

EwaGlos

– On the Challenge of Developing an Illustrated Glossary for Conservation in 11 European Languages

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glossary, conservation, restoration, tenders of contracts, wall painting, architectural surfaces, multilingual, CULTURE PROGRAMME

The mobility of conservation specialists in Europe and the tenders of contracts on the European level are increasing at the same speed as the public's interest in their cultural heritage and the preservation measures shown e.g. at the European Heritage Days. But communication is still difficult because the conservation terminology is not yet standardised in Europe.

Motivated by this strong practical need and a recently published illustrated stone conservation glossary (www.international.icomos.org) a consortium of seven academic institutions - supported by associated partners and external experts – are developing in the frame of an EU project a richly illustrated glossary for conservation terms of wall painting and architectural surfaces, the so called EwaGlos: Concise texts and demonstrative images and sketches should illustrate the concepts of today's use.

The glossary should be published in the eleven mother languages of the involved experts: English (leading language), French, German, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Hungarian, Croatian, Turkish, Romanian and Bulgarian. For methodical advice the European Committee for Standardization was integrated.

The specification

Due to the fact that in the conservation field the terminology varies between the specialists of different materials we chose as specification wall paintings and architectonic surfaces because this terminology is of great significance for the most of our heritage, i. e. historic buildings, their surfaces and decorations.

We defined wall paintings as paintings on inorganic substrates such as plaster and stone. The glossary will not be limited to paintings on walls and ceilings, but will also include architectural surfaces with their plaster, render, stucco and polychromy as a whole.

Objectives and Target groups

The main focus of the book is the clarification of the current use of a term in the different cultures and languages. The goal is to conceive the essence and to be accurate, but not to be exhaustive. It intends to foster the transnational co-operation between state offices, conservation institutions, universities as well as building trades, tradesmen and the construction industries. The target group is e.g. a person who has to write a European invitation for tender. The need is increasing because nowadays more and more big preservation projects are done by international teams. For the dissemination we chose a book as printed version or alternatively as a free of charge PDF e-publication.

 EWAGLOS European Illustrated Glossary for Conservation Terms of Wall Painting and Architectonic Surfaces	
Duration	October 2013 - September 2015
Consortium	Cordinator: HAWK University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim/Holzminde/ Göttingen, Hornemann Institute Co-organisers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Universidad Politecnica de Valencia• University of Art and Design, Cluj-Napoca• University of Malta• Karabük Üniversitesi• Centre Interdisciplinaire de Conservation et Restauration du Patrimoine• Croatian Conservation Institute
Languages foreseen	English (leading language), French, German, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Hungarian, Croatian, Turkish, Romanian and Bulgaria
Publication	book and its pdf on the internet
 Co-funded by the European Union	www.ewaglos.eu

Quality management

Due to the short duration of the project of 24 months we put a special focus on the quality management: We choose realistic tasks with sufficient time, we promote team work, we demand for every term the used sources and we will pre-publish the pilot version in the internet for critical comments.

The specific challenges of terminology in the conservation field

Due to the cultural diversity in every cultural profession concepts are not identical in different languages and countries. In the Conservation field these problems might be stronger than in other cultural areas because it is still a young university discipline. Its terminology is influenced by the natural sciences, the arts and humanities, the engineering sciences but also by traditional craftsmanship and artistic traditions. This applies in particular to the conservation of wall paintings and architectural surfaces, because the connections with the construction industry and the traditional trades have been actively promoted in heritage conservation.

Today, from region to region, the development process of this profession shows differences in content. A very simple **example of inconsistent meaning** is the term "restoration" itself: For some colleagues the English term "restoration" still has a bad reputation resulting from the restoration methods of the 19th century focusing more or less on reconstructions. Even the word "wall painting" has various meanings in Europe. We defined wall paintings as paintings on inorganic substrates such as plaster and stone. Other countries, however, define it as "paintings on the wall" which include e.g. paintings on wooden walls. But there are also **differences in technical execution** and are **terms without an equivalent**.

Another challenge is to clarify the today's use: Terms in report writing and publications can be different to their current use on site. Academics may use different terminology compared to the conservators communicating on the scaffoldings. In the conservation field also many **Italian terms** have spread over Europe, but not all of them are still used today.

The selection of the terms and their structure

The number of the chosen terms was a consequence of the pragmatic fact to get an affordable book at the end of the project. That means ca. 500 pages: 10 pages introduction (only English); 400 pages of glossary (= 200 terms), some pages with a material appendix (without pictures), indices in each language as well as a bibliography. The indices comprise all terms, sub terms, synonyms and ambiguous terms. If for example Italian terms are not in practical use any more in one country but in academic literature we put them in the index of the language of this country.

The selection of terms was the attempt to find the most important c. 200 currently used terms in Europe which need to be explained. The selection focused on the current state of cultural heritage, and on up to date common treatment methods and materials and not on historical methods. The challenge was not to judge or value by putting a term in a certain context and to decide if a term should be included in the definition of a generic term or needs to be explained separately, e.g. could/should „stacco“ and „strappo“ be defined under „detachment of wall paintings“? Or should „egg tempera“ and „casein tempera“ be defined under „tempera painting“? Self-explanatory words as i.e. a "protecting roof" were not considered.

The glossary has been subdivided into three chapters and a material index:

- 1) Craft and Art Techniques (Structure, Surface Design, Construction Aids)
- 2) Alteration (Deterioration Sources, Deterioration Phenomena)
- 3) Interventions (Documentation, Investigation, Prevention / Preventive conservation, Conservation, Restoration)
- 4) Material Index

Due to the limitation of the terms EwaGlos has no hierarchical structures in between these tree chapters, nor a thesaurus. In the chosen three chapters the terms are in different order, i.e. in "structure" the order follows the structure of a wall, i.e. "surface design" it follows the historical development of the art techniques.

The content of the definitions and the comments

We built on already existing materials/contents because the definitions are not intended as improvements. The clue of EwaGlos is that the definitions have to be acceptable for conservators from a many European countries.

The length of each text is limited by the layout of one double page and therefore up to 730 characters. The goal of a definition is to be as concise as possible. They should define a concept, not a word. The definition should comprise the function and generic materials used and should be very close to the illustration. We try to have a hierarchy, starting with the broad definition like "painting technique", and continue with the more specific details like the binding medium of this painting technique. Mentioned sub-definitions will be included in the index. The comment may contain examples for the use and of specific materials, relations to other terms, synonym terms, etc.

Translations

The leading language of the glossary is European English so that the definition and comments are at first written in English and secondly translated into the mother languages of the involved researchers, without any addition or reduction. Due to the cultural diversity concept systems are not identical in different languages or certain concepts (and their terms) might be missing or unknown in one language. Certain individual concepts may have a broader or narrower meaning in different languages, or meanings may overlap. One term may cover several terms in the target language. If we had a term with an inconsistent meaning in the mother language we used a foreign term or added several words with a slash or left the "term" blank or indicated the different meanings of a term and explained it in the commentary. For English terms with double equivalents in the mother language we added the possibilities with a slash. If there is no equivalent in another language, we left the term blank.

Outlook

After the project we will maintain the glossary in the password-protected area of the project website www.ewaglos.eu. We will keep the contact possibility so that readers can suggest improvements for the second edition of EwaGlos.

EwaGlos should be a step to conformity of terminology and international cooperation in the conservation of wall paintings and architectural surfaces which is very important regarding the daily damages. However, we are fully aware that the selection of terms or some definitions and comments can be discussed controversially or that some information might be missing. But we hope that our compilation will support colleagues in their international preservation measures and that the glossary will be developed further towards clear usage of conservation terminology.

Acknowledgements

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