

Part I

The Preservation of Tangible Heritage

Part I of this thesis discusses the historical development of the modern discipline of conservation. It examines the influence of archaeological practice with particular reference to its scientific basis and how this emerged in the first quarter of the last century in artefact conservation. It argues that this became a central characteristic of the professionalisation of the field throughout the C20th, distinguishing the modern discipline of conservation from its historic origins in traditional arts and crafts-based practices.

It also discusses how the modern practice of (so-called) ‘scientific conservation’ (and the practice of restoration as an aspect of this) has become an international phenomenon largely fashioned by the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors. The implications of this movement – especially in terms of its institutionalisation and ‘professionalisation’ – are discussed; both with respect to its administration and in terms of practice in the United Kingdom. Finally, the theoretical basis of these developments (derived from the fine arts) is also examined.

Part I consists of four chapters, as follows: Chapter 1.1: ‘Scientific restoration’, Chapter 1.2: ‘International professionalisation’, Chapter 1.3: ‘Professionalisation in the United Kingdom and Chapter 1.4: ‘European restoration theory’.

1.1. Scientific restoration

This chapter examines the relationship between science, archaeological practice and the emergence of the modern discipline of artefact conservation in the first quarter of the last century. Key specialists are identified through their work in museums together with related scholarly institutes, all of which have contributed to the development of scientific conservation and restoration (it is argued) by the extension of archaeological practice into wider heritage domains.

The scientific basis of practice – both in terms of *adding to* and *subtracting from* the historical document – is shown to be based around the primary value domains of the ‘aesthetic’ and the ‘historical’ which act to determine the nature of the treatment process. Attention is given to restoration in the *adding to* sense which is based on the *visual appearance* of objects and which is necessarily superficial in that the interventive treatment *intentionally* precludes any form of creative expression (other than scientific expression) which is considered inappropriate (and therefore unethical).

It is also argued that the scientific basis of practice is essentially technical and rational *in its thinking* – which is a determining factor with respect to the kinds of materials and techniques used for restoration. When any such restoration (in the *adding to* sense) is carried out it is revealed on the historical document itself as ‘non-like’ restoration. This is the essence of the scientific approach. This thesis argues that the emergence of scientific restoration as an aspect of the modern discipline of artefact conservation marks a decisive departure from its (and indeed archaeology’s) historic origins in the traditional arts and crafts.

Finally, this chapter aims to convey the historical basis upon which the professional practice of conservation has been established – the growth of which (throughout the course of the last century) has introduced scientific restoration to wider domains of heritage.

Historically, methods and techniques derived from the physical sciences, such as chemistry and physics (which were later employed in artefact conservation) were

first developed in archaeology. Rathgen, for example, was an early pioneer through his work in the laboratories of the Royal Museums of Berlin. His *Die Konservierung von Altertumsfunden* [*The Conservation of Antiquities*] was first published in 1898. Rathgen recognised the need for a more systematic approach to the conservation of antiquities which had hitherto been the province of craftsmen who had a familiarity with the medium but, it was felt, lacked positive knowledge of the underlying causes of material deterioration.¹ According to Gilberg, many consider Rathgen to be: ‘...the father of modern archaeological conservation’.²

In the United Kingdom, Harold Plenderleith, who was the former Keeper of the Research Laboratory of the British Museum, London, further developed Rathgen’s earlier work through the publication of *The Preservation of Antiquities* in 1934.³ According to Gilberg: ‘This handbook has long been considered the “Bible” of conservation’.⁴ However, as Gilberg notes of Plenderleith’s second book:

...it was not until 1956 with the publication of *The Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art* that conservation, so far as the broader material heritage was concerned, was truly established, at least in the English-speaking world.⁵

According to Calderaro, Plenderleith’s *The Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art*: ‘...was directed at introducing scientific methodology into a field which had been previously dominated by craftsmen’.⁶

The development of scientific conservation (and restoration) from its craft-based

¹ M. Gilberg, ‘Friedrich Rathgen: The Father of Modern Archaeological Conservation’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 26, Number 2, Article 4 (pp.105-120), 1987. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic26-02-004_1.html [Accessed 15th October 2003].

² Gilberg, 1987.

³ H. Plenderleith, *The Preservation of Antiquities*, Museums Association, London, 1934.

⁴ Gilberg, 1987.

⁵ Gilberg, 1987 referring to Harold Plenderleith (*et. al*), *The Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art*, Oxford University Press, 1956 (reprinted in 1962; second edition published in 1971 and reprinted in 1974, 1976, 1979, 1988 and 1989).

⁶ N. Calderaro, ‘An Outline History of Conservation in Archaeology and Anthropology as Presented through its Publications’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 26, Number 2, Article 3 (pp.85-204), 1987. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic26-02-003.html> [Accessed 9th July 2004].

origins is discussed by Oddy in the introduction to *The Art of the Conservator*.⁷ A similar view is expressed in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage* which also discusses some of the historical and philosophical aspects of conserving cultural heritage confirming the complex nature of the field.⁸ Plenderleith's key contribution is acknowledged by Caple in the following terms: '...these two books became the textbooks to the emerging subject of archaeological and artefact conservation' [my emphasis].⁹ Plenderleith was later to become director of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), Rome and took part in the drafting of the *Venice Charter* (1964), confirming his substantial contribution to the field of heritage preservation internationally.¹⁰

What is important to note here is the movement from archaeological conservation to wider heritage domains, a phenomenon expressed by Pye in the following terms:

Originally archaeological material was limited to artefacts from excavations, but recently the role of the archaeological conservator has extended to cover not just excavated artefacts, but other materials, such as ethnographic and folk-life objects. Some conservators feel that this is a spread outside the proper field of archaeological conservation, others see it as a logical progression and reflection of the range and type of evidence with which an archaeologist may work, from excavated material to standing buildings and modern ethnographic data.¹¹

The connection between archaeological conservation and museums is a long established one, as Madsen notes:

⁷ A. Oddy, *The Art of the Conservator*, edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Press, 1992 (pp. 13-15).

⁸ *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price, The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (p.471).

⁹ C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (p.154).

¹⁰ *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* (The Venice Charter), held at the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Venice, 1964. Available from: http://www.icomos.org/docs/venice_charter.html [Accessed on 15th October 2003]. The Venice Charter was a landmark in the development of heritage preservation internationally.

¹¹ E. Pye, (*et. al*), 'The Archaeological Conservator Re-examined: a personal view', in J. Black, *Recent Advances in the Conservation and Analysis of Artefacts*, James and James, Summer School Press, 1987 (p.355).

Archaeological conservation first developed in museums; for example effective treatments for waterlogged wood and for corroded metals were devised during the second half of the nineteenth-century in the National Museum of Antiquities in Copenhagen. Here the emphasis was not so much on the appearance of the object as on the evidence it contained.¹²

The use of such terms as ‘evidence’ and ‘data’ indicates how the materials were understood and valued and subsequently studied. For example, typically in archaeology, a material will be valued for its historical quality – as evidence of the past. As such, the object is understood in terms of the information (i.e. ‘data’) it can provide *about* the past. Technical studies are important in realising this ‘data’ which is (no doubt) one of the main reasons why science is the basis upon which archaeological (and by extension) artefact conservation is established.

Oddy describes the emergence of ‘scientific conservation’ in similar terms:

Modern scientific conservation, in fact, has its roots in a small band of scientists who were employed in a few European museums in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. First and foremost was Friedrich Rathgen in Berlin, who researched a number of conservation techniques, particularly for metals, and in 1848 published the first scientifically based book on what can truly be called conservation. An English translation was published in 1905, and was the basis of scientific conservation in Britain for many years.¹³

The similarity that the modern practice of scientific conservation shares with archaeology and its association with museums is acknowledged by Matero in the following terms:

If we accept the premise that the practice of conservation began with the

¹² B. Madsen, ‘Artifact conservation in Denmark at the beginning of the last century’ (1987), cited in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.13).

¹³ A. Oddy, *The Art of the Conservator*, edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Press, 1992 (p.13).

study of the underlying causes of deterioration, then it was in the 1930's and 1940's, along with the development of museum conservation laboratories and specialists, that the field was born.¹⁴

Oddy also confirms the important contribution of the British Museum, noting how:

The British Museum called on the services of Dr Alexander Scott, FRS, as a consultant, and then decided to set up a permanent scientific research laboratory for investigating the causes of decay and the methods of treating its effects. In 1926, Harold Plenderleith, MC, was appointed to a post as a conservation scientist, and since then the British Museum has been in the forefront of conservation research.¹⁵

Adding to the work of these pre-eminent figures were the activities of other leading specialists in the field. Their influence is represented in the growing body of technical literature which advanced the modern practice of scientific conservation from the post-Second World War period; see for instance, the work of George Scott and Alfred Lucas¹⁶ - while Ian Rawlins, John Gettens, George Stout and Paul Coremans are identified as central figures by Keck.¹⁷ Other scientific conservators working throughout Europe worth noting include Georg Rosenberg who in 1890 was appointed to the National Museum of Copenhagen; Finkner who developed electrolytic reduction in 1899; Kefting who developed electrochemical reduction; and Bertholot of the French Academy of Sciences.¹⁸

The understanding of the nature of conservation – at least in the Western world was

¹⁴ F. Matero, 'Ethics and Policy in Conservation', *The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter*, Volume 15, Number 1, 2000. Available from: http://www.getty.edu/conservation/resources/newsletter/15_1/feature1_2.html [Accessed 22nd January 2003].

¹⁵ A. Oddy, *The Art of the Conservator*, 1992 (p.14).

¹⁶ M. Gilberg, 'Friedrich Rathgen: The Father of Modern Archaeological Conservation', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 26, Number 2, Article 4 (pp.105-120), 1987. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic26-02-004_1.html [Accessed 15th October 2003] and 'Alfred Lucas: Egypt's Sherlock Holmes', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 36, Number 1, Article 3 (pp.31-48), 1997. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic36-01-003_1.html [Accessed 2nd February 2003].

¹⁷ C. Keck, 'Salute to Paul Coremans', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 30, Number 1, Article 1 (pp. 01-02), 1991. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic30-01-001_indx.html [Accessed 16th October 2003].

¹⁸ C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (p.53).

described succinctly by Robert Barclay in the following terms:

Conservation focuses upon the materials of fabrication – their disposition, arrangement, state and condition – and in doing so downplays the transient, non-material aspects. It attempts to arrest mutability, which is a natural feature of any object that is used by society. At the root of this conception is Western materialism – the need to possess and experience tangible objects.¹⁹

So then, what do we learn here? In philosophical terms, the scientific approach to the past, in the form of historical knowledge as represented in tangible objects, forms the basis of what can be described as a positive material (i.e. tangible) historiography which arguably, could be said to be the primary achievement of archaeology and museology in Western civilisations. And that this conception is underscored by Western materialism which recognises the inherent value manifested in the tangible creations of the past.

What is significant about this is that the value attributed to the existing material has an important bearing on the way it is treated. In museums, for example, if the material is merely a fragment (as is often the case in archaeology), the evidence (or data) is usually recorded and the object may then be placed into storage, disposed of, or perhaps exhibited. Whenever an object is chosen for exhibition, its appearance (i.e. its aesthetic qualities) may also be an important consideration – frequently necessitating restoration in the *adding to* sense.

From this we can understand that archaeological conservation laid the foundations for the establishment of the modern practice of artefact conservation.²⁰ They are similar, for instance, in terms of their association with museums (and other scholarly institutes), methods drawn from the physical sciences, such as chemistry and physics,

¹⁹ R. Barclay, (Bob_Barclay@pch.gc.ca) 18th April 2005. RE: *The Advancement of Conservation*, e-mail to F. Hassard (f.hassard@tiscali.co.uk). In terms of ‘world heritage’, the predominance of Western materialism forms a central aspect of this thesis.

²⁰ The integration of conservation and archaeology is expressed in B. Fagan, ‘A Responsibility for the Past: Integrating Conservation and Archaeology’, *Conservation at the Getty*, Newsletter 18.1, 2003. Available from: http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications/newsletters/18_1/feature.html [Accessed on 22nd June 2005].

and an emphasis on the understanding of underlying causes of deterioration. They also share the view that materials have inherent value because they provide evidence of the past in the form of historical knowledge and hence form the basis of a positive and tangible historiography.

It is possible to speculate then, that one of the main reasons why scientific conservation has excelled in institutions is because they provide an appropriate infrastructure for scientific / technical studies which necessitates the availability of advanced technology. This encourages research and innovation in terms of the materials and techniques used in interventive practice. The appearance of objects is particularly important in museums and galleries for exhibition purposes. Thus whenever restoration (in the *adding to* sense) is required in such contexts, this is usually primarily for aesthetic reasons.

The materials used for any such restoration are therefore essentially intended to give visual parity to the object in order to enable the viewer to understand and enjoy it more easily. In other words, the intention of restoration is mainly to improve the object's *readability*. In order to do this, the materials used do not necessarily need to be the same (in kind) as those of which the original object consists or has ever consisted at any time in its history. This may be understood as intentionally 'abstract' restoration in the sense that there is no attempt made to reflect any metaphysical considerations in the interventive process; the (so-called) 'transient non-material aspects'; i.e. intangibles. The 'authentic' representation of the original creators' intention is highly valued, therefore, only the *physicality* of the object is restored and authenticity is 'reduced' to an apparent visual integrity only.

The benefits that technical understanding could bring to wider heritage domains ensured that scientific conservation (and restoration) would no longer be limited to museum laboratories. In connection with this, Plenderleith's *Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art*²¹ was an important development of conservation practice in that it showed how methods deriving from archaeology could be applied to a vast range of heritage materials. One is immediately struck by the scope of the

²¹ H. Plenderleith, *The Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art: treatment, repair and restoration*, Oxford University Press, 1971 (first published in 1956).

book, covering a vast range of materials based on the day-to-day problems that are presented in the Research Laboratory of the British Museum.

Examples are; metals (such as gold, silver, copper, lead and iron), organics (such as wood, textiles, paper, bone and ivory) and siliceous and related materials (such as stone, ceramics and glass). The appendices provide information on various interventive treatments which are (essentially) presented in the form of recipes. There is also information about monitoring the museum environment and information about the use of dangerous materials, such as toxic solvents. It is the quintessential technical manual for the conservation and restoration of objects within the museum environment; exemplary for its contribution to the emerging discipline of conservation and today, a classic in its own right.

The final section shows photographs of various treatments undertaken. Some of the materials are so fragile that a very delicate approach is essential, such as the tight roll of C18th. Indian Birch Bark Writings (photograph no. 6). Solvents are shown to be useful in cleaning and the removal of stains and various approaches to the removal of surface corrosion products are presented. There are also some examples of reconstructed fragments of the Bronze Bowl from Birdlip (photograph no. 32) which is approximately 4000 years old. The interventive treatment included some filling and consolidation.

There is a particularly good example of restoration (in the *subtracting from* sense of the meaning) of an Egyptian Bronze Figure (photograph no. 31) which demonstrates how an object can be returned to a former 'sharpness' which had been obscured by corrosion products. There is also an interesting example of unifying a fragmented object – the Hilton of Iron Sword from an Anglo Saxon Burial (photograph no. 35) – by using modern Perspex to mount the fragments in such a way as to enable viewers to interpret the structural form of the object, ensuring more complete understanding (as described above).

These examples demonstrate how a technical understanding of materials and the factors that cause their deterioration can save otherwise illegible objects. As one might expect, by being based on practice at the British Museum most of the objects

are archaeological in kind. Because the orientation of the book is based on the study of materials, it is what might be described as a 'recipe book' for a diverse range of interventive treatments. There is, however, noticeably little discussion about the kinds of practical expertise that is frequently necessitated by complex interventive work, such as the reassembly of complicated structures made necessary in the recreation of major losses. This is understandable in an essentially archaeological museum; because of the historical value of the objects, it would be reasonable to expect that they are not restored to a condition of 'like-with-like' completeness (i.e. in the *adding to* sense of the meaning). Indeed, from the illustrations that have been provided it is apparent that there is no attempt to restore in this sense at all.

In more recent years the British Museum publication *The Art of the Conservator* (1992)²² set out to show various approaches to restoration. As with Plenderleith's earlier publication, there are a wide variety of interventive treatments covered. However, in this text there are also examples drawn from the fine arts such as, paintings and sculpture. Unlike the purely archaeological approach to intervention, where structural unity of the original fragments is the main objective, as the case study of The Sutton Hoo Helmet (pp.73-88) demonstrates, the objects that are considered to possess greater aesthetic attributes are also frequently judged to require greater emphasis on visual unity. To this end, the Sophilos Vase (pp.163-176) shows how 'in-painting' can be carried out in such a way that the newly integrated losses are less noticeable to the viewer and therefore do not detract from their appreciation. The 'neutral' tones are carefully used to ensure the original is unmistakably identifiable and no attempt is made to re-create the original appearance in a 'like-with-like' way; thus preventing the possibility of what might be described as aesthetic and/or historical forgery. This idea of 'visual unity' (or *visual oneness*) is (as one perhaps might expect) well-developed in paintings restoration (and one which will be discussed in Chapter 1.4).

Now, the reason why this abstract and superficial approach to restoration is important to this study is because the knowledge / expertise required in carrying such 'non-like' (scientific) restoration is quite different when compared to that required for 'like-

²² *The Art of the Conservator*, edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Press, 1992.

with-like’ (art/craft) restoration. Therefore, the transition of the field from its essentially artistic/craft background to the scientific basis of conservation necessarily has the effect of changing the ‘stock of knowledge’ within it.²³ In order to illustrate this, a good example of restoration which is exactly opposite to ‘intentional abstraction’ can be found in the British Museum’s (so-called) ethnographical section. One of its African totem poles required the re-integration of a missing ear-piece (which, therefore, necessitated restoration in the *adding to* sense). This was carried out by a native of that culture who was invited by the British Museum to complete the work. It was felt that it was necessary to allow for meaning to be *brought to* the object and that this could be achieved by the ‘appropriate’ person whose actions, through the use of *particular* materials and techniques, conferred inherent qualities in the ‘performance’ of the restoration treatment which the museum authorised.²⁴

Therefore, in contrast to scientific restoration, this kind of approach *permits expression* which is not scientific and technical in character, but artistic, historical, value-laden and culturally-specific. In other words, the meaning is transmitted *through* the performance of the restoration based on the values attributed to the historicity *of* that practice; hence it is the antithesis to ‘intentional abstraction’. This approach to restoration thus demonstrates what can be understood as a kind of subject / object synthesis which is connected to what is valued which in turn informs the concept of authenticity. The materials selected and, by extension, the techniques used (and, of course, the person chosen) are the main qualifying factors behind this approach to restoration – which extends beyond merely unifying original fragments – and in fact was carried out in a ‘like-with-like’ way. These ‘wider’ considerations may be understood as ‘intangible heritage’ which extend beyond the materials of fabrication and embody (this thesis will argue) something of the metaphysical complexities of life itself. The subject of intangible heritage is one that is taken up in Part II of this thesis and forms an important part of the overall analysis.

²³ The ‘stock of knowledge’ is a phrase derived from Alfred Schutz’s, *Structures of the Life-World*, William Heinemann, 1974 – and will become important as the thesis is developed in the latter stages.

²⁴ The information regarding the restoration of the African totem pole was provided during a discussion with Nicola Newman of the Conservation Department of the British Museum on 28th October 2005 – the object has not been studied and no images have been obtained. However, it is the *principle* that lays behind the approach to restoring the totem pole which is relevant to this thesis.

The scientific basis of conservation can be seen to have evolved simultaneously with the professionalisation of the field – a phenomenon which is examined in the succeeding chapter(s).

1.2. International professionalisation

This chapter discusses the influence of professional organisations that collectively provide the underlying parameters for the international organisation and administration of the discipline of scientific conservation. This is represented by, for example, the formalisation of ethics and codes of practice and guidance on such things as education and training, professional accreditation and continuing professional development. Early progress in professionalisation was apparent before the Second World War; according to Staniforth, ‘The International Conference for the Study of Scientific Methods of the Examination and Preservation of Works of Art’, Rome, 1930, and the publication of *Technical Studies in the Field of the Fine Arts* from 1932 to 1942 were among the early activities that: ‘...heralded the development of the conservation profession’.²⁵

Explicit in this is the association of technical studies (i.e. science) with profession. According to Pye:

Conservation as it is known today did not develop until the 1920’s and 1930’s, [meaning scientific conservation] and the twentieth century was characterised by the definition and establishment of conservation, by the founding of conservation organisations and the codification of ethics and standards of practice.²⁶

The inter-War period also saw the expanding role of technical studies in fine arts conservation which, according to Philippot: ‘...brought the practice of restoration and conservation from the level of traditional working-class artisanship to that of an exact science’.²⁷ Oddy also notes how the development of scientific conservation, and the professionalisation of the field, continued throughout the C20th. which, as well as crossing new disciplinary boundaries, also crossed international boundaries:

²⁵ S. Staniforth, ‘Conservation: Significance Relevance and Sustainability’, in *Tradition and Innovation: Advances in Conservation*. The Forbes Lecture, Melbourne Conference Papers, International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC) Melbourne Congress, 2000 (p.1). Available from: <http://www.iiconservation.org/conference/melbrn/melbnpaper.php> [Accessed 15th February 2003].

²⁶ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.49).

²⁷ Paul Philippot, ‘Restoration from the Perspective of the Humanities’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price, The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (p.217).

In England and America, scientific conservation took root and developed between the two world wars. The interest that was developing in the USA: ...led to the establishment of the first journal for conservation and technological research on antiquities and works of art, *Technical Studies in the Field of the Fine Arts*, published by the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard. After the war, a number of museum scientists again got together and in 1950 founded the International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works [IIC], with its administrative office in London.²⁸

Buck, who sat on the Committee on Professional Relations which produced the first formulation of a code of ethics for art conservators (the IIC-American Group),²⁹ declared: ‘... a century ago the restoration of works of art was a secretive craft more or less exempted from the objective scrutiny of most 19th-century scientists’.³⁰ This association of science with professionalism is also shared by Dykstra (1996)³¹ and Keck (1978).³²

The American Institute for Conservation (AIC); the International Institute for Conservation (IIC); the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI); the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI); the International Council of Museums (ICOM); the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC); and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, Rome (ICCROM) all emerged in the latter half of the 20th. as influential organisations which, through their attendant literature, promoted the objectives and ideals of scientific conservation. They advanced the field and promoted the importance of preserving

²⁸ A. Oddy, *The Art of the Conservator*, edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Press, 1992 (pp. 13-14).

²⁹ The IIC-American Group is known today as the American Institute for Conservation (AIC).

³⁰ R. Buck, ‘Prosthesis for Aphakia’, offprint from *Miscellanea in Memoriam Paul Coremans* (1908-1965), in *Bulletin de l’Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique*, XV-1975.

³¹ S. Dykstra, ‘The Artist’s Intentions and the Intentional Fallacy in Fine Arts Conservation’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 35, Number 3, Article 3, 1996 (pp.197-218). Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic35-03-003.html> [Accessed on 20th October 2003].

³² C. Keck, ‘The Position of Conservation in the Last Quarter of the Twentieth Century’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 18, Number 1, Article 1, 1978 (pp.3-7). Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic18-01-001.html> [Accessed on 12th October 2003].

cultural property by establishing and upholding professional standards, coordinating the exchange of knowledge, research, and publications – on an international scale.

These influential organisations have been shaped first and foremost by the needs of public sector institutions who have (for the most part) assumed responsibility for the preservation of the tangible heritage. United in cultivating leading-edge research in innovative approaches to conservation and restoration they have all played an important role in assessing and developing the processes and materials used in restoration practice. For example, the IIC conference in 1960 entitled ‘Recent Advances in Conservation’ was: ‘...a landmark in demonstrating in an international forum the widespread application of science to conservation practice’.³³ This general trend reflects the move towards the establishment of an essentially knowledge-based discipline through technical studies combined with historiography. This is reflected in changes to education and training, and the dissemination of such technical knowledge, through a growing body of literature which has burgeoned over the past three decades. As might be expected then, most of this literature is associated with the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors.

This chapter then, looks at the development of the conservation profession (and scientific restoration as an aspect of this paradigm) by providing an overview of the key organisations involved in advancing the discipline – in particular, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and (in more recent years) the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers’ Organisations (ECCO). It is argued that, through their influence ‘scientific’ conservation has become the basis of professionalisation and that this in turn has become part of an international trend towards standardisation – the implications of which is also discussed.

Chapter 1.2 consists of the following sub-sections: 1.2.1: ‘The International Council of Museums (ICOM) definition’; 1.2.2: ‘The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers’ Organisations (ECCO)’; 1.2.3: ‘The formalisation of ethics’; 1.2.4: ‘Education and training during the 1990’s; and 1.2.5: ‘Standardisation’.

³³ *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price, The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (p.471).

1.2.1: International Council of Museums (ICOM) definition

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) founded in 1946. It is dedicated to the development of museums and the museum profession and operates globally providing a worldwide network for museum professionals for the preservation of cultural heritage. ICOM is supported by various governmental and other bodies and has some 21,000 members in 140 countries and is affiliated with international associations. It aims to respond to the challenges and needs of the museum profession – and, as such, offers further evidence as to the absolute professionalisation of the field:

ICOM's activities respond to the challenges and needs of the museum profession and are focused on the following themes: professional cooperation and exchange; dissemination of knowledge and raising public awareness of museums; training of personnel; advancement of professional standards; elaboration and promotion of professional ethics; preservation of heritage and combating the illicit traffic in cultural property.³⁴

The International Council of Museums – Conservation Committee (ICOM-CC) is one of 28 International Committees which constitute ICOM. It is the largest Committee with over 1400 members worldwide from every branch of the museum and conservation profession. It aims to:

...promote the conservation, investigation and analysis of culturally and historically-significant works and to further the goals of the conservation profession. Twenty-two working groups form the backbone of ICOM-CC whose aim is to provide a framework within which conservation specialists can meet and work on an interdisciplinary level. Among their aims are dealing with: scientific investigations; into objects of significance to cultural and natural history; optimising solutions to

³⁴ The International Council of Museums (ICOM). Available from: <http://icom.museum/mission.html> [Accessed on 5th May 2006].

conservation problems and developing standard setting and manuals.³⁵

According to its Statutes, since 1989 ICOM interprets all conservation institutes as ‘museums’:

In addition to institutions designated as ‘museums’ the following qualify as museums for the purposes of this definition: conservation institutes and such other institutes as the Executive Council, after seeking advice from the Advisory Committee, considers as having some or all of the characteristics of a museum, or as supporting museums and professional museum workers through museological research, education or training.³⁶

By 1995 education and training was specified as any: ‘...non-profit institutions or organisations undertaking research, education, training documentation and other activities relating to museums and museology’.³⁷ Hence all universities and colleges and all related scholarly institutes, that provide conservation education and training, and organisations such as the Institute of Conservation (ICON) in London, United Kingdom, that work in association with museums, are included in the ICOM broad definition.

During the 71st session of the Executive Council in Paris an Ethics committee was created.³⁸ It studied the various problems relating to professional ethics in museology. ICOM produced a key document which set forth the basic purposes, principles and requirements of the conservation profession. This was initiated when a draft text was produced by Ballestrem in 1978 which was submitted to the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property in Rome (ICCROM) Standards and Training Committee for review. The document was reviewed on several occasions by museum professionals before being unanimously adopted by the Working Group for Training in Conservation and

³⁵ The International Council of Museums – Conservation Committee (ICOM-CC). Available from: <http://icon-cc.icom.museum/Home/> [Accessed on 5th May 2006].

³⁶ *Development of the Museum Definition According to the ICOM Statutes (1946-2001)*, ICOM. Available from: http://icom.museum/hist_def_eng.html [Accessed 5th May 2006].

³⁷ *Development of the Museum Definition*, ICOM.

³⁸ *1946-1998 ICOM Chronology*, ICOM. Available from: <http://icom.museums/chronology.html> [Accessed on 12th February 2006].

Restoration of the ICOM Committee for Conservation in Copenhagen in 1984. Although over twenty years ago, this definition has had an important bearing on how education and training subsequently developed (and was, therefore, central to the author's undergraduate studies).

In the 'Introduction', ICOM acknowledged the need to define the profession of the conservator-restorer for the following reasons:

In most countries, the profession of the conservator-restorer is still undefined: whosoever conserves and restores is called a conservator or a restorer, regardless of extent and depth of training. Concern for professional ethics and standards for the objects being treated and for the owners of these objects, has led to various attempts to define the profession, to distinguish it from related professions and to establish proper training requirements. It should help the profession to achieve parity in status with disciplines such as those of the curator or the archaeologist.³⁹

From this we can understand that the need to define the profession is related to ethics and standards of practice which would be achieved through changes to education and training. The intention was essentially to ensure improved care for cultural property but also to raise the status of the practice of conservation; hence the reference to archaeologists.

But there are potential problems here; for instance, it could be argued that standardisation in education and training (which is related to ethics) does not necessarily contribute towards standardisation of practice (in terms of outcomes). What may actually happen is that the ethical norm becomes a standard *approach* to practice and although this relates to the outcome of any one particular treatment it by no means standardises the treatment itself. For example, one might approach loss-compensation in an 'ethical manner' but select from a vast array of materials in order

³⁹ 'The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession', *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

to fulfil the objectives – thereby denying the very possibility of a standard outcome. In the domain of furniture and decorative arts (for example) one might ‘ethically’ use moulding and casting techniques in order to replace missing wood-carvings. The Lion of the Punjab is an illustrative example when:

Decorative carvings, both in ivory and in timber were missing from above the doorways. It was decided to manufacture replacement for these carvings, as their loss impaired the overall aesthetic impact of the object. The carvings were cast in Tirantis ‘pigmented’ clear casting polyester resin 405 710 and then adhered in place.⁴⁰

We can learn from this approach to restoration (which may be referred to as loss-compensation) that it is based solely on the *visual appearance* of the object; in other words its ‘aesthetic’ value. The use of such ‘non-like’ materials (and therefore also processes) is based on their ‘scientific’ compatibility; in other words, the materials used are not known to cause harm to the historical fabric *at the time of their use*. It is, therefore, important to remember when considering standards of practice that what is actually standardised is the intention *not* the outcome. This example also illustrates how this approach to restoration changes the nature of *process* – from carving in wood to casting in polyester resin – which clearly has important implications regarding authenticity (and the stock of knowledge deemed essential in the field).

In this connection, the intended actions of the conservator-restorer are described by ICOM under the heading: ‘The Activity of the Conservator-Restorer’ in the following way:

The activity of the conservator-restorer (conservation) consists of technical examination, preservation and conservation-restoration of cultural property: Examination is the preliminary procedure taken to determine the documentary significance of the artefact; original structure and materials; the extent of its deterioration, alteration and loss; and the documentation of these findings. Preservation is action taken to retard or

⁴⁰ N. Bamforth, ‘Ranjit Singh: The Lion of the Punjab’, *Conservation Journal of the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, Number 31, April 1999 (pp.14-15).

prevent deterioration of or damage to cultural properties by control of their environment and/or treatment of their structure in order to maintain them as nearly as possible in an unchanging state. Restoration is action taken to make a deteriorated or damaged artefact understandable, with minimal sacrifice of aesthetic and historic integrity. Their task is to comprehend the material aspect of objects of historic and artistic significance in order to prevent their decay and to enhance our understanding of them so as to further the distinction between what is original and what is spurious.⁴¹

What is problematic here is that the terms ‘conservation’ and ‘restoration’ are brought together under the generic term ‘conservation’ even though in practice situations they are frequently far apart in terms of knowledge and expertise required – as the example of the Lion of the Punjab above showed. Some disciplines, for example furniture and decorative arts (and the *tectonic* arts in general), frequently require high levels of expertise because of their complexity and the nature of the problems commonly associated with them. Interestingly, technical examination is based on identifying original structure which can be understood as signifying that which is considered to be the ‘authentic’.

Under the heading: ‘The Impact and Ranking of the Activities of the Conservator-Restorer’ the document then focuses on the function of the conservator-restorer:

The conservator-restorer has a particular responsibility in that treatment is performed on irreplaceable originals, which are often unique and of great artistic, religious, historic, scientific, cultural, social or economic value. The value of such objects lies in the character of their fabrication, in their evidence as historical documents and consequently in their authenticity. The objects “are a significant expression of the spiritual, religious and artistic life of the past, often documents of a historical situation, whether they be work of the first rank or simply objects of

⁴¹ ‘The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession’, *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

everyday life.” The documentary quality of the historic object is the basis for research in art history, ethnography, archaeology and in other scientifically based disciplines. Hence the importance of preserving their physical integrity.⁴²

This informs the concept of authenticity – which is based on the technical (i.e. scientific) identification of original material fabric. The ability to identify original materials – which may be taken to a forensic level (subject, of course, to the availability of advanced technical resources) – confirms scientific conservation’s emphasis on tangible heritage preservation. It is because of this emphasis that interventive treatment should seek to preserve the *original materials* (i.e. ‘historic integrity’) while restoration is based on improving understanding – which is generally associated with the appearance of the object (i.e. ‘aesthetic integrity’).

The emphasis on maintaining aesthetic and historic integrity (which are the two primary ‘value-domains’) suggests that understanding (i.e. by restoration in the *adding to* sense) is achieved *visually* – and not necessarily, for example, in terms of substance and process or use and function or original creative ‘spirit’. This then, can be described as a *superficial* approach to restoration which is consistent with the archaeological approach to restoration described in Chapter 1.1: ‘Scientific restoration’. And although restoration (in the *subtracting from* sense) results (inevitably) from a desire to reveal original material fabric, this does not appear to be considered as restoration at all – even though it has a significant bearing on the legibility (and indeed the authenticity) of the historical document – the ‘authentic’ preservation of which was the entire *raison d’être* of the Heritage Preservation Movement since its founding in the C19th.⁴³

The desire to reveal original ‘authentic’ material is also one of the reasons why cleaning (or de-patination, removal of accretions) in the restoration of paintings (for example) has in the past caused a great deal of controversy. This is often related to

⁴² ‘The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession’, *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

⁴³ This will be discussed in Chapter 3.1: ‘Conservation-Restoration in the United Kingdom’.

the use of newly developed solvents.⁴⁴ Dykstra (similarly) considers the National Gallery cleaning controversy of the 1940's when he argues that positivism (i.e. scientific interpretation) in its most dogmatic form led to the idea that the revelation of original material through technological cleaning processes would lead to the artist's original creative intention.⁴⁵ Although this phenomenon is by no means limited to the 20th., these examples do demonstrate the association of scientific / technical approaches with the tendency to 'take back' to the original 'authentic' material (known as 'de-restoration')⁴⁶ thus (potentially) compromising the overall aesthetic and the continuity of the historical document in preference of historical accuracy.⁴⁷ In archaeological practice Caple's 'Revelation, Interpretation Preservation' (RIP) model can be seen as another example of this tendency.⁴⁸

The understanding of the object as physical evidence of the past is based on a scientific interpretation of the objects by museums and their wider purpose within Western culture (through museums and related institutions and heritage organisations) in establishing an essentially positive historiography.⁴⁹ In museums, the tangible object is the basis through which this data is (scientifically) interpreted; for instance, in the form of art-historical research, ethnography, and archaeology and other scientifically-based disciplines.⁵⁰ This conception of 'heritage' is embedded in the Western epistemological tradition – the foundation of which is science.

⁴⁴ C. Hoeniger, 'The Restoration of the Early Italian "Primitives" During the 20th Century: Valuing Art and its Consequences', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 38, Number 2, Article 3 (pp.144-161), 1999. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic38-02-003.html> [Accessed 15th October 2003] provides some illustrative examples of fine artwork which has been defaced (in some cases quite literally) by radical cleaning.

⁴⁵ S. Dykstra, 'The Artist's Intentions and the Intentional Fallacy in Fine Arts Conservation', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 35, Number 3, Article 3 (pp.197-218), 1996. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic35-03-003.html> [Accessed 15th October 2003].

⁴⁶ P. van Mensch, 'Conservation' (Chapter 20), *Towards a methodology of museology*, PhD thesis, University of Zagreb, 1992 – discusses this tendency to 'de-restore'.

⁴⁷ S. Keck, 'Some Picture Cleaning Controversies: Past and Present', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, Volume 23, Number 2, Article 1 (pp.73-87), 1984. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/jaic/articles/jaic35-03-003.html> [Accessed 9th July 2004].

⁴⁸ C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (p.33).

⁴⁹ A positivist historiography is an interpretation of the past that is based upon factual evidence (i.e. data) about the past – and is represented in (for example) museums by the accumulation of materials (i.e. tangible heritage) and their subsequent scholarly study.

⁵⁰ The scientific basis of museological conservation-restoration is examined in detail by Mensch; see P. van Mensch, *Towards a methodology of museology*, PhD thesis, University of Zagreb, 1992.

Now, if an object is valued in the present in terms of its artistic, religious, historic, scientific, cultural, social or economic attributes (as made explicit by ICOM) then an approach to restoration that only takes into account its aesthetic and historical integrity (as defined by ICOM) is necessarily partial; and might accordingly be described as reductionist. This surely presents a problem for those that have the responsibility for restoring the objects. Museum collections consist of objects that have their origins in cultures from all over the world. The Grand Tours of the C18th. (for instance) marked the beginning of the modern museum. During this period objects were collected (and often plundered) from around the globe. The superficial (i.e. abstract) approach to restoration is likely then, to be related to the reality that these objects are now *de-contextualised* – which is, in a sense, an admission that the object has lost its cultural specificity once it enters the museum. One could argue then, that professional conservation, as based on an essentially archaeo-museological model, takes the museum-based approach to restoration out of the ‘de-contextualised’ public sector into the private sector – i.e. to culture itself – where expectations may be quite different.

The ICOM definition also recommends that the conservator-restorer work in close cooperation with the curator or other relevant scholar:

The conservator-restorer must be aware of the documentary nature of an object. Each object contains – singly or combined – historic, stylistic, iconographic, technological, intellectual, aesthetic and/or spiritual messages and data. Encountering these during research and work on the object, the conservator-restorer should be sensitive to them, be able to recognise their nature and be guided by them in the performance of his task. Therefore all interventions must be preceded by a methodical and scientific examination aimed at understanding the object in all its aspects and the consequences of each manipulation must be fully considered. Only a well-trained experienced conservator-restorer can correctly interpret the results of such examinations and foresee the consequences of the decisions made.

An intervention on an historic or artistic object must follow the sequence

common to all scientific methodology: investigation of source, analysis, interpretation and synthesis. Only then can the completed treatment preserve the physical integrity of the object and make its significance accessible. Most importantly, this approach enhances our ability to decipher the object's scientific message and thereby contribute to new knowledge. The conservator-restorer works on the object itself. His work, like that of the surgeon, is above all a manual art/skill.⁵¹

According to ICOM then, conservator-restorers should be guided by aesthetic and/or spiritual messages or data which are encountered during research and then incorporated by them in the performance of their task. However, this is not possible to achieve in an easily verified way because such attributes are embodied in people in complex ways. For example, the central defining characteristic of 'spirituality' is a sense of connection to a much greater whole which may include an emotional experience of religious awe and reverence. The emphasis of spirituality is often on personal experience which is related to a sense of being. It may thus be an expression for life perceived as higher, more complex or more integrated with one's worldview, as contrasted with (for instance) the merely sensual and rational. As such, 'spiritual messages' are, strictly speaking, not *data* but *essences* which are ontological in nature *not* epistemological; and thus not 'accessible' scientifically.

However, the implication here is that conservators can determine these factors 'scientifically' and then apply them in performing their task – as if they can somehow be plucked out and then applied in practice situations – which is surely a methodological absurdity. No restoration work can be considered 'authentic' when it is understood in this way.⁵² This is, therefore, a misunderstanding which (it can be argued) makes the museum-conservators' objectives untenable. Nonetheless, the scientific foundation of conservation (and restoration) determines its status as a knowledge-based discipline.

Under the heading: 'Distinction from Related Professions' further guidance is

⁵¹ 'The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession', *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004]. The idea of conservator-restorer as 'surgeon' is revisited in the final conclusion.

⁵² This view is related to 'intangible heritage' which forms the substance of Part II of this thesis.

offered on the role of the conservator-restorer in the following terms:

The conservator-restorer's professional activities are distinct from those of the artistic or craft professions. A basic criterion of this distinction is that, by their activities, conservator-restorers do not create new cultural objects. It is the province of the craft and artistic professions such as metal-smiths, gilders, cabinet-makers, decorators and others to reconstruct physically what no longer exists or what cannot be preserved. The recommendation as to whether intervention on any object of historic and/or artistic significance should be undertaken by an artist, a craftsman, or a conservator-restorer can be made only by a well trained, well educated, experienced and highly sensitive conservator-restorer. This individual alone, in concert with the curator or other specialist, has the means to examine the object, determine its condition, and assess its material documentary significance.⁵³

Thus according to ICOM, the conservator-restorer is not an artist or a craftsperson. This definition must surely be contentious – especially when one considers the amount of valued heritage that was created by the expertise of artists and craftspeople? Historically, many craft traditions (from which the modern practice of scientific conservation has evolved) not only made the objects but also carried out repair and restoration work which called upon and had the effect of sustaining certain kinds of expertise and practice – often in localised (i.e. not institutionalised) contexts. This understanding, therefore, represents an important point of departure for the scientific conservator from the historic arts and crafts practitioner.

According to the ICOM definition, the conservator can be understood as a kind of manager who has control over what is done to the heritage; for example, in terms of how it should be restored, valued, interpreted and understood. This may be necessary for museums which are responsible for large collections. However, it is not uncommon within the heritage sector for some specialists to feel uncomfortable

⁵³ 'The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession', *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

about being ‘managed’ by scientific conservators who they consider to be not understanding of their particular specialisation or working context.

The ICOM definition does, however, make it clear that once a decision is made to restore (in the *adding to* sense) this *may* be carried out by an appropriate art / craft specialist. This suggests that if the conservator does not possess the necessary knowledge (or perhaps facilities) then they should call upon the services of one that does. However, the definition does not take into account how a traditional art or craft discipline may be determined by the use of *particular* materials and techniques. For example, a master-carver’s skill is determined by the way he/she uses his/her tools and the wood he/she works with; there are also specialist surface-finishing techniques related to the use of oils, waxes and natural resins (for example) which may (being historical in their own right) be considered by such practitioners to have their own intrinsic value to the heritage sector.

In fact, there is a vast range of such specialist knowledge in the domain of furniture and decorative arts. Importantly, any change in the acceptability of certain kinds of technologies, such as casting or modelling in order to replace missing wood-carvings, or applying a synthetic finish to an object that originally had an oil, wax or natural resin finish, must necessarily negate the need to employ such an artist or craftsman skilled in such fields – while at the same time potentially precluding the intrinsic value of such knowledge (and practitioners) to the heritage sector as a whole. Some may feel that restoration (in this sense) is *not* the province of the ‘scientific’ conservator at all. And that such decisions relating to materials inevitably contribute to the de-skilling of areas of the sector; as a general maxim: ‘non-like’ materials require *less* expertise to apply. Because the use of technology (including materials) and who uses it determines the nature of the historical document itself, then with respect to interventive practice, ‘knowledge’ and ‘technology’ are necessarily central to all judgments; and, therefore, the basis of our intentions.

In the section: ‘Training and Education of the Conservator-Restorer’ ICOM recommends that:

Training should involve the development of sensitivity and manual skill,

the acquisition of theoretical knowledge about materials and techniques, and rigorous grounding in scientific methodology to foster the capacity to solve conservation problems by following a systematic approach, using precise research and critically interpreting the results. Theoretical training and education should include the following subjects: History of art and civilisations; Methods of research and documentation; Knowledge of technology and materials; Conservation theory and ethics; Conservation-restoration history and technology; Chemistry, biology and physics of deterioration processes and of conservation methods.

[It concludes]: The ultimate aim of training is to develop thoroughly rounded professionals, able thoughtfully to perform highly complex conservation interventions and to thoroughly document them in order that the work and the records contribute not only to preservation but to a deeper understanding of historical and artistic events related to the objects under treatment.⁵⁴

The expression ‘to perform highly complex conservation interventions’ does not make clear whether this also incorporates complex restoration work. In furniture and decorative arts (for example) it is not uncommon for objects to be in very poor condition, frequently with missing sections. The above suggests that the conservator’s role, in terms of practice, is concerned mainly with work of an essentially preservative kind (i.e. such as stabilisation) or restoration of the *subtracting from* kind (i.e. such as cleaning and removal of surface accretions and/or earlier interventions). This would explain why a scientific understanding of materials would be useful.

According to John Kitchin, former Head of the Furniture Conservation Section of the Victoria and Albert Museum:

Museum conservators today have to deal with an enormous amount and

⁵⁴ ‘The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession’, *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

variety of materials; scientific / technical / academic studies are important. However, more often than not the objects do not require extensive work. Typically, it is not in the museum's best interest to acquire objects that require extensive work due to time / cost factors. [Therefore]: ...replacing losses by casting may be carried out in a museum context because of the volume of work to be done. Economics is a major factor.⁵⁵

Accordingly, the qualitative nature of the restoration work in such a context relates directly to what can be described as the subversive forces of institutional economic rationalisation.⁵⁶ This further suggests that when complex or difficult and time-consuming restoration is concerned (especially in the *adding to* sense), it may well lay outside of a conservator's qualification – hence the recommendation of employing a relevant specialist. A lack of relevant knowledge (i.e. for such restoration) would inevitably leave conservators pre-disposed to either taking on work that required relatively little invasive procedures or perhaps to focusing on the surface of objects for which their expertise was better suited, or to use alternative means, such as casting instead of carving. This could in turn contribute to the general downgrading of repair / restoration within the overall field of conservation, potentially undermining the status of the associated traditional art / craft practices. Indeed, such practitioners may be perceived as 'backward' or 'traditionalists' and generally not keeping pace with conservation developments which might in turn foster all sorts of internal tensions – not least professional jealousy. The use of the term 'manual skill' by ICOM (rather than artistic (re) creative excellence) tends to reinforce this hypothesis.

What is important to note here is that well-known institutions such as, the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, by virtue of their status, tend to set the standard for the field as a whole. Their influence is important because the requirements of practice within the public sector (such as museums) may be quite different to that of private sector practice. Therefore, if the archaeo-museological

⁵⁵ J. Kitchin, *Interview with the author*, 12th June 2005.

⁵⁶ The author is aware that this is not a remarkable finding but it is important because some may feel that the whole point of establishing a profession should be to guard against such 'market' forces.

approach to conservation-restoration becomes the basis of education and training (for example, in universities), then newly ‘qualified’ graduates are likely to be ill-equipped to deal with the demands of employment in the private sector. In addition to this, teaching students how to carry out ‘non-like’ restoration (such as casting in the way described) without their first possessing the ability to carve (i.e. in wood), may not be suitable for the demands of a context which ‘intuitively’ prefers ‘like-for-like’; a common expectation in private practice. Surely in training then, it is essential to develop the ability to do ‘like-for-like’ prior to such ‘innovations’? These issues will be taken up in the succeeding sections.

Interestingly, the use of such ‘non-like’ materials in furniture and decorative arts is a relatively recent phenomenon. According to Bruce Luckhurst, up to the 1980’s:

...there was always an emphasis on the use of correct materials that reflected those of which the objects consisted – especially when replacing losses. For example, it was considered important to use the same or similar species of wood when replacing carved elements. Where this was not possible the closest match would be sought.⁵⁷

Kitchin reinforced this by explaining how scientific / technical analysis was used in order to identify the correct materials to ensure ‘like-with-like’ consistency in restoration.⁵⁸ It would seem then, that the scientific / technical aspects, in recent times, have (arguably) become more concerned with developing ‘non-like’ approaches to restoration; hence the acceptability of synthetic resins, above – which are used ‘ethically’ on grounds of ‘scientific’ compatibility. In other words, scientific research now appears to serve a different purpose.

It would appear then, that the ICOM definition reflects a general emphasis on a scientific understanding of objects and a technical interpretation of materials and the factors that lead to their deterioration (which can be described as *knowledge of what*), rather than creative excellence, such as carving, surface-finishing (i.e. *knowledge of how*) frequently necessitated by restoration (in the *adding to* sense) and the value that

⁵⁷ B. Luckhurst, *Interview with the author*, 12th April 2005.

⁵⁸ J. Kitchin, *Interview with the author*, 12th June 2005.

may be attributed to this by certain practitioners. It could be argued that this differentiation is manifest in the terms ‘conservation’ and ‘restoration’; ‘conservator’ and ‘restorer’; ‘science’ and ‘art’; ‘technologist’ and ‘craftsperson’; ‘innovation’ and ‘tradition’; ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’.

The history of art and civilisations is taught on conservation courses in institutes of Higher Education – this is integral to conservation training and establishes it as an essentially knowledge-based ‘academic’ discipline. However, usually the academic study of history involves what can be described as an abstract way of learning about the nature of the creative arts and crafts (i.e. and, therefore, the objects that the field of conservation takes responsibility for). Essentially, this is because it is viewed in objectified form (i.e. in a text) which is abstract from practice itself. This means that one can learn a great deal about traditions of practice without ever partaking *in* that tradition of practice. This is important because through time, and on a cultural level of understanding, this methodological abstraction (which is epistemological) has the effect of causing a caesura between the past and the present. Notwithstanding, such traditions of practice may continue outside of the academic context; and unbeknown to it.⁵⁹ Surely this is important when one considers heritage?

To study for instance, cabinet-making or stone-masonry in an academic way may develop some understanding of form, composition and technique, but this is not the same as knowing how to make. A maker’s knowledge of form, composition and technique will be infinitely more complete even if he/she does not possess an in-depth academic understanding of the history of his/her discipline (in the form of historical knowledge) or a technical understanding of materials. Yet this knowledge (and the value that may be attributed to it) is necessarily part of heritage. Much the same may be said of all of the traditional arts and crafts within the wider heritage community.

In spite of the inherent (and arguably ‘culturally-located’) complications discussed here, the ICOM definition provided a formal basis for the development of the

⁵⁹ There is an epistemological problem here which causes tension between history as a form of knowledge (objectified in the form of a text) and understanding of history as represented in the continuity of a tradition of practice. This distinction will be developed throughout the thesis and forms an important part of the final conclusion.

conservation profession internationally (discussed in the succeeding sections) which can be seen to be part of the standardisation of the field – a phenomenon which is taken up in the final section of this chapter.

1.2.2: European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO)

The ICOM definition (1984) was the first document adopted by the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO) (in 1993) as part of an international trend towards standardisation. To this end, ECCO published its Professional Guidelines and codes of ethics in 1994, representing common European-wide guidelines on professionalisation (which also incorporates education and training). This section discusses the development of the 'scientific' conservation profession through the influence of ECCO – taking what was once the exclusive domain of archaeology and museums into all heritage domains incorporated into professional practice.

ECCO was established in 1991 in Belgium as:

...an international association with a scientific and cultural aim. [The purpose of which]: ...shall be the development and promotion – at a practical, scientific and cultural level of the conservation-restoration of cultural property. [Its main objectives are]: ...to promote a high level of training and work toward legal recognition of professional standards in order to affirm and obtain recognition of the professional status of Conservator-Restorers at national and European level.⁶⁰

According to Larsen: '...the setting of standards for the conservation-restoration profession in Europe must be done by the profession itself. These tasks must be maintained and led by ECCO as the European professional body'.⁶¹

⁶⁰ 'Statutes', *Official Papers*, The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO), 1991. Available from: <http://www.ecco-eu.info/> [Accessed on 6th April 2004].

⁶¹ R. Larsen, *Comments to FULCO – A Framework of Competence for Conservator-Restorers in Europe*, a discussion paper for the Vienna Meeting, 1998, European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabindex=1&tabid=206> [Accessed on 12th February 2005].

ECCO comprises of an Assembly of 21 elected Committee members. Under Professional Guidelines (I), which were adopted by its General Assembly, Brussels in 1993, it outlines the role of the Conservator-Restorer in the following terms:

The fundamental role of the Conservator-Restorer is the preservation of cultural property... in respect of its aesthetic and historic significance. The Conservator-Restorer undertakes responsibility for and carries out the diagnostic examination, conservation and restoration treatments of cultural property and the documentation of all procedures.⁶²

What is important to note here is that the focus is on ‘cultural property’ (i.e. the tangible heritage). And that the primary values are defined by the ‘aesthetic’ and the ‘historical’ – which confirms that the essentially reductionist (i.e. narrowing of values) and superficial (i.e. restoration as based on *appearance*) approach to restoration, associated with archaeo-museological practice, has been adopted European-wide through ECCO.

ECCO also separates out interventive work which it describes under two key categories; ‘Remedial Conservation’ and ‘Restoration’:

‘Remedial Conservation’ consists mainly of direct action carried out on cultural property with the aim of retarding further deterioration. Restoration consists of direct action carried out on damaged or deteriorated cultural property, the aim of which is to facilitate its understanding, while respecting as far as possible its aesthetic, historic and physical integrity.⁶³

Accordingly, in remedial conservation no principles of restoration should apply, while any direct action upon the object is considered to be restoration, which should aim to ‘facilitate its understanding’. This clearly preserves the influence of the ICOM

⁶² ‘ECCO Professional Guidelines (I): The Profession, Point I. The Role of the Conservator-Restorer’, *ECCO Official Papers*, adopted by its General Assembly, Brussels, 1993 (p.11).

⁶³ ‘ECCO Professional Guidelines (I)’, 1993 (p.11). Available from: http://www.ecco-eu.info/index.php?container_id=163&doc_id=170 [Accessed on 1st February 2006].

definition which (to reiterate) defined restoration as: ‘Restoration is action taken to make a deteriorated or damaged artefact understandable, with minimal sacrifice of aesthetic and historic integrity’.⁶⁴

ECCO – in keeping with the ICOM definition – distinguishes the Conservator-Restorer from related fields in the following terms:

The Conservator-Restorer is neither an artist nor a craftsperson. Whereas the artist or craftsperson is engaged in creating new objects or in maintaining or repairing objects in a functional sense, the Conservator-Restorer is engaged in the preservation of cultural property.⁶⁵

Thus it would appear that the ‘function’ of the object (i.e. its ‘use-value’) is a decisive factor in distinguishing the scientific conservator and the artist / craftsperson – which is also, therefore, an inherent aspect of the professionalisation process (as guided by ECCO and ICOM).

The Conservator-Restorer’s obligations towards cultural property are outlined in the Professional Guidelines (II), Code of Ethics, which was adopted by the General Assembly, Brussels in 1993, as follows: ‘The Conservator-Restorer shall respect the aesthetic and historic significance and the physical integrity of the cultural property... and should limit the treatment to only that which is necessary’.⁶⁶

Accordingly, from the perspective of professional conservation, the aesthetic and historical value of cultural property is given preference over its (potential) ‘use-value’. This may be due to the field’s association with museums; typically, an object’s ‘use-value’ diminishes upon entering the museum, as their aesthetic and historical value increases. However, this can present other problems; in the domains of furniture and decorative arts and in musical instruments (for example), use-value *as well as* form and stylistic qualities and originality, may be considered a vital

⁶⁴ ‘The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession’, *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, ICOM, 1984. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/ICOM1984.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

⁶⁵ ‘ECCO Professional Guidelines (I)’, 1993 (p.12).

⁶⁶ ‘ECCO Professional Guidelines (II): Code of Ethics, Point II. Obligations towards Cultural Property’, *ECCO Official Papers*, adopted by its General Assembly, Brussels, 1993 (p.13).

aspect of authenticity. The point being made here is that museum collections may not necessarily be as authentic as they could be and that the professional practice of conservation, by extension, brings this potential difficulty into wider contexts (where an object's use-value might be considered important).

In practice, use-value is typically diminished by the limiting of the treatment; signalled by the term 'minimum-intervention' (a fundamental ethical principle). This is linked to historical value and the subsequent emphasis on preserving the tangible attributes. In order to do this:

The Conservator-Restorer shall strive to use only products, materials and procedures which, according to the current level of knowledge, will not harm the cultural property... The action itself and the materials used should not interfere, if at all possible, with any future examination, treatment or analysis. They should also be compatible with the materials of the cultural property and be as easily and completely reversible as possible.⁶⁷

Therefore, *any* materials may be used so long as the treatment is reversible and respects minimum-intervention. These two principles lie at the foundation of the modern practice of conservation. They legitimise the use of any materials so long as they are considered to be 'compatible' at the time of their use. In scientific conservation, compatibility is determined scientifically (i.e. according to the current level of knowledge) and is therefore based on *adductive* reasoning. This is fundamental to the primary goal of conservation – to slow down the rate of deterioration – and thus to suspend (i.e. 'freeze') the object in time; the well-known museum approach to heritage.

Perhaps what is most pertinent to note here is that ECCO, by adopting the ICOM definition (1984), took ideas about heritage, which were formerly the exclusive domain of the public sector, into the private sector and made this the basis of professionalisation internationally. This re-definition of the field – which has been

⁶⁷ 'ECCO Professional Guidelines (II)', 1993 (p.13).

described as moving from an essentially ‘art / craft-based approach and thinking to a scientific and research-based academic discipline’ – can, therefore, be understood as an extension of scientific conservation into new heritage domains and contexts. This movement is consistent with international trends towards standardisation (in terms of *thinking* but not necessarily in terms of *outcomes*).

It can be argued then, that the conservator-restorer, as reconfigured and repositioned by ICOM and ECCO, is characteristically scientific in his/her approach and therefore objective / impartial in his/her findings – which are shared (for instance) amongst fellow professionals at symposia and in peer reviewed journals. The modern conservator possesses *knowledge of what* in ample measure, while *knowledge of how* effectively remains the domain of the artist / craftsman (who does not ‘know’ the technologies he/she works with). The conservator’s thinking has been cultivated by the Western epistemological tradition (the foundation of which is scientific). His/her language is subsequently different to the artist / craftsman; it is more technical, precise and learned and (perhaps) to some extent ‘medical-like’.

He/she is typically part of a wider administration which has certain ethical guidelines and codes or rules for practice. He/she restores in an *intentionally abstract* way unlike (arguably) traditional craftspeople who frequently value their knowledge on its own terms in a historically-transcendent way as part of an inherited practice. The conservator’s rationale is to preserve what physically remains of the past or (in restoration) to achieve *visual* unity but not necessarily to respect other qualities such as, function or spirit, and/or original creative propriety and (consequently) often *not* in terms of the same materials and techniques. As such, he/she is *experimental* and *innovative* with new materials and new techniques and therefore has a *technological-orientation* – which forms the basis of his/her research. He/she is essentially an innovator (typically *not* a traditionalist) who ‘sees’ the past in materials alone; i.e. tangible heritage.

Tangible heritage is understood as the physical manifestation of the creative spirit of a by-gone era which is restored and conserved for the benefit of future generations in order to provide information (or ‘data’) about *that* era; but also to respect the inalienable ‘rights’ of the original creator. This is the basis of the ‘conservation ethic’

which, in many ways, is an ethic for the ‘non-living’. The accumulation of tangible heritage represents a physical record of time – the scholarly study of which provides evidence of the past, forming what can be described as a positive historiography.

So perceived, history is linear and by being objectified in material form alone (and therefore generally disassociated from people), heritage has come to an end, becoming distant and past – creating a kind of diorama through which the past can be ‘observed and explained’ but detached and therefore fractured. Consequently, for the modern conservator, heritage is perceived as a completed development; all that remains is the physical testimony embodied in the artefact. The principle locus of this history of tangible heritage (and of this sense of fracture) is the museum – the repository where artefacts are housed, organised, interpreted, conserved, restored and displayed in such ways as to confer meaning upon the material world (on behalf of culture).

1.2.3: The formalisation of ethics

Conservation ethics are essentially the rationalisation of the conservator’s intentions. They are there to guide the practitioner but may also assist in regulating the profession. Accordingly: ‘Codes of ethics are necessary in order to provide a basis for making choices. As such, they form the conceptual basis of the conservation profession and all forms of professional practice’.⁶⁸ Ethics are formalised in documents and published by various influential professional organisations as a guide to future practice. At the same time they are influenced by wider developments in areas such as, archaeology and museology. The main influences on the ECCO Code of Ethics were the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC), the Australian Institute for Conservation of Cultural Material (AICCM), the International Institute for Conservation-Canada (IIC-Canada) and the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC).

The main influences on the UKIC are the AIC and the AICCM (Australia), ICOM

⁶⁸ Jedrzejewska, ‘Ethics in Conservation’ (1976); Brooks, ‘International conservation codes of ethics and practice and their implications for teaching and learning ethics in textile conservation with special reference to the Diploma in Textile Conservation taught at the textile Conservation Centre’ (1998); Ashley-Smith, ‘Ethics of Conservation’ (1982), cited in C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (p.59).

and the Museums Association, together with other publications from the Society of Archivists (SoA), ECCO and the IIC-Canadian Group. The formalisation of conservation's ethical considerations can thus be understood as a combination of international influences which have been developed in association with museums, universities, various conservation organisations and associated professional groups; prominent among which are the AIC and the UKIC, discussed below.

The American Institute for Conservation (AIC)

The first formulation of standards of practice and professional relations by any group of art conservators was produced by the IIC-American Group (now AIC) Committee on Professional Standards and Procedures in 1961 under the direction of Murray Pease, former conservator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.⁶⁹ This was adopted by the IIC-American Group Standards of Practice and Professional Relations for Conservators in 1963.⁷⁰ The primary purpose of this document was:

...to provide accepted criteria against which a specific procedure or operation can be measured when a question as to its adequacy has been raised. [And]: ...to express those principles and practices which will guide the art conservator in the ethical practice of his profession.⁷¹

Following from this, the first formulation of a code of ethics for art conservators was adopted by the members of IIC-American Group in Ottawa, Canada in 1967. These two documents, *The Murray Pease Report: Standards of Practice and Professional Relationships for Conservators* and the *Code of Ethics for Art Conservators* were published in 1968 and revised several times throughout the 1970's and 1980's by specialist committees. In 1990, the AIC Board charged a newly appointed committee to assess the role and use of the code and standards as well as to analyse specific difficulties within the documents themselves. A new simplified Code of Ethics and the creation of new Guidelines for Practice to replace the old Standards of Practice

⁶⁹ This is also known as the *Murray Pease Report* or just the *Peace Report*.

⁷⁰ This year (1963) was also the time of publication of Cesare Brandi's *Theory of Restoration* which is examined in Chapter 1.4: 'European restoration theory'.

⁷¹ 'History', *AIC – Code of Ethics*, The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC). Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/pubs/ethics.html> [Accessed on 31st January 2006].

emerged in 1994.⁷²

The Preamble to the document outlines the main objectives of conservation professionals and the purpose of the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice in the following terms:

The primary goal of conservation professionals, individuals with extensive training and special expertise, is the preservation of cultural property. Cultural property consists of individual objects, structures, or aggregate collections. It is material which has significance that may be artistic, historical, scientific, religious, or social, and it is an invaluable and irreplaceable legacy that must be preserved for future generations. This document... sets forth the principles that guide conservation professionals and others who are involved in the care of cultural property.⁷³

The similarity with the ICOM definition and the ECCO documentation is immediately recognisable, showing the desired consistency throughout the international museum world. Emphasis on preserving the material (i.e. cultural property) is advocated.

Among the twelve points listed it states that:

The conservation professional shall practice within the limits of personal competence and education as well as within the limits of the available facilities. While circumstances may limit the resources allocated to a particular situation, the quality of work that the conservation professional performs shall not be compromised. The conservation professional must strive to select methods and materials that, to the best of current knowledge, do not adversely affect cultural property or its future

⁷² This was the version used by ECCO which has had an important influence on professional conservation in the United Kingdom in recent times – which is examined in Chapter 1.3: ‘Professionalisation in the United Kingdom’.

⁷³ ‘Preamble’, *AIC – Code of Ethics*. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/pubs/ethics.html> [Accessed on 31st January 2006].

examination, scientific investigation, treatment, or function.⁷⁴

This statement is of particular interest in this research because it endorses the use of methods and materials that *to the best of current knowledge do not adversely affect the cultural property* (which shows consistency with the ICOM and ECCO documentation, discussed above). Implicit in this is the view that scientific studies are the determining factor of whether or not a chosen material is considered to be suitable. To this end, under the main heading ‘Examination and Scientific Investigation’ there are three key areas outlined in the document under the sub-heading ‘Treatment’ which should follow on from initial examination:

1. Suitability: The conservation professional should only recommend or undertake treatment that is judged suitable to the preservation of the aesthetic, conceptual, and physical characteristics of the cultural property.
2. Materials and Methods: The conservation professional is responsible for choosing materials and methods appropriate to the objectives of each specific treatment and consistent with currently accepted practice. The advantages of the materials and methods chosen must be balanced against their potential adverse effects on future examination, scientific investigation, treatment, and function.
3. Compensation for Loss: Any intervention to compensate for loss should be documented in treatment records and reports and should be detectable by common examination methods. Such compensation should be reversible and should not falsely modify the known aesthetic, conceptual, and physical characteristics of the cultural property, especially by removing or obscuring original material.⁷⁵

It is clear then, that *any materials* may be ethically used so long as they are believed

⁷⁴ ‘Preamble, Points IV to VI’, *AIC – Code of Ethics*. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/pubs/ethics.html> [Accessed on 31st January 2006].

⁷⁵ ‘Examination and Scientific Investigation: Treatment’, *AIC – Code of Ethics*. Available from: <http://aic.stanford.edu/pubs/ethics.html> [Accessed on 31st January 2006].

at the time to meet the stated criteria. This is the case even though the objects may be valued for their spiritual, artistic and/or religious significance. However, this could be problematic in the sense that their may be sensitivity regarding the materials that *are* used.

To illustrate this point, take for example, the restoration of the C19th. model of the Shrine and Mausoleum Gate of Yomeimon of Toshogu which was originally built for the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1868). The model depicts scenes from Japanese mythology and is thus steeped in the history of Japanese civilisation. However, two human figures at the front of the model were missing. The restoration took place at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and was described accordingly:

The loss of the temple guards aesthetically affected the visual statement of the temple, a dominant force presiding over the whole. [For their replacement]: The two figures were cast in polyester resin with fillers of <40% synthetic amorphous silica, flake white dry powder pigment and barium sulphate.⁷⁶

Now, this can be described as an example of the characteristically Western ‘scientific’ approach to restoration based on superficial appearance. However, can we really say that this object, albeit now *visually* complete, is a true and authentic representation of the culture whence it derived? Surely other considerations such as, substance, process, function, spirit and/or original creative propriety – must also be taken into account as aspects of its authentic character? This example shows how these ethical guidelines, by being based largely around the object’s superficial appearance, might endorse the use of products for restoration derived from Western chemical industries which could adversely affect other aspects of its significance.

Where treatment interventions are a last gasp attempt to save the object it is clearly of interest to know about the benefits of such ‘non-like’ technologies – as used (for example) in consolidation treatments. However, the conservation professional also

⁷⁶ N. Bamforth, ‘Yomeimon of Toshogu’, *Conservation Journal of the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, Number 49, Spring 2005 (pp. 8-9)

takes responsibility for restoration (in the *adding to* sense of the meaning). This is important because surface coatings may be changed, while lost elements, such as carvings or important decorative features, may be fabricated in different materials and with modern techniques. The example provided above raises important questions around whether the scientific restorer (i.e. conservator) is operating in areas that perhaps more appropriately belong to the traditional artist or craftsman.

As one might expect in an international industry that is aspiring towards standardisation the UKIC Codes of Ethics and Rules of Practice are virtually identical to those of the AIC.

United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC)

The purpose of the UKIC Code of Ethics and Rules of Practice is to set out the professional standards expected of conservator-restorers.⁷⁷ The Code of Ethics is largely based on the question of what makes the profession credible and respectable. To this end, the main answers appear to be:

...honesty in dealings with clients, employers, employees and colleagues; giving good and fair advice; being aware of ones' limitations; carrying out conservation work to the highest possible standards and not damaging objects; charging fairly for work.⁷⁸

Taken together, the Code of Ethics and Rules of Practice embody the principles and obligations which must govern the behaviour of every member when practising conservation and restoration. As the previous chapters have made clear, the fundamental role of each member is the conservation and restoration of cultural property for the benefit of present and future generations but without losing sight of the role or purpose of the cultural property (which, of course, is ever-changing).

In order to ensure that members maintain the highest of standards of professional

⁷⁷ *Code of Ethics and Rules of Practice*, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC), Official Documents. Available from: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ukic/docs.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2006].

⁷⁸ 'Introduction', *UKIC Official Documents*. Available from: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ukic/docs.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2006].

practice the Code of Ethics sets out certain basic principles. The usual scientific criteria for treatment apply, such as initial examination, sampling and scientific investigation which should: ‘...follow accepted scientific standards and research protocols’.⁷⁹ In addition to this, as with the AIC, emphasis is on the *preservation* of cultural property (i.e. tangible heritage) and maintaining the highest possible standards according to *current knowledge* (i.e. scientific knowledge). To this end, under the sub-heading ‘Materials and methods’ the Code states that:

...each Member shall choose methods and materials that, to the best of current knowledge, will not adversely affect the cultural property. No method or material should be used before establishing any likely reactions between the material and the cultural property.⁸⁰

The term ‘reactions’ employed here implies some form of chemical reaction and therefore that newly introduced materials should be (ideally) inert – in so far as ‘current knowledge’ in a given situation can ascertain.

Under the heading ‘Restoration and Reconstruction’ the code states that:

...any intervention to compensate for loss should be clearly documented. It should be detectable by common examination methods. Such restoration should aim to be reversible and should not permanently modify the aesthetic and physical characteristics of the cultural property unless for clearly defined and over-riding structural or physical reasons and with the consent of the client.⁸¹

The processes involved in the realisation of such restoration do not therefore necessarily consider the substance of the newly introduced material and the processes involved in its application – in terms (for example) of authenticity; hence the ethical acceptance of ‘non-like’ materials (as noted above) which often reflect scientific

⁷⁹ ‘Rules of Practice: Examination’, *UKIC Official Documents*. Available from: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ukic/docs.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2006].

⁸⁰ ‘Rules of Practice: Materials and Methods’, *UKIC Official Documents*. Available from: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ukic/docs.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2006].

⁸¹ ‘Rules of Practice: Restoration and Reconstruction’, *UKIC Official Documents*. Available from: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ukic/docs.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2006].

developments rather than any such conceptual criteria.

It is for this reason that objects that were made of only natural materials may now ‘ethically’ be restored with synthetic materials – which is a potentially unhappy arrangement. Surely the materials of which the valued object consists cannot / must not be considered context-free in their selection? And, therefore, the materials employed in restoration surely also should not be considered context-free in *their* selection? This discrepancy in the conceptualisation of the materials can lead to disagreements over the materials and methods chosen and (inevitably) brings to bear issues relating to respect for the original maker’s creative intentions. Can (for instance) a treatment intervention legitimately reflect the maker’s original creative intentions if the materials used for the restoration of his/her work were not known to the maker when the object was made? This, of course, raises questions relating to what we understand the ‘authentic’ to be (which will be considered in Part II of the thesis).

It also states in the UKIC documents that the actions of each member must be governed by a respect for and knowledge of the cultural property which it defines in the following terms: ‘Cultural property: includes all types of works which are judged by society to be of cultural, aesthetic, artistic, historic or scientific value’.⁸² However, as with the AIC, the UKIC focuses primarily on the aesthetic and historic and does not state to what extent the act of restoration should set out to reflect the other stated considerations. For instance, the term ‘cultural’ might also include religious beliefs and/or ritualistic customs relating to the object’s symbolic value. Many of our tangible collections – from fine arts to decorative arts (for instance) – were created within a religious cultural subtext – which surely must be taken into account? The inference here is that these ‘non-tangible’ (i.e. intangible) attributes can somehow be applied by the conservator in the interventive process. It is not considered in these Codes and Rules that such intangible attributes are, strictly speaking, attributes of *people* and thus are expressed and transmitted through the actions of people who embody them.

⁸² ‘Glossary of Terms’, *UKIC Official Documents*. Available from: <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ukic/docs.html> [Accessed on 15th April 2006].

A good example of this in practice was the restoration of ‘The Mazarin Chest’ from Japan – again at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. In this case, the museum invited a Japanese craftsman who specialises in the practice of urushi lacquering to carry out the restoration work. With respect to this collaborative project, according to Rivers:

Conservation has two aspects: the physical and the metaphysical. The physical aspect is the ‘how’ of conservation, which requires conservators to choose materials and techniques that will best stabilize an object and ensure its long-term survival. The metaphysical aspect is the ‘why’ of conservation, which requires that conservators understand what is valued about an object so that, when conservation has been completed, the underlying significance of the object is enhanced rather than diminished. In other words, conservation practice seeks to understand and preserve tangible cultural property, whilst conservation ethics seek to understand and preserve intangible cultural property.⁸³

The practice of urushi lacquering was understood as an aspect of intangible heritage which is considered in relation to authenticity, as follows:

As a traditional material with a long craft history and distinctly Japanese techniques, urushi is perceived to embody an aspect of the spirit of Japan. Lacquer objects in Japan are valued for their artistic beauty, for their craftsmanship and as historical objects but also have an additional cultural resonance that Japanese restorer-conservators attempt to maintain in their treatments. The use of traditional, non-reversible urushi-based materials and techniques is intended to maintain the cultural integrity, continuity and authenticity of urushi objects. The use of Western materials to restore or conserve urushi is perceived as diminishing the ‘Japaneseness’ of lacquer, thus diminishing its cultural

⁸³ S. Rivers, ‘Conservation of Japanese lacquer in Western collections: conserving meaning and substance’, published in *The 14th Triennial Meeting The Hague Preprints, Volume II*, ICOM Committee for Conservation, 2005.

value.⁸⁴

What can we understand from this? Well, there is clearly intrinsic value conferred upon the *process* of restoration which is determined by the use of particular materials by a particular person. But there is more to be understood from this example in the sense that it also signifies a kind of subject / object dualism in thinking about heritage. This is apparent in the distinction made between the tangible v. intangible which (in this example) are synthesised in the process of restoration under the concept of authenticity.⁸⁵ This is important because ‘value’ is here attributed not solely to the materiality of the past but also (and crucially) to the historicity of understanding manifested in the actions of the person *through the performance of restoration*. The materials and techniques used are clearly central to this synthesis – i.e. it could not happen if modern ‘non-like’ synthetic materials were used instead. However, this example (which is by no-means the norm as examples above have shown)⁸⁶ is the antithesis of intentionally abstract and superficial restoration (based on aesthetic and historical values alone), underlying conservation ethics and thus enshrined in the professional discipline of conservation and widely supported throughout the West (particularly by the public sector).

It can be argued then, that the modern discipline of conservation, *within the context of Western civilisations*, harbours a methodological fallacy which reveals itself in restoration (in the *adding to* sense), its use of technology (including materials), what is considered to be authentic (i.e. original material, appearance, or *process*), the attribution of values (which are context-specific) and, of course, in the role played by the conservator-restorer him/herself. This ‘fallacy’ can be seen to be reflected in conservation’s movement away from its traditional craft-based origins (and from restoration in general) which appears to preclude their intrinsic value to heritage and therefore also the potential role of intangible heritage understood as an aspect of authenticity. The reasons for this (and its potential solution) form an important part of the wider analysis developed throughout this thesis.

⁸⁴ S. Rivers, 2005.

⁸⁵ This example is virtually identical *in principle* to the restoration of the African totem pole at the British Museum referred to in Chapter 1.1: ‘Scientific restoration’.

⁸⁶ Such as the restorations of the ‘Ranjit Singh: The Lion of the Punjab’ and ‘Yomeimon of Toshogu’ which were also restored at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Surely it is largely because of intangible heritage that many (so-called) ‘traditional’ practitioners that embrace certain forms of craft knowledge and expertise have an ‘instinctive’ preference for the use of ‘like-with-like’ materials and techniques in restoration. Typically, their use is understood as continuing their knowledge and related practices which they value as a vital part of heritage; and which are thus not ‘reduced’ to the level of ‘manual dexterity’ (as for instance by the processes of professionalisation).⁸⁷ One of the reasons why such aspects do not appear to be readily considered in the discipline of scientific conservation is because the focus is on the material artefact (i.e. the physical *object* for conservation and restoration) not the living *subject* (i.e. the person who does it). And the predominance of ‘aesthetic’ and ‘historical’ values in the field of conservation means that practice does not necessarily take into account the historicity of understanding represented by people in the present; who may have diverse motives for preserving the past. In this sense, one can argue that the modern practice of scientific conservation (at least according to its formal structure) is at best reductionist, at worst incoherent and at times untenable.

According to Pye, one of the effects of modern conservation ethics with their emphasis on preventive measures is:

...the apparent down-grading of remedial skills and stifling of restoration and even of creativity (in the sense of making new objects). Conserving what is there, however crumbled and unrecognisable, may be used as an excuse to rule out skilled restoration, or the creative reinterpretation involved in carving a new statue for a niche in a cathedral.⁸⁸

This goes to the heart of the matter and illustrates what has long been a problem within furniture and decorative arts conservation. In this area there are strong craft traditions. The academic aspects of conservation (which are determined by the

⁸⁷ Draft ECCO-ENCoRE Proposal for Amendment to P6_TA-PROV(2005)0173, Recognition of professional qualifications ***II. Section X, Article 3: *Acquired rights specific to conservation-restoration practitioners/conservator-restorers*. Annex I.1 Conservator-restorer, 1.1.1 ‘Knowledge and Skills’, European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers Organisations (ECCO), June 2005.

⁸⁸ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.36).

profession) have tended to be dismissive towards those that consider themselves artists and craftspeople. Perhaps it is no wonder then, that at the same time, there is a major art/craft skills crisis in this domain in the United Kingdom coupled with a sense of marginalisation (or exclusion) from the field (discussed in Chapter 1.3, next).⁸⁹

One of the most fundamental principles of conservation which is apparent in all of the major international codes of ethics and guidelines for practice is ‘reversibility’. With respect to this ethical dictum, Pye explains the connection between science and the materials used in archaeological practice in the following way:

The acknowledged irreversibility of almost all conservation treatments underlines the crucial importance of rigorous testing of materials and treatments, and very careful monitoring of treated objects. Testing is scientifically valid but should be one of the final steps in the research process. The immediate effectiveness of a treatment must not be allowed to override the likely long-term effects, an understanding of which requires research into both the materials and the treatments. However, unless we undertake proper research we are in danger of being told, quite justifiably, that we should not use anything except ‘traditional’ materials and methods, or that we should not treat objects at all.⁹⁰

Therefore, the concept of reversibility (which may nowadays more precisely be referred to as ‘retreatability’),⁹¹ when it is interpreted in a ‘scientific’ way, can bring in its wake a change in the use of technology (including materials). This could further undermine the status of traditional arts/crafts practices within the field.

⁸⁹ Concerns regarding the transfer of traditional forms of knowledge and standards of competence are also apparent in other domains of the heritage sector. For example, the recent report *Traditional Building Craft Skills: Skills Needs Analysis of the Built Heritage Sector in England*, National Heritage Training Group (NHTG), 2005 revealed the extent of the problem in the buildings sector.

⁹⁰ E. Pye (*et al*), ‘The Archaeological Conservator Re-examined: a personal overview’, in J. Black, *Recent Advances in the Conservation and Analysis of Artefacts*, James and James, Summer Schools Press, 1987 (pp.356-357).

⁹¹ This is especially since the question was formally raised by the British Museum; see for example, *Reversibility – Does it Exist?* edited by A. Oddy (*et al*), British Museum Occasional Paper 135, British Museum Press, 1999.

In this connection, according to Caple, reversibility: ‘...indicated that a more careful approach was being adopted by conservators and this created a distinction between conservators and the repairers and restorers of the past’.⁹² From this we can understand that, in addition to (apparently) ensuring a more sensitive and informed approach to restoration, the principle of reversibility (and minimum-intervention) has tended to be understood in relation to the *materials used* rather than as an *intention* of the practitioner. It is therefore necessary to clarify that if the concept of reversibility is understood solely with regard to materials used, then the physical application of that material necessarily pre-supposes that the effects of the treatment can be reversed – in other words, taken back to an earlier state. It may not be considered that the *intention* can never be reversed – only the material that has been applied may be removed but quite often the effects of it having been applied cannot be denied.

Logically speaking, *all* applications become inscribed upon the historical document itself (otherwise they serve no real purpose at all) but this may not be apparent to the practitioner in the immediacy of his/her work; an *illusion of immediacy*. It might, however, become discernable through time, should a new ‘style’ emerge; a ‘museum style’ (?).⁹³ In this sense, it is also worth clarifying that conservation’s endeavour to retard deterioration unavoidably produces what might be called ‘newness value’; consider, for example, the ‘new’ condition of the Parthenon Marbles at the British Museum, London. Scientific conservation might be understood then, as a ‘cult of newness’ (in Rieglian terms).⁹⁴

For many practitioners that work in the heritage sector the *quality* of the work that the conservation professional undertakes is not solely (or necessarily primarily) determined by his/her ability to preserve every remaining trace of original fabric but in the choice of technology (including materials) and their ability to execute the work to the highest of standards (there are some very strong views about this in the field). The formalisation of conservation ethics *makes ‘non-like’ restoration ethical*. This

⁹² C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (pp.63-64).

⁹³ See, for instance, E. van de Wetering, ‘The Surface of Objects and the Museum Style’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*) The Getty Conservation Institution, J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp. 415-421).

⁹⁴ A. Riegl, ‘The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and Its Development’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*) The Getty Conservation Institution, J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp. 69-83).

has had the effect of shifting the ‘datum’ upon which judgements about restoration were customarily made which were typically based on ‘like-with-like’ restoration and which therefore necessitated the restorer to possess a level of competence commensurate (at least) with the original maker. This shift dispels with the need for such competence and the need even to be a trained craftsperson at all; which is explicit in the ICOM definition. Put simply, it is easier to camouflage a lack of competence with the use of ‘non-like’ materials while at the same time being consistent with conservation ethics.⁹⁵

Whatever the circumstances, in the discipline of scientific conservation in order for the decision to be ethical, the use of any ‘non-like’ material (according to these rules and guidelines) is based on *adductive* reasoning; in other words on the basis of *until it is otherwise proven*; or *until it is discovered that the intervention has not worked in the way that was intended*; or perhaps even, *until someone points out that the object is no longer a truthful representation of what it pertains to be*. This way of approaching a treatment intervention informs the fundamental principles of ‘reversibility’ and ‘minimum-intervention’. It is also the basis upon which research, testing and experimentation is established, which (in turn) has had a dramatic effect on the kinds of knowledge and expertise necessary in practice.

Typically, trained craftspeople (for example) will aspire to follow a ‘like-with-like’ approach to restoration; or, at the very least, they *can* because they *are* trained craftspeople. Therefore, the establishment of a professional practice which sees innovations in material applications that may not solely be used for preservation purposes but which may also be used to replace missing components (i.e. restoration in the *adding to* sense) represents a kind of separation of the stock of knowledge within the field; like a kind of epistemological fissure. The principles of conservation play an important role in this regard, as Pye has observed:

Conservation has evolved from the activities of craftsmen and restorers who were guided by their skills, and knowledge of the working

⁹⁵ In my observations over the past seven years in furniture and decorative arts, which has been transformed by the introduction of conservation education and training in recent years, I have not yet seen a ‘non-like’ material, be it used for loss-compensation or surface finishing, that requires *greater* levels of expertise (and therefore training) to apply.

properties of materials, rather than by theories or principles. The existence of the principles governing conservation ...distinguishes modern conservation from earlier craft-restoration.⁹⁶

This is surely contentious. Implicit in this is the association of the crafts with restoration which suggests that restoration is understood solely in the *adding to* sense. However, taking an object back in the name of historical accuracy (a practice familiar to archaeological restorers who also seek to ‘freeze’ the object in time) may be understood as restoration in the *subtracting from* sense – an endeavour which was criticised by (for example) William Morris and his supporters with regard to the architectural restorations of the C19th, as follows:

For Architecture, long decaying, died out, as a popular art at least, just as the knowledge of medieval art was born. So that the civilised world of the nineteenth-century has no style of its own amidst its wide knowledge of the styles of other centuries. From this lack and this gain arose in men’s minds the strange idea of the Restoration of ancient buildings; and a strange and most fatal idea, which by its very name implies that it is possible to strip from a building this, that, and the other part of history – of its life that is – and then to stay the hand at some arbitrary point, and leave it still historical, living, and even as it once was. In early times this kind of forgery was impossible, because knowledge failed the builders, or perhaps because instinct held them back.⁹⁷

Morris’s words reflect a tension between different ways of understanding the past – one relating to the past in the form of historical knowledge and the other in terms of practice. The continuity of knowledge in the form of practice was central to Morris’s philosophy of repair and maintenance which informed his somewhat ‘organic’ idea of a ‘living’ historical document.⁹⁸ Critically, the difference between *historical accuracy* and *historical document* also reflects a contradictory understanding of authenticity which is conditioned by the way the past is interpreted – i.e. in the form

⁹⁶ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (pp.32-34).

⁹⁷ W. Morris, *Manifesto of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings*, 1877. Available from: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1877/spabman.html>

⁹⁸ This will be discussed in Section 3.1.1: ‘The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and the Arts and Crafts Movement’.

of knowledge *about* the past (i.e. information or data) or in the form of practice as a *continuation of* the past (i.e. as a way of life). This tends to vary according to working context and the nature of the object for preservation. These were clearly strong principles indeed – which in fact influenced many craftspeople.

It is perhaps worth noting here that in general terms the materials and techniques used in traditional building work reflects the (in fact age-old and arguably unavoidable) necessity for constant renewal. For example, pathways, roads and highways; residential houses, local churches and national cathedrals – all have the inbuilt quality of renewability *by design*. Much the same may be said of traditional cabinet-making and a great deal of decorative art. This inherent quality surely informs the very concept of an historical document? To freeze such heritage in time by interpreting minimum-intervention and reversibility in a fundamental way does not reflect this design and subsequent maintenance philosophy which was central to the C19th. cult of ‘age-value’ (in Rieglian terms).⁹⁹

In scientific conservation *its* principles are understood as a set of laws. This is represented by the formalisation of ethics and codes of practice; a process of rationalisation which is almost entirely linked to public sector requirements in which the germ of an idea about professionalism and academic training was conceived. But they have also been developed by various affiliated conservation organisations and professional groups on an international scale. They are linked to wider concepts, such as values and authenticity, and have a great bearing on the practice of restoration and the subsequent stock of knowledge within the field. However, from the viewpoint of the traditional artist or craftsman, ‘fundamental truth’ (which has a more subliminal inference) may more accurately apply. In other words, a traditional craftsman’s practice may be understood more as a way of life and as a mode of understanding the past rather than in purely rational / explicable terms.

In consideration of this, it should be noted that the ethical code adopted by a profession, as well as guiding practice, may also assist in regulating that profession.

⁹⁹ A. Riegl, ‘The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and Its Development’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*) The Getty Conservation Institute, J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp. 69-83).

This may be understood in terms (for example) of professional responsibility and the question of what makes the profession credible and respectable which may dispense with difficult issues of what behaviour is considered 'ethical'. Furthermore, the function of ethics are not necessarily related to any more general theory of ethics but accepted as pragmatic necessities; for instance, for the benefit of the integrity of the organisation and the service(s) it aims to provide.

Crucially, however, ethical codes are distinct from moral codes in that they function within the ideological framework of a particular group (and the values pertaining to *that* group) and therefore do not necessarily reflect wider 'cultural' concerns. This can lead to the preclusion (or marginalisation) of certain 'stakeholders' which may sustain alternative reasons for preserving the past; the lack of value that the professional field of scientific conservation confers upon the traditional arts and crafts is arguably an illustrative example of this. Central to this notion is *control* which comes about when one group 'defines' (contentiously) what another group is or does (like for instance ICOM and ECCO defining that a craftsman does not preserve cultural heritage).

Ethics are a central feature of standardisation (but in terms of *thought* not necessarily *outcomes*). Therefore, if we accept the premise that our actions are determined by what we *think*, international collaboration in ethics by (for instance) America, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and indeed the whole of Europe, can be understood as signifying a general trend towards homogenisation *in thinking* about the past. This tendency – in a very real sense – also signifies a broad trend towards cross-cultural homogeneity (hence standardisation) which is counter to current recently emerged concerns relating to cultural divergence (which forms the substance of Part II of this thesis). In other words, conservation's ethical guidelines, by being based around the re-establishment of superficial appearance (i.e. to aid understanding in the 'scientific' restoration sense), do not take into account inherited cultural understanding which arguably remains latent but which may be central to sustaining cultural diversity.

Notwithstanding, an important requirement of being ethical is practising within one's own limitations (which is repeated throughout the various codes). The success of the professional practice of conservation, in terms of standards of competence and its

credibility and respectability, will therefore ultimately depend upon standards of education and training – which forms the basis of the next section.

1.2.4: Education and training during the 1990's

European-wide developments in education and training during the 1990's were largely influenced by the ICOM and ECCO documentation (discussed above). This had the effect of orienting the field towards both the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors (such as, museums and universities), fashioning the profession of conservation as an essentially scientific and research-based academic discipline. The ICOM Code of Ethics (1984), for instance, suggested that with regard to the conservator-restorer it would help:

...the profession to achieve parity in status with disciplines such as those of the curator or the archaeologist. [If]: ...training should be terminated by a thesis or diploma paper, and its completion recognised by the equivalent of a university graduate degree.¹⁰⁰

In relation to this, the ECCO Professional Guidelines (III), 'Basic Requirements for Education in Conservation-Restoration', which was adopted by the General Assembly, Brussels in 1994, discussed the nature of education and training commensurate with the ethical norms of the profession. To this end, under the heading 'Type of Education' is states: 'The only reasonable way of training in conservation-restoration is full time education at university level or at an equivalent level, including practical internships'.¹⁰¹ The document also recommended that practical training should be based on case studies. In this way:

...students understand every object as a unique problem in the most practically-oriented way. [And that]: ...case studies also offer the best possibility to integrate all the theoretical, methodological and ethical

¹⁰⁰ 'The Conservator-Restorer: A Definition of the Profession', *ICOM – Code of Ethics*, International Council of Museums (ICOM), 1984. Available from: <http://icom-cc.icom.museum/About/DefinitionOfProfession/> [Accessed on 18th April 2006].

¹⁰¹ 'ECCO Professional Guidelines (III): Basic Requirements for Education in Conservation/Restoration, Point II. Type of Education', *The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO) Official Papers*, adopted by its General Assembly, Brussels, 1994 (p.16).

aspects of conservation-restoration into practical training.¹⁰²

The Guidelines also encourage the study and practice of historical techniques of art and the manufacturing processes of art materials as they promote greater understanding of the physical, historical and artistic aspects of cultural property. It is emphasised that a balance between science and the humanities is indispensable for theoretical instruction.

Related to ECCO's ongoing commitment to professionalisation, the *Document of Pavia – Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Towards a European Profile of the Conservator-Restorer*' (1997) represented an important development in the advancement of conservation education and training. It set out to urge the institutions of the European Union to demonstrate their commitment to the preservation of the cultural heritage by translating ECCO's recommendations into coordinated actions. The *Document of Pavia* refers to the cultural heritage, both moveable and immovable, as: '...a cornerstone of European cultural identity... which respects both national and regional diversities'.¹⁰³

Among the several considerations listed it argues that heritage is finite in nature and that it is necessary to ensure the highest level of conservation-restoration for cultural heritage; i.e. that which is capable of guaranteeing its integrity and prolonging its existence and that this high level of conservation-restoration depends on the professional status of the conservator-restorer being given urgent recognition at a European level. To this end, the Document recommends: '...the recognition and promotion of conservation-restoration as a discipline covering all categories of cultural property and taught at university level or recognised equivalent, with the possibility of a doctorate'.¹⁰⁴ With respect to this, it recommends that: '...the development of the profile of the conservator-restorer should be based on the ECCO

¹⁰² 'ECCO Professional Guidelines (III): Basic Requirements for Education in Conservation/Restoration, Point II: Practical Training', 1994 (p.16).

¹⁰³ 'Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Towards a European Profile of the Conservator-Restorer', *The Document of Pavia*, 1997. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabindex=1&tabid=188> [Accessed on 6th May 2006].

¹⁰⁴ *The Document of Pavia*, 1997. Full text available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/Pavia.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

professional guidelines (1993/1994)'.¹⁰⁵

Another important influence on developments in education and training in a European-wide context was the *Document of Vienna* (also known as the 'FULCO project' or the 'Vienna-FULCO meeting'). The FULCO project was developed in close association with the European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education (ENCoRE) and ECCO as well as Associazione Lanfranco Secco Suardo (known as the CON.BE.FOR project). It was initiated by the Netherlands Institute of Cultural Heritage, Amsterdam (ICN), and dealt with a proposition for professional standards for conservator-restorers in Europe. The origins of the FULCO project are to be found in the Amsterdam workshop 'Centres of Excellence'. The *Document of Pavia* was an important impetus.

In relation to this, the 'Vienna-FULCO meeting' was held between representatives of thirty European education institutions in Dresden in 1997. The outcome was the *Document of Vienna* (1998). The main influences on the *Document of Vienna* are stated in the following terms:

The participants of the Vienna meeting reconfirm and recognise the importance of the landmark documents produced so-far for conservation-restoration, such as the Charter of Venice (1964), the ICOM-CC Definition of the profession (1984), the ECCO Professional Guidelines (1993/4), the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Definition (1996), the ICOMOS Guidelines for education and training in the conservation of monuments, ensembles and sites (Colombo, 1993) and the Document of Pavia (1997).¹⁰⁶

What is worth noting here is that the influence of architectural conservation is prominent in these documents – in particular through reference to the *Venice Charter* (1964) and the ongoing influence of ICOMOS (which advises UNESCO on heritage issues). Indeed, in many respects, these developments (which are essentially reforms)

¹⁰⁵ *The Document of Pavia, Article 3*. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/Pavia.html> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

¹⁰⁶ *The Document of Vienna*, 1998. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/vienna.htm> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

are orchestrated at UNESCO-level. Strategic development in international heritage concerns is usually formalised through UNESCO and then filters through the respective membership countries and heritage organisations. Crucially, however, the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994)¹⁰⁷ which extended upon the *Venice Charter*, and which was published in association with UNESCO and ICOMOS (and ICCROM), has not been incorporated into these educational and professional reforms – something which Part II of this thesis aims to redress.

The *Document of Vienna* also states that:

...further developments at a European level of the definitions of the professional competences should be closely linked to the implementation of the following main and urgent recommendations, based on the document of Pavia:

1. the legal recognition of the profession of conservator-restorer at the European level (Pavia, 4th consideration); to be coordinated by ECCO (cited from the ENCoRE newsletter 3/1999).¹⁰⁸
2. the harmonisation of conservation-restoration education at university level or recognised equivalent (Pavia, Recommendations 1, 3 6); to be coordinated by ENCoRE and the CON.B.E.FOR project (cited from the ENCoRE newsletter 3/1999).¹⁰⁹

With this key statement, the discussion paper constitutes a contribution to and supports the goals and development of the conservation-restoration discipline as a legally-recognised profession throughout Europe. In recognising that the demarcation to other professions or professionals dealing with cultural heritage objects was hitherto lacking, the Vienna-FULCO meeting recognised that any discussion around

¹⁰⁷ *The Nara Document on Authenticity*, drafted at the Nara Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, Nara, Japan, 1994. Available from: http://www.international.icomos.org/naradoc_eng.htm [Accessed on 14th May 2004].

¹⁰⁸ Greece was the first European country to have legally recognised the conservation-restoration profession.

¹⁰⁹ *The Document of Vienna*, 1998. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/vienna.htm> [Accessed on 18th April 2004].

standards had to be based on the ECCO Professional Guidelines. This means that ECCO's wider aim is to ensure that the conservation profession is protected legally. In other words, those who are not professionally accredited will have no legal right to practice and that accreditation (and subsequent legal recognition) is not possible without a formal qualification – preferably achieved by university-based training.

This surely raises concerns. Should the use of legislation in order to protect the interests of conservator-restorers go ahead, it would, in effect, criminalise practitioners who are excluded from the profession, such as artists and craftspeople (who are excluded by definition but who may continue to play a vital role in conservation-restoration practice). In this connection, Paul Tear referred to the example of Michael Jammet:

Michael is in his fifties with over thirty years of practical experience working on the finest French objects. He is also a principle lecturer but because he lacks appropriate academic qualifications he may no longer be allowed to practice. This situation is the outcome of a top-down professionalisation strategy which is essentially Brussels-led.¹¹⁰

This reinforces the idea of control, suggesting a European-wide (and possibly Western) hegemony of heritage.

As a result of the Vienna-FULCO meeting a European network of institutions providing education and research in conservation of cultural heritage 'ENCoRE' was founded in 1998 in Copenhagen. The main objective of ENCoRE is to promote research and education in the field of cultural heritage conservation and restoration.¹¹¹ In the ENCoRE document: *Clarification of Conservation-Restoration Education and Training at University Level or Recognised Equivalent* (the *Clarification Document*) it is defined that conservation-restoration as an academic discipline must be based on the highest level of research. To that end, the

¹¹⁰ P. Tear, *Interview with the author*, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, United Kingdom, 4th April 2005.

¹¹¹ R. Larsen, *Clarification of Conservation/Restoration Education at University Level or Equivalent*, ENCoRE 3rd General Assembly, Munich, Germany, June 2001. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/encoredocs/cp.pdf> [Accessed on 15th January 2005].

Clarification Document states that the basis of conservation-restoration education consists of: ‘...an appropriate balance between integrated theoretical and practical teaching as defined in the *Document of Pavia*...’¹¹²

It goes on to argue that the technical-scientific evolution of conservation-restoration activities, and the complexity of duties and responsibilities that the conservator-restorer must face, demand a specific and high-level training:

The discipline of conservation-restoration is an empirical science, devoted to the prevention and treatment of the decay of objects of cultural heritage. It is characterised by being a mixture of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, and includes the ability to judge in a systematic way on ethical and aesthetic issues. It has its origins in arts and craftsmanship as well as in the humanistic, technical and natural sciences. Cognitive and systematic analysis, diagnosis and solution of problems as the basis for practical conservation and restoration skills are what differentiate the conservator-restorer from the artist and craftsman. These definitions form the basis of, and characterise education and research in the field of conservation-restoration.¹¹³

This shows clearly how the practice of conservation-restoration, once the domain of the artist / craftsperson, has become what is essentially *an applied science*. The field has been re-defined by a scientific / technical evolution, expressed by Larsen in the following terms: ‘The conservation-restoration discipline in Europe is currently undergoing a *paradigm shift*, developing from a craftsman-based approach and thinking to a scientific and research-based academic discipline’ [*my italics*].¹¹⁴ This might then, be interpreted as the contemporary realisation of the work of the early pioneers in archaeological practice discussed in Chapter 1.1: ‘Scientific restoration’.

¹¹² ‘The Background to ENCoRE’. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/AboutENCoRE.html> [Accessed on 7th February 2005].

¹¹³ R. Larsen, *Clarification of Conservation/Restoration Education at University Level or Equivalent*, ENCoRE, June 2001.

¹¹⁴ R. Larsen, Comments to FULCO – A Framework of Competence for Conservator-Restorers in Europe. *A Discussion Paper for the Vienna Meeting 30th November – 1 December 1998*. ENCoRE Newsletter, March 1999. Available from: <http://www.kulturnet.dk/homes/ks/encore/> [Accessed on 7th February 2005].

A primary objective of ENCoRE is to ensure that the conservator-restorer licensed for independent practice is *per se* a graduate at Master's level from a university or governmentally-recognised equivalent, or holds a PhD. It recommends that the overall length of study for entry into the profession or to continue to doctorate level should be five years. With respect to this, in the *Clarification Document*: '...the conservator / restorer is defined as a 'master'. This means a master in the science of conservation / restoration'.¹¹⁵

It was understood at the time of the Vienna-FULCO meeting that the demarcation to other professions or professionals dealing with cultural heritage objects was hitherto lacking and for that reason any discussion around standards had to be based on the earlier ECCO Professional Guidelines. For decades a major issue of the international community of conservator-restorers has been the recognition of the profession and its professionals. This is a major aim of ECCO and ENCoRE. Since its foundation, ECCO has been actively working to raise standards in the education of conservator-restorers, and has dedicated a working group to this project. A major project in this respect was the ECCO partnership in the European CON.B.E.FOR project, which reported in 2000.

One of the recommendations of the *Document of Pavia* (1997) underlines the importance of a comparative study by the profession of the different educational systems. The CON.B.E.FOR project was set in motion with the intention of providing an instrument of knowledge of education and training for conservator-restorers in Europe, which could be used by all institutions or individuals operating in the private sector. The focus was placed on both the scientific / technical and the political-institutional sectors. The CON.B.E.FOR project identified twenty subjects¹¹⁶ as being essential to the syllabus of a study program in conservation-restoration and in accordance with ECCO Professional Guidelines. These are listed below:

¹¹⁵ R. Larsen, *Clarification of Conservation/Restoration Education at University Level or Equivalent*, ENCoRE, June 2001.

¹¹⁶ *Conservator-Restorers of Cultural Heritage in Europe: Education Centres and Institutes. A Comparative Research*. CON.BE.FOR. Associaziones Giovanni Secco Suardo, Laruno (BG), Italy, 2000.

Chemistry
Physics
Biology
Earth sciences (geology, mineralogy, pedology)
History of art, archaeology, ethnology, history, palaeography
Philosophy, aesthetics
History of art technology
History of conservation-restoration
Exegesis of technical sources
Processes of degradation
Environment (climate, lighting, security, etc...)
Display, storage and handling
The science of conservation materials
Technical and scientific examination and documentation
Condition report evaluation and diagnosis
Methodology of conservation-restoration
Theoretical and ethical principles of conservation-restoration
Communication skills
Health and Safety regulations

This confirms the scientific basis upon which the modern practice of conservation is established. Supporting theoretical subjects should be carefully integrated into the curriculum and closely related to conservation-restoration practice which should constitute the major part of the syllabus.¹¹⁷ Master's graduates are expected to be specialised in one particular field of conservation-restoration of cultural heritage.

Among the other organisations associated with this general movement are: the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property, Rome (ICCROM), the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the ICOM Conservation Committee (ICOM-CC) and the International Institute for Conservation (IIC). Other networks concerned with the exchange of knowledge, research, and publications related to conservation-restoration are Conservation

¹¹⁷ R. Larsen, *Clarification of Conservation-Restoration Education at University Level or Recognised Equivalent*, ENCoRE, June 2001.

Information Network (CIN), Conservation onLine (COoL) and Art and Archaeology Technical Abstracts (AATA) – thus confirming the international contexts into which scientific conservation has grown.

The (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ (stated above by Larsen) is a key statement because it established why the focus for educational development has been placed on both the scientific-technical and the political-institutional sectors. Consequently, research is largely based around technological developments, expressed by Hackney in the following terms: ‘Universities are obvious bedfellows for conservation... their funding often comes from research grants and these are usually geared towards the development of new methods’.¹¹⁸ However, such technological developments are not solely used to preserve objects; they are also used to restore them (in the *adding to* sense). This is the basis of ‘non-like’ scientific restoration (described by this thesis) – the development of which can be seen as part of these wider movements in education and training (as an aspect of the ‘paradigm shift’) and should also be understood in relation to (for instance) the *Bologna Declaration on European Higher Education* which is central to standardisation¹¹⁹ - discussed next.

1.2.5: Standardisation

The *Bologna Declaration*¹²⁰ is a pledge by 29 countries within Europe to reform the structures of their higher education systems in a convergent way. Essentially, it sets out to establish an area of higher education by harmonising academic degree standards and quality assurance standards throughout Europe. One major aim is that by 2010 all conservation-restoration education in Europe will fulfil the *Bologna Declaration* (which is also known as the ‘Bologna Process’). Accordingly:

The basic framework adopted is of three levels of higher education

¹¹⁸ S. Hackney, ‘The Development of Conservation Science at the Tate Gallery’, in *The Interface between Science and Conservation*, British Museum Occasional Paper, No.116, British Museum, 1997 (p.11).

¹¹⁹ The ENCoRE *Clarification Document* (2001) for example, took into consideration the Bologna Declaration, 1999.

¹²⁰ *The Bologna Declaration on the European space for higher education: an explanation*, prepared by the Confederation of European Union Rectors’ Conferences and the Association of European Universities (CRE). Available from: <http://66.249.93.104/search?q=cache:Izb9AYBYZ-UJ:www.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna.pdf+bologna+declaration&hl=en&gl=uk&ct=clnk&cd=2> [Accessed on 8th May 2005].

qualification: bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees. These levels are similar to those used in the UK, Ireland (as well as the US) than that of most of continental Europe, where the model is often based on the magister or diploma.¹²¹

The Bologna Process involves six actions relating to:

1. a system of academic grades which are easy to read and compare, including the introduction of the diploma supplement (designed to improve international ‘transparency’ and facilitate academic and professional recognition of qualifications);
2. a system essentially based on two cycles: a first cycle geared to the employment market and lasting at least three years and a second cycle (Master) conditional upon completion of the first cycle;
3. a system of accumulation and transfer of credits (of the ECTS type already used successfully under Socrates-Erasmus);
4. mobility of students, teachers and researchers
5. the European dimension of higher educations.¹²²

Therefore, the aim of the Bologna Process is to make the higher education systems in Europe converge towards a more transparent system whereby the different national systems would use a common framework based on three cycles – Degree/Bachelor, Master and Doctorate.¹²³ By 2005 all signatory countries were to have adopted the two-cycle system and have made a start on introducing a quality assurance system.

At the March 2000 Lisbon Council, the Heads of State and Government, conscious

¹²¹ *The Bologna Process* proposed at the University of Bologna, 1999. Full text available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bologna_process [Accessed on 19th September 2005].

¹²² ‘The Bologna process: next stop Bergen 2005’, *Europa – Education and Training*. Available from: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna_en.html [Accessed on 28th January 2006].

¹²³ ‘The Bologna process: next stop Bergen 2005’.

of the upheaval caused by globalisation and the challenges inherent in a new, knowledge-based economy, set a new objective for the Union for the decade ahead, that of becoming: ‘...the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion’.¹²⁴ The Bologna Process thus moves in the direction of a coherent European system and implicitly invites European institutions to compete more resolutely than in the past for students, influence, prestige and money in the worldwide competition of universities.

In terms of quality assurance, ministers encouraged closer cooperation between recognition and quality assurance networks. To this extent, they encourage universities and other higher education institutions to disseminate examples of best practice and to design scenarios for mutual acceptance of evaluation and accreditation / certification mechanisms. Ministers also pointed out that quality is the basic underlying condition for trust, relevance, mobility, compatibility and attractiveness in the European Higher Education Area and expressed their appreciation of the contributions toward developing study programmes combining academic quality and relevance to lasting employability.

The *Sorbonne Declaration* (1998)¹²⁵ should be understood in relation to the considerations of the Bologna Process. It also:

...stressed the Universities’ central role in developing European cultural dimensions. It emphasised the creation of a European area of higher education as a key way to promote the citizens’ mobility and employability and the Continent’s overall development.¹²⁶

Influenced by these wider movements in European Higher Education, the *ECCO-ENCoRE Paper on Education and Access to the Conservation-Restoration*

¹²⁴ ‘The Bologna process: next stop Bergen 2005’.

¹²⁵ *Joint Declaration on Harmonisation of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System* (The Sorbonne Declaration), by the four Ministers in charge for France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, Paris, 25th May 1998. Available from: <http://www.bmbf.de/pub/sorbonne/declaration.pdf> [Accessed on 16th May 2005].

¹²⁶ *European Higher Education area: joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education*, Bologna, 1999. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/documents/bologna.htm> [Accessed on 7th February 2005].

*Profession*¹²⁷ was based on the *Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications*.¹²⁸ From this can be seen the influences of the earlier developments in education and training which gained pace throughout the 1990's – following ICOM's influential definition (1984) and its subsequent adoption by ECCO (1994). This Paper, therefore, represents the culmination of these achievements over the last quarter of a century and also, through the influence of the European Parliament and Council, becomes the acknowledged format for education and training for the professional field of conservation throughout the European Union.

It is worth noting here that in the domain of furniture and decorative arts (for example) the education and training system in Germany has an exceptional reputation amongst senior practitioners and institutions. The Victoria and Albert Museum and the Wallace Collection in the United Kingdom, for example, keenly take on and/or employ German students / practitioners. The German system is based on the diploma model and thus differs to the three-cycle degree/bachelors, masters and doctoral qualifications in the United Kingdom, Ireland and America, and supported by ECCO.

In general terms, because of the necessity of high levels of traditional art/craft expertise in this domain, Germany recognises that there are two important requirements *prior to* acceptance into the leading conservation institutes. The prospective conservator-restorer is expected to have completed a three-year full-time training in cabinet-making which develops (among other things) their wood-working competencies. Following this they are expected to work for two-three years with a leading restoration specialist who will primarily work for antiquity dealers but also undertake conservation work for institutions, such as museums, galleries and stately

¹²⁷ *ECCO – ENCoRE Paper on Education and Access to the Conservation Profession*, approved by the General Assembly of ECCO (Brussels 7th March 2003) and by the General Assembly of ENCoRE (Turin 9th May 2003). Available from: <http://72.14.203.104/search?q=cache:p15e81kbemIJ:www.encore.edu.org/encore/encoredocs/ECCO-ENCoRE.pdf+ecco+-+encore+Paper+%22access+to+the+conservation-restoration+profession%22&hl=en&gl=uk&ct=clnk&cd=1> [Accessed 15th March 2005].

¹²⁸ *Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications*, presented by the Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, March 2002. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/en/qualifications/com02-119_en.pdf [Accessed 15th March 2005].

homes. During this five-six year period the student will have cultivated high levels of art/craft skills and artistic understanding and become competent and proficient in a wide range of material applications in preparation for purely conservation training. The competition for places in Germany's leading institutions is fierce.¹²⁹ The successful applicant will spend another four years before being awarded his/her diploma and becoming a trained conservator-restorer. That's a total of nine-ten years full-time training to become qualified to diploma-level.¹³⁰

By contrast, in the United Kingdom there is no requirement for such an art/craft foundation prior to entrance at degree-level (the lowest tier of conservation training in the UK) – nor is it a requirement of ECCO (which has caused concern in Germany). Therefore, if the German system was to change to meet ECCO's 'three-cycle' requirements, this foundation would almost certainly diminish – as it arguably has done in the United Kingdom (causing great concern – as the following chapter will discuss). It seems that the educational sector believes that this (arguably vital) knowledge will take care of itself, suggesting a significant underestimation (or perhaps misunderstanding) of the nature of such knowledge.

In 2005 representatives from ECCO held a meeting with the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) to encourage members to: '...contact your national standardisation bodies to influence the work to be elaborated according to international guidelines for quality and ethics with conservation-restoration practice'.¹³¹ CEN is a legal association with the principle aim of achieving the European Standard (EN) in order to facilitate the exchange of goods and services through the elimination of technical barriers to trade. It is the European counterpart to the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). Members of the CEN (the Management Centre based in Brussels) each have National Standards Bodies (NSB's) which work in association with CEN to facilitate technical cooperation.

¹²⁹ This is one of the main reasons why there are so many German students on UK conservation-restoration courses – many have been unable to progress in the German system and have opted for an easier route. This signifies the openness of the UK system but on all accounts there is quite a difference in terms of the competence and proficiency of the 'qualified' student.

¹³⁰ Dr E. Mantz, *Interview with the author*, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, United Kingdom, 6th July 2005.

¹³¹ R. Larsen, *Report of the Chairman of the Board on 4th General Assembly*, ENCoRE, 2002. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabindex=1&tabid=201> [Accessed on 15th January 2005].

A European standard embodies the essential principles of global openness and transparency, consensus, technical coherence and national commitment. These are safeguarded through its development in a CEN Technical Committee (CEN/TC). The main objective of CEN/TC XXX is to draft standards which will help conservation professionals in their restoration and conservation work, ensuring at the same time the possibility for European experts to exchange information on test and analyses methods on cultural heritage. Therefore, this standardisation activity will permit to harmonise and unify methodologies for all the European area. Other heritage organisations associated with CEN are ICOMOS, ICOM, ICCROM and IIC – confirming the international contexts into which standardisation has grown, concomitant with the advancement of scientific conservation.

The Draft Resolution (BT C98/2002), the Draft Business Plan of CEN/TC ‘XXX’ – ‘Conservation of Cultural Property’ (annex to BT N 6732) outlines the various aspects of the standardisation process in the following terms:

Standardisation in the field of definitions and terminology, methods of testing and analysis, to support the characterisation of materials and deterioration processes of movable and immovable heritage, and the products and technologies used for the planning and execution of their conservation, restoration, repair and maintenance. A specific European standardisation activity in the field of conservation of Cultural Heritage is essential to acquire a common unified scientific approach to the problems relevant to the preservation / conservation of cultural heritage.¹³²

Among the five key areas listed for standardisation are:

1. Terminology relevant to the conservation of the artefacts and of the materials constituting the artefacts.

¹³² ‘Conservation of Cultural Property’, annex to BT N 6732, Technical Board, European Committee for Standardisation, December 2003. Available from: <http://www.encore-edu.org/encore/encoredocs/9732.pdf> [Accessed on 15th January 2005].

2. Guidelines for a methodological approach to the knowledge of the artefacts and of the materials constituting the artefacts and of the deterioration processes.
3. Test and analysis methods for the diagnosis and for the characterisation of the artefacts and of their state of conservation.
4. Test and analysis methods for the evaluation of the performance of the products and methodologies to be used in the conservation work.
5. Standardisation on transportation and packaging methods and in the permanent presentation conditions in various public institutions.¹³³

The document states under the heading ‘Market Situation’: ‘The development of standardised test and analysis methods will provide the cultural institutions, enterprises and laboratories with correct instruments for carrying out their work, improving, at the same time their proficiency / competences’.¹³⁴

In addition to this it states that:

The materials / products, the equipment and technologies used nowadays in the conservation and restoration of works, or which are used in diagnostics laboratories, are materials and equipment often produced by multinational industries with great experience... the programme of work of this CEN/TC, while defining the requirements and characteristics of the materials, of the equipment and technologies, can contribute to the improvement of the existing materials and equipment, and support the development of new ones for a more competitive European market.¹³⁵

What we can see from this then, is the movement within the international heritage

¹³³ ‘Conservation of Cultural Property’, annex to BT N 6732, 2003.

¹³⁴ ‘Conservation of Cultural Property’, Article 3.1, ‘Market Situation’, annex to BT N 6732, 2003.

¹³⁵ ‘Conservation of Cultural Property’, Article 3.1, ‘Market Situation’, annex to BT N 6732, 2003.

community towards research and development based around scientific studies which in turn are based around the research and development of new materials and products. This is the basis of standardisation. Although questions have been raised with respect to the implications of international standardisation,¹³⁶ the market orientation of research and development suggests that conservation, in its European-wide context, is moving (inexorably) towards *technological-determinism*. This movement correlates with the (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science (discussed above) and is supported by ECCO – the leading European organisation for moveable heritage. Accordingly:

The development of European standards for the conservation of Cultural Heritage, turning scientific research for its specific purposes into innovative technologies and products, will improve the development of advanced technologies and new materials.¹³⁷

However, as the preceding chapters have argued, these technologies are not solely used for preservation purposes but also find their place in the abstract (superficial / ‘non-like’) approach to restoration advocated by the conservation profession. This is central to the differentiation of scientific conservation from its origins in the traditional arts and crafts. The impact this ‘paradigm shift’ has had on practice in the United Kingdom is considered next.

¹³⁶ M. Cassar, ‘Education and training needs for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage: *Is it a case of one size fits all?* In *Cultural Heritage Research: a pan-European Challenge*, Cracow, 16th-18th May 2002. Available from:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sustainableheritage/learning/MCCracow.htm> [Accessed on 4th June 2004].

¹³⁷ ‘Conservation of Cultural Property’, Article 3.3, ‘Technical Factors’, annex to BT N 6732, 2003.

1.3. Professionalisation in the United Kingdom

This chapter looks at how international developments (discussed above) have influenced the advancement of the conservation profession in the United Kingdom. The main focus is on developments in the past decade – a period of extraordinary change which has raised concerns within the field relating, in part, to the organisation of the profession but also more practical issues concerning such things as professional accreditation, continuing professional development and education and training – especially in terms of standards of competence. This chapter reviews some of the issues that have emerged around the processes of professionalisation.

Chapter 1.3 consists of the following sub-sections: 1.3.1: ‘The conservation profession – problems with transition’; 1.3.2: ‘The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR)’; 1.3.3: ‘Continuing Professional Development (CPD)’; and 1.3.4: ‘Education and training’.

1.3.1: The conservation profession – problems with transition

The Association of British Picture Restorers, established in 1943, is the oldest conservation body in the United Kingdom. In 1958 the International Institute for Conservation (IIC) established its UK Group. By the end of the 1970’s the Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC) and the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC) were set up.¹³⁸ Various other organisations followed during the 1980’s. By the mid-1990’s there were some twelve separate professional organisations, as listed:

*Note: The first block of five listed here later converged to form the Vanguard Group. The remaining seven (below) did not converge.

United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC)

Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC)

Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration (SSCR)

Care of Collections Forum (CCF)

¹³⁸ C. Milner, ‘One for all and all for one: a new single voice for conservation’, *Journal of the National Preservation Office*, 2003. Available from: http://www.instituteofconservation.org.uk/archive/nccr/docs/oneforall_sep03.pdf [Accessed on 11th March 2005].

Photographic Materials Conservation Group (PhMCG)

Irish Professional Conservators' and Restorers' Association (IPCRA)

Institution for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works in Ireland (ICHAWI)

Society of Archivists (SoA)

British Horological Institute (BHI)

Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA)

British Antique Furniture Restorers' Association (BAFRA)

British Association of Painting Conservator-Restorers (BAPCR)

In 1994, coinciding with the publication of ECCO's Professional Guidelines (and interrelated European-wide developments in the field), it was recognised that all these organisations needed to be brought together in an endeavour to create a single unified voice for the profession. The Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC) was the first umbrella body – called the Conservation Forum. This was set up to bring together the diverse groups into one body in order to better represent the field of conservation in the United Kingdom. A central aim was to move towards a common framework for assessing and monitoring professional standards and for developing education and training.

As part of this process in 1999 the Conservation Forum was re-constituted as the National Council for Conservation-Restoration (NCCR) which incorporated the respective organisations and also took ownership of the Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR) scheme. However, this development was not unproblematic; the fragmentary nature of the conservation profession led to disagreements over a number of issues such as, professional accreditation (many felt that a new form of accreditation would not be tailored to suit their particular specialisations), continuing professional development (CPD) (as with accreditation, some felt that this was not contributing to their particular specialisations)¹³⁹ and education and training (particularly in terms of appropriateness, standards of

¹³⁹ A Convergence Consultation Document 'Questionnaire Feedback Report' was published in May 2005 by Bluespark Consulting. Available from: <http://www.bapcr.org.uk/Convergence%20Consultation%20Document.htm>. [Accessed 11th March 2005]. This highlights some of the concerns expressed by members of the respective specialist bodies regarding the convergence process.

competence and proficiency) – all discussed in this chapter.

A major criticism concerned the role of the traditional arts/crafts; BAFRA was one such group, as Barrington explained:

The convergence process has been driven along largely by people who have little knowledge of craft industries... PACR was devised by unpractical people and was at first a shambles and only brought into line through constant criticism by more practical groups within the profession...¹⁴⁰ [However, from BAFRA's perspective it was far from satisfactory]: We do not like the PACR system even in its 'slimmed-down' form because of its failure to identify fully with the hands-on craft issues of the profession and the artistic talent which is so essential to success.¹⁴¹ ...This is one of the reasons why BAFRA maintains its own assessment system and therefore CPD and why we have refused to converge.¹⁴²

Interestingly, Barrington also noted that:

A very recent report stemming from the last NCCR AGM [Annual General Meeting] is that the word restoration/restorer may be omitted from the new converged body's title. If this were to happen, it would, in our opinion [BAFRA's] be a disaster. The inclusion of the word restoration was a principle for which BAPCRA and BAFRA fought hard and successfully when the title of the then new NCCR was being formed some four years ago.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ M. Barrington, (headoffice@bafra.org.uk) 24th March 2005, *RE: Restoration Crafts and CPD*, e-mail to F. Hassard (fhassard@tiscali.co.uk). Michael Barrington goes on to praise the input of Dr Stan Lester who was responsible for designing the PACR.

¹⁴¹ M. Barrington, (headoffice@bafra.org.uk) 21st March 2005, *RE: Restoration Crafts and CPD*, e-mail to F. Hassard (fhassard@tiscali.co.uk). This is cited from an article (sent to me electronically) that first appeared in the BAPRA journal (no date provided in the electronic version).

¹⁴² M. Barrington, (headoffice@bafra.org.uk) 21st March 2005, *RE: Restoration Crafts and CPD*, e-mail to F. Hassard (fhassard@tiscali.co.uk).

¹⁴³ M. Barrington, (headoffice@bafra.org.uk) 21st March 2005, *RE: Restoration Crafts and CPD*, e-mail to F. Hassard (fhassard@tiscali.co.uk). The National Council for Conservation-Restoration was disbanded and the Institute of Conservation (ICON) was created in 2005.

It would appear then, that there has been a decisive move away from the idea of restoration (in the practical hands-on art/craft sense) within the conservation profession in recent years.

Alongside this were other issues relating to the ethics of practice such as, using ‘breaker’s’ (the use of old materials such as wood for restoration work, a commonly accepted practice in the area of furniture and decorative arts), ‘minimum-intervention’ and ‘reversibility’ and the role of other specialised forms of knowledge in the new profession. Some expressed the concern that the essentially art / craft-based practices, in particular, appeared to be singled out and criticised by ‘the conservation establishment’ on these fundamental issues:

Throughout the 1990’s BAFRA felt increasingly left behind in the context of the emerging conservation profession. Essentially, BAFRA seeks to maintain the highest level of art / craft skills; in this respect it stands alone. However, the art / craft aspect has tended to feel ‘bullied’ by academia. Consequently, other professional bodies have been faster at grasping the scientific / technical aspects of conservation.¹⁴⁴

For many, this represented a critical separation within the field. The move away from the idea of restoration was coterminous with the apparently dismissive attitude within the conservation profession towards the more art / craft aspects of the field. The view that the field became polarised into ‘traditionalist’ and ‘progressive’ perspectives was not uncommon, as Powell explained:

Some ‘non-progressive’ conservators can be critical of the more ‘up-to-date’ conservators for not being so practically skilled. In turn, more ‘up-to-date’ conservators have been known to criticise ‘non-progressive’ conservators for lacking appropriate knowledge of, and sensitivity towards, historic fabric. The term ‘restorer’ has at times been used in a belittling manner. This can perpetuate an ‘us-and-them’ kind of

¹⁴⁴ C. Hyde, *Interview with the author*, Rycotewood Furniture Centre, Oxford and Cherwell College, Oxford, 7th April 2005.

situation.¹⁴⁵

Bamforth expressed how this materialises in practice, as follows:

Contemporary practice [conservation] is scientific, technical and therefore ‘progressive’ in its approach to conservation / restoration problems. This sets the emerging discipline apart from traditional ideologies which are typically manifested in the use of traditional materials and techniques.¹⁴⁶

It is arguable that this apparent division within the field was also replicated between UKIC and BAFRA, as Luckhurst noted:

BAFRA withdrew from the UKIC because they were not charitable status. However, the articles that BAFRA members produced for the UKIC journal were criticised for not being ‘scientific enough’. There is today a degree of resentment between the UKIC and BAFRA.¹⁴⁷

What is interesting about this is the criticism of not being ‘scientific enough’ which tends to call to mind conservation’s European-wide ‘paradigm shift’ – i.e. ‘from a craftsman-based approach and thinking to a scientific and research-based academic discipline’.¹⁴⁸ However, due to the apparently dismissive attitude towards the arts and crafts-based aspects of the field, this is arguably analogous to a process of domination and marginalisation – and, therefore, a situation which might more correctly be referred to as a *paradigm break*. The UKIC became one of the five Vanguard Group members (discussed below). It could further be argued that the connotations associated with the term ‘Vanguard’ – which infers supremacy –

¹⁴⁵ C. Powell, *Interview with the author*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 12th April 2005 with interviewee’s amendments 12th August 2005. Christine Powell emphasised that she was speaking from a gilding conservator’s perspective.

¹⁴⁶ N. Bamforth, *Interview with the author*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 16th March 2005.

¹⁴⁷ B. Luckhurst, *Interview with the author*, Little Surrenden Workshops, 12th April 2005 with interviewee’s amendments 20th May 2005.

¹⁴⁸ R. Larsen, Comments to FULCO – A Framework of Competence for Conservator-Restorers in Europe. *A Discussion Paper for the Vienna Meeting 30th Nov – 1 Dec 1998*. ENCoRE Newsletter, March 1999. Available from: <http://www.kulturnet.dk/homes/ks/encore/> [Accessed on 7th February 2005].

reinforces the idea of hegemony (suggested earlier).¹⁴⁹

According to Higgins:

The way conservation has been taught has created disagreements and confusion, leading to a degree of polarisation within the field. The terms ['conserve' and 'restore'] are poorly understood – one is not more superior to the other. Indeed the ethical principles of conservation can be used as an excuse for poor craftsmanship.¹⁵⁰

This suggested 'polarisation' within the field tends to be reduced to a somewhat simplistic binary distinction in conservation literature between what it means to 'conserve' and to 'restore'. It has clearly influenced the perceived role of the historic arts/crafts. This thesis argues (in Part III) that this is linked (erroneously) to the C19th. arguments based on concerns about the wholesale reconstruction of medieval churches.

Other differences relating to the convergence process were connected to the kinds of services and conservation-restoration work expected in different contexts; such as between public and private sectors. Many of these views were expressed over an extended period throughout the 1990's by various organisations, educators and trainers and experienced practitioners. BAFRA, the BHI and BAPCRA, for instance, voiced strong views about the kinds of specialised knowledge / expertise that their areas necessitate.

Simon Padfield (for example) made the following comments:

There has been some concern within the field in recent years that a greater emphasis on knowledge-oriented aspects has tended to overlook the need to sustain and cultivate practical expertise. There is a noticeable lack of understanding of the nature of skills required in applied practice.

¹⁴⁹ Vanguard is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as: 'a group of people leading the way in new developments or ideas'.

¹⁵⁰ R. Higgins, *Interview with the author* (by telephone), 11th October 2005.

Consequently art / craft skills have tended to be undermined, particularly in recent years. This may be due in part to the skills required in different working contexts. For example, a passive approach may be considered appropriate in a museum context, whereas in the private sector more invasive measures may be necessitated by individual customer requirements; which are often not consistent with a 'museological ideal'. It is not acceptable to substitute practical expertise with academic knowledge.¹⁵¹

In spite of these complicated and apparently intractable difficulties, in 2002 five of the organisations (which made up some 75% of the overall NCCR membership)¹⁵² converged to form the NCCR Vanguard Group. The main objective was to gain a single voice for the profession and to move forward with standardisation. However, seven organisations did not converge (as listed above). Therefore, what set out to be a process of convergence actually became a form of segregation (perhaps the administrative conclusion of the 'paradigm break' suggested above?).

Following-on from the process of (so-called) convergence, the Institute of Conservation (ICON) was created in 2005 by the Vanguard Group by the merging of the following organisations:

...the Care of Collections Forum, the Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC), the Photographic Materials Conservation Group [PhMCG], the Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration (SSCR) and the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC).¹⁵³

The National Council for Conservation-Restoration (NCCR) was subsequently disbanded. The newly formed ICON claimed:

¹⁵¹ S. Padfield, (former chairman of BAPCRA), *Interview with the author* (by telephone), 8th March 2005.

¹⁵² This figure includes duplicated membership.

¹⁵³ The Institute of Conservation (ICON), Available from: http://www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=2 [Accessed on 15th March 2006].

...to advance knowledge and education in conservation and achieve the long term preservation and conservation of cultural heritage. It does this by providing guidance, advocacy, training and education opportunities and by uniting the conservation profession and the wider heritage community.¹⁵⁴

To this end, ICON follows the lead promoted by the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO) by adopting its Professional Guidelines, Codes of Practice and Ethics. As such, it maintains that:

Conservation-Restoration is distinct from related fields (e.g. art and crafts) in that its primary aim is the preservation of cultural heritage, as opposed to the creation of new objects or maintaining or repairing objects in a functional sense.¹⁵⁵

This tends to reinforce the idea of a 'paradigm break' – which appears to centre on 'use-value' (i.e. the functional qualities of objects) – and the general orientation of the field towards the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors. One can perhaps understand then, why the processes of professionalisation (and the paradigmatic 'movement' this appears to entail) has contributed to tensions within the field – particularly as it relates to the practice of restoration, but also in terms of just who should be included and/or excluded from it – issues which will be explored in greater detail in subsequent sections.

Typically, professional organisations, as well as providing guidelines for ethical practice and education and training, also support a process of accreditation. In many ways, the Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR) scheme represents the formalisation of this shift in emphasis in the United Kingdom, and forms the subject of the next section.

¹⁵⁴ The Institute of Conservation (ICON). Available from: http://www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=2 [Accessed on 15th March 2006].

¹⁵⁵ The Institute of Conservation (ICON). Available from: http://www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=121&Itemid=2 [Accessed on 8th May 2006].

1.3.2: The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR)

The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR) scheme was developed in association with the Vanguard Group and based on the ECCO Professional Guidelines – as stated in the opening pages of the PACR Candidate Pack (July 2003 version updated in 2005):

For the purpose of the scheme and to ensure consistency, the jointly agreed code against which the standards are set is the E.C.C.O. code, alongside any additional membership code used by your professional body...¹⁵⁶

PACR should then, be understood as part of the wider movement towards international standardisation, as clarified in the PACR ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’: ‘PACR aims to achieve direct correlation of accredited status across international boundaries, particularly within the European Union’.¹⁵⁷ Accordingly, the definition of restoration used for the PACR has been extrapolated from the ECCO Professional Guidelines, as revealed in the following terms:

Restoration consists of direct action carried out on damaged or deteriorated cultural property, the aim of which is to facilitate its understanding, while respecting as far as possible its aesthetic, historic and physical integrity...¹⁵⁸

This confirms the influence of ECCO on professional accreditation and how the practice of restoration will be assessed in relation to PACR.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ ‘PACR Candidate Pack’, National Council for Conservator-Restorers (NCCR), July 2003, updated in 2005. Available from: http://www.pacr.org.uk/docs/pacr_candidate_packv2005.pdf [Accessed on 9th May 2006].

¹⁵⁷ ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’, PACR 1, NCCR, April 2001. Available from: <http://www.ipc.org.uk/PACR1.doc> [Accessed on 15th January 2004].

¹⁵⁸ ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’, Appendix 4: The conservator-restorer’, PACR 1, NCCR, April 2001.

¹⁵⁹ This definition is based on Cesare Brandi’s *Theory of Restoration* which has been adopted by ECCO and today forms the basis of scientific conservation. This is examined in Chapter 1.4: ‘European restoration theory’ (next).

According to Lester:

The rationale for accreditation has generally been to provide a form of assurance to clients and the public as well as raising the profile and status of the profession against a backdrop of fragmentation and to some extent perception as a craft or technician occupation.¹⁶⁰

Accreditation therefore represents the separation of conservation from the conception of being a craft-based practice which (it can be argued) should be understood in the context of the international ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science discussed in the preceding sections. In other words, PACR represents the functional mechanism of the paradigm shift from craft to science in the United Kingdom – or perhaps more correctly, the ‘paradigm break’.

The three main subsidiary organisations associated with the formation of the PACR scheme were the Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC), the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC) and the Society of Archivists (SoA) as part of the then NCCR umbrella organisation. With additional support from the Museums and Galleries Commission and Historic Scotland, the PACR Scheme was introduced in 2000 following successful development and subsequent trial in 1998 and 1999.¹⁶¹

The PACR framework:

...seeks to make public an explicit standard – the ‘Accredited Conservator-Restorer’ (ACR) – applicable to all specialisms. The purpose in doing this is to increase awareness of conservation as a highly skilled and knowledgeable activity of similar standing to other recognised professions as well as providing assurance to the public and potential clients of the standard of professionalism of conservator-

¹⁶⁰ S. Lester, ‘The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers: developing a competence-based professional assessment system’, in *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 25 (4), 2000 (pp.407-409). Available from: <http://www.devmts.demon.co.uk/pacr.htm> [Accessed on 21st January 2003].

¹⁶¹ ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’, PACR 1, NCCR, April 2001. Available from: <http://www.ipc.org.uk/PACR1.doc> [Accessed on 15th January 2004].

restorers.¹⁶²

The accreditation process involves an assessment which is usually based on a one day visit which is undertaken by two existing accredited conservator-restorers (ACR's) – *ideally* one from the same specialism as the candidate and one who will normally be from a different specialism. The accreditation framework consists of:

...a process for accrediting professional capability against explicit standards which are owned by the profession (the assessment and accreditation process). [Together with]: ...a system for ensuring maintenance and enhancement of professional capability through ongoing learning and development (continuing professional development).¹⁶³

The essential requirement in order to apply for accreditation is to be working in conservation-restoration at a professional level and to be a member of one of the participating bodies; the Institute of Conservation (ICON), the Society of Archivists (SoA) and the British Horological Institute (BHI). Typically, conservator-restorers coming forward for accreditation will have one of the following:

- A conservation-restoration first degree followed by at least four to five years of relevant experience
- A related first degree or period of practical training, followed by a full- or part-time conservation-restoration master's degree or period of postgraduate diploma, plus four or five years relevant experience.
- A higher national diploma or equivalent, or significant studio-based training to an equivalent level, plus substantial further experience.

In short then, the prospective conservator-restorer will need current or recent practical experience of conservation-restoration treatments or preventive

¹⁶² 'Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme', 2001.

¹⁶³ 'Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme', 2001.

conservation, an in-depth knowledge of the principles underpinning conservation-restoration practice, as well as the depth and breadth of experience to make sound professional judgements in complex conservation-restoration contexts. The accreditation standards allow conservator-restorers to choose to demonstrate practical capability and proficiency in either conservation-restoration treatments (one area) or preventive conservation (another area), provided he/she can show *a working knowledge of the converse area*.¹⁶⁴

It is worth noting here that Higher National Diplomas (HND's) are almost entirely practice-based while degrees and masters are more academic and scientific in their orientation. Presently, there is no requirement for students to have successfully completed an HND *prior to* being accepted at degree or masters-level. In other words, students can enter at degree or even at masters-level with a chemistry qualification (for example), but without necessarily possessing competent (or even basic) hand-skills. The ability to do this confirms the academic orientation of conservation education and training. Notwithstanding, academic education alone does not develop the knowledge necessary in restoration. Furniture and the decorative arts are good examples of where even a single specialism, such as carving, or gilding can take many years of instruction and training. In other domains, such as paper conservation, the interventive work may be more 'forensic' in kind and not associated with as much in the way of traditional hands-on craft skills.

The distinction the accreditation documents make between 'conservation-restoration' (on the one hand) and 'preventive conservation' (on the other) – i.e. the 'converse areas', respectively – should perhaps therefore be understood in relation to the breadth of knowledge (i.e. epistemologically) required in diverse working domains – and indeed to some extent, working contexts. In furniture and decorative arts (for example), museums tend to advocate a more 'hands-off' approach to interventive practice while in private practice situations the opposite is often the case as customers frequently require their objects to function and not merely to have the appearance of being whole – in the superficial restoration sense.

¹⁶⁴ Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR) 'Candidate Pack', Institute of Conservation (ICON), July 2003 (updated 2005). Available from: http://www.pacr.org.uk/docs/pacr_candidate_packv2005.pdf [Accessed on 9th May 2006]

The range of knowledge may be understood as a spectrum relating to what is done in practice and embodied in the terms ‘conservation’ and ‘restoration’ which Lester describes in the following terms:

Conservation covers a spectrum of activities which include preventative conservation through controlling the environment in which cultural artefacts are stored and exhibited, intervention to arrest decay, strengthen the object and remove accretions, and restoration to return objects to usable or substantially original condition. Restoration and purely preventative work represent opposite ends of the spectrum, with to an extent different aims and ethics; typically they also draw on different mixes of scientific, artistic and craft skills.¹⁶⁵

Therefore, *all* of these divergent strands are necessary to the accomplished conservator-restorer. The example given by Beckford below illustrates the different kinds of knowledge often called into play in practice situations:

Consider a preservation task. An object consists of three wooden panels, each of which is in various states of preservation. Panel I is completely missing; panel II has burn damage but remains whole; and panel III has no burn damage or losses but is simply deteriorated with age. Panel I: requires complete replacement, i.e. new work, which necessitates the appropriate practical expertise. Panel II: charred components, which may be saved by stabilisation and consolidation then filled where necessary, and coloured and grained to match. The kind of expertise required is different. This is when restoration begins to overlap with conservation. Panel III: mostly requires cleaning, some consolidation and may be then waxed. This is conservation. Both aspects require knowledge of materials but there is obviously less need for the kind of knowledge / expertise

¹⁶⁵ S. Lester, ‘Professional bodies, CPD and informal learning: the case of conservation’, in *Continuing Professional Development* 3 (4), 1999 (pp. 110-121) Available from: <http://www.devmts.demon.co.uk/cpd.htm> [Accessed on 6th February 2006].

necessitated by panel I.¹⁶⁶

It is clear from this relatively uncomplicated example that the knowledge called into play in practice situations may be completely different and that this in turn may be explained as a spectrum between what it means to ‘conserve’ and to ‘restore’ (which can plainly be understood from an epistemological perspective). It could, therefore, be argued that if the field has moved away from the idea of restoration towards conservation then this would (at least theoretically) represent a *break* in this spectrum thereby adding to the sense of polarisation which has pervaded the field in recent times. This could also be a reason why there has been a decline in certain kinds of competences nominally associated with restoration; in this case, the art of carving. This would, by extension, contribute to a sense of ‘us-and-them’, centring on *knowledge* – which might, therefore, be understood as an epistemological issue, necessitating an epistemological resolution.

In order to provide some measure of assessment (of knowledge) the professional standards framework consists of functional criteria, which describe conservation work, and professional criteria, which concern working at a professional level. In other words, the functional criteria relate to what is actually physically done to the historical document while the professional criteria tend to relate to the behaviour of the professional. The standards framework has been informed by the work of the FULCO project and the occupational standards developed by the Cultural Heritage National Training Organisation (CHNTO).¹⁶⁷

The functional criteria were adapted from the occupational standards developed by the former Museum Training Institute (MTI 1996) which became the CHNTO in 1997 – thus confirming the influence of museum-based conservation on the formation of the criteria, listed below:

1. Evaluating conservation problems in context
2. Developing conservation strategies

¹⁶⁶ L. Beckford, *Interview with the author*, Beckford Artworks, 4th June 2005.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’, PACR 1, NCCR, April 2001. Available from: <http://www.ipc.org.uk/PACR1.doc> [Accessed on 15th January 2004].

3. Developing and implementing interventive treatment
4. Developing and implementing preventive procedures
5. Managing work, resources and projects
6. Contributing to the interests of the profession¹⁶⁸

From the above listed criteria it is apparent that five of the six points are *subsidiary to* interventive treatment (i.e. what is actually physically done). Only point three ‘Developing and implementing interventive treatment’ directly takes this into account. ‘Interventive treatment’ is the criterion that actually affects the historical document and therefore the most relevant from the point of view of the materials and techniques used in practice. The nature of ‘Interventive treatment’ is explained in the Professional Standards under Point 3: ‘developing and implementing conservation procedures’, in the following terms: ‘...test and develop conservation procedures [and] undertake interventive conservation or restoration’.¹⁶⁹

‘Interventive treatment’ therefore includes conservation *and* restoration work. However, the nature of conservation and restoration work, being on a spectrum as the example earlier illustrated, often varies significantly in practice situations and, therefore, also the kinds of competences required by the practitioner. Combining conservation and restoration in the Professional Standards in this way necessarily presumes that they are not highly distinct domains of expertise. It is, therefore, questionable as to whether this range of competence can be embodied to an appropriate ‘professional’ standard in a single practitioner. In furniture and decorative arts, for instance, the feeling that the practical art / craft competences are grossly underdeveloped at all levels of formal education and training (discussed later in this chapter) suggests that this is impractical (at best) or perhaps an impossibility (at worst).

This apparent anomaly can be seen to be replicated in the PACR ‘Candidate Pack’ wherein ‘conservation’ and ‘restoration’ are considered together (in Point 3) under the heading ‘Conservation-restoration treatments’. The converse area ‘Preventive measures’ is distinguished (in Point 4) even though in theory preventive measures

¹⁶⁸ ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’, 2001.

¹⁶⁹ ‘Introduction to the Professional Accreditation Scheme’, 2001.

are ‘closer’ to the idea of conservation. This would appear to be a peculiar distinction given that conservation and restoration are understood on a spectrum – that has an undefined extension (and as such an equally wide range of knowledge required in practice). Achieving the complete practitioner with professional standards of competence in conservation *and* restoration would require a remarkable education and training system. In view of this, one would have thought (if at all) that ‘conservation’ and ‘preventive’ measures should be considered commonly while ‘restoration’ made distinct – as an autonomous area with its own criteria for formal assessment.

So far as accepting a candidate for PACR there is further overlap between Point 3: ‘Conservation-restoration treatments’ and Point 4: ‘Preventive measures’, as follows:

3. Conservation-restoration treatments

Preventive conservators: if you meet the requirements of area 4 in full [below], you can demonstrate that you have a *working knowledge* of this area derived from your training or previous experience.

4. Preventive measures

Conservator-restorers who are putting forward practical treatments: if you meet the requirements of area 3 in full [above], you can demonstrate that you have a *working knowledge* of this area derived from your training or previous experience [*my italics*].¹⁷⁰

With respect to this overlap, the interpretation of what is meant by a term like ‘working knowledge’ is crucial. In this connection, the Dreyfus model of skills acquisition which classifies performance across a five-level scale from novice-to-expert has been incorporated into the PACR Candidate Pack precisely in order to ensure acceptably consistent interpretation into the different specialisms of conservation.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers PACR ‘Candidate Pack’, Institute of Conservation (ICON), July 2003 (updated 2005). Available from: http://www.pacr.org.uk/docs/pacr_candidate_packv2005.pdf [Accessed on 9th May 2006]

¹⁷¹ S.E. Dreyfus (1981) and H.L. Dreyfus (1984), ‘Novice to Expert Scale’, cited in Institute of Conservation, Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers PACR ‘Candidate Pack’, July

Dreyfus defines ‘working knowledge’ (under the heading: ‘Knowledge’) as ‘beginner’. Taking this definition into account, if we now consider the (so-called) spectrum between conservation and restoration in terms of knowledge and expertise required in practice situations, one can (at least theoretically) argue that a ‘beginner’ who attempts to carry out restoration (by virtue of its more invasive nature and its frequent need for high levels of hands-on expertise) is more likely to run into difficulty or cause harm to an object or carry out qualitatively inferior work, than a ‘beginner’ carrying out conservation-based treatments or even preventive measures on the same object (which by their very nature are *less* invasive).

According to the way it has been structured, the professional assessment documentation does not necessarily provide a reliable way of assessing specialised restoration expertise. As restoration is commonly associated with artists and craftspeople (especially in furniture and decorative arts) this could lead to the exclusion of certain kinds of practitioners based solely upon the criteria of the assessors on the day (who may not themselves be considered by the candidates to be ‘masters’ in their respective specialisms). This clearly weakens the possibility of achieving a reliable national standard in restoration competence.

A good example of this is the case of Laurence Beckford who has been described as ‘one of the finest carvers in the country’.¹⁷² Beckford is one of the last craftsmen to be trained by traditional apprenticeship in the United Kingdom; which he completed in 1977. Following this he has spent twenty-five years (plus) in the heritage sector working on some of the finest creative works such as, the restorations of the interiors at Windsor Castle (where he was ‘Signature Carver’) and the Grinling Gibbons’ lime-wood carvings at Hampton Court Palace. Although his portfolio is undoubtedly impressive, when he applied for accredited status through the PACR scheme he was rejected. Speaking from memory, he recalled how:

...after completing the application forms I received a rejection letter.

2003 (updated 2005). Available from:

http://www.pacr.org.uk/docs/pacr_candidate_packv2005.pdf [Accessed on 9th May 2006]

¹⁷² M. Barrington (ACR), Chief Executive of BAFRA – personal communication with the author, March 2005.

This explained that I had no proven ‘conservation’ training. I was ‘weak’ on attending conservation seminars, conferences and training courses. I did not possess enough scientific / technical knowledge of materials. I was not appropriately familiar with record-keeping and producing analytical reports; those kinds of things. In short, I felt that I was not seen to be educated.

I have contributed a lot over the years to the heritage sector – in terms of the work I have done and in educating and training others, including conservators. However, the conservation profession I feel has let me down. Today I prefer to do new work simply because it is less complicated and I am not feeling unduly burdened by the implementation of conservation’s ethical strictures which is often done by people who do not understand the nature of my work. Although I have tried to be open-minded about new developments in the field, I no longer consider myself a conservator – this is especially so in the past five years.

I have devoted a significant portion of my life to preserving our heritage and passing on my knowledge and experience to others. I am today left with the impression that conservators want to manage. From my perspective they seek to apprehend the judgements that I would normally make myself. They appear to have manipulated the industry to suit *their* requirements; *their* understanding. However, although conservators possess *knowledge* of objects they often do not possess *deep understanding*. They often lack appreciation of the materials, skills and expertise required in the creative process. How *can* they understand carving if they are not trained carvers?¹⁷³

It is perhaps worth mentioning here that *all* of Beckford’s restoration (in the *adding to* sense of the meaning) of the Grinling Gibbons’ carvings at Hampton Court Palace were executed in a ‘like-with-like’ way; he did not use casting techniques and modern synthetics or any other form of wood-substitute to replace the losses. This, of

¹⁷³ L. Beckford, *Interview with the author*, Beckford Artworks, 4th June 2005.

course, is only one example but it is a *very* important one which, it could be argued, symbolises so much of the debate regarding knowledge in the field in recent times and just who is included and excluded from ‘professional’ practice.

On the subject of knowledge, Beckford observes:

The college training system, which superseded the traditional apprenticeship, does play a significant part in training but there is a great deal that it does not achieve. Today we are in danger of losing sight of certain sensibilities associated with certain kinds of customary knowledge. For example, old tools are much better than new ones. This is because in the past they were designed (and often made) by the end-users, i.e. craftspeople [as, indeed, Beckford continues to do]. Mass-produced tools are designed in such a way that they reflect more the limitations of the production process and market demand rather than the specific requirements of the task in hand. One can look at a carving tool and know that it is unsuited for the job. Generally speaking, training colleges are unable to cultivate this kind of understanding because it is impractical. It is inevitably reflected in the quality of the work. These tools therefore represent the historical evolution of wood-carving.¹⁷⁴

Beckford clearly has *far more* than a ‘working knowledge’ of conservation-restoration. Can a profession (and indeed an entire heritage sector) that has a shortage of such knowledge afford to lose the likes of Beckford?¹⁷⁵

According to the way the PACR has been structured it is far more difficult (if not practically impossible) to become an Accredited Conservator-Restorer (ACR) without a university-based training (or nationally recognised equivalent) but it *is* possible to become an ACR without formal training in a particular craft specialism such as, cabinet-making or carving or gilding and so on. One should hardly be

¹⁷⁴ L. Beckford, *Interview with the author*, Beckford Artworks, 4th June 2005.

¹⁷⁵ There are Grinling Gibbons’ carvings presently being restored at Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, High Wycombe (by a lecturer who has a PhD in conservation). He is using modern synthetic resin to replace the missing sections. These are pigmented and carved to shape (with wood-carving chisels) to *appear* as wood. The lecturer is not a trained carver. The answer to the question posed in the main text is (I suggest), emphatically no.

surprised then, that many apprenticed craft practitioners (many of whom undertake work for public institutions, such as museums and other heritage organisations) are critical of how the conservation profession has developed over the past ten to fifteen years – especially with regard to education and training (i.e. the stock of knowledge).

In order to overcome this, and to incorporate the more art/craft disciplines, the PACR scheme would need to formulate a dedicated assessment framework for artists and craftspeople – probably under specialist categories. In furniture and decorative arts, for example, this might be specialist ‘carvers’, ‘gilders’, ‘cabinet-makers’, ‘upholsterers’ and so on. However, what is important to acknowledge here is that the kind of knowledge relating to these disciplines is not only vital to the heritage sector it is in *very short supply* – and decreasing year-on-year, as Hyde explains:

Today there is a skills shortage in the conservation field. Cabinet-making courses that also develop restoration skills are needed. Historic art / craft skills and related working practices are in danger of dying out; perhaps with only ten to twelve years remaining. Economic rationalisation and applied technology has historically been a major factor in the decline of crafts in the UK.¹⁷⁶

It thus seems peculiar that a new profession could potentially perpetuate its demise by not providing a reliable and autonomous way of assessing such knowledge. In this connection, Lester made the following comments:

There isn’t necessarily a problem in developing a system of professional recognition that embraces both the craft tradition and the academic / scientific one, provided that the relevant community/ies want it. As I see it, the things that would be necessary for that to happen are:

- Agreement about the level at which it is pitched (in the sense of level of understanding and capability): if the consensus is (to give a parallel) chartered engineer level, then the same level (not the same

¹⁷⁶ C. Hyde, *Interview with the author*, Rycotewood Furniture Centre, Oxford and Cherwell College, Oxford, 7th April 2005.

training route or same set of knowledge or skills) needs to apply to all.

- Acceptance that there are different philosophies of conservation / restoration and that these are culturally located and, more pragmatically, will be appropriate in different contexts.
- Acceptance of different roles within the overall conservation profession including restorer and preventive conservator.¹⁷⁷

This would also ensure that in terms of quality assurance (which is a fundamental requirement of any professional field) that the assessors were qualified in the practice for which they are assessing; presently there is no requirement for this (Beckford, for example, was assessed by a paper conservator and a cabinet-maker – neither of whom were master carvers). In other words, only trained carvers are qualified, for example, to properly assess the quality of carved restoration work and take account of capability (i.e. the quality of the execution) *and* proficiency (i.e. the efficiency with which it is done).¹⁷⁸ Surely this degree of specialised assessment is imperative at the highest level of restoration work such as for example, that which is undertaken in museums and galleries?

All this said, it does need acknowledging that the PACR scheme has not been functioning for long enough in order to ascertain (with any confidence) its reliability and make useful judgements about how the field is developing. But it is, nonetheless, worth noting that PACR presently enjoys the benefit of selecting from an existing stock of knowledge – largely from people that have either undertaken a traditional craft-based training, such as a traditional apprenticeship, or formally trained on the practice-based courses in the 1980's and 1990's (*prior to* the introduction of conservation education) and/or practical working experience. In the early stages,

¹⁷⁷ S. Lester, (s.lester@devmts.demon.co.uk) 9th May 2005, RE: *Conservation – development of the profession*, e-mail to F. Hassard (fhassard@tiscali.co.uk).

¹⁷⁸ Potentially anyone can carry out practical restoration tasks such as, compensating for a lost carved element, if they spend enough time working at it. The real test of quality cannot therefore be deduced solely from the completed work but must also take into account the proficiency with which it was achieved, the tools used, and the materials selected. Indeed, it could be argued, that the same should apply to *all* aspects of restoration work.

some such practitioners were ‘fast-tracked’ to accredited status to become Accredited Conservator-Restorers (ACR’s).

Notwithstanding, the success of PACR will ultimately depend on a reliable education and training system. Therefore, the real test for PACR will be when selections have to be made from the present and subsequent generations which are no longer expected to have a formal craft-based foundation *to* their training. In furniture and decorative arts (for example), given the uncertain role of art/craft knowledge (and associated practitioners) in the context of the conservation profession, the outlook in this respect does not look good.

Another important aspect of the professionalisation process is the establishment of appropriate mechanisms to ensure the stock of knowledge within the field is enhanced and disseminated. This is formally known as Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and is discussed in the next section.

1.3.3: Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

In the United Kingdom, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was developed in association with the Joint Accreditation Group (JAG) of The Conservation Forum (which was reconstituted to form the National Council for Conservation-Restoration, which eventually became ICON – in terms of the leading professional organisation in the UK), with funding from the three constituent bodies of JAG, the Museums and Galleries Commission, and Historic Scotland.¹⁷⁹

Continuing (or continuous) professional development has been described as “the maintenance and enhancement of the knowledge, expertise and competence of professionals throughout their careers according to a plan formulated with regard to the need of the professional, the employer, the profession and society.”¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ S. Lester, ‘Professional bodies, CPD and informal learning: the case of conservation’, in *Continuing Professional Development* 3 (4), 1999 (pp.110-121). Available from: <http://www.devmts.demon.co.uk/cpd.htm> [Accessed on 6th February 2006].

¹⁸⁰ C.A. Madden and V. A. Mitchell, ‘Professions, standards and competence: a survey of continuing education for the professions’ (1993), cited in S. Lester, ‘Professional bodies, CPD and informal learning: the case of conservation’, 1999.

By the early 1990s:

...Gear, McIntosh and Squires could comment that “the inadequacy of initial professional education as a preparation for one’s entire working life is now well recognised by professional bodies. It is not just that *knowledge dates*, but that the very conception and interpretation of professional tasks and roles change over time.” [*my italics*].¹⁸¹

The requirements of CPD in the conservation profession are based on three key areas: ‘specific learning’, ‘general learning’ and ‘developmental learning’ as stated in the Continuing Professional Development literature in the following terms:

Specific learning concerns particular cases or problems, typically ‘finding out as you go along:’ reading up regarding specific objects or problems, asking colleagues about treatments, checking sources of supply, and so on. This kind of learning is important for day-to-day practice but often becomes out of date quickly.

General learning concerns keeping up-to-date and abreast of trends and developments in the profession and affecting it. This kind of learning might involve reading journals and email discussions, networking and discussion with colleagues, and attending courses and conferences.

Developmental learning is learning which takes forward your practice, creates new opportunities and develops extended professionalism. It may involve undertaking a major study, advanced course or programme of research, be generated through a new job or major project, or stem from becoming involved in activities outside your normal work. Although it is useful to plan developmental activities, the value of developmental learning is often only apparent on reflection.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ J. Gear and A. McIntosh and G. Squires, ‘Informal Learning in the Professions’ (1994), cited in S. Lester, ‘Professional bodies, CPD and informal learning: the case of conservation’, 1999.

¹⁸² ‘Continuing Professional Development: Principles’, Professionalisation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR), National Council for Conservation-Restoration (NCCR), 2005. Available from: <http://www.ipc.org.uk> [Accessed on 15th January 2004].

The CPD document is then, geared towards the development of the person as part of the profession and the way in which the broader profession is moving – such as, technical developments. It involves such activities as discussion about new techniques and material applications and engaging in dialogue with fellow conservation professionals – for instance, by attending conferences and seminars. However, these tend to be based around advances in museological conservation – often relating to preservation issues concerning large collections. According to Mantz:

The new knowledge that is developed in museums mostly relates to material studies through observation and analysis. Knowledge of deterioration is also combined with experimentation and testing of new material applications. This is based around scientific / technical studies and forms much of the subject of conferences and symposia today. There is very little discussion around the techniques of application and the more theoretical implications of the use of new materials.¹⁸³

The idea of knowledge dating as a basis of CPD is thus clearly linked to experimentation and testing of new material applications based around scientific / technical studies.

It is, therefore, worth clarifying here that in scientific, research-based conservation the primary concern is preserving tangible heritage *for as long as possible* (i.e. retarding its deterioration). This might be called its *primary intention*. This conception of heritage can, therefore, be understood as having no ‘frontier’ – i.e. it extends to infinity. In order to understand this, one needs to understand that science is a problem-solution activity. As such, without an identified problem (i.e. the objective or intention) science has only a speculative purpose. In scientific conservation the problem is slowing down the rate of deterioration; if it could be halted completely this would be *ideal*. Conversely, this would mean that the ‘institution’ of science would have no problem (until, of course, another problem was identified).

¹⁸³ Dr. E. Mantz, *Interview with the author*, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, 6th July 2005.

However, clearly, to arrest deterioration completely is not possible to achieve in reality because tangible heritage is in a state of continual flux due to natural entropic processes – regardless of where it is situated. Obviously the extent of change varies from one context to another. Museums, for example, go to great lengths to ‘prevent’ deterioration. But the impossibility of achieving this does not matter; what matters is the intention (i.e. the problem) and the attempts that are made to solve it (i.e. the *idea* of a solution). Hence, the problem of deterioration (consequently) leads to an ‘infinite number of tasks’ that aim for this ideal.¹⁸⁴ Such scientific activity, therefore, has a tendency to present itself as the solution to the problems *it* has created. This effort materialises in research and technological development. It has become a fundamental requirement of professionalisation in the form of CPD.

However, outside of the museum environment the *intentions* (and the ‘problems’) are frequently quite different. Therefore, much of the information acquired as part of CPD may not necessarily be of any real practical benefit (and therefore of any real interest) to an artist or craftsman or ‘conservator’ working in private practice. In addition to this, the intellectual environment that such activities encourage (above all from the ‘authorised’ archaeo-museological perspective) can contribute to isolating certain kinds of practitioners from important conservation issues. Bearing in mind the comments above regarding ‘academic bullying’, this could especially be the case with respect to the more practical craft-oriented practitioners.¹⁸⁵

Also, it may be difficult for experienced artists or craftspeople (who regularly undertake conservation and restoration work) to rationalise the nature of their work – why they value a particular material or technique (for example). By being an artist or craftsman, the way they understand their work and their subsequent actions may be *subliminal* and, therefore, not easy to explain in such a way that fulfils the requirements of the profession. This may be understood as ‘tacit knowledge’; the

¹⁸⁴ The idea of an infinite number of tasks as the basis of scientific ‘intentionality’ is taken from E. Husserl, ‘Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man’, lecture delivered, Vienna, 10th May 1935 (often referred to as: ‘The Vienna Lecture’) in Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, translated with Notes and an Introduction by Quentin Lauer, Harper Torchbooks, 1965.

¹⁸⁵ This is indeed one of the reasons why Laurence Beckford did not pursue CPD and hence failed to attain accredited status through PACR.

Beckford quotation in the previous section regarding old tools is an example.

CPD, by resisting the dating of knowledge, appears to create an epistemological tension in the sense that certain forms of knowledge (and related practices) may be valued *because* they are historical (and therefore ‘dated’) – as would be the case, for instance, in a tradition of practice. Wood-carving, cabinet-making, wood-turning, marquetry, gilding, surface finishing and so on, are long-standing traditions of practice in the United Kingdom.¹⁸⁶ Their continued existence is determined by the particular use of particular materials (and technologies).¹⁸⁷ As such, they may be understood as an inherited way of life (that has certain traits or characteristics) which may be valued intrinsically – i.e. on its own terms. After all, this is the *heritage* sector; surely it should come as no surprise that people value certain forms of knowing and practice as part of understanding and experiencing this inheritance?

Furthermore, the idea of disseminating one’s knowledge, for example, at conferences and seminars or in research journals (as an aspect of CPD), may not be in the interests of practitioners who sustain highly specialised forms of knowledge which may have been developed and sustained over many years of practice – even centuries (as, for example, is the case with Luckhurst and Beckford). Nor may it be (understandably) in the self-employed practitioner’s interests to pass-on what he/she has learnt through inheritance and experience without, for instance, appropriate intellectual property rights. What safeguards do such practitioners have? Transfer of knowledge (albeit essentially limited to textual form) is something that is (arguably) much better suited to practitioners working in institutions, such as museums and universities, especially when they receive a salaried income. *Their* intellectual property rights would normally be protected by the institution on publication – which may be an important part of developing their professional profile, but which does not necessarily mean that they are a more competent practitioner (in fact, quite the opposite may be the case).

¹⁸⁶ Bruce Luckhurst, for example, is fifth generation cabinet-maker who teaches conservation-restoration (including to ‘qualified’ conservators and university lecturers in conservation) but does not feel part of the conservation profession; see B. Luckhurst, *Interview with the author*, Little Surrenden Workshops, 12th April 2005 with interviewee’s amendments 20th May 2005.

¹⁸⁷ Not unlike Yoshihiko Yamashita’s restoration of the Mazarin Chest at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London mentioned in the previous chapter.

But it is the whole basis of CPD which is of particular interest to this thesis because it is first and foremost based on the requirements of the scientific / technical and political-institutional sectors. It is because of this that related activities are largely concerned with technical research and innovation and new material applications which is necessarily *in opposition to* traditional knowledge; raising fundamental questions regarding the epistemological basis of the field which (in turn) impacts upon our understanding of such concepts as authenticity (which will be discussed in Part II).

CPD should be understood in relation to PACR and (by extension) the international moves towards standardisation through which scientific conservation ‘separates’ from the traditional arts and crafts (and therefore also as a key aspect of the so-called ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science). In this sense, *both* PACR and CPD can be understood as a form of centralisation; their epicentre is the museum.

In order for any professional accreditation scheme to be credible over the long-term it will need to be buttressed by a reliable education and training system – discussed in the next section.

1.3.4: Education and training

The Hale Report on *Museum Professional Training and Career Structure* (1987) turned the spotlight on museum training for the first time. In spite of Hale’s limitations (it barely touched on the development needs of museum attendants for example) it provided a framework for many subsequent developments. This included the establishment of the Museum Training Institute (MTI) in 1989, which in 1997 became the Cultural Heritage National Training Organisation (CHNTO), and the network of training officers based in Area Museum Councils. CHNTO is one of a national network of over 70 NTOs and is recognised by the United Kingdom government as the strategic voice of employers and a focal point for information on education and training for the cultural heritage sector, which includes organisations such as museums, galleries and other heritage bodies.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ A. Murch, *People Development in Museums and Galleries*, 2000. Available from: http://www.hlf.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/81B1E074-A75D-4D3F-387951F72D17/0/needs_people.pdf [Accessed on 15th March 2006].

The *Developing People in Museums – Towards a Strategy* report (DPM, 1995) advocated the need for a collaborative approach to tackling the sector’s training needs. In 1997 the MTI became a national training organisation and subsequently set up a national assessment service for its qualifications and validation procedures for pre-entry museum and heritage training programmes and a review of training and development needs in museums.¹⁸⁹ This also incorporated conservation training which Pye explains in the following terms:

The analysis of conservation undertaken in order to prepare the occupational standards for the Museum Training Institute (MTI) in the UK involved deconstructing the activities, and the decision-making and planning processes, involved in conservation. ...a team of conservators had to analyse exactly what constitutes conservation practice. ...At the end of the process arrangement was reached on what was, in effect, a definition of the occupation or profession in the form of a description of the activities common to a wide range of conservators in the UK. Using these standards, further analysis was undertaken by Foley in 1998, in an attempt to arrive at professional standards which could be agreed to define the work of a conservator across the whole of Europe.¹⁹⁰

The PACR scheme (discussed above) evolved from these discussions – which confirm the link between PACR and European-wide standardisation. Accordingly, the modern practice of professional conservation sets out to combine knowledge with skills: ‘...the design and development of modern training draws on educational

¹⁸⁹ A. Murch, *People Development in Museums and Galleries*, 2000.

¹⁹⁰ K. Foley and S. Scholten, ‘FULCO – a Framework of Competence for Conservator-Restorers in Europe’ (1998) and K. Foley, ‘Conservation Future Challenges’ (1999), cited in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.175). See also, K. Foley, *Education and Training in Conservation: A Report for the Conservation Unit of the Museums and Galleries Commission*, Museum and Galleries Commission, London, 1989; K. Foley, ‘Education and Training for Practice’, in *Archaeological Conservation, Training and Employment*, papers presented at a meeting organised by the Archaeological Section of the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation (UKIC), 1991 (pp.27-28); and K. Foley, ‘FULCO, a framework for competence for professional conservation-restoration practice: the project discussed’, in *ICOM Committee for Conservation Preprints of the 12th Triennial Meeting Lyon 29th Aug – 3rd Sept, 1999*, James and James, 1999 (pp.139-146).

thought and offers an opportunity for improvement of conservation as a whole'.¹⁹¹ These considerations were undertaken in the context of wider concerns relating to whether the practice of conservation should be a profession at all.

Pye expresses this and also considers how this relates to the kinds of knowledge that may be developed in relation to the process of professionalisation in the following terms:

Discussion of conservation training during the last years of the twentieth century was influenced by the debate about whether conservation was, or should be, a profession. If education is defined as providing knowledge and understanding (sometimes expressed as 'knowing that') [i.e. knowledge of what], an educated person will know about relevant facts, concepts, principles and procedures and will be capable of using this knowledge to analyse, solve problems and reach decisions. If training, by comparison, is seen to provide practical knowledge and practical skills (sometimes expressed as 'knowing how') [i.e. knowledge of how], a trained person will know how to do things, how things work and what happens when something is done. It is immediately apparent that the old craft restorer was usually trained but may not have had much education, whereas the modern conservator needs both education and training [my comments].¹⁹²

This is interesting in that Pye is referring here to an epistemological tension between different ways of knowing which are separated into two domains, representing what can be described as a kind of *epistemological fission*.¹⁹³ This is an important point because one who is trained in scientific / technical studies will arguably tend to focus much more intricately on the *materiality* of heritage (i.e. the tangible aspects). In contrast to this, one who has a practical artistic / craft training is (arguably) more likely to understand their knowledge (i.e. knowledge of how) as part of a history of

¹⁹¹ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.169).

¹⁹² E. Pye, 2001 (p.172).

¹⁹³ This idea of *epistemological fission* replicates a dualism in Western thought which will be considered further in later chapters and forms an important part of the final conclusion to this thesis.

practice (based on knowledge *as well as* materials) which they have trained into. The continuity of such practice might be an important consideration in such cases when making-traditions are understood to ‘merge’ into conservation-restoration practices – as, for instance, is the case with furniture and the decorative arts (and many other heritage domains).¹⁹⁴ A movement from one epistemological ‘domain’ to the other would necessarily change the ‘datum’ upon which judgements can in practice be made.

In this sense, in a given conservation / restoration requirement the traditional craft practitioner would tend to side with the original maker – in terms of the materials and techniques used and the ‘spirit’ in which the object was created. Michael Huntley expressed his views on this in the following terms:

...as a general guide, any deviation from this [stated above] is a compromise – a kind of negotiation with one’s conscience. [He also added]: ...the nature of the object in the fullest sense is always the datum for action. That is what the tools have been designed for. A full understanding of the creative processes and the nature of the materials, tools and techniques, is essential in this realisation. This *cannot* be achieved without the necessary skills.¹⁹⁵

Although Huntley acknowledged that there were certain situations when a ‘non-like’ restoration may be necessary, he explained that: ‘Like-with-like’ materials are important to retaining the object’s integrity. [As such]: There is something disconcerting about using modern materials on old objects; it is preferable if it can be avoided’.¹⁹⁶

The original maker is thus the primary ‘consultation’ in terms of judgement. However, the ability to ‘stand in the shoes of the maker’ strictly speaking can only be

¹⁹⁴ For example, many stone masons that I have spoken with recognise and value the fact that their knowledge is a continuum of c.1000 years of the stone masonry tradition in Europe. Much the same may be said of many traditional arts/crafts practices.

¹⁹⁵ M. Huntley, *Interview with the author*, Wiltshire, 16th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 28th June 2005.

¹⁹⁶ M. Huntley, *Interview with the author*, Wiltshire, 16th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 28th June 2005.

achieved by employing ‘like-with-like’ means. Although this does not arbitrarily rule out alternative means, it clearly cannot be achieved by not doing so. This ability to ‘connect’, which Huntley refers to as a ‘negotiation with one’s conscience’, is played out on a *subliminal level* (which may be highly aesthetic in character). His use of the term ‘disconcerting’ (regarding the use of modern materials / techniques on old objects) – which infers something that is not easily explicable – reinforces this. It can be argued then, that this understanding (which is linked to ‘knowledge of how’) has what can be described as an *ontological bias* (and is, therefore, not solely epistemological in the purely scientific ‘knowledge of what’ sense).

One can also identify an epistemic tension in history in this regard. On the one hand, there is an emphasis on the scientific study of material heritage – which has its origins in archaeology (which later became the basis of museology). And on the other, there is a history of knowledge in the form of *practice* – ostensibly relating to the traditional arts and crafts. In simple terms, the former is essentially concerned with a dead, inanimate record of history (i.e. relating to the tangible creations of the past), while the latter is living because it is embodied in people. This epistemic tension in history is arguably related to the ‘paradigm shift’ from craft (i.e. history of practice) to science (i.e. history of materials) – placing museology and, by extension, the professional practice of conservation, at its centre.

The tension suggested here is often revealed in the way in which technologies (including materials) are used in restoration. In general terms, practitioners who have undertaken a formal craft training (and who have a preference for ‘like-with-like’ restoration) may be commonly referred to as ‘craftsman-restorers’ within conservation circles. Or perhaps (somewhat belligerently) ‘trade-restorers’ which tends not to reflect the fact that such practitioners also undertake work for public sector institutions – including museums, galleries and universities. Their training allows them to judge whether or not to use ‘non-like’ materials and techniques. In contrast to this, practitioners who have not undertaken a formal craft training, but have extensive technical knowledge, will (perhaps inevitably) tend towards ‘non-like’ restoration because it is known to be better for the survival of the material; their *primary intention*. This is particularly the case in museums and galleries (as reflected in CPD activities discussed in the previous section).

According to Hackney, with respect to conservation-restoration at the Tate Gallery:

...the importance lies in making things last for longer... There are no boundaries between traditional or modern materials when it comes to their use. ...With frames we are trying to return them to their original function whilst replicating any parts necessary as they might have looked when they were manufactured'.¹⁹⁷ [Note the emphasis on visual appearance not substance and process].

However, as a general maxim, it can be argued that *it is not possible to make reliable judgements in restoration practice without first being trained in the practice of restoration*. In other words without a thorough craft-based foundation conservation ethics arguably cannot serve their purpose.

In connection with this, education and training which is based on academic learning, such as in museums and universities, will tend to develop the 'knowledge of what' aspects over and above the 'knowledge of how' (although this even is debatable). In spite of this, according to Pye:

For all students the starting point must be an academic education in the required science and archaeology and art history, which covers methods of research and analysis, and reflective practice, as well as educating them in the nature of the heritage and the theory and principles of conservation. Rather than relying on the old unquestioning apprenticeship system, practical training should draw on different approaches... No training should inculcate only one approach or method; otherwise graduates will be unable to discriminate when new approaches and methods become available. As well as the skills particular to conservation, generic skills of communication, team-working, project design and management should prepare students for professional

¹⁹⁷ S. Hackney, interviewed by L. Backhouse, *Work Placement in the Frame Conservation Department of the Tate Gallery*, 30th Aug - 28th Oct 2005, BSc(Hons) Restoration and Conservation, Sir John Cass Department of Art, Media and Design, London Metropolitan University, submitted December 2005.

practice, and help to break down barriers between the various heritage professions.¹⁹⁸

In addition to raising the profile and status of conservation, Schon (1983) expressed the correlation of science with the typically Western conception of professionalism in the following terms:

...the use of academic training to add legitimacy to occupations' claims to professional status, combined with the dominance of scientific method and positivism as the rising form of academic knowledge from the mid-19th century onwards, has led to the technocratic or technical-rational model becoming the principle approach to professionalism this century.¹⁹⁹

This would appear to give some explanation as to why the process of professionalisation has led to training courses in conservation becoming more scientific and academically-oriented which is also consistent with wider international movements in the field. In fact, furniture and decorative arts in the United Kingdom was one of the last domains to adopt a more scientific conservation-based approach to education and training, as Pye notes:

As conservation developed as a discipline during the twentieth century, so did a concern with how conservators should be trained. Gradually formal training developed... By the last quarter of the twentieth century there was a wide range of different formal conservation courses, many based in universities. Even so, surveys of provision indicated that there were still untrained people working in conservation: for example as late as 1989 a UKIC survey revealed that only 61% of people entering the profession in the UK had conservation qualifications, though in part this reflected gaps in provision, e.g. lack of training in the conservation of

¹⁹⁸ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.176).

¹⁹⁹ D.A. Schon, 'The Reflective Practitioner: how professionals think in action' (1983), cited in S. Lester, 'The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers: developing a competence-based professional assessment system', in *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 25 (4), 2000 (pp.407 to 419) Available from: <http://www.devmts.demon.co.uk/pacr.htm> [Accessed on 21st January 2003].

furniture.²⁰⁰

Adrian Smith explained these changes in the following terms:

Up until the early 1990's there was an 'if you can't make it, then you can't restore it' view of restoration but since then this has changed. It does, however, remain important to combine craft-skills with knowledge of techniques. [However]: ...the focus in recent years in education and training has been directed towards a knowledge-based discipline [as in scientific knowledge].²⁰¹

He also acknowledged the influence of fine arts conservation:

Universities and colleges use the fine arts model as a template for their courses. This attests to the significance of Cesare Brandi's *Theory of Restoration*. This, together with scientific / technical studies, encourages innovative approaches to interventive practice. There has always been a lot of pseudo-knowledge in conservation / restoration. Education and training in recent years has brought academic rigour. Until then restoration in terms of materials and processes always followed a 'like-with-like' pattern.²⁰²

The adoption of the fine arts model (which is combined with significant influences from archaeological conservation) means that the literature that exists within these two high-ranking domains forms the basis of educating and training. One of the reasons why universities have adopted this approach is because museums have changed the definition of art, expressed by Appelbaum in the following terms:

Many museums' definitions of 'art' have broadened to include ethnographic materials and furniture and other decorative objects.

²⁰⁰ E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.170).

²⁰¹ A. Smith, *Interview with the author*, Windsor Castle, 18th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 26th June 2005.

²⁰² A. Smith, *Interview with the author*, Windsor Castle, 18th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 26th June 2005.

Curators and scholars interested in these materials, which traditionally have not been considered fine art, have been flattered to see these collections being honoured. The art museum approach to conservation, therefore, has become particularly appealing.²⁰³

Furniture and decorative arts compared with, for example, paintings or sculpture has tended traditionally to be considered lesser arts in the United Kingdom, so this appears to be an ‘upward step’. This phenomenon is linked to professionalisation in museology – essentially it concerns recognition and status. According to Mensch: ‘The history of the development of museology as a (academic) discipline is very much connected with the history of the professionalisation of the museum field.’²⁰⁴

Professionalisation in conservation is (apparently) another aspect of this, expressed by Ashley-Smith, as follows:

Paintings restorers in the 1950’s and 1960’s were just about intelligent enough and double-barrelled-named enough to be on a level with curators, collectors and academics. Archaeologists, especially those dealing with exotic lands, were of the same kind. In museums and galleries, where the germ of an idea about professionalism and academic conservation developed, the people responsible for the treatment of furniture and other decorative arts were not of the right class to have any influence.²⁰⁵

Therefore, the turn to the fine arts as a template, combined with the cognitive supremacy of scientific method and academic study (which has for long been considered a sound basis for professionalism in the United Kingdom), is a way of achieving the desired ‘position’.

²⁰³ B. Appelbaum, ‘Criteria for Treatment of Collections Housed in Historic Structures’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation (JAIC)*, Volume 33, Number 2, Article 9, 1994 (pp.185-191).

²⁰⁴ P. van Mensch, ‘Magpies on Mount Helicon’, paper presented at the joint meeting of ICOFOM and MINOM during the General Conference of ICOM, Stavanger, 4th July 1995, in *Museum and Community*, ICOFOM Study Series 25 (133-138), Stavanger, 1995. Available from: http://www.mus.ahk.nl/03_onderzoek_ontwikkeling/03_publicaties/13_1996/magpies.jsp [Accessed on 14th February 2005].

²⁰⁵ J. Ashley-Smith, *Unpublished communication with the author* (by post), 2nd December 2005.

The implications of this are confirmed by Smith in the following terms:

Modern restoration theory supports the retention of historic fabric and, when necessary, interventions that seek to re-establish *visual unity*. This theory of restoration comes from paintings – from Cesare Brandi. This theory supports ‘neutral restorations’ which ensures that we do not misrepresent the objects – as historical documents [*my italics*].²⁰⁶

It is important to reiterate here that restoration based on ‘visual unity’ legitimises the use of ‘non-like’ materials in restoration (in the *adding to* sense) on grounds of visual appearance alone (provided, of course, they are ‘scientifically’ compatible) – not necessarily on grounds of (for instance) substance, process and/or function or ‘spirit’, or indeed any consideration whatsoever for original creative propriety. Surely what it does then is reflect a *superficial* approach to restoration which, by advocating the idea of ‘neutrality’, necessarily precludes the ontological bias of practice (described above)?

However, *all* restorations are the result of conscious acts, so just what constitutes ‘neutral’ remains obscure. But this clearly has a very important bearing on the materials and techniques considered appropriate (or ‘ethical’) in practice and forms the basis of education and training in scientific conservation. These changes were introduced to furniture and decorative arts (for example) in the early 1990’s – despite *not* being fine arts or archaeological in kind (implying a methodological fallacy relating to how the objects are interpreted). This has had a considerable effect, as Smith explains:

Training in applied conservation / restoration has moved away from its former craft-orientation towards scientific / technical means. This has encouraged innovative approaches to restoration. Related to this, material compatibility has been a major development; science has enabled positive understanding of compatible materials. This is characteristic of

²⁰⁶ A. Smith, *Interview with the author*, Windsor Castle, 18th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 26th June 2005.

contemporary conservation practice. There are subsequently a greater variety of compatible materials available today which provides choice. These developments have been particularly pronounced in recent years. The availability of new materials has then, had the effect of moving restoration away from the former traditional ‘like-with-like’ approach. Japan has difficulty with the introduction of new materials. Their idea of intangible heritage preservation leads them to seek to sustain traditional ‘like-with-like’ approaches.²⁰⁷

These developments (perhaps unsurprisingly) have coincided with the widely acknowledged decline in traditional craft capability, discussed above.²⁰⁸ Now, it could be argued that the (so-called) ‘ontological bias’ of practice is also an aspect of intangible heritage in the United Kingdom which is potentially undermined by these developments. BAFRA (for example) which: ‘stands alone as the leading furniture-craft organisation in the UK’, has been for some time at variance with conservation’s approach to restoration. The value attributed to traditional craft knowledge by groups like BAFRA and (in architecture) SPAB, and among many specialist craft practitioners throughout the United Kingdom (not necessarily affiliated to any professional group), are similar in their liking of traditional ‘like-with-like’ approaches and aspiration towards art/craft excellence.²⁰⁹ In this sense, they are not dissimilar to Japan in their aspiration to sustain traditional knowledge (and the ontology of practice).

An article by Kate Gill published in *Reviews in Conservation* shows in some detail how the introduction of conservation education and training has changed the approach to (and the materials and techniques used for) upholstery restoration. For example, the use of modern synthetic foams in order to ‘complete the chair profile’ or to present the object to its ‘deduced original appearance’ or the addition of ‘conservation-grade padding materials’ to re-establish the ‘original profile’. In each case the emphasis was on *appearance* – not (for example) substance and/or process

²⁰⁷ A. Smith, *Interview with the author*, Windsor Castle, 18th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 26th June 2005.

²⁰⁸ And clarified by Michael Barrington (ACR), Chief Executive of BAFRA, in Section 1.3.2: ‘The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR)’.

²⁰⁹ Their philosophy is not dissimilar to the UNESCO programme relating to safeguarding intangible heritage examined in Part II of this thesis.

or original creative propriety. This use of modern synthetic foams clearly does not reflect the ‘negotiation with the maker’ or the ontological essence of art/craft practice. The article also advocates the re-design of the object: ‘It is significant that all successful minimally intrusive upholstery conservation treatments give the *appearance* of being attached to the frame in a conventional way’ [*my italics*].²¹⁰

At the Victoria and Albert Museum, Rivers expressed a similar understanding and showed how this is linked to conservation ethics, as follows:

The acceptance of ‘modern’ materials in interventive practice is essentially established upon the interpretation of conservation ethics, i.e. reversibility (retreat-ability), minimum-intervention, compatibility etc. In a museum environment historic and aesthetic values predominate. ‘Neutral restorations’ can be achieved with modern materials and processes. For example, photographic techniques may be used to replace missing sections of veneer; casts taken from existing fabric with modern epoxies may be used to replace lost carvings; Paraloid B72 might be used as a surface coating – a satisfactory *appearance* can be achieved once the appropriate technique had been developed [*my italics*].²¹¹

It can be argued then, that this understanding of conservation ethics means that objects may be represented in such a way that their appearance is at odds with their underlying structure and substance; in other words, presented as something that in truth they are not. This could be misleading. The ethics of this is surely questionable? If we accept the premise that knowledge determines technique (the nature of which is determined by the materials used) and that historical knowledge is determined by the use of traditional materials and techniques (which are typically natural and not synthetic) then one could argue that the ‘ethical’ acceptance of such restoration precludes traditional knowledge within the professional practice of conservation.

²¹⁰ K. Gill, ‘The development in upholstery conservation as a practice of investigation, interpretation and preservation’, *Reviews in Conservation*, the International Institute for Conservation (IIC), Number 5, 2004. This (so-called) ‘neutral restoration’ is similar to the archaeological restoration described in Chapter 1.1: ‘Scientific restoration’.

²¹¹ S. Rivers, *Interview with the author*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, with amendments by the interviewee 3rd June 2005. See also N. Bamforth, *Interview with the author*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 16th March 2005.

This may offer some explanation to why such knowledge / expertise has been downgraded and subsequently declined (quantitatively and qualitatively) within the conservation profession in recent times.

The epistemic tension between ‘knowledge of what’ and ‘knowledge of how’ (which, arguably, is reflected in the European-wide ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science) tends then, to augment a general shift from ontology (i.e. tradition of practice) towards technology (i.e. research-based academic discipline). This is sustained by the profession in education and training and continuing professional development. This movement ultimately materialises in ‘non-like’ restoration – adopted in the name of conservation based on visual appearance alone. This appears (in turn) to be related to a focus on the *physicality* of the past (i.e. the tangible heritage) and a general negation of *metaphysical* considerations (i.e. the intangible heritage) – including those that may be sustained by certain kinds of specialised knowledge by restoration activities.

The epistemological ‘fission’ suggested here can be seen in the gradual (i.e. historical) transformation of the literature within the respective disciplines – from books that describe techniques (which are *practice-centred*) to what are essentially recipe books (which are *material-centred*). A notable publication was the Conservation Science Teaching Series entitled: *Science for Conservators* which was first published by the Crafts Council in 1983 and again in 1984; with later publications by The Conservation Unit of the Museums and Galleries Commission in 1987 and 1992 with reprints in 1994, 1996, 1997 and 2000. This series was intended to be *instrumental* to the process of restoration, but once the value of science was realised (which appears to have been augmented by the drive for professional eminence), ‘recipe books’ have dominated the field.

In the domain of furniture and decorative arts alone, compare for example: Hayward’s *Furniture Repairs*²¹², Alcouffe’s *The Restorer’s Handbook of Furniture*²¹³ and Bennett’s *Discovering and Restoring Antique Furniture*²¹⁴, (all

²¹² C. Hayward, *Antique Furniture Repairs*, Evans Brothers, 1976.

²¹³ D. Alcouffe, *The Restorers’ Handbook of Furniture*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977.

²¹⁴ M. Bennett, *Discovering and Restoring Antique Furniture*, Cassell, 1990.

practice-centred) with Rivers (*et al*) *Conservation of Furniture*²¹⁵ (material-centred); and in upholstery: James' *Upholstery Restoration*²¹⁶ (practice-centred) with Eastop's (*et al*) *Conservation of Upholstery: Principles and Practice*²¹⁷; and in surface finishing: Allen's *Classic Finishing Techniques*²¹⁸ (practice-centred) with Webb's *Lacquer: Technology and Conservation*.²¹⁹ It could be argued that the usefulness of the so-called 'recipe books' is limited (even negligible) without first cultivating the ability to *practice* – and to value *that* practice.

Yet, according to Ashley-Smith: 'The notion that conservation is merely about the physical, means that current conservation chooses to have nothing to do with the isolated intangibles of culture'.²²⁰ But surely it is the case that *all* heritages are culturally perceived – whether from an institutionalised perspective or otherwise? This conception, enshrined in the practice of scientific conservation, fails to recognise the cultural milieu of its own existence – as if it operates in some sort of a-historical, unspecific and geographically un-located 'zone', abstract from culture itself.²²¹ Such 'intangibles' may be sustained in traditions of practice – for instance, in the form of *tacit knowledge*. The general movement from ontology towards technology, suggested here, arguably contributes to the *de-sublimation* of historical practice and the subsequent negation of intangible cultural heritage.

Not unrelated to this, Lester commented on the importance of traditional crafts, as follows:

...traditional skills were primarily concerned with new things rather than restoration. Keeping these skills alive is in my view an important part of conserving cultural heritage – and not only to mend things. But it is not what conservation in the sense of ICON or ECCO is about.²²²

²¹⁵ S. Rivers (*et al*), *Conservation of Furniture*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003.

²¹⁶ D. James, *Upholstery Restoration*, Guild of Master Craftsman, 1997.

²¹⁷ D. Eastop (*et al*), *Upholstery Conservation: principles and practice*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2001.

²¹⁸ S. Allen, *Classic Finishing Techniques*, Sterling, 1994.

²¹⁹ M. Webb, *Lacquer: Technology and Conservation*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2000.

²²⁰ J. Ashley-Smith, *Unpublished communication with the author* (by post), 2nd December 2005.

²²¹ It is worth noting here that methodological abstraction (objectivity) is the basis of scientific methodology. This is arguably one of the reasons why so-called 'isolated' intangibles of culture – are perceived by the discipline of scientific conservation *as* isolated.

²²² S. Lester, *Unpublished communication with the author* (by post), 15th October 2005.

This is a key statement because in not being about traditional skills, professional scientific conservation – as reconfigured and repositioned by ICON and ECCO (and ICOM) – can be seen to be in *direct opposition* to recent developments on the international heritage scene (as Parts II and III of this thesis aim to reveal).

This lack of importance attributed to traditional skills is reflected in the teaching of restoration on conservation courses, as Ed Gregory explained:

BAFRA represents a traditional component of heritage preservation. Typically, its members support the maintenance of customary skills / techniques through the use of traditional materials and processes in applied practice. BAFRA's support of tradition has been criticised within conservation as dogmatic and too narrow in its function – being primarily associated with 'brown' furniture. ...Contemporary conservation, through its espousal of innovative approaches to restoration, reflected in the use of modern materials and techniques, leaves BAFRA somewhat marginalised from recent developments in education and training. In this connection, the use of modern materials on old artefacts is generally based upon the conservation problem at hand rather than upholding any particular principles or ideologies that are informed by custom.

Contemporary conservation thus encourages awareness of alternative approaches to treatment interventions. The use of any material or process is accepted so long as this has been considered within the context of conservation ethics; i.e. well reasoned, with options thought-out and appropriate research and testing for compatibility and retreatability requirements. ...This approach has become more widely accepted in recent years. Accordingly, modern materials, such as moulded epoxy resins, which have been cast from existing fabric, may be used to replace missing elements, such as carvings. In such cases the objective of the intervention is to reinstate *aesthetic unity* [*my italics*].²²³

²²³ E. Gregory, *Interview with the author*, London Metropolitan University, with amendments by the interviewee 23rd May 2005.

This would appear to support highly variable outcomes, indicating a radically subjective form of intervention. Interestingly, John Cross pointed out (during the same discussion) that:

...conservation courses in colleges today do not provide a training as such; rather they provide an introduction to various aspects of conservation. They do not produce artists or craftspeople. [He also added that]: ...historically, many prominent conservators were not particularly skilled artist / craftspeople.²²⁴

According to this then, conservation has always struggled with attaining the appropriate levels of knowledge – despite being considered a *knowledge-based* discipline. This may be because of its origins in museums, as Huntley explained:

Back in the 1950's and 60's record-keeping in museums was appalling – as were methods of restoration. It's a standing joke that inappropriate materials were used and records were inadequate. [With respect to materials and techniques]: Today, there are a wider range of materials to choose from which allows for a broader range of possibilities. However, it is quite easy to justify the use of modern materials or processes by drawing on conservation ethics.²²⁵ Cost may also be an important factor. This may be acceptable in museums for other reasons. Museum conservators are not especially good craftspeople which may also be a reason.²²⁶

This would appear to offer some explanation as to why many experienced practitioners have been critical of standards of education and training in furniture and decorative arts conservation in recent times, as Richard Higgins, a regular assessor of standards over the past fifteen years, noted:

²²⁴ J. Cross speaking at the interview: E. Gregory, *Interview with the author*, May 2005.

²²⁵ Michael Huntley pointed out that he did not think this practice was widespread. It should, however, be noted that West Dean (at which Huntley is a teacher) has always been a leading institution for the art and craft of conservation-restoration practice.

²²⁶ M. Huntley, *Interview with the author*, Wiltshire, 16th May 2005 with amendments by the interviewee 28th June 2005.

...during this period there has been a steady decline in the capabilities and therefore usefulness of trained college (university) leavers. The problem has been getting worse. If this is not addressed soon there may not *be* a profession. There is a problem therefore with knowledge-transfer within the college- (university) based training system.

In the past craftspeople were trained by traditional apprenticeship; learning by intense demonstration. They would subsequently develop in their own way within a 'real-life' working environment. Through this form of knowledge-transfer practical skills and aesthetic understanding were developed to a far higher standard than they are today. West Dean remains stringent with these aspects. However, since their association with Sussex University (which began in the early 1990's), they are also expected to fulfil the requirements of conservation training. In fact, the tendency towards the scientific / technical is apparent in all the institutions; it has the effect of subverting the creative artistic / craft component. Traditional knowledge / expertise (associated with restoration arts / crafts) has subsequently been downgraded within the overall sphere of conservation. In this respect, West Dean is one of the last to be effected. The problems that the profession faces today (in terms of standards of capability) are in large part attributable to the gradual adaptation of conservation teaching in universities and colleges. [And, as an employer in private practice]: ...It is for this reason that many 'qualified' conservators today are not viably employable.²²⁷

Ashley-Smith also recognised these problems in the field of furniture and decorative arts and attributed them to a seemingly 'closed' institutional sector, as follows:

...current conservation training does not develop, let alone encourage, skills such as carving. Training is getting shorter so there is no possibility of developing skills. Work in the institutional sector is getting more

²²⁷ R. Higgins, *Interview with the author* (by telephone), 11th October 2005.

divorced from practical intervention and so there is *no perceived need* [*my italics*]. [In relation to this, he added]: It is my belief that ‘minimum-intervention’ is an institutional ploy to save money and to cover up a lack of skills. [And]: ...The conservation profession is in a mess, having lost its way as far as practical intervention is concerned.²²⁸

This raises important questions as to whether a university-based education and training is adequate at all.²²⁹ In order to illustrate this problem, take for instance London Metropolitan University which runs courses entitled: ‘BSc (Hons) Restoration and Conservation’ and ‘BTEC HND Furniture (Restoration)’. The annual student shows bring together exhibits from both courses. At the 2006 show there were two picture-frames of similar period, design, construction techniques and materials exhibited side-by-side. One related to the ‘BSc (Hons) Restoration and Conservation’ course and the other to the ‘BTEC HND Furniture (Restoration)’ course.

On the HND course the frame had been restored in a ‘like-with-like’ way; in other words, same materials and techniques. In contrast to this, the frame relating to the BSc (Hons) conservation course had been restored in a ‘non-like’ way; with a modern synthetic resin – a material which is available at Conservation Resource Centres but which (in the United Kingdom) is commonly known as ‘car-body’ filler and is available at car-body repair shops and local hardware stores. In both cases sizeable losses were replaced. The synthetic resin is easier and thus more efficient to use because it requires less practical expertise to apply than the original composition.

²²⁸ J. Ashley-Smith, *Unpublished communication with the author* (by post), 2nd December 2005. The graduating student shows frequently reveal the extent of the problem. However, it is not possible to show the quality of work done pictorially; images do not capture the underlying reasons for a student (or teacher) selecting one surface-finishing material over another. For example, Paraloid B72, shellac (as in French polish), oils and waxes, may all provide a translucent surface-finish but they require *extraordinarily* different skills (and therefore knowledge) to apply ‘correctly’. The problem is more readily visible in the materials and techniques used for loss-compensation (i.e. restoration in the *adding to* sense of the meaning).

²²⁹ During training the author received c.16 hours per week group supervision from a trained craftsman. The group consisted of c.18 students which meant that each student received less than 1 hour ‘one-on-one’ tuition at the bench. In a 30-week academic year this amounts to c.30 hours and totals c.90 hours over a three-year BA(Hons) course. That is little over two weeks work for an apprentice who traditionally received c.40 hours per week – over a 52 week working-year which amounts to c.2000 hours; over five years (i.e. the duration of traditional apprenticeship training) that totals c.10,000 hours ‘one-on-one’ (for the most part) *basic* training. It is any wonder then, why so many apprenticed practitioners feel despondent towards present standards?

It can, therefore, be described as a quick and cheap solution. However, its use was also justified on grounds of conservation ethics, such as ‘minimum-intervention’, ‘reversibility’ and ‘compatibility’ – based on scientific / technical research. Very little science is taught at HND-level, therefore, this approach to ‘non-like’ restoration relates directly to the ‘science’ component of the course; hence the award of BSc (i.e. Bachelor of *Science*).

However, the acceptability of such materials as synthetic resin invariably results in two different outcomes – one object that retains material consistency (which also sustains historical process) and the other that does not; and therefore two different historical documents. Teaching such contrasting approaches to restoration at the same institution and awarding the higher honour for the easy and quick solution (albeit apparently grounded in conservation ethics) is surely questionable? Also, the primary objective of the *Venice Charter* (1964) was to pass on to future generations physical manifestations of age-old traditions ‘in the full richness of their authenticity’. This inevitably leads to the question: which of these restoration projects fulfils *to the greater extent* this declaration?²³⁰

There are numerous examples of this kind of restoration at other institutions. For instance, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, High Wycombe teaches students how to cast synthetic resins in order to replace missing carvings on furniture and other decorative art objects. The students who do this do not know how to carve (which is sometimes acknowledged by the student in the project documentation). Perhaps not surprisingly then, there is a common enough view in the field that HND-level students are more useful than many degree (and higher-level) students because their practical capabilities are often more advanced.²³¹ This work is not inconsistent with conservation ethics and so therefore one could argue that ethics are masking an underlying skills problem by allowing students to use alternative means. Such practice *could* be understood as ‘an institutional ploy to save money and to cover up

²³⁰ The *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994) and the *Declaration of San Antonio* (1996) (among others) have subsequently reinforced the importance of authenticity – which is discussed in Chapter 2.2: ‘Authenticity’.

²³¹ C. Powell, *Interview with the author*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 12th April 2005 with interviewee’s amendments 12th August 2005.

a lack of skills'.²³²

It is perhaps worth stressing the predicament that training institutions find themselves in when they take on students at degree- or even at masters-level who do not have a craft-based foundation. This situation is arguably linked to funding – courses are likely to be axed if they do not attract students. In addition to this, Sladden, Cross and Barrington all suggested that the lack of basic skills at entry may be attributable to national changes in education and training particularly in state schools where traditional craft teaching has become displaced by a design and technology-based learning in recent times.²³³ It seems peculiar then, that the art/crafts aspects of the field should feel 'academically bullied' by certain aspects of the conservation profession. One could argue that the professionalisation process, by advocating a university-based education, has contributed to the subjugation (and resulting de-sublimation) of the very areas of knowledge that are evidently missing from the field – and of which are located in art/craft practices.

It is perhaps worth noting here that something analogous to the situation in the United Kingdom in the area of furniture and decorative arts also occurred at the Smithsonian Institution in America. According to Luckhurst (a former teacher at the Smithsonian), for example:

The Smithsonian Institution emerged as a centre of excellence during the 1990's. Their 'fantastic' facilities ensured that many saw them as the

²³² Examples of student projects are kept at London Metropolitan University and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College. In order to access and review the documentation (which goes back several years) a written request must normally be made to the relevant Faculty. Due to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Data Protection Rights (DPR) the student's permission may also have to be sought. If they are not the owners of the object (which is common enough) then the owner's permission may also have to be sought. Much the same may be said of museums in spite of the Freedom of Information Act which came into force earlier this year. For example, the Data Protection Act prevented my free access to the documentation of the Conservation Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London – making a study of work undertaken in all of these institutions impossibly time-consuming.

²³³ J. Cross speaking at the interview: E. Gregory, *Interview with the author*, London Metropolitan University, with amendments by the interviewee 23rd May 2005; H. Sladden, *Interview with the author*, The Edward Barnsley Workshops, Petersfield, 10th May 2005 with interviewee's amendments 11th June 2005; and M. Barrington, *Interview with the author* (by telephone), 7th March 2005 with interviewee's amendments 5th August 2006. Interestingly, at Loughborough Training College training in design was favoured over craftsmanship, resulting in Edward Barnsley's (the then art advisor on design) retirement in 1939; see *The Crafts in Britain in the 20th-Century*, edited by T. Harrod, Yale University Press, 1999 (p.228).

authority on conservation. They only took on students who already had training in the material sciences. However, they tended to have very low practical skills; patching, for instance, was of a low order and their surface-finishing abilities were usually poor. This was due to their emphasis on scientific and technical training, research and record-keeping. Most of the students' time was spent doing analytical work. It became apparent to the Smithsonian that the quality of practical expertise had declined and that they were producing people that were, to all intents and purposes, 'unemployable' in the real-world. The situation there has since come under review; the general decline in skill-levels was a significant factor.²³⁴

This kind of restoration, taught in the name of conservation, is similar to archaeological restoration – in terms of characterisation of materials, historical study, recording and documentation, research, experimentation and innovation and so on. It might, therefore, be understood as an extension of archaeological practice (but obviously without the dig). As such, the practice of conservation can be described as a kind of *materiology* in the sense that it does not deal with archaeological objects but deals with *all* objects; indeed, there is not necessarily a requirement for them to be historical at all. Due to the problems relating to the stock of knowledge within the field and the subsequent criticisms of standards of competence on training courses, it could be argued that whatever education and training may be suitable for archaeological restoration (or, indeed, fine arts restoration) may not be suitable for decorative arts and other 'fine craft' heritage (hence the methodological fallacy).

Different views on the kinds of knowledge and expertise demanded by different working contexts poses a particular problem; for instance, if students of conservation are expected to succeed in the private sector they will surely have to possess the ability to retain 'use-value' – which is a common expectation. To retain the functional qualities of objects is often *considerably* more complex, demanding the

²³⁴ B. Luckhurst, *Interview with the author*, Little Surrenden Workshops, 12th April 2005 with interviewee's amendments 20th May 2005. Interestingly, the Smithsonian Institution is at the forefront of developments in the safeguarding of the intangible heritage – an important aspect of which is traditional craft knowledge. Intangible heritage forms the basis of Part II but the work of the Smithsonian is discussed in Chapter 2.1: 'Heritage – beyond the material dimension'.

highest levels of practical expertise than merely restoring visual appearance. This is particularly so in furniture which, by its very nature, is often designed to perform a function, such as a chair to carry the weight of a person or a chest of drawers for clothes and so on.

To restore only visual appearance would necessarily preclude such *intentional* qualities and characteristically necessitate only moderate (at best) levels of competence. The emphasis on appearance (over function – and, indeed, substance and process) in scientific conservation would appear to be compatible with the immense difficulty that universities and other training institutes evidently have in cultivating high levels of competence and proficiency in graduates at *all* levels. And although in museums ‘use-value’ may not necessarily apply (although arguably it should), most graduates do enter the private sector – so surely it would be logical to ensure that their expertise was appropriately aligned to employers’ expectations?

These difficulties have not been helped by an overly generalised definition of the requirements of education and training ‘common to a wide range of conservators’ which can be seen to be part of the (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science associated with the processes of professionalisation. This lack of specificity is surely the inevitable outcome of the European-wide movements towards standardisation – which is ultimately revealed in the nature of the knowledge cultivated during training. But the issues raised here should also (perhaps above all) be understood in relation to wider forces of institutional economic rationalisation and the (inevitable) market-orientation of the field which appears to augment technological practice (discussed in the preceding chapter).

With this in mind, it seems appropriate to emphasise here that there are many specialist artists and craftspeople such as gilders, marqueteurs, cabinet-makers, wood-carvers, veneer-specialists, Boulle-workers, wood-turners, chair-makers, specialist surface-finishers (including painting), lacquer-work (and other decorative techniques), clock-engineers / makers, and dial-painting and printing specialists, upholsterers, cane-work specialists, metal-workers, lead-work and glass specialists and many more (an exact figure has not been obtained but in all likelihood amounts to several thousands).

Many such specialists, who are first and foremost *craftspeople*, work in private practice but are also involved in education and training in the field of conservation. In fact, much of their work includes commissions from museums and galleries, national houses, private collections and private individual owners. They therefore contribute *incalculably* to the conservation and restoration of heritage throughout the United Kingdom. Yet there is no formal place for such specialists and any reliable way or incentive for them to transfer their knowledge and expertise and in-depth understanding within the administrative framework of professional conservation.

The international movements discussed in Chapters 1.2 and 1.3 (and which is similar to the approach to restoration discussed in Chapter 1.1) has been largely influenced by fine arts restoration theory. In this connection, Chapter 1.4 (next) considers the influence of Cesare Brandi.

1.4. European restoration theory

This chapter analyses some of the key aspects of Cesare Brandi's *Theory of Restoration*²³⁵ together with the philosophical basis upon which he established his ideas and considers the functioning of his ideas in certain contemporary practice situations. His methodological approach to restoration is shown to be related to the way in which a work of art is valued. Key influences on Brandi's thinking are discussed – in particular the persistent authority of European art historians and philosophers – leading to his essentially reductionist, abstract and superficial approach to restoration. Finally, it is argued that Brandi's thinking was essentially the product of the historical intellectual milieu of European culture that has characterised much of the past two centuries – known as 'modern historical consciousness'.

The chapter consists of the following sub-sections: 1.4.1: 'Brandian theory'; 1.4.2: 'Phenomenological reduction'; and 1.4.3: 'Modern historical consciousness'. This is followed by 1.4.4: 'Conclusion to Part I'.

1.4.1: Brandian theory

Cesare Brandi's *Theory of Restoration*, although originally published in Italian in 1963 was not published in English until 1966 (initially appearing in the *Encyclopaedia of World Art*) and therefore did not receive wide publication. In 1996 excerpts appeared in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*.²³⁶ This incomplete version was published at an important time in the development of the conservation profession throughout Europe. The nature of this publication has certainly contributed towards deficient understanding of his ideas and perhaps, in turn, to the epistemological fissure and resulting tensions within the conservation-restoration field (discussed in preceding chapters). On this basis, Brandi's text and its subsequent reception requires some careful appraisal.

The original text, which consists of a combination of essays written over a twenty year period, is written in dense prose. Something should (accordingly) be mentioned

²³⁵ C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration*, Nardini Editore, 2005.

²³⁶ *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (et al), The Getty Conservation Institute, J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996.

here about Brandi's writing which has a beguiling poetic quality which should not allow us to ignore its polemic intention and dogmatic insistence. Nonetheless, inevitably, there are a number of inconsistencies throughout the text but the main points are covered here. The text also seamlessly moves between paintings, sculpture, archaeology and architecture but its reference to decorative art, furniture and handicrafts is negligible. The most recent English translation was published in 2005 (which is the version used here).²³⁷ Although Brandi's theory has been published in a number of other languages, the English version is especially important because of the dominance of the English-speaking language in the teaching and practice of conservation worldwide – in global terms now outnumbering native speakers.

In the preface to the 2005 edition Price (then Director of ICCROM) assessed the importance of Brandi's work to the development of the conservation profession in the following terms:

It is only through dissemination of texts such as *Theory of Restoration* that a discipline can develop a core body of theory and can think eventually of laying claim to professional codes of practice.²³⁸

Indeed, the adoption of Brandian theory by various international organisations and administrations such as, ICOM (implicitly), ECCO (explicitly) and, by extension, ICON in the United Kingdom (explicitly via ECCO), has effectively internationalised Brandi's approach to restoration and forms the basis of education and training throughout the institutional sectors of Europe and much of the West.

Brandi's theory of restoration attempted to balance the importance of the work of art as an historical document with its importance as an aesthetic entity. This is the fundamental distinction on which his theory was elaborated. According to Brandi:

...restoration consists of the methodological moment in which the work of art is recognised, in its physical being, and in its dual aesthetic and

²³⁷ C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration*, Nardini Editore, 2005.

²³⁸ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.8).

historical nature, in view of its transmission into the future.²³⁹

Just what constitutes the ‘methodological moment’ is defined in the following terms:

The recognition of a work of art as a work of art occurs intuitively in individual consciousness, and this recognition lies behind all future behaviour towards the work of art as such. It may then be deduced that the behaviour of the individual, who recognises the work of art as such, instantly personifies universal consciousness, which is entrusted with the task of preserving and transmitting the work of art to posterity.²⁴⁰

The work of art then, according to Brandi *emerges* in time (i.e. historically) and that once it has been recognised as such it is seen as conveying universal value. However, such universalisation is problematical because it infers loss of specificity. For example, when geographical considerations are taken into account the (so-called) emergence process (and therefore universalisation) can result in the separation of the object from its familiar historical setting – or culture (i.e. the knowing subjects), depending upon the location (and intentions) of the ‘recognising consciousness’. This could potentially deny a more complete understanding of the object essential in restoration practice which may lie beyond the horizons of the purely ‘aesthetic’ and ‘historical’ such as, religious or spiritual, which may relate to particular ways of life and how (for instance) the concept of authenticity is understood.²⁴¹

Brandi’s conception of a work of art as an historical document is further developed in the following terms:

From an historical point of view, an addition to a work of art is nothing more than new evidence of human activity and, therefore, is part of history. In this context, an addition is no different from the original and has the same right to conservation. On the other hand, removal, although

²³⁹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.48).

²⁴⁰ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.79).

²⁴¹ For illustrative examples in a global context see: *Cultural Resource management in Contemporary Society: Perspectives on managing and Preserving the Past*, edited by F.P. McManamon (*et al*), One World Archaeology, Routledge, 2000.

also the result of human action and thus also part of history, in reality destroys a record and does not record itself. By doing this, it leads to the negation and destruction of an historical process and the falsification of evidence. Therefore, in historical terms, only the conservation of an addition is unconditionally legitimate, whereas its removal always needs justification, or should at least be carried out in a manner that will leave a trace both in record and on the work of art itself. Consequently, the conservation of an addition is the norm, removal the exception. This is the exact opposite of what nineteenth century empiricism recommended for restorations.²⁴²

The idea of a work of art as accumulation of history, and therefore as an historical document (which can be described as an organic conception based on an understanding of the object as a ‘living’ entity), was also central to the National Gallery’s so-called cleaning controversy of the C20th. The idea of cleaning to reveal the original ‘maker’s intent’ was vehemently criticised by Brandi in the following terms:

...what appears to be the most obvious and incontrovertible principle [maker’s intent]: ...Let it suffice to say that it is presumed to be beyond dispute that the aim of those entrusted with the care of paintings is to present them as nearly as possible in the state in which the artist intended them to be seen. This statement, that seems so patently obvious and incontrovertible, is – especially in the field of painting – the most insidious claim that can be advanced. Neither a curator nor a restorer can make such a claim, precisely because it is a false assertion, an unprovable false assertion, that it is possible to go back to a supposed original state, of which the sole valid proof would be the work itself when it was made – that is, without a time lapse. That is historical absurdity. Yet, integral cleaning appears to be blindly aimed at this goal: at treating a work of art as if it were outside of art and history, and

²⁴² C. Brandi, 2005 (p.68). On this point Brandi is consistent with John Ruskin’s and William Morris’s criticisms of C19th. architectural restorations, although he makes no mention of either of them in his text. Their influence on how the heritage preservation movement was later to develop is examined in Part III.

reversible in time, like a piece of oxidised material that could be given back the physical purity and lustre of its primitive state.²⁴³

Interestingly, it could be argued that science and technology were central issues in *both* of these cases but for different reasons. For instance, the National Gallery's cleaning controversy of the 1940's followed the broad acceptance of technical studies (which became more prominent in the first third of the C20th.) as an approach to the restoration of paintings. The use of solvents by the National Gallery was directly associated with the scientific work of laboratories and a naturally empirical approach to interventive practice which (arguably) contributed to the excessive removal of surface accretions. In other words, the possibilities such materials offered to the practitioners was not unrelated to the subsequent over-cleaning of the paintings.

The other example is provided in the work of the C19th. French architect Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc²⁴⁴ who was not adverse to 'improving' architectural monuments with new materials and building techniques:

There is another overriding condition that must always be kept in mind in restoration work. It is this: both the methods and the materials of construction employed by the restorer must always be of *superior quality* [*my italics*].²⁴⁵

Therefore, in terms of his approach to the problem of restoration, Brandi argues that:

...from the historical standpoint, it must be recognised that it is a way to falsify history when historical evidence is, so to speak, stripped of its antiquity; that is, if the material is forced to acquire new freshness, crisp lines or otherwise made to belie its age.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.110).

²⁴⁴ The influence of Viollet-le-Duc on the development of the heritage preservation movement in the C19th. is (also) examined in Part III.

²⁴⁵ E.E. Viollet-le-Duc, *The Foundations of Architecture: Selections from the Dictionnaire Raisonne*, 1868. Reprint translated by Kenneth D. Whitehead, George Brazier, New York, 1990 (p.214).

²⁴⁶ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.68).

Brandi is here criticising uncritical restoration in the *subtracting from* sense of the meaning because it denies the true representation of age (i.e. ‘age-value’).²⁴⁷ He therefore rejects ‘newness-value’ (in Rieglian terms).²⁴⁸

Brandi’s approach to restoration was developed primarily with paintings in mind – although it must be acknowledged that his general principles are also well-suited to sculpture and archaeological architecture. Essentially, this is because paintings and sculpture tend to be valued for the unique work of the individual master – the unique cut of the sculpture’s chisel and/or the unique brushstrokes of the painter are considered sacrosanct. In the most celebrated works the artist will often be known. As such, their work can never be repeated and must be protected with the utmost care without falsification. It is for this reason that Brandi suggests:

...given that the very concept of a work of art is a unique object because of the un-repeatable singularity of historic events, each case of restoration will be a case in itself and not just an element in a collective series.²⁴⁹

Thus, according to Brandi, the work of art is considered unique and therefore ‘closed’. Importantly, Brandi’s theory also focuses on the most substantial artistic elements – either of a building or a unique painting or sculpture. This is where there is some confusion over the application of his ideas. For example, architecture (much of which would be considered archaeological in kind today) which has so many different aspects to consider (as with other tectonic arts) – such as anything from a leaking gutter, or broken tiles, or a damaged parapet wall, to a carved statue or ornately leaded glass windows or painted wall frescos – might have to be considered on any single building.

From this one can reasonably deduce that there are *degrees of substantiality* in art. It is essential to recognise that Brandi’s *Theory of Restoration* is above all concerned

²⁴⁷ Brandi’s liking for ‘age-value’ is consistent with Ruskin and Morris.

²⁴⁸ A. Riegl, ‘The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and its Development’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp.69-83).

²⁴⁹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.65).

with the *most substantial aspects*. Where restoration is necessary on the less artistically substantial aspects his theory often cannot be rigidly applied. For this reason his ideas are particularly well suited to archaeological conservation, paintings and sculpture because they all tend to be either aesthetically and/or historically *substantial*. Hence, in Brandian theory the primary values are the ‘aesthetic’ and the ‘historical’ (which he refers to as the aesthetic case for restoration and the historic case, respectively).

In archaeology the object or building may be a relic – often with no clear living vitality, or observable mediation with the present other than material evidence of the historically ‘distant’ past. This distancing (or distanciation),²⁵⁰ while the object is absent from (so-called) ‘universal consciousness’ (although it may continue to ‘speak’ only to those who already understand and share the ‘value-system’ from which it stems), invariably leads to a gradual deadening until it eventually descends into pure objectness (or pure materiality) with no clear living mediation. Brandi relates this phenomenon to archaeological restoration in the following terms:

The so-called ‘archaeological’ restoration, however praiseworthy it may be for its respect for the work of art, does not achieve that to which human consciousness fundamentally aspires in relation to the work of art – that is, to re-achieve its potential oneness. Only the first phase of reconstruction is represented by it, and that ends, of necessity, when the surviving relics of what used to be a work of art no longer allow credible integrations.²⁵¹

As such, in archaeology the ‘historical case’ (in Brandian terms) for restoration (i.e. the retention of the historical fabric) typically dominates the aesthetic case (i.e. visual appearance) while ‘use-value’ (i.e. the function of the object or monument) is no longer a primary concern. Brandi expresses this in the following terms:

...when works of art are concerned, even if there are some that, in their

²⁵⁰ P. Ricouer, ‘The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation’, in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action, and Interpretation*, Cambridge University Press, 1981.

²⁵¹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.64).

form, do have a functional purpose (such as architecture and, in general, objects of the so-called ‘applied arts’), the re-establishment of the property of use is, in the end, only a secondary or supplementary part of the restoration, and never the primary or fundamental aspect, that lies in having respect for a work of art as a work of art.²⁵²

Therefore, according to Brandi, ‘use-value’ is reduced in importance. This is all very well, provided it *is* a work of (fine) art (and perhaps not, for example, if it is a work of ‘fine craft’). Historical evidence is most important in archaeology – essentially because the object can provide information (understood in the form of historical knowledge) about the past. Therefore, no principles of restoration need necessarily apply in archaeology. And so Brandi insists:

...the preservation of a work of art that is reduced to a state of ruin depends to a great extent on the historical significance ascribed to it. When dealing with ruins, restoration can only be consolidation and preservation of the status quo. Otherwise, the ruin was not a ruin, but a work of art that still maintained an implicit vitality that would allow its original potential oneness to be re-established.²⁵³

What Brandi calls ‘implicit vitality’ is connected to the process of distancing. In such cases when the building (or object) may require an ongoing programme of maintenance (which is frequently connected to ‘use-value’) a less-strict approach would normally be more appropriate. In order to fulfil the two primary cases for restoration (i.e. the aesthetic and the historical) there are two key elements to his approach which are outlined below.

Visual Oneness

The first is what Brandi calls ‘visual oneness’. Oneness is part of what Brandi refers to as the *aesthetic* case for restoration. For Brandi: ‘...a work of art possesses a particularly indivisible oneness, so much so that it cannot be considered as composed

²⁵² C. Brandi, 2005 (p.47).

²⁵³ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.66).

of parts'.²⁵⁴ Accordingly:

Restoration should aim to re-establish the potential oneness of the work of art, as long as this is possible without committing aesthetic or historical forgery, and without erasing every trace of the passage through time of the work of art.²⁵⁵

This, of course, may be relatively straight forward with respect to a painting or a sculpture but it is difficult to see how this can work with respect to a monument due to its complexity and the functioning of its constituent parts – as the example above suggested. Nonetheless, in this, 'oneness' and 'age-value' are combined.

So far as additive restoration is concerned there will be a need to overcome losses (or *lacunae*). Brandi's analysis of *lacunae* considers paintings, sculpture and architecture. Gestalt psychology informs his approach which he expresses in the following terms:

In a work of art a lacuna is an interruption in the figurative fabric. Contrary to general belief, the most serious aspect of a lacuna for a work of art is not what is missing but what is put inappropriately in its place. The studies and experiments of Gestalt psychology are invaluable in helping to interpret the meaning of a lacuna and find ways to neutralise it. Out of the first attempts to establish a restoration methodology that avoided integrations based on fantasies of the imagination, came the empirical solution of a neutral tone – an attempt to reduce the prominence of the lacuna in the foreground by means of a tone as inconspicuous as possible, which, it was hoped, would push it to the background.²⁵⁶

This approach is particularly well-suited to the restoration of paintings because the emphasis is on *appearance* (i.e. the image) rather than structural considerations (as is

²⁵⁴ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.57).

²⁵⁵ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.50).

²⁵⁶ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.58).

the case in the tectonic arts). The idea of a ‘neutral’ integration (in order to create visual oneness) is established on the basis that the newly integrated tones must not ‘compete’ with the original (in terms of artistic creativity). Brandi expresses this in the following way:

When both historical and artistic factors are at stake, the re-establishment of the work’s potential oneness should not be pushed so far as to destroy authenticity; that is, by superimposing a new, inauthentic but overpowering historical reality on the old.²⁵⁷

Authenticity is thus essentially understood in terms of the original – which informs historical value. This understanding of authenticity imposes a restriction on the restorer who must not ‘superimpose’ *their* artistic ideas upon the work of art in realising the potential oneness of the image. In other words, Brandi’s approach to restoration *intentionally precludes other unwanted interference* – which is manifested in the concept of ‘neutrality’. It is purposefully superficial and might, therefore, also be described as ‘intentionally meaningless’. For that reason: ‘Only the *material form* of a work of art is restored’ [*my italics*].²⁵⁸

Brandi develops different approaches to dealing with lacunae; for example, as well as attempting to reduce the lacunae to the background, there are methods for allowing the lacunae to ‘come forward’ if it is deemed that the image may be more ‘legible’. The endeavour to neutralise lacunae also informs the principle of discern-ability in the sense that:

The lacuna will be sensed as a figure that relegates the painted, sculpted or architectural image to the background, against which the lacuna ‘figure’ stands out... like a violent intrusion... into a context that tries to expel it. Any ambiguity caused by the lacuna must be suppressed; that is to say, its re-absorption of the image, which would thereby be weakened, must be avoided. [This establishes beyond dispute]: ...the full recognition, without difficulty, of all integrations that achieve the

²⁵⁷ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.66).

²⁵⁸ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.51).

potential oneness of the image; and the reduction of the lacuna's prominence as a figure. These points allow for a great variety of specific solutions, all of which will be consistent with the principle from which they derive.²⁵⁹

What is significant here is that, in terms of Brandi's prescription, this potentially allows for the use of *any* method or material on purely visual grounds alone, so long as this does not cause harm to the original historical fabric and fulfils other important principles, such as 'minimum-intervention' and 'reversibility' / 'retreatability'. Accordingly:

...any integrative intervention must always be easily recognisable, but without interfering with the oneness that it is designated to re-establish. Therefore, the integration should be imperceptible at the distance from which the work of art will be viewed. On closer examination, it should be immediately obvious without the aid of special equipment. ... the need to reach a unity, chromatically and in luminosity, between the fragments and the integrations is being asserted. Also, if the distinction between added parts and original fragments can be achieved by special and lasting techniques, the use of identical materials and an artificial patina is also acceptable, as long as the aim continues to be restoration and not reconstruction.²⁶⁰

Therefore: '...any conservation or integration of patina is an intrinsic part of the respect for the potential oneness of a work of art that is entailed by restoration'.²⁶¹

Brandi's understanding of reconstruction is expressed in the following terms:

Reconstruction, re-creation or replication have nothing to do with restoration proper. By their very nature they go too far, and have legitimacy (if at all), only in the field of deliberate reproduction of the

²⁵⁹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.92).

²⁶⁰ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.57).

²⁶¹ C. Brandi, 2005 (pp.66-68).

processes used in forming a work of art. With an addition, there is no imitation; there is, rather, a development or an insertion. A reconstruction, instead, seeks to reshape the work, intervening in the creative process developed. It merges old and new so that they cannot be distinguished, abolishing or shrinking the time interval between the two moments of activity.²⁶²

One of the most successful approaches to achieving such ‘oneness’ is known as *tratteggio* or *rigatoni*. This technique uses vertical brush strokes in the colours of the missing elements of the picture. This allows the original colours in the missing area(s) to be reproduced but the vertical strokes remain visible and thus the in-painting is obvious upon careful inspection.²⁶³

Reversibility

Brandi’s understanding of reversibility is interesting in that he sees it from the standpoint of the restorer – at least in terms of their *intentions* – rather than the way in which a particular material intervention can be undone:

For restoration to be a legitimate operation, it cannot presume that time is reversible or that history can be abolished. Furthermore, the act of restoration, in order to respect the complex historical nature of the work of art, cannot develop surreptitiously or in a manner unrelated to time.²⁶⁴

In addition to this, any restoration: ‘...should not prevent any further restorations but, rather, facilitate them’.²⁶⁵ In other words, according to Brandi, whereas a material application may be reversible the *intentions* of its application are never repeatable; nor, of course, are the ageing effects of them having been there. In terms of materials and techniques, Brandi emphasises *appearance* (i.e. the ‘oneness’ of the image): ‘...a restoration treatment is admissible only in order to hinder any further decay that

²⁶² C. Brandi, 2005 (p.69).

²⁶³ See C. Brandi, 2005 for some pictorial examples of Brandi’s ideas, such as: ‘reconstruction’ (p.133); reintegration of lacunae (pp.134-135); and ‘neutral in-toning’ (pp.136-139 and p.161). See also P. Mora (*et al*), ‘Problems of Presentation’ in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price, The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp. 343-354) for examples of *tratteggio* (also known as *rigatoni*).

²⁶⁴ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.64).

²⁶⁵ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.57).

could lead to additional serious impairment to the form. [Thus]: ‘...form prevails over material...’²⁶⁶

Brandi’s emphasis on the importance of preservation, while at the same time giving preference to *appearance*, overrides *substance* and *process*. As such, he argues restoration should ensure:

...that the material that makes the image effective will be transmitted to the future. This does not mean regenerating the colours or reproducing the technical process used to create the paintings. Therefore, even if our knowledge of such processes is imperfect, this is not a major obstacle for restoration. What is more, even when such knowledge is to be had – in the case of medieval frescos, tempera wall paintings or modern oil paintings, for instance – it would be sheer folly to base the restoration on a reproduction of the original technical process. A fresco is not restored with fresco technique, nor is tempera with tempera, nor an oil painting with repainting in oil. When such a thing occurs it is a gross error.²⁶⁷

Therefore, in the restoration of *paintings* the ‘like-with-like’ approach to restoration is anathema to Brandi – indeed, it may even be unethical. The problem with this view is, of course, that if this were applied to other domains of the heritage sector, this could lead to the exclusion of ‘like-with-like’ restoration – and the need for the associated knowledge and expertise.²⁶⁸

However, in relation to this, Brandi evaluates the primary areas of the aesthetic case (visual oneness) and the historical case (valued material) for restoration in the following terms:

If, in fact, the image imposes the form that the material has received, and the material is but the vehicle of the image, it is clear that what – of the material (which has become the image) – is essential to conserve, will be

²⁶⁶ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.98).

²⁶⁷ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.98).

²⁶⁸ This arguably goes to the heart of many of the issues relating to process and competence discussed in Chapter 1.3: ‘Professionalisation in the United Kingdom’.

what directly effects appearance. [However]: ...from the historical standpoint, even what does not directly contribute to the appearance of the image should also be preserved...²⁶⁹

The latter is clearly fundamental to archaeological conservation. Brandi also states that:

The triumph of the materials over the form is all to the detriment of the form: the materials in a work of art must be induced to serve, in a subordinate capacity, the image itself. To reach such a conclusion it is not necessary to depart from a theory of aesthetics. All that is needed is the watchful sensibility of the artist who well knows that he cannot and must not sink to the level of the artisan.²⁷⁰

Once again there are problematic issues here; for instance, Brandi clearly downgrades the artisan; the creator of much of the ‘art’ venerated today. However, in the handicrafts (he notes) the reverse is the case – which is surely a vital distinction: ‘The work of art in which the materials triumph we call handicraft: the jewel, the vase, the plate, not the picture or the statue’.²⁷¹ According to this view, the restoration of handicrafts *should* be considered from the point of view of material substance and therefore process – not solely historical fabric and visual appearance as with the picture or the statue. This infers that a ‘like-with-like’ approach *should* be taken with respect to the restoration of handicrafts which challenges the idea of (so-called) ‘neutrality’.

Now, this of course, has a significant bearing on the kinds of knowledge and expertise necessary in practice – which in turn clearly necessitates a methodological approach to restoration that is based on *knowledge of practice* (and therefore epistemological) and not primarily on visual appearance (i.e. superficial). However, Brandi’s interpretation of ‘handicrafts’ is not clearly defined. To what extent this should encompass all fine-crafts, such as many aspects of furniture and a great deal

²⁶⁹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.98).

²⁷⁰ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.98).

²⁷¹ G. Argan in C. Brandi, 2005 (p.102).

of the (so-called) decorative arts, is unclear. This lack of clarity may well have contributed to tensions / disagreements across the conservation profession.

Brandi's colleague at the Istituto Centrale per IL Restauro in Rome, Giulio Carlo Argan, summarises the modern 'scientific' approach to restoration in the following terms:

Nowadays, the restoration of works of art is commonly considered as a rigorous scientific discipline and especially as a philological investigation aimed at discovering and enhancing the original text of the work. Once alterations and superimpositions of every kind are eliminated, the text can be read clearly and with historical accuracy. In line with this principle, restoration – which was once mainly practised by artists who often imposed a personal interpretation over the original artist's vision – is now practised by specialised technicians under the continuous guidance and supervision of scholarly experts: *generic artistic competence has thus been replaced by informed historical and technical expertise [my italics]*.

The consequences of this radical change in approach can be summarised as follows:

1. Conservation – consolidation of the work's material together with precautionary measures to enable it to withstand various causes of deterioration – prevails over so-called 'artistic restoration'.
2. 'Artistic' restoration, i.e. the complex of operations aimed at bringing out the stylistic qualities of the work that have been disturbed or obfuscated by over-painting poor restorations, oxidised paints, dirt, lacunae, etc., is conditioned by precise requirements of a critical nature. Avoiding any arbitrary integration of lacunae and any introduction of figurative elements or new colour values, the restoration of paintings is limited (after necessary consolidation of the various parts) to the cleaning of the painted surface and possibly the attenuation of unsightly colour

contrasts caused by lacunae.

3. The critical and scientific preparation needed to conduct a proper restoration – i.e. full knowledge of the stylistic qualities, external influences and the condition of the work being restored – is acquired not only through critical and historical examination of the work, but also through a series of technical studies aided by modern scientific means: radiography, the Wood lamp, chemical analysis of paints as well as other materials added later, etc.

The apparent limitation of restoration for pure conservation purposes does not thus represent a victory of mechanics over the restorer's intellectual activity, but simply shifts the activity of restoration *from the artistic to the critical field* [my italics].²⁷²

There are a number of aspects of this statement worthy of note; for instance, there is emphasis on 'historical accuracy' which is understood to exist in the 'original'. This is largely attributable to a positive material historiography and (potentially) has the effect of advocating restoration in the *subtracting from* sense of the meaning – by eliminating alterations and superimpositions of every kind (as was the case of the National Gallery cleaning controversy, inspired by original maker's intent). The use of new technology can help to achieve better results in this regard but it does raise questions as to the nature of the historical document such as: just what kind of expression constitutes an historical document?

This is important because when the object 'emerges historically' (in Brandian terms) according to this approach to restoration (which 'shifts the activity from the artistic to the critical field'), if the object is understood as an historical document then either the document comes to an end (by being suspended in time) or it is allowed to continue beyond the point of (so-called) historical emergence. If this latter point were the case, then due to the shift from the artistic to the critical field (which brings to the fore scientific restoration) the object would, through the process of restoration,

²⁷² G. Argan in C. Brandi, 2005 (pp. 172-174).

necessarily become an object of science and thus (at least theoretically) potentially subdue its artistic message.²⁷³ It is important to recognise that Brandi's theory is based on *appearance* – it is therefore superficial in the sense that it has not been established on a conceptualisation of the materials (and processes) found and used in works of art, respectively (the reasons for this are discussed in the next section).

The replacement of generic artistic competence in favour of a critical and scientific approach implies that the two are necessarily separate and that the critical / scientific should prevail. In restoration this leads to a downgrading of the traditional arts and crafts and a denial of their *intrinsic value* to heritage. This can be understood as the basis upon which the (so-called) 'paradigm shift' from craft to science has occurred which is today administered internationally by institutions such as, museums and universities and influential heritage organisations such as, ECCO. This has coincided with the re-definition of art by museums, leading (it can be argued) to the misappropriation of Brandian theory for *all* heritages encompassed by the professional practice of conservation as an extension of archaeo-museological practice.

Consequently, there are grey areas when his ideas are applied in other domains for which they were not necessarily intended, such as furniture, decorative arts (at least to some extent), the handicrafts and even architecture (generally non-archaeological). In these domains the makers are more often than not anonymous (which is frequently not the case in paintings and sculpture). In furniture, for example, a single object will usually have been produced by a number of specialist makers such as, carvers, cabinet-makers, veneer specialists, surface finishers, gilders, upholsterers and so on. In fact, a whole range of specialist workers (known as journeymen) may have been employed on a single piece. In addition to this, such objects are also likely to have been produced in series – in specialist workshops. The journeymen would travel from workshop to workshop selling their specialised knowledge and expertise.

It is arguably because of this that we tend to conceive of furniture primarily in terms

²⁷³ See for example, E. van de Wetering, 'The Surface of Objects and Museum Style' in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp.415-421).

of ‘style’ or as a ‘tradition of practice’; for instance, the ‘Chippendale style’ or the cabinet-making, carving or gilding (and so on) ‘tradition’. When such traditions of practice extend into the present there may be a ‘living vitality’ which in turn may play an important role in restoration because of the kinds of knowledge and expertise sustained *by* that tradition. Usually this is not the case in archaeology, paintings and/or sculpture (although this is debatable). Such traditional knowledge may be of a highly aesthetic nature, or even sustain religious and other forms of symbolic cultural meaning for the purveyors and the culture (or group) within which practice is habituated. Understood as such, the practice of restoration may continue to be an important form of cultural expression.

Brandi’s approach to restoration works particularly well in museums and galleries where objects are typically situated at a distance from the viewer and presented under low-lux lighting. Expectations can be quite different when objects are privately owned and especially when they have often complex values attributed to them which may be of a highly personal kind.²⁷⁴ In such cases, an extremely sensitive approach to the surface of the object is called for. This is an important reason why the principle of ‘discern-ability’ that Brandi advocates has to be considered differently in different contexts. This has a substantial bearing on the kind of intervention and the materials and techniques employed in restoration. It is interesting to note also that the use of ‘like-with-like’ materials and artificial patina is acceptable to Brandi so long as this does not involve reconstruction and falsification – which should be understood in terms of the *intent* of the restorer not solely in terms of the outcomes.²⁷⁵

In seeing the work of art in terms of its ‘visual oneness’, while at the same time taking into account the principle of discern-ability, one can immediately see the likelihood of justifying the use of ‘non-like’ materials and techniques for restoration. Therefore, when Brandi’s ideas are used in non-fine arts domains this inevitably leads to (or at least does not prevent) the increased acceptability of modern ‘non-like’

²⁷⁴ The author recalls a situation when he was commissioned to restore a writing desk which belonged to the owner’s great grandmother who was a successful writer. The surface, although not historically ‘accurate’, had not been altered since her death and was therefore of great personal value to the owner. Although this level of intimacy is not necessarily common in private practice situations, when owners become familiar with objects they can be *very sensitive* to even the slightest change in their appearance. It is hard to see how this level of intimacy can exist in an institutional environment – especially when the object is owned by the institution.

²⁷⁵ See, for example, ‘Falsification’ in C. Brandi, 2005 (pp.87-89).

approaches. Such approaches may be reasoned on grounds of ‘neutrality’ but they are (arguably) not neutral at all but more accurately the material expression of science. However, it needs acknowledging that not all such materials are used in Brandi’s name, but as they do not conflict with conservation ethics (which are based on his theory), then one can say that they are indirectly linked to his general approach to restoration.

In addition to the examples provided in the preceding chapters, there are numerous case-studies of (so-called) ‘scientific restoration’ which can be viewed online. Although some of the sites require membership subscription, such as *Studies in Conservation*,²⁷⁶ the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) allows free access. As the AIC produced the first formal code of ethics in the 1960’s, at around the same time as the original publication of Brandi’s *Theory of Restoration* (and therefore there is at the very least a chronological link) it seems appropriate to refer to a few cases from the AIC Wooden Artefacts Group – which, taken collectively (it could be argued), represents Brandi’s legacy (as interpreted in non-fine arts domains). For instance, the use of photographic techniques to replace decorative veneer (thus based solely on *appearance*);²⁷⁷ the replacement of wooden carvings with cast epoxy resin, pigmented to *appear* as wood;²⁷⁸ the replacement of Chinese lacquer with bulked epoxy resin, pigmented to *appear* as oriental lacquer;²⁷⁹ the restoration of a Native

²⁷⁶ ‘Studies in Conservation’, *Journal of the International Institute for Conservation (IIC)*: Available (by subscription) from: <http://www.iiconservation.org/index.php>

²⁷⁷ V. Dorge, ‘Photographic Reproductions Used to Replace Decorative Veneer Losses on a Small Sewing Box’, in *AIC Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints*, 1992. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/1992/WAG_92_dorge.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁷⁸ There are three examples: M. Kutney (*et al*), ‘Conservator, Curator, Craftsman: Collaborations at Colonial Williamsburg’, in *AIC Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints*, 1996. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/1996/WAG_96_kutney.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006]. And: the restoration of the Beauclerk Cabinet in H. Glover, ‘Two Furnishings from Strawberry Hill: Exploration and Treatment’, in *AIC Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints*, 2002. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2002/WAG_02_glover.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006]. And: D. Blanchfield, ‘The Research and Treatment of a Late 18th-Century Lyre Guitar: A Collaborative Effort’, in *AIC Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints*, 1996. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/1996/WAG_96_blanchfield.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁷⁹ M. Carr (*et al*), ‘Loss Compensation of Lacquer on Two Chinese Tables’, in *AIC Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints*, 1997. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/1997/WAG_97_carr.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006]. And: M. Carr, ‘Lacquer Loss Compensation Revisited: More Big Holes in the Top’, in *AIC Wooden Artifacts Group Postprints*, 2003. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2003/carr_03.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

American Birch Bark Canoe based on *appearance*.²⁸⁰

The work represented in each of these case-studies is reasoned on ethical grounds – particularly ‘minimum-intervention’ and ‘reversibility’. The restoration work (which may be referred to as loss-compensation) is based on the *visual appearance* (‘oneness’ in Brandian terms) of the finished object. These approaches to restoration (which are not inconsistent with Brandi’s aesthetic / historic duality) demonstrate how this influences the materials and techniques used (i.e. process). In upholstery restoration (for example) this can lead to the re-design of objects – again based solely on superficial appearance.²⁸¹ There are also some interesting articles regarding the experimental nature of scientific conservation and how new materials (and techniques) are developed from technical research. For instance, a new material for replacing tortoise shell;²⁸² experimentation with new barrier coatings;²⁸³ modification of French polish²⁸⁴ and the use of alternative materials for the treatment of degraded finishes.²⁸⁵

Now, taken as occasional articles or conference papers, these technical developments may not mean a great deal. But when they are understood in context – as part of the international ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science (which arguably they are a sign of) – this innovative work might have a *considerable bearing* on such concepts as (for example) authenticity. How can it not? How different things would be if

²⁸⁰ D. Kurtz, ‘Up the Creek without a Paddle: The History and Conservation of an 1870’s Birch Bark Canoe’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 1997. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/1997/WAG_97_kurtz.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁸¹ There are two examples: D. Trupin, ‘Bottoms Up! (Some Solutions for Supporting Sprung Seats in Historic Upholstered Furniture)’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 2002. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2002/WAG_02_trupin.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006]. And: M. Harpainter, ‘Tips on Removable Upholstery Caps and Backing Fretted Panels’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 2002. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2002/WAG_02_harpainter.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁸² T. Braun, ‘A New Material for Producing Faux Tortoise-shell Fills’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 2002. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2002/WAG_02_braun.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁸³ L. Ellis (*et al*), ‘An Evaluation of Four Barrier Coatings and Epoxy Combinations in the Structural Repair of Wooden Objects’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 2002. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2002/WAG_02_ellis.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁸⁴ C. Deller, ‘French polish from a conservator’s point of view: Some ideas for a better coating’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 1998. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/1998/WAG_98_deller.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

²⁸⁵ A. Heginbotham, ‘What’s Old is New: B-72 and the Treatment of Degraded Furniture Finishes’, in *AIC Wooden Artefacts Group Postprints*, 2001. Available from: http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/wag/2001/WAG_01_heginbotham.pdf [Accessed 3rd August 2006].

authenticity was understood in terms (for example) of *process* – as well as material and form. What is important to note here is not so much the requirements of the particular projects presented above but the *influence* that this approach to restoration has when it becomes public knowledge (especially when it is led by such a prominent authority as the American Institute for Conservation).²⁸⁶

The functioning of the principle of discern-ability (i.e. visible repairs – which often functions in relation to the principle of reversibility) is critically important with respect to the materials used because it can be interpreted to mean something that it was not necessarily intended to mean. For instance, for a restoration to be discernable *does not necessarily mean a different material-type or process*. In addition to this, the idea of a restoration as being ‘neutral’ and therefore *intentionally abstract* (which is established on the premise that the work of art is ‘closed’) could further lead to the preclusion of the traditional arts and crafts.

In domains which have established traditions of arts/crafts practices, such as furniture and decorative arts and the handicrafts and indeed architecture (typically non-archaeological), the administering of Brandian theory (by professionalisation) could contribute to the subversion of unique forms of traditional knowledge and practices which, it can be argued, are part of heritage – but in living form (an idea which has been suggested in the preceding chapters and one which will be developed further in Part II of the thesis).

Finally, Brandi’s theory leads to the suspension in time of what physically remains of the work of art – which is understood to exist thereafter in an *eternally present dimension*. In other words, it is ‘frozen’ in time. This is the theoretical basis upon which the discipline of professional scientific conservation has been established internationally. This conception can be described (theoretically) as a ‘static’ (or *synchronic*) conception of heritage preservation which can be seen to be rooted in Western materialism (which leads to an emphasis on tangible heritage), Western aesthetics (which ‘closes’ the work of art) and a methodological approach which is

²⁸⁶ This is one of the reasons why students on conservation courses in the UK (for example) often respond: ‘why shouldn’t I do it this way?’ when questioned about the materials and techniques they have used. Typically, they have no knowledge of Brandian theory.

essentially reductionist (i.e. by being limited to aesthetic and historical values – the fundamental distinction upon which Brandi’s theory was elaborated).

Brandi’s reductionist approach to restoration is based on a system of philosophy known as phenomenology; the process of reduction is known as ‘phenomenological reduction’. This, together with his underlying reasoning, is examined in the next section.

1.4.2: Phenomenological reduction

Cesare Brandi’s thinking was largely influenced by the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce and various European philosophers and art historians that preceded Croce such as, Georg Hegel and Johann Fichte. Croce produced what was called, by him, the *Philosophy of Spirit*²⁸⁷ (which was in many ways an extension of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*).²⁸⁸ Croce was an ardent idealist, and denied any reality other than ‘pure concept’, or put simply – *ideas*. ‘Pure Concept’ to him comprised largely Platonic ideas and, similar to Immanuel Kant, categorised things like quantity, quality, evolution; any ideas that can be described as a *universal* idea.²⁸⁹

Croce came to the conclusion that if all of reality was an idea, then all of reality could be reduced to purely logical concepts. Consequently, most of his works are expositions on logic. He rejected all forms of religion as not being logical enough and came to view most metaphysics in the same manner. He felt that metaphysics operated largely as a justification of religion and did not constitute viable philosophical ideas. Influenced by this way of thinking, Brandi’s approach to restoration was essentially an attempt to dispense with ‘metaphysical clutter’. It is for this reason that he argued any action should be *intentionally abstract* which he believed represented a kind of scientific neutrality (i.e. methodological objectivity) and hence the rational and critical basis of his *Theory of Restoration*. It is Brandi’s limited conceptualisation of what might constitute the ‘substance’ of an object that necessarily limits the act of restoration to the level of superficial appearance.

²⁸⁷ H. Carr, *The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce: The Problem of Art and History*, Macmillan, 1917.

²⁸⁸ G. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, (translated by A.V. Miller), Oxford University Press, 1977.

²⁸⁹ This philosophical position may be referred to as ‘German Idealism’.

Brandi conceded Hegel's influence in this connection:

Even Hegel could not avoid referring to what he called the 'external and given material', although he did not describe a firm doctrine for use in the conceptualisation of the materials found in art. In this connection, material should be judged by its superficial appearance – it would be quite wrong to start from an ontological, spiritual or epistemological position. Consequently, we must start from a phenomenological viewpoint and from this perspective examine how the material 'transmits the epiphany of the image.'²⁹⁰

It is for this reason that, according to Brandi, the work of art's *appearance* should override its structure or substance, and why only the *form* of the work of art is restored not the *substance*. And therefore also why, in Brandi's theory conflict lies usually in the contrast between the aesthetic and the historical case for restoration. The primacy of the object (or image) must prevail and any action taken to unify the image (i.e. to achieve potential oneness) should not interfere by bringing new *meaning* to the original work. As such, the 'epiphany' of the image is understood to be a manifestation of a divine or supernatural being – or 'spirit' – given in the act of creation by the original artist. (Minimum-intervention, reversibility and discernability originate from this way of thinking). But it is the lack of a doctrine for the conceptualisation of substance that limits restoration to the level of superficial appearance.

Brandi's methodological approach considered the notion of universal value²⁹¹ which he expressed in relation to museums in the following terms:

A work of art, as we see it in a museum, is the same work of art that was created by an artist.²⁹² Once it is finished, or the creative rapport between the work and the artist is ended, the work enters into the world as a

²⁹⁰ C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration*, Nardini Editore, 2005 (p.51).

²⁹¹ The Hague Convention advocated the 'heritage of all mankind' which is based on a notion of universal value; see *The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict: 'The Hague Convention'*, The Hague (1954), entering force in 1956. Full text available from: <http://www.icomos.org/hague/> [Accessed on 30th September 2005].

²⁹² In fact, this is rarely the case.

possible object of universal experience.²⁹³

In order to explain the methodological process through which a work of art enters a museum Brandi draws on Husserlian phenomenology: ‘By putting the issue in this way, it is clear that I intend to apply a *phenomenological* treatment to the work of art; that is, to subject it to a special epoche’ [*my italics*].²⁹⁴

According to Sebastian Luft, a contemporary writer on Husserlian Phenomenology: ‘The first piece of theory leading to the [phenomenological] reduction is the concept of epoche’.²⁹⁵ The ‘epoche’ is a philosophical bracketing constructed with the intention of gaining:

...a view unbiased by the misguided theories of the past thereby leading to: ‘metaphysical neutrality’.²⁹⁶ ...In *Idea I*, Husserl considered the epoche as a turn away from the world and its experience to the realm of pure consciousness by virtue of bracketing the ‘reality claims’ of the natural attitude, thus as a move from transcendence to pure immanence.²⁹⁷

By introducing phenomenology, the epistemological framing of the problem in turn necessitates the explication of a fundamental view of life, which Husserl refers to as a ‘natural attitude’ to what he calls the ‘world of life’ or ‘life-world’. Luft explains this in the following terms:

Husserl conceives of the life-world as the totality of life in its multitudinous facets. The life-world is the field in which life in general carries itself out in its everydayness. Whether Husserl calls this phenomenon life-world or ‘natural world-life’, he alternately emphasises either the noematic (the world) or the noetic (the subjective, living)

²⁹³ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.90).

²⁹⁴ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.90).

²⁹⁵ S. Luft, ‘Husserl’s Theory of Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism’, in *Research in Phenomenology*, 34 (pp. 198-234), The Netherlands, 2004 (p.199).

²⁹⁶ S. Luft, 2004 (p.199).

²⁹⁷ S. Luft, 2004 (p.208).

aspect. The noetic-noematic structure²⁹⁸ designates the correlational a priori in its universal form. It signifies the essential relatedness of world and conscious life. The correlate to the life-world is that mode of living in which this mode of living is the horizon for any kind of action: the ‘natural attitude’.²⁹⁹

Therefore:

What ‘constitutes’ a certain situation, what marks it as relative to other situations, is that the pursuit of a certain interest circumscribes a situation and ‘constitutes’ a self-enclosed domain. This interest determines the truth of the situation.³⁰⁰

In terms of restoration theory, this could be transposed in such a way as to refer to our objectives (or intentions) in any given situation. In this sense, the ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science (discussed above) can be understood as representing the intervening of one dimension (or ‘horizon’) of ‘knowing’ over another. At the same time, the objectives become formalised, administered and made public. In scientific conservation the primary objective is to retard the deterioration of physical objects. This is linked to the desire to preserve a physical record of history by reconstructing our understanding of past events through scientific observation and the explanation of the material outcome of those events; in effect constituting what has been described in this thesis as a positive historiography such as that represented, for instance, in museums. In one sense, professionalisation through the formalisation of ethics and the re-definition of education and training towards material-based studies is the materialisation of just such a wider objective.

²⁹⁸ The noetic-noematic structure replicates the Cartesian subject / object dualism which is (arguably) represented today by UNESCO in the tangible v. intangible duality. This (it can be further argued) represents opposing tendencies (‘dialectical’ in Hegelian terms) which come together (this thesis argues) in restoration under the concept of authenticity which (in turn) materialises in the technologies used for restoration in diverse practice situations.

²⁹⁹ S. Luft, 2004 (p.203). The concept of ‘horizon’ (of life-worlds) was initiated by Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) in the late Middle-Ages but has gradually come into use in modernity – explicitly so in Husserlian phenomenology; see for example, K. Held, ‘The Origin of Europe with the Greek Discovery of the World’ (translated by S. Kirkland), in *Epoche*, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2002 (pp.81-105).

³⁰⁰ S. Luft, 2004 (p.202).

Within the domain of scientific conservation the idea of preserving material heritage is constituted as a ‘problem-solution’ activity. Science posits the situation in hand in a problem-solving way. The problem becomes the objective (or *intention*). Without identifying a problem in the first instance science cannot search for a solution; without a problem science has only a speculative purpose. In scientific conservation the problem (i.e. the objective or the intention) is identified as the deterioration of objects. The objective is to slow down the rate of deterioration; in an ideal sense to halt it altogether. Hence the ‘synchronic’ conception of heritage – i.e. when the object first emerges in time (i.e. historically) and is then suspended (i.e. ‘frozen’ or ‘stilled’) so that it may exist in an eternally present dimension. Restoration is also constituted as a problem or even a ‘necessary evil’³⁰¹ which inevitably leads to questions like whether it is even ‘acceptable’ at all.³⁰²

The Husserlian ‘*epoche*’ thus deals with overcoming the natural attitude by abstracting from the ‘world of life’. The methodological problems of making a concrete way into the transcendental ‘realm’ (i.e. the eternal present) begin here – at the stage of recognition of a work of art. This is part of a scientific process which Luft explains in the following terms:

The epistemological problem concerns, simply stated, true knowledge and the means of attaining it. This issue comes about where it is noticed as a problem. Hence, is knowledge *eo ipso* true knowledge? This depends not only on the meaning of knowledge but also on the context in which one employs it (i.e. ‘intentions’). The sciences represent one such field. The sciences, however, are not the only field in which knowledge is an issue. In opposition to them, there is pre-scientific life and the ordinary performance of life as carried out in the life-world.³⁰³

By making a contextual distinction between the ‘world of life’ and the existence that

³⁰¹ M. Friedlander, ‘On Restorations’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price, The Getty Conservation Institute, The J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (p.332).

³⁰² *Restoration: Is it Acceptable?* edited by A. Oddy, British Museum Occasional Paper, Number 99, 1994. However, with respect to the problem of standards in furniture and decorative arts which is linked directly to the changes in education and training introduced by ‘conservation’ one might quite justifiably ask Conservation: *Is it Acceptable?*

³⁰³ S. Luft, 2004 (p.201).

a work of art has – given that it has left the world of life – Brandi thus limits himself:

...to considering a work of art only as an object of experience in the world of life, as Husserl would say. Doing this will not cause the work of art to decline into generic ‘objectness’, but rather to be accepted, without questioning its essence, as it has entered the field of our perception and thereby our experience. By restricting the work of art in this way, consideration can be given to all the aspects that escape us if we question only the essence of the work: aspects that range from its material composition (and therefore its condition), to its museum presentation. ...as Hegel has said, everything regarding the external material is a given.³⁰⁴

Brandi is, therefore, suggesting that universal value is attained by restricting the work of art through a process of phenomenological reduction which is associated with the work of art entering the museum (or gallery). Once this has occurred the object is then valued only in terms of its aesthetic and historical qualities while other metaphysical attributions are left open to the viewer. This is considered necessary by Brandi because of the infinite ways in which an object may be valued at a given moment in time which he explains, as follows:

...the work of art, precisely for the reason that it is essentially a work of art ...does not stay suspended outside of our experience. Indeed, once it is recognised as such, and especially as it is recognised as such, it has a right to be exempted from the phenomenological world, and – through this small restriction in the world of life – to be treated strictly in relationship to the recognition that has taken place.³⁰⁵

This recognition essentially takes place when a museum makes an acquisition. This implies that the museum has (or assumes) authority over the validity of the recognition that has taken place which suggests that objects are not ‘valued’ (appropriately) *prior to* museum acquisition (or ‘emergence’ in Brandian terms).

³⁰⁴ C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration*, Nardini Editore, 2005 (p.90).

³⁰⁵ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.90).

However, this can lead to what Mensch has described as: ‘...a radical change of function and meaning’.³⁰⁶

It is then, worth stressing here that the object may continue to ‘speak’ to those who already understand and share the value system from which the object stems and that there may be a specific context that sustains this connection (i.e. the living vitality) in what can be understood as a *pre-reductionist* realm. Museums have not always been very good at recognising this – phenomenological reduction is perhaps one of the main reasons why.³⁰⁷ Moreover, whereas the ‘small restriction’ may (arguably) be suitable for the fine arts (such as paintings and sculpture) and archaeology, the expansion of this methodology to all domains of heritage, combined with the efficiency with which museums abstract objects from the world of life on an international scale, has meant that this ‘small restriction’ has not been small but *immense*. Consider, for instance, the Grand Tours of Egypt in the C19th. which led to the wholesale (and rapid) separation of Egyptian heritage from Egyptian culture, leaving both devoid of any meaningful context and annihilating any living vitality. Some of the views expressed in Part II suggest that this kind of situation continues to be problematical.

Brandi explains the ‘closed-ness’ of the work of art (which legitimises his approach to restoration) and how this is associated with the phenomenological reduction in the following way:

Now, this recognition teaches us that the work of art comes to us as a closed circle, as something in which we have no right to meddle except on two conditions: to conserve its integrity for as long as possible; or to reinforce it, if necessary, when its material structure fails. As we are not the artist, the creator, we cannot, with any legitimacy, ignore the march of time and insert ourselves into the moment when the artist was creating the part that is now missing. With such an attitude, we must limit ourselves to enhancing enjoyment of what is left and can be seen of the

³⁰⁶ P. van Mensch, ‘Conservation’ (Chapter 10), *Towards a methodology of museology*, PhD thesis, University of Zagreb, 1992.

³⁰⁷ The changing role of museums is discussed in Section 3.1.3: ‘Museums and intangible heritage’.

work of art, without integrations by analogy, so that there will be no doubt whatsoever about the authenticity of any part of the work of art itself.³⁰⁸

Brandi is here asserting the inalienable right of the original artist to have his/her work preserved for enjoyment today and for the benefit of generations to come. This 'right' is established once the work of art (or object) has 'emerged' which is subject to 'the recognition' and regulated by those that assume authority over *that* recognition. Conservation endeavours to fulfil this commitment (or duty) by revealing and preserving the authentic work and by resisting any temptation to 'reinsert' oneself into the work of art which is considered to violate the personal 'space' of the creator. Accordingly, the process of phenomenological reduction causes the separation of works of art from the 'world of life'. When it is applied to *all* heritages (such as all objects that are contained within museums and/or galleries which are often considered as works of art but not necessarily in the sense that Brandi has considered them) this may also be understood as the systematic separation of *objects* from their *subjects*.

In this connection, for Brandi: 'What is made of the environmental conditions in which it exists, or should exist, or the museological measures to be taken for its display to the public – all these are irrelevant'.³⁰⁹ This is surely problematical and can be the case only if the object is considered in a superficial and universal way:

...in the image that is presented through a work of art, this world of human experience seems reduced to a mere cognitive function with the figurative nature of the image: any concept of organic integrity no longer applies. The image is truly and only what it represents. The phenomenological reduction that is used to investigate what exists becomes in aesthetics the very axiom that defines the essence of the image.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.91).

³⁰⁹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.90).

³¹⁰ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.56).

What Brandi is saying here is that the phenomenological reduction is necessary in aesthetics in defining the essence of the image. This would appear then, to complete a circularity in relation to the process of reduction – which is, in the first instance, instigated by ‘the recognition’ of the work of art (as a work of art) and followed by the subsequent elimination of ‘metaphysical clutter’ (which may be extant within its ‘life-worldly’ context) and then re-defined according to the new environment in which the work of art is located – the *post-reduction* environment – which according to Brandi, are ‘irrelevant’ to accessing the essence of the image. But surely art (in order for it to be experienced *as art*) *must* have an appropriate context? Because if it doesn’t, then it may perhaps more accurately be described as nothing more than a physical specimen of what was once a work of art.

In this connection, although heritage may be valued universally, the restrictive process of phenomenological reduction can have the effect of diluting (or even denying) the multiplicity of ways in which people attribute value – which may extend beyond the aesthetic or the historical, such as social and cultural, religious, spiritual, ritualistic (the ‘metaphysical clutter’ perhaps) – all of which surely *must* be taken into account in restoration. Ongoing issues concerning repatriation and the importance of cultural context and significance (for example) are a reminder that diverse cultural or geographical considerations are not irrelevant to the ways in which diverse peoples understand and ‘connect’ with their heritage – where the work of art is located is *ipso facto* essential.

With respect to the practice of restoration, once an object emerges historically (and subsequently undergoes phenomenological reduction), Brandi recognises that the materials in a work of art can no longer be considered the same as they were in the *pre-reduction* state; they have undergone a transformation. Accordingly, Brandi emphasises that: ‘...the material of the work of art, towards which practical restoration is directed, is subordinate to the work of arts form’.³¹¹ However, he claims this transformation occurs only in the ‘universal’ consciousness of the viewer. It is then, perhaps worth noting here that many such ‘discoveries’ are made by the antiquities trade *long before* entering a museum and/or gallery.

³¹¹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.80).

Nonetheless, in relation to this, Brandi recognises that:

...there is a common misapprehension that un-quarried marble is no different to marble that has been worked into a statue. ...Whereas un-quarried marble has only its physical make-up, the marble in a statue has undergone radical transformation to become the vehicle of an image. In doing so it has become part of history thanks to the work of human hands, and a chasm has opened up between its existence as calcium carbonate and its existence as an image. As an image, the marble of the statue has separated into appearance and structure [by particular processes], making structure subordinate to appearance. Anyone who thinks that the mere identification of the quarry source of an ancient monument sanctions him to quarry more stone there and remake the monument (where reconstruction and not restoration is involved), cannot justify himself on the pretext that it is the same material. The material is hardly the same, as it joins current history through being worked now and so it belongs to this epoch and not to a time gone by. Although chemically the same, it will be different and will amount to no more than an historical and aesthetic forgery [my comment].³¹²

It is important here to understand that Brandi is talking about reconstruction *not* restoration. To him, reconstruction refers to when a monument is completely re-worked in such a way that fuses new fabric (albeit of the same kind) with historical fabric (i.e. existing) to the extent that they are indistinguishable.³¹³ It is not the same as restoration in the *adding to* sense (i.e. replacing lacunae, for example) which purposefully respects the existing fabric and merely fills the lacunae in such a way to complement (not parody) the existing, and at the same time add to the stratification of human activity which constitutes the historical document.

³¹² C. Brandi, 2005 (p.52).

³¹³ This is the kind of *in toto* restoration that led (for example) John Ruskin to voice strong criticisms of (so-called) C19th. restorations. Adding to the problem at the time was the temptation to re-design monuments in the name of 'stylistic purity'. In the C19th. the term 'restoration' was used in a generic sense. In other words, it lacked specificity. It is important therefore to distinguish between *in toto* restoration ('reconstruction' today) and restoration proper (in the sense that Brandi uses the term). John Ruskin's involvement in the C19th. heritage preservation movement is examined in Part III.

However, as far as restoration (in the *adding to* sense) is concerned, and in relation to Brandi's understanding of materials:

The nostalgic saying, 'as it was, where it was', is the negation of the very principle of restoration. It is an offence against history and an outrage to aesthetics, claiming that time can be reversed, and that a work of art can be produced at will.³¹⁴

Accordingly, for Brandi the historicity of a work of art (i.e. its historical value) is a decisive factor in the kinds of technologies (including materials) that may be used acceptably in restoration. It is, however, important to reiterate here that there are *degrees of substantiality* in art and that Brandi's theory focuses on the *most substantial* artistic elements – either of a building or a unique painting or sculpture – and that it is arguably for this reason that when restoration is necessary on the less artistically substantial aspects (for example, roof-tiles or a window sill or a parapet wall on a building) that his theory often cannot be rigidly applied. What (for instance) would become of Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's Cathedral, London if 'like-for-like' restoration was not the general approach to maintaining their structure? Without this approach (which in effect is *constant renewal*) the buildings would surely very quickly radically change in appearance and simply be reduced to a state of ruin due to the damaging effects of pollution.³¹⁵

What needs to be made clear here is that values do not emanate from objects, they are attributed *to* objects by knowing subjects. It should perhaps then, be recognised that if historical value (i.e. historical 'consciousness') was supplanted by, for instance, the predominance of another value, this restriction in the materials (which might be understood as an 'impasse') might be overcome, leading to the recognition

³¹⁴ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.75). It is perhaps worth pointing out here that Brandi's use of terms like 'offence' and 'outrage' tends to reveal his somewhat polemic intention and dogmatic insistence on these issues.

³¹⁵ S. Fitz, 'Saving Cultural Heritage in Germany: A Spotlight on the Present Situation at the Beginning of the New Millennium' 2001. Available from: http://www.arcchip.cz/w06/w06_fitz.pdf [Accessed 18th October 2004] provides 'before' and 'after' images of sculpture from Herten Castle (c.1750) showing the progress in stone decay over a sixty year period, illustrating the problem of rapid monument deterioration. If such materials were replaced in a 'non-like' manner, surely such monuments would become symbolically depleted?

of the importance of *substance* as well as *form* (i.e. appearance) in restoration. And, if substance is considered important, then the *process of restoration* would necessarily have to be *meaningful* – and thus *contribute to* the historical document in a meaningful way. This, by extension, would necessarily entail departure from the reductionism and (so-called) ‘neutrality’ of Brandian theory.

In this connection, if restoration was understood in relation to knowledge (*as well as* aesthetics and history) – for example, in the form of a tradition of practice (which was valued for its own historicity), then Brandi’s starting point – which is a phenomenological position – would need to be reconsidered from an epistemological, ontological and/or spiritual position. Crucially, by starting from an epistemological position, but incorporating within this a recognised tradition of practice unmistakably affiliated to the object for restoration, would in effect also (potentially) incorporate the ontological and/or spiritual dimensions. What is being stressed decisively here is the synthesis between epistemology and ontology which has been ruptured by the presence of modern historical consciousness (and Brandian theory as a manifestation of this – something which will be taken up in the next section).

It is important to remember that Brandi’s phenomenological approach to restoration is based on the fine arts (essentially paintings and sculpture) and that Brandi believes that the materials v. image relationship is not the same in the handicrafts: ‘The work of art in which the materials triumph we call handicraft: the jewel, the vase, the plate, not the picture or the statue’.³¹⁶ He is here implicitly recognising the importance of *process* in the restoration of handicrafts by elevating the significance of the materials (i.e. substance) to the same level as form (i.e. appearance). As such, for the restoration of handicrafts the material chosen and the processes used *are* meaningful. However, Brandi’s interpretation of ‘handicrafts’ is not clearly defined. To what extent this should encompass fine crafts such as many aspects of furniture and a great deal of decorative arts and architecture, is unclear. However, much of furniture and decorative art (and indeed applied arts and architecture) were produced in series – they are the product of making traditions many of which surely *have* extended into

³¹⁶ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.102).

the present.

Although not necessarily applicable (arguably) in paintings and sculpture and perhaps with less relevance in archaeology (because of the absence of implicit living vitality) there is no obvious reason why the ‘fine crafts’ – including the decorative and applied arts and architecture (typically non-archaeological) – should be considered differently to the handicrafts with regard to substance and process. However, this understanding is *contrary to* the present tendency in scientific conservation-restoration to approach every object as if it were a work of fine art (which is arguably not unrelated to Brandi’s cumulative influence).

In order to locate a ‘legitimate’ (i.e. ‘authentic’) tradition of practice (or an individual bearer of certain meaningful knowledge and expertise)³¹⁷ one would have to turn to the ‘world of life’ (because context *is* relevant) and to the *person* as the subject of history and thus towards the *pre-scientific* and *pre-reductionist* dimension in their search (for example, the traditional arts and crafts). Within such a dimension of practice, objectives (i.e. intentions) and therefore ‘truth’ would be of the *fundamental truth* kind and not the truth inscribed by rational criteria or rules of practice (hence the distinction between the scientific *knowledge of what* and the practice-based *knowledge of how* discussed in Chapter 1.3). As such, the ‘spirit’ (i.e. the ontological bias) of practice (or its bearer/s) would authenticate the restoration process – as for instance, was the case with the African totem pole restored at the British Museum and the Mazarin chest at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (discussed in Chapters 1.1 and 1.2, respectively).

Obviously, the materials and techniques used in practice (which have conferred upon them implicit living vitality) are essential in this regard. As such, the spirit of practice is embodied in the person to whomever this ‘legitimacy’ is granted. It is essential to stress here that this does not preclude scientific conservation *per se* (in so far that it is *only* conservation), it merely opens up a ‘pathway’ for ‘authentic’ restoration which necessitates the synthesis of the epistemological and the

³¹⁷ The legitimacy of any tradition of practice is not easily defined but would almost certainly require research in the social sciences. Individual bearers would perhaps be more easily identified but this would surely be outside of the conservator’s (and curator’s) qualification.

ontological dimensions. This would in turn (this thesis argues) allow for a more representative and inclusive and sustainable approach to preserving the past in *all* of its manifestations – tangible and intangible.

In Western aesthetics the original work of art is considered to symbolise, and thus embody in material form, the spirit of the original creator. Brandi expresses this in the following terms:

In its material, its physical constituents, one cannot and should not see anything but the means by which an image is revealed, and a moment of history, is fixed in a record of human spirituality. ...the above premise cannot be denied, except by denying what makes a work of art into a work of art. [As such]: It must be understood that, in any conflict between the work's aesthetic and historical aspects, the aesthetic must always win, for that is what makes it art.³¹⁸

The visual appearance of the original (i.e. authentic) work of art ensures that the spirit of the maker is transmitted to the viewer. Brandi refers to this as an *epiphany* of the image which: '...calls for a suspension of time and the apparition of the work in an eternal present'.³¹⁹ In this respect, Brandi is talking about the aesthetic experience which can be considered a moment of revelation or realisation in the viewing consciousness (which always exists in the present). The apparition existing in an eternal present (accordingly) is necessarily an attribute of any particular observer in any given situation. Where the object is situated is, therefore, of *great importance* because this determines not only to who but also the way in which this experience may occur.

This constitutes (effectively) an abridgement that occurs between the object and the subject (albeit under certain 'conditions'), one which Brandi expresses in the following terms:

...the problem of connection has to do with current enjoyment of the

³¹⁸ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.109-110). Remember, Brandi also states that context is irrelevant.

³¹⁹ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.123).

painting and not the painting in itself. The connection does not act on the painting as pure reality but on the painting as it reveals itself as pure reality in the current consciousness of the observer. The difference is substantial, in that the connection will not effect the eternal present of the work except as this eternal present must become manifest in the historical present of a person's consciousness. So it transpires that the problem of connection can never be resolved once and for all, not even by the creator of the painting, unless the terms of the space contiguous to the painting are fixed once and for all.³²⁰

The idea of an eternal present thus lies at the foundation of the phenomenological reduction. Central to this is the concept of a transcendental spirit which is represented in material form.

Now, with respect to restoration theory, the preservation of the material (and image) represents a physical record of history – in other words a physical record of human life. In archaeological practice the object is typically considered as evidence of the past and thus studied scientifically in order to reveal information about the past. This forms the basis of what has been described as a positive historiography (i.e. a scientific history). This is also the case in the fine arts although there is necessarily greater importance laid on the epiphanous nature of the experience of viewing the image. In other words, in fine arts restoration the aesthetic experience must be considered *as well as* the historical evidence (typically the aesthetic to a greater extent).

The idea of a transcendental spirit in fine arts owes a great deal to the philosophy of Hegel. According to Russell:

At the end of the nineteenth century, the leading academic philosophers, both in America and in Great Britain, were largely Hegelians. [His]: ...interest in 'spirit' owes much to his attraction to mysticism in his youth.³²¹

³²⁰ C. Brandi, 2005 (p.123).

³²¹ B. Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Counterpoint, 1984 (first pub. 1946) (p.701).

Hegel's conception of 'spirit' refers to the processes that lead to the historical development of human consciousness (or mind). To him, civilisations were more than the sum of their constituent parts. This way of thinking led to the conception of 'culture' (i.e. the 'unreality of separateness'). Hegel believed there was a 'spirit' that transcended the whole and gave it definition and meaning and unity manifested in a certain temperament or character. This distinguished one culture from another. For Hegel, 'spirit' was also believed to be progressive in the sense that it advanced the human consciousness to a 'higher' standing – which he referred to as a process of 'becoming'.³²²

Related to this, a distinguishing feature of Hegelian philosophy was the triadic movement known as the 'dialectic'. This was used to illustrate the process of 'becoming' which Hegel described in terms of 'thesis' (first phase), 'antithesis' (second phase) and 'synthesis' (higher phase) – culminating in the 'absolute spirit'.³²³ For example, 'thesis' (e.g. the French Revolution) would cause the creation of its 'antithesis' (e.g. the Reign of Terror that followed), and would eventually result in a 'synthesis' (e.g. the Constitutional state of free citizens). 'Absolute spirit', Hegel argued, can never be achieved (as it only *becomes*) but should be understood as the highest realisation of human consciousness.³²⁴

By objectifying the concept of 'spirit', Hegel's philosophy had the effect of inferring facts out of humanistic understanding (i.e. consciousness). His theory of aesthetics and philosophy of history were important influences on the phenomenological reduction expounded by Brandi.³²⁵ When this idea of the evolution of the human

³²² There is arguably a contradiction here because Hegel's conception of ontology is linear and thus time-dependent; surely ontology (which concerns one's pure being) is not correlated to 'time'?

³²³ It should be noted here that Hegel used this classification only once, and he attributed the terminology to Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). However, the terminology was largely developed by Johann Fichte (1762-1814) – a neo-Kantian but it has tended to remain synonymous with Hegel ever since.

³²⁴ Which, Hegel saw in German man. This idea of *becoming* is apparent in the writing of the Protestant theologian and reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546) who used the term 'calling' in a similar way; it infers forward movement and progress.

³²⁵ The author believes that in the fine arts – in particular painting, sculpture and, to some extent architecture (particularly archaeological), there may be exemplars of the (so-called) originary 'spirit' and that, as such, they are rightly treated as 'one-off' examples and duly preserved. However, it is not necessarily appropriate to consider the so-called lesser arts, such as furniture,

consciousness is understood as an historical process (i.e. when the idea of spirit reflects back on itself) ‘spirit’ may be understood to be embodied in material substance. This materialist view of history can lead to a generalised understanding of the past, thereby producing the arguably unsubstantiated conception of spirit related to the material creations of that particular time, encapsulated for instance, by the phrase ‘spirit of the times’.³²⁶ However, according to Husserl (who was also an important influence on Brandi’s thinking about the past): ‘Spiritual being is fragmentary. To speak of spirit as reality (Realitat), presumably a real (Realen) annexe to bodies and having its supposedly spatiotemporal being within nature is an absurdity’.³²⁷

Related to this is the process of phenomenological reduction, which forms the basis of scientific (positive) historiography (as represented in materials). Both have, it can be argued, contributed to the feeling that museums have become distant (i.e. abstract) from culture itself (i.e. the ‘world of life’). Casson explains this in the following terms:

Some do see museums as full of dead objects and there is general agreement that objects change or are changed, when they enter a museum. If they do not die, their ‘normal’ lives are certainly interrupted, and they are experienced differently from before.³²⁸

Lowenthal expresses a similar view in the following terms: ‘These protective measures alter the conditions in which artefacts are experienced: they remove relics from the here and now, from continuity with the world around them, to an exclusive

the fine crafts, the decorative arts and/or the handicrafts and a great deal of architecture in a uniform way.

³²⁶ This way of understanding the past was central to the founding of the C19th. heritage preservation movement. It is apparent in the writings of Thomas Carlyle and Augustus Pugin – both of whom had an important influence on the thinking of John Ruskin. This is examined in Part III.

³²⁷ E. Husserl, *Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man*. Lecture delivered in Vienna, 10th May 1935 (p.17). Available from: http://www.users.cloud9.net/~bradmcc/husserl_philcris.html [Accessed on 15th February 2006].

³²⁸ H. Casson, ‘United Kingdom Museums Association Conference’ (1960), cited by Strong, ‘Obituary for Sir Hugh Casson’ (1999), in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.73).

milieu'.³²⁹ It is a view similarly endorsed by Kopytoff and Pearce:

In museums many dynamic objects become stilled, such as costume and personal ornaments which were intended to be seen and appreciated, at least in part in movement; or clocks which no longer function. [Objects are]: ...withdrawn from their exchange sphere and deactivated, so to speak, as commodities.³³⁰

If it is the case then, that when objects enter museums (through phenomenological reduction and abstraction from the 'world of life') they are suspended (i.e. 'frozen' in time), this is what forms the basis of the positive 'material' historiography. Art objects may also be valued no less for their appearance; hence the primary value domains within museums are the 'historical' and the 'aesthetic', respectively. As with Brandian theory, this suspension of the object within such an environment clearly leads to the need to physically care for them. Scientific conservation – and its approach to restoration – is born from this need.

This leads to what has been described as a *synchronic* conception of heritage preservation in which the primary objective is to retard decay at the point in time that the object enters the museum. Conservation ethics, such as reversibility, are a product of this synchronisation process. This is arguably the unavoidable outcome of positivism in historiography and the subsequent 'closure' of the tangible object of history. By contrast, this thesis is interested in what might be called a *diachronic* conception of restoration which resists the suspension of objects in time. It is this tension between the diachronic and synchronic that characterises what this thesis argues is an unresolved ideological division which has come to characterise practice within the heritage conservation field.

In relation to this, Cramer (comparing natural heritage with cultural heritage), points

³²⁹ D. Lowenthal, 'Age and artefact: dilemmas and appreciation' (1979), cited in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.74).

³³⁰ I. Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process' (1986) and S. Pearce, 'Museums, Objects and their Collections' (1992), cited in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.74). Or perhaps more accurately they become the 'commodity' of the museum (or gallery). One could further add here that much Christian art, which was created specifically for religious monuments, arguably has no proper context outside of those monuments.

out that the aim of preservation of the natural heritage should be to:

...restore the evolutionary adaptability of nature, the capacity to rejuvenate itself [while] ...even the best museum can only present objects taken out of contexts, in location, in time and in culture. In this respect the museum takes on the character of a tomb.³³¹

Phenomenological reduction (and the subsequent suspension of objects in time) is rooted in Western materialism and is arguably the outcome of modern historical consciousness – a phenomenon which is discussed in the next section.

1.4.3: Modern historical consciousness

In the C19th. in Europe the conception of history as represented in the material evidence of the past could be said to be a condition of the modern historical consciousness – the basis of which is science (or scientific thought or, sometimes in a derogatory sense, ‘scientistic materialism’)³³² whose methodology has involved what might be called a positive historiography.³³³ In arhaeo-museological conservation, the systematic abstraction (through phenomenological reduction) of objects (i.e. tangible heritage) from the ‘world of life’ (for example, as represented by museums) is largely attributable to the modern historical consciousness. Philippot for example, talks about how:

...the emergence of historical consciousness at the end of the eighteenth century brought an end to the traditional link with the past. Ever since this ‘rupture’ the past has been considered by Western civilisations as a completed development. This new ‘historical distance’ has produced the conditions necessary for a more objective, scientific approach to the past

³³¹ F. Cramer, ‘Durability and change: a biochemist’s view’ (1994), cited in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (p.74).

³³² Scientistic materialism is a philosophical stance which posits a limited definition of consciousness to that which is observable and subject to scientific method (i.e. based on empirical, measurable evidence and subject to the laws of reasoning). It is not based upon a tradition of understanding.

³³³ Positivism is a philosophy systematically developed at the beginning of the C19th. by Auguste Comte who claimed that the only authentic knowledge is scientific knowledge. This view (which may also be referred to as scientific ideology) is often shared by technocrats who believe in progress *through* science. Positivism emerged as a philosophy of science deriving from Enlightenment thinkers and is connected to (so-called) ‘scientistic materialism’.

in the form of historical knowledge [i.e. a positivist historiography].³³⁴

The use of the term ‘rupture’ and the phrases ‘historical distance’ and ‘completed development’ imply discontinuity or termination and thus disinheritance, associated with the scientific approach to the past. This is related to the conception of the past as represented in the physical objects of history (i.e. tangible heritage). The apparent termination (which from the point of view of a tradition of practice also suggests ‘annihilation’) suggested here has been (arguably) brought on by the gradual ‘sciencing’ (or ‘naturalisation’ in philosophical terms) of the human consciousness that characterised the period following the (so-called) European Enlightenment.³³⁵ This is attributable to the Western epistemological tradition – the foundation of which again is science.³³⁶ Museums and universities – bastions of scientific knowledge – which historically formed the basis of Western education, are its guiding lights.³³⁷

However, there are of course alternative positions. Lowenthal argues for example:

It is the educated elites of modern Western civilisations who are primarily concerned with preserving the physical form of the material culture of the past; other cultures hold ‘folkways’... more important than

³³⁴ P. Philippot, ‘Historic Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, Guidelines’, in *Preservation and Conservation: Principles and Practices*, Proceedings of the North American International Regional Conference, Williamsburg, Virginia, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1972, Washington Preservation Press, 1976 (pp.367-374). The basis of the positive approach to historiography is therefore scientific epistemology which, since the period of (so-called) Enlightenment (see footnote below), has underpinned the Western intellectual tradition, and which may therefore also be described as the Western *epistemological* tradition.

³³⁵ The Enlightenment was a European intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th- centuries emphasising reason and individualism rather than continuity through tradition. It was heavily influenced by Rene Descartes, John Locke and Isaac Newton and its prominent exponents include Immanuel Kant, Johann Goethe, Francois-Marie Arouet (or ‘Voltaire’), Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith. This idea of ‘breaking’ with tradition is closely linked to the earlier European Church Reforms which is discussed in later chapters – particularly with respect to authenticity in Chapter 2.2 – and forms an important aspect of the final conclusion to the thesis.

³³⁶ C. Dawson, *The Crisis of Western Education*, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1961 associates this phenomenon with the progressive secularisation of Western education since the period of Enlightenment.

³³⁷ E. Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*, Routledge, 1992 examines the role of museums with respect to the Western epistemological tradition.

the physical realities.³³⁸

Caple also describes how museums value objects as evidence about the past and, by extension, as a means to educate people:

As museum objects they are intended to be preserved for ever – for study, display or loan – and have information permanently associated with them. The term value is used... to refer to the value of the object to the museum in terms of evidence of the past, a potential object for display and educative use.³³⁹

Lowenthal's reference to other cultures (or 'folkways') suggests continuity; for example, in the form of a tradition of practice – like a kind of 'living' history. This is not solely related to the physical realities inherited from the past (i.e. tangible heritage) in that it points towards the person as the *subject* of history. There is then, a subject / object dualism represented in this citation.

What can we understand from this? Well, it would seem that approximately two-hundred years of an essentially scientific interpretation of history has created the conception of heritage as exclusively residing in materials which are understood as evidence about the past; 'tangible heritage'. In scientific conservation it (arguably) tends not to be considered that these materials in fact reside in the *present* and that only the moment of initial creation is historical. It can be argued that it is for this reason that present day values often conflict with what is done to the heritage in the name of preservation, such as museumisation, misrepresentation, loss of meaning and attachment, inappropriate restorations, de-contextualisation and so on. It could also be argued that certain heritages continue to 'speak' only to those who already understand and share the value system from which it stems and this continuing communication – the implicit living vitality – sustains a kind of subject / object synthesis. The historicity of understanding of people *in the present* (such as traditions of practice) surely exists beyond the horizons of such a positivistic historiography.

³³⁸ D. Lowenthal, 'Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History' (1996), cited in C. Caple, *Conservation Skills, Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (p.140).

³³⁹ C. Caple, 2000 (p.152).

The problem here is that the continuity of knowledge in the form of *historical practice* (which is therefore embodied in the living *subject* of history) still loses its intrinsic value within the context of scientific conservation. According to authors like Philippot:

Each work of art, each piece of decoration, each historic document is unique and cannot be repeated without faking. It is like a dead language: One can know and understand Latin or Sanskrit, but one cannot speak these languages any more because such speech could not be genuine expression. The unique voice of the past is exactly what must be safeguarded by preservation / conservation. The survival of traditional crafts should not mislead one here. What survives of the craftsman's tradition in the new industrial world is its practical skill...*it is no longer a genuine expression either of the past or of the present... and therefore leads to a faked expression [my italics]*.³⁴⁰

According to Philippot then, the traditional arts and crafts are reduced to the level of practical skill while their intrinsic value to heritage is discounted.³⁴¹ However, surely Philippot's view is built upon a series of untenable assumptions which presume:

- That everyone in Western civilisation 'sees' the heritage in the same way, thereby claiming to know our personal intuitions, knowledge, values and sensibilities – which is not unrelated to the notion of universal values.
- That a mystical phenomenon (i.e. consciousness) is peculiar to us all – a Hegelian view.

³⁴⁰ P. Philippot, 'Historic Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, Guidelines', 1976 (pp.367-374).

³⁴¹ ECCO, for example, requires that the modern conservation practitioner (who also carries out restoration in the *adding to* sense) possesses 'manual dexterity' rather than artistic creative excellence which might seem more appropriate for the restoration of fine quality works of art (or fine craft) – see ref. European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers Organisations (ECCO) Draft ECCO-ENCoRE Proposal for Amendment to P6_TA-PROV(2005)0173, Recognition of professional qualifications ***II. Section X, Article 3: *Acquired rights specific to conservation-restoration practitioners/conservator-restorers*. Annex I.1 Conservator-restorer, 1.1.1 'Knowledge and Skills', June 2005.

- That traditional forms of knowledge lack ‘valuable’ expression – hence the tone of moral indignation inferred by the use of such terms as ‘fake’.

This way of thinking constitutes the intentionally abstract approach to restoration (in the *adding to* sense) expounded by Brandi which perhaps, in turn, is largely attributable to Hegel’s continuing influence over Western aesthetics, accordingly:

Historical consciousness today demands that the authenticity of the documents of the past be respected... Modern aesthetics, on the other hand, in its emphasis on the unique character of the work of art as the creation of an individual consciousness at a given historical moment, has in turn proved that it cannot be reproduced, not even by the artist himself who in attempting to do so would either make a replica – or even a fake – or else create a new work... Aesthetic reality lies entirely in the appearance of the work of art and its understanding cannot be dissociated from the presentation of the work...³⁴²

What is significant here is that from the perspective of the traditional arts and crafts, the fine arts approach to restoration (here discussed) is now used for other heritage domains. The reason for this is because Brandi’s *Theory of Restoration* forms the basis of professionalisation. It could be argued then, that Hegel’s continuing influence has become encoded in the professionalisation process (and all that this entails). Simply put, (and to reiterate) Brandi’s fine arts theory has been misappropriated by the professional administration of conservation and applied to heritage domains for which it was not necessarily intended such as, furniture and aspects of the decorative arts and handicrafts. And, if traditional artists and craftspeople feel excluded (consciously or actually) from the modern practice of scientific conservation (through, for instance, the mechanisms of professional accreditation), this (no doubt) is one of the reasons why.

³⁴² P. Mora (*et al*), ‘Problems of Presentation’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by N. Stanley Price (*et al*), The Getty Conservation Institution, J. Paul Getty Trust, 1996 (pp.343-354). If such a view was applied to fine craft furniture (for example) this would mean that the likes of Humphrey Sladden (who runs the Edward Barnsley Workshops in Petersfield) can only fake the restoration of his own work (which does seem extreme).

Importantly, scientific history (which forms the basis of modern historical consciousness and which is an outcome of the Western epistemological tradition) is essentially abstract in as much as the creator of that history does not necessarily partake directly in the history that he/she creates (evidenced, for example, in the bulk of design writing being written by professional critics rather than practitioners). In other words, this history has been fashioned by what can be described as ‘non-participating’ or ‘disinterested’ observers.³⁴³ For instance, one can write about the history of a tradition of art or craft practice through observing its objects without *being* a traditional artist or craftsman. What is provided is *information* presented in the form of knowledge (usually textually) *about* the materials of that tradition of practice – such as styles, dates, materials, techniques, historical context and so on. An understanding of what it is *to be* a partaker in that tradition of practice is not necessarily incorporated.

This is encapsulated by Caple in the following terms:

A carpenter’s tools and even his furniture may survive, but his expertise, his knowledge of joinery, does not survive directly. It must be deduced from the surviving tools and furniture. Where we have survival of the product – such as a painting or a piece of furniture – we are familiar with archaeologists or art historians deducing the level of expertise of the artist or craftsman who made the object.³⁴⁴

We may indeed be familiar with such views, but how can an archaeologist or an art historian in truth *know* this? A master craftsman, such as a carver or stone mason, is likely to ‘read’ the work in such a way that he/she will ‘know’ every cut that the original maker made and the tools that were used to do it – whether they survived or not. The understanding that is acquired ‘scientifically’ is not only abstract it is necessarily incomplete – and in particular it frequently cannot account for what is termed the ‘tacit knowledge’ of the practitioner.³⁴⁵ Notwithstanding, this way of

³⁴³ S. Luft, ‘Husserl’s Theory of Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism’, in *Research in Phenomenology*, 34 (pp. 198-234), The Netherlands, 2004 (p.212).

³⁴⁴ C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision Making*, Routledge, 2000 (p.27).

³⁴⁵ The concept of (so-called) ‘tacit knowledge’ was developed by Michael Polanyi in *The Tacit Dimension*, Archer Books, New York, 1967. Tacit knowledge refers to knowledge that is wholly or partly inexplicable which often consists, for example, of habits of culture that we do not

thinking also lies beneath the (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science which can be seen to be augmented by the processes of professionalisation which (this thesis argues) is aiming to standardise throughout the institutional sectors of the Western world.

Philippot sees it this way:

...the scientific approach to the past has surpassed national borders and now considers products of all cultures as part of one cultural patrimony of mankind. Living contact with this patrimony can no longer be achieved in revivals – nor, consequently, in reconstructions based on the symbolic value given to a style of the past by romantic nationalism. John Ruskin was the first to express a full awareness of the consequences of the break in the continuity of tradition introduced by the development of the modern historical consciousness.³⁴⁶

In fact, John Ruskin’s philosophical writings inspired the founding of the Arts and Crafts Movement (by William Morris) – in particular his paper ‘The Nature of Gothic’³⁴⁷ – which venerated the traditional arts and crafts. One of the reasons it did so was because Ruskin believed that the modern alienated worker had lost his ‘spirit’ (which, of course, is Hegelian). By sustaining a tradition of practice artists and craftspeople would sustain this spirit; hence the supporters of the Arts and Crafts Movement were at odds with modern *laissez faire* industrialism.³⁴⁸

This laid the foundation of the (arguably *pre-reductionist*) Heritage Preservation Movement formally instigated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

necessarily recognise in ourselves – and therefore it is not easily shared. The tacit aspects of knowing are those that cannot be codified and can only be transmitted via training or gained through personal experience. This can involve learning a skill but not in a way that can be written down. In this sense, it is the opposite of the concept of ‘explicit knowledge’. As such, it may be described as *knowledge of how* (as opposed to ‘scientific’ *knowledge of what*). The Laurence Beckford example provided in Section 1.3.2: ‘The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR)’ is an illustrative example of such ‘tacit knowledge’.

³⁴⁶ P. Philippot, ‘Historic Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, Guidelines’, 1976 (pp.367-374).

³⁴⁷ J. Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, Pallas Editions, 2001 (pp.139-170).

³⁴⁸ The basis of which is arguably (so-called) ‘scientific materialism’ – Adam Smith’s *An Inquiry into the Nature and the Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776 was a cornerstone in its development.

(SPAB) in 1877. The Arts and Crafts Movement (this thesis argues) should therefore be understood in relation to the SPAB. Its insistence on continuity in the form of traditions of practice might also in effect be understood as an attempt to overcome the impasses of the modern (scientific) historical consciousness. Beneath their forceful and much publicised denunciations of C19th. *in toto* architectural restorations (meaning reconstructions today), Ruskin and Morris were fierce advocates of *substance* and *process* (as Chapter 3.1 will argue).

Philippot recognises that:

This progress [of the scientific approach to the past] is expressed by the work of historians and the sensitivities of cultivated people. The universality of this modern viewpoint, as compared to the classicist or nationalistic one, does not prevent some fluctuation of values from one nation to another.³⁴⁹

From this, the concept of (so-called) ‘universal value’ emerges, which implies homogeneity and therefore, loss of cultural specificity – inevitably raising concerns regarding the often complex realities of meaning sustained *by* cultural divergence (which may include traditional arts and crafts practices and other essentially ‘pre-scientific’ forms of expression). The use of terms such as, ‘nationalism’ infers that craftspeople have a kind of underlying political agenda. As such, Philippot here fails to distinguish between nationalism and the importance of cultural diversity and identity (the implicit living vitality). Hence, the scientific approach to the past in the form of historical knowledge could be in danger of subverting alternative reasons for preserving the past – which may lie beyond the primary ‘universal’ aesthetic and historical values.

Moreover, the intentionally abstract approach to restoration that this brings – which may be appropriate for certain domains within the fine arts (such as, paintings and sculpture – and perhaps archaeology) – when it becomes the universal approach used for *all* domains of heritage it inevitably contributes to disagreements. This tends to

³⁴⁹ P. Philippot, ‘Historic Preservation: Philosophy, Criteria, Guidelines’, 1976 (pp.367-374).

be over such things as materials and techniques used, standards of competence and proficiency and feelings of marginalisation or exclusion, contributing to a sense of disconnectedness and discontinuity and therefore disinheritance and disenfranchisement within the heritage sector (as argued in the preceding chapters)

In relation to this, Brandi explains that historical consciousness changes the methods used in restoration in the following terms:

Since much of what has been built over time has its basis in functional as well as artistic requirements, a traditional approach to conservation is often advocated; whereby any intervention is conducted as part of the normal use and repair of the structure. This approach, although admirable in its simplicity, ignores the fact that as recognised cultural property, these sites are now different, divorced from their past by the presence of historical consciousness, and that consciousness dictates new motives and methods for their use and preservation.³⁵⁰

What really matters here is who assumes authority over and then administers this so-called ‘divorcing’? Surely it can be argued that this is also a product of human consciousness. For instance, it can be argued that cultural property (or tangible heritage) is understood in accordance with the methodologies used to interpret it. If it seems to be ‘divorced’ (and this is problematic), then this may be because of the prevailing methodology – which, of course, would be a hermeneutical problem. One of the reasons why the heritage may seem ‘distant’ or ‘divorced’ or a ‘completed development’ is because it is valued first and foremost in *historical* terms.

What is being stressed here is that heritage tends to ‘become’ a reflection of the dominant value ‘type’. In other words, if it is valued above all in historical terms then it will inevitably become consigned *to* history (i.e. the past). On the other hand, if for instance, heritage reflected cultural values (i.e. the present reality – which are not necessarily limited to historical value) this arguably would not occur, redressing the

³⁵⁰ C. Brandi, *Teoria del Restauro* (1977) in F. Matero, ‘The Conservation of Immovable Cultural Property: Ethical and Practical Dilemmas’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 1993, Volume 32, Number 1, Article 2 (pp.15-21)

likelihood of losing its implicit living vitality. This conception of heritage would be more akin to a celebration of the present and not one solely based on ‘disengaged’ memory. However, the scientific approach to the past in the form of historical knowledge (i.e. the positivist historiography) which has been interpreted and inscribed by (so-called) ‘non-participating observers’ adds to this hermeneutical problem because the sense of continuity provided by ‘partakers’ becomes obscured (to the point of opacity) by the dominant methodology (hence the ineligibility of the traditional arts and crafts).

Now, with respect to the practice of restoration, this arguably contributes to the tendency to re-produce the heritage with new materials and methods according to a ‘new’ value-system and form of expression. And because it is guided by technological innovation, (arguably) no longer reflects the activities and aspirations of historically-transcendent culture; hence, the ‘museum style’.³⁵¹ Subsequently, this leads to the belief that restoration should be carried out: ‘...in terms of scientific imagination and technological innovation. [Accordingly]: ...the demonstrated scientific imagination would be no less impressive than the creativity stamped on the art of the past’³⁵² (even though it was described by Cesare Brandi as ‘neutral’).

This appears to suggest that the practice of casting resins in order to fabricate missing elements, such as carvings or surface decoration, should be understood as no less impressive than (for instance) the work of a master wood-carver etc? Surely this would lead to a new kind of heritage – one that reflected advancements in science and technology (largely controlled by institutions affiliated to the State) – and, therefore, a kind of heritage manufacture? This would necessarily lead to a duality in terms of what the heritage comes to symbolise for future generations which, in turn, could have a great bearing on its symbolic qualities and therefore its ‘performative’ power, and, of course, on its historical authenticity (which will be examined in Part II).

This is then, perhaps an inevitable outcome of the (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ which

³⁵¹ E. van de Wetering, ‘The Surface of Objects and the Museum Style’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, 1996 (pp. 415-421).

³⁵² G. Urbani, ‘The Science and Art of Conservation of Cultural Property’, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, 1996 (p.449-450).

(this thesis argues) represents the overthrowing of an essentially ontological paradigm (based on tradition of practice) in favour of a scientific epistemological paradigm which supports technological innovation in restoration; hence the movement from ontology towards technology described above. Modern historical consciousness lies at the heart of this, as does Western aesthetics and the idea of the ‘closed-ness’ of the work of art. It is this that leads to the exclusion of art and craft in favour of science in terms of creative intervention (and the subsequent sense of discontinuity).

According to Vaccaro:

...the sensibility of the second half of the nineteenth century emerges as the expression of an entirely new approach toward cultural heritage, one that is marked by progress in scientific thinking. This approach decrees the impossibility of imitating the styles and works of the past; sanctions, for the first time, the removal of alterations and later additions from a work of art; and makes a clean break between the past and the present. It is in these decades that archaeology, history of art, and history of architecture were defined. This new view disrupts continuity, eliminating the possibility of reinserting oneself into the creative process to open it up once more in competition with the great artists of the past.³⁵³

But this view does, of course, allow for the ‘reinsertion’ of scientific creativity. The difficulty here resides in the fact that to systematically apply this way of thinking to all heritages *is* destructive to the continuity of certain forms of knowledge, as Daly Hartin acknowledges:

[In the pre-scientific epoch]: ...damaged or deteriorated objects were repaired or restored by craftsmen and women whose main occupation was to make similar objects. These craftsmen were often highly skilled and had extensive knowledge of the working properties of their materials and the way they should be used for maximum effect and durability in a

³⁵³ A. Vaccaro (ed.), *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, 1996 (p.263).

new object; they applied this knowledge when repairing old or damaged objects. Paintings were restored by painters or sign-writers, furniture by joiners or cabinet-makers and buildings by masons, all of whom were working with the materials of their trade. This meant that repairs would be made with the same material, e.g. metal on metal, wood on wood, and the emphasis was on regaining or even improving the appearance and function of the object.³⁵⁴

Oddy expresses a similar view in the following terms:

It was not uncommon in the nineteenth and early twentieth century to restore metal objects with matching metal, and stone objects with matching stone, and, as these are the natural ways that a craftsman would think of repairing objects, it is not surprising to find the same techniques and materials used in restoration.³⁵⁵

Accordingly, in the past those that carried out repair and restoration were usually part of the same making tradition (i.e. cabinet-makers would repair and restore cabinet-made furniture, clock-makers clocks, upholsterer's upholstery and so on). The knowledge that such makers possessed meant that they could carry out restoration in a 'like-with-like' manner – as described. Just as with the objects, the knowledge embodied within each craftsperson was an accumulation of history which was transferred from one generation to another – typically by traditional apprenticeship. It is well-known that the C19th. brought a rapid change towards industrial production which supplanted many hand-making traditions. Although new work fell into decline, as modern historical consciousness created interest in the past, the knowledge that had been sustained by such making traditions continued in repair and restoration activities. In fact, this situation has only very recently changed in furniture and decorative arts conservation – noticeable since the changes to education and training in the early 1990's, discussed in Chapter 1.3.

³⁵⁴ D. Daly Hartin, 'An Historical Introduction to Conservation' (1990), cited in E. Pye, *Caring for the Past*, James and James, 2001 (pp.40-41).

³⁵⁵ A. Oddy, *The Art of the Conservator*, edited by A. Oddy, The British Museum Press, 1992 (p.12).

At present, the modern practice of restoration (as carried out in the name of conservation) is having a similar effect on the historic arts and crafts by denying their intrinsic value as a form of living heritage. This new ‘scientific epoch’, therefore, represents not only a move away from ‘like-with-like’ restoration but also the knowledge and traditional practices that are sustained by the cultural patrimony. Modern historical consciousness – scientifically conceived – lies at the heart of this apparent discontinuity.

1.4.4: Conclusion to Part I

Part I of this thesis ‘The Preservation of Tangible Heritage’ examined the historical development of the modern discipline of scientific conservation – from its origins in archaeological practice to its emergence as a professional field of expertise internationally and described how this became underpinned by fine arts restoration theory. From this part of the study the following ideas have been developed.

In recent times, throughout Europe (and the West) the preservation of tangible heritage has been essentially led by the institutional sector, such as museums and universities and related scholarly institutes – reflecting a ‘top-down’, State-sanctioned and Euro-centric vision of heritage. Practice has been essentially reductionist – and based upon the ‘aesthetic’ and the ‘historical’ value of objects. Such values are believed to be inherent qualities of objects. In relation to this, authenticity is understood to reside in (essentially original) historical materials. As such, in terms of restoration practice, authenticity can only be revealed insofar as it exists and (accordingly) cannot be *added to* the historical document in any historically-transcendent and meaningful way.

As a result of this, the practice of restoration is intentionally abstract and based on the superficial appearance of objects (i.e. it is neutral and scientific). Scientific restoration (arguably) precludes metaphysical considerations. The historical document – understood as a record of meaning-conferring, historically-transcendent cultural practice – is terminated and replaced by the muted, inartistic expression of science. In scientific restoration, practice is characteristically innovative and research-based – which materialises in the use of ‘modern’ technologies which changes the nature of *process*. This (inevitably) has an impact on the stock of

knowledge in the field.

With respect to the *process* of restoration, for example, the traditional arts and crafts are disqualified in terms of their intrinsic value to heritage and in the (so-called) ‘paradigm shift’ from craft to science manifested in the professionalisation of the field. The scientific basis of professionalisation has its origins in archaeological practice and gained pace in the post-WWII period – moving into wider heritage domains such as, furniture and the decorative arts, bringing about a palpable decline in capability in the traditional arts and crafts-based skills associated with these domains.

The ‘paradigm shift from a craftsman-based approach and thinking to a scientific and research-based academic discipline’ may be interpreted as reflecting a general shift from what might be thought of as the ontology of practice to a scientific epistemology and, by extension, towards a paradigm defined by technology (i.e. technical research). This ‘paradigm shift’ may in turn be described as a process of ‘sciencing’ (or ‘naturalisation’) which (arguably) has contributed to the de-sublimation of practice and a loss of aesthetic interpretation in favour of technical interpretation and rational ‘adductive’ reasoning. This changes the datum upon which judgements about interventive practice are made and in turn the *intentionality* of practice. In the discipline of scientific conservation for example the primary intention is to slow down the rate of material deterioration.

Accordingly, the ‘wider’ objective of Tangible Heritage Preservation is to provide an ‘authentic’ physical record of the past (i.e. a positive historiography) whereby the objects ‘emerge’ in time (i.e. historically) and are suspended in time as a record of *that* past in the present. This may be described, again in the widest sense, as a (theoretically) *synchronic* (i.e. static) view of heritage – culminating in what is essentially a ‘dead’ (i.e. dehumanised) historiography.