

Doctoral Dissertation

The problem of separation of the paint layer during the process of transferring (removal) a wall painting on examples of transfers of wall paintings with a complex technological structure

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SUMMARY

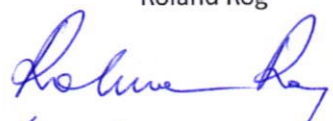
The presented dissertation is an attempt at summarising the research on the problem of separation of the paint layer of a wall painting, understood as the phenomenon of separation of components in the thickness of this layer occurring for a variety of reasons. The author of the dissertation takes a closer look at the issue of separation, a problem that is often downplayed but is potentially significant when one is faced with the need to carry out a painting transfer. As the issue of separation mainly arises in the case of the removal of mural paintings with complex technological structure (in other words, paintings with complex technology), it is the cases of transferring these works that have become the centre of the author's interest. These cases have also become the focus of this dissertation.

The first part of the argument consists of an analysis of the problem of the stratification of the wall painting, which has appeared in various forms in conservation practice. This section details instances of this phenomenon and the countermeasures that have been taken to minimise its impact. Also mentioned are the types and extent of the research that has been undertaken on an ad hoc basis to develop effective conservation methods to address the problem of stratification. A systemisation of this phenomenon according to the immediate causes of its occurrence is also proposed in this chapter. The section concludes with an attempt to articulate the nature of the problem of separation of the paint layer during the removal of a wall painting with a complex or, as the theme of the work indicates, complicated technological structure.

Chapters two and three are the most important part of the work. The former collects and describes in detail a selection of works (art objects, heritage and/or historical objects), each of whom, although different in function and technological construction, is at the same time characterised by the complexity of this construction. In addition to descriptions of the objects themselves, reports are presented on the conservation measures the author has taken to minimise the effects or prevent the risk of separation of the paint layer occurring during the removal of the painting. Ad hoc conservation surveys were carried out during each of these developments, the reports of which I have included in the description of each development. For the sake of the order, the reports and results of the extensive research have been placed in the first subsection of part three, which is entirely devoted to the investigative aspect of my dissertation. Subsection two of part three describes the in-depth research that was warranted in view of the experience gained from the described implementations, as well as the ad hoc research carried out on that occasion. This section therefore describes an investigation into susceptibility of plaster that was the base of Antoni Michalak's 1940s painting on the ceiling of the University of Wrocław's Leopoldina Hall to indicated chemical substances. The next stage of the research was conducting a study of the degree of adhesion of a chosen substrate of one of the wall paintings to the wall structure and a normal lime plaster. In addition, this chapter describes the tests of the resistance of paint layers in selected wall paintings to the indicated chemicals, as well as tests of the susceptibility of the substrates of selected wall paintings to similar agents. The analytical section, however, mainly describes the research carried out into the possibility of removing a fragment of a wall painting using the chemical weakening of its base. The third chapter ends with conclusions.

The dissertation closes with a summary, which can also serve as a starting point for further research into minimising the risk of separation a wall painting during its removal. The objective of this future research should be to determine to what extent it would be possible to reduce the role of the paint stripping tool in the stripping process. The search for new methods should be combined with a simultaneous study of the possibility of chemically weakening the cohesion of the components of the painting substrate. Although the activities described here concerned a painting with a complex technological structure, in the long term the aim of the research might be to use the modification of the stripping procedure proposed in this work when transferring any type of a wall painting.

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10.07.2023