

Review of New Books on Conservation

The Oddities by Homer

It is uncertain whether "Homer" is the author's first name (as in my dad's name) or his last name (as in Winslow Homer). As is now the common practice for most conservators/restorers giving recommendations for conservation, it is probably a pen name to avoid the inevitable liability suits. The French element among us claims that it was really the start of a shopping list beginning with "Homard" which he began at the same time as the book but was unable to complete because his book used up all the ink he was allowed during that fiscal year. This conclusion is supported by the fact that "Homer" is obviously written with the inspiration and emotion typical of hunger whereas the conservation platitudes in the rest of the book simply whet one's appetite to put the book down.

Just as Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus introduced many of their existential ideas to the world via the novel, Homer has chosen this same vehicle to introduce conservation ideas. The relation between these authors and conservation is not that far-fetched considering they published *Nausea* and *The Plague*.

The book begins with "this night the museums are with me". Some reviewers have speculated that Homer is a night watchman at a museum, whereby he gleans his expertise without the prying eyes of "I-told-you-so's". I, however, am of the opinion that he is a conservator working 9 to 5. He refers to "this night" simply because he is working at the optimum light level of 5 lux, as recommended by Michelson (sometimes known as Michalski to conceal his Polish origins) and Morley who maintain that it is not the level of light that matters but the speed.

Evidence that Homer is a conservator is seen in his description of Charybdis and Scylla, which is commonly referred to as "the conservator's dilemma" or being between a rock and a hard place. His repeated involvement with ships and moly can be none other than reference to the "Snow Squall" and Molly O'Guinness Carlson. Circe and the Cyclops obviously

refer to well known personalities in conservation and their limited vision. I recommend this as a book which paper conservators should de-assidify and de-Troy.

Bart Simpson
Restorer of Modern Antiquities

Letter to Editor

Dear Resent Setbacks,

I rekently rekeived your e-mail kall for submissions - I've discovered its simpler to just forward all the messages to other parts of the world, mostly to the United Nations. But for a few minutes at least, I intensively read a phrase here and there, so I found the kall for papers.

I noted that Resent Set of Baks will be published by some new group called CAC-ACCR, instead of IIC-CG. Before kontributing, I have to say I'm just a little konserned about unnessary wear and tear, the kallous wastage of the letter "C" you are kausing. My keyboard is almost exhausted. You use up IIC-CG all those times and now you throw it all away, proposing yet another raft of "C"s be used up. From IIC-CG to CAC-ACCR doubles the konsumption, every time. What about the "C"s I already use up typing CAPC, ICCROM, ICOM-CC, ICOM, ICOMOS, ICTOP, ECCO, CIDOC, and CECA? Besides, all these akronyms sound like one big IKK, and you add CAC-ACCR, which sounds even more like a bad kase of katarrh.

Therefore, if CAC-ACCR stays, I urge all the readers of Resent Situps to set an environmental example, and save letter "c" by substituting "k" or even "s" at every opportunity. Also, "q" and "x" present greatly overlooked and under-rated opportunities. Konservators, put your ethix into aktion! Preserve skarse heritage alphabetikal resources, kompensate for otherwise blatant overuse!

Wishing you all the best for all your work there at Get off My Bakk, I thank you, I assure you of my highest regards,

Signed,
I'm as professional as anyone.