

HARMFUL IMPACT OF VARIOUS FACTORS ON TEXTILE ARTEFACTS

"Museums shape our view of objects and artistic creations", French writer Andre Malraux remarked. They shape it so strongly that we can hardly imagine the world without museums. The museum 'eliminates' an object or a creation from the everyday world. It enables us to compare individual items and their values with other similar items and creations. The majority of textile artefacts are kept in museums.

Textile artefacts are the most demanding segment of cultural heritage in terms of their preservation, conservation and restoration, and also their presentation. As a material of organic origin, the textile is short-lived and prone to quick deterioration. Because they are so susceptible to many destructive factors, textiles have to be treated with utmost care. The preventive conservation begins in museum depots and textile storages, and thus the method of fumigation of textile artefacts is important, as is the way in which they are folded and the paper used to wrap them. It is well-known that acid-free paper has been recommended for some time now, and in recent time some museums began using various polyester products (Teyvek, Vrtek and similar). Furthermore, it is recommended that textile collections are kept in dry spaces. Too high a humidity and inadequate temperature – those faithful companions and allies of old buildings (especially relevant for sacred textiles kept *in situ*), can cause numerous deformations, for example, fibre raising or shrinking, accelerated aging, loss of pigment, and eventually break-up of chemical composition of fibres. Along with inadequate temperature, too much moisture can cause emergence of dangerous microorganisms and moulds.

It is particularly important to protect textile items from light, because its destructive impact will make colours paler and contribute to the break-up of fibres. Both natural and artificial light, and especially direct light, that is, exposure to invisible short-wave sections of the UV spectrum and infrared rays, cause permanent chemical and physical changes contributing to further deterioration, destruction and decomposition of fibres, accelerate aging and loss of colour.

Dust and other impurities collect on textile surfaces, but also penetrate deeper into the textile during the shrinking and stretching processes, and tear filaments with sharp edges of their molecules, causing irreparable damage.

Consequences of activity of various insects, such as silver fish (*Lepisma saccharina*) of the *Thysonura species*, common clothes moth (*Thineola bisselliella*), case-bearing clothes moth (*Thineola pellionella*) and carpet moth (*Trichophaga tapetzella*), as well as several kinds of carpet beetles (*Anthrenus vorax*; *Anthrenus verbasci*; *Anthrenus scrophularie in Altagenus piceus*), can be lethal for textiles.