



RECANATI
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Recanati (Italy)

July 4 – July 23

Instructor: Mr. Sherif Afifi, Head of Rare Books Conservation and Restoration at the Library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina), Egypt

Capacity: 10 Students

Tuition: € 2.000,00 (does not include: airfare to Italy, accommodation, food, required insurance).

Craft and Conservation of Oriental Books

This 3 week class aims to cover the craft of traditional Islamic and Coptic books and bindings, including conservation and preservation techniques.

The lessons will be divided into theoretical and practical components, with a stress on the application of skills.

The theoretical component will explore the structure of Oriental books, and their history and evolution in order to understand a contextually relevant approach to their conservation.

During the practical components, the students will create 2 facsimile bindings (Islamic and Coptic style), reproducing historical binding techniques and making use of original materials and traditional tools. The students will also create samples of a variety of oriental endbands.

Learning Outcomes - Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Describe and define oriental book components and writing supports
- Identify and explain differences of book binding structures
- Design and create 2 historical types of book bindings
- Identify the challenges in the preservation and conservation of the oriental books
- Acquire appropriate conservation methods and techniques

That intermediate class is aimed at people who work in the field of conservation, as well as those requiring better knowledge about the care of books and bound material in libraries, archives, and museums. Those managing book collections or archives will acquire skills in analysing the nature of bound material, and understanding the state of conservation, and best practices in handling, storage and conservation of library and archival materials.

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Contents

Lectures

History of oriental book:

- Manufacturing techniques
- Eastern paper
- Inks (carbon, metal-gall and mixed)
- Eastern endbands (Coptic, Ethiopic, Islamic style)
- Sewing systems
- Boards
- Cover
- Decoration

Conservation of oriental book:

- Preservation (environment control, collection care)
- Preservation in low-resources areas
- Damages identification
- Conservation principles
- Conservation operations (deacidification systems, disinfection, disinfestation, paper and binding conservation methods)

Workshop

Coptic style binding

- Prepare the bookblock
- Sewing
- Endbands
- Boards
- Cover
- decoration

Islamic style binding

- Prepare the bookblock
- Sewing
- Endband
- Boards
- Cover
- Decoration

Different endband styles making

Sewn on card boards

Sheriff Afifi

Sherif Afifi currently holds the position of Head of Rare Books Conservation and Restoration at the Library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina) in Egypt, where he has worked since 2006. In 2013 he was selected for



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voluntary work and training with the British Library Preventative Conservation Team. He has a Master's degree in Photographic and Paper Heritage Conservation from the Department of Chemical Science at the University of Catania, Italy and the Faculty of Applied Arts at Helwan University, Egypt.

Sherif has developed and shared internet applications which serve the conservation community and, in line with his knowledge-sharing beliefs, has launched a successful and much-consulted YouTube channel and writing a blog which provides conservation tutorials.

He has been involved in the planning and the application of a number of international conservation and restoration projects for the Library of Alexandria and other institutions. He was fundamental in the establishment of the Library of Alexandria's first specialist conservation training center in Egypt and in 2015 he was awarded the ICOM - Egypt certificate in recognition of his efforts in the field of heritage conservation.