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NEWSLETTER

Wet Organic Archaeological Materials

ICOM-CC WORKING GROUP

ICOM-CC ICOM international council of museums – committee for conservation

In this issue

FROM THE COORDINATOR

Dear Colleagues,

With this newsletter we welcome you to the new triennium. We would like to introduce you to the new coordination team and share an update from our Working Group's participation in the ICOM-CC Triennial Conference in Valencia in 2023 along with news and requests from colleagues. Furthermore, we draw your attention to the Call for Papers for our Interim Meeting which will take place in Göteborg, Sweden, in September 2025. Do consider submitting an abstract.
We would also like you to start considering colleagues who you would like to put forward for our Lifetime Achievement Award which will be given at the Interim Meeting.

We look forward to a triennium with much exchange of knowledge based on research as well as experiences from everyday working life with wet organic archaeological materials and all that entails.
We hope to see you in Göteborg next year.

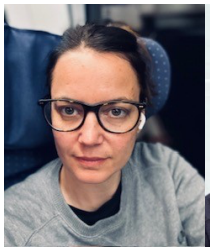
Ida, Coordinator

Part of the coordination team, Valencia 2023. Photo: Jörg Stelzner

Coordination Team 2023-2026

Coordinator Ida Hovmand

Assistant Coordinators:


Ingrid Stelzner


Margrethe Felter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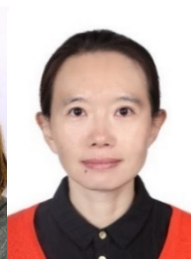

Dawa Shen

We look forward to working as your coordination team for the triennium!

The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group at the ICOM-CC Triennial

The ICOM-CC Triennial Conference was held in Valencia, Spain from the 18th to the 22nd September 2023. The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials (WOAM) papers and planning session were on the afternoon of Thursday September 21st. Three papers were presented: "Wet archaeological leather conservation: A survey of contemporary practice in the Nordic countries" by Ellen Randerz, and Elizabeth Peacock, 'Salt efflorescence on leather objects from the *Vasa* ship' by Johanna Sandström, Francoise Mystere Amombo Noa, Helena Berg, Lars Öhrström, and Marei Hacke, and 'Non-destructive dendrochronology: Analysis of the influence of conservation agents in the wood structure with laboratory-based and synchrotron X-ray micro-computed tomography' by Ingrid Stelzner, Damian Gwerder, Elias Hamann, Jörg Stelzner, Jorge Martinez-Garcia, Marcus Zuber, Philipp Schuetz, and Sebastian Million. All three of these papers are available on the ICOM-CC Publications Online website.

The planning meeting for the Working Group was well attended. The Coordinator (Ida Hovmand) and three Assistant Coordinators (Elsa Sangouard, Kathleen Sullivan, and Ingrid Stelzner) were present. The next interim meeting was proposed for 2025 in Sweden. Part of the planning session included asking for new ideas for specific themes for the Working Group. The suggested ideas were:

- Bringing in a new generation of conservators in our specialized field
- Identifying small projects that would be good for students to do – The Royal Danish Academy was particularly interested in this. They would like to present ideas for students
- Having a database of project ideas – perhaps this could be hosted on the ICOM-CC website
- Retreatment of Collections
- Sustainability is already listed as a theme, but the questions were raised if it should be a greater focus of the Working Group.

Ellen Randerz presenting in Valencia 2023.
Photo: Ida Hovmand

Lifetime Achievement Award

The next Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group's Lifetime Achievement Award will be given out at the conference in Göteborg, so please start thinking about who you would like to nominate.

A short history of the Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group's Lifetime Achievement Award

The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group's Lifetime Achievement Award was established in 2016, with the blessing of the then ICOM-CC Directory Board, as a way of recognising members who had given:

- Distinguished service to the field of wet organic archaeological materials over the course of the nominee's professional career.
- Exceptional contributions with significant impact to the functioning or advancement of the study, treatment and preservation of wet organic materials.
- Dedicated and sustained service to wet organic archaeological materials. This may include: service as a coordinator, assistant coordinator or as chair of one of the local arrangements committees; sustained service as a peer-reviewer for the conference proceedings; service as an editor for one or more conference proceedings.

Recipients can be proposed by any member of the group and the nomination must be supported by two additional letters of support. The award is given at the triennial Interim meeting.

Typically, the award is accompanied by a speech detailing the individual's contribution and this speech is then published in the Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group newsletter.

Three awards can be given each triennium; however, in 2019 we had four exceptional nominations and so, unusually, four awards were given. The recipients to date are:

JIM SPRIGGS (2016)
CLIFF COOK (2016)
PER HOFFMANN (2016)
IAN GODFREY (2019)
KHOI TRAN (2019)
POUL JENSEN (2019)
TARA GRANT (2019)
DAVID GRATTAN (2023)
DILYS JOHNS (2023)
KRISTIANE STRÆTKVERN (2023)

16th ICOM-CC Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Conference (WOAM)

Call for Papers

15th- 19th September 2025
Göteborg, Sweden

It is a great pleasure to announce that the 16th ICOM-CC Wet Organic Archaeological Materials (WOAM) Working Group Interim Meeting will take place on 15th-19th September 2025 in Göteborg, Sweden. Our host is director Sara Roberts and her team at Studio Västsvensk Konservering and colleagues at Göteborg Universitetet.
The conference is planned as a hybrid-format: both in-person and virtual attendance will be possible. Presenters are expected to attend the conference in person.
The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group (WOAM) exists to:

- Disseminate scientific research in the field of wet organic archaeological materials.
- Promote the application of new materials and technologies for conservation.
- Investigate new tools for analysis and documentation.
- Present relevant case studies in the conservation of wet organic archaeological materials.
- Identify further areas of research.
- Facilitate networking for future collaborative activities.

In the Triennial Programme for the 2023-2026 period, ICOM-CC's Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group has established a particular focus on the following subjects, and papers on these themes are invited:

- The ethics and practicalities of treating waterlogged materials, especially large structures or large assemblages.
- Exploration of different sustainable concepts and methods within our field: for example, comparison of different materials used for impregnation, regeneration/reuse of materials used during treatment, methods used to reduce microbial growth during storage and impregnation of waterlogged organics.
- In-situ preservation of waterlogged organics.
- The documentation and characterisation techniques for recording, analysing and assessing waterlogged organics.
- New treatment techniques and continued review of older techniques, such as Kauramin, PEG, Sugars, Alum etc.
- The treatment of composite materials.
- The treatment of non-wood organics.
- The display and storage of waterlogged (and previously waterlogged) organics.
- The role of sulphur and other contaminants in the deterioration of wood and other organics and ways to mitigate these effects.
- The Working Group welcomes research especially from students and emerging professionals.

Although papers and posters addressing these subjects are most welcome, the list is not exclusive. We encourage all original submissions covering topics relevant to the analysis, treatment, study and care of wet organic archaeological materials for consideration. The Working Group particularly encourages research from students and emerging professionals.
After the conference, papers will be published as post-prints on the ICOM-CC Publications Online Platform and will later be available to buy as print on demand via Lulu (www.lulu.com). All authors will be asked to complete and deliver an Author Copyright Transfer Agreement to ICOM-CC, before their paper is processed for publication.
Abstract submissions for Papers

We are using the Coms conference management system to facilitate the submission of abstracts and papers and to make it easier to communicate regarding the reviewing and publication of papers. Please submit abstracts for papers to www.conference-service.com/ICOM-CC-WOAM2025 and follow the steps to create an account. They are due by **8th of June 2024.**
Abstracts should be a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 500 words. The work must be original and not previously published (i.e. print published, as a poster, as an internal review report, or online e.g.: YouTube). The abstracts must contain the title, author(s) name and contact details as well as the body of the abstract. They should not contain images or graphs.

Key dates:
Call for papers issued on 1st of May 2024
May 5th 2024: Start of abstracts submission.
June 8th 2024: Deadline for abstracts submission.
July 8th 2024: Authors notified of abstract review decision.
October 8th 2024: Deadline for final paper submission.
March 15th 2025: Authors notified of final paper review decision.

Abstract submissions for Posters

Abstracts for posters should not be submitted yet. The Call for posters will be announced 15th September, 2024. Start of submission October 1st. Deadline for final submission of posters 15thNovember. Notification 1st January.

Abstract submission for posters should also be through www.conference-service.com/ICOM-CC-WOAM2025.

Abstracts for posters have the same word limits as for papers but be aware that the maximum word count for the poster itself is 2000. Again, the work should be original and not published before.

We look forward to an interesting and stimulating conference.

Kristiane Strætkvern receives ICOM-CC Medal

Former Coordinator of our Working Group Kristiane Strætkvern received the ICOM-CC medal at Valencia for long and outstanding service. She has not only been Coordinator of our Working Group, but also a member of ICOM-CC's Board and Chair of the Board and she is presently a member of ICOM's Working Group on the Future of International Committees.
Many congratulations, Kristiane!

Kristiane Strætkvern's thank you speech having received the ICOM-CC medal. Photo: Ida Hovmand

Past Conference Proceedings Available

There are copies of some past ICOM-CC Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group Conference Proceedings available. The list is given below. If you are interested in obtaining any of these proceedings, please contact Kate Sullivan at kathleen.sullivan@pch.gc.ca and use WOAM Proceedings in the subject line. You will be required to cover the shipping cost. Payment can be made via PayPal, bank wire transfer, or if in Canada by Interac e-Transfer. These proceedings will be distributed on a first come, first served basis.
1981 Ottawa – 17 copies
1984 Grenoble – 1 copy
1996 York – 24 copies
1998 Grenoble – 58 copies
2001 Stockholm – 3 copies

Colleagues' Corner

A 13th century leather bag with rare decorations from the excavations of Staraya Russa

Ekaterina E. Kolosnitsyna
Restorer of the Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve,
Researcher of the Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, Russia

Staraya Russa is one of the most significant towns of the Novgorod land of the Middle Ages. Its role was largely defined by the production of salt from the open mineral springs located there. The cultural layer of the town in the historical part reaches a depth of six meters due to its unique ability to preserve objects made of organic materials (*Toropova, 2011*). Archaeological research in the town is conducted by the Center for Archaeological Research of the Novgorod State University. The objects in the wet cultural layer have been in a state of repose for hundreds of years, despite imperfect but stable conditions in which they have been situated. Upon removal from the excavation, the finds are abruptly exposed to a wholly disparate environment, which frequently has a deleterious impact on them. It is of particular importance to stabilize items made of organic materials, including leather, with the greatest possible dispatch, as they are particularly susceptible to deterioration in an unstable environment. In the work of the Novgorod State University expedition, a preservation method for leather items that are still wet is employed. This involves impregnation with polyethylene glycol, followed by freeze drying. This method has been employed for over a decade and a half, and it is relatively inexpensive, offering stable and predictable outcomes.

Subsequently, restored leather objects are deposited in the Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve.
In the territory of one of the medieval manor houses of Staraya Russa, a belt bag with an original decoration of colored metal was discovered in layers dating to the 1270s–1290s (Fig.1).

Fig. 1. Bag after conservation. Photo: Konstantin Khramov, the Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve.

The bag is represented by a bottle-shaped pouch with a slightly expanding neck, which was tied with a cord through slits. The back piece is composed of a single piece and exhibits considerable wear, including worn holes in the folds. The front side is composed of five pieces, which are presumed to have been originally of different colors.
The seams of the bag have been stitched with canting made of strips folded lengthwise.

The canting has been decorated with numerous thin plates of white metal, which have been placed in each stitch (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. The surviving fragments of metal decoration. Photo: Ekaterina Kolosnitsyna, the Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve.

The length of the plates was greater than the width of the canting, which allowed the master to fix the plates by putting their ends inside the canting, where they were mostly preserved, with only one plate visible on the front side. The edging not only served to embellish the bag, but also functioned as a kind of frame that supported its shape and protected the seams. The only object known to us decorated in the same way (stitched edging with transverse metal plates) is a leather ball found in Novgorod in the archaeological layer of the mid-13th century (*Matekhina, 2019*).

Upon discovery, the bag exhibited remarkable preservation, with all its details intact. In contrast, the metal jewelry, which constituted the majority of the artifacts, was largely lost in antiquity. Timely conservation was instrumental in preserving the plasticity and softness of the leather, greatly facilitating the work of the restorer. The metal decorations and the leather surface were cleaned, leather delamination fragments were eliminated, and small losses of leather were filled in where necessary to restore the seams. Subsequently, all components of the item were affixed together with authentic stitching (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Bag after restoration. Photo: Konstantin Khramov, the Novgorod State Integrated Museum-Reserve.

This bag is one of thousands of items crafted from organic materials that have survived to the present day due to the distinctive characteristics of the cultural layer of select archaeological sites. Regrettably, such finds are often poorly preserved or simply perish if the researchers who discovered them do not take timely measures to stabilize and preserve these artifacts.

Contact: bbkkolosnicyna@mail.ru

References

Matekhina, 2019 - Matekhina T.S. O srednevekovykh predmetakh vostochnogo oblika po materialam raskopok v Velikom Novgorode // Arkheologiya Severa Rossii: «Yugra – volost Novgoroda Velikogo v XI–XV vv.». Surgut; Nefteyugansk; Ekaterinburg, 2019. Chast II. p. 253-287.

Toropova, 2011 - Toropova E.V., Samojlov K.G., Toropov S.E. Arkheologicheskie issledovaniya v Staroj Russe // Vestnik Rossijskogo gumanitarnogo nauchnogo fonda. 2011. № 1. p. 155-166.

ArchaeoBark Project: Archaeological Bark Samples Wanted!

Giovanna Di Pietro, Bern Academy of the Arts (HKB), Switzerland,
Johanna Klügl, Bern Academy of the Arts (HKB) and Archaeological Service of the Canton Bern, Switzerland

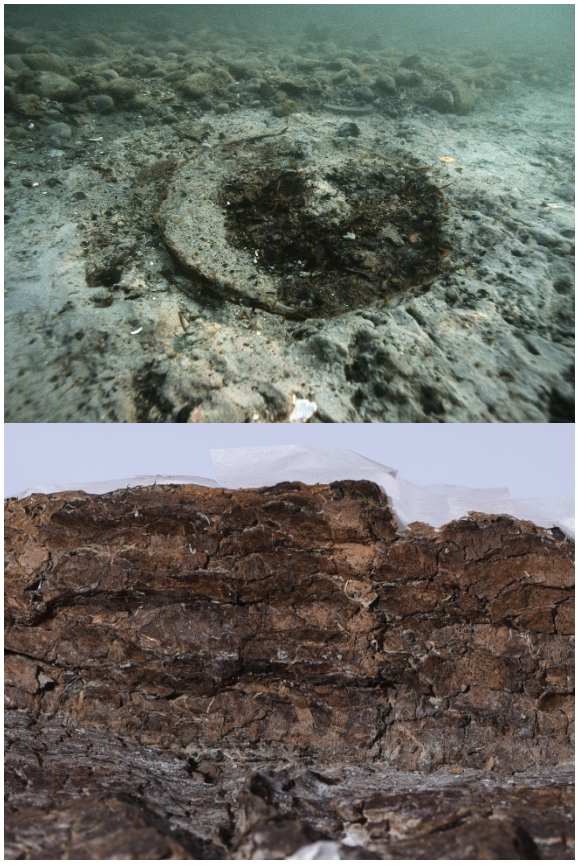


Figure 1. Top: Completely preserved Neolithic bark vessel from Sutz-Lattrigen, Neue Station; Below: Detail of the wall of the Neolithic linden bark vessel after conservation (©Archaeological Service of the Canton Bern, Daniel Steffen (top) und Johanna Klügl (bottom)).

In October 2024 the 3-year project 'Bark: Identification, Conservation and Significance of Prehistoric Bark Vessels' will start. This project is the result of a collaboration between Swiss and German scientists, conservators, archaeologists, and dendrologists with the aim of identifying, conserving and interpreting prehistoric vessels made of unretted bark materials, in particular lime bark.
We will develop tools to enable conservators and archaeologists to identify unretted bark objects possibly using easily accessible equipment. We will investigate the effects of different drying and consolidation methods to dry and stabilize them without loss of information, the main aim of the project. Finally, we will analyse, interpret and compare very early bark vessels from the Linear Pottery wells in Saxony and a series of Late Neolithic and Bronze Age cylindrical vessels from Saxony and from circum-alpine lacustrine settlements.
For our project we are looking for, untreated, unretted and discarded bark materials to use in our experiments, either dry or wet, preferably large pieces. We are interested in bark materials of different ages, not necessarily prehistoric. We expect collections to include the following species: Tilia, Populus, Quercus, Ulmus, Pinus and Betula. If you have such materials, also unidentified and you want to contribute to the research on the identification, use and preservation of organic archaeological objects, we would be very grateful to receive them.
You will be the first to have access to the identification tool we are developing and will have the opportunity to test it first-hand. Your material will be identified and tested, and you will receive the results of our measurements and regular updates on the progress of the research.
More about the project will follow in the coming months.
Contact: johanna.kluegl@be.ch

Other contributors: Ingrid Stelzner (1), Harald Stäuble (2), Kathrin Krüger (3), Oliver Nelle (6), Sebastian Million (4), Jörg Stelzner (1), Ulrich Veit (3)

1LEIZA: Leibniz-Zentrum für Archäologie
2Landesamt für Archäologie Sachsen
3Leipzig University
4Landesamt für Denkmalpflege im Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart (LAD-RPS)

From Oslo 1957 to Boston 2024: RH control for organic finds by saturated salt solutions stands the test of time

Gerhard Eggert
Prof. (em.), Institute of Conservation Sciences, Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design, Germany

To avoid damage by frequent dimensional changes (swelling or shrinking), conserved organic finds need to be displayed at constant humidity. However, how can this be achieved nowadays where energy is expensive, and we all are looking for more sustainable solutions with lower carbon footprints
It is time to re-discover a passive method to control the relative humidity in display cases without permanent energy consumption: saturated salt solutions. The Viking Ship Museum in Oslo was possibly the first museum in the world to use calcium nitrate solutions since 1957 for the display of wooden finds. Textbooks on museum technology in the 1980s mentioned such solutions, but between 1992 and 2022 no relevant articles appeared anymore. In most museums, they were replaced when silica gel products like Artsorb or PRO SORB became available. Frightening 'chemicals' are avoided and silica gel cassettes are easier to handle than containers with solutions. During use, conservators then discovered that, because of the lower capacity of silica gel for water, more frequent maintenance (exchange and re-conditioning of cassettes) was needed. However, the use of solutions survived only in limited places. D. and D.J. Piechota just published their positive experience with magnesium nitrate in a storage cupboard for organic finds since 1998 (!) at the University of Massachusetts, Boston[1].
The use of saturated solutions has been re-evaluated recently[2]. Spilling and creeping of salts can be avoided easily. By choosing suitable salts like magnesium nitrate (RH = 53%) and potassium carbonate (RH = 43%) temperature variations or emission of harmful gases from the solutions do not play any role (The latter cannot be said of silica gel!). And, hitherto not considered: such solutions are excellent absorbers for pollutants, e.g., carbonyl compounds like formaldehyde or formic and acetic acid.
This is currently being tested further at the Laboratory for Measurement Technology of Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Germany using MOS gas sensors. The new research project[3] also comprises practical tests in museums coordinated by Katja Siebel (Veste Coburg). Conservators from 62 (!) institutions worldwide agreed to take part and record RHs inside and outside display cases over a full annual cycle[4].

Fig 1. Relative humidity stabilisation using a saturated salt solution of magnesium nitrate in a display case containing a fragment of a PEG impregnated wooden logboat. Photo: Bevaringscenter Fyn

Among other factors air tightness will be decisive for success.
An interim report on this project will be presented at the IIC Lima Congress September 2024. It is planned to submit the final results to the next ICOM-CC Triennial Meeting in Oslo 2026. A fitting place: The pioneering Viking Ship Museum can look back to more than 50 years of experience (until 2014). Eva Astrup reported excellent results at the ICOM-CC Triennials 1987 in Sydney and 1990 in Dresden[5].

A revival ahead? Good chances, let's see…

[1]Piechota, D., and D. J. 2024. "Thirty Years of Sustainable Control of Relative Humdity". *WAAC Newsletter* 1/2024, 9-19.

[2]Eggert, G. 2022. "Saturated salt solutions in showcases: humidity control and pollutant absorption." *Heritage Science* **10**:54. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40494-022-00689-3.

[3]Eggert, G. 2022. "Two at a time: climatisation and pollutant absorption." *News in Conservation* **93**:12-15. https://www.iiconservation.org/content/news-conservation-issue-93-december-january-2023

[4]A practical guide for participants is available from profdreggert@gmail.com

[5]Download from icom-cc-publications-online.org

Secrets of Ancient nomads from the depth of tombs

Natalia A. Sutiagina
Ph.D. of Historical Sciences,
curator of the exhibition,
Senior Researcher of the Oriental Department of the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia

The exhibition 'An archaeological phenomenon. Between the past and the future' is held in the State Hermitage Museum from 27th of April til 29th of September this year. It is dedicated to three anniversaries – the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the excavations, science and research works of the Xiongnu barrows at the Noin-Uul burial site in Mongolia and the Mongolian-Tibetan expedition (1923–1926) and the 160th anniversary of the birth of Pyotr K. Kozlov (1863-1935), an explorer and researcher of Central Asia. It is the first time that artifacts and documents related to the Noin-Uul burial site, from different museums and archives[1], are being displayed in one museum space.

The science society knew about the ancient tombs in the Noin-Uul mountains in 1913. It happened when A.Ya. Ballod, an engineer from the gold mining company 'Mongolor', accidently entered one of the barrows. However, the purposeful discovery and the worldwide renown of the Xiongnu barrows at the Noin-Uul (1st century BC – 1st century AD) burial site were related to excavations of the Mongolian-Tibetan expedition headed by Pyotr K. Kozlov. The first science monograph dedicated to these archaeological materials 'The culture Xiongnu and the Noin-Uul kurgans' by Sergey I. Rudenko was published only forty years later, in 1962. More recent interest in the barrows in the Noin-Uul mountains appeared in the beginning of the 21st century. From 2005 till 2015 the Russian-Mongolian expedition was headed by corresponding member of the RAS, doctor of historical sciences Natalia V. Polosmak and academician of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences D. Tsevendorj. In 2014 the archaeological complex was included on the UNESCO tentative list of World Heritage sites. In 2023, thanks to some joint efforts of the Institute of Archaeology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and the Chinggis Khaan National Museum, the excavations were resumed.

The geographical location in the north of Mongolia in the permafrost zone and the specificity of the ancient burial ritual are the key to the formation of the 'archaeological phenomenon', which would not have taken place without wooden tombs and objects placed in the graves, including ancient textiles, lacquer and wooden artefacts. The unique preservation of organic materials was facilitated by the depth of the burial pits (more than 10 meters!), thick layers of coal and clay creating a tightness of the burial chamber, stable high humidity and low temperatures. A negative factor leading to the destruction of organic materials was the actions of ancient diggers, who broke the stability of the temperature and humidity inside the wooden tomb.

The most interesting findings and results of the most actual laboratory studies have been presented at the 'An archaeological phenomenon. Between the past and the future' exhibition. Archaeologists, historians, museum

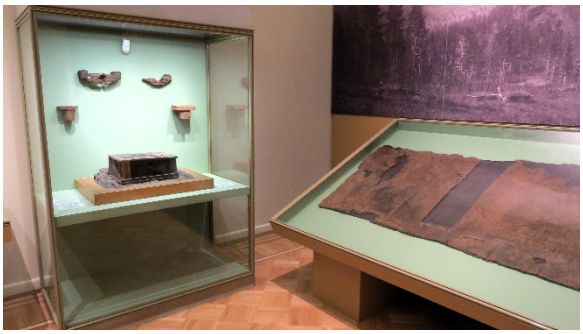
curators, archivists, conservators, chemists, physicists and biologists share and exchange the results of their work and their own views on the Noin-Uul materials. Numerous short stories merge into one - about the Noin-Uul phenomenon and the infinite number of questions and answers related to it.
The exhibition occupies three halls. The material is presented by thematic sections and chronology of events. The first, historical, room is devoted to the biography of Pyotr K. Kozlov, the history of the Mongol-Tibetan expedition and the discovery of the Noin-Uul burial mounds, and the arrival of some parts of the Noin-Uul collection for permanent storage in the Oriental Department of the State Hermitage Museum.

Figure 1 An overview of the first, historical, room. Photo: Georgii A. Shatyi

The first hall demonstrates originals and copies of important documents that determined the course of events in 1924-1934.

Figure 2: A showcase about explorer/researcher of Central Asia Pyotr K. Kozlov. Photo: Georgii A. Shatyi

Authentic items from the Noin-Uul collection are being displayed in the second, archaeological, hall; most of them are shown for the first time.



Figures 3 and 4: Overviews of the second, archaeological, hall. Photo: Georgii A. Shatyi

The Noin-Uul collection of the State Hermitage Museum includes a variety of object categories. Some of them are unique artefacts of international significance. It presents male and female costumes, details of the wooden tombs and elements of the decoration of the burial chambers as well as horse equipment and luxury items of the Xiongnu. The exhibition is accompanied by some watercolor and graphic drawings made by professional artists in the 1920s for the fundamental publication of the archaeological materials of the Mongolian-Tibetan expedition.
The conservation of archaeological materials have always been associated with the previous studies and special storage conditions. Conservation of various archaeological organic materials sometimes requires the development of individual methodological approaches to a

specific degree of preservation for each item or object group. One of the exhibition tasks was to present the processes and results of the modern research that is carried out by the Department of Examination and Authentication of Works of Art and the Department of Scientific Restoration and Conservation of the State Hermitage Museum. The conservators and curators talk about the study methods and some difficult choices they sometimes have to make. They have decided to display some objects that are in the process of conservation. This 'incompleteness' allows visitors to see the meticulous work of the laboratory staff.
Among the exhibits there are some that were treated as early as the 1930s, then the conservation treatment was continued in the 1950s and subsequent decades. For example, more than 600 exhibits made of wool, felt and silk have been conserved.
There are items that were conserved recently in 2021 - 2023. Most of them are wooden objects. Being found in the wet layer, they were dried in natural condition in the 1930s. Noticeable shrinkage, deformation and cracking, which eventually partially distorted the original shape and dimensions of the objects, were the results of the uncontrolled drying process. All wooden findings had dense soil contamination: dried clay literally cemented itself to the surface of the wood. The preserved layer of the clay likely contributed to slower drying and some fixation of the original shape of the object. Several objects have remains of paint or lacquer coating, which is often warped, 'bloated' and crumbled with small flakes.
The third hall of the exhibition presents photographs of modern excavations and findings, which are now stored in Mongolia's museums, as well as two films based on the results of the excavation at the Noin-Uul site by the Russian-Mongolian expedition headed by N.V. Polosmak and D. Tsevendorj. The films tell stories about research experiences and results expectations, the expedition daily life, field life peculiarities and the plans for the future.
At the same time, the renovated hall of the permanent exposition 'Noin-Uul archaeological site' was opened. The exhibition is located in the neighborhood with the hall.
The Noin-Uul archaeological collection includes ancient objects discovered at different times in different burial mounds and stored in museums in Russia and Mongolia. Since its discovery and up to the present, numerous personal, scientific and political interests have centered around it: biographies of discoverers and researchers, reconstruction of life of ancient societies, history of science and institutional and international disputes over the possession of the collection. The Noin-Uul phenomenon of the preservation of rare organic materials, lies in the ongoing process of discovering the mysteries of these tombs and the events of both ancient and modern history swirling around them, attracting new generations of researchers and viewers into this vortex of discovery.

[1]The State Hermitage Museum, the Institute for the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Science, the Russian Geographical Society, the Russian Museum of Ethnography, the State Archive of the Russian Federation, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Science and the Institute of Archaeology of the Mongolian Academy of Science

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Official newsletter of the Working Group specialised in Wet Organic Archaeological Materials from the International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC).

Editors
Mags Felter, Ida Hovmand

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