En octobre 2015, Cécile Brossard du Service Restauration de la BnF a présenté son travail sur la restauration des reliures d’étoffe, lors du XIIIe Congrès IADA (International Association of Book and paper Conservators) à Berlin (consulter ici le programme de ce congrès).

Bien que rare, ce type de reliures est pourtant bien représenté dans les collections de la BnF.

Le poster présenté lors de ce congrès, ici publié (v. page suivante), propose une méthodologie visant à aider le restaurateur de reliures, non familier avec le matériau textile.

Il pourra ainsi appréhender le traitement de conservation-restauration le plus adapté pour une reliure recouverte de tissu, en fonction des dégradations qu’elle présente.

Un article publié dans le n°. 34 (janvier 2017) d’Actuailités de la Conservation reprend en détail cette méthodologie et sa mise en œuvre pour la restauration de reliures textiles appartenant aux collections de la BnF.
INTRODUCTION
Books covered with textiles (satin, velvet or damask...) constitute a challenge for book conservators. First of all, they need to understand textiles and adapt their technical approach with the help of an historical fabric specialist and a textile conservator. We can choose between different treatments according to the textile degradations.

PREPARATORY STEPS BEFORE CONSERVATION TREATMENT

1. Detailed description of the binding and its decoration: to use the right textile vocabulary
2. Technical examination of the structure of the textile covering: to understand how the textile is attached to the boards
3. Damaged areas identification (nature, localisation, extent): for the choice of the conservation treatment
4. Literature about specific materials and techniques: to ensure the validity of the conservation project
5. Weaving and fibre identification: to use the proper conservation fabrics
6. Adhesive and dye analysis: for the compatibility of the conservation products
7. Testing of the conservation method: needle or adhesives: to select the appropriate conservation technique

HOW TO DEAL WITH DAMAGED TEXTILE BINDINGS → 4 APPROACHES
Each approach involves dust removal, preservation boxes, handling recommendations, limited consultations and digitisation when possible (see relaires.bnf.fr)

I. NO TREATMENT, ONLY PRESERVATION BOX / Preventive conservation (ICOM)

When the textile is in a very bad condition: very deteriorated weaving
For completely frayed fabrics or fabrics where only warp / weft yarns remain.
The covering is stabilised with stitches and/or little patches of adhesives, without addition of fabrics.

II. EXTERNAL PROTECTION WITH A CREPELINE / Remedial conservation (ICOM)

When textile coverings are in a bad condition: fragile weaving
For velvet coverings with a powdery condition of velvet pile or fabric coverings with very fragile and brittle silk.

III. COVERING STABILISATION / Remedial conservation (ICOM)

When simple consolidation is required
For detached textile areas and detached embroideries.

IV. COVERING CONSERVATION TREATMENT / Restoration (ICOM)

When textile coverings present losses of fabric
For materials damaged by age, usage or by a previously deteriorated repair.

CONCLUSION
It is essential to get advice from textile professionals and adapt the treatment according to the covering material.

MATERIALS AND PRODUCTS

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