

We were joined by Rosalia Varoli-Piazza (ICCROM Senior Conservation Adviser), who provided a tangible link with the original SCD course and an international perspective. Introductions and the presentation of personal or institutional and ‘mission statements’ by the participants had purposely been left to the second day of the course. However, what were intended to be short, five-minute deliveries overran and became emotive presentations, lasting twenty minutes. The sessions were allowed to continue at this pace, as we sensed this was becoming one of the most important events of the programme. Conservators working for institutions were more confident that they were adhering to approved ‘principles’, although some did comment that they were viewed as cleaners by curators and were expected “to do as we were told”. Some private conservators felt guilty simply because they did not work for a museum and viewed any reconstruction work they were obliged to carry out to please their clients as a “regrettable activity”. One participant admitted she was worried about her conservation career choice, the isolation of benchwork, and sensed that, at her college, ‘restoration’ was an ambiguous term. At the end of the course, she stated that she felt much happier because she appreciated how discussion with owners and communities was going to be an important aspect of her new profession, which would utilize her social skills. A Japanese conservator trained in the West explained the complexities of returning to work in Japan, where centuries of little intervention makes western minimalism seem crude and intrusive. It was evident that the participants appreciated this opportunity to have a voice and discuss their relationship with conservation. They commented that the issues raised on the first day of the course had already made them re-evaluate their own perceptions.

Dean Sully (Conservation Lecturer, Department of Archaeology, UCL) provided an overview of his own career, from bench conservator to a conservator who is now actively engaged with the values of communities. Dean’s professed aim in joining SCD-UK was to provide the participants with the vocabulary and confidence to engage in discussing broader cultural heritage issues. His case study of the management of *Hinemihi*, a traditional Maori meeting hut transported to the grounds of Clandon Park in the early twentieth century, which he always referred to as “she”, drew together many of the themes we had been discussing within a global context (Sully, 2007).

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For the first run of a new course, SCD-UK09 ran comparatively smoothly. Participants were invited to share their ‘take-home messages’. They commented favourably on the pace, structure and variety of the course. Everyone valued the ‘safe space’ that had been created for the open discussion of conservation issues and left feeling that they now had skills to negotiate different value systems and embrace people-based conservation. The success of the course may also be