Conservation treatment of two leather-covered boxes, associated with the silver vessels, made by the Nürnberg goldsmith Peter Kuster, c. 1550.

Luba Nurse & Valentina Ljubic Tobisch

2 Boxes associated with ewer and basin with life casts, made by the Nürnberg goldsmith Peter Kuster
Collection of the Cathedral Treasury Dubrovnik, Croatia

The poster illustrates a recent conservation treatment of two composite boxes (wood, leather, textiles, metal), focused on the structural stabilisation, and recovery of the original leather surfaces, obscured by the excessive restoration treatments in the past.

The ewer and basin were prepared for the upcoming exhibition. The boxes were prepared for storage and occasional display.

Materials/Techniques: Wood foundation, covered with black vegetable-tanned calfskin. Leather moulded and embossed, lined with silk satin, finished with metal clasps. Some of the clasps and attachment pins are of later addition.

Images: a. Ewer, 488 mm, 170 mm, 2160 g, MATERIALS TECHNIQUE; b. Basin, 497 mm, 80 mm, 3770 g, MATERIALS TECHNIQUE. Images: Valentina Ljubic Tobisch

Investigations
To investigate the structure and material composition of the boxes, the following tests were carried out: X-Ray, polarized light and fluorescence microscopy PLM/FM and SEM/EDX

Condition
Wood: multiple cracks, previously restored and now failing, new cracks developed from movement
Leather: thick coating of coloured beeswax, obscuring the original embossed pattern. Leather is incomplete in places, previous restoration used caulking materials to infill the gaps; thin and split in places, pulled away on edges; scuffed surface, exposed inner fibers of the
Silk satin: fragmentary, weak, detaching, stained by animal glue.

Treatment
Wood: stabilisation and infilling, retouching.
Leather: removal of wax coating to recover the embossed surface; stabilisation, minimal infilling, retouching.

Acknowledgements: We thank the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien and Ina Slama for the X-ray analysis, Sylvia Birkušová, Anna Hammerschmied, Jae Seo Park for assisting in this project.