

# **‘Mouldering Chairs and Faded Tapestry ... Unworthy of the Observation of a Common Person’: Considering Textiles in Historic Interiors**

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*Textiles occupy a paradoxical position in historic house interiors. Once one of the most significant elements in many decorative schemes, they have slipped down the hierarchy of decorative art objects, partly because of modern perceptions of textiles, partly because of their dual aesthetic and functional roles and partly because, if not properly cared for, they become faded, dingy, holey, unstable, ‘unworthy’ echoes of their former selves. This article will examine the impact that degradation has on textiles and how they are perceived, focusing on colour, surfaces, texture, lustre and completeness, previous interventions and conservation strategies. It explores changing attitudes to visible degradation – fading, losses, holes, alterations, repairs – and considers how curators and conservators may engage with these complex changes and their implications when planning interpretative and interventive strategies in historic interiors. It considers how recent developments in conservation theory and practice can contribute to this ongoing challenge for display and interpretation.*

## INTRODUCTION

In 1780, Richard Sullivan made a tour of England, inspecting the great houses of the nobility.<sup>1</sup> His view of the textiles he encountered was trenchant – and not enthusiastic:

Some people indeed are delighted with mouldering chairs and faded tapestry ... but in the name of common sense, what is there to be admired in the work of some needy upholsterer? ... These are venerable relics to be sure and ought to be preserved but they are truly unworthy of the observation of a common person.<sup>2</sup>

Sullivan’s ‘common person’ was most likely not ‘common’ at all in today’s sense but a well-heeled tourist with aspirations to aesthetic judgment and learning, as well as a less lofty curiosity about notable houses and their owners. In her 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice* Jane Austen described such a genteel visit, coupled – of course – with shrewd critique and characterisation in her description of Elizabeth Bennett’s visit to Pemberley. Initially, Elizabeth declines her aunt’s proposal, claiming, again with a focus on textiles, to be ‘tired of great houses; after going over so many, she really had no pleasure in fine carpets or satin curtains’.<sup>3</sup> This visit has momentous consequences: it is not just the

encomium of Mr Darcy delivered by his housekeeper, Mrs Reynolds, who shows them around ‘all of the house that was open to general inspection’<sup>4</sup> but the moral judgment Elizabeth makes about the owner after viewing his rooms and furnishings, which were ‘neither gaudy nor uselessly fine’, that leads her to reassess his character.<sup>5</sup> Observation in this case clearly was worthwhile.

The complexities in Sullivan’s reaction to ‘mouldering’ and ‘faded’ textiles deserve examination. His Georgian sensibility was clearly offended by the disorder these textiles represented yet he argued they did have a value for those – if not the ‘common visitor’ – who could perceive this in their ‘venerable’ status. Sullivan has, almost incidentally, highlighted a perennial problem for custodians of historic artefacts who are responsible for the physical preservation of vulnerable textiles while respecting evidence of their passage through time yet making sure they remain intelligible and appealing to modern day visitors. This is the dilemma at the heart of this article, which seeks to examine issues of degradation and intervention in the context of wider shifts in modes of appreciation and changes in attitudes towards historic textiles over time. Sullivan’s view illustrates some of the many paradoxes of textiles in historic houses which are opened to the public and are dedicated to the preservation of objects and, with them, the evocation of the lived past. Whether rare or mundane, textiles may be cherished as survivors from the past and evoke both wonder and a recognition of the reality of the forces of decay – the diachronic approach, acknowledging changes through time. Skilful preservation and presentation allows the rate of such decay to be slowed down or to be made less visible, but physical degradation is inevitable, particularly for such sensitive organic materials. The central aim of this preservation is to maintain the tangible artefact as a physical, emotional and spiritual entity, bridging a forgotten, possibly neglectful, past and a sometimes threatening future.

This article explores the contradictions and paradoxes implied in this dual acknowledgment and denial of the impact of time on textiles and how to respond to this in the context of surviving historic interiors. It considers the impact that degradation – fading, losses, holes, tears, alterations, repairs – has on how such textiles are perceived today by focusing on colour, texture and lustre, completeness and previous interventions. While assessing how curators and conservators may engage with this when planning interpretative and interventive strategies in historic interiors, it is also important to consider the distinct significance of textiles presented in interiors in historic houses, viewed by visitors as part of their singular experience at a specific moment – a synchronic interaction. Unlike textiles displayed in themed exhibitions or in recreated period rooms in museums, these textiles are part of multi-layered rooms which are impregnated with evoked memories and echoes of the people, grand or lowly, who

lived in the house and variously paid for, used, enjoyed, damaged, cleaned or altered the tapestries, upholstery, carpets and curtains surrounding them.

#### TEXTILES DO FURNISH A ROOM

Textiles may literally cover a domestic interior from floor to ceiling – textile-covered walls, tapestries and silk hangings, carpets and rugs, curtains and valances, bed canopies, hangings and covers, upholstered sofas, chairs and footstools as well as smaller items such as fire screens, mantle valences and embroidered pictures. In some cases, as with Robert Adam’s carpets, luxurious textiles were integrated in the overall architectural scheme. The Saloon carpet at Saltram House, Devon, woven at Axminster by Thomas Whitty in 1770, mirrors the plasterwork ceiling design.<sup>6</sup> At Harewood House, Yorkshire, Adam’s 1780s carpet echoes the medallions enclosing Angelica Kauffman’s classical painted roundels on the Music Room ceiling as ‘the lines of the carpet mirror the lines of the light, airy plasterwork’.<sup>7</sup>

Textiles were often the most significant – and expensive – elements in a decorative scheme. The ten tapestries showing scenes from the life of the patriarch Abraham, now at Hampton Court Palace, possibly commissioned by King Henry VIII in the 1540s, are a good example. Richly embellished with gold and silver threads, these wool and silk tapestries cost £2000, equivalent to the price of two war ships. Their extraordinary value increased over the years. They were valued at £8260 in the Inventory of the King’s Goods taken after the execution of King Charles I in 1649 and were important enough to be retained for use at Cromwell’s court, sending a clear statement of authority and continuity.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, in the nineteenth century Queen Victoria and Prince Albert swathed Balmoral Castle’s interiors with the ‘Hunting Stewart’ and ‘Balmoral’ tartans designed by the Prince, a very visible statement of identity and belonging. Carpets, curtains and upholstery were all tartan, supplemented by chintzes with a thistle motif to lighten the effect.<sup>9</sup>

Textiles could be more expensive than the wooden carcasses they covered, even when these were carved. In 1774, Ninian Home ordered a chintz-hung bed with chintz-covered cornices for Paxton House, Berwick upon Tweed:<sup>10</sup>

27 yards Chintz cotton to match 9/6	£12 16 6
27 yards Callico lining 1/9	£ 2 7 3
2 neat Carvd Cornices to ditto covered with superfine Cotton to match Compleat	£ 4 4 4

To 16 pieces of fine Chintz paper made on purpose  
to match the Cotton

£ 6 8 0<sup>11</sup>

These cornices have not survived but the eighteenth-century miniature chintz bedroom in the Baby House at Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire, with its bright white ground chintz bed-hangings and curtains and matching chintz-covered bed and window cornices suggests how fresh and light such rooms would have looked.<sup>12</sup>

Despite their monetary value, the status of textiles can be ambiguous, possibly because of their long-established female gendering. Association with named women is valued and highlighted in the interpretation in historic houses even when – as in the case of Mary Queen of Scots’ hangings at Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk or the bed hangings said to have been worked by Charlotte de la Trémouille, Countess of Derby, in 1650 during the Civil War siege of Lathom House, Lancashire – they were most likely the result of group work. However, many textiles are anonymous, reducing their prominence in the narrative created for today’s visitors. This may be because much of the value placed on early modern textiles in the domestic context was in the act of making as a demonstration of suitable female skill. Women themselves decried their own needlework achievements in order to show proper modesty. In 1607, Arbella Stuart (1575–1615), Bess of Hardwick’s granddaughter and King James I’s cousin, wrote to Sir Andrew Sinclair humbly imploring him to give a ‘peece of worke of my owne’, nothing but a ‘womanish toye’, to the Queen. Lady Arbella was making a shrewd political manoeuvre but nonetheless presented her needlework as part of her meek, docile persona, emblematic of her state as a lowly petitioner.<sup>13</sup>

The 1688 *Guide to Ladies, Gentlewomen & Maids* argued that needlework was a virtuous female occupation leading to spiritual growth, ‘commendable in any woman, for it is time well spent for both profit and delight’.<sup>14</sup> The cultural value of these pieces may have focused more on the moral and educational aspects of the performative act of making than on the textiles themselves. Consequently, these embroideries seem to have had little financial value despite the often exotic, expensive and luxurious silks, metal threads, semi-precious stones and pearls used to create them. They were rarely recorded in inventories, the ‘embroidered cabinet’ in Lady Katherine Hamilton’s room listed in the 1681 Hamilton Palace inventory being a notable exception.<sup>15</sup> Textiles are mobile and may readily be moved from room to room and house to house, as in the case of de la Trémouille’s hangings discussed above which are thought to have been made at Lathom House, Lancashire but are now at Blair Castle, Perthshire. The early eighteenth-century painted cloths at Owlpen Manor, Gloucestershire,

were reduced in height when they were installed in a different room in the house in 1964, losing their bottom border in the process.<sup>16</sup>

Smaller decorative pieces such as embroidered boxes and mirrors are even more likely to be detached from their context, reducing their associative value. Even when there is some contextual evidence, names can be missing or ambiguous. The letter that accompanies an embroidered box in the Ashmolean Museum's collections records that it was 'made by my Mother's Grandmother who was educated at Hackney School after the Plague in London all the young Ladies works were burnt destroyed that they were about at that time'.<sup>17</sup> Textiles may thus become trebly invisible because of their non-professional status, association with submissive female practice and the scarcity of informative archival records. This can lead to attitudes with more disturbing implications. Despite his appreciation of textiles, Horace Walpole, collector and connoisseur of all thing Gothick, used textile terms as insults – surely with a hint of misogyny.<sup>18</sup> Describing Carlton House in London, just completed for the Prince of Wales in 1785, he snidely noted, 'How sick one shall be, after this chaste palace, of Mr Adam's gingerbread and sippets of embroidery'.<sup>19</sup> He had earlier denigrated Adam's design for a new gate and screen for Syon House, London, damming it as 'all lace and embroidery' explicitly associating the gates with 'fussy' femininity rather than a purer, classical (implicitly masculine) aesthetic.<sup>20</sup>

Textiles were also an engine for economic wealth, underpinning English medieval and Tudor affluence and later technological innovation. In one sense, this was their undoing. The ready availability of mass-market, mass-produced textiles has resulted in these once esteemed artefacts slipping further down the hierarchy of decorative art objects, despised because they are mechanically-made and lack uniqueness and further denigrated as the respect and understanding they were once accorded as signifiers of status, taste and feminine sensibility became diminished.

## MUTABILITY AND INVISIBILITY

Textiles from the early modern period rarely survive without changes. Different generations have cut, trimmed and altered to suit changing fashions in taste and to mitigate the impact of damage, creating wonderfully layered complexity but also challenges for preservation and interpretation.

Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, is famous for its textile collections which have been re-used and relocated by the family for a variety of reasons. In the nineteenth century, William Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire, moved textiles and other fittings around within Hardwick and brought in

additions from Chatsworth, his nearby grander house, to create interiors which fitted his vision of how Hardwick should be perceived and its history understood.<sup>21</sup> Hardwick's Long Gallery has a magnificent canopy constructed from the head and tester of a state bed made in 1697 by Francis Lapierre for Chatsworth: this major textile artefact was not only reconstituted but moved, not just into another room but into another context altogether.<sup>22</sup> This is preservation imbued with nostalgia, building on the romantic myth of Hardwick as the prison for Mary, Queen of Scots. As early as 1760, Walpole noted that Hardwick's 'great apartment is exactly what it was when the Queen of Scots was kept there'.<sup>23</sup> Incidentally revealing earlier methods of caring for the fragile textiles cherished for their association with the Queen, the poet Thomas Gray mused in 1762 on the furniture and hangings in her 'Gallery, room of audience, her antichamber', imagining they looked as if Mary had 'just walk'd down into the park with her guard for half an hour ... the very canopies, chair of state, footstool, Lit-de-repos, Oratory, carpets, and hangings, just as she left them, a little tatter'd indeed, but all the more venerable; and all preserved with religious care, and papered up in winter'.<sup>24</sup> Sadly, this is romantic fantasy: Mary was never set foot in the 'great apartment' nor in the so-called 'Mary, Queen of Scots' Room'. Hardwick was built during the 1580s and 1590s and Mary was executed in 1587. In the 1601 inventory, Mary's 'chamber' room was described as 'The Little Chamber within the Best Bedchamber'.<sup>25</sup> The room's bed, which may be a reconstructed version of the 'feild bedsted the postes being covered with black velvet' and 'hangings imbrodered with nedleworke flowers', is now hung with nineteenth-century black velvet hangings with sixteenth- or seventeenth-century embroidery borders and floral motifs.<sup>26</sup> Of the embroidery which Mary made with Bess of Hardwick during her various enforced stays at Chatsworth between 1569 to 1584, a needlework panel bearing her emblems survives and may have been worked by her during her imprisonment before being transferred to Hardwick Hall.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the room's name obviously creates expectations in visitors which means an explanation is required.<sup>28</sup>

The value ascribed to textiles also affects how they are treated. The functional role of tapestries as wall coverings and draught excluders may be more important than their aesthetic value. They can be patched together irrespective of the design, draped over doorways or 'hinged' to accommodate jib doors as, for example, has happened to some of the tapestries at Cotehele Manor, Cornwall.<sup>29</sup> Despite their size and contribution to designed interiors, Heather Tetley notes that carpets are oddly invisible and frequently neglected.<sup>30</sup> Equally, there is still much we do not know about how and where some textiles were placed in rooms and how they were used. Amanda Vickery's discussion of the dividing lines between the acquisitions and responsibilities of husbands and wives in the eighteenth-century

household and the implications of this division for the reading of inventories and wills is relevant here.<sup>31</sup> While linen and other textiles were usually regarded as part of women's domain, makers of inventories were usually male and not always particularly knowledgeable about the textiles they were listing. Categorisation, as well as alterations, need to be taken into account when considering how to interpret textiles in an historic interior.

#### ISSUES OF AUTHENTICITY

One of the underlying issues with textiles in historic houses is that of authenticity. Visitors – and researchers – want to know if what they are looking at is ‘the real thing’. In the early twentieth century, Georges Saville Seligman asserted that it was a central duty of the museum to distinguish between the fake and genuine object by ‘the exhibition of choice and characteristic examples of indisputable authenticity’.<sup>32</sup> Such a notion of connoisseurship may be less central in the museum today but it does emphasise the importance of detailed observation to understand artefacts and evaluate them aesthetically and technically. The ‘ways of seeing’ employed to establish authenticity in artefacts can range from the human eye, sometimes under specialist light sources such as infra-red or ultra-violet light, to microscopy, radiography and computational imaging technologies.

This imperative of authenticity is challenging in the context of the historic interior due to the mutability and movability of textiles but it still has force. May Berkouwer has recounted how the discovery of previously unsuspected restoration in the seventeenth-century wall hangings in the Queen's Antechamber in Ham House, Surrey, long considered to be the only such hangings to have survived untouched in their original context, was, ‘At first ... disappointing [as] these – supposedly – unaltered examples of seventeenth century wallhangings ... suddenly turned out to be not so authentic after all!’<sup>33</sup> Both physical and emotional adjustments were necessary when these earlier interventions were revealed in a later conservation programme.<sup>34</sup> This raises complex questions for the historic house where textiles may have been literally layered one on top of another, carpet on carpet, cover on cover or stripped down and replaced with a later generation's vision of ‘how things ought to be’. Which is the ‘authentic’? Dinah Eastop and Kate Gill have noted that ‘the many covers present on a single chair or headboard manifest the widespread practice of re-upholstery, preserved like “an archaeology” of decorative schemes’.<sup>35</sup> In her 2001 paper, Crosby Stevens vividly demonstrated the ‘layering’ of the degraded chintz fabrics surviving in situ from the 1860s, 1880s and 1900s as upholstery and curtains at Brodsworth Hall, South Yorkshire, reflecting the various redecoration schemes undertaken by the

family with Bedroom 14 alone containing eight different designs.<sup>36</sup> English Heritage's approach at Brodsworth was to retain 'the accumulation of objects and decorative schemes over time and the general decline of the house', giving each of these layers equal significance.<sup>37</sup> This is a radical contrast to that taken by Peter Thornton at Ham House, Richmond, where he aimed to recreate the interior at the zenith of its seventeenth-century glory, using original inventories and contemporaneous descriptions, arguing:

Those who object most strongly to this way of showing houses are usually believers in what may be called the accretion syndrome. They see these houses as an accumulation of successive decorative strata, one laid on top of the other like a well-planned compost heap or a skilfully made lasagna ... [such displays] are mostly charming but they have very little to do with what the rooms (and the houses) were like in their heyday, and they do not really help us understand what these great houses were all about.<sup>38</sup>

The National Trust have on occasion used what they now describe as 'a strong element of fiction' as at Fenton House, London, where John Fowler, a well-known expert in historic room interiors, was asked in 1973 to create 'a mellow, lived-in atmosphere' in some of the emptier rooms.<sup>39</sup> In 1996 Christopher Rowell noted that the National Trust had undergone 'a shift of emphasis towards authenticity based on thorough documentary and comparative research, and an insistence on exact copies of original textiles' including 'the copying of faded rather than original colours of paint, gilding and textiles' as at Uppark House, West Sussex.<sup>40</sup>

As these examples demonstrate, curators and conservators need to make intellectual, aesthetic and functional choices about how textiles are presented in the historic interior, bearing in mind issues of authenticity, aesthetics, homogeneity and safety. They also have to present the layered space and its contents in a way that visitors can understand and appreciate. However, this may not be all that visitors seek. The debate in 2013 following the National Trust's on-line post 'Fiction and Truth' on Fowler's work at Fenton House suggests that it is this evoked atmosphere that generates the strongest response. Contributors, presumably also visitors to Fenton House, stressed the importance of 'atmosphere and alchemy'<sup>41</sup> and the 'ineffable bits of magic that create genuine atmosphere' and conjured up 'goosebumps'.<sup>42</sup> It was this experience of occupying in a special way a space where place and past are perceived as being bound together created the sense of engagement that these commentators relished. This engagement is akin to 'magical thinking' that blurs the boundaries between objective reality and subjective experience.<sup>43</sup> Applying Ning Wang's work on authenticity to visitors' experience of Cotehele Manor, Graham Busby, Rachel Hunt and Helen Small identified this as the individual

experience of ‘constructive authenticity’, whereby visitors ‘feel that they themselves are more authentic than in daily life’.<sup>44</sup> Siân Jones’s and Thomas Yarrow’s observation that authenticity is ‘neither a subjective, discursive construction nor a latent property ... but a distributed property that emerges through the interaction of people and things’ is a useful framework when considering the condition of ‘things’, as it enables custodians and conservators to take into account not only the ‘mouldering’ objects themselves, but also the context in which they are viewed and the people who view them.<sup>45</sup>

## TEXTILES, TIME AND DEGRADATION

The linkage between time and textiles is so deeply embedded in Western thought that it is barely noticeable. Metaphors and metonyms of threads, connected or broken, of interwoven lives, of the fabric of society and of webs which may support, constrain or, increasingly, threaten inform everyday language. The three Fates hover behind these embedded images. These daughters of Zeus assigned each person their destiny: on earth Clotho, the spinner, spun the thread of life while Lachesis, the apportioner, measured it out and Atropos, the implacable, was responsible for cutting the thread, transforming the Fates into the goddesses of death. This underlines the importance of the experience of cloth and clothing throughout our lives: we are wrapped in cloth when we are born and when we die. Fibres and fabrics are essential for clothing and for making interiors variously dramatic, comfortable or warm. Where economic and social circumstances make choice possible, textiles are a fundamental way of establishing and communicating a sense of self in terms of gender, status and self-image. In addition, cloth is a potent carrier of memory. Stitching marks a point in time, an interaction between the cloth and the maker. Alterations are evidence of a wish to update or repair a textile, either recapturing the believed original form or updating a textile to reflect changing tastes.

The main factors causing damage to textiles after long years of exposure in the challenging environmental conditions of the historic house are well-known: excess and unsuitable light, fluctuating and unsuitable relative humidity and temperature, dirt, dust and other pollutants, pests and poor handling.<sup>46</sup> High levels of unfiltered light initiate physical damage as well as causing dye fading and colour shifts. High humidity levels – to say nothing of actual floods or burst pipes – can result in mould growth while raised temperatures speed up degradation processes. Soils not only disfigure textiles visually but also raise acidity causing a chain of fibre breakdown reactions. Moths and other insect pests are some of the most feared – and most voracious – causes of damage. If not properly cared for, textiles can easily become faded, dirty, dusty, dingy, holey and unstable, truly ‘unworthy’ echoes of

their former selves. However, damage, the evidence of use, neglect, abuse, repairs, alterations and additions, is also part of the history of the object.<sup>47</sup> Such changes tells a story about attitudes to the textile and its life history and influence conservation decisions as to which elements of a textile are significant and how ‘damage’, which may also be evidence, should be preserved even when, as can be the case with upholstery, it is concealed beneath other layers.<sup>48</sup>

## EXPERIENCING INTERIORS

As sensory beings, humans depend on sight, smell, sound and touch to engage with, and interpret, our environment. Dennis Severs’s evocation of the life of a Huguenot silk weaving family in 18 Folgate Street, Spitalfields, London, depends on an intense experience: ‘your senses are your guide’.<sup>49</sup> In the house, visitors engage with ‘warm, smoky light captured by the Old Masters, the creak of footsteps on wood, whispers and opening doors, arresting reflections, mixtures, textures and smells; the ticking and chiming of clocks’.<sup>50</sup> Smell, despite its potency in evoking atmosphere, tends to be somewhat neglected in interior interpretations although it can be evocative of both the distant and the recent past. Some people still detect the smell of smoke in the Tapestry Bedroom at Uppark House, a lingering physical memory of the destructive 1989 fire.<sup>51</sup> Sound, in the form of guiding voices or music, is seemingly becoming more important, often now available at the visitor’s choosing as a consequence of new technologies. Such complex impressions create visitors’ sensory perception of historic interiors and inform their understanding. This includes an engagement not only with the hangings and furnishings, but, consciously or unconsciously, with their condition – the ‘mouldering chairs and faded tapestry’. In the museum and historic house, sight becomes the visitors’ dominant sense while touch – at least in principle – is usually denied or diverted: this article thus focuses on light, colour, surfaces, texture, lustre, completeness or incompleteness before reflecting on traditions of care and conservation.

## LIGHT AND COLOUR

The predominance of the sense of sight for the majority of visitors experiencing the historic interior means that lighting in interiors is critical, not just for the preservation of artefacts but also for the understanding of the room and how light was created and manipulated in the past. Natural light shifts and changes, allowing the perception of colours to change along with awareness of the varying lustre of different fibres and finishes and of the glint of metal threads and laces. Flat, even electric lighting may

be easy and controllable but it begs the question of how textile hangings and furnishings might have looked under candlelight or at different times of day and seasons of the year. Was light allowed in at the windows? Were they kept shut or was the light falling on furnishings managed through opening and closing blinds and shutters? In 1851 the novelist Elizabeth Gaskell may have been poking gentle fun at Miss Matty and Mary Smith ‘chasing the sunbeams, as they fell in an afternoon right down the carpet through the blindless window!’, forcing them to move the newspapers laid down to shield the carpet, but expensive carpets were routinely protected with druggets or other cloths and only unveiled for important social occasions.<sup>52</sup> It was even acceptable for eighteenth-century domestic portraits to show chairs with their humble slip-over case covers in place to protect the expensive silk upholstery or hand-worked embroidery from damage by light, soils and abrasion. The c.1775 portrait of *A Gentleman at Breakfast*, attributed to Henry Walton, shows an unknown gentleman relaxing on a chair with a checked case cover.<sup>53</sup> At Harewood House, Chippendale billed Edwin Lascelles for ‘Fine Green Serge Cases’ for eight japanned green and white chairs.<sup>54</sup> Curtains often suffer extensive degradation of edges and linings by virtue of their location and function. At Uppark, the rare eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century curtains were described by its twentieth-century chatelaine Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh as looking like ‘depressing wreaths of damp distressed pink seaweed’ by the 1930s.<sup>55</sup>

Colours may not only fade but also change. The silk wall hangings at Ham House recorded in the 1679 inventory as ‘3 pieces of blew Damusk inpain’d and bordered wth blew velvet embroidered wth. gould & fringed’ have undergone a radical colour shift from the original blue into soft yellow.<sup>56</sup> Unfaded original colours can be rather shocking to eyes trained to expect muted shades. A quick glance at the back of the Ashmolean Museum’s seventeenth-century embroidery *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba* shows that Solomon’s canopy of state and carpet were once strong pinks and yellows while his robe was formerly a bright pink (Figs 1a and 1b).<sup>57</sup> An aesthetic of fading emerged. William Morris accepted that all colours will shift in hue over time but argued that ‘old dyes when fading, as all colours will do more or less, simply gradually changed into paler tints of the same colour, and were not unpleasant to look on’.<sup>58</sup> In contrast to the bright and brash nineteenth-century synthetic dyes (or, as Morris termed them, the ‘foul blotches of the capitalist dyer’), he believed that traditional dyes retained an almost moral integrity and ‘in fading still remain beautiful, and never, even after long wear, pass into nothingness’.<sup>59</sup> However, such acceptance of the muted needs to be challenged if we are to have a sense of the vivid colours of textiles used in decorating early modern interiors. This involves careful consideration of what it is that is being preserved: the original colours (as far as these can be perceived,

understood and recreated) or the present faded state, making it clear to visitors exactly what they are seeing.

## SURFACES, TEXTURE AND LUSTRE

As well as causing physically damaging reactions in fibres, dirt and dust also obscure surfaces and colours. The bed cornices believed to belong to a Chippendale bed, possibly designed for Harewood House between 1767 and 1777, are an extreme example. These were found, not in the house but in the loft above the joiner's workshop, covered in decades of dirt and spider's webs. Made of carved pine, the cornices' main surfaces are covered with a printed Chinoiserie-style textile featuring blossoms, peony-like flowers, butterflies and lively flying and perched birds. Originally the dazzling white ground must have been similar to that of the chintz-covered bed listed in the Paxton House invoice and the miniature bed in the Nostell Priory Baby House discussed above. When rediscovered, this white ground was obscured not only by layers of soiling but also by a later overpainting, now a dirty green-grey. This overpainting transformed the original woven texture of the fabric around the printed motifs into a thickly painted surface, creating a lasting change in the visual impact of the surface (Fig. 2).

[Figure 2 here]

Texture and lustre are critical qualities when understanding the impact of textiles in interiors, offering a sensuous range from soft velvet to stiff horsehair, shining silk to polished linen. Different qualities of matt and reflective are very important in creating the overall aesthetic effect. Of necessity, in order to retain damaged and weakened fibres and fabrics, textile conservators sometimes use various overlays, often crepe-line or fine nets, to secure fibres that would otherwise be lost forever.<sup>60</sup> Protective semi-transparent fabrics used inappropriately can dim the lustre of silks and change perception of underlying contrasting colours and textures. Fortunately, overlay techniques have evolved to be more sensitive to underlying designs. The dramatic crimson and yellow Genoa velvet hangings, dating from 1714–1715, of Queen Anne's bed at Hampton Court Palace had become extremely weak, with such large areas of lost pile that the design was becoming unreadable.<sup>61</sup> Mika Takami and Branwen Roberts of the Conservation and Collections Care Team, Historic Royal Palaces, have published a detailed account of their research into a specialised technique (dye sublimation digital printing) to print a fabric design onto conservation-grade nylon net, chosen for its openness and transparency, in order to

stabilise the velvet and enhance the impact of the woven design: ‘The printed image subtly compensates for the abraded or lost motifs, thus creating a suggestion of the whole, original appearance of the velvet enhancing the overall aesthetic appearance’.<sup>62</sup> This alternative approach aimed to enhance ‘the colour and design [of the fabric]’ which the conventional single-coloured overlay would have obscured so visitors could again appreciate the ‘magnificence of the bed’.<sup>63</sup>

#### COMPLETENESS AND INCOMPLETENESS

In his poem *Tapestry Moths* (1977), Peter Redgrave meditated upon the physical losses caused by moths which – rather alarmingly – he claims to have seen on a tapestry at Hardwick Hall: ‘It was the tapestry moths that ate the colours like the light / Limping over the hangings, voracious cameras ... / Carrying the conceptions of artists away’.<sup>64</sup> The loss of these details, literally eaten by moth larvae, changes the visual impact of textiles and undermines the original intention of designers and makers. The result is a loss of surfaces and a weakening of the fabric structure, catalytic destruction that leads to further losses.

Although texture is best appreciated through touch, this lesser of the five senses is usually not legitimised in the context of the historic interior. Whether furtive or encouraged as in the case of ‘touchy-feely’ samples, touch may bring pleasure and understanding but can also be a source of pain and a cause of damage, physical and emotional. In his somewhat strained exploration of the Five Senses from a religious perspective, the seventeenth-century moralist Richard Brathwayt commented: ‘This sense of touch may be reduced to those three objects ... the intelligible, the irascible and the concupiscible’.<sup>65</sup> Touch is a fundamental way of understanding artefacts, appealing to the intellect and to the senses, both informative and evocative. At the same time, repeated touch is a source of damage to objects in daily use, eventually resulting in actual losses. Curtains may be weakened and eventually tear where they are repeatedly pulled back and forth or up and down; chairs are sat on, resulting in abraded, soiled and distorted upholstery while walking on carpets tracks in damaging soil particles and crushes delicate pile. Touch is a contested sense in the context of publicly-displayed textiles, being both a source of knowledge and – often – sensuous pleasure, but the oils in the skin as well as the physical abrasion of fingers rubbing surfaces cause total loss of fabric structure<sup>66</sup> (Fig 3). Such damage caused by exploring fingers has been known for centuries, as a sixteenth-century instruction to servants makes clear: ‘no man wipe or rube their hands upon none arras of the kinges whereby they might be hurted’.<sup>67</sup> Maria Jordan’s research into visitors’ behaviour towards textiles in historic interiors

indicated that colourful textiles were the most attractive to visitors and therefore most vulnerable to damage by touch.<sup>68</sup> This suggests that faded or weakened textiles might be protected by their very degradation but damage also attracts. People will still touch, even wriggling their fingers into holes and splits. The weakened, vulnerable artefact transgresses expectations of the appearance and completeness of textiles in museum and historic interiors. When such codes are breached, visitors feel enabled to touch and interrogate the damaged area.<sup>69</sup>

[Figure 3 here]

Curators' and collectors' attitudes to loss and damage resulting in incompleteness and disfiguration naturally vary according to the context and function of the textile in question. The Fitchburg Art Centre, Massachusetts, sold the textile collection formed by their founder Eleanor Norcross after these were damaged in the 1934 fire at the museum because the 'textiles were only valued if they were in perfect condition'.<sup>70</sup> Clearly, their damaged state did not concern the famous New York textile dealer Cora Ginsburg who bought them up, evidently thinking them 'worthy'. Others have concurred with this judgment as the textiles, now part of the collection at Temple Newsam House, Leeds, were displayed in 2008 with their charred, darkened and damaged edges visible.

#### TRADITIONS OF CARE: REACTIONS TO DEGRADATION

There is a long tradition of caring for textiles in historic houses, often focused on preventing damage. Even in modest households, blinds and curtains would be closed to manage the ingress of sunlight while carpets would be covered with Holland cloth in summer and felt cloth against 'winter wear'.<sup>71</sup> Again, Gaskell provides a domestic example:

The Miss Jenkynes had purchased a new carpet for the drawing-room. ... We were very busy, too, one whole morning, before Miss Jenkyns gave her party in following her directions, and in cutting out and stitching together pieces of newspaper so as to form little paths to every chair set for the expected visitors, lest their shoes might dirty or defile the purity of the carpet.<sup>72</sup>

Other traditions of care translate readily into display practices today. At Temple Newsam House, for example, chairs are displayed with protective case covers that are similar to those shown in the portrait of *A Gentleman at Breakfast*.<sup>73</sup>

Other interventions have been more significant and long-lasting, a deliberate defiance of the forces of destruction. Of the many chatelaines who cared for the contents of their grand houses, Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh at Uppark and Evelyn, Duchess of Devonshire, at Hardwick made particularly notable contributions to the preservation of textiles in their respective houses. Each undertook lengthy and extensive campaigns of care, sometimes involving local villagers as well as house staff. In the 1930s, Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh spent over a decade preserving the degraded silk damask festoon curtains mentioned above.<sup>74</sup> She washed the fragile curtains in a solution of *Saponaria officinalis* (common soapwort) before the weak silk was stabilised by couching it down in parallel ‘tramlines’ of stitching onto the original woollen linings.<sup>75</sup> Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh was particularly prescient in preserving untreated examples of the Uppark curtains to show their original state, an early instance of the recognition that the treatment changes as well as sustains. Ironically, the 1989 fire at Uppark threatened the survival of these preserved curtains anew. One of the Red Drawing Room curtains was ripped in two during salvage while the fire was still raging. Others were damaged by the fire. In its aftermath, Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh’s thicker lines of couched stitching were reconstructed, giving an overall harmonious aesthetic effect’.<sup>76</sup>

Evelyn, Duchess of Devonshire, repaired many of Hardwick’s tapestries. Her daughter, Lady Maud Baillie, recalls the Duchess, ‘a beautiful needlewoman’, reconstructing a tapestry cut up by Mr Green, a travelling upholsterer who ‘prided himself that he had never brought [sic] any new materials for patching or lining, but had always “used up some of the old”. This economy had a particularly disastrous effect on some of the tapestry, which was ruthlessly cut to fit the staircase walls’.<sup>77</sup>

In some cases, the response to damage can be an attempt to conceal. The partial overpainting on the Harewood Chippendale bed cornices is an extremely unusual example (Fig. 2). All parts of the original white ground of the chintz visible from ground level were carefully covered over, meticulously outlining the motifs. The dirty grey-green colour of the paint led to initial suggestions that this repainting was a later modification to enable the bed to be used in Barry’s nineteenth-century scheme for Harewood, which featured a bedroom painted in an eau-de-nil green.<sup>78</sup> However, analysis showed that the paint was actually basic lead carbonate or lead white ( $2\text{PbCO}_3 \cdot \text{Pb}(\text{OH})_2$ ).<sup>79</sup> Cross-sectional analysis showed the paint had been applied in two thick layers and demonstrated dramatically how the top layer of lead white had degraded as the result of atmospheric pollution to become lead sulphide (PbS). The original intention had been to whiten the ground colour rather than tone it down, undermining theories that the painting was intended to modify the cornices to suit the nineteenth-century redecoration. The reason why this extraordinary white overpainting was undertaken may lie in

an intriguing 1773 letter to Edward Lascelles, Harewood's owner, from his steward, Samuel Popplewell:<sup>80</sup>

About ten [?] days Mary Hurst the Housemaid lighted a fire in the Library and forgot to take down the Chimney board the smoak blacked the marble Chimney piece and stucco over it as far as the top as black as the fire back; the door of your Dressing Room being open it has yellow'd the ceiling and stucco as far as the top of the Dado very much. Nevertheless, by washing and sponging it several times over and painting it, I think the nicest Eye cannot discern, it seems completely repaired.<sup>81</sup>

Did this 'painting' include the cornices of the Chippendale bed, which might then have been located in Lascelles' bedchamber or dressing room?<sup>82</sup> Christopher Gilbert considered it unlikely that the style of bed from which the cornices might have come would have been in Lascelles' bedchamber so it is possible the bed was in some other room not mentioned by Popplewell.<sup>83</sup> Less dramatically, the overpainting may have been a 'restoration' or 'spring cleaning' with the intention of recovering the initial dramatic visual impact of the white chintz, discoloured through the action of the same industrial pollution that later changed the lead white itself to a dingy grey. Conservation analysis and intervention has not removed the layers of concealment, either physically or intellectually, but new light has been shed upon the radical intervention intended to maintain the previous visual impact of the cornices.

Attitudes to past interventions may change over time. Physical damage and loss is particularly affecting where the representations of the human face are involved. This goes beyond concerns over loss of physical integrity and aesthetic value to a deeper engagement with a sense of human mortality. Santana Levey noted that many of the numerous repairs carried out over the years on the textiles at Hardwick Hall focused on the faces. She considered these 'restorations' damaging to our understanding of the textiles: 'Their worst crime was to paint over the missing areas of white satin on the faces with scant regard for the delicacy of the original work or the still visible lines of stitching'.<sup>84</sup> What was once seen as a beneficial intervention, restoring the image of the human face in response to damage can later be seen as obscuring and disfiguring.

## CONSERVATION INTERVENTIONS

Traditionally, European conservation of the fine and decorative arts has aimed for perfection and completeness with integrated surfaces, gleaming finishes and missing elements painstakingly reconstructed and reintegrated. Sometimes this is dictated by the nature of the object itself: tapestries

need to be sufficiently strong to hang without their own weight pulling them apart, carpets need to cover the floor and chairs need to stand and – at least – look as if their upholstery can bear the weight of a sitter. Similarly, those campaigns of care embarked on by Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh and Evelyn, Duchess of Devonshire, can be understood, whether this was consciously intended or not, as a rejection of the evidence of the passage of time in the form of degradation. They resisted decay in order to create ‘an illusion of permanence, to keep at bay the spectres of waste and decay’.<sup>85</sup>

The degree of intervention that is acceptable – ethically, intellectually, visually and physically – is at the centre of conservation decision-making.<sup>86</sup> Cesare Brandi, who framed some of the core philosophies of modern conservation thinking and practice, argued that conservation interventions should not seek to ‘erase every trace of the passage through time of the work of art’.<sup>87</sup> He believed that the moment of treating a material artefact was one ‘in which the object is appreciated in its material form, and its historical and aesthetic “duality”, with a view to transmitting it to the future’,<sup>88</sup> holding the tension between the synchronic and the diachronic in balance for a moment but with the goal of enabling the object’s evolution over time to continue. The choices made in the synchronic moment are critical – the making of meaning through both physical and metaphysical engagement with the object. Ensuring that conservation interventions are not immediately visible may be considered vital to enable full aesthetic appreciation of the artefact, but this can also run the risk of concealing part of the history of the object and the ‘biography’ which time has created in its material presence.<sup>89</sup> This may also lead visitors to believe that objects have somehow miraculously escaped degradation, possibly resulting in misunderstandings about the state of the object which may themselves have an ethical dimension.<sup>90</sup>

Conservation principles have been articulated to address the complex issues.<sup>91</sup> Conservation interventions are critiqued and revisited, sometimes by implementing treatments considered more sympathetic and long-lasting. For example, many of the treatments on the beds at Knole have been revisited. At the time of writing, the red net and animal glue on the curtains on the sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century silk hangings of the Spangled Bed are being removed so a more sympathetic treatment can be implemented.<sup>92</sup>

Allowing visitors to engage with objects that show the effects of the passage of time in an open way can have benefits, as can making the process of conservation visible. For example, Uppark presented an exhibition after the fire of the restoration and conservation processes involved in the remarkable reinstatement of the house and its artefacts, including the textiles.<sup>93</sup> Relatively little is known about museum visitors’ feelings when viewing the conserved object and how conservation influences their experience, understanding and enjoyment. Danai Koutromanou’s research into visitors’

perceptions of the conservator's work reveals that some visitors enjoy learning from insights gained through conservation and acknowledge they had never really considered the need for treatment while others appear almost resentful of the fact that conservation is needed at all.<sup>94</sup>

#### INTERPRETATION STRATEGIES: MAKING THE 'UNWORTHY' WORTHY

There are many issues to consider when aiming to make 'unworthy' textiles worthy of consideration by visitors. These range from the management of causes of degradation by careful preventive conservation to choices about intervention – doing nothing, conserving, restoring or replicating – depending on the significance of the textile and the value(s) accorded to it. It is important to consider the impact of replacement, restoration or conservation on the visitor's perception of the room as a whole. Aesthetic and physical harmony are important to ensure one element does not stand out as new or 'reworked'. Decision-making involves balancing aesthetics and practicalities with the need to help visitors to explore the interior physically, visually and intellectually. Encouraging people to focus, look up, look down and engage with information is critical. Curators may use an ever-increasing menu of options including labels – often avoided in the historic interior but sometimes cleverly integrated as at Nether Stowey<sup>95</sup> or presented as handle sheets or via room stewards – as well as touch panels, photographs, videos and apps.<sup>96</sup> Virtual 'recreations' of the possible earlier appearance of interiors are powerful tools in recapturing the impact of the rooms as they once might have been. As discussed above, the wall hangings in the Queen's Antechamber at Ham House have undergone irreversible change but the digital image showing their original blue colour has been described as 'almost Proustian in its recapturing of a lost moment in time' while 'the faded pink hangings will remain on the walls, as valid evidence of a particular phase in the building's history'.<sup>97</sup> The project at Hampton Court to interpret the famous Abraham tapestries discussed at the start of this paper was a sophisticated approach to recovering lost splendour by carefully projecting the original colours onto the actual tapestry.<sup>98</sup>

Recreating the impact of earlier phases of the life of the room to 'just as it was' is a particularly seductive interpretation strategy but one that is usually overlaid with other complexities. Margaret Ponsonby has argued that ideas of the ideal historic interior are culturally determined and identified the dominant practice in English interpretation as a 'continuum' model as opposed to the American preference for highlighting a particular 'period of significance'.<sup>99</sup> This acceptance in England of faded glory that places the effects of time at the centre of interpretative strategy is emotionally powerful and produces a dramatic narrative of loss and privileged access. Like Brodsworth Hall, Calke Abbey,

Derbyshire, is presented as a ‘time-capsule’ house to be experienced as it was used, loved and left by the family, a place, the guide-book claims, where ‘time has stood still’.<sup>100</sup> This intellectual conceit actually conceals a huge amount of practical intervention – the Calke Abbey guide-book also describes ‘an intensive programme of repair’ – but acts to draw visitors into the ‘magical thinking’ framework of a space outside time.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has examined how attitudes about the value of textiles in interiors have changed over time and how both degradation and intervention may affect the enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of textiles. Underlying this is the value placed on material culture, how this is expressed and how it changes. The Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands offers a model of cultural value that can provide a useful touchstone when thinking about developing approaches to making Britain’s rich textile inheritance ‘worthy of attention’. The Dutch model links conservation, use and development and embeds access, either real or virtual, throughout.<sup>101</sup> Such an approach could enable the impact of degradation to be acknowledged in presenting textiles in historic interiors and make the conservation approach, whether the absolute minimum or a major intervention, part of the interpretative narrative. Given the nature of the ‘material world’ and its vulnerabilities, compromise is probably inevitable. But it is clear that Walter Benjamin’s advice that ‘the rags, the refuse’ should be allowed ‘in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them’ provides an instructive perspective on the values placed on ‘mouldering’ textiles.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 239–40.

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<sup>7</sup> S. H. Anderson, *The Most Splendid Carpet* (Philadelphia: National Park Service, 1978), p. 26.

<sup>8</sup> The *Story of Abraham* tapestries were woven in the workshop of Willem Pannemaker, possibly after designs by Pieter Cocke van Aelst; The Story of Abraham Series, 1540–1543, 770 x 482 cm, Royal Collections Trust, London, RCIN 1046 (Online). Available from: <http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/1046/the-story-of-abraham-series> [Accessed: 24 March 2014].

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<sup>10</sup> Ninian Home bought Paxton House from his cousin Patrick Home in 1773.

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<sup>11</sup> The Paxton House invoice of 7 June 1774 also includes 36 yards of lace billed at £6 and 24 yards of fringe billed at £1 12s; C. Gilbert, *The Life and Work of Thomas Chippendale* (London: Studio Vista, 1978), p. 274.

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<sup>16</sup> N. Mander and K. Mander, *Owlpen Manor. Gloucestershire* ([Owlpen]: Owlpen Press, 2006), p. 21.

<sup>17</sup> M. M. Brooks, *English Embroideries of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries in the Collection of the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford and London: Ashmolean Museum / Jonathan Horne Publications, 2004), pp. 41–43.

<sup>18</sup> Walpole's appreciation of textiles is shown by, for example, his 1781 purchase of a large tapestry map of Warwickshire commissioned in the late 1580s by Ralph Sheldon for his house in Long Compton; Tapestry, wool and silk, c. 1588, 390 x 510 cm, Warwickshire Museum Service, Warwick. See J. Bate and D. Thornton, *Shakespeare: Staging the World* (London: British Museum Press, 2012), pp. 60–63.

<sup>19</sup> Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory, 17 September 1785, in W. S. Lewis et al. eds, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, XXXIII (London: Oxford University Press / New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937–1983), p. 500. A 'sippet' was a small piece of bread, sometimes toasted or fried, which was dipped into soup or gravy.

<sup>20</sup> Horace Walpole to Reverend William Mason, 29 July 1773, in Lewis, *Walpole's Correspondence*, XXVIII, pp. 101–2.

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<sup>59</sup> W. Morris, The Art of Dyeing, paper given 29 October 1889 at a meeting sponsored by the Applied Art Section of the National Association for the Advancement of Art at the Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh (Online). Available from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1889/dyeing.htm> [Accessed: 20 March 2014].

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<sup>60</sup> Crepeline is a light-weight, loosely-woven silk organdie. Kysnia Marko, the National Trust's Textile and Conservation Advisor, discusses the use of crepeline and nets as in-situ first aid treatments in K. Marko, 'Maintenance and first aid', in F. Lennard and M. Hayward eds, *Tapestry Conservation: Principles and Practice* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006), p. 204. herex

<sup>61</sup> M. Takami and B. Roberts, Dress to Impress: Reinstating the Patterned Velvet of Large Scale Bedhangings with Digitally Printed Nylon Net. Presented at ICOM Conservation Committee Triennial, Lisbon, Portugal, 19–23 September 2011 (Online, 2011). Available from: [www.google.co.uk/#q=+bh1.fpc.pt%2Fwinlib%2Fwinlibimg.aspx%3Fskey+takami](http://www.google.co.uk/#q=+bh1.fpc.pt%2Fwinlib%2Fwinlibimg.aspx%3Fskey+takami) [Accessed: 20 March 2014].

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 7–8.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>64</sup> P. Redgrove Tapestry Moths, 1977, The Argotist Online (Online). Available from: [www.argotistonline.co.uk/Regrove%20poem.htm](http://www.argotistonline.co.uk/Regrove%20poem.htm) [Accessed: 20 March 2014].

<sup>65</sup> R. Brathwayt, *Essays upon the Five Senses, revived by A New Supplement; with a pithy one upon Detraction. Continued with sundry Christian Resolves, and Divine Contemplations* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1815, first published 1625), p. 19.

<sup>66</sup> See E. Pye, *The Power of Touch: Handling Objects in Museum and Heritage Contexts* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2007), pp. 16–17.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in M. Hayward, 'Fit for a king? Maintaining the early Tudor tapestry collection', in Lennard and Hayward, *Tapestry Conservation*, p. 15.

<sup>68</sup> M. Jordan, 'Changing Attitudes to Access and Care: the Impact of Touch on Textiles on Open Display (Unpublished diploma report, Textile Conservation Centre / Courtauld Institute of Art, 1986).

<sup>69</sup> Some houses are experimenting with enabling touch in certain recreated interiors. At Avebury Manor, the National Trust allows visitors to 'touch and use everything in the manor – kitchen artefacts, hand-blown glasses and huge hanging tapestries. There are no red ropes, no "do not touch" signs'. See National Trust Annual Report (Online, 2011/12), p. 20. Available from: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/document-1355769401432/> [Accessed: 10 May 2015].

<sup>70</sup> 'My Most Treasured Pieces' Textiles from the Henry Ginsburg Collection. An Exhibition at Temple Newsam House (Leeds: Temple Newsam House, 2008), not paginated.

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<sup>71</sup> J. E. Panton, *From Kitchen to Garret: Hints for Young Householders* (London: Ward and Downey, 1893), p. 133.

<sup>72</sup> Gaskell, *Cranford*, p. 20.

<sup>73</sup> See Temple Newsam House, Leeds, Countryhousereader, Yorkshire (Online, 2011). Available from: <https://countryhousereader.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/p10308411.jpg> [Accessed: 20 October 2015].

<sup>74</sup> Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh was advised by Miss Symonds (in private life, Mrs Guy Antrobus) from the Royal School of Needlework. See Rowell and Robinson, *Uppark Restored*, pp. 139–41.

<sup>75</sup> Meade-Fetherstonehaugh and Warner, *Uppark and its People*, pp. 109–10.

<sup>76</sup> Rowell and Robinson, *Uppark Restored*, pp. 139–41.

<sup>77</sup> Girouard, *Hardwick Hall*, pp. 45–46.

<sup>78</sup> Personal communication, Christopher Gilbert, then Director, Temple Newsam House, 1986, conversation.

<sup>79</sup> M. M. Brooks, ‘The Conservation of a Textile Covered Bed Cornice from Harewood House TCC 0668c’ (Unpublished diploma report, The Textile Conservation Centre / Courtauld Institute of Art, 1986); M. M. Brooks, ‘The conservation of a textile covered bed cornice from Harewood House’, in A. French ed., *Conservation of Furnishing Textiles* (Glasgow: The Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration, 1990), pp. 49–57.

<sup>80</sup> Samuel Popplewell (c. 1713 -1780) was Edwin Lascelle’s steward for 30 years: see Harewood Servants’ Database (Online). Available from: <http://servants.harewood.org/popplewell-samuel-senior/> [Accessed 28 October 2015]. His name is recorded as Popelwell in Gilbert, *Chippendale*, p. 196.

<sup>81</sup> S. Popplewell to E. Lascelles, 24 February 1773, The Steward’s Letter Book, Harewood ms 490/492, West Yorkshire Archive Service, Morley, Leeds.

<sup>82</sup> According to the Steward’s Day Workbooks and the 1795 Inventory, the bedchamber had Indian wallpaper and ‘One Bedstead, with india Chintz hangings, One Window Curtain to suit Do ... One Chintz counterpane trimmed with fringe’ which suggests the dressing room might also have been in a similar style. Steward’s Day Workbooks, Harewood ms 492, 165–172 and Inventory, 1795 ms 490, 1–4, West Yorkshire Archive Service.

<sup>83</sup> Personal communication, Christopher Gilbert, then Director, Temple Newsam House, 1986, conversation.

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<sup>84</sup> S. M. Levey, *Embroideries at Hardwick Hall* (London: National Trust, 2007), p. 62.

<sup>85</sup> T. Edensor, 'Waste matter - the debris of industrial ruins and the disordering of the material world', *Journal of Material Culture*, X, no. 3 (2005), p. 317.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, E. Avrami, R. Mason and M. de la Torre, *Values and Heritage Conservation* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2000); C. Caple, *Conservation Skills: Judgement, Method and Decision-Making* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2000); S. Muñoz-Viñas, *Contemporary Theory of Conservation* (Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005); P. Orlofsky and D. Trupin, 'The role of connoisseurship in determining the textile conservator's treatment options', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, XXXII, no. 2 (1993), pp. 109–18.

<sup>87</sup> C. Brandi, *Theory of Restoration* (Firenze: Istituto Centrale per il Restauro / Nardini Editore, 2005), p. 50.

<sup>88</sup> C. Brandi, 'Theory of restoration, I. Theory of restoration, II', in N. Stanley Price, M. Kirby Talley Jr., A. M. Vaccaro eds, *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1996), p. 231.

<sup>89</sup> I. Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things: commoditisation as process', in A. Appadurai ed., *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 64–91.

<sup>90</sup> M. M. Brooks, 'Sharing conservation ethics, practice and decision-making with museum visitors', in J. Marstine ed., *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 332–49.

<sup>91</sup> For example, English Heritage, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (London: English Heritage, 2008); National Trust, *Our Conservation Principles* (Online). Available from: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/article-1356394365704/](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/article-1356394365704/) [Accessed 19 March 2014].

<sup>92</sup> For example, the King James II bed in the Venetian Ambassador's bedroom was first treated by the Rural Industries Board in the 1960s. Conservation on the King's bed began in 1974 under the direction of Philippa Lawrence and was completed under Annabel Wylie in 1987 with input from over 200 volunteers; C. Rowell, 'The King's Bed and its furniture at Knole', *Apollo*, CLX, no. 513 (2004), pp. 58–65. For the continuing treatment of the Spangled Bed (Inventory Number 129462.1) see Knole Conservation Team Blog, *Conservation Trial for the Spangled Bed Continues* (Online, 2014). Available from: [knoleconservationteam.wordpress.com/2014/04/09/conservation-trials-of-the-spangled-bed/](http://knoleconservationteam.wordpress.com/2014/04/09/conservation-trials-of-the-spangled-bed/) [Accessed: 21 March 2014].

<sup>93</sup> This exhibition ran from Uppark's re-opening in 1995 until 2007.

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<sup>94</sup> D. Koutromanou, University of York, Department of Archaeology, Research Students (Online). Available from: [www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/research/research-students/koutromanou](http://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/research/research-students/koutromanou) [Accessed: 20 March 2014] and D. Koutromanou, Developing Evaluation Strategies for Engagement Projects in Conservation, Conservation, Communities and Capacity Building conference, University of York, 11–13 July 2014 (Online). Available from: <https://engagingconservationyork.wordpress.com> [Accessed: 21 March 2014].

<sup>95</sup> National Trust, *Annual Report 2011-12 Going Local*, p. 21. Available from: <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/document-1355769401432/> [Accessed: 21 March 2014].

<sup>96</sup> See, for example, J. F. Donnelly ed., *Interpreting Historic House Museums* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002); D. Baker and G. Chitty, *Managing Historic Sites and Buildings: Reconciling Presentation and Preservation* (London: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>97</sup> The image was made by conservator Vicki Marsland and photographer John Hammond. See National Trust Treasure Hunt, ‘Time Regained’ (Online, 2010). Available from: <https://nttreasurehunt.wordpress.com/2010/03/17/time-regained/> [Accessed: 20 March 2014].

<sup>98</sup> R. Perkins, H. Owens, C. Carr, K. Hallett, I. Gibb and K. Frame, ‘Henry VIII’s tapestries revealed’, in J. Bridgland ed., *ICOM-CC Lisbon 2011 Abstracts 16<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference Lisbon, 19–23 September 2011* (Almada, Portugal: Critério, 2011), p. 287.

<sup>99</sup> M. Ponsonby, ‘Textiles and times: reactions to aged and conserved textiles in historic houses open to the public in England and the USA’, *Textile History*, XLII, no. 2, pp. 200–19.

<sup>100</sup> National Trust, *Calke Abbey* (London: National Trust, 1989), p. 6.

<sup>101</sup> Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, ‘The research agenda for moveable heritage; programmes and projects’, in *Knowledge for Moveable Heritage: An Overview of Knowledge Products of the Research Agenda for Moveable Heritage, the Netherlands* (Amsterdam: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2011), p. 40.

<sup>102</sup> W. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, Trans. H. Eiland and K. McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 23.