

The Italian Association of Archaeometry (AIAr)

The Italian Association of Archaeometry (AIAr), which was established in 1993, is the principal Italian association of scholars and researchers in the field of archaeometry. As stipulated in the By-Laws, *the aim of the association is to promote and develop research, didactic and professional activities for studying and safeguarding the Cultural Heritage by utilising scientific methodologies. It promotes contacts between researchers in the scientific disciplines and those in the humanities in order to deal with problems regarding the study, restoration and conservation of Cultural Properties.* Therefore, the term “archaeometry” should be understood in a very general sense as a synonym for Science and Technology as applied to the Cultural Heritage.

Its members are:

- the great majority of university teachers in the discipline and university researchers, both structured and not, in the (physical, chemical, geological, biological) sciences applied to Cultural Properties, as well as in engineering and architecture, and numerous researchers of public research institutes, among which are the CNR and ENEA;
- a significant component of archaeologists, art historians and restorers employed in governmental offices, who are involved in the protection, conservation, restoration, and safeguarding of the archaeological and artistic patrimony;
- a consistent number of persons holding degrees, specialisations, and doctorates in archaeology, architecture, the history of art, the cultural heritage, and conservation sciences, who are employed professionally in activities of diagnostics, research and excavation, above all in consultancies and assistance on building sites, in art restoration (monuments, paintings, various art objects), preventive and emergency archaeology, and territorial and town-planning design.

AIAr thus combines competences on a theoretical, methodological and scientific research level with experiments related to diagnostics and the conservation of art objects of all ages, and offers itself as a reference point for those in the analytical field who are in need of professional advice. With these prerequisites, AIAr has often dedicated thematic conferences to the problems of conservation and diagnostics of the principal categories of art objects.

The investigative techniques used are very varied, ranging from ones that are already consolidated to the more innovative ones. Among these are non-invasive techniques that can be transported *in situ* for investigation purposes, techniques aimed at the dating and identification of forgeries, and monitoring techniques for environments, both inside and outdoors, in which the works are conserved.

Particular attention is given to young scholars who are interested in archaeometry, both by sustaining their activities in direct manner with awards or study grants, and also by organising training programmes that facilitate their insertion into the work of research on an international level and in the working world.

On a biennial basis, AIAr organises a National Conference that by now has become a fundamental scientific-cultural appointment in Italy as far as archaeometric research is concerned and in which there is an ever increasing participation on the part of young researchers. This appointment also attracts great interest on the part of the international community of archaeometry scholars.

The past AIAr national congresses were held at:

- I Verona, 2-4 December 1999 (organised by Marco Martini)
- II Science for the Cultural Heritage, Bologna, 29 January–1st February 2002 (organised by Claudio D'Amico)
- III Archaeometry in Italy. Science for the Cultural Heritage, Bressanone, 10–12 February 2004 (organised by Claudio D'Amico)
- IV Pisa, 1-3 February 2006 (organised by Claudio D'AMico)
- V Science and the Cultural Heritage, Siracusa, 26-29 February 2008 (organised by Anna Gueli)

Thematic Meetings at the suggestion of the members have also been organised on an annual basis.

Past meetings have dealt with the following topics:

- Biology and Archaeobiology in the Cultural Heritage field, Como, 22-23 September 2003 (organised by Cristina Sabbioni, Franca Persia and Lanfredo Castelletti)
- Technological innovations for the Cultural Heritage in Italy, Caserta, 16-18 February 2005 (organised by Claudio D'Amico and Carmine Lubritto)
- Colour and Art: the history and technology of colour over the centuries, Florence, 28 February-2 March 2007 (organised by Mauro Bacci)

- **Reflections and transparencies: diagnosis and conservation of vitreous works of art and manufactures, Ravenna, 24-26 February 2009 (organised by Mariangela Vandini)**

AIAR members who have regularly paid their annual dues will receive free of charge the Newsletter and the Proceedings of the national conferences and thematic meetings organised by the Association. They are also entitled to take out a subscription to the *Archaeometry* journal at a reduced price.