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Assessment, Treatment, and Study in the Conservation Laboratory of the Vatican Secret Archives

ABSTRACT

When the papal embassy closed in Venice in the late eighteenth century, the Fondo Veneto, Sezione II, a forty-linear-meter collection of legal and accounting documents, was among the several thousands of bound and loose documents transferred to the Vatican Secret Archives, Vatican City-State. A year-long Samuel H. Kress Foundation post-graduate conservation fellowship in 2000 supported work on condition assessment, rehousing, study, and treatment of the manuscripts and printed materials in this collection. The project and the highlights of the treatment and study of the collection were described. Examples of historic bindings and letter formats were shown, and observations on repairs contemporary to the original documents and bindings were made. The author discussed how current trends in non-invasive conservation treatment approaches influenced treatment solutions.

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