

The forgotten “New De Mayerne” MS Sloane 1990 – Comparative overview of an understudied primary source

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In 1967, almost half a century ago, A.E. Werner published an article entitled “A ‘New’ de Mayerne Manuscript” in which he brings the manuscript MS Sloane 1990, today in the British Library in London, to the attention of conservators and art historians. Werner provides a preliminary description of this manuscript and its contents, which, in many aspects, seem to resemble one of the most cited primary sources used in reconstruction research in conservation today – the 17th-century manuscript *Pictoria, sculptoria, tinctoria et quae subalternarum artium spectantia in lingua Latina, Gallica, Italica, Germanica, conscripta a Petro Paulo Rubens, Van Dyke, Somers, Greenberry, Janson, etc., Fol. no. xix*, commonly known as the “Mayerne Manuscript,” MS Sloane 2052. Werner ascribes MS Sloane 1990 also to Théodore Turquet de Mayerne and his protégé and amanuensis Jean Colladon. However, as Ulrike Kern confirms in her recent review article “The art of conservation I: Theodore de Mayerne, the King’s black paintings and seventeenth-century methods of restoring and conserving paintings” (*Burlington Magazine* 1351: 157, October 2015), there still has not been published neither a transcription, nor a comprehensive index or a more detailed comparative analysis of this primary source, despite its conspicuous similarities to a key primary source for reconstruction research used by conservators, and despite the increasing interest in De Mayerne in historical studies. Building on recent work in art history, conservation studies and history of science providing many more insights into the fascinating figure of De Mayerne, and in light of book historians’ increasing attention to hybrid compilations as important agents in knowledge collection and circulation, the author argues that it is more than timely to subject this largely forgotten “new” manuscript to a more thorough analysis and to make its art technological content better accessible to conservators and historians of art and science alike. This poster provides a first step in this research project that is being conducted within the context of the ARTECHNE research group led by Prof. Sven Dupré at Utrecht University, The Netherlands. It presents an overview of the content of this manuscript, a description of its main features and its idiosyncrasies in comparison to the well-known “Mayerne Manuscript” MS Sloane 2052, which has already been published in several translations (see Ulrike Kern’s article for an excellent overview of the existing scholarship on the “Mayerne Manuscript” and its edition and translation history). The poster also provides an overview of existing scholarly literature on MS Sloane 1990. Finally, interviews will be conducted with conservators who have worked with both sources which will include information on their experiences working with recipes from the manuscripts ascribed to De Mayerne. The preprint publication of this poster provides the author with an excellent opportunity to inform the conservation community about this project and to invite conservators who have worked with MS Sloane 1990 to share their experiences with this intriguing, yet still understudied primary source with a wider audience.