

## Microbiological research of the collection of book cabinets in the Wladyslaw Grabski Library

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**Abstract:** *Microbiological research of the collection of book cabinets in the Wladyslaw Grabski Library.* Through the ability to adapt to most conditions, mold is capable of colonizing most technical materials. In the case of libraries, mold generally inhabits wooden cabinets, parts of books, papers and other materials rich with nutrients. This study was motivated by the emergence of efflorescence in book collections and on the wooden walls of the libraries' cabinets in SGGW Library. The sampling method used on the gravitational sedimentation of biological aerosol to the medium. Identification was made on the basis of micro- and macro observation. The identification has allowed to determine the following molds: *Penicillium chrysogenum*, *Penicillium meleagrinum*, and *Acremonium charticola*. All of the listed species can cause human disease, therefore it is necessary to pay attention to the influence of molds both on the book collection but also on human health.

After concluding the research and the analysis of the results, the book collections were fumigated with S-9 gas, and the cabinets were sterilized using 10% sterinol.

**Keywords:** library, microbiological contamination, molds

### THE CAUSES OF MOLDS IN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Fungal infections are often associated with inattention to hygiene within a certain place [Wiejak 2011], in fact it appears as a result of wrongly designed building projects or wrongly done construction [Matkowski K. 2011, Ważny 1997]. These building's owners have to apply preventive measures and keep controlling everything in the matters of mycology areas [Ważny 1973]. Wooden buildings and those alike are under high risk of infection by molds, which is caused by high humidity, by construction defects or wrong building conservation [Karbowska-Berent 2004], as well as natural disaster [Wojtczak 1999]. Monumental objects, with cellulose and proteins contents: wood, leather, parchment, cotton, linen, can become a perfect living environment for microorganisms from the air. *Actinomycetes* and filamentous fungi show a high activity during the process [Gutarowska and oth. 2010]. The most popular kinds of mold in rooms that are caused by air include: *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, *Cladosporium*, *Fusarium*, *Mucor*, *Penicillium*, *Rhizopus*, *Trichoderma*, *Geotrichum* [Gutarowska and oth. 2010, Matkowski 2011]. In the example of libraries, the fungi usually settle on the wooden parts of cabinets, books, papyrus etc., which are rich in nutrition: carbohydrates and protein [Matejczyk, Wołejczyk 2011]. Occurin molds are heterotrophs, they feed on the dead organic matter, the enzymes produced by those molds are used to break down complex compounds. Their nutritional requirements are relatively low, therefore they can grow in an environment with a low nutrients content. This makes it difficult to prevent as it is hard to produce an environment in which they would not be able to live. Filamentous fungi grow in a wide range of temperatures. Optimum temperatures for fungi is about 20°C – it's a temperature usually found in rooms. PH reaction, like optimum for microorganisms 5-6 pH. Moreover it is known, mold can develop in 70% of humidity, while the decrease of speed in the process of growth can be seen at 11-14% of the moisture of the material. After 6-14 days [Gutarowska 2010] in high humidity 96-98% and temperature 28%, fungi grow really well and fully cover the entire surface with the mycelium.

## MOLDS

Commonness of mold occurring in every natural environment and very easy adaptability make that these organisms can colonize and overtake most technical materials. Molds which degrade paper [Potrzebnicka 2001] are able to also degrade carton, cardboard, leather, pergamín, inks, natural glue and wax seals [Gallo 1993]. They occur as early as the production stage, and their development is dependent on the manner of storage. Degradation of the final products are caused by microorganisms which are able to hydrolyse cellulose in paper. One of the most important molds with high ability to degrade cellulose in a variety of materials is *Trichoderma*. Moreover, to the list of molds responsible for the degradation of cellulose in paper, we can add *Aspergillus*, *Penicillium*, *Chaetomium*, *Cladosporium*, *Alternaria*, *Aureobasidium*, *Stemphylium*, *Hormodendrum*, *Popularia*, *Trichothecium*, *Botrytis*, *Phoma* and other [Strzelczyk and oth. 2001, Strzelczyk 2004]. The presence of molds in certain objects can be recognised due to colourfull stains – they are colourfull spores. They can be grey, ocher, white, morels, brown, rusty, black and other [Strzelczyk 2004, Piotrowska, Źakowska 2010]. For other typical symptoms of molds on paper, next to the colorful stains we can observe a dusty raid [Internet].

## METHOD

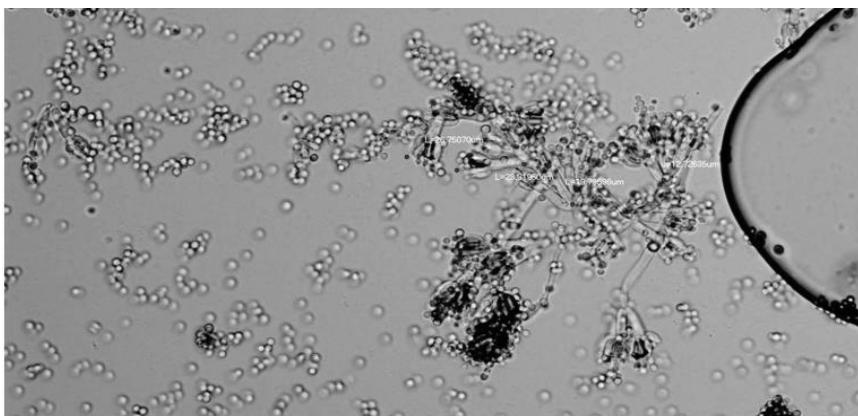
The reason for this research was the appearance of fungi efflorescence on the book collections and on the wooden walls of the library cabinets in Main Library of WULS in Warsaw named after Wladyslaw Grabski. The sampling method relies on sedimentation, which uses the occurrence of the still particles setting onto the growth field. The solid particles of biological aerosol include fragments of hyphae and spores. The sedimentation method is based on the assumption, that during 5 minutes on the 100 cm<sup>2</sup> of substrate (medium) settle about as much organisms, as located in 10 liters of air [Wiejak 2011]. For tests 90 mm diameter disposable petri dishes were used with medium (Agar + Glucose + Chloramphenicol + Bengal Rose). The time of exposure of Petri dishes in libraries cabinets was 5 minutes. Later, the examples were put in thermostat, where were their incubation (30°C, humidity 80%).

From the material gathered after the check of the microbiological cleanliness of the air, using the surface inoculation reductive method certain colonies of mold were separated. Colonies of mold were chosen according to the frequency of occurrence of the strain at least three plates or by development of the culture, like mold which is dangerous for people. These cultures were incubated during 10 days. Identification was made on the basis of their morphological characteristics by comparison with those of the known species observed under the microscope. During the identification process photos were taken using the microscope (Olympus DX 40 - coupled with a digital camera and CellSens program).

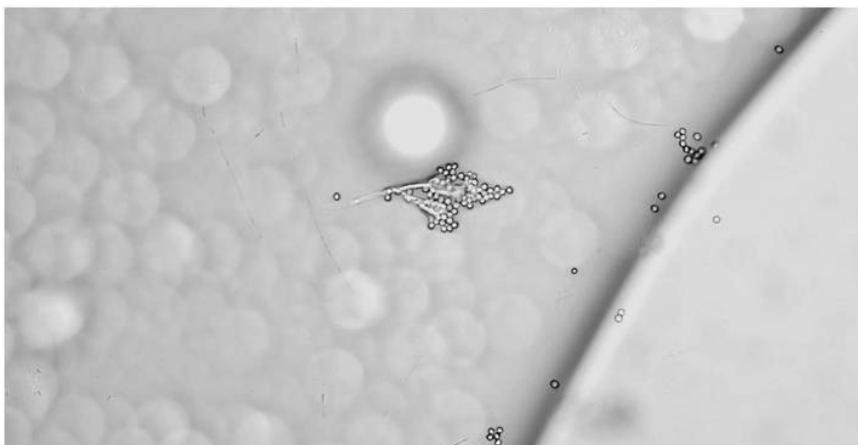
## RESULTS

Identification has allowed to determine the following mold *Penicillium chrysogenum* and *Penicillium meleagrinum*, *Acremonium charticola* [fig 1-3].

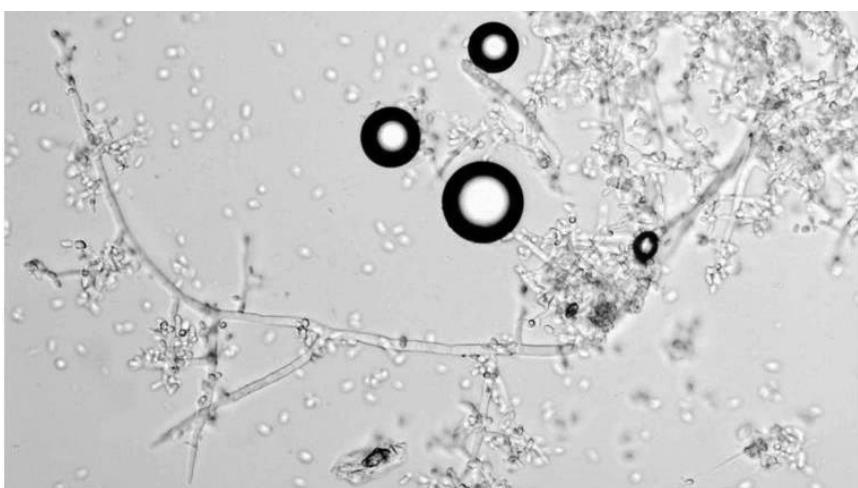
Used the keys to identification: Gams W. 1971: Cephalosporium-artige Schimmelpilze, Samson R., Houben J. 2011: Phylogenetic and taxonomic studies on the genera *Penicillium* and *Talaromyces*, Studies Mycology 70, Raper, K.B., Thom, Ch. & Fennel, D.I. 1949. Manual of the Penicillia. The obtained results correlate with literature data about molds in libraries and others rooms. The most common species in rooms are *Penicillium* sp. [Zyska 2001, Zielińska-Jankiewicz and oth. 2008, Wójcik 2014]. This kind of mold are BSL 1 (Biosafety Level) – the characteristic of the high risk of biological threat. In people with reduced resistance can cause lung mycosis, ocular inflammation and allergic reaction. *Acremonium charticola* common on the wallpaper was isolated from cellars [Piontek 1999,



**Figure 1.** *Penicillium chrysogenum* conidiophora and spores



**Figure 2.** *Penicillium meleagrinum* conidiophora



**Figure 3.** *Acremonium charticola* spores and hyphae of fungi

Zyska 2001] with high humidity. It causes of lungs and epidermis infection. Therefore it is necessary to pay attention influence of molds to book collection but also for human's health.

## SUMMARY

The molds are microorganisms which are present everywhere, both in home and in workplace. High humidity causes the of appearance of the mold in the book collections in library. In the papers cellulose is very hygroscopic and very slowly captures moisture of the environment. Also, the addition of organic glue to paper make it a good nutrients for microorganisms [Adcock 1999]. Molds on the paper colorized by metabolic process in this organism – it is a common reason of appearance of stains on the book [Wasilewska 2004]. Reconized molds *P.chryzogenum*, *P.meleagrinum* are common in human environment. The third species *Acremonium charticola* – very often appear in high humidity room, on the cellulose material. After research and analise of results book collections was fumigate by gas S-9 (ethylene oxide and carbon dioxide) in vacuum chamber in conservation Department in National Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw. Cabinets was sterilized by sterinol.

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**Streszczenie:** *Badania mikrobiologiczne szaf bibliotecznych w Bibliotece Głównej im. Władysława Grabskiego SGGW w Warszawie.* Powszechność występowania grzybów pleśniowych we wszystkich środowiskach naturalnych oraz ich niezwykła zdolność przystosowania się do warunków otoczenia sprawia, że organizmy te mogą kolonizować większość materiałów technicznych. W przypadku bibliotek są to najczęściej drewniane regały, elementy książek, papirusów itp., które są bogate w węglowodany i białka.

Pobudką do przeprowadzenia badań było pojawienie się wykwitów pleśniowych na księgozbiorach oraz ścianach drewnianych szaf bibliotecznych, w Bibliotece Głównej SGGW. Materiał badawczy pobrano metodą sedymentacyjną. Identyfikacji grzybów pleśniowych do rodzaju lub gatunku dokonano na podstawie obserwacji mikro- i makroskopowych struktur grzybów. Oznaczono następujące gatunki: *Penicillium chrysogenum*, *Penicillium meleagrinum* i *Acremonium charticola*. Wszystkie wymienione gatunki nie tylko degradują m.in. materiały ligno-celulozowe, ale również mogą być przyczyną chorób ludzi.

Po przeprowadzonych badaniach i analizie wyników, księgozbiór poddano fumigacji przy zastosowaniu gazu S-9, a szafy biblioteczne zdezynfekowano 10% r-rem sterinolu.

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