

# DOCUMENTATION, OBJECT RECORDING, AND THE ROLE OF CURATORS IN THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM, CAIRO\*

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## Introduction

The curator is the mediator between collections and the public, although curatorial duties might differ from one country to another, and occasionally from museum to museum. Traditionally, as 'keeper', a curator is responsible for the core mission of the museum,<sup>1</sup> namely the care of its collections. 'Despite the centrality of collections, the position of curator has been somewhat embattled in recent years. This was originally due to the reorganization of museums from curator-led departments to a more functional administration. This tendency has been intensified by the increasing emphasis on public programs and visitor services and by the realization that exhibitions and other museums activities require input from many other professional disciplines as well as curatorial'.<sup>2</sup> This quote from Lord and Lord highlights the challenges that curators currently face: their role may be extended to cover non-curatorial duties, while exhibitions and other museum activities require additional input from other professional disciplines.<sup>3</sup> At a time when many museums are cutting down their curatorial staff in favour of personnel from other disciplines, these challenges may even threaten the career. Thus, it becomes a necessity to reinforce the importance of the role of curator, which must be centralized around the collection and its management.

## Curatorial challenges in Egypt

Museums and Egyptian curatorial departments have witnessed significant changes in recent years.<sup>4</sup> With the desire for reform after the 2011 revolution, museum experts have taken the opportunity to transform museums into collaborative community centres. Considerable change has been implemented in museums and these institutions are now reassessing their strategic plans in search of competitive advantage based on stakeholder relationships.<sup>5</sup> Traditionally, curatorship was synonymous with artefact custodianship, defining the principal role of the curator as a 'keeper' who is responsible for the care and security of collections under their purview.<sup>6</sup> Nowadays, curators find themselves more often entrusted with non-curatorial duties. Egyptian curators occasionally serve as educators, marketers, multimedia specialists, and administrators due to the lack of professionals in these disciplines.<sup>7</sup> The Egyptian Museum in Cairo (EMC) is a good example for observing and evaluating such changes. Suffering from current economic difficulties in Egypt, the EMC faces numerous challenges in striving to achieve its goals and accomplish its mission. While management and curatorial staff dedicated efforts to the museum's social role and public engagement through education programmes, frequent temporary exhibitions, and activities (Figs 1 and 2), not much attention has been given to the development of permanent

displays, which remains uncertain until now (Fig. 3). The museum suffers from the absence of strategic planning and leadership, which is sometimes the case of museums operated as 'line-departments'.<sup>8</sup> Often, there is a wide gap between who manages, operates, and implements plans, and who sets the strategic plans; the mid-term and long-term objectives being the primary responsibility of 'the governing body'.<sup>9</sup> It becomes necessary to re-assign the museum priorities, which also should be defined in its short and long-term objectives.<sup>10</sup>

Although Egyptian curatorship has not developed a strategic plan,<sup>11</sup> it has witnessed changes in its priorities over the last two decades.<sup>12</sup> The interest and dedicated efforts of curators have been focused first on museum education, public engagement, documentation, and exhibition,<sup>13</sup> and second on marketing, fundraising, and strategic planning, which have increased in priority over the last three years.

In the case of EMC, museum exhibition, public engagement, and education are its stated priorities; however, 'documentation and collection management' should be first and foremost. There is an urgent need to understand, research, and classify the priorities of collection management as well as to define the strengths and weaknesses of the collection.<sup>14</sup> This requires giving priority to documentation, research, and tracking of the collection. It is important to establish a research plan that would use object records as a base to develop the museum's permanent displays and pedagogical programmes.<sup>15</sup> The research should focus first on the object records: reconstructing object histories and archaeological contexts, updating published references and publications, and including contemporary interpretations. Each object has multiple stories to tell beyond its original purpose and the nature of its discovery—for example the chapel of the cow Hathor<sup>16</sup> (Figs 4, 5 and 6)—and any information that might shed new light on the interpretation of this object and contribute to its history should be collected. 'What can an object tell us?' is an important question whose answer requires intensive and focused curatorial research that, in turn, can be used in the development of exhibitions and pedagogical programmes.<sup>17</sup>

### The EMC curatorial duties and traditions

The EMC curatorial staff are organised in a hierarchical pyramid model following a traditional organisation divided into eight curatorial sections—in addition to the Registration, Collections Management and Documentation Department (RCMDD) and the Conservation departments. Each section deals with a certain period or type of objects and has curators in charge who carry the traditional curatorial duties in their associated galleries.<sup>18</sup> The RCMDD is responsible for specific duties including registration, tracking and object movement, updating the database as well as providing scholars with data and images. Though the staff are organised hierarchically, the operation relies on task forces and assigned committees that carry out specific tasks, and normally report to the General Director. Policies, procedures and manuals define tasks and answer questions such as 'who should be included in the committee?' and 'how should the work be processed'? Therefore, the RCMDD protocol is responsible for the documentation, inventory and numbering methods for new accessions (Fig. 7).

When accessioning new objects, the General Director forms a committee that includes the curator in whose collection the object would go, a registrar, a conservator, security staff, and a photographer as well as the inspector(s) who bring the new objects to the museum. The registrar collects and prepares the data related to the objects and arranges the registration sheets with new accession numbers (Fig. 8). Then the assigned committee meets to study, examine and photograph the objects and add entries to the *Journal d'Entrée* (JdE) and Special Register and determine whether to display the objects within a gallery or place them in storage. A final report is made by the curator in charge and the registrar and is presented to the director. Several other daily duties can be carried out by the curatorial staff, such as condition reporting, exhibiting, handling and packing the objects, and guiding official guests. In addition to other non-curatorial duties such as the museum opening-and-closing responsibilities, where curators must check all galleries of the museum together with the security staff to ensure the safety of the collection on display together with the showcases as well as the gates and windows of the galleries, curators might serve on administrative, financial, security committees as well as the regular executive and management committees.

### The EMC inventory systems: the recurrent problems

The difficulties facing curators in collection management and documentation at the EMC are discussed hereafter, with examples given to illustrate collection documentation, object tracking, and numbering system issues. EMC has several inventory systems that have been created for different reasons.<sup>19</sup> These multiple inventory systems cause needless confusion: why does an object have several numbers? When was each of these inventory systems established? And what is the reason for the creation of these different systems? The various systems under discussion below do not include the recently created numbering system currently used by the GEM.<sup>20</sup>

*Journal d'Entrée* (JdE)<sup>21</sup> has been the fundamental inventory system and accession register since its inception in the 1880s until the present. The JdE was initiated when the national Egyptian collection of antiquities was at the Bulaq Museum, founded in 1858.<sup>22</sup> However, while there might be a discovery date associated with these early objects entered in the JdE and the museum collection, it is not until 1888 that entries themselves are dated.<sup>23</sup> The latest item to be entered at the time of writing was JdE 100187, a coin excavated at San el-Hagar in 2018.<sup>24</sup> Parallel to the JdE, the EMC established other inventorying systems to deal with certain problems, or for certain goals. The *Catalogue général du Musée du Caire* (CGC),<sup>25</sup> is a scholarly publication in which objects have been grouped by category, related objects being given a sequential number within a series allocated to that category.<sup>26</sup> It also has been used as a numbering system, often with the number marked in a red on the object itself. The *Temporary Registers* (T.R.)<sup>27</sup> were established in 1914 and discontinued in 2007. The T.R. was used to register objects that had been received by the Museum, but whose status was not yet clear, i.e., whether or not they would be officially accessioned. It comprises the date of receipt into the museum, plus a serial number in sequence of objects received on that day (so 1/2/24/3 is the third object received on 1 February 1924). The *Special Registers* (SR) is another accession system intended to be used internally at the

museum. Its main goal was the distribution of artefacts to particular curators, who have responsibility over specific collections. The system was established in 1960 by dividing the collections of the museum into seven sections, each of them dealing with specific historical periods, galleries, and/ or particular collections. The First Section, for example, was dedicated to Tutankhamun, Hetep-Heres, the royal collections from Tanis, and jewellery, while the Second Section was devoted to all objects from Prehistory to the First Intermediate Period. In the 2000s, a new section was established for the documentation of the collections in the museum basement—Section Eight, which has a unique accession system different from the other sections. There are 15 registers in Section Eight, each one is numbered and dedicated to a specific kind of collection according to the type, site or the collector—for example, King Farouk Collection, Aniba, Pottery, Sinai, and Various Collection. These collections are also identified by a letter in the inventory code: F for Farouk, P for Pottery, V for Various Collection, and so on. An example of this number is SR.8V/239, which indicates that we are dealing with Special Register, Section 8, Various Collection, and object number 239.

In addition, the RCMDD has created a new form of temporary numbering system to track special cases. This includes objects which have been stored in the basement for decades, and for which no previous inventory number has yet been identified but might nevertheless exist<sup>28</sup> as well as objects that the museum received, often temporarily, for purposes other than accession (travelling or in-house exhibitions, for example). These objects may not yet have received an official SCA accession number at another museum or a site magazine. In this case, the temporary numbering is given the code PV (Provisional Number) followed by the year and a sequential number. An excellent example is PV.2009.15, a wall painting with two women and lotus flower, from the tomb of Qenamun (TT93), Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, 18th Dynasty, repatriated to the Egyptian Museum from Barcelona, Spain, in 2009.

### Object record and documentation matters

Objects inventorying, documentation, and object-tracking are critically important to the museum's collection management strategies and resolving associated issues is a priority that needs to be included in any of its forthcoming action plans. Hereafter, we discuss some critical problems encountered not only by the curatorial staff, but also scholars who conduct research on the objects in the museum's collection.

Because the JdE is the fundamental inventorying system, each object should to have a JdE number; however, a significant percentage have either never been given a JdE number or have more than one JdE number. Examples are discussed below in order to illustrate issues the museum seeks to resolve.

#### Individual objects with more than one JdE number

There are many cases in which one object has been given multiple JdE numbers. For instance, a faience ankh-vase of Amenhotep II from KV35, excavated by Loret in 1898, has JdE numbers 32457-a and 32491-t, in addition to CG 24393, and SR.4/ 2491. The vase was entered, by error, twice into the JdE on the same date! CG 24390 (SR.4/ 2490) is another

faience ankh-vase of Amenhotep II (also from KV35), which also has multiple JdE numbers (JdE 32491-a, 32491-b, and 32651-j). These are just two examples of common mistakes that can occur while cataloguing a large number of minor objects coming to the museum in one shipment.

Other cases concern objects that have been catalogued but have neither number written on them nor tags attached to them—such objects could easily be divorced from their records. This has occurred quite often, but the most extreme example is the duplication of the entire collection of Yuya and Tjuiu from KV46, which comprises 191 objects that have been entered twice in the JdE (Figs. 9-10)! This particular case raises questions because the collection was well documented during its excavation and was received at the museum in 1905, the same year it was excavated.<sup>29</sup> The collection was given the CGC numbers 51001-51191 and thus a dedicated CGC volume was prepared by J.E. Quibell in 1905 and published in 1908.<sup>30</sup> Quibell's volume was held from printing at the time as not to compete with the volume by Theodore M. Davis, who published the excavation and the discovery of the tomb in 1907.<sup>31</sup> However, the collection was not entered to the JdE until 1938.<sup>32</sup> In 1960, it was entered to the Special Register (Figs 11 and 12).<sup>33</sup> For no apparent reason, the collection was given new JdE numbers (JdE 95225-95429) on 1 June 1981.<sup>34</sup> In his decision to create new JdE numbers<sup>35</sup>, the curator responsible<sup>36</sup> likely relied on fact that the CGC did not include JdE numbers for these objects,<sup>37</sup> and probably thought they had not been given JdE numbers yet since there would have been nothing to lead back to 1938 as their accession year. Yuya's collection also bears examples of double entries, for example: SR.4/ 97 (CG 51186; JdE 95345), a bundle of plants that was entered again under SR.4/ 122 (CG 51186; JdE 95320). It should be also noted that two shabtis, SR.4/ 140 (JdE 95363, CG 51037) and SR.4/ 144 (CG 57029) were stolen on 28 January 2011 and have yet to be recovered (Fig. 13).

Such mistakes within one of the best-known groups of objects in the museum may be seen as highlighting both a lack of consistent collection management and the need for systematic objects research. It thus becomes clear that curators need to carry out research on objects and collections in order to have accurate inventory data and information regarding their accession. It should also be noted that in certain instances of multiple JdE numbers, the reasons for duplication are genuine and logical: e.g., a group of blocks found separately, yet later unified into a single monument. Similarly, a set of amulets and beads belonging to one bracelet might have each had its own number, before being entered under one (new) inventory number after restoration. In the case of a colossal dyad statue of Amun and Mut from Thebes, the statue was found in pieces that have each been given multiple numbers. In 1998/1999, the statue was reassembled by Hourig Sourouzian, adding newly discovered fragments to the earlier ones, with the resulting assembled piece given a new number, JdE 99064 (SR.4/ 15927 – Fig. 14).<sup>38</sup>

#### One JdE number for several objects

In some instances, one JdE number may have been given accidentally to several objects. This can happen when more than one curator or registrar is responsible for accessions. For instance, JdE 30770bis1-9 is the number of nine objects excavated at Coptos by W.M.F.

Petrie for the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) in 1893.<sup>39</sup> However, JdE 30770bis itself is a Middle Kingdom stela usurped by Ramesses II that records a visit of Asiatic princes—this stela is also inventoried as CG 34511 (itself a duplicated number) and JdE 37496).<sup>40</sup> Though most of them are excavated from the Great Temple in Coptos, there is no obvious reason why they should have been given the same number. It is possible that the objects were numbered on site before being brought to the museum, which may explain the overlapping with JdE 30770<sup>41</sup> (Figs 15 and 16).

#### Individual objects without JdE numbers

These objects have been given one or more numbers in the other accession systems (T.R., CG, or SR), but have not been entered in the JdE. This is perhaps owing to uncertainty as to whether it had previously been entered, or if already in the T.R., or uncertainty as to whether a decision had been made to keep the object at the museum or not.

#### *Objects with SR and/or CG numbers only*

In some cases, an object might not have a JdE number but has a SR or CG number, or both, even though it may have been acquired several decades prior. An example is CG 34097 (SR 3/ 10331): the round-topped limestone stela of Ipu from the New Kingdom,<sup>42</sup> which has no JdE number.

#### *Objects without any number*

An interesting example relates to a coffin set from Lahun that was re-discovered in the basement without any number or associated data.<sup>43</sup> The set consists of an anthropoid wooden coffin and a cartonnage mummy case. It transpires that it had been discovered by Petrie in 1900 and had entered the museum in 1901. It languished without any numbers until 2004-05, when it was given a temporary number (N.37) during documentation work in the basement.<sup>44</sup> Although the set has not yet been given a JdE number, it has however been documented at the museum and its archaeological context has been established. Curatorial research has since led to the restoration and reassembling of the set as well as scanning of the body. The case illustrates the difficulties associated with forgotten objects left for decades without being given JdE numbers, or those that lost their accession numbers and associated data.

#### Unlocated objects: 'objects lost inside the museum'

A number of objects are noted in the database as 'lost objects', indicating their current location is unknown. This happens when object movement has not been recorded and is a serious problem in collection management, as it is necessary to track the movement of any object with each relocation. There are thousands of such objects in the museum. We may consider two find-groups as examples: one from the burial of a lady called Bak from Sheikh Abd el-Qurna,<sup>45</sup> excavated in 1858, and the second, from the tomb of Kha at Deir el-Medina (TT8), excavated by Ernesto Schiaparelli for the Egyptian Museum of Turin in 1906.<sup>46</sup> The group of Bak's objects are numbered JdE 3317-3348 and includes baskets, scarabs, rings, and other small burial goods. The equipment from the grave of Kha have the numbers JdE 38643 a-d; 38644 a-b, 38645a-d, 38646a-c, and 38647a-s, which includes bread, lamps, lamp

supports, among other items (Fig. 17). The lack of object data and photos in the registers has made it a challenge in identifying and locating these objects, which have been distributed in the galleries according to type. Half of these find-groups cannot currently be located within the museum at present. These case-studies speak to the necessity of building consistent object records with archaeological context, movement history, description, and archival photos.

Good documentation can facilitate the efforts of the museum to retrieve stolen objects. For example, in the aftermath of the looting and vandalism of the museum on 28 January 2011, 58 objects were found to have been stolen. However, thanks to their proper documentation, the museum together with the police and Interpol were able to retrieve these objects. The museum has thus far succeeded in retrieving 39 of the 58 stolen objects, notably JdE 67925 (SR.3/8944), a bronze statue of Harpocrates dated to the 26th Dynasty, gifted by King Fuad I in 1936. In addition, PV.2009.4, PV.2009.5, PV.2009.6, PV.2009.7, and PV.2009.8, five painted limestone relief fragments cut and stolen from the tomb of Seti I (KV17), were returned to Egypt by the University of Tübingen in 2006, thanks to published photographs of the tomb from the 1920s.

## Conclusion

Egyptian curatorship faces various challenges, which sometimes differ from those encountered at other international museums; however, curators share the same goals with regard to collections in their care. The current challenges are the impetus for the revision of curatorial priorities at EMC, focusing on the collection and its management. The following should be considered to improve collection management and object research, both within and outside the museum:

- Implementing a system to track objects inside the museum to avoid the recurrent problems and linking said tracking system to the museum database;
- Defining areas of research that would aid the museum study and interpret its collection;
- Providing online access to the collection, while maintaining the museum's copyright;
- Encouraging scholars to share their up-to-date publications, archival photographs and materials, research, and knowledge of EMC objects through the online access, while museum registrars review the information and decide whether it should be added to the collection database;
- Establishing internships or fellowships programmes to allow qualified scholars to work closer with curators and registrars; thus, supporting the museum's goals to build collection records.

The EMC curatorial department should open the discussion in order to define and revise the priorities regarding the museum's collection and its management. A long-term strategic plan to manage the collection, its documentation and its care is much needed, especially at a time when a significant portion of the collection is being transferred to the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) and National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC). The Egyptian Museum, Cairo needs to showcase the quality and strengths of its remaining collection to

maintain its distinguished position as a hub for Egyptology. Documenting the entire collection and cleaning up the database should be considered a major institutional goal. Decisions must be taken to define and prioritize the goals and necessary actions must be taken to achieve them. These goals must be broken down into short-range, measurable objectives.

This article and the study cases serve to present the current challenges in museum collection management in general but also regarding the collection of the EMC as well as to highlight the importance of establishing a strategic plan for collection management at the museum. It also gives examples for tracking and obtaining information about problematic objects, helping provide explanations to scholars who experience difficulties when working on EMC objects.

## Photos



*Fig. 1: Curators installing an exhibition in one of the galleries. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.*





*Fig. 2: Curators handling objects in one of the displays. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.*



*Fig. 3: The current display in one of the Ground Floor galleries, showing the crowded display and the lack of interpretation. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.*



*Fig. 4: A set of archival photos documenting the Excavation of E. Naville for the EEF (Egypt Exploration Fund) in 1906 at Deir el-Bahri, temple of Thutmose III, chapel of Hathor (DB.NEG.04.0036a - DB.NEG.04.0037a - DB.NEG.04.0037d). Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.*



*Fig. 5: Chapel of Hathor from Deir el-Bahri, temple of Thutmose III, at the EMC. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.*



Fig. 6: Chapel of Hathor from Deir el-Bahri, temple of Thutmose III, at the EMC (detail). Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.



Fig. 7: Curators and conservators handling and examining objects during one of the regular committees inside the galleries.


	<p><b>REGISTRATION AND COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT</b></p>	
<p><u>ACCESSIONING FORM</u></p>		
<p>Section Number: _____</p>		
<p>Curator in charge: _____</p>		
<p>Date: _____ (ex: January 18, 2007)</p>		
<p>SR: _____</p>	<p>JE: _____</p>	<p>CG: _____</p>
<p>Title: _____</p>		
<p>Description: _____                  _____                  _____</p>		
<p>Material(s): _____</p>		
<p>Dimensions: Height _____ cm. Width _____ cm. Depth _____ cm.</p>		
<p>Length _____ cm. Diam _____ cm. Weight _____ gr.</p>		
<p>Please write additional information on the back</p>		
<p>Dating: _____</p>		
<p>Provenance: _____                  _____</p>		
<p>Manner of Acquisition:    <input type="checkbox"/> Bequeathed                      <input type="checkbox"/> Exchanged                     <input type="checkbox"/> Confiscated                      <input type="checkbox"/> Given                     <input type="checkbox"/> Excavated                      <input type="checkbox"/> Repatriated</p>		
<p>Excavation Information: _____                  _____</p>		
<p>Other source: _____</p>		
<p>Home Location (where it will "live"): _____</p>		
<p>Current Location: _____</p>		
<p>Section Head Signature: _____</p>		
<p>Entered in database:</p>		
<p>Date: _____</p>	<p>Recorder: _____</p>	
<p>Updated May 10, 2010</p>		

Fig. 8: A blank form specifying the data to be collected for a new acquisition. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

30 April 1938 1

### TOMB OF YUYA & THUYU

NUMBER	POSITION	DESCRIPTION	DATE	MATERIAL	DIMENSIONS	PROVENANCE	FINDER	Inventory no. Catalogue & Guide	REMARKS	PHOTOGRAPH
68959	P15-A	Outer sarcophagus of Yuya. On slab, covered with black resin. Gilt bands	XVIII <sup>th</sup> dynasty	Wood	L: 2.22	Tombs of the Kings Thebes February 1905	Antiquities Dept at the expense of Theodore M. Davis	51001 (6468)	Published: Davis. The Tomb of Yuya and Thuyu	68959-68979
68960	P15-B	Mummiform coffin of Yuya, resined; gilt bands		Wood	L: 2.75			52002 (6367)	also Quibell, The Tomb of Yuya and Thuyu (Cat. Gen. du Musée du Caire) 1908	
68961	P15-C	Mummiform coffin of Yuya. covered with silver leaf and partially gilt		Wood	L: 2.27			51003 (6366)	φ = 8 = 3/10	
68962	P15-D	Mummiform coffin of Yuya. Gilt		Wood	L: 2.04			51004 (6369)		
68963	P15-E	Outer sarcophagus of Thuyu. On slab covered with black resin. Gilt bands		Wood	L: 2.79			51005 (6370)		
68964	P15-F	Mummiform coffin of Thuyu.		Wood, gilt	L: 2.185			51006 (6371)	φ = 8 = 2/10	
68965	P15-G	Idem		Idem	L: 1.945			51007 (6372)		
68966	P15-R1a	Gilt mask of Yuya		Idem	L: 0.33			51008		
68967	P15-R1b	Idem of Thuyu		Idem	L: 0.40			51009 (6373)		
68968	P15-R1c	Bands from mummy of Yuya		clay, plaster, gilt	L: 0.75			51010		
68969	P15-R1d	Ornament cutnagage of Thuyu		Idem	L: 1.21			51011		
68970	P15-H	Cameo box of Yuya		Wood, resin, plaster, gilt	L (incl) 0.75			51012 (6374)		
68971	P15-I	Idem. of Thuyu		Idem	L: 0.72			51013 (6375)		
68972	P15-H	Cameo vase of Yuya with lid & viscera		Alabaster	H: 0.34			51014 (6376)		
68973		Idem		Idem	H: 0.44			51015 (6377)		
68974		Idem		Idem	H: 0.43			51016 (6378)		
68975		Idem		Idem	H: 0.44			51017 (6379)		
68976		Cameo vase of Thuyu with lid, mask & viscera		Alabaster	H: 0.51			51018 (6380)		
68977		Idem		Idem	H: 0.46			51019 (6381)		
68978		Idem		Idem	H: 0.485			51020 (6382)		
68979		Idem		Idem	H: 0.545			51021 (6383)		

Fig. 9: The first page of the Yuya and Tuya collection inventory, starting with JdE no. 68959; the entry is dated to 30 April 1938 (JdE volume XV, page 1). Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.

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رقم سجل Serial No.	موقع الاثر Provenance	وصف الاثر Description	تاريخ الاثر Date	المادة Material	القياسات Dimensions	المكتشف Discoverer	رقم الاثر Inventory No.	تاريخ الاثر Date	ملاحظات Remarks	موقع الاثر Provenance
95225	p. 13-a	Outer sarcophagus on side of yuya	June 1981	wood, gilt band	h. 3.22	T. A. Davies	C.G. 91001	1.8.81	C.G. 91001	
95226	p. 13-b	Humaniform coffin of yuya	"	wood, with gilt / lacquer	h. 2.75	"	C.G. 91002	"	C.G. 91002	
95227	p. 13-c	"	"	wood, covered with silver leaf, partially gilt	h. 2.27	"	C.G. 91003	"	C.G. 91003	
95228	p. 13-d	"	"	wood, gilt	h. 2.04	"	C.G. 91004	"	C.G. 91004	
95229	p. 13-e	Neck of yuya	"	Human	h. 1.65	"	C.G. 91005	"	C.G. 91005	
95230	p. 13-e	Band from body of yuya	"	cloth and plaster, gilt	4-centred stars, 2.75	"	C.G. 51000	"	C.G. 51000	
95231	p. 13-e	Sarcophagus on side of yuya	"	wood, between red, white, blue	h. 2.79	"	C.G. 21003	"	C.G. 21003	

Fig. 10: The first page of the Yuya and Tuya collection (re)inventory in the JdE, starting with JdE no. 95225; the entry is dated to 1 June 1981 (JdE volume XX, page 83). Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.

رقم سجل Number	تاريخ الاثر Period	وصف الاثر Description	تاريخ الاثر Date	المادة Material	المقياس Dimensions	المصدر Provenance	المسكن Person	رقم الاثر Inventory No.	تاريخ الاثر Date	ملاحظات Remarks	صوره Photography
101	P13 Case 1	Outer sarcophagus, on sled, of Yuya	20th Dyn	Wood, gilt bronze	h. 3.22	T. of Yuya & Thuya. T. of Kheper 1905	Th. Davies	C. 51001	Guide 3667 J. 36225		
102	P13 Case 2	Mummiform coffin of Yuya.		Wood, with gilt & bitumen	h. 2.75			C. 51002	Guide 3667 J. 35226		
103	P13 Case 3	Mummiform coffin of Yuya.		Wood, covered with silver leaf & partially gilt.	h. 2.27			C. 51003	Guide 3666 J. 35227		
104	P13 Case 4	Mummiform coffin of Yuya.		Wood, gilt	h. 2.04			C. 51004	Guide 3669 J. 35228		
105	P13 inside 4	Mummy of Yuya.		Human	h. 1.651			C. 51190	J. 35229		
106	P13 inside 4	Sarcophagus from body of Yuya.		Gloth and plaster, h.: central slab) 0.75 gilt	h. 2.04			C. 51010	J. 35230		
107	P13 Case 5	Sarcophagus, on sled, of Thuya.		Wood, bitumen- red & gilt leaf	h. 2.79			C. 51005	Guide 3705 J. 35231		
108	P13 Case 6	Mummiform coffin of Thuya.		Wood, gilt	h. 2.195			C. 51006	Guide 3704 J. 35232		
109	P13 Case 7	Mummiform coffin of Thuya.		Wood, gilt	h. 1.945			C. 51007	J. 3621		
110	P13 inside 7	Mummy of Thuya.		Human	h. 1.496			C. 51191	J. 35234		
111	P13 inside 7	Stonework cartonnage of Thuya.		Gloth & plaster gilt	h. 1.21			C. 51011	J. 35235		
112	P13 Case 12	Canopic box of Yuya.		Wood, plaster, h. (total) 0.95 gilt				C. 51012	J. 3694		
113	P13 Case 15	Canopic box of Thuya.		Wood, stummy h.: 0.72 gilt				C. 51013	J. 35236		
114	P13 Case 17	Canopic vase of Yuya, with lid & viscera.		Alabaster h.: 0.34				C. 51014	J. 35237		
115	P13 Case 17	Canopic vase of Yuya, with lid & viscera.		Alabaster h.: 0.44				C. 3690A	J. 35238		
116	P13 Case 17	Canopic vase of Yuya, with lid & viscera.		Alabaster h.: 0.43				C. 51015	J. 3690A		
117	P13 Case 17	Canopic vase of Yuya, with lid & viscera.		Alabaster h.: 0.44				C. 51016	J. 35240		
118	P13 Case 17	Canopic vase of Thuya, with lid & viscera.		Alabaster h.: 0.51				C. 51017	J. 35241		
119	P13 Case 17	Canopic vase of Thuya, with lid & viscera.		Alabaster h.: 0.51				C. 51018	J. 3690-3693		

Fig. 11: The first page of the Yuya and Thuya collection inventory in the Special Register, Section 4, starting with SR.4/ 1; the entry date is 1960 (SR/4 volume 1, page 1). Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.

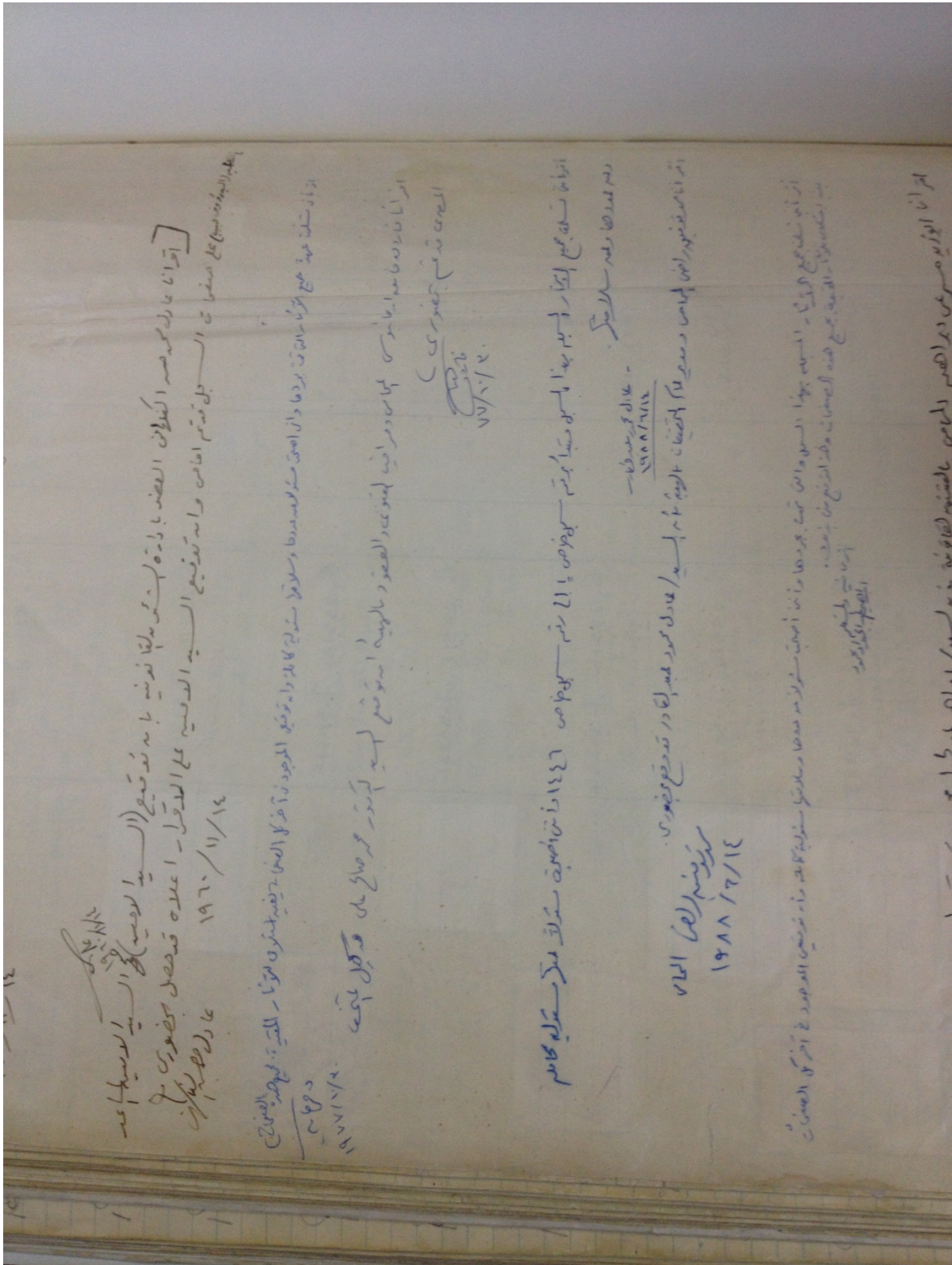


Fig. 12: The last single page of the SR book, which often records the transfer of the artefacts' custody from a curator to another. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.





*Fig. 13: An archival photo of the Yuya and Tuya shabti JdE 95363, which was stolen on 28 January 2011. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.*



*Fig. 14: The colossal dyad statue of Amun and Mut from Karnak after reassembly in 1999. Courtesy of the EMC. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.*

No d'ordre	Matière	Description du monument	Dimensions	Observations	1873
30768	bronze	Une fleur renversée	h. 0,085 diam. 0,05		E 19 N 4
30769	"	Scarabée noir sur une petite bête	h. 0,015		E 19 W 3
30770	"	Épave, pendant la double couronne, sur une vase	h. 0,12		E 19 S 1 Baa
30771	porcelaine verte	Statuette de Dieu Thot debout	h. 0,11		38665 P 19 N 5 1874
30772	pièce noire	Un pot de cette forme	h. 0,13		18124 P 183 K
30773	"	Un autre	h. 0,095		18128 P 183 K
30774	bronze rouge	Un vase de forme scudollé	h. 0,115	2095	2095 P 183 L
30775	albâtre	Un vase de cette forme	h. 0,115		18925 P 50 J 62
30776	porcelaine bleue	Petit pot à collier, avec son couvercle	h. 0,085		36817 P 34 W 6 am 9
30777	"	Petit ornement. Un lot entre deux crochets (parties)	h. 0,028 long. 0,036		B-9
30778	porcelaine verte	Un petit pot de cette forme de l'autre en forme d'arc	h. 0,028		3676 P 49 V 82
30779	"	Branch d'ornement à tête de griffon: épave grecque	h. 0,028	52516	P 25 A
30780	bronze	Machine d'écrou à jour. Le regard se voit en l'air devant une double	long. 0,09 h. 0,07		P 32 54 imp
30781	schiste	Ornament de cette forme	h. 0,14		1893 P 42 Gant
30782	brass	Contour recouvert de 2 plumes et pendant les signes	h. 0,145		P Cour 24 D

Fig. 15: JdE V, page 269 showing the entry for JdE 30770, with an arrow below referring to the attached note with the JdE 30770 bis1-9. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.

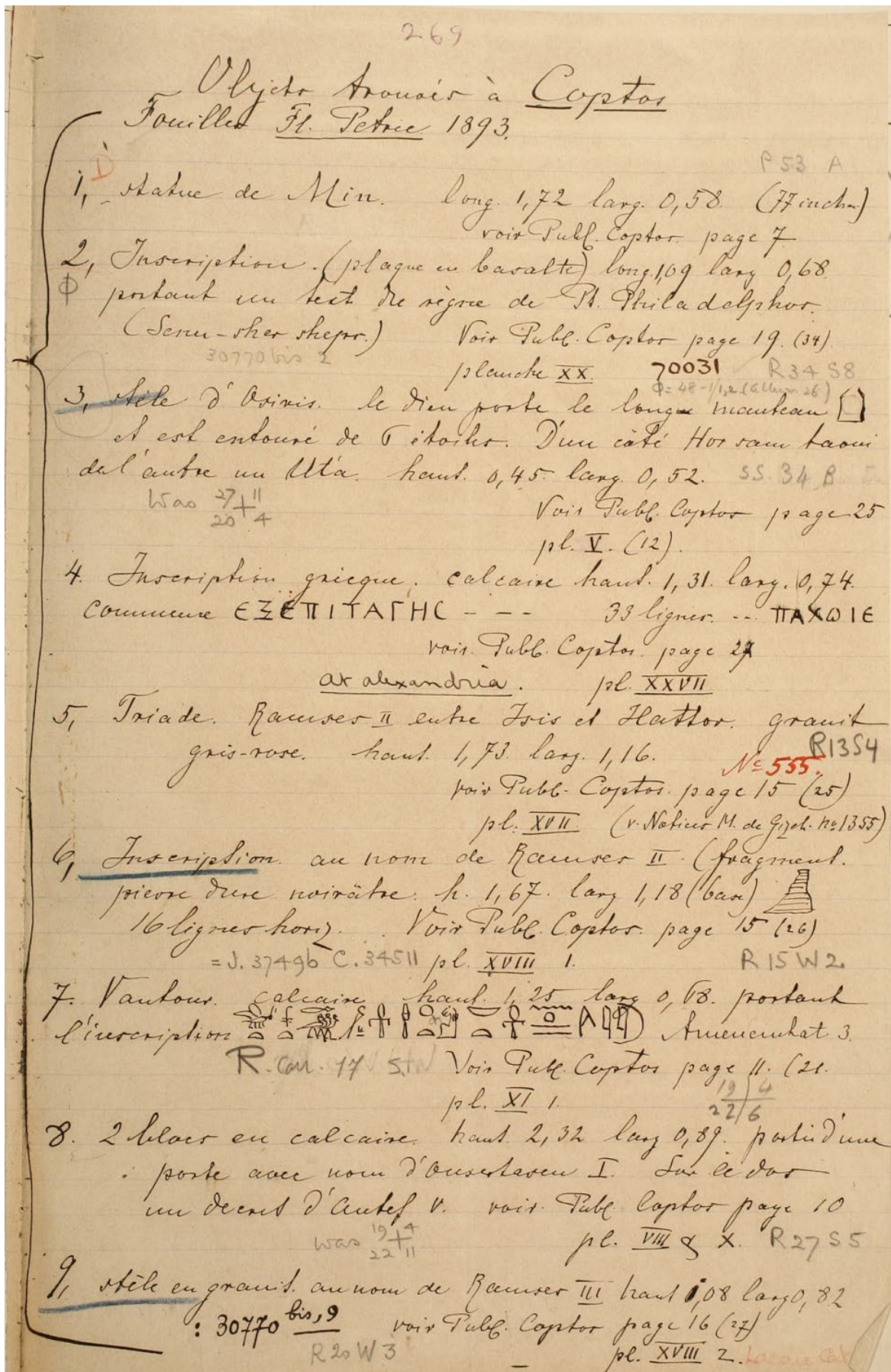


Fig. 16: JdE V, page 269 showing the entry for JdE 30770, with an arrow below referring to the attached note with the JdE 30770 bis1-9. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.

N°	PLAQUE DANS LE MUSÉE	DESCRIPTION DES OBJETS	MATIERE	DIMENSIONS	PROVENANCE	CATALOGUES ET PUBLICATIONS	REMARQUES
38640	PS 301	Morceau de char de bois.	bois	Long. 1. H. 0.02.	1916 Cimetière de son		1906
38641	PS 302	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.13	Lebanon 1906		
38642	PS 303	Longue épave en forme de colonne pyramidale. Le socle est en pierre, le sommet en bois. Les 4 supports sont en bois. Les 4 supports sont en bois. Les 4 supports sont en bois.	colonne, bois, pierre	H. 1.70. Diam. 0.10. Diam. 0.10.	Paris et Méditerranée (Schapovalov, 1914)		
38643	PS 304	Un objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Diam. 0.18	id		
38644	PS 305	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.12	id		
38645	PS 306	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.20	id		
38646	PS 307	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.10	Green		
38647	PS 308	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.09	Lebanon		
38648	PS 309	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.05	Lebanon		
38649	PS 310	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.04 x 0.02	id		
38650	PS 311	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	H. 0.02	id		
38651	PS 312	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	H. 1.59. L. 1.61	Lebanon		
38652	PS 313	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Long. 0.54 x 0.13	Lebanon		
38653	PS 314	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	H. 0.45	Lebanon		
38654	PS 315	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	Diam. 0.25	Lebanon		
38655	PS 316	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	H. 0.12	Lebanon		
38656	PS 317	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	H. 0.15	Lebanon		
38657	PS 318	Objet en terre cuite, forme d'un disque.	terre cuite	H. 0.12	Lebanon		

Fig. 17: The information in JdE regarding the find-group from the tomb of Kha at Deir el-Medina (TT8), excavated in 1906. It provides neither object photos nor enough description to identify and distinguish objects. It does not record the recent tracking of the objects inside the museum either. Cf. JdE volume VII, page 158. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum.

\* This paper is an expanded version of a talk given at the 2017 CIPEG Annual Meeting in Chicago. We wish to thank the organizers of the conference for giving us the opportunity to present this material.

- <sup>1</sup> K. Fowle, 'Who Cares? Understanding the Role of the Curator Today', in S. Rand and H. Kouris, *Cautionary tales: critical curating* (New York, 2007), 10f.  
<[http://curatorsintl.org/images/assets/Fowle\\_Kate.pdf](http://curatorsintl.org/images/assets/Fowle_Kate.pdf)>.
- <sup>2</sup> G. and B. Lord, *The Manual of Museum Management* (New York, 2009), 77.
- <sup>3</sup> B. Lord and M. Piacente, *Manual of Museum Exhibitions* (New York, 2014), 233-5, 237-8.
- <sup>4</sup> M. Gamal Rashed, 'The Museums in Egypt after the 2011 Revolution', in *Museums and Heritage in the times of political change. Museum International* 67 (Paris: Blackwell Publishing, 2015), 125–130.
- <sup>5</sup> D. A. Elsorady, 'The role of stakeholders as a competitive advantage in the formulation of antiquity museum strategies in Egypt,' *Museum Management and Curatorship* (2018), 2, 13f.
- <sup>6</sup> W. Doyon, 'The Poetics of the Egyptian Museum Practice.' *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 10 (2008), 8–9.
- <sup>7</sup> M. Gamal Rashed, 'Museen in Ägypten: Herausforderungen und Chancen', *Antike Welt* 4/16 (2016), 55–59.
- <sup>8</sup> National, state, provincial, country and local authority museums are often part of the cultural department of the relevant levels of government. This is equally true of the 'Egyptian Archaeology and History museums' which are part of the Museums Sector under the Ministry of Antiquities. (cf. Lord and Lord, *The Manual of Museum Management*, 14–15).
- <sup>9</sup> Lord discussed the factors that affect the different modes of government including 'line department'. It is recommended that the operation system be changed, albeit without changing the nature of the overall governing body in order to overcome any possible obstacles (cf. Lord and Lord, *The Manual of Museum Management*, 14–16, 20–21).
- <sup>10</sup> Rashed, *Antike Welt* 4/16, 55-59.
- <sup>11</sup> M. Gamal Rashed, 'A New Concept and Exhibition Program for the Egyptian Museum in Cairo,' *Journal of Ancient Civilisations* 33/1 (2018), 58–59, 60–61.
- <sup>12</sup> Z. Hawass, "New Era for Museums in Egypt", *Museum International* 57/1–2 (2005), 7–23.
- <sup>13</sup> Rashed, *Antike Welt* 4/16, 55–59.
- <sup>14</sup> Lord and Lord, *Manual of Museum Management*, 76f.
- <sup>15</sup> Rashed, *JAC* 33/1, 43f.
- <sup>16</sup> JdE 38574, SR 4/ 11550, and JdE 38575, SR 4/ 11549. As an example of studies recontextualizing objects, see G. Miniaci and S. Quirke, 'Reconceiving the Tomb in the Late Middle Kingdom: The Burial of the Accountant of the Main Enclosure Neferhotep at Dra Abu al-Naga', *BIFAO* 109 (2010), 339–84.
- <sup>17</sup> S. Byrne, 'Voicing the Museum Artefact,' *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies* 10 (2012), 23–34.
- <sup>18</sup> W. Doyon, *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 10, 8–9. There have been few changes in the management system at the museum, except for forming new units for Education, Marketing, Temporary Exhibitions and archaeological research within the curatorial department.
- <sup>19</sup> Bothmer, "Numbering Systems in the Cairo Museum", in *Textes et Langues de L' Égypte Pharaonique, BdÉ* 54/3, (1974), 111–122.
- <sup>20</sup> The collections of the GEM, the majority of which come from the EMC, have been given a new numbering system that consists of a code and a serial number (GEM + serial number). Although documentation, object recording, and numbering systems of the GEM and NMEC are not included in the current discussion, it is necessary to indicate that these new numbering systems will add yet another level of complexity to object identification and tracking.
- <sup>21</sup> M. Trad, 'Varia Musée du Caire: Journal d'Entrée et Catalogue Général', *ASAE* 70 (1984/1985), 351–357.
- <sup>22</sup> The extent first three volumes are copies written in 1881 (Trad, *ASAE* 70, 351).
- <sup>23</sup> Cf. JdE volume IV, 345.
- <sup>24</sup> The JdE consists of 25 handwritten volumes, the images of the registers are accessible in the database.
- <sup>25</sup> There are approximately 90 volumes.
- <sup>26</sup> For the CGC volume classifications and its links with the JdE, see Trad, *ASAE* 70, 351–57.
- <sup>27</sup> The T.R. register books present numerous issues in documentation such as crossing out of an entry once the object was either entered into the JdE or 'deaccessioned'. However, this did not always happen: sometime the entry has not been crossed out after being entered into the JdE; in other cases, a cross-reference to the JdE is mentioned in the T.R., without the entry being crossed out; in other cases, the entry has been left without any mark or reference for the JdE, which causes problems for the documentation department in ensuring whether such objects have been given JdE numbers or not.

- <sup>28</sup> For example, the coffin set from Lahun that is discussed below: cf. Rashed, 'An anonymous coffin and cartonnage from Lahun', *JAEI* 15 (2017), 18–32.
- <sup>29</sup> J. E. Quibell, *Tomb of Yuaa and Thuiu*, CGC 51001-51191 (Cairo, 1908).
- <sup>30</sup> Quibell, *Tomb of Yuaa and Thuiu*, vii.
- <sup>31</sup> T. M. Davies, G. Maspero, P.E. Newberry, H. Carter, *The Tomb of Iouiya and Touiyou* (London, 1907).
- <sup>32</sup> Cf. JdE volume XV, 1–9. According to the register book, the collection Yuya and Thuyu was entered to the JdE on 30 April 1938 and was given the JdE numbers 68959-69169. Among them, eleven objects had not been given any CG numbers, thus having only the JdE numbers 69159-69169, and the T.R. numbers 24/12/25/1-5 and 24/2/26/1-4. These objects were pottery vases with or without stoppers, found beside the door to the inner chamber (JdE 68659: cf. Davis, *The Tomb of Iouiya and Touiyou*, pl. v. This means that these objects were left unregistered until December 1925 and were entered into the T.R. on two different days, 24 December 1925, and 24 February 1926. Unfortunately, neither the T.R. nor the JdE mentions whether these objects were left at the tomb or at a Luxor magazine after the discovery, or had been transferred with the collection into the museum.
- <sup>33</sup> The museum established the Special Register in 1960. The Yuya collection, accordingly, was placed in its 4th section which is dedicated the New Kingdom, as the first collection registered there. The Registration and the SR numbers were given by the curator in charge, Abd-el-Kader Baghdadi, who wrote the entries, and signed the entire register. On the last blank page of the register, it is noted that the curator had entered the collection to the SR. The last single page of the SR often records the transfer of the objects from a curator to another, see Fig. 12.
- <sup>34</sup> It is generally assumed that a curator will check the JdE before giving new JdE numbers.
- <sup>35</sup> It is noted that although the description of the objects in the SR obviously follows the JdE, it gives the CG numbers as alternative numbers while ignoring the JdE. This action raises several questions and might explain the duplicated entries in the JdE in 1981. However, one question is left unanswered: why were the JdE numbers of the objects not placed in the SR register during its compilation, or even later in the early 1990s when Adel Mahmoud, the curator in charge at that time, noticed the duplication and added both JdE numbers to the SR register?
- <sup>36</sup> Mohamed Saleh was the curator in charge, and the Director of the Museum during the 1970s-1980s.
- <sup>37</sup> It has been prepared earlier than the relevant JdE volume.
- <sup>38</sup> The fragments had several numbers, e.g. JdE 39256 (CG 602=SR.4/11500), a head of Mut; CG 918, the left chest and wig; TR 7.1.15.1, the statue group; TR 14.6.24.31 (SR.4/11501), the upper part of crown of Mut; TR 6.11.26.8 (SR.4/ 11590), a head.
- <sup>39</sup> PM V, 125; W. M. F. Petrie, *Koptos* (London, 1896), pl. xviii [1].
- <sup>40</sup> PM V, 125; Petrie, *Koptos*, pl. xviii [1].
- <sup>41</sup> JdE volume V, 269 bis.
- <sup>42</sup> P. Lacau, *Stèles du Nouvel Empire*, (Cairo, 1909–1957), 149–50, pl. xlvii.
- <sup>43</sup> Rashed, *JAEI* 15, 18–32.
- <sup>44</sup> The objects, which are located in the basement and have no known numbers, are being given temporary accession numbers until it can be confirmed whether or not any of them have been entered to the JdE previously.
- <sup>45</sup> This find-group and its archaeological context is being researched and published by M. Gamal Rashed and Stephen Quirke, UCL. Through this research eleven objects out of the 22 objects from this burial have been located.
- <sup>46</sup> This find-group and its archaeological context is being researched and published by Enrico Ferraris, the Egyptian Museum in Turin; see also, J. Carole, 'Schiaparelli et les archéologues italiens aux bords du Nil: égyptologie et rivalités diplomatiques entre 1882 et 1922', *Rivista del Museo Egizio* 1 (2017), 1–21.