


Between Attribution and Misattribution. The Collection of Daniel Marie Fouquet and the Provenance of a Roman Head in the Getty Museum and a Counterweight in the Musée du Louvre

Cecilia Benavente Vicente 

Abstract: The article examines the provenance history of two ancient objects: a Roman head in the Getty Museum (Inv.-No. 79.AA.135) and a counterweight in the Musée du Louvre (Inv.-No. E 25286). Both objects are linked to the collection of the French physician and antiquities collector Daniel Marie Fouquet (1850-1914). This research highlights the importance of a critical re-evaluation of existing documentation, particularly in relation to previous attributions and exclusions from the Fouquet collection. It also addresses a significant misunderstanding surrounding the 1922 auction of the collection, showing that several individuals involved have been misidentified in earlier research. These inaccuracies have contributed to confusion in reconstructing the collection's history and dispersion. More broadly, the case demonstrates ongoing challenges in researching Fouquet's collection and his historical network and provides a foundation for future research on Fouquet's role as a collector and the relevance of provenance research today.

Keywords: Daniel Marie Fouquet; Musée du Louvre; Getty Museum; art market; Sevadjian; Henri Rivière

The collection of Daniel Marie Fouquet represents an important example of a late 19th- and early 20th-century private collection, comprising Egyptian antiquities, Coptic artifacts, and Islamic ceramics. After part of Fouquet's collection was sold at auction in 1922, its objects were dispersed across institutions and private collections worldwide. Although some pieces were documented in early publications, others are difficult to identify today due to gaps in provenance records, changes in cataloguing practices, and inconsistencies in museum databases. Reconstructing Fouquet's collection represents a major opportunity for scholarship, allowing these objects to be studied within contemporary research frameworks. This paper explores these challenges through two case studies (Getty Museum Inv.-No. 79.AA.135 and Musée du Louvre Inv.-No. E 25286), illustrating the complexities of reconstructing Daniel Marie Fouquet's collection and the broader implications for provenance research.

Daniel Marie Fouquet and his Collection

Daniel Marie Fouquet was a French physician who relocated to Cairo in 1881.¹ His initial years in Egypt were defined by his role in addressing the cholera epidemic of 1883.² He was awarded the

- 1 For a complete biography, see Thérèse Charmasson: Les collections du Dr. Fouquet et la publication des Bronzes grecs d'Égypte de la collection Fouquet et des Terres cuites d'Égypte de la collection Fouquet par Paul Perdrizet, in: Samuel Provost / Frédéric Tixier (eds.): Proceedings of the Colloque International Paul Perdrizet, savant européen et industriel Lorrain (1870-1938), 7th-9th November 2018, forthcoming.
- 2 Daniel Marie Fouquet: Correspondance, in: La France Médicale, 30^e Année Tome 11 N° 17, 1883, 9th October 1883, 200-202. See also William Guyer Hunter: Remarks on the epidemic of cholera in Egypt, in: British Medical Journal 1 (1893), No. 1203, 91-96, here: 93; Denis Iconomopoulos: Le choléra en Égypte en 1883. Étude adressée au gouvernement hellénique, Cairo 1884; Jean-Gabriel Leturcq: Art. "Fouquet Daniel (Doué-la-Fontaine, 1850-Le Caire, 1914)", in: François Pouillon (ed.): Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française, Paris 2008, 423-424; Morris L. Bierbrier (ed.): Who was who in Egyptology, Norwich 2012, 197.

“Médaille d’Épidémie d’Or” for his work.³ Beyond his medical practice, Fouquet engaged in numerous archaeological missions, specializing in the analysis of animals and human remains. Among his notable contributions were the examinations of the royal mummies and the mummies of the priests of Amun from the cachette at Deir el-Bahari.⁴ While Fouquet was regarded as a specialist in mummy studies during his era, some of his conclusions about the royal mummies were later revised by the Australian Egyptologist and anthropologist Grafton Elliot Smith (1871-1937).⁵

Daniel Marie Fouquet was a collector whose passion for antiquities extended across the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman cultures. Notably, Fouquet also developed an early fascination with Islamic ceramics, leading him to establish one of the largest collections in this field. His contributions extended beyond his personal collection, and many museums benefitted from his generous

donations.⁶ Numerous scholars dedicated themselves to studying Fouquet’s collection during his lifetime, a pursuit which Fouquet actively supported. His collection of Arab weights and measures was published by Paul Casanova.⁷ Fouquet also made scholarly contributions to the study of Islamic ceramics, publishing a significant article based on his assemblage of ceramic shards.⁸

In 1909, during the second International Congress of Archaeology in Cairo, Fouquet established a professional relationship with the archaeologist Paul Perdrizet (1870-1938). As a result of this collaboration, plans were made to publish Fouquet’s extensive collection in a series of works. Before Fouquet’s death, however, only the catalogue of Hellenistic bronzes had been completed and was published by Perdrizet in 1911.⁹ A decade later, a detailed work on Graeco-Egyptian terracottas appeared.¹⁰ Both works have come to be regarded as key references in their respective fields, highlighting the lasting scholarly importance of Fouquet’s collection. Additionally, the Egyptologist Émile Chassinat (1868-1948) published the Egyptian collection of Fouquet in 1922.¹¹ A few months later, Perdrizet published his study *Antiquités de Léontopolis*, in which he examined the cult of the lion-headed god Mahes and the religious landscape of Leontopolis, based on the objects from Fouquet’s collection.¹²

The Sale of Fouquet's Collection and Sevadjian's Involvement in the Auction

Fouquet passed away in Cairo on August 13th, 1914. Following his death, his collection was transported to Paris, arriving there a year later in 1915.¹³ The collection was sold at auction over the course of various days in Paris at the Galerie Georges Petit

3 The Médaille d’Épidémie d’Or was established in 1885 to honor individuals who contributed to epidemic control, particularly during the 1884 cholera outbreak, with four levels of distinction based on the degree of involvement. Designed by Hubert Poncarne (1827-1903), it was awarded by various French ministries, initially the Ministry of Commerce and later the Ministry of the Interior, with distribution continuing until 1930 when the Ministry of Public Health took over, see G. Masson: Récompense, in: *Gazette hebdomadaire de médecine et de chirurgie*, deuxième série XXI (1884), No. 1, 16.

4 The cachette of Deir el-Bahari refers to a burial cache near Deir el-Bahari on the west bank of the Nile across from Luxor (ancient Thebes). It contained mummified remains of pharaohs, queens, members of the royal family and high priests. Daniel Marie Fouquet: *Observations relevées sur quelques momies royales d’Égypte*, in: *Bulletins et Mémoires de la Société d’Anthropologie de Paris* 3 (1886), No. 9, 578-590; Gaston Maspero: *Les momies royales de Déir el-Baharî*, in: *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission archéologie française au Caire* vol. 1.4, Cairo 1889; Georges Daressy / Grafton Elliot Smith: *Notes sur la momie de Thoutmôsis IV*, in: *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 4 (1903), 110-115; Georges Daressy / Grafton Elliot Smith: *Ouverture des momies provenant de la seconde trouvaille de Deir el-Bahari*, in: *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 4 (1903), 150-160; Georges Daressy: *Les cercueils des prêtres d’Ammon (deuxième trouvaille de Deir el Bahari)*, in: *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 8 (1907), 3-38; Daniel Marie Fouquet: *Note pour servir à l’histoire de embaumement en Égypte*, in: *Bulletin de l’Institut Égyptien* 3 (1896), No. 7, 89-97; Daniel Marie Fouquet: *Le tatouage médical en Égypte dans l’Antiquité et à l’époque actuelle*, in: *Archives d’anthropologie criminelle, de criminologie et de psychologie normale et pathologique* 13 (1898), 270-279.

5 One example of this is Fouquet’s claim that the cause of death of the man identified as CG 61098 was poisoning, see Grafton Elliot Smith: *The Royal Mummies*, in: *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*, Nos. 61051-61100, Cairo 1912, 116; Bob Brier: *The Mummy of Unknown Man E: A Preliminary Re-Examination*, in: *Bulletin of the Egyptian Museum Cairo* 3 (2006), 23-32, here: 23-29.

6 Émile Chassinat: *Les antiquités égyptiennes de la collection Fouquet*, Paris 1922, 5.

7 Paul Casanova: *Étude sur les inscriptions arabes des poids et mesures en verre (collections Fouquet et Innés)*, Cairo 1891.

8 Daniel Marie Fouquet: *Contribution à l’étude de la céramique orientale*, Cairo 1900.

9 Paul Perdrizet: *Bronzes grecs d’Égypte de la collection Fouquet*, Paris 1911.

10 Paul Perdrizet: *Terres cuites grecques d’Égypte de la collection Fouquet*, Strasbourg / Nancy / Paris 1921.

11 Chassinat 1922 (see FN 6).

12 Paul Perdrizet: *Antiquités de Léontopolis*, in: *Monuments et Mémoires publiés par l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 25 (1921/22), 349-385.

13 Charmasson 2018 (see FN 1), 20.

in 1922. Initially, 359 lots consisting of Egyptian, Hellenistic and Roman, Egyptian-Byzantine, and Egyptian-Arabic art were sold on June 12th, 13th, and 14th. However, these works were first displayed in a private exhibition from June 5th to 9th, 1922, followed by a public exhibition from June 10th to 11th.¹⁴ The remaining 249 lots, consisting of Egyptian, Hellenistic and Roman, Coptic and Arabic art, were auctioned on June 19th and 20th, 1922.¹⁵

The auction was carried out under the supervision of commissaire-priseur Fernand Lair-Dubreuil (1867-1931), with Arthur Sambon (1867-1947) supporting him as expert. It is important to note two facts: first, the heirs were not the initiators of the auction, and second, only a part of the collection was offered for sale. These two aspects are likely interconnected, offering potential insights into numerous unresolved questions regarding the auction process and the subsequent worldwide dispersion of the collection.

Danielle Smotherman Bennett suggested in her article on the old marks on Hellenistic and Roman terracottas from the Menil Collection that the auction was conducted by auctioneer Lair-Dubreuil and organized by Hatchick Sevadjian (1884-1933), an antiquities dealer, who presumably acted on behalf of Fouquet's widow.¹⁶ Her assertion is based on a document housed in the Archives of the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA) in Paris, which is part of the minutes of sales.¹⁷ This would explain why Sevadjian is listed both as a seller and as a purchaser of objects.¹⁸ However, there are indications suggesting an alternative interpretation, potentially providing a more accurate understanding within a different contextual framework.

In the document dated May 20th, 1922, Sevadjian is not explicitly identified as the organizer of the auction but rather as the owner of the

collection.¹⁹ The fact that Sevadjian is referred to as the "propriétaire" raises the question of why, if he was acting on behalf of Fouquet's heirs, the heirs or heiress themselves are not listed as "propriétaires" of the collection. Additionally, the relationship between Sevadjian and the family is not clarified in this document, leaving room for further inquiry.

A possible explanation can be found in the French literary journal *Le Mercure de France* from the year in which the auction took place.²⁰ There, the auction of Fouquet's collection is commented on, and it is stated that the collection was acquired from the heirs of Dr. Fouquet by a syndicate of prominent antiquities dealers.²¹ This aligns with the fact that Sevadjian was a member of the "chambre syndicale de la curiosité et des beaux-arts de France".²² One possible explanation for his listing as owner of the collection could be that the syndicate, as a legal entity, may not have been able or willing to appear as owner, possibly for tax or legal reasons. In this case, Sevadjian's name might appear in the documents to formalize the transaction, while the syndicate would represent the actual owner. This would also explain why Sevadjian appears as seller and buyer in the minutes of sales at the same time.²³

However, the situation is more nuanced. The repeated appearance of the surname "Sevadjian" in the minutes of sales, where it is referenced in varying contexts that distinguish him as the seller from other entries, cannot be attributed solely to his role acting on behalf of the syndicate. Two distinct individuals bearing the name "Sevadjian" purchased items at the auction: one identified as H. Sevadjian and another as S. Sevadjian. The first individual is Hatchik Sevadjian, previously noted, while the second

14 Auct. cat. Paris (Hôtel Drouot, 12th-14th June 1922): Collection du Docteur Fouquet du Caire, première vente.

15 Auct. cat. Paris (Hôtel Drouot, 19th-20th June 1922): Collection du Docteur Fouquet du Caire, deuxième partie.

16 Danielle Smotherman Bennett: Identifying Old Collection Marks on Hellenistic and Roman Terracottas Associated with the Collection of Daniel Marie Fouquet, in: *transfer* – Zeitschrift für Provenienzforschung und Sammlungsgeschichte / Journal for Provenance Research and the History of Collection 2 (2023), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48640/tf.2023.1.101806>, 121-134, here: 126-127.

17 Reference number AD Paris D 42 E 3/147.

18 Smotherman Bennett 2023 (see FN 16), 127.

19 "Il est propriétaire de l'Ancienne Collection de Sculptures en pierre, Bronzes et faïences de l'art Egyptien, grec et Romain du Docteur Fouquet du Caire", AD Paris D 42 E 3/147.

20 *Le Mercure de France* was an influential French literary journal that, from 1890 to 1965, provided a platform for avant-garde writers and artists, establishing itself as a critical observatory of modern culture and the humanities in the 20th century.

21 Jacques Daurelle: Art ancien et curiosité, in: *Mercure de France* 15 (1922), No. VII, 559-561, here: 560.

22 Anonymous, in: *La curiosité: organe de la chambre syndicale de la curiosité et des beaux-arts* 28/29 (1928), 199.

23 AD Paris D 42 E 3/147.

is likely Séropé Sevadjian (1868?-1932).²⁴ Hatchik and Séropé Sevadjian were diamond and gemstone dealers. Hatchik's business address was 53, rue du Faubourg-Montmartre, Paris (IXe) and he served as treasurer of the Société des Études Arméniennes in 1930.²⁵ Séropé Sevadjian owned a highly renowned collection spanning from antiquities to modern art, featuring works by Degas, Delacroix, Pissarro, and Renoir, which was partly sold at auction in 1927 at the Hôtel Drouot.²⁶ That sale included several objects which had been acquired in 1922 and originally belonged to the Fouquet collection.²⁷

A notable challenge for provenance research arises from the fact that there were multiple individuals bearing the surname "Sevadjian" active in the late 19th and 20th-century antiquities market. Confusion is compounded by inconsistent references in the literature, wherein the name sometimes appears as "Sevadjian" but also as "Sivadjian" rendering it unclear whether these variations refer to the same individual. Furthermore, museum databases and auction records provide limited assistance, as they frequently merge the identities of different persons under a single last name. There is also considerable confusion among Hatchik Sevadjian, Séropé Sevadjian and Mihran Sidvajian (?-1914). Further confusion arises when researchers misinterpret the "M." that precedes a name in French-language documents as "Mihram", whereas, in fact, it just stands for "Monsieur".

Mihram Sivadjian was an antiquities dealer, who had a shop in Paris at 17 rue Le Peletier (IXe) and another shop in Cairo.²⁸ He was also a maternal

uncle of the Kalebdjian frères (Hagob and Garbis Kalebdjian) and was related to another Armenian antiquities dealer, Dikran Garabed Kelekian (1867-1951).²⁹ Mihran Sivadjian's name is further linked to the smuggling of the so-called second treasure of Lamboussa, a collection of late antique silver and gold artifacts discovered by chance near Lamboussa, Cyprus, in 1902. While part of this treasure was confiscated by the British authorities and is now housed in the Cyprus Museum, a significant portion entered the illicit market. Key figures in this affair were Nicolas Tano (1886-1924), an antiquities dealer based in Cairo, along with his associates Alexandre Dingli (?-1903) and Mihran Sivadjian, who were involved in the smuggling of these artifacts.³⁰

Objects Missing at the Auction of Fouquet's Collection

As previously mentioned, the entire collection was not included at the 1922 auction in Paris. The Egyptian and Coptic objects, the Hellenistic bronzes, as well as Islamic ceramics, were auctioned, but an important group of objects was missing from the sale: the terracottas. How the terracottas were subsequently sold on the antiquities market and under which circumstances they were offered for sale remains uncertain. The research conducted by Danielle Smotherman Bennett has significantly advanced the study of the terracottas from the Fouquet collection, offering valuable insights into the distribution of these items.³¹ Her work tracing the provenance of the terracottas in the Menil Collection and their connection to the Fouquet collection revealed the sale of the terracottas and their appearance on the Paris antiquities market during the 1970s. She was able to link the dealers Bernard Pahmer, J.J. Klejman, and, most notably, Marguerite Mengin of the renowned Galerie

24 Among his contemporaries, he was known for his passion for horses and horse racing, and he owned several horses himself. His name frequently appeared in newspapers of the time as the owner of horses participating in various races and competitions, see Gaston van Cleeff: *Les grandes épreuves hippiques*, in: *L'Éclairer du dimanche*, 27th January 1924, 3.

25 Anonymous: *Ventes de fonds de commerce*, in: *Archives Commerciales de la France* 63 (1936), No. 140, 4252; Anonymous: *Société des Études Arméniennes. Procès-verbaux des séances*, in: *Revue des études arméniennes* X (1930), No. 2, 273.

26 Auct. cat. Paris (Hôtel Drouot, 1st-3rd June 1927): *Collection de S. Sevadjian*, Paris 1927.

27 Notable examples include the head of the Egyptian god Amun, now in the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de la Habana (MNH 94-120), as well as a bronze lion throne dedicated to Harpocrates and a bronze statuette of a recumbent lion. The latter two objects belong to the so-called "Trouvaille des lions" from Leontopolis (Tell el-Moqdam); Auct. cat. Paris (Hôtel Drouot, 1th-3rd June 1927): *Collection de S. Sevadjian*, Paris 1927, Lot 56, Lot 72 and Lot 73.

28 Fredrik Hagen / Kim Ryholt: *The Antiquities Trade in Egypt 1880-1930. The H.O. Lange Papers*, Copenhagen 2016, 263.

29 Orphée Lamotte: *Recherches autour du marché de l'art islamique à Paris de 1900 à 1950: la famille Kalebdjian*. *Art et histoire de l'art*, Paris 2020, 37, 83-93, URL: https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-04557400v1/file/14ELE01908_M2_2019_texte.pdf, <13.10.2025>.

30 Robert S. Merrillees: *The Tano Family. Gifts from the Nile to Cypress*, Nicosia 2019, 9-13; Chris Entwistle: 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth': the British Museum and the second Cyprus treasure, in: Chris Entwistle (ed.): *Through a Glass Brightly: Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology Presented to David Buckton*, Oxford 2016, 226-235.

31 Smotherman Bennett (see FN 16), 121-134.

La Reine Margot to the sale of these terracottas.³² Moreover, her research on the old labels from the Menil Collection sheds new light on the antiquities market for this type of object.³³ One might speculate about the reasons why the terracottas were not offered for sale at the auction. It could be that a personal decision was made by the widow, supported by recommendations from friends and colleagues of Fouquet, not to sell these items to the syndicate.

The Case of a Roman Head at the Getty Museum

Terracottas are not the only objects missing from the 1922 auction. A Roman portrait of a man, today in the Getty Museum (Inv.-No. 79.AA.135), can serve as an example of items that were not sold during the auction (Figure 1).³⁴ This marble portrait presents a middle-aged man whose face is marked by striking expressiveness. Deep furrows in his brow highlight the pronounced wrinkles on his forehead. The nasolabial folds are deeply etched, further accentuating the stern expression. He has a pronounced double chin, adding to the fullness of his lower face. The back of the head is flat and unevenly finished, featuring a large rectangular cavity at the base of the neck where additional traces of stucco can be observed.³⁵

The portrait head of a man in marble was formerly part of the Brummer collection, as indicated by a card numbered “P350” from the Brummer Gallery Records at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.³⁶ The card describes the piece as a “Roman portrait head of a man, in marble: clean shaven. Top and back of the head missing. Face intact [?]. 10 inches high”. The inscription on the card attests that the head was acquired at the Dr. Fouquet auction in Paris in 1922 under Lot No. 133. However, Lot No. 133 in the “première vente catalogue” actually refers to a bronze handle (published by Perdrizet) purchased by Feuardent Frères, now

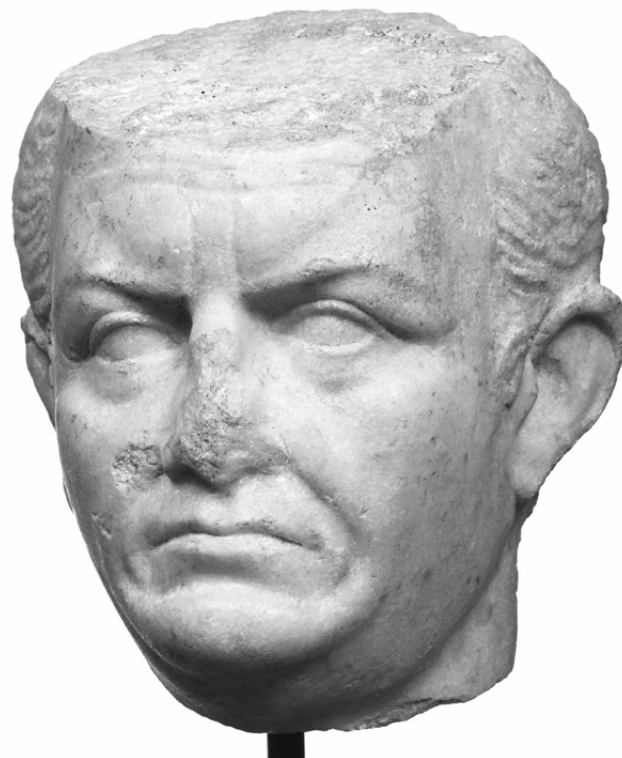


Figure 1: Portrait head of a man, marble, 29 × 18,6 × 16,2 cm, Getty Museum, Inv.-No. 79.AA.135.

in the British Museum.³⁷ The catalogue of the “deuxième vente” lists Lot No. 133 as Coptic textiles, acquired by the Parisian banker Robert Schumann (1869-1951).³⁸ This is not the only discrepancy, as on the reverse side of the Brummer card it is noted that Imre Brummer (1889-1928) purchased the head at the Fouquet auction. According to the documents from the INHA, Imre stands out as the only one of the Brummer brothers who was not present at the auction.³⁹

32 Smotherman Bennett 2023 (see FN 16), 127-129.

33 Smotherman Bennett 2023 (see FN 16), 129-134.

34 Smotherman Bennett 2023 (see FN 16), 127, FN 36.

35 Exh. cat. Tulsa (Philbrook Art Center, 25.04.-12.06.1981): Roman Portraits in the Getty Museum: Caesars and Citizens, edited by Jiří Frel / Sandra Knudsen Morgan, Los Angeles 1981, 46-47, 124, No. 31.

36 <https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16028coll9/id/62278/rec/2>, <13.10.2025>.

37 The handle is inventoried under the number 1922,0712.3, see https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1922-0712-3, <13.10.2025>; Perdrizet 1911 (see FN 9), 37, No. 59, Plate XVIII; Auct. cat. Paris (see FN 14), 25.

38 Auct. cat. Paris (see FN 14), 22.

39 For the Brummer brothers, see William H. Forsyth: The Brummer Brothers: An Instinct for the Beautiful, in: Art News 73(1974), No. 8, 106-107; Branislav Anđelković / Jonathan P. Elias: Ernest Brummer and the Coffin of Nefer-renepet from Akhmim, in: Issues in Ethnology and Anthropology, 8 (2013), No. 2, 565-584, here: 568-571; Christina Kelley Wytko: Ella Baché Brummer and the curation of the Brummer Legacy, Master Thesis, Missouri 2018, 7-32; Tom Hadwick: Pioneers or Followers? The Brummer Brothers and Egyptian Art, 1910-1922, in: Yaelle Brio / Christine E. Brennan / Christel H. Force (eds.): The Brummer Galleries Paris and New York. Defining Taste from Antiquities to the Avant-Garde, Leiden / Boston 2023, 265-298.

Moreover, the head matches the description of another Roman head auctioned alongside Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquities on June 7th, 1922, in Room No. 8 at the Hôtel Drouot, under Lot No. 133. The sale was conducted by the commissaire-priseur Baudoin, with Feuardent Frères serving as experts.⁴⁰ In the catalogue, it is described as “Tête de Vespasien. – Il n’en reste que la face – H., 27 cent”. Not only does the catalogue number correspond with the information on the Brummer card, but the description also matches, stating that the face is preserved while the back is not. Unfortunately, there is no photograph on the plates of the catalogue.

At the auction of June 7th, the head was identified as a portrait of Vespasian (9-79 AD, Roman emperor 69-79 AD). It has also been suggested by other scholars that the head in the Getty Museum might represent a portrait of Vespasian.⁴¹ However, stylistic and typological analyses strongly suggest that it belongs to the Julio-Claudian family. All of this leads to the conclusion that the head now in the Getty Museum was sold on June 6th at the Hôtel Drouot and acquired by Imre Brummer, and not at the auction of the Fouquet collection. A misunderstanding likely occurred during the inventorying process at the Brummer Gallery. It must be considered that all three brothers might have purchased large quantities of objects simultaneously and that the auctions were held in close succession, which could have led to such misunderstandings.⁴²

40 Auct. cat. Paris (Hôtel Drouot, 07.06.1922): Objets d'Art antiques égyptiens, grecs et romains, Paris 1922, 13, No. 133, <https://bibliotheque-numerique.inha.fr/de/collection/item/53301-antiquites-egyptiennes-grecques-et-romaines-vente-du-7-juin-1922-<22.12.2024>>.

41 Exh. cat. Geneva (Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève, 28.10.1982-30.01.1983): Les Mondes des Césars, edited by Jacques Chamay / Jiří Frel / Jean-Louis Maier, Geneva 1982, 106-109, Plates 19-19b; Hans Rupprecht Goette: Studien zu römischen Togadarstellungen, Mayence 1990, 40, footnote 184b.

42 A detailed examination of the collection reveals several objects claimed to originate from Daniel Marie Fouquet's collection, though no evidence substantiates these assertions. It seems likely that these objects were never in his possession. Closer analysis reveals potential causes, including inventory errors, misattribution due to resemblance to his known holdings, or deliberate mislabeling to enhance their value. Full documentation will be presented in a forthcoming study by the author.



Figure 2: Ancient Egyptian counterweight depicting a lion-headed deity, Musée du Louvre, H. 7,4 cm, bronze, Inv.-No. E 25286.

The Case of a Counterweight in the Musée du Louvre

The Musée du Louvre holds a counterweight necklace registered under Inv.-No. E 25286 (Figure 2). This counterweight originally belonged to a menit-necklace, an ancient Egyptian percussion instrument. A menit typically comprises a counterweight and one or more rows of beads, which produce sound when shaken. It was worn around the neck, with the counterweight resting at the back.⁴³ The counterweight in the Musée du Louvre is made of bronze, although parallels exist in faience and wood. Menits are associated with lioness-headed deities such as Hathor,

43 Paul Barget: L'origine et la signification du contrepoids de collier-Menat, in: Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale 52 (1953), 103-111; Elisabeth Staehelin: Art. “Menit”, in: Wolfgang Helck / Wolfgang Westendorf (eds.): Lexikon der Ägyptologie, vol. 4, Wiesbaden 1981, 52-53; Jan Moje: Hathor im Pflanzendickicht: Zum Menit des libyschen Großfürsten Ker. (Ägyptisches Museum Berlin Inv. 8939), in: Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde 139 (2012), 66-79; Jean-Luc Chappaz: Un contrepoids de collier «Menat» au Musée d'art et d'histoire, in: Bulletin du Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève du Musée Ariana et de la Société Auxiliaire du Musée, la Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire 31 (1983), 9-16; Catherine Châtelet: L'Offrande du collier-menit dans les temples d'époque gréco-romaine, Turnhout 2015, 5-29.



Figure 3: Archival photograph from Fouquet's collection, depicting a lion-headed counterweight, private archives of Dr. Fouquet, Carton 13 (provisional numbering), private collection.

Bastet, Sekhmet, Mut, and Tefnut, all considered daughters of the sun god Ra. Given these associations, this counterweight features the head of a lioness-headed goddess. Functionally, the *menit* served as both a ritual object and an amulet: it possessed an apotropaic (protective) character and symbolized rebirth. Its design and use in cultic contexts reflect broader religious practices in ancient Egypt, wherein objects were often imbued with protective and regenerative qualities.

The object held in the Musée du Louvre is dated to the Third Intermediate Period (c. 1070-664 BC), with its provenance remaining unknown.⁴⁴ According to the museum's database, this *menit* belonged to Henri Benjamin Jean Pierre Rivière (1864-1951), who bequeathed several objects from his collection to the Musée du Louvre after his death in

44 A parallel object is housed in the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung in Berlin. This piece, made of bronze with gold inlays, bears a dedicatory inscription to the goddess Bastet. It was donated to the museum by the German diplomat Gustav Travers (1839-1892) in 1876, see Günther Roeder: *Ägyptische Bronzefiguren*, Berlin 1957, 467, §634d, Plate 63h; Jacques-François Aubert / Liliana Aubert: *Bronzes et or Égyptiens*, Paris 2001, 354.

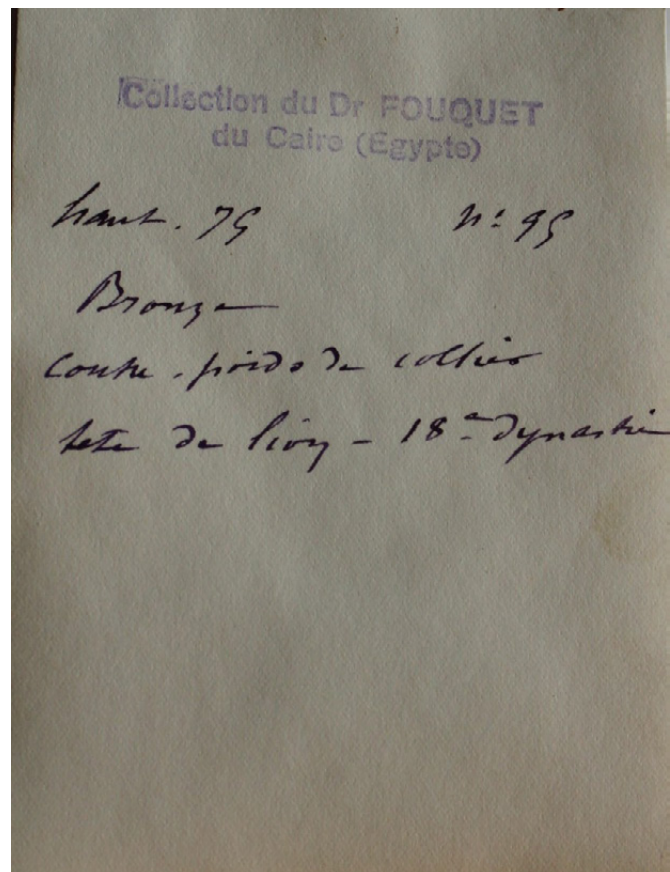


Figure 4: Verso of the archival photograph, annotated with a description of the counterweight, private archives of Dr. Fouquet, Carton 13 (provisional numbering), private collection.

1952.⁴⁵ Henri Rivière was a versatile French artist renowned for his lithographs and landscape depictions, particularly inspired by Japanese art.⁴⁶ He was closely associated with the cabaret *Le Chat Noir*, where he worked as a set designer and director for its famous shadow plays, which were a highlight of the performances. Rivière was also an amateur photographer, who captured Parisian life and daily scenes from the late 1880s until the early 1900s. His photographs also show the construction of the Eiffel Tower and life in Brittany.

While the object's provenance can be traced to Henri Rivière, recent evidence sheds new light on its earlier history. Within the private archives of Fouquet, a photograph was found depicting the *menit* counterweight now in the Musée du Louvre

45 Various Authors: *Le donateurs du Louvre*, Paris 1989, 305-306. See also <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010004769>, <13.10.2025>.

46 See Philippe le Stum (ed.): *Henri Rivière: Les Détours du Chemin. Souvenirs, Notes et Croquis 1864-1951*, Saint-Rémy-de-Provence 2004; Valérie Sueur-Hermel (ed.): *Henri Rivière. Entre impressionnisme et japonisme*, Paris 2016. Further literature can be found on pages 217-223, which showcases all facets of Rivière and his work.

(Figure 3).⁴⁷ On the reverse of the photograph (Figure 4), in Fouquet's own handwriting, appears the following annotation: "haut 75 N°. 95 Bronze contre-poid de collier tête de lion – 18e dynastie".⁴⁸

At first glance, the similarities between these objects might suggest a parallel piece, potentially produced from the same mold. Yet a closer inspection of the object itself, as well as the archival photograph, reveals damage to the rounded section on the right side – an imperfection also visible in the archival image from the private archives of Fouquet. Additionally, the same surface irregularities in the patina are apparent, which may have been caused by corrosion or material aging. This strongly suggests that the artifact in the Musée du Louvre was once part of Fouquet's collection.

The counterweight in the Musée du Louvre is among the objects that once belonged to Fouquet; however, it was not included in the sales lot at the 1922 Fouquet auction. Its provenance is evidenced by entries in Fouquet's inventory lists and further supported by a photograph in his archives. One of these inventory lists, which mentions the counterweight, is dated to 1913, indicating that the object remained in Fouquet's possession up to that year. It can be assumed that Fouquet either gifted or sold the object to Henri Rivière, who was himself a passionate collector.

The Connection between Fouquet and Rivière

Henri Rivière navigated the multifaceted world of art dealers, collectors, artists, and connoisseurs immersing himself in an environment where art, culture and commerce converged. He developed a profound appreciation for diverse forms of art, from Japanese and Far Eastern art to Greek and Egyptian antiquities. Yet, he was critical of other aspects, such as collectors driven by avarice rather than true appreciation, the practices of antiquities dealers trying to maximize their profit or the prevalence of forgery.⁴⁹

Henri Rivière and Daniel Marie Fouquet clearly knew each other; evidence of their connection dates back to at least 1913. In that year, Henri Rivière published the first volume of *La Céramique dans l'Art Musulman*, in which he presented three examples from Fouquet's collection.⁵⁰ Among the highlights in Rivière's publication was a jar from Fouquet's collection of Islamic ceramics (Figure 5). Produced under the Fatimid Period (909-1171 AD), it is believed to come from the Egyptian city of El-Fustat, though Fouquet listed its provenance as Upper Egypt.⁵¹ It features a rounded body, tall neck, and intricate yellowish-luster decoration over opaque glaze, with motifs including interlace patterns, palmettes, and a distinctive row of five fishes. It is currently held by the Victoria and Albert Museum under Inv.-No. C.48-1952.

Several labels on the jar's base provide clues to its provenance (Figure 6). At the center, there is a label from Fouquet's collection indicating its height and diameter in ink, likely in Fouquet's own handwriting. In the lower right corner, a label bearing the number 262 corresponds to the lot number from the 1922 auction of the Fouquet collection.⁵² According to the minutes of sales, this item was acquired by Dikran Kelekian, who purchased it for the sum of 64.100 francs. This amount represented the highest bid for a single object in the entire 1922 auction of the Fouquet collection. The label bearing the number 160 likely indicates that this vessel was on loan from Dikran Kelekian to the Victoria & Albert Museum. Kelekian had placed several items on long-term loan to the museum from 1910 until his death in 1951, and the present vase was added to this group after its acquisition in 1922. According to a loan document dated 10th July 1932, preserved in the museum's archives, each object was assigned an individual number. 160 was the number designated for the vase formerly in the

47 I am sincerely grateful to Thérèse Charmasson for providing the photograph and for the valuable exchange of information, which significantly contributed to this article.

48 The number 95 corresponds to the inventory number personally assigned to this object by Fouquet in his collection. Fouquet's attribution of this object to the 18th Dynasty is incorrect, as its stylistic features suggest a date more consistent with the Third Intermediate Period, as indicated in the Musée du Louvre's database.

49 Monique Moulène: Henri Rivière collectionneur et éditeur d'art, in: Sœur-Hermel 2016 (see FN 47), 51-55. Le Stum 2004 (see FN 47), 87-111.

50 Originally, it was intended to publish three volumes on *La Céramique de l'art musulman*, aiming to create one of the most comprehensive works on the subject. The project was supported by the editor Émile Levy (1861-1916), but he passed away before the third volume could be written, resulting in the publication of only two volumes, see Le Stum 2004 (see FN 47), 106. For Émile Levy see Maud Allera: La photographie à la Librairie centrale des Beaux-Arts-Éditions Albert Lévy (1906-1936), in: Les Cahiers de l'École du Louvre 10 (2017), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/cel.545>, 1-11.

51 Henri Rivière: La céramique dans l'art musulman, vol. I, Paris 1913, Plate 22.

52 Auct. cat. Paris (see FN 14), 43, Lot 262, Plate XIV.



Figure 5: A luster-painted jar formerly in Fouquet's collection, today in the Victoria & Albert Museum, Inv.-No. C.48-1952.

Fouquet collection. The vase was later acquired by the Victoria & Albert Museum with the support of the National Art Collections Fund.⁵³

The label, which features a blue stamp and includes the words “K. B. H. Z. A. München”, which stands for “Königlich Bayerisches Hauptzollamt” (Royal Bavarian Customs Office). This likely indicates that the vase passed through the customs office when it was transported to Munich for the 1910 exhibition *Meisterwerke Muhammedanischer Kunst*.⁵⁴ Several objects from the Fouquet collection were displayed at this event. The aforementioned jar was exhibited in room 49 under number 1101.⁵⁵

The exchange between Rivière and Fouquet was not limited to Islamic ceramics; it also en-

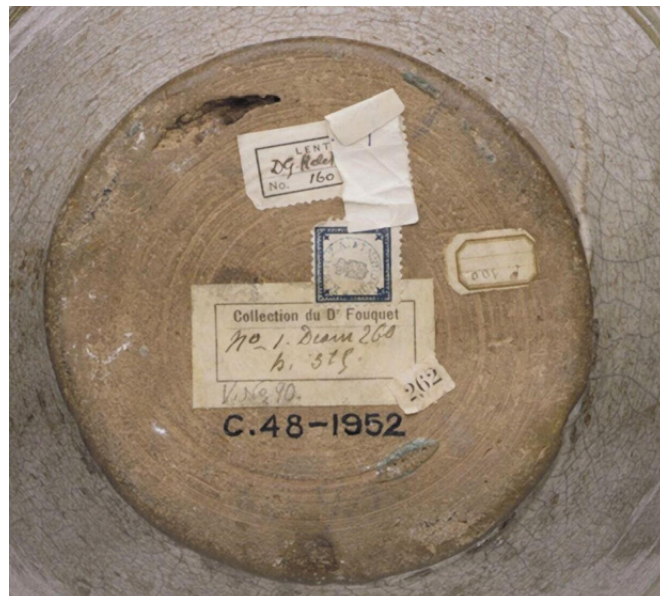


Figure 6: Base of the jar with collection labels and ink markings, Victoria & Albert Museum, Inv.-No. C.48-1952.

compassed other categories of objects, such as the counterweight now in the Musée du Louvre. In the Department of Prints and Photography at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the notebooks and archives of Henri Rivière contain documentation, including correspondence and addresses of widely recognized collectors of antique ceramics, notably Dr. Fouquet from Cairo. These records clearly attest to a professional relationship between Rivière and Fouquet and indicate that they were in regular contact.⁵⁶ Rivière likely acquired the counterweight – now catalogued as Inv.-No. E 25286 in the Musée du Louvre – directly from Fouquet around 1913.

Perspectives and Future Research on the Fouquet Collection

The case presented in this article reflects a broader set of challenges that accompany research on Fouquet's collection. Many objects remain untraced and are dispersed across the globe, with their current locations still unknown. Furthermore, several owners have yet to be properly identified, partly due to confusion in the existing documentation regarding the identities of individuals historically associated with the collection. Even the annotations provided by Fouquet himself must be carefully re-evaluated, as assumptions about original

⁵³ I would like to thank Dr. Mariam Rosser-Owen, curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum, for generously providing documents and information about this vase, which helped clarify several of my questions.

⁵⁴ Eva-Maria Troelenberg: Eine Ausstellung wird besichtigt. Die Münchner „Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst“ 1910 in kultur- und wissenschaftsgeschichtlicher Perspektive, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien.

⁵⁵ Exh. cat. Munich (Theresienhöhe 1910): Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst. Edited by Friedrich Sarre, München 1910, 106.

⁵⁶ Moulène 2016 (see FN 50), 53.

provenances and archeological contexts often reflect the interpretive framework of their time. The Fouquet collection represents a valuable basis for continued research. Beyond the scope of this article, future investigations will have to address the historical networks surrounding the 1922 auction, the reconstruction of the dispersed collection, and the contextualization of individual objects within their broader historical and commercial trajectories. These objectives are part of a forthcoming research project that will further Fouquet's role as a collector and the broader relevance of provenance studies.

ORCID®

Cecilia Benavente Vicente 

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0774-9038>

List of picture credits and copyrights

Figure 1: © Getty Museum

Figure 2: © 2012 Musée du Louvre / Département des Antiquités égyptiennes

Figure 3-4: © Private collection

Figure 5-6: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Reference

Cecilia Benavente Vicente: Between Attribution and Misattribution. The Collection of Daniel Marie Fouquet and the Provenance of a Roman Head in the Getty Museum and a Counterweight in the Musée du Louvre, in: *transfer* – Zeitschrift für Provenienzforschung und Sammlungsgeschichte / Journal for Provenance Research and the History of Collection 4 (2025), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48640/tf.2025.1.113823>, 135-144.