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PROFESSIONALS
FORUM

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LA VENARIA REALE





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" Appelbaum 2010, p.independent of object type or material, and its use will enable conservators to be more confident in their treatment decisions. Conservation Treatment Methodology is illustrated with numerous examples that emphasize the equal importance of the physical and cultural aspects of objects for decision-making. The book also explains how the history of an object and the meaning that it holds for its owner or custodian contribute to determining its treatment. Conservation Treatment Methodology is an essential text for conservators, historic preservation specialists, and restorers, as well as students. Since it is not a technical manual about how to carry out treatments, the book will also be of value to art historians and museum personnel who work with conservators." "This book is unique in its overarching, multidisciplinary approach. The writing is not only clear, but entertaining and engaging." Dan Kushel, Distinguished Teaching Professor, Art Conservation Department, Buffalo New York 29.

spaces of the Institution. The intention in presenting these data is that this initiative encourages research on archaeological collections present in museums, instead of excavating new sites. The practice of conservation is much more than the application of manual and advanced material-specific techniques to achieve long-agreed objectives. Our task, as conservators, is the material preservation and interpretation of objects that have value to its owners or to society at large. Accomplishing this task requires us to understand that our choices, based on protocols and scientific research, can impact on the meaning of these objects. Thinking and acting beyond materiality demonstrates how broad and dynamic our work as conservators is. Conservators must also be involved in protocol creation, documentation, field and scientific research. Ultimately, then, the ideal conservation practice is not only in our hands, but also in our heads". This case study is as well important to understand how the museum is often seen only as a place of storage, not only for the public but also for researchers. Museums are not spaces fated to the past, or of dead icons. Above all, museums are living and dynamic spaces, which besides housing and conserving objects, also generate research and communicate through exhibitions and publications, and the curator has an essential role in this.

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CONSERVATION OF EVIDENCE: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OBJECTS BIOGRAPHY FROM TUTANKHAMUN TOMB

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ABSTRACT

Tutankhamun is famous throughout the world for the wealth of the objects found in his tomb. Numerous books have been written about the golden treasure, but no study writes about the materials used during the discovery. Howard Carter who discovered the tomb used in his everyday life inside the tomb some materials such as boxes, paper, cards and pieces of newspapers for packing and transportation of the objects from the tomb to Cairo Egyptian museum, the research focus on these materials which have a historical context with the objects and consist its biography.

The research focus on the packing materials used with the objects discovered in Tutankhamun tomb, not as usual on the objects itself. Howard Carter used with the objects newspaper such as the Times, Morning Post and Egyptian Gazette which date back to 1922 the time of discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, photography and food boxes which he bring from outside Egypt and other related packing materials.

The aim of our research is to present a new ways of thinking about conservation of museum objects, thinking more about the objects biography. Despite the objects is the main concern of museum conservators but some time the packing



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fig. 1

1. Newspaper Used during restoration process. (Courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford, UK).

materials can add more significance value to objects. The research present a study of object's life through the materials used within. Analyze the social lives of objects (Object 'biographies'), to understand what stage in an object's life we are studying, recording, representing and conserving. Know more about everyday life in the tomb and excavator, not only this but also the evidence around the world during this time. Thinking about how, where and why things are made (materials and technique), discussing their condition and significance. The research open discussion engage community with people from different nationality about different articles and evidence related to their country in these pieces of newspaper. Thinking about how to display these pieces within the objects to engage the community with preserving not only the objects but also the evidence of the history will be very interesting to complete the story about Tutankhamun's tomb and to be attractive for visitor in our new museum GEM-CC.

INTRODUCTION

Biography is the life story: help us to understand what stage in an object's life we are studying, recording, representing and conserving. Analysis of objects is useful because they help us to think about: how things are made (materials and technique), where they were made and used, why they are in poor or good condition, how their significance varies.

MATERIALS

H. Carter used in his everyday life inside the tomb of Tutankhamun some materials such as boxes, paper, cards and pieces of newspaper for packing and transportation of the object from the tomb to the Egyptian museum at Cairo (fig. 1 e fig. 2).

All these materials have a historical context with the archaeological objects from the tomb; these materials can tell rich stories about the everyday life of the excavators. The idea from this case study is to study biographies of objects with these pieces of newspapers with the everyday life of the excavator, making link between the dates of the newspaper and what happened inside the tomb in this date with the aim to preserve them as a part of the history of the objects.

2a-b. Food boxes and box for glass plate negatives used as packing boxes.



fig. 2

3. The Times Newspaper used as a packing material for Tutankhamun textiles in 1922.



fig. 3

4. Newspaper used as a packing material for Tutankhamun textiles in 1922.



fig. 4

In this case study conservation focus on preserving the materials used with the objects as packing and storing as they have social lives. Looking into newspaper which Carter used with the objects such as the Times, Morning Post and Egyptian Gazette, as packing materials for textiles from the tomb to the Egyptian museum at Cairo (fig. 3 e fig. 4). Conservation decided to preserve the biography of objects and the diaries of excavators.

Conservation in this case not an intervention but extraction of data from these materials. documenting the articles in this newspaper records that some of them talk about the discovery of the tomb, other article talk about the fleet's tour London fire visitors to Luxor and other one talk about American scientists from Metropolitan at the tomb, a lot of articles have interesting evidence . Also we will give a hint about the letter of excavator to their friend such as the letter from Mace to his wife.



fig. 5

5. Simulation of display
Design for newspaper
pieces.(Author design).

Documentation for the food and photographic boxes which Carter brings it from London and used it as storage boxes for objects, also numbering cards made by Carter. Packing paper which have found with objects contain different number than Carter number gives more details about the development of numbering of Tutankhamun's collection by the time. Two popular objects were received in these materials the textiles and the hassock. Textiles were packed in both cardboard and wooden boxes inside these boxes were the pieces of the newspaper. The cardboard box with the hassock used to preserve the beads, this box was a French box of gelatin silver bromide photographic plates, marketed at the beginning of the 20th century by the Lumière company "anonymous society of photographic plates and papers Antoine Lumière and his sons", which thought to be brought by Hurry Burton the photographer of the tomb. A nice story about this box is that the arrival of gelatin silver bromide plates changed the history of photography at this time. Also give more details about why Hurry Burton chooses this type of plates which allow producing in advance large quantities that can be preserved before and after the shooting. Thinking about how to display these pieces with the objects to engage the community with preserving not only the objects but also the evidence of the history will be very interesting to complete the story about Tutankhamun's tomb and to be attractive for visitor in our new museum GEM-CC (fig. 5).

CONCLUSION

The preservation of Tutankhamun's tomb collection is a huge challenge. Working in direct contact with the objects and studying the debates and practices of the past while reviewing our own practices revealed that present-day conservation decisions integrate decisions from the past more comprehensively than initially realized.

All conservators must accept that communicating with the public is part of their role Public engagement will be the way forward. In building a strong profession conservation has a future if the wider community feel and thinks it is important, this come out when conservators engage the community about their work to make the case that the work they do is important. Conservators need to convince the general public that conservation matters. Conservation is not only the intervention or treatment we applied to our collections, conservation can apply to preserve the materials around the objects which maybe data, storage materials and registration cards which we can call it objects biography.

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