



**RedList**

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**ICOM**



**EMERGENCY**

# RED LIST OF EGYPTIAN CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK



# EMERGENCY RED LIST OF EGYPTIAN CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK

## *Introduction*

Egypt is home to a world-renowned and diverse cultural heritage. Preventing the smuggling and illicit trafficking of the country's cultural objects is a constant preoccupation. Now, faced with an extraordinary situation, Egyptian heritage requires increased protection.

Vulnerable Egyptian artefacts range from those relating to daily life to those of a religious or ceremonial nature. They may be taken from archaeological sites and museums, or similar institutions. Artefacts originating from any of the nation's historical periods are highly sought-after, most common amongst them are those from the Pharaonic and Nubian era, as well as Graeco-Roman, Coptic and Islamic periods.

Egypt recognises that the illicit excavation of archaeological sites destroys an object's context and diminishes its cultural and historical significance. The resulting gaps in knowledge impoverish the understanding of Egypt's rich past and, consequently, important chapters in the development of mankind. Since 1869, Egypt has created and further enhanced the legal framework protecting its cultural heritage. The Egyptian government has multiplied efforts aimed at countering illicit trafficking, thus demonstrating its long-term commitment to the protection of the nation's heritage.

Despite these efforts, theft, looting and illegal export remain constant threats. Fighting the illicit trade in cultural goods is a global responsibility to protect and preserve Egypt's rich heritage, one that provides insight into the cultural, artistic, scientific and historical evolution of all mankind.

## *Purpose*

The fight against illicit traffic in cultural goods requires the enhancement of both legal instruments and practical tools disseminating information and raising public awareness.

The *Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk* aims to help art and heritage professionals and law enforcement officials identify Egyptian objects that are protected by national and international legislations. In order to facilitate identification, the *Emergency Red List* describes the categories or types of cultural items that are most likely to be illegally bought and sold.

Museums, auction houses, art dealers and collectors are encouraged not to acquire these objects without having carefully and thoroughly researched their origin and all the relevant legal documentation. Due to the great diversity of objects, styles and periods, the *Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk* is far from exhaustive. Any cultural good that could have originated in Egypt should be subjected to detailed scrutiny and precautionary measures.

### Eleven ICOM Red Lists published to date:

*Red List of African Archaeological Objects*, 2000  
*Red List of Latin American Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2003  
*Emergency Red List of Iraqi Antiquities at Risk*, 2003  
*Red List of Afghanistan Antiquities at Risk*, 2006  
*Red List of Peruvian Antiquities at Risk*, 2007  
*Red List of Cambodian Antiquities at Risk*, 2009  
*Red List of Endangered Cultural Objects of Central America and Mexico*, 2009  
*Emergency Red List of Haitian Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2010  
*Red List of Chinese Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2010  
*Red List of Colombian Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2010  
*Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk*, 2011



## *The cultural heritage of Egypt is protected by the following national and international laws and bilateral agreements:*

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### NATIONAL LEGISLATION

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By-law of March 1869 on "Antiquities items", including *Regulatory dispositions for excavations to prevent the smuggling of antiquities.*

By-law of March 1874 on *Undiscovered antiquities irrespective of their location are property of the government.*

Decree of 1835 *Banning the unauthorized removal of antiquities from the country* (15 August 1835).

Decree of 1897 *Concerning the Punishment for illegal excavation* (12 August 1897).

Law No. 14 of 1912 on *Antiquities*, 12 June 1912.

Ministerial Decree No. 50 of 8 December 1912 on *Antiquities trade and authorisation.*

Ministerial Decree No. 52 of 8 December 1912 on *the Ruling on excavations.*

Ministerial Decree of 10 February 1921 on *the Export of antiquities.*

Law No. 14 of 29 January 1931 on *the Protection of cultural objects found near and around Al Moallaka.*

Rule No. 10613 of 6 March 1952 on *Regulations for the commerce in antiquities.*

Law No. 215 of 31 October 1951 on *the Protection of antiquities*, as amended by Rule No. 10614 of 6 March 1952 on *the Export of antiquities.*

Law No. 215 of 31 October 1951 on *the Protection of antiquities*, as amended by Rule No. 10614 of 6 March 1952 on *the Protection of antiquities.*

Rule No. 10827 of 17 August 1952 on *the Ruling regarding excavations.*

Law No. 117 of the year 1983 *Concerning the issuance of antiquities' protection law* (11 August 1983).

Article 12 of the Constitution, revised on 25 May 2005.

Law No. 117 of 1983, as amended by Law No. 3 of 2010 (14 February 2010), *Promulgating the antiquities' protection law* (6 August 1983).

### INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

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The Hague Convention of 14 May 1954 for the *Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention* (Ratified, 17 August 1955), the First Protocol (Ratified, 17 August 1955) and the Second Protocol (Ratified, 3 August 2005).

UNESCO Convention of 14 November 1970 on the *Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property* (Accepted, 5 April 1973).

UNESCO Convention of 16 November 1972 *Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (Ratified, 7 February 1974).

### BILATERAL AGREEMENTS

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*Austria – China – Comoros – Cuba – Ecuador – El Salvador  
Greece – India – Ireland – Italy – Jordan – Kazakhstan – Maldives  
Peru – South Korea – Switzerland*

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## *Should you suspect that a cultural object originating from Egypt may be stolen, looted or illegally exported, please contact:*

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### Ministry of Antiquities

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3 El-Adel Abu Bakr St., Zamalek, Cairo, Egypt

#### *Minister's Office*

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Tel: +20 2 27 36 56 45 / +20 2 27 35 87 61  
Fax: +20 2 27 35 72 39

#### *Department for Repatriation of Antiquities*

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Tel/Fax: +20 2 27 35 45 33  
E-mail: [redlistegypt@gmail.com](mailto:redlistegypt@gmail.com)

### The Egyptian Museum

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Midan al-Tahrir, Downtown Cairo, Cairo, Egypt  
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Fax: +20 2 25 79 69 74  
E-mail: [egyptianmuseum@hotmail.com](mailto:egyptianmuseum@hotmail.com)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** A *Red List* is NOT a list of actual stolen objects. The cultural goods depicted are of inventoried objects within the collections of recognised institutions. They serve to illustrate the categories of cultural goods protected by legislation and most vulnerable to illicit traffic. ICOM wishes to thank all of the institutions and people who so generously provided the photographs presented in the *Emergency Red List* for Egypt.

## PREDYNASTIC, PROTODYNASTIC, PHARAONIC AND NUBIAN ERA (5200 - 332 BC)

### Statues

**Ceramics:** Glazed or painted shabtis (funerary figurines) in faience and/or pottery. [illus. 1]

**Metal:** Bronze statues representing gods, goddesses, animals or animal hybrids. [illus. 2]



1. Gilded faience shabti of Heqareshu, New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (ca. 1550 - 1295 BC), 17.5 x 5.5 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Sameh Abdel Mohsen
2. Bronze striding statue of the goddess Neith, Late Period, Dynasty 26 (ca. 688 - 525 BC), 14 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Sameh Abdel Mohsen

**Stone:** Human figures in quartzite, limestone and granite. Painted and/or inscribed. Representing members of the royal family, scribes, people and gods. [illus. 3–4–5–6]



3. Quartzite head of an Amarna princess, New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (ca. 1353 - 1336 BC), 7 x 9 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin
4. Painted limestone group statue of Kaemheset with his Wife and Son, Old Kingdom, Dynasty 6 (ca. 2323 - 2200 BC), 54 x 36 x 43 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin
5. Painted limestone shabti (funerary figurine) of Sennedjem, New Kingdom, Dynasty 19 (ca. 1279 - 1213 BC), 28.8 x 9 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin
6. Granite block statue of Khnumibre, Karnak, Ptolemaic Period (332 - 30 BC), 55 x 24 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo

## Vessels and containers

**Ceramics:** Bowls and jars, may be painted and/or incised with figural or geometric designs. [illus. 7–8]

**Stone:** Canopic jars, vases, bowls and flasks, made from calcite, siltstone, limestone, greywacke and hydrite. [illus. 9]



7

7. Pottery bowl with incised geometric decoration, Lower Nubia (Aniba), ca. 2300 – 1500 BC, 9.4 x 19.5 cm.

© Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin



8

8. Black-topped jar, Naqada I/Amratian (ca. 3850 – 3650 BC), 38 x 15 cm.

© Egyptian Museum, Cairo



9

9. Painted limestone canopic jars, Third Intermediate Period (ca. 900 – 800 BC),

Duamutef: 36 x 14.4 x 13.5 cm;

Hapi: 34 x 12.3 x 13.5 cm;

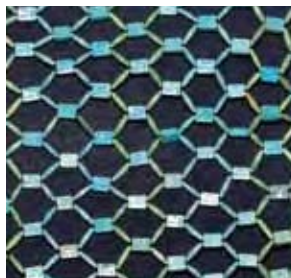
Qebehseuef: 32 x 11.7 x 13 cm;

Imsety: 34.5 x 12 x 13.2 cm.

© Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

## Daily life

**Mixed materials:** Nets or necklaces with beads or amulets of faience (glazed ceramic), semi-precious stones, silver and gold, with *cloisonné* inlay. [illus. 10–11]



10

10. Bead net composed of faience plaques and beads, Saqqara, Late Period, Dynasty 26 (ca. 688 – 525 BC), 21 x 21 cm.

© Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin



11

11. Gold, faience and stone bead necklaces, New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (ca. 1550 – 1295 BC), 15–38 cm.

© Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin

**Wood and stone:** Objects for daily use, including headrests, tables, chairs, stools, cupboards, lamps, etc. [illus. 12]



12

12. Inscribed wooden headrest of Khenu, Saqqara, First Intermediate Period (ca. 2100 – 2030 BC), 20 x 27 x 7 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Susanna Thomas



# ANCIENT CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK

## Funerary elements

**Wood:** Wooden objects for religious or ceremonial use representing models of boats and depicting people at work (millers, butchers, musicians), offering bearers, workshops and other daily scenes. [illus. 13]

13. Painted wooden model of a boat with twelve crew members, Beni Hassan, Middle Kingdom (2066 - 1781 BC), 64 cm.  
© Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin



13

**Human remains and associated objects:** Human mummies or mummy parts, may be wrapped in bandages, sometimes with a cartonnage (papier mâché) decoration and masks, and a wooden or cartonnage coffin. [illus. 14]

**Animal mummies:** Ibis, cats, dogs, crocodiles, etc., wrapped in linen bandages. [illus. 15]



14

14. Mummy of Duamuthotep, daughter of Iriheru, with gilded mask, Akhmim, Ptolemaic Period (304 - 30 BC), 155 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin



15

15. Ibis mummy, Saqqara, Late Period (525 - 332 BC), 40 x 13 cm.  
© Mummification Museum, Luxor

**Papyrus:** Religious or ceremonial texts, usually illustrated. [illus. 16]

16. Section of a Book of the Dead of a Songstress of Amun, Thebes, New Kingdom (ca. 1550 - 1069 BC), 70 x 30 cm.  
© Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin

16



## Architectural elements

**Painted and/or carved stone stelae or blocks of wall decoration representing moments from daily life or special occasions.** [illus. 17–18]

17. Limestone wall relief, Saqqara, Old Kingdom, Dynasty 5-6 (2471 - 2195 BC), 47 x 86 cm.  
© Salima Ikram

17



18. Painted limestone round-topped Stela of Paheripedjet, Abydos, New Kingdom, Dynasty 19 (1295 - 1186 BC), 66 x 36 cm. © Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin

18



## EGYPTIAN GRAECO-ROMAN AND NUBIAN MEROITIC ERA (332 BC - AD 395)

### Statues

**Stone:** Representations of gods, people and animal hybrids made from marble, limestone, granite, greywacke, sandstone or alabaster (calcite). [illus. 19–20]

**Terracotta:** Representations of animals, humans or body parts. [illus. 21–22]



19

19. Alabaster (calcite) bust of Sarapis, Roman Period (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), 21.2 x 15.8 x 5.8 cm. © Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim



20

20. Sandstone Ba-statue of the Viceroy Maloton, Karanog, Meroitic era (2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD), 74.1 x 22 x 56.7 cm. © Nubia Museum, Aswan



21

21. Statue of Harpocrates, Fayoum, Roman Period (ca. 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), 15.5 cm. © Graeco-Roman Museum, Alexandria



22

22. Tanagra, Hadra (Alexandria), Ptolemaic Period (ca. 275 - 200 BC), 21.5 x 6.9 cm. © Graeco-Roman Museum, Alexandria

### Vessels and containers

Ceramic, faience, alabaster (calcite), other flasks and vessels, decorated and/or inscribed. [illus. 23–24–25]

23. Pilgrim flask decorated with an African couple, Alexandria, Graeco-Roman Period (ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> century BC), 9.6 x Ø 7.6 cm.  
© Gayer Anderson Museum, Cairo

24. Spherical pottery vessel with floral, animal and bird decoration, Meroitic era (270 BC - AD 320), 14.7 x Ø 15.7 cm.  
© Egyptian Museum, Cairo / Ahmed Amin

25. Glazed faience vase, Mit Rahina or Memphis, Roman Period (ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), 16.6 x 17 x Ø 14.5 cm.  
© Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim



23



24



25

### Religious or ceremonial portraits

Plaster funerary masks or painted wooden portraits, showing the head or the upper part of the body of the deceased with the hands placed on the chest.

On the masks: jewels, crowns and garlands are employed as decorative motifs; eyes may be inlaid. [illus. 26–27]

26. Painted plaster mask, Tuna El-Gabal, Severus Alexander (AD 222 - 235), 26 x 17 cm.  
© Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels

27. Wooden mummy portrait of a bearded man, Roman Period (ca. AD 170 - 180), 40.5 x 20 cm.  
© Walters Art Museum, Baltimore



26



27

# AN CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK

## Coins

In copper, bronze, silver or gold. Egyptian coins of the Ptolemaic and Roman era usually depict in the obverse busts of the emperor or a family member, with Greek writing. The reverse varies and can represent gods or personifications of the virtues. [illus. 28–29]

28. Bronze coin, Alexandria, Ptolemy III Euergetes I (246 - 222 BC), Ø 3.5 cm.

© Museu Nacional de Arqueologia, Lisbon

29. Silver coin, Alexandria, Ptolemy I Soter I (ca. 367 - 283 BC), Ø 2.8 cm.

© Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid



28



29

## COPTIC ERA

Coptic era (4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> century AD) and Coptic art of later periods

## Reliefs and icons

**Stone:** Raised and sunk reliefs (friezes and stelae) with floral motifs, crosses, grapes, animals, human figures and/or inscriptions. [illus. 30]

30. Limestone frieze in high relief with vegetal motif,

Behnasa or Baouit, ca. AD 390, 35 x 90 cm.

© Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels



30

**Wooden panels:** Reliefs decorated with carved human and animal figures, floral designs and/or scenery. [illus. 31]

Icons painted with mainly biblical scenes and saints. [illus. 32]



31



32

31. Lion attacking an antelope wooden relief, Aphroditopolis (Kom Ishqaw), 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, 35.2 x 26.3 cm. © Coptic Museum, Cairo

32. Tempera icon showing the Holy Family, 19<sup>th</sup> century AD, 84 x 55.5 x 1 cm.  
© Coptic Museum, Cairo / Sandro Vannini



## Daily life

**Ceramics and stone:** Ostraca (fragments of pottery or stone with text). The writings are often short notes, accounts or literary excerpts. [illus. 33]

**Textiles:** Hangings and clothes decorated with human, animal and/or floral figures, geometric motifs, crosses and/or inscriptions. [illus. 34]

33. Ceramic ostracum with Coptic text (tax receipt), Thebes, first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD, 7.7 x 5.6 x 0.9 cm. © Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels

34. Woven wool and flax textile fragment, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> century AD, 96 x 102 cm. © Musée Royal de Mariemont, Morlanwelz

33



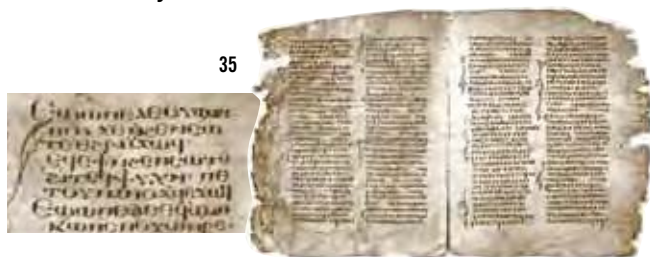
34



## Manuscripts

Paper, parchment or papyrus with Coptic or Arabic text, decorated with geometric designs, biblical scenes or Christian symbols. [illus. 35–36]

35



35. Parchment double-leaf with text from the Old Testament (Book of Exodus), probably from Sohag, 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, 32.8 x 53.8 cm. © Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

36



36. Parchment prayer book, Qasr Elwiz (Nubia), 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, 11.6 x 16.5 cm. © Nubia Museum, Aswan

## ISLAMIC ERA

(AD 640 - 1805)

## Vessels and containers

**Ceramics:** Bowls and other vessels in lustre painted celadon or porcelain, with inscriptions or decorations. [illus. 37]

**Metal:** Bottles and pitchers made from copper and bronze, with silver and gold floral ornaments. Sprinklers may be inlaid with gold and silver and carry the owner's monogram. [illus. 38]

**Glass:** Glass and enamel lamps, vases, bottles, flasks, etc., decorated and/or coloured. [illus. 39]

37. Lustre painted large dish, Fatimid era (5<sup>th</sup> century AH / 11<sup>th</sup> century AD), 15 x Ø 40 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

38. Copper perfume sprinkler inlaid with gold and silver, Mamluk Period (AH 698 - 708 / AD 1299 - 1309 or AH 709 - 741 / AD 1309 - 1340), 23.5 x 11 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

39. Gilded and enamelled glass mosque lamp, complex of Sultan Hussan (Cairo), Mamluk Period (AH 622 - 894 / AD 1250 - 1516), 35.5 x Ø 26 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

37



38



39



## Daily life

Bronze, brass, copper, iron, silver or gold candlesticks, lamps, knives, amulets and jewellery. May be inlaid with silver, gold or colours. [illus. 40]

Copper furniture decorated with geometric and floral elements and bearing cursive writing. Inlaid with silver and gold. [illus. 41]

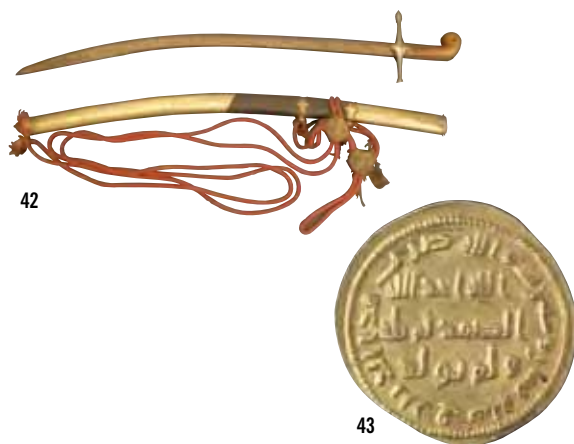
Weapons made from steel, may be inlaid with gold inscriptions. [illus. 42]

Coins and medals in gold, silver and other metals, with texts in Arabic. [illus. 43]



40. Incised brass candlestick, Mamluk Period (AH 265 - 860 / AD 887 - 1482), 48 x Ø of base 40 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

41. Copper table inlaid with silver and gold, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> century AH / 9<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century AD, 81 x 40 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo



42. Gilded steel sword and blade with gilt silver crosspiece and ivory hilt, Mamluk Period (AH 907 / AD 1501), 95 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

43. Gold coin (dinar), Fatimid era (AH 403 / AD 1012), Ø 2.5 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

## Architectural elements

**Wood:** Inlaid or encrusted wood panel fragments from doors, pulpits and ceilings with geometric and/or vegetal motifs. [illus. 44]

**Ceramics:** Decorative tiles with geometric, architectural and/or vegetal patterns. [illus. 45]



44. Ivory inlaid wooden panel with geometrical decoration and plants, Mamluk Period (8<sup>th</sup> century AH / 14<sup>th</sup> century AD), 27 x 27 x 3 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo



45. Ceramic tile panel with painted underglaze decoration and transparent glaze overall, Ottoman era (AH 1087 / AD 1676), 240 x 144 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

## ISLAMIC ERA (continued) (AD 640 - 1805)

### Textile (fragments) and accessories

**Textiles:** Cotton, linen, silk or wool, often dyed with a variety of colours. Designs may include a band inscribed with the names and title of the ruler, geometric forms and/or vegetal motifs. [illus. 46]

**Jewellery:** Necklaces, bracelets, earrings and rings, in gold, silver and other metals, sometimes with precious stones. [illus. 47–48]



46

46. Block-printed linen fragment, Mamluk Period (8<sup>th</sup> century AH / 14<sup>th</sup> century AD), 33 x 21 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo



47

47. Gold necklace, Ayyubid Dynasty (AH 549 - 628 / AD 1171 - 1250), 24 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo



48

48. Two gold bracelets decorated with filigree and superimposed coils, Fatimid era (5<sup>th</sup> century AH / 11<sup>th</sup> century AD), Ø 6.7 - 7.2 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo

### Books, documents, and manuscripts

Papyrus, parchment or paper (usually made from linen) manuscripts written in ink. Books or leafs bound in leather, with calligraphy and illuminations. [illus. 49–50]



49

49. Medical prescription by Ibn El Afeif, Fostat, Mamluk Period (9<sup>th</sup> century AH / 15<sup>th</sup> century AD), 16 x 10 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo



50



50. Qur'an kareem in thuluth script in black and red ink with gold illuminated paper and stamped leather binding, Mamluk Period (AH 842 - 857 / AD 1438 - 1453), 8 x 11 cm. © Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo





The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is the main international organisation of museums and museum professionals committed to promoting and protecting the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

With almost 30,000 members in 137 countries, ICOM is an international network of museums and museum professionals specialised in a wide range of museological and heritage-related disciplines.

Created in 1946, ICOM is a non-profit non-governmental organisation (NGO) maintaining formal relations with UNESCO and having a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

The fight against the illicit trafficking in cultural objects is among ICOM's highest priorities. The *Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk* has been designed to raise awareness on the smuggling and illicit trade of cultural goods from Egypt, thus aiding in protecting the country's cultural and historical heritage.

ICOM wishes to thank the members of ICOM's International Committee for Egyptology (CIPEG) and Egypt's national museums, as well as the Ministry of Antiquities of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for their unwavering commitment towards the success of this project.

The *Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk* is the eleventh publication in ICOM's *Red Lists* series, following those for Africa, Latin America, Iraq, Afghanistan, Peru, Cambodia, Central America and Mexico, Haiti, China and Colombia. The *Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk* is ICOM's third *Emergency Red List* publication, with Iraq and Haiti being the first two.

<http://icom.museum>

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Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs*



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