

## **A Museum for Tutankhamun: A Proposal to Transfer Tutankhamun's Treasures to Giza in 1975-1976**

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### **Abstract**

The present article focuses on the proposal to transfer Tutankhamun's collection from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo to a new exhibiting place in 1975-1976 as an attempt to clear a space in the Egyptian Museum for the other collections to be displayed in a modern manner and to solve the issue of artifacts overcrowding. Giza was proposed to be the new home of Tutankhamun's objects for many justifications. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York proposed a promising project with suggestions regarding the site, the museum designs, the itinerary of the tour within the proposed museum, the construction costs and the anticipated revenues. This project collided with the aspirations of President Sadat to construct a new cultural center on the site of the former Turah prison which he demolished in 1975. The transfer of Tutankhamun's artifacts from the Egyptian Museum was therefore postponed until the new Grand Egyptian Museum has recently been built. This paper utilizes primary source documents in The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives in New York.

**Keywords:** Tutankhamun's Museum Project; Transfer of Tutankhamun's treasures; The Egyptian Museum in Cairo; Tutankhamun's collection

### **Introduction**

The idea of transferring Tutankhamun's treasures from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo to another place, as has recently occurred with the transfer of this collection to the Grand Egyptian Museum at Giza, is not a new idea. This perception was discussed in depth in 1975 and 1976, and an almost complete vision was developed for a new museum to be built at Giza, which was supposed to house the objects of the young Pharaoh.

The issue of renovating the Egyptian Museum in Cairo was raised when the Egyptian Government approved the American application to host the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition in six American cities (the National Gallery of Art, Washington, Field Museum of Natural History and the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, New Orleans Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Seattle Art Museum, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) in 1976-1979. The exhibition tour of fifty-five selected items from

Tutankhamun's treasures began in the USA in 1976.<sup>1</sup> It was agreed that the profits of this exhibition would be donated to the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities for the renovation of the Egyptian Museum or for any other archaeological project in Egypt. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (MMA), the main organizer of the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition in the USA, started to evaluate the condition of the Egyptian Museum to determine its needs in 1975.

The collection of the Egyptian Museum surpassed any Egyptology collection in the world. However, the Egyptian Museum suffered from severe crowding of artifacts, and had become closer to being a mere repository for antiquities rather than a place for displaying them because of its receiving large numbers of artifacts over the years.<sup>2</sup> The great increase in the number of artifacts especially occurred after the Antiquities Law of 1912, which stipulated that Egypt was entitled to obtain fifty percent of the archaeological finds, provided that the excavator gets the other half, and that the share of the Egyptian Government should be placed in the Egyptian Museum.<sup>3</sup> This caused a large accumulation of artifacts in the Museum, which might cause damage to them and negatively affect the way they were displayed for visitors and scholars.

Hence, the urgent need to solve this problem arose, and thinking began on transferring a collection of artifacts from the Egyptian Museum to another location. There were discussions between the MMA and the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities and the Egyptian Museum on which artifacts should be transferred from the Egyptian Museum and where they should be displayed later.

The opinion settled at the beginning on the need to transfer the collection of Tutankhamun, because it could alone and independently be displayed in its own museum, and because of its great worldwide fame due to the intensive publicity following the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb (KV62) in November 1922.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, a proposal to establish a museum for the treasures of Tutankhamun at Giza began to be discussed.

The current study discusses this proposal in terms of the proposed site for the construction of the museum and the justifications for selecting Giza as a location for the new proposed museum and the study carried out by the MMA which provided a design for the museum and a vision of its important sections and how to display the artifacts in its galleries. The study also focuses on the expected cost of the museum establishment, its anticipated revenues, and the final decision

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<sup>1</sup> I. E. S. Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976), 4; Marianne Eaton-Krauss, *The Unknown Tutankhamun* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), x.

<sup>2</sup> Bill Price, *Tutankhamun: Egypt's Most Famous Pharaoh* (Harpenden: Pocket Essentials, 2007), 141.

<sup>3</sup> On that law, see Doaa M. Elkashef and Asaad A. Zaki, "The Foreign Interference in Governing the Archaeological Work in Egypt Following the Discovery of Tutankhamun's Tomb," *BSU International Journal of Tourism, Archaeology, and Hospitality* 2/2 (2022): 63-91.

<sup>4</sup> On the tomb and its treasures, see I. E. S. Edwards, *Tutankhamun, His Tomb and Its Treasures* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976).

regarding its construction. This line of inquiry helps fill a gap in the extant literature regarding the issue of artifacts overcrowding in the Egyptian Museum and attempts to manage this dilemma. This article represents a unique approach to the idea of moving Tutankhamun's objects out of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

This study adopted the historical and analytical research methods by investigating the relevant primary sources such as letters, notes, drawings, and agreements which are located in The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives in New York.

### **A Solution for Artifacts Overcrowding in the Egyptian Museum**

When the Egyptian Government approved the USA in late 1975 to host the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition in six American cities in the period from 1976 to 1979, it was agreed that the profits of this exhibition series would be donated to the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities for the renovation of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo or for any other archaeological project in Egypt. The officials of the MMA, the main organizer of the exhibition in the USA, were responsible for evaluating the condition of the Egyptian Museum and for preparing a report about its needs.<sup>5</sup>

Among the important parts of the Egyptian Museum to be renovated were the galleries of Tutankhamun. In 1975, there were discussions between the MMA and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo regarding the choice between the renovation of the galleries of Tutankhamun in the Egyptian Museum or the establishment of a new museum for Tutankhamun's objects at Giza.

The Egyptian Museum was built, basically, to collect and display samples of art and monuments dating back to the main chronological periods; Predynastic, Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, .... etc. However, the intense interest in Egyptian archaeology, particularly in the period from 1910 to 1930, resulted in unearthing "unbelievable number" of artifacts. According to the Antiquities Law of 1912, the Egyptian Museum should keep 50% of the discovered objects and the other half was for the excavator. There were no plans to deal with the abundance of artifacts of different types and materials, and it was difficult for the Egyptian Antiquities Service to establish small museums at the sites where these objects were discovered because of security issues. Thomas Hoving, Director of the MMA, stated: "At some point the Museum changed from a display-oriented repository to a mere repository." The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb made matters more complicated; it compounded the problem of space, balance, and the proper display

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<sup>5</sup> Agreement between the Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Director of the Cairo Museum (2-3) on November 24, 1975, Box 43, Folder 8: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. Contracts. List of objects (1 of 2). 1975-1976, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

at the Egyptian Museum.<sup>6</sup> The larger number of the artifacts from the tomb dominated the second floor of the Museum.<sup>7</sup>

Hoving believed that the Egyptian Museum suffered from the narrowness of its halls compared to the number of displayed works of art. From his point of view, this was “the critical problem of the existing Cairo Museum.” The Museum was described as “cluttered, inefficient and perhaps dangerous for works of art because of the lack of space.”<sup>8</sup> It was stated in a report of the MMA that if there was no solution for the problem of overcrowding in the Egyptian Museum, it would not be possible to undertake the renovation, check the deterioration, or overcome the visitors’ confusion and fatigue. Hoving reported: “decentralization and I mean decentralization and not dismemberment should be very seriously considered.”<sup>9</sup>

The MMA officials suggested displaying the Tutankhamun material at the Egyptian Museum in a modern manner through the renovation and expansion of the existing facilities. They concluded that the space allocated for Tutankhamun’s objects was not adequate in terms of modern museology, and that there was no logical order in the placement of the artifacts. They believed that this collection needed at least the entire west aisle of the second floor and some of the space which was assigned for the coffins and funerary equipment of Yuya and Tuya,<sup>1</sup> the parents of Queen Tiye, the Great Royal Wife of Amenhotep III. The treasures from their tomb in the Valley of the Kings (KV46), discovered by Theodore M. Davis in 1905, were all housed in the Egyptian Museum,<sup>1</sup> except for a few duplicates given to Davis which he subsequently granted to the MMA.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving, Director of the MMA, to the Architect Kevin Roche (7) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun: The King, the Tomb, the Royal Treasure* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 213.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving to Gamal Mokhtar, President of the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities, on December 30, 1975, Box 1, Folder 7: Cairo. Correspondence Thomas Hoving and Gamal Mokhtar. April, June 1975, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>9</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 24-25, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 28, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> On the tomb of Yuya and Tuya (KV46) and its treasures in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, see James Edward Quibell, *Tomb of Yuya and Thuiu* (Le Caire: Institut Français d’Archéologie orientale, 1908); Nicholas Reeves and Richard H. Wilkinson, *Das Tal der Könige: Geheimnisvolles Totenreich der Pharaonen* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 76; David O’Connor and Eric H. Cline, *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign* (USA: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 5.

<sup>1</sup> William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt: A Background for the Study of the Egyptian Antiquities in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Part II: The Hyksos Period and the New Kingdom (1675-1080*

However, the representatives of the MMA pointed out that providing an additional space on the second floor for Tutankhamun's collection would solve the problem related to that collection, but would result in other problems for the rest of the museum collections. They also argued that the second-floor galleries, within the U-shape, were too narrow to be a space for exhibiting the large objects of Tutankhamun such as the great shrines which were barely able to fit into the north corridor and the public could hardly walk on either side of those shrines. The proper display of Tutankhamun's objects required over forty percent of the Egyptian Museum which would result in the problem of how to display the rest of the Museum collections. Additionally, the alcoves, which were located directly off the U-shape Tutankhamun galleries, were displaying special collections such as daily life, papyri, Roman portraits, and others. The existence of these different collections very close to the collection of Tutankhamun would add to the confusion. Hoving stated that if these special collections were displayed chronologically, it would be no confusion at all.<sup>1</sup><sup>3</sup>

During the renovation process of Tutankhamun's objects in preparation for their transfer to the USA to be displayed in the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition tour, and as an attempt to solve the problem of space, it was suggested that the Hellenistic and Roman objects should be transferred from the Egyptian Museum to another place. This proposal was not implemented for many reasons: the Hellenistic and Roman artifacts were not that extensive; they were important for the historical continuity in the Museum; and they could not be displayed in a separate museum, because they were not of such historical and artistic importance.<sup>1</sup><sup>4</sup>

To accommodate Tutankhamun's objects and the rest of the collections as well, Hoving addressed the possibility of enlarging the Museum. It was not only the issue of finding an adequate space for displaying the archaeological artifacts, but also finding a sufficient space for the peripheral elements of the Museum—administrative, curatorial, conservation, maintenance, and security needs.<sup>1</sup>

The UNESCO experts, who visited Egypt in May 1976, suggested the construction of a back wing and lateral enlargements using the space occupied by the

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B.C.) (New York: Published for the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Harvard UP, 1959), 261-62, 263.

<sup>1</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 29, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (8) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 30, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

administrative offices and the library, the use of the basement as a place suitable for display purposes, and the establishment of a building on another site for research collections and reserves. From their point of view, these enlargements would safeguard a traditional landmark in the heart of Cairo.<sup>1</sup>

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Hoving believed that it was unfeasible because the south side could not be expanded as it had the main entrance and a garden, and no expansion could be made on the north side because the new road from the new Ramses Bridge was planned to go there.<sup>1</sup> The Egyptian Minister<sup>7</sup> of Housing and Reconstruction, Osman Ahmed Osman, told Hoving that the avenue on the east side of the Museum was planned to be widened up to a 0.4 meters from the east wall of the wing, and that the expansion could be made up to the new wall separating the east side of the Museum from the widened road. This enlargement would add approximately 10,000 square meters to the Egyptian Museum. In this case, it was necessary to ensure that this expansion would not negatively affect the lighting in the existing galleries. The fire equipment could have been maintained along that avenue, and the proper foundations could have been established. However, Hoving wondered: “does one really want a new wing near a major traffic artery with lots of vibrations?”<sup>1</sup>

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It was difficult to enlarge the east and west flanks due to the existence of barracks for the police, the cast laboratory, and the administrative offices. They also had to put into consideration that if an expansion took place, it would be difficult for fire trucks to get to the sides of this building which was unacceptable.<sup>1</sup>

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On June 7, 1976, at a meeting with the Director of the MMA, Thomas Hoving, in New York, Osman Ahmed Osman expressed his admiration for the idea of establishing a new museum at Giza, as well as for the project of renovating the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and declared that he “will help furthest extent his powers and abilities.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Needs and Possibilities of Museum Development in the Arab Republic of Egypt (6) Box 44, Folder 7: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (1 of 2). 1975-1976, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>7</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (5) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 31, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>9</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (5) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Telex from Thomas Hoving to William Harrison, President of International Business Associates, on June 8, 1976, Box 43, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. Chronological. 1976-1977, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

From the point of view of the MMA officials, the only solution to get more space in the Egyptian Museum was to move some of its collections to another display place, and the ideal collection to be removed from the Museum was the collection of Tutankhamun which dominated the second floor. The unique historical, stylistic, and aesthetic nature of this collection would make it strong enough to be displayed on its own in an appropriate place.<sup>2</sup> The proposal to transfer Tutankhamun's objects from the Egyptian Museum was based on the fact that this collection was fascinating and attractive enough to stand alone and on the publicity of Tutankhamun's tomb which was discovered almost intact in November 1922.<sup>2</sup>

The Egyptian Museum Council proposed the construction of a new museum for Tutankhamun's objects upon a site in Cairo. This proposal was rejected by the MMA, because Cairo was a crowded city, and housing was almost impossible. Hoving claimed that the presence of a new museum of Tutankhamun in the same city would negatively affect the attendance at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo as the visitors usually visited Giza and the Egyptian Museum. He argued that the construction of a new museum for Tutankhamun at Giza would not therefore stop visits at the Egyptian Museum which was rich in objects of different periods. He stated: "a new Tutankhamun museum within the city would become a serious rival to the Cairo Museum."<sup>2</sup>

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The site of Giza was suggested to be the location for the new proposed museum of Tutankhamun's treasures. It is worth mentioning that there were two arguments against placing the treasures of Tutankhamun in a museum located at Giza. The first argument claimed that the objects of Tutankhamun did not belong to the same historical context of Giza which is mainly, but not exclusively, an Old Kingdom site. Hoving stated: "Tutankhamun has little to do with Cairo or the Egyptian museum, but is there owing to the impracticality of putting the material back at Luxor."<sup>2</sup> The second argument<sup>4</sup> was the fear and concern about a severe shortage of visitors to the Egyptian Museum as Tutankhamun's treasures were considered the most prominent artefacts. There were worries about unfavorable world reaction if the famous historical Egyptian Museum was abandoned. Another logical concern

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<sup>2</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>1</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar on December 30, 1975, Box 1, Folder 7: Cairo. Correspondence Thomas Hoving and Gamal Mokhtar. April, June 1975, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 25, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>g</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar (3) on February 23, 1976, Box 44, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. Exhibition traveling (2 of 2). 1976-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>4</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (10) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

was the huge cost of building a new museum and the potential delay in its construction.<sup>2</sup><sup>5</sup>

Hoving thus suggested not to remove all the treasures of Tutankhamun from the Egyptian Museum. He argued that the objects were plentiful with high quality and that there was a number of duplicates which meant that a considerable collection could remain in the Museum to attract more visitors. He assumed that if the other artifacts in the Egyptian Museum were beautifully displayed, they would be glorious, and tourists would visit the old museum of Cairo and the new one of Tutankhamun which might lead to lengthen the visit in Cairo and to increase revenues.<sup>2</sup><sup>6</sup>

Some members of the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities preferred to transfer the Old Kingdom objects from the Egyptian Museum to a new museum at Giza and to keep the Tutankhamun material in the Egyptian Museum. However, this proposal was criticized by the MMA, because the Egyptian Museum was built to display a broad historical continuity of artifacts from different periods of ancient Egypt, and the transfer of “one of the major blocks of that history would seriously jeopardize that reality.” Hoving favored the removal of objects representing a small period (i.e., the short reign of Tutankhamun) rather than removing a material illustrating centuries of art.<sup>2</sup><sup>7</sup>

Additionally, the MMA officials believed that the removal of all the Old Kingdom objects from the Egyptian Museum would not solve the problem of lack of space, because they did not occupy the same space of Tutankhamun’s objects. The opinion to transfer the Old Kingdom artifacts to Giza was based on the fact that Giza is an Old Kingdom site. This opinion, however, was rejected on the ground that “only a fraction of the Old Kingdom material in the Museum actually comes from Giza.”<sup>2</sup><sup>8</sup>

In short, there were three possibilities of a new exhibit place for Tutankhamun’s objects: somewhere in Cairo which could be the Island of Gezira, the Valley of the Kings, or Giza. Hoving did not recommend the first two alternatives, arguing that it would be too expensive to get a new place for another museum in Cairo, and that the Valley of the Kings was not feasible because of climatic conditions and its inaccessibility, while Giza would be a suitable place for a new museum displaying Tutankhamun’s treasures.<sup>2</sup><sup>9</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Telex from Thomas Hoving<sup>5</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar on April 26, 1976, Box 1, Folder 8: Cairo. Telexes. February 1976-October 1977, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>6</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar on December 30, 1975, Box 1, Folder 7: Cairo. Correspondence Thomas Hoving and Gamal Mokhtar. April, June 1975, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>7</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar (1) on February 23, 1976, Box 44, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition traveling (2 of 2). 1976-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>8</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar (2) on February 23, 1976, Box 44, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition traveling (2 of 2). 1976-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>9</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (6) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus

Hoving asked the President of the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities, Gamal Mokhtar, to be involved in the plans of constructing a new museum if a decision was made to erect a new one. He also asked to be invited to any possible upcoming meetings with the Egyptian authorities and the UNESCO experts that would discuss the concept and site of the new proposed museum.<sup>3</sup> 0

Mokhtar was worried about the decision to remove Tutankhamun's treasures from the Egyptian Museum lest he might be blamed for the dismemberment of the entire Museum. William Harrison, President of International Business Associates and the liaison office of the MMA in Cairo, believed that Mokhtar was pressured by the UNESCO experts who had another point of view.<sup>3</sup> 1

The Egyptian President Sadat asked for UNESCO's assistance in building a new museum. It was arranged that a representative committee from the UNESCO would visit Cairo in May 1976 to discuss the implementation of the plan for the new museum. Mahdi Elmandjra, Assistant Director-General of the UNESCO for Programming and Future Studies and Special Adviser to the UNESCO Director-General, made communications with Mokhtar regarding this proposed project. There was a great interest in the MMA in this visit, and Hoving was advised to discuss this development firstly on telephone with Mokhtar and then personally during his upcoming visit to Cairo.<sup>3</sup> Hoving was invited by Mokhtar to attend the UNESCO experts' meeting with the Egyptian officials which was planned to be on June 1 or 2, 1976.<sup>3</sup> 3

Members of the UNESCO's Division of Cultural Heritage reviewed the possibilities of establishing a new museum to host the Egyptian cultural heritage effectively during their visit to Egypt in the period from May 23 to June 3, 1976. They visited several Egyptian museums including the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Museum of Islamic Art, the Coptic Museum, the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, and museums in Aswan and Luxor.<sup>3</sup> 4

The UNESCO members suggested to launch a campaign to raise funds for the development of museum facilities in Egypt, following the UNESCO's International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia, to ensure a proper presentation and preservation of the Egyptian unique heritage. This suggestion was

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records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Telex from Thomas Hoving to Gamal Mokhtar on April 26, 1976, Box 1, Folder 8: Cairo. Telexes. February 1976-October 1977, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Telex from William Harrison to Thomas Hoving on April 22, 1976, Box 1, Folder 8: Cairo. Telexes. February 1976-October 1977, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Telex from William Harrison to Thomas Hoving on April 22, 1976, Box 1, Folder 8: Cairo. Telexes. February 1976-October 1977, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Telex from William Harrison to Thomas Hoving on April 22, 1976, Box 1, Folder 8: Cairo. Telexes. February 1976-October 1977, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Needs and Possibilities of Museum Development in the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1, Box 44, Folder 7: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (1 of 2). 1975-1976, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

out of their belief that the Egyptian cultural heritage did not only include archaeological sites of global interest, but also archaeological artifacts that must be presented and preserved in a scientific manner. They considered the development of museums in Egypt an essential because of their importance for the restoration, conservation, and presentation of the national cultural heritage.<sup>3</sup>

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The UNESCO experts recognized several measures that were needed to present and preserve the objects in the Egyptian Museum effectively, including appropriate lighting and light control, air conditioning, an alarm system, the reduction of dust, and better arrangements of the Museum reserves. They also believed that the total renovation of the Egyptian Museum could be accomplished only in case of an enlargement of the building. They stated: “any improvements which would be attempted without the required surface increase can only lead towards partial and unsatisfactory results, ..... should extensions of the Cairo Museum be constructed, the presentation of Tutankhamun collection according to the outstanding model proposed by Mr. Hoving might well be feasible.”<sup>3</sup>

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### **Giza as a Proposed Location for the New Museum**

The choice of Giza as a site for the new museum was originally proposed by the Chief of Special Projects and Construction in the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities, Fouad El Orabi, and agreed by Gamal Mokhtar, Abdel Kader Selim, then Director of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and other members of the Museum Council. This proposal was presented to the MMA. Hoving and his architects Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo were convinced that Giza would be a suitable site, especially the spot which was located adjacent to the so-called Khufu pavilion.<sup>3</sup>

Hoving considered this spot as a practical one for many reasons: Giza was one of the main touristic areas in the world; the site would be easily accessible to Cairo, twenty minutes by car; the general site had been cleaned up; the place had a good publicity due to the existence of the Sound and Light shows which would prove to be increasingly popular later on; a new museum for Tutankhamun could be a new source of revenues, because the Egyptian Museum was closing its doors at 2:00 p.m. Tourists used to visit Giza in the afternoon when the climate became cooler, and the Sound and Light show began at 7:30 p.m. Therefore, the new museum could be opened from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 or 9:30 p.m.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Needs and Possibilities of Museum Development in the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2, Box 44, Folder 7: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (1 of 2). 1975-1976, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Needs and Possibilities of Museum Development in the Arab Republic of Egypt, 5, Box 44, Folder 7: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (1 of 2). 1975-1976, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 26, 35, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>8</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (9) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

Hoving claimed that this spot would be suitable only for a museum, given that the land was owned by the Egyptian Government and the existence of the required infrastructure in the site in addition to that which could be developed in the then existing spaces such as restaurants, access roads, public toilets, electricity, guards, garden, and other facilities. His choice of Giza as a place for the new proposed museum was supported by the tourist facilities which had been completed at Mena House and other facilities which were planned to be structured in the near future.<sup>3</sup> Hoving stated that this anticipated project “will be a stunning affair.”<sup>4</sup>

However, the members of the Egyptian Museum Council were concerned about doing constructions in an area at Giza which had never been properly excavated. Hoving informed Mokhtar that a detailed study was conducted by the MMA on the proposed site which was located to the southwest corner of the visitors’ pavilion, the so-called Khufu Pavilion. He clarified that this site revealed no archaeological remains, and that no archaeological findings were discovered during the construction of this pavilion. He also claimed that several members of the Egyptian Museum Council confirmed that this area had been cleared. He pointed out that if any archaeological remains appeared in the site during the borings, the site would be withdrawn from consideration to be a place of the new proposed museum.<sup>4</sup>

The view of the MMA officials was consistent with the importance of museums in the tourism industry in Egypt and the urgent need to expand the establishment of museums to maximize tourist capabilities and revenues. They believed that it was important to consider the proposed process of the renovation of museums and the erection of new ones, because they were essential and fundamental parts of Egypt’s expanding tourism sector, and the establishment of a new museum had its historical significance and its economic positive impact. They claimed that opening a space in the Egyptian Museum and constructing a new museum at Giza for Tutankhamun’s artifacts would be beneficial to both Egypt and the Organization of Antiquities.<sup>4</sup> In April 1976, they assured that they would help in the Egyptian Museum rehabilitation even if a decision was made to construct a new museum.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>o</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar on December 30, 1975, Box 1, Folder 7: Cairo. Correspondence Thomas Hoving and Gamal Mokhtar. April, June 1975, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Renovation of the Cairo Museum – July 11, 1976 – Stage one, on July 11, 1976, Box 43, Folder 2: *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Cairo briefing paper (1976). 1976-1977, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>g</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar (3) on February 23, 1976, Box 44, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition traveling (2 of 2). 1976-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving<sup>2</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar on December 30, 1975, Box 1, Folder 7: Cairo. Correspondence Thomas Hoving and Gamal Mokhtar. April, June 1975, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Telex from Thomas Hoving<sup>3</sup> to Gamal Mokhtar on April 26, 1976, Box 1, Folder 8: Cairo. Telexes. February 1976-October 1977, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

### The Design Plans for the Proposed Museum

The MMA officials recommended a possible site for the proposed Tutankhamun Museum at Giza which was located to the immediate southwest of the so-called Khufu Pavilion that was built for the Sound and Light (fig. 1, A).

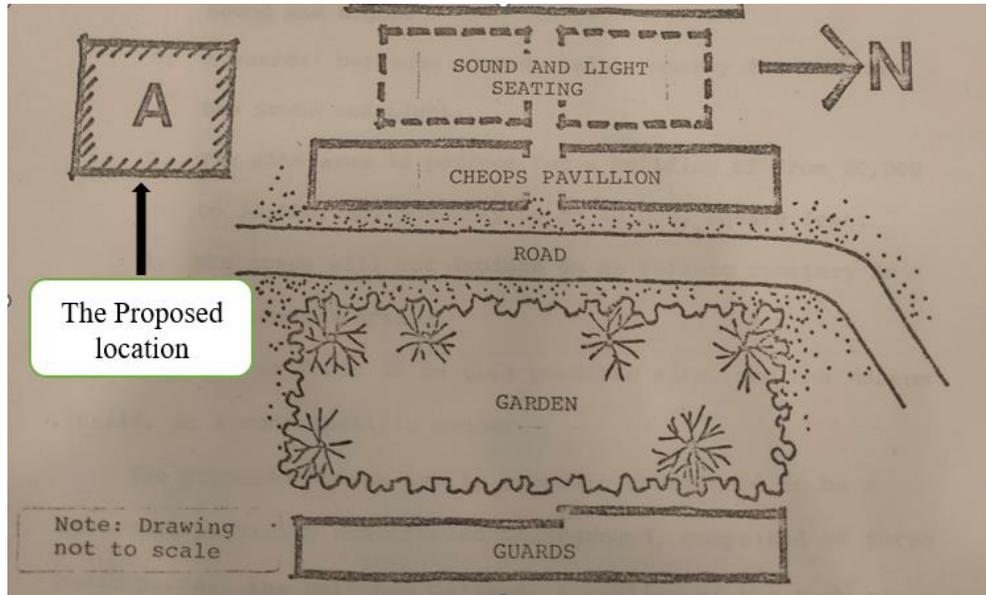


Fig. 1: The possible location of the proposed Tutankhamun Museum at Giza.<sup>4</sup>

Hoving's reasons for suggesting this location included the availability of the site as it was owned by the Egyptian Government; its proximity to the Sound and Light which had a restaurant, cafeteria, and other facilities; the existence of paved roads near the site and the possibility of extending the then existing road; the availability of a modern electrical system for the Sound and Light; the employment of the most experienced engineers at the Sound and Light; the site's convenience for a building of 25,000 up to 40,000 square feet; and the non-existence of an Islamic cemetery in the general area.<sup>4</sup>

The proposed museum was planned to be partially built underground and to include three main parts: the Entrance Gallery; a replica of Tutankhamun's tomb, or a room showing the tomb by Harry Burton's photographs; and a series of large galleries.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that Harry Burton was the photographer of the MMA expedition

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (11) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (12) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (13) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

at Thebes who assisted Lord Carnarvon's expedition in the recording of Tutankhamun's tomb.<sup>4</sup>

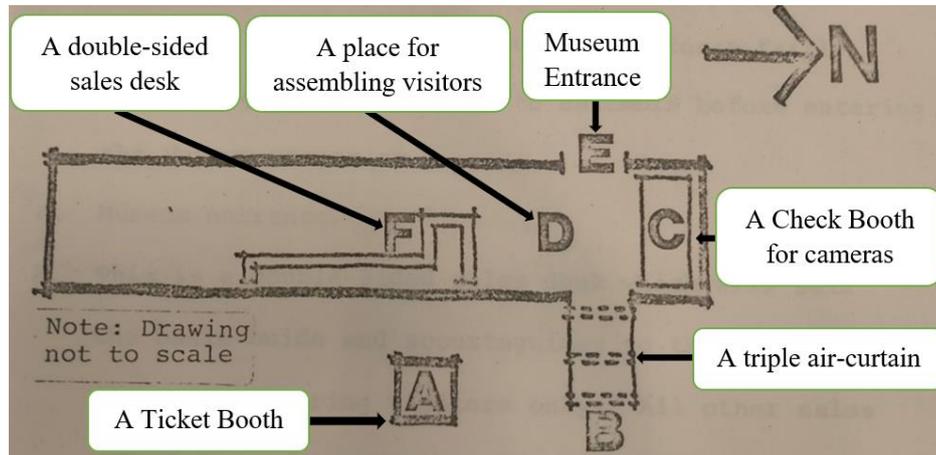


Fig. 2: The proposed design of the Entrance Gallery.<sup>4</sup>

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The proposed Entrance Gallery (see fig. 2) would include a Ticket Booth (A) which should be separate from the Museum. Hoving stated: “in Egypt, it’s normal for guides to purchase blocks of tickets for groups. Invariably the guides try to enter with more visitors than tickets.” He suggested that the admission ticket placement should not impede access without a ticket into the sales area. A triple air-curtain (B) or another technique was intended to protect visitors from dust and to make the Museum interior as free as possible of dust or sand. It was suggested to set up a Check Booth (C) for cameras...etc. An Entrance Gallery (D) was planned to be used as a place for assembling visitors before entering through the Museum Entrance (E). The proposed Entrance Gallery would include a double-sided sales desk (F) for selling just catalogues and acoustic guides to the Museum. This place would be designed only for entering visitors while other sales materials could be purchased on the other side of the double-sided sales area, because visitors usually do most of their purchasing after their visit.<sup>4</sup> It was stated that eighty percent of all visitors of the MMA did their purchasing on their way out of the Museum. Hoving believed that the sales area should be at least 5.000 square meters to be spacious enough to handle about 1000 products such as books, posters, slides, postcards, jewelry, reproductions, fabrics, maps, and others. This store was planned to be one of the most impressive museum shops of its kind in the world,

<sup>4</sup> Harry Burton, “Clearing the Luxor Tomb: The Work of the Photographer, A Responsible Post,” *The Times*, February 16, 1923, 9; “Work at the Tomb of Tutankhamun,” *Bulletin – Metropolitan Museum of Art* 33.2 (1975): 96; Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 14; F. Nigel Hepper, *Pharaoh’s Flowers: The Botanical Treasures of Tutankhamun*. 2nd ed. (Chicago: KWS, 2009), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (13) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (14) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

whose revenues would contribute not only to the original building, but also to its continuing operations.<sup>5</sup>

According to the 5.000 square meter sales area and based upon the expected five hundred thousand annual attendances at unit per person sales index of two dollars twenty-seven cents, a gross sale was estimated at one million one hundred thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars per year.<sup>5</sup>

The proposed plan of the museum included a replica or near-replica of Tutankhamun's tomb within the museum so that all visitors would go through it (fig. 3). The first main concept of the proposed museum was the tomb; the tomb should be represented in the museum in its real or approximate dimensions. The second main concept was the precise location of every object within the four chambers of the tomb.<sup>5</sup>

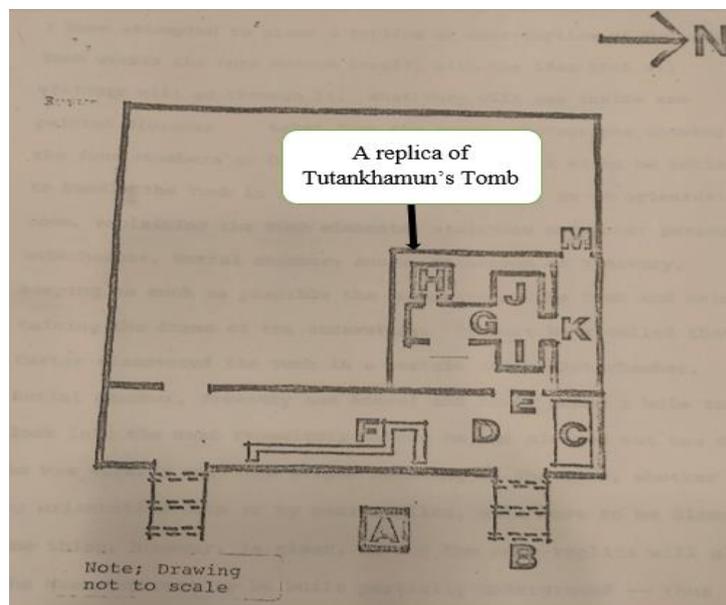


Fig. 3: The proposed design of a replica of Tutankhamun's tomb.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 43, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Telex from Thomas Hoving<sup>1</sup> to William Harrison on March 9, 1976, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>2</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (16) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>3</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (15) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

The replica of Tutankhamun's tomb was planned to include painted dioramas inspired by the photographs of the MMA photographer Harry Burton which were taken throughout the six years of Tutankhamun's tomb excavations.<sup>5</sup> Burton's photographs show the tomb's four chambers as they were discovered by Howard Carter. As an alternative to the tomb replica, an Orientation Room could be designed illustrating the tomb elements— the Entrance Staircase, the Corridor, the Antechamber, the Burial Chamber, the Treasury, and the Annex— to maintain the drama of the excavation. The construction of a replica or near-replica of the tomb would have required the building of the museum partially underground.<sup>5</sup>

Members of the Egyptian Museum Council found it strange to construct the proposed museum partly underground when Egypt was a country of sun light. It was normal to construct a museum of this type all above ground with glass roofs for natural light. However, the MMA strongly recommended the construction of the tomb replica and the galleries underground. The construction of a part of the museum underground was based on a number of grounds: to give the visitor the experience of entering a tomb; to create the proper temperature and humidity and facilitate the dust control in this desert area; the low cost maintenance; the building would be better protected in normal events or in more severe circumstances; and the artificial light would permit the objects to be displayed properly since many exhibited artifacts would be gilded or made of gold or alabaster.<sup>5</sup>

Some members of the Egyptian Museum Council were concerned that the cost of the underground construction would be higher than the cost of building above ground.<sup>5</sup> Hoving stressed that the proposed museum would not be wholly built underground, but only about 2000 square meters, and that they did not plan to go deeply underground. He tried to reassure the Egyptian officials by giving an example of an underground building in the MMA, the Lehman Pavilion,<sup>5</sup> which was 60% underground and whose maintenance was much less than the other above ground buildings in the Museum.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (16) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving to Gamal Mokhtar (4) on February 23, 1976, Box 44, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. Exhibition traveling (2 of 2). 1976-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Richard Morschès, the MMA Vice-Director of Operations, to Thomas Hoving, on February 13, 1976, Box 44, Folder 8: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (2 of 2). 1976-1977, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>5</sup> The Lehman Pavilion was inaugurated as an addition to the MMA on May 12, 1975. It was built to display about 3,000 objects of western European art donated by Robert Lehman who was an investment banker, Murray Illson, "Lehman Pavilion Backed by Court," *The New York Times*, November 19, 1971, 41; Grace Glueck, "Lehman Collection at Met Open for Private Viewing," *The New York Times*, May 13, 1975, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving to Gamal Mokhtar (4) on February 23, 1976, Box 44, Folder 3: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. Exhibition traveling (2 of 2). 1976-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

According to the proposed design of the new museum (see figs. 3 and 4), the visitors could first enter the tomb replica or the Orientation Room, and then the four main galleries (N, O, P, and Q) through an entrance (M). The galleries were planned to be equipped with modern lighting, showcases, in-gallery storage, and air-cooling and humidity systems. The artificial lighting would be used instead of windows and skylights. The four galleries would be correlated to the four chambers of the tomb itself. It was suggested that the space of the galleries should be 18,800 square feet based upon the existing space at the Egyptian Museum. The exit from the galleries (R) would lead into the other side of the double-sided sales area, while the final exit (T) would be through air curtains to prevent dust.<sup>6</sup>

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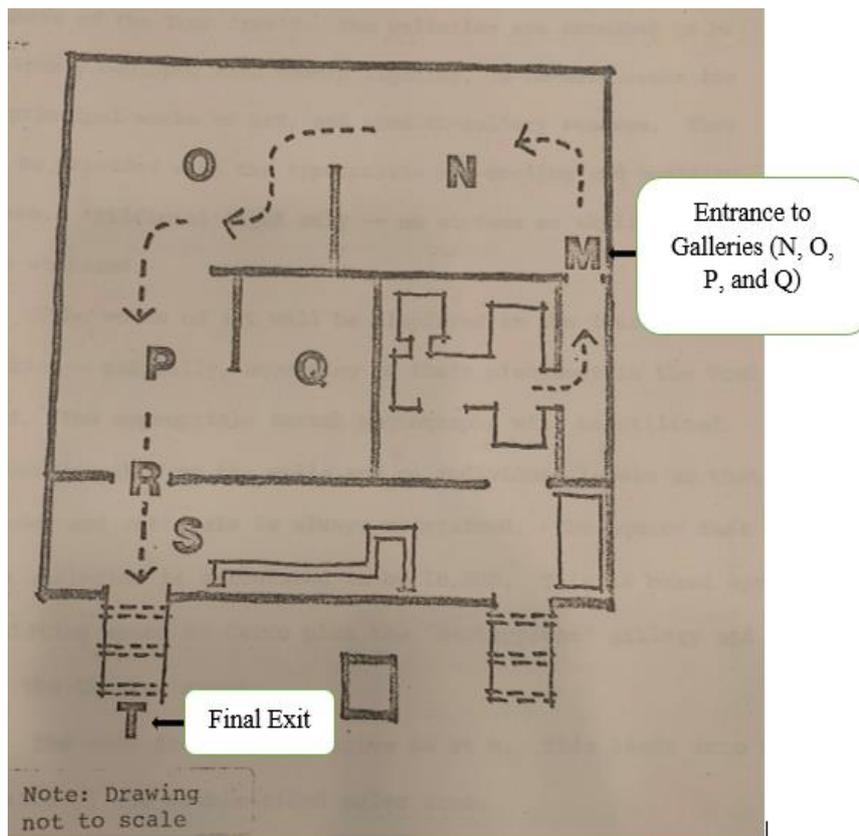


Fig. 4: The proposed design of the main four galleries.<sup>6</sup>

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### The Peripheral Elements of the Proposed Museum

Hoving envisioned the peripheral elements of the proposed museum and divided them into six elements: mechanical needs, curatorial needs, security needs, reception rooms, conservation needs, and public needs.

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (18) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas Hoving to Kevin Roche (17) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

The mechanical needs of the proposed museum included air cooling, dust scrubbing, and heat capability. They should be contained in a subsidiary building close to the museum, but not inside it. Hoving set the special requirements for this area which included the necessity of a storage of ten years of spare parts with lockable cabinets. It was advised that the Egyptian technicians who would work on this equipment should be trained in the MMA for three to four months. Hoving stated: “this will not be difficult since I am convinced that a cadre of technicians from Egypt will out-perform any other in the rest of the world if motivated and trained.” He recommended that all the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system equipment must be made in the USA. He also suggested an office, workroom, and lockers for two engineers and three technicians, an area for maintainers, and storage for the cleaning equipment.<sup>6</sup>

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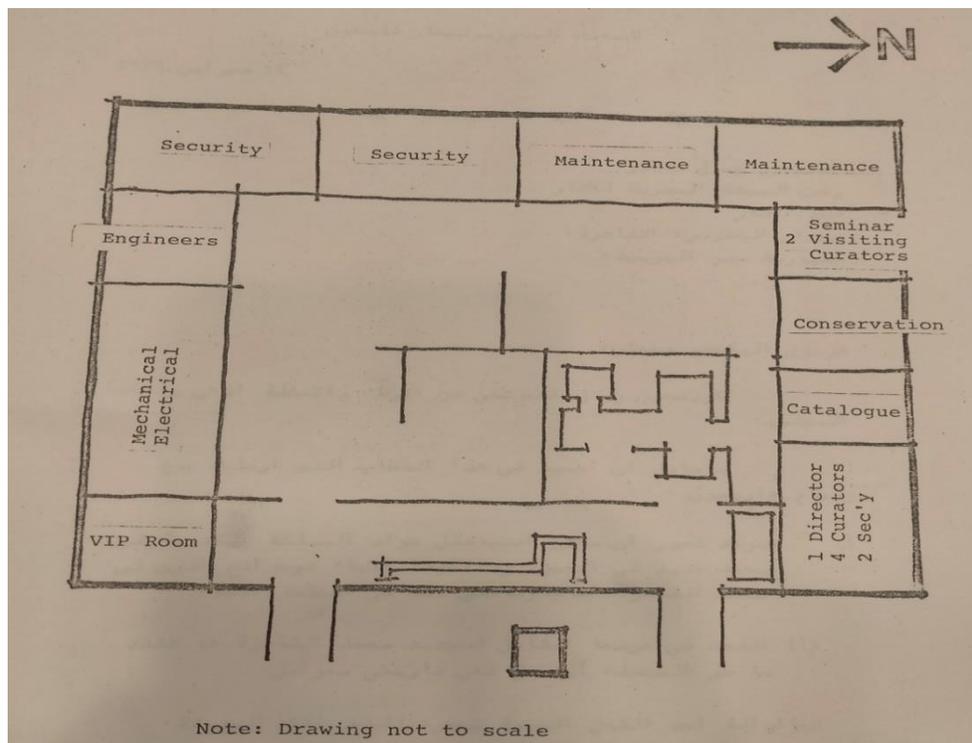


Fig. 5: The peripheral elements of the proposed museum.<sup>6</sup>

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The curatorial needs included offices and toilet facilities for the director and six staff including two secretaries, desk spaces for two visiting scholars, a conference room, a photo studio, and a space for the library. The museum buildings should include a security office with a changing room for the officers. This office should be equipped with a safe, closed-circuit TV, digital security system, and central

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>3</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (19) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>3</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (24) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to " the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

alarm system. A two-way communication between the galleries and the security office should be provided.<sup>6</sup>

It was also recommended to establish a reception room for VIPs which should be equipped with its own toilet facilities, bar facilities, and kitchen for receptions, and to think about a garden for the VIPs and a garden for the public as well.<sup>6</sup>

The proposed museum was also in need of an adequate space for two conservators for the ongoing conservation which was one of the priorities. The public needs included toilets. Hoving gave some recommendations as follows: a stone fence should be constructed around the building for the night use of guardian dogs; the museum officials should be able to close the galleries when other parts of the building were being used; the showcases should be of glass, not plexiglass; the exterior finish might be of sandstone; the building should be low and discrete to not impinge upon the general site of Giza; the interior floor finish might be made of Aswan granite, the interior wall and ceiling should be slightly curved and made from a creamy white gesso substance of the interior of a mastaba; large objects such as chariots, beds, and shrines would not need to be installed in glass showcases but would need to be protected from the public.<sup>6</sup>

The proposal for the construction of a new museum was intended for displaying only the Tutankhamun material. The Egyptian Ambassador to the USA, Mohamed Ashraf Ghorbal, and the Minister of Housing and Reconstruction, Osman Ahmed Osman, suggested an expanded theme for the new proposed museum to host not only Tutankhamun's objects, but also others from different dynasties of ancient Egypt which would make the new museum even more attractive. After discussions with Hoving, Kevin Roche, and John Dinkeloo, they were convinced with the idea of constructing a new museum for the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh as a historic and generic phenomenon. Hoving declared: "this general and fundamentally intriguing theme would fit into the area of the Great Pyramid even better than Tutankhamun alone would, since that remarkable edifice is the summation of the Pharaonic power and spirit."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>4</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (20) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>5</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (20) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>6</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>6</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (21-22) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>6</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 37, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

In line with this new proposition, Hoving suggested the refinement of the basic proposal. He developed a concept including a series of galleries illustrating the pyramids through models, prints, legends, photography, and x-ray projects. There were no such galleries in the area, and they would be appropriate within this proposed museum rather than close to the pyramids themselves. The MMA report stressed that all presentations in the proposed Giza museum should be of the highest quality. Hoving reported: “this is to be the pride of the world.”<sup>6</sup>

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The more general theme museum should present the progress of archaeology at the major sites in Egypt, such as Saqqara. This would be represented in model and photographic form which would contribute to the educational purpose of the museum and would be beneficial for tourism as well. Hoving proposed that a certain section in the new museum should be assigned for the pyramids chain stretching from north of the Great Pyramid down to the Fayum. He also suggested the transfer of some artifacts from the Egyptian Museum to the new museum which would solve the problem of overcrowding. He stated: “there is more than enough for both locations.” However, the nucleus of the new proposed museum would be Tutankhamun’s treasures.<sup>6</sup>

The proposed added material was planned to be placed to the right of Tutankhamun’s galleries in the proposed previous plan underneath the sitting area for Sound and Light. The land underneath the sitting area was government-owned and archaeologically cleared.<sup>7</sup>

According to the new perception of the new proposed museum, the itinerary for a tour in this museum should start at a ticket booth, then entering a garden to a vestibule equipped with an air-curtain to protect the interior from dust. The visitor would proceed to an area where he could purchase the museum catalogue and would then proceed through the replica of Tutankhamun’s tomb to the galleries. These galleries would include those of the pyramids, pharaohs, and the galleries of Tutankhamun’s treasures laid out in the same order as they were discovered. It should be noted that there was a plan for a special VIP entrance.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 38, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>6</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 39, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 40, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> White Paper: Proposed Renovation of the Cairo Museum and Creation of a New Museum at Giza devoted to the History of the Pyramids, the Glory of the Pharaoh and Tutankhamun, in June 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 45, Box 1, Folder 13: Cairo Museum. White paper on proposed

### The Construction Costs and Anticipated Revenues of the Proposed Museum

In December 1975, Hoving estimated that the construction costs for one square foot of a modern building type during that time ranged from \$20-25 to tops \$ 28,<sup>7</sup> but he modified this anticipation in March 1976 to be fifty dollars per square foot.<sup>7</sup> The Egyptian officials declared that Egypt would cover the basic construction costs, while the MMA would pay for the equipment such as mechanicals, cases, lighting, etc., with funds coming partly from the profits of Tutankhamun's Exhibition and partly from funds pledged by a private donor.<sup>7</sup>

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The proposed plans for the new museum were delivered to Mokhtar and Osman on June 29, 1976.<sup>7</sup> The MMA suggested three schemes for the museum space and thus the costs as follows:<sup>7</sup>

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<b>Scheme A</b>	<b>2044 square meters</b>	
	Construction	\$1,600,000
	Contingencies, management, fees	\$400,000
	Total construction	\$2,000,000
	Installation	\$1,000,000
	Total project	\$3,000,000
<b>Scheme B</b>	<b>3997 square meters</b>	
	Construction	\$3,250,000
	Contingencies, management, fees	\$750,000
	Total construction	\$4,000,000
	Installation	\$2,000,000
	Total project	\$6,000,000
<b>Scheme C</b>	<b>8486 square meters</b>	
	Construction	\$6,750,000

renovation. June 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>2</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (22) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> Telex from Thomas Hoving<sup>3</sup> to William Harrison on March 9, 1976, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum from Thomas<sup>4</sup>Hoving to Kevin Roche (22) on December 22, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> Telex from William Harrison<sup>5</sup> to Richard Morsches on July 7, 1976, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>7</sup> Report on Proposed Tutankhamun Museum at Giza, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

	Contingencies, management, fees	\$1,500,000
	Total construction	\$8,250,000
	Installation	\$4,000,000
	Total project	\$12,250,000

The MMA employees had an optimistic view regarding the operation of the proposed museum and its economic feasibility. They conducted a study on the most important products that could be sold and invested in after the museum's operation. They suggested a merchandise line for the proposed museum including approximately 100 jewelry items made of gold, gold on sterling silver, sterling silver, gold on bronze, and semi-precious stones with enamels. These items would be sold for \$10-\$1000. They also suggested that the jewelry objects to be made should include Tutankhamun's Falcon Pectoral,<sup>7</sup> Tutankhamun's Wedjet Eye Pectoral,<sup>7</sup> Amenhotep III's Pendant,<sup>7</sup> five golden rings with the King's name, and the three Golden Flies Necklace of Queen Ahhotep,<sup>8</sup> mother of Ahmose I.<sup>8</sup> <sup>0</sup>

The suggested merchandise line should also include sculpture and three-dimensional reproductions, approximately 25 objects made of gold, gold on sterling silver, sterling silver, gold on bronze, and gold on wood. These items would be sold for \$25-\$1500. They could include the figure of Goddess Selket,<sup>8</sup> the Gold Mask of Tutankhamun,<sup>8</sup> gold and silver standing figure of Tutankhamun, series of gold panels from the Naos, golden panels from the King's fan. It was also suggested that the sales area should provide posters, postcards, books about the daily life of the ancient Egyptians and excavations in Egypt, needlework kit, porcelain plate, crystal vase with lotus flower design, alabaster glass cachepot, and

<sup>7</sup> Cairo JE 61893; Carter No. 267m (1); Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen: Discovered by the Late Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter*, Vol. II (London: Cassell, 1927), 126, pl. LXXXIV (B); Alix Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptian Jewellery* (London: Methuen, 1971), 139, pl. LVI (A); Cyril Aldred, *Jewels of the Pharaohs: Egyptian Jewellery of the Dynastic Period* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 222, pl. 104; Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 138-39 (Cat. no. 27), pl. 16; idem, *Tutankhamun, His Tomb*, 170; Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun*, 151.

<sup>7</sup> Cairo JE 61901; Carter No. 256VVV; Carter, *Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen II*, 126, pl. LXXXIV (B).

<sup>7</sup> Cairo JE 60702; Carter No. 320c. This pendant of solid gold representing a squatting king was found wrapped in a piece of linen within a gilded miniature coffin in Tutankhamun's tomb. The king was firstly identified as Amenhotep III. However, it has been suggested that the squatting figure may represent Tutankhamun himself. Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen: Discovered by the Late Earl of Carnarvon and Howard Carter*, Vol. III (London: Cassell, 1933), 86-87, pl. XXV (C); Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 152 (Cat. no. 41), pl. 16.

<sup>8</sup> The treasure of Queen Ahhotep including this necklace was discovered in 1859 at Dra Abu el-Naga in Western Thebes, Gaston Maspero, *History of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Babylonia, and Assyria*, Vol. IV, Part A (London: Grolier Society, 1903), 137, 139; H. E. Winlock, "The Tombs of the Kings of the Seventeenth Dynasty at Thebes," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 10, no. 3/4 (1924): 252.

<sup>8</sup> Merchandise Line for Tutankhamun Museum (1) Box 1, Folder 12: Cairo Museum. Sales materials and amounts. [1976], Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>8</sup> Carter, *Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen III*, 46-47, pl. VIII; Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 1 (Cat. no. 43), pls. 24-25.

<sup>8</sup> Cairo JE 60672; Carter No. 256A; Edwards, *Treasures of Tutankhamun*, 134-35 (Cat. no. 25), pl. 12.

tote bag imprinted with hieroglyphs.<sup>8</sup> Hoving offered that the materials which were developed by the MMA to be sold in the USA Tutankhamun Exhibition, about 400 sales items, could be sold in the sales area of the proposed museum and might bring as much as \$200,000 per year.<sup>8</sup> 5

### The Final Decision Regarding the Proposed Museum

As the key to the renovation of the Egyptian Museum was the removal of a whole collection to obtain a space for displaying the other objects properly, it was suggested to take Tutankhamun's collection from that Museum to the proposed new museum at Giza. The Egyptian Museum Council expressed in 2/3 of its membership approval for the scheme. Mokhtar stated that he was supportive of this idea, but he had distinct problems from the 1/3 opposition, as well as the UNESCO exploratory team who seemed to like the scheme but wanted to work on it only in the Egyptian Museum.<sup>8</sup> 6

Hoving tried to get the support of C. Robert Devine,<sup>8</sup> Vice-President and Director of Public Affairs in Reader's Digest Association which was a multi-brand and multi-platform media and direct marketing company, regarding his recommendation of building a new museum for Tutankhamun at Giza. He asked Devine to persuade influential individuals in Egypt to be convinced with his proposal, because he thought that it would be more practical.<sup>8</sup> 8

During his discussion with the Egyptian President Sadat concerning the building of a new museum at Giza near the pyramids in July 1976, Devine informed the President that Lila Acheson Wallace, Owner of Reader's Digest, offered a gift to establish a new museum. However, President Sadat refused the idea of a Giza museum for Tutankhamun. He expressed his desire to build a new museum overlooking the Nile on the site of the former Turah Prison which he demolished in 1975. His vision was that the museum should include several exhibits detailing Egypt's history, both past and present, as well as its future plans.<sup>8</sup> However, there were rumors that the First Lady, Jihan Sadat, did not agree with the idea of 9

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<sup>8</sup> Merchandise Line for Tutankhamun Museum (3) Box 1, Folder 12: Cairo Museum. Sales materials and amounts. [1976], Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>8</sup> Renovation of the Cairo Museum— July 11, 1976— Stage one, 3, on July 11, 1976, Box 43, Folder 2: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. Cairo briefing paper (1976). 1976-1977, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>8</sup> Briefing Paper: Thomas Hoving trip July 12–July 27, 1976, Cairo, Moscow, Leningrad, Paris (4) Box 1, Folder 18: General. Briefing paper Hoving trip to Cairo, Moscow, Leningrad, Paris. July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>8</sup> For Robert Devine, see "C. Robert Devine, 72, Ex-Magazine Official," *The New York Times*, January 9, 1990, 23.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Thomas Hoving to C. Robert Devine, Vice-President and Director of Public Affairs – Reader's Digest, on December 23, 1975, Box 1, Folder 11: Cairo Museum. Reports and Correspondence. December 1975-July 1976, Irvine MacManus records related to the *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition, 1975-1979, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

<sup>8</sup> Interview conducted by Charles Devine, Reader's Digest, with President Sadat, in July 1976, Box 44, Folder 8: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (2 of 2). 1976-1977, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

establishing a museum at Turah as she did not think it was a good place for a museum center.<sup>9</sup>

Sadat's refusal of the idea of building a new museum for Tutankhamun at Giza seemed to be the end of that promised project, and pushed Mokhtar to give up the idea of transferring Tutankhamun's collection from the Egyptian Museum lest he might be blamed for the dismemberment of a historic and iconic museum.

### Conclusions

The most important problem which confronted the competent Egyptian authorities who desired to renovate the Egyptian Museum in Cairo was the large number of artifacts preserved compared to the available space, to the extent that the Museum had been described by some as a mere repository for antiquities rather than a museum for displaying them. The collection of Tutankhamun, which was the largest one in the Egyptian Museum and occupied a large space, had been chosen to leave the Museum to be displayed independently and attractively in its own museum. This was the most appropriate solution from the point of view of the MMA officials to clear a space in the Museum to exhibit its other collections in a modern and appropriate manner.

The responsible officials of the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo along with the MMA administrators agreed to establish a new museum for Tutankhamun's collection at Giza, to the immediate southwest of the so-called Khufu Pavilion, for many reasons: its reputation as one of the world's most popular tourist destinations; the convenient location of the site, about 20 minutes by driving from Cairo; the clearance of the entire proposed site; the good publicity of the location due to the presence of the popular Sound and Light shows; the land being owned by the Egyptian Government; and the availability of necessary infrastructure.

The MMA officials presented a proposal with schematic to the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities illustrating that the proposed museum would include three main parts: The Entrance Gallery; a replica of Tutankhamun's tomb, or a room showing the tomb by Harry Burton's photographs; and a series of large galleries. The suggested perception of the museum also included a number of peripheral elements. To encourage the Egyptian authorities to proceed with this project, they also presented a study on the expected costs of construction, as well as a promising study on the anticipated revenues after operating the project.

Despite the efforts made by the MMA experts in preparing studies and drawings for the new proposed museum, as well as the several discussions between the MMA and the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities, the desire of President Sadat was not consistent with the establishment of a museum for Tutankhamun's collection at Giza, but rather the construction of a cultural center in Turah. Consequently, the process of transferring the treasures of Tutankhamun from the Egyptian Museum to another place was postponed until recent years, when the

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<sup>9</sup> Memorandum from Georgia<sup>0</sup>El Monasterly, Special Assistant to William Harrison, on July 20, 1976, Box 44, Folder 8: *Treasures of Tutankhamun*. General (2 of 2). 1976-1977, Thomas Hoving records, 1935-1977, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives, New York.

Grand Egyptian Museum was built to be the new display place of Tutankhamun's objects.

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متحف توت عنخ آمون: مقترح نقل كنوز توت عنخ آمون إلى الجيزة في عامي ١٩٧٥ -

١٩٧٦

#### الملخص العربي

تركز هذه الورقة البحثية على مقترح نقل مجموعة توت عنخ آمون من المتحف المصري بالقاهرة إلى مكان جديد لعرضها في عامي ١٩٧٥-١٩٧٦ كمحاولة لحل مشكلة تكديس المتحف المصري بالقطع الأثرية ولتوفير مساحة عرض للمجموعات الأخرى بطريقة حديثة. وقد تم اقتراح منطقة الجيزة لتكون الموقع الجديد لعرض قطع توت عنخ آمون الأثرية لعدة أسباب تم مناقشتها في هذا البحث. يناقش البحث مقترح متحف المتروبوليتان للفنون للمتحف الجديد متضمناً الموقع المقترح والتصميم وسيناريو العرض المتحفي ومسار الجولة السياحية داخل المتحف وتكاليف البناء وكذلك الإيرادات المتوقعة للمتحف بعد تشغيله. اصطدم هذا المشروع بتطلعات الرئيس السادات لبناء مركز ثقافي جديد يتضمن متحفاً في موقع سجن طرة الذي قام بهدمه سنة ١٩٧٥، وبالتالي تم تأجيل نقل كنوز توت عنخ آمون من المتحف المصري حتى تم تشييد المتحف المصري الكبير مؤخراً. تعتمد هذه الورقة البحثية بشكل أساسي على المصادر التي تتمثل في الوثائق المختلفة ذات الصلة بموضوع البحث والمحفوظة في أرشيف متحف المتروبوليتان في نيويورك.

**الكلمات الدالة:** مشروع متحف توت عنخ آمون؛ نقل كنوز توت عنخ آمون؛ المتحف المصري بالقاهرة؛

مجموعة توت عنخ آمون