

The Project for the Conservation Center in the Grand Egyptian Museum

Footsteps of the GEM-CC project

Looking Back with Pictures Chronologically

2008~2016



Construction of the Grand Egyptian Museum (hereinafter referred to as “GEM”) was launched as a national project in Egypt, starting from the summit meeting between the then President Mubarak and the then Prime Minister Koizumi in 2003.

The GEM will be constructed as one of the largest museums in the world, which is proud of a scale of 81,000m² total floor space, in northwest of three great pyramids of Giza in the suburbs of Cairo, and it will be planned to collect and exhibit 100,000 Egyptian artifacts. It is expected to be not only a main attraction of the Egyptian tourism, but also a global center of Egyptology, as well as one of practical organizations for conservation and study of artifacts.

“The Project for the Conservation Center in the Grand Egyptian Museum (hereinafter referred to as “GEM-CC”)” has been acting for eight years with the first phase (from June, 2008 to June, 2011) and the second phase (from July, 2011 to March, 2016) in total, for the purpose of capacity development of the GEM-CC staff preparing for the opening of the GEM.

Specialists who have plenty of knowledge and techniques were gathered all over Japan, and they have handed techniques from Japan to Egypt through trainings to develop the capacity of the staff members who are in charge of conservation of precious artifacts.

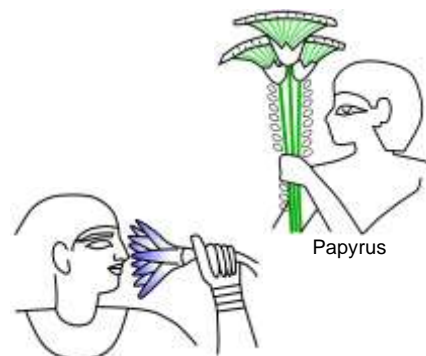
Various materials such as wood, stone, metal, etc. were used for Pharaohs’ artifacts and they have been damaged and deteriorated due to various causes during thousands of years. Therefore, not only conservation techniques but also a wide range of technical knowledge about analysis and diagnostics of raw materials and pigments, and pest management, packing and transportation were transferred. The Japanese experts who instructed training courses reached over 180, and the number of training courses conducted over 100. At the beginning, due to cultural difference between Japan and Egypt, and difference in the way of thinking about conservation, there was miscommunication between the Egyptian and Japanese side at the beginning; however, Egyptian Side became more approachable and started to trust the Japanese experts and techniques. After eight years have passed, now they conserve many artifacts by themselves, and even they present their achievements at international symposia.

However, the project hasn’t always been progressing smoothly. Not only the intensified demand for democratization, what is so called the Arab Spring, and also the declines of the public security which was caused by a political change thirty months later forced the experts to take refuge outside Egypt. Besides, due to the current financial distribution of Egypt, management of the GEM-CC has become very challenging, the securement of the staff and the budget has become a challenge. Egypt and Japan cooperated to face and overcome such challenges and difficulties in this project. It can be said that the biggest achievement is building cooperation and trust relationships beyond the personal level.

We would like to look back the progress of this project with pictures chronologically.



Trust in God, But Tie Your Camel (the teachings of Islam)



Lotus (national flower of Egypt)

In ancient Egypt, lotus was the symbol of Upper Egypt, and papyrus was that of Lower Egypt

【Conservation Capacity Development Program】

We set over twenty programs (training courses, symposia, etc.) so that the GEM-CC can conserve Egyptian artifacts consisting of various materials such as stone, wood, textile and leather, metal, glass, etc., in environment appropriately.

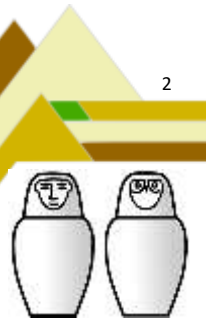
We planned to conduct training courses of conservation techniques by each material as well as to set in Materials in Conservation and Diagnostic and Analytical Techniques which are related to conservation techniques in common. Furthermore, programs of preventive conservation which maintains the safe environment for artifacts conservation such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) and Collection Management were also set in. Technique of packing and transportation is indispensable because artifacts are collected all over Egypt. The GEM-CC is a huge organization hence Occupational Health and Safety of the staff and ability of development of organizational management are very important themes as well. We also supported actively Study Visit Program in Foreign Countries and participation in international conferences of the GEM-CC staff.

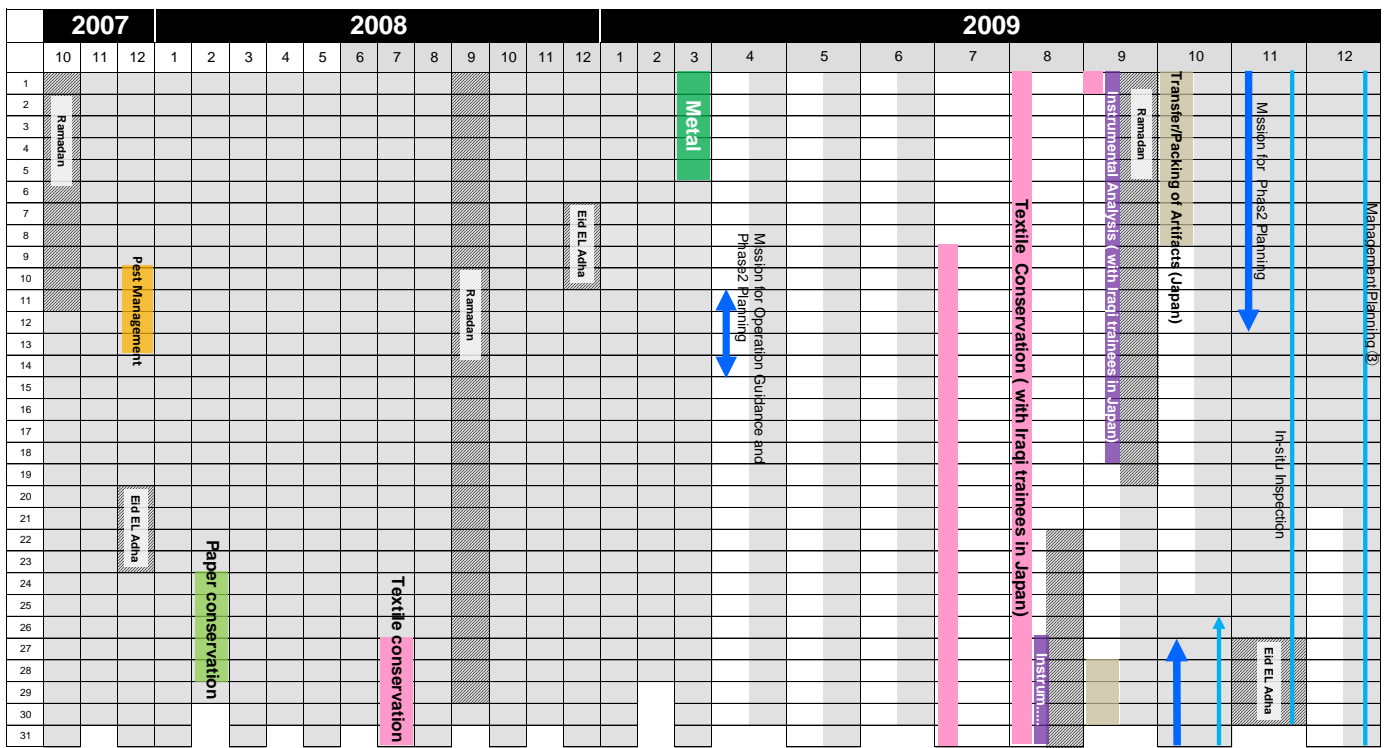
Field	Program	
Preventive Conservation	Occupational Health and Safety	
	Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	
	Insecticidal Treatment in Museum	
	Microorganism Management	
	Preventive Conservation for Mummies and Related Artifacts	
	Storage Management	
	Packing and Transportation in GEM-CC	
Conservation	Condition Reports, Treatment Reports and Academic Papers	
	Painted Objects	
	Textile (Organic Materials)	
	Papyrus	
	Wood	
	Stone	
	Japanese Paper for conservation treatment	
	Inorganic Objects (metal)	
Inorganic Objects (non-metal)		
Conservation Science	Conservation Science	
	Materials in Conservation	
	Environmental Science for Museums	
	Diagnostic and Analytical Techniques for Conservation	
Others	Study Visit Program in Egypt	
	Study Visit Program in Foreign Countries	
	Academic Degree Program	
	Annual Academic Symposium	

Each training course was conducted from twice to nine times with deepening and diversifying gradually. The total number of trainees who participated in the programs reached approximately 2,250.



Grand Egyptian Museum Conservation Center (GEM-CC)





★ Commencement of Phase I (6/22)

● Arrival of Mr. Nakamura, project's chief adviser

★ Registration of artifacts for the database starts

- □ : Programs held in Japan
- □ : Programs held mainly in Egypt
- ● : Personal titles are of those days



Registration of archaeological artifacts



Training Course on Metallic Objects



Training Course on Transfer/Packing of Artifacts



Training Course on Instrumental Analysis (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara)



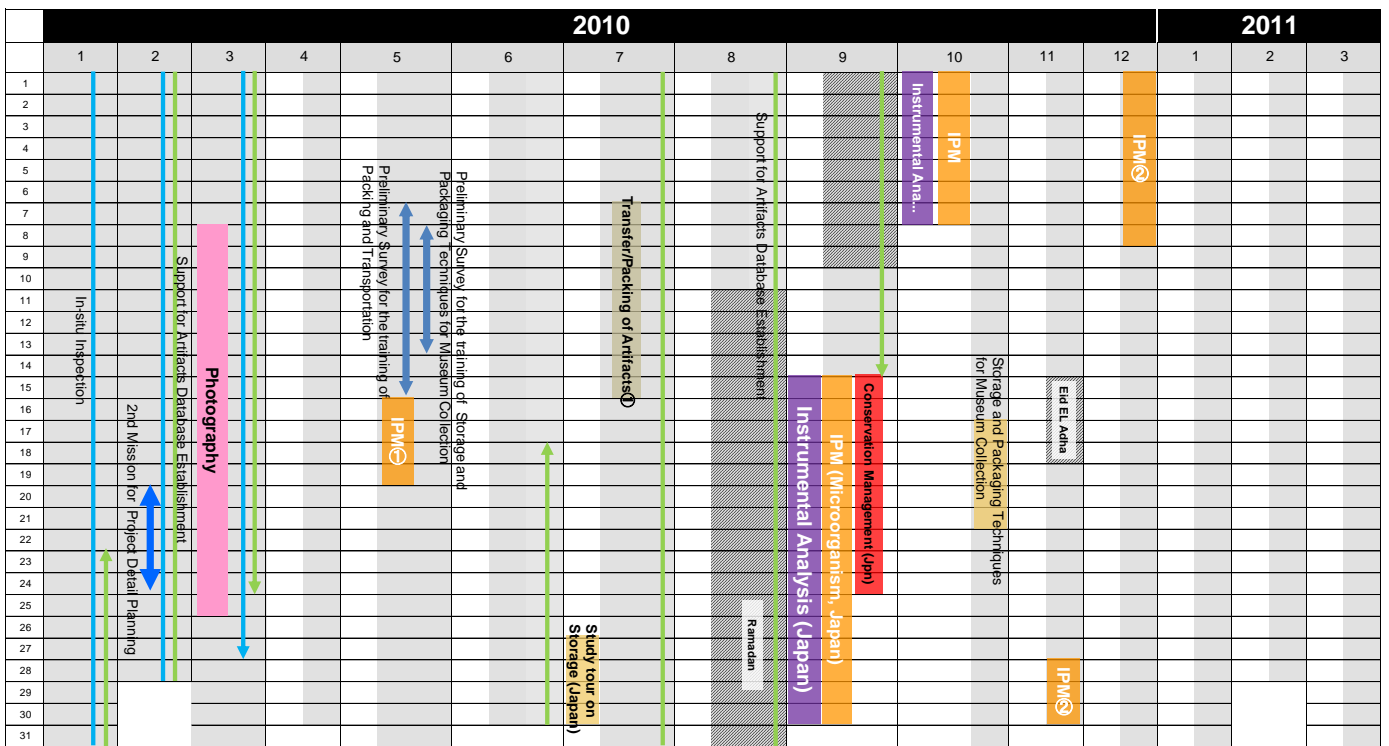
Training Course on Textile Conservation: Practice of dyeing



Japanese mission members for project planning and Egyptian representatives



Project Implementing Agency: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
 Counterpart Organization: Ministry of Antiquities, Arab Republic of Egypt
 Supporting Organization in Japan: National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo (NRICPT)



- ★ Inauguration of GEM-CC (6/14)
- ★ Ms. Ogata, President of JICA, visits the Project
- ★ Demonstration of "Arab Spring" ★
- ★ Evacuation of project's experts ★
- ★ Resignation of President Mubarak ◆
- ◆ Establishment of the Ministry of Antiquities. Dr. Zahi Hawass takes up the Minister's post ◆



Training Course on Photography



Training Course on IPM (Integrated Pest Management)



Training Course on IPM (Integrated Pest Management)



Mission for making detailed plan of the phase 2



Training Course on Packing and Transportation



Inspection in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina



Measurement of the Golden Mask of Tutankhamun



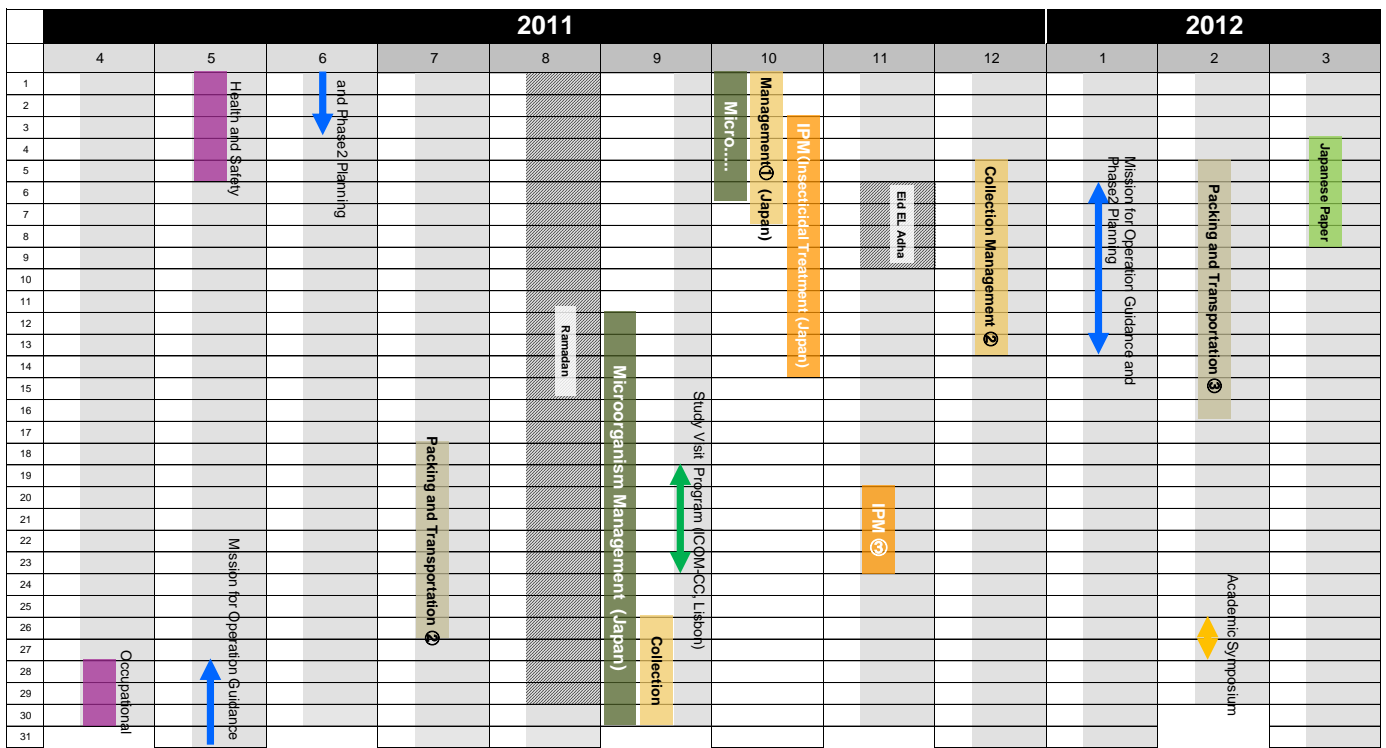
Ms. Ogata, President of JICA and H.E. Ambassador Ishikawa visit GEM-CC



Training Course on Storage and Packaging Techniques for Museum Collection

Inspection in the Egyptian Museum





◆ Mr. Ibrahim becomes the Minister of antiquities ★ Commencement of phase II (7/1)
 ● Arrival of Mr. Suzuki, project's chief adviser ● Mr. Bassir becomes the General Director of GEM, replacing Mr. Goneim
 Ms. Ogata, President of JCA, visits the Project ★
 Construction work of GEM begins ★



Training Course on Occupational Health and Safety



Training Course on IPM(Integrated Pest Management): Sampling of microorganism



Training Course on Packing and Transportation in GEM-CC: Lifting objects by a ceiling crane



Training Course on Japanese Paper for Conservation Treatment



Training Course on Microorganism Management (Center for Fungal Consultation, Japan)



Training Course on Microorganism Management (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo)



Training Course on Collection Management: Numbering of storage cabinets



Groundbreaking Ceremony of GEM, attended by the Minister of Antiquities Mohamed Ibrahim, H.E. Ambassador Okuda and etc.



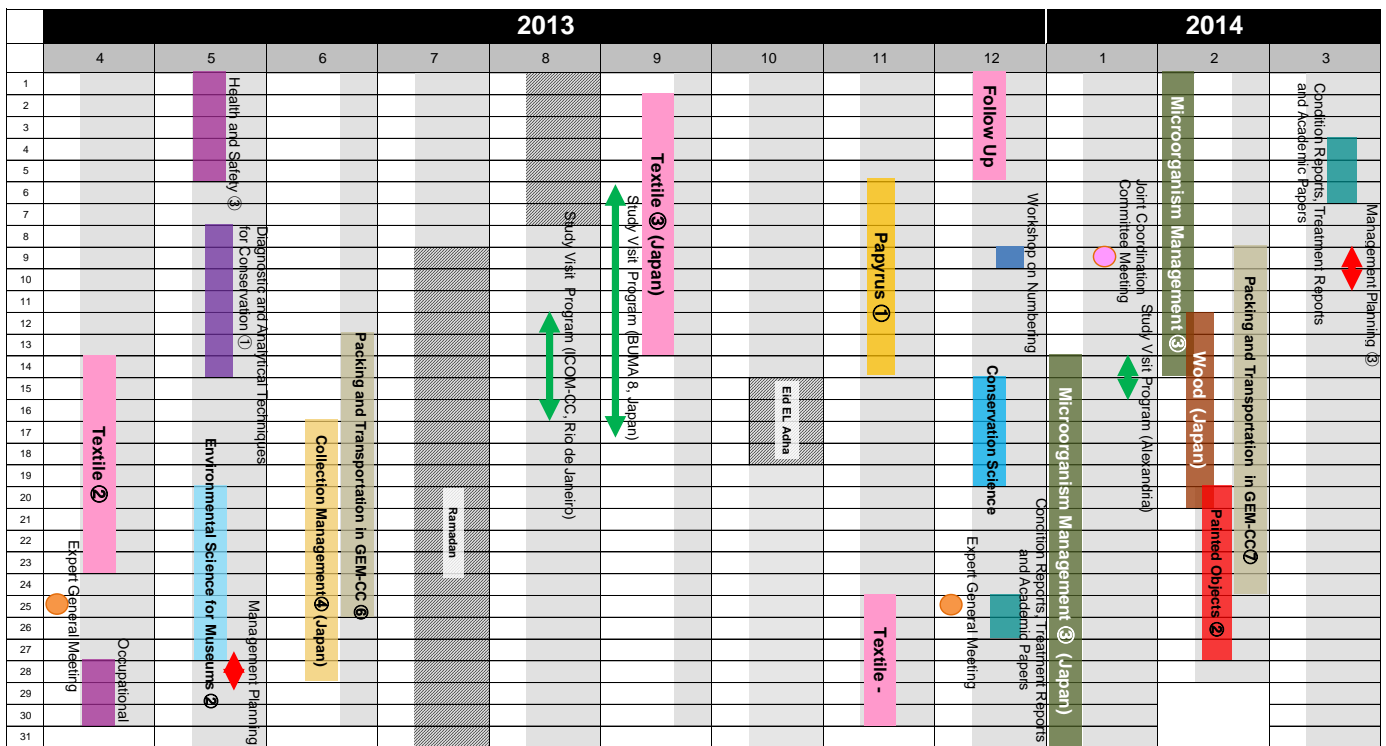
Training Course on Collection Management: Practice on condition check of museum collections



Training Course on IPM (Integrated Pest Management)



Academic Symposium: Keynote Speech of Dr. Kawanobe, Director of Japan Center for International Cooperation in Conservation, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo



- ◆ Mr. Eisa becomes the Minister of antiquities
- ★ Military coup
- ◆ Mr. Ibrahim becomes the Minister of antiquities
- Arrival of Mr. Okamoto, project's chief adviser
- Mr. Mustafa becomes the General Director of GEM



Training Course on Diagnostic and Analytical Techniques for Conservation



Training Course on Papyrus: Practice of making Papyrus



2nd Joint Coordination Committee Meeting



Training Course on Painted Objects: Practice of color analysis



Training Course on Textile: Storage methods of textiles



Mr. Moamen, the head of organic lab and the supporting staff in NRICPT



Training Course on Wood (Institute for Conservation of Cultural property, Tohoku University of Art and Design, Yamagata)



It is snowing in Akita



Training Course on Packing and Transportation in GEM-CC: Practice of packing artifacts and lifting heavy objects by a gantry crane



Study Visit Program (BUMA-8, Japan): Welcoming three participants from Inorganic Lab of GEM-CC



Training Course on Microorganism Management: Practice of handling damaged objects at the Center for Fungal Consultation, Japan

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◆ Presidential inauguration of Mr. Sisi

◆ Mr. Damaty becomes the Minister of Antiquities

● Dr. Tarek becomes the General Director of GEM

● Arrival of Mr. Nagata, project's chief adviser

★ Japanese Prime Minister Abe visits GEM



Training Course on Materials in Conservation : Comparative study on conservation treatment



Training Course on Occupational Health and Safety : Evacuation drill



Training Course on Conservation Science: Lecture on photography of artifacts



Signing ceremony of project's interim evaluation



Training Course on Japanese Paper for Conservation Treatment: Practice of making paste in NRICPT



Training Course on Textile: Certificate presentation at closing ceremony



Training Course on Painted Objects: Practice of chemical cleaning



Training Course on Wood: Learning the structure of King Tutankhamun's bed



Study Visit Program: Six posters are presented in the ICOM-CC Melbourne



Statue of Ramses II and the construction site of GEM



---Acknowledgments---

We are grateful and wish to thank everyone involved in this project which ranged over eight years until a successful ending.

The GEM is aiming to reach a partial opening in 2018 and a grand opening in 2022. Great numbers of actions will be taken between Egypt and Japan as well as in the future based on a relationship of mutual trust that both countries cultivated so far, so that the GEM will be a proud museum in the world.

We cannot help praying for a small bud which this project left for Egypt growing greatly.



