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# Applying the Manchester Methodology to the study of animal mummies from ancient Egypt

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## Résumé

Research into mummification has been underway at the University of Manchester since the 1970s, leading to the development of an evolving best-practice methodology for the study of human and animal remains. A dedicated research project investigating animal mummies from ancient Egypt began in 2000 and was formally inaugurated in 2010 as the Ancient Egyptian Animal Bio Bank. The Bio Bank now contains records for 807 individual animal mummies held in 58 separate museum collections in the UK, Europe and North America. This project aims to collate the disjointed and disparate information relating to this understudied body of material whilst adding valuable scientific data obtained through a programme of rigorous analysis. The Manchester Methodology applies a series of techniques to the material in a logical fashion, from macroscopic analysis of the bundle exterior to microscopic investigation of small samples removed from damaged mummies. A large component of the research is the application of non-invasive imaging techniques – namely digital radiography and computed tomography – to assess the nature of the bundle contents and the mummification technique. Through collaboration with imaging partners, around 350 animal mummies have been studied using dual imaging modalities to enable a thorough investigation. Analysis of a cross-species and cross-collection dataset has led to the challenging of existing theories about many specimens.

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