

A Bridge of Curiosity and Conflict: How Egyptology Connected Europe and Egypt

Departmental Honors Paper

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Outsiders in Egypt

Egyptology has been a driving force of cultural clash and exchange in Egypt for a very long time. Even during the Pharaonic Period in Egypt itself, there were people who possessed a deep fascination for the nation's past. It is hardly a surprise, then, that this fascination continued through time and spread to other nations and peoples. Egypt and its people have borne the brunt of the effects of this foreign fascination with their nation. This is especially true during and following the periods of major European influence in Egypt. Egyptology, even before it was officially called such, was both a major reason for and a way in which Europeans interacted with Egypt and its people. Egyptology acted as a sort of connective tissue between Egypt and Europe. Changes, both cultural and political, in one country would send ripples through that connection, which would then have an effect on the other. That is not to say that the connection was entirely equal. Europe was very much a colonial power in this relationship, and exerted more influence on Egypt than Egypt was often capable of matching in return. Despite the imbalance, neither side was left unchanged by the connection forged through Egyptology.

In order to explore how Egyptology changed over time and affected Egypt and Europe, it is important to understand what exactly it is. To judge by the name alone, Egyptology would seem to be the study of every aspect of Egypt: its geology, culture, climate, languages, society, politics, and its entire history. This is, however, not what Egyptology truly is. In actuality, Egyptology is the study of ancient Egypt from the beginning of its recorded history to - and this part becomes rather confused - the Persian Conquest, or the Greco-Roman period, or occasionally the Late Antique Period.¹ To add to the confusion is that the discipline itself is not actually even a single discipline, but rather a loose formation of dozens of different disciplines,

¹ Thompson, Jason. *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology*. Vol. 1: From Antiquity to 1881. Cairo, NY: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015. 2.

often connected together by only their own connection to ancient Egypt. These disciplines range from history, to language, climate, and archaeology, to name a few. Then, of course, within each discipline, there are many areas of expertise; for example, one might specialize in Middle Kingdom history and would likely be out of one's depth in things related to the Greco-Roman Period. It is nearly impossible to be an Egyptologist who is well learned in all aspects of Egyptology.

That said, there are a surprising number of disciplines related to ancient Egypt that do not fall under the category of Egyptology. For example, those who study Egyptian prehistory are not generally considered to be Egyptologists. In general, the most commonly upheld distinction for an Egyptologist is training in the ancient Egyptian language.² Of course actual Egyptologists were not the only ones who did work related to ancient Egypt, but it would be foolish to attempt to ignore people like Howard Carter, who was not an Egyptologist but whose work had major effects on Egyptology, because they did not hold the correct titles. This means that there will be people and organizations discussed here that do not technically fall under the official category.

Interest in Egypt's ancient past started as early as Pharaonic Egypt itself. A man from the Nineteenth Dynasty called Khaemwaset is sometimes called "the first Egyptologist." He was the fourth son of Pharaoh Ramesses II and the High Priest of the god Ptah.³ Much of his career involved traveling through the lands of Egypt and restoring monuments of the past, mostly from the Old and Middle Kingdoms, which even at that point in time were considered a part of the ancient past. Even before the first individual "Egyptologist" the Cult of Osiris was taking part in something resembling archaeological excavations. In the Middle Kingdom, priests from the Cult of Osiris began excavating the tombs at Abydos in search of the burial place of Osiris. They

² Thompson, Vol. 1, 3.

³ Thompson, Vol. 1, 17-18.

eventually found the tomb of the First Dynasty king Djet and renovated it, believing it to be the tomb of Osiris.⁴

Outside nations also became fascinated by Egypt. Greece was one such, and many of their epic poems include references to Egypt. In the *Iliad* the character of Achilles has one such a line:

Nay, not for all the wealth
Of Thebes in Egypt, where in ev'ry hall
There lieth treasure vast; a hundred are
Her gates, and warriors by each issue forth
Two hundred, each of them with car and steeds.⁵

In the early stages of Greek civilization there was minimal interaction with Egypt in general, which was also discouraged by the Egyptians, who tended towards isolationism. Eventually the Greeks gained increased contact, mostly in the form of trade, which led to the belief, by the Greeks, that Egypt was the mysterious source of ancient wisdom. In fact the philosopher Plato wrote of the Egyptian god Thoth, “He it was who invented numbers and arithmetic and geometry and astronomy, also draught and dice and, most importantly of all, letters.”⁶ After traders were allowed, general travelers soon followed. In the fifth century BCE the historian Herodotus travelled through Egypt during the first period of Persian rule and wrote down his account of the country. Herodotus is notoriously unreliable, and in fact many of his stories of ancient Egypt are complete nonsense. For example, he relates a story of how the king Cheops was able to fund and build his pyramid by prostituting one of his daughters. During the Greco-Roman period in Egypt, more specifically about 280 BCE, a man by the name of Manetho wrote a history of Egypt in Greek. It is considered to be the most comprehensive history to come out of the Greco-Roman

⁴ Thompson, Vol. 1, 18.

⁵ Thompson, Vol. 1, 19.

⁶ Thompson, Vol. 1, 19.

period and is, in fact, where the modern organization of ancient Egyptian history into dynasties originates.⁷

Following quickly on Greece's heels with its fascination for Egypt Rome developed its own "Egyptomania." Egyptian artifacts were imported to Rome, including an obelisk from Heliopolis that was taken by Emperor Augustus (r. 30 BCE - 13 CE) and erected on the east end of the Circus Maximus in Rome (Figure 1).⁸ So fashionable was Egypt, that when Romans could not get the real thing they made their own "Egyptian artifacts" and Egyptian motifs were used in Roman art and interior design. The Mensa Isaac (Figure 2) is a bronze tablet created by Romans with images of Egyptian gods and a series of nonsense hieroglyphs inscribed on it.⁹ The Magistrate Caius Cestius built an Egyptian style pyramid to be his tomb.¹⁰ Egypt and its culture was more than something of artistic interest for many Romans. The Cult of Isis spread into Roman territories and eventually into the city of Rome itself. Many emperors tried to snuff it out, but the worship persisted and reached its height in the third century CE when even Roman emperors were members of the cult.¹¹ One of the most influential things to come out of the Roman period in Egypt is the Corpus Hermeticum, a series of treatises on philosophy, mysticism, magic, alchemy, and astrology written by anonymous Egyptian writers and attributed to a mythical ancient sage known as Hermes Trismegistus.¹² This was one of the most influential writings of its time and many ages after; in other words, "...they [the works] were considered by

⁷ Thompson, Vol. 1, 22-23.

⁸ Thompson, Vol. 1, 23-29.

⁹ Thompson, Vol. 1, 23-29.

¹⁰ Thompson, Vol. 1, 23-29.

¹¹ Thompson, Vol. 1, 23-29.

¹² Thompson, Vol. 1, 29-30.

many, both in antiquity and in later ages, as fundamental to true understanding, and they exerted an influence on Egyptians studies that still resonates.”¹³



Figure 1. *Rome, Lateran obelisk, near San Giovanni in Laterano.* Photo by Maus-Trauden September 6th, 2004. Taken from de.wiki.

¹³Thompson, Vol. 1, 29-30.

gives are entirely inaccurate.¹⁵ Sandys also includes illustrated examples of hieroglyphs, but most of them were nonsensical and fantastical. More reliable travel writing comes from John Greaves who went to Egypt with the purpose of searching for manuscripts, but stopped to study the pyramids while he was there. His work on the topic, *Pyramidographia* (Figure 3), is the first scientific survey of the pyramids with both accurate measurements and a good cross section.¹⁶ He was also able to correctly identify the king associated with each pyramid. Another, rather unfortunate, activity that came out of the new European travel was “mummy mining.” Mummy mining was the practice of digging up ancient mummies to be used in different medicines (Figure 4). The idea that mummy (this was the term used in medicinal contexts) had medical applications was not new to this period. During the medieval period the philosopher Ibn Sina (980-1037), wrote in one of his several medical treatises that mummy,

is subtle and resolute, useful in cases of abscesses and eruptions, fractures, concussions, paralysis, hemicrania, epilepsy, vertigo, spitting of the blood from the lungs, affections of the throat, coughs, palpitations of the heart, debility of the stomach, nausea, disorders of the liver and spleen, internal ulcers, also in cases of poison.¹⁷

It was during the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment that the amount of mummy being mined increased greatly. It became a common piece of merchandise for pharmaceutical companies to have in stock.

¹⁵ Thompson, Vol. 1, 70-72.

¹⁶ Thompson, Vol. 1, 70-72.

¹⁷ Thompson, Vol. 1, 63.

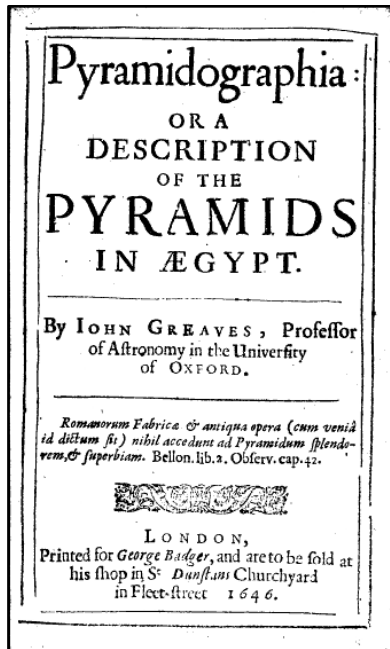


Figure 3. John Greaves: *Pyramidographia, or, A description of the pyramids in Ægypt*. George Badger, London 1646.



Figure 4. Apothecary vessel (albarello) with inscription (*MUMIA*) dating to 18th century at Deutsches Apothekenmuseum Heidelberg, Germany. Bullenwächter.

Coptic research also took a step forward during this period. Its study was done for two main reasons: to further biblical studies and as part of an attempt to decipher ancient Egyptian. Key to a number of the breakthroughs made was a Danish man named Georg Zoëga. He played a major part in the recognition and identification of the many different dialects of Coptic and of tracing their history. This work would lead him to study hieroglyphs, where he made halting attempts towards the idea that hieroglyphs were phonetic. Before this it was almost universally accepted that hieroglyphs were entirely symbolic in nature. Zoëga still held that they were primarily symbolic, but he did suggest that some of them could have a phonetic value as well and be combined to form words.¹⁸ This was an important early step in the right direction. Even still, he did not believe that true decipherment was possible and made no real moves in that direction.

One more important thing to come out of European fascination with Egypt during the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment was Freemasonry. In its early years the Masonic movement kept to biblical imagery, but later in the century many of their rites included Egyptian elements. The Masons sought mysterious elements to cloak themselves in, and ancient Egypt, so far in the distant past and obscured by an undeciphered language, fit this need perfectly. Moses, a biblical figure given prominence by the Freemasons, was also closely associated with Hermes Trismegistus.¹⁹ The height of Egyptianizing elements in Freemasonry came during the 1780s with Giuseppe Balsamo (also called “Count” Cagliostro), who claimed to have learned “in the subterranean vaults of the Egyptian pyramids, where, like Moses, he was instructed in all the lore of the Egyptians” and was “in communication with priests who still maintained ‘underground temples’ in Egypt.”²⁰ He was extremely influential until his death in 1795 after being imprisoned

¹⁸ Thompson, Vol. 1, 87-88.

¹⁹ Thompson, Vol. 1, 90.

²⁰ Thompson, Vol. 1, 90.

by the Inquisition for being a “restorationist and propagator of Egyptian Masonry.”²¹ His death came too late for the purposes of the Inquisition however, as Egyptian elements had already embedded themselves into the Masonic tradition. The proliferation of the Freemasons meant that many Egyptian motifs made their way into popular culture. Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* and the United States of America’s Great Seal both include Egyptian motifs.

In 1798 France was in the middle of a war with Britain. Having just come out of a revolutionary period of civil war, France was at a disadvantage because they could not strike directly at the island nation due to Britain’s naval superiority. Instead the French government decided to break Britain’s overland communication with its prized colony, India. To do this France marched on Egypt. An army of seventeen thousand men and 185 ships strong was the initial force sent on this mission. Napoleon Bonaparte, at this time a young general, was the commander.²² Jason Thompson provides a good summary of the French conquest:

The French landed near Alexandria on 1 July 1798 and quickly captured the town, but the Napoleonic conquest of Egypt was by no means a walkover. The invasion occurred in the month of July, when the heat was unbearable and the annual inundation was spreading across the land. There were some extremely difficult moments as the army marched south through the desert towards Cairo. No adequate provisions had been made for food, the soldiers were not even supplied with canteens, and their heavy uniforms were wrong for the climate. Meanwhile, the French flotilla sailing up the Nile became separated from the army and nearly suffered defeat. But once arrayed against the Mamluks in the decisive battle on 21 July, superior French tactics, equipment, and numbers prevailed.²³

Among the expedition sent for the conquest were 151 civilians who made up the Commission of Sciences and Arts. They were sent to make an inventory of the land, past and present. They made detailed surveys of any ancient sites they came across during their travel with the army, including Thebes and Asyut. After the success of the expedition and the conquest of Egypt

²¹ Thompson, Vol. 1, 90.

²² Thompson, Vol. 1, 97.

²³ Thompson, Vol. 1, 98.

Napoleon established the Institut d’Egypte and charged them with “(1) the progress and propagation of the sciences in Egypt; (2) research, study, and publication of natural, industrial, and historical data on Egypt; and (3) advising on various questions concerning which the government shall consult it.”²⁴

One of the most significant discoveries to come out of the new Napoleonic rule in Egypt was the Rosetta Stone (Figure 5). In 1799 a group of French soldiers were making fortifications near the town of Rosetta when they uncovered the stone. The stone itself is 112 centimeters high by 75 centimeters wide and 28 centimeters thick and is inscribed on one side with hieroglyphic, demotic, and Greek.²⁵ Each language says the same thing. The stela was one of several originally erected during the reign of Ptolemy V in commemoration of his benefactions to the priesthood. This stone would prove to be the key to deciphering hieroglyphs, thanks to its bilingual nature (hieroglyphics and demotic are just two different scripts of the same language).

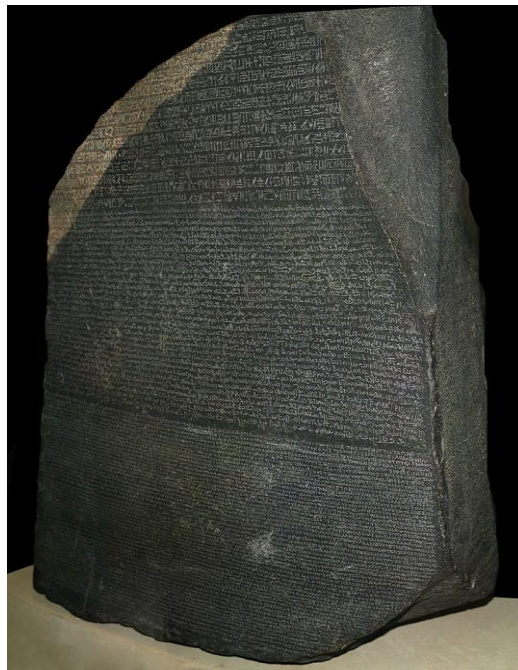


Figure 5. *Rosetta Stone*. Photo by Hans Hillewaert.

²⁴ Thompson, Vol. 1, 98-99.

²⁵ Thompson, Vol. 1, 103.

At the turn of the century Britain moved to take Egypt from France. Napoleon had already returned to France and begun the process of becoming emperor and so those who remained in Egypt were cut off from reinforcement and rescue. They surrendered on June 18th, 1801 in Cairo and on September 3rd in Alexandria. After the surrender the British took possession of all of the antiquities the French had collected, but, after an impassioned defense by Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, French scholars were allowed to keep their papers. This marked the beginning of British supremacy in Egypt, as they overtook both the natives and other European powers. Initially Britain had very little interest in Egypt outside of its strategic importance and saw ancient Egyptian objects as “curiosities, as things significant not in their own right but rather as crude forms of artistic expression.”²⁶

The objects taken from the French were given to the British Museum as a donation from the king at the time, George III. They had no choice but to accept, though “the new accessions from Egypt were appreciated more for their colossal size and as prizes of war than for their intrinsic merit.”²⁷ The British Museum was established in 1753 and is widely considered to be the “first national, secular, and public museum.”²⁸ This is the first large entrance of the British Museum into this narrative, though in truth it was involved to a marginal extent before this point. Its entrance here is notable because the museum would soon become the template after which Egypt designed some of its own institutions. The museum was also in the process of establishing what would become the largest collection of Egyptian antiquities outside of Egypt. It would become the foundation of British Egyptology, which went on to become one of the dominant forms of Egyptology in Egypt after the British conquest, thus influencing the way Egyptians developed their own form of Egyptology.

²⁶ Thompson, Vol. 1, 104.

²⁷ Thompson, Vol. 1, 105.

²⁸ Thompson, Vol. 1, 104.

France was not to be counted out just yet. They were able to retain all their papers from their time in Egypt and they were very productive with them. While in Egypt, Napoleon had been determined to have all the knowledge gathered brought together and published. And despite his return to France and subsequent loss of Egypt to the British that determination remained. In 1802 Napoleon ordered the publication of “all the results relative to science and art obtained during the course of the Expedition.”²⁹ Out of this decree came *Description de l’Egypte: ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Egypte pendant l’expédition de l’armée française, publié par les ordres de sa majesté l’empereur Napoléon le Grand* (Figure 6). Heading the project was the Ministry of the Interior and Edmé Jomard. He and a committee gathered and reviewed articles and prepared the image plates for the publication. The sheer size of the publication necessitated new inventions. Nicolas Conté created new techniques in engravings for generating sky, water, and architectural surfaces. It was initially intended by the committee that every part of *Description de l’Egypte* be published at the same time, but they were running sorely behind the 1809 deadline set by Napoleon. Instead only the first few finished volumes were published in 1810 (with 1809 printed on the front page to keep to the letter of the law).³⁰ It took until 1825 for the full set to be published and in total it was ten volumes of plates and nine of text. *Antiquités* took up five of the plate volumes and four of the text volumes, which is more than half of the nineteen total volumes. The *Description de l’Egypte* was meant to be a survey of the entirety of Egypt, its geography and modern culture and history and the like, but instead Egypt’s ancient past dominated over all the other topics. It serves as a very obvious example of where European focus was in the land of Egypt.

²⁹ Thompson, Vol. 1, 105.

³⁰ Thompson, Vol. 1, 106.

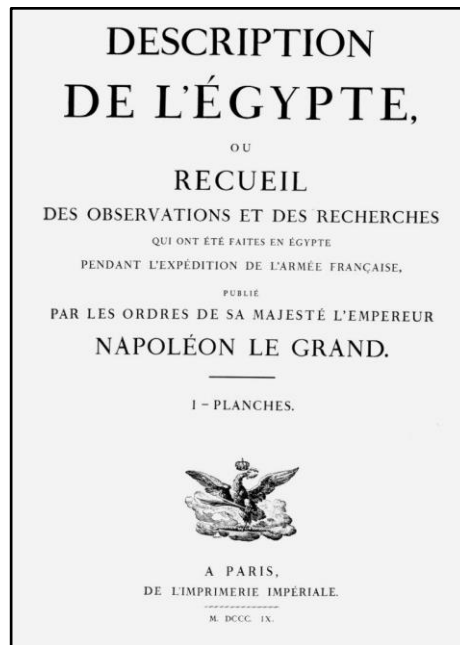


Figure 6. Scan from "*Description de l'Égypte*", Taschen GmbH, Köln 2007.

The other important piece of work done in France that came directly out of the Napoleonic conquest and expeditions was the decipherment of hieroglyphs. Credit for decipherment is given to Jean-François Champollion (Figure 7), though with some qualifications. He was not the first to believe that hieroglyphs were phonetic; the theory had been gaining momentum for several years. The foundation for much of Champollion's work came from Thomas Young and William John Bankes, who had identified the cartouches of Ptolemy and Cleopatra. Young had also identified the individual letters within each name. Champollion used these as his starting point and began the process of decipherment and creating an alphabet. By 1827 he had moved on from basic decipherment and had discovered determinative signs, which are signs on the end of words that are part of the meaning of the word, but have no phonetic value.³¹ In his mid-thirties Champollion was made a curator of the Egyptian collections at the Louvre. In this role, he taught only a few students before his death a few years later.

³¹Thompson, Vol. 1, 127.

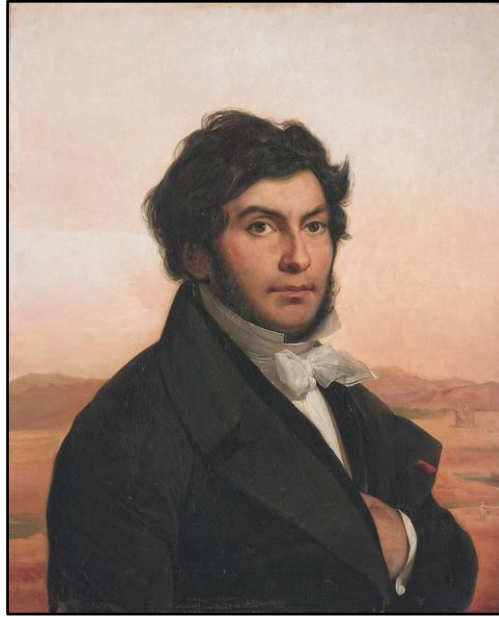


Figure 7. *Jean-François Champollion*. Painting by Léon Cogniet.

Meanwhile, back in Egypt a man named Muhammad Ali was making the most of the chaos left in the wake of the French retreat. He originally came to Egypt as a senior officer in a contingent sent by the Ottomans against the Napoleonic occupation. When the French left after the British invasion the political situation in Egypt was confused and unstable and Muhammad Ali took advantage of this. He was able to wring a governorship in 1805 from the Ottoman government, who gave it up only with great reluctance.³² From that point he began consolidating power and in 1811 he made sure his authority would remain unchallenged by massacring the Mamluks, a warrior class who carried a lot of power under the old regime. Despite technically remaining Ottoman governor, Ali had made himself the autonomous ruler of Egypt. He expanded Egyptian authority south into areas where historically travel had been difficult; this included Nubia and northern Sudan. Over all of the territory under his control Ali established an internal security that, in some European travelers' opinions, was better even than in Europe. A British traveler at the time said, "I do not know of any European country where one may travel

³²Thompson, Vol. 1, 132.

with greater safety than Egypt. Robberies, and murders for the sake of plunder, are almost unknown.”³³

Muhammed Ali’s new, stable government allowed for more regular and direct diplomatic representation by European powers in Egypt. Britain sent a man named Henry Salt (Figure 8) and France one called Bernardino Michele Maria Drovetti (Figure 9). Both men had ready access to Ali due to the leader’s eagerness to foster good relations with the two European powers. This access was used mainly for antiquities collecting, which was now being done on an industrial scale. The massive collections made by these two men went on to form the basis for the three biggest collections of Egyptian artifacts outside of Egypt: the British Museum, the Louvre, and Museum Island in Berlin. It is something of a wonder that this many objects made their way out of Egypt when one considers the fact that Salt and Drovetti spent quite a bit of their time attempting to sabotage and undermine one another. The two competing teams of excavators were sometimes referred to as the “armies” of Salt and Drovetti. In fact, so fierce was the competition between the two that it bordered on outright violence.³⁴ Artifacts were stolen and shipments sunk. Open conflict was avoided only by the creation of a line of demarcation that forced the two apart and set up Drovetti on the east side of the Nile and Salt on the west.

³³ Thompson, Vol. 1, 132.

³⁴ Thompson, Vol. 1, 134.

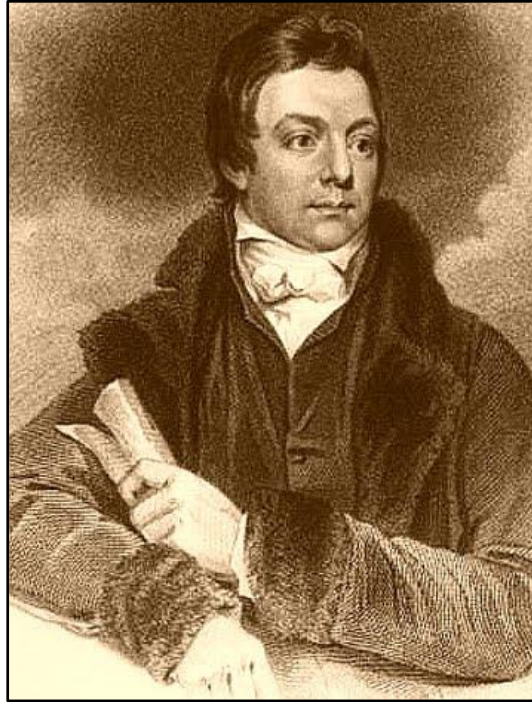


Figure 8. *Portrait of Henry Salt*. Painting by John James Halls (c. 1815)

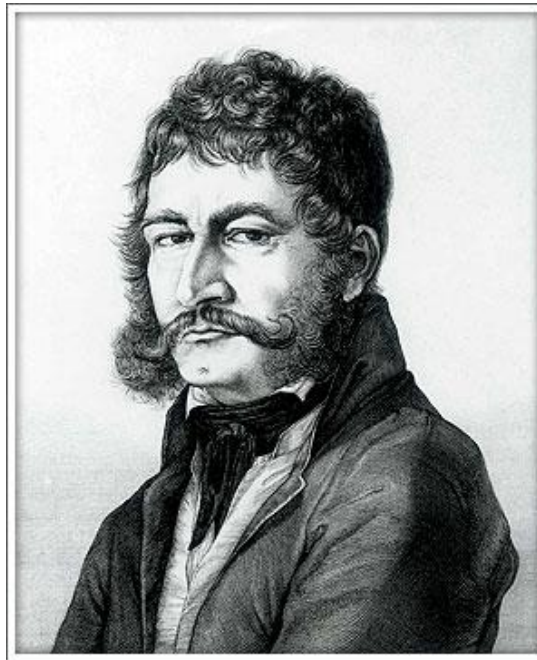


Figure 9. *Portrait of Bernardino Michele Maria Drovetti*. Painting by Apodemus.

While Salt and Drovetti were busy fighting amongst each other, other Europeans were taking advantage of increased security and travelling around Egypt. This led to the rediscovery of many ancient sites that had been lost and, due to previous conditions, had been difficult to

search for. On March 22nd, 1813 Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, a Swiss explorer, discovered the temple at Abu Simbel built by Ramses the Great in the Nineteenth Dynasty of the Egyptian New Kingdom period.³⁵ Giovanni Battista Belzoni was working in the Valley of the Kings in 1817, trying to avoid Drovetti's agents in the nearby Tombs of the Nobles. There he found three previously undiscovered royal tombs: the tombs of Ay, Ramses I, and Seti I. Just a year later, William Bankes found one of the biggest sources for ancient Egyptian chronology while copying names of kings and gods in Abydos. While in the Temple of Seti I Bankes came across the Abydos King List, which is a list of Egyptian monarchs starting in the First Dynasty and continuing to the Nineteenth Dynasty. Muhammed Ali's reign and the work between his administration and European officials and scholars was the closest Egypt would come to independence and equality with major outside powers for quite some time.

Muhammed Ali reigned until his death in 1849. Two of the rulers that followed, Abbas Pasha and Said Pasha, had none of Ali's ability and were unremarkable and lackluster, but it was the ruler after them, Khedive Ismail, who lost Egypt the power and independence gained by Ali. Ismail was a wasteful ruler and lost massive amounts of money on expensive schemes that rarely worked out. By 1875 Egypt was so deep into bankruptcy that they sold Suez Canal Company shares to Britain for a fraction of their worth for momentary financial relief.³⁶ Europe was quick to take advantage of Egypt's crippling debts owed to it and established Western-controlled institutions over Egypt's financial affairs and collected debts for European bankers. These European institutions only made matters worse for the Egyptian people. In 1879 Ismail made a belated attempt to fix Egypt's financial problems and lessen European involvement, but he was replaced by the Ottomans with his son Tewfik, who was more open to Western control. Tewfik's

³⁵ Thompson, Vol. 1, 137.

³⁶ Thompson, Jason. *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology*. Vol. 2: The Golden Age: 1881 - 1914. 2.

openness did not extend to the rest of Egypt and in 1881 a military faction headed by Colonel Ahmed Urabi led a coup and took control of the Egyptian government.³⁷

France and England would not stand for this new anti-European government and so they sent warships to Alexandria as a show of force intended to cow the residents into submission. This backfired, and instead anti-European sentiment rose, and the city exploded into riots on June 11th, 1882. Two thousand Egyptians and fifty Europeans were killed, and the Egyptian cabinet declared war on Britain. In the midst of the crisis there was a change of government back in Paris and the French fleet left, leaving the British alone. Britain had been reluctant from the start to take direct action and so they bombarded Alexandria in the hopes of shocking them into submission. This only served to strengthen Egyptian resistance, and so the British launched a full invasion. A decisive victory was won at Tell al-Kebir by the British on September 13th, 1882 and Urabi was exiled.³⁸ Tewfik was restored, but survived only by the auspices of the British, which made Britain the master of Egypt. They quickly moved the Antiquities Service from the khedival court and placed it under the power of the Ministry of Public Works, a British controlled organization. This began Egyptology's "Golden Age".

The term "Golden Age" comes very much from a European perspective, as this was one of the time periods when Egyptians had the least control over their country and the antiquities therein. Britain's new control allowed for the creation of The Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) whose object was

to raise a fund for the purpose of conducting excavations in the Delta, which up to this time has been very rarely visited by travelers, and where but one site (Zoan, Tanis) has been explored by archaeologists. Yet here must undoubtedly lie concealed the documents of a lost period of Biblical history- documents which we

³⁷ Thompson, Vol. 2, 2.

³⁸ Thompson, Vol. 2, 3.

may confidently hope will furnish the key to a whole series of perplexing problems.³⁹

Edouard Naville was chosen to be their lead excavator and worked a full season in 1883 at Tell al-Maskhuta, but when a site for the 1884 archeological season was chosen he was unavailable due to his work on the Book of the Dead.⁴⁰ William Flinders Petrie (Figure 10) was sent in his stead to the site of Tanis.

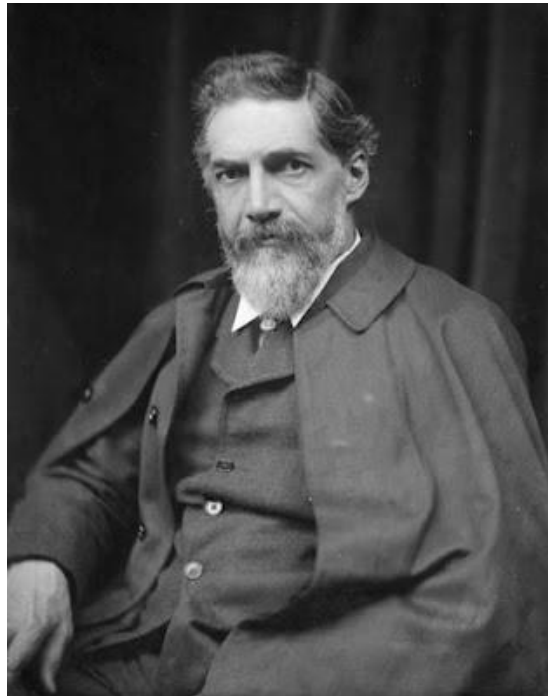


Figure 10. *Flinders Petrie*. Image from The Petrie Museum Of Egyptian Archaeology.

Petrie was self-taught and this showed, both for good and for ill, in the way he excavated. In a number of ways Petrie's methods were superior to those of his contemporaries. He was extremely organized when it came to hiring labor. He would hire large crews of Egyptian workers and would appoint *raises*, native foremen, from among them.⁴¹ To prevent artifact stealing and motivate the workers Petrie paid for finding small artifacts. His recording of the site and its artifacts was done to a higher standard than was usual for the period. The man was also a

³⁹ Thompson, Vol. 2, 13-14.

⁴⁰ Thompson, Vol. 2, 15.

⁴¹ Thompson, Vol. 2, 17.

remarkable pioneer. If there was knowledge or techniques that he needed but did not yet exist, he created them. He built his own camera to capture high quality photographs and created new ways to determine the chronology of a site. This new chronological method came about because Petrie paid careful attention to the small, seemingly unremarkable objects that were typically ignored and often thrown away by other archaeologists of the time. One of the most significant groups was ceramics, especially broken vessels and potsherds. Pottery can be used to index social, economic, and political changes over time, as well as, as alluded to above, provide an overall chronology. This is possible because pottery is incredibly abundant on most every site and undergoes rapid changes over time that are culturally specific. Petrie declared that, “No excavation can yield their proper fruits without using this main key to understanding them” and it is “essential for a key to the age of other objects, as it is universally spread on all sites.”⁴² So good was this relative dating method, that it is still in use by modern archaeologists.

For all the good he did for archaeology, Petrie was not without his faults. As much attention as he gave potsherds and other small objects, he was equally inattentive to stratigraphy. Stratigraphy is invaluable for getting a clear understanding of larger events that affected a site, as well as aiding in determining a relative chronology among other things. He was equally careless about dumping the back dirt from his digs. Richard H. Wilkinson would have the misfortune of discovering this while attempting to work on the mortuary temple of Queen Twosre, a ruler of the Nineteenth Dynasty, when he was forced to dig through all of Petrie’s back dirt to reach his own site.⁴³ Worse still, was the way Petrie often neglected objects after he had packed them up to be sent back to Britain. They would often be left sitting in shipping crates and there was usually no accompanying documentation, assigned numbers, or catalogues. Petrie acquired objects from

⁴² Thompson, Vol. 2, 19.

⁴³ Thompson, Vol. 2, 19.

antiquities dealers and due to the lack of documentation with the artifacts it is difficult to determine which objects he sent back to England were found *in situ* (in place on the site), and which came from the dealers. Petrie was of the attitude that “I must find and publish, so others can do the work.”⁴⁴ The man could also be stubborn to a fault when it came to interpreting his findings and would often hold out even against contrary evidence. A colleague wrote of him that Petrie “is a man of ideas and systems, from the right way to dig a temple to the only way to clean one’s teeth. Also he only is right in all things.”⁴⁵

Foreign interest in Egypt was mostly limited to Europeans, but in the early nineteenth century, American travelers began making their way to the country and returning with tales of its ancient splendor. These tales were carefully tailored to fit an America that was both slave-holding and extremely Christian. Focus was carefully placed on topics like Joseph in Egypt and the Exodus. Slavery was also handled very carefully. Ancient Egypt was clearly civilized and sophisticated, but African and Africans were held to be barbaric and inferior at their core. To fix this seeming paradox George Gliddon and Samuel George Morton, in the 1840s, presented a set of skulls that they claimed proved that the Nile Valley was originally populated by a branch of the Caucasian race.⁴⁶ In addition Gliddon published *Types of Mankind* with the physician Josiah C. Nott, in which he wrote,

For the sake of illustrating that, even in Ancient Egypt, *African slavery* was not altogether unmitigated by moments of congenial enjoyment; not always inseparable from lash and the hand-cuff; we submit a copy of some Negroes ‘dancing in the streets of Thebes,’ by way of archaeological evidence that, 3,400 years ago (or before the Exodus of Israel, B.C. 1322), ‘de same ole [N-word]’ of our Southern plantations could spend his Nilotic Sabbaths in saltatory recreations, and ‘Turn about, and wheel about, and *jump Jim Crow!* [italics in original]’⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Thompson, Vol. 2, 19-20.

⁴⁵ Thompson, Vol. 2, 20.

⁴⁶ Thompson, Vol. 2, 205.

⁴⁷ Thompson, Vol. 2, 206.

Little more need be said.

In the early summer of 1914 Egyptology and its future seemed assured and had little cause for worry. The West was still coming down off the heights of the “Golden Age” and there seemed little cause for any kind of concern. Then in late June, while most Western Egyptologists were on summer leave, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and Duchess Sophia were assassinated in Sarajevo. On August 4th Europe was plunged into World War One. When the Ottoman Empire joined the war on the opposite side of Britain the veil of Ottoman ownership that had until this point been hanging over Egypt was officially ripped away and on December 18th Egypt became an official British Protectorate.⁴⁸ Most archaeological projects were put on hold while the war raged, but it was in the up and coming generation that Egyptology took the greatest hit. Countless youths were slaughtered in the trenches, and the university students who were made into lieutenants, captains, and majors were among the first to go. A Cambridge professor lamented, “Of my pupils at Cambridge at least one-half, and practically all the best, have been killed or maimed for life; the work that I did has been for the most part wasted.”⁴⁹ Then, to add to the tragedy, after the bloodshed had finally ceased on the battlefield, an influenza epidemic swept through Europe and claimed, it might have seemed, everyone who was left. This was the “lost generation” of Egyptologists.

In the wake of the war, Western Egyptologists mostly resumed their work, picking back up the projects that had been put on hold. For Germans it was a different story. Germany took the brunt of the blame for World War I and this applied even to the relatively uninvolved scholars. Egyptologists and other scholars were isolated from the international community and their participation in scholarly meetings was resisted or even outright prohibited. Georg Schweinfurth,

⁴⁸ Thompson, Jason. *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology*. Vol. 3: From 1914 to the Twenty-first Century. 2.

⁴⁹ Thompson, Vol. 3, 10.

a famous geographer, botanist, and explorer of Egypt, was not invited to the 1925 International Congress of Geography. He was the founder and first president of the Geological Society in Egypt. It took longer for Germans to be allowed to return to the field, if they were at all.

It was within a world still weary from the war that the most famous discovery in Egyptological history happened. In 1922 Howard Carter sent a telegram after years spent in a seemingly fruitless search in the Valley of the Kings for a lost tomb to his sponsor Lord Carnarvon. The telegram said,

AT LAST HAVE MADE WONDERFUL DISCOVERY IN THE VALLEY. A MAGNIFICENT TOMB WITH SEALS INTACT. RE-COVERED SAME FOR YOUR ARRIVAL. CONGRATULATIONS. CARTER.⁵⁰

Carnarvon arrived soon after and on the 26th of November, 1922 the sealed doors into the tomb of Tutankhamun were breached. A small hole was made in the upper left-hand corner of the doors and Carter peered in using a candle as light. His report of what happened then is one of the most famous bits of writing in Egyptology.

At first I could see nothing, the hot air escaping from the chamber causing the candle flame to flicker, but presently, as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, details of the room within emerged slowly from the mist, strange animals, statues, and gold - everywhere the glint of gold. For the moment - an eternity it must have seemed to the others standing by - I was struck dumb with amazement, and when Lord Carnarvon, unable to stand the suspense any longer inquired anxiously, 'Can you see anything?' it was all I could do to get out the words, 'Yes, wonderful things.'⁵¹

The opening of the tomb sent a shockwave through the Western world in what would be called Tutmania and it came not a moment too soon. Interest in ancient Egypt had been lagging, and a lack of interest meant a lack of funding. The popularly called King Tut fixed that problem and

⁵⁰ Thompson, Vol. 3, 47.

⁵¹ Thompson, Vol. 3, 48.

Egypt and its iconography became more popular than ever. Jewelers made replicas of the jewelry found in the tomb and dresses sported hieroglyphic designs.

The discovery of Tutankhamun also had a profound effect on Egypt itself as well. Native Egyptians began to identify themselves and their country with ancient Egypt. It became a point of national pride and encouraged a strong sense of national identity that would have profound effects later. A more immediate consequence happened when Carnarvon sold exclusive reporting rights for the tomb to *The Times* of London. This was deeply offensive to the Egyptian newspapers who were now unable to report on an important event happening in their own country. *The Times* expected other news sources, especially Egyptian ones, to come to them to negotiate access. It also did not please the nationalists high up in the Egyptian government who had the power to make Carnarvon and Carter's project more difficult.

Egyptian nationalism and the attempt to control the antiquities leaving their country was not entirely new at the time of the Tutankhamun discovery. Starting in the late 19th century the Egyptian government had been making decrees and laws about digging rights and object ownership. The problem was that there was not that much interest from the native population and so they were rarely, if ever, enforced. It was not until the 1920s that this changed, and the old laws began to be enforced, while new laws were put into place. This was part of an effort to increase Egyptian involvement in Egyptology and archaeology as well as limit Europe's involvement and ability to remove objects from the country. This was deeply upsetting to Westerners who "felt a deep-seated sense of proprietary right, a belief that...the Egyptians were appropriating things that properly belonged to the west" and that "the number of educated Egyptians who can appreciate such things is an insignificant handful, while on the other hand, as

our birthright and inheritance from the past, Egypt can be a wonderful influence in civilized lands of the West.”⁵²

The Second World War opened the door to one of the biggest changes in Egyptological history, Egyptian independence. The war had left Europe severely weakened and Egypt relatively unscathed. Nationalistic sentiment had been steadily growing in Egypt and Europe’s weakness was exactly the opportunity they needed. In January 1952 the Black Saturday Riots broke out. These were anti-British riots triggered by the killing of 50 Egyptian auxiliary policemen in the city of Ismaïlia in a one-sided battle the day before by British occupation troops.⁵³ Shepherd’s Hotel, a popular stop for European Egyptologists, was burned to the ground. Several organizations, including the University of Alexandria, were purged of British personnel. In July of the same year the current leader, King Farouq, was overthrown by a group of Free Officers (Figure 11). A man named Gamal Abd al-Nasser would emerge from their number to become the president. With this and the near total removal of Europeans from Egypt’s archaeological institutions the decolonization of Egypt was complete and Egyptians now had control of their ancient heritage.

⁵² Thompson, Vol. 3, 81-82.

⁵³ Thompson, Vol. 3, 235.



Figure 11. *The Egyptian Free Officers in 1953. From left to right: Zakariya Mohieddine, Abdel Latif Boghdadi, Kamel el-Din Hussein (standing), Gamal Abdel Nasser, Abdel Hakim Amer (standing), Muhammad Naguib and Ahmad Shawki. Public Domain.*

Egyptians in Egyptology

Throughout the entire history of Egyptology, the Egyptian people have been a crucial, if oft forgotten and overlooked part. From the very beginning to the time they took back control of their country and their history the Egyptian people have been interacting with the ancient past that fills their land. Both in their daily lives living around the relics of the ancient Egyptian civilization and in more “official” and scholarly pursuits ancient Egypt is a part of their world.

The first major period of interest in ancient Egypt by Arabs and Egyptians after the fall of the civilization itself came during the Medieval period, well before Europeans pulled themselves out of the “dark ages” and took an interest themselves. The era started with the Arab conquest of the country and the spread of Islam throughout. It would eventually overtake Coptic Christianity, a form of Christianity that took hold during the Roman occupation, as the major religion of the people. Like most peoples before them, the Arabs also found Hermes Trismegistus, and Egypt in general, to be a source of ancient wisdom and knowledge. It was commonly believed that he

“built the pyramids, founded cities, constructed the temples, and was the source of all knowledge, whether practical, mystical, or magical.”⁵⁴

During this time a number of travelers made their way around Egypt, taking in the ancient monuments. Dhu al-Din al-Misri (796-860 CE)⁵⁵ was one such man. He was born in the town of Akhmim, which housed an ancient temple to the Egyptian god Min. Al-Misri examined this and many other monuments, figures, and inscriptions. It was said that he understood hieroglyphs, though that is unlikely to be the case and he was probably making subjective, mystical interpretations.⁵⁶ Others wrote about the works left by the ancients, either in marvel at their ancestors achievements, like Saad Allah Abu al-Makarim in his book *The Churches and Monuments of Egypt and Some Neighboring Countries* or to bemoan the ongoing loss of monuments like Abdel Latif, who was a physician teaching in Cairo at about 1200 CE. An Egyptian historian during this period named Abu Jafar al-Idrisi wrote a book on the history of Egypt called *Anwar ulwiyy al-ajram fi al-kashfan asrar al-ahram (Light on the Voluminous Bodies to Reveal the Secrets of the Pyramids)*. It included a study of the pyramids with a description of their location, measurements, an analysis of their mineral content, and a survey of previous literature on the subject.⁵⁷ He also travelled around to other monuments and wrote about them. For example, Al-Idrisi writes of the Sphinx, which was still undamaged and retained traces of paint when he saw it, “This figure is very beautiful and its mouth carries the stamp of grace and beauty. It could be said that it smiles graciously.”⁵⁸

The other main thing that drew Arabs to ancient Egypt was the lure of buried treasures, a motif that is deeply embedded within Middle Eastern lore on the subject of ancient Egypt. This

⁵⁴ Thompson, Vol. 1, 48.

⁵⁵ Thompson, Vol. 1, 45.

⁵⁶ Thompson, Vol. 1, 45.

⁵⁷ Thompson, Vol. 1, 47.

⁵⁸ Thompson, Vol. 1, 47.

persisted all the way into the late 19th century when the leader of Egypt, Ibn Tulun, used uncovered ancient gold to fund the building of his mosque. When that proved to be successful, and as a measure to curb unauthorized treasure hunting, he began to require permits for treasure hunting and organized excavations under government oversight.⁵⁹ Arab scholars also made important contributions to the study of the ancient Egyptian language. They recognized that Coptic, the language used at that time by members of the Coptic church, was descended from ancient Egyptian, which was an important first step towards the decipherment of the language. They were also able to distinguish between several different ancient Egyptian scripts, most notably hieroglyphs, which they called “bird’s script”, and hieratic, which they called “temple script”.⁶⁰

With Islam as the religion of the ruling class and spreading to dominate among the people, the Islamic view of ancient Egypt became of increasing importance. The figure of Pharaoh appears several times in the Qur’an and in the majority of his appearances Pharaoh is a negative figure. In his main and most often referenced appearance Pharaoh is the antagonistic force against which Moses must struggle to free the Israelites. He is described as arrogant (*mustakbir*), a transgressor (*musrif*), a corrupter (*mufsid*), a rebellious tyrant (*taghiy*), and, most importantly for it was the source of his moral corruption, as having haughtiness (*‘uluww*). When confronted with the power of God through the signs of Moses, Pharaoh dismisses them as mere magic and sorcery and says, “I am not aware of any other lord of yours but myself.”⁶¹ The Egyptian king acts as an example of the arrogance of rejecting God’s sovereignty and, through his constant refusal of God’s signs as the ultimate example of disbelief (*kufr*). The other notable appearance of Pharaoh is as part of a list of ancient peoples who rejected the message of God:

⁵⁹ Thompson, Vol. 1, 49-50.

⁶⁰ Thompson, Vol. 1, 51.

⁶¹ Ali, Ahmed, trans. *Al-Qur’an: A Contemporary Translation*. Sura 28: 38.

What is the concrete reality? What do you comprehend by the concrete reality? The Thamud and 'Ad denied the consequential calamity. So the Thamud were destroyed by a storm of thunder and lightning. And the 'Ad were destroyed by the furious cold blast of roaring wind ... Then came Pharaoh, and those before him whose habitations were overthrown while they were committing crimes. When they disobeyed the apostle of their Lord He seized them with an overwhelming punishment ... in order to make it a warning for you, so that the ear might retain its lesson.⁶²

In this Pharaoh is not an individual, but instead acts as a symbol for the whole of ancient Egypt, one of many pagan civilizations which denied God and so were eventually destroyed. This context makes the ruins left behind by this and other ancient civilizations tangible proof of the power of God and the consequences of rejecting God.

Pharaonic ruins also have an important role in the idea of remembrance, an important theme in Islam and the Qur'an. For example, one passage states, "We have been sending word to them that they may strive to remember [sometimes translated as "take warning"]. Those to whom We gave the Book before this do believe in it; and when it is read out to them, say: 'We believe in it. It's the truth from our Lord. We had committed ourselves before it came.'"⁶³ In general, the Qur'an takes a rather pessimistic attitude towards humankind's ability to remember, especially in regards to God's mercy and generosity. One of the most prominent examples of this is of the Jewish people after their exodus from Egypt. Not long after having been freed from slavery under Pharaoh through God's power they forget the one who saved them and begin worshipping a golden calf idol. Forgetfulness doubles as not only a human weakness, but also as a failure of faith and comes to the heart of the concept of *kufr*. *Kufr* is disbelief, as was mentioned above, but, more than that, it is also a deliberate and ungrateful act of disacknowledgement of God's

⁶² Ali, Sura 69: 2-6, 9-10, 12.

⁶³ Ali, Sura 28: 51-53.

mercy.⁶⁴ By standing as physical proof of the ancient civilization spoken of in the Qur'an and of the fate of those who reject God, Pharaonic ruins serve as reminders for the faithful.

Along a similar vein, Muslim writers penned an entire genre called *fada'il* literature, which listed the 'merits' of a country. In the ones which speak of Egypt, Pharaonic monuments are treated as history lessons to be considered. These writings were attempts to bring together all that was known about ancient Egypt during the medieval period. To do so, authors wrote about geography, science, and history and pulled their sources from the ancient Greeks and classical Muslim histories.⁶⁵ Al-Idrisi's writing, *Light on the Voluminous Bodies to Reveal the Secrets of the Pyramids*, which is discussed above is one such work.

Western cultures have a habit of assuming that Arab peoples tended towards destruction when it came to ancient monuments, and this is an unfair and often false assumption. On the contrary, it was generally believed that it was both vain and arrogant to attempt to destroy Pharaonic monuments. Al-Idrisi recounts a narrative of an earlier Muslim traveler who witnessed quarrying of the ruins from Thebes on the subject:

My father said, 'Look, son, what the Pharaohs built and how it is being destroyed by these idiots. Nothing is more tragic and sad than the loss of what these ruins offer to those who would regard them and consider their lesson. If I had my say in the matter, I would prevent these ignoramuses from destroying them. What sort of wisdom preaches that these ruins should be removed from the face of the Earth? On this very ground trod the stallions of the Prophet's Companions, God Bless Them, as they headed to conquer Nubia after taking Egypt. These people saw these buildings but their hands did not stretch out to ruin them. Rather, they left them as a sign to teach a lesson to those who would consider, and a reminder to every seeker of knowledge.'⁶⁶

As this passage illustrates, ancient ruins were viewed, among scholars, not as something to be destroyed, but rather as objects for contemplation. They can impart an understanding of the

⁶⁴ Colla, Elliott Hutchinson. *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity*. 78.

⁶⁵ Colla, 79.

⁶⁶ Colla, 88.

smallness of human existence in comparison with historical time and the vainness of human endeavors to build civilization in comparison to divine creation. Most of all, the monuments are lessons about the passing of time.

By the time the nineteenth century came along the views of Egyptian Muslims towards ancient Egypt had undergone several changes. Where before the ancient was something to learn from, but considered unconnected to the Egyptian people of the time, now there was an effort made to assert continuity between the ancient Pharaonic past and the Muslim present. This change of attitude was part of a rise in national pride and the belief that modern Egyptians should be able to hold a claim on the ancient past. One of the problems that faced this sort of view was the pagan and polytheistic nature of the ancient Egyptian religion and the negative connotation of such in Muslim thought. To solve this many Egyptian scholars began focusing on aspects of the religion that most resemble Islam, like the belief in the afterlife and the importance of burial, and emphasizing one of the major deities, Amun, and understating the overall polytheism. The ancient Egyptian religion was spun as an almost proto-Islamic form of monotheism that was corrupted by the passage of time. A textbook from the time states,

The priests of the Egyptians worshipped God the Almighty, praise to Him! And they acknowledged God's oneness. But they hid that from others in order to protect their leadership position. For others, the priests placed statues [*tamathil*] by whose worship they drew near to God. As time passed, their belief in the oneness of God dissipated, and they began to take the idols [*asnam*] as gods. Thus, they worshipped Amun, Ptah, Osiris (the Sun), Isis (the Moon), the Sphinx, dogs, crocodiles, cats, scarab beetles, and the greatest of their gods, the calf Ibis. For these deities, they built sanctuaries and temples.⁶⁷

This was also the time in which Egyptian Nationalism was beginning to rise among the populace. Part of this rise included the new connection the country had to its ancient past. Egyptians were growing tired of European involvement in both their government and their

⁶⁷ Colla, 145-146.

antiquities. The nineteenth century, as noted in a previous section, was the first time that any laws about digging rights and object ownership were passed, even if actual enforcement was rather lax. Part of the reason that Egyptians were coming to identify with ancient Egypt was the linking of the Pharaonic culture to the land itself as a unique product of the geography. This allowed for a bridging of the time gap between the two eras and put the focus on a shared experience of place. Ancient Egypt was now seen as a time of glory to which the present should aspire, for “in the time of the Pharaohs, Egypt was the mother of the world’s nations [*umam al-dunya*] and the barb of its weapon was strong.”⁶⁸ Elite Egyptians, in order to spread these new forms of thought, employed a rhetoric of shame. It was implied that if they had not studied ancient history, they were not authentically Egyptian and to be ignorant of the ancient past was to be a false patriot. This came as something of a reversal of before, in which it was the ancient period that was associated with the ignorance of the pagan era (*al-Jahiliyya*) and now it was only the ignorant who did not know of the Pharaonic past.

The patriotic progress of the nineteenth century was forced on hold after the country experienced bankruptcy due to the actions of several of Muhammad Ali’s successors. It took until the next century, around the 1920s for the nationalist spirit to really pick up again. As stated above, the Egyptian government had technically passed several laws about digging rights and object ownership, but it was not until nationalist sentiment and feelings of possessiveness for their past rose to new heights in the 1900s that these laws were actually enforced and even more strict ones put into place. Control of the Antiquities Service was wrested away from European hands and put under the firm control of the Egyptian government. This all happened under the relatively strong and anti-European leadership of prime minister Saad Zaghlul. Unfortunately, the progress towards Egyptian independence was not to last as Zaghlul’s replacement, Ahmed

⁶⁸ Colla, 132.

Ziwar Pasha, was all too willing to fall back under European sway and Egypt would not find its independence until after World War II.

Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi (Figure 12) was a particularly notable individual in the history of Egyptology, especially on the Arab side of things. He was born in 1801 in the town of Tahta and would receive an elementary education there before seeking higher education at al-Azhar University in Cairo.⁶⁹ Al-Tahtawi's mentor, Hasan al-Attar, recommended him as part of a group of forty-four students sent to France to obtain useful knowledge to bring back to Egypt. A few years after his return to Egypt al-Tahtawi published *Takhlis al-ibriz fi talkhis Baris* (*The distillation of pure gold in summing up Paris*) in 1834. *Takhlis* was a description of al-Tahtawi's observation on Parisian life. It was one of three landmark books of that decade in which Egypt and the West attempted to get a good look at one another. The other two were *Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* by E.W. Lane and *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* by John Gardner Wilkinson published in 1836 and 1837 respectively. The first indications of al-Tahtawi's interest in ancient Egypt came during his time in France, where he translated *Dithyrambe sur l'Egypte* into Arabic. When he returned to Egypt al-Tahtawi was picked by Muhammed Ali to be one of the founding members of his School of Languages where he also taught French.

Khedive Ismail, one of Ali's successors, gave al-Tahtawi a position as head of the translation bureau and as a member of an education advisory board. From these positions al-Tahtawi worked to educate his fellow Egyptians about the history of their land and spark more public interest in the topic. In keeping with this goal, he wrote and published *Anwar tawfiq al-jalil fi akhbar Misr wa-tawthiq Bani Ismail* (*Glorious light on the story of Egypt and*

⁶⁹ Reid, Donald M. *Whose Pharaohs?: Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I*, 51,

authentication of the sons of Ismail, 1868), which was originally meant to be the first of a series, but al-Tahtawi died before completing the rest. The book in question is a history of ancient Egypt and covered from the Pharaonic era up to the Islamic conquest.⁷⁰ In his writings al-Tahtawi claims, brags almost, that Egypt had, unlike most other nations, not shone in one era and then faded, but instead stayed relevant throughout seventy centuries. It was “the mother of all the nations of the world”⁷¹ in the time of the pharaohs, was known for philosophy and learning under Alexander, the Ptolemies, and the Romans, and became a pillar of Islamic culture. His experience in Europe informs some of the writing of *Anwar*. He pulls from European translations of hieroglyphics and archaeological evidence. When discussing the chronology of ancient Egypt al-Tahtawi notes when his conclusions diverged from those of European scholars. Since al-Tahtawi wanted the general populace to accept ancient Egypt as part of their own history he identifies the pharaonic religion as Sabi’a, which is mentioned in the Qur’an, along with Christianity and Judaism as one of the monotheistic religions of the “Book”.⁷² For this work, many other writings, and his work in education Al-Tahtawi is considered one of the great thinkers of his generation. He is still included on modern stamps in Egypt.

⁷⁰ Reid, 109

⁷¹ Reid, 110

⁷² Reid, 111



Figure 12. *Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi*. Public Domain.

Muhammad Ali (Figure 13), who was touched on in a previous section, was another influential figure for Egyptian Egyptology. He was the leader of Egypt in the beginning of the nineteenth century. He wrested control from the Ottomans and began a brief period of Egyptian semi-independence (the nation was still technically under the Ottoman Empire, though they held very little influence with Ali in charge). He was the first head of state to embrace, to some extent, ancient Egypt as the symbol of the modern state. As the symbol of his official journal Ali adopted the pyramid in 1829. He also showed some personal interest in Egyptology and requested a translation of the text on an Alexandrian obelisk and a sketch of pharaonic history from a French scholar. During Ali's reign there was a rising concern about the increasing rate at which ancient temples and monuments were being destroyed; thirteen temples had been destroyed since the time of the Napoleon expedition. Champollion pleaded for protections for antiquities and Ali himself showed a certain amount of dismay at the exhumation he witnessed of

mummies at Qurna.⁷³ Blame was generally placed at the feet of several different parties, including European collectors and tourists, antiquities dealers, fellahin, and building projects. The temple of Dendera was being quarried for stone to build a cotton factory in Qena.⁷⁴ When he made a declaration regarding the destruction in August of 1835 Ali focused on Europeans as the main offenders. He banned the export of antiquities and ordered their collection for a museum in Cairo saying,

It is also well known that the Europeans have buildings for keeping antiquities; stones covered with paintings and inscriptions, and other similar objects are carefully conserved there and shown to the inhabitants of the country as well as travellers ... such establishments bring great renown to the countries which have them.⁷⁵

Muhammed Ali's decree created a museum under the direction of al-Tahtawi and Yusuf Diya Effendi and asserted national control over its antiquities. Or maybe we should say it would have, had it taken hold. Diya started making inspections of sites in Upper Egypt, but with a lack of general interest from the general populace and little in the way of official enforcement the whole thing eventually fell by the wayside. Despite the generally unsuccessful nature of the attempt, this is seen by some as the point at which the Egyptian Antiquities Service and Egyptian Museum were founded.⁷⁶

Though he is responsible for some of the first laws aimed at keeping Egyptian antiquities under Egyptian control Muhammad Ali is also responsible for a number of antiquities being taken out of the country by Europeans. He often used antiquities as bargaining chips or gifts for European powers. An obelisk from the Temple of Luxor was sent to the French king Louis XVIII that was put up in 1836 in the place de la Concorde and in 1877 another that had been

⁷³ Reid, 54

⁷⁴ Reid, 55

⁷⁵ Reid, 56

⁷⁶ Reid, 56

gifted to Britain was erected by the Thames.⁷⁷ In the end Ali's main focus was on modernizing his country and assuring its success in the present time and antiquities were mostly a means to achieve that end.



Figure 13. *Muhammad Ali*. By Auguste Couder from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Memory of Modern Egypt Digital Archive.

It was not just scholars and political leaders, but also more everyday people that were an important part of Egyptology in Egypt. Ali Mubarak (Figure 14) was one such person. He was an engineer, the one who had been responsible for the planning of modern Cairo under Ismail. He also played a part in extending a state school system into more of the country. As well as his work with the government, Mubarak was also a writer. He published a geographical encyclopedia called *Al-Khitat al-tawfiqiyya al-jadida*, which discusses both ancient and modern Egypt. It reached twenty volumes in length. Mubarak wrote this series in part to rectify a problem that he believed to exist within Egyptian society at the time.

Cairo is no longer the way it once was...due to the change in dynasties and the upheavals of time ... We have found no one among the sons of Egypt who can interpret for us these changes or instruct us in the causes thereof, or guide us

⁷⁷ Reid, 57

aright in understanding the country's notable monuments. We look upon these works but do not know the circumstances of their creation, we wander through them but do not know who made them ... How many the mosques which are ascribed to men who did not build them, and temples to persons who have not seen them. ... But it is our duty to know these things, for it is not fitting for us to remain in ignorance of our country or neglect the monuments of our ancestors. They are a moral lesson to the reflective mind, a memorial to the thoughtful soul ... For what our ancestors have left behind stirs in us the desire to follow in their footsteps, and to produce for our times what they produced for theirs; to strive to be useful even as they strove.⁷⁸

There were long separate sections on Thebes and Memphis and smaller sections on many other sites, including Heliopolis. In the Memphis section there is a discussion of the pyramids and the different theories surrounding them from various sources, both Arab and European. Mubarak also devoted a portion to the measurement system of the pyramid builders, which he held a special fascination for as an engineer. The point of these books was to increase public knowledge of ancient Egypt because he believed that pride in ancient Egypt was essential to Egypt's modern national identity.

Mubarak was a member of the *Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art arabe*, which was established, mostly by Europeans, to conserve art and architecture in Egypt. They wanted to preserve the art and architecture of the previous Arabic powers in the region. His membership was relatively short-lived as he had major disagreements with the dominant Europeans. He took issue with the Europeans' tendency to look down on Egyptians and their insistence on putting the preservation of historic buildings over all else. While not against preservation in theory, Egypt was trying to recover from its fall into bankruptcy and Mubarak found those to be the more important and pressing issues. He felt that, under the circumstances, "Does one need so many monuments? When one preserves a sample, isn't that enough?"⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Reid, 179-180

⁷⁹ Reid, 234



Figure 14. *Ali Mubarak*. Public Domain.

Forces Collide: The Tutankhamun Excavation

Having explored both the European and the Egyptian perspectives on Egyptology through World War I, it is now useful to look at how those two sides both came together and clashed over an actual archaeological site. The discovery and excavation of Tutankhamun's tomb is one of the most famous and so while it can-not be considered to stand for the typical site, it is an excellent opportunity to examine all the different forces that could get involved and it marked a turning point in the reception of Egyptology and ancient Egypt for the Egyptian people.

As touched on in a previous section, Howard Carter (Figure 15) discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 at the tail end of an otherwise fruitless season of searching. Carter, who himself was not wealthy, needed a sponsor to provide the funds and influence he lacked. Though he became one of the most well known names in Egyptology Howard Carter was not an actual Egyptologist. He started out as an artist and was copying out inscriptions in the 1890s.⁸⁰ He

⁸⁰ Thompson, Vol. 3, 39

worked under Percy E. Newberry, Flinders Petrie, and Edouard Naville in that time and learned archaeological techniques from them. In 1908 he was recommended to George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Herbert, the Earl of Carnarvon. Carnarvon had acquired a concession to dig in Thebes and required an excavator. This began Carter and Carnarvon's association. Several years later in 1914 the Earl was awarded a second concession, this time for the Valley of the Kings. By this point in time most considered the valley to have been mostly picked clean, with few new discoveries left to be made there. Carter believed otherwise and luckily for both him and future archaeology in the area he was proven to be correct.

1922 was the last season of excavation in the Valley of the Kings and Carter's last chance to make a discovery. On November 4th the first step of the entrance to the tomb of Tutankhamun was uncovered by Carter's workers.⁸¹ The next day they had uncovered all the way up to a sealed door bearing the name of the young king. Upon confirming his discovery Carter sent word to Carnarvon and put off opening the tomb until his arrival. On the 23rd Carnarvon arrived and on the 25th the door to the tomb was opened revealing a passageway to another sealed door. Both doors had been breached in antiquity and resealed by ancient officials so Carter and Carnarvon had no idea if they were going to be walking into an empty looted tomb or into one relatively untouched and full of artifacts. As fate would have it, the tomb had remained remarkably intact and when Carter and company made a small breach in the doorway to the next room what they saw was a room filled with, as Carter famously described in his written retelling of the event, "wonderful things."

⁸¹ Fritze, Ronald H. *Egyptomania: A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy*, 223.

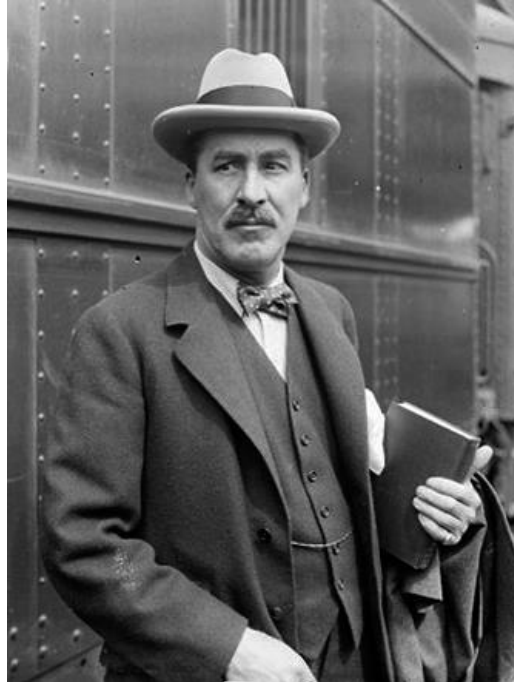


Figure 15. *Howard Carter*. Chicago Daily News, Inc., photographer - The Library of Congress (USA).

For the people back in Europe, the discovery of Tutankhamun arrived at exactly the right time. The sensation was explained perfectly by the American Egyptologist James H. Breasted.

The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb - the most romantic and thrilling story of archaeological exploration and discovery since Schliemann's revelations at Troy and those of Sir Arthur Evans in Crete - broke upon a world sated with post-First World War conferences, with nothing proved and nothing achieved, after a summer journalistically so dull that an English farmer's report of a gooseberry the size of a crabapple achieved the main news pages of the London metropolitan dailies. It was hardly surprising therefore that the Tutankhamun discovery should have received a volume of world-wide publicity exceeding anything in the entire history of science. Almost overnight Carter and Carnarvon became international figures.⁸²

Every newspaper in Egypt and the West was chomping at the bit to cover the discovery, but Carnarvon made the decision to grant *The Times* of London exclusive coverage rights. This meant that *every* other newspaper that wanted to print any information on the discovery had to buy that information second-hand from *The Times*. Despite that hurdle, newspapers across Europe and America soon spread images and information about the discovery through the West.

⁸² Charles Breasted, *Pioneer to the Past: The Story of James Henry Breasted, Archaeologist*. 344-45



Figures 16 and 17. Cover of the *The Illustrated London News*, 22 January 1927 and Back page of *Le petit journal illustre*, 11 February 1923. Photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*.

With the influx of Egyptian imagery in the news it was only a matter of time before this was reflected in pop culture. This was a phenomenon called Tutmania. Egyptian theming and iconography found their way into all sorts of different aspects of culture in Europe and the United States. The music industry was quick to latch on, and shortly after information of the discovery got out in 1923 sheet music went on sale for a song titled “Old King Tut.” One section of the song goes as follows:

Three thousand years ago,
In history we know
King Tut-an-ka-men ruled a mighty land.
Mid laughter, song and tears,
He made a record that will always stand.⁸³

⁸³ Brier, Bob. *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs*. 169-170

It was a hit almost as soon as it came out and so the enterprising J.W. Jenkins Sons Music Company added a few new words and created “Old King Tut Was a Wise Old Nut.” This and the original “Old King Tut” were created before it was known that Tutankhamun was a teenager when he died, so the song and the cover art depict (Figure 18) him as an old man.

Tutmania also extended into the world of fashion. There were dresses made in an Egyptian style or with Egyptian iconography, like the ankh, stitched into the fabric. Small decorative items like jewelry were made to mimic items or the style of items found in the tomb. There were many necklaces made in the shape of scarabs and neck/chest jewelry styled after Tutankhamun’s famous winged chest piece. One of many popular sets of small items and knick-knacks were mechanical pencils made in the shape of mummy cases (Figure 19).⁸⁴ If the top ring was pulled, the pencil extended from the bottom. They were popular charms for flappers.

Consumable items were also caught up in the sweep of Egyptian styled goods. Perfume was a major good that got the Egyptian treatment. In Paris there was the *Perfume de la Nubie* and America had the Palmolive Company’s Talc Egyptian (Figure 20).⁸⁵ It was not long before books and movies were made with an Egyptian theme, turning Egypt and Tutankhamun into a multimedia sensation. One best-selling novel, *The Egyptian* by Mika Waltari, was then adapted into an equally successful film of the same name. Other films that owe their existence to Tutmania include *Cleopatra* starring Theda Bara, *The Ten Commandments*, and *The Mummy*.⁸⁶ In all the hype surrounding the discovery of Tutankhamun there were many public faces of the project like Carter who were propelled to stardom. But there also were a large number of people integral to the project that have mostly been forgotten, even now.

⁸⁴ Brier, 172-173

⁸⁵ Brier, 173

⁸⁶ Brier, Color Plates 43-44, page 176



Figure 18. Cover illustration for *Old King Tut was a Wise Old Nut*. Printed in *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs*.



Figure 19. Mechanical pencil charms worn by flappers around their necks and on charm bracelets. Printed in *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs*.



Figure 20. *A perfume sold by the Palmolive Company shortly after the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. Printed in Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs.*

Of the people who worked on the Tutankhamun excavation the vast majority were Egyptians hired from local villages to do non-specialized work, like moving objects from the tomb and around the site. These people were generally called bearers or porters and even people who have made a study of the Tutankhamun dig, like Christina Riggs, know little about them.

How little we can say about the Egyptian staff on this most famous of excavations, or even in the *The Sphere* photograph, is in sharp contrast to the coherent and comprehensive narrative that Carter's journals appear to provide for his part of the work.⁸⁷

Photographs are some of the only places where we can see Egyptians and their work and efforts on excavations as they are almost never referenced, and certainly never by their actual names, by the Europeans in charge of the site or in the paperwork and writings that come out of excavations. As such, the only real evidence available of these workers comes from the photographs of the site and work, taken mostly by Harry Burton or the press. In these images the

⁸⁷ Riggs, Christina. *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*, 157

different Egyptian workers can be seen either posing or in the midst of their work. As can be seen in the pictures provided (Figures 21-27) only one of the photographs is actually about the workers (Figure 25), in all the other photos they are there simply in the background and the focus is placed firmly on one or more Europeans, the work itself, or the artifacts. There are only three workers whose names we know and were all *ra'is* (a *ra'is* is like a foreman). The most mentioned is the head *ra'is*, though it is difficult to identify the name with any one person in any of the photographs. This man is Ahmed Garigar and he was responsible for hiring and coordinating the labor for each season.⁸⁸ It is possible that one of the three men in the back line of Figure 25 is Garigar as they are identified as *ra'is*, but there is no way to know for sure.



Figure 21. Two Egyptian official observe as porters load crates onto the government barge. Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original possibly by Arthur Merton, 1923.

⁸⁸ Riggs, 155



Figure 22. *Egyptian porters taking the tomb objects to the Nile at the end of the first season.* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original photographer unknown, 1923.



Figure 23. *Carter and a ra'i's struggle with the weight of the hippo couch.* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original photographer unknown, 1923.

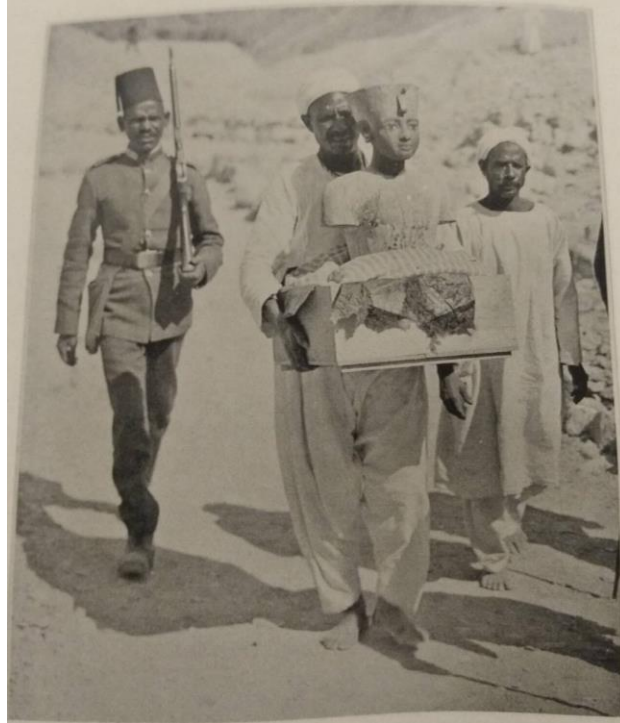


Figure 24. *An Egyptian workman, possibly a ra'is, carrying the 'mannequin' to the 'laboratory' tomb of Seti II (KV 15).* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original possibly by Arthur Merton, 1923.

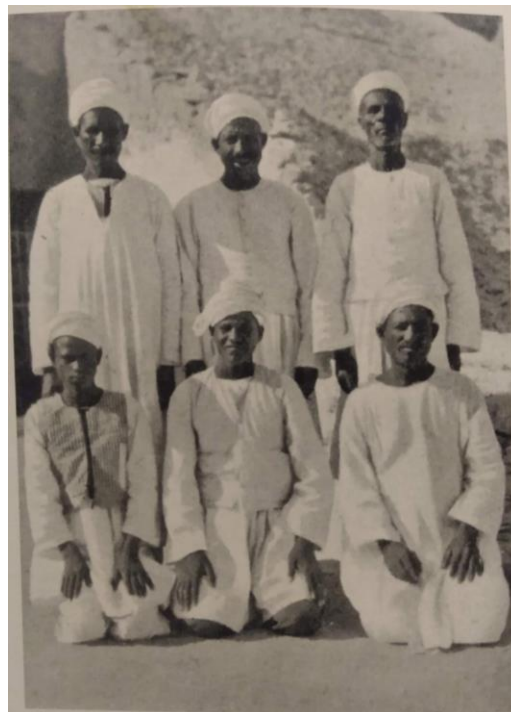


Figure 25. *Photograph of Egyptian men who worked at the tomb of Tutankhamun, published with the caption 'The men who are assisting Mr. Howard Carter' and identifying the three men at the back as 'head men.'* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original from *The Sphere*, 1923.



Figure 26. *Demolishing the wall between the Burial Chamber and the Antechamber.* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original by Harry Burton, 1923.



Figure 27. *Removing the first roof section of the outermost shrine.* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original by Harry Burton, 1923.

A rather poignant example of the way the Egyptian people were utilized but not acknowledged is Figure 28. This is a picture taken by Harry Burton of some of the jewelry from Tutankhamun's tomb using a young Egyptian boy as a model. Even though the boy is the largest thing in the frame he is not the subject of the picture. He is not even named. Instead all the information Burton gives with the photograph is about the artifact. In this context the boy has been given the same worth as a mannequin, but he is an exotic mannequin. This and the other pictures Burton took were meant for European viewership and a number of them would end up in publications about the excavation. European readers were fascinated by the Tutankhamun excavation. It was exciting and all the wondrous items evoked scenes of an exotic and glamorous past in the imaginations of all the Europeans eagerly following the proceedings. The people back home wanted to see something exotic and new, so that is what Burton gave them. He chose an exotic mannequin for the exotic jewelry.



Figure 28. *An Egyptian boy wearing a necklace and pectoral from Tutankhamun's tomb.* Description from and photo printed in *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive*. Original by Harry Burton, 1926.

After news of the discovery broke across Egypt, nationalist interest in ancient Egypt surged. Pharaonic themes began popping up throughout mainstream Egyptian culture. Among the most noticeable consequences of this was the barrage of new journals that sprang up. These included *Kliyubatra (Cleopatra)* (Figure 29), *Wadi al-Muluk (Valley of the Kings)*, and *al-Siyasa al-Ushbu'iyya (The Weekly Political)*.⁸⁹ *Kliyubatra* and *Wadi al-Muluk* were not particularly long-lived, though the latter claimed it distributed 10,000 copies of each edition throughout Egypt and Sudan. Unlike the other two, *al-Siyasa al-Ushbu'iyya* survived longer as it was the mouthpiece of Liberal Constitutionalist Party. It was edited by Muhammad Husayn Haykal, a political intellectual and leader of the party. He championed Pharaonism in both literature and politics and as such the journal used Pharaonic themes in its visuals and in its coverage/analysis of Egyptian culture.⁹⁰ For the other journals the Pharaonic themes served mostly a decorative purpose, but this still served to link the past to the present via the theme of royalty and state power. At the same time as the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb the title "king of Egypt" was coming into use for the first time since ancient times and ancient Egypt was seen as a time of powerful monarchs and government, a useful comparison for the modern government striving for independence.

⁸⁹ Colla, Page 211.

⁹⁰ Colla, Page 213.

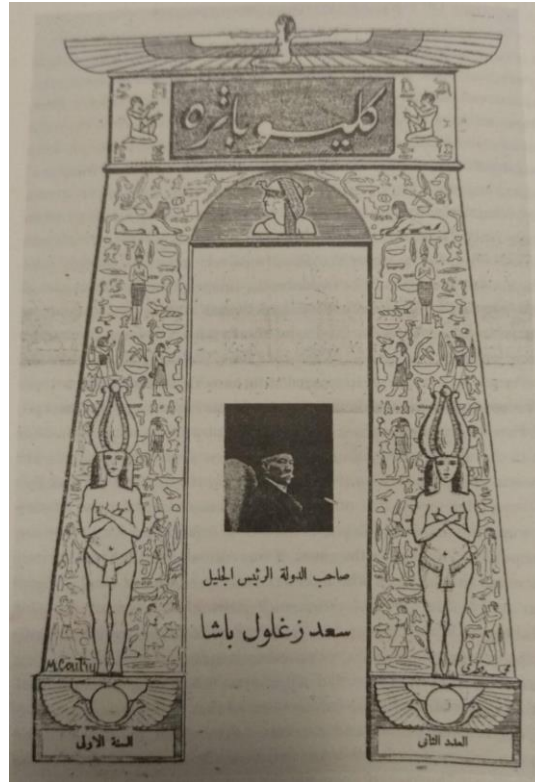


Figure 29. Kliyubatra, August 1924: “The Head of State and Exalted President, Sa’d Zaghloul Pasha”. Picture printed in *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity*.

Following Carnarvon’s decision to give a London newspaper exclusive rights to cover the dig there was an additional upwards surge of nationalist sentiment. Many felt that “a valuable part of their patrimony had been given away in colonial fashion by foreigners to foreigners without a thought to Egyptian rights or sensibilities.”⁹¹ This feeling took the shape of the tightening of control by the Egyptian government in areas which had previously been barely policed. Before this the Antiquities Service was pretty firmly in the pocket of Europe, but now the Egyptian government took control and began to enforce the antiquities laws that had been in place for some years but had been generally ignored. The government began putting pressure on Carter to allow more Egyptian visitors into the site and ended the long-standing fifty-fifty find division. Instead, the tomb and everything in it were ruled Egyptian property. Concessions could

⁹¹ Thompson, Vol. 3, 56

no longer be given to individuals, only to institutions or those affiliated with one. Requirements that to modern archaeologists seem routine were newly applied to the Tutankhamun excavation. These included approval for visitors, submission of a list of proposed personnel, and an onsite inspector.

Carter felt that these new restrictions were impossible to work with and abruptly shut the tomb in protest, leaving the sarcophagus lid suspended precariously above the sarcophagus. He posted his complaint in a hotel in Luxor, "Owing to the impossible restrictions and discourtesies on the part of the Public Works Department and its Antiquities Service, all my collaborators in protest have refused to work any further upon the scientific investigations of the discovery of the tomb of Tut-ankh-amen."⁹² He expected an immediate apology from the government and to return to working under the conditions he was used to in the past. This proved to be a grave miscalculation on the part of Carter, who underestimated how tenuous his position had become. Over his career he had alienated both groups in the Antiquities Service by being both rude to the Europeans and contemptuous to the Egyptians. With the death of Lord Carnarvon in April of 1923 and the election of Zaghloul's Wafd Party in February of 1924 Carter would find very little leeway or support anywhere in Egypt. Instead of Carter's expected apology, prime minister Saad Zaghloul declared that Carter had infringed upon his contract. This and the final article of the Carnarvon concession were used to revoke the entire thing. The article in question stated that:

Any infraction, on the part of the Permittee or his agents, of the conditions above stated shall entail the cancellation of the present authorization, without any notice being given or formality being taken. ... and this without the Permittee, or any agent of his, having the right to claim any indemnity or compensation whatsoever or for any reason.⁹³

⁹² Colla, Page 205.

⁹³Thompson, Vol. 3, 67

The government claimed that leaving the tomb in such a dangerous state, with the lid still hanging above the sarcophagus via a temporary mechanism, constituted such an infraction.

Though Carter was surprised by the response he received, he firmly believed that he could gain a quick victory through legal action. His plan was to take the issue to Egypt's system of Mixed Courts, an institution established to provide jurisdiction in civil and commercial cases between foreigners and Egyptians. Though it was meant to be balanced, Europeans held a clear upper hand in the court. Pierre Crabités from Louisiana was the judge for Carter's case and his lawyer was F.M. Maxwell, a rather tone deaf choice as in the past Maxwell had pushed to have Morcos Hanna, who was now minister of public works in charge of the Antiquities Service, receive the death penalty when Britain was cracking down on nationalism.⁹⁴ At one point during the trial Maxwell called the Egyptian government bandits, which was especially offensive in Arabic culture and shot down any chance of the trial ending with a deal between the two parties. In the end Carter did win in the Mixed Courts, but the Egyptian government quickly took the case to the Court of Appeals in Alexandria where they won the day, the court deciding that the government's actions were an administrative act over which the Mixed Courts held no jurisdiction. With this win under their belts the government was now willing to make a settlement. Luckily for Carter and the widowed Lady Carnarvon, Saad Zaghlul was replaced as leader with Ahmed Ziwari Pasha. Ziwari was much more amenable to British influence and Lady Carnarvon was able to acquire another, though more restrictive, concession and, for lack of a better option, Carter was brought back in to continue the work. In the end Lady Carnarvon never did end up with the share of the find she and her late husband had expected. All of the finds were taken by the Egyptian government and installed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Eventually

⁹⁴ Thompson, Vol. 3, 67

Lady Carnarvon did receive some compensation for the money she and her husband had spent on the dig. Carter never did publish his work from the tomb.

Conclusion

Though focused on a narrow field, that of Egyptology, this paper touches on a much larger issue, when one culture intervenes with another. Ancient Egypt has long been a draw for people of other cultures and in their enthusiasm for the ancient, outside cultures tend to overlook the current occupants. European nations had a tendency to go into a country or area they found interesting or useful and establish, or at least try to establish, their own rule or sphere of influence. In Egypt, as has been discussed, this started with the travelers and artifact collecting, but soon France had sent armies marching through the country. We have seen the way Egypt as a nation changed after that, the westernization of the government, cities, and infrastructure. Europeans held priority over high level administrative positions and all new buildings or organizations created were modeled on European equivalents. Even those Egyptian leaders who came later and tried to make Egypt more independent, like Muhammed Ali, still tried to further their nation by westernizing it. We've already looked at Ali's establishment of a state museum during the creation of which he specifically cites the effects such institutions have in Europe to explain why he wants one in Egypt. Even the way that Egyptians began to embrace ancient Egypt was tinged with Western influence. We have seen al-Tahtawi push for wider knowledge of ancient Egypt amongst his people after first learning about it during a trip to France, where he spent a great deal of time studying French culture.

Europe had a strangle-hold on Egypt for so long that it is impossible to know what the nation and the people would have done if left to themselves. They and their culture have been

irreparably changed and Egypt was not the only country Europe did this sort of thing to. But what we cannot forget, is that this was not some one way street. It is irresponsible, if not downright insulting, to assume that Egypt, and other nations like it, sat passively in this exchange. If nothing else, take away the knowledge that the people of Egypt did not sit idly by while Europeans had the run of their country. As this paper has shown, Egyptians had their own visions for what they wanted for the future of their nation. They had powerful leaders and scholars and engineers. They held protests and rebellions and did everything they could to take charge of their own land, until, eventually, they did it. Egyptology is only one part of this overarching story, but it has been a part of Egypt's story since almost the very beginning and it continues to be a part of it even now. That is why we bother to study Egyptology as a discipline, not only for what it tells us of the ancient past, but for what it tells us of the people who played a role in its development.

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