

The Ruins of Preservation: Conserving Ancient Egypt 1880-1914

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- 5 The rhetoric of preservation began to suffuse the archaeology of Egypt in the late nineteenth century. Amelia Edwards' best-selling travel narrative, *A Thousand Miles up the Nile*, is sometimes considered to have instigated 'modern' attitudes to the preservation of Egyptian monuments.¹ In some ways this judgement is appropriate: unlike her pronouncements on race
10 (shocking even by contemporary standards), Edwards' attitudes to conservation can be reduced to statements that still sound modern enough:

The wall paintings which we had the happiness of admiring in all their beauty and freshness are already much injured. Such is the fate of every Egyptian monument. . . The tourist carves it over with
15 names and dates. . . The student of Egyptology, by taking wet paper 'squeezes' sponges away every vestige of the original colour. The 'Collector' buys and carries off everything of value that he can, and the Arab steals it for him. The work of destruction, meanwhile goes on apace. . . The Museums of Berlin, of Turin, of Florence are
20 rich in spoils which tell their lamentable tale. When science leads the way, is it wonderful that ignorance should follow?²

- Between 1876 and her death in 1892, Edwards did more than anyone else in Britain to popularize Egypt's ancient history and established several of the institutional structures that still dominate British Egyptology today. The
25 continuity of these institutions, in particular the Egypt Exploration Fund/Society (the name was changed in 1919) and the Edwards Chair of Egyptology at University College London, encourages a sense of connection from the

¹ For this view see any publication or website on the early history of British Egyptology, from T. G. H. James, *Excavating in Egypt: The Egypt Exploration Society 1882-1982* (London, 1982) to www.digital.library.upenn.edu/women/edwards/edwards.html; for some explanation of Edwards' attitude to the Egyptian people see Billie Melman, *Women's Orients* (Ann Arbor, 1993), 254-75.

² A. B. Edwards, *A Thousand Miles up the Nile* (London, 1876), 353.

present back to the moments in the 1870s and '80s when modern conservatory Egyptology, concerned with the painstaking recovery and recording of sites rather than acquisition of art for museums, was supposedly born.

This paper deals with the contingencies that subverted preservation: it
 5 concerns the ways in which the creation of disciplines, with the power-struggles and epistemological competition that involves, can compromise the development of coherent responses to preservation concerns. Although the language of conservation entered Egyptological discourse in the 1870s, it did not define practice until nearly half a century later. For most Europeans,
 10 preservation continued to mean export to Europe, and the spectre of *felaheen* lime-kilns continued to be used as justification for dismembering ancient structures. Conservation interests were also consistently over-ridden by the many ideological crusades that Egyptologists pursued. Indeed, the need to fund-raise in Britain led Edwards herself to advocate the dismantling of sites
 15 so that donors to her cause might receive items for their private collections. These were often as mundane as uninscribed bricks from the walls of New-Kingdom storage buildings. From being the voice of conscience when uninhibited by practical interests, Edwards became a manifestation of the problem itself. The ideological causes that shaped Egyptology, ranging from proofs of
 20 biblical events to evidence for racial or eugenic theories, always trumped the fragile conservatory principles which hindsight leads us to overestimate as a driving force behind this Egyptological activity. In fact, the decades that followed the birth of preservation rhetoric were by far the most destructive in history, and those who voiced preservation concerns most loudly were often
 25 the most culpable. This phenomenon in Egypt has marked parallels with the development of archaeological practice in other imperial settings, particularly in the troubled movements for preservation in India. The question of who, whether the tiny Egyptological lobby or the army of administrators drafted into 1880s Egypt from India, really shaped attitudes to Egyptian
 30 monuments complicates this picture. In fact, it was often not Egyptologists who travelled the monuments and lobbied administrators for their preservation, but vice versa. Administrators who travelled the length of the country fulfilling their imperial duties habitually wrote to London periodicals to 'put Egyptologists on the alert' to the 'museum thieves' and 'stone contractors'
 35 who preyed on the monuments.³ These correspondents usually note informing local police, who are chastised for their lack of interest; quite what they

³ J. C. Ross, 'The Mutilation of Monuments in Egypt', *The Academy*, 927 (1890), 107; Ross was Inspector-General of Irrigation in Egypt and was a frequent conduit of information for Egyptologists.

expected Egyptologists to do, beyond wringing their hands, is not always clear.

There was one striking element of Egyptological discourse in which preservation concerns did predominate. While preservation was not the guiding principle of excavation, it did quickly become the dominant rhetorical theme in Egyptological power struggles. Egyptology, even by the standards of 5 other incipient archaeological disciplines, was intensely factional. This was in part because of national jealousies that intensified after British occupation in 1882. Administrators, engineers, and officers poured into Egypt from British 10 India, where preservation had already become a contentious issue as Upinder Singh describes.⁴ Many of these officials became large-scale collectors, founding several of the regional museums in England and Scotland; others became respected Egyptologists in their own right, perpetuating the long-running theme whereby diplomatic postings began archaeological careers (e.g. Henry 15 Rawlinson); yet more donated funds to the new Egyptological organizations. Before long these organizations recognized that it was politic to give administrators or engineers such as Sir John Fowler and even the toxically unpopular retired Proconsul, Lord Cromer, honorific roles on their committees.

The distribution of antiquities was not, in theory at least, a free market. 20 Rudimentary antiquities legislation was first introduced under Mehmed Ali in 1835, endeavouring primarily to restrict export of ancient art works; this had been almost entirely ineffective. The creation of an Antiquities Service in the 1850s, the pet project of the French scholar August Mariette, gave slightly more bite to efforts to control the movement of monumental art. As Elliott 25 Colla has argued, this control of the market did not mean the end of commerce in antiquities, but encouraged the development of new market mechanisms and new commercial discourses. This involved reframing purchases in the non-commodity registers of aesthetic-historical conservation, centralizing antiquities extraction through emergent state agencies, and giving 30 quasi-commercial practices a legitimacy they may not have enjoyed before.⁵ It remained, however, very straightforward for even the humblest individuals to continue as before: countless European and American travelers continued to do so.

⁴ Upinder Singh, *The Discovery of Ancient India: Early Archaeologists and the Beginnings of Archaeology* (Chicago, 2004); see also Robert Tignor, 'The "Indianization" of the Egyptian Administration under British Rule', *American Historical Review*, (1963), 636-61.

⁵ Elliott Colla, 'Preservation and Repression: Egyptian Antiquities Law as Doctrine and Practice', 3rd German-American Frontiers of Humanities Symposium (2006); abstract http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/pls/web/docs/F8284/4_colla.pdf

The British occupation gave the need to protect antiquities intense new urgency. However much the British liked to present themselves as saviours of Egypt's heritage, this event (even more, perhaps, than the burning of the library of Alexandria or Napoleon's brief rampage along the Nile) was a moment of enormous escalation in the destruction of Egypt's antiquities. Once Anglo-Indian administrators, with their sense of imperial entitlement, flooded into Egypt, previous legislation counted for nothing. Techniques for preventing customs officials opening export crates packed with antiquities were discussed openly in archaeological and military circles; the British Museum curator Sir E. A. T. Wallis Budge developed particular renown for his skills in subterfuge.

Several attempts were made to stem the flow. The early 1880s, for instance, saw a string of decrees relating to Arabic art, Antiquities prior to the Arab conquest, and the ailing Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Bulaq. Those decrees dealing with the ancient world were negotiations between Khedival power and the French antiquities service and were designed with British acquisitiveness in mind. 'All the monuments and objects of antiquity, recognised as such by the Regulation governing the matter, shall . . . be declared property of the Public Domain of the State' insisted a pronouncement of May 1883; this raft of legislation reprised themes of previous decades with no guarantee of greater potency.⁶ In response to efforts to curb export, the British launched impassioned criticism of treatment of antiquities that were kept in Egypt. They noted, in particular, the vulnerability of Mariette's museum in Bulaq to flooding during the annual inundation: even improvements carried out after a particularly damaging deluge in 1878 did not end the insistence that preservation was synonymous with export of antiquities to major European capitals. When the collections were moved to new quarters in Giza in 1890 initial enthusiasm was quickly replaced by fresh jingoistic criticism.⁷ In the same breath as he demanded that 'politics and political chauvinism' be kept out of discussion of preservation, A. H. Sayce railed against this French-controlled 'incoherent institution in a partially civilised community'.⁸ Also in the early 1880s, Maspero selected six retired military officers to become an improvised 'inspectorate' of monuments, each assigned

⁶ For translations of selected antiquities legislation, see Adrienne L. Fricke (trans.), 'Appendix II: Egyptian Antiquities Laws' in J. H. Merryman (ed.), *Imperialism, Art and Restitution* (Cambridge, 2006), 175-92.

⁷ For A. H. Sayce's initial, positive, views see 'Letters from Egypt', *Academy*, 937 (1890), 273.

⁸ A. H. Sayce, 'How are the Monuments of Egypt to be Preserved?', *Academy*, 1022 (1891), 508.

a particular sensitive region to oversee. Then, in 1891, a marginally more robust decree had the language of preservation at its core. It insisted that ‘monuments fixed to the ground, regardless of their state . . . must be conserved in place’; but it also formalized the system of *partage* whereby half of any haul could be exported out of Egypt by an excavator.⁹ These were not
5 inconsiderable adjustments, but in comparison to the vast new scale of problems they were small-scale, under-resourced and indecisive.

Until the 1880s field Egyptology had been dominated by a close network of scholars led by the intensely anti-British Mariette, friend and ally of the Paris-educated Khedive Ismail. The abrupt jerk from this French domination, towards British involvement, under the more pragmatic figure of Gaston Maspero, could not be anything but divisive.¹⁰ The most impassioned statements of concern for the preservation of Egyptian antiquities in this period came from French literary figures such as Pierre Loti, and were sustained
15 attacks aimed squarely at the British administration.¹¹ This was also a period of waxing German imperial interest in regions as disparate as Cameroon and Mesopotamia, and German antiquarians such as Rudolph Virchow were increasingly vocal in their distaste for the activities of British Egyptologists and political leaders. They favoured analogies between British archaeological sites
20 and the chaos of war zones, reminding readers of the close fit between imperial belligerence and British fascination with the ancients.¹² Areas coloured British red on world maps, they implied, marked ‘danger’ for remains of the past and regional heritage which would be forced violently into new colonial interests.

Yet factionalism was not just determined along national lines. The early history of British Egyptology is riddled with misunderstanding and personal vendetta. The Egypt Exploration Fund’s first two excavators, for instance, played out their mutual distrust by enlisting younger scholars to undermine each other’s work. Spies were hired, press-campaigns were used to blacken
30 reputations, and physical fights resulted on more than one occasion.

⁹ This conformed to treatment of treasure trove accepted since Roman Law; for the fullest coverage to date of these developments see Antoine Khater, *Le Régime juridique de fouilles et des antiquités en Egypte* (Cairo, 1960).

¹⁰ Profoundly anti-British sentiments persisted among the French and German archaeological establishment; during Maspero’s two spells in charge the British found excavation and export much easier than in the years when others, such as Emil Brugsch sought to revive the spirit of Mariette.

¹¹ E.g., Pierre Loti, *La Mort de Philae* (Paris, 1908).

¹² See below, p. 000.

Preservation concerns became the primary rhetorical resource in the new vocabulary of Egyptological outrage and insult.

However impossible their application, Egyptologists were at least fantasizing about a world in which conservation would be an overriding concern.

5 Each excavator compared his rivals to exploitative industrial capitalists, concerned only with extracting maximum remuneration from the ground at minimal cost, and presented himself as protector of Egypt's heritage. The history of archaeology has tended to label its protagonists either as 'good' preservationist, record-keeping excavators, or as 'bad' unsystematic and scientifically illiterate ones. In reality no such division could be drawn. The pace

10 of excavation, and therefore of destruction, accelerated rapidly because Egyptologists failed to agree on how preservation concerns should operate; they acquired many more sites than they could excavate responsibly simply to prevent rivals from 'destroying' them. This was a trend in which so-called

15 'progressive' archaeologists were most culpable. Disagreement about what Egyptology was, rather than leading to slower, more reflective, activity, led to rapid, panicked excavation that bore little relation to the idealistic schemes set out in Egyptology's first pedagogic texts.

Politics of excavation

20 Sometimes excavation sites were likened to war-zones because that is exactly what they were. This was true of the Egypt Exploration Fund's early excavations in the Nile Delta near the recently opened Suez Canal. The canal remains the biggest generator of income in Egypt, and Ismailia, the city founded by the canal-builders, still carries the memory of de Lesseps in the faded grandeur of

25 a few public buildings. It recalls the period when, after the booming cotton production of mid-century, prices plummeted. Egyptian borrowing from European financial houses ceased to be invested in economic expansion; instead, it was consumed in the service of a national debt that was now more than ten times the size of annual revenue.¹³ In the 1860s the Suez

30 Canal Authority had established its headquarters in Ismailia, and it is no coincidence that this city, constructed at the height of Ismail's efforts to emulate Europe, later became an important centre of resistance to British colonial intrusion. Between 1875 and 1936 Egypt received virtually no income from the lucrative canal and Ismailia symbolized this kind of

35 injustice.

¹³ For these circumstances see several works by Robert Tignor, beginning with 'The "Indianization" of the Egyptian Administration' and culminating in *Egypt: A Short History* (Princeton, 2010).

Where the current, neoclassical, Ismailia museum was provocatively opened in 1932, at the height of nationalist tensions, its smaller predecessor was opened at a similarly contentious moment, the year after British occupation. In 1882, Ismailia had been a key strategic objective for both the British troops of Garnet Wolsey and the Egyptian nationalist forces of General Ahmed Urabi: the diminutive 1883 museum was not just a reflection of historical interest but a small symbol of European victories.¹⁴ It catered for several separate European constituencies and told a story of Egyptian history that began in the pages of the King James Bible and ended with the arrival of a new chosen people. These European constituencies included official travellers between Egypt and India; they also included nonconformist ministers from provincial towns like Leicester and Bedford who made up the bulk of Thomas Cook parties before the occupation, and whose pursuit of the Exodus route has left behind extensive diaries that revel in parallels between modern Lake Timsah and Bible verses.¹⁵ A third constituency was the surprisingly large number of battlefield tourists who descended on Egypt after the occupation and the 1882 defeat of Urabi's Egyptian nationalist forces by Wolsey's British troops.

Outside the museum hawkers sold wares to appeal to each of these classes of visitor. Small artefacts, often strawless bricks from domestic buildings, were sold as biblical relics, supposedly fashioned by the 'bleeding hands' of enslaved Hebrews. Other artefacts were military: a visitor could 'acquire for the sum of one pound sterling a shell which may or may not have been originally picked up on the battlefield'.¹⁶ This military tourism is a feature of British activity in 1880s Egypt that is often forgotten. It was entangled with Egyptology, and was presented by commentators as a far bigger phenomenon than historically inspired travel. Stanley Lane-Poole's gory description of the Egypt Exploration Fund's first site captures this messy relationship between military occupation and Egyptological activity. Far from the idyllic wilderness presented in Egyptologists' press-releases, this is a landscape punctuated by

a succession of abandoned preserved-meat tins, exploded shells,
fragments of clothes and other debris, and by the legs of horses,

¹⁴ For the events surrounding Urabi's uprising against Ishmael's successor, Tewfiq, in 1879, and the way this was used as justification for British military intervention see Tignor, *Egypt: A Short History* (Princeton, 2010).

¹⁵ Cook himself was a Baptist minister and, as Tim Larsen in *Contested Christianity* (Baylor, 2004) has shown, his tours in the Eastern Mediterranean partook as much of the nature of pilgrimage as tourism.

¹⁶ Stanley Lane-Poole, 'The Discovery of Pithom-Succoth', *British Quarterly Review* (July 1883), 108.

and sometimes of men, protruding from the ground where their shroud of sand has been blown away.¹⁷

The larger of two Thomas Cook boats seen on the Freshwater Canal, Lane-Poole continues, is fitted out for those ‘on the trail of the army of ’82’, the much smaller dahabiyeh is intended ‘to be used for the purposes of science’ and ‘devoted to no sordid gain or vulgar curiosity’.¹⁸

Egyptologists themselves were more reticent than Lane-Poole concerning politics and empire. They went to extraordinary lengths in the 1880s and ’90s to demonstrate that military and scholarly activity were entirely disconnected, or even that the occupation had problematized, rather than assisted, the activities of British Egyptologists. They were acutely aware of the tightrope they trod between securing the backing of the unpopular political regime, and preventing scholars from around the world from seeing the activities of British Egyptologists as just another arm of imperial power.

Like several other areas of Egyptian administration Egyptology remained nominally under French control, as it had been since the mid-century. British Egyptologists liked to emphasize the threats this posed to their own existence, including the fact that, for fear of upsetting French interests, nervous British administrators hoped to limit or even close down potentially fractious British Egyptological activity. There is some justification for their view. In the 1880s Lord Cromer, at the beginning of his troubled tenure as Proconsul, was deeply concerned by the diplomatic tensions that antiquity hunting could lead to. He vetoed the deployment of an official British Museum representative in Egypt and when a British Museum employee, the exceptionally irresponsible and ‘entitled’ Wallis Budge, arrived in an unofficial capacity Cromer did all he could to persuade him back to London.¹⁹ Two decades later, Egyptology was still—staggeringly—said to exemplify a science ‘remote from politics’.²⁰ No-one since the mid-twentieth century would claim that Egyptology was not politically entangled, but the extent to which it was tossed around on an ocean of much more powerful interests, unable to develop in any cogent and self-determined manner, is constantly underestimated.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ See, e.g., Budge’s account of his arrival in Egypt, E. Wallis Budge, *By Nile and Tigris* 2 vols (London, 1920), I, 76ff.

²⁰ ‘Ancient Egyptian Art’, *Athenaeum* (1915), 267.

Exploration and conservation

Egyptology in 1882 was still many years away from becoming a coherent discipline. The ideal skill-set of an Egyptologist was not agreed on and disciplinary objectives were not settled, never mind the technical apparatus that might achieve them. Philologist, historian, engineer, draftsman, archaeologist, astronomer, anthropologist, architect, theologian, chemist, physicist, mathematician: each was considered a key component in the identity of the ideal Egyptologist by some of those who popularized or funded the incipient discipline. The Egyptian language and script could be studied in Berlin and other German universities, and several American (but few British) students made their way there in this period. Yet no courses existed anywhere that taught Egyptological skills representative of any combinations that might be used in the field.

The Egypt Exploration Fund embodied this confusion over what Egyptology was. Until after 1900 this organization had similar numbers of members to the more famous societies dealing with British heritage, including the National Trust. Preservation of Egyptian temples and tombs had been central to its founding principles. By the time it actually engaged in its first excavations, however, preservation played little role in the discourse the organization was involved in, still less its practice. The Fund's founders had quickly discovered that preservation of Egyptian monuments did not raise subscriptions: only religion could assure a following on the scale that could fund large excavations. Attempts to map the Exodus route, excavate the Land of Goshen and discover records of Joseph, Moses, and Jeremiah followed. It is indicative of this shift that a rival organization, run by Royal-Academy painters and with a tense relationship with Egyptologists, was soon set up in London to represent the preservation interests the EEF had discarded.²¹ It is also no coincidence that this group, the Society for the Preservation of the Monuments of Ancient Egypt, was short-lived.

Dominated by theological interest on its inception, the turnover of EEF committee members was rapid. Combined with rich discoveries at Graeco-Roman sites this led the organization to be transformed within a decade: much to the chagrin of many subscribers, the Fund was quickly wrenched from biblical enthusiasts seeking Hebrew relics from the muddy Delta, by

²¹ This has usually been presented as a complementary institution to the EEF (their archives are now amalgamated, giving an unhelpful sense of unity). The relationship between the two was never easy: the founder of the SPMAE, Edward Poynter, insisted that it was Egyptologists the monuments needed protecting from. Even after the foundation of this society, however, commentators continued to urge 'the necessity for the preservation of the monuments'.

classicists coveting papyri from the dry Fayum. Amidst such rapid about-
turns major projects such as an archaeological survey of Egypt, painstakingly
planned, fell apart or were dramatically scaled down. Even on individual
projects priorities were so different that excavators failed to work together,
5 undermining each other's schemes. Near Amarna in 1892, for instance, Petrie
followed an incongruous set of boot prints in the sand to find junior em-
ployees of the archaeological survey sabotaging the work to which they were
supposed to be contributing.

Political shocks of the 1890s and early 1900s made Cromer's name a
10 byword for iron-fisted aggression rather than the 'enlightened' leadership
he aspired to; this encouraged nationalist sentiment to extend into the
Egyptian countryside and further problematized archaeological activity.²²
A handful of administrators did see official archaeology as politically expe-
dient. For instance, Kitchener in Khartoum championed the archaeology of
15 Meroe: this was both a personal agenda, consolidating his identity as 'Avenger
of Gordon' by emphasizing the shared archaeological proclivities of the two
generals, and a publicity stunt to generate public awareness of the Sudan.²³
Yet the protection of Egyptian monuments remained a staggeringly piece-
meal affair. Administrators were much more likely to collect for themselves,
20 or for sale in London, than to support official archaeological bodies or pres-
ervation agendas. The British Museum's 1920 document *How to Observe in
Archaeology* demonstrates the persistence of this phenomenon. It encouraged
administrators, military officers, and travellers in Egypt to collect responsibly:
to record, for instance, the provenance of acquisitions, and to consider sale to
25 museums before dispersal among private collectors. Its existence emphasizes
the extent to which digging and collecting, despite legal stricture, remained a
free market until the creation of an Egyptian parliament in 1922 began to give
the law teeth; famously, this new dispensation would be dramatically tested in
its very first year when Howard Carter opened the Tomb of Tutankhamun.

²² On Cromer's use of the classics to emphasize his 'enlightened' status see Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley, 2003).

²³ At this point Gordon's fame rested as much on his supposed discovery of the 'true' Tomb of Christ in Jerusalem (validated by the Anglican Church) as on his martyrdom at Khartoum. For Kitchener's efforts to tie his mythology to the legacy of Gordon, see James Robinson, 'The Heroic Myth of Lord Kitchener', unpublished dissertation, University of Birmingham.

Petrie and *Methods and Aims in Archaeology*

Caught up in the confusion and petty jealousies of the 1880s and '90s was a young Kentish archaeologist called William Matthew Flinders Petrie. Petrie made two key enemies in the Egypt Exploration Fund which would dog the first decades of his career. One was the Fund's Honorary Secretary, R. S. Poole, a British Museum numismatist, UCL Professor of Classics, and enthusiast for biblical Egypt.²⁴ The other was the Fund's first excavator, the Swiss Bible scholar, Edouard Naville. The conflict with Poole stymied teaching of the Egyptian language in Petrie's UCL Egyptology course, but it is the conflict with Naville that is of interest here, based as it was on conflicting ideas of how a site should be maintained and recorded.²⁵ This was a conflict based on disagreement over what an archaeological site was.

In 1885 Petrie was visited at Koptos by an ambitious young classical scholar called David Hogarth; soon Hogarth had been persuaded to infiltrate Naville's large EEF excavation of the Temple of Hatshepsut. Petrie's caricature of Naville was of a clumsy theologian-cum-antiquarian who lacked any conception of the archaeological record, whose idea of scientific excavation was to find a direct route to the biggest monumental remains and extract them for the lowest price, whatever the archaeological cost. Petrie contrasted this with his own interest in unprepossessing remains like potsherds, which could be used to reconstruct cultural development, and his delicate treatment of archaeological strata, applying (as he put it) the techniques of geology to the human past. His celebrated teaching collection at UCL, with its 20,000 pots, makes a marked contrast to Naville's legacy in monumental art scattered around Europe's museums. Following the law that a discipline's history is written by the institutional winners, Petrie's image of the two men has been set down as canonical.

However, the British press did not always see things this way. They presented Naville, working in an official capacity for a British institution, as selflessly reconstructing ancient cities and temples, piece by monumental piece.²⁶ Petrie, working on his own account, and shipping small items to Europe by the thousand was instead presented as selfishly grubbing in the mud, dismantling sites to feed museums abroad. Within a few months even

²⁴ Poole's particular vision of Egypt is captured in *Cities of Egypt* (1881) in which some of the most important pharaonic cities are not even mentioned, but tiny border outposts receive whole chapters on the basis of a single scriptural mention.

²⁵ Since Poole vetoed the employment of anyone but himself to teach hieroglyphs, and Petrie refused to work with Poole, Egyptian language classes had to be held irregularly and surreptitiously in the bedsit of Frances Llewellyn Griffith.

²⁶ E.g. F. L., 'In the Learned World', *Academy*, (1914), 402.

Hogarth had switched sides. In a delicately phrased public apology for his earlier espionage he disowned Petrie and his techniques: where Petrie accused Naville of destroying the archaeological record at Deir el Bahari, Hogarth insisted that the strata had been compromised before Naville arrived. Hogarth had, he insisted, found ‘a German newspaper of 1875’ sixteen feet down.²⁷ Naville undoubtedly represented an older model of archaeological practice than Petrie, which placed much less emphasis on detailed recording of sites, or limiting the scope of excavations in order to preserve material for future excavators. But it is important to note that Petrie’s progressive archaeology was not considered by many contemporary commentators to offer greater scope for either conservation or the acquisition of knowledge.

The reasons for this are instructive and can be approached through the most important published engagement with preservation concerns in this period. This is the first comprehensive manual of Egyptological technique and practice in any language: Petrie’s *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* (1904). It is also one of the first systematic statements of archaeological practice, and therefore an early interrogation of the vexed relationship between destructive knowledge-generation and careful preservation that was the constant conundrum of pre-electronic archaeology. Since 1892 Petrie had been teaching Egyptology at UCL in a decidedly haphazard manner and this text had three main purposes: to set his pedagogy on a firmer footing; to develop his ambitions towards the status of public intellectual; and to win the public and press over to his new archaeological approach. Before exploring the text itself, this section will set out some of the reasons it was needed.

Petrie faced difficult circumstances in the 1880s and ’90 s. Firstly, tensions developed in his relationship with museums. He became increasingly frustrated with the pressure museums exerted for the dispersal of artefacts around the globe; yet he remained dependent on their sponsorship. His method of operation was to collect donations, then to give the biggest donors—whether Copenhagen, Boston, or the Ashmolean—first choice from among the items he could secure permission to export.²⁸ A significant

²⁷ ‘Egypt Exploration Fund’, *Academy*, (1894), 356.

²⁸ Under *partage*, the Director General of the Antiquities Service had the real first choice, keeping especially significant items for the Egyptian Museum; most of these were not intended for display but were entered into public auction. Once this share had been taken the remaining material (in practice often much more than half the discoveries) was Petrie’s to distribute as he saw fit. Without this distribution there would have been no viable means of funding excavations. The auctions were a significant source of income for the Egyptian museum, and resulted in enormous dispersal of antiquities around the globe, until the mid-twentieth century.

proportion of the current collections of many European and American museums was acquired through Petrie in this way. Although Petrie placed great emphasis on provenance, he worked so quickly that the destinations of his items were often not properly recorded. Several current museological projects
5 such as *Naukratis: the Greeks in Egypt* have spent a great deal of time locating the huge numbers of artefacts that Petrie dispersed around the world.²⁹

The case of Naukratis is instructive of other contingencies attached to Petrie's approach. Before *Methods and Aims*, Petrie singularly failed to persuade museum curators of the value of his interests: the results were disastrous. After his first season at this major site of early-Greek iron working,
10 Petrie had enthusiastically, and with a minimum of recording, packed the best iron instruments for immediate transport to the British Museum. When he returned to Britain, one of his first priorities was to visit his Naukratis exhibit in the Museum's Bronze room. To his surprise he found a few pots
15 and statuettes but no metal-work. Enquiring of an attendant, he learnt that the curator, C. T. Newton, had considered the iron items ugly and thrown them away. They were never recovered. The next decade saw several more misunderstandings of this kind, caused perhaps by the art-historical obsession of curators, but exacerbated by Petrie's hasty recording and failure to
20 communicate effectively. The real problem here, responsible for untold destruction, was still lack of agreement on what Egyptology was and who had the right to define its parameters.

Just as damaging as these disjunctions between Egyptologist and museum was Petrie's neurotic disdain for his peers. The suspicion he harboured not
25 just for Naville but for all other excavators explains his failure to adhere, even approximately, to his own strictures. Egypt to Petrie was 'a house on fire': despising 'maggoty' modernity and other excavators with equal intensity he saw his own role as salvage from these twin threats.³⁰ His first priority was not the patient conservation of sites that *Methods and Aims* suggested; it was
30 keeping sites out of the hands of other excavators. If this meant hastily working-over vast, delicate remains himself, in explicit contradistinction to his own published strictures, this was seen as a small price to pay for keeping them out of other hands.

The disjunctions between archaeologists and their curatorial sponsors
35 combined with the difficulties generated by rapid excavation to inspire some strongly negative coverage of Petrie's publications. Throughout the

²⁹ http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/research_projects/naukratis_the_greeks_in_egypt.aspx

³⁰ For some of Petrie's railing against modernity and 'maggoty' industrial England see W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Seventy Years in Archaeology* (London, 1931), 125–6.

1880s and '90s every particular in which the new Egyptian archaeology deviated from the established norms of classical excavation was a source of contention. Petrie insisted on three particular developments. Firstly, in order to leave excavated structures standing, and recover museum-pieces with minimum destruction, the Egyptologist should be an engineer by training and temperament: language and historical scholarship were merely secondary considerations (Petrie even used his inaugural lecture at UCL to insist that 'no greater mistake is made . . . than supposing that an excavator must needs be a scholar').³¹ Secondly, he pressed the importance of developing techniques to reconstruct societies and their history from potsherds, weights and measures, and stressed the relative unimportance of high art. Thirdly, he insisted that results must be published within weeks of excavation to make absolutely certain that records of every site, however incomplete, became public.

15 All three of these considerations were subjected to ridicule. Petrie's insistence on rapid publication was assaulted as unscholarly and embarrassing. *The Athenaeum's* reviewer took a typical line:

Mr Petrie should not thrust upon the world a book 'with all its imperfections, its half-gleaned results, its transitory views', upon the principle that 'half a loaf is better than no bread'. When he informs his readers that 'it is a golden principle to let each year see the publication of the year's work', he quite forgets that he publishes a confession of his inability to do work which requires careful deduction or patient research.³²

25 This reviewer's assault on Petrie's 'ephemeral' interests and lack of proper training was also typical: the Naukratis volume

is a most laborious, but wearisome treatise . . . and in spite of all this Mr Petrie declares that 'no finality' can be expected. . . When Mr Petrie began to excavate . . . he should first have had a training in Egyptian and Greek and Roman archaeology [and] some acquaintance with ancient languages . . . most of Mr Petrie's conclusions will have to be altered or modified.³³

Methods and Aims became Petrie's most substantial attempt to put an end to this kind of criticism. The text is an apology for his approach, intended to win

³¹ This lecture is reprinted as Appendix A in Rosalind M. Janssen, *Egyptology at University College London, 1892-1992* (London, 1992), 98.

³² 'Naukratis', *Athenaeum*, (1886), 471.

³³ *Ibid.*

classicists, philologists, and museum curators over to his scientific cause.³⁴ This was his attempt to define, once and for all, what Egyptology should be, and to assure his authority over its development. Petrie set out by establishing a dichotomy. On one side was the world of ‘pretty things’, fine art, literature, and history which had ‘housed’ the dilettante archaeology of previous decades (the world of Giovanni Belzoni and A. H. Layard).³⁵ On the other was an approach to the past that made history subservient to the ‘principles of science’ and ‘real knowledge’ in which, Petrie insisted, archaeology’s disciplinary future lay. Knowledge of chemistry and physics, he argued, is as important as critical knowledge of ancient languages. By this stage in his career, Petrie was ready to declare war on classical archaeology and the practices of museum curators, and *Methods and Aims* became a text about the practice and ethics of scientific treatment of antiquities and sites.

One of the most striking features of *Methods and Aims* is its detailed pro-
scription of the character, ethical agenda and personal habits of the archae-
ologist. This character is defined in explicit contrast with contemporary
notions of the aesthete: to borrow James Eli Adams’ terms it emphasizes
‘desert saint’ against ‘dandy’ masculinity.³⁶ Petrie insists that archaeology is
‘better fitted to open the mind, to produce wide interests and toleration’,
effectively to form character, than any other discipline.³⁷ His opening chap-
ters are a bold and direct statement concerning this vision of Edwardian
masculinity. In keeping with the volume of Epictetus he carried in his over-
coat, Petrie presents a Stoic vision of the modern male: eschewing luxury,
embracing physical hardship, actively pursuing austerity and militaristic regi-
mentation. This vision was fully realised on Petrie’s sites, for which an ‘iron
constitution’ was famously required.³⁸ Frequently taking up occupancy in
tombs, much like second-century Alexandrine ascetics, Petrie as well as his
assistants and visitors adhered to long working hours, Spartan conditions and
‘the master’s’ astonishingly strict regimen.

This emphasis on moral rigours rather than formal training gives
Methods and Aims its intensely remonstrative flavour. Petrie sets out the

³⁴ Its failure to ignite much excitement in 1904 has been explained away by archaeologists such as Roger Summers on the grounds that ‘it was in fact twenty-five years ahead of its time and was consequently unpopular’, Roger Summers, ‘Methods and Aims in South African Archaeology’, *South African Archaeological Bulletin* (March 1958), 3-9.

³⁵ W. M. F. Petrie, *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* (London, 1904), viiff.

³⁶ J. E. Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (Ithaca, 1995).

³⁷ Petrie, *Methods and Aims*, viii, 1-8.

³⁸ E.g., Charles Breasted, *Pioneer to the Past* (New York, 1943), 75-6; see also Drower, *Flinders Petrie*, 217f.

responsibilities of excavators: ‘gold digging has at least no moral responsibility, beyond the ruin of the speculator; but spoiling the past has an acute moral wrong in it’.³⁹ He compared archaeology to a laboratory science but emphasized that unlike other experiments Egyptological experiments could be conducted only once: the very essence of this science was destruction. The key to the archaeologist’s craft was therefore to be found in the moral judgment that weighed knowledge-gained against evidence-annihilated. The archaeologist’s true identity was not founded on aesthetic discrimination (like Charles Newton at Halikarnassos) nor courageous adventure (like Layard at Nineveh) nor even inspired discovery (like Schliemann at Troy) but on a kind of discrimination that was ethical rather than artistic: a principle of inspired compromise that balanced the claims of the present to know the past against the claims of future excavators.

The character that Petrie aims to establish is not just a generalized ideal of modern masculinity; it is an attempt to generate an image of himself that can secure him a status as a public figure. This is an endeavour that his eugenicist texts soon followed up.⁴⁰ His attempt to acquire the prestige of a latter-day Layard or Schliemann reveals him reshaping the role of celebrity archaeologist for a new political environment. He employs the classic ‘anxiety of influence’ technique of undermining the basis of his predecessors’ popularity which he locates in both aestheticism and the ‘romance of adventure’. He casts aspersions on ‘gentlemen’ and ‘businessmen’ who had enthusiastically ‘squandered [thousands] ‘in doing harm’ where level-headed experts could do great good ‘with a hundred pounds intelligently spent’.⁴¹ The association of archaeology with adventure, he implies, is the cause of its bad name among scientists. The press, of course, demurred, praising Petrie most strongly when he failed to undermine this adventure: even the lofty *Athenaeum* revelled in the fact that Mr Petrie’s rigid typologies cannot ‘curb the element of Oriental fantasy—neither do we apprehend he would desire to—which bids defiance to all rules of scientific classification’.⁴²

³⁹ Petrie, *Methods and Aims*, 1.

⁴⁰ These texts, in particular *Janus in Modern Life* (London, 1906) and *The Revolutions of Civilisation* (London, 1911), were both enthused over by figures as eminent as H. G. Wells; as Richard Overly has noted, ideas we usually associate with Spengler were, in the 1910s and ’20s often referenced to Petrie’s works instead. See also Petrie’s chapter ‘Archaeology’ in Alfred Russell Wallace’s collection *The Progress of the Century* (New York, 1901).

⁴¹ Petrie, *Methods and Aims*, 3.

⁴² ‘Mr Petrie’s Forthcoming Exhibition of Egyptian Antiquities’, *Athenaeum*, (30 Aug 1890), 297.

Methods and Aims depicts the thrifty expert with a steady hand and level head as an all-powerful puppet-master guiding complex excavations: the archaeologist must inspire the loyalty of scores of local Egyptian workers; sites must become well-oiled machines in which all those present are eyes and ears of the centralized power. The archaeologist is a charismatic man-manager, but also a creature of uncanny instinct. Petrie describes how the buried work of masons dead four-thousand years can be sensed by tiny variations in the feel of earth beneath the feet. Published just as *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* was being penned, this is redolent of the ‘animistic reason’ that Michael Saler insists was present in so much more than Doyle’s fictions at this moment.⁴³ This unteachable sensitivity and intuition distinguishes the good from the bad archaeologist:

The power of conserving material and information; of observing all that can be gleaned; of noticing trifling details which may imply a great deal else; of acquiring and building up a mental picture; of fitting everything into place, and not losing or missing any possible clues;—all this is the soul of the work, and without it excavating is mere dumb plodding.⁴⁴

All others on site are mere tools; ‘the hands of the master’ must be responsible for all delicate work such as clearing soil from antiquities. As Stephen Quirke has pointed out, this glorification of expertise as authority mirrors colonization in miniature.⁴⁵ Even Petrie’s unusually loyal commitment to the most proficient of his workers (rehiring them year after year even for excavations distant from their homes) neatly parallels certain techniques of colonial rule. The roles of these intermediary agents such as Ali Suefi who quickly developed substantial local power through their access to the archaeologist, echoes the ‘go-betweens’ of recent scholarship on the borderlands between cultures in imperial zones.⁴⁶

Local knowledge, although rarely acknowledged in excavation reports, was a powerful resource even for the excavations most rooted in the traditions of

⁴³ Michael Saler, *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* (Oxford, 2012), 25–56.

⁴⁴ When Petrie touches on these themes he often employs echoes, surely deliberate, of the language and ideas of Conan Doyle and of T. H. Huxley’s 1888 essay ‘On the Method of Zadiq’; Huxley and Doyle exemplify the kind of public status that Petrie sought.

⁴⁵ Stephen Quirke, *Hidden Hands: Egyptian Workforces in Petrie Excavation Archives, 1880–1924* (London, 2010).

⁴⁶ Simon Schaffer et al., *The Brokered World: Go-betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820* (London, 2009).

the King James Bible and Herodotus. Archaeology and antiquities tourism were both enormously destructive of small Egyptian communities after 1882, but Egyptologists came to value these communities for unexpected reasons. In works like *Methods and Aims*, which aspired to interest the public not just in the outputs of Egyptological research, but in the day-to-day practice of the excavator, some picture of local communities and the archaeologist's relationship with them began to emerge. At the beginning of the 1880s Petrie, Naville, and other excavators were deeply interested in local traditions. This was not the 'peasant studies' agenda that emerged in the 1930s: excavators before the First World War had little interest in understanding or preserving fellah traditions in their own right.⁴⁷ Instead, they worked hard to recover traces of biblical or classical people and locations from Arabic place names and folklore. British periodicals frequently featured images of excavators not as lone explorers, but shepherded by intermediaries who pointed out landmarks to which tradition attached the names of Moses or Rhodopis. And every archaeological instruction manual of this period suggests strategies for appraising the reliability of local knowledge. The Arabic language and local tradition are presented as a veil drawn between the modern European viewer and a crystalline reality called 'ancient Egypt'. From the patterns dimly discerned through this veil the contours of antiquity can be reconstituted. As well as this highly amateurish attentiveness to etymological echoes among local people, observation of the relationship between modern *felaheen* and the Nile was used as a means of accessing the 'ancient Egyptian mind' which was supposedly formed in response to the same environmental challenges and quotidian realities. Amid assumptions of the unchanging nature of 'the East', and despite general lack of interest in modern Egyptian culture in its own right, the Egyptologist became folklorist as well as engineer, engaged in the preservation of cultural traces as well as stone and mortar.

British Egyptology in European perspective

It is a familiar fact that preservation concerns played out very differently in different European states. It is also well known that this related in part to divergent attitudes to professional and amateur approaches (so far as those terms make any sense for this period). To wheel out the cliché, preservation in

⁴⁷ When this genre did emerge, towards the end of Petrie's career, its exponents usually studied villages with economies that were reliant on archaeology or the tourist trade, where villagers could acquire archaeological expertise themselves or else 'become mysteriously rich in a very short time' by joining in the circulation of antiquities. Nor was this the anthropology of the *felaheen* which usually, for the sake of convenience, studied archaeological workforces (e.g. W. H. R. Rivers).

Germany was less a matter of public interest and more a matter for certificated experts in architecture, art history, or engineering. Preservation concerns in Britain were mobilized through public interest, often open subscription and donation, and organized by celebrities whose institutional affiliations or expert training were not self-evidently those of an incipient heritage industry. This cliché holds more or less true. To all intents and purposes Flinders Petrie, until at least the time when *Methods and Aims* was published, was seen to belong to this amateur tradition. He lacked classical languages and university training. The costs of his early excavations were raised by Amelia Edwards via public subscription and he received no remuneration beyond bare expenses.

The differences this generated between Petrie and European scholars were many. Often university trained, they had access to university resources and authority. Often state-funded, they received official sanction from their own governments and the Egyptian state. Mariette for instance was sponsored from 1849 by his employer, the Louvre, and by 1859 had persuaded Khedive Ismail to found the Department of Antiquities he controlled until his death in 1881. This position also allowed him status as director of Egypt's first museums. Still more dramatically, it permitted him use of *corvée*: he wielded state authority to compel *felaheen* into his workforce. His role as a cultural intermediary between states was demonstrated in his authorship of the libretto of Verdi's *Aida*, commissioned for the opening of the Suez Canal. Other French and German archaeologists partook of Mariette's system to varying degrees, but most sought connections with a system that became increasingly formalized and was tied increasingly closely to state power.

By the time Petrie arrived in Egypt this was (despite the usual institutional jealousies) a well-oiled system with its own pecking-order in which leading French and German Egyptologists knew their place. It carefully controlled permits to excavate, both to limit antiquities leaving Egypt and to attempt to establish a professionalized system whereby only those with appropriate credentials or connections might dig. Like Mariette, its new leaders saw retaining antiquities in Egypt as a primary goal, and like Mariette they aimed to develop a professional system with a clear hierarchical structure.

Mariette's ambition to keep antiquities in Cairo was one that the British continued to oppose. In fact, Petrie, and his peers refused to work within this hierarchy and in so doing they threatened the system. Self-consciously independent and amateur, they rejected French or German leadership, and considered their own authority to trump that of the Department of Antiquities. To this end, Petrie's claim to a technical archaeological superiority, which used mathematics to record sites and chemistry to preserve artefacts, was crucial. Since he asserted that imperial power was not his justification, Petrie's insistence on an entirely new skill-set, not taught in universities,

not ‘owned’ by Mariette’s hierarchy, was the chief grounds that British archaeologists found for justifying their antagonism to the Department of Antiquities. Although he did attack Mariette on the grounds of his treatment of *felaheen*, his chief critique concerned the aesthetic nature of the Department’s concerns and their apparent lack of interest in the contributions of chemical and physical knowledge to the development of an archaeological science. The support Petrie did have in the British press thus hit out at French, German, and Greek excavators, deploring the fact that not archaeological judgements, but ‘some diplomatic fad’ placed the antiquities of Egypt in ‘the present utterly incompetent hands’; in the view of this reviewer the French system (‘if system it can be called’) squandered ‘thousands upon thousands of pounds of the public grant’ and achieved nothing.⁴⁸ Even in the 1890s when all real danger from flooding was long gone, the Department of Antiquities museum was consistently portrayed as the most dangerous place in the world for antiquities.

This drawing of battle lines defined the enmities that developed. Petrie was belittled by German scholars such as Virchow and Schweinfurth in much the same terms as were employed by the cosmopolitan art critics whose work filled the London journals: he was an untrained amateur who showed no flair for those skills that validated the archaeologist’s or antiquary’s claim to expertise. His enemies could wield the opinions of the most prestigious names of European archaeology when they sought to sully Petrie’s reputation. One American lawyer, resident in London, did so when he used Petrie’s most celebrated excavation—Hawara—as a case study to damn the amateurism of British Egyptology in general: ‘Schweinfurth told me that Virchow had said to him that the horrors of Königgratz had not prepared him for the revolting sight of Petrie’s mangled remains of Hawara’.⁴⁹ In reality, of course, there were no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ figures. Petrie’s attitude to the *felaheen*, although deeply orientalist, was fairer than Mariette’s; Mariette’s attitude to the Egyptian state was more positive than Petrie’s.

After Methods and Aims

From 1910 onwards the UCL Egyptology course (nominally under Petrie’s control but in fact masterminded by Margaret Murray) was finally organized into a certificated qualification, no longer just Petrie’s paternalistic finishing school for ‘lady artists’.⁵⁰ It had soon become the model for archaeological

⁴⁸ ‘Illahun, Kahun and Gurob’, *Saturday Review*, (17 Oct 1891), 452.

⁴⁹ F. C. Whitehouse to Edward Poynter, 27 September 1888, EES VIIIa.3.

⁵⁰ See Rosalind M. Janssen, *Egyptology at University College London, 1892-1992* (London, 1992).

Egyptology education, its elements adapted into similar courses in Britain, Europe, and America. But change was under way before these students reached the field: the vast salvage archaeology projects associated with the building of the Aswan Dam forced international cooperation on an entirely unprecedented scale. At the same time, reorganization of the Department of Antiquities gradually placed some, younger, British Egyptologists within the system. In 1899, for instance, Howard Carter was appointed Chief Inspector of Antiquities for Upper Egypt (some of the many tensions at work here were demonstrated when Carter was forced to resign after siding with Egyptian guards against French tourists in the ‘Saqqara Affair’ of 1905). The careers of Carter and his replacement, Arthur Weigall, demonstrate the gradual professionalization of British Egyptology. Yet this was all patchy and unsustainable development: this new generation of Egyptologists struggled to balance the pressures exerted by the British Government (including those for rapid development of Egyptian irrigation, road, and rail) with the claims of preservation; surprisingly frequently, they sided with industrial modernization and against the cause of antiquities. In this sense, increasing professionalization of British Egyptology did not mean increasingly coherent attitudes to preservation.

Two things changed this. The first was the suspension of archaeological activity during the First World War. The Egyptology that emerged after 1919, long discussed in European cities over five inactive years, was more coherent than its earlier manifestations. Members of the EEF continued to meet irregularly during the war and at their meetings a post-war agenda for the organization was shaped. On 3 October 1916 H. G. Lyons, J. G. Milne, and A. H. Gardiner met and with ‘scientific’ as their watchword compared the techniques of French, German, and American scholars to attempt to reconcile diverse Egyptological approaches into a coherent disciplinary norm.⁵¹ It was in this wartime ferment that the reputation of Naville was finally challenged, not Petrie but the American Egyptologist George Reisner being praised as the model for progressive recording and preservation techniques. Reisner was soon celebrated as the first Egyptologist to achieve in practice the freedom from museum interests that Petrie had long advocated in theory. His work at Giza was also celebrated as developing photography from an ethnographic and topographic tool into one that could truly be called ‘archaeological’.

Yet 1922 was an even more significant year than 1919. It represented the beginning of a new Egyptological order. Under the 1922 Egyptian parliament the plunder of antiquities became much more difficult. Egypt became much less a ‘house on fire’ and the sense of panicked acquisition receded. Those for

⁵¹ EEF Sub-committee Report, 3 October 1916, XVIII 32.

whom this panic had become a way of life, including Petrie and many of his students, now found Egypt an inhospitable place to dig and moved their focus eastward and northward around the Mediterranean. Once again, the archaeologists followed in the footsteps of the imperial regime, taking advantage of the Jerusalem Mandate (1923-48) in much the same way as they made use of British power in Egypt from 1882-1922. The same kinds of practice continued in Palestine far into the twentieth century: Petrie maintained many of his 1890s approaches into the 1930s. Pressures for heritage agendas, it seems, remained localized, the established culture of archaeology continuing to prove resistant to change.

Timothy Mitchell has demonstrated how Egypt under British rule was treated as a playground for technological experimentation, generating approaches and ideas that would then be exported around the globe. The most obvious example is the total restructuring of the flow of the Nile from the 1870s onwards, with the Aswan Dam begun in the 1890s being the first really major event in this. This helped, in Mitchell's words 'inaugurate around the world an era of engineering on a new scale. . . for many postcolonial governments the [ability to rearrange] the natural and social environment' through this new breed of super-dam 'became a means to demonstrate the strength of the modern state as techno-economic power'.⁵² Archaeology, on a much more modest scale, followed a comparable pattern. Much like these dramatic engineering interventions, the archaeological practices established in Egypt in the 1890s did not so much adapt to the new circumstances of the 1920s as migrate to places where political developments permitted their operation. Numerous figures who had trained as Egyptologists within Petrie's circle of influence (such as John Garstang) chose to reject the new strictures of Egypt, persisting with established approaches in areas made newly amenable by political and military power. The factors that limited the efficacy of heritage agendas in the 1890s continued to wreak ruin on preservation.

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⁵² Timothy Mitchell, 'Can the Mosquito Speak?' in *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Technopolitics, Modernity* (Berkeley, 2002), 19-53; what Mitchell also shows is that these alterations of the Nile made it a highway for diseases that were new to Egypt. They permitted, for instance, the 1942 invasion of Egypt by mosquitoes carrying particularly virulent forms of malaria, which Mitchell suggests was as momentous an invasion as that by Rommel's panzers in the same year.