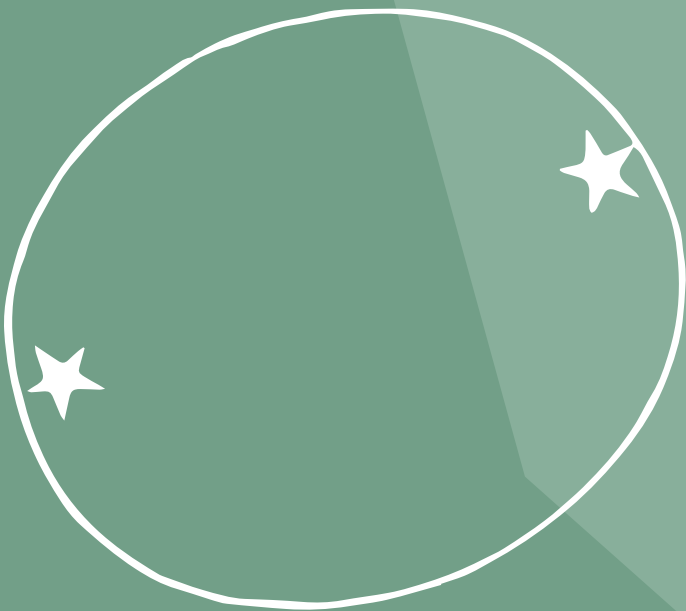


EXPORTING EGYPT

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Exporting Egypt: Where? Why? Whose?

Archaeological finds have ended up in places we might expect, such as museums and universities. But they have also turned up in more unusual locations like masonic lodges and domestic garages. How did they get there? What do they mean in those spaces? Who owns them now?

From the 1880s to the 1980s licensed British excavations in Egypt resulted in the discovery of tens of thousands of artefacts. These can now be found in more than 350 institutions, in 27 countries across 5 continents. There is no other endeavour in world archaeology that has a legacy of such a scale or scope.

This exhibition explores the journeys taken by objects from archaeological sites to institutions around the world, the issues involved and their legacies today.

For more information visit the Artefacts of Excavation project website:

<http://egyptartefacts.griffith.ox.ac.uk/>



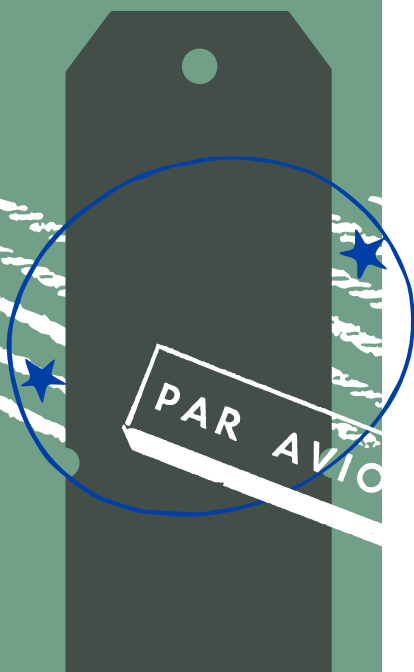


Legacies

Victorian claims that objects were not safe until they are in a museum seem less certain today. Some of the objects that were discovered a century ago have since been lost. Museums closed, collections were transferred and antiquities sold. Liverpool and Hull Museums were both bombed in the Second World War resulting in the destruction of thousands of unique finds. In other cases the collections did not move, but knowledge about their history has been lost.

When museums closed objects could be sent elsewhere. In some cases however we do not know their whereabouts. Of the 456 'minor antiquities' sent to a New York camp for Sunday school teachers in 1888, the fate of only one is known. This was a fine ancient Egyptian statue found in a basement by a student in 1979. It was sold at auction and its location is now unknown.

Most controversial are when objects intended for a public institution are sold at commercial auction.





International distributions

British excavations in Egypt were a transnational affair. Funding came from all corners of the Empire, as well as from other parts of Europe, the USA and Japan.

In Japan, Kyoto University Museum received several crates of objects from Flinders Petrie in 1922. For them the artefacts were significant not because they were ancient Egyptian, but because they represented a scientific approach to archaeology. It was a model that Japanese scholars adopted to construct their own past.

In South Africa several white colonial museums keenly sought ancient Egyptian artefacts. In Cape Town, Grahamstown and Durban, museum curators felt that because South Africa was a young country it needed tangible links with the ancient civilizations of the Old World. They paid little attention to the indigenous cultures and history around them.

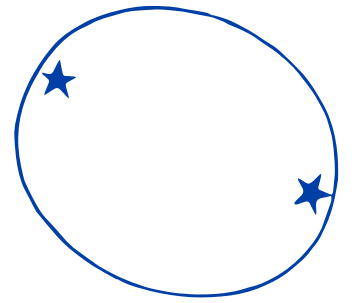
Distribution in America depended upon competition between cities like Chicago, New York and Philadelphia. Personal networks also played a part. The husband of the EEF's representative in Boston, for instance, was a Knights Templar and Scottish Rites Mason, resulting in several animal mummies finding a home in a Masonic Lodge in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

“[antiquities acquired] chiefly for the **enhancement** of the large European museums and the satisfaction of an uninstructed **public curiosity**, destroyed almost as much evidence as it garnered.”

Stephen Glanville, Cambridge, 1947



DEC



Reception, display and distribution in the UK

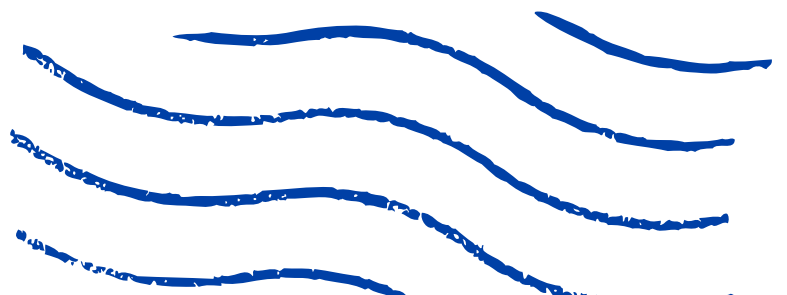
Partage benefitted British archaeological teams because it allowed them to attract sponsors. In return for funding excavations, such donors could acquire material for institutions. Occasionally, important patrons and colleagues received private gifts of 'duplicate' objects.

When excavated finds first arrived in Britain they were exhibited at an annual exhibition held in London. This popular event was a forum for curators to seek out newly-excavated objects that might expand their collections. It was also a chance for the public to learn about British excavations.

When the exhibition closed, objects were boxed up again and sent around the world to fulfil obligations to sponsors. In the UK alone there were more than 180 destinations. Local museums from Truro to Aberdeen acquired things, schools benefitted, and University collections grew.

Industrial centres such as Birmingham and localities around Manchester were particular focuses for collecting. In the steel production centre of Sheffield the museum received iron tools, while the cotton manufacturing city of Bolton was allocated ancient textiles.

'the public, in subscribing to the Egypt Exploration Fund, appreciated the fact that they were making a good investment for the British Museum and for our provincial collections'






The Export of Egypt's Antiquities

Laws against the removal of antiquities from Egypt had existed since 1835. Such rules were rarely enforced, but when the UK's Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) was first announced in 1882 it was acknowledged that no objects would be allowed to leave Egypt. Nevertheless, two years later hundreds of finds from excavation were shipped to England. Tens of thousands more followed in the ensuing decades.

The export of antiquities was made possible by a deal struck between the EEF's English excavator, Flinders Petrie, and the French Head of the Antiquities Service, Gaston Maspero. The process was called partage. Through partage foreign excavators were required to submit all finds to the Cairo Museum and anything not needed there was permitted to be exported. The removal of these antiquities was therefore legal, but it was dependent on power inequalities between nations which frequently overlooked Egyptians' interests.

Partage agreements tightened over the years, especially after the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and the rise of Egyptian nationalism. Today antiquities are not allowed to leave Egypt.



'Foreigners are destroying ancient edifices, extracting stones and other worked objects and exporting them to foreign countries'

Khedive Muhammad Ali 1835



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“distribution of excavation material by previous **generations** of Egyptologists has always struck me as a **monstrous** practice”

Laurence Flanagan, Ulster Museum, 1963



“So long as the antiquities are made **available** for **science** it does not matter where they are deposited”

Archibald Sayce, Oxford, 1882

“it must be **distinctly** understood that by the law of Egypt **no** antiquities can be **removed** from the country”

The Times 1 April 1882



America: Reverend J. E. Kittredge

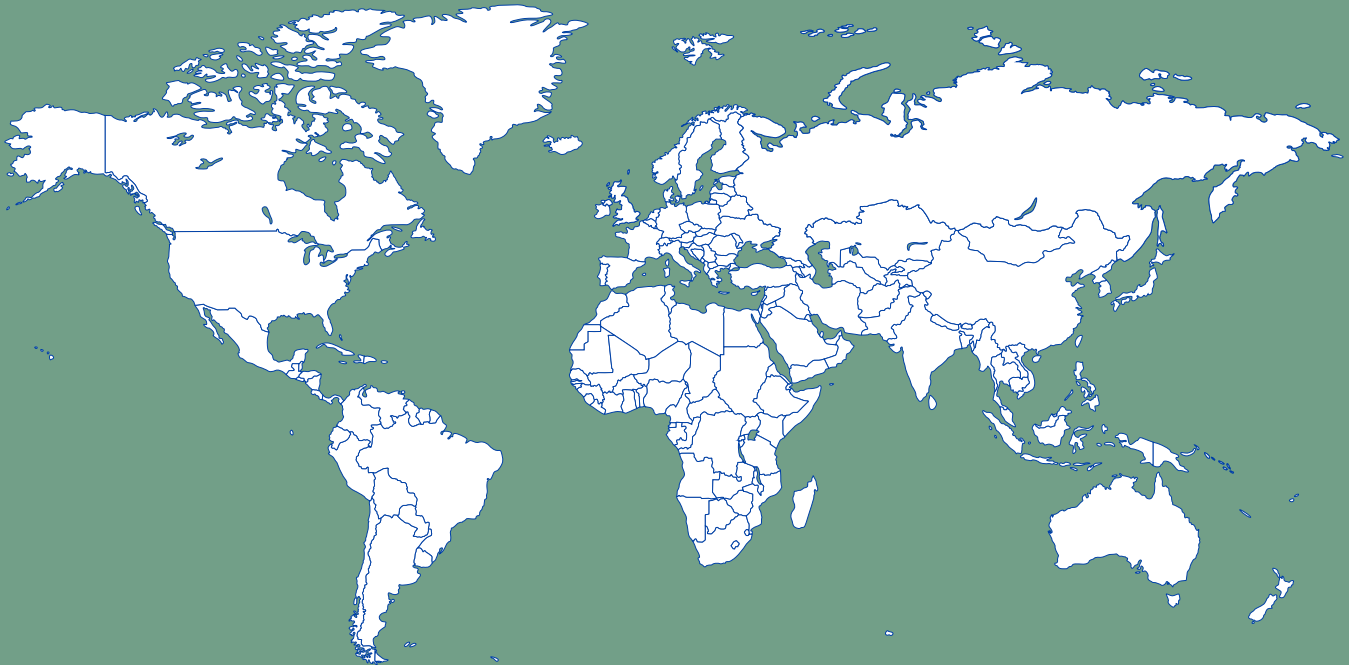
In August 1881 Kittredge helped establish 'Oriental House' in New York. The Museum illustrated the Middle East's geography and biblical history as part of the Chautauqua Assembly, a Christian education movement. Kittredge was a regional secretary for the American Branch of the Egypt Exploration Fund and he secured 456 'minor antiquities' from them in 1886-87. The Museum closed in 1905 but what happened to the Egyptian collection remains a mystery.



Examples of the sort of 'minor antiquities' sent to Chautauqua, including a wadjet-eye amulet (UC52354) and faience amulet of Bes (UC52848), both Late Period from excavations at Naukratis. All Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology

"We entered a place called a museum which had evidently been brought together by feminine hands, so jumbled were the exhibits"

Rudyard Kipling, on visiting Oriental House, 1890



Japan: Kosaku Hamada

Described as the founder of scientific archaeology in Japan, Hamada spent three years at UCL studying archaeology with Petrie during World War One. When he returned to the University of Kyoto he was appointed the first Professor of Archaeology and carried out excavations in China, Japan and Korea. Hamada continued to support Petrie's excavations and received objects to expand his teaching collection. The University now houses the largest collection of Egyptian antiquities in Japan.

Three copper implements from a tomb at Abydos in the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology (UC16174-UC16176).

The pottery and bones from the same tomb are now in Kyoto, Japan.



"It is enough if we can just introduce Western researchers' theories to help to study our Eastern history"

Kosaku Hamada, 1923

South Africa: Guy and Winifred Brunton

Husband and wife team Guy and Winifred Brunton led excavations in Egypt during the 1920s before Guy was appointed Assistant Keeper at Cairo Museum. The Bruntons received a share of finds which formed the basis of their private collection. In 1948 they retired to South Africa where Winifred's father had built a mansion at Prynnsberg in the Free State. Some of the Brunton collection came to the Petrie Museum after Guy's death. The rest remained on the Prynnsberg estate until it was sold at auction in 1996.

"The South African country house sale of the century"

Sotheby's, 1996



Photograph of the 1924 excavation season at Badari. Labeled 'Mrs Aitken, Miss Don, Mr Starkey, Mr Back, Mr and Mrs Brunton'. Courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL



United Kingdom: Janet May Buchanan

Buchanan was one of an increasing number of women involved in fundraising for Egyptian archaeology in Victorian and Edwardian Britain. Many such women were also linked to the women's suffrage movement. Buchanan was devoted to bringing ancient Egypt to wider audiences and she arranged for almost 1000 objects to come to Glasgow from Petrie's excavations. She set up Egyptology societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh to support fieldwork and organised Glasgow's first public Egyptian exhibition in 1912.

"The standard of civilisation in any country is judged to a very great extent by the position of the women"

Margaret Murray, Glasgow Kelvingrove Exhibition Catalogue 1912

Australia: Hugh McIntosh

Following the 1922-23 media frenzy surrounding the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, the colourful editor of Sydney's Sunday Times, Hugh "Huge Deal" McIntosh, founded an Australian branch of Britain's Egypt Exploration Society. It was short lived. Prominent businessmen sponsored excavations at Amarna expecting a share of golden finds. They were disappointed by the archaeological discoveries of pottery and faience sent and the branch was closed in 1926.

"The establishment of an Australian Branch of the parent Society will be an epoch in the history of Australia"

Australian Branch of the Egypt Exploration Society, 1923

Who Owns Antiquities? The case of Harageh

1914

In winter 1913-14 Petrie's British School of Archaeology in Egypt (BSAE) uncovered striking silver jewellery in a 4000-year old tomb at Harageh. The grave contents were recorded and the objects submitted to the Cairo Museum for inspection. Half of the finds remained in Egypt, but the rest were permitted to be exported. After a temporary exhibition in London the finds were divided amongst 24 fieldwork sponsors. One funder was the St Louis Branch of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA), which was allocated the silver jewellery and a headrest found in another tomb. The finds were dispatched to St Louis Museum according to BSAE regulations which stipulated that material should remain in the public realm.



Who has the right to sell Egyptian antiquities?

Should Museums or other heritage organizations sell archaeological finds?

Is the commercial sale of antiquities linked to illegal excavation and looting of sites in Egypt?

In October 2014 the group of silver jewellery found by Petrie's team at Harageh arrived back in London. It was not put on display in a museum, but in Bonhams' auction rooms. The St Louis AIA had decided to sell the Egyptian finds in the UK in order to fund archaeological projects in America with the profits. Following an outcry New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art stepped in and a private sale of the silver jewellery for an undisclosed sum was made. The headrest however was sold at public auction for three times its estimated price and disappeared into private hands.

2014

This booklet is based on the temporary exhibition 'Exporting Egypt. Where? Why? Whose?' that was displayed at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL, from January 29 to May 13 2017. The content is drawn from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded research project 'Artefacts of Excavation', a collaboration between UCL and the University of Oxford. The exhibition was curated by project lead, Alice Stevenson, project Research Associate, Emma Libonati, and project DPhil student, Alice Williams. Graphics were designed by studio HB, and installation facilitated by the Petrie Museum staff Ignacio Faccin and Louise Bascombe, with additional help from volunteers Katerina Ball and Amanda Ford Spora. We are further very grateful to the Petrie Museum Manager, Maria Ragan, for support and to Briony Webb for administrative help.

Thanks are also due to the Griffith Institute of the University of Oxford, Ashley Cooke from Liverpool Museum and Art Gallery, and the Egypt Exploration Society for permission to use images from their archives.



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