

**Exhibiting Archaeology: Constructing
Knowledge of Egypt at Temporary Exhibitions
in London, 1884-1939**

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Abstract

Between 1884 and 1939 the Egypt Exploration Fund (later Society) and the British School of Archaeology in Egypt held a series of annual exhibitions in London to showcase the finds of each archaeological season. Displaying artefacts excavated just weeks before, alongside new archaeological interpretations and interpretive devices, and in varying locations across the capital, these temporary exhibitions functioned as network hubs for the circulation of disciplinary objects and knowledge. Established at a time when archaeology was emerging as a new, professional scientific discipline and the British occupation of Egypt was altering political dynamics, the practice reflected a period of considerable change in the display and reception of ancient Egyptian collections. The aim of this thesis is to centre the exhibitions in the theoretical framework of archaeological representation, addressing how the practice contributed to the construction and communication of knowledge about ancient and contemporary Egypt in the imperial metropole. The following discussion will argue that the annual exhibitions utilised their temporary, transient, and transitional nature to experiment with new ways of displaying Egypt and of shaping the visual culture and material products of Egyptian archaeology.

Samuel Oliver Parritt-Gell

10.01.1998 – 21.07.2019

In loving memory of my cousin Samuel who studied PPE at Jesus College, Oxford, but sadly passed away the week before his graduation ceremony.

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1. Introduction

Between 1884 and 1939 the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) (later Society (EES)) and the British School of Archaeology in Egypt (BSAE) each held a series of annual exhibitions to showcase the results of their archaeological seasons. The displays not only represented a new phase in British archaeological practice in Egypt, but also a new chapter in Anglo-Egyptian political relations, brought about by the founding of the EEF and the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. As such, the annual exhibitions reflected a period of considerable change in the display of ancient Egyptian collections and in the broader representation and communication of Egypt. Lasting anything from two weeks to two months, and usually held in the summer months to coincide with London's wider exhibition season, each year these temporary displays brought the concepts, practices, and material products of Egyptian archaeology to public and professional audiences in the metropole.

Established at a time when archaeology was emerging as a new professional, scientific discipline, these exhibition spaces became key sites for the negotiation of meaning and the on-going construction of the archaeological object. The protean nature of archaeology during this period is reflected in the choice of location. Held at various institutions across London from learned societies and universities to popular entertainment venues, the concept of Egypt and the objects on display were constantly re-contextualised, re-imagined, and re-interpreted. Each new venue gave archaeology the opportunity to draw from different institutional narratives and attracted new disciplinary audiences to engage with Egyptian antiquities and facilitate new conversations. These annual gatherings of objects, people, and ideas became a routine part of post-excavation procedure and a crucial location in the international distribution of finds from British-led excavations in Egypt. Presenting artefacts excavated just weeks before, alongside new interpretations and interpretive devices, the displays functioned as a network hub for the construction and circulation of disciplinary objects and knowledge.

This thesis examines how these annual exhibitions contributed to the construction and communication of knowledge about ancient and contemporary Egypt, as well as the

discipline of Egyptian archaeology. I argue that the annual exhibitions utilised their temporary, transient, and transitional nature to experiment with new ways of displaying Egypt and of shaping the visual culture and material products of Egyptian archaeology. Although temporary exhibitions and their epistemological significance are often overlooked in historical analysis, being seen as brief and fleeting moments in the history of display, it was precisely these qualities that made the annual exhibitions so exceptional and gave them the freedom and flexibility to experiment, making them significant sites in the construction of knowledge.

In the following chapters, I seek to demonstrate how the annual exhibitions occupied a unique, intermediate position between the field and the museum, and that this siting was a key factor in the creation of meaning. Because they were largely situated outside the institutional confines of the museum, the displays created an alternative encounter with Egypt and the archaeological object, one that allowed far greater intellectual and ideological flexibility, enabling their organisers to experiment with different ways of representing this new phase in archaeological practice. Unlike most contemporary museum displays, the annual exhibitions offered an image of Egypt constructed directly by the archaeologists and archaeological organisations responsible for the excavation of material, bringing a voice and agency that differed from those of the traditional curatorial authority. While the archaeologists could draw elements from contemporary museum practice in order to communicate their ideas, overall they maintained a physical and conceptual distance, using this separation to create their own visual and material identity and to construct knowledge in contrast to the permanent museum gallery.

The temporary status of the annual exhibitions, and the absence of the solidity and permanence so often associated with museums, contributed to the formation of ideas. In contrast to the museum gallery, each year's displays presented new sites, new objects, and new interpretations to audiences. This thesis analyses how this seasonality enabled archaeologists to offer more dynamic and flexible displays, responding to the rapid changes of a developing discipline. This quality allowed the annual exhibitions to become a questioning, contemporary, and responsive space in which Egypt could be embedded within socially and politically engaged narratives.

1.1 Theoretical framework

To date there has been little research on the annual exhibitions as a practice, and their historical contribution to the representation and understanding of archaeology and ancient cultures has been overlooked. An article by Amara Thornton (2015) which examines the history of the practice in relation to social networks of archaeology, is so far the only study solely devoted to the subject. While Thornton provides an important study of the socio-historic context for the exhibitions, she does not engage critically with their content or the significance of the material being exhibited. A major aim of this thesis is to address this historic imbalance and demonstrate their value by providing a thorough analysis of the exhibitions as an epistemological and communicative device, utilising the theoretical framework of archaeological representation.

Recent years have seen an increased interest in archaeological representation. Research in this area aims to explore how traditionally non-academic representations, such as museum displays, contribute to the construction of knowledge about ancient cultures and archaeology as a discipline (Moser 2001; 2009; 2015a; 2015b). Until recently, representations that had been deemed more ‘popular’ in appearance and content had largely been dismissed as insignificant contributors to archaeological meaning-making, particularly in comparison to academic discourse. However, it is now widely recognised that a wealth of different representational media, from museum displays and literature to works of art and illustrations, play an influential part in creating ideas about the past, often engaging with and in turn shaping academic understandings of ancient cultures. This thesis aims to situate the practice of annual exhibitions in this rapidly developing field of archaeological representation. By taking the display of objects as a particular genre of communication, this thesis examines the different epistemological mechanisms employed by the exhibitions to create knowledge in order to understand how the practice functioned to create meaning and communicate ideas about ancient Egypt, modern Egypt, and Egyptian archaeology as an emerging discipline.

Stephanie Moser’s *Wonderous Curiosities* (2006) remains the leading study of the display and reception of ancient Egyptian artefacts, and in part the inspiration behind

this thesis. By focusing upon the permanent galleries of the British Museum from the mid-eighteenth to the late-nineteenth century, Moser has demonstrated how a framework of archaeological representation can be very effective in charting changing public and scholarly perceptions of ancient Egypt in a museum context. Her mixed methodology, which combines extensive archival research with methods drawn from museum studies, visual culture studies, and material culture studies, provides a rich and multi-layered account of the transition of Egyptian antiquity from wonderful curiosity to historical document. Within this area, the work of Frederick Bohrer (2003) and Shawn Malley (2012), detailing the history of the acquisition, display, and reception of Assyrian archaeology in Britain, have equally added to current knowledge on museums as critical sites of archaeological communication.

For the display of ancient Egyptian material, and of archaeological objects in general, many of these larger and more prominent studies in the field have centred upon mid-eighteenth to late-nineteenth century representations within Western European national museums (for example, Bohrer 2003; Moser 2006; Malley 2012). Although extremely valuable in building a picture of the history of collecting, display, and reception across a single period, the dominance of these very specific temporal and spatial parameters in the literature can create the impression that the representation and presentation of archaeology, including that of ancient Egypt, has remained unchanged and unchallenged since the mid-nineteenth century. Inadvertently, such studies have also prioritised the permanent installations of museum galleries in the presentation of archaeology over other spaces of display. These detailed studies on representation do not necessarily take into account wider networks of engagement outside the museum and what impact these contextual shifts may have on the consumption of archaeology and the construction of knowledge. In fact, the subject of temporary exhibitions appear to have been largely overlooked in the field of archaeological representation, an omission that goes together with a general absence of theoretical discussion around temporary exhibitions. Yet temporary displays have much to offer in this field of discussion.

In extending the parameters of archaeological representation, this thesis is also concerned with how the display of ancient Egypt and the representation of Egypt as a

primarily ancient and archaeological nation impacted upon audiences' understanding of contemporary Egypt. It is necessary to approach this aspect of the topic from a broad postcolonial theoretical perspective, applying the wealth of literature deriving from this movement that relates to the representation of non-western cultures, in particular the subject of race and cultural difference (Karp and Lavine 1991; Hallam and Street 2000). Further theoretical detail from within this framework, including Orientalism and its recognition of the constructed cultural 'other', will be applied to this discussion throughout.

1.2 Method and sources

While museum displays and exhibitions have been recognised for their considerable knowledge-making capacity (Hooper-Greenhill 1992; 2000; Kaplan 1995), Moser (2010, 24) has rightly noted that few studies have focused in detail on how displays work to create knowledge. In exploring methodological approaches to exhibition analysis, Moser (2010) has shown that displays consist of a complex and diverse range of elements that convey meaning both independently as "technologies of presentation" and collectively as a "system of representation". A thorough examination requires these critical components to be identified and assessed not only for their individual contribution but also for how they work together to offer a multi-layered experience. In order to employ such a methodology this thesis deconstructs the annual exhibitions as a system of representation. The following chapters analyse the location and setting in which the exhibitions took place, the content and development of narratives within the exhibition space, and how the objects on display were selected, arranged, and presented to audiences within the environment and the interpretive devices that framed them. It addresses matters of reception by examining the types of audiences visiting the exhibitions, their experience, and how the displays may have influenced their understanding of Egypt and archaeological practice.

The data on which the examination of these individual components is based has been obtained primarily through research in archives. The archive collections of two archaeological organisations were of critical importance: the Lucy Gura Archive of the Egypt Exploration Society; and that of the British School of Archaeology in Egypt, which

is housed at the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College London. Visits to these largely unpublished collections allowed for the study of exhibition catalogues and photographs of the exhibition spaces, both of which proved insightful for the reconstruction of the arrangement and display of objects and the construction of narratives. Unfortunately, the very small number of extant images capturing the displays means that there is limited direct representation of what the exhibitions looked like. However, their reconstruction can be equally achieved through a combination of archival sources. Correspondence, annual reports, records of committee minutes and board meetings, and object distribution files relating to individual museums provided an institutional voice and context behind the practice. In the Lucy Gura Archive, two visitor books gave valuable snapshots of the audience profile of the annual exhibitions. Both collections are in the process of being catalogued, with many records not yet processed or identified. While I am confident that the range of data collected provides a fair and detailed representation of the practice, this has inevitably had an impact upon the availability and visibility of resources. It is likely that the picture may be enriched in the future by further exhibition-related discoveries as cataloguing progresses.

In addition to these organisations, the archive collections of satellite or partner institutions were also visited, largely those which had hosted annual exhibitions or had been in some way involved with their organisation. The archives of the following organisations were consulted: the British Association for the Advancement of Science housed at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford; the Palestine Exploration Fund; the Royal Archaeological Institute now kept at the Society of Antiquaries; University College London's Special Collections and Records Office; and the Wellcome Collection housed at the Wellcome Trust. In an attempt to gain some insight into the personal experience of the annual exhibition practice, the identifiable archives of individuals associated with the displays were consulted, including that of Amelia Edwards at Somerville College and those of Francis Llewlyn Griffith and Percy Newbury at the Griffith Institute, all at the University of Oxford. At University College London the personal papers of archaeologists Flinders Petrie, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, and Olga Tufnell, and of eugenicists Karl Pearson and Francis Galton were also examined.

While a scattering of first-hand visitor accounts of attending the exhibitions survive in the archival record, these are almost exclusively by individuals with a professional interest in the exhibitions and primarily from a London-centred archaeological network. Voices and experiences of members of the visiting public have proved almost impossible to trace apart from a handful of passing comments from members or fellows in the correspondence archives of the EES and BSAE, and these people too were connected to the exhibitions as amateur archaeologists or Egyptologists with some specialist knowledge. Where possible, the personal archives of names listed in the visitor books were explored, but without success. This means that the archival data provides a primarily institutional perspective on the annual exhibitions.

In the last few decades, critical theory surrounding archival research as a historical method has highlighted the possibilities and limitations of working with archive collections, and much of this discussion is pertinent to the institutional archives consulted here. As many scholars have shown, archive collections and the documents housed within them are never natural or neutral. Each archive has been created and shaped by a succession of individuals and influenced by personal and professional biases. The subjective selection of what to include and exclude from an archive, as well as methods of categorisation, can lead to an uneven coverage of history through partial or incomplete collections and the creation of “silences” (Cook 2011; Fowler 2017). In viewing the historical archive as a “locus of power/knowledge”, Michelle King (2012, 17) has stressed how it has become routine for researchers to “recognise how acts of producing, organising and classifying archival documents constitute forms of knowledge in and of themselves, while archival collections as a whole constrain the types of history made possible and impossible through them.”

This assessment is particularly apt when considering the archives of small, private organisations such as learned societies, where the institution as authority oversees the collating and organising of documents that pertain to its own history and seeks to craft its own narrative as an entity. Structured by disciplinary practitioners, such collections may be made to preserve or forget particular aspects of their own history or discipline. There is equally a tendency to preserve the memory of individuals who were felt to have had the greatest impact upon the field, generally at the expense of lesser-known

or marginalised actors. In the archives consulted here, such focusses have led to the preservation and glorification of the 'hero archaeologist', usually male field directors who were typically credited with excavations and discoveries. In particular, the actions of Petrie dominate archive sources across many collections. While I have attempted to mitigate this effect and to acknowledge the broader agencies and the multiplicity of actions underlying the exhibition practice, this dominance has unavoidably influenced the direction of this thesis.

In order to provide a more distanced and less institutionalised perspective of the annual exhibitions, this thesis utilises exhibition reviews and notices published in contemporary, English-language newspapers, periodicals, and magazines. Published reviews provide often detailed descriptions of the exhibition spaces and the objects and narratives presented within them and have proved helpful for understanding and partially reconstructing the annual exhibitions. Where personal accounts are lacking, such sources prove of critical importance in building a picture of the wider impact and dissemination of the exhibitions and how they were received by visitors from both within and outside the archaeological community. Reviews from a wide range of national, regional, and local British publications have been examined in order to survey a broad spectrum of geographical, social, educational, and political perspectives that may be linked to particular titles. Although one must be careful not to see these reports as synonymous with public opinion, they render visible how and to what extent the exhibitions shaped popular understandings of ancient and modern Egypt, as well as the discipline of Egyptian archaeology.

Just as with institutional archive collections, a number of limitations and biases must be addressed when working with historic newspapers. The majority of published reviews utilised in this thesis have been sourced through online digital databases, primarily *The Times Digital Archive*, the *Illustrated London News* database, *ProQuest*, and the British Library's *British Newspaper Archive*. While digitisation has enhanced access to a greater range and volume of resources than ever before, the challenges and weaknesses presented by such digital platforms have been raised by historians (e.g. Bingham 2010; Nicholson 2013). The digitisation of some titles and not others may lead to a distorted picture. Of particular relevance to this thesis are the copyright

limitations that have led to fewer twentieth-century newspapers being digitised than those of the nineteenth century, resulting in an imbalance of evidence towards the coverage of earlier exhibitions. The mixed success rates of 'keyword' searches have also been highlighted. Many databases do not account for the possible range of alternative terminologies; they can also be affected by the quality of the original scan and character recognition. A British Library survey of their nineteenth-century newspaper archive, for example, found an average 'word accuracy' of 78% (Nicholson 2013, 60). For this thesis I have attempted to mitigate this difficulty by applying multiple and broad keyword searches to the relevant periods and by searching titles known to have engaged earlier with the annual exhibitions by the successive seasons in which exhibitions were on display. Furthermore, there remains a problem with distancing researchers from the original and tangible text. When examining a digital resource it is easy to gain a distorted view of an article, with little knowledge of its positioning or presentation in the newspaper or of content surrounding the piece such as advertisements or images. Each of these factors affects how and how far a reader would have engaged with the original article and must be kept in mind when considering any analysis of reception.

In the last couple of decades, Egyptology has seen a significant 'archival turn' as part of a wider move towards a critical understanding of the history of the subject (see Carruthers 2015). Within this growing discourse, a number of projects have examined the archive to explore how individuals and institutions have engaged with and responded to ancient Egyptian material culture (Colla 2007; Riggs 2014; 2018; Stevenson 2019). Such studies have also used archives to critically examine how Egyptology has constituted both itself and its objects of study in a practical way. This thesis is intended to add to this growing body of research.

The very nature of Egyptology as a field of study, the context and timing of its foundation, and its geographic focus means that its archive is heavily embedded within a colonial context. The recent archival turn has done much to raise awareness of colonial silences, highlighting post-colonial methodologies and developing tools to handle bias in the sources. Publications such as Stephen Quirke's *Hidden Hands* (2010) address marginalised voices in the field, drawing attention to Petrie's Egyptian

archaeologists who had been erased and alienated from the archaeological discovery narrative, while Donald Reid (2002) has drawn attention to the inherent Western and European bias in the discipline by detailing the many Egyptian scholars who shaped the production of Egyptological knowledge in Egyptian museums. In navigating this course, much can be gained by looking to the long-standing research of historians working with comparable colonial contexts. Historians such as Ranajit Guha (1983) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1985) have addressed the representation of 'subaltern' individuals and voices historically presented through the filter of colonial structures in South Asia and India respectively, while Ann Stoler (2009) and Nicholas Dirks (2002) have approached the colonial archives of the Dutch East Indies and South Asia primarily as ethnographic spaces to be deconstructed and critically analysed (see also Carter 2006; Decker 2012).

Although a number of publications are leading the way, this kind of interrogation of the colonial archive is still in its infancy for Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology. In the conclusion of Christina Riggs' most recent *Photographing Tutankhamun* (2018, 230), the author draws attention to the "external face" of the Egyptological archive and how it masks a more complex colonial framework of knowledge production. As Riggs states, "[n]ot to be able to see through such verbal and visual narratives reveals a weakness at the heart of Egyptology..." A significant shift in disciplinary thinking is needed to see archives as "sites of self-examination and critique".

1.3 Thesis structure and description of content

This thesis is organised in such a way as to address the various epistemological components of the annual exhibition separately, analysing each in turn and assessing how they operated in the construction of knowledge.

Chapters 2 and 3 provide a contextual background to this study. Chapter 2 situates the annual exhibitions in the historical setting of the British occupation of Egypt and the foundation of the Egypt Exploration Fund. It addresses how in this context archaeology and the concept of ancient Egypt more generally was used by the British as a strategic device in the creation of imperial and nationalistic sentiment and the justification of

colonial actions abroad. With the distribution of archaeological finds and the annual exhibitions a direct result of these actions, the displays were embedded within this dense socio-political context and fostered a highly politicised representation of Egypt that was important for maintaining an imperial vision.

Chapter 3 begins by considering historical antecedents of the annual exhibition, situating the practice in the wider context of exhibitionary culture in nineteenth-century Britain. The chapter examines the strategies and methods of displaying archaeological objects, including those of ancient Egypt, in relation to recent theoretical debates surrounding the exhibitionary complex and the display of the temporal and cultural Other in the late nineteenth century. It then explores methods of displaying Egyptian archaeology in the lead up to the annual exhibitions, surveying international exhibitions, museums, and learned societies, in order to examine interpretive strategies of 'knowing' Egypt in the mid to late nineteenth century. One aim of this chapter is to show that these examples are relevant to the construction of knowledge by demonstrating that past representational practices influenced the way in which material was displayed and received at the annual exhibition.

Chapter 4 addresses the location and setting of the annual exhibitions. By utilising scholarly approaches to the geographies of science and scientific spaces, it examines the relationship between exhibitions and the diverse environments in which they were held, considering the role of space in how knowledge of Egypt and Egyptian archaeology was generated and received. The chapter offers analyses of four different locations, in chronological order, to demonstrate how each had a significant impact upon how ancient Egypt was consumed.

The next chapter (5) turns to the content, shape, and scope of the annual exhibitions, addressing what types of objects, narratives, and voices were present in, and absent from, the exhibition space. This chapter focuses on the exhibitions of Flinders Petrie, divided into two distinct phases in his archaeological and exhibitionary practice: settlement archaeology displayed at the Royal Archaeological Institute; and funerary archaeology displayed at University College London. It touches upon the role of political and curatorial agency in shaping these exhibitions, as well as how the selection of objects and narratives related to wider socio-political contexts.

Chapter 6 studies how the exhibition space was organised to construct the excavated find as a scientific specimen. Arranged thematically, this chapter examines how methods of display and exhibitionary techniques, such as object arrangement, archaeological plans, and catalogues were employed to turn these finds into working, disciplinary objects, in turn making visitors into disciplined observers. The chapter draws upon case studies from across the history of the exhibitions to show how their unique approach of bringing the field-site to audiences in the metropole fostered a particular type of engagement and way of seeing, creating a collective empiricism.

The last thematic chapter (7) focuses on the annual exhibition's diverse audiences and the way in which objects were received. To demonstrate the significant role of the subject-object relationship in knowledge construction, this chapter explores three principal audience groups: the general public; museum and archaeology professionals; and journalists. Drawing upon documents such as visitor books, museum correspondence, and published exhibition reviews, it pieces together the profile and experience of each of these visitor groups and addresses their relationship with the 'excavated artefact'.

The Conclusion reflects upon each of the exhibitionary components discussed, arguing that the annual exhibitions, although often overlooked because of their temporary and transitional nature, were significant in the construction of knowledge about ancient and contemporary Egypt. The exhibitions formed a central network hub for disseminating objects and knowledge, as well as for generating ideas that shaped British understandings of archaeology in fundamental ways as a burgeoning scientific practice, and the excavated artefact as an object of scientific study.

2. Historical context of fieldwork in Egypt

The late nineteenth century, particularly from the 1880s onwards, marked a significant turning point in Egyptian archaeology and British-Egyptian relations. This juncture saw the intersection of intensified political activity in Egypt, the professionalisation of Egyptology and archaeology as areas of study, the introduction of systematic excavations in the region, and the rise of cultural institutions such as museums across Britain. Collectively, these forces of change considerably altered Britain's relationship with Egypt and the ancient Egyptian object, and began a transformation in the values they were starting to acquire.

In recognition of the importance of socio-political context in the mediation of exhibitions and in the creation and consumption of knowledge, this chapter aims to set the annual exhibitions in their immediate historical surroundings. The following sections examine the particular conditions which framed and shaped the exhibition practice. Starting in 1882, this chapter examines how the EEF and the annual exhibitions were established against a backdrop of Britain's occupation of Egypt and the colonial concept of ownership and possession, as well as territorial and intellectual expansion. This movement saw British archaeological practice in Egypt and the excavated ancient Egyptian artefact become progressively entangled in a complex political discourse, used to demonstrate a perceived Western superiority and authority over a colonised Middle East. I argue that, within this context, the mass movement of archaeological objects out of Egypt and the annual exhibitions held in the metropole became a symbolic and material manifestation of this new imperial enterprise, critically engaging audiences with developing British-Egyptian relations through the medium of archaeology.

2.1 British occupation and knowledge construction

In the summer of 1882, following decades of political tension in Egypt and rival Anglo-French interests in the region, British forces launched a military campaign on Egypt in response to the perceived threat of an advancing Egyptian revolution and increasing independence (Reid 1998; Toledano 1998). By 12 September 1882 British troops had

defeated Egyptian forces in a number of engagements along the Nile Valley, culminating in the Battle of Tell el-Kebir and the occupation of Cairo. What initially began as a 'rescue and retire' strategy resulted in the inauguration of nearly 75 years of British occupation (Hopkins 1986; Daly 1998). Egypt would not be free from British troops until the Egyptian Revolution in 1956. As a 'veiled protectorate' British occupation left Egypt under the nominal authority of the French and the Ottoman Empire, but with an increasing British presence in all matters of governance, finance, and administration. At a time when Britain was expanding its empire and testing relations with territories of strategic importance, Egypt became absorbed into the British colonial project.

This age of New Imperialism was laden with classical connotations, and Egypt's ancient past was never far from political thought. Although some people were beginning to turn towards international relations in the 'New World' of America as a model for a more modern British imperialism and society (Bell 2006), the pull of ancient and classical civilisations ran deeper through the fabric of society. Social critics such as John Ruskin and James Anthony Froude emphasised the cyclical nature of historical processes by drawing positive parallels between the expanding empires of ancient Rome and modern Britain. With British parliament dominated by classical scholars, including Prime Minister William Gladstone and Foreign Secretary Earl Granville, it is understandable that many historians have rooted the decision to occupy Egypt within this European and Hellenic discourse (Reid 2002, 153-159). Classical models and the Roman archetype became common tropes for thinking about Empire (Goff 2005, 17; Kumar 2012), and the occupation of Egypt presented an opportunity to return to the ancient world, to the cradle of civilisation, and the intersection of the Greek and Roman empires revered by so many.

Within this discourse Egypt's ancient past was employed strategically as a justification for pursuing imperial ambitions in the region. To view Egypt solely as its past, to favour its ancient history over its present, was an act of political control. In the ever-present duality of power and knowledge in British colonial expansion and policy, Britain's knowledge of ancient Egypt served to legitimise its actions abroad, which in turn strengthened the demand to know ancient Egypt better. The language used to

describe the events that surrounded the occupation of Egypt was freighted with vocabulary pertaining to knowledge and information. In the following two retrospective accounts of the occupation of Egypt, we see how the association between occupying and knowing Egypt had infiltrated all levels of the public and private domain, from parliamentary debates to the popular press:

We know the civilization of Egypt better than we know the civilization of any other country. We know it further back; we know it more intimately; we know more about it. It goes far beyond the petty span of the history of our race, which is lost in the prehistoric period at a time when the Egyptian civilization had already passed its prime... We are in Egypt not merely for the sake of the Egyptians, though we are there for their sake; we are there also for the sake of Europe at large. (Balfour speaking in parliament in 1910, as quoted in Said 2003 [1978], 32)

When the British Army of Occupation marched into Egypt in 1882, that country most unexpectedly became the object of thought of every intelligent thinker in Europe and of every English-speaking nation throughout the world. The diplomat, the soldier and the politician each looked upon Egypt with a practical eye, and meditated what advantage could be got from it for the country which he represented... But others besides the practical men were interested in the opening up of Egypt by the British – we mean the student of general history and the archaeologist, not to mention the expert Egyptologist... who flocked to Egypt demanded with no uncertain voice that all the available information on the subject should be given to them. (*Illustrated London News* 1896)

This urge to objectify and categorise Egypt, and to make it empirically knowable, was a mainstay of the British colonial enterprise (see Cohn 1996; Stafford 1999; Bayly 2016). It was also deeply rooted within an Orientalist discourse which saw the act of Western powers collating knowledge of Eastern counterparts as a show of dominance and authority. As Bernard Cohn (1996, 3-4) has stated, British forces were invading and conquering “not only a territory but an epistemological space”, and the establishment and maintenance of such territories “depended upon determining, codifying, controlling, and representing the past.”

In the decades leading up to military occupation, the ancient Egyptian object had become heavily entangled in this discourse. The increasing colonial presence and competing political interests of European nations in Egypt led to the founding of the

Egyptian Antiquities Service by the French authorities in 1858, established as a means of control over Egypt's cultural commodities and the knowledge they pertained (see Reid 2002). This intervention from European powers acted as a strategic device in the separation of the country's ancient, civilised past from its modern inhabitants. Egypt had become an object, rather than a subject, of knowledge, and 'knowing' Egypt materially was a symbolic act played out between the competing British and French nations (see Said 2003 [1978], 32-33).

This interest in ancient Egyptian material culture was further exemplified by a new concern for its preservation, a complex desire to safeguard Egypt's heritage not for the benefit of Egyptians, but for European interests in the advancement of scientific and biblical knowledge. At the heart of this movement was a stereotyped Orientalist image of the Egyptian population perpetuated by European nations, in which the ancient Egyptian object came to represent an ancient civilisation 'discovered' and rescued by the West from inevitable ruin and obscurity at the hands of the unenlightened East. An article in *The Art Journal* in 1861, entitled 'The Present Condition of the Monuments of Egypt', demonstrates the heightened interest in Egypt's material past as well as a rare, self-critical view of European concerns:

We blame the ignorant Arab whose poverty induces him to break away a fragment for sale to the European curiosity-hunter, ever anxious to obtain what he may not fully understand; or we direct a righteous scorn towards the Turk who would deface the figures his religious belief induces him to conceive to be wicked productions; but with the complacency of a self-proclaimed superiority, Europeans have done the most fatal mischief of all, and this within the last five-and-twenty years. The monuments of Egypt have not been most miraculously preserved, to be wantonly injured or destroyed in the nineteenth century, not so much by the ignorant and unlearned as by 'scholars and gentlemen'. (*The Art Journal* 1861, 257)

Yet, the destruction and removal of Egyptian material culture was broadly considered justified if museums were to benefit. With regard to the vandalism of tomb reliefs in the Valley of the Kings, Fairholt continued "...if the faces had been sawn in slabs from the substance, and so carried to European museums, some excuse might be framed" (*The Art Journal* 1861, 257). Firstly, this comment demonstrates the significance placed

upon the Western construct of the museum as a primary site for knowledge production during this period, adhering to the Victorian desire for greater public knowledge through strategies of research and display. Secondly, it reveals the elevated status given to European institutions of learning in particular, despite the fact that at this time Egypt, through the Antiquities Service, was building its own collection for the opening of its national museum in 1863 (Reid 2002). These actions prioritised European knowledge and strategies of knowing over those of the Middle East.

Within this discourse, the ancient Egyptian object became the public face of European-Egyptian relations, central in negotiations of both British and European identities, and a key player in colonial narratives of power and control (see Rose-Greenland 2013). The British occupation of Egypt intensified such attitudes, further incorporating archaeological practice and the Egyptian archaeological object as part of the materialisation of British nationhood.

2.2 Archaeology in occupied Egypt: the founding of the Egypt Exploration Fund

It was in the same year as British occupation that the EEF was established. In April 1882, just two months before the British bombardment of Alexandria and in the height of political upheaval in Egypt, announcements were published in the national press advertising the formation of a Society for the promotion of excavation in the Nile Delta. It was reported that the Fund's principal founder, the popular novelist, journalist, and travel-writer Amelia B. Edwards, had become concerned during her travels in Egypt in 1873 over the neglect and destruction of ancient Egyptian sites and monuments "under a regime which had neither the interest nor the resources to remedy the situation" (Drower 1982a, 10). Upon her return to England, Edwards gathered support from Reginald Stuart Poole of the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum and sought advice from Gaston Maspero, the director of the French-led Egyptian Antiquities Service. The result was a new archaeological society, based on the model of excavation committees such as the Palestine Exploration Fund which had been established in 1865.

The EEF was planned to actively address growing concerns over preservation by raising funds to conduct systematic excavations in Egypt, simultaneously raising Britain's profile in the burgeoning field of scientific exploration. Conducting their own excavations, securing their own collections, and creating their own knowledge would enable the British to compete with other European cultural and scholarly powers. There was no shortage of influential supporters for the cause: high-profile personalities from the worlds of industry, politics, academia, and the church, were keen to participate in the wider imperial project (Moon 2006, 160-171; Stevenson 2019, 10-11). The early years of the Fund saw sites divided between two excavators with conflicting approaches to archaeology: the Swiss Egyptologist and epigrapher Édouard Naville who led their first excavation in 1883; and the British archaeologist William Matthew Flinders Petrie who joined the organisation later that year.

Although the EEF was never officially affiliated with the British campaign in Egypt, it is likely that the timing of its founding resonated with national and international audiences, projecting a particular message and a lasting bond between the two events. In January 1883 the EEF began their first excavation at Tell el-Maskuta in the Wadi Tumilat, under the direction of Naville. Just three months earlier the site had been integral to the advancing British army at the Battle of Tell el-Kebir (Dixon 2003, 94), placing the military and archaeological events in close geographical, temporal, and conceptual proximity. It has even been stated that Edwards was keen to take advantage of the military intervention by employing British soldiers posted in the region to assist on their excavations, a controversial suggestion that was rejected by other members of the committee (Drower 1982b, 311). For years to come, however, the perceived association between the Fund and occupation was not forgotten in the British media, some organs of which saw archaeological excavations as a British duty within its colonial territory:

The British occupation of Egypt had brought with it increased obligations, archaeological as well as political, and the members of the Fund were the only body that was prepared or willing to meet them on the archaeological side.
(*Saturday Review* 1904, 169)

The EEF developed along the same time-line as British occupation in Egypt, and indeed the two were not unrelated. As an institution the Fund benefited from the new order

which followed military occupation, actively operating and participating in this new politically-defined context. In Britain, an increased awareness of Egypt likely generated greater support for the Fund's cause and enabled it to secure a sense of legitimacy and authority for its work. Logistically, it also allowed the Fund to develop and further its aims on the ground, forging relationships with key figures in the British administration in Egypt and utilising newly developing infrastructure. Although the EEF was not officially or financially supported by the government, diplomatic channels were occasionally used to secure permissions to excavate and process archaeological objects. Similarly, the growth of commercial tourism that grew out of Britain's expanding colonial infrastructure fuelled the public's appetite for Egypt and Egyptian antiquities and provided the means to transport objects out of Egypt to Imperial centres (Riggs 2010, 1137; Stevenson 2019, 6).

Although there were multiple, intersecting motivations and agendas for international scholarship at this time (see Ellis 2017a), in the context of a newly occupied territory, the introduction of British-led archaeological excavations in Egypt functioned partly to serve nationalistic and imperial agendas. As a developing science, archaeology was among the influx of new technologies and British skilled workforces employed in the Egyptian landscape. British-trained engineers and technicians were brought to Egypt to apply their skills in agriculture, construction, and irrigation (Thompson 2005, 23), and archaeology and its material products added to this very visible performance of scientific progression and technological achievement. The unearthing of Egypt's past was also part of a wider mechanism for producing imperial knowledge, linked to processes of empire building and governance. As the study of human history and prehistory, archaeology fitted neatly alongside the rapidly expanding field of social-scientific inquiry in Egypt. The growth of European-dominated social science institutions in the region, studying anthropology, human geography, and demography, saw Egypt reimagined as a 'social laboratory' and its 'native' population function as "passive objects of observation, taxonomy, and classification" (El Shakry 2007, 5-6). This objectification of Egypt was paralleled in the archaeological approach and collaboratively archaeology and social science presented Egypt as bodies of data to be interpreted, managed, and controlled in the production of hegemonic knowledge.

However, this wave of archaeology in Egypt correlated with a wider global strategy of utilising and appropriating the archaeological past. Díaz-Andreu (2007, 128) states that from the 1880s Britain, and to a lesser extent the United States, “inaugurated a state policy of actively encouraging foreign excavations and opened up their first foreign schools.” This action is indicative of the increased importance attributed to archaeological knowledge in the construction, communication, and maintenance of the imperial vision. The distant past was woven into new politicised narratives and strategies to legitimise British actions abroad. It was deployed in matters of nationalism and identity, used to define colonial, ethnic, and religious boundaries, as well as relating to concepts of self and other. Within the contested geographies of imperial expansion, the “notion of the past as a resource to be managed by the present”, particularly by colonisers, became established on the colonial frontier (Meskell and Preucel 2004, 316).

Within this paradigm, archaeology in Egypt and the founding of the EEF, provided an important empirical historicism and a tangible and material link to the classical and biblical histories and ideologies that underscored British interest in the region. By projecting British power backwards in time through association, archaeology gave hegemonic supremacy a history and temporal legitimacy (Said 1994). This strategy at once domesticated ancient Egypt, incorporating into the British national identity, and distanced it from Egypt’s modern inhabitants who were viewed as the antithesis of British imperial ambition.

2.3 Exporting material Egypt: partage and museums

Within a year of the EEF excavating in Egypt, Petrie began to negotiate with the Antiquities Service over the right to export a proportion of the Fund’s excavated finds, a movement that had been prohibited by Egyptian law since 1835 (Stevenson 2014a, 91). A meeting between Petrie and Maspero in Paris in November 1883 started the negotiations, and within a season the new system had been finalised. The swiftness of this action reveals a clear impetus for material gain on the part of the Fund’s committee and financial subscribers, as well as speaking to a much wider public

demand for the products of archaeological and imperial enterprise. The result of this tactful diplomacy was the system of “partage”, which permitted the removal of selected finds by licensed foreign excavators, subject to the approval and first refusal of the Antiquities Service and Bulaq Museum in Cairo. The first consignment of objects to be exported under the new system was that of Flinders Petrie’s excavations at the biblical site of Tanis, which arrived into Liverpool harbour in 1884 and was also the first collection to be distributed to museums by the Fund (Stevenson 2014a, 91).

For many, including Petrie, the removal and ownership of objects was considered Britain’s right as the occupiers of Egypt, and in return for long-standing political commitments to the country. Writing to Amelia Edwards in the summer of 1885, following a particularly fraught division of finds during which a box of objects was misplaced, Petrie’s frustration was palpable:

This is what comes of being inspected at Bulak; that beastly farce swallows near a week of my time, smashes things by hasty repacking, + finally loses things altogether. Of course Maspero cannot help it, he does it simply as possible + takes as little as his duty allows; but I hate losing a lot of my best things to go to a collection where they cannot be exhibited, may be lost, + can never be of the same value as when with all the others... All this when England is bleeding gold and blood over the country. I don’t wish to bring the Bulak Museum to England, but we ought to have all the duplicates from it, + free right to excavate where ever we like... When some other nation has done as much for Egypt, then they may claim the same. (PMA 3/1/PEN/20)

This passage offers a glimpse of the extent to which the excavated artefact had become intertwined with political narratives, at least for Petrie. Embedded within wider tropes of salvage and salvation, the removal of objects was justified to British audiences as a means of protecting and safeguarding the heritage of western civilisation from a modern Middle East that could not be trusted. Even though it was a notion contested by some voices of dissent, including Petrie’s contemporary Édouard Naville (see Stevenson 2019, 35), it remained popular with many in Britain. As Petrie once stated “...there was a very strong party in England who even said that we ought to have carried off the Bulak Museum to England...” (EES. COR.016.f.78). From a political perspective, the possession and physical ownership of Egypt’s heritage stood as a metonym for both territorial and intellectual possession. As archaeological objects

became integral to the reproduction and communication of the British imperial narrative, their export and distribution mobilised related values, allowing the material signifiers of occupation to be projected to audiences internationally. This conception was normalised within the grander scheme of imperial exports from foreign nations. By 1880 Britain was taking 80 percent of Egypt's exports (Hopkins 1986, 379). Within this imperial and economic context, the excavated artefact and removal of Egypt's cultural heritage can be viewed as another exported commodity in the objectification of Egypt as a resource for the British empire. And much like the many tonnes of cotton shipped from Egyptian fields to mills in the north of England each year, the exportation of archaeological products was funded through private enterprise. The agricultural terminology used in the contemporary press to discuss the unearthing and mass movement of excavated artefacts from Egypt, such as "reap" and "harvest", hints at the parallels being drawn more publicly. As Meskell and Preucell (2004, 317) have noted, the concept of heritage as cultural goods, embedded within these notions of ownership and control, often led to archaeological objects being depicted as a "scarce commodity or property" with an "essentialized vision of the past as a 'natural' resource".

The partage system enabled the Fund's expeditions to return to Britain with a range of objects. The majority were small, portable, fragmentary finds that were seemingly inconsequential enough to be overlooked by the Egyptian Antiquities Service but equally easy for Petrie to transport in large quantity (Stevenson 2014, 2019). Each year this quantity of finds would form the basis of the Fund's fundraising strategy, with museums and public institutions contributing donations of money towards excavations in order to secure objects for their own collections. As Stevenson (2019, 38) has stated "[a] symbiotic dependency between the Fund and museums was soon established", to the extent that "...the financial imperative to provide for museums took precedence over pretensions to scientific archaeological practice." Those public institutions that supported the Fund's work financially could expect to receive a proportion of antiquities in return; the greater the financial contribution the larger or of greater quality the consignment would be. When Petrie wrote to Poole in May 1884, a few

short months after the partage agreement had been finalised, he wrote with a clear vision:

You will see that I reckon on bringing home a quantity of little things... all valueless to any large museums, but – where perfectly labelled – quite an attraction to little local museums, whose sole specimen from Egypt is perhaps a poor blue shabti, or a hand of a mummy. I look to your Committee filling a vacant post in England, - that of suppliers of ordinary Egyptian trifles + pottery, duly authenticated + labelled, to all the country museums. Such an agency will be welcome, + will awaken + stir an interest in Egyptian antiquities better than anything else. People want something tangible to finger + stare at; books alone are not enough. (EES COR.016.f.32)

This promise of Egyptian antiquities fitted well with the development of museums in late nineteenth-century Britain. The Museums Act of 1845, allowing local councils to establish museums for the education and social benefit of the public, had introduced an unprecedented growth in the number of local or municipal museums in Britain (Pearce 1990, 18), with the most rapid rise documented between 1870 and 1910 (Hill 2005; Stevenson 2019, 39). This expansion led to the increased professionalisation of the sector, with the emergence of the role of museum curator as a career, while the establishment of the Museums Association in 1880 helped to foster collective museum practice (Teather 1990; Kendall 2014; Stevenson 2014, 92). With new collections developing alongside new strategies of classification and display, it is easy to see why so many institutions were keen to engage with the Fund and its offer of provenanced, scientific specimens.

After Petrie parted company with the EEF in the late 1880s, and after a period of independent financial backing from the wealthy industrialists Jesse Haworth and Henry Martyn Kennard, he established his own archaeological organisation in 1905, the British School of Archaeology in Egypt (BSAE). With this, the opportunity for museums to acquire ancient Egyptian artefacts increased. The BSAE, managed primarily by Petrie and his wife Hilda, also participated in partage through their own excavations in Egypt, offering their finds to public institutions in return for financial contributions towards excavations. The two organisations, the EEF and the BSAE, although at times fractious rivals, worked simultaneously in the field with a similar

mission and helped to create a “complex patchwork of British-headed excavations and international webs of finds distribution” (Stevenson 2019, 13).

Alice Stevenson’s (2019) research into the history of the distribution process demonstrates the extent of the vast global network of individuals and institutions who participated in this project through both the EEF and BSAE, as well as its lasting legacy. In what she terms a “material diaspora” (2009, 1), the result was a complex scattering of Egyptian antiquities acquired by “an estimated 350 institutions across twenty-seven countries in five continents.” The process of partage would change shape considerably over the course of a century. The initial period between 1884 and 1914 can be considered the “most intense and diverse phase of finds distribution” (Stevenson 2019, 7). But as archaeology moved into the interwar years, when political tensions in Egypt intensified and the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb made global headlines, the distribution of finds declined rapidly as “antiquities exports from Egypt were progressively curtailed” (Stevenson 2019, 9). Partage came to a complete end in 1983 with the introduction of Law 117 in Egypt for the ‘Protection of Antiquities’, a law which prohibited the export of Egyptian archaeology exactly one hundred years after Petrie’s first negotiation in Paris (Stevenson 2019, 222).

2.4 Establishing the first annual exhibition

The practice of annual exhibitions was established in the autumn of 1884, the same year that the first distribution took place and the initial wave of Egyptian artefacts landed on British shores. It was evident from the outset who was the driving force behind the practice, with the initiative emanating from the field rather than the committee room. When Petrie wrote to Poole from his excavation at Tanis requesting that a room be secured in London, the committee suggested “a shed at the back of a dealer’s garden” which the archaeologist quickly turned down as “utterly impossible” (Petrie 1931, 50-51). From that point on, with the committee’s lack of enthusiasm laid bare, Petrie and his close archaeological network took it upon themselves to organise the exhibitions, a tradition that seems to have been maintained throughout much of its history.

In his autobiography, *Seventy Years in Archaeology*, Petrie (1931, 51) recalled that first year: “[t]he objects which I was allowed to retain I showed in London, at the first of a long series of annual exhibitions which has done much to educate the interest of the public.” Education and the distribution of knowledge were certainly among the Fund’s key objectives, with a strong strategy of excavation reports, newspaper articles, and generating publicity from the start. However, archival evidence suggests that this was neither the initial nor the primary consideration behind the exhibition practice, as this letter from Petrie to Poole shows:

You must remember not only the transport, but the need of a large room with tables and shelves in London to unpack in, and then the distribution of all the things afterwards. I hope you will be able to have a suitable room, which might be so arranged that any one wishing to see all the things could do so, and which would be a great convenience to me as I could see and catalogue all the pottery together. (EES COR.016.f.30).

For Petrie (1886a, 49), who once lamented that “[t]he thousands of small objects brought over prevent my noticing them in detail”, the hiring of rooms in London to lay out and work on his recently excavated finds served a very practical purpose. This focus is substantiated by Petrie’s pocket diaries for this initial period, which reflect on the exhibition as an active and multifunctional space for mending, cleaning, joining, and stringing objects, as well as for drawing, weighing, interpreting, and labelling finds. A room that was large enough for sorting artefacts equally benefited the mechanics of partage, allowing free space to view and allocate objects to museums and facilitate the distribution process. Such a layout ensured that museum professionals had the opportunity to peruse the objects and to select which ones they would like to receive in return for their financial contribution. Processing and distributing the material began as the primary motive for the practice, public access and engagement were of secondary importance.

While Petrie and his team would work on the collection in the exhibition rooms all week, in that first year just two of those days (Tuesdays and Thursdays) were allocated to the public. Work on the material continued while visitors were present, allowing audiences a glimpse of the post-excavation procedures of archaeologists. The exhibitions remained an active and multi-faceted archaeological environment, but

during this initial period they turned from being largely practical and logistical exercises to more public-facing events, as the number of public days increased gradually to five and finally six days per week. This development is perhaps indicative of the exhibition's continuing success or of the growing demand of fundraising, for which the exhibitions became a central device.

For audiences, the annual exhibitions presented a new and different image of Egypt. Situated outside the museum, it was an image constructed directly by the archaeologists responsible for the excavation of material, and it was heavily sculpted by complex Anglo-Egyptian political relations. The displays existed as a direct consequence of *partage* and thus were tied to diplomatic agency in Egypt. They offered the first and most consistent representations of ancient Egypt to be governed by these new colonial relationships, and as the scale of content waxed and waned with the political climate the consequences would be apparent to exhibition audiences. At a time when "power was made visible through theatrical displays" (Cohn 1996, 3) and Europe was fully immersed in a "world as exhibition" mentality (Mitchell 1989), these temporary exhibitions facilitated a dialogue between Empire and the Imperial metropole, rendering Egypt knowable and familiar to British audiences. The practice offered a space to negotiate and play out these political and scientific entanglements and to showcase Egyptian archaeology and the new excavated artefact in the process of construction and in the context of political change.

When Petrie established his own archaeological organisation he continued the tradition of annual exhibitions. His Egyptian Research Account (ERA), which was set up in 1896 specifically to finance the practical training of archaeology students in Egypt, led to a number of joint exhibitions with the EEF in which the two shared the display space but retained separate and distinct identities. Not until 1905, when Petrie established the BSAE, were exhibitions physically divided, displayed concurrently in different venues during the summer months. These exhibitions had a long-lasting legacy and impact, running almost continuously for over five decades from 1884 to 1939, interrupted only during the First World War, when excavations in Egypt were put on hold.

The BSAE displays added to the ever-expanding landscape of Egyptian and Sudanese archaeological exhibitions in the years before the First World War. A growing network of British-led excavations saw Petrie's former student John Garstang, who excavated at Meroe in Sudan for the University of Liverpool's Institute of Archaeology, establish his own displays in London from 1909 (Thornton 2015). This influence was also felt beyond the capital, as in 1911 the University of Oxford's expeditions to Faras in Sudan adopted the same model to publicly present their finds in the University's Examination Hall. Although the exhibitions of Garstang and the University of Oxford lie outside the scope of this thesis, their additions demonstrate that the annual exhibitions of the EEF and BSAE were operating as part of an extensive, multi-sited system of representation.

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From the very beginning, the annual exhibitions were embedded within a dense socio-political context. With the exhibitions enabled by British occupation, the political relationship between Britain and Egypt and the politicised understanding of the objects being excavated exerted a great influence over the exhibitions, framing the practice and creating a specific context of viewing the collections on display in the heart of the imperial metropole. As the first and most direct and timely representation of this new relationship to be displayed in London, the effects of such colonial power dynamics on knowledge creation cannot be underestimated. As a result, this thesis will continue to frame the exhibition practice as not just a platform for archaeological representation but a politicised representation of Egypt, both ancient and modern. It was a status that enabled the annual exhibitions and their material products to be seamlessly woven into the broader culture of exhibitionary practice that had been developing throughout the course of the nineteenth century.

3. Historical context of exhibitionary culture

Before examining the annual exhibitions and their representation of Egypt, it is important to consider the earlier history of comparable displays. Recent research by Stephanie Moser (2014a, 1303) has demonstrated the “cumulative effect of representations” in which images of ancient Egypt, in particular, built upon previous traditions of reception in a dialogic process. This effect, Moser notes, “...ensured their survival as influential agents in the reconstruction of the past.” As such, the rich and vibrant context of nineteenth-century exhibitionary practice, within which the idea of the annual exhibitions took form and initially operated, must be addressed. By identifying the many layers of contexts and representations that may have shaped engagement with ancient Egyptian objects in the period leading up to the annual exhibitions, we can gain insight into the motivations and objectives behind the practice as well as influences on how material was selected, categorised, displayed, and received within the exhibition space.

This chapter aims to position the annual exhibitions in this wider nineteenth-century exhibitionary culture. It begins by examining the changing landscape of exhibition practice in Britain and its relationship to the burgeoning discipline of archaeology, assessing the ‘exhibitionary complex’ and the ‘exhibitionary Other’ as frameworks for critically understanding the mechanisms of knowledge construction during this period. I then address three key sites for the display of ancient Egyptian material culture, exploring the role of international exhibitions, museums, and learned societies in developing interpretive strategies for ‘knowing’ Egypt between 1850 and 1882. Particular attention is given to the temporary exhibitions of learned societies, such as the Palestine Exploration Fund, as not only the closest parallel to the annual exhibitions but also integral sites in the wider shaping of nineteenth-century archaeology. By examining and comparing these display contexts, all of which were active in the immediate lead-up to the annual exhibitions and therefore within close mnemonic proximity, I argue that each played a significant role in shaping the exhibitions. These multiple layers of representational tradition surrounding ancient

Egypt influenced both how the exhibitions were constructed and how they were consumed by audiences.

3.1 Exhibition culture in nineteenth century Britain

The nineteenth century witnessed a significant recasting of cultural activities in Britain. The development of new disciplines and technologies, coupled with changes in education, leisure patterns, and public transport, encouraged a proliferation of exhibitions and shows across British urban centres (Levell 2000, 11; Kember et. al. 2012). The scale and subjects of exhibitions varied greatly, as organisers at local and national levels recognised exhibitions as a popular platform for showcasing ideas and engaging diverse audiences through their extensive reach. On one end of the scale, large international exhibitions and world fairs celebrated industrial and imperial endeavours to international acclaim. The Great Exhibition of 1851, for example, received 6,039,195 visitors from 34 nations, starting a trend that would see one major exhibition every year or two until the outbreak of the war in 1914 (Brain 1993, 9; Hoffenberg 2001, 1). Meanwhile, trade organisations and learned societies utilised the popularity of exhibitions to host temporary displays for the promotion and distribution of their own unique products and knowledge. As a result, exhibitions were commonplace in the nineteenth-century cultural landscape and social calendar (see Altick 1978; Greenhalgh 1988; Brain 1993; Levell 2000; Hoffenberg 2001; Mathur 2007).

The rapid rise in exhibition culture was the product and reflection of specific social, cultural, and political factors. The visual and material forms of the exhibition resonated with Victorian attitudes towards capitalism, alongside growing interests in commodities, mass production, and consumerism, all of which changed how people interacted with the material world (Richards 1990; Freedgood 2006; Sattaur 2012). These contemporary attitudes to 'thing culture' and 'commodity culture' were expressed in the pages of popular magazines, newspapers, and illustrated periodicals, all of which contributed to the proliferation of material imagery and advertisements designed to "shape the universe of things" (Briggs 1990, 325). The exhibition found its place within the spectacle of Victorian consumption alongside printed media, shops,

and theatres. Collectively, they provided a forum for the symbolic organisation and structuring of the material world, appealing to the public through the newly found “pleasure of consuming displays” (Miller 1995, 88). In a period when the commodity became the subject of mass culture and central to everyday life, the visual consumption of sights, cultures, and curiosities on offer at exhibitions became part of elaborate social rituals and expressions of national taste.

The growing popularity of the exhibition can also be seen as a response to the increased fascination with material culture developing within the political and intellectual mind-set. In a study of objects from the the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India, Claire Wintle (2013, 2) has highlighted how ‘foreign’ material culture was crucial to the colonial project because material exploitation, consumption, and ingestion lay at the heart of empire. Furthermore, exhibitions visually demonstrated new fields of knowledge, such as archaeology and anthropology, that used material culture and visual technologies to convey prominent ideologies of imperialism. Exhibitions achieved success by connecting their audiences to political activity at home and abroad, engaging them with new perceptions of time, space, and distance, concepts that were being altered through parallel developments in the historical and social sciences, commercial travel, and communication technology (Levell 2000, 11). For exhibition audiences, these displays provided a collective experience of national pride and progress. The culture of exhibitions was carefully crafted to refashion the ideas and actions of Britain and its Empire.

3.1.1 The Exhibitionary Complex

The changes that took place in nineteenth-century cultural practice can be examined further through Tony Bennett’s concept of the ‘exhibitionary complex’ (1995; see also Bennett 2004), which he presents as characteristic of the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century. Building upon Foucauldian notions of power/knowledge and the modern episteme (Foucault 1970), this concept presents the exhibition as a central device within nineteenth-century governance and civilising missions, examining ways of producing and viewing exhibitions that were critical in cultivating disciplinary

machines of knowledge and a new self-regulating public. Exhibitions are viewed as the product of a progressively more inclusive stance towards culture, which saw institutions transfer objects and associated ideas from the exclusive, private domain to increasingly public arenas. In the process, exhibitions functioned as vehicles for constructing and communicating knowledge and messages of power to a far wider audience than before (Bennett 1995, 60-61). New themes, structures, and modalities of knowing emerged (Hooper-Greenhill 1992, 197-199), while the spaces of knowledge and education became more diverse.

Exhibitions fitted Victorian ideals for the distribution of knowledge. As sites for the instruction and improvement of the masses, they were linked increasingly to schools and classrooms through their common pedagogical theory (see Cote 2000), and they were a consistent and strategic element in public education which had become a higher priority for society as a whole (Greenhalgh 1988, 18-22). From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the educational intent of the exhibition and the public museum sought to improve the technical, aesthetic, and moral understanding of socially and culturally diverse audiences. This rationale was deeply rooted in a wider socio-political discourse. In *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (1996), Bernard Cohn presents the exhibition as an 'investigative modality' of the colonial project through which appropriate knowledge was collated, ordered, classified, and then transformed into a usable form. Within this discourse Cohn views exhibitions as an 'officialising procedure' and part of a process of state building, in which colonial power was made visible while knowledge was maintained and controlled by specialists. This ideological interpretation of exhibitionary knowledge must remain in the foreground of any analysis of exhibition practice during this period.

For archaeology, developing and maturing as a new subject throughout the nineteenth century, the exhibition provided a means of shaping its own academic and material identity, situating it within a network of disciplines that utilised the same approach. Bennett's (1995, 59) 'exhibitionary complex' draws attention to the almost symbiotic relationship between the growth of exhibition culture and intellectual subjects, demonstrating how museums and exhibitions served as "linked sites for the development and for the circulation of new disciplines (history, biology, art history,

anthropology) and their discursive formations (the past, evolution, aesthetics, man) as well as for the development of new technologies of vision.” Exhibitions had become an institutionalised practice, a necessary step in the performance, promotion, and intellectual acceptance of emerging material disciplines like archaeology. They mobilised practices of observation, description, and classification essential to the production of archaeological knowledge.

For Bennett (1995, 67) one of the greatest strengths of the exhibition, in relation to its ideological function within society, was its “ability to organise and co-ordinate an order of things and to produce a place for the people in relation to that order.”

Building upon the realisation that the whole world was empirically knowable, exhibitions of the nineteenth century provided a space where protagonists of newly emerging and increasingly professionalised disciplines could experiment and engage with ways of structuring and making sense of the world, introducing new visual frameworks for understanding and interpreting the objects of their study. Through processes of classification, arrangement, and display, exhibitions created contexts in which objects could be ‘read’ and in which both the object and the message it represented acquired values of authority, authenticity, and significance (Jordanova 1989, 23-24). The employment of archaeology within the exhibitionary complex was equally ideological (Bennett 1995, 76-77).

Much like the exhibition space itself, objects were becoming increasingly recognised for their value as educational devices, with the pedagogic method of object-centred learning recorded as early as the late nineteenth century (Cote 2000; Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 105). Through the exhibitionary complex objects were valued for their ability to act as material signifiers, as mechanisms for generating meaning, supporting multiple interpretations, and transmitting information (see Taborsky 1990; Rowe 2002, 31).

This epistemological shift had a profound effect upon the way that material culture was studied and experienced, and was reflective of a movement across the material sciences. As Stocking (1987, 263) states, the second half of the nineteenth century was a “period when not only anthropology, but science generally was much more ‘object’ – or specimen – orientated than today.” In acquiring meaning, objects and collections were used to carry statements of disciplinary identity, to “demarcate criteria to bound

and discipline bodies of material” (Whitehead 2009, 79), which would in turn re-structure knowledge. Replicated over a network of exhibitionary sites, nineteenth-century displays were used to reinforce this archaeological practice and material identity.

This restructuring of knowledge and cultural practice led to new, formalised ways of seeing, and encouraged audiences to become a new kind of observer, as “...one who sees within a prescribed set of possibilities, [and] one who is embedded in a system of conventions and limitations” (Crary 1990, 9). The disciplined eye was actively created and formalised through the constructed disciplinary context. Pearce (1992, 119-120) gives some indication of the impact of a disciplinary context and how it may affect ways of seeing and engaging with objects: “[e]ach discipline creates a particular mind-set within its adherents which gives shape to their thinking and feeling, and sets up bondings and loyalties. Each has established the parameters within which particular versions of the broad paradigms of research, classification, contextualization and criticism will take place.” By focusing attention upon the pedagogic object and developing disciplined epistemic virtues based on collective empiricism, exhibitions functioned as a space to promote a movement already prevalent in the nineteenth-century sciences (Bain and Ellenbogen 2002; Daston and Galison 2007), adapting it for a mass audience of the general public. As such, one of primary functions of the exhibition was training audiences in how to view, observe, engage with, and question disciplinary objects, a training that was fundamental in the development of archaeology as a science.

The exhibitionary complex has faced some criticism in recent years for its seemingly broad, overarching approach and the risk its overuse can carry in potentially “blunting our understanding of museum practices and rendering our accounts of Victorian culture all too predictable” (Kriegel 2006, 684). It stands to reason that each exhibition should be analysed in its own right and, to some extent, it is true that the theory cannot be applied wholeheartedly to the annual exhibitions. In fact, the following chapters of this thesis will argue that the annual exhibitions were characterised, and their knowledge construction facilitated by, a level of individualism and a degree of separation from institutionalised practice. However, the exhibitionary complex

remains significant from a contextual point of view. This was the world that the annual exhibitions were entering in to, that they were building upon, and in many ways much of its ethos can be seen running through the practice. Equally, we must acknowledge that all exhibitions operate and are consumed within a far wider network of institutions and individuals. Bennett's exhibitionary complex remains one of the most comprehensive frameworks for understanding, in particular, the epistemological relationships and disciplinary networks that emerge in exhibitionary practice during this period. Bennett's theory therefore allows us to critically engage with this history, a necessary approach in building a strong contextual understanding of knowledge construction and communication at this time.

3.1.2 The Exhibitionary Other

Inherent within this new educational paradigm and disciplined way of seeing was the concept of 'Otherness', a representational practice that constructed and projected an image of other cultures as fundamentally different from their own. This intentional separation and differentiation between the imperial self and the colonial other was based upon binary oppositions that tapped into contemporary ideologies, such as familiar versus exotic, progressive versus inferior, and civilised versus barbaric. As Hall (1997, 236) states, "culture depends on giving things meaning by assigning them to different positions within a classificatory system. The marking of 'difference' is thus the basis of that symbolic order which we call culture". In defining and emphasising difference, the social, cultural and political construct of otherness became significant in establishing a contrasting imperial identity at home, and provided an intellectual framework in which culture became a new object of knowledge.

Edward Said's (2003 [1978]) seminal study into the European stereotyped image of 'the Orient' outlines the scale and dominance of this representational practice and the power of the cultural other. As a case study it holds particular value to this discussion for its engagement with Egypt as an 'Oriental' culture. Said (2003 [1978], 3) explains how Orientalism, as an epistemological discourse defined by its separation of 'the Orient' from 'the Occident', enabled European culture to "manage – and even produce

– the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period.” This strategic knowledge was articulated and manipulated in many aspects of the nineteenth-century lived experience, and would have been familiar to a wide variety of exhibition audiences.

Exhibitions of the nineteenth century played a crucial role in the construction and communication of ‘otherness’. In this context it is especially important to recognise exhibitions as systems of representation, as contested spaces that create systems within which objects are imbued with meaning, value and validity in line with specific discourses. By reducing other cultures to objects that can be studied, analysed and organised by the ‘superior’ minds of the West, exhibitions were central in the production and dissemination of colonial knowledge of power and difference, and the legitimisation of colonial activities abroad. Processes of objectification and material classification systems enabled cultures to be “judged and ranked in hierarchical relationship with each other” (Lidchi 1997), placing both the exhibitors and their audience in a position of power over the subject and uniting them as one common entity in the construction of the ‘self’ against the ‘other’.

The construction and reception of the exhibitionary other was aided by the increasingly dominant and strategic role that material culture was playing in the colonial project overseas. Wintle (2013, 2) explains how objects were being used to increase social awareness and forge social relationships across empires, to connect different communities and cultures, and “construct or deny identity and cultural difference.” Objects were central in reinforcing a visual culture of empire. Once displayed within the constructed narratives of the exhibition or museum objects embodied those values, ‘standing in’ for a particular race, nation, or political activity. The necessity of the three-dimensional object within imperial storytelling and propaganda highlights the value of an object-centred approach to research of this period and the vital role of objects in any post-colonial critique.

The use of the cultural other was at its most explicit and pervasive in anthropological or ethnographic displays of material culture and human exhibits. In the second half of the nineteenth century the national appetite for the ‘consumption’ of exotic cultures, coupled with developments in the institutionalisation of anthropology as a new branch

of the human sciences, saw a remarkable increase of cultural displays in both exhibitions and private shows (for example, Maxwell 1999, 1-9; McCarthy 2007). Much like the annual archaeological exhibitions that followed, these temporary ethnographic displays often operated outside the intellectual confines and the permanence of the museum. This approach not only diversified locations of display, and therefore locations of disciplinary knowledge, including sites such as lecture theatres, universities, and learned societies, but their temporary nature also allowed displays to adapt to, and engage with, the latest anthropological theories and political happenings. Qureshi (2011, 4; 2012), in examining the case of displayed African peoples, has highlighted how important it was for exhibitions of this period to demonstrate timeliness and political topicality to ensure success. These associations, whether devised consciously or subconsciously, were also vital in the display and reception of the cultural other. In this disciplinary context, temporary exhibitions offered a unique flexibility that suited the rapidly changing nature of anthropological thought and the socio-political context in which it was developing. As a strategic approach this would have undoubtedly appealed to the founders of the annual archaeological exhibitions as a means of forging their own disciplinary identity and ideas, and reacting to political happenings in Egypt.

The display of foreign objects and living foreign peoples normalised and commercialised the objectification of other cultures and the concept of material culture in general. It can be viewed that the success of these ventures paved the way for similar explorations of the temporal rather than spatial 'other' in archaeology and exhibitions of archaeological material. In conceptualising history and the past as another cultural encounter, ancient cultures were 'consumed' along the same lines as contemporary ethnographic cultures. This demonstrates how the concept of the past is as much a construct as the cultural other, both could be adapted and manipulated in support of particular narratives, and were utilised similarly within the exhibitionary complex. Bohrer (2003, 43-44) has also explored how a combination of both spatial and temporal distance was often aligned in representations to form an 'exoticist hybridity', in which certain lands like Egypt and Palestine were considered to have both contemporary and historical interest. In many contexts of display,

representations of both temporal and spatial otherness worked in tandem to construct meaning across the then less-consolidated disciplinary boundaries of archaeology and anthropology.

It is beneficial to situate the origins and appeal of the annual archaeological exhibitions within this broader disciplinary setting. Both archaeology and anthropology share a similar intellectual heritage that at this time would have been evident in the way in which their subjects were interpreted and displayed to the public. Similarities in their material composition would mean that archaeological objects, including those of ancient Egypt, would also be known to audiences through anthropological narratives and research (Champion 2003; Challis 2013; Stevenson 2014b). It is highly probable that curatorial decisions, as well as the scholarly and public reception of archaeological exhibitions in the nineteenth century, would have been conditioned by material displays of anthropology and their wider narratives of mankind. With that in mind the importance and relevance of their shared perceptions of the cultural other as both knowable and consumable commodities cannot be underestimated.

It is evident that from the mid-nineteenth century disciplinary anthropology and archaeology were both defining and utilising otherness in their research. Yet the analysis of the exhibitionary other is still viewed as an 'ethnographic' discourse with current research still not fully recognising that both past and contemporary otherness were equally represented through archaeological subjects. While the ethnographic other has been extensively scrutinized in this scholarship, the archaeological artefact has been less so. Despite Jordanova's (2000) attempt to highlight the benefits of a critical approach to otherness in historical disciplines, very few studies have situated representations of the past into this largely anthropological practice. This study aims to address the value of approaching and analysing nineteenth-century archaeological displays, in particular, through this existing intellectual context.

3.2 Displaying Egyptian archaeology: interpretive strategies for 'knowing' Egypt, 1850-1882

The display of ancient Egyptian material was inevitably enmeshed within the nineteenth-century exhibitionary complex. By the mid-nineteenth century Britain had established a colonising presence in Egypt, culminating in military occupation in 1882 (Mitchell 1988). As shown in chapter 2, the strength of this colonial context and amplified power dynamic considerably altered the way public and professional audiences engaged with the concept of Egypt and the ancient Egyptian object. It also created a fresh epistemological framework and environment for the display and reception of ancient and modern Egypt in Britain, particularly within the imperial metropole. As large national shows, museum collections, and temporary exhibitions explored and experimented with this new phase and relationship in richer detail specific ideas of Egypt were filtered down to audiences through a variety of representational practices.

The display of ancient Egyptian objects in the nineteenth century must be framed in relation to the proliferation of exhibitionary practice similarly designed as interpretive strategies for knowing Egypt. In the mid-nineteenth century ancient Egypt was being represented through the entertainment industry in operas such as *Aida*, as well as dioramas, and panoramas, some of which were produced in consultation with Egyptologists such as Joseph Bonomi (1849; see also Anonymous 1847). Equally, an array of visual representations provided a far greater sense of the context in which ancient Egyptian material culture was situated. Popular representations such as the lithographs of ancient monuments created by David Roberts, the publication of Sir John Gardner Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, as well as advances in photographic technologies, enabled a variety of audiences to build a multi-layered interpretation of the ancient civilisation (Moser 2006, 200-201). These methods helped create a complex tapestry of ideas which simultaneously domesticated ancient Egyptian visual and material culture within the eyes of British public and built a sense of national ownership over the ancient civilisation.

It is evident that representations and displays of ancient Egypt operated within the exhibitionary complex and wider nineteenth-century patterns of structuring and

viewing world cultures. It is also clear that this period was critical in creating an image of Egypt, both ancient and modern, which was often exploited and manipulated for political, commercial, and scholarly gain. Through mechanisms of display and representation, sites of exhibition became contested spaces for the negotiation and dissemination of this changing imagery and the changing values of the ancient Egyptian object. It is therefore worth addressing the impact of different contextual displays of ancient Egyptian material upon knowledge construction and considering what influence such representations had upon the annual exhibition, not just in terms of the motivations behind establishing the practice, but also in terms of building traditions of display and reception.

The remaining sections of this chapter take the period 1850 to 1882 as its temporal limits, bookended by two key points: the opening of the Great Exhibition and ending with the British occupation of Egypt and the founding of the Egypt Exploration Fund. As has been rightly noted by both Moser (2006, 8-9, 215) and Stevenson (2019, 6), the events of 1882, coupled with the professionalisation and institutionalisation of the discipline and the introduction of systematic excavations in Egypt, considerably altered the British relationship with Egypt and the ancient Egyptian artefact. As such this chapter leads up to the point in which these two distinct chronological phases meet. While the history of engagement with ancient Egyptian material culture in Britain has an extensive and rich history and influence over traditions of representation, tracing back to as early as the sixteenth century (Moser 2006, 11-32), the focus of this chapter lies in the fifty years preceding the first annual exhibition to gain a more focussed perspective of events within the individual and collective memories of those organising and attending the annual exhibitions.

3.2.1 International exhibitions

Viewed by many as the “dawn of the exhibitionary age” (Levell 2000, 25), the Great Exhibition of 1851, and its direct successor the Crystal Palace exhibition at Sydenham which opened in 1854, started a series of temporary, large-scale, international exhibitions that had successors world-wide until 1939 (Greenhalgh 1988, 1). As a

temporal departure point, these two events hold significant value for this discussion. In terms of the objects displayed, they set a precedent for understanding other nations through their material culture, making the “display of material culture a social ritual for a great number of people” (Challis 2008, 181; see also Richards 1990, 1-72), and also permanently altered the way in which collections were organised and studied (Hoffenberg 2001, 12). Equally, the Crystal Palace exhibition in particular marked a considerable turning point in the visualisation and representation of Egypt and its history. The combination of these factors, coupled with an increased political interest in the country, presented Egyptian archaeology firmly within the exhibitionary complex, arguably for the first time in Britain.

When the Crystal Palace relocated and reopened in 1854, antiquity became the focus of the newly devised Fine Arts Courts, displaying the evolutionary sequence of art beginning with ancient Egypt, as the cradle of civilisation, leading to ancient Greece and Rome, and ultimately concluding with the European Renaissance. Each themed court in the series presented life-sized reconstructions of ancient monuments and architectural wonders, creating a new and immersive experience for entertainment, education, and self-improvement. It is here that we begin to see nineteenth-century Britain physically and metaphorically align itself with the imperial and industrial might of the ancient civilisations, a relationship drawn tangibly closer through British advances in archaeology and the increased display of, and public familiarity with, the archaeological object. The Crystal Palace exhibition created a lens of imperial prowess and progress through which Egypt was to be assessed, and through which visitors were invited to compare Britain and ancient Egypt, and the scale of their cultural, political, and artistic achievements. Displayed in this context Egypt had become part of a wider colonial narrative, justifying colonial activities abroad through historic comparisons. By reconstructing and building life-sized, walk-through replicas of ancient Egyptian monuments within the exhibition space Britain was forging a complex statement of cultural appropriation; a message that was encapsulated in the hieroglyphic inscriptions which adorned the walls of the replica temples, honouring Queen Victoria as Pharaoh (see Phillips 1854, 40).

The Fine Arts Courts played a crucial role in constructing and disseminating archaeological knowledge in the early stages of its disciplinary identity. International exhibitions provided a context of technological progress in the modern Western world within which archaeology was presented and celebrated as a new science, with the Fine Arts Courts further demonstrating how new technologies of display could contribute to our understanding of ancient cultures (see Challis 2008). Through their displays the Courts engaged with current archaeological theories and often controversial debates (see Moser 2012). Leading figures in Egyptian archaeology, such as Joseph Bonomi (Jones and Bonomi 1854) and Sir John Gardner Wilkinson (1857), authored guidebooks and companions to the Egyptian Court specifically, advising on how to view and contextualise the information presented, providing multiple platforms for addressing both scholarly and public interest. The proposal to display a reconstruction of an Egyptian tomb being excavated at the Crystal Palace (Piggott 2004, 48), although ultimately unsuccessful, demonstrates how at this stage Egypt had become synonymous with great discovery narratives, its identity in Britain intertwined with that of archaeology and the discipline's imperial narrative of scientific progress. Exhibitions provided an experimental platform on which these knowledge relationships could be created.

The Crystal Palace exhibition also recognised the importance of Egyptian antiquities in their construction of knowledge. Although no authentic artefacts were on display, the Egyptian Court featured its own museum with casts of significant sculptures from world renowned collections such as the British Museum, the Museo Egizio in Turin, and the Musée du Louvre in Paris (Moser 2012, 97). The fact that these artefacts were being duplicated points to the educational objectives behind collections of Egyptian archaeology at this time, and indicates a sense of purpose beyond values of exoticism and rarity. Embedded within the Egyptian Court, these casts, and attempts at a contextualised surrounding, formed part of a wider strategy of converting scientific observation for a mass audience. By selecting a representation of the most significant architectural and sculptural styles, these displays were designed to break down ancient Egyptian culture and instruct the visiting public on how to observe and read aspects of ancient Egypt. As one guidebook comments with reference to the Fine Arts

Courts, “...our present task is to show him how to see the Building itself, and not describe its contents...” (Phillips 1854, 38). The inclusion of a museum speaks to the importance of objects as part of this strategy, but also alludes to the idea that this fabricated setting was equally designed to instruct visitors on appropriate museum behaviour, to provide training in how to engage with, and observe, Egyptian archaeology in more traditional object settings, such as museum galleries and archaeological exhibitions.

By 1860 the Crystal Palace at Sydenham was displaying what was collectively known as the ‘Egyptian Collection’, which, in addition to the Egyptian Court, now included a display of specimens of natural resources and contemporary products manufactured in Egypt. Not only was this new arrangement spatially linked to the Egyptian Court and therefore the antiquity of Egypt, but it was visually linked through a new photographic display depicting contemporary life in Egypt amongst the ruins of its past glory. In a review of the Egyptian collection published in *The Art Journal*, the display of natural resources, the products of colonialism, are praised for being comparable to the greatness of the ancient civilization, while contemporary Egypt is viewed as the antithesis of progression, timeless and static; its material culture “simple and rude” and “identical to those known long centuries ago” (*The Art Journal* 1860, 348; see also Vanke 2008). Interestingly, in this context the artefacts of modern Egypt are described as curiosities in comparison to its archaeological heritage, the value of which was to be found only “in the powerful appeal which it makes in behalf of this glorious Egypt – an appeal to the civilized world to take a part in the resuscitation of Egyptian civilisation” (*The Art Journal* 1860, 348).

This dual identity and cultural comparison, between the Fine Art Courts and the industrial display of modern Egypt, was vital in constructing knowledge of ancient Egypt during this period. Egypt was portrayed as a land of dichotomy, its civilized past and uncivilized present sharing a Victorian romanticised landscape. Knowledge of Egypt was constructed through a juxtaposition of these contrasting images, creating an understanding of ancient Egypt and its archaeological remains that was very much dependent upon, and entangled with, these dominant and political views of modern Egypt. International exhibitions provided one of very few spaces in which ancient and

modern Egyptian material culture could be displayed side-by-side for direct comparison. As such, these displays offered new narrative opportunities unavailable to most museums with archaeological collections. The perceived value of this interpretive strategy was certainly recognised by exhibition audiences with regard to the Egyptian display: “[u]nlike the British Museum, there is abundance of room at the Crystal Palace... it is quite possible to... group together such collections as will mutually enhance the value and interest of each other through the influence of association” (*The Art Journal* 1860, 348).

It was an interpretive strategy and representational tradition replicated widely across international exhibitions and world fairs. The first time authentic ancient Egyptian artefacts were exhibited in an international exhibition in London in 1862, they were framed by a selection of modern Egyptian crafts and domestic utensils (Timbs 1863, 321-323). It was the only nation in the exhibition that included an archaeological element to its representation. Similarly, the Paris International Expositions of 1867 and 1878 famously included a reconstruction of an ancient Egyptian temple housing objects on loan from the Bulaq Museum alongside a reconstruction of a Cairo Bazaar, in which Egyptian and Sudanese people were presented as exhibits (Greenhalgh 1989, 85-86; Lenormant 1878). Even after the establishment of Petrie’s annual archaeological exhibition the tradition continued to dominate across Western Europe, with the 1889 exhibition in Paris, the largest and most popular of Paris’ Exposition Universelle, following suit (Mitchell 1988; 1989). Petrie would in fact contribute to the international exhibition culture in 1893, when he exhibited material from his excavations at the Columbian Exhibition in Chicago (Riggs 2010, 1139).

When Petrie opened his first annual exhibition to the public in 1884 the Crystal Palace at Sydenham was still receiving two million visitors a year, an average it had maintained since opening thirty years earlier (The Crystal Palace Foundation 2015). The Fine Arts Courts, by then capturing a particular snapshot of archaeological and imperial history, remained popular with exhibition audiences throughout the 1880s (Challis 2008, 183). This experiential overlap, combined with the position its representations held in both national and institutional memory, would have undoubtedly informed the reception of Petrie’s displays. With the continued rise of

anthropology as a discipline the dominance of the representational tradition aligning Egypt's past and present would also continue to hold influence over the academic study, and therefore display, of Egypt into the twentieth century. The international exhibition stands as a significant cultural activity through which both scientific and historical knowledge was produced and deployed as strategic knowledge, Egypt's role within this interpretive strategy would remain paramount to future representations.

3.2.2 Museums

From the mid-nineteenth century Britain witnessed a steady growth in the number of local museums as a result of the Museums Act of 1845 allowing local councils to establish museums for the education and social benefit of the public (Pearce 1990, 18). Between the years 1850 and 1887 the number of museums in Britain rose from sixty to at least 240 (Pearce 1992, 107), this expansion led to the increased professionalization of the sector, most noticeably resulting in the introduction of the professional museum curator and the foundation of the Museums Association in 1880 which served to establish a collective museum practice (see Teather 1990; Kendall 2014; Stevenson 2014a, 92). The impact of this growing museum culture upon the establishment and reception of the annual archaeological exhibition cannot be underestimated. These developments meant that a wider proportion of the population had access to cultural and historical displays, including those of archaeology, and would have likely resulted in an increased appetite for archaeological exhibitions.

While the Great Exhibition and Crystal Palace exhibition had introduced the concept of studying and intellectually engaging with material culture to the public, museums provided a far more focussed and direct form of engagement with authentic archaeological objects. A review of the 1878 International Exposition in Paris highlights the unique position museums held in terms of access to Egyptian archaeology: "Now that there are legal obstacles to their export, Egyptian antiquities of any value hardly ever reach the West, and the small portion that still does so is much more eagerly sought after by public museums than private collectors" (Lenormant 1878, 377). This

direct engagement was an experience that for most members of the public, outside of the academic sphere, could only be gained through the museum, and therefore forms a significant and influential case study for public knowledge and the conceptualisation of ancient Egypt.

Museums are noted for their strategic role as key epistemological sites within the nineteenth-century exhibitionary complex (Bennett 1995). It was, for example, during this period that many museums came under the aegis of the newly founded Department of Science and Art (Forgan 1994, 141), and Select Committees began to examine the relationship between local and national museums and the promotion of scientific education (*Nature* 1874). In examining museum representations during the second half of the nineteenth century and their communication of the past, including those of Egyptian archaeology, we must consider to what extent they were governed or guided by wider social, cultural, and political objectives. This becomes especially significant when we note how museums and their representations most likely operated within a network system, predominantly functioning in a top down approach from national to local levels. Moser (2006, 5) demonstrates the power of these representations and hints at how such systems operated: “[w]ith the arrangement of substantial collections of antiquities in the national museums of the nineteenth century, a major tradition in representing ancient cultures was firmly established.” This collectivity within museum practice could suggest that museum audiences were experiencing an almost singular, controlled, and sector-regulated representation of ancient Egypt. While it is likely that the annual archaeological exhibition drew heavily from museum practice, it would ultimately counter this museum-style representation through experimentation and new methods of interpretation, and could explain why as a practice it situated itself outside of the museum sphere both physically and intellectually.

The British Museum offers a prime example of how museums were arranging and presenting objects to construct a particular view of ancient Egypt. In the mid-nineteenth century knowledge of ancient Egypt at the British Museum was created largely through its comparison to the Classical art of Greek and Roman statuary. As an interpretive strategy, the ‘Chain of Art’ presented a linear progression of stylistic form

and contemporary views of beauty through the new chronological arrangement of its sculpture collections, situating the 'primitive' works of ancient Egypt and Assyria at the beginning of this narrative (Jenkins 1992, 63; Malley 2012, 65). The role and privilege of ancient Egypt, within this Hellenocentric framework, was to historicise the Classical collections, to function as a point of comparison for the cultural and artistic achievements that were to follow. Yet, through this arrangement ancient Egypt also acquired scientific validity from the collections which surrounded it.

The impact of this interpretive strategy led museum audiences to know ancient Egypt, and modern Egypt through association, as a cultural curiosity, its value reduced in comparison to that of the Classical, and therefore European, ideal. Such representations played on the concept of the exhibitionary other through, what Bohrer (2003, 7) has termed, 'historical exoticism', an exploration of cultures temporally distant from the familiar. The inclusion of this interpretation in visitor guidebooks of the period demonstrate how these ideas were not just visually implied but actively produced and didactically presented to audiences:

The stranger who visits the Gallery of Sculpture, in the British Museum, cannot fail to be struck by the curious collection of objects in the room of Egyptian Antiquities. Passing from the contemplation of the almost faultless representations of the human form in marble, the triumph of Grecian art, he comes to figures more remarkable, at first sight, for their singular forms and colossal size, than for their beauty. Though the contrast between what he has just left, and the new scene to which he is introduced, creates at first no pleasing impression, feelings of curiosity and admiration soon arise from a more careful examination of what is around him. (Long 1846, 4)

Museum collections, and therefore the representation and knowledge of ancient Egypt from which they were constructed, were also deeply embedded within the exhibitionary complex and the period's socio-political surroundings. Stevenson (2015a, 2) has stated how "[t]hroughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Europe's burgeoning new museums continued to profit from the imperialistic and nationalistic rivalries that were being played out in Egypt." (see also Colla 2007, 24-66; James 2001; Reid 2002, 21-63). Even into the second half of the nineteenth century

the meaning acquired by these objects from this acquisition process would be just as recognisable to museum audiences. As historic symbols of imperial conquest and power, it is likely this meaning would be heightened having acquired new relevance and familiarity in light of the prospect of British colonial expansion into Egypt. These discourses of power transmitted through the object would be emphasised even further when displayed within the context and architectural setting of a global museum.

The museum context in the nineteenth century was also responsible for producing its own way of seeing. The concept of 'age-value' as a mode of interpretation, similar to an audience's appreciation and understanding of artistic and historical value, was central to the reception of ancient Egypt. This temporal appreciation of an object and its journey through time would be elevated when applied to objects from ancient Egypt and Assyria, as usually the oldest civilisations represented in museum collections. Bohrer (2003, 110) has noted how the emergence of age-value in the nineteenth century had "fundamental ramifications – social, intellectual, and political – for the history of Assyrian reception." As Assyrian and Egyptian collections were so aligned in their museum reception during this period, both being geographically and chronologically associated and similarly interpreted as exotic and primitive, it can be assumed that age-value was equally significant in the reception and knowledge construction of ancient Egypt. In fact, historically, the de-contextualising and transformative effect of the museum space has charged the ancient Egyptian object with a particular museal aura (see Hoberman 2003); a combination of age-value, unique artistic style and, in terms of sculpture, colossal size incited values of curiosity, awe, and wonder in their reception, differentiating them from most other collections (see Moser 2006, 200-215). This museum-defined reception of ancient Egypt transcended beyond the museum space. With the annual archaeological exhibition providing a comparable type of engagement with the authentic archaeological object we can expect that it generated a similar response from a shared public audience.

The museum experience during this period introduced another appeal of the ancient Egyptian object, intertwining its representation with the narratives of its discovery and the biography of its discoverer (Moser 2006, 205; Riggs 2010, 1136). The excavation of

objects and their transportation to Britain caught the public's imagination through coverage in the periodical press. It was a continuation of the orientalist dialogue; a heroic narrative of brave and intrepid Western archaeologists triumphing over adversity to rescue an ancient civilisation and bring it 'home' to safety. Once displayed in a museum context the object drew value and meaning from its association with the grand discovery narrative and the raised profile of the excavator, aiding its process of 'artefaction'. The notion of an object being known through its excavator, and in many ways embodying its excavator, was initiated and popularised through museum display but went on to become an integral component in the popular success and reception of the annual archaeological exhibition, which showcased the work of renowned archaeologists. Furthermore, it helped raise awareness of the object biography, a concept which facilitated understanding of the excavated object and the archaeological process.

3.2.3 Learned societies

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a rise in archaeological societies at both a local and national level across the United Kingdom (see *Nature* 1873a; 1873b; 1873c), introducing new approaches to knowledge construction and the display of archaeological objects. These societies demonstrate how archaeology operated as a discipline within the exhibitionary complex, and presents yet another avenue in which Egypt was introduced into this representational and pedagogical system. In contrast to the museum, the archaeological societies had a more exclusive audience, offering a form of representation and knowledge construction which was much more targeted in its approach and intellectually defined.

This period, and the resulting rise of the archaeological society, was marked by the increasing institutionalisation of historical research and the further progression away from the amateur and broad study of the antiquarian towards the more specific, professional, and scientific approach of the archaeologist. As Evans (2007b, 267) has stated, this shift resulted in "the changing performance, demonstration and content of the past, and its adjudication or authority...". The use of the term 'performance' here

is crucial in understanding this practice; archaeological societies, and other learned societies which included archaeology amongst their growing interests (see Pearce 1990, 19), used multiple display techniques to perform archaeology, as a means of defining and reinforcing disciplinary boundaries and identities, but also to introduce the by-product of this new knowledge, the excavated artefact. These alternative techniques of displaying, questioning, and interpreting the archaeological object were replicated across a geographically and intellectually wide network of learned societies, acting as linked sites for the circulation of new ideas and knowledge. Although such displays included all material aspects of archaeology, particularly British finds, growing interests in non-European archaeology from the mid-nineteenth century onwards also brought more exotic artefacts to the fore, with the ancient Egyptian object becoming increasingly situated into this wider archaeological manifesto.

At the centre of this performance was a weekly meeting in which collectors and curators presented their archaeological objects for evaluation and physical inspection by an exclusive network of society members. This process of display and interpretation was termed 'exhibiting', and provided a far more hands-on and experimental engagement with objects than could be found elsewhere. These settings created a forum for developing an understanding of past material culture, where archaeology and decisions about the past could be performed through a group-based adjudication, recorded and distributed through society proceedings. In this context archaeological objects were prized for their evidential and typological values, as demonstrable proof and evidence of known historical narratives and changing theories. Exhibition at society meetings acted as a process of authentication where objects could be sorted, judged and validated by disciplinary authorities according to their place in classificatory systems and archaeological chronologies. It is here too that we begin to see a growing interest in the concept of the newly discovered and recently excavated object, and the aspiration for immediacy in exhibitions needed to reflect the changing nature of archaeology as a discipline. These concepts became paramount to the display and reception of the annual archaeological exhibition.

Examining the published proceedings from the British Archaeological Association and the Society for Antiquaries of London shows that ancient Egyptian objects were

exhibited quite regularly between 1850 and 1882. Although accounts show that ancient Egyptian objects were exhibited far less frequently than British and European specimens, Egypt appears to be the best represented country outside of European archaeology with the number of exhibits increasing as the century progresses. As a result, Egyptian archaeology is valued more, and its meaning heightened, for its intrinsic rarity and cultural otherness in comparison to the European archaeology it was exhibited alongside.

For museums and private collectors across the United Kingdom and Europe, the disciplinary context of Society meetings acted as a network hub for the distribution of both knowledge and archaeological objects, creating even greater parallels between this practice and the annual archaeological exhibition. Both the Society for Antiquaries in London and the British Archaeological Association have recorded instances of ancient Egyptian objects being brought to meetings for evaluation prior to entering museum collections. The Museum at Hartwell House in Buckinghamshire (BAA 1857, 218), Warrington Museum (BAA 1860, 316), the British Museum (SAL 1885, 211), and the Royal Museum of Cagliari (BAA 1852, 432) all sought advice from Society members on objects recently acquired or donated to their collections during this period; knowledge which would presumably inform how the object was presented to the public upon its return. In some instances networking curators actively sought to expand their own collections, with rare specimens acquired by museums following their exhibition at Society meetings, as this example of a bronze figurine of a sphinx demonstrates: “[s]uch figures rarely occur, as may be concluded by there being no specimen in the British Museum, to which the present example has since been presented” (SAL 1864, 317). The regular attendance and input of leading authorities in the study of ancient Egyptian material culture, including British Museum Keeper of Egyptian and Oriental antiquities Samuel Birch, Egyptologist Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, and Archaeologist Édouard Naville (see Bierbrier 2012), demonstrates how the archaeological society had become a central resource in the construction and communication of knowledge about ancient Egypt, as well as institutionally recognised and valued.

Society meetings were responsible for reinforcing a particular image of Egypt. The types of Egyptian object exhibited were very much led by trends in contemporary collecting practices. Highly collectable items such as small to medium sized excavated objects and *objets d'art* representing religious and funerary practices and aspects of daily life formed the majority of exhibited items and therefore the focus of knowledge created through this process. Within the context of Society meetings the idea of what constituted a disciplinary archaeological object and the values and knowledge being sought from that object, particularly in association with Egypt, were shifting and being directed by the material culture available for discussion. Thereby supporting Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (1998, 18) observation that "... disciplines make their objects and in the process make themselves." This scholarly representation of archaeology was a direct contrast to the monumental image and grand discovery narratives favoured in public representations of Egypt at large-scale international exhibitions and museum displays.

This image of Egypt mirrored the type of material culture later favoured by Petrie, which would form the basis of annual exhibition displays. Stevenson (2014a, 91) has commented on how Petrie's departure from monumental finds to the "mundane and fragmentary" may have been guided by the fact that these types of object fell outside of Egyptian legislation and interest, and were "logistically simpler and easier to transport". Collectors and excavators exhibiting at Society meetings would have been governed by the exact same restrictions following laws against the export of antiquities from Egypt in operation since 1835 (Stevenson 2014a, 91; see also Khater 1960). We must take into consideration that Petrie may also have been motivated to find significance in the everyday object by the work and exhibitions of archaeological societies and the types of objects and knowledge being circulated through these disciplinary networks. Furthermore, in choosing to display such finds exhibition audiences would perhaps associate the annual archaeological exhibitions more with the work and objectives of such archaeological societies.

3.3 Temporary exhibitions and the shaping of archaeology

In terms of seeking an origin or motivation behind the practice of annual exhibitions, the archaeological and learned societies offer interesting parallels from the mid-nineteenth century. Not only were objects being exhibited at weekly meetings, but local and national archaeological societies were displaying collections of material at regular *conversazioni* and ‘temporary museums’ as part of annual general meetings (Chung 2002; Evans 2007, 272). Archaeology was also featured in multi-disciplinary *conversazioni* held by learned societies as part of exhibition seasons, in particular those celebrating the new sciences (Moger 1978; Alberti 2003; Price 2006; Plunkett and Sullivan 2012). There is certainly evidence to suggest that ancient Egyptian objects were being displayed widely at these exhibitions. They were, for example, situated in world archaeological narratives, such as the Society of Antiquaries of London’s (1873, 32) temporary exhibition of ‘Bronze Implements and Weapons’ held in 1873, and in more eclectic narratives of national intellectual progress, such as the Wolverhampton *Conversazione* of 1873 in which private collections of Egyptian papyri were exhibited amongst varied displays of “...pictures, articles of vertu, and many rare curiosities” (BAA 1873, 432, 436).

When reporting on the growth of scientific societies from the mid-nineteenth century, including archaeology, the journal *Nature* (1873a, 24; 1873b; 1873c) concluded that such societies “do good and serviceable work by ... the encouragement of local exhibitions” and that they reflected a “... general advance of intelligence, elevation of taste, and spread of education ...” This contemporary viewpoint gives some indication of the objectives behind society exhibitions and the context of reception. In these semi-public displays, ancient Egypt was exhibited in a context of intellectual advancement and curiosity. Egyptian archaeology formed part of a catalogue of material which demonstrated the improving impact of science and showcased archaeology as a product of empire and the re-defined archaeological artefact, a product of imperial knowledge. These arenas of display actively engaged with the exhibitionary complex, functioning as a social context in which ancient Egyptian material was viewed as a scientific specimen and archaeological meanings could be circulated. This presentation of the ancient Egyptian object was largely devoid from

the spectacle and mysticism and detached from the more romantic and sensationalised representations that often featured in public displays.

This encounter with material culture had an impact upon how public and scholarly audiences engaged with, and viewed, archaeology, promoting and reinforcing a group way of seeing and a collective affirmation of identity that aligned with disciplinary thought. Through experimental engagement, these active, hands-on and multi-sensory exhibitions provided an opportunity for an exclusive public and amateur archaeologists to exchange ideas with professionals and exhibitors on equal footing (see Alberti 2003). Although there were didactic components, for example in accompanying lectures and lantern slide shows, those present were intended to be active in constructing their own understanding, with the intention to think through the object and create a dialogue around archaeology. At archaeological societies in particular, exhibitions were a space for showcasing new disciplinary technologies and graphic representations which aided the interpretation of archaeological objects (Chung 2002; Evans 2007b, 272-274). The display of archaeological plans, diagrams, photography and three-dimensional models helped build a visual culture of disciplinary archaeology through which Egyptian material culture could be accessed and evaluated. These visual technologies created numerous interpretive strategies for knowing Egypt through the scientific process of archaeology.

Society exhibitions formed a regular part of urban life in the decades between the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Great War in 1914, influenced by the display of material culture that had become so pervasive during this period (Alberti 2003, 210). Being such a prominent and regular feature of the nation's social calendar we could ascertain that, in establishing the annual archaeological exhibition, Petrie was intentionally building upon and linking to a tradition of display already embedded within cultural and institutional memory. Petrie's pocket diaries held at the Petrie Museum reveal that he regularly attended *conversazioni* at the Royal Society and Royal Academy of Arts before and during his exhibition series, often taking objects with him to present to audiences. It is therefore evident that Petrie was actively engaging and participating in this type of display throughout his career.

Comparisons have been drawn before between the annual archaeological exhibition and the *conversazione*, but more for their seasonality and social networks rather than their content, style of presentation, and unique approach to knowledge construction (for example, Thornton 2015). I believe it was this experimental engagement and epistemological virtues to which Petrie was drawn. By building upon this tradition Petrie was not only utilising a well-regarded platform for sharing and promoting new research in a disciplinary context, but also encouraging a particular way of seeing from a particular audience. What Petrie took and developed from this exhibitionary practice was its unique type of engagement with material culture, a format which would encourage critical thought and questioning, and experimentation with new interpretation and visualisation techniques; all of which mirrored Petrie's own advanced approaches to fieldwork. For Petrie, society exhibitions provided a framework for engagement that no other representational practice of its time could provide: direct engagement with disciplinary archaeology as an evolving scientific practice.

3.3.1 Palestine Exploration Fund

One of the greatest and most direct influences for Petrie would have been the temporary exhibitions held by the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF) in London, an archaeological organisation that Petrie would become professionally linked to later in his career. Although Egyptian archaeology was only occasionally displayed in these exhibitions, the practice is certainly worth exploring further not only for its influence on Petrie's exhibitionary practice but its impact on archaeological knowledge of the Near East and the Bible Land, within which Egypt was firmly situated in the nineteenth-century mind-set. This, in fact, becomes especially important when we consider the biblical principles and objectives upon which both the PEF and supposedly the EEF were founded (Gange 2006; 2013).

Established in 1865, the PEF's first recorded exhibition was held in 1869, some fifteen years prior to Petrie's, featuring displays of artefacts excavated by the organisation "for the purpose of illustrating the progress which has already been made in the work,

and the encouragement which the success hitherto obtained affords for future and more energetic labours in the same direction" (*The Observer* 1869, 5). Newspaper reports indicate that the exhibition contained "four cases of ancient pottery, one case of jewelry, one of glass, and two or three others which may be described as miscellaneous" (*The Times of India* 1869, 4). These recently excavated artefacts, displayed alongside contextualising photography of Palestinian landscapes and images of daily life, were praised for their ability to demonstrate advances in practical archaeology but more so for their role as physical evidence of biblical narratives (*The London Journal* 1869, 132-133).

This exhibition, held at the Dudley Gallery in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, a location that Petrie would later choose for his own exhibit in 1888 (see chapter 4.3.2), was one in a series hosted by the PEF. Although they were not conducted regularly, exhibition catalogues in the organisation's archive reveal at least two further exhibitions prior to 1882 and the founding of the EEF, one in 1873 and another around 1877. Equally, the PEF loaned excavated material to other exhibitions, primarily for their biblical connotations. Collections were lent to the Manchester Missionary Society for an exhibition "furthering the cause of the Christian mission" in 1869 (Manchester Missionary Society 1869; *The Manchester Guardian* 1869a) in which objects were classified as "missionary trophies from all parts of the world" (*The Manchester Guardian* 1869b), and also to the South Kensington Museum in 1870 for an exhibition on the 'Holy Land', for which the PEF would be responsible for "organising, arranging and minutely labelling the collection" (PEF/WS/362/1).

Ancient Egyptian material culture was also displayed at these exhibitions as part of a wider Near Eastern and Biblical narrative. Egyptian archaeology of similar types to those favoured by Petrie, including pottery, tools, and flint instruments, were exhibited in connection to what was termed "geographical specimens" illustrating the character of modern Egypt and its inhabitants (PEF 1873, 23). This orientalist approach exemplifies how material culture was being used and experimented with in an archaeological context to explore new dimensions of an ethno-archaeological framework. It is also evident that the PEF was adopting strategies from other society exhibitions by introducing new visualisation technologies, through the use of

photographs, archaeological maps, plans, and models, to illustrate their findings (Rubin 2006).

The display of these recently excavated objects, from both Palestine and Egypt, certainly proves that there was a demand for exhibitions and narratives of this kind. The circulation, prominence, and availability of these objects to the public also suggests that the work of the PEF was highly likely to both inform the reception and influence the establishment of the annual archaeological exhibitions which were to follow. It is within this exhibitionary practice that the excavated object also takes on a new function, as a promotional tool for the work of an archaeological organisation and the excavator responsible for their discovery. Just like the EEF, the PEF was a membership society that relied on donations to continue its work. In this context the excavated object represented not only the advances already made in archaeology, but the promise, excitement, and possibility of what was still to come. This would therefore have been a contributing factor behind the selection of objects and narratives for display, establishing a unique representational tradition and setting a precedent for the annual archaeological exhibitions to follow.

* * * * *

The annual exhibitions were the product of London's vibrant and popular exhibitionary culture that flourished throughout the nineteenth century. Appealing to the nation's new found appreciation for material things, the new sciences, and the products of an expanding British empire, this developing visual culture of display and engagement was likely a direct inspiration behind establishing the practice, as well as key to shaping the way Egyptian archaeology was received by metropolitan audiences. The subject and content of the annual exhibitions fitted neatly into these exhibitionary ideals. As an emerging scientific and professional discipline, the displays offered a space for archaeology to formulate and affirm its own academic and material identity, legitimising its position within a network of similar subjects. It was also a space for audiences to negotiate nineteenth-century notions of the world by engaging with the contemporary concept of Otherness. By displaying the material culture of peoples both temporally and geographically distant, and by using that ancient civilisation to reflect

upon modern Egypt under British occupation, the annual exhibitions created an alternative encounter with the imperial Other.

Within this context, ancient Egypt could be found across a broad spectrum of displays. Its imagery adorned entertainment venues and popular publications, while its material culture was experienced in museums, large international exhibitions, and smaller learned societies. This range of encounters with ancient Egyptian objects and design created multifaceted traditions of representation which enabled audiences to 'know' Egypt through the prism of nineteenth century London, and which ultimately influenced the annual exhibitions as a practice.

4. Location and setting

In the spring of 1889 Flinders Petrie tasked archaeologist Flaxman Spurrell and Egyptologist Percy Newberry with finding a suitable venue for his latest annual exhibition. Individually they made enquiries and contacted colleagues, viewing rooms in London's cultural quarters of Charing Cross and Bloomsbury, as well as "private picture galleries" for hire in the commercial art districts of Conduit Street and Bond Street. Both men kept Petrie informed of what they found, writing to him in the field to outline their suggestions and concerns ahead of his arrival in England, with Spurrell asking "...do you think it necessary that the rooms should be in a fashionable locality?" (PMA 5/SPU/14; see also: Newberry MSS 1 37/16). The question of location was, from the very beginning of the practice, one of great importance.

The lack of private premises meant that each year both the EEF/S and the BSAE sought rooms to hire for the display of their annual exhibitions, in this transitional phase between the field and the museum. Over the years the annual exhibitions engaged with key sites of knowledge production, with displays housed in the rooms of learned societies, popular entertainment venues, universities, and museums. It was this freedom of movement that afforded the societies a unique flexibility to respond to the changing topography of London's intellectual landscape, intentionally operating within the leading and authoritative spaces from which scientific knowledge was emerging. The movements of the annual exhibitions, and the distinct chronological trends in the choice of location, exemplify a complex, evolving network of scientific spaces in late nineteenth and early twentieth century London, with which archaeologists were keen to engage.

From the first exhibition in 1884, locations were chosen as part of an interpretive and promotional strategy. The right setting was a way to create new contexts from which the collection could draw meaning, encouraging a particular way of seeing and experiencing the objects on display. Successful collaborations could aid publicity and strengthen credibility through association, promoting the work of British archaeology in Egypt to different audiences. An appropriate physical and socio-cultural setting therefore constituted a statement of identity, so that the decisions involved are a

telling indicator of the intent behind the exhibition practice. The multiplicity of settings was equally significant for the excavated artefacts and for the knowledge being produced. Locating the exhibitions in a succession of different locations meant that objects were constantly re-contextualised and re-interpreted, drawing upon different institutional narratives. New locations attracted new audiences to engage with the objects and facilitated new conversations, enabling a wide circulation of disciplinary knowledge and encouraging a diverse gathering of people, objects, and ideas that helped to shape the object as a social construct.

Thus, throughout this period the annual exhibitions enacted Egyptian archaeology in different epistemological environments and for different audiences, but what impact did these settings have on the exhibitions, their content and narratives, and how excavated finds were received and interpreted? In this chapter I explore the relationship between the annual exhibitions and the diverse locations in which they were held, considering the role of space in how knowledge of Egypt and Egyptian archaeology was generated and received. In considering the space in which an exhibition is held as an active agent in the making of meaning, this chapter explores how each new location re-contextualised the collection, re-framing the exhibition and its message.

In following the trends in the practice over time, this chapter is organised temporally and spatially, evaluating each type of site successively while raising questions of historical change and cognitive shifts in scientific practice. I consider how the choice of location related to contemporary understandings in Egyptian archaeology and broader scientific subjects, and what this reveals about archaeology's developing disciplinary identity. The intention is to consider the movements of archaeological knowledge across space and time using annual exhibitions as a vehicle. Although this chapter picks up on broad chronological trends in the practice, developments were far from neat and linear. Organisations would often go back and forth between different institutions, while the introduction of additional temporary exhibitions hosted by more than one organisation during this period meant that excavated finds from Egypt were often presented simultaneously in different settings, creating a multiplicity of meanings. An object's relationship with its environment was never stable, nor was its meaning. These

different locations, whether concurrently explored by such organisations or historically associated with them, created overlapping layers of significance that continued to reproduce meaning for the object. The issue of location was always one of overlapping narratives and multiple contingencies, with a mix of ideological, personal, and practical factors shaping and moulding the practice and the archaeological object. In adopting a spatial approach to studying knowledge in context, it is necessary first to consider more broadly the notion of space and its significance within the construction of knowledge.

4.1 Place, space, and knowledge production

In addressing the subject of location and setting this study benefits from several decades of scholarship into the geographies of science and scientific spaces. This spatial turn in the historical analysis of knowledge emphasises the “constitutive significance of place and space, site and situation, locality and territoriality” in the production and circulation of scientific theories and practice (Livingstone 1995, 5; see also Livingstone 2003; 2010a; Meusburger et al. 2010). The focus of this approach, which encompasses settings from large regional localities to individual buildings, is on the notion of space as a social and cultural construct, with the aim of examining how these varied arenas facilitated and conditioned the knowledge produced within them. Studies such as David Livingstone’s seminal *Putting Science in its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge* (2003, 7), which explores the geographical narratives of primarily Western science from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century, have demonstrated how “space is far from a neutral container in which social life is transacted.” Spaces are “produced, made, [and] constituted by human actors” (Livingstone 2010a, 782). Each setting demarcates its own terms of admission and patterns of behaviour, and it may shape language, communication, and intellectual exchange (Livingstone 2007).

This chapter is informed methodologically by this approach, particularly its handling of the movement and transition of knowledge across multiple locations. Such accounts have noted that as scientific practice moves from place to place, mobilising specimens, apparatus, individuals, or ideas, the knowledge that is produced and reproduced

undergoes a considerable transformation and translation as different people encounter the material in different circumstances (Finnegan 2004; Livingstone 2003, 135-178; Secord 2004). This theoretical concern resonates with the theme of the annual exhibitions. Unlike museum collections that remain relatively static and are largely bonded to their surroundings, creating meaning in a constant environment, the collections of the annual exhibition were subjected to changing environments and interpretive frameworks. As each year new collections were installed in different locations, archaeological knowledge of Egypt was fitted into existing architectural and spatial forms as well as becoming temporarily embedded within other institutional discourses, arranged and interpreted in the context of associated narratives, agendas, and “regimes of value” (Appadurai 1986).

While little has been published about the reception of objects or exhibitions across multiple venues, branch studies into the “geographies of reading” by researchers in the spatiality of science provide a valuable analogous case. Here, the leading publication has been James Secord’s (2001) inquiry into the circulation and reception of the *Vestiges of the Natural History of Selection*, a Victorian “sensation” published anonymously in 1844. Secord demonstrates how different meanings and interpretations of a single text were produced as its pages were read by different people in different institutions and societies, cities and regions across England, in what David Livingstone (2010b, 13) terms the “located nature of hermeneutics.” The parallels which have been drawn between the reading of texts and the reading of exhibitions render this spatial approach particularly germane. Louise Ravelli (2006, 119-139), for example, shows how exhibitions function in a similar way to publications. She describes exhibitions as “multi-modal, meaning-making texts” made up of numerous components, or “elemental genres”, which “cohere as a whole, and function as one unit”. As communicative media and authored/curated collections of ideas, publications and exhibitions are subject to the same shifts in meaning and diversity of reception. Like reading a text, reading an exhibition is “never a placeless activity” (Livingstone 2010a, 784).

Previous accounts of the role of space in the production of exhibitionary knowledge in particular have used a more physical and material interpretation of the notion of

space. These accounts tend to prioritise the impact of structural components - such as museum and exhibition architecture, layout, object arrangement, and the physical parameters of space - upon visitor experience (e.g. Giebelhausen 2011; MacLeod 2005a; 2005b). Studies such as Stephanie Moser's (2010) guide to exhibition analysis frame these components as "technologies of presentation", part of an array of factors integral to the production of exhibitions and the formation of meaning. While these accounts have done much to address the exhibition space as a social and cultural product, as well as an active agent in the making of meaning, there is more to an exhibition's setting than the physical reality of a site. Locations construct conceptual and intellectual contexts that influence how the collections within are perceived and interpreted. Given the many and diverse venues with which the annual exhibitions were associated, it is essential to consider the impact of the physical and cognitive environments in which they were situated and knowledge constructed.

Falk and Dierking's (2000; see also Dierking 2002) "Contextual Model of Learning", which takes into account the "rich contextual nature" of meaning-making from objects in museums and exhibitions, can provide a more holistic and detailed framework for analysis. They approach the process as a "contextually-driven" activity, proposing that "all learning is situated, a dialogue between the individual and his or her own environment" (Dierking 2002, 5). This model takes into consideration overlapping layers of context within a setting, all of which contribute to and influence the construction of knowledge. The layers include the physical and socio-cultural context of a location. Falk and Dierking emphasise that knowledge is a shared and social process and that certain settings demarcate particular "communities of learners" that "utilize each other as vehicles for deciphering information, for reinforcing shared beliefs, [and] for making meaning." Each new environment used for an annual exhibition subjected the collections to different epistemological and disciplinary contexts.

4.2 Performing archaeology in the metropole

Before we consider the role of individual sites, we must step back and look at the location of the annual exhibitions on a larger, regional scale. From the beginning, the practice was located in central London, a tradition that was maintained each year by generations of field directors until the last exhibition in 1939. The practice was therefore inextricably bound to the metropolitan culture of the capital. While the contents of an exhibition presented the material products of places and people that were temporally and geographically distant, the concepts created and consumed in the metropole had an undeniably local flavour. The exhibitions were the product of their environment and as such were highly dependent on their immediate surroundings to generate meaning.

Studies of the geographies of scientific practices have demonstrated how places such as London acquired credibility, authority, and expertise in the production and communication of knowledge, in particular through the distinct relationships that formed between practitioners, institutions, and objects (Livingstone and Withers 2011). David Livingstone (2003, 90) has argued that scientific endeavours often had a regional expression and that historically regional factors have “conditioned the production and consumption of scientific knowledge.” For the present study, late nineteenth-century London must be considered as a unique context which shaped and characterised much of the knowledge produced in this region. The choice to situate the annual exhibition within this existing framework is laden with meaning, both for the intention of the exhibitors and for the reception of exhibition audiences. As a unique context for the production of knowledge, it is essential to consider not only the reasoning behind positioning the annual exhibition within this wider setting, but also the influence of that location upon the content and message of the exhibitions. To what extent was the annual exhibition, and the way in which it presented and interpreted Egyptian archaeology, defined by its geographical context?

Nineteenth-century London was home to a bustling and vibrant network of scientific institutions. In the years leading up to the first annual exhibition in 1884 these spaces of science were undergoing a reconfiguration focused primarily on the capital. The locations of science were diversifying in an attempt to promote new expertise and the

professionalization of disciplines, as well as to bring a more public dimension to the practice of science, creating interactive locations for discovering and communicating ideas (Lightman 2011, 36). Within this trend, settings such as the museum were becoming increasingly prominent in the practice and teaching of scientific disciplines (Alberti 2011a), a prime example being the opening of London's Natural History Museum in 1881. The annual exhibition was a product of this development. Practitioners of archaeology felt the need to actively and visibly alter how they constructed and communicated knowledge in line with progress in other disciplines. By situating their exhibitions in London and participating in this intellectual context, Petrie and the Fund were adhering to conditioned local practices and regional pedagogic traditions in order to convert archaeological concepts and findings into a universal discourse. They were making a public statement of association, seeking public and professional acceptance, and affirming archaeology's position as a burgeoning scientific practice.

Both the positioning of this practice within the imperial metropole and its relationship to the politicised nature of its content highlight what Meskell and Preucel (2004) term the "politics of location" in encounters with heritage. The annual exhibitions played upon the inherent dichotomies of place which overseas archaeology inspired. In bringing excavated artefacts from the foreign and unknown "field" in Egypt into the domestic spaces and familiar systems of knowledge of London (see Strandsbjerg 2012, 51), the exhibitions showed control and authority over a semi-colonial territory that was often perceived as unmanageable. Displaying a British representation of an occupied territory at the heart of Empire, where global trade, transport, and administration intersected, involved a level of political agency in the construction of knowledge. Geographer Jane Jacobs (1996, 34), for example, explains how the concept of imperialism is shaped and formed through the local: the "embeddedness of imperialist ideologies and practices is not simply an issue of society and culture but also, fundamentally, of place." Late nineteenth-century London was a symbolic as well as a built environment, with one 1880 city guidebook describing the bustling metropolis as the "centre of commerce, of wealth, of intellectual and moral life" (Fry 1880). As "both the object of and stage for an imperial pageant", London provided an

overt image of progress and modernism, as well as a contact zone to experience the people and material products of Empire (Looker 2002, 1). In this context the annual exhibition and the highly politicised Egyptian archaeology immersed ancient Egyptian objects into a dense imperial discourse and subtext, grounding them within a network of imperial sites, institutions, and individuals from which they could draw meaning and legitimacy. In a mode and context of presentation tailored to central rather than provincial cultures, archaeology was used to facilitate a dialogue between Empire and the metropole.

Correspondence documenting early discussions of possible locations reveals that suitable venues were considered at Charing Cross, St. Martin's Lane, and at Waterloo House on Museum Street in the warren of roads opposite the British Museum's entrance (PMA 5/SPU/14). The intention was evidently to gravitate towards large cultural institutions, such as the nearby National Gallery and the British Museum. These choices were also about acquiring authority and credibility through proximity to such institutions and endowing the contents and message of the annual exhibition with associated meanings. On a practical level this positioning enabled the Fund to capitalise on the infrastructure and audience base already established at these locations. The choice of London was equally about making archaeological finds visible and accessible in the right social and intellectual circles. Amara Thornton (2015, 1) shows how, by embedding the annual exhibitions within London's wider exhibition season, the displays could attract an array of public and professional audiences, including the "well connected and moneyed", creating a social space in which "conversation and networking were as important as educational enrichment."

The value of location to this London-centric archaeological network is apparent in the career of John Garstang, an archaeologist who excavated and acquired his exhibition skills under the tutelage of Petrie, going on to secure his own exhibition residency at the Society of Antiquaries in London's Burlington House from 1903. Despite contributing to the establishment of the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Liverpool and holding a professorship there, Garstang came to London each year to exhibit the results of his Egyptian and Sudanese excavations, exploiting the advantageous position of a London setting as Britain's cultural capital.

In the early years of the Fund, individual finds were occasionally mobilised outside of the annual exhibition and the metropole to generate support in carefully selected regions, revealing the perceived intrinsic value of objects as symbols and signifiers. The Fund's committee minutes show that 1893 was particularly active in this respect, approving requests for objects to be sent to the Antiquaries Society of Haileybury College in Hertfordshire, institutions in Greater Manchester and Lancashire, and the Chicago World's Fair, as well as two different Biblical societies in London, the Sunday School Institute and the Society for the Propagation of Christianity among the Jews (EES General Committee I). One such request came from Annie Barlow, the EEF's local secretary for Bolton, who wrote to the committee to ask "for some minor antiquities for Bury and Bacup to renew the interest felt in those places for the Fund" (EES General Committee I, 57). The Committee's response was "to send objects as soon as possible." In the years that followed such requests were turned down more frequently, until the practice was stopped completely. Despite the critical financial support the Fund received from some regions, particularly the industrial towns of greater Manchester (see Forrest 2011), the annual exhibition as a whole was never mobilised outside the metropole. A trial exhibition of watercolour paintings from the EEF's excavations was displayed within the neo-classical grandeur of Manchester's Art Gallery on Mosley Street in 1893, yet despite its reported success and the Committee's stated determination to make the Manchester exhibition an annual event (EES General Committee I, 54-55), this was the first and only EEF exhibition to be held outside of London. Whether deliberately or by force of circumstance, the EEF reserved its displays of material culture for the Imperial metropole, privileging London and the newly-defined excavated artefact as the primary product and source of archaeological ideas.

4.3 Private versus popular spaces

The founding years of the practice from 1884 to 1892 saw the annual exhibition housed at two contrasting locations, reflecting the tension between public and private spaces of knowledge that hallmarked the development of archaeology as a discipline in the late nineteenth century. Initial experimentation between the private arena of the Royal Archaeological Institute and the public spectacle of the Egyptian Hall gave

physical reality to this tension and to archaeology's struggle to forge its own academic identity.

Before the establishment of the country's first university course in Egyptology at University College London in 1892, the museum was the institutional home of academic studies of ancient Egypt and Egyptian antiquities. In the late nineteenth century, the museum had risen to be a leading site of encounters with material culture, particularly in London. In spite of these developments, Petrie decided to establish the annual exhibition outside the intellectual safety of the museum, setting a precedent that would be followed for the next four decades. I believe that for Petrie this was a deliberate physical and conceptual separation from the museum.

While museums outwardly presented an image of authority, growing numbers of professionals were becoming critical of museum practice and its approach to knowledge construction (e.g. Wood 1887; see also Conn 1998, 22). Museums were accused of delaying the progress of science by not keeping up to date with changing ideas or paradigms, and the sector was considered at the mercy of an inherent conservatism enforced by boards of governors, museum trustees, and local councils. The British Museum's Curator of Natural History, F. A. Bather (1897, 678) wrote:

By mere force of circumstances, lack of time, undermanaging, and so forth, the arrangement of specimens in the show-cases of the museum remain the same throughout many years... Classifications come and classifications go, but the classification adopted when the museum was built, say fifty years ago, seems likely to go on forever.

In Thomas Greenwood's *Museums and Art Galleries* (1888, viii) he deplored the lamentable "state of decrepitude and decay" that many museums had found themselves in, with many "almost ready to close their doors from lack of public support and interest." Petrie (1888, 408) too voiced misgivings over the pedagogical value of museums, stating that such collections "...had not grown out of the 'curiosity' stage, when gold and pearl are the attractions, and scientific research must take its chance." For Petrie, museums, particularly the British Museum, were spaces of compromise and competing interests. A point that must have resonated for him was the fear that the static, out-dated displays of these institutions had taken the place of

the more progressive and dynamic temporary exhibitions which had once proved so advantageous (see Wood 1887, 396).

Tony Bennett (1995, 80) argues that the museum was associated with “solidity and permanence” but that these were “achieved at the price of a lack of ideological flexibility”: “[p]ublic museums instituted an order of things that was meant to last. In doing so, they provided the modern state with a deep and continuous ideological backdrop, but one which ... could not be adjusted to respond to shorter term ideological requirements.” Thus, the annual exhibition became defined as a concept in contrast to the museum, providing something that permanent displays could not. By situating the annual exhibitions outside the museum space, Petrie was creating an alternative encounter with the archaeological object and was free to experiment with different ways of representing this new phase in archaeological practice, ensuring that his exhibitions were more dynamic, more flexible and immediate in their representations, and quicker to respond to the fast-paced changes of a developing discipline. This move was equally important as a statement of identity and ownership, as a means of constructing his own knowledge and epistemological practices outside the confines of the museum and tailoring knowledge to a more specific target audience. This was what Petrie desired for his exhibitions, and he found it initially in London’s learned societies.

Here we see the conflict between Petrie’s internal and external dialogue. Although he wanted to make his archaeological finds more visible to London audiences and more in keeping with contemporary approaches of the sciences towards public engagement, through his actions he rejected conspicuously public spaces of knowledge. Petrie was fully aware of the growing need, almost expectation, to publicise his work through exhibitions, but he decided to do so on his own terms by situating his practices within the private and traditional space of the Royal Archaeological Institute. Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (2000, 126) writes of the “deep-rooted binary divisions” of public and private spaces that structured the nineteenth-century museum, but this tension is equally evident in wider locales of scientific discourse. She writes that “[t]he private spaces were the spaces for knowledge production, irrevocably separated from the public spaces for knowledge consumption.” By choosing a more private and privileged site of

knowledge Petrie was making a clear distinction. His exhibitions were not simply for consumption, they were not the polished product of a museum gallery, but they were active spaces for developing and exchanging of ideas and for the ongoing process of interpretation.

4.3.1 The Royal Archaeological Institute

Petrie was responsible for selecting the rooms of the Royal Archaeological Institute for the first annual exhibition. Having turned down Reginald Stuart Poole's offer of exhibiting his finds in an art dealer's garden shed, Petrie's intentions for a professional and academic display of archaeology were clear (Petrie 1931, 51-52). In a letter to Amelia Edwards ahead of the first public viewing, he wrote: "We have arranged to have the room of the Royal Archaeological Institute for unpacking and settling all the things that I have brought... [t]his will not only interest some fresh people, but it gives us an excellent room close to Oxford Circus without any expense" (PMA 3/1/PEN/04). The room in question was the Institute's meeting room in Oxford Mansion, not a space designed specifically for exhibitions but unused from July to November each year so that it fitted well around excavation seasons (EES COR.016.f.32). It also allowed for flexibility: as audience numbers and the scale of content grew Petrie was able to expand the exhibition to fill rooms on the ground floor and basement (Newberry MSS 1 37/16).

Standing on the site of the old Oxford Market, demolished just a few years before in 1880, the new Oxford Mansion, just north of Oxford Street, was progressive in style, with a red-brick façade and modern interior design. As an intellectual society, the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland was no stranger to holding public exhibitions. In 1880, at their former premises off of Regent Street, the Institute held a temporary display of antique helmets and armour, an eclectic mix of examples from ancient Greece to seventeenth-century Europe with "the object of bringing together as many types as possible, so as to facilitate a comparative study of helmets of different periods and countries" (Royal Archaeological Institute 1880, 455). The exhibition received twelve hundred visitors in the twelve days that it was open to the public (RAI

1880, 456). Petrie may have attended and been inspired by the exhibition, as he mentioned it in correspondence to Reginald Stuart Poole in an attempt to persuade the committee of the suitability of the Institute as a location for their own displays (EES COR.016.f.32). Petrie's 1884 exhibition is likely to have been the first held in the new rooms at Oxford Mansion, but by no means the last. Perhaps building on the success of Petrie's annual exhibitions, the Royal Archaeological Institute started to engage with exhibitions more regularly, hosting temporary displays of Icelandic art and Scandinavian antiquities which could be seen in the weeks preceding Petrie's displays in 1889 and 1892 (RAI Council Minute Book 3).

As an active member of the Royal Archaeological Institute and a keen subscriber to their academic discourse, Petrie was drawn to the Institute as an appropriate intellectual and conceptual venue for his exhibitions. Records show that Petrie regularly participated, presented papers, and exhibited objects at the Institute's weekly meetings, often publishing detailed accounts of each season in the Institute's journal to accompany the exhibitions (for example, Petrie 1884; 1886a). By 1891 he had been appointed on the Institute's sub-committee for Antiquities alongside Lieutenant General Pitt-Rivers (RAI Council Minute Book 3), and in August 1892, the month before Petrie's final exhibition at Oxford Mansion opened, he was elected Vice-President (RAI General Meetings, Minute Book 1, 22). It was also Petrie who persuaded the Egypt Exploration Fund to rent their first office premises in the Institute's rooms in 1886, forging a stronger physical and intellectual bond between the two societies (RAI Council Minute Book 3). This was an audience that Petrie knew well and one that he was evidently keen to engage with his collections and theories.

The matter of audience was a strong motivation in the decision to host exhibitions at Oxford Mansion. The location brought a socially exclusive membership, which in 1880 stood at just over 400 members, predominantly male and all "in possession of either wealth, status or educational background" (Ebbastson 1994, 23-24). As a particularly gendered space, one can imagine that the Royal Archaeological Institute formed the ideal backdrop for the performance of a scientific masculine identity in the late nineteenth century (see Ellis 2017b). While the institution's long-standing aim of popularising the objects of archaeology may have attracted a slightly more diverse

audience to their exhibitions, exclusivity remained at the core of the society and by incorporating the Fund's collections into this educational paradigm they were adhering to that philosophy. A reference to the Institute as an "imposing red brick structure" in an exhibition review published in *The Times* (1889) is potentially quite indicative of how the Institute may have presented a barrier to intellectual access for those outside of the membership. This exclusivity stood in contrast to the general reconfiguration of scientific spaces in London at the time. Most institutions were looking to distance themselves from the gentrification of the sciences in previous decades (Lightman 2011, 36).

This choice of venue as a platform to introduce the work and material products of the EEF speaks volumes of their intent. For Egyptology as a young discipline, and for the Fund as a young society keen to establish their academic credentials, the exhibitions provided a tangible link to an Institution with a far more established history and membership (see Wetherall 1994). It was an association that assigned integrity and authority to their displays in an appropriation of academic prowess. This environment also created a particular context and way of viewing that Petrie and the Fund were keen to encourage. The two societies shared very similar values and methodological approach which made them a logical partnership. From its foundation in 1844, the Royal Archaeological Institute promoted the careful observation and recording of archaeological discoveries and the preservation of objects. It was similarly concerned with overseas archaeological work seeking "the sanction and support of the British government in preserving national antiquities" abroad (Wetherall 1994, 11). The Institute was particularly object-focussed, encouraging its members to recognise the value of material culture and promoting skills of observation within the archaeological episteme. Thus, the location immersed the Fund, its activities and collections, in distinctive disciplinary practices, affirming the position of Egyptology and the status of Egypt's material culture in contemporary archaeology.

Yet, the choice of venue also had a rather unexpected impact upon the way archaeology was consumed by the public. The proximity of the Royal Archaeological Institute to the hustle and bustle of London's central shopping district, Oxford Circus,

did not go unnoticed by exhibition reviewers. One journalist visiting Petrie's 1890 exhibition of objects from Kahun and Gurob delighted in the comparison:

It is, indeed a singular experience to pass from the stream of modern life in Oxford Street, with its roar of traffic and shop windows, smart with the latest novelties, and then at the distance of a few paces to find oneself surrounded by the tools and utensils, the dresses and ornaments, the objects pertaining to ritual observance, the talismans, the charms against unseen and malevolent influences, and even the coffins and funeral paraphernalia of a populace which, at an interval of more than forty centuries, was as brisk and busy as our own.

To one impressed with the associations connected with these relics of the past, the familiarity of some of the objects of common life is almost startling. The sickle that cut from the corn which may have helped fill the granary of a Pharaoh is fashioned on the same lines as those sold by our village ironmongers... The small tooth-combs might have been bought in the Lowther Arcade, saving that the modern workman would suppress the little touch of artistic carving... The baskets would find buyers in the Whitechapel Road, and the housewife would not doubt their being of home production. (*The Athenaeum* 1890, 297)

In a period when the commodity became the subject of mass culture, this parallel placed the annual exhibitions on the periphery of Victorian consumerism and conspicuous consumption. The developments in nearby department stores, where shop windows capitalised on Britain's well-established culture of display (see Crossick and Jaumain 1999), "fostered particular modes of looking" that were evidently having an impact upon exhibition engagement (Stevenson 2019, 48-50). Ancient objects were compared to modern day consumables, breaking down the trans-historical divide and bringing the ancient lived experience tantalisingly close to Victorian Britain.

The powerful commercial influence did not end there. With art galleries spanning the length of nearby Bond Street and Regent Street, the Royal Archaeological Institute was also situated centrally within London's thriving commercial art district. This geographic clustering saw the EEF's exhibitions located at the centre of a network of spaces which were collectively conditioning the reception of modern art in late nineteenth-century London (Fletcher 2011, 47). This positioning may have been advantageous for the EEF however. As Pamela Fletcher's (2011, 51) research has shown, the summer months saw the area become a "spectacle of exhibition, as viewing art became one more stop on a shopping (or window shopping) tour of the West End." From as early as 1870,

individual art galleries had begun to engage their own annual exhibitions to coincide with the Royal Academy's summer show. The EEF's choice of venue would have incorporated their displays into a chain of temporary exhibitions offering a diverse mix of art, archaeology, and consumer goods in the capital, and quite possibly shaping audience expectation and experience.

4.3.2 The Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly

Following Petrie's separation from the EEF in 1887 there was a drive for a new independent identity, as well as an increased awareness of the need for publicity. As a result the annual exhibition sought alternative arrangements, temporarily disassociating itself from the Royal Archaeological Institute. Petrie's commercially-minded benefactors, Henry Kennard and Jesse Haworth, both with business acumen, took control of finding a suitable location to showcase the results of their first joint venture in Egyptian archaeology. Kennard wrote to Petrie in August 1888 to inform him that he had selected the Egyptian Hall in London's Piccadilly; Petrie commented to Amelia Edwards:

I have got a letter from Mr Kennard here saying that he has taken a room at the Egyptian Hall for £60 for two months. I do not like running into such expense on speculation, where no object is involved except publicity, but I dare say it is the best thing to do under the circumstances. We must make a splash of it now that the matter is settled thus, and do the best to draw. (EES COR.017.c.95).

The Egyptian Hall stood almost opposite Burlington House, home to learned societies such as the Society of Antiquaries, the Royal Academy of Arts, and the Royal Geographic Society. The Hall was located at the centre of London's thriving artistic and scientific community, yet was viewed as a popular and commercial rather than intellectual establishment, very much on the periphery of the academic cultural scene. Opened in 1812 and decorated in the Egyptian style popularised by Nelson's triumph at the Battle of the Nile in 1798, the Egyptian Hall started its life as the home of Bullock's Museum of ethnographic and historical curiosities before gaining its reputation as a popular exhibition space (Walford 1897, 257-258). A monument to the nineteenth-century fetish for exhibition culture, the multiplex venue witnessed an eclectic mix of

exhibits, from the display of living foreign peoples and medical marvels, to high-society watercolour collections from the Dudley Gallery Art Society (Fry 1880, 146-147). Advertised as “England’s home of mystery” in an 1887 advertising campaign (BL EVANS.96), visitors to Petrie’s exhibition in the summer of 1888 could also have taken in a theatrical show by famous illusionists and spiritualists Maskelyne and Cooke, who had a popular tenancy at the Egyptian Hall from 1873 until the venue’s demise in 1904 (Jenness 1967).

By choosing the Egyptian Hall as a venue for the 1888 annual exhibition, Petrie’s group was directly tapping into a long tradition of nineteenth-century exhibitionary practice, but they were largely aligning their representations with the spectacular and sensational rather than the scientific and academic. This act placed ancient Egypt firmly within the realm of consuming other cultures; within a context of exoticism and mystery, theatre and performance (see Moser 2015a). Establishing a position for Egyptian archaeology within a popular entertainment venue ensured that the annual exhibition’s ideological reach was extended significantly further, however its commercial character considerably altered the nature and message of that year’s exhibition and may have conflicted with the serious tone that the exhibitions were intended to convey. It was in stark contrast to the learned society and exclusivity of the Royal Archaeological Institute, and a move that contested the comfortable image of archaeology as the sole pursuit of the gentlemanly classes. Yet the ease of this transition between private and public spaces is a testament to the uncertain position of Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology at the time, and the need for archaeological organisations to seek popular as well as scholarly approval.

In terms of the visitor experience, the Egyptian Hall created a distinctive context for engaging with newly excavated artefacts. With an entranceway flanked by colossal figures of Isis and Osiris (Fry 1880, 146; now housed at the Museum of London 2010.5/1 and 2010.5/2), and the grand hall lavishly designed to resemble the interior of Karnak Temple, the venue situated Petrie’s material within an imitation setting. The highly elaborate pastiche of popularised Egyptian imagery introduced a colourful background and element of design to the display, in contrast to the solemn presentation in the rooms of the Royal Archaeological Institute. For many, the scale

and theatricality of the setting would have been reminiscent of the Egyptian Court at Sydenham's Crystal Palace, which provided a walk-through recreation of ancient Egyptian monuments, still open to the public at the time of the 1888 annual exhibition (Moser 2012).

Whereas the Egyptian Court was created as a didactic resource, it is doubtful how much educational value the Egyptian Hall's interior added to the viewing experience. By 1888 the characteristically Georgian representation of ancient Egypt that surrounded the exhibition was rather dated, and possibly quite jarring with Petrie's desire to present a modern and progressive archaeology. Similarly, this framework did not accurately convey the historical context or significance of Petrie's objects on display but if anything served to further fictionalise ancient Egypt in the mind of the public, reducing the intellectual value and status of the new excavated artefact and stripping the collections of the power of their authenticity. It is hardly surprising that of all the reviews during this exhibition period, only those from the 1888 exhibition refer to the objects on display as "novelties", most likely a consequence of their physical environment.

In fact, the collections on display only served to perpetuate the sense of exoticism and mysticism evoked by the Egyptian Hall. The 1888 exhibition featured the results of Petrie's excavations at Hawara, a season that Petrie (1892a, 81-111) would later recount in his popular publication *Ten Years' Digging in Egypt* in a tone evocative of a serialised adventure novel. The grand adventurer narrative saw Petrie and his team tunnelling beneath an unexplored pyramid, wading and crawling through water, candle in hand. In an attempt to 'salvage' Egyptian antiquities Petrie (1892a, 93) describes how he "...spent another gruesome day, sitting astride of the inner coffin, unable to turn my head under the lid without tasting the bitter brine in which I sat." The colourful cartonnage portraits and the rows of mummified human remains that resulted from this excavation created an immediate encounter with the ancient deceased. As one reporter for the *London Daily News* (1888) described, "[t]he dead of ancient Egypt are being exhibited in the Egyptian Hall, and it is a curious, mournful spectacle." An engraved image of the exhibition space shows rows of coffin-like boxes, each with a lid half propped open, revealing the face and upper torso of an embalmed

sleeping figure. On the wall above hung the portraits of the faces beneath the linen bandages, watching over visitors like ghostly apparitions. The entire scene is reminiscent of Victorian gothic literature. We must bear in mind the agency and motivation of the journalist and newspaper editor in this choice of image, but regardless of its accuracy it portrays an exhibition that caught the public's imagination or, as a London correspondent for the *Cornishman* (1888) put it, "set the reflective mind a-dreaming."

The choice of the Egyptian Hall as a location also had a deeper resonance. By arranging distributed finds in the grand hall, Petrie was sharing the space that had been used for the display of Giovanni Battista Belzoni's Seti I exhibition in 1821. The year-long display of Seti I's reconstructed tomb and fourteen cases of Egyptian antiquities had caught the imagination of the British public, receiving 1,900 paying visitors on its opening day (Daniel 1981, 70), playing an important role in fostering the early nineteenth-century notion of "ancient Egypt" (Pearce 2000; Duesterberg 2015, 52, 123-128; also Altick 1978, 243-245). Stephanie Moser (2015a, 1289) sites Belzoni's exhibition and the subsequent publication of his travelogue *Voyages Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs and Excavations in Egypt and Nubia* (1820) as the "inspiration for the wave of Egyptomania" at the time. This association did not go unnoticed by the visiting public, with Petrie (1889, 3) commenting that the Egyptian Hall was "once more appropriately filled, as it has not been since Belzoni's exhibition there over sixty years ago. Some of the visitors of this year remembered and mentioned visiting Belzoni's collections in the same room."

The strength of this association had implications for how Petrie's collections were consumed. Even though Belzoni's display was beyond the living memory of most visitors, the location and event had become embedded in national consciousness and in cultural and collective memory. This association was reinforced by reviews that actively compared the two exhibitions: "The Egyptian Hall, London, since Belzoni exhibited in it 'The Tomb of Psammuthis King of Thebes,' nearly seventy years ago has not had anything in its galleries more appropriate to the name than Mr. Petrie's antiquities now on view" (*The Star*, 1888). Within this comparative setting Petrie's displays were thus imbued with historic and nostalgic meanings once generated by

Belzoni's exhibition. The collection became a material and visual link to the romance of early exploration in Egypt, presenting an image of Petrie as Hero in an Orientalist narrative. This demonstrates the influence of prior knowledge and experience to a visitor's meaning-making (Roschelle 1995), also highlighting Moser's (2015a, 1303) theory of the "cumulative effect of representations" where historic representations of ancient Egypt remain "influential agents in the reconstruction of the past", creating a dialogue with "previous traditions of reception". It could be suggested that this choice of location was part of a wider strategy on behalf of Petrie's benefactors; a publicity stunt or plan to instil a sense of nostalgia and perceived integrity through this historic association. In reality the location did little to point to the future of archaeological practice: by returning to a past representational form, by enshrining the past and instilling the virtues of the familiar, the exhibition rather served to further frame the excavated artefact as curiosity.

Despite the public consensus that "Mr Petrie's annual exhibition was better and more appropriately housed" in the Egyptian Hall (*The Times* 1889), Petrie did not exhibit there again. Instead the annual exhibition returned to the Royal Archaeological Institute for the next four years. The decision to return to the exclusivity of the Institute could be interpreted as Petrie reasserting his control over his image and the presentation of his collections. It certainly suggests that he recognised the value of location. Yet the popular demand and appetite for these exhibitions continued. In 1886, upon hearing of Petrie's departure from the Fund, fellow archaeologist Edouard Naville remarked to Petrie in a letter that after "three most interesting exhibitions" the "English public has now grown desirous to see every year a rich harvest of monuments brought from Egypt" (PMA 5/NAV/03). Naville's assumption was indeed correct. Perhaps as a testament to the success of the tenancy at the Egyptian Hall, Petrie was approached by another popular entertainment venue in the summer of 1892. In a letter to Egyptologist and younger colleague Percy Newberry he wrote:

I had the offer of the Niagara Hall space; but I have no reason to leave [Oxford Mansion], as the admissions just pay for the room and attendance, and I am my own master there. Moreover I do not want a crowd of sight seers, as I should have to protect everything much more carefully; and I do not care to tie

myself thus to a distinctly commercial connection, which I have always avoided hitherto. (Newberry MSS 1 37/39).

The management of the Niagara Hall, an entertainment venue in St. James' Park close to Westminster Abbey, was aware of the public draw that ancient Egypt could provide. Seven years earlier, in 1885, they had held a grand and popular display of Egyptian antiquities. The colourful posters advertised the opportunity to see "Egypt in London" as "the most interesting and instructive sight in the world" (BL EVAN.9056), and the organisers were clearly keen to replicate its success. While such exhibitions showed a strong public demand for displays of Egyptian archaeology, the approach sat uncomfortably with Petrie, and his response points to his intention for the annual exhibition. For Petrie, it would appear, such "commercial" ventures were not the educational paradigm that he aspired to. Not only did they often attract the wrong type of audience, but they risked undermining the authority of his displays and the knowledge he was creating.

4.4 Universities

On 15 April 1892, Amelia Blanford Edwards, co-founder of the Egypt Exploration Fund, died at her home in Bristol. Her will would fundamentally change the course of Egyptian archaeology and of the annual exhibition. Upon her death, Amelia left £5,000 to University College in London for the founding of a Professorship in Egyptian Archaeology and Philology. Following the academic advances already made in France, Germany, and other countries, this was to be the first university course in the United Kingdom dedicated solely to the study of ancient Egypt. The bequest was accepted by University College along with Edwards's extensive collection of books, photographs, and Egyptian antiquities, which she wished to be used as teaching materials for a "wide extension of knowledge" (Janssen 1992, 1-2). An announcement in *The Times* in 1892 declared that her friend and former colleague Flinders Petrie had been appointed to the Edwards Professorship, and in his inaugural lecture he outlined his plans for a new "school of scientific excavation" (quoted in Janssen 1992, 102). At a stroke the university had become the primary site for the production of archaeological knowledge of Egypt.

Petrie's appointment heralded a new era for the annual exhibitions, as the likelihood of cheaper rent and more convenient rooms saw them also move into residence at University College, London. This academic context provided an alternative system for learning about Egypt, and would come to heavily shape the subject-object relationship, as well as the knowledge produced by the exhibitions and the construction of ancient Egypt. From the first exhibition in the small Edwards Library in 1894, where objects jostled for position among Edwards's bibliographic collection, Petrie's annual exhibitions would be produced at the University for the next forty years, coming to an end in 1932, not long before Petrie's retirement and emigration to Jerusalem. This movement of the exhibition into higher education had ramifications for the wider practice of archaeological exhibitions. Following its separation from Petrie, the EEF continued to engage with London's learned societies for a further two years, holding displays at the Society for Antiquaries in Burlington House. However, they too moved their collections into a university in 1897, initially sharing an exhibition space with Petrie at University College before finding independence and a more permanent home at the rival institution of King's College. Petrie's biographer Margaret Drower (1985, 296) notes that "Neville refused to exhibition at [University College London], where he would be, as he said 'under Petrie's protection', henceforward he was to hold his annual exhibitions in King's College London, of which he was an Honorary Fellow." This simultaneous move by both parties highlights a noticeable shift in spaces of knowledge construction during this period and an aspiration to respond to the geographical movement of Egyptian archaeology as a discipline. Yet, I believe that presenting the annual exhibition in a university context was equally a statement. This choice of location held far greater connotations and symbolism to a knowing audience, and the decision was deeply tied to the changing role and public opinion of the university system in the period.

When Petrie joined University College in 1892, the British higher education system was expanding and thriving. The last twenty years of the nineteenth century saw the rise of the modern university and the birth of the civic university movement. Based in part on the liberal Humboldt University of Berlin system, civic universities were often born out of old mechanical institutes and were established in major industrial and commercial

city centres across the United Kingdom. These were institutions with a keen sense of place; William Whyte (2015, 132) states that the “modern university was rooted in their locality”. They were, for example, designed by local architects as “municipal monuments”, and heavily funded by local philanthropists keen to invest in the moral and intellectual progression of their towns (Whyte 2015, 167). Created in opposition to the elite exclusivity of the collegiate universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham, these new ‘redbrick’ universities offered advanced education to non-traditional students, extending access to knowledge regardless of age, gender, or socio-economic background. By 1914 the civic university movement had gained 10,000 university students in comparison to the 7,000 shared by Oxford and Cambridge, and as early as 1901 “almost one in five undergraduates in the civic universities was female” (Whyte 2015, 146). These new sites of knowledge became thoroughly accepted by both the state and the public (see Vernon 2001).

It was not just the more egalitarian ethos but also the civic university’s approach to knowledge construction that revitalised the higher educational system. The redbrick institutions valued research as well as teaching, and offered new, modern disciplines with a focus on practical and professional subjects. Such courses were conducted through more expansive methods of teaching and a greater diversity in their spaces of knowledge construction. The workshop, the laboratory, the lecture hall, and the library were all incorporated into the student’s academic experience, and most importantly for this discussion, so too was the material collection. In discussing Manchester, Samuel Alberti (2009, 165) states: “[t]he new university colleges founded in the English provinces in the wake of Owens College’s foundation in 1851 all included museums, ranging from small departmental teaching collections to sizable art galleries.” Such collections were curated by academic staff, within their departments, and were therefore producing a very different knowledge to that of the traditional museum. The significance of this practice was evident in the way that spaces for collections were physically incorporated into these single-site, purpose-built institutions from the outset (Whyte 2015, 164-5), designed to physically and conceptually create an intrinsic and cohesive relationship. By the beginning of the twentieth century this system of learning

had gained national recognition, as David Murray showed in his *Museums: Their History and Use* (1904, 275):

Every professor of a branch of science requires a museum and a laboratory for his department; and accordingly in all our great universities and other teaching institutions we have independent museums of botany, palaeontology, geology, minerology, pathology and materia medica, of archaeology – prehistoric and historic, classical and Christian – each subject taught having its own appropriate collection.

In keeping with the municipal aims of the civic university, a number of these collections were accessible to the public as ‘teaching’ collections, intended to accommodate both academic and local communities. This development had a considerable impact upon the shape and demographic of the annual exhibition’s audience. Collections were becoming an accepted and expected part of the university environment, creating a new generation of exhibition visitors familiar with the concept of university museums, the role of the disciplinary object, and the narratives and knowledge that such a context produced.

The civic university movement sparked a resurgence of interest in the university system, in addition to the shift in the sites of knowledge production. The annual reports from University College London exemplify how at the turn of the century learned societies across the arts and sciences, such as the Philological Society and the Geologists Association, gravitated towards the University as an intellectual hub. The 1903 annual report states that “[s]everal Educational Societies and organisations have held their annual meetings in the College” and that “[t]he Council are glad to welcome such Societies” (University College London 1903, 41). A precedent which no doubt encouraged the movement of archaeological societies like the British School of Archaeology in Egypt and the Egypt Exploration Fund. This shift was even more apparent in the epistemological practices of material disciplines. To many, the Edwardian museum, as “symbols of the past and of the state” (Hoberman 2011, 165), popularised outdated ideologies and, it could be argued, stood in opposition to the modernist sentiment of the new, progressive university. Ruth Hoberman (2011, 17) describes how, at the turn of the century, as “museums put new energy into public education, they became less and less a locus for scientific research”, its role being

replaced by sites like the laboratory. This shift in resources and in the geography of knowledge diluted the museum's authority and its academic potential: it was no longer the pivotal site of current knowledge that had been intended in the mid-nineteenth century. In reference to parallel developments in the United States of America, Steven Conn (1998, 17) argues that "[t]he struggle between museums and universities over the production of knowledge was not simply a contest over where knowledge would be produced, but over what kind of knowledge would be produced and who would have access to it."

It is likely that Edwards was influenced by the progressive nature of the modern university. The fact that she chose to leave her collection to a university and not a national or local museum in itself is particularly telling. She was already familiar with the objectives of institutions such as Manchester through her work with the Fund and the distribution of objects and was sympathetic with the social causes exemplified by the civic university movement. As a dedicated campaigner for women's rights and education, in her lifetime Edwards gifted objects to women's colleges and gave lectures to women's institutions. It was therefore logical that she should specify University College London as the recipient of her bequest as the only academic institution at the time to admit women for degrees by examination. Kate Sheppard (2013, 44) notes the stipulation in the bequest that "classes, scholarships and exhibitions" at the newly founded department "were to be open to students of both sexes."

Although the choice of location was somewhat governed by Amelia, Petrie's act to stage the exhibitions at the University confirms his support for the setting as an appropriate context for his discoveries. Albeit older than the civic university movement, University College London, founded in 1828, was still considered a relatively new institution in the British university system. With regard to the social history of knowledge, Peter Burke (2012, 240) has highlighted that such "new institutions are free from the weight of traditions that are reproduced over the generations." University College shared many of the same principles as the rising modern university and was unafraid of innovation. For University College, the last quarter of the nineteenth century had "been a period of very rapid development and

great complexity. In the world at large change had been unusually swift” (Bellot 1929, 400) and the University was expanding both physically and conceptually (Harte and North 2004, 160-119). It was not only willing to take a chance on a new subject but to give Petrie, fresh to the academy, the creative freedom to develop it into an academic discipline. While the learned society represented the past of archaeology as a practice, the university represented its future: University College gave institutional form to the study of Egyptian archaeology and the excavated artefact. Over the next forty years Petrie’s collections and University College formed a synonymous and synergetic relationship in the construction of knowledge. Rosalind Janssen (1992, 8) writes that “University College, Gower Street was primarily to mean to many Londoners – and to others as well – the place they must visit in summer to see Petrie’s newly discovered antiquities.”

4.4.1 University College London

Located at the heart of Bloomsbury, a district which had by the late nineteenth century become the “undisputed intellectual quarter of London” (Ashton 2012, 3), University College London shared its elegant garden-lined streets with the British Museum. Walking through the black, wrought iron gates at the Gower Street entrance, and crossing the neat lawn of the quad, exhibition visitors faced the imposing neo-classical façade of the College’s main building. For architectural historian William Whyte (2015, 55), the design was “calculated to achieve magnificence”. The edifice was complete with a towering, ten-columned portico designed by architect William Wilkins and “modelled after the Temple of Jupiter Olympus in Athens” (Whyte 2015, 55). Erected not long after the founding of the University in 1828, this structure had come to embody the progressive, liberal, and secular ideologies that lay behind the institution’s establishment; an architectural juxtaposition to the ancient universities of Oxford and Cambridge. For exhibition visitors, it was architecturally comparable with many of London’s grand public museums and galleries, including the nearby British Museum and the National Gallery. As Moser (2006, 194) has noted with the classical designs of the British Museum, the architectural surroundings “associated the Egyptian antiquities with art and taste”, but equally with academic endeavour. As an

architectural style redolent with social, moral, and intellectual improvement, to approaching visitors the University's façade stimulated a sense of reviving antiquity and aligned these institutions architecturally as temples of knowledge.



Figure 1. The EEF and ERA exhibition of material from El Kab, 1897. PMAN 6650. Courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL.

This grandiose architecture was thoroughly incorporated into the visitor experience. The main building was where the annual exhibition was most frequently displayed, taking up residency in the South Classroom/Exhibition Room, or – as Janssen (1992, 8) has since identified it – the current Strang Print Room. According to Janssen (1992, 8), on at least one occasion the exhibition also took over the Women's Union Room during the summer months, much to the protest of its members. Photographs of these spaces reveal spacious rooms with grand Georgian proportions, many with fluted columns adorned with acanthus-leaf capitals. Large sash windows across one wall of each room flooded the exhibition space with light, often playing artistically with the patina of objects, such as predynastic alabaster bowls, placed strategically on window-sills (fig. 1). Occasionally, the architecture played a more theatrical role in knowledge construction, as in the 1894 exhibition, at which the great doors of the portico, usually

kept closed, were ceremoniously opened as an entranceway for exhibition visitors. Upon entering, visitors would encounter “several large sculptures” from Petrie’s excavations at Koptos spilling out onto the portico’s flagstone floor (Petrie 1894, 14). In these scenarios the architecture worked to define the excavated artefact as an object of cultural significance, as the product of an enlightened and international university system.

It only takes a quick glance at the 1908 floor plans of the University’s main building to gain an understanding of the exhibition’s place within the institution both physically and conceptually (fig. 2). During the summer vacation the annual exhibition was set among lecture halls, libraries, and classrooms, but it is the wide distribution of university collections that is perhaps most striking. The main building was scattered with museums, from the geology museum in the south wing to the comparative anatomy museum and Slade School’s antique room in the north wing. Collections were fully integrated into academic life and the university’s institutional culture. This was especially apparent at the turn of the century, when annual reports show an increased interest and investment in the management, reorganisation, and redisplay of collections at University College London. The introduction of electric lighting, new dedicated staff positions, and the expansion of space to incorporate more specimens as well as student research facilities in collections, was regularly reported after 1901. For a specific group of learners it was the university context that made these objects meaningful, fostering a particular mode of seeing and way of responding to material culture. It placed objects within a specific regime of value or “meaning-production system” in which the objects acquired a stability of meaning for those invested in this “spatio-temporal material reality” (Taborsky 1990, 55-56). Although the exhibitions only occupied College space for a few weeks each year, the objects and the people engaging with them in this environment were entered into a dialogue and set of behavioural practices governed by this institutional discourse. Within this interpretive framework, the excavated Egyptian artefact acquired extrinsic value in relation to the teaching collections: in this context it was a disciplinary object, the product of an academic discourse and part of an educational process.

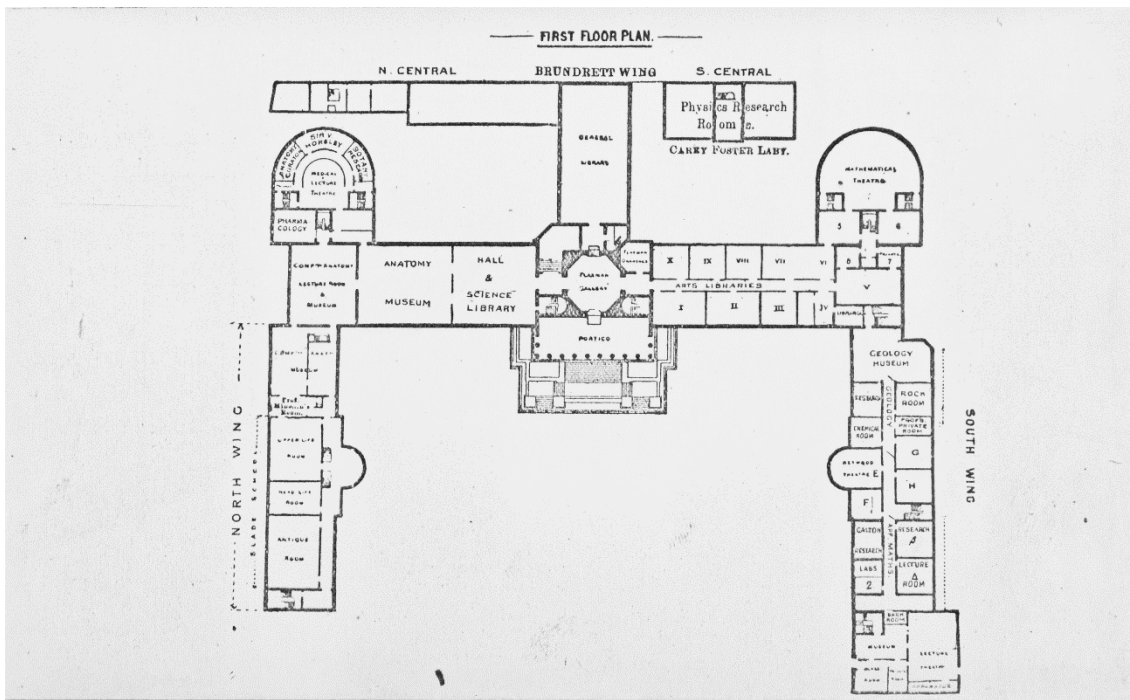


Figure 2. First Floor Plan of University College, c1908. Courtesy of UCL Special Collections.

Petrie's absorption into this academic world must have shaped his annual exhibitions and the type of knowledge they produced. Objects played an increasingly significant role in the teaching of Egyptian archaeology at University College London. From the start Petrie incorporated an object-based epistemology into the course through the use of a growing permanent collection. In keeping with the prevailing ethos of the new university movement, this permanent collection, which was kept up to date through yearly additions, became the focal point of vocational training in archaeological practice, providing the practical skills required to develop the next generation of excavators. The university context allowed Petrie to experiment with the role of objects in an archaeological education, and as such, over many years he painstakingly arranged the permanent collection to maximise its pedagogical potential. The many thousands of specimens were ordered typologically and by date, adhering to Petrie's deep-held belief that gaining a detailed material knowledge of ancient Egypt was a prerequisite to field experience:

At present the archaeological experience that should be acquired before doing any responsible work in any country ought to cover the history of the pottery century by century, the history of beads, of tools and weapons, of styles of art, of the styles of inscriptions, of the burial furniture and of many small objects which are now well known and dated. (Petrie, 1904, 4).

This period and context of experimentation had a remarkable influence on the annual exhibition, which began to adopt a far more openly didactic philosophy. For example in the 1897 exhibition of material from Deshasheh, Behnesa, and El Kab, a “historical series of beads” from the permanent collection was added to “serve as a type set for comparison”, arranged to present their chronological and stylistic development from the 5th Dynasty to the Coptic period (EEF and ERA 1897, 11). In 1899 Petrie arranged for the loan of prehistoric “vases”, arranged typologically with corresponding text panels, as “an opportunity of studying together a group which will soon be scattered to various collections” (EEF and ERA 1899, 3). In moving away from the single-site narrative and seeking additional material to support potential gaps in the exhibition, Petrie worked with the university context to create a broader and more rounded educational experience for exhibition visitors.

As spaces of knowledge production shifted, so did the terms of access to that new knowledge. While the permanent collection was reserved for the use of students and for those who applied for permission through Petrie or the Provost (University College London 1913, 36), the annual exhibitions offered a means of public engagement and fulfilled the civic duties that had become expected of the modern university. As Petrie (1931, 145) would later comment in his biography, “[w]ork in Egypt was not College business, though it gave vitality to the College in the public view.” This relationship brought with it a wider audience base, raising the profile of the exhibitions on a national and international scale and ensuring a far greater impact for the knowledge created. In contrast to the Royal Archaeological Institute that had preceded it, the University attracted a far less socially exclusive and male audience. Events, such as the regular university-wide *conversazione* held in the summer months, brought large public audiences to engage with Petrie’s collections. One reviewer from the *Morning Post* (1897) described the scene of the 1897 *conversazione* at which “all the buildings were thrown open to visitors.” Over 3,000 guests came together to explore the University grounds, to admire the works of the Slade School of Art and witness “the more scientific side ... brought into vivid relief by experiments in numerous rooms”. Alongside the University’s best and brightest minds, Petrie delivered talks on his temporary collection to excited crowds, showing them a cacophony of “beads,

statuettes, paint-slabs, dishes and vases, papyri, and one large statue, the finest piece of work of its kind of Egyptian origin in this country.” The reporter concluded that “[u]p till a late hour all the rooms were thronged, and all the experiments shown had crowds of interested spectators.” The increasing public support clearly appealed to Petrie, and he reassured readers of the annual report of the Egyptian Research Account that holding exhibitions at University College London was a “means of exhibiting fresh interest, more than formerly, and has gained us a great many new subscribers” (ERA 1906, 10). The exhibitions even attracted the attention of royalty, with Prince John of Saxony visiting in 1911 (PMA 115-9-1_(31)1910-1911), Princess Beatrice in 1921 and 1922 (PMA 115-9-1_(4)1920-1921; PMA 115-9-1_(42)1921-1922), and King George V and Queen Mary receiving a guided tour of the exhibition space in 1928 as part of the University’s centenary celebration (University College London 1928, 65).

Perhaps most importantly to Petrie, however, the choice of location also extended the academic reach of the exhibition. Immersed and legitimised in a context of new scholarship, the university setting introduced the Egyptian excavated artefact to a more academically diverse audience than before, with participants from across departments in the arts and sciences becoming active in the construction of meaning. In the open and interdisciplinary approach to studying Egyptology at University College, with students encouraged to attend lectures in anthropology, geology, and anatomy as part of their Diploma (Sheppard 2013, 86), students and practitioners from other subject areas would equally be drawn to Petrie’s collections as comparative objects of study. The vast amounts of correspondence held in the UCL archive between Petrie and Professor of Eugenics, Francis Galton, and later Galton’s protégé, the statistician and eugenicist, Karl Pearson, show that cross-departmental collaborations on Petrie’s collections were relatively commonplace at the University. All three men shared an interest in the anthropometric analysis of ancient Egyptian skeletons, and Petrie’s excavations provided a wealth of data for collaborative work in the area (Challis 2013). Petrie wrote to Galton in 1895, “I think that I may see you at my exhibition. I shall be there all the first week” (Galton 3/3/16/20 f.66-68). Such remarks show that within the university Petrie’s exhibitions were spaces to facilitate conversations and the exchange of ideas, encouraging a wide circulation of

archaeological knowledge. With each new disciplinary gaze ancient Egyptian material culture was being re-interpreted and re-contextualised, promoting the versatility and relevance of the excavated artefact across multiple research specialisms.

4.5 Museums

While Petrie and the British School of Archaeology in Egypt maintained their run of exhibitions at University College London, the Egypt Exploration Fund continued to explore alternative venues within which to frame the results of their fieldwork. The retirement of Edouard Naville, the last of the Fund's traditional excavators trained in the "old-fashioned school of Mariette and Maspero" (Bierbrier 2012, 399), marked the end of the Fund's relationship with King's College London, with the final exhibition held there in summer 1912. The Fund returned to the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries at Burlington House in 1913, but the arena of archaeological displays had changed considerably in the intervening years. A growing number of archaeologists now held their own annual exhibitions and had forged allegiances with particular spaces of knowledge, and the EEF found themselves in an increasingly competitive market.

From 1903, University of Liverpool archaeologist Professor John Garstang had secured a strong professional relationship with the Society of Antiquaries, holding a series of high-profile exhibitions of his excavations in Egypt and Sudan in their meeting rooms (Thornton 2015). Held in the same summer months each year, the exhibitions of the Fund and of Garstang had already found themselves in direct competition and were often a point of comparison for the national press. In 1909 one correspondent from *The Athenaeum* declared that the EEF's exhibition was "just as unpretending and as 'home-made' in appearance as Prof. Garstang's is imposing and skilfully arranged." The Fund's struggle, indeed desperation, to secure an appropriate location to showcase their finds is palpable in the letters of the EES archive. Perhaps through professional loyalty, the Society of Antiquaries often gave priority over dates, length of tenancy, and allocation of space to the exhibitions of Garstang (see EES XIII.f. unnumbered), who was acutely aware of the value of setting and its role in promoting his work. Upon receiving a letter from the EEF seeking agreement over a shared space,

Garstang replied that he was hesitant to curtail his plans, stating that it would “ruin our project utterly to have to make any serious change at this stage”. Yet, sympathetic to the cause, he suggested that the Fund could make use of the smaller room adjacent to his own, opening “say, a week later than we do, allowing the exhibition to run part of the time concurrently” (EES XIV.a. unnumbered a). While the Fund may have been drawn back to Burlington House as a means of capitalising on the success of Garstang’s exhibitions, it was not long before they broke free from these traditional locales to explore alternative settings.

The offer of an exhibition room at the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum in 1931 and 1932 provided a means of forging a new identity. The interwar period had already seen the re-branding of the Fund, signified by the change of name to the Egypt Exploration Society. This period of regeneration continued into the 1930s with the introduction of a new project at Armant, in partnership with Sir Robert Mond, and the appointment of John Pendlebury, as the new, dynamic field director at the Society’s concession at Tell el Amarna. In 1930, at the age of twenty-seven, the Cambridge graduate Pendlebury not only gained directorship of a world-renowned archaeological site but was also appointed Curator of Knossos in Crete. The mix of experience, particularly in Crete, where interpretive approaches were more advanced, created a strong aptitude for public engagement. Correspondence in the EES archive shows that Pendlebury was far more active in organising and shaping the exhibitions than any of the Society’s Field Directors since Petrie. Former EES Director, Christopher Naunton believes (personal communication, 2016) that Pendlebury had a driving ambition to utilise different communicative media to engage with non-specialist audiences, as demonstrated by his decision to film and hold public viewings of his excavations. Thus, the choice to move into the museum space for Pendlebury’s first exhibition could be viewed as a signal of change, signifying that the Society was embarking on a new direction with a new image and vision.

Whether by chance or by design, the Society’s move into the museum was timely. By 1928 there were 530 museums in the United Kingdom and Ireland, 43 of which were concentrated in London. Although there was a disparity in the spatial distribution, funding, and popularity of museums between London and British regional centres, the

metropole's museum culture was thriving (Miers 1928). The President's address at the Museums Association's annual conference the following year declared that "increased means of transport have stimulated movement in the population; the numbers of visitors to art galleries and museums is on the increase... [a] number of circumstances conspire to make the present a hopeful time for a big museum movement" (Miers 1929, 44). However there were more specific developments in contemporary museum practice that would make this a particularly fruitful period for the Egypt Exploration Society: the growth of temporary exhibitions. At his address to an expectant crowd of museum professionals, Sir Henry A. Miers continued:

A fashion is setting in for public exhibitions, they are so well advertised that thousands flock to them, where a few years ago there would have been only hundreds; this is not only true of such things as the Flemish and Dutch Picture Exhibitions, and that of English art recently held in London; it is true of the provinces as well as the metropolis, and it applies to all manner of subjects. (Miers 1929, 44).

Miers attributed this renewed interest not only to a cultural shift but also to wider changes in ways of seeing and engaging with material culture, calling for British museums and museum professionals to actively respond:

Perhaps the attractive displays in shop windows, which really do in themselves constitute a vast popular museum accessible to all, have accustomed people to use their eyes more keenly and critically; wireless talks, and even to a small extent the cinema shows, have excited interest in things that may be seen if people will only take the trouble to go look for them... If then, there is a newly-awakened appreciation of exhibitions, and displays, if people at large are getting into the habit of using their eyes and desiring to understand what they see, now is the time for the museum to make the most of their resources and to help each other challenge the attention of the public who are certainly, in matters relating to art, already acquiring a new and far more intelligent interest than formerly. (Miers 1929, 44-45).

Both these changes and the role of the temporary exhibition had been on the horizon for some time. The First World War had seen a social and educational transformation in the role of British museums, with special wartime exhibitions organised to serve as propaganda, to educate the population on matters of warfare and welfare, and often as a means of light entertainment at a time of crisis. Such temporary exhibitions "provided museums with opportunities to explore the potential of the museum as a

communicator” (Kavanagh 1988, 169), and as such museums were becoming re-centred as an educational resource. The following decades saw increased Government attention on the wider role of museums and object-based learning in public education (Board of Education 1932; British Association 1920). By entering the museum space in 1931 the Egypt Exploration Society was participating in, and perhaps responding to, a resurgence of interest and redevelopment in the museum sector, in a desire to reach out to a new audience. University collections had begun to distance themselves from the public, with a 1928 *Report on the Public Museums of the British Isles* stating that “the university museums which are open to the public have not paid much attention to the needs of the general or uninstructed visitor, or of children” (Miers 1928, 34). In that same year, Petrie’s collections had faced opposition from University College London when he and other representatives from the Archaeological and Anthropological Boards were told that “Universities had no business with Museums” (Petrie 1931, 262). The topography of London’s academic landscape was once again changing, and so too was its audience. Positioning the Society’s finds within the museum demonstrated that archaeological knowledge was both adaptable and relevant to these epistemological changes.

4.5.1 Wellcome Historical Medical Museum

Originally founded in 1913 by Henry Solomon Wellcome, the American-born businessman and co-founder of the global pharmaceuticals firm Burroughs Wellcome and Company, the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum illustrated the global history of medicine and healing through Wellcome’s private collection of medical artefacts and paraphernalia, the result of over forty years of dedicated collecting (Larson 2009). Located at 54a Wigmore Street, next to a Burroughs Wellcome and Company commercial showroom, the Museum occupied a region of London largely devoid of museum culture. It was however strategically positioned at the centre of London’s medical district and in close proximity to the Royal Society of Medicine, to universities and hospitals, and the medical practices of Harley Street, and thus ideally situated to attract medical scholars and professionals to its diverse collections (Larson 2009, 155).

Wellcome's Museum was praised as the first of its kind. Arranged over two floors, it presented linear narratives of progressive evolutionary theory through a unique combination of archaeological, ethnographic, and modern medical collections, tracking the development of medicine from prehistoric cultures to so-called 'primitive' and 'civilised' societies. For Wellcome and his successive curators, however, there was little distinction between objects and their disciplinary classifications: the objective of the Museum was to reconstruct the history of humankind through its artefacts, and as such the overriding narrative and analytical schema was anthropological (Skinner 1986). Inevitable parallels were drawn between the displays of Wellcome's collection and those of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, creating a comparative framework for knowledge construction. As *The Lancet* implied in 1926, "Pitt-Rivers was the patron saint of curators, and what he had done for human cultures in general Mr Wellcome had done for medicine."

The decision to immerse the Society's finds from Tell el-Amarna and Armant in the context of a medical museum was perhaps not as arbitrary as it may first appear. Wellcome was deeply fascinated by the development of science in ancient Egypt, he was a financial supporter of both the BSAE and the EES, regularly receiving finds in the annual distribution process (see WA/HMM/CO/Chr/E.4; WA/HMM/CM/Col/17; WA/HMM/CM/Col/81.), and had himself directed archaeological fieldwork at the Sudanese site of Jebel Moya between 1910 and 1914 (Addison 1949). Ancient Egyptian material culture and human remains already featured heavily within Wellcome's displays and within the Museum's grand developmental narrative. Having passed underneath a large bronze and enamel winged Aten-disc and eye of Horus which Wellcome had chosen to sit prominently above the Museum's entrance (Montserrat 2000, 90-91), visitors to the Society's exhibition would have found ancient Egyptian artefacts scattered across the largely thematic displays, absorbed into the ethnographic collection to provide evidence for particular sub-narratives. As exhibition visitors made their way through the Museum to the Society's display, the kind of material culture and narratives that they encountered *en route* would already be beginning to shape their ideas of ancient Egypt, the excavated artefact, and its place in current anthropological thinking.



Figure 3. EES exhibition at Wellcome Historical Medical Museum featuring the Tell el Amarna house model, 1931. Waddington 045. Courtesy of Egypt Exploration Society.

Comparison of the archival photographs of the 1931 display (fig. 3) with images of gallery spaces and floor plans published in the Museum's 1926 visitor guidebook shows that the Society's exhibition was located on the ground floor (basement) of the Museum, occupying the large open space at the rear of the building previously dedicated to Wellcome's First World War collection. To access this area visitors would have to pass through the *Hall of Primitive Medicine*: two consecutive galleries that showcased practices of folk and foreign medicine deriving from 'primitive races' of Africa, Asia, South America, and the Pacific. Here visitors would have caught their first glimpse of ancient Egypt, as Egyptian amulets were displayed alongside African 'fetish figurines' and ceremonial masks. Its intention, according to the guidebook, was to convey how "magical therapeutics may be traced from stone ages to present-day primitive races" (Wellcome and Malcolm 1927, 22), but the dominance of contemporary ethnographic material served only to perpetuate the popular image of a timeless Egypt. Whether intentionally or not, the dark and cluttered appearance of these galleries, coupled with the noticeable lack of interpretation for objects presented

as the products of magic and mysticism, encouraged visitors to consume these artefacts as curiosities (Larson 2011, 188; Naylor and Hill 2011, 69).

Frances Larson (2011) has noted that, as an introductory gallery, the *Hall of Primitive Medicine* functioned as a point of reference, a means of reiterating the stark contrast between the primitive world and the achievements of western society in the galleries that followed. As visitors made their way to the staircase at the back of the building leading down to the exhibition they passed through the *Hall of Statuary* where they encountered an alternate vision of ancient Egypt. Here, in the expansive and light-filled gallery, contrasting deliberately with the 'primitive' hall that preceded it, ancient Egyptian healing deities, medical papyri, and surgical instruments were grouped with comparative material from ancient Greece and Rome to demonstrate the classical origins of modern, western medicine. This arrangement played upon the standard Eurocentric, evolutionary narrative that was so engrained in museological practice and so familiar to museum audiences. The constructed environment of the Wellcome Museum positioned ancient Egypt and the Society's finds somewhere between Other and Self, envisioned as at once primitive and civilised within the Museum's complex anthropological narrative. Downstairs the unique material juxtapositions continued. With at least thirty-eight table-top display cases in use for the Society's excavated material, in what the exhibition catalogue describes as the "very generous loan of a spacious room" (EES 1931, 5), it is easy to imagine that the exhibition dominated the ground floor of the Museum. However, it is likely to have shared floor space with reconstructions of historical scenes, which were mentioned in published reviews as late as 1929. A sixteenth-century Italian pharmacy and an eighteenth-century London chemist were among the popular, theatrical walk-in dioramas that may have framed the Society's finds.

This was the first time that the Society's finds had been viewed in conjunction with other objects, material narratives, and disciplines, and the first time they had been situated in a broad global and chronological context. Each of these new sets of relationships and associations had an impact upon the way the collection was received by visitors. Ancient Egypt was no longer presented as a single isolated culture but was incorporated into a grand anthropological narrative intended to serve specific scholarly

agendas. Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (2000, 18) has shown how the construct of a museum is far from a neutral space, with “relationships between people, nations, and ideas... produced through the objects selected, the way they are displayed and the relationships between them” bringing “the world into an apparent single, rational framework.” The Wellcome Museum was no exception, with its rigidly defined arrangements designed to actively shape the visitor’s viewing and meaning-making experience. The displays dissolved traditional disciplinary boundaries and spatial divisions, and through an alternative method of classification created a new way of knowing ancient Egypt. This was a system of knowledge from which the Society’s collections inevitably drew meaning (Hooper-Greenhill 1992, 5; Lidchi 1997, 167-8). In this environment designed to celebrate progression and diversity in all scientific endeavours, the excavated artefact was reframed as a scientific specimen.

Displayed for the first time within a museum context before distribution, the very status of the Society’s excavated finds was reimagined. By the time of the 1931 exhibition, the Wellcome Museum had been expanded and rearranged, with the addition of “several new sections and objects of historical interest” (Wellcome and Malcolm 1927, 13), and its displays thoroughly modernised. The guidebook praised the introduction of more effective lighting and display cases “so that the visitor might inspect the objects to the best advantage and with the utmost ease” (Wellcome and Malcolm 1927, 14). Published reviews picked up on the contemporary feel of the displays, with *The Lancet* (1926, 883) reporting on the “new cases with superimposed glass shelves, which allow more objects to be shown in the space allotted without overcrowding.” Whereas previous exhibitions had reserved display cases for the smallest and most valuable objects, the Society’s 1931 exhibition presented its entire collection in the Museum’s new table-top display cases. Viewing objects in display cases, as familiar display furniture of museums and symbols of object status, the Society was engaging its visitors in a very traditional and recognisable museum discourse, altering and shaping the way they observed and behaved around the objects and fostering a particular epistemological mind-set.

Many scholars in the study of critical museology have discussed the transformative effect of the museum setting upon our understanding of an object and the meaning

that surrounds it (e.g. Stead 2007). Upon entering the museum space, and through the act of selection, museum objects are imbued with a palpable and heightened sense of agency, power, authenticity, and value (Leinhardt and Crowley 2002, 318-319), a particular “museal-aura” that comes from experiencing the physicality and materiality of a museum-displayed object (Hoberman 2003; see also Latham 2015). In this setting, and as part of this elaborate performance of “objecthood” (Stead 2007), the Society’s message and ideas were equally endowed with a sense of authority, an affect that Kaplan (1995, 41) has observed is particularly unique to the museum as a location and communicative medium:

It should not be forgotten that the location of exhibitions in ‘museums’ – in those special historic, scientific, social and cultural institutions that arose in the western world – is also part of the process. Viewers are more likely to accept messages in the context of museums. This is even more important to consider in presenting non-western cultures, and the objects and art obtained from them, usually under colonial rule. (Kaplan 1995, 41).

It is evident that the museum context had a transformative effect upon the shape and content of the annual exhibitions, with *The Times* (1931) describing it as a “display unusual in size, in character, and in richness.” For example, we begin to see the Society engaging with exhibition practices more commonly associated with the museum sector, tailoring their exhibitions to suit their new environment and to cater for a broader museum audience. In the Wellcome Museum in 1931 the Society not only provided a museum-style shop where visitors could purchase plaster casts of objects and postcards of excavation, but presented a large-scale loan exhibition of Egyptian jewellery containing 392 individual exhibits displayed chronologically from Predynastic to Roman and Coptic Egypt alongside their annual collection of excavated finds. The exhibition brought together items from eight museums and higher education collections: Brussels Museum, Pelizaeus Museum in Hildesheim, Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, Liverpool Free Museums, Liverpool Institute of Archaeology, Manchester University Museum, Eton College, and University College London. The vast majority of these objects however, eighty-two percent of the total number of exhibits, were on loan from a group of twenty-three private individuals. The use of mannequins adorned with replica dress and authentic ancient Egyptian accessories, and the incorporation of modern pieces of Egyptianising jewellery on loan from the famous jewellers Cartier and

Maison Boucheron, shows that the exhibition was designed to appeal to a popular audience, marking a new direction for the Society. While John Pendlebury had proposed a loan exhibition of material from Tell el Amarna a year earlier (EES uncatalogued letter a), in reality it could not logistically be achieved outside the museum context and without the “services of [Wellcome’s] technical staff” that this choice of location provided (EES 1931, 5).

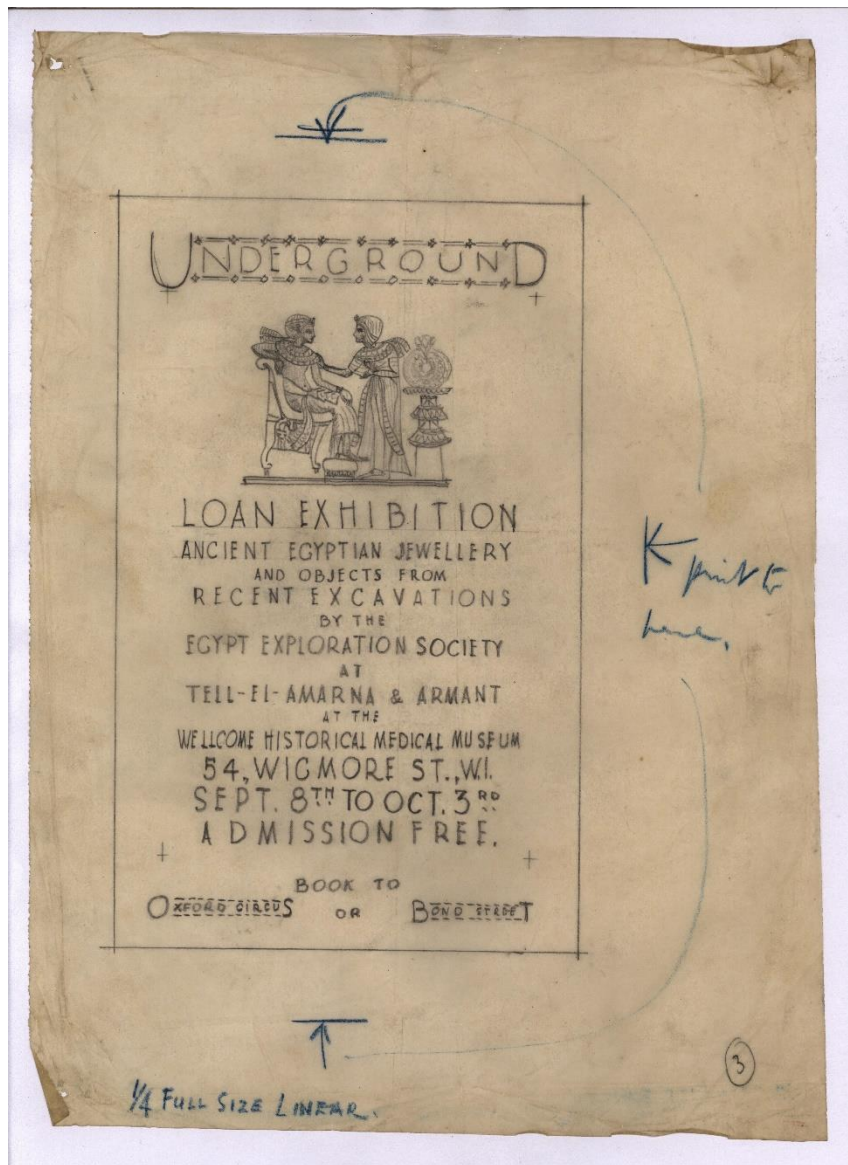


Figure 4. Draft London underground poster by Hilary Waddington advertising EES exhibition, 1931. TA.WAD.02.01.03. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.



Figure 5. Draft London underground poster by Hilary Waddington advertising EES exhibition, 1931. TA.WAD.02.01.04. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

The Society's decision to incorporate a loan exhibition demonstrates an acute awareness of trends in contemporary museum practice: just two years before the Museums Association had made a national plea to museum professionals for greater collaboration between museums and for the sharing of collections for loan exhibitions to encourage greater audiences (Miers 1929, 45). Pencil sketch drafts of London Underground posters advertising the 1931 exhibition, recently acquired for the EES's archive collection (fig. 4 and 5), reveal that the Society was equally aware of the sector's views on the importance of publicity. As the Museums Association's Chair stated at their 1929 annual conference:

In these advertising days the art galleries and museums have to seek methods of publicity; and it will repay them to do so. London railways have even found it worth their while to put up most arresting advertisements of the National Museums. (Miers 1929, 44).

Whether guided by colleagues at the Wellcome Museum or following their own initiative, the Society's choice of location and corresponding publicity campaign appears to have been successful. Imogen Grundon's (2007, 146) biography of John Pendlebury records that the 1931 annual exhibition received "...a thousand visitors in the first five days" and that "[w]hen the visitor numbers grew to over four thousand, they decided to extend the exhibition another month." In a Wellcome Museum press release held in the Museum's archive, Curator Louis Malcolm explained that the extension was granted "[i]n response to many urgent appeals from those interested in archaeology and anthropology" and that the exhibition had "attracted widespread interest" (WA/HMM/CO/Chr/H.6[a]). It was to be, in the words of the Society's Secretary, Mary C. Jonas, a "record exhibition" for the Society (WA/HMM/CO/Chr/H.6[b]). Since in the late 1920s, due to the strict rules of admission usually enforced by Wellcome, the Museum's annual visitor numbers averaged between 3,000 and 4,000 people (Larson 2009, 155), the exhibition numbers give an impressive sense of scale. The relaxed admission rules for the exhibition period, which saw the entire Museum open to the public without charge and admission ticket, is likely to have encouraged a vast number of curious visitors intrigued to see Wellcome's collections, but it ensured a far greater ideological reach for the exhibition, attracting a more popular and diverse audience. For the Society which was facing an uncertain financial future, the location may have been a strategic choice to fundraise for excavations on a larger scale.

It is very likely that the Society was equally drawn to the Wellcome Museum as an appropriate intellectual context. The location represented an unexplored opportunity to reconfigure people's perceptions of the Society and its mission, a means of aligning its work with a prominent, scientific research institution and to tap into a specific community of learners from across the allied sciences. The rebranding of the Society as a scientific institution was indeed becoming an increasing priority for its committee members, who, in the face of changing antiquities laws in Egypt and tightening controls

over the movement of objects, were faced with the prospect of receiving far fewer material finds from excavations to distribute to its supporters. In the years leading up to the Wellcome exhibition the Society was in the midst of developing a new vision, attempting to focus less on the material products which had made the Society's name and more on less tangible scientific results. The Society's Honorary Secretary wrote to Thomas Whittemore at the EES's American Branch in 1928 outlining their plan:

What I have in mind is the possibility of appealing to a rather different public. Our appeal must now be less to the Museum (or its supporter) anxious for "objects" than to public-spirited people willing to finance purely scientific research, alike excavation and the adequate and scholarly publication of its results... what we require most urgently is the support of people willing to finance sound, scientific, adequately published excavations for the scientific results alone, irrespective of what it may yield in Museum objects. (EES uncatalogued letter b).

The choice of the Wellcome Museum is perhaps a telling indicator of where the rebranded Society saw its future. Frances Larson (2009, 229) notes that "Wellcome's Museum had earned a higher profile by the late 1920s" on a national and international scale after its redevelopment and re-opening in 1926. The redevelopment had modernised the Museum not just in appearance but in mind-set too. Louis Malcolm, the curator in charge of the redisplay, a Cambridge anthropology graduate and pupil of A. C. Haddon, had assured Wellcome that they had gone to great lengths to bring the Museum "into line with, or even ahead of, the scientific institutions in London" (Malcolm, quoted in Skinner 1986, 394). In accordance with Wellcome's founding aims, the Museum was promoted as an active research facility to be valued on a par with a laboratory (Skinner 1986, 393), a place that facilitated object-centred learning and material lessons in the history and modern practice of global science, providing a practical teaching collection with an emphasis on visual, readable displays, to be used in conjunction with the Museum's own library of "100,000 books, manuscripts and incunabula" (Wellcome and Malcolm 1927, 99-102). As an intellectual context, the Museum would attract an audience of academics and practitioners that could subscribe to the Society's new vision both theoretically and financially. Although the level of active research taking place behind-the-scenes of the Museum has since been brought into question (Larson 2009, 203), the Museum was still held in high

professional regard, and it is likely that the collaboration was as much about projecting the right image for both the Society and for Wellcome.

Not only did this setting associate the Society with a research facility that prided its content, narratives, and appearance as being “continually progressive” (Wellcome and Malcolm 1927, 101), in 1931 it also presented an opportunity for the Society’s work to be officially incorporated into the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) centenary celebration in London, in which the Wellcome Museum was to be the focus of the Association’s Anthropological section (Section H). Running from 23rd to 30th September 1931, the Centenary meeting and celebration saw a rich assortment of educational talks, lectures, film showings, and exhibitions from all aspects of the sciences spread across the capital. According to the BAAS member’s programme, the Society’s exhibition was to be the largest of seven temporary displays in the Wellcome Museum that showcased the results of recent research in the fields of anthropology, archaeology, and ethnology. Other displays included Winifred Blackman’s “tatu designs from modern Egypt”, Professor Cipriani’s “photographs and casts of African natives”, and the English Folk-Dance Society’s display of “historical folk costumes” (Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Dep. B.A.A.S 264). Of the seven pop-up displays only the EES’s exhibition was extended due to popular demand.

Correspondence between the Museum and the Society shows that the EES committee were keen to be formally associated with the proceedings, postponing the start of the exhibition by some months to coincide with the celebration (WA/HMM/CO/Chr/H.6). The motivation is apparent, with the formal association bestowing official recognition and legitimacy on the Society and its work. As O. J. R. Howarth (1931, 259) wrote in his centenary retrospective of the BAAS’s history “[t]he name of the British Association has come to carry weight; its name attached to any subject of scientific research or publication is a guarantee of the worth of that subject.” It would also connect the Society to a global network of individuals and institutions. One of the founding objectives of the BAAS, established in 1831, was “to make the cultivators of science acquainted with each other, to stimulate one another to new exertion” and “to bring the objects of science more before the public eye and to take measures for advancing its interests and accelerating its progress” (Howarth 1931, 14). Minutes of the BAAS’s

committee meetings in the lead up to the celebration estimated that over 3,000 people would attend the proceedings (Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Dep. B.A.A.S 25). The diverse programme of events attracted BAAS members not only from across the United Kingdom, with the members' programme offering reduced fares for those travelling to the events by train (Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Dep. B.A.A.S 264), it also sought to unite scholars from across the Empire, as part of the BAAS's heightened imperial mission to promote scientific intercourse among the dominions (Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Dep. B.A.A.S 64). It was here that London, as the symbolic and ideological setting for this narrative, continued to be an active agent in knowledge construction. As the Lord Mayor of London declared to delegates ahead of the centenary celebration:

Clearly no centre of human activity in this world owes a greater debt to science and its applications than does London; none can show more vividly and in more varied forms the benefits of science in the life of the people, nor wider opportunities for further scientific attainment. (Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Dep. B.A.A.S 263).

Forty-seven years after the first annual exhibition was displayed at Oxford Mansions, the imperial metropole still held a magnetism for the display of scientific endeavours. Physically located in this environment and displayed in the context of anthropological collections, alongside the collected materials of foreign nations, the knowledge and artefacts produced through the Society's work were once again legitimised and authenticated as a product of the Imperial project.

* * * * *

Over the course of the practice of annual exhibitions the Egypt Exploration Society had displayed their finds in eleven different venues across London, three of which had been shared with Petrie. These sites alternated between private and public spaces of knowledge, presenting ancient Egypt, archaeological practice, and the excavated artefact to a myriad of different audiences. The plurality of these sites and the fluidity of movement between them reveals a great deal about the protean nature of archaeological fieldwork and of the discipline of archaeology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It also reveals the underlying necessity felt by practitioners of archaeology to utilise location as a means to gain acceptance within an increasingly complex scientific community. It is clear throughout that locations were chosen

strategically to legitimise archaeological ideas and the excavated artefact. Plotting the pattern of the exhibition's movement through time shows that these organisations were proactive in confronting the demands and challenges of London's changing scientific landscape, as well as the shifting demographic of archaeology's audience and the changing habits of would-be consumers.

The varying choices of venue demonstrate the significance of location as an active agent in the construction of meaning. How objects and ideas are received and interpreted is fundamentally conditioned by the environment in which they are positioned. As archaeological objects were moved into new venues, crossing the threshold of learned societies, universities, museums, and entertainment venues, their purpose and meaning were re-imagined. Presented and consumed at once as curiosities, scientific specimens, disciplinary objects, and museum artefacts, the collections formed synergies with each location, shaping viewers' engagement with, and understanding of the archaeology of Egypt.

The annual exhibitions occupied an intermediate space, a transitional phase in the excavated artefact's journey between two fixed points: the field and the museum. This transition was reflected in the choice of location and setting for the exhibitions. Situating the practice outside the institutional confines of the museum created an alternative encounter with the archaeological object, one that enabled greater intellectual and ideological flexibility, as well as a freedom to experiment with different ways of representing this new phase in archaeological practice. The annual exhibitions were key sites for the negotiation of meaning and the exchange of ideas. Locating the exhibitions in multi-disciplinary institutions meant that objects were constantly re-contextualised and re-interpreted, drawing upon different institutional narratives. The locations attracted new audiences to engage with the objects and facilitated new conversations. Not only did the practice of exhibitions enable a much increased circulation of disciplinary knowledge, it also encouraged a diverse gathering of people, objects, and ideas that would in turn help to shape the object as a social construct.

5. Content and message

The annual exhibitions contributed greatly to a period of change in the display of Egyptian collections, and in the representation and communication of ancient Egypt as a whole. The introduction of systematic excavations in Egypt and the subsequent large-scale movement of antiquities radically altered the parameters of archaeological knowledge and representations. New excavation techniques and the process of partage saw a dramatic increase in the number, and particularly the types, of Egyptian antiquities arriving on international shores, and a wider selection of objects to create and support new narratives. In very strong contrast to the traditional make-up of contemporary museum displays, these changes provided a far broader and richer engagement with ancient Egyptian culture and a less limited range of material from which an understanding of Egypt's past could be generated.

Each year's exhibition celebrated a new material and ideological diversity, but how did the curators manage this new information and interpret it for audiences? This chapter focuses on the exhibitions of Flinders Petrie, divided into two distinct phases in his archaeological and exhibitionary practice: settlement archaeology displayed at the Royal Archaeological Institute (1884-1890); and funerary archaeology displayed at University College, London (1894-1936). By focusing on the exhibitions of Petrie, this chapter examines the content, shape, and scope of the collections displayed over the course of the practice, analysing what type of objects, narratives, and voices were present in, and absent from, the exhibition space. What image of Egypt and Egyptian archaeology did the exhibitions serve to communicate, and why? What identities and meanings were imparted on the collection? How did this representational system function to create knowledge? In order to examine these questions, this chapter discusses some of the most common themes and trends emanating from the exhibition space, as they can be gleaned from the exhibition catalogues and published reviews.

In this chapter I argue that the annual exhibitions did not present a singularity of vision or purpose in representing Egypt. The ancient culture was constantly re-interpreted

and re-imagined to reflect a diverse array of contemporary interests and to meet a variety of needs, demonstrating the multivalent potential of the ancient Egyptian object as a generator and palimpsest of meaning (Moser 2015b, 250-251; Riggs 2015). At the very least, the displays presented Egypt as part of shared European self-image or identity, linking Britain to Egypt via the classical world and industrial ingenuity, but also as a vehicle for bolstering imperial ambitions at the turn of the twentieth century, extending the temporal reach of Western civilisation and the circulation of ideas about racial superiority. It is likely that many further visions of Egypt were also operating simultaneously within the exhibition space. This chapter shows that the origins and reasoning behind these 'uses' of Egypt were equally diverse. While some were driven by Petrie's personal and professional bias and a desire to strategically position and elevate the study of ancient Egypt within certain academic spheres, others were connected to popularism in order to attract audiences, to appeal to potential fundraisers, and tap into contemporary trends in museum collecting.

I focus on the content and message of Petrie's exhibitions for two main reasons. First, linked to his professional reputation, Petrie's exhibitions acquired unequivocal status amid those of his peers. Widely reported on as "proverbial in the archaeological world for [their] interest" (*The Scotsman* 1911) and attaining "the position of an institution" (*The Athenaeum* 1890, 297), his exhibitions and the narratives constructed within them had a seemingly more authoritative and extensive global reach than others. With reports equally praising the archaeologist as a skilled story-teller and communicator of Egypt's history, of which *The Academy* (1886, 158) claimed "Mr Petrie was distinctly the author", his exhibition narratives held considerable sway in communicating ancient Egypt to public and professional audiences, and they maintain a strong legacy to this day. Second, Petrie was the longest-serving archaeologist associated with the exhibitions, with displays spanning almost the entire practice from 1884 to 1936. This longevity allows us to retain a level of consistency while diachronically examining changing narrative trends and curatorial practices over a substantial period of time.

5.1 A reactive space

As the first point of encounter with a new material Egypt, aided by its temporary and transient nature, outside the ideological and institutional confines of the museum setting, the annual exhibitions became an experimental space. They were a forum for the exploration and embodiment of new representational and narrative strategies and for the negotiation of meaning. New narrative opportunities were present not just in the form of unexplored sites but in the fluid and evolving status of the objects themselves. The seeming freshness of the newly excavated artefact and the recentness of its discovery aided this process in many ways. In their first public appearance since leaving Egypt these objects were almost untainted by any previous and long-held interpretations or complex modern biographies. They were distant from the well-trodden, institutionalised narratives of the museum, into which they had not yet been absorbed. Such objects were more open to interpretation and creative thinking, and far more malleable in the way that they could be fitted into different narratives and applied to different agendas. They also lent themselves to multiple layers of meaning and on-going interpretation. Visitors were more willing, even expectant, to engage with the new theories and histories that were actively being constructed around them. It was this performance of the new, this concept of originality and the excitement of the unfamiliar, that the annual exhibition thrived upon, and this approach could be delivered with impact each year through fresh content. While the permanent galleries of the museum might remain static and unchanged for decades (see Moser 2006), each year the annual exhibition offered new, up-to-date content and ideas that continually changed public and professional understandings of ancient Egypt.

The temporary nature of these exhibitions also applied a greater sense of immediacy that was used to great effect in the creation of narratives. This unique transiency created a dynamic, reactive space with the ability to respond to, and engage with, its immediate environment. Here we begin to see the selection of objects and narratives being guided by current trends and new multi-disciplinary approaches that were influencing the interpretation of Egypt at the time, but also by wider socio-political and cultural contexts (see Qureshi 2011; 2012). The exhibitions offered timeliness,

topicality, and political relevance. In this setting ancient Egyptian objects became seamlessly woven into contemporary issues and debates.

The impact of this sense of immediacy is perhaps most apparent in the political agency governing the shape and scope of exhibition content. As a representational system, the annual exhibitions were far from a passive reflection of a season's excavation. Each year they presented a highly manufactured image of Egypt, one routinely shaped by numerous actors in the successive stages of post-excavation procedure. Within Egypt, newly forming colonial relationships contributed significantly to the sculpting of collections. The process of partage and diplomatic agency considerably altered the character of returning archaeological assemblages, with the French-led Egyptian Antiquities Service retaining objects of considered value for the Bulaq Museum in Cairo and forcing Field Directors to present a vision of ancient Egypt that was inevitably defined in contrast to the interests of the Antiquities Service. As a direct consequence of partage the exhibitions were intrinsically tied to diplomatic agency in Egypt, and as such they offered the first and most consistent representations of ancient Egypt to be governed by these new colonial relationships. They were thus political collections, and their shape, size, and content were highly dependent upon Anglo-Franco-Egyptian relationships. In this volatile and reactive environment, any changes to antiquities laws or colonial administration had an immediate and visible impact upon exhibitions. Object numbers were often dramatically reduced or they would be delayed by bureaucracy in Egypt, with content altering mid-display as new objects arrived into the country (e.g. EEF and ERA 1899, 3). These chains of association with political and colonial activity in Egypt would have been tangible within the exhibition space and very apparent to audiences.

5.2 Curatorial agency

Unlike most museum collections, the annual exhibitions offered a representation constructed directly by the archaeologists responsible for the excavation of the material, with field directors accountable for the selection, arrangement, presentation, and interpretation of their finds to the public. It was these curatorial choices that

helped manufacture an alternative vision of ancient Egypt and an authoritative performance of practical archaeological knowledge. Established at a time when David Gange (2013a, 153) suggests “Egyptological authority” was shared between “museum curators, historians, astronomers and clergymen as well as excavators” and “[t]he distinction between popularizer and practitioner remained impossible to draw”, the annual exhibition created a clearly demarcated space in which the authority of the professional archaeologist as knowledge-maker could be explored. It was this unique and innovative role of the excavator as curator that so distinguished the annual exhibitions from its contemporaries.

In the last decade, museological literature examining the construction of meaning within collections and displays has moved away from the well-worn Foucauldian analysis of mechanised governmental systems of knowledge production to focus on the authority and agency of the curator as an individual actor (see Byrne et al. 2011; Longair 2015). As Sarah Byrne (2011, 309) has commented “[t]he agency of collectors and curators has too often been eclipsed by a focus on the government ideologies or system in which they operated.” This recent turn to a more socially-driven analysis reasserts the curator as an active participant in the formation and arrangement of collections, subject to the influence of an array of personal networks and impetuses. At the annual exhibitions each successive archaeologist-curator left a clear mark on the displays, through their selection of objects, narratives, and interpretative techniques.

For many who visited or read in newspapers about the displays organised by Flinders Petrie, this agency and authority was very apparent. The exhibitions, as well as the content and narratives developed within them, were inexplicably tied to Petrie as an individual and as a personality. Regardless of Petrie’s organisational affiliation at any particular time, whether with the EEF or BSAE, popular opinion referred to the displays first and foremost as ‘Petrie’s annual exhibitions’ or ‘Petrie’s collections’. A 1904 review in the satirical magazine *Punch* went as far as to rebrand the displays, writing: “[a]ltogether, Mr Punch’s representative spent a highly Egyptological morning at what might (it is hoped without undue respect) be called the ‘Flinderies’.” His name had thus become synonymous with the annual exhibitions and with Egyptian archaeology.

These chains of association were never so apparent with any other field director. For visitors to Petrie's displays it was understood, correctly or incorrectly, that their content had been excavated and interpreted, and the narratives sculpted, primarily by him. As such, they were viewed as a manifestation or embodiment of his notoriety and persona, of his academic and scientific prowess in the field of archaeology. Petrie's strength of character and famous ego were salient each year. As archaeologist and numismatist J. G. Milne declared in 1914, "Petrie has got some great scheme on, but I can't make out what it is. Of course his exhibition is going to be the biggest on record: it always is, every year" (EES XIV.a. unnumbered b).

The experience offered by the exhibitions was different from that of most museum displays, where the identity of the curator remained largely unknown. As Sturge (2007, 159) points out in relation to the anonymity of the museum label writer, the invisible status of the curator was not just a practicality but an ideological stance:

By remaining anonymous – an invisible translator – the label writers do not diminish their agency but on the contrary become more absorbed into the Voice of Science, an institutionally powerful speaking position and one that brooks little dissent. The anonymous label allows the words only one possible source, the museum institution.

Petrie's agency and ownership marked yet a further separation from the institutionalised homogeneity of museum practice. The fact that Petrie worked actively and visibly within the exhibition, writing labels and communicating with visitors (see chapter 6), was an overt performance of curatorial agency and authority and perhaps a strong statement of possession, asserting that he remained in control of the knowledge being produced within the space.

When the young Percy Newberry wrote to Petrie in 1886 to enquire about volunteering to help with exhibition arrangements, Petrie replied that "so much depends on memory and personal knowledge of the places and objects that there is scarcely anything but drawing that I can give up" (Newberry MSS 1 37/6). This "personal knowledge" is what Petrie later referred to in his guide *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* as "visual memory", a discriminatory talent that separated the field director or "the master" from the rest of his excavation team (Petrie 1904, 18-19). It was a method that privileged his knowledge as director over that of others,

particularly over his Egyptian workers, and maintained the “structure of domination that the archaeologist requires” (Quirke 2010, 29). While colleagues are recorded to have helped in the unpacking, organising, and re-packing of exhibitions, correspondence seems to show that in the early years Petrie took sole responsibility for curatorial decisions, ensuring that this structure of domination extended from the fieldsite to the exhibition space. In 1884 he wrote to Amelia Edwards outlining just some of his responsibilities at Oxford Mansions: “[h]ow I can possibly get through everything – copying inscriptions, labelling objects, writing papers, printing photos, + arranging the many little things, which will go undone if I do not see to them – I do not know...” (PMA 3/1/PEN/06).

The turn of the century saw a democratisation of curatorial authority. No longer were the exhibitions the sole domain of the field director; for the first time knowledge-making was placed in the hands of the wider excavation team. As the scale of operations expanded in the field, Petrie appointed colleagues to supervise and manage areas of excavation, many of whom were archaeology students from University College London whose fieldwork training was funded by his Egyptian Research Account initiative. From 1896 onward, exhibition catalogues began to list members of the excavation team and their responsibilities, while published reviews moved away from the ‘hero archaeologist’ narrative to praise the collective knowledge and effort of a team excavation. From this point on, the exhibitions were to project an image of archaeology as a professional science, displacing the now outdated vision of a gentlemanly pursuit to stress the importance of a skilfully managed site and trained workforce.

This transition was aptly reflected in the exhibition catalogues through a new multivocality. As multiple sites or areas of excavation were presented to the public, a number of excavators were invited to write their own interpretation and were named as authors alongside their contributions. Male archaeologists such as James E. Quibell (1896 & 1897), John Garstang (1900), Arthur Mace (1900), Norman De Garis Davies (1900), David Randall Maclver (1901), Charles T. Currelly (1903), Leonard S. Loat (1904), many in the early stages of their career, were invited to contribute to the exhibition catalogues that had once been the sole domain of Petrie. These catalogues

were by no means edited to read as a homogenised whole. Each separately authored section presents a new voice and a new actor in the performance of archaeology, with a variety of different writing styles and personal interpretations. Yet it remains unclear to what extent these individuals had a say in the selection of objects to interpret, or whether the larger narrative remained governed by Petrie as field director.

As students of archaeology became more involved in the process of exhibition-making there was an increased presence of women, not only in the arrangement and organisation of the exhibition space but in the social composition of its audience. This was in opposition to the predominantly male gendered space of the learned society which preceded it. The study of Egyptology at University College London attracted a high proportion of female students. Kathleen Sheppard (2013, 43) has commented that “[m]any of the first classes consisted mostly of women students, both single and married, and a few elderly men.” In her autobiography, Margaret Murray (1963, 158), who organised and lectured in the subject for much of her career, commented that at one point twenty of the seventy-two women students at University College were enrolled on the Egyptology course. This rise in female interest had not gone unnoticed by archaeological societies such as the EEF, which recruited a number of high-profile women fundraisers as regional or local secretaries across the United Kingdom and in the USA, and to great effect. “Interest in the study of antiquities has grown within the last twenty years at an enormous rate”, stated one male speaker at the Fund’s 1892 Ordinary General Meeting. “This we must attribute partly I think to improved general education – to higher education, and more exact scholarship, and, undoubtedly, also to the better education of women” (EEF 1892a, 19).

At the turn of the century women featured more regularly as part of Petrie’s excavation teams, as well as playing a significant role in post-excavation procedures. Hilda Petrie, who first met her husband Flinders Petrie at his annual exhibition in 1896 (Petrie 1931, 163), Margaret Murray, Lina Eckenstein, Olga Tufnell, and Gertrude Caton-Thompson, are all known to have participated in organising and arranging Petrie’s exhibitions. Sheppard (2016, 52) even remarks that Petrie was “dependent” upon them to manage and administer these activities. For Murray, the exhibitions

were perhaps an important educational opportunity for women on her course. Sheppard (2016, 53) reports that Murray actively sought ways to support and encourage her female students “in their quest for opportunities and recognition in the public and in authoritative fields of study” (see also Sheppard 2015). The exhibitions would have provided practical experience and vocational training in working with material culture and public engagement.

The early decades of the twentieth century saw University College become an increasingly politicised setting for the advocacy of women’s rights. Many of the women tasked with facilitating exhibitions, including Hilda Petrie, Murray, Eckenstein and Caton-Thompson, were actively involved in the suffrage movement (Sheppard 2015, 105-119; Stevenson 2019, 58-60). Traces of Murray’s activism can be found in the pages of University College’s student magazine, in which in 1923 she published a translation of the text ‘Chant of the Women of Edfu in honour of Horus’. At the same time the Women’s Union Society was fighting a turbulent and controversial battle to join the men-only Student’s Union. Within the telling lines of Murray’s translation, it is not difficult to read her underlying motivations. The ancient text begins “[l]ift your voices, Edfu women, call the Gods to aid” and ends with the defiant line “[r]aise the chant, O women, strike the sounding drums.” The ripple effect of Murray’s activism within Egyptology was felt as far as Glasgow. At a temporary exhibition organised by the archaeological fundraiser Janet May Buchanan at Kelvingrove Museum in 1912, many high-profile female archaeologists loaned their objects for display, and Murray was invited to write the accompanying exhibition catalogue. Alice Stevenson (2019, 62) rightly refers to the Glasgow exhibition as a “political statement”. In a section on “Women’s role in Ancient Egypt”, Murray (1912, 20) drew parallels between the ancient civilisation and the ongoing suffrage campaign:

The standard of civilisation in any country is judged to a very great extent by the position of the women. Where the women are treated as inferiors, they become inferior and the nation suffers accordingly; where women are treated as equals, the nation improves and advances.

Murray thoroughly embraced the Glasgow temporary exhibition as an opportunity to express and materialise her feminist ideology, closely intertwining ancient Egyptian narratives with effervescent contemporary politics. Yet this freedom of speech

presents a stark contrast to the annual exhibitions that Murray was organising at her own place of work. Despite the number of politically active female archaeologists involved in Petrie's annual exhibitions, the displays were never utilised as a mouthpiece for feminist political agendas nor as a platform for women-centred narratives. The lives of ancient women were incorporated into exhibition narratives but merely as a representation of wider society, not as the focus of any investigation. This may indicate that women felt less confident in pursuing such political statements within their own place of work, or it may imply that the task of selecting and arranging objects and narratives was more strictly governed by male archaeologists, and their male interests, who had a tight control over the narratives that they wanted to supply to their audiences.

It would not be until the BSAE's 1925 and 1926 exhibition of material from Badari that a woman's voice was present in the exhibition catalogue, when Gertrude Caton-Thompson was invited to contribute short pieces on the prehistoric flints discovered on site. Overall, the voices of female archaeologists remained conspicuously missing from the exhibition space and catalogues. This absence did not go unnoticed in some media circles. In Caton-Thompson's personal scrapbook of press cuttings, now housed in the archive at University College London, a well-thumbed article from the *Evening Post* in 1922 reads:

Not everyone who visits the exhibition of Professor Flinders Petrie's latest discoveries of Egyptian antiquities, which opened at University College this week knows how large a share women have contributed to our knowledge of the life of Ancient Egypt (IoA Box 11 Caton-Thompson Newspaper Cuttings Book I, p.1)

Although the article reads more as token curiosity about what is described as "women's discoveries", it is a testament to the omission of Petrie's female colleagues and clearly struck a chord with Caton-Thompson who selected it for her carefully curated scrapbook.

While exhibition catalogues credited female team members for the more feminine pursuit of archaeological illustration, with the art-work of many women displayed alongside the objects, the near-complete absence of female authors or contributors denied women archaeologists an authoritative voice in archaeological interpretation,

suggesting that women were valued more as communicators than as knowledge-makers in the exhibitionary process. This role of organising and enabling exhibitions fits neatly into Kate Hill's (2016) observation that in late nineteenth and early twentieth century museum practice women were strategically allocated roles that were considered more feminine, such as those in education and outreach. Hill (2016, 166) describes how museums "deployed 'feminine' expertise to successfully mediate scholarly knowledge for a popular audience." Could it be that this practice was emulated within Petrie's own exhibitions? A letter from 1912 written by Flinders Petrie to the London Society for Women's Suffrage on behalf of his wife Hilda, now housed at the London School of Economics Archive, demonstrates Hilda's primary role with the exhibitionary process:

I regret to say that Mrs Petrie is obliged to take entire rest at present as she has been unwell lately; and she has a very tiring month before her of daily attention to subscribers at the Exhibition of the British School of Archaeology, the whole personal detail of which is in her hands. She will therefore be unable to undertake anything else until the end of July. I write as she is away for entire rest. (Quoted in Challis 2018)

This possibility is supported by archival correspondence which shows that a select group of women archaeologists, including Hilda Petrie and Murray, were tasked with liaising with museum professionals in the exhibition space (see chapter 7.3). In this capacity they would guide curators and directors towards particular objects for their collections, communicating their significance and facilitating the process of selection and distribution. It therefore appears that women's expertise and voices were valued, but that they were not able to acquire curatorial agency in the exhibitions.

While some voices and ideologies were curtailed within the exhibition space, others were excluded altogether. Egyptian colleagues who had worked on excavations alongside Petrie and his students were not given any role in the exhibitions, just as they were excluded from many elements of the post-excavation process, including documentation and publications (Quirke 2010). In the field, Petrie relied heavily upon his Egyptian excavators to assist in the construction of archaeological meaning. In addition to the teams of between a hundred and two hundred workers, he employed a permanent group of at least six experienced foremen led by his close colleague 'Ali al-

Suayfi (Petrie 1904, 24-26; Quirke 2007, 264-266; 2010; Doyon 2015, 147-148). Yet, despite the breadth of their experience and their highly-skilled and knowledgeable presence on site, their status was not acknowledged. The metropolitan environment of the exhibition saw a reinforcement and reproduction of colonial power structures, in which the interpretation of Egyptian archaeology remained the privileged domain of white, Western, male archaeologists.

Such an exclusion is symptomatic of wider-held attitudes across nineteenth-century disciplines, as Sturge (2007, 159) notes in relation to anthropological museum practice:

Colonial-era curators, in common with their fellow anthropologists in the field, believed that the words of the 'natives' could not be trusted ... In this nineteenth-century view, the owners of the objects have no authority to interpret – they are 'intimidated' by the collector and the truth of their statements is further clouded by the intrusive, probably corrupting presence of a language-mediator because they do not speak the language of the anthropological collection. Better by far to subordinate them to silent, thus objective, witnesses ... and have Western experts give cogent verbal form to the raw material collected.

Petrie's exhibitions echoed this practice by not attributing any agency to his Egyptian excavators. Under colonial authority, British excavators claimed the moral and intellectual right to produce knowledge to the exclusion of Egyptian citizens: the impact of the period's social-political context was felt not just in the selection of content and narratives on display, but also in who got to speak on behalf of Egypt's heritage.

5.3 Settlement archaeology

As the first EEF annual exhibition opened its doors to the public on 9 September 1884, it introduced a new material Egypt to nineteenth-century Britain. The excavations of Tanis, a Third Intermediate Period and 26th Dynasty temple and city in the Nile Delta, was the first site to be exhibited and interpreted under the aegis of the new society. Petrie's display of household objects found in the abandoned remains of Ptolemaic dwellings brought to life ancient lived experience. Artefact by artefact, he pieced

together the lives of Tanis's inhabitants, revealing their occupations and possessions, from the local painter whose home contained broken trial pieces of his craft, to the wealthy woman who, in haste, had hidden her jewellery in the cellar of her property in fear of being robbed (Petrie 1885, 33). It was this glimpse into the ordinary lives of ancient Egypt that set the tone for this initial period of the exhibition's history and its tenancy at the Royal Archaeological Institute.

The first nine years of the practice, under the EEF and then Petrie as an independent excavator, were dominated by settlement and urban archaeology. The Graeco-Roman period city sites of Tanis, Naukratis, Tell Defenneh, and Nebesheh in the Nile Delta, the Middle Kingdom towns of Lahun and Gurob in the Fayum, and the New Kingdom city of Tell el Amarna in Middle Egypt all featured in exhibitions between 1884 and 1892. While these sites were interspersed with temple, cemetery, and funerary remains, it was the domestic narratives generated from these excavations that seem to have been the most promoted and valued. The domestic context brought a rich selection of object types for the creation of narratives and for engaging audiences. The collections displayed the organic and perishable materials of everyday life; the fragile nature of their materiality only served to heighten their perceived "age value" (Bohrer 2003). Displays were enriched with new materials, new textures, and new colours, leading a correspondent from the *Pall Mall Gazette* to write in 1892, "...we feel we must begin again all the lessons in colour that Egypt had taught us."

A description published in *The Times* (1885), listing the type of content visitor's encountered in Petrie's early exhibitions, sets the scene:

The collection comprises vases, cups, bowls, lamps, figures, and heads of men, women, and animals, some worked in alabaster, but for the most part moulded by the potter's hand. There is a plentiful supply of personal ornaments, amulets and charms, knives, chisels, belts, spear heads, arrow heads, and fish hooks, iron hoes and hatchets, cake stamps in a kind of terracotta, sundry foundation deposits of the temple of Apollo, capitals, shafts, and bases of stone columns... Besides the above there is a collection of numerous weights for coins, sheckles, drachma, etc.

These small and domestic fragments of ancient Egyptian life formed a representation of Petrie's Egypt. As already noted, Petrie focussed on the mundane and fragmentary, not only as important forms of evidence but also because they conferred a logistical

advantage (Stevenson 2014a, 91). These were not the grand, traditional ‘museum quality’ pieces which were favoured by Petrie’s contemporaries, including his co-EEF excavator Naville, leaving Petrie able to navigate and, to a certain extent, exploit the partage process to meet his own needs. Together these collecting practices and logistical processes facilitated distribution, but perhaps more significantly they helped to create a new type of object, one that Stevenson (2014a) terms the “excavated artefact”.

The shaping of knowledge within the exhibition space was similarly guided as much by logistical constraints as by ideological frameworks. The limited space available at the Royal Archaeological Institute restricted what could be shown. Not only did this often reduce the scale of content, it also prevented the Fund from displaying their largest finds, limiting the exhibition and its representation of ancient Egypt to small and medium sized objects. It was this restriction that primarily excluded the collections of other EEF excavators such as Édouard Naville, favouring the results of Petrie, and in particular his presentation of domestic life and settlement archaeology. Just as the small, manageable, and transportable aided the construction of the excavated artefact (Stevenson 2014a, 91), so too did it enable the exhibition process. Whereas Naville’s preference for monumental finds conflicted with the practicalities of the annual exhibition, the minor antiquities promoted by Petrie’s work fuelled the practice and ensured its continuation.

The desire to provide objects that could be easily exhibited and that fitted the logistical requirements of the exhibition procedure may have influenced collecting in the field. A letter to Petrie from Amelia Edwards in 1886 appears to qualify this when she writes that “[c]ertainly M. Naville would never bring home any small objects for exhibition or distribution if left to his own devices – but with Mr Griffith and Mr Cowan there would be no fear of failure in that way” (PMA 5/EDW/20). Not only does this pair exhibition with distribution as significant objectives of the Fund, it also demonstrates that the exhibition was a motivating factor in collecting. From this we can surmise that securing objects for exhibition incentivised and reinforced archaeological practice, which in turn structured a very specific representation of Egyptian archaeology at the annual

exhibition. Here we see the very materiality of the finds beginning to structure and shape the temporary exhibitions, and much of the agency for collecting in the field.

Although such a system suited the Fund's needs, the Fund's supporters took some convincing of the advantage of displaying small domestic finds. Joseph Offord Junior, an automobile businessman and son of a Biblical antiquities collector (see Pinches 1900), wrote to Amelia Edwards ahead of the Naukratis exhibition in 1885 to ask whether they were planning to display any "large" artefacts. "I do not ask because I want to see them", Mr Offord wrote, "but because from a business point of view I think one large object would gratify many subscribers more than any number of small ones" (EES COR.006.g.unnumbered). This reaction from subscribers was likely the result of a representational system that had become prevalent in nineteenth-century museum galleries and subsequently imprinted on the public imagination. Many national museum displays, in particular, perpetuated what Stephanie Moser (2015a, 1277) describes as the "visual codification of ancient Egypt", a material representation often "associated with qualities such as monumentality, strength and immortality." The small, fragile, and humble fragments of everyday life showcased by Petrie offered a strong visual juxtaposition to the familiar images of a monumental and pharaonic Egypt. It was this presence of absence that contributed significantly to the construction of knowledge and meaning within these temporary spaces (see Rees Leahy 2012).

While these constraints continued to shape exhibition content there was equally a conscious attempt to streamline the exhibition's content further, channelling focus towards Petrie's collections and the narratives that derived from his material. Despite the Fund having multiple projects working simultaneously in the field, the exhibitions of this period only occasionally featured a token sample of objects from excavations other than Petrie's. For example, at the first exhibition in 1884 a section of one table was dedicated to Naville's finds at Pithom (*The Academy* 1884), but it was a small selection of the material available for display and not representative of his excavation as a whole. These minor collections, if featured at all, were no more than fleeting reminders of the breadth of archaeological work undertaken by the Fund, and they were viewed as a sideline to the main event in a period dominated by Petrie's discoveries. This focus may have resulted from a desire to create a clearer and less

cluttered narrative, as Petrie later commented in 1886 in relation to the Fund's exhibitions, "[i]t is a pity to split the attention of the public" between excavations (EES COR.016.f.131). Regardless of motivation, the strategy privileged Petrie's knowledge and construction of ancient Egypt and the archaeological object over those of his contemporaries.

After Petrie parted company with the Fund, archival correspondence shows that the Fund remained hesitant to place responsibility for the exhibitions in the hands of his colleagues. When Naville held the Fund's first exhibition without Petrie in the summer of 1887 it was met with mixed reviews and received comparatively little coverage in the national press. Edwards resorted to writing a piece for *The Academy* in an attempt to raise interest in the collection, but even then she wrote almost apologetically about the exhibition: "[t]he small objects now on view at Oxford Mansion does not in any sense represent the result of the season's excavations; neither is it likely to be regarded as an exhibition likely to interest the general public." Edwards describes the objects on display as "waifs and strays" from the excavations of Tell Basta and Tell el Yahudiya where "large monuments were uncovered in such rapid succession ... there was literally no time to sift the soil for minor antiquities. The spoils of Bubastis are too large and too weighty to be shown in any private room."

In the years that followed, Naville submitted many written requests for a room to exhibit his finds, stating: "I deplore that they should not be exhibited somewhere together and seen by the British public. It would be the best possible advertisement for the Fund" (EES COR.005.g.5). His persistent requests were ignored by the Committee who chose instead not to exhibit the results of the 1888 and 1889 seasons. There were many years where Naville felt compelled to write desperate pleas to the Fund to hold an exhibition, and in a marked contrast to the EEF's dealings with Petrie, the suitability of Naville's material was subject to inspection and approval by the Committee before an exhibition was agreed upon. In 1895, a decade after Petrie's departure from the Fund, Petrie's exhibitions remained the primary point of comparison and a significant influence over the Fund, with Naville writing: "I very much hope the Committee will decide to have [an exhibition]. There is quite enough for that, and there is a good deal

to be added from the first two winters. Petrie would make one for much less ..." (EES XI.d.37).

The decision to push Petrie's collections to the forefront of these public-facing displays can be seen as a deliberate strategy of the Fund. Not only was Petrie favoured as an exemplary curator who understood the need for exhibitions and could interpret his finds to a wide audience; as a figure with a brand and an increasingly academic presence, he was equally appealing to the Fund as a signifier of their success and intentions in Egypt. His methods and collections were advanced and innovative, exemplifying the progression and the future of the discipline with which the Fund wished to be associated. Championing Petrie's collections was important for securing the EEF's identity as a new organisation finding its place, and settlement archaeology was a means of demonstrating that it was both pioneering and making a distinctive contribution to the field. The exhibition reviews of this period show that the displays of settlement archaeology were particularly valued because they filled a significant gap in current archaeological knowledge of the region. A reviewer from *The Academy* wrote in response to the 1884 exhibition:

The temples and tombs of the old Egyptians have been excavated with scrupulous care, but their houses have been neglected; and thus our knowledge of manners and customs, of the processes of the artist and craftsman, and of the local varieties of art best told by certain objects of provenance, has not grown with that of mythology, history, and the greatest movements of architecture and sculpture. (*The Academy* 1884, 191).

Such views were supported within the discipline. Gaston Maspero's (1887, 1) publication *Egyptian Archaeology* opened with the statement:

Archaeologists, when visiting Egypt, have so concentrated their attention upon temples and tombs, that not one has devoted himself to a careful examination of the existing remains of private dwellings and military buildings.

Within this pioneering vision, settlement archaeology provided a means of showcasing new archaeological ideas and techniques. The systematic excavation of intricate town plans and the science of preserving and conserving delicate organic materials were outlined in the exhibition space. The very presence of such a wealth of finds and range

of materials was a testament to the success of these new approaches and a glimpse into the future of scientific archaeological practice.

The decision to prioritise Petrie's representation of a domestic Egypt may have been driven in part by a growing interest for 'man-made' objects across the museum sector. Kate Hill (2005, 74-75) has shown how in the 1880s and 1890s municipal museums shifted considerably in their collecting practices, moving away from primarily natural history collections in favour of acquiring 'man-made' artefacts that could fall into a variety of cross-disciplinary categories from archaeology and anthropology to industrial art and local history. Within this framework, the products of Petrie's settlement archaeology could be deployed across diverse sub-collections to support relevant narratives. With the distribution of finds so crucial to the continuation of the EEF's practice in Egypt, it is likely that the opportunity to appeal and demonstrate relevance to popular collecting trends in museums was prioritised.

Such a focus may also have been motivated by an increasing public appetite for the consumption of the everyday lives of others. The Victorian era, in particular its latter years, has long been termed the 'Age of Biography', and Juliette Atkinson (2010) has shown that much of this fascination centred not upon the famous male figures of Victorian hero-worship that we might imagine, but upon the "hidden or neglected lives" of humble men and women. This largely unexplored trend was fuelled by an voyeuristic desire to uncover marginalised lives, revealing the lived experience of the anti-heroes and working classes that were capturing the public's imagination in contemporary literature. The developing field of archaeology extended this interest into the ancient past. Just like the ongoing excavations of Pompeii, which continued to captivate audiences in the late nineteenth century, the annual exhibitions gave material expression to the concept of biography and offered a tangible means of accessing the daily lives of remote ancestors.

Richard Jenkyns (1980) has described how this captivation with breathing life back into the people of ancient societies transcended nineteenth-century popular culture, inspiring creative media from historical fiction to decorative arts. Artists like the Dutch-born Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema, an acquaintance of Petrie and frequent visitor to his annual exhibitions, celebrated domestic life in antiquity through their works (Moser

2016; Verhoogt 2018). By the mid-1880s Alma-Tadema was established as one of the most successful artists of his day. His incorporation of archaeological objects sourced from museums and exhibitions created intimate and immersive visions of antiquity, with a particular focus on the materiality and emotion of the ancient lived experience. According to Stephanie Moser (2015a, 1273), these intricately detailed and richly textured scenes “...redefined the ancient world in a manner many could understand and relate to, challenging the notion it was solely the preserve of educated elites.” Late-nineteenth century Britain was awash with imagery of antiquity and ancient domestic life, and Petrie’s displays of settlement archaeology added a material layer to these popular and familiar representations.

Settlement archaeology domesticated and familiarised ancient Egypt, drawing upon essentialist values by highlighting the concept of a shared humanity across spatial and temporal boundaries. Within this initial period, the annual exhibitions played upon this essentialism, developing themes to further humanise ancient Egypt, emphasising its relevance and connection to contemporary society. The themes selected for discussion in the following sections – biblical, classical, and industrial narratives – were all relatable topics that appealed to a shared European identity and experience in the nineteenth century (see Wintle 1996, 13). However, their inclusion could also be considered a strategic opportunity to legitimise the growing subject of Egyptian archaeology within well-established and familiar discourses. By materialising the link between Egypt and these existing areas of interest, Petrie and the EEF sought to gain both academic credibility and popular approval.

5.3.1 Biblical narratives

Historian David Gange (2013a, 153) describes the 1880s as “the high tide of the British public’s relationship with biblical Egypt and the moment when Egyptologist’s in Britain were most intensely engrossed in the pages of the Pentateuch.” This rising interest is reflected in this initial period of the EEF’s history. The first excavations saw Naville working at Tell el Maskhuta in 1882, a site that the Fund identified, as it later turned out erroneously, and promoted as Biblical Pithom, one of the cities associated with the

Pharaoh of the Exodus. Similarly, Petrie's first project for the Fund in 1884 explored the settlement of Tanis, a site that had been linked to the Biblical Zoan from previous excavations by Auguste Mariette. Such campaigns, and those that followed during this period at Tahpanbes, Goshen and Tell el Yahudiya, consolidated the Fund's association with sites of religious interest and placed them firmly within the realm of biblical authority, in an attempt to prove its accuracy as written evidence and materialise the historical context of the Old Testament.

The Fund embraced its position as explorer and protector of Biblical and Christian heritage in Egypt, which was regularly extolled in its annual reports and press statements, yet that narrative was conspicuously absent from the exhibition catalogues and published exhibition reviews of this period. When it came to the display of the Fund's finds in exhibitions, ancient Egypt's connection to biblical history remained on the periphery of scholarly discourse. Occasionally, we see an underlying use of the Bible and Christianity as a chronological marker, as a familiar point of reference for the temporal understanding of the objects on display and as a device to emphasise age-value. However, the religious significance of a site and its material culture was very rarely mentioned in published reviews and not at all in the surviving exhibition catalogues of this period. Much like the accompanying excavation reports (see Gange 2013b, 153-156), the annual exhibitions appear to have distanced themselves from any evocative biblical rhetoric or interpretation.

Many historians of the discipline have emphasised the importance of the biblical narrative to the popularisation and successful communication of ancient Egypt and Egyptian archaeology to the public. Jason Thompson (2015, 15), for example, stresses that the "biblical association was of paramount importance to the EEF." Equally, Gange (2013a, 163) argues that "[t]his popular discourse defined late nineteenth-century Egyptology by dictating how its practitioners and popularizers communicated with the expanding audiences that funded them." Given the very public-facing nature of the annual exhibitions and the popularisation of the biblical narrative, this absence may seem paradoxical, as well as surprising given the character of the material on display. As Ledger-Lomas and Gange (2013, 2) have demonstrated, the increased urbanisation in nineteenth-century Britain saw popular and scholarly interest turn to "idealised

models of city life drawn from history, mythology, and religion” in which “the Bible was a vital, perhaps even the principal, source ...”. The ‘discovery’ of such towns and the presentation of settlement archaeology at the exhibitions, could have offered a prime opportunity for metropolitan audiences to explore these ideals in the most physical and tangible of forms.

It could, of course, be that the biblical narrative was so pervasive in the late nineteenth century that it did not need verbalising, that it remained an implied and underlying theme throughout this period. But the stark contrast between the very vocal use of the bible in the EEF’s publicity campaign and the exhibitions suggests that there is something more to it. Perhaps we should begin to challenge assumptions of the overriding dominance of Christianity and the Bible in the EEF’s early history that have been promoted in recent scholarship. Or, at the very least, question whether its use was more strategic and conditional than has been thought, being targeted towards certain public outlets and not others. Naville’s excavations at Pithom stands as a strong case in point. Although Gange (2013a, 193) refers to Pithom as a site that was “easy to adapt for popular consumption” (see also Gange 2013b), it was represented only by a side table in the first exhibition of 1884. This under-representation by the Fund must have been deliberate, and the site received only passing reference in a handful of reviews.

The limited presence of biblical narratives in the exhibition space may have been related to Petrie’s own curatorial agency and authority. While scholars argue that Petrie and the Fund were unified by an “enthusiastic confidence in the social and theological power of archaeology” and “common ambition” (Gange 2013b, 160), archival correspondence suggests that Petrie was less enthusiastic about excavating in the Delta, a region many believe was claimed by the Fund specifically for its Biblical importance. In a letter to Edwards in 1885, in which he bemoans the treatment of British-led excavations by the French authorities in Egypt, Petrie writes “...we ought to have ... free right to excavate where ever we like, (not only in the [illegible] Delta where no one else will go) ... When some other nation has done as much for Egypt, then they may claim the same” (PMA 3/1/PEN/20). The passage appears to indicate that the Delta excavations were imposed upon the Fund, rather than selected, and

that the region was not an entirely attractive prospect for the archaeologist. It could be that Petrie cared less for the biblical significance of ancient Egyptian sites than is currently believed.

When Petrie displayed his finds from Tanis, biblical Zoan, at the Royal Archaeological Institute in 1884, he almost pulled the narrative away from the site's biblical connotations. For example, choosing to refer to the city by its Greek rather than its biblical name. This was an approach that he later followed, favouring Greek and often Arabic names instead, but it stood in opposition to the Fund's supposed mandate, which saw Tell el Maskhuta consistently termed as Pithom. Similarly, when Petrie presented the site to the RAI's committee, he emphasised Roman finds, not biblical history:

The objects that I have the pleasure of placing before the Institute today, are some of the antiquities of the Greek and Roman periods, found in the recent excavations that I carried on during the past season for the Egypt Exploration Fund, at San-el-Hagar (the Roman Tanis) in the Delta of Egypt. They have, by the kind permission of the council of the Institute, been on view in the rooms of the Institute during the past few weeks, along with other less important remains ... (Petrie 1884, 342).

Although Gange (2006, 1089) proposes that the classical bias in the site's coverage was due to the fact that "[b]iblical finds were not, in the end, forthcoming", at no point in this presentation was the site's Christian relevance addressed. The community to which this presentation was given is particularly telling: Petrie's curatorial intent spoke not only to his own academic focus but to the audience he was seeking to attract. While biblical associations may have appealed to a largely popular audience, perhaps the Graeco-Roman drew more scholarly and elite interest.

Such a division is perhaps symptomatic of growing tensions between biblical and classical narratives. It was after all during this period that the social and educational reformer, Matthew Arnold, famously coined the phrase 'Hebraism and Hellenism' to denote the dual points of influence and epistemological frameworks of the late-nineteenth century. In this perspective Hellenism was characterised by rationality and critical, questioning thought free from religious bias, whereas Hebraism required "obedience from the individual that might lead to an unquestioning acceptance of the

status quo” (Stone 1998, 180; see also Gruen 2009). It would appear that, for Petrie, the exhibition space presented an opportunity to frame ancient Egypt in Hellenic discourse, both literally and figuratively.

5.3.2 Classical narratives

The classical narratives of Graeco-Roman Egypt flourished in this initial period of the annual exhibitions. Petrie’s Roman finds from Tanis were followed, and perhaps surpassed in popular appeal, by the Greek finds excavated at the Delta site of Naukratis the next season. For two consecutive years the Royal Archaeological Institute was adorned with items from this ancient commercial and production centre. As the site of a Greek settlement and “the heart of the Greek race in Egypt” (Petrie 1886b, 24; 1886a), the Naukratis displays presented a vision of a culturally diverse Egypt, with a vibrant mix of artistic traditions and religious practices identifiable in the archaeological record. Later, Hawara excavations brought London audiences face-to-face with Egypt’s Roman population in 1888, arguably for the first time through the medium of portraiture. The naturalistic images of the ‘mummy portraits’, displayed alongside their owners’ mummified remains and possessions, fleshed out the identities and lived experience of Egypt’s Graeco-Roman inhabitants with considerable impact (see Challis 2013, 105-114; Picton, Quirke and Roberts 2007).

These exhibits spoke directly to a long-established tradition of displaying classical archaeology in British museums and international exhibitions (Dyson 2006; Nichols 2015). They tapped into enduring systems of representation which had portrayed Greek and Roman culture and art as the pinnacle of ancient and modern taste, design, and beauty (Haskell and Penny 1981). Within this framework, ancient Egypt was often depicted of lesser status and to some extent this bias is shown in the way that visitors gravitated towards certain objects. At the 1888 Hawara exhibition, artefacts considered non-classical were described as “Egyptian antiquities of the ordinary type, very good in themselves, but wanting in the absorbing and immediate interest of the [Graeco-Roman] finds of last winter in the Fayoum” (*The Star* 1888). Even in collections wholly of the dynastic period, such as Petrie’s Amarna displays of 1892, this

comparison to classical art loomed large over visitor opinion, with the naturalistic sculptures of Akhenaten's reign described as "fit to be compared with the best of Greek work" (*The Times* 1892).

Both professional and public audiences saw the value of settlements like Naukratis as lying not just in uncovering ancient Egyptian history but also in extending knowledge of Greek and Roman history. Petrie (1886a, 50) heralded the city as "...perhaps the most valuable site for Greek archaeology of the early historic period that will ever be found." This role of Egyptian archaeology as facilitator of Greek and Roman history set the tone for much of this early period of the Fund's work. And whereas the desire to prove the historical accuracy of the Bible remained conspicuously absent, another text appeared to feature in exhibition discourse: the writings of Herodotus. Petrie and reviewers spoke freely of archaeology's ability to verify and recreate the ancient landscapes and events that featured in the works of authors such as Herodotus, Plato, and Strabo. The 1888 display of Hawara, in particular, elicited great excitement at the prospect. As a reviewer from *The Star* (1888) commented, "everything Mr Petrie has found goes to confirm the description Herodotus gives of the Labyrinth." While another from the Anglo-American periodical, *Littell's Living Age* (1888, 443), noted "we are daily discovering proofs of the truthfulness of the writings of Herodotus."

The annual exhibitions were used to materialise connections between Egypt and Greece, in particular, with ancient Egypt being envisaged as the birthplace of Greek civilisation and the location from which much Hellenic art and style developed. The displays and exhibition catalogues drew material parallels wherever possible; as one reviewer commented:

Tradition and history combine to indicate Egypt as the source of much that was afterwards Hellenised to a higher perfection; and, though of late years a not unnatural reaction has turned aside from Egypt the direction and, therefore, the results of archaeological research, the recent discoveries at Naukratis will necessitate at least reconsideration of the theories now current as to the origin of the types prevalent in many branches of Hellenic art. (*The Academy* 1885, 228)

Cementing these connections was not just important for the positioning and understanding of Egypt as a historical entity, it brought Egypt as a concept into the

fold of the familiar. Ancient Egypt became centralised within the much broader and progressivist narrative of Western civilisation, placing it at the beginning of an unbroken chain of development that stretched from the ancient world to present day Europe. These bonds were also important for the intellectual positioning and affirmation of Egyptian archaeology as a developing field of study. By being aligned with long-standing and popular disciplines such as classical studies, the annual exhibitions could help to validate Egyptian archaeology's status, framing its material products as approachable, consumable, and relatable to an existing, large audience.

When we consider who in British society was engaging with classical subjects at this time, it is perhaps clear to see why it would be centralised as an important exhibition narrative. From the mid-nineteenth century a classical education and ideological focus had become essential in establishing class identity (Bowen 1989). The study of ancient Greek and Roman history, culture, languages, and philosophy was a staple fixture of an elite, private education and a requirement for Oxford and Cambridge university admissions. As "a masculine preserve", and considered by many as the basis of intellectual and moral power, it was a discourse that came to define nineteenth-century Britain's governing classes and positions of authority, shaping the nation's clergy, military, and political powers in particular (Jenkyns 1980, 280; Turner 1981). The narrative spoke directly to a large percentage of the exhibition's target audience (see chapter 7). Not only would it attract those currently engaged in the classics professionally but also economically privileged visitors who identified with classics in their educational and social background. The EEF was aware that classical objects were aligned with the social elite, yet they were equally viewed as an opportunity to enhance the general public's education. When Gilbertson, an EEF committee member, visited Petrie's 1886 Naukratis exhibition he informed Edwards that the artefacts on display were "less Egyptian than the Tanis objects, although in that way there are many things to strike the unlearned ... there is less that the public will recognise as old Egyptian" (EES COR.009.a.40).

It was not until the turn of the century, followed by the outbreak and stark reality of the First World War, that a classical education came to be viewed by many as an overly romantic and outdated irrelevance (Bowen 1989; Jenkyns 1980). Even in this initial

decade of the annual exhibitions, its dominance was under threat from what many considered to be a more useful and modern educational focus: science and industry. The technical colleges and new red-brick universities, mainly in the midlands and north of England, focussed less on training in the humanities in favour of subjects that would favour the demands of an industrial and enterprising nation (Jenkyns 1980, 276-279). A classical education was seen to stand in opposition to the progressive modern world and the creation of forward-thinking and useful citizens. While the annual exhibitions continued to honour traditional classical narratives, organisers were equally keen to reflect this interest in industry through their displays, ensuring that Egyptian archaeology remained current, relevant, and equally appealing to a rapidly increasing audience base.

5.3.3 Industrial narratives

Petrie's work in settlement archaeology brought to the fore the material culture of manufacture and trade, highlighting the detailed mechanisms, organisation, and infrastructure of labouring populations. Collections deriving from such contexts were prominent in the temporary exhibitions and in the corresponding catalogues, building a sequential representation over time that reflected the diversity and varying scales of manufacturing activity in ancient Egyptian society. While the exhibition of material from Lahun (1889) portrayed the prevalent domestic industries of rope-making, weaving, and netting, those of larger settlements at Naukratis (1885) and Tell el Amarna (1892) revealed narratives of large-scale production, providing a glimpse inside ancient 'factories' producing faience, iron tools, and glass objects for local use and export. Petrie's selection and arrangement of objects for display show that his interest lay not in the finished product but in illustrating the manufacturing process didactically through material remains. Where possible, faience amulets were presented alongside their moulds, while the tools and equipment used for items such as bronze and glass were laid out in sequential order. These methods and processes were conveyed to visitors through lengthy descriptions in the exhibition catalogues:

Every stage of the glass working is here represented from the factories. The pots which supported the crucibles in the furnace, with glaze run down their outsides; the broken pan of blue frit for colour; the quartz pebbles, which formed a cobble floor on which objects were toasted on the furnace; and which were afterwards crushed to mix for the blue glaze; the flat dish with a piece of a batch of fine blue frit, roasted to the right colour... In the case are a piece of crucible, broken off the glass when cold; pieces of glass shewing the form of the crucibles, some broken away when cold; samplings taken out with pincers; pieces of clear glass broken up and ready for use; glass reheated and rolled into rod; flattened into strip; drawn into thread and into tube; used for decorating the glass vases; wound round wire to make the glass beads. (EEF 1892b, 9-11)

Petrie's fascination with production extended to the material utility, design, and detailed workings of simple objects, deconstructing their components to analyse how they were made and how they functioned. The questions that he asked of material culture, and that he expected his visitors to ask, were symptomatic of an increasingly industrialised, material-focused, and commercially-minded British society.

It is easy to imagine to what extent Petrie's collections resonated with the late nineteenth-century visitor. As a nation enveloped by industrial progress, having born witness to the rapid rise and growth of British industry and manufacture since 1830, the industrial narrative held particular relevance. By the time of the first annual exhibition, Britain had entered what has since been termed its 'Second Industrial Revolution' of 1880 to 1914 that brought "big capital, high science, and complex technology especially into three industries – iron and steel, metal manufacturing, and chemicals" (Mann 2012, 597-628). The phase brought rapid economic growth, greater social divisions, and a second wave of urbanisation towards British industrial towns. It is surely no coincidence that the newspapers and periodicals that provided the most detail of the exhibition's industrial narratives were those of British industrial towns and cities. Exhibition reviews published in the *Liverpool Mercury* (1885), the *Manchester Times* (1885), the *Leeds Mercury* (1889), and the *Aberdeen Weekly Journal* (1892) all reported on the displays of production methods to their readers in far more detail than newspapers from other regions.

Comparisons had long been made between the industry of ancient Egypt and those of nineteenth century Britain. With industrialisation viewed as the apex of progress and

civilisation, such comparisons became a common thread in popular discourse. Author and journalist William Blanchard Jerrold (1862, 2) had stated that "...the great cotton-mills of Lancashire are but the inevitable development of the looms of Thebes and Corinth ...". Even Petrie (1886a, 47) in his publication *Finding Naukratis* described the ancient site as "the Greek Hong Kong or Birmingham in one: the treaty-port where they had their factories and imitated the work and arts of their early masters the Egyptians." The exhibition catalogues and newspaper reports sought direct parallels between ancient and modern materials and methods, highlighting the similarities of tools and using familiar terminology to strengthen those trans-historical bonds.

British people were also becoming more familiar with the presence of industrial material culture in museum and exhibition narratives. The culmination of the reform of design education in the 1830s and the overwhelming success of the Exhibition of the Industries of all Nations in 1851 led to an increased interest in the display of industrial objects as a means of national education and civic improvement (Jerrold 1862; Snape 2010). While this interest resulted in a proliferation of technical exhibitions and museums (see Lightman 2013), its greatest long-term impact came in the last quarter of the nineteenth century in the shaping of municipal museum collections. These museums, established predominantly in centres of industry for the educational benefit of the working classes, were often closely aligned to local commercial enterprises and acquired collections illustrative of local industry in order to provide content to which local communities could relate (Hill 2005). At the time of the first annual exhibitions of the EEF these regional collecting practices were at their peak, with museums such as Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery opening its Industrial Hall in 1885 and overseeing an "expenditure of approximately £10,000 on objects of industrial art between 1885 and 1889" (Snape 2010, 25-26).

The desire of the EEF and Petrie to incorporate industrial collections, for the annual exhibition and for subsequent distribution, could be considered a response to these wider collecting trends and practices in the museum sector. Parallels can certainly be seen between Petrie's selection of objects and methods of displaying industry and those of contemporary municipal museums, particularly in the way objects were arranged to illustrate manufacturing processes. Thomas Greenwood (1888, 92), a

leading campaigner for public museums, reported that in the Sheffield Public Museum “[t]he various stages in the manufacture of files, cutlery and electro-plated goods are shown” in order to compare “old and new methods”. Similarly, Greenwood (1888, 29) described an exhibition of local products in Manchester in 1887 in which “the various stages of the raw material up to the perfected article were shown, and it may safely be stated that no Exhibition of modern times possessed in this way a wider and more real educational value.” By selecting and arranging industrial collections in this way, Petrie was aligning his displays with an established visual codification of British industry.

As Britain’s industries thrived, the EEF saw a rise in the number of wealthy industrialists wishing to partake in their imperial project. Alice Stevenson (2019, 40-41) shows how in these early years the Fund attracted committee members and subscribers from these emerging professions, securing steadfast connections with industrial towns and centres in the north of England and Scotland, such as Macclesfield, Manchester, and Dundee. Petrie’s own private benefactors, Jesse Haworth and Henry Martyn Kennard, had equally made their living in areas such as Manchester’s cotton industry. Their collective interest reflected a desire to strengthen the bonds between ancient Egypt and British manufacturing towns by securing examples of a shared industrial heritage for municipal collections through distribution. Such acquisitions added to the moral and educational improvement of the local communities that worked within their industries. It is therefore likely that this growing body of interest contributed to shaping the content and narratives of the annual exhibitions, and that Petrie and the EEF may have felt obliged to meet this development in order to continue to secure financial backing.

By constructing and emphasising these industrial narratives Petrie not only responded to national interest but also demonstrated the contemporary relevance of his collections, linking the ancient material world to wider contemporary social and cultural questions. The excavated artefact became a means of materialising and historicising concepts, such as urbanism and industrialisation, that would have translated well in the exhibition space.

5.4 Funerary archaeology

As Petrie's annual exhibitions moved into University College in 1894 they took on a new persona. A wealth of new concessions enabled Petrie to navigate away from the Delta to more publicly familiar territory. With excavations spanning the length of the Nile Valley, he established a strong and forceful presence in what had become a politically charged region of archaeological exploration, the preserve of French and later German excavators. Petrie's exhibitions began to engage with sites that were geographically closer to the popular tourist destinations of Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan; areas that retained a strong mnemonic connection to the heroic grand archaeological narratives of explorers like Belzoni and Henry Salt, so revered in nineteenth-century Britain. This transition into the Nile Valley, with its different climate, archaeological landscape, and preservation, altered the very shape and scope of the annual exhibitions. The domestic settlement narratives that had dominated the practice for its founding decade began to dissipate as excavations turned primarily to cemetery and funerary remains.

In the years leading up to the outbreak of war in 1914 Petrie's exhibitions featured burial grounds such as Naqada, Hierakonpolis, and Abydos in Upper Egypt, and Tarkhan in the Memphite region. The scale of many of these excavations was vast, with Tarkhan producing over 1000 graves in one mile of desert. Petrie reported in the accompanying exhibition catalogue that the work produced "the largest record of accurately dated remains that have ever been measured" (BSAE 1913, 3). During this period, the make-shift shelves and display counters that lined the walls of each exhibition room were filled with funerary equipment, and there was a greater and more noticeable presence of human remains. The direct subject-object relationships deriving from the excavation of these graves and the vast scale of data collated in cemeteries brought new narratives to the exhibition space with content indicative of social class and hierarchies, gender, age, culture, and race.

Robert Chapman (2013, 47) attributes the first social analysis of funerary contexts as an explicit theoretical framework to the advent of Processual Archaeology in the 1960s. While he does indicate that "cemeteries and burial mounds of the dead have supported inferences of shared cultural traditions" since the emergence of

archaeology in the nineteenth century, he believes that it was not until the mid-twentieth century that “there was a greater and more coherent focus on these inferences, examining their theoretical bases and exploring the analytical methods and interdisciplinary collaboration that gave rise to references to a ‘Mortuary Archaeology’”. The analysis of data and the types of narratives that we see emerging from the exhibitions of this pre-1914 era suggest that this perspective may not do justice to earlier archaeological practice. While the primary purpose for these excavations was to ascertain the age of the cemeteries in order to shed light on the history of each site and its chronological position (BSAE 1898, 3), the exhibition catalogues show that social interpretation of cemeteries was a prominent theme within the exhibition space and an important narrative for public consumption. As Petrie wrote to Karl Pearson in 1895:

It is ... a matter of importance to me to be able to pick out particular skeletons which I want to exhibit, to look out those with remarkable points so as to track if there is any peculiarity in the tombs of men and women, old and young, deformed persons, etc. (UCL PEARSON 11/1/16/94).

Social identity was attributed to much of the content of exhibitions of this period, with the arrangement of objects allowing for direct comparison of social constructs. Arranged in groups according to burial context, the Abydos exhibitions of 1900 and 1901 displayed and interpreted the material culture of the First Dynasty rulers alongside the “tombs of the domestics”. The 1913 Tarkhan displays similarly arranged male and female burials side by side, their “bones fixed in position with paraffin wax” (BSAE 1913, 7), for a gendered comparison of material culture and burial practices. The temporal depth of burials at cemetery sites exposed archaeologists and audiences to social change in the most visual and tangible of ways. This representational strategy functioned to create meaning within individual exhibitions, while the consistency of display style and content over this period supported longer-term and cumulative meaning-making as each year sites of different regions and periods contributed to a picture of a changing and evolving Egyptian society. The value here lay in the exhibition’s ability to materialise a concept of social and cultural change that was so familiar to audiences of the day.

The prominence of this strategy may be related to the socio-political context in which these interpretations were made. In the years before 1914 Britain's socio-political landscape underwent a dramatic transformation. The growth of urbanisation and industrialisation created a more rigid and structured class system amid increasing social tension. The nation was becoming increasingly aware of the concept of class, of unequal wealth and opportunities, and of the material manifestations of such divisions. As Jon Lawrence (2011, 247) writes, "[c]lass feeling was written deep into the fabric of pre-1914 British society and culture." The onset of class politics saw the establishment of the Labour Party and the election of the Liberal Government in 1906, followed by a programme of rapid and widespread social reform in areas such as the welfare system. As the population became subject to stringent social classifications, marginalised groups questioned existing hierarchies, and it was during this period, in response to the gendered nature of political authority, that the activities and campaigns of the women's suffrage movement intensified. It was to be a period of considerable social change and reform.

Contemporary social and political thought had begun to permeate archaeological consciousness. In 1907, in response to the election of a Liberal government, Petrie turned his hand to writing a critical and candid social commentary as "a consideration of the trend of social changes" (Petrie 1931, 211). The publication, *Janus in Modern Life* (1907), addressed Petrie's concerns over matters of Edwardian class, race, and immigration for a primarily Conservative audience, highlighting the importance of looking to the past in order to improve the future. As Debbie Challis (2013, 187-189, 197-200) has shown, *Janus* was a not-so-subtle "eugenic manifesto" that called for the purification of the superior race through policies including tighter immigration control and even the sterilisation of those considered 'unfit' from the lower classes. Although the publication received limited attention in the media, it was accompanied by a national lecture tour on the subject, and Petrie acquired attention and ideological support from anti-socialist groups (Challis 2013, 198-199). In 1911 there followed another publication, *The Revolutions of Civilisation*, which further addressed the subject of race but this time through the rhetoric of progress, civilisation, and artistic achievement (Challis 2013, 200-204).

In order to interpret the wealth of social data being excavated, Petrie and the annual exhibitions of this period appear to have turned increasingly to anthropology for a wider, comparative frame of reference in relation to the broader study of humankind. The field of anthropology could help formulate and process ideas around social differentiation and complexity, political organisation, and racial hierarchies. Although Timothy Champion (2003) has argued that the study of ancient Egypt and anthropology had little interaction during this period, scholars have questioned this assertion (see Adams 1997; Stevenson 2015b). Alice Stevenson (2015b, 26) has shown, through the University of Oxford as a case study, that even though Egyptology was beginning to shape its own disciplinary identity by the end of the nineteenth century, in the early twentieth century there remained “concerted efforts to incorporate Egyptology within the wider remit of anthropological study.” As the 1930s approached and disciplinary boundaries became more formalised, the study of ancient Egypt began to become isolated, but up until this point Egypt had sat comfortably within both archaeological and anthropological discourse, particularly in relation to general evolutionary schemes and shared epistemology of artefacts (Adams 1997; Stevenson 2015b; see Gosden 1999 for broader discussion of archaeology and anthropology). This fluidity is apparent within the annual exhibitions. At the time, Petrie and his colleagues were feverishly engaging with anthropological societies and publications, sharing data, and exchanging ideas, in 1895 Petrie was even appointed the President of the Anthropology section of the BAAS (Challis 2013, 179). The impact of this interconnectivity is evident in the direction of exhibition narratives.

In this heightened socio-political context, Petrie looked to use the annual exhibitions of this period to reflect upon his practical and theoretical work, stressing the importance of civilisation, progress, and racial superiority. These politically-charged narratives were meant to help affirm Britain’s dominance and identity on an imperial stage, as was suitable for exhibitions in London at the height of its imperialism. The themes that have been selected for discussion in the following sections – early Egypt, the subject of race, and modern Egypt – were topics that fed into this rhetoric but were equally intended to demonstrate Egyptian archaeology’s relevance to current

discourse. In this way Petrie sought to prove that as concepts ancient and modern Egypt could actively contribute to timely political debates, as well as to broader anthropological and scientific endeavours in the study of humankind.

5.4.1 Exhibiting early Egypt

From 1894, the excavation of mortuary remains at Predynastic and Early Dynastic sites such as Koptos, Naqada, Hierakonpolis, and Abydos, drew archaeological attention to the rise of Egyptian civilisation. At a time when scholarly knowledge could only account as far back on Petrie's chronology as 4000 BCE and the 4th Dynasty (Petrie 1899, 202; now dated to the mid-third millennium), the discovery of these far earlier remains, predating current knowledge by at least a thousand years, altered public and professional understandings of ancient Egypt considerably. The display of flints, arrowheads, and pottery at the annual exhibitions from those little-known periods of Egyptian history brought visitors into contact with a new and unfamiliar vision of ancient Egypt.

The displays captured Egypt at stages from prehistory, through the emergence of complex societies, to state formation, undergoing major economic and socio-political transformations to form a complex society with centralised government and institutionalised political authority in the pharaonic state (see Bard 2017). With socio-economic and political reform high on the national agenda at the beginning of the twentieth century, it is understandable that the material culture of early Egypt formed such a significant focus of the exhibitions during this period. The representation of this evolving social structure offered something that paralleled the social changes that needed explaining in the present. At the same time, this narrative also tapped into the wider national rhetoric of linear progress. With ancient Egypt credited as the cradle of modern civilisation, this developing narrative gave Western civilisation a far greater temporal depth and served to legitimise British and European authority as leading global and imperial powers. The discovery of this new wealth of social data allowed archaeologists to position ancient Egypt far more securely into this progressivist agenda.

We had at last before us evidence of the close of the period previously considered pre-historic, showing the development of the art, writing, and civilisation of Egypt and the composition of a race which had since maintained its character during 6,000 years... Egypt was then an originator in the arts and not a borrower, but ever since then most of the nations of the earth had been borrowers and not originators. Here we were studying the history of a country, not borrowing but developing a vast and complex civilisation from its own resources. (Petrie 1899, 203)

It was to be the Predynastic and Early Dynastic site of Abydos that dominated the exhibition narratives of this period. Excavated and displayed over five seasons (1899-1900, 1900-1, 1901-2, 1902-3, and 1921-2), the complex site fostered a progressivist narrative that unfolded in the exhibition space year after year. The rarity of finds at Abydos enabled Petrie to claim greater certainty and detail for ancient Egyptian chronology than before. He stated in the 1902 exhibition catalogue, “the most important result, scientifically, has been the accurate connection of the prehistoric and historic periods” (EEF and ERA 1902, 3). In displaying these results, the annual exhibitions asserted a position at the forefront of scientific endeavour, filling significant gaps in current knowledge and offering a vital first look at new material Egypt. The immediacy of these representations and the claim of new discoveries appear to have attracted visitors. Writing for *The Globe* in 1901, Assyriologist William St. Chad Boscawen (see Horry 2015), places these academic “victories” into context:

The exhibition now open at University College... may be said to surpass those of former years. We are, however, getting so used to these Petrie surprises that they do not alarm us now. The man who has stretched the historic age of Egypt back to the days of the great Menes himself, and beyond that has invaded the vast realm of the prehistoric, must always be gaining fresh victories. (*The Globe* 1901, 3)

The timing of Petrie’s discoveries was apt. Matthew Goodrum (2012) has noted how the period between 1860 and 1890 was critical for the establishment of a common concept of human prehistory across the natural and life sciences in Britain. Although it had been investigated previously, a growing mass of data collated and shared between the newly emerging disciplines of archaeology, geology, palaeontology, and ethnology meant that by the 1890s scientists had been able to assemble a far more coherent picture of early human life. This research, led by notable scientists such as Manchester’s William Boyd Dawkins and Edinburgh’s James Geikie, had vastly

extended the chronology of human existence and “marked a profound change in the way the human past was viewed and investigated” not only within scientific communities but in shaping public perceptions (Goodrum 2012, 121).

The wealth of data from early Egyptian burials excavated in this period meant that Petrie could contribute directly to these very contemporary discussions by situating Egypt more firmly within this developing chronology, while also demonstrating Egyptian archaeology’s timeliness and relevance in relation to the wider natural and life sciences. Here the exhibitions demonstrate how archaeology’s protean nature still prevailed, as catalogues were interspersed with geological and anthropological inspiration. Faced with reconstructing a non-literate society, Petrie turned to anthropology and his anthropological peers to interpret, discuss, and contextualise his findings, presenting his work on early Egypt to societies such as the Royal Anthropological Institute (see Petrie 1899). The influence of this interaction can perhaps be seen in the formation of Petrie’s ideas, as he attributes the shift in material culture traditions and burial practices in early Egypt to the migration and movement of different races. In the EEF annual report of 1900 Petrie outlined this theory in progressive developmental stages, in which he claimed the “oldest race of man to have been of the Hottentot type” which was then superseded by Caucasian and then Semitic races which led to a “rapidly increasing civilisation” (Petrie 1900, 22-23).

The result of these cross-disciplinary interpretations can be seen in Petrie’s choice of language. While Early Dynastic material was praised for its craftsmanship and design, the language often used in the exhibition catalogues to describe prehistoric and Predynastic objects, and therefore styles of thought, was heavily indebted to anthropological discourse. Terms such as primitive, barbarian, and crude - words typically used at the time to refer to ethnographic, non-western artefacts - were seamlessly woven into the exhibition narrative for audiences to consume. In what reads like a contemporary ethnographic account, the 1903 exhibition framed the material from Abydos in this discursive tradition:

The limestone figures are very elementary, and with them was a flint, evidently selected for its resemblance to such a figure; at the sides are two other natural flints of large size, also selected for their resemblance to such animals. These

appear to be primitive fetish stones, dating from an age when sculpture had scarcely dawned, and the natural stone was selected on the desert and brought into the temple as a venerated object. These suggest the very rude style of limestone figures is from improving natural forms rather than modelling from the animal. (EEF and ERA 1903, 12)

Petrie's use of the term "fetish stones" in this passage is revealing. Now strongly contested, it was once fashionable in late nineteenth-century anthropology to describe objects of unexplained supernatural and spiritual properties, notably from West Africa (Pool 1990; Graeber 2005). Its presence in the catalogue triggers a direct comparison between prehistoric Egyptian artefacts and the material culture of contemporary African 'tribal' communities, as well as concepts of Otherness. What was the intention behind this use of language and what would it have meant to exhibition audiences?

In *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, Sally Price (2001) analyses the everyday understandings of the term 'primitive' in Western thought, showing that historically it has been used to reinforce a dichotomy between Western civilisation and the 'uncivilised' communities of the non-Western world. The term was used for societies perceived as culturally inferior and thought to have limited technological and social development, while also carrying strong pagan and ritualistic associations such as fertility rites, cannibalism, and spirit possession. Objects defined by the West as 'primitive' were "regularly analysed in the comparative context of drawings by apes, children, and the insane" and thought to be "produced more spontaneously and less reflectively – with less artistic intentionality – than works of Western authorship" (Price 2001, 2, 89).

By depicting Predynastic Egypt as primitive and equating its material culture with that of contemporary 'tribal' or 'savage' communities, Petrie was making a strong evolutionary and progressivist statement. Not only did the analogy make it far easier for exhibition audiences to imagine the life and lived experience of prehistoric Egyptians, albeit through a Western imperial lens, but the idea that ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman high art and civilisation had grown from the seed of such a primitive society also acted as an ultimate point of comparison for the concept of European progress. By blurring the distinction between past and present, Petrie's

interpretation reminded audiences in the metropole of their claimed superior position over contemporary non-Western societies whose material culture was presented as prehistoric through association.

This narrative, along with Petrie's interpretations and choice of language, may have responded to the growing interest in so-called 'primitive art' which, Oscar Abadía (2015) has shown, was beginning to penetrate archaeological thought. At the turn of the century, artists across Western Europe turned to non-Western objects from small-scale societies, particularly in Africa and Oceania. As expanding colonial infrastructure saw an influx of such objects enter Europe, *avant-garde* artists discovered an appreciation for their aesthetic qualities and they became a source of inspiration for the developing movement of modernist primitivism. A long-standing art-historical narrative suggested that primitive art was 'discovered' and popularised from around 1910 onwards by modernist artists such as Picasso (Clifford 1988; Vogel 1988, 14-15; Sturge 2007, 151). However, recent research shows that an awareness and appreciation of 'primitivism' had begun to influence European artistic tradition and inform popular tastes from no later than the 1890s (Corbey and Van Damme 2015), and thus within Petrie's temporal range. This earlier appropriation and popularisation of the term primitive would have raised the profile of artefacts deemed to sit outside the traditional canon of classical Western art, making Petrie's analogy familiar and relatable to exhibition audiences.

The legacy of such interpretations is clear. The catalogue from the Burlington Fine Arts Club's temporary exhibition on ancient Egyptian art in 1922, shows that at that date the word 'primitive' was still synonymous with Predynastic Egypt and the concept of primitivism remained a popular subject of debate:

The tendency of to-day towards the primitive, whether in the absolute or relative sense, is, like every popular phase, capable of dangerous exaggeration... The truly primitive in Egyptian art holds but a small place in the present exhibition, and in its presentments and methods seems so remote from the later and accepted styles that some authorities even suggest an independent origin. But whether the two are connected by the processes of evolution or not, they have at least the bond of the country. (Burlington Fine Arts Club 1922, xvii)

This passage gives some indication of how all-consuming the primitive narrative had become in the archaeology of early Egypt. And it continued apace in the annual exhibitions, as the BSAE's discovery of Badarian culture in 1924 ensured that Predynastic Egypt remained at the forefront of archaeological narratives.

5.4.2 Exhibiting race

As indicated above, storytelling of early Egypt was heavily entangled in notions of progressive civilisation and racial ideology. Ideas about race in particular became a common feature of the annual exhibitions, echoing scientific communities across Britain, continental Europe, and America which saw a rise in racial theory and eugenics in the early twentieth century (Sheppard 2010, 25). Within this intellectual framework, ancient Egypt provided extensive data in both pictorial and skeletal remains through which ideas of racial superiority and hierarchies could be projected back to the rise of Western civilisation. As Kathleen Sheppard (2010, 29) has shown, Petrie's work was valued for its ability to "lend the authority of historical evidence to the eugenics movement" and to make eugenic claims "more authoritative by combining quantitative data with historical trends in civilisation and heredity." Furthermore, this discourse was entering the public domain through publications such as University College anthropologist Grafton Elliot Smith's *The Ancient Egyptians and Their Influence upon the Civilisation of Europe* (1911). Although Smith's hyper-diffusionist views about the migration of ancient races was strongly rejected by his academic peers, including Petrie, the work was "very widely publicized in popular media" and received well by the public (Champion 2003, 183). In the context of such controversies, the exhibitions of this period became a central space to critically explore theories with both scholarly and popular audiences.

By this point, Petrie had built a reputation for presenting the questions and theories of race through archaeological practice. In 1886, before he was appointed at University College London he had been commissioned by eugenicist Francis Galton and the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) to travel to Egypt and document the different racial types depicted on ancient monuments through

photography and plaster casts. In the following year Petrie published the images in *Racial Photographs of the Egyptian Monuments* which was available upon request to a select audience of academic peers (see also Poole 1887). Although Sheppard (2010, 19) has proposed that this work, at least in published format, was “not readily available to the general public”, his research received a much wider audience through the circulation and exhibition of the accompanying plaster casts. While Petrie mobilised the plaster casts for presentation at conferences and society meetings, letters he wrote Galton reveal that they were also exhibited to the public at South Kensington Museum:

The Palestine Exploration Fund have agreed to exhibit all the casts at South Kensington on their basis, before I send them in to British Museum., where but few will see the light I expect. Thus they will be available for general inspection I hope during October and November. (Galton 3/3/16/20 f.36-342)

The 1887 exhibition, which Petrie hoped would be extended into the New Year (Galton 3/3/16/20 f.46-49), positioned Petrie’s research firmly within the parameters of eugenic scholarship. In the following years he continued to engage with the subject, contributing to anthropological conferences and giving lectures to public and academic audiences (for example Petrie 1906a; 1906b). Petrie’s work with the BAAS had a profound and lasting legacy on his career and reputation as an archaeologist, as is evidenced by letters in the BAAS archives which reveal that requests for the racial photographs featured in Petrie’s publication were being received as late as 1945 (Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Dep. B.A.A.S 335). These associations would have been known to those in the relevant circles and would have undoubtedly shaped the expectations and make-up of annual exhibition audiences.

The displays gave Petrie a platform to explore these narratives in greater detail, but while they entered the exhibition spaces from an early stage, they did not intensify until the turn of the century. As Petrie moved his work into University College the annual exhibitions began to reflect his expanding collegiate networks. His closer working relationship with the eugenics pioneers, Francis Galton and Karl Pearson, at the Anthropometric Laboratory, had a particularly significant impact on the generation and prioritising of narratives. Their work fostered a mutually supportive partnership in which Petrie supplied his colleagues with ancient human data for statistical analysis

and they fuelled Petrie's ideas of racial types and the future improvement of the human race (Sheppard 2010). Petrie's arrival also coincided with a peak in eugenics interest in the mid-to-late 1890s, as the field gathered "wider intellectual and popular attention" in Britain in response to national anxiety over social class and the perceived threat to racial purity and hierarchies (Challis 2013, 190-194). Within this framework ancient Egypt provided a significant case study.

The excavation of large numbers of graves during this period brought an increased presence of human remains to the exhibition space, and visitors came face-to-face with the subject of racial studies. The display of human remains facilitated these dialogues, with direct encounters stimulating discussion of race in ancient Egypt. This was something Petrie was keen to encourage with exhibition audiences, and a topic that visitors seemed equally eager to engage with; perhaps a testament of the subject's public prominence and acceptance at the time. One journalist from the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* (1921) recounted a conversation between Petrie and a fellow visitor:

He was standing by the body of a girl who died about 6000 B.C. She was a prehistoric Egyptian. Her body was found in the sand, in its attitude of cramped and uneasy sleep, and much of the flesh is still on those ancient bones.

The expert was asked about the Egyptian race – was it a mixture of Negroid and Semitic (or Jewish) types? "That is so; if we are speaking of the foundation race of Egypt," he said. "But it must be remembered that it is difficult to define the Egyptian race as it is to define the British race. Waves of conquerors came upon Egypt from south and west and south-east, each wave bringing with it new racial elements which affected the old stock to some extent. This head now" – pointing to the girl's body – "shows very little trace if any, of the negro strain. It might well be a pure Semitic skull."

Petrie's focus on the young woman's skull in this passage is telling. The craniological enthusiasm that emerged in many disciplines from the late nineteenth century, coupled with the intensification of Petrie's work on cemetery sites, saw the systematic collection and transportation of ancient Egyptian human skulls into Britain for craniometric studies and the classification and comparison of races. Human skulls from Egypt arrived in large quantities. In a letter to Pearson from the field in 1895, Petrie wrote:

I estimate that we shall fill 40 to 50 cases, each 5 x 1 ½ x 1 ft in size. There will be among these about 300 skulls, and the rest bones. I have kept all bones that are in good state, and some if possible from every tomb – even if only one fragment to indicate the age (Pearson 11/1/16/94).

By 1900 Petrie's fellow archaeologist and team member, David Randall-McIver (1900, 95), stated that their excavations had amassed 1,400 ancient Egyptian skulls, a vast quantity in comparison to the Royal College of Surgeons' thirty specimens. The durable, robust, and transportable properties of skulls, in comparison to complete skeletons, saw specimens from all over the world enter Western museum collections to enable the construction of representations of race (Dias 1998; Alberti 2011b; Challis 2013; Larson 2014, 174-201; Redman 2016), and the annual exhibitions were no exception.

While the displays featured intact skeletons, it was the display of depersonalised human skulls which took priority in the limited space of the annual exhibitions. Skulls were dispersed among other objects to illustrate the racial profile of individuals depicted in scenes and statues, or they were arranged in neat, linear rows for heightened impact and ease of comparison. As Sturge (2007, 137) has argued, in this context the skulls' presence was transformed into an "indisputable fact" in which they were "not simply 'seen' in some unmediated or natural way, but were offered to a particular form of gaze that made them into... facts that proved biological difference." Here, Petrie was using a shared visual language of displaying race and difference, that was familiar across museum collections in anthropology, natural history, and anatomy (Dias 1998). Nelia Dias (1998, 38) notes that the comparative mass displays "provided a means of making difference visible to the public and inscribing it into the memory of visitors." Such displays also carried heavy historical connotations of head-hunting and trophy-taking (see Larson 2014), and in the context of the metropole they may have offered a powerful physical reminder of imperial Britain's scientific, political, and racial superiority.

This narrative thread extended beyond the display of human remains and even beyond Egypt's ancient population. Petrie's exhibition of material from Sinai at University College in 1905 included a group of photographs of Egypt's modern inhabitants. The catalogue reads: "[i]n the bookcases are portraits of Bedawin and

Sudanis by Mr C. T. Currelly, showing the various types now met with in Sinai” (EEF and ERA 1905, 18). These images appear now to be lost, and so one cannot know how far the style of photography reflected current anthropological thinking. However, the use of the term “type”, which would have evoked anthropometric and biometric ideologies is suggestive of their purpose as well as their content and composition. Type photographs, which were used extensively from the 1880s and traditionally captured front-facing and profile views of an individual, were seen as a scientific means of documenting and classifying race, as well as often criminal traits. Such codified images, “taken within anthropological frames of intellectual reference” (Peers and Brown 2009, 278), would have been understood within this institutional context; they were also used increasingly in archaeology circles. As Christina Riggs (2018, 135) has shown, by the 1920s type photographs were influencing the photographic documentation of archaeological finds such as the human remains of Tutankhamun.

In a context in which the term ‘type’ was used interchangeably for both objects and humans, the exhibitions had the effect of promoting an objectification of contemporary Egypt’s population, reducing them to objects of study and critical interrogation. The inclusion of these photographs demonstrated the “overlapping interest in ancient and modern race and heredity” prevalent at the time (Challis 2013, 176), bringing the discussion firmly into the colonial present.

5.4.3 Exhibiting modern Egypt

When visitors to Petrie’s joint EEF and ERA exhibition in 1899 opened their exhibition catalogues, they encountered the following statement on the first page:

This past winter has been unusually destructive to the cemeteries of Egypt; in every direction native plunderers have been wiping out the history of the country by looting the more valuable objects and selling them to the tourist. And for every single object so handed up, dozens of tombs have been wrecked, and the whole of their other contents destroyed. So perishes the history of some thousand years, while transient politicians disagree. (EEF and ERA 1899, 5)

This was the first mention of Egypt's modern population in the exhibition catalogues and marked a new politicised narrative thread for the turn of the century. As the catalogues slowly progressed from an inventory list of objects, Petrie began to utilise the introductory pages as a mouthpiece for his political concerns about Egypt, many of which centred upon his attitudes towards, and racist characterisations of, modern Egyptians. These comments expressed widespread fears among Western archaeologists over what they perceived as an increased level of destruction on Egyptian archaeological sites, exposing what Stephen Quirke (2007, 51) has referred to as "the easy culture of blame between 'European' and 'Arab'...". This narrative was circulated and reinforced by the British media at the time. *The Times* (1899) published the quote in full as part of their exhibition review that year, commenting that "[f]or the perpetrators and those in authority who have permitted such wholesale vandalism the Professor must have been tempted to wish a like fate..."

Modern Egyptians were framed in the Orientalist tradition of Self versus Other, represented in exhibition catalogues as looters, plunderers, and thieves, and portrayed as a nation incapable of looking after their own country's history or recognising its value. Exhibition spaces began to depict the scale of destruction by displaying plans detailing the number of tombs which had been plundered or "pulled about by the Bedawin who hoped to find gold" (EEF and ERA 1905, 8). This presentation was the antithesis of the national self-image of Victorian Britain as the civilised protectors and saviours of a shared global heritage. This narrative intentionally distanced modern Egypt's inhabitants intellectually and emotionally from their ancient ancestry, and it served to justify a British presence and increased involvement in the country as a veiled protectorate. To frame Egypt's archaeology as something that needed immediate safeguarding legitimised the EEF's objectives in the minds of exhibition visitors, validating the right to excavate and to take objects out of Egypt for safe-keeping.

Petrie projected similar characterisations on to his team of Egyptian excavators. Well-rehearsed Orientalist tropes representing Egyptians as slow, lazy, greedy, and untrustworthy were perpetuated in the exhibition catalogues, which frequently suggested that the only way to combat such characteristics was to apply constant

surveillance and leadership by trained Western male supervisors (see also Quirke 2007; Doyon 2015):

To maintain such a hold on workmen that they will leave gold unexamined, and fetch their masters to remove it, is the necessary tone of good excavating, which can only be kept up by giving a fair return to the men for all that they find... Here again we could not expect a workman finding many pounds' worth of gold in a deep hole out of sight, to hand it up if he did not know that he would receive its value in return. (EEF and ERA 1904, 19)

These attitudes served to bolster Petrie's and the Fund's positions as leading authorities or "masters" in the field, maintaining and reinforcing colonial hierarchies that viewed Egyptian workers solely as subaltern, instruments of excavation. This strategic and politically-weighted narrative was applied with dehumanising effect. This portrayal of prevailing British authority over Egyptian workers also functioned as a source of national pride in intra-European rivalries. When Petrie excavated at Abydos in 1900, some years after Amélineau, he asserted that the latter's poor management had let "the ignorance, the thefts, and the carelessness of his [Egyptian] workmen" interfere with the success of his results, so that the British had returned to the site to improve upon their results (EEF and ERA 1900, 3).

This negative image of modern Egypt, and the colonial imperative, had been a theme of Petrie's excavation reports from as early as 1885 (see Petrie 1885, 1). By incorporating it into the exhibition catalogues, over a decade later, he shifted the narrative from the restricted and academic readership of excavation reports to a more open and public forum. This shift roughly coincided with the writing of Petrie's manual, *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* (1904), which dedicated a chapter to the selection and management of Egyptian labourers, the dehumanising content of which parallels that in the exhibition catalogues. The timing of these subjective narratives and shift into the public sphere may suggest an increased popular demand for more personal and candid accounts of life on excavation, but they may have been seen as desirable for archaeology's self-image. This colonial rhetoric and assertion of control and subjugation of modern Egypt did not only justify British archaeology's presence in Egypt: it was a crucial part of the process of artefaction by claiming the superiority of Western science (see Colla 2007). Archaeology on the colonial frontier had

constructed its objects of analysis in relation to Otherness and it was a concept which needed to be maintained and reproduced in a public forum.

There was, however, another device used to construct knowledge of modern Egypt within the exhibition space. The catalogues of the period fostered a comparative framework which directly compared the ancient artefacts on display to modern Egyptian traditions, cultural practices, fashions, and material culture:

Four shell pendants for the forehead; one oval, one imitation of basket work, and two female figures. The two former have a hook on the inner side, apparently to hold up a face veil; if so, they are the origin of the gilt forehead ornament of modern Egyptian women. (EEF and ERA 1899, p.9)

Some of the excavated artefacts began to be viewed through an ethnographic lens, blurring the boundaries between ancient and modern, archaeology and anthropology. This desire to demonstrate continuity with the past is something which Petrie approached in a series of articles entitled *Egypt in Africa* (1914). The concept of “survivals” from ancient times later gathered wider academic interest in both Egyptology and anthropology, reaching its height in the 1920s and 1930s (Wainwright 1919; Blackman 1926; 1927; see Stevenson 2013). This emphasis on similarities and a continuity in material culture tradition over time constructed an image of a timeless Egypt for exhibition audiences, an unchanging society, without progress, and a factitive temporal remoteness (see Fabian 1983). It was an image which further fuelled the opposing binary of self vs other that aided the subjugation of a colonised Egypt. Whereas Britain, within the Western world, was framed as civilised, urban, dynamic, and progressive, Egypt was portrayed as uncivilised, rural, backward, and static (see Sturge 2007, 151).

Analyses of systems of representing non-western cultures in western museum and exhibition spaces have demonstrated that the practice of exhibiting ‘other’ cultures is a powerful, political activity and never neutral (Karp and Lavine 1991; Coombes 1994; Lidchi 1997; Hallam and Street 2000; Simpson 2001; Sturge 2007, 129-165; Onciul 2015; Horwood 2018). Particularly in the heightened colonial context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, exhibitions did not reflect the true or ‘real’ nature of the cultures they intended to display but the power relationship between

the subject of the representation and those who created it, in a process Henrietta Lidchi (1997, 1919) has described as the “display of a power asymmetry”.

However, many of the long-standing arguments in this area focus on the concept and act of visibility. Timothy Mitchell (1988, 2), for example, emphasises how “rendering things up to be viewed”, making the world ordered and observable, was key to colonising reality. Henrietta Lidchi (1997, 198) states that “[t]he politics of exhibiting means museums make certain cultures visible, in other words they allow them to be subjected to the scrutiny of power”, while Dias (1998, 49) argues that “...the process of constituting racial difference is associated with the ways in which it is visualised.” In the annual exhibitions, modern Egyptians were rarely represented within the exhibition space nor were their voices incorporated into the exhibition dialogue, but they remained a distant presence and as such were vital to the construction of imperial ideologies. In this case, enforced invisibility was itself a powerful production and legitimisation of difference. This presence of absence, or “museal silence” (see Mason and Sayner 2019), in the exhibition space was surely revealing to audiences and perhaps more crucial to the construction of knowledge.

* * * * *

Petrie’s exhibitions and the changing shape of their content show how the annual exhibitions offered multiple, overlapping representations of Egypt to public and professional audiences. Each year Egypt was re-imagined through newly excavated material, with the collections shaped and manipulated by curatorial and political agency to convey particular messages. The earliest displays at the Royal Archaeological Institute played upon ancient Egypt’s role as a precursor and marker of European civilisation, emphasising its connection to the classical cultures of Greece and Rome and highlighting its identity as an industrial landscape. By reinforcing these images the annual exhibitions humanised and domesticated the ancient civilisation, drawing it into contemporary and popular frames of reference to which audiences could relate. Petrie’s later displays at University College framed Egypt as an imperial vehicle, in a manner entirely fitting to the context of London at the height of its imperial power. The excavations of early Egypt extended the temporal reach of Western civilisation and the superiority of the Caucasian race. At the same time, the introduction of a

vision of a modern Egypt incapable of looking after its own heritage formed a strategic narrative that was as much about constructing the cultural 'Self' as it was about the cultural 'Other'.

In order to create this diversity of representation, Petrie utilised the very temporary and transitional status of his exhibitions. Their positioning outside of the intellectual and institutional confines of the museum strengthened his curatorial authority and empowered him with the freedom and flexibility to experiment and explore alternative visions of Egypt. This status also allowed him to respond to the fast-paced changes of archaeology as a developing discipline, as well as to engage with its contextual surroundings. These displays were products of their environment and thoroughly entangled in their socio-political context, as is clear from the narratives that were brought to the fore and from the curtailment or exclusion of other voices and ideologies. Here, the polyvalent character of archaeological objects and their ability to carry multiple meanings becomes apparent. At the annual exhibitions ancient Egyptian objects were used as communicative devices through which contemporary narratives could be told and the modern as well as the ancient world could be addressed.

6. Display and devices

In 1887 Gaston Maspero, director of the French-led Egyptian Antiquities Service, approached Amelia Edwards to translate his latest work, *Egyptian Archaeology*, for an Anglophone audience. The book offered an insight into the future of archaeological practice in Egypt and Edwards embraced the opportunity to write a translator's preface to critically address the current approach of public museums towards material knowledge and to question their usefulness in presenting and interpreting archaeological objects to the public:

As regards the practical side of Archaeology, it ought to be unnecessary to point out that its usefulness is strictly parallel with the usefulness of public museums. To collect and exhibit objects of ancient art and industry is worse than idle if we do not also endeavour to disseminate some knowledge of the history of those arts and industries, and of the processes employed by the artists and craftsmen of the past.

Edwards' solution to this rather somewhat one-dimensional approach was to encourage a new way of seeing, introducing a disciplinary vision to displays and to archaeological audiences:

Archaeology, no less than love, 'adds a precious seeing to the eye'; and without that gain of mental sight, the treasures of our public collections are regarded by the general visitor as mere 'curiosities' – flat and stable for the most part, and wholly unprofitable. (Edwards in Maspero 1887, v)

The shift in vision enjoined in this passage is symptomatic of the emerging practice of a scientific archaeology. As Alice Stevenson (2014a) has observed, the founding of the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1882 and the start of systematic and scientific excavations in Egypt saw the construction of a very different type of ancient Egyptian object: the "excavated artefact". No longer viewed as a wondrous curiosity and valued for its material and aesthetic properties alone, the excavated artefact was to be an informative piece of historical evidence with informational status, irreversibly linked to a network of sites, individuals and institutions, supported and authenticated by a

wealth of documentation. Stevenson (2014a, 97) has shown how, in its redefinition, the excavated artefact could be implanted into “wider taxonomic schemes that pervaded intellectual thought and practice in the late Victorian era”, thereby validating the Egyptian antiquity as an object of scientific enquiry and archaeology as a burgeoning science. The changes in “mental sight”, to which Edwards referred, captured archaeology’s attempts to more rigidly define its working object as well as its visual disciplinary culture and observational practices. The introduction of maps, plans, diagrams, photography, and object markings, items that, like the excavated artefact, were designed to be ‘read’ by specialist practitioners, became an extension of the object’s identity and materiality.

This process of ‘artefaction’ had wider socio-political implications. Elliot Colla (2007, 175) argues that “the transformation of ‘things-found-in-Egypt’ into artefacts and the scientific methods that attended this transformation were essential for European attitudes about their own identity as Europeans in the metropole.” Artefact discourse was also a statement of ownership, granting authority and privileged access to knowledge and confirming Britain’s influence as a leading scientific nation (Colla 2007, 24-66). The power to identify and reclassify such objects as the instruments of Western science instantiated dominance and control over Egypt as the constructed ‘other’.

Both Colla (2007) and Stevenson (2014a; Stevenson, Libonati, and Williams 2016) have shown how a number of procedures, across multiple sites, contributed to this process of transformation or artefaction. In this chapter I examine the role of the annual exhibitions in this process, helping to construct and communicate the excavated artefact for public and professional audiences and bringing to life archaeology’s new “mental sight”. As previously established the annual exhibitions had the freedom to experiment with archaeological ways of seeing and displaying that were often beyond the reach of museum practice, a process that was aided by the transitory presence of the objects on display.

The displays therefore marked an important stage in an object’s transition, but how was this process enacted? Drawing upon case studies from across the history of the exhibitions, this chapter examines how methods of display and interpretive

technologies were used individually and collectively to turn these finds into working, disciplinary objects, to introduce a new visual culture of archaeology, and encourage visitors to become disciplined observers. I argue that in doing so the exhibitions implemented a unique interpretive strategy of bringing the fieldsite to audiences in the metropole. By examining space and design, object selection and arrangement, labelling and catalogues, public talks, and the display of plans, photographs, film, and three-dimensional models, I show how these exhibitions constructed the archaeological site for audiences to consume. In presenting the exhibitions almost as an extension of the fieldsite, with archaeologists continuing to work on the collection under the gaze of the visitor, the displays became active spaces for the on-going interpretation of finds, fostering a particular type of engagement and way of seeing, while also forming a space for disciplinary fashioning.

6.1 Creating the working object and the disciplined eye

Amelia Edwards' reference to "mental sight" in the future of archaeology hints at an increased awareness of visibility and visual perception prevalent in nineteenth-century Britain. Archaeology and the annual exhibitions were developing in the context of new Victorian ways of seeing. In *Techniques of the Observer* Jonathan Crary (1990, 8) remarks on a shift in vision established at the "points of intersection where philosophical, scientific, and aesthetic discourses overlap with mechanical techniques, institutional requirements, and socioeconomic forces." Advances in illumination and the introduction of innovative image-making technologies, such as powerful microscopes and photography, infiltrated much of life and were ultimately responsible for a new scopic period, transforming the way in which people viewed and experienced the world around them. Crary (1990, 7) notes how this influx of visual technologies and displays, coupled with changes in social and cultural habits and the reorganisation of knowledge, prompted reflection on how "vision was discussed, controlled, and incarnated in cultural and scientific practices." In what has been described as a "sight-dominated culture" (Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 112), in which sight "appears to have been valued far more highly as an avenue to knowledge than in later periods" (MacDougall 2009, 59), the nineteenth century witnessed an acute

awareness of acts of looking, raising questions about knowledge-making practices, perceptual change, and the authority of the subjective and objective gaze.

This modernisation of vision was particularly prominent in the observational sciences. As Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison (2007) have shown, from the 1860s a desire to avoid the interference of the subjective self led many sciences to encourage a new collective way of seeing and knowing or “collective empiricism” that would allow for a standardised, disciplined approach to observation, promoting objectivity as an epistemic virtue and the premise that knowledge should be to some extent independent of the knower. The selection and constitution of “working objects”, which Daston and Galison (2007, 19-20) describe as “any manageable, communal representative of the sector of nature under investigation”, such as type specimens, provided a basis for collective empiricism, “train[ing] the eye to pick out certain kinds of objects as exemplary and to regard them in a certain way.” They argue that through the regularisation and internalisation of objects and viewing practices within subsets of the empirical sciences “these various ways of seeing were lodged deeper than evidence; they defined what evidence was... [t]hey drew the boundaries within which arguments and debates could take place” (Daston and Galison 2007, 369)

As an emerging discipline and observational science, archaeology needed to fit into this framework. The construction of the excavated artefact, as archaeology’s working or common object of enquiry, was particularly necessary for Egyptian artefacts that were to be dispersed. The global distribution of finds from Egypt and the creation of the working object went hand-in-hand, in fact their mass movement was dependent upon this process in order to succeed. The standardisation and regulation of knowledge and knowledge-making practices was needed to allow for the circulation of not only objects, but also of ideas, theories, and ways of seeing (Livingstone 2003, 135-178). It ensured that, regardless of where and when the excavated artefact was being observed, dispersed viewers would understand at least the basics of what archaeological objects are and how they should be known, viewing them through the same disciplined eye. But the science of observation has to be a learned experience. It is a technical skill that needs to be honed and practiced through sustained and repetitive behaviour, as Lorraine Daston and Elizabeth Lunbeck (2011, 3) stress:

[O]bservation is a highly contrived and disciplined form of experience that requires training of the body and mind, material props, techniques of description and visualization, networks of communication and transmission, canons of evidence, and specialized forms of reasoning.

The annual exhibitions provided a space that could privilege this notion, with archaeologists fixing and stabilising their working objects through the selection and display of artefacts and accompanying visual culture, “bringing new objects into the fold of the observable” (Daston and Lunbeck 2011, 7), and in which public and professional audiences could learn how to see and engage with the materiality of excavation. Within this constructed arena of visual consumption visitors were given the tools to understand, interpret, and communicate codified archaeological knowledge. The social and collective nature of the exhibitions, in which visitors could converse directly with archaeologists, enabled audiences to enhance meaning and knowledge construction in extended “communities of learners” (Falk and Dierking 2000, 46-50). This social interaction also aided “modelling”, in which visitors learned how to read and engage with archaeological objects in part by observing the behaviours of others and modifying their own approach. Over the course of the exhibition practice, this repeated engagement cemented and further developed visual habits, creating a visual and material literacy among its diverse audiences.

From the outset, the annual exhibitions fostered a new style of engagement, creating a viewing experience that was experimental in its approach, distanced from museums in order to encourage a different mindset and to discard other visual and intellectual frames of reference. I now turn to the structure of the exhibition space, examining how a network of interpretive devices and technologies of display came together to create this unique epistemological environment.

6.2 Space and design

The creation and use of space is fundamental to how collections are perceived and visitors engage with and comprehend exhibited objects (see Schorch 2013). At these exhibitions, factors including the spatial configuration, the layout and type of display furniture, and the prominence of any colour, would have worked together to shape

the viewing experience, often in ways not apparent to the visitor (Pearce 1990; Moser 2010; Monti and Keene 2013). As we have seen in chapter 4, the annual exhibitions provided largely alternative locations for the display of Egyptian archaeology in the capital. For visitors entering the premises of an archaeological society or a university campus, the architecture and surrounding environment had already begun to inform their ideas of the displays in contrast to museum settings. Their vision was challenged further as they came into the exhibition space. These spaces, which were not purpose built for collections, would have been unfamiliar and perhaps intriguing for that reason.

Each year the collections transformed these meeting rooms into temporary display spaces. The small, perhaps ill-suited rooms, which contained fittings such as fireplaces and bookcases, stood in contrast to the high ceilings and grand proportions of public museum buildings, creating a viewing experience more akin to that of a private collection or cabinet of curiosities. Yet the scale of the rooms worked well for the collections on display. These smaller spaces were proportionally compatible with the size of the objects and fostered a more intimate engagement. They also provided sufficient natural light, which Petrie in particular valued as a necessity for the study of any collection. Suitable lighting was one of the “first requirements” to consider in any building, “no other qualities can possibly atone for defects of lighting in a museum” (Petrie 1904, 131).

The layout and appearance of the rooms seem to have followed a common formula through much of the practice, acquiring a reputation for being quite makeshift in style. A reporter from *The Times* (1909) described the EEF exhibition as “just as unpretending and as ‘home-made’ in appearance as Prof. Garstang’s is imposing and skilfully arranged.” Tables and temporary counters, occasionally “built up of packing-cases” (*The Times* 1890), were placed at the centre of each room, while cabinets, shelving, and free-standing objects lined the walls, encouraging a circular navigation of the space. Temporary partition boards divided up the rooms and covered existing library collections, particularly at University College, serving also to increase content capacity, providing additional surfaces upon which objects, photographs, and other two-dimensional material could be hung. Particularly in the early years, these spaces

were often described as crowded and “quite full”, “leaving only sufficient space for visitors to circulate” (*The Times* 1886).

The general visual impact upon entry into the exhibition space seems to have lain in the density and profusion of material on display. Visitors described how objects “fill and more than fill” the rooms (*The Times* 1886) and were crowded onto every possible surface.

On the counter and on the wall opposite, and on the floor, wherever there is a foot or two spare, are piled the clay pots and pans and drinking vessels, the wooden cups and bowls, the clumsy plates and dishes, and the spouted Pipkins in which these old-world folk cooked and served their food fifty centuries ago. (*The Times* 1889)

Newspaper reports talk of alabaster vessels perched on windowsills in direct sunlight “so as to give full effect to the beauty of the translucent materials of which they are made” (*Manchester Guardian* 1897), while a “double row of solemn-looking mummy-cases” was said to “line the entrance passage” (*The Times* 1890). Every inch of available space was used, from freestanding objects on the floor encroaching upon visitor pathways to “domestic relics... literally piled against the walls from floor to ceiling” (*The Times* 1889). On some occasions, Petrie displayed ceramic vessels “hanging all along the walls” by their handles (PMA 3/1/PEN/19), creating the impression of objects floating in mid-air. While these arrangements must have provided visual stimulation at every possible height and along every sight-line, it is easy to imagine that the annual exhibitions could have been a chaotic and overwhelming experience.

This content-heavy style, which was particularly characteristic of the early years of the exhibitions and of Petrie as an archaeologist and curator, set a tradition that influenced the exhibitions and people’s expectations for decades. A letter from Petrie to Edwards in 1885 goes some way towards explaining his intentions:

I have got out nearly all that I can find space to exhibit... I do wish you could have a look over the tables; there is fully thrice as much in the room as last year... Only half the boxes are cleared through, + not a third of the things are really visible. (PMA 3/1/PEN/19)

The work of Elizabeth Edwards (2001) on anthropological collections of the same period provides a context for Petrie's style. Edwards shows how two competing approaches to scientific displays dominated Western museum and exhibition culture in the late nineteenth century. She characterises the older of the two approaches as "trophy style arrays" in which material culture was laid out *en masse*, seemingly without scientific arrangement. These displays reflected an implicit salvage agenda and a focus on quantity over quality, with objects grouped for aesthetic effect. Such arrangements, which included Petrie's annual exhibitions, looked back to earlier conversaciones. Kevin Moore's (1991, 167) study of the Liverpool Mechanics Institution exhibitions of the 1840s evokes the common conception that "scale was equated with value: the more objects of cultural 'worth' displayed, the greater the 'civilising impact'." This approach clashed with the emerging "rhetorics of scientific visibility and the spatial construction of knowledge" which brought more streamlined and focused displays into the public domain (Edwards 2001, 63). Petrie's comment that "...not a third of the things are really visible" contrasts with that movement and with some leading authorities of the day, with Sir William Henry Flower (1996 [1893], 33) writing in his *Essays on Museums* that the key to imparting knowledge of a specimen was "the isolation of each object from its neighbours, the provision of suitable background and above all... [a] position in which it can be readily and distinctly seen."

At the time when Petrie was using an older display style, the newly established professional body of curators at the Museums Association was debating its effectiveness and continuation in museums. At the Association's second annual meeting, Natural History curator at Sunderland Museum, Robert Cameron, argued:

The over-crowding of specimens is one of the commonest faults of Museums. There is a desire on the part of the Curator to show off his whole stock, and even his duplicates. This is an evil because it distracts and bewilders the mind of an ordinary visitor. It gives him the feeling that is hopeless for him to master the names and characteristics of such a multitude of specimens. (Cameron 1890, 82).

This debate had been ongoing for at least a decade, and in consequence many scientific collections had begun to reduce and adapt their displays according to

principles of “representativeness, sparsity and public instruction” (Bennett 1995, 43). Most notably, the Natural History Museum in London changed to the new style in 1884 (Bennett 1995, 40), the year of the first EEF annual exhibition. Criticism of the exhaustive approach extended into the world of Egyptology. When the Burlington Fine Arts Club opened their exhibition on *The Art of Ancient Egypt* in the summer of 1895, the organisers distanced themselves from this outdated mode of display. In a critique that appears to speak directly to Petrie’s annual exhibitions, the Club stated that for “a large number of the general visitors the display was a surprise”:

[T]he highest fruits of that existence do not find adequate representation in confused heaps and crowded ranks of miscellaneous objects, too often subdued to one uniform neutral tint by the dust of decades. The impression thus given is as misleading as that which would be derived of contemporary British industrial art, from an examination of the shelves of a dealer in second-hand furniture. Hence, coming to the Gallery of the Burlington Club with the fixed idea of the mummy, and with perhaps also shadowy recollections of a chair, a wig, or some dilapidated hoes, it was natural that the visitor was unprepared to find on every side cases filled with delicate and imaginative works of art. (Burlington Fine Arts Club 1895, iii)

Even though the crowded display practice was criticised for being inaccessible to audiences, particularly those with little relevant prior knowledge, many leading collections of the time continued in the same vein, particularly in anthropology. The Pitt Rivers Museum, the Horniman Museum, and the Musée du Trocadéro in Paris demonstrated the “blurred edges between the conventions of science and those of trophy” (Edwards 2001, 66). The style left an impression on the practice, as evidenced by one review of the EEF’s 1909 exhibition at King’s College: “...the different objects are crowded together in a not over well-lighted room on the first floor, and at first sight appear to be nothing but a mass of pots” (*The Athenaeum* 1909).

For Petrie, and perhaps for his successors, presenting visual mass was an important part of their strategy. While many museums moved towards presenting more select groups of finds, the annual exhibitions retained their visual identity by displaying and interpreting an excavation *en masse*, offering objects as archaeological assemblages before they were separated and distributed to museums worldwide. A principal aim of the annual exhibitions was to bring the fieldsite to audiences in London, and to fulfil

this Petrie employed scale of content as an interpretive and epistemological device. Not only could this strategy aid the visualisation of archaeological practice, showing important connections and relationships, it also encouraged audiences to examine the collection and the site as a single entity and as an interrelated construction in its own right. For visitors also, being able to see at a glance the products of a single excavation, arguably evoked the scale of an ancient town and the belongings of its inhabitants.

This strategy privileged the concept of visible availability. David Jenkins (1994, 248-249) has noted in his analysis of ethnographic displays in nineteenth-century America that “scholarly investigation depended upon the availability of objects as things seen.” At the turn of the twentieth century, Jenkins writes, there was a growing concern that increased sizes of stored collections and reductions in display would have a negative impact upon accessibility and the development of knowledge. In that perspective the annual exhibitions presented an opportunity for the democratisation of archaeological collections. By functioning almost as visible storage, the exhibitions allowed Petrie (1904, 132-33) to display what he often termed the “whole of the needful material”. This visible availability had wider consequences. The amount of material on display enabled excavators who were seeking funding to showcase their strengths and achievements to museum professionals and potential financial backers, in a visible celebration of the success of their work and the promise of objects to come. Moreover, if the exhibitions were to double up as spaces in which the archaeologists could study, record, and organise their collections, as Petrie had long suggested, displaying as many objects together as possible within one space was beneficial, creating a more effective working environment.

Despite the apparent informality of the space, Petrie was active in implementing a design strategy and a sense of identity for the practice. In exchanges of letters discussing the presentation of antiquities with Reginald Stuart Poole, Petrie advised on the use of wooden mounting blocks for objects, as in his own exhibitions (EES COR.016.f.139). These pine mounting blocks with printed labels pasted onto one side were presumably used to stabilise some objects or to raise others in the arrangement, drawing attention to particular pieces. To give some idea of scale, Petrie recorded ordering 2,400 pine blocks ahead of his 1886 exhibition (EES COR.016.f.150). This

correspondence also shows that colour was a key component in design. In a critical comparison of the “smoky brown-grey” and “light green” used by the British Museum’s Egyptian and Greek departments respectively, Petrie stated:

What I have preferred always, and use for all our exhibitions, is the truest neutral grey that I can get, slightly blue if anything to bear getting brown with dust; this is the fairest thing to use as it does not prejudice the eye in any way... it is in fact simply diluted blackness, light enough to shew writing and not to be too sombre, and dark enough not to dazzle the eye from any object placed on it. (EES COR.016.f.139)

This colour would have been very prominent in the exhibition space, being used for object labels, the coloured paper covering the mounting blocks, and most surfaces (EES COR.016.f.150). This choice went together with Petrie’s desire to create a display that framed objects as the central learning devices, rather than detracting from them. The neutral background colour allowed the natural colours, texture, shape, and materiality of the object to remain the primary focus.

This emphasis is echoed in Petrie’s use of hanging and draped fabric behind objects to form a neutral backdrop for groups, in a manner reminiscent of his photographic methods in the field. On excavation sites, fabric backdrops placed behind carefully arranged groups of objects served to de-territorialise the image and artefact, bringing a desired “contrast and clearness of the object” to the photographic record (Petrie 1904, 77). Just as Petrie (1904, 79) advocated the use of black velvet on site, or lighter fabrics to bring out the outline of darker pieces, he replicated this practice in the exhibition space (fig. 6; see also Bohrer 2011, 31), using backdrops to isolate and elevate the object as primary signifier. Such techniques may have also created different zones within the exhibition. This visual strategy for drawing the visitor’s gaze towards the object remained prominent throughout the practice. Attention continued to be paid to the colour, type, and texture of material on which an object would be placed. In 1912 Eric Peet wrote “I suggest that a little money should be spent on nice coverings for the tables, etc. People will rave about a thing seen on velvet that they would pass unnoticed on sackcloth” (EES XIII.e. unnumbered).



Figure 6. EEF and ERA exhibition showing material from Deshasheh at University College, 1897. Deshasheh 022. Courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL.

For display furniture, locations such as the Royal Archaeological Institute provided a small number of lockable, table-top display cases for the Society. As a security measure, these were used for a selection of their most valuable and “fragile” materials (*The Times* 1886), as well as small items that were at risk of theft. They also prevented these smaller items from becoming visibly lost in the dense displays. At Petrie’s Tell el Amarna exhibition in 1892 cases were used for the finest fragments of brightly-coloured glazed tiles, jewellery, and moulds, as well as the most prized examples of Amarna’s sculptural art (Petrie 1892b, 15-17). As the only objects housed within such familiar symbols of object status, these artefacts were differentiated within the space, separated from the general flow of the exhibition and singled out for greater contemplation (see Gosden 2004).

The vast majority of the objects on show were free-standing and unprotected by cases. Although the lack of display cases appears to have been driven initially by financial necessity rather than design, it came to define the practice, and

archaeologists and organisers appeared to embrace it. In response to the EES Committee's concerns over object security, Petrie wrote in 1886:

If one had adopted full precautions such as would look reasonable + proper... it would have cost us far more than the value of all that we have lost. A certain amount of risk must be taken in every affair that has a national prize behind it. An armour-plating of absolute security comes very expensive, + costs so much, + is so much in the way that it is more loss than the risks it prevents. (EES COR.016.f.149)

This absence of traditional display furniture added to the non-institutionalised feel of the experience, being far removed from the crisp, clean, and ordered lines of showcases in museum galleries. Moreover, the practice had an unparalleled effect on visitor engagement, bringing people into direct contact with ancient objects very often for the first time. A change in attitude in the mid-nineteenth century, as collections shifted from the private to public sphere, saw museums become a “pseudo-sacred space” where artefacts were “positioned outside of ordinary time and space, and thus removed from ordinary human interaction”, in a process intensified by the distance and physical barriers placed between the observer and object (Classen 2012, 145-146; also Noordegraaf 2004, 49). For the majority of visitors used to engaging with ancient objects through glass, the absence of cases would have been a novelty. Isobel Armstrong (2008, 117), who has published on the social and cultural repercussions of Victorian glass culture and the “scopic period” that it produced, has shown how the introduction of glass in similar contexts was sometimes felt to have “disempowered” the viewer's gaze. Without such mechanisms of optical mediation, audiences at the annual exhibitions were brought far closer to the material. This rare closeness would have stimulated an enhanced level of observation and an appreciation of materiality, free from obstruction and distortion.

The glaring absence of traditional display furniture encouraged a more experiential and sensory engagement, shaping important aspects of the archaeological encounter. In 1895 a reporter from *The Academy* described a unique experience upon visiting Petrie's displays of material from Ballas and Naqada at University College:

A curious sensation is at the command of anyone who cares to smell the strange funerary unguent in a great jar placed near the entrance on the left. Its heavy, elusive and uncanny perfume he may ever more associate with the

burials of what is spoken of in the Catalogue as the 'New Race'. (*The Academy* 1895, 17)

While one reviewer commented on being able to smell the "faint odour from the many fragments of masonry [which] imparts to the air a flavour as of antiquity" (*The Morning Post* 1892), another remarked that it was a "passing strange to see and touch articles which were in everyday use" (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* 1890). These sensory encounters may be corroborated by the exhibition catalogues, in which restrictions on touching are mentioned in relation to only two objects from the entire period, in both cases because of their "fragmentary condition" (EEF and ERA 1900, 8; see also EES 1931, 29). We cannot know what verbal instructions were given to restrict handling within the exhibition or its signage, but touching objects may have been considered part of the experience. It is, for example, likely that institutional visitors were authorised to inspect and touch the objects.

Only a handful of references hint at the exhibitions being a tactile experience, but studies of the behaviour of visitors suggest that touching would have been inevitable. David Dean (1994, 43) writes that "[p]eople have an innate predisposition for touching, both as a sensory and experiential confirmation of what they see, and as memory reinforcement. If objects or surfaces are within reach, they will be touched." While touching objects had been restricted in museums and considered somewhat taboo from the mid-nineteenth century onward, these rules were conditioned in part by the museum environment and implemented by design. In the less traditional setting of the annual exhibition, audiences may have been more inclined to explore the collections through heightened sensory engagement.

Fiona Candlin (2008; 2010) has commented on how object handling in collections has historically been linked to privilege and social status, with restrictions coming into force as museums and their audiences shifted into the public sphere, along with speculation that some working-class museum-goers were not cultured enough to handle objects. Within the more exclusive setting of the annual exhibitions, which attracted a socially elite audience (chapter 7), handling may have been more readily permitted. The practice was common in local archaeology society meetings and exhibitions, with which Petrie was familiar, that generally encouraged an experimental

engagement for similar audience groups. It also fit with the progression of material sciences in exclusive university settings; thus, the Pitt Rivers Museum in the University of Oxford experimented with handling as part of an active process of knowledge production (Gosden and Larson 2007, 121-122). Petrie's reason for turning down the popular entertainment venue Niagara Hall for his exhibition, in order to avoid attracting a "crowd of sightseers" because he would "have to protect everything much more carefully" speaks volumes here (Newberry MSS 1 37/39). The opportunity to experience ancient objects through touch may have been granted to satisfy the exhibition's particular audience base, including museum professionals and potential benefactors. One should therefore ask how far the envisaged composition of the audience influenced the shape and design of the practice.

Not until the successful residency at the Wellcome Museum of Historical Medicine in 1931 and 1932 did the EES show a greater desire to display their collections in exhibition cases. The closure of Wellcome's museum meant that the Society was able to negotiate the loan of several cases for their 1935 and 1936 exhibitions, which were held at the offices of the Palestine Exploration Fund in Manchester Square (WA/HMM/CO/Sai/A.16). These cases had been praised in the press ten years before for their contemporary design and feel (see chapter 4.5.1). Although the correspondence only refers to these two years, the mention and the continued use of cases in EES exhibition catalogues suggests that the loan remained active until the EES exhibition in 1939 (EES 1937; 1938; 1939). Equally, it is possible that the Palestine Exploration Fund, who held their own exhibitions, had purchased their own display cases in the meantime. Either way, as the EES exhibitions entered their final phase their appearance had changed significantly.

6.3 Selecting and arranging objects

While scale of content constituted an important strategy for the annual exhibitions and fulfilled a key objective in bringing the fieldsite to audiences in London, the material presented and information it contained still had to be organised. A structured viewing experience was essential to making an excavation digestible and to avoid

creating the impression of visual and conceptual confusion. The key lay in the selection and arrangement of objects. Although the concept of arranging objects in order to acquire and disseminate knowledge was widely accepted as part of the emergence of the modern museum and its “new visual regime” in the early nineteenth century (Noordegraaf 2004, 10), the act of object arrangement does not appear to have been subject to significant critical thought until much later in the century. “[T]he question of Museum Organisation, and Museum Arrangement is one of those questions which are now coming to the front, in the spread of general education in this country,” reported one speaker at the Museums Association conference in 1890, “and it is one which offers unlimited opportunities for differences of opinion ... converting heterogeneous collections, old and new, into a Museum fitted for modern requirements...” (Dawkins 1890, 38).

Petrie, in particular, understood the importance of arrangement. His manual, *Methods and Aims in Archaeology*, is highly critical of contemporary museum displays and their approach to archaeological assemblages. “Our museums are ghastly charnel-houses of murdered evidence”, he lamented, “the dry bones of objects are there, bare of all the facts of grouping, locality, and dating which would give them historical life and value” (Petrie 1904, 48). In Petrie’s experience, contemporary displays separated objects from their contextual significance, isolating them from the physical and conceptual relationships that made them meaningful. The annual exhibitions gave him the freedom and autonomy to experiment with these different theories in a practical sense and we see much of what Petrie discussed manifest in the exhibitions from an early stage in his career.

The annual exhibitions were far from being passive reflections of a season’s excavation. Each year the collections would be reduced and shaped into a new coherent ‘whole’ or a new “momentary assemblage” to actively produce meaning and affect (see Lucas 2012). Recent discussions around the term assemblage in archaeological contexts show how, through deliberate agency and social intervention, collections are subject to frequent processes of reassembly and the articulation of new material relationships (see Lucas 2012; Fowler 2013; 2017; Hamilakis 2017; Hamilakis and Jones 2017; Wingfield 2017). At the annual exhibitions the construction of these

new assemblages was significantly driven by restrictions in display space, often requiring limited numbers of objects, but there is evidence to suggest that these acts of discarding and selection were also influenced by a desire to create a coherent and readable display, as well as guided by principles of visual knowledge and visual literacy.

For Petrie, refining the collection for display involved removing the objects he termed “duplicates” from the assemblage. In a letter to Amelia Edwards in 1885 he explained how he planned to prioritise his “best series” at the exhibitions while “duplicates must stop in boxes” (EES COR.016.f.84). The very use of the term ‘duplicate’ and the idea that some objects were considered identical are revealing. They imply that in this context these objects were not valued as individual finds for their unique archaeological knowledge and presence as historical documents, but for their aesthetic and stylistic qualities within a visual paradigm. While duplicates were essential to gathering financial support from museums and were often supplied to smaller, regional institutions, they were perceived as deficient in archaeological value. At one exhibition Petrie even proposed setting up a “presentation table” at the door of the exhibition to give away duplicates to subscribers (EES COR.016.f.78). The idea was prevented by the committee, much to his disdain:

I cannot see what objection there is to dividing some of the innumerable duplicates (or rather centriplicates) among the subscribers. Can Mr Newton or anyone else find museums enough to receive 600 scarab moulds, or 300 bronze arrow heads, or 500 iron, or even 60 Athenian tetra-drachmas? By all means let every conceivable museum have all that can in reason be given it, but we are stuffed with things that we cannot give away in such quantities + yet that will fetch us as much help as a dozen or two subscribers every year. (EES.COR.016.f.131)

The non-display of duplicates shows a strong educational thrust in the desire to present a clear and coherent narrative to audiences. The objects selected for display and therefore singled out for contemplation were chosen for their exemplary nature and their ability to function as ‘type specimens’ from which knowledge could be derived. Through this management of knowledge and the act of “concealing and revealing” certain finds, Petrie was able to standardise his working objects (see Gosden 2004).

Here, Petrie was constructing what Susan Pearce (1992) refers to as a systematic collection. Drawn from the natural sciences, and “conceived of as display”, systematic collecting was based around the principle of taxonomy, in which collections were assembled in order to make it possible to compare and contrast specimens within a classification system that was based upon the material. The practice facilitated the creation of sequences and serial relationships in order to demonstrate a particular point, while also providing a way of structuring and understanding the physical world. The act of selection was key to this collecting strategy, with artefacts chosen based primarily upon “the strength of an objects supposed ‘typicality’ or their ‘departure from the norm’ so that they may act as referents” (Pearce 1992, 85).

By selecting some objects to act as ‘type specimens’ and units of comparison, Petrie was able to materialise the concepts of typology and seriation for which he became so well known: classifying and arranging objects into a material sequence to demonstrate their changing appearance over time and chronological development, a process that he applied equally to show cultural and functional groupings. Although the use of typologies has since been criticised for cleansing and stretching data, and its over emphasis on homogenous meaning and forms (Droop 1915, 8-9; Boozer 2015; Sørensen 2015), critiques that could equally be applied to its display, at the time Petrie was a pioneer of this technique within the field of archaeology (Lucas 2001, 78) and the exhibitions gave him free rein to materialise these ideas. He advocated this kind of typological arrangement in *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* (1904), in which he called for the “intelligent display of objects as to shew their relation to each other in development”, a necessity that required “free space in museums” in order to be explored to its fullest. While these techniques were employed from the first exhibition, visualising typologies became far more prevalent in the BSAE displays of material from Badari in 1924, 1925 and 1926, when the excavation of a new prehistoric culture and attempts to position it chronologically led to a new “definite limit of scale for the dating of prehistoric man in Egypt” (BSAE 1925, 2). As these narratives became more central their visualisation in display and verbalisation became more essential:

Here are put in historical order the groups of alabaster vases, beads, amulets, and any pottery found with them. There are very few absolute dating points, but the sequence of forms and styles leaves little uncertainty in the relative order. (BSAE 1924, 6)

The flints upon the length of the table are arranged in the groups to which they belong. The horizontal rows are labelled to show the site from which they came, together with the altitude above present lake and sea level. The vertical rows show the typological class to which they belong, and are labelled by class and sub-class at the head of each row. The same class from different sites can therefore be compared at a glance. (BSAE 1925, 4)

Although the use of typology is seldom mentioned explicitly in the exhibition catalogues, both they and archival photographs show that a large proportion of objects were displayed by material type for comparative effect (fig. 7). Often arranged in neat linear displays, these groupings subtly evoked the concept of evolutionary progression and enabled audiences to observe morphological patterns and changes for themselves. Petrie (1915) went on to replicate this strategy in the 1915 re-display of his permanent museum collection, declaring that object types “should all be put close together, so that a large mass of one period of relief can be seen at once, and a general impression of style produced on the mind, in a way in which scattered examples cannot do.”

As a strongly visual method of bringing order and direction to a single-site display, a typological arrangement would have appealed to Petrie’s observations on the importance of visualising and materialising knowledge. Indeed, parallels can be drawn between Petrie’s exhibition arrangements and his attitudes towards archaeological publications. In *Methods and Aims in Archaeology* he referred to the importance of presenting images of objects in plates:

The reader is to be put first of all in possession of all the facts and materials, and the author’s conclusions are only a co-ordination, presented to enable the reader to grasp the material, and to feel clearly the effect of it on his sum of ideas, or organised sense of the nature of things. Hence nowadays the main structure of a book on any descriptive science is its plates, and the text is to show the meaning and relation of the facts already expressed by form. (Petrie 1904, 114)

At every point it must be remembered that nearly all foreign students, and most English ones, will know the plates but not the text; that the plates will be the material practically used for comparison, and building up a view of the subject;

and therefore that they should be as far as possible self-contained and self-explanatory... (Petrie 1904, 116).

Through their arrangement the exhibitions operated as material publications, as three-dimensional realisations of the approaches that Petrie published.



Figure 7. BSAE exhibition of material from Hawara at University College, 1911. Courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL.

But with minimal interpretation, just how accessible were these displays to those without prior knowledge? The idea that objects ‘speak for themselves’ within such arrangements has been questioned by scholars such as Julia Noordegraaf (2004, 51), who believes that typological displays may have been an “obstacle for the uneducated”. An exhibition review in *The Athenaeum* shows that the arrangements occasionally met resistance. Despite attempts to emphasise the scientific nature of the knowledge being produced and the staging of the Egyptian archaeological artefact as a

disciplinary object, the strength of the antiquity as curiosity was still able to overcome such attempts:

Mr Petrie is very painstaking in the rigorous classification of his collection, and in maintaining the relative sequence of its various sections; but he cannot eliminate or curb the element of Oriental fantasy – neither do we apprehend he would desire to – which bids defiance to all rules of scientific classification. (*The Athenaeum* 1890, 297).

Yet at least for some well-informed visitors, the displays translated well. At the EEF's exhibition of material from Naukratis in 1885, an excavation famed for its ceramic discoveries, Petrie prepared an elaborate display of vessel types. A typological display strategy appears to have been applied more frequently to the presentation of pottery and stone vessels, particularly in the early exhibitions when, as Amelia Edwards (1887, 109) stated, "the subject of Egyptian pottery is still obscure, and as a science is yet in embryo". The 1885 arrangement was praised by one knowing reviewer from *The Academy* (1885, 228-229) for providing "an unbroken chain of chronological evidence". In the reviewer's opinion "[s]uch a series... is the one thing necessary to combine isolated specimens into a connected and intelligible whole."

This choice of arrangement had wider consequences for the positioning of archaeological disciplinary knowledge. By arranging archaeological objects as such, Petrie situated them within pre-existing visual frameworks that provided familiar and recognisable regimes of value across the natural sciences and anthropology. The use of unilinear schemes of relatedness fitted into an "evolutionary conception of culture" that Gavin Lucas (2001, 78-79) reports as being a prevalent theoretical discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, Pitt-Rivers, who was an influential figure for Petrie, famously applied such an interpretive framework to his collections. It is known that Petrie visited Pitt-Rivers' displays in Kensington at least once in autumn 1883 (Stevenson 2012a, 10), and the opening of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford in 1884 would also have been a likely source of inspiration. Similarly, the use of typologies and type specimens, a term described by American natural historian C. H. Merriam (1897, 732) as "understood the world over", had rapidly become common practice across the sciences. The exhibitions therefore spoke

a shared language, a communicative shorthand across disciplines, legitimising and authenticating the archaeological artefact as an object of scientific enquiry.

In the following decades, this style of typological arrangement became commonly discussed among Egyptologists and archaeologists. When William E. Hoyle (1908, 160, 162) of Manchester Museum presented a paper at the 1908 Museums Association conference entitled *The Arrangement of an Egyptological Collection*, he approached Petrie to contribute a text as “a past master of this subject” and “one of the principal authorities”. Petrie’s response outlining the subdivision of objects by type and arrangement in chronological sequence, which was read to the audience in his absence, was widely accepted by his peers. Audience members advocated its approach as enabling visitors to “trace more readily the stages of evolution... in the forms of vases of patterns of ornamentation” and praised as the “only possible arrangement” for pottery collections (Hoyle 1908, 156, 158). Yet, as Alfred Cort Haddon of the Horniman Museum pointed out, it was still considered suited to “more serious students” rather than the general public (Hoyle 1908, 158).

This was not the only method of organisation employed by Petrie at his annual exhibitions. What has been described by Lucas (2001, 27) as Petrie’s “two-fold character of objects” was enacted within the exhibition space. While sections of the displays were arranged in linear typologies, celebrating the aesthetics of similarity, other areas were organised by archaeological context. Catalogues and archival images paint a picture of clustered sets of objects, laid out on table tops or pinned to fabric-covered mounting boards (fig. 8), presenting a number of tomb groups and find groups ‘as found’ on excavation. This treatment allowed Petrie to materially articulate the archaeological site, recreating physical and meaningful bonds between objects that had become lost in the destructive course of excavation, and that would perhaps be lost again in the process of distribution. Allowing objects to once again derive meaning from those associations. Alice Stevenson (2012b) has shown how archaeological context was a process, “created not just in the archaeological site in Egypt, but further performed in the exhibitions of finds in London, the newspaper reports, EEF’s Committee meetings and in the hands of curators...” As such, the annual exhibition

was one of numerous platforms upon which this concept could be put into practice for metropolitan audiences.



Figure 8. Tomb group from Abydos on display at EEF and ERA exhibition at University College, 1900s. Abydos Tomb 45 056. Courtesy of Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, UCL.

The process of partage provided challenges for the presentation of context. Where some objects from groups were retained in Cairo, excavators needed to find creative ways of fulfilling and visualising the concept. Photographs, illustrations, and plaster casts were often used to stand in for the original object on display in order to retain contextual significance. From the turn of the century, exhibitions were occasionally supplemented by temporary object loans from the Egyptian Antiquities Service. The earliest recorded instance dates to 1900 when the Egyptian authorities permitted the

loan of objects they had acquired through partage agreements: a set of ivory carvings and a blue marble dish from Abydos that was valued in the exhibition catalogue for its “rarity of design” (EEF and ERA 1900, 7). Petrie’s biographer Margaret Drower (1985, 261) described the loan as an act in which “Maspero’s liberal attitude was displayed”. The agreement stands as a testament to the perceived importance of the temporary displays to both sides, but their presence was also symptomatic of stable political relations. As partage agreements tightened into the twentieth century and competition for objects increased, British demands for temporary loans became highly politicised. The practice was eventually stopped altogether, leaving archaeologists to find alternative methods of completing contexts.

It could be argued that Petrie’s desire to preserve context in display was in part a reaction to what he perceived as a failing of contemporary museum practice:

So ignorant are curators that they will even divide up a tomb-group of objects, which are the keys to knowledge, and foolishly scatter them up and down the galleries merely as second-rate specimens of what is already there, without any date or history. This is actually the case in the three largest national museums. (Petrie 1904, 48-49)

Their connection as found together in tombs and groups also requires free space, more than is yet to be had in any English museum. The preservation of the whole of the needful material is still more utterly beyond the limits of any of the present museums. (Petrie 1904, 132)

Petrie’s strong views on this method of arrangement sometimes clashed with those of his colleagues in the museum sector. When he earmarked a particular tomb group displayed in his 1909 exhibition for the Victoria and Albert Museum, the offer was made under the “stipulation” that the group should remain intact and “all be exhibited together in one case”. Although the Museum had shown interest in the objects, sending representatives specifically to view them in Petrie’s exhibition, they had to decline the offer because such a display was beyond the scope of their newly re-arranged galleries: they simply could not accommodate “exhibiting mixed objects in the way proposed” (V&A unnumbered a). Petrie’s frustrations were evident in his reply:

It is truly unfortunate that both of the London museums should prefer to sort by materials instead of periods. I had hoped that one at least would have

followed the modern interest in rooms and groups of single periods. As it is the whole tomb, which is very varied, will be kept together at Edinburgh. (V&A unnumbered b)

Petrie's comment regarding the "modern interest" relating to more contextualised displays correlates with the exhibition feedback found in reviews and the direction of the annual exhibitions. Although the concept of find groups had been prioritised from the start, from the turn of the century the exhibitions began to experiment with more creative visualisations of archaeological context through the medium of reconstructions. The first recorded example is from 1902 at the EEF's Abydos exhibition, where excavators reconstructed a First Dynasty burial. Grave goods of stone and pottery vessels were placed in their original positions around a human skeleton submerged in sand, recreating the objects and human remains as found and capturing the archaeologist's perspective at the moment of discovery. "[T]he skeletons," the exhibition catalogue explained, "were too much decayed by wet soil to preserve them, so later bones of the XIth dynasty are here placed to show the position" (EEF and ERA 1902, 11). As a didactic device this reconstruction allowed the excavators to elaborate on theories relating to the positioning of grave goods, directly communicating and visualising archaeological practice.

The display clearly resonated with popular audiences and public museums, because the accession registers of the Horniman Museum show that they acquired a reconstruction of an Early Dynastic tomb group from the EEF that year. This may have been the same example, which remained central to the Horniman Museum's ancient Egypt displays until at least the 1960s (Williams 2012). The Museum's Curator in the early 1900s, Anthropologist Alfred Cort Haddon, was a strong proponent of reconstructive technologies in museum galleries. At the Museums Association conference in 1908, where he took part in a discussion on *The Arrangement of an Egyptological Collection*, the concept of such "popular" or "synthetic" displays featured heavily. With reference to the "highly instructive" dioramas being experimented with in the United States, Haddon praised the idea of capturing a tableau of daily life through the arrangements of objects as the ideal method of communicating ancient lived experience to wider audiences. It was "without doubt", Haddon stated, "the very best way of arranging a collection so far as the instruction of the public was

concerned” (Hoyle 1908, 158). The fact that Haddon was aware of only a few museums in the United Kingdom that were employing such devices suggests that the exhibitions may have been forward-thinking in their approach to contextualised displays, showing the Fund’s proactive drive to engage with public audiences.

The preservation and performance of archaeological context acquired further significance at the annual exhibitions. The prospect of distribution, in which find groups could be divided and transported to collections worldwide, enhanced the value of this kind of representation and the knowledge that it conveyed. This was evidently a concern for Petrie (1931, 133) who later lamented that “[i]t had been a bitter sight to me, everything being so split up in England that no really representative collection of my results could be kept together.” This awareness was equally strong among exhibition visitors and appears to have increased the public demand for contextualised and reconstructive displays, with visitors keen to understand and ‘see’ the objects in their original context.

The objects here shown will by the end of the month be dispersed – those of Prof. Garstang among private individuals, those of the Fund among public museums. In both cases they will be lost to the majority of persons who now visit them, and we think, therefore, that fuller reproductions of the form of burials here recorded should be given to visitors. If it is found impossible to build up a typical burial – as has been done in other exhibitions – large and clear photographs of the typical graves... should at least be exhibited in the room. Another suggestion is that the objects retained by the Cairo Museum should, in every case where they are not so perishable as to run the risk of damage in transit, be borrowed for exhibition over here. (*The Athenaeum* 1909, 75-76)

Through the use of these two display strategies, of arranging objects to represent the very visual and dual concepts of typology and context, we see a desire to reflect the collective significance of the excavated artefact. Through selection and arrangement, the annual exhibitions demonstrated that as an object of scientific enquiry these artefacts derive a high proportion of their meaning and value from association, assemblage, and material relationships.

6.4 Labels, catalogues, and public talks

From the first exhibition in 1884 Petrie introduced a system for labelling objects that was designed to facilitate an understanding of the collection. As well as the printed labels, which were to be pasted on to the side of mounting blocks, grey card labels in two sizes, “1 ½ x 2 ¼ inches and 3 x 4 ½ inches”, branded with the organisation, the name of the site, and the year of excavation, were produced in large quantities to be displayed alongside individual objects (EES COR.016.f.150). These could best be described as non-interpretive or identification labels, used to convey a minimal amount of information including dates, materials, and a basic description of the object (Serrell 2015, 39). Petrie made clear that the intention behind these labels was not only to make the displays more readily comprehensible to visitors, but also to act as “permanent labels” to accompany the objects once they were distributed to museums (EES COR.016.f.32), ensuring that the knowledge generated within the space also went into circulation.

What made this process of labelling unique was that content was added to these labels by Petrie while the exhibition was open to the public (EES COR.016.f.43), emphasising that the exhibitions were equally a space for Petrie and his team to review, research, and interpret the finds post-excavation.

I have finished arranging all the things + have now to go on with the labelling. I shall do this on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 to 4, beginning 9th Sept, on which days people can see the things. (EES COR.016.f.43)

The act of writing labels during opening hours meant that the exhibitions presented a very active environment, with the knowledge created there constantly evolving. This practice extended the concept of bringing the fieldsite to audiences in London, placing visitors at the forefront of new interpretations, as well as giving them the opportunity to see the performance of archaeological practice at first-hand. As such, the exhibitions doubled up as a space to observe the archaeologists at work as well as the objects that they were interpreting.

Around 1889, a more structured viewing experience for visitors was introduced to the annual exhibition through the publication of exhibition catalogues. These small,

pocket-sized booklets added a different modality of communication, providing a choice of ways to receive information (Serrell 2015, 161). For the price of sixpence, these didactic aids directed and regulated a specific pathway around the exhibition space, offering an important means of organising and compressing the mass of information on display. The catalogues, which were initially concise (the first was just 8 pages), supplemented the object labels and contextualised the collection and knowledge produced. Each included a brief introduction to the excavations and to the historical and geographical context of the site, occasionally they would also feature more didactic components such as ancient timelines and lists of pharaohs or dynasties. While they worked to draw attention to objects of particular historical, artistic, technological, or anecdotal interest, to begin with the majority of pages were devoted to extensive lists of objects, individually identified by a brief description of their appearance, function, or material type.

In terms of the evolution of the exhibition as a practice, the introduction of catalogues signified a shift towards a more visitor-focussed approach, and an increasing concern about presenting the collections and archaeological knowledge to audiences. However, the date of their introduction remains difficult to determine. The earliest example to survive in a British archive collection is from the 1889 exhibition of material from the Fayum; this is housed in the World Museum, Liverpool. Yet a handwritten note on its front cover states that “[t]he first catalogue was in 1887[sic] at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly”, which seems to imply that the practice was in fact introduced a year earlier. If this is correct, Petrie may have created catalogues initially to target the more diverse and less academic audiences that the commercial venue attracted.

These different modalities of exhibition text worked together to present the voice and unique perspective of the excavator. Since the catalogues were written by archaeologists in the first person, their authorship and personal approach to interpretation would have been very apparent to readers, enriching the exhibition with an authoritative view of the site and the collection. Written not to distract from the exhibition’s content but to encourage visitors to observe and engage with the objects, the texts retained a strong material focus, instructing indirectly on how to

identify objects through observation. They also became a vital tool for communicating and mobilising archaeological knowledge through disciplinary language. Catalogues often capitalised or italicised the discipline's technical vocabulary and terminology, defining its terms, standardising its language, and in the process its working objects.

Although labels and catalogues provided different levels of engagement, with the catalogue offering a slightly more accessible exhibition text than the object labels, both media had fundamentally descriptive rather than interpretive content, with very few objects interpreted for a non-academic audience. The approach gained mixed reviews from visitors. *The Standard* (1884) praised the "careful system of labelling the objects and their arrangement" as "one which renders the inspection of the collection a much easier and pleasanter task than many public exhibitions afford". While archaeology professionals such as J. J. Stevenson of Edinburgh commented to Petrie that his catalogue was "admirable in its terseness and clearness" (PMA 5/STE/01), its style of interpretation was not received well by all:

The catalogue... helps one very little in this case, being for the most part a dry and bald inventory of the objects displayed, without even in all cases distinguishing their provenance. Entries like '8. Types of staff-heads in diorite and breccia', for instance, can hardly be of much assistance to the uninstructed visitor. (*The Athenaeum* 1909)

Fitting with Ravelli's (2006, 3) description of the period, the content of both labels and catalogues appears to have been "developed with an audience of peers in mind", primarily fellow scholars with a certain level of prior knowledge. Even though one of Petrie's (1931, 51) aims for the exhibitions may have been to "educate the interest of the public", this style may have worked against him. As Moser (2010, 27) has stated, such an approach can "intimidate visitors and render them more passive in their interaction with the exhibition."

The incorporation of didactic texts was nonetheless an important strategy in creating an overall image for the collections. It was a statement of identity and a means of encouraging a particular way of seeing and engaging with the excavated artefact, as well as assigning intellectual value to the objects on display. This strategic direction is reflected in the 1890 decision to change the name of visitor guidebooks from "hand

list” to “catalogue”. The use of the term catalogue by definition sparked connotations of a systematic and methodical collection, as well as a scientific and specialised subject matter.

By using object labels and catalogues, Petrie was experimenting with contemporary museum practice and inserting his collections into a current interpretive framework. By the 1880s these interpretive methods, although relatively new, had become “an accepted new *doxa* for museum practice” (Bennett 1997, 27). Introduced as part of the wider strategy of re-arranging scientific collections to increase their legibility, they were becoming increasingly familiar to exhibition audiences. Reports from the Museums Association’s committee appointed to consider labelling (Howarth 1891) demonstrates that this was a topical subject and that Petrie’s model adhered to a common practice across museums at the time. His decision to engage with these new methods is therefore significant. These devices played an important part in the “reconception of the status and role of the museum object” in the late nineteenth century (Bennett 1997, 29), and by using them Petrie was creating a similar context of viewing and imbuing the collection with similar values. In conjunction with the arrangement of objects, these methods presented the collection as a didactic resource, a process of validation, and a signifier of object status.

The adoption of these methods demonstrates how the meaning and value of the excavated artefact no longer lay solely in its physicality but also in the supporting documentation. Within the exhibition space, object, label, and catalogue worked together to create knowledge, forming a new whole or disciplinary construct: an object of scientific enquiry. The labels and catalogues provided evidence of an object’s history, linking it authoritatively to a particular site and period, an excavator, and an archaeological organisation. The importance of provenance was so heavily weighted within this developing scientific archaeology that archaeologist Eric Peet claimed in 1912 that “objects are really of little use to anyone without the account of their finding” (EES XIII.c.unnumbered). As Alice Stevenson (2014a, 97) has shown, “these very processes of archaeological recording also became additional forms of authentication... the record of its provenance became the integral attribute of the excavated artefact.”

The role of the catalogue and label as authentication maintained a legacy beyond the exhibition space, accompanying objects through the distribution process to their allocated institutions. When Petrie wrote to EEF chair Reginald Stuart Poole in May 1884 ahead of the first exhibition and distribution of objects, he made his intentions clear: "I look to your Committee filling a vacant post in England, - that of suppliers of ordinary Egyptian trifles + pottery, duly authenticated + labelled, to all the country museums" (EES COR.016.f.32.). A leaflet published by the EEF in 1900 and circulated to curators cemented this procedure (EES uncatalogued document a), stating that all objects were to be accompanied by such documentation in order to inform curatorial and dissemination practices at the receiving institution. This physical bond between the excavated artefact and documentation enabled the circulation of archaeological knowledge and agency and responded to curators' immediate demands for information (see chapter 7.3).

The annual exhibitions would further incorporate the archaeologist's voice and perspective through regular public talks for exhibition audiences. This practice was initiated by Petrie, who was present at the exhibition for set days per week in order to work on the collection and to receive and engage with the visiting public. The publication of these days at the end of exhibition reviews suggests that the opportunity to meet and converse with the excavator of the collection was an appeal for visitors, and for the excavators an opportunity to present their archaeological authority and subject specialism. From the first exhibition onward these public talks proved popular, so much so that Petrie began to regret how much time they took away from his work with the collection:

The people coming to the room swallow all my time there; yesterday I did six hours of study talk, I do it because it is just a scrap of personal attention to each which comes which may keep them in better humour. (PMA 3/1/PEN/11)

Although Tony Bennett (1997) suggests that museum talks were in decline during this period through lack of interest, the continued popularity of Petrie's presence and the collective opinion at the Museums Association's 1890 conference seem to suggest otherwise. Museum talks were seen as a successful means of engaging and educating the public, as well as necessary for interpreting the displays and arrangements to a

wider non-academic audience. As one conference delegate commented, the primary function of a museum is “teaching the people how to use a museum. To this end, museum lectures and demonstrations are indispensable” (Dawkins 1890, 44; see also Paden 1890; Wood 1887, 395). Having previously questioned how accessible Petrie’s typological or contextual arrangements had been to the general public, it could well be that these regular interactive talks by archaeologists were intended in part to break down intellectual barriers, a means of verbalising the rationale behind the displays. This increased social interaction would have aided “modelling” within the exhibition space (see Falk and Dierking 2000, 49-50), allowing those with little relevant knowledge of the subject to learn and observe disciplined behaviours directly from the archaeologists. For some of Petrie’s contemporaries, however, disciplinary language was still contentious; thus Richard Paden (1890, 97) of the Liverpool Museum urged his peers at the Museums Association on the “advisability of avoiding technical terms, and to make free use of simple language, easily understood by the working classes.”

Archival evidence suggests that accompanying talks by the archaeologists, in particular by field directors, remained a popular activity for both the EES and the BSAE throughout the exhibition practice. Petrie noted in his 1906 pocket diary that in one month he had given 50 lectures in the exhibition space (PMA 115-9-1_(26)1905-1906). The tradition continued into the 1930s, with the charismatic John Pendlebury attending his own exhibitions regularly to discuss the collection and the excavation with visitors. Wealthy benefactors, such as American-born Mrs John Hubbard who resided in Paris but had a number of EEF artefacts donated in her name to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, praised Pendlebury’s talks as well as the opportunity to meet the excavation team (EES TA. COR. Tell el Amarna II uncatalogued letter a). According to Pendlebury’s biographer, Imogen Grundon (2007, 146), his talks inspired at least one visitor to follow a career in Egyptology. Egyptologist and art historian Cyril Aldred, who attended the exhibitions as a teenager, later became the Keeper of Art and Archaeology at the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh.

6.5 Maps, plans, and illustrations

From the first exhibition in 1884 onward Petrie created mixed media displays that combined physical artefacts with bold visual aids, adding multiple layers of interpretation. Archaeological maps, plans, and illustrations were prominent within the exhibition space, often clustered together to cover one or two walls or scattered around the room and displayed alongside relevant finds. However, as the 1900 catalogue explained, such material was “liable to temporary removal for publication purposes” (EEF and ERA 1900, 9), illustrating how the exhibition was an active and performative research space. These devices served multiple functions. Like the labels and catalogues discussed above, the presence of such material spoke to the growing importance of provenance. As part of the rhetoric of ‘evidence’, they extended and authenticated the significance of the excavated artefacts while serving to promote and legitimise archaeology as a science, helping to affirm a visual culture that could be associated with the discipline. These graphic representations not only supported the interpretation of the collection but could also be consumed as disciplinary objects in their own right (fig. 9). For the EEF, as a pioneering institute of archaeological method, the visualisation of data and the diversity of this media played an important role in communicating knowledge of process and results. These graphic representations were recognisably scientific in their approach and appearance, and distanced from the more romantic and artistic conventions that had dominated archaeological illustrations since the mid-nineteenth century (see Lewuillon 2002). As some reviewers noticed, they displayed attributes such as detail and precision that had become so inherently linked to ‘scientific’ practice, encapsulating the intricate and highly-skilled expertise that was required of archaeology as a new professional discipline:

On the wall are plans of the mound of Nebireli, giving a detailed representation of the sacred enclosures and the streets of the town of Naukratis... which afford yet further evidence of Mr. Petrie’s patience and ingenuity in discovery, and exquisite and detailed care and execution. (*The Academy* 1885)

Maps and plans helped to further extend and materialise the concept of excavation, adding an important spatial dimension to the visitor’s understanding of an archaeological site. Hedley Swain (2007, 222) has commented on how the use of

“record drawings made onsite to interpret archaeological features” fell out of favour within exhibitions because they were seen as inaccessible to public audiences:

These drawings tend not to be a dominant feature of archaeological displays, even though they are so characteristic of archaeological evidence. This is probably because they are complex and difficult to understand... It is perhaps a shame that archaeological plans are not used more, even in a stylised and simplified way to make a direct connection, not only with the site itself but also the techniques of excavation and data recovery. (Swain 2007, 222)

Reviews from the annual exhibitions, however, show that audiences frequently interacted with maps and plans to help visualise ancient sites:

From obscure traces of street refuse, with here and there the help of a remaining bit of house-wall, a map has been produced which could hardly have been made clearer and more accurate had every brick and stone remained where the builder had first placed it. (*The Academy* 1885, 228)

A plan of the town hangs on the door of the smaller room at Oxford-mansion, thus enabling one to realize in what a curious hive that population lived... (*The Times* 1889)

These materials also helped to facilitate a spatial and contextual understanding of the finds on display by showing “the positions of principal finds” (EEF and ERA 1898, 7), empowering audiences to piece together an object’s positioning in time and space and its archaeological context, to navigate the built environment in which a find was discovered, and to uncover any material associations and relationships.

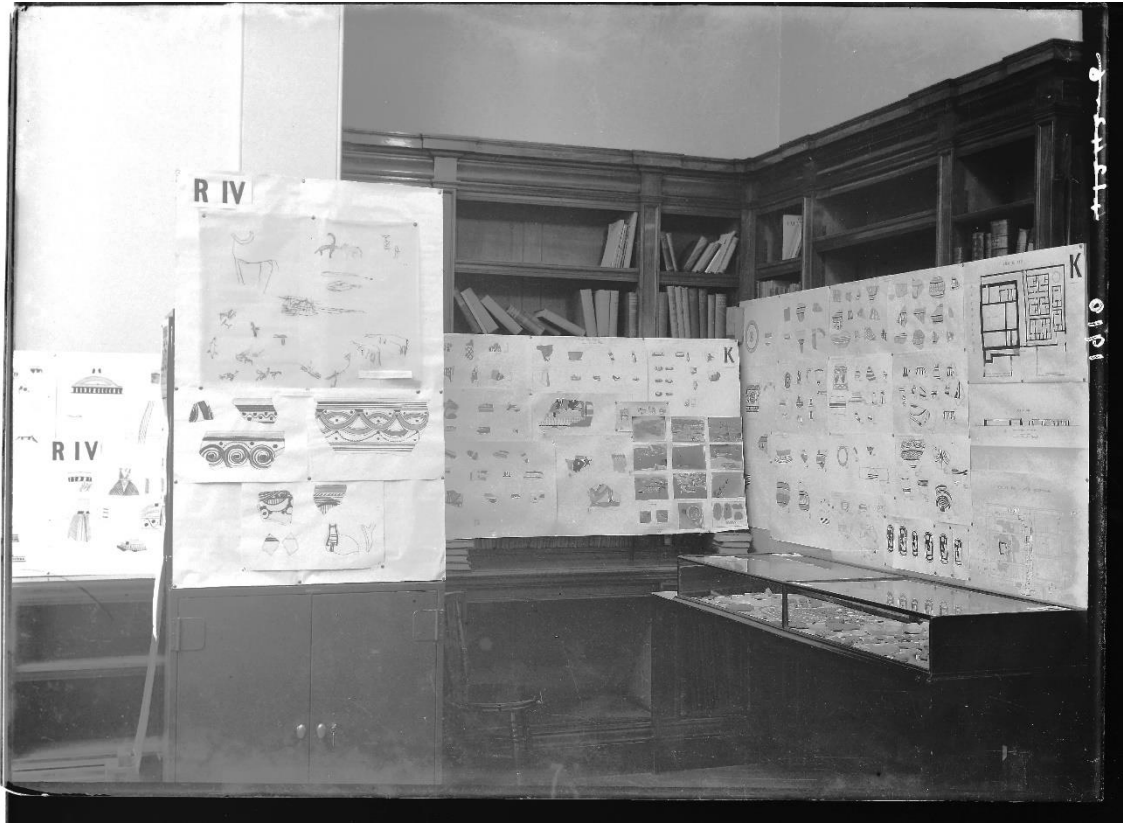


Figure 9. Plans and illustrations on display at the EES exhibition at University College London's Institute of Archaeology in Regent's Park, 1937. ARMANT_1910. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

The presence of maps and plans drew the exhibition, the visitor, and the objects into a spatial dialogue that was enmeshed in a major political discourse. John Harley's (1988, 282) pioneering *Maps, Power, and Knowledge*, demonstrated how in nineteenth-century Britain maps had become "further institutionalised" in the popular imagination and "part of the intellectual apparatus of power" (see also Harley 2001). He argues that "[a]s communicators of an imperial message, they have been used as an aggressive complement to the rhetoric of speeches, newspapers, and written texts, or to histories and popular songs extolling the virtues of empire." A growing body of research on cartographic history and the imperial map has shown how they became familiar symbols of control, authority, and possession (see Edney 1997; 2009; Bender 1999; Driver 2001; 2010; Barrow 2003; Etherington 2007). In the context of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century display, such maps would have resonated with exhibition audiences. Throughout the exhibition practice Egypt was occupied by British political and military forces, and that fact would have undoubtedly shaped the way these interpretive devices were read and comprehended.

Just like maps, archaeological plans offer a socially constructed form of knowledge, reflecting the inherent biases of the maker and the socio-political context in which they were made. As such, they contain the same intentional “silences” or omissions found in colonial map-making practices (see Harley 1988, 290). The plans on display at the annual exhibitions, whether depicting a settlement site, a temple, or a tomb structure, portrayed a landscape reimagined by archaeologists that privileged Egypt’s ancient past over its present, actively erasing much of Egypt’s more recent heritage. Archaeologists had the power to select which aspects of Egypt’s history should be made visible and which should remain invisible, removing signifiers of modern occupation and in the process dehumanising and desocialising the landscape. Harley (1988, 290) argues that “[t]he notion of ‘silences’ on maps is central to any argument about the influence of their hidden political messages.” Asserting that “...maps – just as much as examples of literature or the spoken word – exert a social influence through their omissions as much as by the features they depict and emphasise.”

Matthew Edney (2009, 12) has shown how that during this period the act of mapping, surveying, or recording land was a marker of “unequal power relationships” in which “communities produced maps that represent weaker polities for the exclusive benefit of the stronger...” This applies strongly to the exhibition space, where the construction and display of maps and plans justified not only territorial but also intellectual possession. To a viewer in the metropole, these devices imposed systematic order on a supposedly ‘chaotic’ land, offering a fleeting glimpse of modern Egypt that was heavily structured and organised through maps, plans, and diagrams as technologies of control. Contemporary Egypt was projected as subdued and mastered by superior British scientific procedure and imperial technologies, constructing the notion of Egypt as a territory and its archaeological knowledge as a possession to be owned. As part of a new archaeological vision, these interpretive devices were equally important in placing the discipline and the excavated artefact firmly within the realm of the imperial project.

6.6 Photography and the moving image

The development of photographic technology was a key component in the reshaping of vision in the nineteenth century (see Crary 1990), and its impact was felt significantly in archaeology, which developed as a discipline in the same period. As an advanced scientific practice that was viewed with epistemological reverence as distinctly mechanical and inherently objective, photography was quickly adopted by emerging disciplines, such as archaeology and anthropology, as a means of legitimising and validating their scientific status (Riggs 2017; 2019). The evidential and informational value of the photograph was seen as promoting archaeology as an observational and empirical science, and it became fully integrated into the discipline's self-identity. Christina Riggs (2017, 362) has shown how the use of photography "contributed to discursive strategies that positioned archaeology as a scientific practice defined by rigour, accountability, methodology, and objective facts." Whereas previous visualisation techniques, including maps, plans, and illustrations, had always been subject to interpretation and the subjective vision of the creator, photographs acquired a seemingly more privileged status as proof and evidence in archaeology. Frederick Bohrer (2011, 22) likens the comparison of these divergent methods of recording at the time to a "generalized anatomy" and "particularized physiognomy" of archaeological sites and monuments.

Although photography provided archaeological method with additional scientific grounding, its adoption was also about performance and being seen to engage with the right scientific methodologies. It is therefore unsurprising that the exhibitions, as key sites for the performance of archaeological practice in the metropole, incorporated photographic interpretation from their beginning in 1884. The absence of exhibition catalogues for this early phase means we cannot be sure which images were displayed, but we know from correspondence that they were printed by Petrie personally as "printers either varnish or injure the plates, which I wish to avoid till we have the lantern series done on glass slides" (PMA 3/1/PEN/06). This comment reveals how much value he placed on this technology not only as an expensive resource but also for its importance in disseminating knowledge both inside and outside the exhibition space.

While Sudeshna Guha (2005) argues that by the 1880s “photography had superseded other forms of recording practices, such as sketching, painting and model making” exhibition reviews and later catalogues show that Petrie and the archaeologist-cum-curators who came after him provided a several styles of interpretation at the annual exhibitions. Petrie seems to have hesitated to rely on photographs alone to interpret his findings. Even though he dedicated an entire chapter to the use of photography in *Methods and Aims in Archaeology*, he appeared to question its authority as a recording method:

Photographs are essential for all objects of artistic interest, and for expressing rounded forms for which elaborate shading would otherwise be needed. Views of the excavations and buildings are also wanted. And it is desirable to publish photographs as well as drawings of very important carvings, in order to guarantee the accuracy of the drawings, which is the more useful edition for most purposes. (Petrie 1904)

In this spirit, the exhibitions created a patchwork of interpretive devices that were designed to support, supplement, and complement one another, working individually and collectively to present and interpret data, as well as demonstrating the wealth of recording practices needed to produce scientific archaeological knowledge.

By the time of the first annual exhibition Egypt had long been associated with photography. From as early as 1842, with the Prussian expedition led by Karl Richard Lepsius, photographers had focussed their lens on ancient Egyptian monuments, capturing largely aesthetic shots which appealed to the West’s fascination for an Orientalist and exoticized Egypt (see Bohrer 2011; Lyons 2005; Szegedy-Maszak 2005). Photographers such as Francis Frith, who produced surveys in the Holy Land and Egypt in the 1860s, had a “silent impact on the emerging practice of archaeological photography” as well as the “memory of nineteenth century viewers” (Brusius 2016, 255-256). These images, widely reproduced and circulated to popular and scientific audiences, would have been familiar to exhibition visitors as part of a collective archaeological imagination. By the 1880s Petrie was building upon decades of photographic documentation of ancient Egyptian sites, but Bohrer (2011, 10) believes that in this period in particular such photographs became a “document of the formalization of archaeological vision in Egypt”.

The annual exhibitions played upon the profession's aesthetic legacy by incorporating photographs of wider landscapes, situating the objects on display in their original geographic setting. Within the scientific context of the exhibition these photographs took on further meaning, engaging the viewer in a specific mode of seeing. These photographs presented part of the Egyptian landscape as a *site*, as a document to be read, analysed, and interrogated. Kitty Hauser (2007, 34) has shown how rapid advances in the historical sciences in the late nineteenth century, for example in archaeology, geology, and palaeontology, led to a "radical historicization of the natural environment", altering the way in which the British public viewed their surroundings. The landscapes depicted in such images, Hauser observes, were intended to reflect not only a visible present but also traces of an absent past, signs of former human activity that required a forensic eye to be identified and understood (see also Bohrer 2011, 7-9). While Hauser has shown that this archaeological way of seeing had already begun to enter the public field of vision, the surrounding content of the exhibitions, and the ability to view such landscapes in relation to other visual modes of archaeological recording, would have enabled visitors to convert these traces into archaeological knowledge.

Aerial photography brought a different visual representation of the archaeological landscape to the annual exhibitions of the 1930s. This technology had developed rapidly during the First World War, when photographs were taken from aeroplanes for military planning and intelligence. Archaeologists recognised the potential of such images to capture an almost perfect outline of archaeological settlements and structures where no trace had been visible on the ground; in this way they continued a long association between archaeology and the military in shared knowledge-making practices that helped to "fix a new sort of archaeological vision" (Bohrer 2011, 85). Nowhere was this more apparent than across the Middle East where military photography in the War had been prolific. O.G.S. Crawford and Alexander Keiller (1928, 4) wrote that "Arabia and the countries bordering it have played a leading role in the history of this new method of research ... [t]he ancient sites there are so plain that no special training or interest is required to detect them." This sentiment was echoed in the catalogue for the EES's 1932 exhibition, which used aerial photography

to communicate the scale and remains of the sprawling 18th Dynasty city of Akhetaten to a broad audience:

Before leaving the Exhibition the visitor's attention is drawn to the magnificent Aerial Survey photographs, taken for us by the Royal Air Force, and especially that one which comprises the whole site. In this photograph, while the parts excavated show up very blackly, it is still perfectly possible to see the outlines of the countless unexcavated houses lying thickly round the Royal Estate, *the most important portion of the whole city*. (EES 1932, 8)

This show of a new technology ensured that the EES's archaeological vision remained relevant and contemporary, demonstrating that the Society was engaging with current archaeological discourse, but it also made a connection to wider colonial practices. The aerial photographs utilised by the Society were often military instruments of surveillance for the protection of law and order, created with territorial imperatives such as boundary construction. Their use linked the discipline of archaeology directly to colonial power and authority and normalised these practices within the exhibition space.

One area in which the exhibitions relied heavily on photography was in visualising archaeological context. Photographs of deposits, shown 'as found', were often displayed alongside the relevant artefacts, allowing visitors to interpret the material in situ and draw meaning from object groupings, associations, and relationships. For example, empty coffins were displayed alongside photographs showing how human bodies were once positioned inside at the 1931 exhibition. In contrast to the presentation of landscapes and sites, these images may reflect a greater input of scientific method. They provided another layer to the performance of archaeological context while also making clear that excavation is inherently destructive and irreversible. Much in the same way that nineteenth-century anthropology adopted a 'salvage agenda' with its photography, capturing and preserving endangered cultures through mechanically produced images (see Edwards 1992; 2015), archaeology used the same visual methods to preserve and record its fleeting knowledge.

These images of objects in situ also hinted at the working processes of archaeology and the agency of the archaeologist. The 1901 EEF and ERA Abydos exhibition, for example, included a section on the re-discovered burial of the First Dynasty "Queen of

Zer”, framed by photographs of her body and possessions. The catalogue describes in detail the content of only one photograph, that showing the “arm of the Queen with bracelets upon it, after half of the wrappings were removed” (EEF and ERA 1901, 7). Christina Riggs (2014, 59) notes that “the entire premise of archaeology rested on discovery and revelation”, discussing how these acts of unwrapping and revealing human remains and objects became an integral part of the process of artefaction. By displaying this imagery, the exhibition both presented the process of revealing and producing the excavated artefact and exemplified the selectiveness of archaeological value through the removal and discarding of cloth coverings, in this instance for the main prize, “the most important group of gold work” found during that season (EEF and ERA 1901, 7). Photographs such as this centred the visitor’s gaze upon the perceived object of scientific enquiry, literally stripping away any peripheral paraphernalia. This treatment also raises the question of whether the presence of such imagery was also guided by social expectation and the need to elicit funding.

Much like the gold bracelets found upon the Queen of Zer, photographs of objects were often used to stand in for artefacts that had been retained in Cairo, or to represent significant groupings that had been separated through partage. Here, the belief in the scientific and mechanical objectivity of photographs was so widespread that they were presented and consumed as substitutes for archaeological objects. Just as Mirijam Brusius (2016, 258) has demonstrated for the use of early photography in museum collections, such images “promised proximity to the objects even though the objects were still remote”. This mechanical proximity enabled visitors to apply the same observational methods to the photograph that they would to the study of a physical artefact. The supposed absence of human mediation between the object and its representation, unlike in archaeological illustrations, stressed the perceived authority of the photograph and created what many viewed as another reincarnation of the working object.

Whereas the photographs used earlier had hinted at the archaeological process of excavation, the images displayed in the 1930s exhibitions were far more explicit in their communication of practices and techniques. The author of the EES 1938 exhibition catalogue wrote “[t]he attention of visitors to the Exhibition is drawn to the

series of photographs exhibited, which illustrate the various phases of the season's work." The gallery wall of images displayed the field director's choice to depict the systematic stages of excavation, from clearing the site to recording its objects, covering all aspects of activity in the field. As largely procedural shots these photographs had far greater technical reach. This representation of archaeological practice in the exhibition space was part of a "conscious policy of making the performance of fieldwork visible" that Sudeshna Guha (2002, 98) has shown became an important strategic practice for photographers capturing British excavations in India in the next decade.

Archaeologists continued to embrace new technology as excavations and exhibitions progressed into the twentieth century and mechanical imaging techniques developed to encompass cinematography. Over three seasons at Tell el Amarna, between 1930 and 1933, the EES recorded the process of excavation on film. These 16mm films, now housed in the EES archive, were shot in part by the team's architect Hilary Waddington and captured a reportage of daily life in Egypt on and off site. Chris Naunton's (2010, 51) speculation that the footage was intended for a public audience and that it could have been shown at the annual exhibitions may be correct. A letter in the Wellcome Trust archive from EES Secretary, Mary Jonas, written in the lead up to the 1931 exhibition at the Wellcome Museum asks if it will be "permissible to show a cinema film at intervals during the exhibition?", with the caveat that "the film is a sub-standard safety one and therefore out-side all the usual restrictions and regulations" (WA/HMM/CO/Chr/H.6[c]).

No further evidence has been identified to confirm whether the screenings took place, but its inclusion would certainly have fitted the programme of activities that the British Association for the Advancement of Science planned for its Centenary celebration, of which the EES 1931 exhibition formed a part. Running parallel to the EES's displays was an exhibition of 'Mechanical Aids to Learning' arranged by the BAAS and held concurrently at the Imperial Institute, the Institut Français, and the Science Museum. The exhibition explored the educational benefits of film, including "demonstrations of apparatus in active use" and screenings of films such as 'The Ruins of Ninevah' and the 'Native Life of Samoa' alongside those of the Empire Marketing Board (BAAS 1931, 11,

13). With the establishment a year earlier of the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films, which aimed to improve and extend the use of visual and audio devices in education, cinematography was high on the national agenda, particularly in the promotion of the Empire.

The museum sector was equally keen to explore the benefits of cinematography, with the Museums Association dedicating a special edition of its *Museums Journal* to 'Museums and Movies' in April 1930. In terms reminiscent of Victorian museology and the civic mission, the cinema was described as a new "instrument of rational recreation" through which museums could impart "life and movement" into their static galleries (Lowe 1930, 342). The *Journal* reported on "a few go-ahead museum people" who were experimenting in this direction, building cinema screens alongside their institutions or incorporating portable screenings in dimly-lit corners of their exhibition halls (Museums Association 1930; see also Furse 1930). Much in the same way as photography decades earlier, the focus remained on the scientific and objective advantages of film in contextualising the objects on display:

[H]ow much the specimens would gain in effectiveness if we could only show them in their proper environment or in use... I venture to think that such displays would be distinctly in keeping with the more human and more scientific spirit which now permeates the study of natural history. (Lowe 1930, 343).

The EES film of Tell el Amarna would have added a new, dynamic dimension to the displays, offering both archaeological knowledge and an element of spectacle. The footage captured the processing of objects on site, notably the lintel of Hatiay, the discovery of which caused a stir in the British press. The piece featured prominently as a plaster cast in the exhibition while the original remained in Cairo. Being able to see footage of the lintel in its original context, systematically cleaned, lifted, and transported within the Egyptian landscape would have undoubtedly enhanced the quality of the visitor's interaction and engagement with the object on display.

The EES footage provides a scopophilic gaze upon archaeological life in Egypt, portraying the scale and magnitude of excavations as a technical and colonial operation. Wide panoramic shots show managed and controlled sites with large teams of Egyptian excavators digging in ordered rows and children filmed in neat lines

ferrying buckets of debris away from the site, while British archaeologists supervise from a distance in a performance of authority. In contrast, close-up shots depict Egyptian and British workers painstakingly clearing debris away from sunken ceramics and carefully raising them intact, demonstrating the exactitude, skill, and precision required. In combination these scenes emphasise the scientific, systematic, and collective nature of archaeological practice (Riggs 2017), raising awareness that such knowledge is produced and not just discovered (Shepherd 2003).

Despite the film's archaeological focus, it could equally be read ethnographically, particularly when viewed amongst the anthropological collections of the Wellcome Museum. These scenes of 'native' labour and archaeological toil were interspersed with images of Egyptian culture and everyday life along the Nile, including men in *jelabiya* performing *fan a'nazaha wa-tahtib*, more commonly known today as *tahtib*, traditional martial arts fought with sticks. At a time when anthropological cinema was at its height and interwar British audiences were "hungry for the latest images of exotic peoples" (Griffiths 2002, xxxii) this footage can be read across several registers. As a visual display reinforcing colonial relationships, power dynamics, and hierarchies, it could be viewed as propaganda that, like many anthropological films of the time, served to justify policy abroad, locating archaeology as an imperial discourse and discipline.

Showings of films at the annual exhibitions did not take hold as much as photographs. It is not clear whether this was due to the expense and complexities of filming on site in Egypt, or perhaps to the unique nature of the 1931 exhibition at the Wellcome Museum. Photographs continued to be the dominant imaging technique within the exhibition space, where they were also circulated and exchanged. Notes scribbled alongside names in the visitor books show that several members of the public requested prints of archaeological and ethnographical photos. The practice was even commercialised at the EES 1931 and 1932 exhibitions, where visitors could purchase a set of captioned postcards of photographs taken at Tell el Amarna, depicting significant discoveries and daily life on and off excavation (Grundon 2007, 146; Montserrat 2000, 91). Their popularity with visitors shows that photography as a medium was fully embraced by a wide cross-section of exhibition audiences.

6.7 Models

The use of three-dimensional, scale models of sites at the annual exhibitions can trace its origins back to the late eighteenth to mid nineteenth century, where typically antiquarian and demonstrative models were used to accompany lectures at local and national archaeological societies. In a history of the archaeological model, Christopher Evans (2004, 29) has shown how in this environment archaeology used models to explore how to “visualise its own activity” but also as a “means of technological demonstration within the sciences as a whole.” They were an effective means of communicating scale, technique, and spatial knowledge, as well as an important performative aspect of the discipline. But their presentation and circulation at archaeological societies meant that they remained exposed to and regulated by a network of select individuals. Not until the late nineteenth century did archaeologists begin to recognise their benefits to a broader public audience.

Augustus Pitt-Rivers was particularly taken by the use of models. Inspired by what he had seen at the Society of Antiquaries he commissioned over a hundred models, mostly of his own excavations, to be displayed alongside associated artefacts in his museum (Evans 2004, 121). Harold St George Gray (1929, 36), a former archaeological assistant and model maker to Pitt-Rivers, later wrote that “[t]he construction of models of ancient sites before, in progress of, and after excavation was one of the most distinctive and conspicuous branches of General Pitt-Rivers’s scientific work, as testified by the large number of models exhibited in the Farnham Museum.” Gray’s use of the word “scientific” here is particularly pertinent. These models were designed to encapsulate and communicate Pitt-Rivers’s scientific approach to excavation and innovations in fieldwork technique. Their construction relied heavily on accurate surveys and site records, intricately sewing together elevation and section drawings, with plans and contour maps of the area (Evans 2004, 121; see also Gray 1929). While Petrie would have encountered such models through his archaeological society networks, it is more likely that his inspiration to use them in public displays came directly from his close professional relationship with Pitt-Rivers. An 1894 letter from Petrie to Pitt-Rivers, now in the archives of Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum,

shows how the use and merit of scale models as communication devices for museum audiences provided a point of discussion between the two archaeologists:

I am much obliged for your suggestion about models; and as I am giving to clear out an entire fort of the XVIIIth Dynasty we might well have a model of that to enlighten the public, somewhat like the model of Pompeii at Naples.
(Quoted in Stevenson 2012a, 9)

It would, however, be another ten years before Petrie began to experiment with three-dimensional models in his own exhibitions. The earliest extant record appears in 1905 when Petrie displayed a model of the temple of Hathor at Serabit el Khadem in Sinai in his rooms at University College (fig. 10). A 1903 report by St George Gray (1903) on the construction of a similar relief model of Arbor Low Stone Circle in Derbyshire suggests that Petrie's model may have taken up to 450 hours to construct. While archaeological models of the period were largely demonstrative in their style, designed to illustrate the processes of excavation itself, the Sinai model appears to have been more ahead of its time, with a partial reconstruction of the temple. The model shows the temple with its roof removed and several walls reinstated, revealing the perceived plan of chambers and passages within. Evans's (2004, 127) statement that reconstruction modelling "came increasingly to the fore" over the course of the twentieth century as public interest in archaeology grew, shows that Petrie's 1905 example was in many ways innovative and perhaps an indication of his attempts to break free from the specialised way of seeing that earlier archaeological models had promoted. However, the introduction of such reconstructive technologies were a point of contention for some visitors with prior knowledge of the site, as evidenced by a review in *The Athenaeum* (1905,49):

Most conspicuous [in the exhibition] is the model of the temple of Hathor at Sarabit el-Khadm, in Sinai, already well known to us by the photographs taken by Lepsius in 1845, and the careful surveys of the Royal Engineers published by the late Dr. Birch. Any one who will take the trouble to compare this "restoration" with the recent plan of M. Benedite, reproduced in Maspero's 'Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient' (t. i. p. 474), will see how much this model owes to the imagination of its constructors.

This "scathing anonymous review", which Margaret Drower (1985, 296) suspects was written by Edouard Naville, questioned whether Petrie's interpretation of the site as a

“Semitic temple”, or as a temple at all, was correct – a proposal that had been openly criticised and fiercely debated in the press in the weeks before and during the exhibition (see Campbell Thompson 1905a; 1905b; Petrie 1905a; 1905b). The inaccuracy of Petrie’s reconstruction, the reviewer suggests, “may be excused in view of the extreme paucity of result from his late unlucky expedition to Sinai” (The Athenaeum 1905, 49). As Petrie fought back against his critics, he turned to his model as evidence in support of his argument, providing a neatly labelled photograph for publication in *Man*. Rather like Pitt Rivers, Petrie seems to have considered his model a culmination or extension of the site record (Evans 2004, 121).

Regardless of questions over its accuracy, the model of the Hathor temple appears to have been popular with public audiences. Drower (1985, 296), for example, seems to have linked the “unusual interest” that the 1905 exhibition attracted in part to the display of the model. Petrie, however, was aware that it polarised popular and professional opinion. Reflecting on that summer in his autobiography, he (1931, 199) wrote “[f]or our July exhibition of Sinai, I had an accurate model made of the Serabit temple and monuments, but could not get any museum to take it off my hands, though there was much public interest in it.” It is not clear whether this lack of interest from the sector was due to the model’s size, its content, or perhaps its interpretive or experimental style. What is evident is that public benefit was clearly of utmost importance for Petrie, who went on to commission a model of the hill of Onias and its temple site for his next exhibition in 1906 (Petrie 1931, 203).



Figure 10. Model of the Serabit el Khadem temple on display at the EEF and ERA exhibition at University College, 1905. SINA1_0279. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

A scattering of models were used throughout the practice, although it remains difficult to determine an exact number. Examples such as McKay's model of the "hitherto unknown pyramids at Mazghouneh" gained press attention in 1911 for its ability to show "the maze of underground passages and chambers, stairs and portcullises, by which the Egyptian monarch hoped to baffle plunderers..." (*The Scotsman* 1911). Yet, it was in the EES's successful 1931 exhibition at the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum where the use and popularity of models reached its peak. Three large reconstructive models dominated the exhibition space, two representing excavations at Armant and one those at Tell el Amarna. As a group the models were seen as a visual spectacle. Deemed effective didactic displays for communicating ideas about the ancient past, they received positive reviews from both popular and professional audiences, as evidenced by a letter in the Wellcome Trust archive written by the Museum's Conservator, L. W. G. Malcolm:

The Exhibition has attracted widespread interest and has been visited by thousands. Realistic models are extensively employed for the first time to illustrate the structure and character of ancient Egyptian palaces, tombs and

methods of excavations. Such models have proved of considerable value in presenting to the uninitiated a vivid picture of Egyptian life and customs, rendering the exhibition instructive to all interested in the study of archaeology... [the models] tell at a glance what hours of reading and study would not make clear. (WA/HMM/CO/Chr/H.6[d])

The popularity of the models can be linked to a growing appetite for reconstructive models in British and American museums, particularly in the 1930s (Evans 2004). A desire to bring the past to life for museum audiences, to contextualise and recreate ancient lived experience, saw an increase in both the use of models and popular dioramas depicting 'habitat groups' and 'life groups' at a life size (Moser 1999). In archaeology, these technologies of display had a high impact on visitors. As Evans (2004) has noted, unlike technical plans, diagrams, and illustrations, which included an appreciable level of codified, specialist knowledge, reconstructive models presented interpretations of the past that could be 'seen' rather than 'read'. The influence of the museum sector upon this 1931 exhibition is evident. The field directors employed architectural model makers, at least one of whom had also worked in the museum sector, to materialise their visions. The resulting models were far more professional in appearance, intended as vehicles for technological demonstration (see Busch 1991; Knoll and Hechinger 2006). It is therefore unsurprising that at least two of the three models on display that year found their way into museum collections, consumed and distributed like artefacts, following their exhibition appearance.

Oliver Myers, the field director at Armant, commissioned two of the models for the exhibition. While much information about the first one, which represented the Baqaria, has been lost, the second, of the Bucheum, can be better traced. It was constructed by John B. Thorp of Thorp Model Makers, a company founded in 1883 and specialising in architectural models, whose premises were at the time situated at 88 Grays Inn Road. John Thorp had been employed as a model maker for both the Science Museum and Museum of London and must have been ideally suited to such a project. Representing the Bucheum "in its final stage after many walls and buttresses had been built by the Romans" (EES 1931, 19), the model, now housed at Manchester Museum, partially reveals an underground network of passages and burial chambers,

detailing the positioning of stelae and sarcophagi as found in situ (fig. 11). An attached interpretation panel gives a labelled map of the site with reference to the major tombs, while small viewing windows on either side of the model provide subterranean sightlines of the tunnel network that visitors could experience (fig. 12-14).



Figure 11. Model of the Bucheum at John Thorp's workshop, 1931. ARMANT_0837. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

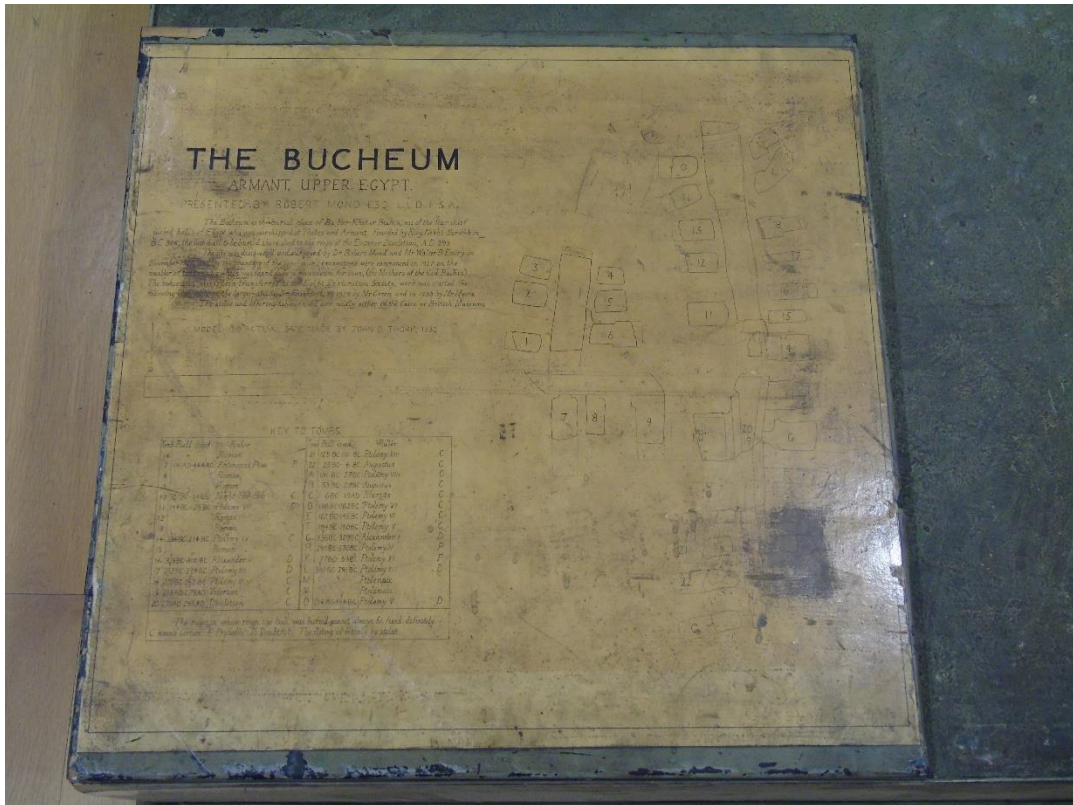


Figure 12. Interpretation panel on the Bucheum model at Manchester Museum, 2018. Author's own photograph.



Figure 13. Viewing window onto tunnel network on the Bucheum model at Manchester Museum, 2018. Author's own photograph.



Figure 14. Further detail of the Bucheum model and its subterranean sightlines, 2018. Author's own photograph.

Archive material at the Wellcome Trust shows that after the exhibition both of Myers's models as well as a reconstruction of a bull burial and three plaster casts, were presented to Sir Henry Wellcome for his private collection (WA/HMM/CO/Chr/H.6[e]). After Wellcome's death in 1936 and the subsequent division of his collection and distribution to museums nationwide (see Larson 2009), it appears it was left to Myers and the EES to find another permanent home for this material. EES Secretary Winnifred Keeves approached Mary Shaw at Manchester Museum in 1939:

I am writing to you at the suggestion of Mr. O.H. Myers to enquire whether the Victoria Museum would like to have the model of the Bucheum made by Mr. Thorp for one of the Society's Exhibitions. I understand that it is about six or seven feet square and twelve to eighteen inches high. We are trying to find a

suitable home for it and shall be glad to know whether the offer appeals to your Museum. (MM Egypt Archive Correspondence ID 418)

The Bucheum model was acquired by Manchester Museum (accession number: 1955.1), presumably to support the interpretation of their Amarna material. It remains unclear whether the model was ever displayed, but it has spent the last few decades in storage in both Liverpool and Manchester (Campbell Price, personal communication 2018). As a further testament to how such dated models have fallen out of favour in museum collections, the model was recently at risk of disposal due to its condition and size, which is something beyond the scope of most of today's museum stores.

A fully interactive model of a Tell el Amarna house, built to a scale of three centimetres to one metre by architectural sculpture company Aumonier and Sons, of Charlotte Street in London, was perhaps the highlight of the 1931 exhibition (fig. 15). Field director John Pendlebury celebrated it as the "first model of an ancient Egyptian house to be shown in England" (EES uncatalogued document b). The model had been commissioned by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago at the request of the Institute's founder, James Henry Breasted (OIM registration number: C479A-C; accession number: 116). The timing suggests that it was to feature in Breasted's new museum and research facility, which was to open in December of that same year and would receive three thousand visitors in its first three months (Abt 2011, 355-356). However, the Oriental Institute had suggested to the EES that the model should remain in London for their annual exhibition "so that it can first be exhibited together with the finds of the coming season at Amarna, and could serve in the propaganda for funds in support of the Society's work" (EES uncatalogued letter c).

The Amarna house model was a visual and physical demonstration of the collective archaeological and architectural knowledge required for a reconstruction. As Ralph Lavers (1933, 36), an architect and member of the EES Amarna team, later wrote in *The Architectural Association Journal*, "[s]everal years of intensive research was necessary before this model could be made..." Whereas reconstructive technologies had earlier been dismissed for their presumed inaccuracies and imaginative content (see Jones 1999; Moser 1999), in emphasising the weight of research behind its construction and the number of specialists involved in the process the EES made sure

that the Amarna model possessed authenticity and scientific credibility (see Lloyd 1933). The exhibition catalogue makes clear that the model was based on data accumulated from “several hundreds” of excavated houses, “so that it has now been possible to produce an accurate representation of a typical example... with a reasonable amount of assurance and a minimum of conjecture” (EES 1931, 14). Evans (2004, 128) has linked such methods to the “reconstructionist ethos” of 1930s archaeology of settlement sites as well as a growing appetite for dramatic reconstruction paintings in publications such as the *Illustrated London News*. These links are certainly relevant to the Tell el Amarna excavations. Thus, the Society and its archaeologists presented the site architecturally to public audiences, stimulating them to identify with the Amarna lived experience, as in the artistic reconstructions featured frequently in the pages of the *Illustrated London News* (Monteserrat 2000, 74).



Figure 15. The Tell el Amarna house model. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Here we see a far more engaging and visitor-focused approach to knowledge construction than before. The peopled and landscaped reconstruction, which presented a snapshot of daily life in miniature, read a little like a diorama. The model was accompanied by a lengthy account in the exhibition catalogue, providing a detailed walk-through description of the house written from an ancient Egyptian perspective by the eloquent and engaging John Pendlebury. Here, Pendlebury's experience of progressive curatorial interpretation and of communicating reconstructions to the public at the site of Knossos on Crete may have trickled into his EES role (see Marinatos 2015, 111-115; Pendlebury 1930). A level of haptic perception may also have been introduced to the visitor experience, with the model designed to be hands-on and interactive. Original footage in the EES archive shows a practical demonstration of how sections of the building's roof and walls could be removed or propped open, allowing viewers a glimpse of the many interior spaces, as well as capturing each room's layout and design features in detail. An archive photograph (fig. 3) of the model shows that at the exhibition it was presented open access on a table top display, which would have allowed for interaction. The catalogue's descriptive content of the house's interior certainly suggests that this kind of exploration was encouraged.

These models were evidently popular with audiences, to such an extent that they often gained more visitor attention than the objects on display. Some exhibition reviews (such as *The Scotsman* 1931) chose to focus solely on the Amarna model at the expense of all artefacts. Had such models become more popular than the objects they were originally designed to contextualise? The attention shown to them is understandable since they must have dominated the exhibition space physically and visually. While their heavy presence, as Alice Stevenson (2019, 164) has commented, can be seen to have "pre-empted the post-war shift in public expectations of permanent museum display, in which there were fewer objects and more interpretation", they were also a necessity. Political tensions in Egypt had seen the number of objects offered to the EES through partage decrease rapidly throughout the 1920s and 1930s, significantly altering the shape, content, and dynamics of the annual exhibitions. The Society needed new, stimulating ways of visualising

archaeological practice and interpreting ancient Egypt for public and professional audiences that did not rely solely on physical artefacts. The substantial presence of the models offered a distraction from what must have been a noticeable decline in object numbers, while also projecting an image of a Society keen to explore and engage with new technologies and interpretive devices.

* * * * *

Established in the 1880s when archaeology was finding its position among the new sciences, the annual exhibitions provided an opportunity for Egyptian archaeology to carve out its own disciplinary vision and way of seeing, aligning its development with a heightened awareness of visuality and progress in the observational sciences. The experimental ethos of the exhibitions enabled archaeologists to introduce audiences to new canons of evidence at the forefront of practice, shaping and standardising the discipline's visual culture and objects of study. Re-defining the Egyptian antiquity as an excavated artefact was central to this concept, with the exhibitions operating as a space for the process of transformation and artefaction. In order to alter the meaning of the object, previous viewing practices had to be challenged. The exhibitions informally taught visitors how to be disciplined observers, to engage with the materiality of excavations, and to actively apply this new vision to de-codify archaeological knowledge. As a social encounter, the exhibitions were also about creating a collective empiricism through establishing fixed practices of visual and material literacy in the field of archaeology. As the discipline continued to develop into the 1930s the exhibitions expanded with them, remaining a platform for practitioners to share the documentation and visualisation techniques which continued to alter public and professional perceptions.

This approach was achieved through multiple layers of exhibition technologies that were intended to create an interpretive framework for reading the newly excavated artefacts. The unique approach of bringing the fieldsite to audiences in London was key to this epistemological strategy. The display of archaeological maps, plans, photographs, and models brought a vital spatial dimension and visualisation of the field. The arrangement of objects enabled concepts such as assemblages, typologies, and context to be materialised. The voice of the archaeologist, presented through

labels, catalogues, and public talks, provided an authoritative perspective that was absent from most other displays of Egyptian archaeology. The archaeologist's presence in the space, which was an active, working environment for processing and organising finds, made the exhibition into an extension of the archaeological site. All these factors were part of a conscious effort to make the performance of fieldwork visible.

The practice maintained a physical and conceptual distance from museums for a number of reasons including knowledge construction. It fostered a unique context of engagement that centred on the close inspection of objects, free from the distortion and obstruction of glass cases, as well as an increased sensory exploration through touch and smell. However, while the practice maintained this separate identity, it increasingly drew and enhanced components from museum practice in order to engage audiences further. The introduction of object labels, catalogues, three-dimensional models, and the use of varying approaches to arranging objects, all demonstrate a thorough and enlightened understanding of current practice and a dialogic relationship with the museum sector. It was, however, ultimately the unique environment of the annual exhibition that afforded its organisers the freedom and flexibility to experiment with these devices, creating a patchwork of interpretation that was structured around the excavated artefact.

7. Audience and reception

Up to this point the focus of discussion in this thesis has been on the agencies behind the display, a largely select group of individuals, and how they organised the annual exhibitions and produced the exhibitionary object. This present chapter changes direction to consider the audiences that populated these spaces and the many responses to the displays by the visiting public. In this chapter I therefore turn to the visitors who filled the exhibition space and constituted a distinctive and significant group of consumers of Egyptian archaeology in the capital.

A central aim of this chapter is to build a picture of the audiences of the annual exhibitions by discussing three significant groupings in some detail: the general public or popular audience; archaeology and museum professionals; and journalists. Through these groupings I hope to gain a better understanding of the composition of exhibition audiences and the constituency of the visitor by using demographic analysis, addressing class and social status, education, gender, professional and geographic background, as well as teasing out elements of individual and collective experiences and notions of reception within these groups. Who were the visitors? What were their conditions of access? How did they engage with and respond to the objects and displays? What was their experience of visiting the exhibitions? What impact did these exhibitions have as a cultural event? The way in which these displays were consumed, and who were the consumers, has an enormous influence over the knowledge being constructed. By centring the visitor, this chapter goes some way toward acknowledging the many diverse and complex subject-object relationships generated within the exhibition space, as well as toward reinstating the active and autonomous visitor in the history of temporary exhibitions.

7.1 Visitor studies theory

In recent decades, Museum Studies has seen a marked change in approaches used in visitor studies. Visitors to museums and exhibitions are no longer thought of as a largely homogenous group who receive messages in a passive process of knowledge

transfer, but as autonomous agents who each bring their own unique personal experiences, identities, agendas, and prior knowledge to meaning-making (Hooper-Greenhill 2011). Falk and Dierking's (1992, 37) 'Interactive Experience Model', for instance, examines the social context of learning within the museum and highlights personal context or social background as "perhaps the single greatest influence on the visitor's museum experience". By re-defining visitors as active participants, performers, and interpreters within the exhibition space, it becomes possible to draw attention to the socially situated and dialogic nature of knowledge construction. Falk and Dierking (2000, 92-105) note, for example, that the majority of learning experiences within the museum happen in circumstances of "within-group sociocultural mediation." Whether directly or indirectly, interactions with other visitors, ideas, and identities, inevitably shape their engagement with the objects and narratives on display. In order to understand an exhibition's audience and how they interpret the displays before them, we must gain an insight not only into individual visitors, but also into how they function as groups within the exhibition space and how between them they mediate social, interactive, and collaborative learning.

While the study and understanding of today's visitor is steadily increasing and approaches and methods are becoming more rigorous, in museum and exhibition history the visitor remains elusive. Scarcity of data, variable institutional documentation, and rarity of personal accounts leave audiences somewhat invisible in the historical record. As Kate Hill (2016, 103; see also Hill 2005, 126) has stressed, it has become easier, and therefore commonplace, for critical historical narratives to focus on the Foucauldian analysis of the Museum as an institution at the expense of the visitor.

In most cases the enormous asymmetry in evidence between the documents systematically created and preserved by the museum itself, and the sparse surviving records of visitors' reactions, actions and experiences has meant that even when historians set out to document visitor's opinions about museums, they have ended up focussing on how museums sought to shape those opinions. (Hill 2016, 103)

Only a handful of studies have successfully tackled the subject of the historical visitor in order to address their actions and experiences, as well as their thoughts and views

of the material they encountered. Through extensive archival research, Hill (2005; 2016), Samuel Alberti (2009), and Stephanie Moser (2006) have pieced together the social and cultural make-up of historical audience groups and have gleaned some aspects of their personal experience in engaging with displays in different contexts, including municipal, university, and national collections. These accounts show that the historical visitor operated in much the same way as today's audiences and hence should be analysed in similar ways.

7.2 General public or popular audience

From very early in the exhibition practice, the organisers at the EEF considered the gathering of visitor information to be of paramount importance. From no later than 1885 visitor books were left out at exhibitions for attendees to sign and give their names and addresses. This was primarily a marketing initiative, a means of gaining the details of interested parties in order to promote the Fund's work and keep them informed of upcoming events and exhibitions. The annual displays were always viewed as an opportunity to recruit new subscribing members and receive donations towards excavations. In the weeks leading up to an exhibition Edwards and Petrie, in particular, returned to previous visitor books to send out personal invitations and announcements, as evidenced by this 1886 letter from her to him:

I have received the name book this morning, & I find them and 580 of them – including about 12 of my subscribers. Probably as many of them Poole's – but I do not know his people.

I have not nearly enough cards for all them, but will select the more prominent names, and addresses as far as I can. Do you think it worth while to have more printed for this purpose? I will order them if you wish it. (PMA 5/EDW/09)

While a handful of such documents relating to Garstang's temporary exhibitions have survived in the archives of the Garstang Museum at the University of Liverpool, the visitor books of the Egypt Exploration Fund had long been thought lost. However, in the course of this research, two examples were discovered in the Egypt Exploration Society's Lucy Gura Archive. The first lists the names, addresses, and sometimes

professions of visitors to the Fund's 1906 exhibition at King's College London (fig. 16), while the second records the same information for the Society's exhibitions at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House in 1922, 1924, and 1926, and the EES's office in 1927.

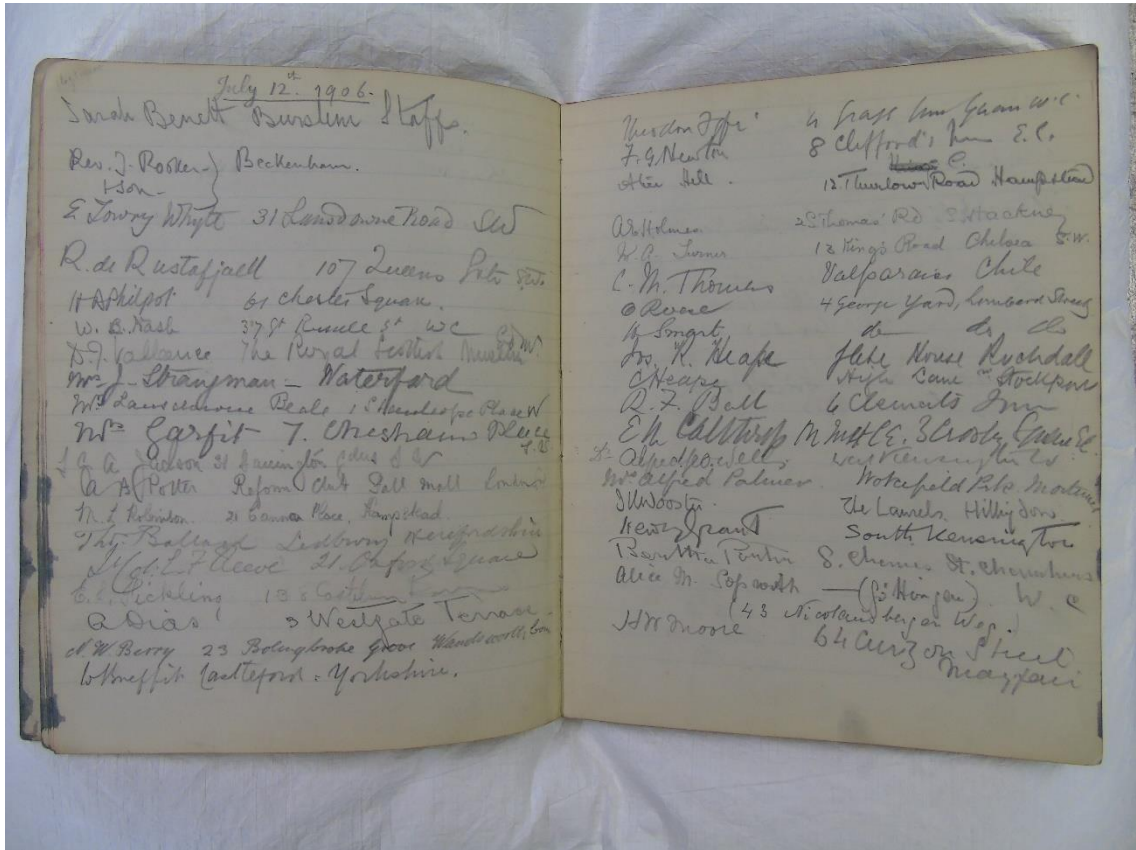


Figure 16. The 1906 exhibition visitor book in the Egypt Exploration Society archive, 2019. Author's own photograph.

As part of the “ritual of exhibition visiting” (Macdonald 2005, 125), particularly in smaller-scale private collections of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, signing a visitor book would have been a familiar process to many of those attending the displays of the EEF. The books themselves reveal a little of the visitor experience. Scribbled notes and marginalia next to names detail requests for photographs, enquiries about membership, and levels of interest in the Fund's work (figs. 17-18). These suggest that a representative of the Fund was on hand, perhaps often next to the visitor book, and would hold and record such conversations. Together with the mentions of promotional leaflets, book sales, photograph sales, and a donations box being provided for visitors, one can imagine that the visitor book was kept in an area

occupied by the Fund within the space, perhaps by the entrance, where prospective members or interested parties could ask questions about the organisation and the display. Thus, the visitor book was an interface for meaningful engagement with exhibition visitors.

Although visitor books are still largely under-analysed, in recent years increasing numbers of scholars in Museum Studies have approached them as an object of research (Macdonald 2005; Morris 2011; Coffee 2013; Ross 2017). These studies propose valuable methods for working with such documents, but they focus upon more recent examples where audiences were given the opportunity to leave comments on their experience. While these provide unparalleled qualitative access to the views and thoughts of exhibition and museum audiences, those created in the nineteenth century and earlier, which primarily list names and addresses, require a different type of analysis. Paula Findlen (1994, 137) has shown that these documents have a longstanding history in the sector, with examples dating back to the private collections of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy, in which the signatures of prominent attendees “...immortalised the fame of a museum and its creator by recording their connection to the social, political, and intellectual centers of power”. Despite their lack of visitor dialogue, these records are often the only source of information on historical audiences and, as Findlen (1994, 136-146) has shown, openly lend themselves to quantitative visitor research in terms of attendance figures, as well as to some extent for the social and professional demographic of visitors to past exhibitions.

There remain a number of limitations with working with such data. The lack of comments and visitor dialogue means that these books are a means of identifying an elusive audience rather than gaining an understanding of their individual views. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (2011, 373) has criticised such demographic studies, stating that they often prevent us from understanding the “value of that experience to visitors”. In order to avoid a superficial discussion of reception it is indeed vital to tease out such values where possible in order to gain a richer insight into a more meaningful visitor experience. To that end we must look to what can be established or extrapolated from the demographic data by exploring the social, cultural, and

Any detailed analysis must also investigate the accuracy of the data extracted from the books. We know from archival sources that not everyone who attended the annual exhibition signed the visitor book. During the 1886 exhibition Petrie wrote to Edwards from the Royal Archaeological Institute to keep her abreast of visitor numbers:

Today we have 70 signatures which means over 100 people; I counted 21 in the room when it was far from fullest. Every day our attendance increases, signatures rising from 45 to 70. The things draw amazingly, + many people come more than once, + bring their friends. (EES COR.017.c.18)

A hastily scribbled comment on the bottom of one day's entry in the 1927 exhibition visitor book that reads "several did not sign" shows that non-signing continued throughout the history of the exhibition. Where people are absent from these records, it should be asked what were the motivations for signing? Rates of signing, for example, may have been affected by the way the EEF presented the purpose of the visitor book. If the prime aim of recording visitors was for marketing, perhaps the book was only signed by those who wished to receive further information about the Fund. Yet, the presence of names without addresses shows that some visitors were willing to sign purely as a record of attendance rather than a commitment to involvement. Be that as it may, it is clear that the visitor books do not present a full list of attendees; an unquantifiable number of invisible visitors will unfortunately remain absent from the forthcoming discussion.

In such historical documents we must be aware of social protocols that may have governed people's actions and reduced the visibility of certain demographics, notably in relation to age and gender. It is possible, for example, that in strongly patriarchal family groups of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century men may have signed the visitor book on behalf of their wives, children, and other people in their group. This may be the case particularly if the visitor was signing in order to receive communications from the organisation. Frequently we see women recorded without a name but simply referred to as the "wife" of a male visitor, resulting in their individual identity being obscured. In both books the lack of titles and the predominant use of initials with a surname, rather than the first name and surname written in full, has hindered the identification of women. More often than not a woman's title, either

Miss or Mrs, was added as marginalia by a member of EEF staff to a name with just initials in order to indicate gender, presumably for correspondence (fig. 17). While this does provide a more reliable measure of gender, it is unlikely that this was done for every female visitor. We can therefore identify only a minimum number of women attending, but the true number is very likely to be higher.

Despite these and other limitations, these sources provide a rare and valuable opportunity to access audiences previously thought lost, offering two snapshots in time from which we can begin to repopulate and reanimate the exhibition space.

7.2.1 1906 exhibition

The period around 1906 was a fruitful yet unsettled time for Egyptian archaeology in the capital. Having established the ERA in 1892, Petrie had continued a working relationship with the EEF, both receiving financial support and holding joint exhibitions. However, by 1905 the relationship had become unbearably fractious, and after a couple of months of heated discussions he parted company with the Fund for the second and final time. The decision was fuelled by arguments over financial arrangements and the Fund's preference for Edouard Naville. The EEF remained determined to fund Naville's excavations at Deir el Bahari, and with costs there rising year by year the committee had suggested that Petrie should suspend his own excavations to concentrate on fundraising (Drower 1985, 293-296; Petrie 1931, 197-198). In disgust, Petrie terminated his contract with the EEF and established his own archaeological organisation, the BSAE, in July. The 1905 exhibition at University College was their last joint display, but tensions were evident. Petrie announced his separation in the exhibition catalogue, "owing to [the Fund's] limitation to the site of Deir el Bahri" (EEF and ERA 1905, 3), and Naville refused to exhibit in the same room (Drower 1985, 296), choosing instead to display his finds at the Society of Biblical Archaeology opposite the British Museum.

The 1906 exhibition was therefore a fresh start for the EEF and the first to be held in King's College London's Strand Campus, in what would become a six-year relationship. The Strand had undergone a major redevelopment only a couple of years before. In a

project that Jonathan Schneer (1999, 19, 19-28) describes as “the intersection between politics and architecture”, the street had been widened to create a broad sweeping boulevard reminiscent of Paris and Berlin. Several slums had been demolished and buildings refaced in Edwardian Baroque as part of this grand scheme of civic improvement and imperial ambition. This was a far grander, more modern and metropolitan setting for the Fund’s new discoveries than earlier locations: “[t]he rooms in which they are shown are both more spacious and more convenient than those which have been at the disposal of the Fund on other occasions, and the exhibits are consequently displayed to much greater advantage than in former years” (*The Athenaeum*, 1906).

Open for four weeks from 10 July to 4 August, the exhibition catalogue and published reviews reveal that the display showcased two high-profile excavations. In one room visitors encountered finds from a number of Naville’s seasons at Deir el Bahari, primarily from the 11th Dynasty mortuary temple of Mentuhotep and the ‘sanctuary of Tuthmosis III’. In an adjoining room were shown the results of Grenfell and Hunt’s excavations at Oxyrhynchus, with a display of papyri and discoveries of Graeco-Roman period objects, including coins, children’s toys, and terra-cottas. That year’s exhibition, however, was dominated by one particular discovery: that summer Naville and his team had excavated the Hathor-cow statue at Deir el Bahari, and the find had attracted significant attention in the press, where it was heralded as “the most perfect specimen of animal life in ancient or modern sculpture” (*The Morning Post* 1906). The discovery fuelled the famed rivalry between Naville and Petrie, with one prominent EEF patron, Mary Louise McClure, writing “I fear our ‘cow’ has turned poor Petrie’s milk sour!” (EES COR.007.a.46). Although the statue remained in Cairo, the display of a true-to-life model created by artist F. F. Ogilvie, as well as watercolour paintings of its discovery by M. Reach, captured the imagination of the exhibition’s many visitors (EEF 1906, 18-19). These artistic representations were so popular that Ogilvie’s model, and some of his accompanying colour sketches, went on to be exhibited at the newly opened Modern Gallery at 61 New Bond Street (EES General Committee I, 98; see also Fletcher and Helmreich 2011, 309).

Conditions of access had relaxed a great deal since the Fund's early exhibitions at the Royal Archaeological Society. Originally these had been divided into "private" days, when Petrie and his team could work on the collection and receive exclusive visitors, and "public" days from 10am to 4pm, usually Tuesdays, Thursdays, and eventually Saturdays, when members of the public were admitted without charge "on presentation of visiting cards" (*The Times* 1886). These cards, which visitors had to receive or acquire from the Fund's offices, regulated access to the collection and ensured that the well-connected were guaranteed entry. The primarily male and elite membership of the Royal Archaeological Institute were also granted admission as a condition of the loan of their premises. By the turn of the century, such regulation had lapsed. The 1906 exhibition was open from 10am to 5pm, typically for six days per week, over its four-week run. Admission tickets were no longer used and newspapers reported the collection as "open to the public" and "free to anyone interested in the work of the Fund" (*The Sphere* 1906). But what impact did the shedding of this image of restriction have upon visitor numbers and the social composition of audiences?

The visitor book shows that a minimum of 674 individuals visited the 1906 exhibition over the 23 days it was open to the public. Numbers peaked at 79 people in one day during the opening week, but the daily average was between 20 to 40. These figures appear relatively comparable with the earliest EEF exhibitions with Petrie. At the first exhibition in 1884, Petrie confirmed that "[t]he numbers run up rapidly, 16th – 5, 18th – 9, 23rd – 14, 25th – 30" (PMA 3/1/PEN/11), and in 1888 he reported that "[t]he show draws fairly, quite as well as I expected; 30 to 40 on rainy days + 40 to 50 in fine weather" (PMA 3/1/PEN/35). Daily and total visitor numbers could rise significantly depending on location and content, as in 1885, when the Fund "...had in over 100 people yesterday, quite tight blocked sometimes" to view the famous Naukratis displays (PMA 3/1/PEN/28), and at the Egyptian Hall in 1888 where Petrie estimated a total of 2000 people over two months (PMA 3/1/PEN/38). The relative consistency in average visitor numbers across these two decades suggests that, despite changes in conditions of access, the exhibitions remained quite an exclusive event, primarily advertised among a select group of individuals who constituted a fairly tight community of interested parties.

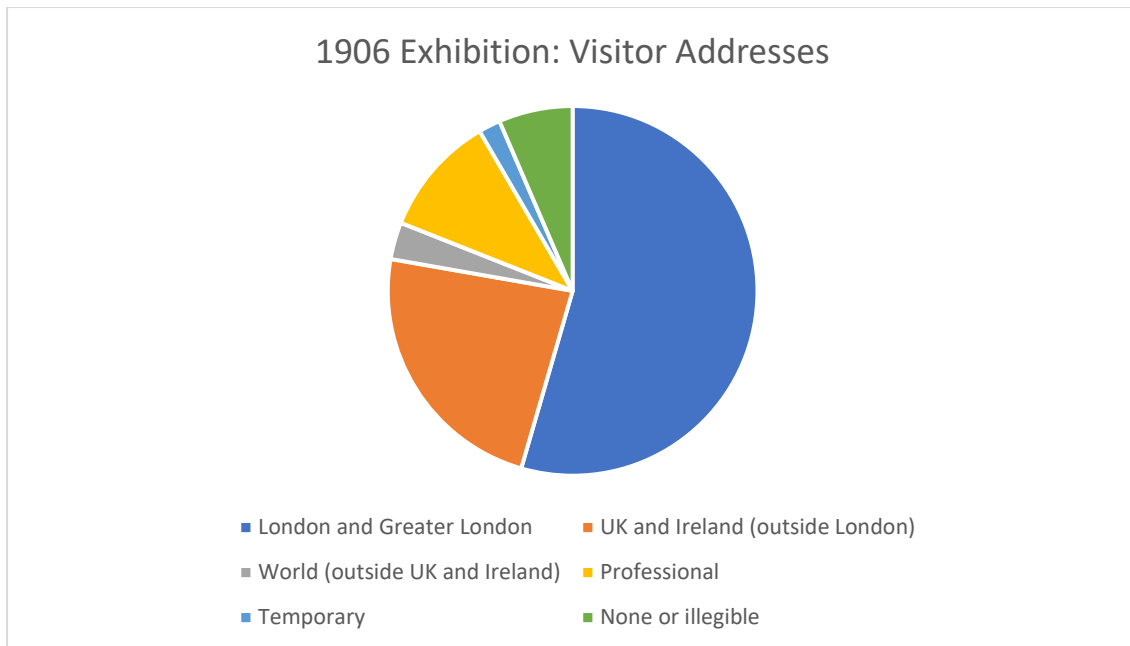


Figure 19. Chart showing the percentage of different visitor addresses listed in the 1906 visitor book, based on the 674 individuals listed.

This exclusivity is also reflected in the geographical data. In order to visualise the residential distribution of visitors to the 1906 exhibition, I have plotted all the permanent addresses provided in the visitor book onto maps. The decision was made to exclude professional and temporary addresses, such as hotels and clubs, from this dataset, in order to give a more accurate representation of where visitors were living (fig. 19). The addresses recorded in the visitor book reveal that the largest proportion, at least 55% of visitors, lived in London and Greater London (fig. 20). 23% of visitors came from the rest of the United Kingdom and Ireland, with the majority clustered around the south-east region and the cities of Birmingham, Nottingham, Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds (fig. 21). Just 3% originated from international locations, with northern Europe and the East Coast of the USA featuring most prominently (fig. 22). This pattern shows that while the exhibitions were drawing national and, to some extent, international interest, their audience was largely local. The prominence of this audience base suggests that the exhibition and its content were primarily viewed and interpreted through a metropolitan frame of understanding.

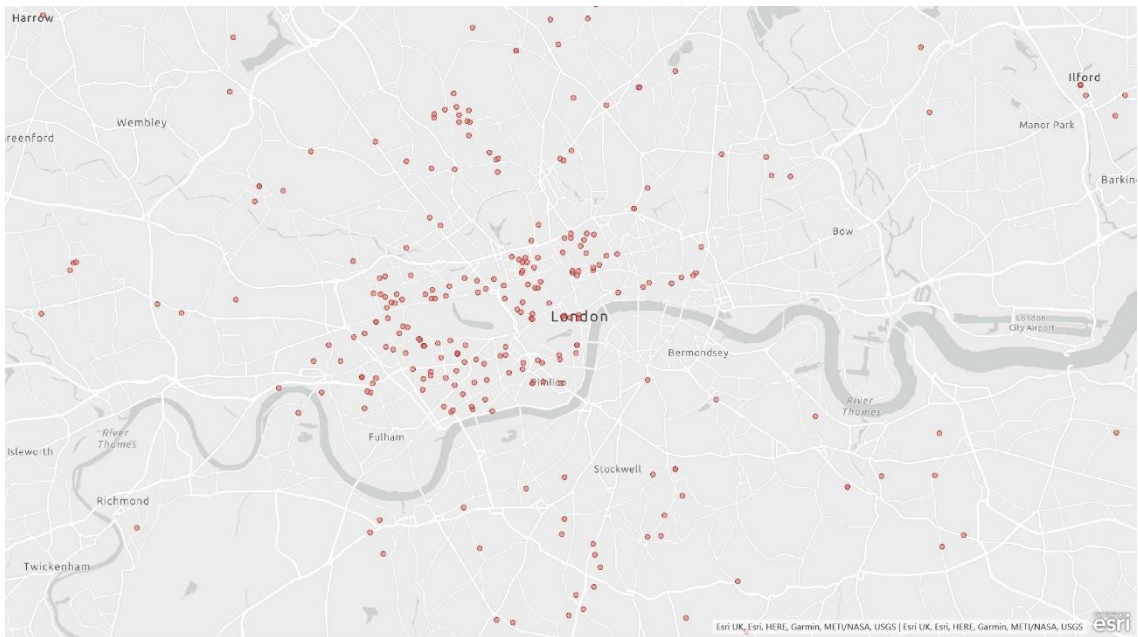


Figure 20. Map showing the location of London and Greater London addresses from the 1906 exhibition.

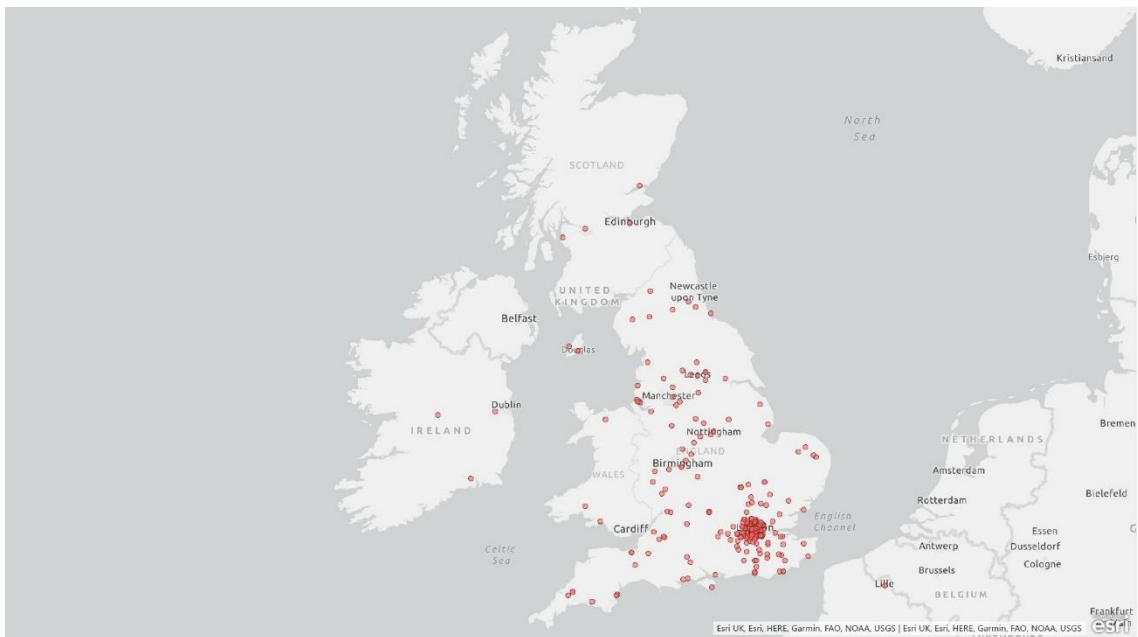


Figure 21. Map showing the location of UK and Ireland addresses from the 1906 exhibition.



Figure 22. World map showing the location of addresses from the 1906 exhibition.

For the social constituency of the annual exhibition’s visitor base, Amara Thornton (2015) identifies a largely elite, non-scholarly audience, whose character was in part due to careful and strategic timing. Thornton places the annual exhibitions firmly within the London Season, a period spanning May to July during which aristocratic families would return to their town houses and London would abound with cultural events, performances, and temporary exhibitions. This timing was critical, and it seems that in the formative years of the practice Petrie occasionally paid the penalty for opening too late:

It would be impossible for me to get my things fit for exhibition before 1 August, by then it will be the worst time to exhibit. So I shall – as last year – take time first to do all my writing + drawing, + then exhibit when people begin to return from holidays. (PMA 3/1/PEN/51)

The London Season, a time that Thornton notes was when scientists, artists, and aspiring writers could seek out wealthy patrons, was crucial for marketing archaeology in the capital. Although such events were open to all, their social aspect, in which “conversation and networking were as important as educational enrichment”

(Thornton 2015, 1), meant that an upper-class and aspiring middle-class audience was almost guaranteed.

The discovery of visitor books makes it possible us to solidify these conclusions by comparing their unique contents to contemporary social records. Between 1898 and 1899, Charles Booth, a British shipping magnate, philanthropist, and social scientist, recorded a wealth of empirical data on the streets of London with the objective of creating a “city-wide social classification scheme” (Gibson-Brydon 2016, 6; see also Vaughn 2018, 61-92). Booth and a team of investigators accompanied policemen on their patrols across the metropolis, interviewing residents and recording their observations in a series of notebooks now held at the archive of the London School of Economics. The end result was a series of maps, published in survey volumes as the *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty 1898-9* between 1902 and 1903, which colour-coded London’s streets under seven different categories according to the income and social status of their inhabitants:

Black - Lowest class. Vicious, semi-criminal.

Dark Blue - Very poor, casual. Chronic want.

Light Blue - Poor. 18s. to 21s. a week for a moderate family.

Purple - Mixed. Some comfortable others poor.

Pink - Fairly comfortable. Good ordinary earnings.

Red - Middle class. Well-to-do.

Yellow - Upper middle and upper classes. Wealthy.

Booth’s observations stretched across an extensive area of London, from Hampstead in the north to Clapham in the south, from Greenwich in the east to Hammersmith in the west. The only areas that were not recorded were in the central City of London, which were deemed to house very few residents. Thomas Gibson-Brydon (2016, 6) has shown how this unique social mapping was the result of Booth’s “lifelong obsession with the moral and material improvement of the working people” and that his maps and social classifications gained considerable traction in Edwardian government and charitable policies.

Hitherto, the specifics of class, wealth, and the social status of museum and exhibition visitors have remained largely inaccessible to historical research. The temporal proximity and geographical relevance of Booth's maps to the 1906 exhibition provides a unique and valuable reference point from which we can begin to build a more accurate visitor profile. By comparing the London addresses recorded in the 1906 exhibition to Booth's data from the preceding years it is possible to give a more accurate account of the social composition of exhibition visitors. We must bear in mind the subjective nature of the map's data and its context of production, which was heavily driven by overt political and religious motivations and agendas. The map's interpretations of social status were influenced by the bias of a small group of middle- to upper-class investigators and were largely intended for an elite readership. Despite these reservations, Booth's study offers one of the most pertinent indicators of wealth and status for late Victorian and early Edwardian London and thus, given the dominance of Londoners amongst visitors to the exhibitions, presents an unparalleled starting point for a discussion.

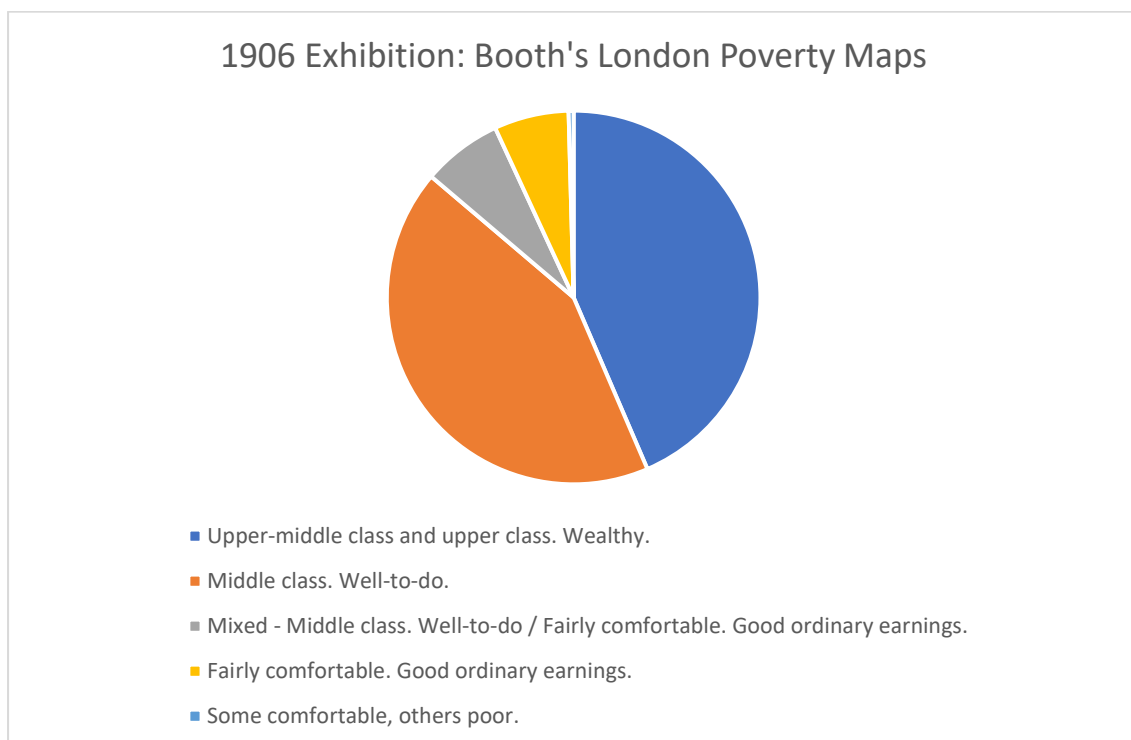


Figure 23. Chart showing the percentage of Booth map classifications for London addresses listed in the 1906 visitor book.

Results from mapping visitor addresses support previously developed interpretations. Of the visitors who gave London addresses within the coverage of Booth's maps, 44%, the largest proportion, came from areas of the highest level: 'Upper-middle and upper class. Wealthy'. Booth (1904) defined this category as households that "keep three or more servants, and whose houses are rated at 100 pounds or more". The second largest proportion, at 43%, are those classified as 'Middle class. Well-to-do', a category defined as "families who kept one or two servants". Thus, 87% of visitors residing within the map's coverage came from the two highest mapped social classes. The lowest class represented was a single visitor who lived in a street classified as 'Some comfortable, others poor' (fig. 23). In an urban landscape that was so much defined by class and social boundaries, the geographical spread of visitors highlights this demographic. By far the majority of London visitors to the 1906 exhibition came from the north and west areas of the capital, areas relatively close to the locations of the exhibitions as well as representative of the city's wealthiest communities. The poorest areas of London, such as the south-east and the East End – areas seen to epitomize "poverty in London in the nineteenth and early twentieth century" (Brodie 2004, 1; see also Beaven 2005, 28) - are conspicuously absent. While it is difficult to define the social characteristics of visitors living outside of the capital, the Booth map data provides a revealing snapshot of the exhibition's immediate London community.

It is difficult to gauge quite what the intended or targeted audience was for the EEF's displays, but this image of an elite, educated visitor group fits with Petrie's projected vision: on 12 July 1888, following the opening of his exhibition at the Egyptian Hall, he wrote to Edwards:

Several solid folks have been: [Arthur] Evans, [General Lane-Fox] Pitt Rivers, [Augustus] Franks, [William Blake] Richmond, Holman Hunt + Mrs, all more than once. We have got hold of the right vein of folks, + not had any nasty boors or 'arrys about. (PMA 3/1/PEN/38)

Petrie's early correspondence in reference to his exhibitions is somewhat dominated by the subject and status of his visitors. He wrote regularly to Edwards to record the rise and fall of daily figures and list the more noteworthy individuals who had attended, such as antiquities collector Aquilla Dodgson (PMA 3/1/PEN/37), archaeological fundraiser and Member of Parliament William Thyssen-Amherst (PMA

3/1/PEN/38), the Director of the Society of Antiquaries Frederick George Hilton Price, and members of prominent aristocratic families such as Janet Ross, daughter of Lady Duff Gordon, who had spent much of her early life in Egypt (PMA 3/1/PEN/11). The correspondence reveals that the exhibitions were also timed to coincide with particular events in order to attract specific groups of interest to the Fund. In 1892, for example, the approaching general election led Petrie and his team to debate the timing of their displays, as Spurrell suggested:

If you have an exhibition this year – I strongly recommend the earlier date you mention... The Election is the turning point. If the Elections are early or late, July will be best. If early it will enable you to judge by canvassing opinions in good time. If late it will be useless because of the uncertainty of policy. Any how the issuing of a circular to old M.P.s will be useless & new M.P.s are nowhere. (PMA 5/SPU/19)

In the event, that year's exhibition was delayed until September, allowing plenty of time to lobby the newly elected MPs over the plight of British archaeology in Egypt, but also to fit with the Ninth Congress of Orientalists at University College London, when, as Drower (1985, 202) noted, "many distinguished visitors would be in town". The audiences that gathered for Petrie's exhibitions remained a global talking point even after his death, with one journalist for the Australian *Sydney Morning Herald* (1942) recalling in Petrie's obituary how "all the intelligentsia of London [had] thronged to see" the annual displays.

The EEF's 1906 exhibition attracted a similar audience profile to that desired by Petrie almost fifteen years earlier, with a scattering of aristocracy and nobility, as well as a mix of professionals with roles traditionally associated with the middle and upper classes. From those who entered their job titles or professional addresses in the visitor book we can establish that the displays were visited by academics and others teaching in higher education, medical doctors, Members of Parliament including Sir Edwin Durning Lawrence the First Baronet and MP for Truro, military officers perhaps with first-hand experience of working in Egypt, members of the Church, scientists and inventors like Sir William Henry Preece, businessmen and philanthropists like Sir Otto Bait, as well as industrialists and factory owners, such as Reuben Hunt whose company specialised in engineering and agricultural equipment. The university setting attracted

passers-by from the departments of zoology and metallurgy, while the close proximity to the Inns of Court enabled numerous legal professionals to attend. Among this mix of professions and intellectual backgrounds Egypt was simultaneously consumed and re-imagined as a political entity, a military experience, a charitable enterprise, and intellectual stimulus, while also possessing gravitas as an artistic landscape.

The displays continued to draw people from the creative arts, as had been the case earlier with Pre-Raphaelite artists Holman Hunt and Alma Tadema; thus, the author Henry Rider Haggard visited on 16 July 1906. By the time of the exhibition, Rider Haggard was already a household name and pioneer of the Lost World literary genre, mixing imperial tales of adventure in the remote colonies with those of distant archaeological pasts (see Murray 1993). Ancient Egypt had featured in a number of his works, the most popular being *She* (1887); others included *The Way of the Spirit* (1906), *Morning Star* (1910), and the serialised *Smith and the Pharaohs* published in *The Strand Magazine* in 1912 and 1913 (see Driscoll 2017). As Eleanor Dobson (2014, 31-43) has commented, Rider Haggard often drew literary inspiration from the Egyptian artefacts he found in abundance in London's museums and exhibitions and from his own growing collection of antiquities and curios, blending material reality into his fictional narratives. He is a prime example of the type of visitor that the exhibitions appear to have attracted: he was well-connected and part of an exclusive archaeological network, considering Petrie, Archibald Sayce, and E. A. Wallis Budge to be among his circle of friends (Dobson 2014, 31-32; Gange 2013a, 216); he was also affluent, with the "time and money to satisfy [his] interest in archaeology" (Thornton 2015, 10).

Hugh Cunningham (2014, 155-159) notes that, for the upper- and middle-classes of this period, time was structured "more by leisure than by work", with the non-productive consumption of time, such as learning ancient languages, viewed as a symbol of prestige. As he notes, this 'leisure class' also "justified its existence by reference to its social duties and obligations". Attending the annual exhibitions and supporting archaeological organisations fit neatly into both of these categories. However, this elite and socially exclusive audience stands in contrast to the image of a more accessible ancient Egypt that had developed in the galleries of the British

Museum during the mid and late nineteenth century. As Moser (2006, 225) notes, "...the nonelite were liberated in their approach to Egyptian antiquities and were quick to appropriate them because they were not intellectually owned in the same way as were the classical antiquities." Exclusivity is also somewhat at odds with the growing diversity of audiences in the museum sector. Kate Hill's (2005) study of working-class audiences in municipal museums during this period has shown that such institutions attracted a diverse demographic. Weekly visitor figures of around 4000 people for museums in Bolton, Liverpool, and Nottingham, as well as 18,000 for Birmingham Art Gallery in 1888, lead Hill (2005, 126) to assume that "a fairly large proportion of the working class must have visited such an institution at least once." Ruth Hoberman (2011, 109) describes audiences at the turn of the century as a "new population of museumgoers" and "unprecedentedly mixed in terms of social class, age, gender, and profession." One should therefore question whether the exhibition audience really was one of social unity; if so, why did it contrast so strongly with the make-up of contemporary museum audiences?

There are clear reasons why visitors of a lower economic background may be less visible in documents such as the visitor book. We know, for example, that not everyone signed. Perhaps visitors of a higher social class were more likely to indicate their attendance; or if the book was primarily a register of interest in the Fund's work, those who could afford membership fees or might make donations would be more likely to sign. Yet, there are glimpses of a more diverse public within its pages. On 17 July 1906 the exhibition was attended by two women who gave their address as Brabazon House in Pimlico. This institution, built in 1901-2 just after the completion of Booth's poverty maps, was described by *The Times* (1901) as "housing for ladies of very limited means"; one that "afforded a happy home to young girls who might otherwise have found themselves in a very forlorn position in the great metropolis..." Women's rights campaigners Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and her sister, Millicent Fawcett, the then President of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, were amongst the dignitaries present at the opening ceremony (*The Times* 1902). The presence of these two Brabazon House women "of limited means" hints at a more

economically diverse, perhaps under-attested audience for Egyptian archaeology in the capital.

Both the EEF and the BSAE were aware of the need to provide greater accessibility for visitors from less affluent economic backgrounds. They appear to have encouraged greater diversity by employing well-recognised museum strategies intended to attract a working-class audience. The Fund, for example, included one Sunday opening in their 1906 exhibition, and in the same year the BSAE introduced extended opening hours for the first time, opening on two evenings from 8pm to 10pm. Both of these policies had been introduced to exhibitionary culture and the museum sector in the late nineteenth century with the aim to improve the lives and minds of the British working classes and to broaden museum publics (see Beaven 2005, 28-29). Although considered controversial and the subject of intense debate in the museum profession, these measures were steadily implemented with much success to institutions such as Liverpool Museum in 1890, Manchester Museum in 1895, and the British Museum in 1896 (Alberti 2009, 155). For Liverpool Museum, which introduced evening opening hours one night a week “with a view of encouraging this class of visitors as much as possible”, the scheme was a great success, seeing 8,368 evening visitors in the first six months (Paden 1890, 95-96). Studies have shown that visitor figures for museums, and in particular for temporary exhibitions of this period, generally rose at times when people from lower economic backgrounds were able to attend, for example during public holidays, weekends, and evening opening hours (Bennett 1998, 113; Hill 2005, 126; Moore 1991). Although it is unclear what impact these strategies had upon the EEF and BSAE exhibitions, both organisations were directly engaging with museum and public sector initiatives to attract a wider audience.

Exhibition reviews certainly seem to imply that contemporaries recognised at least two different visitor identities within the exhibition space. The first of these polar groupings is described as specialist or learned and the second as popular/general or unlearned. While these two audiences appear to have been identified in terms of levels of education and prior knowledge, it could also be argued that the categories presuppose differences in class and social status. The reviews appear to show that these two groups engaged with the collections and consumed the displays, and the

knowledge they contained, in different ways, or at least it was assumed that this was the case. For example, of the EEF's 1906 exhibition, one reporter from *The Shields Daily News* said the display included "many objects of great technical importance for the serious student, but there is also a large collection of odds-and-ends of more general interest, always instructive, and often diverting."

This polarisation of visitors was a well-rehearsed trope in the exhibition reviews and one that had appeared repeatedly since the beginning of the practice. Reviews assumed and circulated the idea that particular types of objects appealed to different levels of knowledge and that some could only be appreciated by specific social groups, with many objects believed to be of interest only to the educated elite. This exclusionary narrative dismissed the notion that a general audience could comprehend the 'true' value of such artefacts:

That a collection of this quality... should be dispersed will be a matter of profound regret not only to specialists, but to the educated generally. (*The Athenaeum* 1890, 298)

The present exhibition in many respects is the most generally interesting yet shown by this society. It contains Egyptian antiquities for the Egyptologist, Greco-Egyptian antiquities for the classical archaeologist, relics from a famous Biblical site for the Bible student, and an abundance of those domestic curiosities which especially delight the general public. (*The Academy* 1886, 158)

This perspective was even present within the organisations themselves, with Amelia Edwards writing that the EEF's 1887 annual display was "not an exhibition likely to interest the general public" (*The Academy* 1887).

In passages like those cited above, words such as 'curiosities' and 'delight' imply a more simplistic, superficial, and less worthy interaction with material culture. Such heavily weighted terminology paints a picture of an audience who value the collection for its ability to please, entertain, and amuse, rather than its 'correct' function to educate. This discourse is reminiscent of wider beliefs in the museum sector in the same period. In 1884, Walter Bessant published a rather damning commentary on the working class and their amusements in *The Contemporary Review*. For wealthy observers like Bessant (1884, 349), "who visit the museum chiefly in order to see the

people”, lower-class visitors understood very little of what was on display and left equally un-informed. “Those glass cases, those pictures, those big jugs, say no more to the crowd than a cuneiform or a Hittite inscription” (1884, 349-350). He concluded “[i]t is to them simply a collection of curious things which are sometimes changed”, suggesting further that such visitors should cut their teeth on exhibits of a more “homely” and domestic character. This was an attitude prevalent in the exhibition reviews, which appear to imply that lower-class visitors would feel more comfortable with objects of a ‘domestic’ nature to which they could relate more easily. Within the exhibition space these social divisions were enacted and played out through the material culture on display. When the archaeological object was viewed by wealthy patrons and scholarly audiences it was considered an artefact or specimen, but when attention was turned to a general public audience and their engagement the same object could become a curiosity.

When it comes to analysing the gender of exhibition audiences, at least 185 (27%) of the 674 recorded visitors from 1906 can be identified as female, and for at least one day women outnumbered men in the visitor book’s records. The women signing the visitor book included people from a range of professions and disciplines, from the sculptor and painter Susan Ruth Canton, who exhibited at the annual exhibitions of the Society for Women Artists and at the Royal Academy, to Lady Margaret Lindsay Huggins, a pioneer in astrophysics and spectroscopy (see Becker 2017; McKenna-Lawlor 2003). Among the names was the American actress Madame Lydia Mamreoff von Finkelstein Mountford, who made her name dressing in Oriental costume and performing dramatic representations of biblical stories and the customs of modern day Palestine in America’s popular Holy Land theme parks, tapping into the nation’s interest in the birthplace of Christianity (Long 2003, 22-25). There was also a Miss Lord, who worked for the British Syrian Mission, an Evangelical body that supported the education and training of Syrian women as missionary teachers for their local communities (Anonymous 1903).

One of those attending the exhibition on Monday 23 July was the campaigner for women’s rights and education, Elizabeth Sturge from Bristol. Just months before, she had returned from a trip to Egypt and Sudan with her sister as part of their grand tour

(see Sturge 1928, 59). Her travels evidently left an impression, as a handwritten note next to her name shows she joined as a member of the Fund that same day. But she had returned from Egypt ready to “devote herself to the constitutional suffrage cause” (Crawford 2001, 661). In her memoirs, she looked back on that year as the “advent of Militism” in which the women’s movement “flared up again in an acute and dangerous form” (Sturge 1928, 60). 1906 was the year when the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) moved its headquarters from Manchester to London, campaigns for women’s rights intensified with a number of arrests and imprisonments in the capital, and the term ‘suffragette’ was coined by the *Daily Mail* (Marlow 2000, xv). Although Sturge’s campaigns were non-militant, in that year she stepped up her actions, travelling increasingly from Bristol to London to take part in meetings and marches. Her views of the government’s resistance to the campaigns were later set within ancient metaphors:

It was difficult to understand how such manifestations of public feeling could be resisted, but the heart of the Pharaoh was hard, and seemed to grow harder as the agitation grew more intense, and the Militants went from one illegality to another, stopping short of nothing but taking life. (Sturge 1928, 61)

Although Sturge’s views of the annual exhibition were not recorded, one can imagine that it was received positively. Ancient Egypt had gained an increasingly warm reception among Victorian and Edwardian women, particularly in the women’s rights movement. Not only had the role of Egyptologist and archaeologist gained a reputation as a career path accessible to outsiders and therefore to women, with a growing cohort of non-professional specialists like Amelia Edwards (Willard 1897, 322-324), the ancient civilisation was also viewed favourably for its fair treatment of women in society (Melman 1992, 254-275). The female ruler Hatshepsut, in particular, who made an appearance at the EEF exhibition in 1906 through a scattering of 18th Dynasty artefacts, was heralded as a role model of female power and equality (Hoberman 2011, 142; Melman 1992, 264-269).

Moreover, the exhibition was situated in a political hotspot in the women’s rights campaign. The visitor book reveals that at least one visitor made their way from 4 Clements Inn, the newly established central office of the WSPU, which was located just off of the Strand, only streets away from King’s College (see Bartley 2002, 83).

Described by Diane Atkinson (2018, 41) as the “battle headquarters” of the Union, spearheaded by Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel, 4 Clements Inn was considered home by a number of influential suffragettes and the strategic centre for the group’s famous London campaigns. The suffragettes later took their protests to the Egyptian galleries at the British Museum, smashing a display case containing an ancient Egyptian mummy on 23 May 1914 (Atkinson 2018, 493). As a symbolic act of political violence, the attack could be linked to the frequent use of museum mummies as a popular narrative in suffrage-inspired fiction at the turn of the century (Hoberman 2011, 143-144). Ancient Egyptian collections were becoming increasingly and publicly entangled in this dense political discourse of women’s status and female empowerment. Viewed in this context of this heightened political awareness, with debates raging in Parliament as well as the printed press, it is easy to imagine how such a climate would have informed reception and shaped the way visitors were engaging with Egypt as a concept at the turn of the century.

7.2.2 1922-1927 exhibitions

The second visitor book covers the EES’s exhibitions at the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, in 1922, 1924, and 1926, and in their offices at 13 Tavistock Square in 1927. Situated in the heart of London’s social and intellectual scene, surrounded by learned societies and exclusive members’ clubs, Burlington House on Piccadilly was a particularly elite location for the EES’s exhibitions. The Society of Antiquaries biographer, Joan Evans (1956, 316), stated that “[a] society is strongly if unconsciously influenced by the rooms in which it meets...” For the EES and its exhibition visitors, Burlington House’s mid-Victorian classicism with its grand staircases, heavy mouldings, painted stucco, and marble furnishings, created a stately impression. It was in this environment that the EES chose to present its finds. Open to all five days per week, Monday to Saturday, from 10am to 5.30pm with free admission, the exhibitions were located to attract London’s social, cultural, and intellectual elite.

Burlington House was first trialled as a venue for the annual exhibitions in 1913 and 1914. Following the break in excavations in Egypt during the First World War, the

rebranded Egypt Exploration Society returned to the tradition and status of the Society of Antiquaries to exhibit in 1921 with a new and exciting archaeological concession. Tell el Amarna, the 18th Dynasty city of the pharaoh Akhenaten, had been excavated before World War I by German teams, but, as they lost their concessions in its aftermath and their sites were redistributed among the British and French, permission to excavate at Amarna was handed to the EES. Having been a fruitful and renowned concession for the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft, producing globally famous artefacts such as the bust of Nefertiti in 1912 (Montserrat 2000, 72), the promise of further significant finds and the prospect of adding to the increasing mythology of Amarna was an opportunity cloaked in political pride and propaganda. In a letter to the editor published in *The Morning Post* (1920), EES President and former General, Sir John Maxwell explained that:

The task of the Germans at Amarna has passed to Britain, as it should do, and it is for us to show that we are carrying on this important work worthily... But the Society is determined that the work shall be scientifically done and thoroughly recorded. As successors to the German archaeologists in this work our national reputation is involved.

Inter-European rivalries were not the only political dynamics at play. This visitor book spans a turbulent and politically-charged decade for Anglo-Egyptian relations and British archaeological practice in Egypt. The 1919 Revolution in Egypt and the Nationalist uprisings against British occupation resulted in a forceful response of repression by the British government. Elliott Colla (2007, 200) reports “hundreds of Egyptians died and thousands were arrested as colonial authorities put down the rebellion”. By 1922 the British viceroy granted Egypt formal independence, with British advisors positioned across government departments, but national relations with British archaeologists working in the field remained fraught. The sensational discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb by Howard Carter on behalf of his patron Lord Carnarvon in November 1922, was a further catalyst for Egyptian nationalism as competition over the right to own the finds escalated (Colla 2007, 199-210; Reid 2015). The decision of Pierre Lacau, director of the Egyptian Antiquities Service, to claim all finds for Egypt, with the exclusion of a few duplicates, placed the Egyptian archaeological object at the centre of a global political narrative.

The exhibitions of this period were embedded within this tense colonial and revolutionary context, and this would have been noticeable for exhibition audiences. As the process of partage became further contested in political tension and national sentiment, the concept of ownership and custodianship over Egyptian heritage became more strongly politicised. Tighter controls over the movement and export of objects began to shape the physical make-up of the EES exhibitions as the displays reduced dramatically in size throughout the decade. Correspondence from this period shows that the division of finds in Cairo was now driven by anxiety. “The whole division has stood in the sign of fear”, Henri Frankfort wrote, “[f]ear of Lacau towards the Egyptians and fear again at the thought that some splash in our papers would give rise to suspicion as to his ‘national’ direction” (EES uncatalogued letter d).

Meanwhile, as tensions grew in Egypt, the British public’s appetite for all things Egyptian intensified. A wave of ‘Tut-mania’ hit the country along with an influx of Egyptianised imagery and commercial products, from fashion and interior design to cigarette branding and postcard sets, all of which actively shaped the national perception of Egypt. As Christina Riggs (2018, 177) has highlighted, “...apprehensions of ancient Egypt made the ancient culture seem ever more familiar, even comforting, to Western audiences, just as the modern Egyptian state became ever more independent.” The display of ancient Egypt in full theatrical and imperial guise returned to the capital once again in the British Empire Exhibition in Wembley, which ran concurrently with the Society’s 1924 exhibition. Generating 27 million visitors with a daily average of 104,211 (Knight and Sabey 1984, 18), the exhibition offered audiences an immersive, walk-through facsimile of Tutankhamun’s tomb in full technicolour, created under the consultancy of Egyptologist Arthur Weigall (Fryxell 2017, 530-532; Reid 2015, 163-164). Situated in the exhibition’s amusement park, alongside the merry-go-round and other children’s rides, the experience “prompted a thrilling sense of temporal displacement followed by a return to one’s own time” (Fryxell 2017, 532). As in the Great Exhibition some seventy years before, the tomb facsimile veered away from traditional exhibits of authentic antiquities to celebrate new technologies of display and to present a distinctly modern means of experiencing ancient Egypt.

The EES's exhibitions on Tell el-Amarna (1922, 1924, 1926 and 1927) spoke directly to the Tutankhamun discovery and its New Kingdom context, and contemporary newspaper reports show that the Society worked hard to capitalise upon the connection. Letters published by excavators 'sold' Akhenaten as the 'step-father of the new boy king'. However, this outpouring of confidence was not reflected in their exhibitions. Correspondence between archaeologists in the field and the EES office in London show that there were underlying concerns that Amarna was not producing enough museum-quality pieces either for exhibition or for distribution. While Leonard Woolley repeatedly explained that the site was "not yielding much in the way of objects" (EES TA. COR. Tell el Amarna IV uncatalogued letter), Henri Frankfort later suggested that it "may be suicidal policy to confine the work of the Society to Amarna" as the site was producing "nothing of particular interest". To counteract this, Frankfort proposed "having some cemetery-site in reserve to fall back upon if Amarna proves unproductive" (EES TA. COR. Tell el Amarna II uncatalogued letter b). As content reduced, exhibitions were no longer held annually; with displays not taking place in either 1923 or 1925. Whether through choice or limited availability, the Society committed to much shorter exhibition runs: the 1922 display lasted just nine days and 1924 eleven, a far cry from the four-week stretch of pre-war exhibitions.

Despite the Society's concerns, the visitor book reflects a significant (45%) increase in visitor numbers following Howard Carter's discovery, rising from 278 in 1922 to 404 in 1924. Without access to the visitor figures immediately before the First World War it is difficult to ascertain how characteristic these numbers are, but a marked increase is certainly evident. This timing suggests that the Tutankhamun excavations had a direct impact upon the scale and scope of exhibition audiences, fitting with the increased public appetite for all things Egyptian. This increase is also reflected in the Society's membership numbers. A hastily written scrap of paper in the EES archive entitled "rough estimate of money collected as result of recent discovery (June 1923)" shows that the Society benefited from "[a]n influx of new members, about 90 elected, though all cannot be attributed to new discovery." It also mentioned a substantial increase in "special donations" from both private individuals and public outlets (EES uncatalogued document c).

While the visitor figures seemed positive, the Amarna exhibitions received a mixed response in the media. Dominic Montserrat (2000, 74) showed that a burgeoning relationship between the EES and the *Illustrated London News* saw Amarna receive “unprecedented coverage in its pages.” However, overall the exhibitions of this period appear to have gathered far less attention in the national press than those before World War I. *The Times*, which had been one of the most loyal and vocal supporters of the exhibitions since 1884 and had contributed financially towards the Tell el Amarna excavations, ceased to cover the displays in any detail, moving from lengthy reviews to short summary pieces featured alongside other exhibition notices. The 1927 exhibition was not featured at all. This attitude appears to have been paralleled elsewhere in the printed press, as one reporter from the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1923) declared “[h]ad our interest in Egyptology not been jaded by Tutankhamen’s tomb, the coming excavations at El Amarna would cause a public thrill.”

Perhaps surprisingly, it was the Society’s 1926 exhibition focusing on excavations at Abydos, a site historically unconnected with Tutankhamun, which caught the imagination of both the public and the popular press. The excavations were rewarded an extended run of nineteen days at the Society of Antiquities and generated not only the largest amount of media coverage but the highest visitor figures of the period, with at least 764 attendees. The *Illustrated London News* referred to the 1926 exhibition as a “place of pilgrimage for all interested in Ancient Egypt”, and for the first time the EES offered an extra day at the end exclusively for readers of the periodical.

Abydos provided a greater range of content for the exhibitions in comparison to Amarna. Writing from the site in 1926 in the lead up to the exhibition, field director Henri Frankfort, commented:

I propose to stay here till the end of March; the cemetery work will not be prolonged unduly. As soon as there is any difficulty in finding a profitable fresh spot, or as soon as the objects obtained appear to me to be sufficient for an attractive exhibition and an encouragement to the subscribing museums and private persons, I shall stop and concentrate on the Osireion. (EES TA. COR. Tell el Amarna II uncatalogued letter c)

In a letter to the editor of *The Times* (1925), President Sir John Maxwell noted that the excavation “differs in object from that of the preceding two years, but is, if possible, of

wider interest.” The success of the Abydos exhibition, at least with the press, seems to have centred on the ‘Osireion’ or cenotaph of Seti I. Linked by the press to the mysterious cult of Osiris and labelled as the key to understanding the development of religious ideas, its popular appeal also lay in its ability to evoke the grand discovery narrative that so appealed to Tutankhamun-influenced audiences. *The Times* (1926, 13), which reported on the discovery in its ‘Imperial and Foreign News’ segment, focused on the colonial romanticism of the excavation process.

Some hundreds of men and boys are at work under the direction of the engineer, the men shifting the huge blocks or stone by mere man power, aided by the simplest of tools, rollers, levers, and wedges, the boys carrying up baskets of sand and rubbish, the whole scene looking extraordinarily like an ancient Egyptian relief suddenly come to life.

The exhibitions could no longer rely on the physical presence of material culture alone to guarantee success and popular approval. The Osireion’s appeal lay in the concept of discovery and in the scale and imperial theatricality of a vast archaeological operation. When the Society returned to exhibiting Amarna the following year, visitor numbers went back to their previous range at 326 attendees. This reduction could, however, also be linked to the EES’s change in exhibition venue from the Society of Antiquaries to their offices in Tavistock Square.

While the peak in attendance in 1926 shows that the exhibitions could reach a broader public, the relative consistency of visitor numbers across the period suggests that they remained primarily of interest to an exclusive audience and a network of well-connected individuals. It is not currently possible to provide the same depth of information about the class and social status of the 1920s audience as is for 1906, but the range of professions and titles listed in the visitor book suggests that the exhibitions continued to attract high-ranking professionals and elite members of society. Those attending included former politicians, such as the Conservative Member of Parliament Lord Wyfold, and army officers, including Lord William Cecil, a retired Colonel who served in Sudan and became a courtier to Queen Victoria and King George V. There were also businessmen such as John Maltwood, managing director of the Oxo company, and people in judicial office like First Baronet Sir John Ross, the last Lord Chancellor of Ireland. The setting of Burlington House appears to have influenced

the character of exhibition audiences, with a significant higher proportion of Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries in attendance. The exhibitions of this period show a decline in some professions in comparison to 1906, notably in members of the clergy, which may suggest that in the intervening years there had been a further separation of church and archaeology.

The social profile of this audience largely reflects that of the Society of Antiquaries membership at the time, which consisted mostly of “people of independent means” or those who could afford to use “their leisure time in an amateur capacity” (Barker 2007, 383). While learned societies remained somewhat of a bastion for social exclusivity, the interwar years and the looming possibility of a Labour government saw many begin to re-evaluate their exclusive memberships in a desire to widen participation. Joan Evans (1956, 390-393) showed that the Society of Antiquaries attempted to reduce the costs of membership and introduce more affordable gradients for those with an interest in archaeology, however the proposal was rejected by the Society’s Council in the 1920s in favour of keeping the status quo.

While the BSAE continued the practice of evening openings for two or three days per exhibition throughout this period in order to maximise the number of working visitors, the EES no longer provided extended Sunday opening hours under the same directive. Nonetheless, questions relating to accessibility for lower-income visitors appear to have remained current in the interwar era. The preface to the catalogue of the 1937 EES exhibition at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, stated:

Exhibitions have a dual purpose. Firstly to give specialists and the public an opportunity to see the objects discovered before they are dispersed to various museums in different countries and, secondly, to raise funds for continued excavation. In view of the primary purpose of this exhibition we have made both entrance and catalogue free, so that the poorest may see the work for nothing... (EES 1937, 3)

As before, the visitor book gives a glimpse of a more economically diverse audience for the annual exhibitions. On the 19 July 1926 the exhibition was visited by a J. Duke from Goldington Buildings, the first social housing complex to be built in the parish of St Pancras in 1902. The foundation stone, still visible on the building today, tells passers-by that it was intended as “housing for the working-class”. Changes in working

patterns and leisure habits of interwar Britain suggest that an economically diverse audience was far more likely than before. The introduction of mass commercial entertainment and an altered work-leisure balance saw a shift in the way working-class men in particular prioritised their time (Beavan 2005, 181 and Cunningham 2014, 149). Events, such as the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924 attracted high numbers of working-class visitors drawn to the opportunity of experiencing the world outside their local communities, a prospect beyond reach for many (Rose 2002, 349-350). As one visitor commented, the setting of imperial grandeur and propaganda, into which Tutankhamun's tomb was incorporated, left them feeling "very proud to belong to the Mother Country" (quoted in Rose 2002, 350). It is likely that for many the annual exhibitions equally provided an opportunity to experience Egypt from the comfort of the capital.

In terms of geographical data, the visitor books show that London audiences remained the most significant group at 45% of the total signatures, a figure comparable to the 55% of Londoners for the 1906 exhibition (fig. 24; figs. 25-28). The data provides valuable clues about the composition of audiences. For example, the 1920s exhibitions reveal that the majority of London visitors again lived in the north and west of the city in the boroughs surrounding Piccadilly, areas that two decades after Charles Booth's social mapping project continued to house London's wealthy and elite. The number of United Kingdom visitors from outside London rises from 23% to 25% between the two periods (figs. 29-32). However, since private and public transport infrastructure improved national mobility to unprecedented levels during the interwar years, one might expect to see a greater rise. Enhancements to the railways and London underground (Jackson 2018), coupled with expanding road networks and the widespread adoption of the car (Law 2014), gave rural and suburban populations far greater, easier, and more affordable access to London for both work and leisure. Therefore, this marginal difference in percentages could suggest that the exhibitions maintained a very similar, largely metropolitan audience profile.

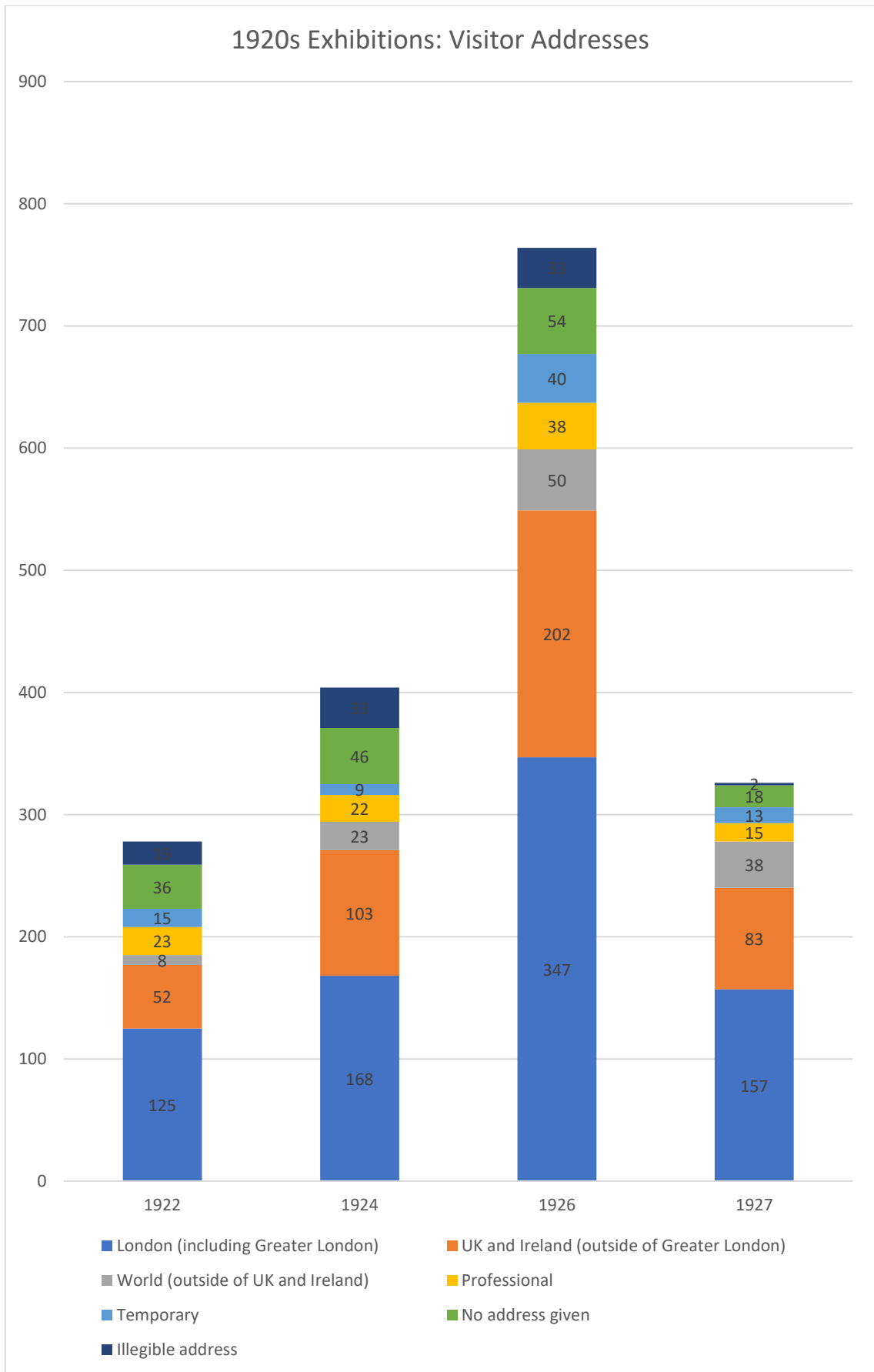


Figure 24. Chart showing the type and locations of addresses listed in the 1920s visitor book.

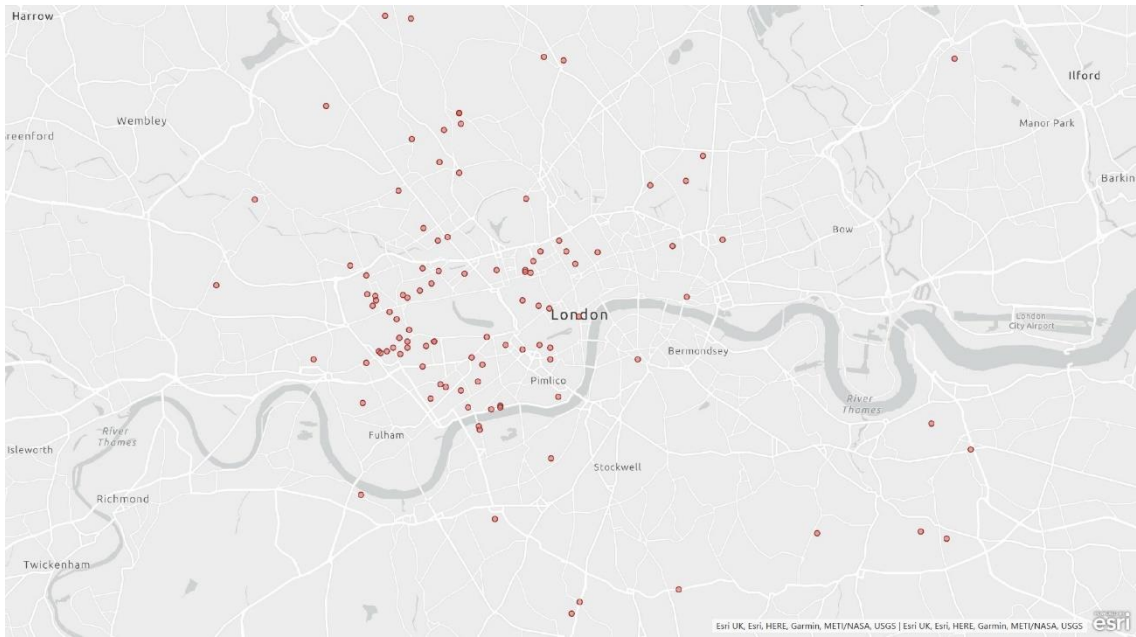


Figure 25. Map showing the location of London and Greater London addresses from the 1922 exhibition.

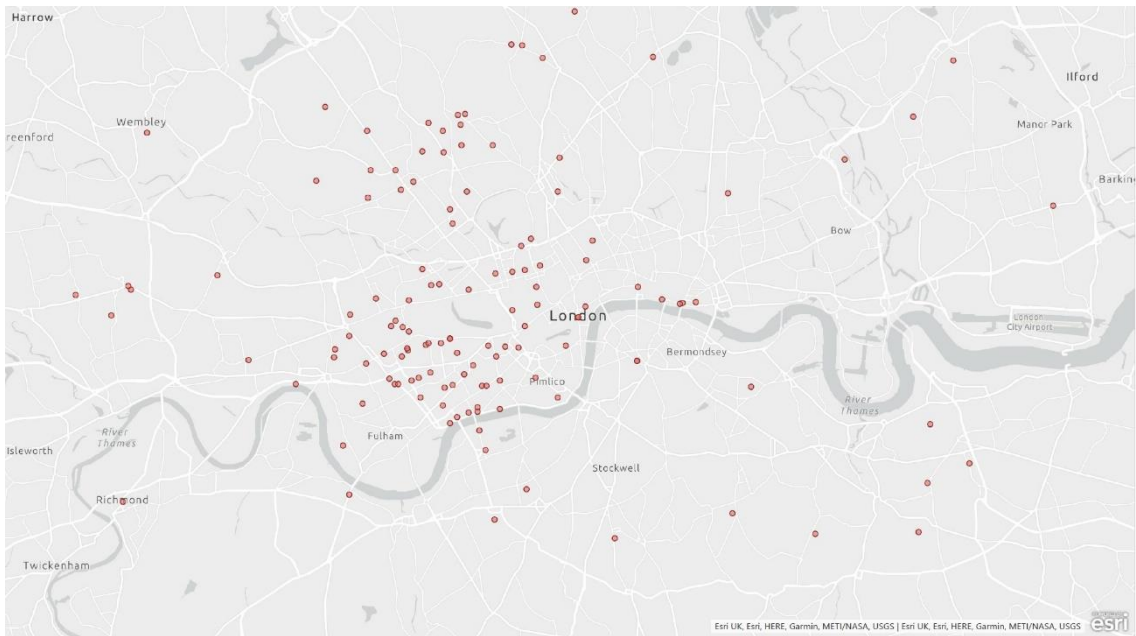


Figure 26. Map showing the location of London and Greater London addresses from the 1924 exhibition.

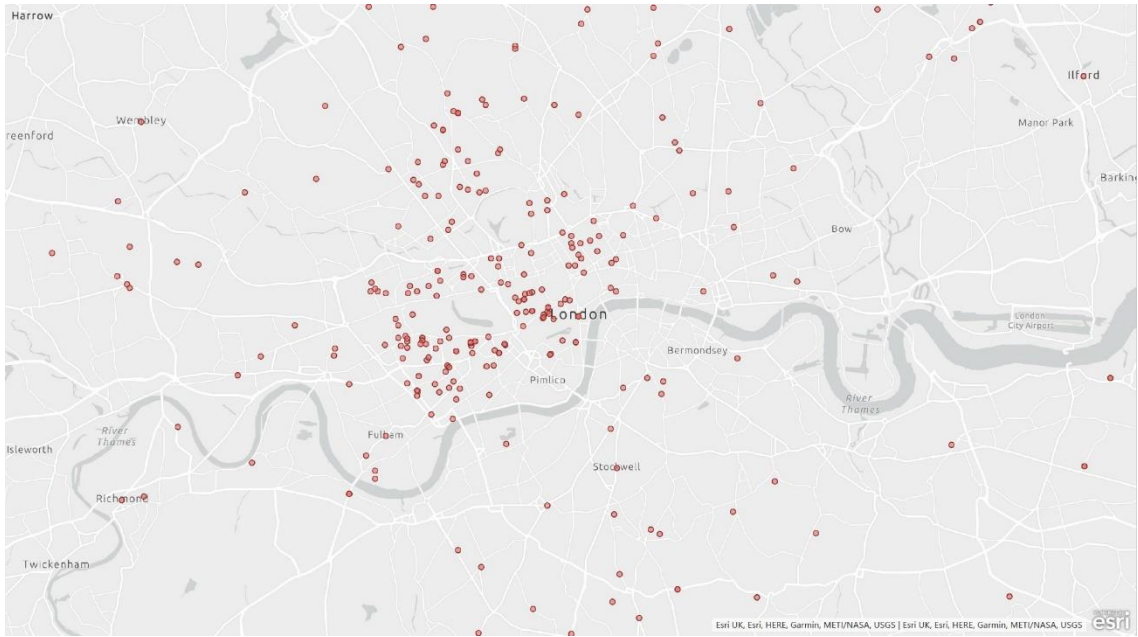


Figure 27. Map showing the location of London and Greater London addresses from the 1926 exhibition.

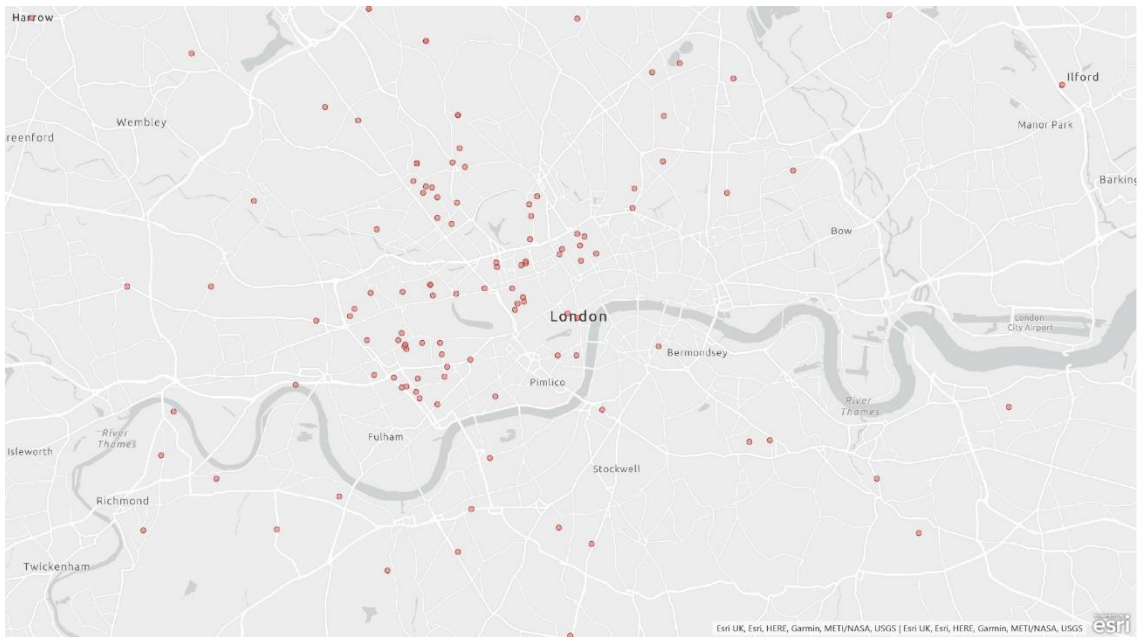


Figure 28. Map showing the location of London and Greater London addresses from the 1927 exhibition.

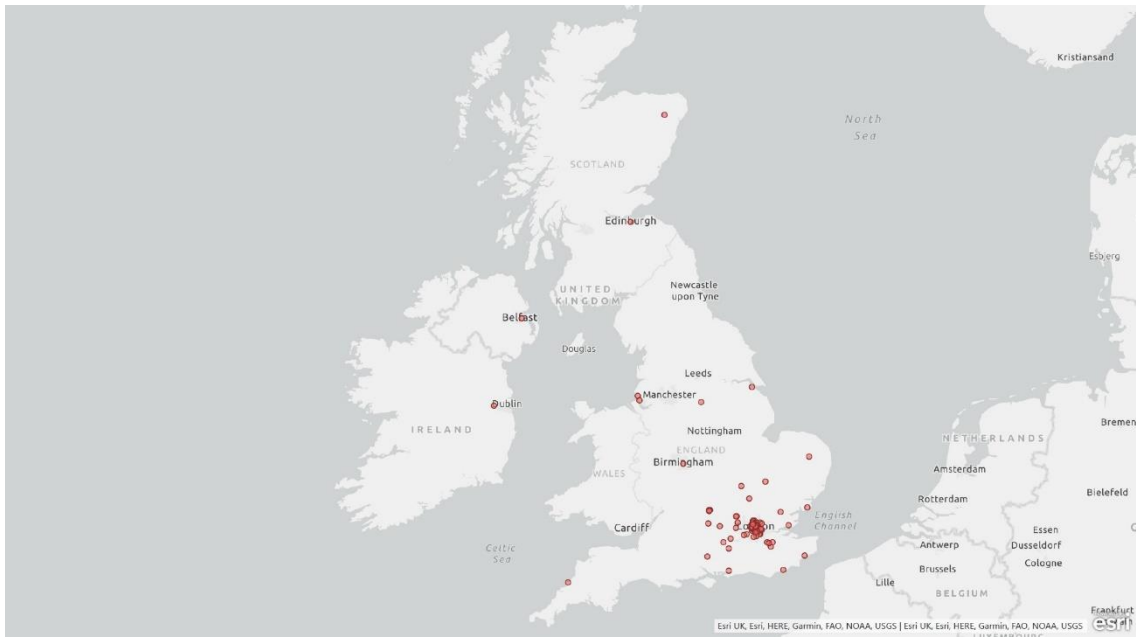


Figure 29. Map showing the location of UK and Ireland addresses from the 1922 exhibition.

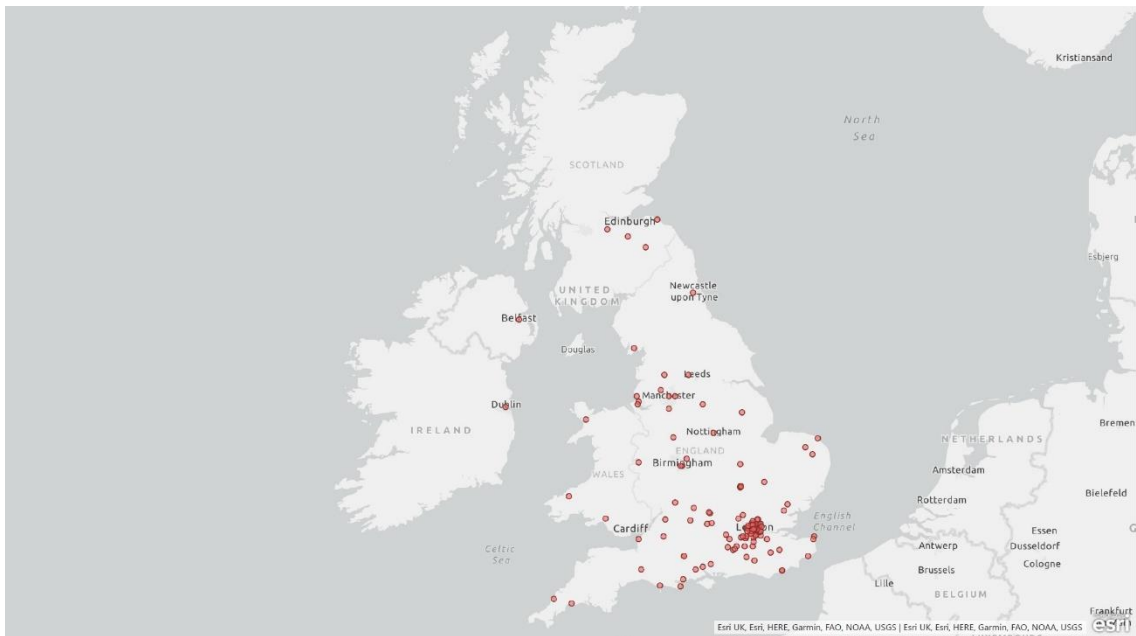


Figure 30. Map showing the location of UK and Ireland addresses from the 1924 exhibition.

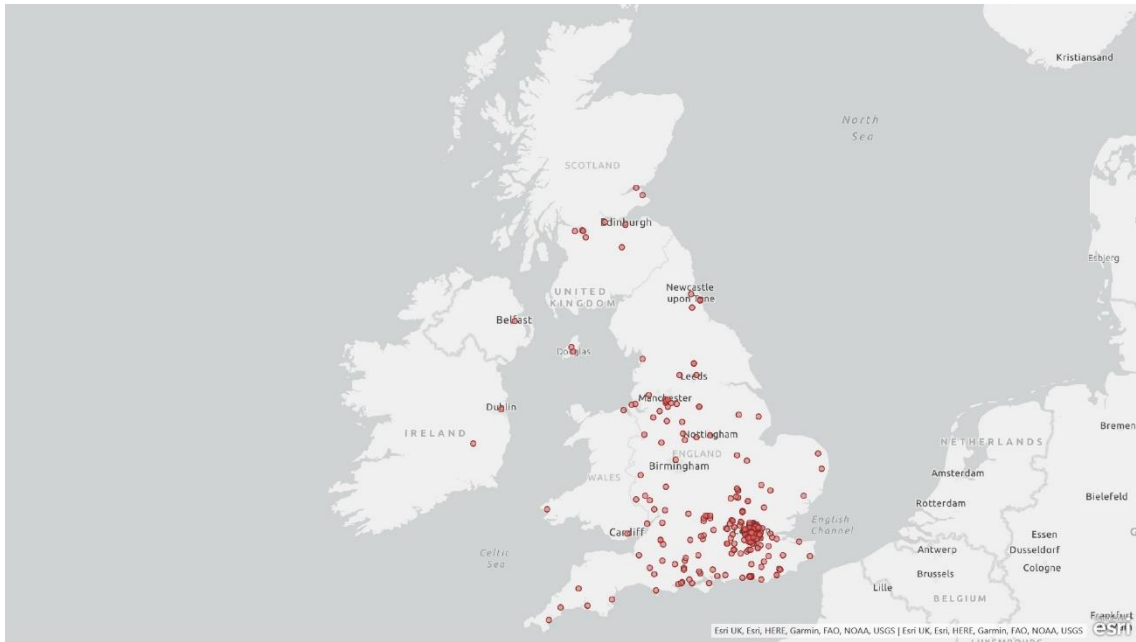


Figure 31. Map showing the location of UK and Ireland addresses from the 1926 exhibition.

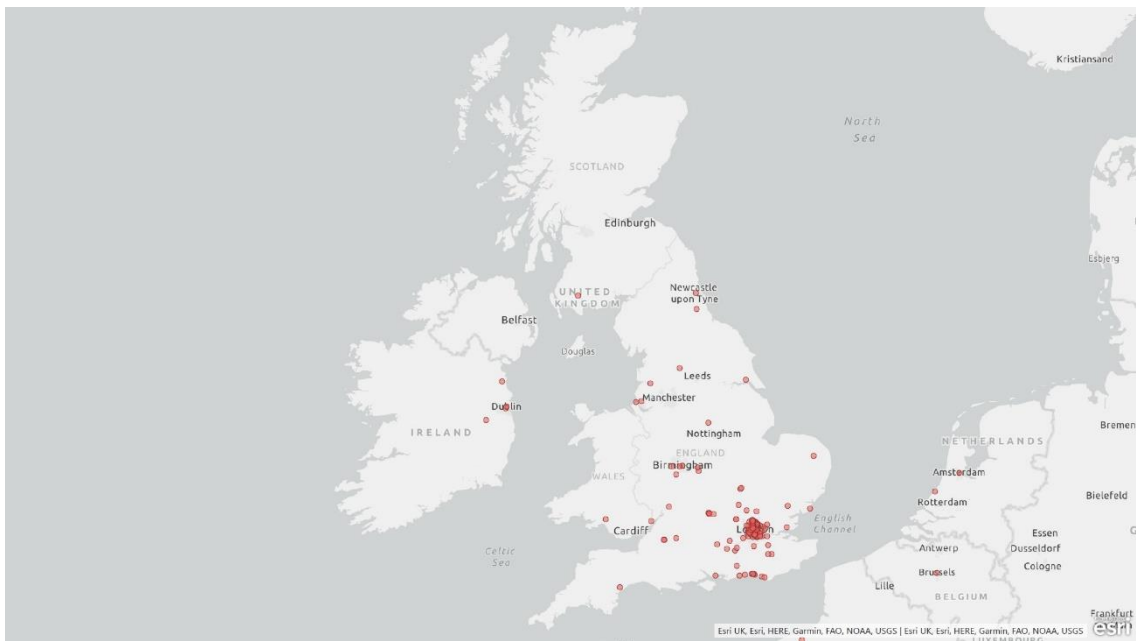


Figure 32. Map showing the location of UK and Ireland addresses from the 1927 exhibition.

The exhibitions of this period show an increase in international visitors with numbers rising from 3% in 1906 to 7% across the 1920s (fig. 33-36). Although they remained the smallest audience group geographically, the shift reflects a metropole far more

connected in international travel, as well as the increasing globalisation of twentieth-century Britain. While the number of visitors from Europe remained relatively low, the most notable difference is the rise of visitors and the patterns emerging on the east coast of the USA and the peripheries of empire. The self-governing dominions of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa, for example, are all represented. Alice Stevenson (2019, 116-128) has shown that in the preceding decades the EES had been building relationships with these nations as part of a wider international network of supporters and finds distribution. With the excavated artefact now being woven into the national narratives of these colonial museums, often displayed as imperial goods or for the purpose of nation-building, this rise in numbers documents an increased global awareness of the Fund's work and an amplified presence of ancient Egypt in their public museums. This timing is especially relevant for Australia, which in 1923 opened its own branch of the EES due to popular demand (Stevenson 2019, 150-153). Although the branch was short-lived, it is indicative of the worldwide interest sparked in the aftermath of the Tutankhamun discovery and may have been a factor in this rise in global visitors.

In the early twentieth-century expanse of empire, visitors from the British colonies of Hong Kong, Jamaica, and Sierra Leone, and British-controlled Egypt, Iraq, India, and Sudan, are also listed. All names assigned to these addresses in the visitor book appear to be those of British settlers or expatriates in the regions who held colonial administrative and military roles or were engaged in the wider imperial project through institutions such as the London Missionary Society. Among this growing international engagement, the visitor book shows an increased visibility of those directly involved in Anglo-Egyptian and Anglo-Sudanese relations, including a range of British bureaucratic positions and the Imperial administrative elite in Egypt, demonstrating that interest in archaeological practice was not unrelated to political life in Egypt. Visitors such as John Winter Crowfoot, husband of archaeologist Grace Crowfoot, visited in 1922 when he was serving as not only the Director of the Department of Antiquities in Sudan but as the Sudanese Director of Education and Principal of Gordon College in Khartoum. Charles Mackintosh, who served under Lord Cromer in the Egyptian Public Security Department and went on to become a Cairo

correspondent for *The Morning Post* between the wars, visited in 1926. In 1927 the exhibition was attended by J. Cryer, who was then the Minister for Education in Egypt, and S. Mohammed, a representative of the Egyptian Educational Mission based at Victoria Street in London. The visitor book is also peppered with names of people who had served or were serving in the British military in Egypt, stationed in the strategic outposts of Cairo and Port Said.



Figure 33. World map showing the location of addresses from the 1922 exhibition.



Figure 34. World map showing the location of addresses from the 1924 exhibition.



Figure 35. World map showing the location of addresses from the 1926 exhibition.



Figure 36. World map showing the location of addresses from the 1927 exhibition.

In comparison to the 1906 exhibition, the percentage of visitors that can be identified as female in the visitor book of this period is relatively consistent. There appears to be an initial drop from the 27% visiting in 1906 to 18.34% (51 out of 278 visitors) in 1922. However, numbers levelled out in the following years, settling at 28.46% in 1924 (115 out of 404 visitors), 27.09% in 1926 (207 out of 764 visitors), and 26.68% in 1927 (87 out of 326 visitors). As before, these figures represent the minimum number of women visitors as many may be left unaccounted for in the way that women signed their names or chose not to be recorded at all. These numbers suggest that the gender profile of visitors to the annual exhibition had not changed much in the intervening decades.

The visitor book shows a range of women attending the exhibitions. Names include Adela Breton, the explorer of Central and South America and archaeological illustrator, who, then in her seventies, visited the exhibition before sailing to Rio de Janeiro for a conference some nine months before she died (McVicker 1989, 14). The author Lilia Rider Haggard followed in her famous father's footsteps by visiting in 1924 (see Manthorpe 2015), while Annie Horniman, a pioneer of British theatre management

and daughter of collector and tea shipping magnate Frederick Horniman (Goodie 1990), visited in 1926. Among the other names listed was Helen Churchill Candee, an American author, journalist, women's rights campaigner, and survivor of the Titanic disaster, as well as Lady Ottoline Morrell, a socialite of English aristocracy who belonged to the famous Bloomsbury set (see Darroch 1988; 2017; Gathorne-Hardy 1974). Lady Morrell's private papers and diaries, kept in the British Library, do not reveal her thoughts about the exhibition but they do show that her visit formed part of a busy summer season in her Bloomsbury residence, sandwiched between entertaining the King of Spain and Virginia Woolf at her home in Oxford and a three month grand tour of France and Italy (BL MS 88886/4/18).

The fact that the percentage of women visitors remained relatively constant between 1906 and the 1920s may seem surprising in view of the considerable changes in the role of women and attitudes towards them in interwar Britain. In population statistics alone, the number of women in Britain outweighed that of men following the tragic loss of life in the First World War. Billie Melman (1988, 5) has shown that "between 1801 and 1914 the proportion of females to males in England and Wales never rose above 1068 to 1000." Yet, "[i]n 1921 the average was 1096 females to 1000 males..." with the highest disparity being between the ages of 20 and 34. In addition to this demographic imbalance, unmarried women of the 1920s were gaining greater financial, professional, and social independence in the lead up to the suffrage reform in 1928 (see Adam 2000, 113-156).

Although British society was still heavily weighted in favour of men, women were beginning to gain new freedoms such as access to a broader education and an increase in leisure time and opportunities. A decrease in working hours and better-structured working weeks meant that young women with a personal income across most social classes became prominent leisure consumers, engaging with the cinema, dance halls, and shopping, and enjoying far more daily leisure time than their mothers' generation (Todd 2005; Langhamer 2000, 190; Stead 2016). Even though women had become "an increasingly public presence between the wars" (Stead 2016, 8), this visibility is not wholly reflected in the visitor numbers of the period. This may be in part to do with the setting of the exhibitions which, despite developments in gender equality,

remained a largely male gendered space of learning. Only in 1921, following the new Sex Disqualification [Removal] Act, were women first elected to become Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries. Such social shifts can take time and, as Evans (1956, 389) reported, the number of women associated with the Society remained low for a considerable period.

We do begin to see a hint of a more independent female audience appearing in the pages of the visitor books. In contrast to the 1906 records, a number of female visitors were members of women's clubs, recording a club name as their temporary London residence. This addition reflects on going changes to London's social landscape, particularly around Piccadilly and Burlington House. Such organisations, intended to rival the gendered spaces of male-only social and residential clubs (see Milne-Smith 2011), were established with greater frequency in the early twentieth century to support growing numbers of young professional women (see Doughan and Gordon 2006). *The Lyceum Club*, open to women with a university degree or to women who had published in literature, arts, science, or journalism (Doughan and Gordon 2006, 53-54; Keighren 2017), features alongside *The Ladies Athenaeum Club* and *The Forum Club* in the EES visitor book of this period. Furthermore, the patterns and groupings of women's signatures suggest that some women were visiting the exhibitions as a social activity with a group of female friends or colleagues. This stands in contrast to the marital couples and family groups in which women tend to appear in the 1906 exhibition records.

Some reviewers certainly believed that the collections on display spoke directly to this new generation of independent modern women, or at least to their gendered stereotypes:

Then, as if to remind up-to-date young ladies who may visit the show that they are not so very modern after all, there are alabaster pots for rouge, kohl-tubes for eye paint, mirrors, necklaces, and amulets of far-away and long ago.
(*Lancashire Evening Post* 1926)

This passage reflects the necessity felt by 1920s newspapers to appeal to a growing female readership, as well as the long-running journalistic narrative that women were more concerned with "persons and things" than with ideas and principles (Bingham

2013, 99). However, it spoke still more to the preoccupation of interwar Egyptomania with the enduring modernity of ancient Egypt. The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and its contents was accompanied by feelings of temporal displacement, a nostalgic sense of familiarity, and the idea that Tutankhamun and his possessions embodied the modernist spirit (Fryxell 2017; Riggs 2018, 189-205). It is evident that these cultural comparisons stretched beyond Tutankhamun to encompass the EES's displays, influencing the way audiences viewed and engaged with the material on display, conceptualising and experiencing ancient Egypt through their own modern identities.

7.3 Museum and archaeology professionals

One audience group that was present throughout the exhibition practice was the museum professional, in particular those actively involved in acquiring material for the collections for which they were responsible. The names of museum curators, directors, and founders occur throughout the pages of the EEF/EES's visitor books, demonstrating that the exhibitions became a routine part of the professional calendar of national and international museum folk. For this community, the annual exhibitions provided an opportunity to not only select objects for acquisition into their own collections but also to advance personal and institutional knowledge by engaging with current archaeological research. In the days after the exhibition's closure the contents would be divided, packed, and sent off to collections across the United Kingdom and around the world, but the process of distribution always began in the exhibition space.

Because these interactions were institutional in character, many related archival documents survive, either correspondence between museum workers and exhibition organisers or official records in museum committee books and acquisition folders. This wealth of documentation makes this the most chronicled exhibition experience from a specific group of individuals, making it possible to piece together a far more detailed account of their visits than for members of the general public. This material shows that museum professionals were a highly valued and desired audience and that they experienced the exhibitions and consumed the collections and its knowledge in a distinctive way.

I received an urgent letter from Sir Flinders Petrie stating that the specimens he had excavated in Egypt, which were available to subscribers, would only be on exhibition for a couple of days longer, and if I wished to make my own selection I must do it at once. This I did and I have pleasure in reporting that I was successful in securing articles from tombs of Qau and Badari. These consist of objects in copper, glass, slate, alabaster, earthenware, marble, leather, ivory &c., and in addition Sir Flinders permitted me to select a large number of objects, such as copper harpoon, ornaments and utensils in the form of fishes, shells &c for exhibition in the Fisheries Museum. (Hull Museums Committee Book, 104)

Records, such as this from Hull Museum's Committee Book in 1923, document a widely shared experience for the museum professional. Each summer, exhibition organisers would contact the museums or public institutions which had contributed financially to the excavations that year, inviting them to attend the annual exhibition and inspect the potential acquisitions on display. For Hull Museums, which contributed £10 annually, the opportunity to select objects that related to their institution's regional narratives or disciplinary focus was too good to miss. This unique reward kept subscriptions coming in each year.

From early on, Petrie devised a system for keeping a record of museum requests for objects. As representatives visited the exhibition they were given a copy of the exhibition catalogue in which they were encouraged to note the objects that they most desired for their collections, as this letter from Pitt Rivers Museum curator Henry Balfour indicates.

I wanted to give you a catalogue marked, as you kindly suggested, to indicate the things I specially covet for the P.R. Museum [Pitt Rivers Museum]. I am sending it herewith, though I expect I am too late. I have marked in red special desiderata (heavily or lightly according to the emotions the specimens arouse). I wish I could have sent it earlier, or better still have consulted with you in the matter, but I have been wildly busy. (PMA.WFP1.115.10.1.26.30.1-2)

As curators like Balfour went around the space, catalogue in hand, they initialled objects and underlined references in the text, scribbled comments, and sketched diagrams in the margins to indicate their preferences. At the end of their visit the catalogues would be collected by, or sent back to, exhibition staff. All requests would be taken into consideration when the final division of finds took place. This method

also enabled curators to engage with the exhibition remotely through the catalogue, which appears sometimes to have been sent to subscribing museums whose representatives were unable to attend in person. A range of these marked-upon and coded documents can be found in the distribution folders of the Petrie Museum archive, each one detailing the thoughts and wish lists of a museum representative (fig. 37).

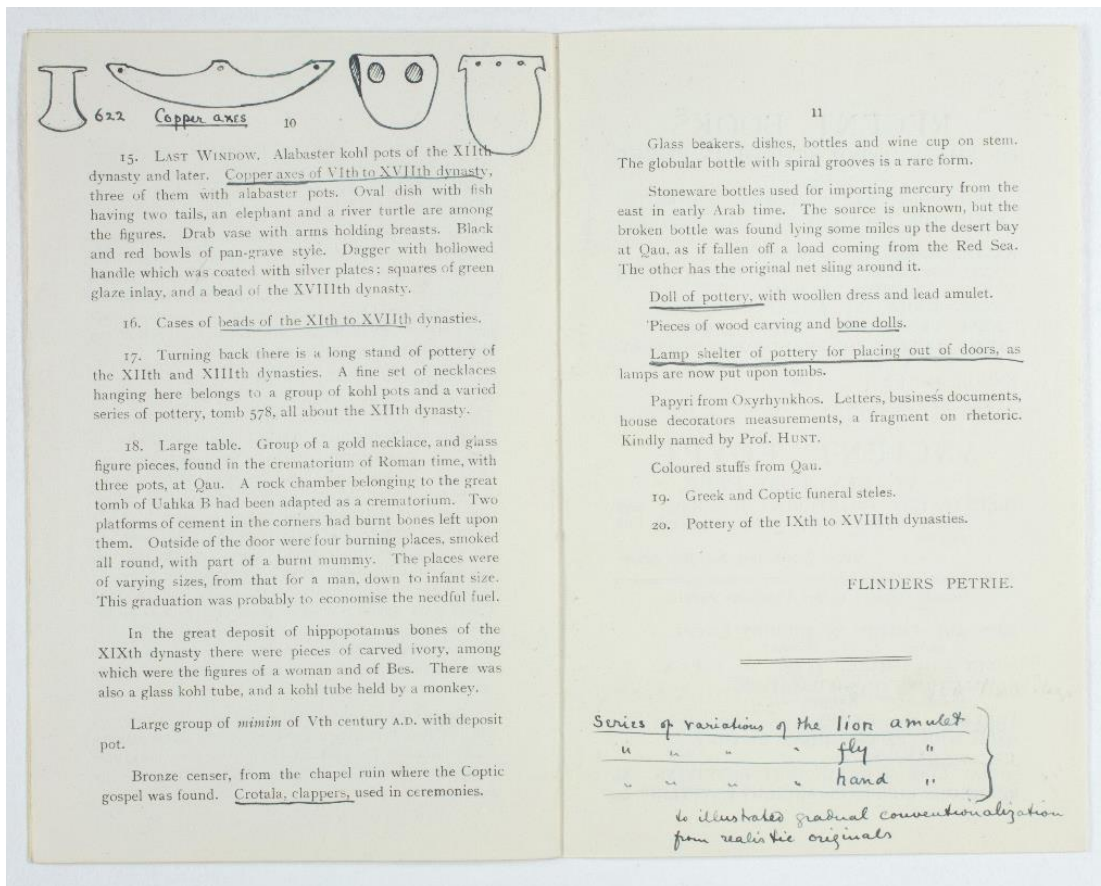


Figure 37. 1924 BSAE exhibition catalogue annotated by Henry Balfour from the Petrie Museum archive. Author's own photograph.

In this context the exhibition space operated as a showroom, creating a scene a little reminiscent of an auction house. This comparison may contribute to explaining why such a large quantity of material was exhibited. The high-density displays that became synonymous with the annual exhibitions enabled museum representatives to view the collection almost in its entirety and examine objects with ease, gaining an immediate understanding of what was on offer each season. It also presented an opportunity for the excavators to fully demonstrate to museums the quantity, quality, and diversity of

the material being excavated. A powerful visual presence of archaeological success was the best possible argument for continuing financial support.

For the museum professionals, this engagement fostered a pressured and contentious environment. The sense of urgency that appears in the passages quoted above hints at the level of competition that was present within the exhibition space. As professionals came to the capital to inspect the latest discoveries, national, regional, local-authority, and university museums competed for the best objects and for those that would draw in crowds or fill gaps in their collections. The global dimension of distribution meant that this urgency was shared internationally. The visitor books at the EES, for example, record visits from archaeologists Walter Hauser and Charles Kyle Wilkinson as representatives of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, as well as curator Albert William Van Buren on behalf of the American Academy in Rome. Tine Bagh (2011, 7-10) reports that the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, one of Petrie's principal sponsors, regularly sent either Valdemar Schmidt, an Egyptologist who aided the museum with the purchasing of Egyptian antiquities, or his assistant Maria Mogensen, to attend the exhibitions to secure finds. Notes taken by Mogensen can be found on exhibition catalogues in the Petrie Museum archive from 1910, 1920, and 1921; her name is also listed in the visitor book for 1924. Here Schmidt reports back to his employer, Carl Jacobsen:

I was happy that I had the opportunity to view Petrie's exhibition very thoroughly in London. I spent several hours there every day and examined every single piece – often as a kind of guide for others. After many discussions with Petrie and others I have decided (on Your and the Glyptotek's behalf) not to opt for the piece, of which I provided a rough sketch last time, but for one that everybody (including myself) judges to be no. 1. (Letter from Schmidt to Jacobsen, 8th July 1908, as translated in Bagh 2011, 15)

The piece in question, which Schmidt successfully acquired, was a lintel from a building in Memphis (Mit Rahina) dated to the 21st Dynasty king Siamun (Glyptotek AEIN 1012). It would have been one of the largest objects on display in the limited space of the annual exhibition and certainly fulfilled the museum's desire for "un grand monument" in return for their annual subscription of £400 (Bagh 2011, 14). Yet, as Schmidt mentioned, the decision was not one he could make alone. Many museum professionals mentioned that their experience was enhanced by the conversations

they had with Petrie and members of his excavation team. When Henry Balfour wrote to Petrie following his visit to the 1924 exhibition, he extended his thanks “to Lady [Hilda] Petrie and Miss [Margaret] Murray for their kind help in pointing things out” to him (PMA.WFP1.115.10.1.27.35.2). Similarly, in 1924 Bolton Museum curator Richard Quick wrote to inform Petrie that he had been “over the exhibition” with James Starkey, who had helped in selecting artefacts (PMA.WFP1.115.10.1.27.28.10). Thus, those selecting potential acquisitions had a rather bespoke exhibition experience in which excavators with an in-depth knowledge of the material acted as personal guides, often targeting curators to promote specific objects and to find those artefacts that would best fit with their collections.

Developments in the museums sector, which saw the establishment of the Museums Association in 1889 and the professionalisation of many museum roles and practices (Teather 1990; Kendall 2014), meant that the exhibitions came at the right time to capture this growing audience. As museums in Britain faced new challenges in ordering, classifying, and systematising their collections, there was an increased demand for provenanced and contextually-rich archaeological material. For museum curators, whose role it was to “inform and reaffirm” these procedures (Stevenson et al. 2016, 8), the annual exhibitions provided a visual and practical demonstration of how the excavated artefact could function within these new systems of knowledge and how information could be drawn from an object. In viewing the objects on display in terms of their museological and pedagogical potential, systematic collectors among this audience assessed whether or not they would fill a specific gap in institutional knowledge, if they could support particular narratives or sequences, and how much epistemological value they could bring to an existing assemblage (see Macdonald 2011; Pearce 1992, 87-88).

The range of professionals from different types of collections engaging with the annual exhibitions in this way, as shown in the visitor books, demonstrates how the excavated artefact was being received as a cross-disciplinary object. Even though the exhibitions were designed to frame Egyptian antiquities as working archaeological objects, they had the ability to transcend disciplinary boundaries. While science museums sought objects to fit into existing technological groups, anthropologists looked to position

ancient Egypt with evolutionary narratives of social and cultural development, and curators of Fine Arts sought objects of aesthetic quality and craftsmanship. The notion of ancient Egypt and its material products was both translatable and transferable, and each collection found its own value in the concept of the excavated artefact.

It is easy to imagine that the annual exhibitions exerted considerable influence over contemporary museum practice. At a time when disciplinary archaeology and professional museum practice were developing alongside each other, the practical demonstration of display techniques must have rendered the annual exhibitions particularly valuable. For many, the opportunity to see the excavated artefact working in the context of a display, to see which objects appealed to different audiences and how visitors engaged with the material and its arrangement, could have provided a source of inspiration and catalyst for discussion. Equally, the curatorial choices and the interpretive frameworks that were established at the annual exhibitions are likely to have influenced the shape and content of other collections to some extent. By privileging certain objects and narratives for display and guiding curators towards particular artefacts, the archaeologist and archaeological organisations exerted some authority over curatorial decision-making, influencing trends in collecting practices and future representations of the ancient civilisation.

TO CURATORS OF MUSEUMS.

THE attention of Curators is drawn to the fact that full information is sent in three forms about the objects received from the Egypt Exploration Fund.

- (1). Every small object is labelled, and the objects belonging to one group are labelled together, *and should be kept together*. The labels are wrapped with the objects.
- (2). A full list of objects with localities is sent from the Office.
- (3). A marked copy of the Catalogue of the Exhibition is sent in order to supply more general information: and such details are added as suffice to re-arrange the objects in case of the previous sources being mislaid by the unpackers.

It is therefore requested that Curators will attend personally to the unpacking of objects. Many objects are found broken, and are not re-joined as they might be injured by re-breaking in transit. Curators should therefore ascertain that any breakages are due to transit, before assuming that such injuries are not ancient.

EMILY PATERSON
(Secretary).

Figure 38. Leaflet sent to curators with division of finds, from early 1900s. Courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society.

A turn of the century document circulated to museum curators receiving material through the EES distribution system, shows that when finds were packed up and sent off to their allocated institution each consignment was accompanied by a series of documents, including the exhibition catalogue and the exhibition labels used in display (EES uncatalogued document a; fig 38). Many of these catalogues are now in museum archives, with the objects sent underlined by EES and BSAE staff as a record of their delivery. Such documentation ensured that the curators, regardless of their personal knowledge or specialisation in Egyptology or archaeology, would be able to utilise the objects within the context of their own collections. As Eric Peet described to EEF

secretary, Emily Paterson, in 1912, this demand for immediate information was of paramount value to curators.

The objects are really of little use to anyone without the account of their finding. If the museum to which they go has an account of this in the form of a publication at the time, it prizes them and sets them out with adequate labels and is pleased with them. On the other hand, if the publication comes out three or four years after, it is too late. Interest has gone and the groups are either broken up or relegated to cellars. A curator has no time to search through a publication of several years work on the chance of finding out about a particular set of things from one of those years. (EES XIII.c.unnumbered)

Interpretation material from the annual exhibitions also served this purpose. It offered immediate access to a authoritative knowledge that could aid the interpretation, categorisation, and arrangement of the objects that museums received. Such documents enabled the circulation of ideas as well as the continuation of display practices and reconstruction of narratives, ensuring that the displays had a legacy beyond the parameters of the exhibition space.

For many institutions this immediacy of information was necessary in order to replicate their own temporary exhibitions of EEF/EES and BSAE material, often for the purposes of fundraising. Curator T. Russell Goddard of the Hancock Museum in Newcastle stressed this significance in a 1924 letter to Hilda Petrie, writing “I hope you will find it possible to send us a fairly representative collection, as when it arrives I am anxious to make a special exhibition here which will be well written up in the local press with a view to obtaining subscriptions next year” (PMA WFP1.115.10.1.27.38.a-b). Such exhibits aimed to replicate the seasonality of the annual exhibitions, bringing fresh objects and new interpretations to local audiences as soon as possible after their appearance in London. Smaller regional museums in particular appear to have embraced this practice, with examples such as Folkestone Museum holding a temporary display of their “recently acquired collection of Egyptian antiquities” in 1922. A letter to the editor published in the *Folkestone, Hythe, Sandgate and Cheriton Herald* stated that Mr C. K. Rhodes will be present on two afternoons “to give information concerning the various objects exhibited”. For Mr Rhodes, who is listed in the EES visitor book as having attended the annual exhibition as a representative of

Folkstone Museum on 11 July, it was an opportunity to share the ideas he had heard with a wider visiting public.

As the central hub in the global distribution network, the annual exhibition offered an unprecedented opportunity for networking among museum and archaeology professionals and for exchanging ideas and knowledge. The scholarly impact of the exhibitions was therefore significant, not only in the selection of material and the narratives being presented and feeding into other collections, but also in opportunities for knowledge exchange that it provided. For the expanding professions of archaeology and museology, establishing such networks was also crucial for furthering professional contacts and securing employment or research opportunities, as Gertrude Caton-Thompson's (1983, 86) autobiography reveals:

The following months in London were busy with the summer exhibition by the British School of Archaeology in Egypt, of the winter's finds at Abydos, including my 200 Palaeoliths, which brought me into touch with a number of well-known people... The Director of Maltese Antiquities, Professor Zammit, was in London for the Petrie Exhibition and urged me to take the opportunity of excavations in the cave of Ghar Dhalam near the Borg.

For archaeologists and museum professionals the annual exhibition therefore provided a range of opportunities for acquiring specimens, learning of new interpretations, and making new personal connections. As such, the exhibitions became a vital space for the transformation of both objects and people.

7.4 Journalists

Tucked inside the pages of a 1902 EES exhibition catalogue, once owned by the Society's secretary Emily Patterson but now stored in their archive, is the business card of L. Goodenough, a reporter for the *Bristol Times and Mirror*. Written upon the card in Patterson's delicate hand is the note: "press notice in future". Goodenough was one of several journalists who regularly made the trip to the Society's exhibitions and published detailed accounts of their experiences across a range of newspapers and periodicals. As valued visitors, reporters were sent notices announcing the exhibition dates and inviting them to attend a press day which, according to the entries in

Petrie's pocket diaries, was usually held the day before the official opening. Although, an 1890 review in *The Athenaeum* seems to imply that journalists were occasionally provided access to the collection weeks before its opening. Following a detailed account of the collection within the exhibition space published in late August, the reviewer states that "Mr Petrie expects to have completed his arrangements by the middle of next month, so as to allow the exhibition to be opened on the 15th September." The tradition of holding press days continued with vigour until at least 1936, as letters to the EES office written by John Pendlebury in the field show the necessity of organising the date ahead of his return (e.g. EES TA. COR. Tell el Amarna II uncatalogued letter d).

This privileged access given to journalists is indicative of their importance within the process and publicity of archaeology. As Amara Thornton (2018, 75-102, at 75-76) shows, from the late nineteenth century onward archaeologists used the printed media as "a significant platform for promoting disciplinary identity and sharing knowledge." Although journalistic attention fluctuated throughout the course of the annual exhibitions, creating clear lines of communication between archaeologist and journalist remained an essential marketing strategy that was thoroughly embraced by excavators and their organisations. From the start, Petrie and the EEF corresponded in detail over the right publications to advertise the exhibitions:

I see no possible objection to the article in Harper's, it seems a capital move, + of course we must utilise their clichés... (EES COR.016.f.45)

We ought to have had good accounts in all the dailies + a page of sketches in the Graphic, +c. (PMA 3/1/PEN/13)

While visitor books appear not to have been available or not signed during press days, the scattering of names that feature in the days that followed is indicative of the breadth of printed media engaging with the exhibitions: *Architect's Journal*, *Athenaeum*, *The Building News*, *Christian World*, *Daily Graphic*, *Daily News*, *Egyptian Gazette*, *The Times*, *Tribune*, *Westminster Gazette*, and *The Yorkshire Post*. These titles range across newspapers and periodicals, from inexpensive dailies and weeklies to specialist or learned journals, and demonstrate the wide circulation and dissemination of archaeological knowledge.

Journalists formed a distinct audience group in two significant respects. First, they were valued visitors to the exhibitions who, like museum professionals, received an individualised experience of the displays. Second, there existed a whole audience who only ever experienced the exhibitions indirectly through the reports they published. Graham Law (2016, 42) notes that by the late nineteenth century the newspapers and periodicals that had once been “luxury goods, afforded only by the wealthy few” had been “largely transformed into cheap commodities available to the mass of the domestic population, with an expanding market overseas for the monthlies in particular.” With increasing literacy, reading had become a popular leisure activity across all classes and a particularly social act, with the latest copies of newspapers and magazines being read aloud in the home or consumed communally in pubs and coffee-shops (Beegan 2008, 36-37). The words, and to some extent the images, that journalists selected to represent the displays had a far greater social and geographical reach than the annual exhibitions could ever achieve through their physical presence alone. While we must be wary not to associate the reports of newspapers and journalists directly with public opinion, it is important to assess how such accounts may have shaped ideas of and attitudes to the annual exhibitions and their content. Exhibition reviews appeared regularly in the pages of illustrated periodicals, such as the *Illustrated London News* and *The Daily Graphic*. In a period when people were swathed in a new and dynamic visual culture, the nineteenth century saw a proliferation of illustrated media that enabled hundreds of thousands of people to all experience the same image at the same time. While some newspapers used their lack of images as “a badge of their intellectual seriousness”, many others recognised illustrations as “a necessary mechanism for coaxing in readers through the offer of visual pleasure” (Maidment 2016, 104). A letter from Petrie to Edwards during his 1888 exhibition at the Egyptian Hall shows that he was strongly aware of the power and value of images in the printed media:

The show draws fairly, quite as well as I expected; 30 to 40 on rainy days + 40 to 50 in fine weather. The Illustrated L[ondon].N[ews]. sketches will give us a great lift I hope, + may save us from loss perhaps. The Ladies Pictorial will have drawings also, + the Sat[urday]. Rev[iew]. + Daily T[elegraph]. will have articles. We have advertised moderately about 20 times in all. (PMA 3/1/PEN/35)

The *Illustrated London News* sketch mentioned here by Petrie is the earliest known image of the annual exhibitions. It was captured and mass-produced through the wood-engraving process. Artists, illustrators, or draftsmen trained in producing engravable designs, would have been sent to the exhibition to create an initial drawing, before engravers transferred and cut the image onto a block, creating an intricate rendering of the original (Beegan 2008, 47-71; Maidment 2009, 17-39). Such images depicted the exhibition space as well as select groups of objects likely chosen by members of the press, providing a visual summary of pieces that caught the public's eye or were deemed journalistically appealing. Objects were also probably selected for their unique, curious, or artistic qualities, or perhaps for their ability to translate well into illustrations. Although the designs varied in quality, many were even able to convey the texture and fragility of archaeological objects with the utmost detail. As Gerry Beegan (2008, 56) observes, engravers often "...varied the lines according to the qualities of the objects they depicted, using different techniques for organic and manmade surfaces." This method of visualising the exhibition space and its content enabled material knowledge to be circulated to a readership of hundreds of thousands.

By the early 1890s, technological advances had seen a gradual decline of engravings and increased use of photographs in British newspapers and periodicals. In 1904 the first daily newspaper to include only photographs, the *Daily Illustrated Mirror*, was launched, and about this time there was also a shift in the way the annual exhibitions were presented. Technological advances had been happening concurrently in the field and archaeologists now had a plentiful supply of photographs to offer newspapers for publication. Exhibition reviews were no longer accompanied by sketches of the exhibition space but by modern, scientific images of excavation and objects in their Egyptian landscape.

This shift was part of a growing trend for the reproduction of scientific photographs and photographs of science in turn of the century periodicals. For readers with an appetite for such subjects, visualisation through photography not only enabled access "to otherwise distant and inaccessible realms" but also "to things which were usually the preserve of those privileged enough to have advanced instruments and specialist

knowledges” (Mussell 2009, 205). For the EES and BSAE excavators who had gained greater control over their visual representation, these photographs framed and legitimised the exhibitions in their scientific context. Reviews often featured photographs of objects taken on site, where they had been carefully arranged on dark fabric backdrops to centre the viewer’s gaze, with photographic scales, object labels, and excavation numbers deliberately visible. The selection of such images for popular publication, with their distinctive visual codes, enabled newspapers and periodicals to participate in the construction and further mobilisation of the excavated artefact as the subject and object of scientific enquiry.

Exhibition reviews were published across a wide cross-section of national newspapers spanning all political allegiances. While provincial papers engaged thoroughly, if sporadically, with the practice, often introducing regional perspectives, the London-based press appears to have dominated coverage, which means that the vast majority of readers experienced the exhibitions through a metropolitan lens. Throughout this period provincial newspapers frequently drew from the larger, institutional London outlets (Potter 2004, 52), paraphrasing or reprinting exhibition reviews. Similarly, the popularity of London correspondents who lived and worked in the capital filled regional publications with London-centric perspectives.

As the primary means of communication between political elites and the wider population, the mass-circulation press, particularly those based in the metropole, played an increasingly influential role in the new public-facing politics of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Britain (Halvorson 2010, 430). Newspapers actively shaped and defined Britain’s identity in relation to its Empire, bringing news from the colonies ‘home’ to British readers (see Potter 2004; Kaul 2013). After the British occupation in 1882, Egypt became a regular feature in reports on foreign policy and international affairs. A. G. Hopkins (1986, 364) notes “the sheer volume of published output on the occupation of Egypt” and how “[p]ublic interest in Britain’s movements in the quicksands of Egypt was immediate and widespread.” While more liberal newspapers, such as the *Morning Leader* and *the Star*, which aimed to counterbalance the “new sensational dailies” and their “tide of imperialistic sentimentality”, were opposed to British military action in Egypt (Thompson 2005, 35,

50), press coverage was dominated by propaganda campaigns to justify British actions abroad as part of the wider imperial agenda. Many papers, such as the *Pall Mall Gazette*, included reports from British representatives engaged in Egyptian administration and became a mouthpiece for the views of British officials abroad, providing a platform to reinforce negative images of Egypt's instability and influence public opinion (Halvorson 2010, 430; Hopkins 1986, 383; Reid 1998, 230). The annual exhibitions sat within this discursive strategy and thus were integrated into wider political narratives of colonial expansion and ownership, used to legitimise and justify Britain's colonial ambitions and activities.

Published reviews cloaked the EES and BSAE exhibitions in nationalism. In the early years of the exhibitions, in the aftermath of occupation, reviews played upon common tropes of orientalism, triumphalist themes of scientific exploration, and grand hero narratives. The displays, and the objects within them, were framed by the press as signifiers of national pride, and the knowledge produced was branded as distinctly English or British in the face of their colonial subjects and competing powers.

It is a matter for no small gratification that a discovery so important has been due to an English organisation – the Egypt Exploration Fund – and above all, to an English excavator, Mr. W. M. Flinders Petrie, whose ingenious and patient tracking out of the site will take its due place among the most brilliant exploits of archaeological pioneers. We have thus a proof, and not an altogether superfluous one, that England still keeps pace in such enterprises with the other great European nations. (*The Academy* 1885, 225)

The transposition of national sentiment upon material things was nothing new in British newspapers. For decades the press had iconicised objects of ancient civilisations arriving in British collections, such as the Parthenon Marbles in 1816 (Rose-Greenland 2013) and Austen Henry Layard's Great Bull from Nineveh in 1848, the shipping and installation of which was covered as a national event in the *Illustrated London News* (Malley 1996). In a time when European nations competed to acquire classical art as a measure of their status (Hoock 2010), these tangible links to a glorified ancient past were seized upon as symbols of British nationhood with international power. As Fiona Rose-Greenland (2013, 656) has suggested, the material remains of ancient civilisations were "symbols whose meaning and potency could transcend national borders and communicate with a diverse audience of rivals and

imperial subjects.” This material construction of British nationhood was played out publicly in the press, and the coverage of the annual exhibitions is no exception. Newspapers were fixated on specific prized objects - the rare, the grand, and the unusual - each endowed with sentiments of national pride, but the treatment of the annual exhibitions was distinctive in its politicised approach to objects as a collective.

The scale of content and visual appearance of the exhibition space was a popular discussion point and, for the printed media and its subsequent readership, the quantity of objects sparked political commentary. The exhibition was a visual representation of the work conducted in Egypt and the achievements of the imperial project, and quantity equated with colonial success. The density of this cluttered visual spectacle of objects described as ‘salvaged’ from Egypt served to define the collections as ‘treasure’ hoards and ‘trophies’ of conquest now in the hands of its rightful owners. In exhibition reviews the terms used to describe the visual mass of the collections were laden with political connotations, exploiting a language that would resonate with imperial audiences (see Craig and Thompson 2013). Petrie, for example, was often described as returning to Britain “laden with spoils of his archaeological investigations” (*Manchester Guardian* 1884). The frequent use of the word “spoils” carried an undertone of warfare and military strength, painting an image of objects looted, plundered, and taken by force. Equally, frequent references to the archaeological assemblage as a “rich harvest” played linguistically with Egypt’s role within the British empire as a land of great agricultural and economic potential. As *The Saturday Review* (1904) reported, “the soil of Egypt is as fruitful to the archaeologist as it is to the cultivator... as an archaeological treasure-house Egypt seems to be practically inexhaustible.” Such descriptions conjured an image of archaeological objects being stripped from the land as another colonial export and asset, emphasising Britain’s authority over Egypt. The shared etymology of the word ‘field’ in archaeological, military, and agricultural usages already blurred the discursive lines between these three worlds.

References to spoils, harvests, treasure, and trophies, terms that are evocative of nationalism and abundance, were frequently used in press reports throughout the early years of the annual exhibitions, which suggests that as a collective these objects

were creating a powerful statement of occupation and possession. Although these rhetorical, somewhat clumsy terms may appear quite jarring with the careful precision associated with the new scientific practice of archaeology so celebrated by the British press, together they conjure up an image of an objectified Egypt being dominated by the political and technological strength of the British Empire. These particular words were much more prevalent at the beginning of the practice, in the immediate aftermath of the occupation, but they appear to have set the subsequent tone and style of reporting on the exhibitions thereafter. Because the annual exhibitions were founded in that initial stage of occupation, the two became intertwined in the words of journalists and perhaps in the minds of the reader.

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Through the analysis and comparison of the two known EEF/EES visitor books it has been possible to demonstrate that visitor numbers remained relatively consistent between the two periods of 1906 and the 1920s. There were also consistencies in the social and geographic make-up of visitors: both periods attracted a primarily male, London-centric, and wealthy upper- to middle-class audience. While the visitor books show a constant but relatively low number of female attendees and hint at the presence of more economically diverse visitors, both groups remained minorities in the socially exclusive and gendered setting of the university and learned society. The exhibitions held at the more popular and public-oriented Egyptian Hall in 1888 and Wellcome Museum of Historical Medicine in 1931, which attracted an estimated 2000 and over 4000 visitors respectively, suggests that location may have been a barrier to access for many potential groups. However, it seems clear that the EEF and excavators like Petrie were keen to attract a socially elite audience. In timing the exhibitions to coincide with the annual London Season, as well as promoting the displays to a select group of well-connected individuals of independent means, the organisers attracted those influential figures who were able and willing to contribute financially to excavations in Egypt.

The two other audience groups identified in this chapter, museum professionals and journalists, show that organisers provided tailored exhibition experiences for high-priority individuals. For invited museum professionals the displays provided a unique

opportunity to examine and select acquisitions for their own collections, as well as to network and exchange ideas with colleagues and find out about current research from the field. Such experiences enabled professionals to enrich their institution's collections and displays, engaging with current discourse and perhaps even enabling making it possible to adopt display techniques and representational narratives beyond the exhibition space. The introduction of exclusive press days demonstrates the value of journalists as an audience group. As part of an important marketing strategy for archaeology as a developing discipline in need of financial support, journalists also received a personalised experience of the exhibition. With reviews published across a wide range of newspapers and periodicals, ancient Egypt and the archaeological object became woven into different press agendas, as well as politicised and regionalised narratives. Such reviews introduced the exhibitions to an extensive readership, with far wider social and geographical reach than attendance could ever achieve.

The aim of this chapter is to shine a light on just some of the different audience groups identifiable for the annual exhibitions, in order to highlight the active and autonomous visitor in exhibition history and reveal the socially situated and dialogic nature of knowledge construction. Each of the groups discussed in this chapter, as well as the individual actors within them, brought their own agendas and personal and professional contexts to the exhibitions and their meaning-making processes, each making different interpretations and constructing different understandings of the objects on display. The exhibitions offered multiple visitor experiences to multiple audiences; these groups did not experience the collections in a vacuum. The ways in which exhibition visitors interacted with different people and their ideas, whether directly or indirectly, would have shaped their engagement with the archaeological object and their wider learning experience. It is easy to imagine that in the intimate and immediate surroundings of the annual exhibition, which fostered an environment of networking and exchange, that these types of interaction were heightened, making the visitor experience particularly unique.

8. Conclusion

In the summer of 1932 the BSAE held what was to be their last annual exhibition. The following year's event was cancelled with very little notice and no explanation:

Unfortunately we were obliged to cancel our annual Exhibition and a dead summer has proved of evil consequence in the renewal of funds. In July, subscribers and donors have always rallied to our exhibition, to be shown the exhibits in detail. It is their interest and enthusiasm during that four or five weeks, which provides much of the resources for the next season's researches. We have received practically no donations with which to carry on, although our prospects for the coming season are more than usually promising. (BSAE 1934, 3)

While the organisation tried staging a purely photographic exhibition in its place during the summer of 1934, the exhibitions never returned and three years later the BSAE used their 1936 annual report to officially announce to subscribers that the practice had come to an end:

It is a great loss that we have been unable to continue those exhibitions of discoveries which have been held for four or five weeks every year (except war years) since the first of the series in 1884. Many people we have welcomed annually from the last century down to recent times, and we would assure those friends and supporters that the main work – that of excavation and research – continues as vigorously as ever. (BSAE 1936, 3)

Subscribers were reassured that the work of the BSAE had not diminished. "On the contrary", the report stated, "the expeditions have been more frequent if of shorter duration, and the summers have been used for subsidiary work without interruption." The time that was once spent arranging and hosting temporary displays for public and professional audiences would now be put towards writing publications, without which, the report declared, "excavation is useless" (BSAE 1936).

The EES continued to hold exhibitions until 1939. The outbreak of war may have appeared as a convenient stopping point for the practice, but in reality the displays were already coming to an end. For the past seven years tensions had been forming between the archaeologists and the Society's committee over the fate of the annual

exhibitions. John Pendlebury, who had been so keen on them as a form of public engagement, was well aware of the committee's intentions. Writing to his father following his 1932 displays at the Wellcome Museum of Historical Medicine, Pendlebury commented: "[a] very inferior show, space inadequate etc. Really it's hardly worthwhile going on with a Society which takes so little interest in its most important job!" [quoted in Grundon 2007,156]. Towards the end, Pendlebury had to pressurise the committee into holding an exhibition, and his correspondence grew increasingly fraught: "What about the exhibition. Is it O.K. for September in the same rooms? If the Committee agree that we do anything so low as to have an exhibition might 'Amarna' be on sale? It has invested one or two people" (TA. COR. Tell el Amarna II, uncatalogued letter e). What had once been a central point in the Society's calendar was no longer a priority. It cannot be coincidental that the two organisations' exhibitions fell into disregard at the same time.

The factors which contributed to the demise of the practice were complex and far-reaching. As shown in previous chapters, the interwar period saw both the EES and BSAE struggle to maintain support from museums. Political tensions in the region and Egyptian nationalist uprisings, coupled with the spectacular find of Tutankhamun's tomb and questions of national ownership, had an impact upon partage and drastically reduced the scale of archaeological material entering Britain for distribution. To compensate for the lack of objects, societies like the EES turned to collating scientific data, but less tangible results meant there was increasingly no need to display their objects in London each year. Without the distribution of objects, the exhibitions had lost a primary function and a key audience.

Alice Stevenson (2019, 184-187) has shown that the lack of interest from museums became more pronounced after the Second World War. Post-war austerity meant museums had little capital to invest in excavations and societies. Dwindling interest in Egypt and world collections in general also saw museums realign their collecting habits to reflect renewed interests in British history and heritage, and objects of national and regional relevance. The work of the EES and the BSAE, the role of partage and the annual exhibitions, all represented museum practices of the past to a sector and a nation wanting to look toward the future.

World collections and Egypt were also losing their appeal to public audiences. After visitor numbers peaked at more than 4,000 under unique circumstances in 1931, the EES exhibitions of 1934 and 1938 saw a marked drop in numbers. When describing the 1934 display, EES Secretary Mary Jonas confided in archaeologist Guy Brunton that “we don’t get as many people as I would like to see, and so many are cranks, play-writers or Akhenatenites, or something weird” (EES.COR.BRUNTON unnumbered letter). This drop in interest was reflected across the Society’s public engagement activities, as fellow EES Secretary Mary Crawford commented in 1936, “...our last lecture was so badly attended that we have not been energetic in getting another as yet...” (EES TA. COR. Tell el Amarna II, uncatalogued letter f).

With declining support from museums and donors, the exhibitions had probably also become a financial burden, showing considerable expense for little return. The last known costings of the BSAE’s annual exhibitions, which were occasionally listed in their annual reports, show that between 1921 and 1924 they ranged from £22 7s 10d to £46 17s 0d. This equates to around £1000-£2000 in today’s money or the equivalent of 67 to 140 days wages for a skilled tradesman at the time. It is perhaps unsurprising that both organisations saw fit to channel such expenses into excavations and publications.

By the time fieldwork resumed after the Second World War, the landscape and positioning of British archaeology in Egypt had changed considerably. Britain’s colonial presence in the region had weakened, and tighter laws were placed on archaeological work and on the exportation of finds. For a practice that had always been so intricately tied to political circumstance, it would be these changes that sealed the fate of the annual exhibitions. Following Petrie’s death in Palestine in 1942, the BSAE continued to operate for another twelve years under the guidance of his widow Hilda Petrie, but the organisation no longer sponsored excavations, choosing to focus instead on the backlog of publications and finds that needed to be distributed (Stevenson 2019, 184). For the EES, archaeological surveys and epigraphic fieldwork replaced large-scale excavations in Egypt, and the Society turned increasingly to sites in Nubia and Sudan. The UNESCO campaign to address the Nubian heritage affected by the projected Aswan High Dam dominated the Society’s work in the 1950s and 1960s under the fresh

rhetoric of multilateralism and international collaboration (Carruthers 2016). New long-term financial support channelled through the British Academy from 1947, an act which Stevenson (2019, 199) describes as more of an attempt by the British to guarantee soft power in the region than an investment in archaeological research, meant that the EES no longer had to rely so heavily upon public and institutional donations. It was a culmination of these shifts in national interest, public and professional appeal, and political and economic circumstance that ensured the annual exhibitions did not return.

In 1968 the EES held one last temporary exhibition at the British Museum, retrospectively displaying the results from several recent years of fieldwork. The title, *An exhibition of recent discoveries in Egypt and Sudan*, paid homage to the displays which had come before, but in content and appearance it offered a very different experience. This was an exhibition intended to fit the museum aesthetic: select groups of 'museum-quality' finds were presented in modern glass display cases, in a gallery that reflected a homogenised, mid-century design. Glossy-covered exhibition catalogues, with plentiful images, and large museum interpretation panels communicated ideas about ancient Egypt and archaeology in an institutionalised voice. With the distribution of finds from Egypt all but at an end, the choice of a museum setting reflected a new era and change of direction for the EES, one which saw a more diverse museum audience engage with the products of excavation. The seasonality, personality, and liminality of the annual exhibitions had gone.

8.1 Summary of findings

The aim of this thesis has been to examine how the annual exhibitions constructed and communicated knowledge of Egypt, ancient and modern, together with archaeological practice to audiences in London during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. To do so, it has treated the annual exhibitions in their component parts – historical context, location and setting, content and message, display and devices, audience and reception – analysing each, both in turn and as a collective, to show how the displays functioned as a complex system of representation. Each

component played a significant role in shaping ideas and understandings of ancient and modern Egypt, as well as archaeological practice.

Beginning with the historical context of the exhibitions, chapters 2 and 3 charted the socio-political and cultural contexts surrounding the formation of the displays. This discussion positioned the exhibitions historically to show how they were a product of their environment and considered how these factors influenced both the practice and the perceptions and actions of those organising and engaging with the displays. Chapter 2 demonstrated that the political context of British occupation weighed heavily upon the annual exhibitions, informing many aspects of their organisation and consumption. The displays were framed by long-standing Orientalist attitudes towards the Middle East which reinforced concepts of Self versus Other. A Eurocentric vision of Egypt's ancient past was favoured over its present, and it was used to promote a progressivist history in which Egypt was positioned as the foundation of Western civilisation. The act of occupation and the foundation of the EEF in 1882 solidified these national sentiments, with the archaeological knowledge generated from excavation, distribution, and exhibition linked to power, possession, and legitimation. As a product of colonial expansion, the displays and archaeological objects were framed as material signifiers of occupation and supported the construction and maintenance of a British imperial vision. The content and meaning created within these spaces were tied to political developments in the region. As such, the exhibitions became a platform to enact and negotiate these power dynamics through the medium of archaeology, facilitating a dialogue between the imperial metropole and Egypt as a colonial territory of a special type.

Chapter 3 identified the origins of the practice, exploring how the displays built upon a rich and diverse exhibitionary culture which had thrived in the capital throughout the nineteenth century. The annual exhibitions were woven into a wider and vibrant tapestry of temporary displays celebrating the material culture of a newly commercial Britain, emerging academic disciplines, and the products of empire. As displays that projected the idea of colonial expansion and imperial strength and introduced audiences to the emerging professional discipline of archaeology, the annual exhibitions' depiction of Egypt sat comfortably within a wider, colonialist exhibitionary

heritage. Ancient Egypt fitted neatly into this context of viewing and way of seeing. As a culture both temporally and geographically distant, its material culture was displayed prominently across museums, international exhibitions, and learned societies. The strength of these traditions of representation influenced the organisers of the annual exhibitions to present Egypt in a particular format, as well as guiding audience expectations, shaping the way visitors engaged with and formulated ideas of Egypt. While the power of this exhibitionary culture can be felt running through the practice, and was certainly influential in its development, by no means did the exhibitions conform to any standardised conventions of display. In fact, the annual exhibitions were characterised, and their knowledge construction facilitated by, a level of individualism and a degree of separation from institutionalised practice.

Britain's exhibitionary culture centred on the capital, and this geographical positioning was key to the development of ideas and the creation of meaning. Discussion of the annual exhibitions in chapter 4 turns to address this role of place and space in the construction of archaeological knowledge, showing how organisers used choices of location strategically and experimentally. The various locations across the capital that hosted the exhibitions allowed archaeologists both to structure their own vision of Egypt and to convey a particular image of the study of Egypt vis-à-vis the emerging sciences and the changing landscape of knowledge in London. These sites of representation also framed messages in other ways. Perhaps most importantly, the choice of location affirmed the exhibitions' transitional and intermediate position between the field and the museum. Such locations enabled the organisers to experiment with displaying Egyptian archaeology in alternate settings, outside of the institutional and intellectual confines of the museum. The power of this liminality in forging narratives and shaping the archaeological encounter has been overlooked in most studies.

In examining the shape and scope of the exhibitions' content, chapter 5 shows that the annual exhibitions offered a very specific representation of Egyptian archaeology, one that was initially driven by small to medium sized objects that were logistically easier to transport and, more importantly, easier to display in the restricted space of the exhibition venues. This more intimate portrayal of ancient Egypt represented through

the smaller, everyday items of domestic and funerary contexts, stood in contrast to the grandeur and scale of traditional, monumental collections, and came to define the practice. While it has been raised previously that museum collecting practices and the prospect of finds distribution had governed excavation to some extent (Stevenson 2014a), this research offers the first notion that securing small objects that could be displayed at the annual exhibitions had also incentivised and reinforced archaeological practice in the field.

The intermediate positioning and experimental approach was further reflected in the multiple visions of Egypt that were created within the exhibition space. Chapter 5 shows that this liminal status afforded archaeologists the freedom and flexibility to develop their own curatorial agency and interpretive voice, and to experiment with new narratives. As each year audiences were introduced to a new material Egypt through fresh content, exhibitors played with the polyvalent nature of archaeological objects to demonstrate how they could be woven into contemporary issues and debates. The temporary and seasonal nature of the practice aided this process, allowing the displays timeliness and topicality, traits that contrasted with the familiar permanence and stability of the museum. This approach meant that the exhibitions could maintain relevance, adapting to, and engaging with, the latest archaeological theories and political happenings. Petrie's more nuanced and socially-driven approach to interpreting funerary archaeology at the turn of the century, for example, reveals that the exhibitions were engaging with more complex discourses in archaeological theory than are often currently recognised. The unique flexibility and platform for experimentation provided by the exhibitions suited the rapidly changing nature of archaeology as a developing discipline, as well as shifting socio-political dynamics between Britain and Egypt.

Chapter 6 argues that the experimental ethos which characterised much of the annual exhibitions was used to great effect in shaping and standardising archaeology's visual culture, its working objects, and a disciplined way of seeing. Through the design and layering of interpretive technologies of display, the exhibitions fostered an environment in which visitors could engage with the products and processes of excavation, bringing the fieldsite to audiences in London. This was introduced in part

through the very distinctive style of the displays. While many museums moved towards presenting more select groups of finds, the annual exhibitions retained their visual identity by displaying and interpreting an excavation *en masse*. This strategy can be traced back to the beginning of the practice when the exhibitions were primarily intended as a logistical requirement for sorting and organising finds post excavation, when public display was of secondary importance. Throughout the practice the displays remained active sites for the ongoing interpretation of finds, marking that distinction between the annual exhibition as a space of knowledge production and the museum of knowledge consumption. As the exhibitions doubled up as a space for post-excavation analysis, to some extent they became an extension of the fieldsite in an approach that differed greatly from all contemporaries. This experiential aspect was reinforced through design and interpretive devices. The absence of display cases, for example, facilitated object-based learning through touch. This offered a striking intimacy that was lacking in museums but was becoming increasingly common in universities at the turn of the century, perhaps demonstrating the annual exhibitions' emphasis on education. Overall this chapter highlights how these strategies of study and engagement were vital for the process of artefaction, of transforming Egyptian antiquities into excavated artefacts and viewers into disciplined observers.

By exploring the types of visitor and visitor experience at the annual exhibitions, chapter 7 identifies three main audience groups: the general public or popular audience, museum and archaeology professionals, and journalists, demonstrating how the exhibitions as an intimate, social space aided a rare cross-communication and knowledge production between these different communities of learners. The key finding from this area of discussion has been the social composition of the visiting public. There has long been speculation that the audiences that immersed themselves within these rather exclusive archaeological networks of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were of a higher social class. This is perhaps unsurprising given a subsidiary purpose of the exhibitions was to elicit funding for further fieldwork. The discovery of EES exhibition visitor books and the opportunity to analyse and interpret visitor addresses for the first time has proved this theory correct, at least with regard to the exhibitions of the early twentieth century. The comparison of the 1906 visitor

addresses in London to the data collated in the Booth poverty maps created a few years before has shown that the majority of visitors can be identified as coming from the two wealthiest social classes. As a hitherto unknown resource, these visitor books provide a rare snapshot of exhibitionary audiences in a field where such historical data is lacking.

The temporary and transitional status of the annual exhibitions means that spaces such as these are sometimes overlooked in historical analysis, seen as a brief and fleeting moment in the history of displaying Egypt. Yet it was precisely these qualities that made the annual exhibitions so unique and gave them the freedom and flexibility to experiment, making them significant sites in the construction and dissemination of knowledge. This research demonstrates that so much of current understanding and ideas about ancient and modern Egypt, as well as archaeological practice, were created not just in the field or in the museum but in these under-theorised spaces in between.

8.2 Contribution to the field

This thesis demonstrates the value of exploring temporary exhibitions as communicative and epistemological devices not only in the construction of archaeological knowledge and understanding, but in the broader practices of displaying material cultures. In scholarship far greater emphasis has been placed upon the permanent galleries of the museum and how ideas of the past have been created over longer-term engagements, than on temporary exhibitions which might be easily dismissed as less significant in the construction of knowledge and in the history of display more generally. However, as this study has shown, temporary displays have often presented exceptional opportunities to explore and experiment with practices beyond the reach of most museum galleries. Often the ideas generated within such spaces had greater reach and impact than previously assumed. It is therefore timely to expand the scope of histories of display to explore temporary exhibitions and in this way extend the academic reach of the subject, fleshing out the theoretical

understanding of temporary displays and the special ways in which they have operated historically.

Whereas the subject and concept of the museum has become canonical in discussions of engagement with material culture and the shaping of ideas, this thesis seeks to demonstrate the value of looking beyond the museum to other spaces of display and encounter. Throughout the nineteenth century, in particular, complex networks of spaces were used to communicate the materiality of archaeology and its ideas to public and professional audiences. From lecture halls to town halls, from public schools to worker's guilds, cities across Britain created a diverse landscape of archaeological representation. Temporary and mobile display spaces such as the annual exhibitions provide a counter-narrative, challenging the primacy and authority of the museum as knowledge-maker. Studies in this area must take into account the expansive network of different spaces and audiences that were engaging with archaeological products, and the different engagement opportunities that these spaces provided.

8.3 Suggestions for further research

In addition to the growing need for research into temporary exhibitions, during the course of this project it became apparent that the study of the annual exhibitions offers a great scope for addressing a range of issues. For example, this study is limited to the exhibitions of the EEF/S and BSAE, but these were not isolated events. Such displays belonged in a network of exhibitionary spaces that presented ancient Egypt and other archaeological subjects to public and professional audiences. There is scope to analyse how such networks, including the displays of Garstang and the University of Oxford, in addition to the numerous local archaeological societies, created a far broader system of representation during the twentieth century. How were other archaeological subjects represented through these channels? Were classical archaeology or areas of world archaeology displayed in similar manners? Did they share audiences or ideas? What networks of influence and curatorial agencies existed between these spaces? By examining a fuller range of these displays it would be

possible to map and critically explore the wider landscape of spaces of archaeological knowledge.

One area that this thesis has not been able to explore is the legacy of the exhibitions beyond the exhibition space. Curators and museum professionals engaged with the exhibitions, but how their ideas took shape back in their own museums is not yet known. This research has shown that there is a wealth of evidence connecting curators and the exhibitions in museum archives. The opportunity therefore exists to study how far the narratives, arrangements, and selection of objects in temporary exhibitions were shaping museum displays. What impact did the annual exhibitions have upon individual museums and museum practice in general? If exhibition narratives and arrangements influenced museums, to what extent did they differ from the traditional image of Egypt in museums and how were they received by audiences, particularly those outside of the capital? Such a direction also offers scope to bring the study of the annual exhibitions into the present, by considering what legacy these important, discipline-shaping displays have in today's museum collections and practices.

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Appendix 1: List of exhibitions

List of exhibitions drawn from exhibition catalogues and exhibition reviews. Site names are as they appear on catalogue.

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1884	Egypt Exploration Fund	Tanis (Zoan), San	Petrie	Oxford Mansions, Royal Archaeological Institute	9 Sept - mid-Oct	Tues & Thurs, 10am-4pm
1885	Egypt Exploration Fund	Naukratis	Petrie and Griffith	Oxford Mansions, Royal Archaeological Institute	8 Aug - 30 Sept	Sat, Tues & Thurs, 10am-4pm
1886	Egypt Exploration Fund	Naukratis, Tell Nebesheh, Tell Defenneh	Petrie, Ernest Gardner, Griffith	Oxford Mansions, Royal Archaeological Institute	2 Sept - 21 Sept (last public day according to pocket diary)	Sat, Tues & Thurs, 10am-4pm
1887	Egypt Exploration Fund	Bubastis, Tell el Yahooodeh, Tell el Karmus	Griffith, Naville	Oxford Mansions, Royal Archaeological Institute	8 Aug - 9 Sept	Mon, Wed & Fri, 10am-4pm
1889	Petrie	Lahun/Kahun and Gurob	Petrie	8, Oxford Mansion, Oxford Circus	16 Sept - 5 Oct	11am-5pm
1890	Petrie	Kahun, Gurob and Tell Hesy	Petrie	6, Oxford Mansion, Oxford Circus	15 Sept - 11 Oct	11am-5pm
1892	Petrie	Tell el-Amarna	Petrie	4, Oxford Mansion, Oxford Circus	19 Sept - 15 Oct	10am-5pm
1893	Egypt Exploration Fund	Der el Gebrawi, el-Bersheh, and Beni Hasan	Griffith	Art Gallery, Mosley Street, Manchester	Sept - Oct	Not provided
1895	Egypt Exploration Fund	Deir el Bahari	Naville	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	8 Jul - 20 Jul	Not provided
1895	Petrie	Ballas and Nagada	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	1 Jul - 3 Aug	10am-6pm
1896	Egypt Exploration Fund	Fayoum	Grenfell and Hogarth	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	1 – 7 July	Not provided

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1896	Egyptian Research Account	Thebes	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	6 Jul - 1 Aug	10am-6pm
1897	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Deshasheh and Behnesa (EEF) and El Kab (ERA)	Petrie (EEF), Quibell (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	1 - 31 July	10am-5pm
1898	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Dendareh (EEF) and Hierakonpolis (ERA)	Petrie (EEF), Quibell (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	4 - 30 July	10am-5pm
1898-9	Egypt Exploration Fund	Fayum, Oxyrhynchus and Naukratis	Grenfell and Hunt, Petrie	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	6 - 12 July	Not provided
1899	Egypt Exploration Fund	Diospolis (and a loan collection of prehistoric vases)	Petrie, MacIver and Mace	University College, London, Gower Street	10 - 29 July	Not provided
1900	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Abydos (EEF) and Hierakonpolis (ERA)	Petrie, Mace (EEF), Green (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	2 - 28 July	10am-5pm
1901	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Abydos, El Amrah (EEF), Beit Khallaf (ERA)	Petrie, MacIver (EEF), Garstang (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	1 - 27 July	10am-5pm
1902	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Abydos, Fayum (EEF), Temple of the Kings (Sety I) (ERA)	Petrie, Grenfell and Hunt (EEF), Milne (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	1 - 26 July	10am-5pm.
1903	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Abydos, El Hibeh and Oxyrhynchus (EEF), Drawings from the Osireion (ERA)	Petrie, Grenfell and Hunt (EEF), Murray (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	1 - 25 July	10am-5pm.
1904	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Ehnasya, Deir el Bahari, Oxyrhynchus (EEF), Gurob, Saqqara (ERA)	Petrie, Naville and Hall, Grenfell and Hunt (EEF), Loat, Murray (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	4 - 30 July	10am-5pm

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1905	Egypt Exploration Fund	XIth dynasty temple at Deir el Bahari	Naville	Society of Biblical Archaeology	3 - 29 July	10am-5pm
1905	Egypt Exploration Fund and Egyptian Research Account	Sinai, Pithom, Oxyrhynchus, Thebes (EEF), Saqqara (ERA)	Petrie, Grenfell and Hunt (EEF), Murray (ERA)	University College, London, Gower Street	29 Jun - 29 Jul	10am-5pm.
1906	Egypt Exploration Fund	XIth dynasty temple at Deir el Bahari and Oxyrhynchus	Naville, Grenfell and Hunt	King's College, London, Strand	10 Jul - 4 Aug	10am-5pm
1906	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Hyksos Camp, City of Rameses, Cemetery of Goshen, Town and Temple of Onias and other sites	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	2 - 28 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 10 & 20 July (8-10pm)
1907	Egypt Exploration Fund	XIth dynasty temple at Deir el Bahari and Oxyrhynchus	Naville, Grenfell and Hunt	King's College, London, Strand	9 - 30 July	10am-5pm
1907	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Gizeh and Rifeh	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	1 - 27 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 5, 15, 25 July (7:30-9pm)
1908	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Memphis and Athribis	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	29 Jun - 25Jul	10am-5pm, evenings 10 & 20 July (7:30-9pm)
1909	Egypt Exploration Fund	Abydos and Mahasna	Ayrton and Loat	King's College, London, Strand	8 - 31 July	10am-5pm
1909	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Memphis (Palace of Apries) and Thebes (Qurneh)	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	5 - 31 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 5 & 15 July (7-9pm)
1910	Egypt Exploration Fund	Abydos, Umm el Ga'ab and Sidmant	Naville, Blackman and Johnson	King's College, London, Strand	7 - 23 July	10am - 5pm
1910	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Memphis and Meydum	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	4 - 30 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 15 & 25 July (7-9pm)

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1911	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Hawara, Gerzeh, Mazghuneh and Memphis	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	26 Jun - 29 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 5, 15 & 25 July (7-9pm)
1912	Egypt Exploration Fund	Abydos and Atfieh	Naville, Johnson	King's College, London, Strand	8 - 20 July	10am-5pm
1912	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Tarkhan, Heliopolis and Memphis	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	24 Jun - 20 Jul	10am-5pm, also evenings 5 & 15 July (7-9pm)
1913	Egypt Exploration Fund	Abydos and Meir	Naville, Loat, and Peet, Blackman	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	23 - 30 July	10am-5pm
1913	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Tarkhan, Riqqeh and Memphis	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	30 Jun - 26 Jul	10am-5pm, also evenings 4, 14 & 24 July (7:30-9pm)
1914	Egypt Exploration Fund	Antinoe and Abydos	Johnson, Naville and Peet	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	11 - 28 July	10am-5pm
1914	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Treasures of Lahun, and antiquities from Harageh	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	22 Jun - 18 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 30 Jun & 10 July (7:30-9pm)
1921	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Woolley	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	4 - 13 July	10am-5.30pm
1921	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Lahun and Sedment	Petrie, Brunton	University College, London, Gower Street	4 - 30 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 15 & 25 July (7-9pm)
1922	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Woolley	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	3 - 12 July	10am-5:30pm
1922	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Abydos and Oxyrhynchus	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	3 - 29 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 5, 15 & 25 July (7-9pm)

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1923	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Qau-el-Kabir	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	2 - 28 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 10 & 20 July (7-9pm)
1924	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Qau and Hamamieh	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	4 - 26 July (3 July for ILN readers)	10am-5pm, also evenings 15 & 25 July (6:30-8:30pm)
1924	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Griffith and Newton	The Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	1 - 12 July	10am-5:30pm
1925	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Badari and in the Fayum	Brunton	University College, London, Gower Street	6 - 25 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 15 & 25 July (6:30pm-8:30pm)
1926	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Prehistoric Antiquities from Upper Egypt, The Fayum, and the Persian Gulf	Caton-Thompson	University College, London, Gower Street	5 - 24 July	10am-5pm, also evening 14 & 23 July (6:30pm-8:30pm)
1926	Egypt Exploration Society	Abydos and Tell el-Amarna	Frankfort	Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House (Council Room)	5 - 24 July	10am-5:30pm
1927	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Frankfort	13 Tavistock Square, W.C.1	5 - 22 July	10am-5:30pm
1927	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Gerar	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	27 Jun - 16 Jul	10am-5pm, also evenings 6 & 15 July (6:30pm-8:30pm)
1928	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Beth-Pelet I (Tell Fara), Palestine	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	6 - 28 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 10 & 20 July (6:30-8:00pm)

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1929	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Beth-Pelet I (Tell Fara), Palestine	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	8 - 27 July	10am-5pm, also evenings 10, 19 & 20 July (6:30-8:30pm)
1930	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Prehistoric, Hyksos, Egyptian Antiquities, Beth-Pelet I (Tell Fara)	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	9 - 31 July	10am-5pm
1931	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna and Armant, and a loan of Egyptian Jewellery	Pendlebury, Myers	Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, 54 Wigmore Street	8 Sept – 3 Oct [extended to 31 Oct]	10.30am-5.30pm, also evenings 10 & 16 Sept (5:30-9pm)
1931	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Tell el Ajjul, Palestine	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	6 - 25 July	Not provided
1932	Egypt Exploration Society	Abydos, Amarna & Armant	Calverley, Pendlebury, Myers	Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, 54 Wigmore Street	17 Jun - 27 Jul	Not provided
1932	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Tell el Ajjul, Palestine	Petrie	U University College, London, Gower Street	10 Jul - 3 Aug	Not provided
1933	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Pendlebury	Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, W.C.	26 Jun - 15 Jul [extended to 22 Jul]	10am-7pm
1934	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Pendlebury	Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square	17 Sept - 13 Oct	11am-5:30pm
1934	British School of Archaeology in Egypt	Photographs from Tell el Ajjul, Palestine	Petrie	University College, London, Gower Street	10 Jul - 3 Aug	Not provided
1935	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna	Pendlebury	Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square	16 Sept - 12 Oct	11am-5:30pm

Year	Organisation	Excavation	Director	Exhibition Location	Dates	Opening Times
1936	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna with collection of cat figures lent by Mr and Mrs Neville Langton.	Pendlebury	Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square	14 Sept - 3 Oct	Not provided
1937	Egypt Exploration Society	Tell el-Amarna and Sesebi	Pendlebury, Blackman	Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square	5 - 24 July	11am-5:30pm, also evenings 6, 14 & 22 Jul (5:30-8pm)
1937	Egypt Exploration Society (Sir Robert Mond Expedition)	Armant	Myers	Institute of Archaeology, Regents Park	September	Not provided
1938	Egypt Exploration Society	Sesebi and Amarah West	Blackman, Fairman	Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square	23 Jun - 14 Jul	Not provided
1939	Egypt Exploration Society	Amarah West	Fairman	University College, London, Gower Street	20 Jun - 15 Jul	Not provided
1968	Egypt Exploration Society	Saqqara (1952-56, 1964-68); Buhen; Kor (Buhen South); The Nubian Survey, (1960-61); Cemeteries of Qasr Ibrim, (1961-62); Fortress of Qasr Ibram; Tell el Fara'in (Buto).	Emery	British Museum	16 Oct - 30 Nov	Not provided