

Miguel John Versluys (ed.)

**BEYOND EGYPTOMANIA**

Objects, Style and Agency



**STUDIEN AUS DEM WARBURG-HAUS, BAND 21**

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**REIHE »KUNST UND WIRKMACHT / ART AND AGENCY«**

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**DE GRUYTER**

This volume is cordially dedicated to  
**Professor Jan Assmann,**  
on the occasion of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present volume is the result of an expert meeting held at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, January 2016. The symposium was organised by Caroline van Eck (then Leiden, now Cambridge) and myself. It was part of a series of activities that we launched, together with Pieter ter Keurs, then Professor of Material Culture at the Department of Anthropology of Leiden University and head of the department of collections and research of the National Museum of Antiquities, in the framework of the *Material Agency Forum* (MAF); an interdisciplinary podium for the study of material agency at the intersection of the disciplines of Art History, Archaeology and Anthropology, which the three of us initiated in 2014 and was supported by the Leiden University Profile Area *Global Interactions* (LGI).

The Leiden meeting in 2016 was the outcome of a long process of preparation, initiated by an explorative workshop in 2012 (prudently entitled *Beyond Egyptomania?*), which I organised together with the Royal Netherlands Institute (KNIR) in the city of Rome. My meeting with Florian Ebeling at that occasion has been vital for the further development of the project. Rethinking the rich trajectory of adaptation and interpretation of »Aegyptiaca« was particularly central to my research at that time, because of The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) VIDI program *Egypt in the Roman world*, which I coordinated from 2009 to 2014 at Leiden University. I have greatly profited from the input of the VIDI PhDs, also in preparation of this book, and I would like to thank Eva Mol and Marike van Aerde in particular.

Joining forces within MAF has been extremely fruitful for the 2016 conference and this subsequent book in many respects, as the concepts of *object*, *style* and *agency* now decisively

moved centre-stage in my rethinking of Egyptomania. Moreover, many of the authors of this volume were invited to Leiden already in 2014 and 2015, in the framework of our MAF lecture series, to present their work and discuss its feasibility for the planned expert meeting.

The »survival« of ancient Egyptian cultural forms beyond the realms of the Nile is a huge topic in terms of both chronology and subject matter. The Leiden symposium brought together, for the very first time, specialists from all these different periods and domains for discussion. The meeting therefore started out with, perhaps, a certain uneasiness about what exactly was at stake (the apologetic »I am not an Egyptologist« with which several participants started their lecture gradually became our proud motto), but soon developed into a fascinating discussion that yielded a bewildering variety of fruitful directions. I sincerely hope that this book testifies to that rich debate, its great potential as well as the (conceptual) difficulties involved.

Concerning the latter, I first would like to thank Caroline van Eck: her role in conceptualising the conference as well as this volume has been crucial – and I am very grateful that this book is part of the *Studien aus dem Warburg-Haus*, the series in which it truly belongs. Secondly I would like to thank the authors of the volume for their intellectual adventurousness and eagerness to come to Leiden and participate in this project. All papers have been substantially revised after the Leiden meeting with the idea that, although dealing with different periods and different objects *and* subjects, they are in fact all in dialogue with one another. Thirdly I am grateful to the discussants, only one of whom was present at the symposium itself. Their critical evaluation, from different disciplinary perspectives, of the attempt in (material) *mnemohistory* that this book represents, I consider to be an enormous asset to the volume and the debate as a whole.

The conference and this publication were made possible through the (financial) support of the National Museum of Antiquities, the Leiden University Profile Area *Global Interactions* (LGI), The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Chair group Classical & Mediterranean Archaeology from the Leiden Faculty of Archaeology. My sincere thanks to all of them, as well as to Jean-Marcel Humbert for providing a (new) photo for the cover of the book, Uwe Fleckner and Suzan van de Velde for their important help with the editing process as well as Katja Richter and Arielle Thürmel at De Gruyter.

Leiden, April 2020

Miguel John Versluys

## PREFACE: BEYOND EGYPTOMANIA

### »NACHLEBEN«, MNEMOHISTORY AND THE AGENCY OF THINGS EGYPTIAN

Caroline van Eck

This book has many origins, both intellectual and institutional, but it was also inspired by two paradoxes. The first is that although the presence of Egyptian culture and its artefacts is probably the longest case of uninterrupted *Nachleben* in the West, the studies that aim to cover the entire lifespan of this presence are extremely rare. The second is that Aby Warburg never wrote about the *Nachleben* of Egypt. This absence is almost a negative of the main themes in his work. Egyptian art is static and devoid of stylistic development, at least according to the state of knowledge during his life, and therefore did not lend itself to the study of stylistic revivals he studied. Egyptian images do not express vivid emotions in gestures and attitudes that originate in the earliest stages of humanity, and resurface in moments of great crisis. They do not present the pathos formulas that populate *Mnemosyne*, the collective memory of mankind in the way Greek, Roman or Italian Renaissance art did. Nor did Egyptian art aim at the naturalistic representation of gesture, expression, or the human body, that characterises the classical tradition, and generated much of its stylistic development. And finally Egyptian imagery cannot be said to represent *Denkraum*, nor its making to function as such, because it lacks the conflicted nature of so much of the art that interested Warburg.

Yet at the same time his ideas provided much of the inspiration for the present volume. Although *Nachleben* and *Mnemosyne* do not appear to play a significant role in Egyptian visual culture, Warburg's identification of memory as a major factor shaping the development of art is fundamental to understand such a long-term process as the millenarian presence of Egypt in the West. Jan and Aleida Assmann's theory of cultural memory is a rethinking of Warburg's *Mnemosyne*. Where Warburg saw its origins in phobic reactions to the

events that terrified primitive man, the Assmanns see cultural memory as a conscious, rational creation of memories that helps societies to overcome crises in a newly found ritual coherence. In thus redefining cultural memory they also created a new discipline: mnemo-history, which is not the study of past things, persons, events, and institutions, but of their remembrance, over long stretches of time.

The ambition of this book is to give an overview of the presence of Egypt in Europe and the Middle East by means of a series of chapters all devoted to one artefact. This brings us to the second way in which Warburg provided the starting-point. He excavated *Bilderfahrzeuge*, the trajectories of images across time along what he called the *Wanderstraßen der Kultur*, leading from Persia and Israel to Hamburg, Amsterdam or the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico. Very fittingly it is also the name of the major Warburgian research project hosted at present at the Warburg Institute in London, which takes his research program outside Europe and beyond the classical tradition. This book looks instead at *Dingfahrzeuge*: at the routes of objects and object types across time, from Assyria to 19<sup>th</sup> century St Petersburg. It does not aim to write biographies of objects, because using that genre too often implies a coherence, autonomy and integrity between episodes that often applies to one person's life story, but masks the ruptures, contingencies and radical changes that take place for instance in the trajectory of an obelisk from Luxor to the Place de la Concorde in Paris.

By tracing such *Dingfahrzeuge* this book does not aim to provide a large-scale catalogue of Egyptian presences. As an exercise in mnemohistory it aims to reconstruct the constellations in which Egyptian artefacts, which in some case had been lying around unattended for centuries, create an interest, and become actors in processes of interpretation, appropriation and transformation. They become material testimonies to pedigrees and cultural traditions, signs of political or religious allegiance, or valuable tokens in cultural and political diplomacy, to name but a few of the contexts in which Egyptian objects acquire agency. Where Warburg studied the historical conditions that led to new episodes in the *Nachleben* of the classical tradition, this volume looks at the emergence of historical constellations in which Egyptian objects are endowed with the power to act on those involved with them, to speak to new generations, and to generate new styles.

Instead of regarding the survival of things Egyptian as an irrational phenomenon, this book finally considers the literally objective foundation for that survival. Every specialist on Egyptomania agrees that Egyptian material and visual culture is extremely well-defined and easy to recognize. The traditional explanation for this is that Egyptian culture did not evolve, and knew no stylistic development. The chapters in this book break away from this macro-historical perspective to ask of individual artefacts – coins, tables, dishes, statuettes, furniture – what features in their design and use of materials may be said to have played a role in their survival, and what role these aspects played in the constellations of their revival. In other words, this book investigates the relations between the survival of Egyptian artefacts, their style and their agency.



**EGYPT AND ITS MNEMOHISTORY:  
INTRODUCTIONS**



## HAUNTED BY EGYPT

### A LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE ON HISTORY, MNEMOHISTORY AND MATERIAL CULTURE

Miguel John Versluys

»The granite & porphyry monuments of Aegypt exert an incredible power over every mind. Whence is this Charm? Partly perhaps, because they are the neutral Ground, where the hard and resisting material and the pliant hand of man have met. »So far shalt thou go and no farther» has been the silent l[a]nguage of these massive creations for centuries. Their majestic quietness, their sharp, flat, and angular lineaments, the economy of labor in the treatement of the stern material and their whole appearance are beauties of Style, which to us, who can cut the hardest stone like Chalk are no longer prescribed by necessity.«<sup>1</sup>

Gottfried Semper, lecture on primitive art, London 1851

In 1975, the South-African artist William Kentridge, then 20 years old, visited Paris for the very first time. Among the many sketches he made in his travel-notebook only three drawings document his visit to the Louvre; an encounter that nevertheless made a profound impression on the young student. From the Louvre collections, Kentridge chose to draw two Egyptian baboons from granite as well as »un gardien du musée se reposant sur la chaise«.<sup>2</sup> In his fascinating *Carnets d’Egypte* from 2010, Kentridge wonders whether it was his familiarity with baboons from his childhood, during which time these animals were still a common sight in South Africa, that made him document exactly these two objects from the Louvre collections; or perhaps his interest in ethnography as what he considered a very necessary addition to the Art Historical canon. But the remainder of his text shows that something else was going on; as Kentridge himself is very well aware. It is exactly for that reason that, 35 years later, he decided to compile his *Carnets d’Egypte*: an exhibition and an accompanying booklet documenting and exploring his relations to Egypt. These relations take a variety of forms. In his *Carnets*, Kentridge presents us, amongst other things, with drawings of Egyptian themes on old and used papers and books (thus evoking the inherent palimpsest character of things Egyptian?); self-portraits as a seated Old Kingdom scribe; a real »Isis tragédie« (»When does the tour start? I’d like to see the terracottas, the monuments, the marbles, the sarcophagi, the death masks the sar cophafa cophaf cophaf cophaf cophaf the sarcophagi [...]«); musical performances; and even films with wonderful installations like »Nubian landscape«, a pyramid landscape made up of metronomes amidst all kinds of drawings and illustrations referring to Egypt. After having worked on Mozart’s *Zauberflöte* and its Egyptian themes earlier, Kentridge is very specific about his reasons for undertaking this project and writes:

»En renouant avec l'Égypte pour ce nouveau projet, j'avais une préoccupation centrale: je voulais explorer une géographie intérieure, mettre au jour l'Égypte que je portais en moi et plus particulièrement trouver le lien entre ce monde intérieur et les importantes collections de vestiges exposées au Louvre. Ces vestiges constituent à mes yeux un pont entre le monde historique et un monde mythologique [...].«<sup>3</sup>

This fascinating statement by one of the leading artists of our time constitutes the ideal overture of this essay and of the collection of papers in this book, for various reasons. In the first place, because it concerns an inner geography with regard to Egypt (»l'Égypte que je portais en moi«, as Kentridge phrases it); an inner geography that Kentridge has acted on and made explicit through his *Carnets d'Égypte*. Talking about »une géographie intérieure« underlines to what extent Egypt is actually part of us and how Egypt is thus unavoidable, perpetual, and haunting us infinitively. In the second place, because it shows how important objects, in this case the collections of the Louvre, are to arrive at and understand the Egypt we carry within ourselves. And in the third place, because it makes clear that those objects should not be solely understood as historical sources but that they also, as Kentridge phrases it intuitively, belong to the domain of mythology; forming a bridge between history and mnemohistory, as I would call it.<sup>4</sup>

## **HISTORY, MNEMOHISTORY AND MATERIAL CULTURE**

The material and intellectual presence of Egypt is at the heart of Western culture, religion and art from Antiquity to the present. This volume aims to provide a long-term and interdisciplinary perspective on Egypt and its impact, taking theories on objects and their agency as main points of departure. The central questions this book addresses are *why*, from the first millennium BC onwards, Egyptian things and concepts are to be found in such a great variety of places throughout European history and *how* we can account for their enduring impact over time. By exploring an object-oriented perspective on this question, this volume aims at contributing to both: recent discussions on the »reception« of Egypt and how to move forward in this discipline, as well as current debates on the agency of artefacts across archaeology, anthropology, and art history.<sup>5</sup>

This collection's point of departure is the hypothesis that the Egypt that is such an important and enduring part of Western culture is not only made up of cultural, religious or artistic concepts – routinely discussed under the heading of reception in one form or another<sup>6</sup> – but consists also, or perhaps even primarily, of objects that have oriented and shaped many processes and events throughout history. Those objects, it must immediately be added, do more than simply communicate those cultural, religious and artistic concepts.<sup>7</sup> Not only do they passively represent such human ideas, they are active agents in their relationship with people and history simultaneously.<sup>8</sup> Within this human-thing entangle-

ment, their impact, or agency, does not seem to always solely depend on what they represent.<sup>9</sup> The quote of Gottfried Semper's lecture on primitive art, held in London in 1851 and used as the device for this essay, illustrates this well. For Semper the power of the porphyry and granite monuments from Egypt has nothing to do with their being Egyptian in the first place but depends on their materiality and, what he calls, »beauties of style«. As the essays in this volume show, those specific characteristics will in turn play a major role in making cultural, religious or artistic concepts have an impact on history as being *Egyptian*.<sup>10</sup> It is the aim of this book to open up and investigate the fascinating intersections between history, mnemohistory, and material culture with regard to Egypt.

## BEYOND EGYPTOMANIA

The case of Egypt is particularly compelling because hardly any other culture produced a repertoire of objects, forms and styles that is so recognizable and that had such a long afterlife, or *Nachleben*, to use Aby Warburg's term.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the cultural memory of Egypt is enormous and seems perpetual, as most prominently Jan Assmann has shown throughout his ground-breaking work – often using the word *Resonanz* where Warburg, I think, would have put *Nachleben*.<sup>12</sup> This storehouse of memory is stocked with concepts but also with objects, each with their own unmistakeable aesthetics that we call Egyptian. As the cultural, religious or artistic concepts that were framed as Egyptian, these objects were substantially influential to the societies they entered. What's more, often these »Aegyptiaca« seem to function as catalysts that »get things going«.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the enduring persistence of both Egyptian objects and concepts is most often described as a process of revival and reception, in which they only play a passive role, awaiting their rediscovery in later ages. From this historical perspective, the endurance of Egypt tends to be a history of episodes of reception and revival. Often these episodes are studied in chronological isolation (see below) and not infrequently are they then labelled as manifestations of *Egyptomania*, with all of that term's negative connotations of fashion, obsession or even irrationality. The recent monograph by Ronald R. Fritze, characterizing Egyptomania as a history of *fascination*, *obsession* and *fantasy*, is only one out of many more variants and examples.<sup>14</sup> In this respect, especially the distinction between Egypto-logy (*logos*) and Egypto-mania (*mania*) has done much harm to our pursuit of a proper understanding of the phenomena indicated by the latter term. This book aims to formulate a paradigm that goes *beyond Egyptomania* by attempting to rewrite the history of »the Egyptian preference« from the perspective of mnemohistory and its *Wirkungsgeschichte*, namely, the active role of Egyptian objects and especially the interaction between both. Is it possible that ultimately the particular materiality and style of Egyptian artefacts constitute one of the main backbones of Egypt's *Nachleben*?

The title *Beyond Egyptomania*, is, of course, explicitly and purposefully programmatic. It is simply meant to say that we should take the »survival« of ancient Egyptian cultural

forms and the impact of Egypt seriously. I think this is hampered by our use of the word Egyptomania itself, because of the associations inherent to it, and moreover by the lack of a clear definition.<sup>15</sup> The word Egyptomania came into being around 1800 and implied some sort of irrationality from these beginnings onwards.<sup>16</sup> It has been used indiscriminantly for a very wide variety of phenomena since. When concerning concepts and ideas, these often are associated with fashion, obsession or irrationality; when material culture is the focus of attention, it often concerns popular material culture – or Tutankhamen. In both respects Egyptomania is something audiences tend to mildly smile upon or laugh about; *Egyptomania makes Egypt harmless*. This book is called *Beyond Egyptomania* because I believe that such an approach is not helpful to use when aiming to better understand why Egypt is everybody's past. It is important to underline that I do not wish to suggest that previous or future research by scholars using the term is unsound or should be discarded.<sup>17</sup> Especially the foundational work by Jean-Marcel Humbert on Egyptomania should be mentioned in this respect.<sup>18</sup>

## INVESTIGATING THE »LONGUE DURÉE«

Much work has already been done on chronologically and/or contextually isolated responses to Egypt. Usual suspects include Cleopatra; Hadrian and Egypt; the Borgia apartments; Sixtus V and the Vatican obelisk; Napoleon and Egypt; Tutankhamen, et cetera. However, all kinds of boundaries – between disciplinary specialisations (history, philosophy, religious studies, art history, archaeology, etc.), on the one hand, and period specialisations (Classical studies, Egyptology, Renaissance studies, Modern history, etc.), on the other – stand in the way of a clear, overall view of the persistence of Egypt in Western culture. As a result, the study of the reception of Egypt has so far remained rather »antiquarian«.<sup>19</sup> Scholarly attempts to arrive at interpretative overviews, like the 1969 book by Siegfried Morenz entitled *Die Begegnung Europas mit Ägypten* or the series *Encounters with Ancient Egypt* edited by Peter Ucko, are very few.<sup>20</sup> This book does certainly not provide such an overview, but aims to investigate the coherence, if any, between all these individual examples distributed over time and across space, and proposes to combine history, mnemohistory, and material culture as a compelling research instrument to do so.<sup>21</sup>

The question of *Nachleben* thus constitutes this book's central research problem. For that reason, the eight case studies that form the core of the volume start in the Iron Age and subsequently deal with the Greek-Hellenistic world, the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages, the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the long 19<sup>th</sup> century, while in each case departing from a specific object or context and trying to answer a similar set of questions regarding Egypt.<sup>22</sup> This structure puts difficult questions about transmission and *Resonanz* into sharp focus. A sceptical reader might well ask whether we can actually talk about comparable phenomena here and whether we can really speak about

transmission through time, as from the case studies it becomes perfectly clear that Egypt can mean and do myriad different things in myriad different contexts, and that certainly »l'Égypte des uns n'est pas toujours l'Égypte des autres« as Laurent Bricault puts it. The mnemohistory of Egypt is therefore not a coherent discussion about a coherent topic, as Jan Assmann and Florian Ebeling write, because Egypt has been used to make a very wide variety of arguments.<sup>23</sup> These are indeed important questions and observations. The aim of this book is therefore not to simply construct or position a vertical line of transmission, but rather to investigate the *Nachleben* of Egypt throughout time and space seriously and in particular from the perspective of material agency.<sup>24</sup>

Outlining such an overview is important for different reasons. It makes clear that Egypt has always played an important role in processes of cultural innovation, be it as cultural foundation or as quintessential Other. In many historical contexts, Egyptian civilisation was considered to be an important testator. But unlike Classical Antiquity, which has always been seen as place of origin and therefore an integral part of the Western world, Egypt was not only the deeper past, but also the Other simultaneously. Hence, Egypt was often strange and familiar at the same time, and this liminal position will prove to be important for our understanding of the impact of Egypt and things Egyptian. The *longue durée* thus redirects our attention from the many individual historical contexts that for one reason or another appropriate Egypt towards the cultural and material forms that constitute Egypt and, as such, enables us to study these two perspectives in relation to each other beyond passive reception. Moreover, Egypt is not an isolated case. The discussions and insights provided by this book can serve as an inspiration to study the *longue durée* (material) agency of, for instance, »the Greek«, »the Chinese« or »the Celtic«.<sup>25</sup>

Objects are fundamental to investigating the long-term for many reasons, as has been outlined above. Cultural responses to Egypt cannot be understood without taking into account the tangible form of Egyptian objects, their style, and materiality.<sup>26</sup> By addressing the *longue et vaste durée* of the dissemination of Egyptian objects, forms, and motifs across the Mediterranean basin and subsequently the entire Western world and by showing the complexity of the relations between *being* Egyptian, *doing* Egyptian, and *looking* Egyptian, this book also hopes to incite reconsideration of the problem of style, which for too long has been rejected from archaeology, anthropology, and art history – and which is fundamental to understanding Egypt. There is, however, also an important methodological reason why adding objects so prominently and, one might say, independently to Assmann's mnemohistory project concerning Egypt matters: it adds another historical layer. In the Bronze Age, Egyptian stylistic features are an important constituent of an international *koine*.<sup>27</sup> In the Iron Age Near East and Mediterranean, »Aegyptiaca« were everywhere and have been usefully described as the most popular global commodity of that world.<sup>28</sup> It is important to realise that cultural responses to Egypt therefore started much earlier than with Herodotos – and we need objects in order to document that »prehistory« of Egypt's mnemohistory.

## THE CONTENT OF THE BOOK

The first Part of this book contains four Introductions. Its main aim is to discuss the many concepts that are used to describe and analyse ›the Egyptian preference‹ critically and in relation to each other. In his contribution, Pascal Griener rightly states: »That the impact of Egypt on the early modern period should not be understood merely as a fashion for exotic forms, is obvious. However, it is more difficult to find the right set of methods suitable to understanding such a complex phenomenon.« Taken together, the articles in Part I explore this set of methods and do so in critical discussion. The present essay has paid attention to objects and their (material) agency in particular and asked what this perspective could add to ideas about the mnemohistory of Egypt. These are presented by Jan Assmann himself and Florian Ebeling in the next article; their contribution also entails a much-needed overview and examination of earlier approaches towards the reception of Egypt and their discontents, especially with regard to the question of mnemohistory. To better conceptualise the eternal return of Egypt as well as its haunting character, they draw on Gadamer's concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte*. The great advantage of *Wirkungsgeschichte* over *Rezeptionsgeschichte* is that it locates agency with the concept (and the object) itself, thus accounting for its haunting character and its development over time. In his personal and passionate essay, Jean-Marcel Humbert holds a plea for *retaining* Egyptomania as a concept. Very usefully dissecting the many uses and abuses of the concept over the last two centuries, he underlines how important it is to be aware of the specific domain that one is in (the arts, literature, philosophy, popular culture, etc.) and to realise the very different character (and understanding) of Egyptomania in various national research traditions. His case study of the uses of Egypt in 20<sup>th</sup> century publicity is an important addition to the long-term overview that Part II of this book provides. In the essay by Pascal Griener, lastly, all the (sometimes) conflicting ideas on history, mnemohistory, and material culture of the first three essays come together wonderfully. Focussing on the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a very specific and defining moment in Egypt's *Nachleben*, Griener first analyses how the displacement of Egyptian fragments and ruins serves as an index of progress. He then shifts his focus to another argument made through Egypt and shows how Egyptian objects contributed to the construction of a new vision on art and the agency of objects. This is a very important idea. It is well known that scholars like Johann Joachim Winckelmann had great difficulties understanding »Aegyptiaca« and wrote Egypt largely out of the development of Classical civilisation as a result.<sup>29</sup> »Ihr Denken ging das natürliche vorbei und beschäftigte sich mit dem Geheimnisvollen«, Winckelmann writes on Egyptian civilisation, trying to pin down the difference between Greek art and Egyptian art.<sup>30</sup> We now know that Egypt and »Aegyptiaca« were crucial constituents of what we call Greco-Roman Antiquity, although in a rather different way than Classical (material) culture was.<sup>31</sup> The same seems to be true for European civilisation and its reception of that Classical culture.

In eight specifically selected case studies, the second Part of the book presents a long-term overview of Egypt's *Nachleben*. This overview is, of course, extremely selective and



limited to very specific goals, as explained above. The »colonne vertébrale« presented in Part II, if indeed it is that, ranges from the Iron Age Mediterranean and Near East (Gunter), via the Hellenistic (Bricault) and Roman (Swetnam-Burland) periods as well as the Middle Ages (Laboury & Lekane), to the early modern period (Mason and Haslund Hansen) and the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Nouvel-Kammerer and Hurley). All essays take their cue from a specific object (or set of objects) called Egyptian and subsequently explore how these »Aegyptiaca« reshaped their surroundings and historical contexts.

In order to return to the central research questions and problems formulated in this essay and likewise explored in Part I, the third part of the book contains four discussions from four different disciplinary perspectives. These concluding discussions elaborate on the central concepts of the volume (objects, style and agency) only briefly introduced here, evaluate the various contributions in relation to each other and will therefore help the reader to explore the many interferences between the eight individual case studies in part II and the coherence of the volume as a whole. David Fontijn addresses the issue of material agency from an archaeological and anthropological perspective; Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt discuss Egyptian style and/as agency from the perspective of Art History; Stephanie Moser revisits Reception Studies by looking at the magic of the material and Stephen Quirke, lastly, investigates what the perspectives brought forward in this book might bring to Egyptology (and vice versa) and how a focus on »Ancient Egypt beyond itself«, as he calls it, might even have much wider and deeper resonances in space and time.



# THE MNEMOHISTORY OF EGYPT

## APPROACHES TOWARDS THE UNDERSTANDING OF EGYPT IN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Jan Assmann and Florian Ebeling

There are two modes of access to the past, one »historical« and one »mnemo-historical«.<sup>1</sup> The historical way aims at investigating and reconstructing past events, conditions, situations as they »really« were or happened exploring all kinds of contemporary sources. The »mnemohistorical« approach, on the other hand, asks for the past, not »as it really happened« but as it was and is remembered, addressing the same questions to tradition that is expressed by a famous hexameter:

Quís, quid, ubí, quibus auxiliís, cur, quómodo, cuándo?  
Who?, what?, where?, by what means?, why?, how? and when?<sup>2</sup>

Who, when, why, for whom, remembers the past and by what means? When I first applied the »mnemohistorical« method, I was dealing with apocryphal traditions about the Exodus of Israel from Egypt. In this case, there are no sources that would give an access to the event »as it really happened«. All we are left with are codifications of memory. Outside the Bible, these come – to name only the most important sources – from the Egyptian historiographer Manetho (third century BCE) and his Jewish excerptor Josephus Flavius (first century CE): two historians, who »remembered« the event for completely different reasons, in different form, at different times. Manetho wrote for the Greek court to introduce the new rulers of Egypt into the history and culture of their kingdom, Josephus wrote for the Greek-speaking intellectual class with the apologetic interest to defend the Jews against the calumnies about Jewish history circulating in Hellenistic historiography. This bias led him to mistake a passage in Manetho for an Egyptian account of the Exodus tradition, whereas

it dealt as a matter of fact with legendary memories of the Amarna age.<sup>3</sup> In my book *Moses the Egyptian*, I asked primarily the »why« question.<sup>4</sup> What was the agenda of those, who stressed the Egyptian descent or education of Moses? My interest was not to correct them, stressing the Hebrewness or Jewishness of Moses, but to understand their agenda, especially concerning those writings in the 18<sup>th</sup> century who wanted to overcome the distinction between »natural« and »positive« religion, religion based on the study and worship of nature and religion based on revelation.

Mnemohistory is the history of memory. Here too, however, an important distinction has to be made. The past is not only »remembered« by later generations, it also exerts by itself an influence on later times. When Manetho, e.g. wrote his excursus about the Heliopolitan priest »Osarsiph« who led a group of lepers and adopted the name »Moyses« after having given them laws, he stood under the impression of legends circulating in Egypt at his time, in which an Egyptologist easily recognizes a distorted memory of Akhenaten.<sup>5</sup> Josephus, on the other hand, read Manetho's text as a malicious account of the Exodus. The German terminology distinguishes between *Rezeptionsgeschichte* (history of reception) and *Wirkungsgeschichte*.<sup>6</sup> Manetho's excursus testifies to the *Wirkungsgeschichte*, the legendary reverberations of the Amarna experience that in spite of the destruction of all tangible testimonies still existed in Egypt after more than 1000 years.<sup>7</sup> Josephus' reading of Manetho, on the other hand, can be seen as a case of *Rezeptionsgeschichte*; he studies Manetho's text as a sample of anti-Jewish propaganda.

Originally, both terms derive from the literary discourse and refer to different ways of dealing with »classical« texts. *Wirkungsgeschichte* attributes their »afterlife« mainly to the texts themselves. That a text such as Homer's *Iliad* is still read by readers of our time is not due to the interest of modern readers in Greek epic poetry but to the enormous intrinsic qualities of the text that did and do not fail to impress readers of all times. The philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer, the most prominent theorist of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, calls this property of classical texts their »unmittelbare Sagkraft« (immediate communicative power).<sup>8</sup> Immediacy can be understood as widely independent from any mediating institutions such as schools, teachers, literary critics, commentaries etc. *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, on the other hand, is connected with the »School of Constance« (Hans Robert Jauss, Wolfgang Iser and others) that attributed the »afterlife« of classical texts to the reader and mediating institutions, without whom there would not be any afterlife at all.<sup>9</sup> The same distinction may also apply to the past in general. That an event or a period is remembered for centuries to come may be due to its lasting importance; examples are the Reformation, the Age of Enlightenment or the French Revolution (Kant: »ein solches Phänomen vergisst sich nicht mehr«),<sup>10</sup> or to the keen interest of scholars who unearth from the archives persons, events and institutions that possibly never existed. Examples for this kind of remembering the past are Moses or Wilhelm Tell.

The mnemohistory of ancient Egypt is interesting, not because it contained any authentic knowledge about Egypt but because it served as a mirror of contemporary society and

culture. The less important this literature is for the historical approach to the past, the more it serves the interests of mnemohistory. Why has a special element of the past been »remembered«, i.e. studied and discussed? Because it provided a model for a society confronted with instant problems. »The call«, wrote Henri Bergson, »to which memory responds, emanates from the present«.<sup>11</sup>

The confrontation with ancient Egypt in the early modern period is an example of mnemohistory par excellence as until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> the West had no direct access to the literature of ancient Egypt. Even when Greeks and Romans lived for centuries in Egypt and from Herodotus onwards described the writing of the Egyptians, they did not do so in a proper way and until Champollion the West has not been able to read Egyptian texts in the way modern Egyptology does. This is grounded in a fundamental misunderstanding of ancient Egyptian culture and writing. Let's explain this with respect to the most important concept of Egypt in 18<sup>th</sup> century: the Egyptian mysteries.

The ancient sources presented the Egyptian initiation in two aspects: a grammatological and a topological one. The grammatological aspect pointed to the fact that in Egypt there were two different scripts in use, one open, one secret; the topological aspect highlighted the wealth and extension of subterranean constructions and held that the buildings above ground served the official popular religion, the constructions underground, by contrast, the secret religion. Both were based on severe misunderstandings of the Egyptian evidence.

I shall only very briefly touch upon the well-known grammatological theories about hieroglyphs. Knowledge about hieroglyphs died out in Egypt during the fourth century CE but a wealth of information concerning the Egyptian script persisted in Greek literature. The Greeks were fascinated by hieroglyphic writing for two reasons: one is the iconic character of the signs and their apparent reference to things and concepts rather than to words and sounds, and the other is the fact that there existed, alongside hieroglyphic writing, another completely different and non-iconic script that was understood by the Greeks as being alphabetic. Both reasons were wrong but enormously influential for the image of Egypt in European memory. Of the various authors highlighting the iconic, non-discursive and purely conceptual character of the hieroglyphs, I mention only a passage from Diodorus that insists on three points: the non-discursivity (the hieroglyphs do not render the order of speech), the metaphorical character of the meanings of depicted objects and the emphasis on knowledge and memory.

#### 1. Non-discursivity:

The hieroglyphic writing does not aim at rendering speech (logos) by the connection of syllables but at metaphorically expressing the meaning of the objects depicted which are stored in the memory.

#### 2. Iconicity:

In this way, they draw, e.g., a hawk, a crocodile, a serpent, a part of the human body such as an eye, a hand, a face or something similar. The hawk signifies speed, since it is the

fastest of all birds; this may be applied to everything speedy. The crocodile signifies malice. The eye means the guardian of justice and of the body. The hand with outstretched fingers means the necessity to earn one's living, the closed left hand means the preservation of goods. All the other signs in form of body parts, tools and other things work the same way.

### 3. Memory:

By making efforts to find out the hidden meanings of things they arrive through long practice and training of memory at writing and reading everything they want to.<sup>12</sup>

The mastery of the script requires a vast knowledge about the hidden meaning of things. Learning to read and write amounts to an initiation into the secrets of nature.

The distinction between two scripts goes back to Herodotus who visited Egypt in the middle of the fifth century BCE and is most clearly expressed by Diodorus in the introduction to his passage on hieroglyphs quoted above: The Egyptians use two different scripts: one, called »demotic«, is learned by all; the other is called »sacred«. This one is understood among the Egyptians exclusively by the priests who learn it from their fathers in the mysteries.<sup>13</sup> The existence of two different scripts is explained by the distinction between the sacred and the profane, priests and laymen, secrecy and publicity. Later sources, especially Clement of Alexandria and Porphyry,<sup>14</sup> explicitly declare that the various steps in the acquisition of literacy, leading from the demotic to the sacred cursive and from there to the most accomplished script, the hieroglyphic cryptography, amounted to a veritable initiation. Pythagoras, e.g., according to Porphyry, spent twenty years in Egypt entering into the various secrets of the different Egyptian scripts. This grammatological interpretation of Egyptian split culture forms the basis of the curious theory of dual religion or society. The use of two apparently different scripts reflected, in the eyes of the ancients, a split in Egyptian society, between the initiated priests on the one hand, and the rest of the literate society on the other. This situation was a perfect confirmation of what Heliodorus and other ancient authors described as the Egyptian »duplex philosophy«, a vulgar or exoteric and an exclusive or esoteric one, one for the priests and one for the people.<sup>15</sup>

Hieroglyphic writing, therefore, was held to be not only a system of communication but also, and above all, to be a codification of sacred knowledge and divine wisdom. It was both natural and cryptic, whereas alphabetic writing was held to be both conventional and clear. The non-iconic, demotic script was believed to be an alphabet invented by the Egyptians for the purposes of communication, administration and documentation, whereas Hieroglyphs were invented for the purposes of mystery, for the transmission of esoteric knowledge. Needless to stress that all this is pure imagination. Its importance lies not in what it has to say about ancient Egypt but about Western concepts of secrecy, its religious and cultural functions.

The most important source in early modernity concerning the Egyptian hieroglyphs was the first book on Hieroglyphs by Horapollon Nilotes, which dates from the fifth cen-

tury CE and was discovered in 1418 by an Italian merchant in a Greek monastery.<sup>16</sup> For seventy hieroglyphs, it gives not only the meaning, which is mostly correct, but also the motivation, which is rather fantastic. The sign for »to open« is said to be written with the image of a hare because this animal never closes its eyes, and the image of a goose writes the word »son«, because this bird has a peculiar sense of family. Obviously, the lost knowledge about the phonetic meaning of the signs – the words for »to open« and »son« are nearly homonymous with the words for »hare« and »goose« – has been replaced with that moralizing zoology that is known to us by Aelianus, Plinius and the *Physiologus*.

Another discovery of the 15<sup>th</sup> century opened a window on the content of Egyptian esoteric knowledge believed to have been committed to hieroglyphs. This was the *Corpus Hermeticum*, which was brought to Florence after the fall of Constantinople and put on the desk of Marsilio Ficino: a collection of theo-philosophical treatises attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, a fabulous Egyptian sage of highest antiquity.<sup>17</sup>

For about two millennia ancient Egypt was only accessible at second hand: The Egyptian literature was described by Greek and Roman authors in a way that did not lead to the decipherment of the hieroglyphs. Even when it was not possible to read Egyptian texts, the West thought to some degree that they were able to do. The *Hieroglyphica* were used as a handbook for the translation and the hermeneutics of the hieroglyphs and even more, the authors of the West wrote in this manner.<sup>18</sup> The hermetic writings, written in Greek and Latin, were understood as Egyptian texts translated in Greek language; a form that was believed to corrupt the original and much more subtle meaning of the text but is still referred to as an authentic offspring of Egyptian wisdom.<sup>19</sup>

Even the representation of Egyptian art and iconography in the West was not present in the form of original masterpieces from the classical times but via Roman copies from the imperial period. These Roman-Egyptian hybrids, Egyptian art in Roman adaptation, were the models for Egyptian aesthetics until the documentations of the travels to Egypt served authentic evidence, beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with Friedrich Ludwig Norden and then with full impact in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with Vivant Denon's publications and the *Description de l'Égypte* (1809–1828).

In 1822, exactly 400 years after the arrival of Horapollon's *Hieroglyphica* in Florence, Jean Francois Champollion succeeded in deciphering the hieroglyphs. With this achievement, ancient Egypt seemed to have lost its mysteries. It became clear that there was no monotheism, no arcane theology, no antagonism between a popular religion and a religion of the sages and initiates. The hieroglyphs were shown not to be a cryptography but the normal writing used for stone inscriptions and basically the same system as the cursive writings, and the subterranean structures were identified as tombs. Egyptology did in fact unveil and demystify ancient Egypt within the historical sciences. Ancient Egypt lost its mystery which after this definitive unveiling lives on outside the academics.

After having found the access to the original sources, historians of Ancient Egypt dismissed the »Egyptian Mysteries« as pure fantasy. The whole traditional image of Ancient

Egypt, as it was based on Greek and Latin sources, was discarded as »Egyptomania« and disposed of as an accumulation of misunderstandings. The hieroglyphs were shown not to be a cryptography encoding esoteric wisdom in symbols, but a normal phonographic script, the subterranean constructions were identified as tombs and the whole concept of a dual culture, religion or philosophy was exploded. From a mnemohistorical perspective, however, these same concepts can be shown to be of the highest influence and interest. The hieroglyphic theory, erroneous as it was, fuelled a heated debate on grammatology that culminated in the philosophy of Jacques Derrida. Not less influential proved the theory for emblematic traditions in Western art.<sup>20</sup> The image of ancient Egypt as a dual culture informed not only the secret societies of the 18<sup>th</sup> century but led also, in the writings of Lessing and Mendelssohn, to ideas of double membership that are still important for our time.<sup>21</sup>

But even from a historical perspective, the verdict of »misunderstanding« begins to appear not wholly justified. At least it seems plausible now to recognize in the Greek image of ancient Egyptian writing and religion a reflection of Late Egypt's self-image, i.e. the form in which it wanted to present itself to the Greek visitors, settlers and officials. With the high increase of knowledge about Greco-Roman Egypt in recent years it becomes more and more evident that many of these alleged misunderstandings were shared by Greeks and Egyptians alike.<sup>22</sup>

## **ENCOUNTERING EGYPT: HISTORIOGRAPHY AND TERMINOLOGY**

As demonstrated above the concept of mnemohistory is tailor-made for the research into the history of reception of ancient Egypt. This term tries to avoid problems and ambiguities of those terms that have determined the field of research so far. Let's have a short look at the history of this research in this field and the common terminology used so far to discuss the efficiency of this concept.

The Western image of ancient Egypt is a topic that has not emerged as a coherent discussion about ancient Egypt within the history of reception. Prior to scientific Egyptology, Egypt was the subject of discussion within numerous different cultural-historical reference systems. Hieroglyphs in the context of the language, the relationship of monotheism and polytheism or idolatry in the context of religion, symbolic knowledge and revelation in the history of hermeticism, the quest for the best medicine and spiritual treasures in the context of alchemy and so on. Many of these discourses have been interwoven and overlapped, nevertheless these discussions were not focused on the best possible knowledge about ancient Egypt. Egypt was used as an argument in these different contexts and not as a topic in its own right.<sup>23</sup> A coherent discussion focused primary on understanding the ancient Egyptian culture only emerged with scientific Egyptology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, maybe in regard to art and aesthetics within 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>24</sup>



It is interesting to consider the nexus of all the different discourses that make Egypt a topic. Is there something like a master-narrative or an agent of the »thing Egyptian« in cultural history? This question is crucial for further research, as we have to determine whether it makes sense to ask for the bigger story or is the object of research only a bunch of loosely or associatively connected topics.<sup>25</sup> The diversity of discourses that made Egypt a subject of discussion means that a variety of different disciplines is dealing with the research into the history of reception of ancient Egypt. In this respect, we have a large number of publications dealing with the different aspects of the history of reception from their respective disciplinary perspectives; and only a few of these papers try to understand their topic as a part of the history of reception of ancient Egypt likewise.

The number of books focused on the whole history of reception is tiny. This imbalance is grounded in the fact that scientific Egyptology as the main discourse about ancient Egypt nowadays does not cover the history of reception by its self-definition. Egyptology focuses on ancient Egypt itself, it incorporates the Greco-Roman and the Coptic Egypt but draws the line of its competence at least with the beginning of Arabic Egypt. Initially, Egyptology formed its self-concept in sharp distinction from the history of reception stigmatizing it as a history of errors and failures.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, it was Egyptology as well that helped to establish the research into the history of the reception of ancient Egypt as a scientific topic in its own right. Two Egyptologists launched this additional perspective that took reception seriously in the 1960s: Erik Iversen and Siegfried Morenz.

*The Myth of Egypt and its Hieroglyphs in European tradition* was first published in 1961 by Erik Iversen. This book is part of a long tradition of brilliant studies in the hieroglyphic tradition. Most books and articles of this tradition have been written by scholars specialized in the fine arts and in Renaissance culture. Karl Giehlow in 1915 and Ludwig Volkmann in 1923 wrote very good and still useful books on this topic.<sup>27</sup> As an Egyptologist Iversen refers to these books but he goes much further in chronology. He begins with ancient Egypt and he ends with Champollion. Iversen suggests that he is giving an account of much more than the hieroglyphic tradition when he writes: »But as a red thread through this intricate web of direct and indirect influences [...] runs the hieroglyphic tradition.«<sup>28</sup>

Iversen implemented the »concept of Egypt in the West« as a fruitful additional perspective into a well-established research tradition. In doing this he maintained the high level of the research literature he is referring to. He tried to understand the actual author and the actual piece of art within their historical and intellectual framework. After more than half a century, *The Myth of Egypt and its Hieroglyphs* is still a very good book. But besides its merits Iversen was wrong in insinuating that the hieroglyphic tradition is a sufficient red thread through the full range of the history of reception. There are many discourses and images not covered by this approach and it is misleading to postulate the one trace as *pars pro toto* before even beginning to find different traces.

Siegfried Morenz intended to give an account of the whole range of encounters of Europe with Egypt in his book *Die Begegnung Europas mit Ägypten* in 1968. He claimed

that he would not omit any important part but also admitted that this could only be a sketchy attempt.<sup>29</sup> Morenz describes three stages of this encounter: The first lasted till late antiquity as an encounter of Europe and Egypt as a living culture. The second one deals with the »idea of Egypt« that began to emerge during Roman times in the context of the Isis cult and was not connected with the cultural realities in Egypt. The third stage that led to scientific Egyptology for Morenz begins with the idea of true scale comprehension and »understanding culture in its own terms« which was stimulated by the German art historian Winckelmann and the German philosopher Herder in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>30</sup>

Morenz examines whether the idea of Egypt expresses the best available knowledge of its time, especially with respect to the second stage, and in particular the history of reception. He does not compare for example Athanasius Kircher's writings about Egypt with modern Egyptology – this would be anachronistic. But he inquires whether anybody had better information and he challenges the plausibility of the single concept of Egypt. And in this regard Morenz condemns for example Kircher's interpretation of the hieroglyphs as grotesque nonsense.<sup>31</sup> From my point of view Morenz completely misses the crucial point in the interpretation of the meaning Egypt had to the West by regarding the history of reception as the pre-history of Egyptology. Kircher's main interest was not to understand ancient Egypt as well as possible. Rather than aspiring to be an Egyptologist he used the »concept of Egypt« in theological and philosophical controversies. Being a Jesuit he fought against the Reformation and tried to prove wrong any attempt to limit the truth claim of Christianity, the revelation and the role of the Roman-Catholic Church. These were Kircher's intentions and his attempt to understand Egypt must be understood as a part of this challenge. Even when Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* is one of the most comprehensive compilations of Greek, Latin, Arabic and Hebrew texts about ancient Egypt, it was not intended as an end in itself and it must not be understood as the ideal prerequisite for the best possible understanding of ancient Egypt as a topic sui generis.

There is a third important book that launched this research theme in the 1960s, not written by an Egyptologist. In 1967 the historian Jurgis Baltrušaitis, a Lithuanian living and working in Paris, published *La quête d'Isis* with the subtitle »Essai sur la légende d'un mythe. Introduction à l'Égyptomanie«.<sup>32</sup> This book is a brilliant account of the importance of the goddess Isis in parts of the literature from the Renaissance to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He traces many motives back to their origins in Antiquity and covers many different discourses using Isis and ancient Egypt as an argument. Baltrušaitis labels his study an »Introduction à l'Égyptomanie« and he does not claim to give a comprehensive account by using the subtitle »essai«.

These are three important studies initialising something new by focusing on the image of Egypt in the long-term and broader cultural context. All of them are both ground-breaking and fraught with problems: Iversen is in danger of equating a part of the story with the whole. His study illustrates the problems of focussing on one discourse. Iversen has a vast knowledge of many aspects of the history of reception of ancient Egypt and his book bene-

fits from this.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless his book inevitably leaves out a multitude of discussions that made Egypt a topic. This is no problem as long as the author is capable of making clear in which way this special aspect of the history of reception is part of the bigger story, in which way it is typical, in which way it is an exception, where are the relationships to other discourses and so on. The good and excellent studies are doing this nowadays, but to highlight the special case with the general characteristics requires a profound knowledge of cultural history and the history of reception of ancient Egypt. The problem is increased by the fact that many scholars are writing studies that could be regarded as a contribution to the research into the history of reception of ancient Egypt, but they are not trying to classify their study in this way or they do not take up the further research in this field and miss out on presenting their research as a contribution to the mnemohistory of ancient Egypt.

In this regard Baltrušaitis' book only aims to present an essay without any systematic or comprehensive purpose. Like Iversen, Baltrušaitis did not embed his study in the broader context of the history of reception of ancient Egypt and has not made any claim to cover this history even when his book is stunningly rich with examples. Unfortunately, Baltrušaitis used the term »Egyptomania« and made it popular in the Romance languages. Especially in France and Italy it is used for the discussion of the image of Egypt in the fine arts. Before Baltrušaitis the term was already used in 19<sup>th</sup> century and afterwards it was adopted by Jean Marcel Humbert regarding a conscious adoption of decorations and forms from ancient Egyptian art.<sup>34</sup> Later on and together with Clifford Price he used this term for any »kind of approach to anything ancient Egyptian«.<sup>35</sup> The problem with this terminology is that »mania« suggests an evaluative difference between the scientific Egyptological approach with the word »logos« and the pathogenesis of the human mind with the word »mania«. Neither Baltrušaitis nor Humbert used this term in this way for their profound research. Nevertheless, this evaluative term bears this overtone of an irrational interest in ancient Egypt. Besides a number of excellent studies there is an even bigger number of studies taking the research into the history of reception not as a proper analysis of cultural history but as a description of funny or quirky topics. This might be entertaining and even something that is sold in the book-market but delivers no significant contribution to the understanding of history. The term »Egyptomania« is growingly used to classify books and articles that make no proper attempt but remain descriptions of curiosities without a detailed contextualisation in cultural history.<sup>36</sup>

Morenz' book had the most comprehensive aspiration in presenting a history of the whole story with all of the important topics of the encounters of Egypt and the West. This is a courageous attempt to describe and understand the »Idea of Egypt« in the whole history of the West. This was the first time ever that a scholar tried to do this. Nonetheless Morenz failed: It was too big a task for just one scholar and Morenz' account leaves out many important parts of the whole story. But first and foremost: there is an important methodological problem with his approach: Morenz misunderstood the story of reception of ancient Egypt by taking it as an early form of Egyptology. This might be caused by a special interest which

is part of an Egyptologist's *déformation professionnelle*: namely the focus on looking for the genuine Egyptian value. However, even if this approach might be explained by an Egyptologist's typical perspective, it trivialises the mnemohistory of Egypt.

Since the publication of these three books nobody has tried to write a book with the aim of covering the whole range, at least nobody with a proper scientific approach. The scope has always been limited either to a special problem or with regard to a specific period, mostly to both. The only attempt to give an account of the wider range of the research is a good example of the problems involved: In the year 2000 a conference took place in London entitled *Encounters with Ancient Egypt*. The resulting eight volumes published in 2003 constitute a stunning collection of articles and topics.<sup>37</sup> They offer a good insight into the variety of topics but do not present an overview. There neither is a general introduction, just introductory remarks, nor is there a general index, a discussion of the research field and the research history. And there are many gaps with regard to the topics covered – this is inevitable in general but becomes a serious problem when there is no overview classifying the different articles as part of a bigger story. We still lack an overview and the *Encounters with Ancient Egypt* are proof that the discussion about the history of reception is in danger of being treated as a bunch of loosely connected topics and detailed studies.

## **TERMINOLOGY BETWEEN HISTORY OF RECEPTION AND EFFECTIVE HISTORY**

Baltrušaitis used the term »Egyptomania« to label his study, Morenz examines a »Begegnung/ encounter« and Iversen traces back the »tradition of a myth«. There are a lot of terms used for the research field we are talking about. Let us briefly consider the most important and frequently used terms and their methodological implications.<sup>38</sup> As pointed out above there are two different perspectives to consider: the term »Reception of ancient Egypt«<sup>39</sup> lays the focus on the recipient's interpretation, the active agent in his time and in his socio-historical setting who forms an image of Egypt using (passive) sources. In focussing on the intention of the one who forms a concept of Egypt *Rezeptionsgeschichte* operates mainly with explicit ideas and texts. Likewise, it is focused more on the way the concept of Egypt is formed than on the output itself. This implies a constructivist epistemology and is requiring an analysis of the synchronic setting of an act of reception like New Historicism, Microhistory or Constellation Analysis. Jan Assmann has explained this concept of »history of reception« above with the example of Josephus who was reading Manetho as anti-Jewish propaganda and intentionally disputed this thesis.

On the other hand, Manetho himself serves as an example of *Wirkungsgeschichte* (effective history), being influenced by legends circulating in Egypt. The concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte* (effective history) is focused on the meaning that Egypt had in cultural history and to consider a special case of reception as part of a longer tradition and a vague circulation

of ideas. In a naive sense this term implies that a part of the ancient Egyptian culture is not lost but still exists and continues to be vivid and effective. It lays the focus on the thing Egyptian as an agent in the historical and cultural process and requires the research into the diachronic development. When Siegfried Morenz is showing that writing and calendar are two achievements the West owes to ancient Egypt, he is referring to this model.<sup>40</sup> Generally speaking, *Wirkungsgeschichte*, as demonstrated above, is about the impact of tradition on cultural history. It is about the legends, the allusions, the many vague concepts that have tinged so many traditions, even if they only seem to be about Egypt marginally. E.g., in the Early Modern Age, most discourses have been deeply influenced by the biblical motives of Egypt and even when the biblical texts are not mentioned explicitly they form a kind of background structure.

To make one of these concepts absolute, always bears problems: the constructivist implication of »reception« might underestimate that an artist or author does not act in a totally self-determined way. Images of Egypt were handed down to him in childhood, and he was confronted with the expectations of a patron or the requirements of the genre. We must take into account the tradition formed by the bible, sermons, classical literature or iconographic traditions and so on. It would be misleading to indicate the randomness of the encounters with Egypt. Although the concepts of Egypt have always been used as a projection surface, it has never been random but come down with a huge set of preconditions.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand the thing Egyptian cannot be regarded as an autonomous actor in history; it is always a human being that is confronted with Egypt. He or she is either reacting (the passive model) to a tradition connected to ancient Egypt or is taking up the thing Egyptian (the active model). This tension is crucial for the concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte* by Hans Georg Gadamer, often translated as »effective history«. In his opus magnum *Wahrheit und Methode* from 1960 Gadamer tries to understand the nature of human understanding in general and the understanding of texts in particular. He claimed that the gap between the intention of an author and the subsequent comprehension of a written source is generally insurmountable.<sup>42</sup> Following this proposition, understanding a text is not only a process of trying to understand the author, it is in the same way bound to the intellectual mind-set of the reader. It is not only a passive answer or reflex to history but also an active form of handling history: »Eine jede Zeit wird einen überlieferten Text auf ihre Weise verstehen müssen [denn ...] immer übertrifft der Sinn eines Textes seinen Autor. Daher ist das Verstehen eines Textes kein nur reproduktives, sondern stets auch ein produktives Verhalten.«

Understanding a text is always grounded in the act of reading and the very conditions of the one who is doing this. This is the perspective of »reception«. At the same time the gap between the document from history and the form in which it is understood later on is suffused with tradition that provides the guideline for interpretation: »Der Abstand der Zeit [...] ist ausgefüllt durch die Kontinuität des Herkommens und der Tradition, in deren Licht uns alle Überlieferung sich zeigt.«<sup>43</sup>

Each form of dealing with history (»understanding« in general in Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics), whether we call it understanding, encountering, reception etc., is acting and reacting likewise, on the one hand it means to form the concept of the intention and the meaning of a text and on the other hand it means to understand this text and oneself as part of a tradition that formed the text and our mind-set: just as the author of the text is deeply influenced by other texts, discussions and ideas the reader and his preoccupations in understanding are likewise formed by tradition, education and enculturation. As a consequence, we have two major parts to consider: the author in his socio-historical context and the tradition preforming the ways in which he faces ancient Egypt.

Gadamer deals with texts and authors writing in languages comprehensible for the West: national languages, Latin or Greek. It is a little bit more complex when it comes to understanding ancient Egypt by means of mnemohistory as we are talking about history that is referring to history. When we are interested in the concept of Egypt in 18<sup>th</sup> century, as demonstrated above, we are trying to understand an author writing in this time about Egypt or an artist creating a piece of art in this time. That means we are trying to comprehend the way the author in history is trying to comprehend the much older history of ancient Egypt. Referring to Gadamer this means the object of our interpretation is not ancient Egypt but the author in history writing about ancient Egypt and we try to understand his comprehension of ancient Egypt. The epistemological interest is the one referring to ancient Egypt not ancient Egypt itself, and the history that we have to take into account is the tradition of concepts of Egypt that led from antiquity till the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The importance of history as a predetermined setting for the understanding of the past, in this case of ancient Egypt, is crucial: nobody could face history in a purely objective way, as everybody is biased by the tradition of the object of knowledge.<sup>44</sup> An author writing about Egypt and a reader trying to understand a text about Egypt is always deeply predetermined by the tradition. To understand why a special case of reception took place we have to understand the tradition the recipient is faced with.

Gadamer's hermeneutics and the subsequent *Rezeptionsästhetik* (reader-response criticism), as has been described above, proved to be useful to study the »reception of antiquity« but it is much more complicated in the case of Egypt, as Egypt was only accessible second hand.

Greek and Roman Antiquity was always comprehensible in direct confrontation with the Latin and Greek texts, at least since Humanism for the *res publica literaria*. And Antiquity was *grosso modo* a normative part of Western culture, sometimes as a distinction often as identification. In contrast, Egypt was always a second hand image in Western culture handed down by the accounts of the bible or classical literature. Before modern Egyptology was established, one had to read, interpret, criticize or transform the Bible or the Latin and Greek writings to understand ancient Egypt. In this regard, we can look at »reception of ancient Egypt« as a subdivision of biblical studies or the Classics. Focusing on the concept of Egypt in the West we have to ask for the basis of this concept, for the underlying inter-

pretation and reception of the bible and the authors from antiquity. These images preformed the modes of »reception of ancient Egypt« till the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the decipherment of the hieroglyphs.

»Reception of ancient Egypt« thus needs a different approach to »reception of Antiquity« and mnemohistory takes up the point that »reception of ancient Egypt« had no direct access to ancient Egypt and was not able to go *ad fontes*.

Ancient Egypt appears to the West in three different forms, as a »message«, as a »trace« and as a »memory«: Egypt left behind many traces like pyramids, tombs, temples that once transmitted a meaning but this meaning was widely lost when the knowledge of hieroglyphic writing disappeared in the late fourth century CE. The messages from Pharaonic Egypt fell silent. In the narrow sense the »traces« we are talking about are remnants like wall remains, refuses and other things left behind without communicative intention. Archaeology is working on this aspect of ancient Egypt. When Champollion deciphered the hieroglyphs in 1822 Egypt became »readable«, the Western world has become able to understand the meaning of the traces the Egyptians wanted to leave to posterity. Modern Egyptology is concerned with this aspect of ancient Egypt.

The third mode is Egypt as a part of the cultural memory. This is, as already stressed above, not mere »reception« or »encounter« in the sense of a self-determined or voluntary interest in Egypt. Not only does cultural memory address, interrogate, and research the past, but it is also haunted by the past. The one being encountered with ancient Egypt is coined by the society he lives in, by the peer group he belongs to in family or profession, by the form in which he is socialised or enculturated. The form we are trying to understand is always deeply influenced by these conditions that made the human being.

The investigation of the cultural memory is called mnemohistory. It is concerned with the past as it is remembered and it suspends from the question of whether the memory reflects proper history. Mnemohistory focusses on the very situation of the act of remembering by a research into the »why«-question (see above) and combines the research into the synchronic structure with the diachronic backbone of history in surveying the story-lines of tradition, the webs of intertextuality, the diachronic continuities and discontinuities of reading the past. Mnemohistory analyzes the importance a present ascribes to the past. Unlike historical positivism the task of mnemohistory consists in analyzing the mythical elements in tradition and discovering their hidden agenda as shown above.

The eminent advantage of mnemohistory is the fact that it is not giving prescriptions in terms of the object and its interpretation. It is a method that fits perfectly for the research into the pre-Egyptological encounters with ancient Egypt. So many other terms used so far are problematic: »Egyptian-revival« or the similar use of »Egyptian Renaissance« might denote in their literal sense a special time of an increased interest in Egypt.<sup>45</sup> These terms suggest that times of a relatively low interest were followed by a rediscovery of Egypt. This could be misleading as the image of Egypt has always had a latent potential. Research in recent years has offered striking evidence for the importance of Egypt for example in Middle

Ages literature, a period that was regarded decades ago as being absolutely not interested in ancient Egypt.<sup>46</sup> The idea of transformation seems to fit much better than the one of cycles of vitality and ignorance.<sup>47</sup> »Egyptomania« should be avoided for any rational encounter with ancient Egypt, and many more terms denote a special attitude towards ancient Egypt, e.g. »Fascination of ancient Egypt«, Ägyptophilie or Ägyptosophie.

## THE LIMITS OF THE SUBJECT AND THE LIMITS OF METHOD

Talking about the terminology is a means to reflect on the range and the method of the research field. In regard to intellectual history it is a matter of debate if we will start to talk about the »Mnemohistory of ancient Egypt« with either Herodotus or with Homer and Aeschylus and in which way we will consider the documents that have survived as extracts and quotations. But in general, we agree that all these texts form the beginning of the history of reception of ancient Egypt. This is a fundamental difference to material culture, where we have a starting point much earlier.

For intellectual history, it makes sense to put an end to the history of reception with the establishment of scientific Egyptology. Something has changed dramatically with the decipherment of the hieroglyphs. The West had direct access to ancient Egypt, being able to read the original texts of this culture. From then on there was no need to make an interpretation of the accounts of the bible and the classical literature to understand ancient Egypt. The perspective changed from focusing on the inside and the hidden wisdom, allegories and philosophical interpretations to the outside, quantification, editions and translation.

If this also applies to the self-conception of Egyptology as a strict science, this model must be relativized in cultural reality. With regard to art and literature the ideas of the history of reception are still vivid and can't be regarded as outdated with the beginning of Egyptology. Three examples might highlight this problem.

Paul Klee (1879–1940) created paintings that reflect a first-hand impression from his travel to Egypt as well as an inspiration by anthroposophical books from Rudolph Steiner about Egyptian mysteries. Klee's next-door neighbour and friend Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) was a member of the Theosophical Society and Kandinsky's book *Über das Geistige in der Kunst (Concerning the Spiritual in Art)* is strongly influenced by Mme Blavatsky who understood Egyptian freemasonry from the 18<sup>th</sup> century as old Egyptian mysteries.<sup>48</sup> All of this was an inspiration for Klee's artistic work. All this is not Egyptology, but is it really Egyptomania? Blavatsky and Steiner served only as an inspiration and Klee never claimed to refer to scientific truth.

A concept of Egypt, likewise strange and famous, can be found in the writings of Aleister Crowley. Crowley was the most influential and notorious occultist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While on honeymoon in Egypt in 1904 he and his wife spent the night in the pyramid of Cheops, performed some magical rituals, visited the Egyptian Museum and were attracted



by a stela with the registration number 666. Crowley and his wife claimed to have had a revelation stimulated by this stela. This revelation was published under the name *The book of law (Liber L vel Legis)*. The first law of this religion is »Do what you wilt«. Crowley tried to give a scientific appeal to this. He reported that he discussed the stela with Emil Brugsch, the younger brother of the German Egyptologist Heinrich Brugsch and assistant of Auguste Mariette in the Egyptian museum. Furthermore, Crowley claimed that the famous Egyptologists Battiscombe Gunn and Alan Gardiner made a translation of the stela in 1912.<sup>49</sup>

Crowley's presentation as the prophet of an ancient Egyptian religion is pure nonsense with regard to scientific Egyptology. Nevertheless, it is popular and was attractive especially in pop culture: Jimmy Page from Led Zeppelin bought Crowley's house in Scotland, David Bowie and Ozzy Osbourne dedicated songs to Crowley and in literature Crowley inspired Timothy Leary and Ian Fleming. This combination of Egyptian Religion, hard drugs and sex magic was likewise famous and notorious, shocking and appealing. L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, was a follower of Crowley and the Rosicrucian group AMORC took up Crowley's writings. Till now AMORC is strongly connected to ancient Egypt their Egyptian Museum in San Jose houses the largest collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts on display in Western North America. All this is deeply influenced by the ideas that form the history of reception of ancient Egypt. The term »mania« may suit in this context, but it does not help to understand why these people were referring to ancient Egypt.

In the case of »Afrocentrism«, the »reception of Egypt« has become the subject of socio-political controversy and is discussed in detail in classical studies as well as in reception research: one of the eight volumes of the *Encounters* is dedicated to this topic.<sup>50</sup> In an attempt to prove that ancient Egypt was a black culture and the origin of Western civilisation, many authors quote texts from the history of reception. In 1789 John Murrant gave a speech in the first lodge for Afro-Americans, referring to Egypt and Africa as the origin of freemasonry and humanity.<sup>51</sup> He referred to Egypt and freemasonry in order to argue against racial abuse. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century this was the exception rather than the rule. The most dominant concept of Egypt within the discussion of slavery was the idea of relief from Egypt as the »house of bondage« and the identifications of the blacks with the Israelites in Egypt. Nevertheless, some authors fighting for abolitionism referred to Egypt as the black African origin of culture.<sup>52</sup>

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century this movement became powerful in the course of postcolonialism and the »Black Power« movement. Some authors only wanted to show that black culture is not a deficient mode of European culture but exists in its own right. Egypt played a major role for the authors trying to prove that Western culture is only an offspring of the black African culture that first flourished in ancient Egypt. Cheikh Anta Diop understood Egypt as a black African culture that must not be understood as part of the Mediterranean world but in the nexus of African cultures. Much more radical was George Granville Monah James when he claimed that the Western culture was not only an offspring of black Egypt but also

negated this relationship. With his battle cry »stolen legacy« James didn't intend to take part in the scientific discourse but acted as a political activist.<sup>53</sup>

With Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* this discussion became part of the discourse of the humanities.<sup>54</sup> Like his many predecessors he reads the texts from the history of reception like factual reports without any historical-critical contextualisation. According to Bernal, the Greeks acknowledged the fact that the Egyptians like the Phoenicians formed the foundation of their own culture. Out of antisemitic and racist reasons the first protagonist of classical studies would have neglected the importance of the predecessors and labelled ancient Greece an Aryan civilisation.

Grosso modo this discussion is a continuation of the history of the reception of ancient Egypt. The most important sources are Greek narratives about Egypt taken as factual reports and in particular the concept of Egypt formed by 18<sup>th</sup> century freemasonry lives on.<sup>55</sup> In the end this is more a discussion about politics than about scientific truth and the »Afrocentrism« is an excellent example of the mnemohistory of Ancient Egypt.

# PLAIDOYER POUR L'ÉGYPTOMANIE, OU COMMENT S'APPROPRIER UNE ÉGYPTÉ FANTASMÉE

Jean-Marcel Humbert

La relation de notre monde occidental avec l'Égypte antique a le plus souvent été, avec des variantes d'importance selon les pays et les périodes, étroite et privilégiée. Le mot »fascination«, abondamment utilisé pour qualifier l'action exercée par l'héritage du monde égyptien ancien lors de sa réception par l'Occident, en montre bien l'extrême particularité. Fascination exercée par l'originalité d'un domaine longtemps lointain pour ne pas dire inaccessible, et qui a continué de croître au fur et à mesure de sa découverte et de son étude scientifique après la naissance de l'égyptologie. De là à vouloir en conserver, en reproduire, en réutiliser les composantes, quitte à les détourner de leur fonction et de leur rôle originels, il n'y avait qu'un pas qui a été très tôt franchi. Ainsi, l'art occidental s'est-il enrichi de créations à base d'antiques, extrêmement originales, qu'il va intégrer en les adaptant au goût du jour, lui-même en perpétuelle évolution.

L'art égyptien, loin de s'éteindre, connaît ainsi depuis l'Antiquité des possibilités infinies de continuer à vivre – et même à revivre – loin des rives du Nil, sans être le maître de sa propre destinée ni des transformations et transpositions qui le touchent. Ce phénomène unique dans l'histoire de l'art et du développement du goût, tant par son étendue géographique que par sa durée, touche de fait tous les domaines de l'art puis de la vie quotidienne. Son étude s'est petit à petit imposée, et est ainsi devenue, depuis les années 1960 et surtout 1970, une discipline universitaire à part entière.<sup>1</sup> Celle-ci nécessite quantité d'études transversales, et impose non seulement une bonne connaissance en égyptologie, mais également une aptitude à décrypter l'art officiel, l'art politique, l'art populaire et l'évolution du goût dans toutes ses composantes, entre la Renaissance et nos jours.

Au demeurant, le nombre des éléments stylistiques empruntés à l'Égypte antique reste relativement faible, du fait de leur grande puissance d'évocation qui suffit à leur permettre d'évoquer, avec un simple élément, toute une civilisation. De ce fait, on retrouve toujours un peu les mêmes, mais revus, réinterprétés, corrigés selon la mode du moment. Outre l'inépuisable trilogie obélisque-pyramide-sphinx, on relève essentiellement – entre autres – des éléments architecturaux bien reconnaissables (massifs, murs à fruit, corniches à gorge, tores, adaptations de pseudo temples avec chapiteaux et colonnes), des décors (disques ailés, hiéroglyphes plus ou moins corrects), des signes distinctifs (uraeus, némès), des évocations de la mort (momies, tombeaux), ou encore des pharaons et des reines (Ramsès, Toutankhamon, Cléopâtre) ou des dieux et déesses (Isis, Osiris).

Mais comment désigner, aussi bien pour les spécialistes que pour le grand public, des choses aussi différentes que l'intérêt pour la civilisation égyptienne, et sa réappropriation par tout un chacun? Problème terminologique encore compliqué par des formulations différentes selon les langues et les cultures. Alors que le mot «égyptomanie» a pris une importance grandissante dans le monde bien que son acception soit loin d'être encore stabilisée, il est devenu important de voir s'il répond à l'usage international qui en est fait. Surtout, est-il judicieux de lui laisser désigner tout ce qui a trait à l'Égypte et au goût pour l'Égypte? (plates 1–7)

## **»ÉGYPTOMANIE«, ORIGINES D'UN MOT CONTROVERSÉ**

L'origine du mot «egyptomania» est très ancienne. Car non seulement l'égyptomanie est un phénomène né dès l'Antiquité, mais le mot lui-même a été utilisé dès la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Dans un très récent article, Noreen Doyle nous présente à travers une brillante démonstration les plus anciennes mentions du mot «égyptomania» répertoriées jusqu'à présent.<sup>2</sup> La toute première mention manuscrite semble apparaître en mars 1797, dans une lettre de Frederick Augustus Hervey, 4<sup>e</sup> comte de Bristol et évêque de Derry, à Wilhelmine Encke, comtesse de Lichtenau (voir plus bas). Vers 1806–1809, Sir John Soane, dans ses conférences sur l'architecture, parle de l'envahissement d'«Egyptian mania» (en deux mots), désignant ainsi le mobilier décoré de formes empruntées à l'Égypte antique. Il s'agirait là de la première mention imprimée du mot en anglais. Mais comme Soane avait très bien connu Hervey à Rome dans les années 1778–1780, où ils partageaient leur passion pour l'Égypte, l'expression peut très bien venir de cette rencontre, sans qu'aucun élément ne vienne le confirmer. Comme le mot est lié au séjour romain des deux compères, on ne peut que penser qu'il couvre à la fois le domaine égyptien et le domaine des copies faites à partir du domaine égyptien, qu'il s'agisse de Piranèse et de son décor pour le Café des Anglais, des fouilles de la villa d'Hadrien, ou de celles du forum romain.

La première mention imprimée en français du mot «égyptomanie» aurait été publiée en 1808, dans la première édition allemande de l'autobiographie de Wilhelmine Encke (ou

Enke), où elle cite cette fameuse lettre qu'elle a reçue le 20 mars 1797 de Frederick Augustus Hervey: «Chère amie et adorable comtesse, enfin je trouve le comte de Cassis, cet homme si intéressant pour l'Égyptomanie dont je suis dévoré et dont je ne démords par, et qui loin de me guérir de mon infection, me la fait prendre pour médecine et non pour maladie.»<sup>3</sup> Le mot, tel qu'utilisé dans ce document fondateur, ne paraît nullement péjoratif – comme le souligne Noreen Doyle –, et sa connotation est essentiellement médicale, comme si la «fascination» induite par l'Égypte semble alors constituer une maladie plus du fait de l'excès qu'elle comportait, que de celui de son contenu intrinsèque. Nous verrons plus bas que le cas est plus complexe qu'il n'y paraît de prime abord.

## DE LA TROP LARGE ACCEPTION DU MOT ÉGYPTOMANIE

Comme c'est souvent le cas dans toutes les langues, il arrive qu'un mot soit dévoyé, et mal employé, le plus souvent par méconnaissance de sa définition exacte. «Égyptomanie» est du nombre, même si ses mauvaises interprétations ne sont pas légion, car beaucoup d'auteurs utilisent le mot sans savoir précisément de quoi ils parlent, surtout à une période récente où l'évolution de sa signification est patente. Et l'erreur la plus commune est de mettre sous ce vocable tout ce qui concerne l'Égypte, brouillant ainsi l'évolution du terme. C'est ainsi que l'ouvrage – au demeurant peu intéressant – de Patrice Caratini, *L'égyptomanie, une imposture*, traitant d'une soi-disant importance médiatiquement surfaite du domaine égyptien dans son ensemble, a connu un accueil plus que réservé.<sup>4</sup> De même, un ouvrage récent pour les enfants, sous le titre *Egyptomania*, traite de l'ensemble de la problématique égyptienne antique.<sup>5</sup> Enfin, une collection entière de livres sur l'Égypte a été récemment publiée sous le titre *Egyptomania* par les éditions Alata (lancement de la collection le 15 janvier 2016 à l'Institut du Monde Arabe, à Paris) en coédition avec le journal quotidien de différents pays.<sup>6</sup>

Dans un excellent article, Stephanie Moser étudie de son côté la signification du mot «egyptomania» qu'elle désigne en le qualifiant de «pejorative word that evokes a sense of disproportionate and unconstrained passion for ancient Egypt», tout en regrettant son emploi anarchique:

»Beyond Humbert's critical efforts to characterise Egyptomania, many others have sought to clarify what the term means. For most, it refers to a fascination for ancient Egypt outside the walls of academe and whilst some adopt the term in a positive manner (e.g. Brier defines it as a love for ancient Egypt), others reflect on the negative connotations of the term. Helen Whitehouse, for instance, describes it as an 'inelegant term' that refers to the 'craze' for things Egyptian and Egyptianising.»<sup>7</sup>

## VERS LE CHOIX D'UN TERME GÉNÉRIQUE

Du jour où les historiens de l'art ont essayé d'expliquer, sinon de codifier, cette appropriation de l'Égypte et sa réception dans le monde occidental, il a fallu lui trouver un nom. Dès que j'ai commencé à travailler, en 1970, sur le domaine de la résurgence dans l'art occidental, au cours des siècles, des formes empruntées à l'Antiquité égyptienne, la question de la terminologie à employer s'est tout de suite posée avec acuité. Et surtout ce qu'un tel mot devrait très précisément désigner au niveau de la «réception» et de l'étude de ce phénomène si particulier.

Les mots pour ce faire ne manquaient pas, mais l'implication internationale du phénomène rendait le choix plus délicat, d'autant que chaque auteur avait tendance à en privilégier un aspect sans pour autant indiquer avec précision l'acception qu'il lui donnait, souvent d'une manière extrêmement large. «Egyptomanie», «Egyptomania», «Renaissance de l'Égypte», «égyptianisme», «égyptophilie», «égyptolâtrie», «pharaonisme», «thèmes égyptisants» ou «néo-égyptiens», «Egyptian revival», «Egyptian style», «Egyptian taste», «Nile style», en flamand «egyptiserende»: tous ces termes sont souvent employés les uns pour les autres, sans que leurs utilisateurs connaissent très précisément l'acception précise de chacun d'eux.

Richard G. Carrott parle, dans plusieurs de ses publications, de «neo-egyptian style». Patrick Conner et David Beevers emploient prudemment, en titre de leur exposition fondatrice de Brighton *The Inspiration of Egypt* (1983). Michael Darby préfère dans ses articles l'appellation «Egyptian spell», et Brian M. Fagan intitule son ouvrage *The Rape of the Nile*.<sup>8</sup> Les Français utilisent plus volontiers le «style retour d'Égypte», et Jean Yoyotte fait état d'«égypteries» et de monuments «égyptianisants», mots auxquels on préfère «égyptiennes» et monuments «égyptisants». <sup>9</sup> Jan Assmann parle de «mnemohistory», mais ce terme ne concerne pas strictement le seul domaine égyptien, et le regretté Brian A. Curran de «the cultural memory of Egypt». <sup>10</sup> Il reste toutefois entendu qu'«egyptiaca» – ou «Aegyptiaca» – désigne le matériel archéologique, alors qu'il est lui aussi utilisé dans le sens de «réception» par Florian Ebeling, et «égyptologie» l'étude scientifique de l'Égypte ancienne, de tous les points de vue. <sup>11</sup>

Un autre mot, apparu à la fin du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans le monde anglo-saxon, «agency», désigne essentiellement l'effet que produisent les objets sur les personnes qui leur sont confrontées. Ce mot reste relativement obscur aux autres langues, car quasiment intraduisible. Tout au plus «effet», «impact», «entremise», «influence», «médiation» ou «action», voire même «interaction» en français. Le vague de tout ce que recouvre ce mot (il avait été traduit par le néologisme «agentivités» et en allemand dans le titre de l'ouvrage d'Alfred Gell, par «Wirkung») ne permet pas de l'utiliser sérieusement en histoire de l'art. <sup>12</sup> Ou alors faudrait-il que tout le monde se mette d'accord sur une définition précise et compréhensible du terme. De plus, il ne prend pas du tout en compte la manière dont sont réutilisés les éléments empruntés à l'Égypte ancienne, qui se fonde sur des mythes, symboles et conno-

tations, ce qui constitue l'exceptionnelle originalité du phénomène par rapport à beaucoup d'autres revivals, grec, gothique, oriental, chinois ou exotique, qui eux sont de simples réutilisations décoratives sans substrat intellectuel, et qui ne véhiculent donc pas de message autrement spécifique. Notre collègue et ami Miguel John Versluys manie avec art toutes ces formulations.<sup>13</sup>

Mais parmi tous ces mots, l'un d'entre eux a fini par s'imposer dans le dernier tiers du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle: celui d'«égyptomanie» devenu universellement «egyptomania». Dès 1967, Jurgis Baltrusaitis précise *Introduction à l'égyptomanie* en sous-titre de son *Essai sur la légende d'un mythe. La Quête d'Isis*.<sup>14</sup> Jean Leclant, deux ans après, intitule *En quête de l'égyptomanie* son compte rendu de l'ouvrage.<sup>15</sup> Dès les années 1970, je l'emploie personnellement couramment dans mes publications; John Loring parle en 1979 d'*Egyptomania: the Nile style*.<sup>16</sup> Bob Brier intitule *Egyptomania* son exposition de 1992, et James Stevens Curl, lorsqu'il réédite en 1994 son ouvrage de 1982, inclut – afin de suivre la mode – *Egyptomania* dans son titre, mais revient au titre d'origine dans sa réédition de 2005.<sup>17</sup>

Un tel succès s'explique, car c'est en effet un mot simple, intelligible dans toutes les langues, et donc universellement compris, qui recouvre l'intégralité de cette question si originale de la réception et de la réutilisation de l'art égyptien antique dans nos productions artistiques ou populaires occidentales. Mais en fait, comme nous l'avons vu, il ne s'agissait que de la reprise d'un mot déjà utilisé depuis fort longtemps, et qui n'avait pas encore trouvé sa véritable assise épistémologique.

## POUR UNE DÉFINITION CONSENSUELLE DU MOT «EGYPTOMANIA»

Le goût pour l'Égypte et tout le domaine égyptien (ne devrait-on pas dire à l'extrême l'amour de l'Égypte?) recouvre nombre de choses thématiquement très diverses. Dans le cas où l'étude couvre l'Égypte dans sa globalité, ou au moins l'Égypte antique, cela implique bien sûr tous les domaines, y compris l'archéologie, l'égyptologie, la réception et les relations induites entre ces divers sujets. Mais à partir du moment où l'on constate la présence d'un élément illustrant l'Égypte antique dans une création moderne ou contemporaine quelle qu'elle soit, on peut tout à fait n'étudier que cette question précise. Il convient alors de bien définir dans quel domaine on se trouve.

Mais pour que tout un chacun parle exactement de la même chose, il convient de bien séparer la description et l'analyse de ces copies elles-mêmes et leurs différents modes d'expression au cours des âges dans l'art et le goût, de leur étude, de leurs origines, de leurs sources égyptiennes (la «grammaire» stylistique égyptienne) et de leurs sources originales (monuments et objets visibles en Égypte, découverts par des archéologues, présentés dans des collections, musées et expositions, ou reproduits par des gravures ou photographies dans des ouvrages documentaires, des romans populaires ou des magazines) plus ou moins largement accessibles à tout un chacun selon la période et le pays. Qu'il y ait un choc en re-

tour vers les études égyptologiques et plus largement historiques est indéniable, mais il s'agit là de domaines annexes, se situant en marge et permettant simplement d'éclairer notre domaine d'étude central, la réutilisation des thèmes antiques. Tout mêler ne peut aboutir, comme on le voit trop dans des études récentes, à une confusion préjudiciable à la bonne compréhension d'un phénomène au demeurant plutôt simple.

Depuis longtemps, j'ai précisé dans des livres et des expositions ma propre approche de cette question, d'une manière qui a été largement adoptée et reprise à travers le monde: pour moi, le mot »égyptomanie« désigne uniquement des copies et adaptations de l'art égyptien antique dans notre monde moderne et contemporain. Tout ce qui est induit vient expliquer le thème, le compléter, mais n'est pas couvert a priori par ce mot. Pour bien préciser ce que recouvre le mot »égyptomanie«, il faut donc en préciser le contenu. Il faut en effet clairement séparer l'étude globale de l'intérêt pour l'histoire de l'Égypte antique et celle de l'art égyptien antique – souvent appelé »réception« dans plusieurs langues (notamment anglais et allemand) – de sa réapparition dans les domaines les plus inattendus avec des significations modifiées.

En 1985, le Professeur Jean Leclant a contribué à préciser cette question, en baptisant la curiosité qui taraude explorateurs et érudits des siècles passés (au sujet de laquelle il parle de »rêve égyptien« et de »mirage égyptien«) du nom d'»égyptophilie«, pour bien la différencier justement de celui de l'égyptomanie: »La curiosité pour la vallée du Nil et son antique civilisation continua de se manifester par divers indices que nous nous proposons de préciser; ces aspects variés d'une certaine égyptophilie pourraient constituer une sorte de préface, aux paragraphes parfois très ténus d'ailleurs, pour l'étonnante découverte de Champollion: la naissance en 1822, par la Lettre à M. Dacier, de l'»Égyptologie.«<sup>18</sup> Un blog Internet, nommé »egyptophile«, a très bien compris le sens de ce mot.<sup>19</sup>

Dans l'ouvrage destiné au grand public extrait de ma thèse de doctorat (1987), puis dans le catalogue de l'exposition *Egyptomania*, j'ai de mon côté contribué à essayer de fixer les règles d'emploi du mot égyptomanie, exprimées ainsi:

»Ce concept recouvre toutes les réutilisations d'éléments décoratifs et de thèmes empruntés à l'Égypte ancienne dans des formes et des objets variés, sans rapport avec leur utilisation et leur raison d'être d'origine. Le facteur déterminant qui permet de définir une création comme égyptisante est donc avant tout le décor antique: par exemple, un sphinx – ou une sphinge – couché n'est égyptisant que s'il est coiffé du némès; de même, un sphinx – ou une sphinge – ailé assis, plus grec qu'égyptien, est égyptisant s'il porte cette coiffure. Suivant le même raisonnement, une représentation de la *Bataille des Pyramides* devant des ruines de temples et d'obélisques n'est pas égyptisante, tandis que le même décor animé de personnages habillés à l'antique le sera. Enfin, toutes créations néo-égyptienne moderne peut participer de l'égyptomanie si elle est recréée et réutilisée avec un sens nouveau, comme c'est le cas dans le cinéma ou la publicité. Mais il ne faut surtout pas donner l'étiquette d'égyptomanie à tout ce qui a un rapport avec l'Égypte:



un tableau représentant des vues d'Égypte, des palmiers, une caravane dans le désert est du domaine de l'orientalisme et de l'exotisme, non de l'égyptomanie. De même, voyager en Égypte, avoir le goût des antiques, en rapporter et en exposer dans un cabinet de curiosités est de l'égyptophilie, non de l'égyptomanie. L'égyptomanie n'emprunte rien non plus à l'art de l'Égypte contemporaine, où elle est cependant très répandue.<sup>20</sup>

On peut ajouter à ces éléments, pour aider à clarifier cette question, le statut des copies des modèles antiques. Il faut, autant que faire se peut, distinguer la copie servile d'éléments, souvent réutilisés dans un environnement et un contexte différent de celui d'origine, des adaptations, qui peuvent aller fort loin jusqu'à rendre parfois le modèle original difficilement reconnaissable. Ainsi, par exemple, une copie exacte de la statue de la reine Touia (musée du Vatican) en vraie grandeur n'a pas de sens particulier autre que décoratif ou pédagogique, alors que la même copie, en petite dimension, et servant de base à un candélabre prend tout son sens de création égyptisante.<sup>21</sup> Au contraire, les créations picturales de Gauguin ou de Bart Van der Leek s'éloignent beaucoup plus d'une copie exacte, et n'en sont que plus égyptisantes.

Il me paraît qu'aujourd'hui encore, cette proposition de définition garde, dans tous les domaines, tout son sens. D'autant qu'elle est partagée par de très nombreux spécialistes et adoptée par le grand public. Ainsi, par exemple, Eugène Warmenbol en retrace brillamment les étapes, tandis que Manon Schutz, dans une fiche en ligne, en donne une définition à la fois simple et précise se référant à nos propres convictions, pendant que Ronald H. Fritze met quant à lui en sous-titre de son livre *Egyptomania: »A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy«*.<sup>22</sup>

De son côté, dans son récent article universitaire, Stephanie Moser étudie la «réception» du domaine de l'art égyptien en liaison avec l'archéologie et l'identité nationale des pays intéressés pendant les diverses périodes concernées.<sup>23</sup> Elle y aborde également, très en détail, la problématique de la terminologie, et en particulier la formulation «égyptomanie» elle-même. Bien que je sois globalement d'accord avec ses conclusions, je dois dire qu'il est un peu regrettable que son étude soit fondée dans sa plus grande partie sur des publications faites en langue anglaise. Quoi qu'il en soit, Stephanie Moser confirme l'importance du mot «égyptomanie» et l'étendue à la fois géographique et chronologique de son emploi, et contribue ainsi de manière constructive à conforter la place de cette problématique en tant que thème d'étude scientifique autonome. Elle arrive en effet aux mêmes conclusions par des voies plus détournées:

»Egyptomania is nevertheless the most encompassing term we have for the reception of ancient Egypt. »Egyptian Revival« sounds more promising in that it does not have the same implications of an obsessive fixation with ancient Egypt, but this too has its limitations in that it suggests the reception of ancient Egypt is primarily an artistic movement (»Revival« being a term that is widely adopted in art history). »Representations of ancient

Egypt« is certainly more neutral as a description, but it does not convey the fact that this is a long established and widespread cultural movement, nor does it communicate the extent and level of engagement with this culture that the alternative terms offer.»<sup>24</sup>

Et elle ajoute:

»Because the reception of ancient Egypt is characterized by an intensity of interest and the engagement with this culture ›spread‹ so quickly to all areas of popular culture, the term Egyptomania is perhaps best maintained as the better of the options. Although it remains a problematic term, the emotive aspect of ›Egyptomania‹ conveys a certain truth about the treatment of the subject over the centuries.»<sup>25</sup>

### **L'ÉGYPTOMANIE EST-ELLE UNE MALADIE? SI OUI, COMMENT SE SOIGNER, OU... VIVRE AVEC?**

Le mot »égyptomania« a toujours suscité bien des interrogations, voire des rejets.<sup>26</sup> Il est en effet souvent mal compris, ce qui explique que son usage se présente toujours aujourd'hui trop anarchique. L'exposition du Louvre (Ottawa et Vienne) en 1994–1995 est à cet égard un excellent cas de figure. Lorsqu'il avait fallu trouver le titre de l'exposition, *Egyptomania* est le premier qui fut proposé par les commissaires, mais il ne fut pas validé par le service communication du musée car il lui paraissait trop court et étrange. Une société spécialisée dans la recherche de titres correspondant à des concepts fut consultée, et au bout de plusieurs semaines, ses conclusions furent les mêmes, elle ne put trouver mieux, et c'est avec ce titre (explicité par le sous-titre *L'Égypte dans l'art occidental, 1730–1930*) que l'exposition connut le plus gros succès du Louvre après sa réouverture avec la pyramide de Peï pour entrée.

Mais c'est surtout la connotation médicale, voire psychiatrique, de son suffixe »mania« qui, dans certains pays, freine son utilisation. Stephanie Moser cite de telles épithètes que l'on peut qualifier pour le moins d'excessives: Colleen Manassa associe le mot avec »an obsessive behaviour«, tandis qu'Alison Moore croit qu'il »suggests a compulsion, rather than a deliberate action within a political hegemony«.<sup>27</sup> Noreen Doyle, dans son article, montre également des exemples du mot clairement associé à une maladie, appelant des traitements ad hoc, à une époque où Freud et autres psychologues n'étaient guère prévisibles, qui auraient certainement préféré, pour ce qui concerne leur domaine, »égyptopathie« et »égyptopathes«.<sup>28</sup>

Ailleurs au contraire, le suffixe »mania« devient un élément d'attractivité. Le magazine *Connaissance des Arts* souligne ainsi l'aspect commercial de l'utilisation de l'art égyptien dans un article intitulé *Toutankhamon-Manie*.<sup>29</sup> De même, une exposition de Marie-Paule Vanlathem s'est intitulée (en flamand): *Manie en Mythe, Egypte* (1987).

Aujourd'hui, le suffixe »mania« employé en archéologie et en histoire de l'art a perdu l'essentiel de ses implications négatives, et constate essentiellement un état de fait (mummymania, Toutankhamonmania, etc.). Par ailleurs, il accompagne harmonieusement, comme en un clin d'œil, le côté ludique, et même parfois drôle de ces adaptations, notamment dans les caricatures et dans la bande dessinée. L'égyptomanie fait souvent sourire, voire rire, et ce n'est pas là la moindre de ses qualités.

Ainsi, au moins quatre sites Internet utilisent dans un cas comme dans l'autre le mot »egyptomania« dans son acception globale, confirmant ainsi la popularité du terme. Un forum de discussion uruguayen sur l'Ancienne Égypte s'intitule avec humour *Foro para Egiptomaniacos*. Un autre a pour titre *Doctor's diagnosis: Egyptomania*, où Egyptomania reste la fascination pour l'ancienne Égypte, mais où »mania« est défini comme »an excessively interest, enthusiasm, or longing a craze«. Un troisième, qui s'appelle *Dr. Sphinx's Blog*, a pour sous-titre *Egyptomania is the best cure for boredom*. Enfin, une page Facebook animée par Lyn Green a pour titre *Egyptomania: Ancient Egypt in Modern Culture*.<sup>30</sup>

Manie bien innocente en tous cas, adoptée par le grand public et tout à fait respectable tant qu'elle ne dépasse pas, sur l'Internet, les limites des domaines politico-psychologiques, dont l'afrocentrisme. Des charlatans, des sectes et des mouvements irrationnels mystiques s'en sont également emparé, qui, profitant de la crédulité des foules, font fleurir le pouvoir des pyramides, le rôle des Martiens ou autres extra-terrestres, et la prochaine résurrection de l'Atlantide. Il va sans dire que nous sommes là aux extrêmes limites de l'égyptomanie, en tout cas de celle qui est considérée comme académique et rationnelle.

## LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DE L'ÉGYPTOMANIE DANS LE GRAND PUBLIC

C'est avec le développement de l'industrialisation, dès le milieu du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, que la facile multiplication des objets à bas coût a permis d'inonder le marché avec des objets »d'art populaire« de moins noble facture que ceux réalisés jusqu'alors, mais souvent de fort belle qualité et montrant une réelle créativité.<sup>31</sup> L'égyptomanie a profité de ce courant et de l'engouement commercial qui en a découlé, à la suite des Expositions Universelles, et a connu ainsi une véritable démocratisation amenant à l'appropriation du domaine égyptien ancien par de nouvelles classes de la société. Mais, contrairement à ce qu'écrit Stephanie Moser (»Distinct national responses to ancient Egypt were generated in Europe, particularly in France, Germany and Britain, and later in North America«), cette diffusion s'effectuait à travers une mode bien plus internationale qu'on ne le pense en général.<sup>32</sup>

Les liens entre l'appréciation du passé archéologique égyptien et l'identité nationale de chaque époque ont fait évoluer la manière de voir, de définir l'archéologie et ses découvertes, de décrire, de juger, même de critiquer l'art des anciens. Tout cela est maintenant de mieux en mieux étudié, notamment dans le domaine du théâtre, de l'opéra et du cinéma; mais la collecte réelle ou virtuelle d'objets populaires de la seconde moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> et de tout

le XX<sup>e</sup> siècle permet également d'éclairer d'un jour nouveau les raisons du développement international de l'égyptomanie, et sa propension à intéresser les classes les moins aisées de la société. Là aussi, c'est un regard en retour sur nos propres sociétés que nous proposent le domaine égyptien et ses tentatives d'appropriation par un très large public populaire en nombre toujours croissant.

Pourtant, le hiatus entre les découvertes archéologiques, les progrès de l'égyptologie et l'égyptomanie<sup>33</sup> n'a pas pour autant cessé. Comme je l'ai montré dans un récent article, les dessins à la fois approximatifs et énigmatiques décorant les obélisques et certaines pendules de garnitures de cheminées entre 1860 et 1900, essentiellement fabriquées en France, sont directement inspirés de l'ouvrage du milieu du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle *Obelisci Aegyptiaci* d'Athanasius Kircher.<sup>34</sup> Cette production de masse dont on retrouve des exemples dispersés aux quatre coins du monde ne copiait donc pas des dernières découvertes archéologiques ni des livres les plus récents pourtant magnifiquement illustrés, mais un ouvrage parmi les plus anciens concernant l'art de l'Égypte antique. Dans ce domaine aussi, la nouveauté, c'était l'ancienneté, qui présentait une vision dépassée mais peut-être plus évocatrice, voire onirique, que la plate exacte reproduction de la réalité. Ce phénomène peut être observé dans de nombreux domaines, notamment dans des décors intérieurs.<sup>35</sup>

Les exemples de ce type sont légion, qui montrent que le goût du public a été longtemps plus formé par l'égyptomanie que par l'égyptologie, qui lui est moins accessible. La télévision a certainement à jouer un rôle didactique qu'elle assume le plus souvent, mais les films de la BBC, avec leur présentatrice vedette Joann Fletcher et ses incessantes et insupportables pleurnicheries, ont certainement joué le rôle contraire.

## **UN EXEMPLE D'ÉGYPTOMANIE MODERNE TRÈS FLORISSANTE: LA PUBLICITÉ**

Parmi toutes les manifestations de l'égyptomanie, notamment dans le domaine «populaire», la publicité est l'une des plus variées et des plus représentatives, dans la mesure où elle montre particulièrement bien la diversité, les excès et les limites de ce phénomène. Car il s'agit de vendre aussi bien des choses sans intérêt à quelqu'un qui n'en a pas besoin («vendre du sable à un Nubien»), que des produits de qualité dont il rêve ou qui peuvent lui être utiles. Pour cela, il s'agit surtout de capter l'attention du client potentiel. Surfant sur les acquis socioculturels, l'égyptomanie publicitaire émerge aux domaines de la sociologie et de la psychologie (composition et réception du message publicitaire), mais rejoint en même temps l'histoire de l'art, notamment du fait de la qualité de certains dessins, du graphisme ou de savantes compositions.

La relation du message publicitaire avec des concepts vieux de plusieurs milliers d'années est également un élément troublant de ce domaine très particulier. Il faut avoir présent à l'esprit que ce phénomène est international; d'une part, les publicités des multinationales

sont diffusées à travers le monde dès le début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle; d'autre part, on trouve une démarche identique dans tous les pays occidentaux, qui y fonctionne absolument de la même manière. L'impact de ces milliers de créations touche des millions de personnes, de manière directe, réfléchie ou subliminale, ce qui en fait, avec le cinéma, la bande dessinée ou même les attractions égyptiennes dans les parcs à thèmes, l'un des éléments de diffusion de l'égyptomanie les plus efficaces qui soient, et où ce concept prend véritablement tout son sens.<sup>36</sup> Mais une telle étude ne peut commencer que par la collecte réelle ou virtuelle, qui permet de rassembler les milliers d'exemples indispensables à toute analyse.

La publicité joue quasiment sur le même registre que la peinture d'histoire, dans ses essais de transporter intellectuellement celui qui les regarde dans l'antiquité comme s'il s'y trouvait réellement. Elle rejoint ainsi directement la relation qui existe entre la peinture et le théâtre (opéra et ballet),<sup>37</sup> puis avec le cinéma, ce qui est un gage de son impact.<sup>38</sup> Peut-être même la publicité est-elle encore plus directe et incitative (c'est son but premier) en plongeant celui qui la subit dans un monde onirique auquel il adhère d'emblée. Il ne peut d'ailleurs en être qu'ainsi pour qu'elle fonctionne, car on la reçoit le plus souvent directement, sans l'avoir demandée. Le mythe de l'Égypte, créé par l'Occident, est ici particulièrement à son aise, offrant avant tout le merveilleux d'un monde hors de la grisaille quotidienne, garant du succès des publicités à l'égyptienne. Ainsi le rêve, la poésie, l'humour, le délire et même la stupidité sont-ils largement présents dans les publicités à l'égyptienne.

Plusieurs domaines publicitaires sont associés à l'Égypte ancienne: des marques, comme par exemple «Sphinx», qui sont liées à des éléments d'une extrême diversité, dont la saga du sphinx et toute la symbolique qu'il recouvre; des produits et services, illustrés par leurs activités, coton, tabac, funéraire, etc.; enfin des publicités utilisant des éléments égyptiens antiques lors de campagnes publicitaires, par exemple Palmolive entre 1915 et 1925. L'Égypte y apparaît selon des critères multiples, exprimant bien l'imaginaire qu'elle suscite. Mais elle est également patrie de la lettre, et modèle – ô combien contemporain! – d'un langage où l'image se fait texte. Humour, pastiche et jeu se mêlent ainsi, qui réutilisent les éléments d'une représentation du monde particulièrement originale proche de l'esthétique moderne: hiéroglyphes, personnages figurés de profil, sphinx, pyramides, momies et sarcophages possèdent une telle puissance d'évocation qu'ils suscitent toutes sortes de détournements.

En même temps, l'Égypte conserve un contenu mystérieux, qui induit des publicités trompeuses profitant de la crédulité des consommateurs, toujours très vive aujourd'hui encore: profiter de «King Tut's good luck Egyptian wishing ring», avoir fortune, santé et bonheur grâce au «talisman égyptien du bonheur», faites pousser son «Egyptian beauty plant», développer et raffermir ses seins en 12 jours, faire vieillir plus vite le vin dans une mini pyramide et ses sortilèges. Toutes les superstitions sont exploitées sans vergogne, et la «Pyramid power» n'a pas fini de trouver des adeptes plutôt naïfs.

Mais il ne s'agit là que de dérapages fortuits et au demeurant relativement rares. Outre de simples fonds décoratifs plus ou moins adaptés aux compositions et constitués de repré-

sentations »supposées exactes« de l'Égypte ancienne, la publicité égyptisante propose une Égypte rêvée recrée par des artistes inspirés, mêlant bien souvent l'art égyptien à l'art du moment constituant une assimilation parfaitement réussie contribuant à la crédibilité de la publicité. La base en est constituée le plus souvent d'une archéologie plus ou moins fantaisiste, mais d'où transparaissent toujours largement les mythes et les symboles véhiculés par l'Antiquité égyptienne. Le tout est souvent complété par l'application de deux concepts: des Égyptiens anciens déplacés dans notre monde moderne, et la transposition de nos habitudes de vie en Égypte ancienne. Dans les deux cas, la relation avec le passé essaie d'établir une connivence entre le client potentiel et l'Égypte, bien sûr acquise ipso facto.

Des produits de luxe à la nourriture pour chats, l'Égypte est capable de tout faire vendre, car elle focalise bien tous les rêves de l'Occident. Outre l'exotisme (le Nil, palmier et chameau) et toute la panoplie égyptisante (la pyramide qui défie le temps, le sphinx, les dieux, les momies et les hiéroglyphes), elle reçoit le renfort fréquent de Toutankhamon, Ramsès et bien d'autres qui se sont mis, depuis plus d'un siècle, au service de la déesse Consommation. Cléopâtre, Néfertiti et Isis, touchant au domaine féminin, constituent un cas particulier dans la mesure où elle jouent sur l'appropriation de leur personnage par la cliente, là aussi comme au cinéma.

Mais quels que soient les systèmes publicitaires utilisés, tous sont chargés d'évoquer des valeurs multiples, à la fois mystérieuses et rassurantes, qui défient les siècles. La plus importante est la monumentalité et la solidité, traduites dans les vertus positives d'une fiabilité, d'une robustesse résistant à l'usure du temps, d'une durabilité mise à profit dans des produits aussi divers que des peintures industrielles, des voitures, des pneus, des montres et des stylos, et même des chewing-gums, tous pourtant également et rapidement périssables. Efficacité, protection, sécurité, confiance sont également largement dispensés par la présence de sphinx, tandis que l'évocation de la vie des esclaves montre l'évolution positive de notre civilisation en termes de mécanisation. Les productions d'origine égyptienne telles que coton, tabac, bière bénéficient de traitements appropriés. Vient ensuite la richesse, l'Égypte apparaissant comme le lieu privilégié des trésors encore à découvrir, que l'on peut s'approprier grâce aux jeux d'argent. L'éternité avec des images de la mort détournées par l'évocation de l'Égypte ancienne (entreprises funéraires) voisinent avec celles du savoir médical souvent utilisé pour des médicaments. Un certain goût du luxe (luxe = luxor = louxor) voisine avec la beauté (hygiène, cosmétiques) et l'élégance (déshabillés masculins et féminins, bijoux), tandis que l'informatique, souvent mise en parallèle avec les hiéroglyphes, trouve une assise elle aussi rassurante.

Pour vendre une savonnette ou pour attirer le public dans un magasin, la publicité égyptisante utilise tout un arsenal de thèmes et de symboles dont elle a toujours abondamment et habilement joué et dont elle joue encore, pour la plus grande joie de ceux qui savent lire derrière l'apparence extérieure des choses leur sens caché. Elle parvient ainsi à apporter la part de rêve et d'humour nécessaire. Le public est très consciemment séduit par l'Égypte, et plus ou moins inconsciemment par l'égyptomanie, dont il sait en tous cas parfaitement

décrypter les messages. La floraison des thèmes égyptiens dans la publicité ces dernières années confirme la vitalité du phénomène de l'égyptomanie et sa capacité à trouver de nouveaux modes d'expression. De fait, l'Égypte apparaît dans beaucoup de domaines comme »la« référence (plates 8–12).

## MÉTHODOLOGIE POUR LE FUTUR

Alors qu'il y a cinquante ans la bibliographie de l'égyptomanie ne comptait à travers le monde guère plus d'une dizaine de références, elle approche aujourd'hui allègrement le millier. Ce n'est pas pour autant que la connaissance du sujet se soit développée autant qu'on l'aurait souhaité. En effet, trop de »chercheurs« se contentent encore de recopier ce qui a déjà été publié sans fouiller plus avant la portion de sujet qu'ils prétendent traiter, et sans même consulter la totalité de la bibliographie!

Par exemple, les décors intérieurs de la maison de Thomas Hope sont décrits comme »most accomplished interior of the Egyptian revival«. <sup>39</sup> Or c'est oublier l'intérieur de l'appartement de Denon, dont il n'existe il est vrai aucune représentation, mais dont on connaît bien le mobilier égyptisant. <sup>40</sup> Par ailleurs, s'il n'est pas précisé »des premières années du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle«, c'est aussi omettre la salle égyptienne de la villa Borghèse, les grands décors italiens du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et même la salle égyptienne du château Snešnik. <sup>41</sup>

Il s'agit là d'une lacune très fréquente du domaine anglo-saxon, qui fonctionne trop en circuit fermé, alors que beaucoup d'articles publiés en Europe continentale et Amérique du Sud répondent depuis longtemps à beaucoup de questions étudiées dans des articles plus récents, dont les auteurs n'ont pas pris la peine de consulter la bibliographie internationale du sujet (il existe pourtant maintenant des traducteurs qui aident considérablement à supprimer la barrière des langues, encore faut-il avoir la curiosité d'aller jusqu'au bout des recherches). Traiter à nouveau – ou différemment, mais pas mieux – des sujets déjà étudiés, freine considérablement l'avance de la recherche internationale.

Par ailleurs, je voudrais nuancer ce qu'écrivait Helen Whitehouse: »Egyptomania has been amply documented in its visible manifestations; the focus should now shift to a more penetrating analysis of the mental constructs of Egypt that lie behind this selective use of its imagery.« <sup>42</sup> En fait, après près de 50 ans de travail sur le sujet, il n'est pas un jour où je ne découvre un bâtiment égyptisant resté ignoré à travers le monde, ou un service de table, ou une sculpture, ou une peinture.

En effet, la possibilité de mener des recherches par Internet a décuplé les résultats, même si faire de la veille scientifique en ligne est une tâche qui prend énormément de temps, au détriment de celui qui devrait être consacré aux publications scientifiques. Néanmoins, c'est grâce à un tel travail que l'on s'aperçoit à quel point le champ de l'égyptomanie reste en grande partie inexploré, et offre aux futurs étudiants des espaces encore totalement vierges. De ce fait, j'ai un peu de mal à comprendre comment tant d'étudiants et même de cher-

cheurs confirmés continuent à publier des exégèses plus ou moins fumeuses sur l'égyptomanie, notamment dans le domaine politique et colonial, sans avoir constitué un catalogue plus complet, voire exhaustif dans certains domaines, des réalisations égyptisantes.

D'autant que l'étude résolument internationale de l'égyptomanie est une nécessité absolue. Les études locales sont certes utiles – et même indispensables – pour défricher le terrain, mais d'autres, largement transversales, aident à mieux comprendre le phénomène.<sup>43</sup> Certes, le rapport à l'Égypte n'était pas le même en France et en Angleterre après la campagne de Bonaparte, mais l'utilisation politique des éléments égyptisants qui fleurissent alors n'était finalement pas tellement éloignée d'un pays à l'autre. Les artistes – et notamment les peintres – se connaissent, se fréquentent, et la mode passe d'un pays à l'autre. Dans leur lutte scientifique et commerciale, les manufactures de porcelaine se livrent une lutte acharnée à travers l'Europe, et quand l'une propose une nouvelle thématique décorative – et la thématique égyptienne fut partout très prisée – les autres ne tardent pas à suivre.

## CONCLUSION

En conclusion, je pense donc que l'égyptomanie telle que je la définis et la «réception» de l'art de l'Égypte ancienne sont des choses complémentaires qui doivent néanmoins être étudiées séparément, même si l'on doit sans cesse jeter des passerelles entre les deux. En effet, les collections et collectionneurs, les musées et expositions et la manière de les présenter, les copies serviles à but purement didactique, tout cela à mon sens n'émarge pas au domaine de l'égyptomanie, même si les liens existants ne doivent pas être sous-estimés. Car on ne peut pas étudier la «réception» de l'Égypte ancienne sans étudier parallèlement l'évolution de sa «connaissance» dans le grand public (voyages, conférences, enseignement, expositions, publications de vulgarisation, films documentaires, etc.).

L'égyptomanie est issue de ces deux données qui ont considérablement évolué au fil du temps. Mais le choc en retour est particulièrement fort, le plus fort que l'on ait à observer dans tout le domaine archéologique: car si l'égyptomanie perturbe, le plus souvent inconsciemment, la vision et le travail de restitution des égyptologues, c'est surtout la vision du grand public qui en est en partie brouillée. L'égyptomanie a en effet une puissance et un impact beaucoup plus grands que ceux développés par les chercheurs universitaires et les archéologues. En ce sens, là aussi, l'égyptomanie donne en retour une image forte et parfois un peu inquiétante de notre monde d'aujourd'hui et de son rapport fantasmé avec son passé. C'est pour toutes ces raisons que je pense profondément qu'il serait souhaitable de réserver le mot «égyptomanie» (ou «egyptomania»), déjà consacré par la *vox populi* de manière internationale, au sens couvert par la définition que je propose, et d'utiliser la quantité d'autres mots disponibles pour tous les autres usages.



# THE FASCINATION FOR EGYPT DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

## HISTORY OF A »CONFIGURATION«

Pascal Griener

The fact that the impact of ancient Egyptian life and culture on the early modern period should not be understood merely as a fashion for exotic forms is obvious. However, it is more difficult to identify the set of methods that will enable us to understand such a complex phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Over the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, there developed an epistemological configuration in which references to Egypt proved important as a way of grasping the power of art objects. Any attempt to delineate this configuration is no mean feat. In this essay, I shall focus on new, secular representations of ancient Egypt, which developed independently of the traditional reference to the Bible, and particularly to the Old Testament. In reality, it is difficult to disentangle secular representations from biblical ones during that period. In a recent and superb volume, *Exodus*, Jan Assmann has shown that Egypt takes centre stage in the Old Testament, since the whole destiny of Israel is sealed when its leader, Moses, decides to lead his people outside Egypt and to desert Pharaoh's empire. This long process raises the greatest hopes; the Jews long for a better future, and their dream of a new land changes their vision of History.<sup>2</sup> That historical discourse is not satisfied with the vain inventory of Pharaonic dynasties, duly listed by the Pharaoh's scribes; it is a process and progress leading to a distant, but glorious aim. In a sense, the *philosophes'* vision of history as the progress of civilization, was a secular version of the Biblical, teleological representation of History.

One of the most potent components of this configuration is also one of its most straightforward elements; I shall therefore examine it before dealing with the ways in which Egyptian material was exploited by art historiography during the Enlightenment.

## DISPLACING RUINS AS AN INDEX OF PROGRESS

Paradoxically, Ancient Egypt was to become one of the most powerful tools that the moderns used in order to glorify their own times. This was achieved essentially by means of a powerful narrative of cultural progress in which technology played a decisive role.

In 1585, Pope Sixtus V entrusted the engineer Domenico Fontana with a challenging task – moving a 327-ton red granite Egyptian obelisk from its site south of the Vatican basilica to the piazza in front of the basilica. Nine hundred men and seventy-five horses were requisitioned; even so, the project required the best part of a year. The key to Fontana's success was the scaffolding erected around the obelisk, which allowed him to harness the power of the men and the horses to raise the obelisk, place it on a platform and then move the platform on rollers to the obelisk's new location.<sup>3</sup> Fontana published this technological triumph in his *Della trasportatione dell'obelisco vaticano* (Rome: Basa, 1590).

Another attempt was made to raise an obelisk which had been found in the Campo Marzio (plate 13). This proved unsuccessful, and it was not until two centuries later that the solution to the problem was found.<sup>4</sup> Nicola Zabaglia (1664–1750), an engineer and inventor, employed a special mechanical device to extract the monument's five blocks from the ground. The obelisk could then be restored; in 1792, it was placed on the piazza di Montecitorio at Pope Pius VI's behest. This symbol of technical power being used to retrieve, to displace or to rescue the remains of the ancient world was so powerful, that it still exerted fascination during the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the *Description de l'Égypte* (from 1809), chapters on modern technology and chapters on archaeology are afforded equal weight; this juxtaposition heightened the contrast between two stages of civilization.<sup>5</sup> It should be pointed out that during the same period Giovanni Belzoni, the great Italian archaeologist and mover of statues, settled in Egypt in 1812 – not in order to devote his time to antique monuments, but rather to interest the Egyptians in his invention of a pump that could be used to raise water. Spurned by the Pascha in spite of his talents as an engineer, he then turned his mind to Egyptian archaeology. He discovered important sites and started to engage in the business of transporting and selling some of the most important sculptures to the Western powers. He was the driving force behind the removal of the so-called Memnon colossus in granite, which was subsequently purchased by the British Government. Weighing more than seven tons, this monumental statue is still today the largest piece of sculpture in the British Museum.<sup>6</sup> Technology, if correctly employed, can replace the infinite resource of slave labour, characteristic of Ancient Egypt; technology seems to work, not with the help of human graft, but almost by magic, enabling a huge stone to move effortlessly. It may be said that this glorification of the magical, almost supernatural powers of technology was a powerful exercise in propaganda. Its advocates aimed to obscure the reality underlying the extensive use of new techniques during the Industrial Revolution, namely that they still relied to a very great extent on an intensive use of a human labour force. Marx rightly says in his *Kapital* (1867) that the famous *added value* is rendered invis-

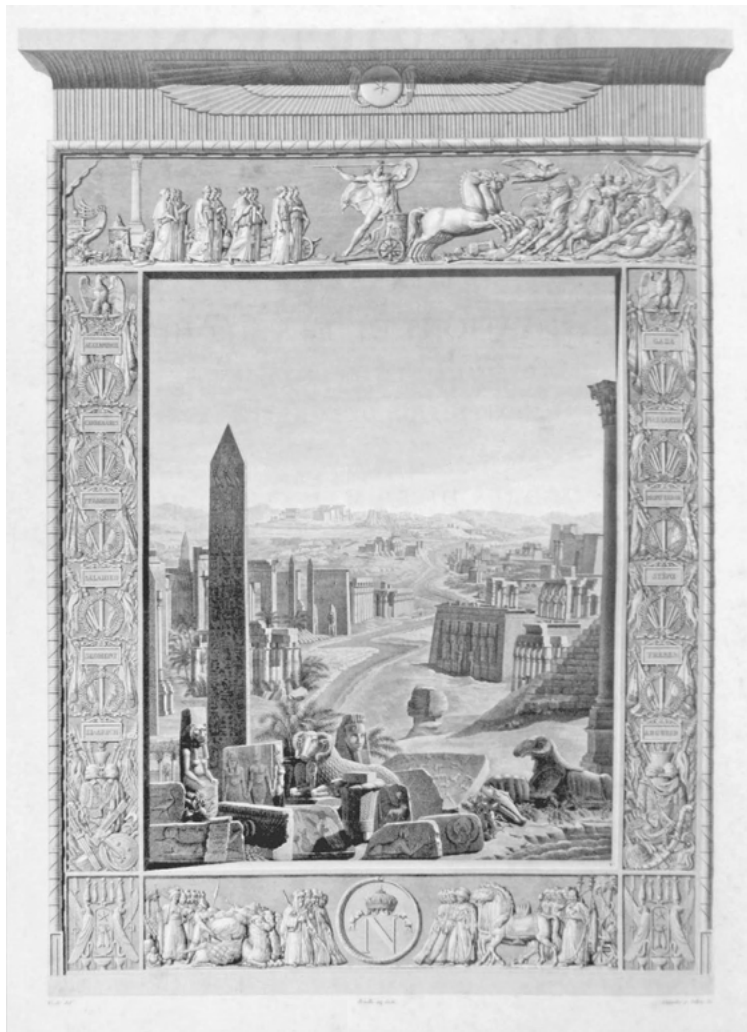
ible within the capitalist system. In 1869, when the Suez Canal – a masterpiece of modern technology – was finally completed, the countries that had sponsored the project planned to construct a modern pyramid of huge proportions, in order to celebrate this feat.<sup>7</sup>

Faithful to a tradition inherited from Ancient Rome, Enlightenment museum culture was keen to represent the grandeur of a civilization in two ways: through ambitious buildings, and through the display of prestigious monuments from past cultures, more especially from conquered territories. This strategy was not new in modern times. Ever since the Renaissance, Egyptian monuments had been used in Rome as allegories of eternity; they conferred this impression of timelessness, by metonymy, to the Roman supremacy. Several examples may be cited: the frontispiece to Dupérac's *Vestigi* (1606) (plate 14) is framed by two fragments of obelisks covered with fanciful hieroglyphics, true signs of the most ancient antiquity, and of the ancient Roman conquest of the world, which was in turn a preparation for the supremacy of the Christian religion. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the famous *Roma triumphans* exhibited in the Capitoline museum, flanked with two slaves, highlighted the central position of the *caput mundi*; two Egyptianizing representations of Isis, one on each sides, framed this group, imparting a timeless quality to it.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Pius VI ordered that two Greek Egyptianizing figures should frame the main door to the Vatican museum. This was a very clear sign, and was only reinforced by the presence, in the immediate vicinity, of the sarcophagus of Costanza, signalling the apex of ancient art and history, the moment when emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, within a teleological vision of History. But with the great uprooting of monuments at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century for the sake of the great European museums, Egyptian art was gradually considered for its own sake, and not only as a symbolical material designed to highlight the Grandeur of the Roman Empire. Secondly, the symbolism connected with these objects was more powerful than all the Egyptian objects excavated in Italy, because they were aggressively collected directly in Egypt – they were not sediments of the Roman empire anymore. Their meaning could be reinvested directly by the new powers rivalling with the grandeur of ancient Rome. Thirdly, the size of the pieces transferred from Egypt to Western museums became so great by 1800 that their effect was meant to satisfy an aesthetic of the Sublime; more often than before, they were not restored. The Memnon fragment of the British Museum outlined a sublime idea of ancient Egyptian sculpture: it was a fragment, but this fragment enabled the viewers to present in their mind the near impossibility to fantasize the size of the original sculpture it came from. The symbolism connected with such practice had very deep roots: within the museum, a fragment which had been transported at great cost was deemed to remain immobile in his new setting, because its new purpose was to symbolize the almost eternal fate promised to the British or to the French empire. The curators of the British Museum were very keen that such message should get through; they had a new inscription in Roman characters carved into the original Rosetta stone, which was taken from the French by the British army, and granted to King George III by the treaty of Alexandria in 1802. This inscription reminded all visitors that

King George III was the first modern monarch to have conquered Africa in modern times; it reminded the proud British visitors that the stone was a spoil of war. In the Louvre, the same tactics applied: among the antiquities sold by Prince Camillo Borghese to Napoleon in 1806, were some Egyptian pieces. A heavily restored sphynx was thus carved with a false hieroglyphic including the design of a bee, one of the emblems of the new Emperor.<sup>9</sup> Such emblem was embroidered on the coronation robes of Napoleon; the same type of modern hieroglyphic graces the frontispiece of the *Description de l’Egypte* (fig. 1). The new Emperor was keen to appear as a modern pharaoh, at a time when his regime was heading towards absolutism. Thus, the Egyptian symbolism lent credibility to the Bonaparte dynasty, as it was associated with an ancient lineage of kings. Besides, the whole French historiography of the Egyptian Campaign had managed to turn a French defeat into a glorious adventure. Such objects enabled the museum to illustrate a legend in becoming. My third example is also French: in 1817, Belzoni received some antiquities from the British consul Henry Salt, with whom Belzoni made a huge traffic of antiques. Among the pieces which were negotiated was a statue of the goddess Sekhmet. It was purchased by count Auguste de Forbin, the director general of the Louvre museum after the Restoration. In memory of this superb purchase, Forbin had the stone engraved with his own name.<sup>10</sup> This gesture is extraordinary, inasmuch as it betrays the attempt, by a museum director, to attach his own memory to that of the monuments exhibited in the museum, so that he could be remembered forever for his deeds. Most of the intermediaries who undertook the transport of these antiquities embarked on a similar campaign in order to give monumental proportions to their actions. In the main chamber of the Khafre pyramid at Gizeh, Belzoni wrote in very big characters: »scoperta da G. Belzoni, 2. Mar[ch] 1818.« In 1816, he »signed« the Ramesseum with a monumental inscription carved by his men on a pillar.<sup>11</sup> Like Forbin, he had his name on statues which were sold to museums, like the basalt statue of Anemophis III found in the King’s tomb at Thebes, and now in the British Museum.<sup>12</sup>

As we can see, in Great Britain as in France, the Egyptian spoils were seen as the paradigms of a new type of symbolical object in the age of museums: the colossal fragment as a mobile symbol of absolute immobility. It was made mobile by sheer force, uprooted and transferred to the capital of a new Empire, where it was placed in new temples, like eternal monuments, duly engraved with new and glorious inscriptions. In fact, these ancient objects were systematically grafted – even physically – with new contents. Having become again true models of immobility, they could receive new and monumental inscriptions, which enabled the viewer to put the oldest civilization and a modern empire on a par.<sup>13</sup> The museum became a major showplace for this staging of political power.

In effect, the Egyptian reference played a great role in defining the modern culture of the museum, at a time when the old idols entered into the museum.<sup>14</sup> One fine example bears witness to the role of the Egyptian material, in defining the very power of the object which is being musealized. In 1778, Prince Marcantonio Borghese ordered the architect Antonio Asprucci to redecorate one of the great rooms in his Villa.<sup>15</sup> In the center of this salon covered



1 Frontispiece from the *Description de l'Égypte*, after a design by François Charles Cecile

with paintings by Tommaso Conca, the visitors of this private museum could admire two modern statues, both carved by Antoine-Guillaume Grandjaquet: an Isis, and an Osiris. In her study of this program, Carole Paul seems to have missed the deep meaning of this iconography, which is connected with a Greek interpretation of Egyptian culture.<sup>16</sup> In his treatise *On Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch recalls the myth of the death of Osiris, whose body is hacked into fourteen pieces by his brother Seth; these body parts are buried in different parts of the Egyptian Empire. Isis manages to find each part, and to erect a monument upon each of them.

The only part which Isis fails to find is the sex of Osiris; she replaces this missing part with an *ersatz*, then makes love to Osiris. From that union, Harpocrates is born. Each city which boasts of the presence of a monument to Osiris believes that the whole body of the God was buried underneath.<sup>17</sup> In fact, this ancient narrative lays down a founding myth of the museum and of its magical powers. The purpose of a museum is to collect fragments, but these »body parts« are given a new life as a fictional, complete body fully reconstructed within the viewer's imagination; moreover, each object, even a fragment, becomes a self-contained entity within the walls of the museum. The major asset of the museum resides in its metonymic power: it can transform a part into a whole, and bring back to life what was a dead body part.<sup>18</sup>

### **A CENTRAL PROBLEM OF AGENCY IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: THE »PRESENT PRESENCE« OF THE ART WORK**

I shall now tackle a very difficult question pertaining to the appropriation of Egyptian art during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. How did Egyptian art contribute to the construction of a new vision of art, where the almost magic powers of the object could become a central issue?

In order to explain this, I shall have first to make a detour. In an essay published in 1992, Alfred Gell is at pains to state that mimetic art is not all about copying nature, but about producing magic.<sup>19</sup> Talking about the Joconda by Leonardo, he says that this portrait, although it is made of wood and paint, produces a powerful effect almost through magic – he even uses the word transsubstantiation, which, for a British scholar, is quite significant. What is at stake here is the fear that the aesthetic of the mimesis should place the work of art in a state of inferiority as regards to the original it is copying. Seen in this way, it is merely making an absent present, as Leon Battista Alberti puts it in his *De Pictura* (1435). Maurice Godelier sums up this question very neatly:

»to presentifying is not the same as representing, and it is what makes the difference between an icon which has been consecrated or an African statue »endowed« with the presence and with the power of a spirit, and the Joconda: [...] those who admire the latter know intuitively that this woman is at the same time present as an image but absent as a person, and that this absence renders her presence unreal. (Présentifier n'est donc pas représenter, et c'est ce qui fait la différence entre une icône consacrée ou une sculpture africaine »chargée« de la présence et de la puissance d'un esprit et le tableau de la Joconde: [...] ceux et celles qui l'admirent savent intuitivement que cette femme est à la fois présente comme image mais absente comme personne et que cette absence fait de sa présence une réalité irréaliste.)«<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, Gell did not know that an art critic had, long before him, sensed the acute character of this problem: Roger de Piles, in his *Cours de peinture par principes* (1708)

betrays the same concern as Gell – he realized the pitfalls of the theory of the mimesis bequeathed by Classicism – hence his attempt to highlight very strongly the magical character of painting, which must be understood in this context.<sup>21</sup> During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this question is the object of huge debates, but it is projected onto a historical framework. It takes the form of a discussion upon the origins of art.<sup>22</sup>

In his amazing book – *A New Science: The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason* (2010) – Guy Stroumsa shows that from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the question of the study of religion took a new form.<sup>23</sup> It involved a thorough inquiry into the human origins of religion. At first, the Bible served as a major reference for this quest, but very soon, the comparative study of ancient pagan religions took the lead. The *Cérémonies religieuses* by Bernard Picart and Jean-Frédéric Bernard (1723–43, 9 vols) – one of the most explosive publications of the Enlightenment – singles out the two major origins of all religions: pantheism, and materialism.<sup>24</sup> In this history, the role of the priests is nearly always shown in negative terms – it is presented as a caste which seeks to dominate over the faithful; their aim is to cloud religion in mystery, in order to keep a position of power over the people. Catholic religion is studied, not as a religion singled out by Revelation, but as a faith comparable to any other faith, and considered from an anthropological perspective, as a cultural phenomenon with clear political implications. This interpretation of religion as *Religio duplex* was not new, and Egypt was the model most commonly used in order to expand it.<sup>25</sup>

These two trends became extremely powerful by the time of the French Revolution. First, the *Religio duplex* was used by some major art theorists of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in order to give a political legitimacy. In 1805, Quatremère de Quincy put forward the idea that the origin of Greek art could be found in the Egyptian hieroglyphics.<sup>26</sup> The design of those sacred signs was under the control of the priests. The Greek artists managed to free themselves only partially from the constraints of a coded style of representation, since allegorical art remained of great importance in Greek culture. Quatremère, through this theory, was trying to define a model of Art in which art theorists like himself would have full authority over all artists; he wanted to play a major role, and preside of the social, political purpose of the arts in modern times, at least in France. All his life, he endeavored to keep a spiritual lead over all artists in France. In effect, at the Academy of Fine Arts, in a country where the State plays a major role in the art world, he remained a powerful presence almost all his life; the young artists of the Romantic period quickly realized that he was their worst enemy, but being born in 1755, he only died in 1849...<sup>27</sup>

As for the second trend, it pertains to the overall secular, political interpretation of the impact of ancient religion on the arts. In 1795, Charles François Dupuis published a book whose printing was sponsored by the French Convention nationale: *L'Origine de tous les Cultes*.<sup>28</sup> Dupuis put forward the idea that every religion, including the Christian faith, find its origin in the primitive cult of Nature, and especially the cult of stars, sabeism. This theory was based upon a comparative study of ancient religions, but from an atheistic point of view. In 1798, an Egyptian *bassorilievo* representing the Zodiac was discovered in Denderah

by the French expedition. It was quickly dated to 15000 years BCE by Dupuis and his friends.<sup>29</sup> Such a date threatened the Christian vision of History, since the Catholic Church defended the belief that the world had been created by God 4000 years before Christ. Besides, Dupuis believed that the Zodiac of Denderah seemed to support his sabeist theory. It took the great classical scholar Ennio Quirino Visconti, and later Jean-Baptiste Biot, to reject this whole interpretation; they could demonstrate that the Zodiac was not a very ancient monument, but that it dated to the second century CE, when Egypt was a Roman territory. After the first Empire, Egypt ceased to be used by the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment as a weapon against the Catholic Church. However, an anthropological history of religion, and particularly a new history of Idolatry played a major role in the establishment of the history of ancient art during the Enlightenment. To illustrate this point, I shall first compare a book by Pierre Monier, and one by the chevalier de Mehegan, both on the history of art. Pierre Monier relied heavily upon Plinius in order to explain the development of art in antiquity.<sup>30</sup> Above all, it is a technical history, which traces the progress of artistic techniques, from the first use of skiagraphia in painting to the discovery of colours etc. Fifty-seven years later, Mehegan opted for a totally new type of narrative: he considered that it was impossible to understand the development of the arts without inquiring into the mind of the primitive inhabitants of the earth, from the earliest antiquity onwards; the destiny of art, in antiquity, could not be distinguished from that of pagan idolatry.

Such an approach clashed with a very prevalent mode of explanation in philosophical circles at the time, and which made extensive use of what is called today »conjectural history« – a heuristic fiction which was used to imagine in a totally abstract and analytical fashion, the first stages of civilization from the first gatherings of individuals to the most refined forms of society. Such an approach had nothing to do with proper history. At the beginning of the *Discours sur l'origine des inégalités* (1755) Rousseau boasts about it: »écartons tous les faits.«<sup>31</sup> For Antoine-Yves Goguet, the author of *De l'origine des loix, des arts, et des sciences, et de leurs progrès chez les anciens peuples* (1758), this heuristic fiction had no value, because it turned the first humans into rational beings, who could decide on the foundations of society.<sup>32</sup> Historians like Goguet privileged what we would call today an anthropological outlook on art and on culture in general. Thus, Goguet says:

»Tout annonce d'ailleurs l'ancienneté de la sculpture dans l'Asie & dans l'Egypte: sans parler des témoignages que les Historiens profanes pourraient nous fournir. [...] je pourrais encore parler du veau d'or élevé d'après les modèles que les Israélites en avaient vu en Egypte: mais je crois en avoir dit assez pour établir que l'origine & l'usage de la sculpture remonte aux temps les plus reculés.

Cette partie des arts aura été fort grossière dans les premiers temps. [...] On peut cependant s'en former une idée d'après ce que les anciens nous disent des premiers essais de la sculpture chez les Grecs, art que ces peuples avaient appris des Egyptiens. Leurs statues n'étaient originairement que des masses informes & quarrées qui se terminaient en



gaines. Longtemps encore après, leurs connaissances se bornaient à faire des figures dont les bras étaient pendans et collant sur le corps.»<sup>33</sup>

This new type of approach was based upon two types of literature: that devoted to the different people of the earth, and that dealing with past cultures, especially in antiquity. As well as in the theological field, the Bible played a major role in this type of discourse; but it was articulated to a brand new science, which has been studied in great detail by Fernando Vidal in recent years: Psychology. Vidal has shown that especially in Germany, biblical hermeneutics drew extensively upon psychology to explain the most difficult events narrated in the Old Testament; it involved the attempt to imagine the functioning of a mind, in a distant past.<sup>34</sup> The most outstanding example of such a method in the French speaking world is given by Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger and his *Antiquité dévoilée*.<sup>35</sup> Basing his inquiry almost exclusively on the Bible, Boulanger puts forward the idea that all religions and rites of the world may be explained by a single original cause: the Flood as it is depicted in the Genesis (7.1–24). At that stage in the history of mankind, the tragedy of the flood struck the mind of all those who had survived thanks to Noah's ark. In order to exorcize their terror of this ordeal, and to overcome their primitive trauma, several generations of humans developed complex sets of beliefs and rituals; slowly, the latter enabled them to free themselves from the fears of their ancestors. Such visions of history may seem fanciful today, but they were revolutionary, because they singled out collective psychology as a principle of explanation in history and as such, they were incredibly modern. Over the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Bible no longer enjoyed this primacy as a primary document for modern historians, and it was gradually replaced by a more secular models: above all, that of Ancient Egypt. This civilization became the more secularized cultural space where a full reflection on the history of mankind was constructed. Thus the problem took a new form: what was at stake, was to understand the power of ancient religious sculpture at a time when ancient statues of Gods were contemplated by modern viewers. These viewers no longer shared the beliefs of the ancients on religion, for whom these statues were powerful evocations of the gods.<sup>36</sup> In other words, the anthropological outlook on sculpture led to a problematic related to the agency of ancient sculpture, but it was achieved through a paradoxical bias: that of the disenchantment of ancient art works in modern times.<sup>37</sup>

I should like now to analyze how the Egyptian material was constructed within the narrative of the history of art, in a century when Winckelmann wrote and published his *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764). This question obliges me to deal first with an important question of method. Normally, the study of Egypt within the historiography of art privileges the thematic approach. Scholars examine the qualities granted to Egyptian sculpture and architecture over the period in the European literature devoted to art. I do not agree with that method. In order to explain why, I should like to make another detour through linguistics and through narratology. Two important texts, *The dialogic principle* by Mikhaïl Bakhtin, and the *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, by Emile Benveniste, take issue

with Ferdinand de Saussure's only concern with a structural approach of language, seen as the only scientific object for the linguist, as opposed to speech.<sup>38</sup> For Bakhtin, language is a purely theoretical concept, and it sums up a dead reality. What is real and alive, is the dialogue between two human beings – therefore, speech is the right phenomenon that the linguist should study. Each new enunciation of a single content changes its meaning. This is why Language is to be studied in motion. Two other inputs seem to me of great importance: that of Joseph Mali, and of his book *Mythistory* (2003), and that given by *Platon, les mots et les mythes* written by Luc Brisson.<sup>39</sup> Brisson analyzes how Plato opposes philosophical discourse to mythical discourse – and how this distinction lays officially the foundations of Greek philosophy. Yet Brisson remarks that very often, Plato resorts to Myth in order to explain a notion, or to develop an argument; thus myth plays a cardinal role in a discourse from which Myth is apparently rejected on principles. This distinction is by far not as clear and easy as Plato wants it to be. For Joseph Mali, the modern era may be defined by the recognition that there is no opposition between myth and a pseudo-neutral historical discourse. The Myth »imparts meaning to history«, »the primal 'order' in human life and history«.<sup>40</sup> This leads to the recognition of the »narrative construction of reality«.<sup>41</sup>

As a consequence, I shall try to study Egyptian art in motion, as it moves within the different discourses where art historians, philosophers attempt to place Ancient Egypt in the history of cultures. This place is shifting all the time, sometimes even within the same text by the same author. I hope that by studying these movements, we may see which deep preoccupations are absorbing art historians and philosophers, as regards our problem. This problem is almost always dealt with at the intersection between Greece and Egypt; different narratives, which one could call mythistorical narratives, try to grapple with that problem and with its consequences.<sup>42</sup>

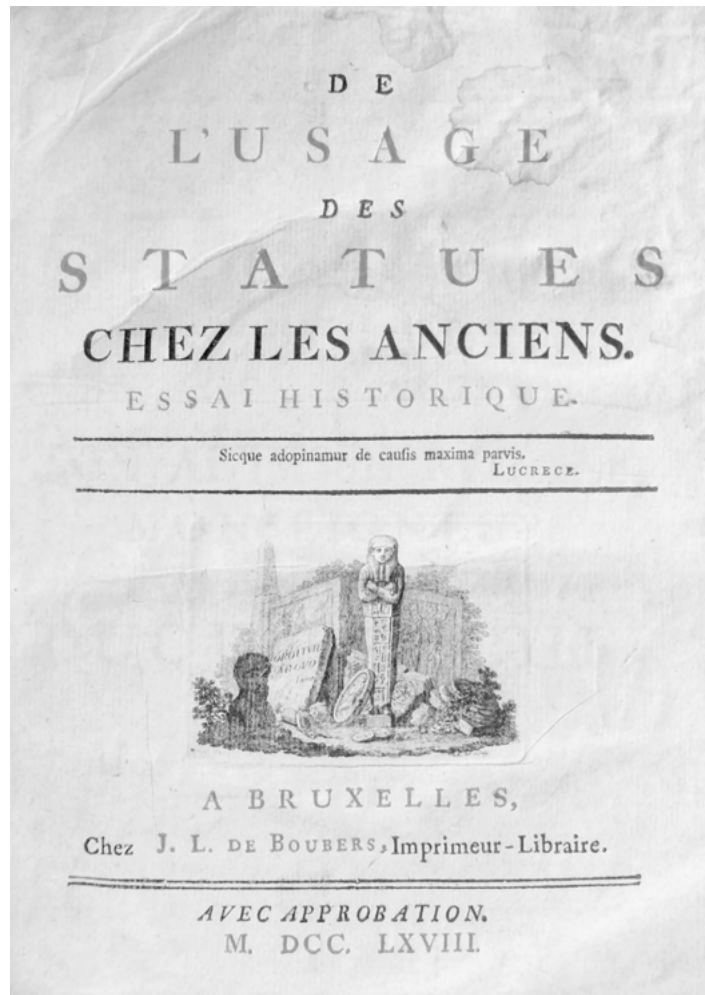
Let us start with one of the most famous art historians of the time: in his *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764), Johann Joachim Winckelmann rejected the view that Greek art had anything to do with Egypt; within a construction based upon the aesthetic supremacy of Greek art – the chapter on Greek art starts with a long development on the essence of art – the Greeks are shown as the only people who succeed in discovering this essence; they owe their excellence to a kind of one-off, almost divine revelation; therefore, they cannot borrow their art theory from any another culture.<sup>43</sup> Winckelmann opposes Greek art and Egyptian art, for aesthetic but also for political reasons. Egyptian artists were despised as simple craftsmen, while Greek artist enjoyed fame and fortune. In Egypt, the cast of the priests enjoyed an absolute power over all artists, while in Greece, the latter took an active part in the shaping of the imagination of all the worshippers, because they created new forms for the representation of the gods. In Egypt, the artistic imagination was self-contained within strict and immutable limits; representations are static symbols, hiding powerful meanings.<sup>44</sup> This immutability causes a deep melancholy in the Egyptian mind.<sup>45</sup> Greek artists built up their imagination in close relationship with the study of nature, of the external world. Egyptian art had no history, because it was totally immobile.<sup>46</sup> Greek art was

optimistic, and keen to progress. For Winckelmann, the hero of ancient Greek art is Daedalus, the Greek technician, the first artist who managed to separate the legs and feet in his human-shaped statues, to lend much more life to the representation of the Gods. Winckelmann is incapable of accepting that the Egyptians were remarkable technicians; for him, this ability could mark any progress like in Greece. This vision of the different antique civilizations as separate entities was quite widespread at the time. The Rotunda of Mars – the entrance to the collection of antiques in the Louvre around 1802 is decorated with a central painting – a glorification of Greek art and of Prometheus, the great technician surrounded by four medallions, allegories of Egyptian art, Greek art, Roman art and Florentine art – each of them as separate entities so to speak, with their relevant principles and characteristics.<sup>47</sup> In a way, Winckelmann did not apply the right tools to his analysis of the powers of ancient sculpture. Unlike most of his contemporaries, he had little interest in anthropology. The best proof of his failure is his last great publication, and intellectually his most ambitious one: the now forgotten *Versuch einer Allegorie* published in 1766.<sup>48</sup> In this book, Winckelmann tries to imagine a new social and moral function for the arts in modern times, and it is based upon his utopian view of Greek Polis at the time of Pericles. In order to fulfill its social role, a sculpture should convey lofty moral contents. These contents should be encoded thanks to a new type of allegorism, suitable to the modern world. This allegorism is devoided of all magic, and is reduced to so-called »natural« signs – that is, made with mimetic or metaphorical images – that is, a purely *rational* system of signs. This theory reduced the work of art to a mere translation of textual contents into images; once they have been deciphered, they seem almost irrelevant. Here, Winckelmann betrays his kinship with Rousseau, and with his vision of human beings as rational subjects; he was a great admirer of the philosopher from Geneva. As we can see, Winckelmann was faced with a difficult task, namely imagining the enchantment of art in modern times, from his historical viewing point. In another and recent publication, I have shown that in his description of the Apollo Belvedere, Winckelmann outlines a model of aesthetic contemplation which relies upon the creation of an effect of magic presence of the neo-platonic form; The text of the description is performative, it allows the reader to feel the ideal form pulsing under the skin of the Apollo Belvedere; in turn, this effect of presentification of the pure form in the material of sculpture is immediately exploited by Winckelmann, who projects the viewer in Antiquity, and makes him worship the God as a ancient Roman or Greek citizen would have done it – thus bypassing, with the help of a kind of historical empathy, the problem faced by the moderns while contemplating statues which are remnants of dead religions.<sup>49</sup> According to Winckelmann, this solution provided the modern viewer with an ersatz of antique worship, without the need to believe in the ancient gods. All it requires from the viewer is a psychological experience, and a dignified attitude towards those old luminaries of the ancient world. As we know, the word *numen* comes from *nuere*, to nod with the head as a sign of approval.<sup>50</sup> What connects here between the ancient *numen* and the new, is a position of the head. In his print *Kunst Kenntnis*, Daniel Chodowiecki opposes two types of aesthetic perception:

that of overly enthusiasts, who are ridiculously mannered, and the dignified, poised attitude of two young men who ponder the effects of an antique sculpture upon their inner being; one of the two nods towards the statue, as a mark of respect for the art work.

Unlike Winckelmann, other thinkers were not inhibited by their aesthetic creed, and they managed to postulate a kind of circulation between Egyptian and Greek art, so to speak. According to their theoretical convictions, they opened or closed at will the barriers between these two civilizations, to great effect. One of the most efficient opponents of Winckelmann was count Ottaviano di Guasco, whose *De l'Usage des Statues chez les Anciens*, published in 1768, is a masterpiece (fig. 2).<sup>51</sup> Guasco disliked Winckelmann, and with him, those historians who have »la tête pleine des idées et du système mythologique des Grecs«.<sup>52</sup> The vignette printed on the title page proudly shows an Egyptian sculpture, next to the following inscription: »Orditur ab Ovo«.<sup>53</sup> Using an organicist vision of history which had been built up by his friend Montesquieu, Guasco observes the development of sculpture as a whole, taking into account the circulation between civilizations, both ancient and modern, without any regard for aesthetic considerations. Guasco's history IS a »mythistory«, but a critical one: for example, in order to underline the debt of Greek sculptors to Egyptian art, he dismisses outright the importance of Daedalus as a first realistic sculptor, as he reminds his reader that the oldest sculptures in Greece were shapeless pieces of wood or of stone.<sup>54</sup> But Guasco goes even further, and shows that originally, the magic presence of a sculpture has little to do with artistry. He reminds his reader that even at the end of the Roman empire, when sculpture knew no bounds in sophistication, people still worshipped rough stones or shapeless pieces of wood in a great deal of temples, because these objects had been invested of special powers by tradition. By doing so, Guasco showed that the allegorical, iconographic dimension of art works were very secondary features, compared with their magic power, and this power was opaque; it remained intrinsic to the art work, and remains consubstantial with it, even when it is deciphered by a worshipper or by a modern viewer. The most fascinating Egyptian god for this generation of scholars was Harpocrates, the god Horus, but also the patron saint of Silence. This new vision of the symbolical construction of the work of art as an entity where form and meaning are indistinguishable, developed before Goethe theorized his famous distinction between allegory and symbol: »Die Symbolik verwandelt die Erscheinung in Idee, die Idee in ein Bild, und so, dass die Idee im Bild immer unendlich wirksam und unerreichbar bleibt und, selbst in allen Sprachen ausgesprochen, doch unaussprechlich bliebe.«<sup>55</sup>

The second writer who, after Guasco, bears witness to a total change of vision on Egypt is Johann Gottfried Herder. In his book, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* Herder takes a position which is totally opposite to that of Winckelmann.<sup>56</sup> For him, a given civilization may not be judged according to universal standards, but only according to the standards and values of the civilization which is being analyzed by us. Such ideas made the full rehabilitation of Egypt possible, and Herder accomplished this task. He also underlined that every civilization is a totality whose components form a closed-up structure.



2 Title page, with vignette »Orditur ab ovo« from Guasco, *de l'usage des statues chez les Anciens*. 1768

However, he did not succumb to the temptation of closing the barriers between Egyptian and Greek culture. Thanks to a complex theory, Herder assigns the role of intermediary to very specific civilizations, especially those which were highly proficient in commerce – like the Phoenicians: those people took over the role of intermediaries between Greek and Egyptian cultures. The Phoenicians knew how to simplify the components of a given culture, more efficiently than that this culture itself; thus it could appropriate, transform these components, and make them ready to be assimilated by another culture.<sup>57</sup>

I hope to have shown that if we study the artistic literature of the Enlightenment in motion, we may understand that »mythistory« plays a vital role in exploring new conceptions of the agency of the art object, outside the box – I mean, outside boundaries defined by all the systems of value – aesthetic, political ones – which were still preeminent during the Enlightenment period, and which favored greatly Ancient Greece as well as Ancient Rome. This practice of »mythistory« involves the closing or the opening of different doors between different ancient cultures, and to reflect freely on the consequences of such experiments.

This liberty was essential in order to imagine a type of art where the materiality of an art object, its form and its symbolical dimensions formed a whole that no amount of discourse could sum up or interpret exhaustively. Secondly, such exercises betray several preoccupations: for example, Time, Progress are often criticized as a damaging factor in the history of art – Herder thought that his time was a period of excessive refinement and ultimately, of decadence ; Egypt could offer a counter-image, a culture where Time remained still, where a stable system could function at infinitum.<sup>58</sup> Egypt was the culture where an aesthetic of the Sublime was at work, while Greece seemed to focus on the Beautiful in art. Egypt enabled the moderns to imagine a society entirely regulated by superior and hopefully reasonable powers, while Greek culture nurtured democratic dreams. More importantly, the chiasm between Greece and Egypt enabled philosophers of the Enlightenment to understand, within a culture steeped in mystery, how art works could receive their deep meaning in ancient Egypt, a meaning that no modern hermeneutics could ever exhaust.

In his famous book *Arbeit am Mythos*, Hans Blumenberg remarks that »only work on Myth, even if it is the fact of finally reducing it, makes the work of myth manifest«.<sup>59</sup>

We have seen that the analysis of the powers of ancient sculpture, made by the moderns – that is outsiders to the ancient creeds – was extremely refined. They first made good use of the tools provided by anthropology, but they also tried to cross the barrier between the Ancient times and the times of disenchantment with the help of psychology, and with a splendid reflection of the powers of the imagination to achieve the production of Presence in Art. Two major tools were used:

1. a thorough analysis of the mythical and magical dimension consubstantial to the art work in Antiquity, – an analysis on Myth which made Myth manifest, present for the moderns.
2. A systematic use of visual, dramatic devices, in order to metaphorize the new vision of ancient Egypt.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, new visual metaphors emerge, which express the Egyptian numen in a new way. First of all, the presentation of the Sacred became much more spatial. The interior of St Peter, by Desprez, is a good example of it: the space is huge, and very dark; in the dim light radiating from a cross, one feels the Divine Presence. Such effects



3 Frontispiece from Passalacqua, *Catalogue raisonné, »Chambre épulcrale«*, mausoleum discovered in december 1823

became commonplace in the first Egyptian exhibitions. In 1826, Giuseppe Passalacqua organized a very successful show of his Egyptian collection in a »Passage«, 52 Vivienne street (fig. 3). In a typical fashion, one exhibit evoked the atmosphere surrounding a funeral monument from Ancient Egypt, steeped in darkness. What is depicted here is what Warburg called a *Denkraum*, or may be, because of its deep irrational component, one could call it a

*Fühlraum* if I may craft this neologism.<sup>60</sup> Egyptian architecture was often shown in the same light, especially because of its colossal dimensions: one of the best examples is the temple at Denderah, as engraved for the *Description de l'Égypte*. In this temple, statues and worshippers are hardly visible between the colossal columns of the temple. The mysterious interior is bathed in a supernatural light. Above all, Egyptian architecture became associated with the subterranean world. The most famous attempt to associate Egyptian architecture with the subterranean world is the work of Antoine Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy. His dissertation *De l'Architecture égyptienne* was written in 1785 but published only in 1803 in a modified form. Faithful to the topoi of Enlightenment architectural theory, Quatremère establishes three theoretical models: the hut, the tent, the grotto, – the latter is exemplified by Egypt, a chthonian architecture par excellence.<sup>61</sup> Louis Jean Desprez used the same metaphor when he placed Egyptian monuments in crypts; such rethoric has been so powerful that it been casting a long shadow over modern museography, even today. In 2016, the visitors of the Louvre have to go down to a crypt to admire the Sphinx of Tanis, the embodiment of all Egyptian mysteries about the passage from *Life to the Afterlife*. A second crypt, called the crypt of Osiris, contains a famous sarcophagus. Such dispositions are totally false and anachronistic as regards the Sphinx and its original function, but this disposition still pays tribute to an old topos of the late Enlightenment. Over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the staging of Egyptian culture in the Museum adopted this Chthonian metaphor.<sup>62</sup> It became the most perfect theatre set where, amidst mummies, the visitors could experience a paradigmatic experience of the past: the catabasis. As Carlo Ginzburg says it in his essay *Ecstasies. Deciphering the Witch's Sabbath*: »The attempt to obtain knowledge of the past is also a journey into the world of the dead.«<sup>63</sup>



**OBJECTS, STYLE AND AGENCY:  
A LONG-TERM OVERVIEW**



## AEGYPTIACA

### INVESTIGATING STYLE AND AGENCY IN THE IRON AGE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Ann C. Gunter

In our ever-vigilant attention to the presence and quantity of Egyptian (or Egyptian-looking) artifacts in regions outside the Nile Valley, do we artificially privilege a category of objects, and a mode of reception, that more closely approximate modern responses to ancient Egypt than to their ancient contexts? Was there a consistent and widely shared understanding of their »Egyptianness«, a durable construct that crossed cultural and temporal boundaries? In the absence of evidence for viewer response, how can we reconstruct ancient perceptions of what we consider to be discrete and meaningful categories of visual and material culture? Drawing on material agency perspectives and innovative reappraisals of »Aegyptiaca« especially in the Roman world, I explore these questions with reference to two episodes of reception history in the Iron Age eastern Mediterranean, broadly defined. My aim is to explore the parameters of a familiar, seemingly self-evident class of objects, together with approaches to interpreting them within their new cultural settings.<sup>1</sup>

In the long history of ancient Egypt's material connections with the outside world, dating at least to Neolithic times, the New Kingdom (c. 1550–1070 BCE) surely stands out as a particularly robust period of interaction. An »international age« of high-level diplomatic contacts, along with the lively commercial exchange of raw materials and finished goods, linked the Aegean world with the empires and kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean and Near East.<sup>2</sup> Military and political expansion inaugurated by the Dynasty 18 pharaohs brought new regions to the south and north under Egyptian domination. In Nubia and the southern Levant, the material consequences included the local production of Egyptian-style architecture, pottery, stone vessels, and objects made of alabaster, faience, glass, and ivory. Precisely what this »Egyptianization« reflects is much debated – foreign military or admin-

istrative control, for example, or local elite emulation of foreign styles – but the material impact manifestly accompanied Egypt's commanding role in both political and commercial spheres throughout the eastern Mediterranean and Near East.<sup>3</sup>

By contrast, the Iron Age emerges as a new chapter in the life of Egyptian styles, in which »the influence of Egyptian imagery, and of imagery inspired by Egypt, exceeded the country's political weight and its importance as a trading partner«. <sup>4</sup> During the Third Intermediate Period (c. 1070–664 BCE) and later under Saite rule (664–525 BCE), Egyptian-type objects, including amulets, scarabs, and figurines, and Egyptian-themed metalwork, carved ivories, and faience, were disseminated in vast quantities across the Mediterranean, the Levant, and southwest Asia. These objects and styles reached new and distant destinations principally through the agency of non-Egyptian actors: Phoenician traders, Greek travelers or mercenaries, and Assyrian kings who seized booty and demanded tribute from conquered western regions. During this period Egypt was a complex of small states, in which the growing prominence of Libyans, especially in the north, engendered considerable social, political, and religious change. From its eastern Delta home of Bubastis, Dynasty 22 (945–715 BCE) successfully claimed the Egyptian throne until the Nubian annexation around 715 BCE. As Assyria gained influence and territory in the southern Levant beginning in the eighth century, it engaged with Egypt and first attempted an invasion around 674. Psamtik (Psammetichus) I, an Assyrian client-king, managed with the aid of foreign mercenaries to reunite Egypt and re-establish rule independent of Assyria and Kush under the Saite dynasty, based at Sais in the western Delta, which gradually achieved successful commercial relationships with Greek states not least by establishing foreign trading stations (*emporía*) at Naucratis and elsewhere in the Delta. Greek literary testimony, along with archaeological evidence, documents Saite patronage of Greek sanctuaries especially in the eastern and southeastern Aegean. Throughout the period a significant dimension of Egyptian politics, society, and culture was shaped by prominent goddess cults, including those of Bastet, Mut, Sakhmet, and Hathor.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars have tended to focus on the *human* identity and agency involved both in the production of these objects and their relocation to new geographical and cultural settings. In recent decades, interest has centered on the fundamental role Phoenicians played in the wide circulation of Egyptian and Egyptian-style works throughout the Mediterranean; as has long been recognized, Egyptian imagery and style comprised a fundamental and pervasive component of Iron Age Levantine material and visual culture more broadly. Shifting emphasis to *material* agency, I contemplate two different Iron Age contexts in which Egyptian or Egyptian-style objects were introduced as »foreign«: the sanctuary of Hera on the eastern Aegean island of Samos, and the tombs of queens at Nimrud in northern Mesopotamia. Both in the Iron Age Aegean and in Neo-Assyrian royal centers these objects are generally considered »exotica«, and their acquisition has sometimes also been framed as an early chapter in a long history of »Egyptomania«. <sup>6</sup> Our consistent terminology across such diverse cultural spheres suggests stable and self-evident categories with fixed and enduring



1 Scarab incised with sphinx holding cartouche and name of Amun-Re above sphinx. Green glazed steatite; l. 4 cm. Rhodes, Camirus, tomb; reign of Psammetichus I (664–610 BCE). London, British Museum, G&R 1861,1111.13.



2 Jar with lid in the form of kneeling figure supporting jar with frog. Glazed composition; h. 10.16 cm. Rhodes, Camirus; 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. London, British Museum, G&R 1860,0404.75.

meanings: »Egyptian« (and »Egyptianizing«) as widespread (if not universal) and timeless phenomena. This framework emphasizes the static properties of objects, perhaps implicitly encouraging the expectation of a corresponding uniformity of meaning within broadly homogeneous cultural settings, or even across such divides as »East« and »West«. It promotes the notion of a monolithic »Egypt« to which there was a predictable or consistent response, perhaps even comprising the initial phase of an enduring (predominantly »Western«) reception history. By juxtaposing these very different contexts, I seek to emphasize instead the diversity of response to works in, or incorporating, Egyptian styles, and hence to the concept of »Egypt«. Egypt's cultural influence in the Iron Age across a vast geographical expanse was largely performed through objects deposited in sanctuaries and burials. In both circumstances, material agents that drew specifically and knowledgeably on Egyptian forms, materials, and iconographies were crucial to negotiating new social identities and introducing new ritual practices. And, adapted to different cultural settings, these material agents became something new, with the capacity to effect change. Joseph Maran has emphasized the transformative potential of appropriating items from »outside« with special reference to prehistoric societies: »In combination with the particular structure of a society, this agency must have at all times ensured that impulses arriving from outside were transformed by merging them with existing values and world views.«<sup>7</sup>

In the Iron Age Aegean, attention has long concentrated on the large corpus of amulets, figurines, and small vessels made from glazed composition, commonly known as faience (figs. 1–2). Found primarily in sanctuary votive deposits but also in tombs, these objects are

typically labeled »Aegyptiaca« – a term that usually embraces both works of Egyptian manufacture (»genuine«) and specimens closely modeled on them or exhibiting Egyptian elements of style and iconography but fashioned by Greeks or Levantines (»imitations«).<sup>8</sup> They have often been understood within the broader context of the »Orientalizing« period, an era of robust exchange during the ninth to seventh centuries BCE in which Phoenician traders are accorded a prominent role. Are these »Aegyptiaca« »genuine« imports (thus made in Egypt, either in Egyptian or Greco-Egyptian workshops in the Nile Delta), or »imitations« produced elsewhere (in the Levant, for example), or in eastern Aegean workshops (primarily on Rhodes)? If they are of Levantine origin, does their transport to the Aegean represent the agency of Phoenicians, or of Greeks who traveled to the eastern Mediterranean littoral or Cyprus? If genuinely Egyptian, are they contemporaneous products or »heirlooms«, perhaps acquired through intermediaries? Does their presence as votives in Greek sanctuaries exemplify dedications of »exotica« by Greeks, or were they sometimes personal possessions offered by foreign visitors?

At the Neo-Assyrian capital of Nimrud, in northern Mesopotamia, excavations have uncovered a few Egyptian or Egyptianizing objects in the lavishly furnished tombs of several Assyrian queens dating to the ninth and eighth centuries BCE.<sup>9</sup> Since the tombs predate the seventh century military conquests that brought Egyptian booty, resources, and personnel in large quantities to Assyrian royal centers, the presence of these works raises intriguing questions. Why were they considered suitable grave gifts for Assyrian royal women? Were they somehow connected with the individual biographies of the deceased, or do they exemplify a broader royal Assyrian »taste« for »exotica« or imports from »western« lands? Should we also link them with the vast corpus of »Egyptianizing« styles of metalwork and ivories recovered from royal storerooms and other locations at Nimrud, generally understood as tribute and booty acquired from conquered regions in the Levant, as further evidence for this taste?<sup>10</sup>

Issues of authorship, style, place of origin, and means of transfer have largely dominated approaches to Egyptian (and Egyptian-looking) objects found in new cultural settings – whether »Eastern« or »Western«. And because our categories emphasize artisan identity and geographical or cultural »source«, they have less actively fueled interest in the role of material culture in constructing new collective identities and altering social practices. Over the past few decades, scholars have critically reappraised longstanding assumptions about simple relationships between material culture and group identity. Rather than reflecting individual or collective identity, material culture is increasingly understood to play an active role in constructing identities and negotiating relationships.<sup>11</sup> As »exotica«, Egyptian and Egyptian-style works are typically considered – like other foreign imports – to signal status; as valuable personal possessions and markers of elite self-fashioning, they were subsequently re-used as tomb gifts or votive offerings. Recent studies have increasingly recognized a significant diversity among cultural responses to foreign-style objects in local cult or burial practices, and thoughtfully addressed »exotica« as a problematic category.<sup>12</sup> We can

likewise reconsider whether the categories of »Egyptian« and »Egyptianizing« continue to provide a productive means of classifying material culture.

I also refer selectively to earlier periods of Egypt's material connections with outside regions, for two reasons. First, recent investigations of the Egyptian impact on neighboring areas in the Late Bronze Age have addressed the problematic character of »Egyptian«, »Egyptianizing«, and »Egyptianization«, yielding insights that could prove useful both for exploring their Iron Age history and their treatment in modern scholarship.<sup>13</sup> Second, given the already long life of Egyptian styles outside the Nile Valley before the first millennium, we need to consider the issue of cultural memory. Some of the Egyptian and Egyptian-style works recovered from Iron Age contexts were manufactured decades or even centuries before their date of deposition, thus linking the objects and their biographies with a much more distant past. My discussion touches only marginally on this important subject, but it deserves further exploration. My approach has also been informed by provocative reappraisals of Egyptian and Egyptian-looking objects in Roman and later imperial settings that draw attention to the limitations of traditional scholarship and demonstrate the interpretive value of object biographies and a material agency perspective.<sup>14</sup>

## **EGYPTIAN AND EGYPTIANIZING: AUTHORSHIP, SOURCE, AND STYLE**

A framework for the European reception of Egyptian and Egyptian-looking objects was already in place when preclassical civilizations were rediscovered in the mid- to late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The early modern investigation of Egyptian and Egyptian-looking objects in Italy established a method for their classification and interpretation, positioning Egyptian history and culture largely outside its ancient Roman setting: these decontextualized works were catalogued and analyzed as sources for Dynastic Egypt, not for imperial Rome.<sup>15</sup> For J. D. S. Pendlebury, writing in 1930, the ancient Greek encounter with Egypt and its material culture could be readily assimilated to the 20<sup>th</sup> century European experience of that land, its people, and the artifacts it »made available«. He emphasized the individual actor, and that individual's personal encounter with Egypt, in explaining the meaning of Egyptian objects placed in tombs or sanctuaries in the Archaic Greek world. Faience scarabs and amulets found in several burials in or near Athens, he concluded, »must be the ›souvenirs‹ of some returned adventurer of the Late Geometric period rather than the evidence of peaceful trade«. <sup>16</sup> By contrast, Egyptian objects in votive deposits at Sounion were thought to number among »the honest treasures and ›luck‹ of Attic sailors brought from a far country, not amulets bought to place in a tomb with some hope of mysterious benefits for the dead«. <sup>17</sup> It was the Greeks' good fortune that possibilities for contacts with Egypt expanded during the artistic floruit of Dynasty 26, Pendlebury observed, collapsing several millennia in characterizing the Greek response: »Then too, as never before, the ordinary Greek, not the ad-

venturer alone, had the opportunity of visiting Egypt. There was the great trading station at Naucratis and, for all we know, personally conducted tours up the Nile by guides as delightfully inaccurate as their descendants.<sup>18</sup> A later generation instead emphasized Phoenician agency in the long-distance contacts between the eastern Mediterranean littoral and the Aegean, along with the central and western Mediterranean. An equation of »Aegyptiaca« with »curios«, »souvenirs«, and »trinkets« dovetailed neatly (and conveniently) with the Homeric image of Phoenicians hawking »gee-gaws« (*athyrmata*). In most scholarship today, Phoenicians remain the prime movers in the circulation of Egyptian objects and styles, especially before the late eighth century BCE.<sup>19</sup>

Traditionally, our primary (or at least initial) task as scholars has usually been to distinguish Egyptian from Egyptianizing objects, »genuine« from »imitation«, in order to ascertain the object's place of manufacture and the artisan's (or consumer's) ethnic or cultural identity. And yet the limitations of these categories are also acknowledged, if less frequently elaborated. It is not always possible to distinguish Egyptian from Egyptianizing workmanship, for example, even on technical grounds.<sup>20</sup> Scholars also disagree on whether Egyptianizing signifies »derivative«, or whether the fact of emulation perhaps instead underscores the clear intentionality these artifacts reflect. »It is obvious that mere imports found in a tomb have less significance than the fact that somebody imitates, purposely and with effort, objects which he cannot acquire by import«, Günther Hölbl has observed; »we may assume that these imitations were as acceptable to their owners as imported originals«.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, it remains plausible that Egyptian artisans were involved in establishing the East Greek faience industry and its technical standards: »The nomenclature [Archaic Greek faience production] does not necessarily imply direct Greek involvement in their manufacture. A more exact designation would be Egyptianizing workshops in East Greece«, writes Virginia Webb: »The exact source of the technical and stylistic know-how which was adopted in the workshops established on Rhodes is still the subject of discussion.«<sup>22</sup>

Fresh perspectives on »Aegyptiaca« in other cultural spheres help steer us away from a preoccupation with classification and the determinative role played by authorship (or ownership), toward an emphasis on material agency and shifting identities. Drawing on phenomenological approaches grounded in the work of Martin Heidegger, Eva Mol argues persuasively for understanding Roman »Aegyptiaca« not as a discrete, homogenous category of material culture, but as objects interconnected to a world, or conceptual and spatial environment in which they were experienced and used; they participated simultaneously in multiple, complex, and dynamic networks. Mol's nuanced study challenges prevailing interpretive frameworks governing the analysis of »Aegyptiaca« by recognizing different layers of perception on which our notions of »Egyptianness« are built: »By its use and function within different networks, Egypt could become concealed as a layer of perception«, she writes: »The perception of the same object can change; its »Egyptianness« can become concealed, to be revealed again in another context.«<sup>23</sup> From this interpretive perspective, we thus consider not only formal, seemingly static material properties (including imagery and

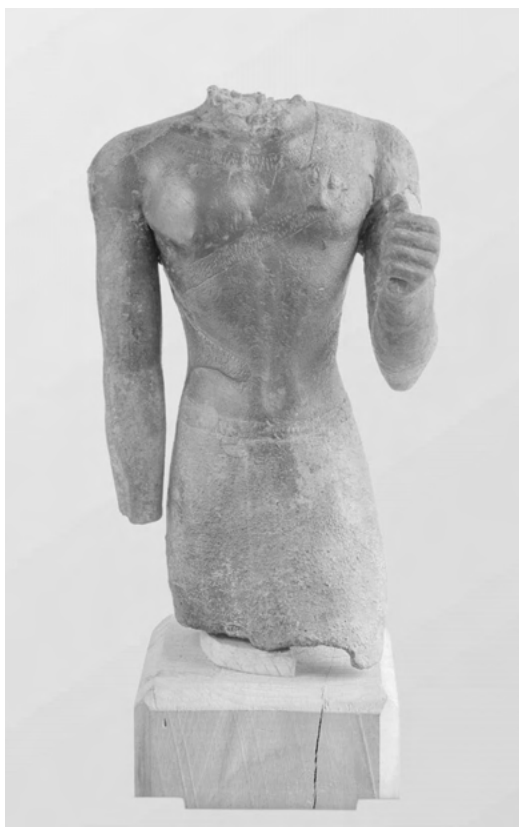


style) connecting Egyptian-type objects to others *we* perceive as permanent members of the same category, but also investigate how they were intertwined with other environments and in what spatial, social, and material contexts they were experienced. This approach aims to gain additional access to ancient viewers and responses, seeking a richer understanding of what these objects meant in their past environments.

## **EGYPTIAN AND EGYPTIAN-STYLE OBJECTS IN THE HERAION AT SAMOS**

By far the most numerous imports in the Iron Age Aegean are the thousands of »Aegyptiaca« recovered from Greek sanctuaries, which therefore furnish prime sources for tracing both the spatial trajectories of these artifacts and the transfer of ownership and meaning accompanying their new cultural settings. As noted earlier, votive deposits typically preserve Egyptian imports along with Egyptianizing works attributed to Levantine manufacture and, especially from the late seventh and sixth centuries, the products of East Greek workshops. Despite their wide geographical distribution in the sanctuaries of multiple deities, broad patterns have emerged in the categories of »Aegyptiaca« recovered from votive deposits and the character of participating cults. As Günther Hölbl's detailed studies in particular have determined, they appear primarily in the sanctuaries of female deities: Aphrodite, Athena, Artemis, Aphaia, Demeter, and Hera.<sup>24</sup> Faience amulets and figurines are dominated by images of a particular constellation of Egyptian deities whose cosmic domains governed female fertility and the protection of young children: Amun, Isis, Horus, Bes, Sakhmet, Nefertum, and Ptah-Sokar-Osiris (Pataikos). The small vases that held special ointments, too, served a protective function. Burials, where »Aegyptiaca« are found almost exclusively with women and children, furnish further evidence for this gendering of objects and spheres of divine activity. The deities whose images appear in these capacities do not include those traditional for Egyptian funerary contexts. Given these correlations between object and owner in both sanctuaries and tombs, most examples recovered from votive deposits were probably offered by Greeks, perhaps especially female worshipers – regardless of the means by which these objects arrived at Greek sites.

Yet these sanctuary deposits also exhibit significant diversity in the overall quantities of Egyptian-style objects and their constituent types, the deities represented, and the proportions of Egyptian to Egyptianizing works. In some cases, differences surely reflect chronological disparities among the votive deposits. For example, scarabs and scaraboids were found in large numbers in the Hera sanctuary at Perachora and the Argive Heraion, but only a few have appeared at Samos. None belongs to the groups produced in the first half of the seventh century BCE. Thus, either these types of scarabs were not dedicated in Samos, or the votive deposits are too late to include them.<sup>25</sup> In other instances, differences in the types of Egyptian and Egyptian-style objects suggest highly significant and complex local circum-



3 Statuette of Egyptian priest. Bronze; pres. h. torso 26.6 cm. Samos, Hera sanctuary (B 1312). Vathy, Archaeological Museum of Samos

stances concerning source (Levantine or East Greek industry) and availability, cult practices, and the relationship between donors and votives.

The Hera sanctuary on Samos has yielded not only an impressive number of »Aegyptiaca« – over 1,000 objects, including more than 600 made of faience – but also examples of Egyptian or Egyptian-style material that otherwise appears rarely, or in very small quantities, at other Archaic sanctuaries: works fashioned from ivory, alabaster, and bronze, for example.<sup>26</sup> The large number and variety of »Aegyptiaca« is often attributed to the particularly close political and commercial ties between Egypt and Samos attested in Greek literary sources. Archaeological evidence has substantiated Greek literary testimony documenting Saite royal patronage elsewhere in eastern Aegean sanctuaries.<sup>27</sup> The unusual quantity and character of the »Aegyptiaca« at Samos have also been linked with the special role Ionian and Carian pirates and mercenaries played in the service of Saite pharaohs.

Most exceptional among the Samian »Aegyptiaca« are the bronzes, which number over two hundred; while the majority are assigned to Dynasty 26, works of Dynasty 25 (719–



4 Statuette of Osiris. Bronze; h. 25 cm. Samos, Hera sanctuary (B 929). Vathy, Archaeological Museum of Samos

656 BCE) date also appear. One group consists of hollow-cast figures of humans, deities, and sacred birds and animals, which occur in two scales: large, and generally fragmentary, with the exception of a once-gilded Egyptian *sem*-priest originally some 66 cm tall (fig. 3); and smaller examples that reach a height of 30 cm. Another group contains small solid-cast figurines also in the form of humans, animals, and deities. Miscellaneous object types include bronze furniture fittings, fragments of incense burners, fly or whisk handles, and a mirror inscribed for the goddess Mut.

The bronzes are also noteworthy because the figures represented do not mirror the same group of deities common to the faience »Aegyptiaca« preserved at most Greek sanctuaries. Instead, they are primarily images of male deities – Bes, Harpocrates, Horus, Ptah, and Reshef – and include three examples of the otherwise scarcely attested Osiris (fig. 4) and one of Min-Amun. Female deities, by contrast, are represented only by a figurine of Neith (fig. 5) and one probably of Mut.<sup>28</sup> Bronze figurines of Egyptian deities, male or female, seldom occur outside Egypt. If the Samian bronzes were acquired by Ionian or Carian mer-



5 Statuette of Neith. Bronze; h. 22.5 cm. Samos, Hera sanctuary (B 354). Vathy, Archaeological Museum of Samos

cenaries as »curiosities« or gifts, and were donated following their return from Egypt, we would surely expect similar examples to appear in other Ionian sanctuaries, where large quantities of »Aegyptiaca« in the form of faience amulets and figurines have indeed been found.<sup>29</sup> It is therefore plausible, as Helga Bumke has proposed, that the bronzes are offerings made by Egyptians and reflect *Egyptian* dedicatory practices. The statuettes of priests, she argues, can only be understood as gifts from Egyptian priests. The figurines of deities can also be understood as Egyptian offerings, reflecting the practice (especially common in the the Saite era) of presenting images of *Nebengöttern*, brought in small wooden shrines, alongside the main deity – in this case, Hera.<sup>30</sup> Bumke avoids concluding that these dedications demonstrate Egyptian influence on local cult practices, or Egyptian identification of Hera with Egyptian deities. Instead, she suggests, they reinforce an impression of knowledgeable interaction in the realm of cult ritual and its material expression. In this respect, they also provide a background to subsequent developments in monumental stone architecture and sculpture at Samos that manifestly drew on Egyptian traditions and technical expertise.<sup>31</sup>

From a material agency perspective, the single category of »Aegyptiaca« obscures critical differences among these votives in material, scale, origin/authorship, donor identity, function, and meaning within a new cultural setting. Once the faience amulets and vases were acquired from Egyptian or East Greek workshops and dedicated at Samos, they became something else: votive offerings to the goddess of the sanctuary, functioning within a different environment of material, social, and religious space. Their reference to special Egyptian forms, materials, styles, and divine protection persisted, but they were now also intertwined with a new network of sanctuary dedications, including numerous objects in non-Egyptian styles. At Samos, the bronze figurines of Neith, Osiris, and other Egyptian deities absent from the repertoire of faience votives, along with the large-scale bronze statuettes of priests, acquired a new identity as dedications to the sanctuary but through their iconography, material, and style were also linked to other material networks and dedicatory practices that extended far beyond the Heraion. They did not simply reflect the ethnic or cultural identities of their donors, but in fact enabled the participation of non-local visitors at the Hera sanctuary.

Finally, but not least, the visually stunning presence of numerous Egyptian-style votives made from special materials, such as faience or bronze, must have brought about dramatic changes in the physical appearance of the sanctuary over a period of several decades, as represented by votive deposits at the Samian Heraion. Virginia Webb has commented on the scale and quantity of faience votives fashioned as male figures and as falcons, including examples measuring 25 to 30 cm in height.<sup>32</sup> For a period of some forty years (c. 630–590/580 BCE), she observes, the cult areas »must have been overcrowded with faience flute-players etc. which would have glittered with iridescent turquoise glaze touched with blue black«.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, the numerous bronze statuettes of deities and large bronze statuettes of priests, some enhanced with gilding or copper, would have introduced a new visual culture, including a new sense of scale.<sup>34</sup> This profound aesthetic impact would have increased over time, further altering the sanctuary's appearance and therefore viewers' responses.<sup>35</sup> The special circumstances surrounding the Egyptian and Egyptian-type votives at Samos also suggest that seemingly identical Egyptian-looking objects appeared in quite different company within the various sanctuaries of goddesses in which they are typically found. The faience »Aegyptiaca« from Samos reflect the imagery governing female domains, as is the case for many Archaic Greek sanctuaries. Yet a significant number consist of male figures bringing animals for dedication or sacrifice or playing musical instruments (chiefly the double flute); they likely represent the donor himself.<sup>36</sup> Given an emphasis on identifying production centers and their characteristic manufacturing parameters, our catalogues of individual objects highlight similarities and differences among object types, material and technique, and stylistic and iconographical variations within those types. In the context of dissimilar configurations of votives, however, they must have appeared very different. At the neighboring Ionian sanctuary of Aphrodite at Miletus, for example, the bothroi yielded an exceptionally large number of faience »Aegyptiaca« in familiar categories, but few

bronzes. Moreover, the faience figurines exhibit marked differences in the constellation of deities represented, including an almost unparalleled image of the Theban deity Amun-Re-Harakte.<sup>37</sup> Their »Egyptianness« would arguably have been enhanced in this »visual ecology«, perhaps especially in contexts including special categories of Egyptian-style objects such as bronze figurines of priests or images of deities seldom encountered in Greek sanctuaries, whose iconography would have been unfamiliar to most visitors.<sup>38</sup>

Specific iconographies and styles were used to convey specific meanings: Greeks actively signaled those meanings through the use of Egyptian forms and frequently also Egyptian-style materials. To effectuate divine activity, material agents had to assume the precise forms of their Egyptian prototypes. Scarabs, other amulets, and figurines of particular deities were often fashioned within restricted parameters of form, type, scale, style, and material. Through these objects, worshipers knowledgeably appealed to the cosmic realms controlled by particular members of the Egyptian pantheon – a distinctive constellation of deities – through precise formal and typological manifestations. Thus, the specific features of local cult and votive practices, and the function of these particular artifacts, were differently understood and exercised different influences at each site. In other words, the material agency of »Aegyptiaca« was performed within local circumstances of cult and votive practices: this meaning was not entirely predetermined, nor fully independent of the objects themselves. The objects do not simply reflect contact with Egypt – direct or indirect – but actually constitute cultural innovation, enabling the establishment of new votive practices and the participation of non-local visitors.

### **EGYPTIANIZING, LEVANTINE, AND INTERCULTURAL STYLES IN THE NIMRUD QUEENS' TOMBS**

Between 1988 and 1992, Iraqi archaeologists made a series of spectacular discoveries in the Neo-Assyrian capital of Nimrud (ancient Kalhu), in northern Mesopotamia. In the Northwest Palace built by King Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BCE), they unearthed several mostly undisturbed tombs dating to the ninth and eighth centuries BCE.<sup>39</sup> The Queens' Tombs, as they are known, contained the remains of adults and children; accompanying inscriptions named some of the burials as royal women. A stone sarcophagus in Tomb II housed two females, one identified through cuneiform inscriptions on a nearby stone tablet and on two gold bowls as Yabâ, wife and queen (*sēgallu*) of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE). She is probably the same individual named in other inscribed objects placed in the tomb as »Banitu, queen of Shalmaneser« (V) (726–722 BCE), and may have died during the latter's reign.<sup>40</sup> One inscribed bowl was elaborately decorated with Egyptian – or strongly Egyptianizing – scenes (plate 15). Scholars have analyzed its rich stylistic and iconographic details in order to determine its place and date of manufacture, its artisan's ethnic or cultural identity, and its significance as a tomb gift inscribed for this particular queen.<sup>41</sup>

Although not the only gold vessel recovered from the tombs, Yabâ's bowl was exceptional in its elaborate hammered and engraved decoration, arranged in two principal zones filling the interior.<sup>42</sup> Around the circumference a concentric frieze depicts a lively boating expedition that takes place in a specifically Nile setting, a papyrus marsh. Four boats occupied by seated and standing figures engaged in hunting and other activities are placed at approximately equal intervals. One boat is distinguished by its bow in the shape of a water bird and a hull resembling a fish with scales (plate 16). The bowl's interior zone encircles a concentric arrangement of human and animal figures swimming in a lush setting of lotus plants: a nude female, a horse, a ram, a crocodile, and fish. Experts immediately recognized precise and extensive similarities between Yabâ's bowl and a silver bowl of nearly identical shape, dimensions, and decoration, allegedly recovered from a cemetery at ancient Golgoi on Cyprus and housed in the Berlin museums since 1886. Although less well preserved, its decoration is similarly arranged, with a concentric outer frieze composed of boating scenes in a papyrus thicket and an interior zone encircling swimming figures arranged in concentric patterns. Most scholars have attributed the Berlin bowl to Phoenician workmanship of the ninth to eighth century BCE.<sup>43</sup> In discussing the Berlin silver bowl probably made in the same workshop as Yabâ's gold bowl, Eric Gubel connected its boating scenes with the Bastet festival later described by Herodotus, an event that took place on the lake surrounding the temple of this goddess in Bubastis (Tell Basta), home of the Dynasty 22 rulers. Gubel suggested that this imagery may have first appeared in decorated Phoenician bowls between 850 and 825 BCE, when Osorkon II founded the Bubastis temple.<sup>44</sup> A late eighth century date would coincide neatly with the date that Yabâ's bowl was presumably deposited.

Yet a comprehensive study of the Nimrud bowl and its sister in Berlin has concluded that nearly every aspect of subject, composition, and style displays a strongly Egyptian character.<sup>45</sup> The authors drew comparisons with well-established Egyptian funerary imagery depicting the deceased in a boat hunting waterfowl, as in Dynasty 18 tomb paintings. They also cited links with boating scenes depicted on shallow faience bowls of New Kingdom date recovered from sites both in Egypt and elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean, such as Enkomi on Cyprus. Boating scenes and landscape settings on Egyptian faience chalices of the Third Intermediate Period also provide close parallels. Other features indicating an Early Iron Age rather than New Kingdom date are the scenes combining bovines and horses, along with certain landscape features. Only a few antiquarian details, such as types of furniture and musical instruments, argue for Levantine rather than Egyptian workmanship. In association, iconographic and stylistic comparisons suggest a date for both bowls in the tenth century BCE, perhaps as the products of a single workshop in the southern Levant with close ties to artistic centers in the Nile Delta. The gold bowl's cuneiform inscription naming Yabâ must have been added later and thus furnishes no evidence for date of manufacture. On the basis of her name, Yabâ has been identified as a princess of West Semitic origin, as have several other Assyrian royal women.<sup>46</sup> The gold bowl may thus have been an »heirloom«, perhaps an item of dowry or an official gift, furnishing a link

between her presumed homeland and the bowl's likely production site in the southern Levant.

Although unique in its elaborate figural scenes in a Nile setting, the gold bowl was not the sole Egyptian-looking object recovered from the Nimrud tombs. Egyptian elements of style, material, and iconography have also been recognized among the lavish and elaborately decorated gold jewelry, dress and hair ornaments, and other accessories that adorned the queens' bodies.<sup>47</sup> In her recent investigation of female dress and personal ornament in Tombs I, II, and III, Amy Gansell has identified multiple styles, defined as Royal Assyrian, Near Eastern, Intercultural, and Composite. The Intercultural style drew on foreign (Egyptian or Levantine) imagery, forms, or elements of female regalia; Composite style objects incorporated imported physical components.<sup>48</sup> While the elaborately decorated gold objects have received the most attention, the tombs also yielded examples of Egyptian-inspired protective imagery in the form of amulets and seals found in close association with the deceased. In Tomb I a terracotta sarcophagus housed a female 50 to 55 years of age, whose burial is dated to the ninth or eighth century BCE. Around the legs were monkey-shaped amulets made of lapis lazuli, rock crystal, and carnelian, and silver and carnelian amulets fashioned as heads of the Mesopotamian demon Pazuzu. A group of faience pendants and seals near the deceased's head also included pendants fashioned as Pazuzu heads and winged females, perhaps the demoness Lamashtu, and at least two stamp seals bearing hieroglyphic (or pseudo-hieroglyphic) inscriptions.<sup>49</sup> An unusually shaped gold fibula near the right ribs terminates in a female figure wearing a Pazuzu headdress, along with a bird of prey, perhaps an eagle (plate 17).<sup>50</sup> Near the right hand, a carnelian stamp seal, set in an elaborate gold mount, bears a hieroglyphic (or pseudo-hieroglyphic) inscription.<sup>51</sup> An apotropaic and exorcistic force, Pazuzu's image protected against evil demons, particularly Lamashtu, who threatened women during childbirth and abducted infants. Like his Egyptian counterpart Bes, Pazuzu was represented in two forms: as a complete figure with head and body, and also often partially, as a head alone. Tomb I's cluster of amulets and seals bearing images related to Pazuzu is of considerable interest, reflecting a marked concentration in the queens' burials and comprising the earliest securely dated examples of this demon's iconography. Additional examples associated with royal females were recovered from the queen's residence at Fort Shalmaneser in Nimrud, where five Pazuzu heads were found along with a Bes amulet and an Egyptian scaraboid inscribed »ms« (»to give birth«).<sup>52</sup> This discovery also underscores the close ties linking Bes, Pazuzu, and birth. While the tomb examples may not represent the initial appearance of Pazuzu's iconography, the cluster of images here and in the Fort Shalmaneser residence associates this protective imagery with the exalted status of the deceased.

We could also consider the presence of Egyptian-type features from the perspective of concealment introduced above. Multiple tomb objects inscribed for their owners attest to the material construction of Assyrian royal female identity. Some, such as Yabâ's Egyptian-style bowl, were made long before the queen's death and subsequently »person-



alized« by means of an inscription naming both deceased and king. Tomb II yielded altogether six vessels made of gold, electrum, or rock crystal, each bearing a cuneiform inscription naming Yabâ, Banitu, or Atalia, wife of Sargon II (721–705 BCE).<sup>53</sup> Thus inscribed, Yabâ's Egyptian-style bowl effectively became a new category of material culture, forging a crucial connection to the other inscribed objects deposited in the tombs, which were fashioned in non-Egyptian styles. In this way, a dimension or layer of the bowl's »Egyptianness« was concealed, and its meaning and value in constructing Assyrian royal female identity was emphasized. The electrum mirror recovered from Tomb II, described as »Egyptianizing« because of its papyrus decoration at the juncture of mirror and handle, could be similarly understood.<sup>54</sup> Once inscribed for Atalia, it participated in a new network of objects that emphasized the owner's personal and royal identity.

The Intercultural and Composites styles of female ornament, along with material practices involving the protection of women and children, may also reflect a newly cosmopolitan or imperial horizon, perhaps drawing on the cosmic spheres associated with Egyptian deities and forms of esoteric knowledge. And a variety of texts document interaction in this period between the Assyrian court and Egyptian ruling families, suggesting the high-level transfer of information concerning these material practices of communication with the divine.<sup>55</sup> During the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, Yabâ's consort, increased interaction resulted specifically from Assyrian military activity in the southern Levant, probably chiefly intended to expand regional commercial exchange. This king extended Assyrian control to the Mediterranean through a series of conquests in the Levant and asserted Assyrian might on Egypt's borders (the »Brook of Egypt«). He declared that he removed Hanunu, the Egyptian-backed ruler of Gaza, sacked the city, and erected a royal stele to commemorate his accomplishments.<sup>56</sup> Administrative records establish that Egyptians resided at the Assyrian court as scribes, and as horse experts.<sup>57</sup> In the final decades of the eighth century, during Sargon's reign, the Delta ruler Osorkon IV (c. 730–c. 725 BCE), who controlled the northeastern Delta (including Tanis and Bubastis), brought audience gifts to the Assyrian king in an apparent diplomatic overture.

## CONCLUSIONS

The common label »Aegyptiaca« suggests a homogeneous and durable category of material culture not only with respect to type and style, but also to meaning. Building on recent scholarship advocating new approaches to this and other categories of »exotica«, I have sought to indicate the potential for emphasizing material agency and fluid boundaries in analyzing the altered perception of foreign-style objects in new cultural contexts. The broad dissemination and informed deployment of Egyptian and Egyptian-style objects in the Iron Age greater eastern Mediterranean indicates a widespread familiarity with material practices in the realm of divine protection, particularly in the domains of women and young chil-

dren, that reached across significant geographical expanses and social strata. The efficacy of this agency depended on highly specific typological and iconographic formulations, extending to color, material, dimensions, style, and other formal qualities. And yet the two contexts reviewed here debate notions of Egyptian and Egyptian-style objects as distinct and static categories of material culture, stable constructs that persisted across cultural and temporal boundaries and evoked predictable responses as »foreign« or »exotic«. Objects made in or incorporating elements of Egyptian styles must often have become something different in their new cultural settings; they could preserve references to Egypt in various aspects of their meaning and function, while simultaneously effecting changes in ritual practices and creating new social identities. By recognizing the capacity of these objects to reveal or conceal their »Egyptianness« in the context of changing environments and viewership, we acknowledge their transformative potential.

## L'ÉGYPTE DES UNS N'EST PAS TOUJOURS L'ÉGYPTE DES AUTRES

### À PROPOS D'UNE DRACHME DE MYNDOS

Laurent Bricault

Alors que les royaumes issus du démembrement de l'Empire d'Alexandre frappent de multiples émissions monétaires avec, à l'avvers, le portrait d'un ou plusieurs membres de la famille royale accompagnés de légendes permettant de l'identifier, les monnayages civiques grecs de l'époque hellénistique, ceux des cités comme des ligues, présentent régulièrement, sur cette même face, l'avvers, des portraits – masculins ou féminins – qu'aucune légende ne permet a priori d'identifier. Les portraits en question sont assez stéréotypés, comme sur les six monnaies sélectionnées ici (plate 18). On y voit la tête orientée à droite d'un homme mature, barbu, à l'abondante chevelure, parfois couronné de lauriers, voire de feuilles de chêne. Le plus souvent figurée seule, cette tête est parfois accolée à une seconde, généralement féminine. L'identité de cette (ou de ces) divinité(s) ne peut être déterminée au vu de ces seules images, qui plus est en l'absence de tout attribut considéré comme signifiant par celui qui connaît par avance, grâce à ses propres références culturelles et à son savoir, l'iconographie traditionnelle du panthéon grec: ici, pas de serpent qui pourrait orienter vers Asklépios, pas de trident pour un éventuel Poséidon, pas de foudre ni d'aigle pour un possible Zeus, par exemple. Ces portraits, héritiers des frappes monétaires des siècles antérieurs, sont ceux de divinités plus ou moins directement liées à l'autorité émettrice dont l'identité nous est révélée par l'ethnique que l'on peut lire sur les revers. Les six monnaies de cet échantillon (drachmes, hémidrachmes et unités de bronze) sont toutes datables du II<sup>e</sup> ou du début du I<sup>er</sup> s. av. J.-C. et elles concernent diverses entités politiques du bassin égéen: quatre cités du Dodécanèse et de Carie, en Asie Mineure (Stratonicee,<sup>1</sup> Cos,<sup>2</sup> Halicarnasse<sup>3</sup> et Myndos<sup>4</sup>), le *koinon* des Magnètes,<sup>5</sup> en Thessalie, et le royaume de Thrace sous le règne de Mostis<sup>6</sup>.

L'identification du portrait de l'avvers, que l'image seule ne permet pas de révéler avec certitude, s'éclaire par les textes, littéraires ou épigraphiques, relatifs à la cité, au *koinon* ou au royaume. On peut ainsi, sans grand risque de se tromper, considérer que le dieu au droit de l'hémidrachme de Stratonicee doit être Zeus, qu'il s'agisse de Zeus Chrysaoreus ou du Zeus de Panamarios;<sup>7</sup> celui de celle de Cos doit être Asklépios;<sup>8</sup> celui de la monnaie de bronze d'Halicarnasse Poséidon;<sup>9</sup> celui de la drachme du *koinon* des Magnètes Zeus Éleuthérios;<sup>10</sup> et que Zeus et Héra forment le couple au droit d'une émission de bronze du roi Mostis de Thrace.<sup>11</sup>

Mais, dans cette sélection, quid de la drachme de Myndos? Le monnayage hellénistique de Myndos est intéressant par sa singularité. Hormis quelques rares petites dénominations de bronzes et quelques hémidrachmes en argent au portrait de Dionysos, on ne connaît qu'une seule série de drachmes, très homogène, qui présente toujours le même motif au droit et, au revers, un autre motif lui aussi systématique. Connues par un nombre limité d'exemplaires jusque dans les années 1980, les drachmes de Myndos sont devenues plus courantes sur le marché numismatique avec la diffusion et l'utilisation, illégale le plus souvent, des outils de prospection individuels que sont les détecteurs de métaux. Depuis 30 ans, plusieurs trésors ont ainsi été mis au jour et, pour la plupart, rapidement dispersés sur le marché de l'art. Préparant avec Julie Dalaison une étude sur ce monnayage d'argent, nous avons pu constituer un catalogue comptant plus de 500 exemplaires contre moins d'une centaine connus en 1980<sup>12</sup>. Leur mise en série et l'étude des coins utilisés pour les frapper permettent d'avancer quelques remarques. Nous connaissons actuellement près de trente magistrats monétaires dont les noms apparaissent sur ces drachmes. Ces magistrats monétaires, chaque année, étaient probablement quatre à officier. Ces monnaies ont été frappées sur une période assez courte – une douzaine d'années au maximum – sans doute durant la première moitié du II<sup>e</sup> siècle av. J.-C.

Mais ceci ne nous dit toujours pas qui est le dieu figuré à l'avvers de ces monnaies. Les rares mentions littéraires de Myndos ne nous sont d'aucune utilité. Quant au corpus épigraphique de la cité, il est extrêmement mince, une grande partie de la ville ayant depuis longtemps glissé sous les eaux de la Méditerranée.<sup>13</sup> Le site ne fut jamais vraiment fouillé avant les recherches menées depuis 2005 par Mustafa Şahin de l'université d'Uludağ, notamment sur l'île côtière de Rabbit Island, et dont on attend la publication des résultats.<sup>14</sup>

La réponse vient de la mise en série de ces drachmes myndiennes, qui fait apparaître sur plusieurs exemplaires une couronne coiffant la tête de notre dieu barbu. Souvent tronquée, déformée, mal comprise par les graveurs (fig. 1), elle peut toutefois être identifiée à la couronne *atef* d'Osiris (fig. 2). Une couronne qui se compose d'une haute tiare fasciculée en forme de couronne blanche (celle de Haute Égypte), dont le sommet est coupé pour soutenir un petit soleil. Flanquée de deux plumes d'autruche, elle souligne à la fois le caractère solaire et astral du dieu. Parfois posée sur deux cornes de bélier, elle peut également s'orner d'un *uræus* dressé devant la couronne blanche. Pour autant, le dieu barbu coiffé d'un *atef* sur une drachme émise par une cité carienne au II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. peut-il, doit-il être automatique-



1 Drachme de Myndos  
(Début II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.)



2 Drachme de Myndos (Début II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.)



ment identifié comme un Osiris? Sans doute pas. C'est le revers qui apporte le complément d'information nécessaire.

Outre l'ethnique Myndiôn et le nom du magistrat monétaire, les revers de cette série s'ornent d'un motif, très rare à cette époque dans les monnayages hellénistiques, qui correspond à une coiffure composée d'un disque solaire surmonté de deux hautes plumes nervurées, un disque placé entre des cornes de vache et orné d'un *uræus*, l'ensemble reposant sur deux épis de blé. C'est cette coiffure que l'on a pris l'habitude d'appeler, d'après le *De Iside et Osiride* (chap. 19) de Plutarque, le *basileion*, et que les numismates – et plus largement les historiens – nomment «couronne ou emblème d'Isis», «Headdress of Isis», «Isiskrone», «Kopfschmuck der Isis» ou encore «capricapo d'Iside».

La combinaison des types de l'avvers et du revers (dieu barbu à l'épaisse chevelure coiffé de l'*atef* plus *basileion* d'Isis orné d'un *uræus*) révèle l'identité de notre dieu: il ne peut s'agir que de Sarapis, le parèdre de la déesse Isis dans le bassin égéen à l'époque hellénistique.<sup>15</sup> Cette identification établie, deux questions, parmi bien d'autres, viennent alors à l'esprit, qui se placent à des échelles différentes: Pourquoi les autorités civiques de Myndos ont-elles choisi ce motif pour orner le droit de ce média officiel qu'est la monnaie? Que fait l'*atef* osirien sur la tête de Sarapis et que peut bien signifier cette couronne pour qui n'est pas Égyptien?

Je répondrai à la première question en deux temps. D'abord en rappelant très brièvement quelques données historiques. Puis, en guise de conclusion, en rapportant au cas de Myndos les remarques que l'on peut faire pour tenter de répondre à la seconde question. Myndos est, comme Halicarnasse, une colonie doriennne de Trézène, en Argolide. C'est une petite cité pourvue de larges fortifications et surtout munie d'un bon port (voire deux si l'on en croit les premières informations fournies par les fouilleurs turcs).<sup>16</sup> Conquise par Ptolémée en 309, longtemps disputée entre les Diadoques et les Épigones à l'instar du reste de la Carie, elle fait partie, au II<sup>e</sup> et encore au début du I<sup>er</sup> s. av. J.-C., de ces cités cariennes dites libres pour lesquelles Rhodes jouait en quelque sorte le rôle de tutrice, de protectrice<sup>17</sup>. Rhodes, dont on connaît les rapports privilégiés qu'elle entretient avec les Lagides dès la fin

du IV<sup>e</sup> s., Ptolémée I<sup>er</sup> lui devant par exemple son épithète de Sôter. Une île où le culte de Sarapis est officiel à Lindos, à Camiros ou à Rhodes même depuis au moins le milieu du III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., comme l'atteste la présence régulière d'un prêtre de Sarapis dans les listes de prêtresses révélées par l'épigraphie<sup>18</sup>. Il en est de même sur le continent, où une liste de prêtres provenant de Phoenix, au cœur de la Pérée rhodienne, datée de la période 255–236 av. J.-C., mentionne elle aussi un prêtre de Sarapis, Pythoklès, fils de Kléophantos, en quatrième position<sup>19</sup>.

Rhodes est, de tous les ateliers d'Asie Mineure, celui qui fit usage du plus grand nombre de symboles à caractère isiaque (sistre, situle, *uræus* et *basileion*) sur ses monnaies à l'époque hellénistique, et le plus précocement, dès la fin du III<sup>e</sup> ou le tout début du II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.<sup>20</sup> Une émission d'hémidrachmes au nom du magistrat Athanodôros datée *ca* 205–190 av. J.-C. utilise, pour la première fois semble-t-il, un *basileion* au revers comme marque monétaire, une pratique qui se perpétue pendant plus d'un siècle par la suite.<sup>21</sup> À l'instar de Rhodes, plusieurs villes cariennes comme Myndos, Stratonicee et même Halicarnasse, alors plus ou moins directement sous contrôle rhodien, font figurer le *basileion* sur leurs monnaies au II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. Cette influence rhodienne, que rendent visible les types monétaires en question,<sup>22</sup> se lit ailleurs, comme dans les noms des souscripteurs du Sérapéum de Kéramos,<sup>23</sup> lequel fut construit à la fin du III<sup>e</sup> ou au début du II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. Sur les 73 noms que comporte cette liste gravée sur une stèle retrouvée à la fin des années 1970 dans ce port du sud de la Carie, on ne relève aucun nom théophore en rapport avec Sarapis. Qui plus est, un bon nombre d'entre eux paraissent appartenir à la population non-ionienne de Kéramos, ce qui semble plaider en faveur de l'introduction du culte de Sarapis par Rhodes et non par Alexandrie, même si la cité fait alors partie des possessions lagides et entretient avec l'Égypte d'importantes relations commerciales. Une situation qui ne pouvait que faciliter l'implantation des cultes isiaques.<sup>24</sup> À Stratonicee, un Sérapéum existait à la fin du III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.<sup>25</sup> Il est très probable que les garnisaires lagides en poste dans cette cité carienne ne furent pas étrangers à sa construction. La volonté de retrouver des dieux familiers joua un rôle essentiel dans la diffusion et la pénétration des cultes isiaques en terres non égyptiennes. Sur cette terre carienne à la croisée des influences rhodienne et lagide, où les cultes isiaques sont attestés dès le milieu, voire le premier tiers du III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., les acteurs du commerce ont eux aussi dû jouer un rôle majeur dans leur propagation le long de la côte occidentale de l'Asie Mineure et leur réception officielle<sup>26</sup>. Si Isis est bien présente, soit seule, soit associée à Sarapis dans l'épigraphie hellénistique égéenne, on observe toutefois que les temples sont des Sérapéums et les prêtres des listes officielles ceux de Sarapis.

Alors, Sarapis, justement. Sur les monnaies, mais aussi sur des intailles, des camées et des bijoux (plates 19–20), sur des céramiques à reliefs de l'Égypte lagide et de la Sicile hellénistique, les représentations de Sarapis sont caractérisées non seulement par la coiffure à *anastolè*, c'est-à-dire sans les mèches frontales qui apparaîtront par la suite, mais également par la présence de la couronne *atef*.<sup>27</sup> Ce constat est important car il permet, visuellement, de mieux appréhender l'évolution du rapport entretenu par les premiers Ptolémées avec les



3 Tétradrachme d'Alexandrie (ca 217 av. J.-C.)

pouvoirs sacerdotaux égyptiens. En effet, les monnaies émises par la nouvelle dynastie montrent d'abord, sous Ptolémée I<sup>er</sup>, l'image de Zeus et ses symboles. À la fin de son règne ou au début de celui de son successeur Ptolémée II, la tête de Zeus s'enrichit de deux attributs, la corne de bélier d'Ammon et une petite couronne *atef*<sup>28</sup> : la dynastie se place alors clairement sous la protection de Zeus-Ammon-Sarapis/Osiris, divinité synchrétique réunissant les puissances dominantes des panthéons grec et égyptien<sup>29</sup>. Une étape nouvelle est franchie lorsque, sous Ptolémée IV, à l'époque de la bataille de Raphia, en 217, le couple Sarapis-Isis est représenté sur une importante série monétaire en argent (fig. 3), donc destinée à circuler.<sup>30</sup> L'image du dieu, façonnée à l'origine pour les Grecs d'Alexandrie voire, plus largement, pour les sujets grecs de l'Égypte lagide, reçoit à cette occasion une sorte de consécration officielle et marque l'établissement de nouveaux rapports de force en Égypte : la disparition des cornes d'Ammon doit s'expliquer par la perte d'influence du clergé de Thèbes (ammonien) face à celui de Memphis (osirien et de Ptah). Progressivement, les grands-prêtres memphites de Ptah deviennent les seuls interlocuteurs véritables du pouvoir royal, puisque dans les temples nombre de dignitaires détiennent désormais leur autorité du fait de leurs fonctions militaires ou civiles, et non de leurs sacerdoces. Ces pontifes héréditaires connaissent alors un accroissement de leurs charges religieuses sur les sanctuaires de tout le pays et leurs relations avec le pouvoir deviennent de plus en plus étroites, comme en atteste la charge de prophète du souverain vivant, connue depuis Ptolémée Aulète. La réapparition, dans le courant du III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., du pontificat de Ptah à Memphis permet à la monarchie lagide d'endosser un habit pharaonique. La fondation de cette lignée de grands-prêtres apparaît étroitement liée au culte dynastique, mis en place dès 272/1 et à la volonté du pouvoir royal de ne pas se reposer uniquement sur des élites déjà en place. Le premier à reprendre ce titre de grand-prêtre est sans doute Épistote-Pétobastis (ca 310–250), à la fin de sa carrière. Son fils Annôs, responsable du culte d'Apis à Memphis, voit ses charges s'élargir et il devient le premier à pouvoir s'enorgueillir du titre de « directeur des prophètes de tous les dieux et déesses de la Haute et de la Basse Égypte ».<sup>31</sup> C'est dans ce contexte particulier que s'inscrivent les évolutions de l'image, de la personnalité et des domaines d'action du couple Sarapis/Isis.

En effet, le même type d'analyse peut être fait, comme l'ont bien montré Michel Malaise et Richard Veymiers<sup>32</sup>, pour le *basileion* à l'*uræus* qui orne le revers de notre drachme de Myndos. Les reines lagides semblent avoir été parées de cet emblème dès le règne de Ptolémée II, Arsinoé II l'ayant intégré dans le montage complexe de sa couronne spécifique.<sup>33</sup> Bérénice II, épouse de Ptolémée III, en fit une couronne à part entière, qu'elle porta de son vivant, tout en étant parallèlement assimilée à Isis. La double plume était en fait la coiffure traditionnelle des épouses de pharaons jusqu'à ce que s'opère, sous Amenhotep III (1390–1352), ce que l'on appelle une hathorisation de la royauté féminine. À la double plume s'ajoute désormais le disque solaire à cornes porté par la déesse Hathor, créant ainsi une couronne composite portée ensuite tant par les reines que par Hathor et les déesses qui lui sont apparentées, mais jamais par Isis, du moins pas avant le II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.<sup>34</sup> Le port de cet emblème hathorique à plumes – que nous appelons donc *basileion* – par les reines ptolémaïques, leur permet de s'inscrire dans la tradition et la continuité de leurs prédécesseurs pharaoniques. Quand Isis, au début du II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., se retrouve parée de cette couronne emplumée qui, rappelons-le, montre un *uræus* sur le disque, c'est sans doute en raison de son caractère royal, lorsque s'affirme la volonté du pouvoir lagide, au même moment, de présenter le prince héritier comme un Horus. Une étude chronologique serrée de la documentation fait apparaître assez clairement que c'est des reines lagides qu'Isis hérita du *basileion*, comme Hathor, un millénaire plus tôt, avait hérité des plumes des épouses des pharaons. Et non le contraire.

Si l'on élargit, au-delà de la seule couronne, l'analyse approfondie et comparée de l'image évolutive des souveraines lagides et de la déesse Isis, plusieurs constatations s'imposent. C'est donc à partir du règne de Ptolémée III que les reines lagides s'approprient, jusqu'à la fin de la dynastie, la couronne hathorique à plumes qui les inscrit dans la longue durée du pouvoir royal égyptien. Mais il n'y a pas que la couronne qui soit concernée. Il en va de même pour leur vêtement et pour leur chevelure. L'image nouvelle d'Isis qui se construit alors, bien loin de la figure hiératique des siècles antérieurs, porteuse d'une nouvelle couronne, d'une nouvelle chevelure à boucles, d'un nouveau vêtement, s'inspire clairement de celle des souveraines<sup>35</sup>. Cette image fut très certainement élaborée à Alexandrie, c'est-à-dire dans un milieu grec, proche du pouvoir, mais perméable aux influences égyptiennes, sans doute sacerdotales et peut-être memphites. Les Ptolémées, ou leur entourage, ont donc opté, pour donner corps à l'épouse qu'ils attribuèrent à Sarapis, pour une couronne royale mais non divine, pour une coiffure libyque et non égyptienne, et pour un vêtement d'origine égyptienne, mais dont le langage formel des drapés était grec.<sup>36</sup>

Si on peut donc parler d'emprunts égyptiens dans la construction de l'iconographie royale lagide, il faudrait parler, au sujet d'Isis, non pas de son hellénisation – un terme beaucoup trop vague qui n'explique rien et paraît bien inapproprié ici – mais plutôt de la *ptolémaïsation* de son image, les acteurs de cette évolution iconographique ayant assurément tiré grand profit de l'image et du culte des souveraines lagides divinisées.<sup>37</sup> C'est cette image ptolémaïsée d'une Isis intimement liée aux reines lagides qui va sortir d'Égypte dès la fin du III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. pour se répandre en Méditerranée orientale.





4 Drachme de Ptolémaïs (125–121 av. J.-C.)

S'agissant de Sarapis, dont le nom grec renvoie sans doute au moins autant au dieu *Wsir-Hp*, l'Oséapis memphite du serment d'Artémisia,<sup>38</sup> qu'à une construction identitaire associant Alexandrie, Memphis et Argos,<sup>39</sup> la couronne qui lui est attribuée au III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., l'*atef*, vise sans doute à la fois à souligner les rapports qu'il est supposé entretenir avec Osiris, et notamment les prérogatives royales qui sont les siennes, et à justifier le choix d'Isis pour être sa parèdre. Ptolémée III, qui fit notamment construire le grand Sarapieion d'Alexandrie,<sup>40</sup> et son épouse Bérénice II sont très certainement les promoteurs de ces rapprochements entre le couple royal et le couple divin. Sarapis et sa parèdre Isis sont ainsi devenus, dès le milieu du III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., le canal idéologique préférentiel du pouvoir lagide, forgé par la superposition et les interactions de traditions généalogiques gréco-macédonniennes et égyptiennes, et destiné surtout à donner corps au projet identitaire et légitimateur de la royauté ptolémaïque.

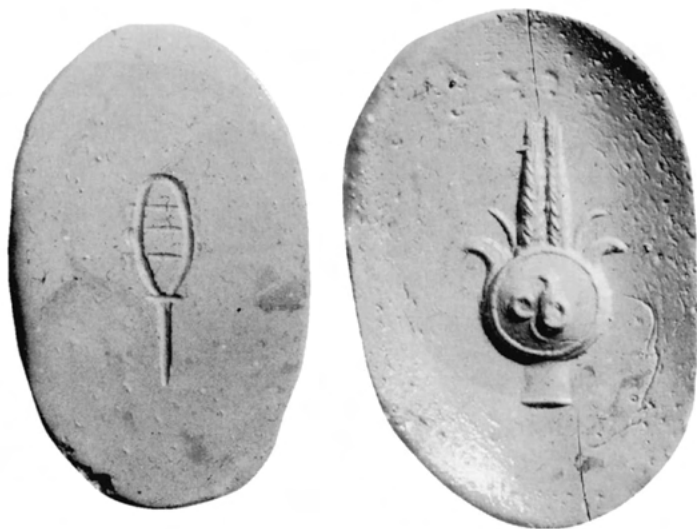
Sarapis couronné de l'*atef* et Isis coiffée du *basileion* apparaissent donc, dès le début du II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., comme des dieux dynastiques par excellence. Ils sont le miroir divin du couple royal lagide. C'est précisément à cette époque qu'en dehors de l'Égypte, le *basileion* et la couronne *atef* apparaissent sur les premiers documents datables avec une certaine précision que sont les monnaies, dans le monnayages de communautés civiques en liaison étroite avec Alexandrie, comme Myndos ou Rhodes, ou encore Ptolémaïs et Antioche sur l'Oronte lorsque Cléopâtre Théa, princesse lagide, y règne en maître à la tête de la monarchie séleucide (fig. 4).<sup>41</sup> Les choix opérés par les autorités civiques de Myndos de faire figurer Sarapis au droit et Isis – via son *basileion* – au revers du monnayage d'argent qu'ils émettent au cours du II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. sont toutefois exceptionnels. Jusqu'alors, seul le monnayage royal d'Alexandrie avaient fait figurer le couple ensemble, par leurs bustes jumelés, sur un monnayage d'argent. Si le contexte évoqué plus haut peut expliquer l'utilisation de marques monétaires isiaques par un certain nombre de cités micrasiatiques, nulle n'alla aussi loin que Myndos. Pour autant, les raisons précises de ce choix, assurément dicté par des considérations locales et identitaires, nous échappent encore. On peut cependant être tenté d'inscrire le cas myn dien dans le phénomène plus large, qualifié par Andrew Meadows de «Great transformation»,<sup>42</sup> qui voit au II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C. les cités grecques faire évoluer, parfois radicalement, les types iconographiques de leurs monnayages, dans un souci d'affirmation et d'autonomisa-



5 Drachme de Patras (ca 32/1 av. J.-C.)

tion. Les épiphanies divines, les fêtes associées sont l'occasion de modifier les types voire d'en imposer de nouveaux. À titre d'exemple, on a déjà souligné ailleurs<sup>43</sup> que les drachmes et hémidrachmes rhodiennes des années 89–85 av. J.-C. au nom des magistrats Euphanès, Maès, Thrasymédès et Zénôn, mais aussi certains grands bronzes qui font usage du *basileion* comme marque monétaire, étaient à mettre en relation avec la première guerre mithridatique, et en particulier avec le siège que Mithridate VI imposa aux Rhodiens en 88 av. J.-C. au cours duquel Isis se serait manifestée<sup>44</sup>. Hélas, pour Myndos, les sources sont toujours muettes.

Au terme de ce rapide tour d'horizon, il est donc nécessaire de distinguer deux niveaux de lecture, et peut-être deux étapes dans la perception de ces éléments figurés. Pour les Ptolémées et leur entourage alexandrin, l'*atef* et le *basileion* sont le symbole de leur intégration dans la *longue durée* de l'histoire égyptienne, comme sur le tétradrachme de Ptolémée Philopator. Pour les Grecs outremer, pour les souveraines dont les modèles se trouvent à Alexandrie<sup>45</sup>, l'*atef* et le *basileion* sont les symboles de la royauté lagide, comme sur les drachmes de Myndos.



6 Empreinte de pierre gravée (ép. hellénistique)

Ce n'est donc pas une surprise de voir le type du Sarapis paré de l'*atef* disparaître progressivement – mais non totalement – du monnayage et des autres supports iconographiques antiques au cours du I<sup>er</sup> siècle av. J.-C.,<sup>46</sup> pour être remplacé progressivement par celui du Sarapis au *calathos* (plate 21). Dans le même temps, le *basileion*, si étroitement lié aux reines lagides et notamment à la dernière d'entre elles, Cléopâtre VII Nea Isis (fig. 5),<sup>47</sup> cède la place à un autre marqueur identitaire d'origine égyptienne, le sistre (fig. 6). Cette évolution trahit en creux – ou en négatif, comme on voudra –, les rapports étroits entretenus par ces symboles avec le pouvoir alexandrin. Celui-ci disparu avec la prise d'Alexandrie par Octave et le suicide de Cléopâtre, de nouvelles images apparaissent alors au premier plan : le sistre qui renvoie directement à Isis et au monde divin sans passer par l'intermédiaire royal hellénistique;<sup>48</sup> le *calathos* qui exprime et illustre une réalité devenue essentielle, qui fait de la province d'Égypte la source première des céréales qui nourrissent Rome, et de Sarapis, la divinité principale d'Alexandrie, son protecteur attitré<sup>49</sup>, négligeant désormais Osiris, premier roi d'Égypte, et sa couronne *atef*.



## AEGYPTIACA ROMANA

### THE »BLACK ROOM« FROM THE VILLA OF BOSCOTRECASE AND THE AESTHETICS OF EMPIRE

Molly Swetnam-Burland

The frescos of the »Black Room« from the Roman villa at Boscotrecase are a popular attraction in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.<sup>1</sup> They are reconstructed as a free-standing period room (Gallery 167) within the Greek and Roman wing, complete with a mosaic *emblema* set into the floor, ceiling above, and a large marble table at the center of the room (plate 22). The frescos are famous as early examples of the so-called Third Pompeian Style, which favored monochromatic ground colors and representations of insubstantial architectural forms. In this setting, in which the already dark walls are shielded from direct light, the eye is immediately drawn to two vividly colored panels on the back wall, representing scenes of Egyptians worshipping animals (plates 23–24). The reconstructed room appears to offer viewers an intimate look into the fashionable world of the Roman elite, for they come from a villa long thought to have belonged to the emperor Augustus' own grandson. The room's décor appears to celebrate the recent conquest of Egypt, the villa having been constructed roughly twenty years after the defeat of Cleopatra.

These frescos offer an ideal vantage point from which to survey the Roman engagement with Egypt, focusing upon style and agency.<sup>2</sup> They come from a well-dated context that provides information on the creation of the imagery (that is, how the artists succeeded in presenting a convincing Egyptian style), their role within a broader decorative program (that is, how foreign motifs were integrated with more traditional imagery), and even the responses of viewers from the time of the villa's construction in the years following 11 BCE through to its destruction during the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 CE. The association of the site with the imperial family has led to interpretations of the iconography in the past

that attribute it to political motivations, understood as referring to the role of Augustus' general, Agrippa, in bringing the territory to heel. Yet careful attention to the archaeological record and the history of the site complicates this view: I will argue that the evidence for ownership is inconclusive at best. As a result, we must seek explanations for the imagery beyond the ideological, instead understanding the motifs as reflective of a period in history when interest in Egypt was on the rise, and in which Egyptian products of all sorts, including prestige goods and staples, were vital to the Roman economy.

The frescos in the »Black Room« recalled motifs on luxury wares, including cameo glass, carved obsidian, and precious gems. When freshly painted, they were part of a popular aesthetic in the domestic sphere that celebrated wealth through representations that evoked sacred dedications and spoils of war. Yet this context also speaks to the changing valence of this imagery over time, as depictions of Egyptian objects could be found not just in sumptuous, elite villas like Boscotrecase but also in the homes and tombs of the everyman. This case, in a nutshell, allows us see Roman interest in Egypt within a broader context, as part of a general predilection for spices, foodstuffs, silks, artworks, and other materials from foreign places. It also reveals the power exerted in turn by objects that were from or evoked Egypt, the ability to engage the eye, to shape aesthetics, to capture the imagination. In what follows, I favor a contextual approach: setting the Egyptian-inspired motifs both within their historical and spatial contexts, exploring what the imagery meant to its patron and artist at the time of creation, and using evidence provided by small finds and graffiti to explore how the images may have, in turn, acted upon their viewers through the long history of their display.<sup>3</sup>

## **THE »BLACK ROOM« AND ITS EGYPTIAN-STYLE PINAKES**

Part of the continuing appeal of the »Black Room« in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is that it gives the appearance of real space as it existed at a precise historical moment. This type of display was prevalent in American museums in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, intended to showcase architectural interiors in ways that would appeal not to scholars, but to the public. In the 1920s, when the Boscotrecase frescos were acquired, period rooms also became popular for ancient, medieval, and exotic settings.<sup>4</sup> Paired with the famous cubiculum from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor from Boscoreale, the »Black Room« was designed to illustrate the lifestyle of Roman grandees in the heyday of the empire, surrounded by murals as rich as any tapestry. Yet at the outset, it is important to realize that the room as we see it today is heavily reconstructed. Fragments of the original walls were set into a modern frame, so as to appear to be complete, and sections that were imperfectly preserved were left in the museum storerooms.

Based on the excavator's records and detailed study of the fragments, Christine Alexander reconstructed the original designs of the east, west, and north walls of the room.<sup>5</sup> All

three walls were broken into two zones of decoration, with a red-hued dado featuring geometric designs and a main zone with carefully executed motifs set against a burnished black ground. At the center of each wall, there were representations of temples with spindly-thin columns. Though these architectural elements appear insubstantial, the artists rendered them as three-dimensional, even able to cast shadows. On each wall, at roughly eye level and framed by these *tempiettos*, were landscapes, sacro-idyllic scenes that showed shrines as if seen from above. To either side of each *aedicula*, there were representations of objects. On the north wall, these objects were framed paintings, or *pinakes*, resting upon tall supports; on the east and west walls, these were tripods, furniture for holding cauldrons. Throughout the room, representations of birds (swans, sparrows) and fantastical creatures (griffins) add interest and whimsy; there are even two minute portrait medallions incorporated into the pediment on the north wall. Like many so-called Third Style compositions, then, the frescos of the »Black Room«, deliberately play upon the viewer's perceptions of space. They at once treat the surface of the wall as flat, in so doing emphasizing the real space of the room in which the viewer stood, and also offered tantalizing glimpses into spaces and places beyond, the distant worlds of the landscapes, and the intriguing world of the Egyptian panels.

Though the original design of the room was far busier than the spare presentation in the Metropolitan museum today, it is clear nonetheless that the *pinakes* were focal points in the room. Both depict scenes in which Egyptian figures worship animals (plates 23–24). The right-side panel is better preserved and shows a kneeling figure wearing a kilt and *nemes* headdress with what may be a *uraeus* or other ornament. He holds a plant or stalk of wheat, and faces a statue of a dog standing upon a low altar. To the other side of the altar there is a standing figure, wearing a headcloth with feathers, a broad collar or cape over the shoulders and holding a *sistrum* and a *situla*. The left-side panel depicts a standing figure, probably female, wearing a white sheath and headdress, venerating a representation of a cow or bull standing upon a high table. Her proper left hand is missing, but it seems that she also held an object. Facing these figures is a representation of a crocodile-headed god, kneeling upon a low podium and holding a flail and what may be a mason's square.

A lingering result of the period room presentation, which frames the focal points in a way that makes them appear to be isolated by design, is that scholars have approached them individually rather than in conversation. In the case of the Egyptian-style *pinakes*, scholars have worked to identify the figures, arguing that the crocodile-headed figure represents the Egyptian deity Sobek and that the animals standing upon the altars were Anubis and Apis. The human figures are understood as Egyptian kings, queens, and priests.<sup>6</sup> Further, on the presumption that the villa belonged to Agrippa Postumus, Elfriede Knauer argued that the *pinakes* referred to members of the imperial family in their capacity as rulers of Egypt following annexation: the figure of the queen was Julia, Augustus' daughter, and the king was Agrippa, her husband and the emperor's close advisor.<sup>7</sup> The medallions have received similar scrutiny. Many scholars have argued that they represented historical figures: some have

seen them as male, arguing they represented Agrippa Postumus and his father, Agrippa, and others as female, representing Julia and Livia.<sup>8</sup> The imagery, thus, has been subject to politicized interpretations, and scholars have assumed that each detail, on its own, was intended to send a particular message. Yet, as I show below, the association of the villa with the ownership of the imperial family is far from secure.

## THE AUGUSTAN VILLA AT BOSCONTRECASE: AN IMPERIAL CONTEXT?

The villa at Boscontrecase was uncovered in 1902, when it was exposed during the construction of the Circumvesuviana train line, though that there was a site was well known from objects found in the area.<sup>9</sup> The site was located on the estate of Ernesto Santini, who excavated the remains under the direction of Matteo Della Corte, who recorded the finds and published them in the *Notizie degli Scavi*.<sup>10</sup> In 1906, an eruption of Mt. Vesuvius destroyed much of the town, including the local cemetery and Santini's estates. The plan made at the time of excavation shows that the villa included both extensive working quarters with small rooms for housing slaves and goods (A) and an elite residence (B) surrounding a peristyle courtyard (fig. 1). The »Black Room« (labeled 15 on the plan) was one of a series of chambers opening onto a long terrace (D). Della Corte's account paints a picture of a site, like many villas along the Campanian coast, designed to function both as a working farm, generating income from slave labor, and to serve as a seaside retreat, where its wealthy owners could retire from the heat of the capital during the summer and entertain their guests in style.<sup>11</sup>

Whether the site belonged to Agrippa Postumus, Augustus' grandson, however, is less clear than often assumed. The matter should be considered carefully, for the issue of ownership is foundational to the political readings of its frescos reprised above. Though it has come to be taken as a fact, the case for the site as an imperial property was made in full only in the footnotes of Mikhail Rostovtzeff's influential *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, written not long after the villa's discovery and relying heavily upon observations made by Della Corte.<sup>12</sup> It rests on four pieces of evidence: an amphora found inscribed in Greek with a name that could have been an abbreviation of »Agrippa«; roof-tiles stamped with inscriptions that refer to Agrippa Postumus »[from the workshop] of the orphan Agrippa, with Tubero and Fabius consuls«; two signet rings inscribed with the name of an imperial freedman, Tiberius Claudius Eutychus; and, most importantly, a graffito referring to the emperor found in the peristyle of the villa, »the mother of Caesar was a woman«.<sup>13</sup> In brief, the argument for imperial ownership is as follows: the tile provides a consular date for the site's construction or possibly an extensive reconstruction, 11 BCE, and suggests the villa was owned and built by Agrippa Postumus; the amphora provides some possible corroboration that someone named Agrippa was associated with the site; the graffito commented upon the villa's owners, perhaps making reference to Agrippa Postumus'



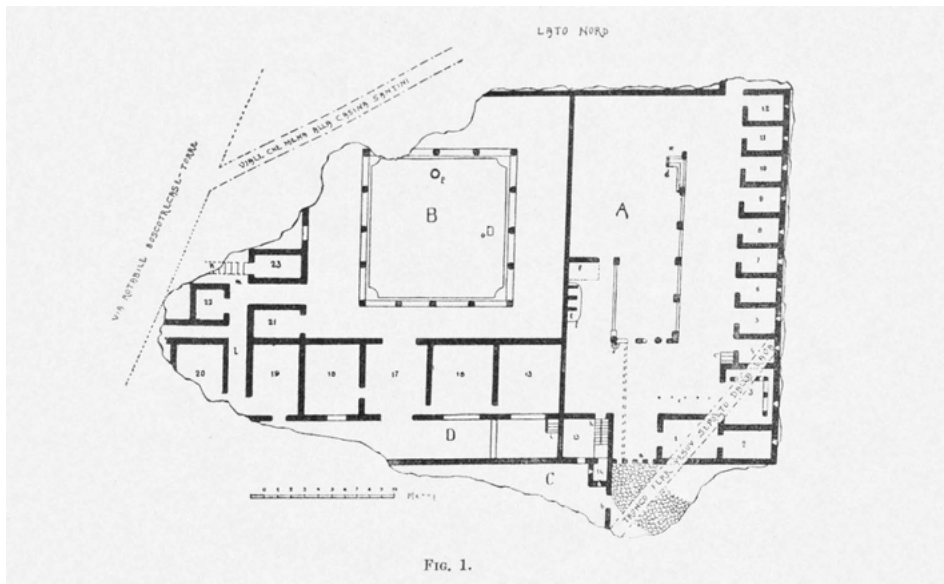


FIG. 1.

1 Plan of the Villa at Boscotrecase. After Della Corte 1922, 1

mother Julia or possibly to Atia, Augustus' own mother; finally, Eutychus was an overseer of the villa, who managed it after Agrippa Postumus' fall from grace.<sup>14</sup>

Yet when pressed, none of this evidence presents a truly compelling case. The amphora was discovered as a chance find in 1903 on Santini's property, perhaps on a road between Boscotrecase and nearby villas at Torre Annunziata. Further, the inscription itself is unclear. What has been taken for the name »Agrippa« is attested only by a single character that is an elision of the Greek letters alpha, gamma, and rho.<sup>15</sup> It may not, indeed, even be a proper name. Several other amphorae were found on the site, inscribed in both Greek and Latin, but none contained equivalent information.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the amphora does not serve to tie the site securely to Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa or his son.

The graffito, too, must be reconsidered as evidence regarding ownership. Recent work on graffiti in Campanian houses and villas understands them as documenting places where people spent time, and as reflecting conversational speech: greetings, jokes, insults, and games.<sup>17</sup> Graffiti were often dialogic, appearing in high-density groups. The graffito in question (CIL IV 6893) was part of such a cluster.<sup>18</sup> According to Della Corte, this graffito and several others were inscribed in the plaster fluting of a column on the south side of the portico. The graffiti included: a series in which a man named Receptus offered salutations to some of his friends, one of whom may have been a renowned actor in the region; a simple name, Q(uintus) Iunius; a graffito of disputed reading, that may have referred to Falernian wine.<sup>19</sup> This collection is typical of graffiti clusters, inscribed over time and documenting

the responses of several individuals, united not by content but by space. That is, the concentration of the graffiti on the columns show that the portico was a relatively public space in which many people spent time. The content of CIL IV 6893 suggests that it was intended to be amusing, a joke of sorts: the emperor's mother (Atia or Julia) was a mortal woman, but not a goddess.<sup>20</sup> Further, the line is written in pentameter. Many Pompeian graffiti were written in verse, including those that quote or refer to Latin literature and those that present their author's own compositions.<sup>21</sup> Several other graffiti from the villa were also lines of poetry.<sup>22</sup> All in all, then, the graffiti referring to the imperial family cannot be taken as a reference to them as the villa's owners, but rather as part of a culture of worldplay – sometimes erudite, sometimes pedestrian, but rarely solely documentary in nature.

In contrast, the stamped tiles make overt reference to a member of the emperor's family, Agrippa Postumus. Yet they do not necessarily testify to his ownership of the villa. This type of inscription most often provides evidence of the owners or overseers of the clay beds or workshops that produced the bricks.<sup>23</sup> Allison Cooley has noted that tiles with a similar inscription to those associated with the villa have been found in houses in Pompeii.<sup>24</sup> There is also evidence, moreover, that other members of the imperial family, including Livia and Poppaea, were involved in the brick industry in the region of Campania.<sup>25</sup> And, indeed, the clay beds in question may not even have been located in close proximity to the villa, for bricks were sometimes transported between the place of their production and use.<sup>26</sup> These stamps, then, do suggest that Agrippa Postumus had properties in Campania and provide a *terminus post quem* for the structure, but little more.

Of all the evidence, only the signet rings appear to offer a solid link between those who resided and worked in the villa and the imperial family. Yet, here, too we must proceed with caution. First, it is unclear when, precisely, the villa came under the control of Tiberius Claudius Eutychus. His name provides evidence for his status as a member of the *familia Caesaris*, slaves and freedmen associated with the emperor and often working on his behalf throughout the empire. However, based on his nomenclature, he could have been associated with either Tiberius or Claudius, and thus his activity at the villa could date anywhere from 14 to the 60s or 70s CE. It was quite common for imperial slaves and freedmen to outlive the emperor who manumitted them.<sup>27</sup> Second, there were many imperial freedmen active in Campania in this period, some working directly for the emperor as agents in the grain trade, and some likely working for themselves after manumission.<sup>28</sup> It is possible that the property was part of a portfolio of land and other investments owned by a member of imperial family in the first century CE (as were many other sites nearby, like the villa at Oplontis).<sup>29</sup> But that in itself does not mean that the imperial family ever spent significant time there. In all, the evidence linking the site to Agrippa Postumus is too scanty to assume that he or his mother specifically resided at the villa or had a hand in its décor.

Thus, interpretations that presume that the frescos were intended to be viewed by the imperial family or made reference to them as individuals in a specific way must be discarded, including politicized interpretations of the *pinakes*. Yet, even if these paintings did not

refer to Augustus' conquest of Egypt quite so overtly, that does not mean they are without social or artistic significance. To the contrary, minimizing the political associations of the décor allows us to focus on the ways in which its style reveals broad attitudes to Egypt and Egyptian goods, in the growing Roman empire.

## **LITTLE LUXURIES: BRINGING EGYPT HOME IN THE FIRST CENTURY CE**

The victory of Augustus (then Octavian) over the forces of Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra in 30 BCE at the Battle of Alexandria ushered in a period of intense fascination with Egyptian culture in Italy. There had, of course, long been communication between the regions, centered on trade: ivories, ostrich eggs, and other prestige goods found their way into Etruscan tombs;<sup>30</sup> merchants traveling from and through Delos, involved in the slave trade, helped establish the Isiac cults in Campania.<sup>31</sup> Centuries of sustained contact meant that many people living in Italy already had established preconceptions about Egyptian culture. Roman authors lauded the land of the Nile for the wisdom of its philosophers, the power of its sacred oracles and ancient religion, and its fertile lands with abundant yields. They also sometimes poked fun at its upside-down customs, including the veneration of animals.<sup>32</sup> Annexation, however, was a landmark moment in the mnemohistory of Egypt: conquest did not eclipse these preconceptions about the place and its denizens, but folded them into a rich rhetoric about Rome's position as *caput mundi*.<sup>33</sup>

It cannot be denied that there was a political dimension to this shift, especially for those living in the heart of the empire. Augustus' conquest was celebrated in ceremony and song, over a period of nearly two decades: in 29 BCE, Augustus staged a triple triumph, parading Cleopatra in effigy through the city, surrounded by all manner of spoils taken from Alexandria.<sup>34</sup> Over the next decade, Vergil wrote the *Aeneid*, embedding his description of Augustus' victories in the origin story of Rome.<sup>35</sup> In 23 BCE, Horace published his first book of odes, including the famous characterization of Cleopatra as a *fatale monstrum*.<sup>36</sup> And in 10 BCE, Augustus erected two Egyptian obelisks in the Campus Martius and Circus Maximus, the text on their bases proclaiming the cooption of Egypt as a Roman province.<sup>37</sup> Thus, at approximately the same time that the »Black Room« was decorated, references to Rome's conquest were abundant.<sup>38</sup>

Annexation, however, also impacted life in Italy in ways that were not overtly political – especially pertinent to discussion of imagery in the domestic sphere. After Actium, the flow of goods of all sorts from Alexandria increased, facilitated by Roman control of the port cities. Pliny the Elder provides evidence for a thriving trade in Egyptian products, including those intended for consumption, such as foodstuffs (grain, oil, figs, dates, vinegar, wine, spices and medicines), as well pigments, reeds for pens, and papyrus. Prestige goods included incense, perfume, Egyptian antiquities, and many materials that likely arrived Italy in

raw form such as metals, gemstones, and decorative granites.<sup>39</sup> It is likely that the Egyptian origin of these products was known to many consumers, but the goods themselves were not prized simply because they were Egyptian; rather, some were valued because they were inexpensive, others because of their quality, and others because they were sumptuous.<sup>40</sup> In short, the early empire experienced an economic sea-change, of which Egyptian commerce was but one crucial part. The result was that consumers in Italy had access to a greater range of material at cheaper prices, including luxuries once available only to the highest echelons. Recent scholarship on wall paintings with Egyptian themes, like those of Boscotrecase, presumes that they drew upon the association of Egyptian materials with luxury goods.<sup>41</sup> Let us consider more deeply, then, the role of Egyptian imagery in the Roman minor arts, focusing on two media that required costly materials and specialized labor: inlaid obsidian and cameo glass.

There were many sources of obsidian in antiquity, including those close to Italy (e.g. modern Sardinia, Lipari), but also those quite distant (e.g. modern Ethiopia, Armenia).<sup>42</sup> Even so, Pliny the Elder's discussion of the material links it closely to the trade in marbles from the east that began to flourish in the early empire, associating it with Ethiopia and India, both locations known for their valuable wares, which would have reached Rome by way of the port of Alexandria.<sup>43</sup> He describes a sculptural group made of obsidian depicting four elephants, which Augustus put on display in the Temple of Concord in Rome, a use that links the material with exotic motifs intended to be a novelty and a marvel.<sup>44</sup> Pliny also specifically associates the material with Egyptian culture. He relates the story of an obsidian statue that had been despoiled from its location in a temple in Heliopolis by one of the governors of the province, which Tiberius decided to repatriate because of its sacred nature.<sup>45</sup>

Most examples of Roman obsidian belong to the minor arts: jewelry, mirrors set into walls, furniture revetment, and refined tableware.<sup>46</sup> A complete set of obsidian vessels was found in 1954 in a maritime villa at Stabiae, a context similar to the villa at Boscotrecase. There were four vessels in the set, all fashioned from single pieces of stone, and inlaid with semi-precious stones and metals: a small ring-handled cup with floral motifs, a *phiale* with birds and Nilotic flora, and two large ring-handled cups with Egyptian-looking figures (plate 25).<sup>47</sup> Both cups feature vignettes on obverse and reverse in which figures in elaborate dress (and depicted in »combined perspective«, in which the component parts of a figure were each represented from their best angle, thus resulting in a figure with a profile head, frontal torso, and profile legs) give offerings to animals standing atop altars or tables. Despite their findspot, there is some debate about their origin and manufacture. Some have seen them as imported artworks, made by artists from Alexandria, in large part because of the exotic motifs.<sup>48</sup> Yet, though they are rare, most inlaid obsidian objects like these are associated with Italy.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, the motifs on the cups are not wholly consistent with Egyptian artifacts. Though some details appear to be accurate, the motifs would be most suited to an Egyptian funerary context, but here are applied to vessels of Roman sympotic

shape and function.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, the scenes play to the quintessentially Roman stereotype of Egyptian culture and behavior, animal worship.<sup>51</sup> The *phiale*, too, makes most sense as reflective of Italian tastes and workmanship. Though fragmentary, it is clear that the motif was Nilotic, with lotus and papyrus-like elements, lightly incised and chased in gold. The visual vocabulary here differs, yet the style equally speaks to typical Roman ways of representing Egypt.<sup>52</sup>

If these are not Egyptian objects, how can we account for their style and its impact on Roman audiences? Kenneth Lapatin's spectrometry study of one of the cups from Stabiae suggests that the obsidian likely came from Ethiopia; he identified the other materials as gold, pink and white coral, carnelian, lapis lazuli, and jasper.<sup>53</sup> Some of these materials could be found in Egypt, but many were also likely brought from much farther afield, probably moving through Berenike and other Red Sea ports on their way to Rome.<sup>54</sup> The meaning, then, lies not just in an intriguing (to the Roman eye) depiction of animal worship, but in the materials, riches from all around the Mediterranean. Considered as a collection, the impact of the tableware would be greater still. Ellen Swift has argued that the decoration of prestigious dining sets was intended to showcase the power and prestige of their owners in two ways. During communal meals, the *dominus* and the highest status members of the party may have used the most luxurious implements, just as they often enjoyed different foods than others at the table. When not in use, collections of tableware were sometimes arranged formally for display, to showcase their shapes, material, and motifs.<sup>55</sup> The obsidian and elaborate craftsmanship of this remarkable set, then, spoke of the owner's wealth and worldly tastes – a message that was enhanced by the exotic, Egyptian imagery.

Egyptian-inspired motifs also appeared in cameo glass in the decades following conquest, a medium that employed less costly materials than did objects like the Stabian cups, but required highly specialized artisans. Roman cameo glass was produced only for a short period of time (c. 15 CE–25 CE) in the early empire by several workshops located in the region around Rome and Campania. Marika van Aerde's recent study demonstrates the popularity of Egyptian motifs in this medium, attested by 27 fragments and intact vessels. Yet she also shows that Egyptian elements were not segregated from other iconography, but often appeared combined with Dionysiac motifs and amorini.<sup>56</sup> Because these vessels were produced in Italy for local consumption, they speak directly both to the audience's ability to recognize and read a foreign style and reveal the proficiency of the artists who made them, able to recreate that style in a way that was convincing.

Consideration of one example, a fragment of an *amphoriskos* in the Corning Museum of Art, allows us to think about both the sources of the imagery and its appropriation (plate 26). The vessel replicates, in minute scale, the form of a common type of amphora (Dressel 2–4), often used for shipping wine.<sup>57</sup> On the body, there is a partial scene of an Egyptian figure, wearing a Nubian wig, carrying an antelope or gazelle upon his shoulders. Partial remains of a second figure suggest that the scene continued around to the reverse side of the flask. As with the obsidian cups, the imagery derives from Egyptian funerary art. Similar



2 Egyptian scene, Wallpainting from the tomb of Ounsou from Luxor-Thebes, Egypt. New Kingdom, 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (1554–1305 BCE)

scenes, of attendants bringing gifts intended for the tomb's owner, are frequently found in New Kingdom tombs, such as the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty tomb of Ounsou in Thebes (fig. 2). Though we know little about how pattern-books circulated in antiquity, it is possible that tomb paintings like these served as models for Roman artists, especially if reproduced in outline or cartoon form that allowed artists to manipulate the details.<sup>58</sup> We know that Romans visited Egyptian tombs, on the basis of graffiti left behind by tourists marveling at what they saw.<sup>59</sup> Yet, accurate though this example appears, it too is inconceivable except as a Roman cultural product. Not only has the scene been adapted to a new medium, requiring carving of hard glass in exquisite detail, but also to a new scale, shrunk to miniscule proportions.

In these examples, the Egyptian style itself exerted agency, an ability to influence the responses of viewers and to shape their perceptions, in ways both subtle and obvious. First, the obvious. As luxury goods, these objects had value in several senses. Their monetary worth derived from their expensive materials and labor-intensive production. Goods like these would have been valuable in a commercial sense, whatever their design. But they also

possessed extra-pecuniary value. They were created to be used, as indicated by their traditional forms and shapes, and thus their »meaning« cannot be divorced from function.<sup>60</sup> The obsidian cups were to be employed at table, and the perfume vessel at an individual's toilette. The agency of the Egyptian style exerted itself in the disjunction between ordinary shape and extraordinary ornament. The novelty of the fictive style called to mind a culture known for its antiquity and unusual customs; the mundanity of shape anchored the objects in the real-world settings for which they were designed. Notably for the examples above, these social functions were crucial to the establishment and communication of status, both on an individual level (as the user anointed himself or herself with unguents, in the case of the *amphoriskos*) and on a communal level (as the user drank wine from a showy vessel, before the eyes of peers and subordinates).

The style also revealed itself as effective in other, less overt ways. Both examples feature miniaturization, the reproduction in small scale of images that were imposing in size in their original settings. This translation likely served to regularize, for the Roman eye, iconography that in the original context might have appeared confusing. Egyptian tombs often included figures of varying sizes in single scenes, a kind of social perspective that was intended to convey information about the relative importance of the subjects and their role in the narrative.<sup>61</sup> Yet the scale also forced the Roman viewer to approach and think about the object in certain ways. Rendered in painstaking detail, the motifs showcased the virtuosic skill of the artists, and, by implication, the expense required to employ them. Similarly, it emphasized the material of the pieces, which required first-hand examination to be fully appreciated.<sup>62</sup> Finally, miniatures also appealed to an emerging aesthetic for »the small« in the Roman domestic sphere, allowing patrons to own personal versions of famous sculptures, the better to appreciate them up close.<sup>63</sup> Here, then, the patron was able to own a little piece of an enormous province, to participate at once personally and at a remove in the creation of Rome's vast empire.

These examples, then, demonstrate how style predominantly, if not exclusively, can exert its own form of agency. They demonstrate through their form, composition, and size, how the confluence of costly material, high-quality artistry, and fashionable design create layers of meaning. The value of the paintings of Boscotrecase as a case study is that they allow us to look at this process in depth, within a secure archaeological context.

## **EGYPTIAN IMAGERY IN THE LIVED ENVIRONMENT: THE »BLACK ROOM« FROM CREATION TO RECEPTION**

Let us now return to Boscotrecase to reconsider its Egyptian scenes on several fronts: how the imagery was created; how it fit with contemporary tastes; and, finally, how use of the room and interpretations of its décor may have shifted over time. All three avenues move us away from reductive interpretations that treat the meaning of the frescos as static,

or which argue for top-down, politicized interpretations. Instead, a diachronic approach reveals how many different individuals interacted with and viewed the frescos over the period of roughly eight decades when they were on display.

As discussed above, at the time the frescos were painted, we can safely assume that the villa was an elite residence, commanding sweeping views of the coast, located in an area frequented by many elite families from Rome, who escaped the summer heat of the city and also enjoyed the revenue of their fields and vineyards. Sometime following 11–10 BCE, the owner of the villa at that time hired painters active throughout the region to decorate (or perhaps redecorate) the series of small bedrooms that opened onto the terrace. The team likely included a stuccoist, a master painter, and one or more painters working underneath him.<sup>64</sup> In their study of the villa, Christine Alexander and Peter von Blanckenhagen argued that at least two hands can be identified: the master, responsible for the mythological scenes and landscape paintings, and another painter responsible for the architectural frames, subsidiary details, and the Egyptian scenes.<sup>65</sup>

Looking to this artist's work beyond the *pinakes* of the »Black Room« reveals his method. All three *cubicula* included Egyptianizing details. There were small Egyptian-looking figures in the dado of room 19, and in the upper zone of room 16. Unlike in the »Black Room«, however, these figures were not focal points, but decorative filler rendered with quick, freehand strokes. Further, there is little variety among them. Many of the figures are lost, quite possibly now in private collections.<sup>66</sup> However, drawings of the figures commissioned by Della Corte at the time of excavation show that the artist reproduced figures in stock poses, varying only the details of dress and attribute (fig. 3). One of these figures appears to be a mirror-image iteration of the figure of Sobek from the »Black Room«. This suggests that the artist was neither creating the imagery whole-cloth nor basing it on precise models, but rather relying on a pattern-book that included figures in outline, a template easy to manipulate.<sup>67</sup> It is also notable that in the *pinakes*, in which his Egyptian figures are placed into a narrative scene, the painter abandoned the seemingly accurate »combined perspective«, for those elements were perhaps not features of the templates, including the animals and altars, which are rendered in more typical three-dimensional perspective. This underscores that the fictive Egyptian style was not natural to the artist, but was used deliberately. Atmosphere, not accuracy, was the point.

What was the role of these motifs within the entire decorative scheme of the room? As with the luxury goods discussed above, the style encouraged viewers to approach the room and its paintings in certain ways, some obvious and some subtle. First, this time, the subtle. Throughout the room, the artists played with both perspective and scale. Some elements of the décor, like the landscape paintings, were miniaturized and presented as if seen from above and afar, so that the shrines, the people worshipping there, and even the dedications put up to honor the gods were compressed into a frame so small that the viewer would necessarily have to approach the wall to inspect them. Even when considered head-on, these scenes are elusive, painted in a hazy, impressionistic manner that defies close inspec-





3 Small Egyptian-looking figure  
from the villa of Boscotrecase, Della  
Corte 1922, 9

tion.<sup>68</sup> In contrast, the tripods and the *pinakes* were realized in three dimensions, but stretched to almost monumental proportions. Though they represented real objects, they are so attenuated that they appear insubstantial, unable to bear their own weight (fig. 4). The Egyptian figures worshipping animals provided yet a third mode of perspective. Thus, as a formal composition, the room presented its viewers with several competing modes of representation and systems of scale. Yet the room could be read on another level, too, for this stylistic dissonance served to highlight a common theme. In different ways, these elements – the tripods, the *pinakes*, and the landscapes – relate to the act of veneration and reveal the world of the sanctuary. The landscapes depict worshippers in sacred settings, approaching the shrines that housed the gods; the *pinakes* and tripods represent gifts, given by worshippers to the gods.

As depictions of real-world objects, despite their unusual size, both the tripods and *pinakes* reflected the aesthetics of collection in the late Republic and early empire. Tripods were a popular motif in Roman frescos, where they symbolized both the act of dedication in sanctuaries and referred to the agonistic practice of elite competition, and also may have represented Greek antiques, taken from famous sites and brought to Rome.<sup>69</sup> Representations of *pinakes* in fresco, too, may often be understood as referring to votives taken as spolia from ancient Greek sanctuaries. The *pinakes* from the Augustan villa at Farnesina, for example, depict substantial monochrome paintings in gilded frames standing on sculpted



4 Tripod from the Black Room.  
Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale



5 Frescoed wall of the cubicle »B«, from the Villa della Farnesina

bases (fig. 5). The style of these »paintings within a painting« recalls that of fifth century Greek art.<sup>70</sup> Generally speaking, then, the representations of sacred furnishings from the »Black Room« exercised an appeal similar to that of depictions of statues in Roman painting. They gave the impression of the owner of the house as worldly, possessed of the ability to appreciate and possibly to own costly antiques.<sup>71</sup> The Egyptian style of these examples additionally created an association with luxury goods, like the obsidian cups and cameo glass discussed above, in which such imagery was often found.

On this view, the *pinakes* are meaningful not as isolated elements in the room's décor (whether they are understood to refer to Augustus' conquests, Agrippa's relationship with the imperial family, references to religious dedications, or anything else), but rather as part of a cohesive mural scheme. The artists responsible for painting the room and the patron who commissioned their labor selected a style that represented a stark change from those of earlier decades, forward-looking on many fronts at once, including color palette, the manipulation of scale and perspective, and the employment of deliberately foreign visual vocabulary. That the subject of these imaginary paintings was *itself* the act of veneration, however strange Romans thought animal worship was, underscores their suitability to the design as a whole.

Yet the story of the »Black Room« does not end here, for we should not presume that such meaning(s) never changed. The agency of artifacts entails not only an ability to act on observers, but an ability that grows and accumulates new or changed significance over time.<sup>72</sup> A more detailed look at the finds associated with the space explodes the notion that the room always functioned as a bedroom or sitting chamber for elite owners and their guests. The finds included several bronze vessels and utensils, including a lantern and candelabrum; a crystal pendant from a necklace; five amphorae; and, most intriguingly, an inscription written in charcoal on a piece of fallen plaster from another room in the villa.<sup>73</sup> The inscription is difficult to read, and mostly consists of numbers with two legible words: *a[c]cepi* »I accepted« and *pabu[la]* »fodder«. <sup>74</sup> This suggests an account related to the villa's agricultural production. In all, the finds suggest a space given over to storage. The room was likely chosen for this purpose not because of its decoration, but because it was closest of all the rooms along the terrace to the stairs that communicated with the productive quarter beyond.

We must not dismiss those people who used the space in its final years as viewers – indeed, the people who accumulated and stored goods in the space (perhaps slaves) and the person who wrote the account (perhaps a manager or overseer) are the only viewers for whom we have evidence. All others are, of necessity, theoretical constructs. The evidence adduced above against the argument that the villa belonged to Agrippa Postumus is again useful as testimony to the culture of the site and its residents during the later first century CE.<sup>75</sup> Many who frequented its grounds were possessed of some degree of literacy, including many who were almost certainly of lower or servile status. The graffiti they wrote on its walls reveal the villa to be a social space: a place of meeting and greeting; of work; of self-expression; and of play, where visitors or residents used the walls to showcase themselves as wordsmiths, offering impromptu lines of poetry or clever puns and jokes.<sup>76</sup> We can say with certainty that those who labored and lived in the »Black Room« in its final phase did not belong to the world of wealth and leisure that its décor was intended to evoke.<sup>77</sup> If anything, the collection in the room speaks to a system of valuation that prized the utilitarian, and kept broken objects because their materials were still of monetary worth.<sup>78</sup>

We can only speculate what the Egyptian-inspired motifs meant to those who encountered them in the villa's final phase. By the end of the first century, however, Egyptian-style

motifs like the *pinakes* were no longer as popular as before. They could still be found in houses in Pompeii where the so-called Third Style had not yet been repainted, as well as in garden paintings.<sup>79</sup> But those that drew on Pharaonic models had been eclipsed by new motifs in the private sphere, such as Nilotic landscapes, that explored different ideas about the relationship between the conquered territory and the capital. Pygmy landscapes depict the residents of Egypt as minute, living in remote landscapes populated by dangerous animals. Yet even as these scenes »othered« the residents of Egypt in some ways – rejecting the realities of life in the province in favor of a fantastical, ever-flooded world – they also celebrated its fecundity, its grain a gift to the people of Rome.<sup>80</sup> From the vantage point of this final generation of viewers at Boscotrecase, then, we can perhaps glimpse Egypt's agency in a stage of evolution: looking from the prestige of a novel motif, to its democratization, and even to its eventual devaluation.

## CONCLUSION

Generations of visitors to the Metropolitan Museum of Art have stood at the doorway to the »Black Room«, invited by the illusion that it presents a real space to imagine themselves as its ancient viewers. The Egyptian *pinakes* dominate the experience of the room. The landscapes, intended to be the focal points of the room, are small and the visitor is barred from the close scrutiny that would reveal their technical artistry up-close and first-hand. The tripods are missing. Their place on the walls is occupied instead by modern black panels that give the room an even darker aspect and which force the eye to the back wall, where the Egyptian scenes leap forth courtesy of their vivid palette. Responses to the space may be many: some might be encouraged by the Egyptian motifs to ponder Rome's geographical hegemony; others, spurred by the date on the placard, to recall dramatic stories of Julius Caesar, Anthony, Cleopatra, and Octavian (perhaps relying on Shakespeare more than Suetonius); still others, to think back to the museum's signature collection of Egyptian art, a short walk across the Great Hall. That the room itself is an illusion, its archaeological reality both more complicated and more mundane than it appears, is of little concern to viewers today, and perhaps rightly so. Period room displays are not intended to reflect scholarly understandings, but to pique the public's curiosity. Do we demand absolute accuracy of art aficionados, undergraduate students, and children on school trips, or is their engagement and genuine interest sufficient? Confronted with the »Black Room«, they are engaging with the biography of Egypt, themselves another link in the chain of its reception from antiquity to today.



## LOST IN TRANSLATION?

### ON »AEGYPTIACA« IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Dimitri Laboury and Marie Lekane

As is well known, the historiographic concept of »Middle Ages« belongs to cultural temporalities and represents a classic case of *a posteriori* cultural construct, looking backward in order to bridge – or emphasize – the gap between »classical« antiquity and »Renaissance« as the birth of the so-called modernity. But in the context of the reception of ancient Egypt and the history of »Aegyptiaca« in western traditions, it actually appears quite relevant. As Charles Burnett put it in the incipit of a fundamental article on the »Images of Ancient Egypt in the Latin Middle Ages«, »It is commonly thought that the Latin Middle Ages was a barren period for knowledge of and interest in Egypt – between the enthusiasms of the late Hellenistic Neoplatonists and the rediscovery of *Horapollo* and the *Corpus Hermeticum* in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.«<sup>1</sup> This new »intermediate period« for Egypt and pseudo *terra incognita* or – better – *deserta* has therefore indeed often been deserted or at least neglected by modern Egyptology and Ägyptenrezeption studies. In the latter's perspective and from the vantage point of the present book, it seems nevertheless very important to assess what did change and thus bridge the alleged gap between the perception of Egypt through its »Aegyptiaca« in the Greco-Roman era and its offspring in early modern times.

### VISUAL AND PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH »AEGYPTIACA«

With the conquest of Egypt by the Arab general 'Amr Ibn el-'As and his troops from 639 to 642 and the consequent collapse of Byzantine dominion over the country (despite many counterattacks), the rest of the ex-Greco-Roman world and the territories of future

Christian Europe lost direct physical and visual contact with ancient Egypt as a land, a culture and a monumental landscape and (re)source.<sup>2</sup> Hence it very quickly became extremely difficult to visit the country and its time-honored monuments as, for instance, Germanicus did in early 19, or, a century later, Emperor Adrian (in 117 and again in 129–130), as well as many of their fellow citizens who left graffiti on the lower part of the so-called »colossus of Memnon« (actually one of a pair of gigantic statues of pharaoh Amenhotep III, of the 14<sup>th</sup> c. BCE), substantiating the strong appeal – including on a touristic level – of such imposing pieces of statuary.<sup>3</sup> From a Eurocentric point of view, Egypt was then rejected to the borders of the – then shrunk – known world, to the alien.<sup>4</sup>

In terms of material culture and representation, of objects as supports, vessels and agents of cultural visualization, this historic and geopolitical seclusion of the land of Pharaohs dramatically – and for a long period of time – enhanced the impact and importance of *aegyptiaca romana*. Indeed, with actually very few – and rather insignificant – exceptions in early Modern Times, until the *Expédition de l'Égypte*, the only objects available to imagine or construct a visual representation of ancient Egypt in Europe for more than a millennium were those imported or created by the so-called Roman Egyptomania.<sup>5</sup> It is worth noticing here that the overwhelming majority of the genuine »Aegyptiaca« imported by Romans come from Lower Egypt (when it's not from Alexandria itself) and, maybe more importantly (though it is not without any link), date to what is usually designated as the Late Period of Egyptian history, or, for some of them, to the Ptolemaic era.<sup>6</sup> This selection seems to correspond to the most accessible pieces both in time and space;<sup>7</sup> but, because of the strong archaizing trends that characterized the evolution of ancient Egyptian art since the 25<sup>th</sup> dynasty (from the mid-8<sup>th</sup> c. BCE onward), it also promoted some sort of a caricatural vision of Pharaonic art. That this kind of archaeological and, hence, art-historical »filter« suited well Roman tastes or at least Roman expectations regarding the art of ancient Egypt – and thus also denotes a cultural »filter« – is strongly suggested by the fact that most of the imitations or recreations of Egyptian art made in Rome and its cultural world share exactly the same characteristics, the same over-Egyptian-ness, with, of course, diagnostic iconographic features (e.g. the *nemes*-headdress, *shendjyt*-loincloth, anthropo-zoomorphic hybridity, etc.), but also forms and morphological types playing – almost obsessively – on compacity and geometrism, and dark or variegated stones (such as granodiorite and greywacke, or granite and porphyry) or other similar materials. Such material properties, i.e. both style and materiality itself, define(d) those objects as some sort of an antithesis of Greek and Roman art of the time, a visual definition of Egypt as the embodiment of otherness or alterity, in line with the well-known logos of Herodotus about this culture (in which, according to the Greek »historian«, people »in most of their manners and customs, exactly reverse the common practice of mankind« [II, 35]). Roman artists and patrons were undoubtedly conscious of those different signs of artistic Egyptian-ness (iconography, style and materiality) for they obviously played with them according to the impression of otherness and the message they wanted to convey.<sup>8</sup>



Within the history of non-Egyptian »Aegyptiaca« or objects produced to look Egyptian-like, this properly material aspect or consideration, in addition to purely iconographic signs or markers, reveals itself as a quite specifically Roman innovation – or at least characteristic – when compared with earlier forms and manifestations of the adoption of Egyptian style in the Levant and Mesopotamia. This is undoubtedly related to the aesthetic contrast that was perceived between this so old and exotic art of ancient Egypt and classical and post-classical artistic tradition and developments in the Roman sphere.<sup>9</sup> And in this sense, there seems to be an evolution toward an increasing – felt – distance (nevertheless, as always, source of attraction), from the appropriation of or assimilation to the Pharaonic model by Near-Eastern rulers of the Bronze Age through the production of an Egyptian-like material and visual culture, to the contrastive vision of Egyptian art as the materialization of – tamed and integrated – otherness in Roman and post-classic perception, and, after that, the alienness of remote – in space, time, but also cultural representation – pagan Egypt in medieval monotheisms, i. e. in Christianity, but also in Islam and Judaism, as we will see here below.

As a matter of fact, this caricatural projection of ancient Egyptian art filtered through Roman approach to Pharaonic Egypt and its material culture was to have, with the transition from antiquity to Middle Ages, a strong and long-lasting effect on subsequent periods of European history, up until Johann Joachim Winckelmann and the vision he promoted about this art in his so influential *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1764), and, for some aspects, even until today.<sup>10</sup>

## THE MULTIPLICATION OF DISCOURSES ABOUT ANCIENT EGYPT

As Charles Burnett, again, perfectly summarizes, in the Latin Middle Ages, »the information and legends concerning Egypt in preceding centuries were sufficiently rich to allow us to say that images of that civilization remained alive and creative. This richness was a combination of the motifs that were inherited from classical sources with those taken from Hebrew sacred history, to which were added the direct experiences of travellers to the Orient, and, from the late 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the texts and the images of the Arabs.«<sup>11</sup> Because of this cultural – or actually cross-cultural – situation, the sources and discourses about ancient Egypt indeed became – even more – polymorph, diverse and sometimes contradictory, for they could aim at opposite objectives. Among the most important and significant ones, one certainly has to pinpoint:

1. The Christian Bible narratives that set some crucial events of the Old and New Testaments in Egypt, as »the house of slavery« in the Exodus, on the one hand, but also, on the other hand, as a shelter or the cradle that allowed and led to the revelation of both Moses and Jesus Christ, or, to use the felicitous expression of Jan Assmann, as the past of Israel and, hence, of the Christian world.<sup>12</sup>

2. The vision of Early Church Fathers, rejecting ancient Egypt as the epitome of *daemones* idolatry.<sup>13</sup>
3. Pharaonic survivals through Coptic beliefs and practices, variably understood and even identified, since ancient Egyptian paganism was quite violently discarded.<sup>14</sup>
4. Classical sources, which broadly conveyed a more positive appraisal, with the recurrent idea of Egypt as the other *par excellence*.
5. An esoteric approach of ancient Egypt as the paragon – if not the actual source – of pagan but nonetheless respectable wisdom, including astronomy, astrology, arts, medicine, alchemy but also magics, building on classical, biblical and hermetic traditions, with Hermes Trismegistus, the »Moses aegyptiacus«, as a central figure, who defined his homeland as »the temple of the whole world«.<sup>15</sup>
6. The Islamic look on ancient Egypt, mixing and often reinterpreting the aforementioned sources and discourses, complemented by a direct contact with the land and its monuments and enhancing their esoteric and mysterious aura.<sup>16</sup>

Without even mentioning popular traditions, such as the ones on the »Gypsies«, these various scholarly interpretations of ancient Egypt created an extremely diversified but also ambiguous vision of Pharaonic culture and its monuments. And Burnett to conclude:

»The medieval west received different images of Ancient Egypt, depending to a large extent on the status and profession of the recipient. For the common people the predominant image of Egypt would have been as the antithesis of Israel and the epitome of idol-worship. For the scholar educated in classical literature, it was a land of myths and exotic gods, that provided a rich fund of metaphors. For the doctor, it was the source of medicines – including the *mumia* from preserved corpses – and the land of Cleopatra, whose beauty had qualified her to write on women's cosmetics. For the philosopher and theologian, it was the home of Hermes Trismegistus, who, although a pagan, had a profound understanding of the nature of gods and men [...]. For the magician and alchemist, it was a land of wonders, and the fount and conduit of ancient wisdom. Most of these images were based on classical, biblical and Arabic sources, and first-hand experience of Egypt and its monuments had, to all appearances, little effect. In this respect the period of the Middle Ages in the west could be said to differ not only from the periods that preceded and followed, but also from the contemporary Arabic situation. Nevertheless, the images of Ancient Egypt formed a significant part of western medieval culture, and deserve to be taken into account.«<sup>17</sup>

This complex situation inevitably engendered a lot of misunderstandings and misconstructions about ancient Egyptian monuments and the culture that created them. A very well-known example is the identification of the great pyramids of Giza as the granaries of Joseph referred to in the *Genesis*, a conception that can be traced back at least to the end of

the fourth century, with, among others sources, the Spanish nun Egeria, who, on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, visited Egypt in the winter 381–382, i.e. a little bit more than a decade before the last preserved dated hieroglyphic inscription, in the name of a certain Nesmeterakhem, in the temple of Philae, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 394, so at a time when the ancient Egyptian culture was clearly not already completely lost or forgotten.<sup>18</sup> But the Christian reading filter, what could be called the *interpretatio christiana*, was obviously much stronger.

Furthermore, in such a context, one may assume that, just like in the Renaissance, the depth and subtlety of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of »Aegyptiaca« could be extremely variable depending on the educational level of the beholder. So, for instance, the Italian multi-talented artist Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472), archetype – and inventor – of the concept of the *pictor doctus* in Florence of the Quattrocento, gathered so much information about ancient Egyptian culture and monuments through his reading of classical authors that he was able to write on pharaonic construction techniques (not without some mistakes), hieroglyphic writing, statues of Ramses or Sesostris, and refer to Kheops and Mykerinos as authors of Giza pyramids, but such was clearly not the case for most – if not any other – of his contemporaries. A century later, the scholar painter Lambert Lombard (1505/6–1566) in Liège, who had an unusual interest in ancient Egypt, identified as an Egyptian object a broken statue of the goddess Sekhmet that he saw in Rome, in 1537–1538, in the collection of Cardinal Cesi, and graphically restored it with typically pharaonic iconographic elements; but, again, he was certainly one of the very few who had the required knowledge to do so to the North of Italy in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>19</sup> Because of the physical and visual rupture with Egypt, whose understanding and representation then relied almost exclusively on very diversified textual sources, this must have been quite the same in Medieval Europe, engendering a multitude of more or less individualized visions, that makes any general attempt to build a broader picture very difficult, almost impossible.

## **THE ISSUE OF THE LOSS OF STYLE:**

### **»EKPHRASIS« AND STYLISTIC TRANSLATION**

The very nature of the material used in the Middle Ages to keep a memory of ancient Egypt and construct a cultural representation of it, a fundamentally – and almost exclusively – textual material, implied a significant – and, within the history recounted in the present book, an unusual – reduction of the agentive power of »Aegyptiaca« as objects and images, engendering a nearly complete loss of the so characteristic style of ancient Egyptian art.<sup>20</sup> Once again, the phenomenon can be easily illustrated by later parallels. This is the case, for instance, of the so-called neo-hieroglyphs, created in the Renaissance on the basis of purely textual references and devoid of any feature that would visually connect them with true ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs or imagery, until scholars involved in their study and produc-

tion decided to consider the shape and style of actual writing characters on »Aegyptiaca« excavated from the archaeological ground of Rome, usually more than a century earlier.<sup>21</sup> And the same stylistic rupture applies to the depictions of Isis in the Osiris cycle painted by Bernardino di Betto, d. Il Pinturricchio (1454–1513), and his workshop in the Borgia apartments of the Vatican, around 1492–1494,<sup>22</sup> or in the various illustrated versions of the *De claris mulieribus* (1361–1362) of Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375). So, clearly, the use of *ekphras(e)is*, i.e. textual description(s), of images or motifs in order to recreate them without any further support of a visual nature induces a loss of style, or at least a serious danger of it, and hence a translation of the depicted theme into another style. But the phenomenon is actually a little bit more complex, for it may involve and combine conscious as well as unconscious stimuli.

## THE FILTERING PERCEPTION OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MONUMENTS

First of all, as cognitive sciences have now perfectly established, we look less with our eyes that with our brain, since the latter interprets what we can see and even determines what is relevant to our eyes and perception, directing the selection of visual information made through them. For this reason, there is an inextricable link between training or experience and visual perception.<sup>23</sup> The history of »Aegyptiaca« in Western tradition provides us with excellent examples of this unavoidable cognitive fact. For instance, although the draughtsmen of the *Expédition de l'Égypte* copied pharaonic monuments *in situ* and *de visu*, because of their own artistic education and probably under the influence of the vision of ancient Egyptian art promoted by Winckelmann, they very often produced drawing records stylistically contaminated by classical imagery.<sup>24</sup> The same holds true for some Roman copies of genuine »Aegyptiaca«, such as the so-called *Obelisco Sallustiano*, a duplicate of the Heliopolitan obelisk of Seti I and Ramesses II (re-)erected on the orders of Emperor Augustus on the spina of the *Circus Maximus* in Rome in 10 BCE, and now in the centre of the Piazza del Popolo (*Obelisco Flaminio*). The style of its decoration, especially when compared to the original Ramesside model, is to the eyes – and visual brain – of an Egyptologist very awkward, to say the least, revealing a sculptor who certainly did not understand all of what he was copying (fig. 1).<sup>25</sup> So copying is always an interpretation and the faithfulness of the copy – especially on a stylistic level – inevitably depends on the copyist's knowledge and understanding of the model and its cultural context.<sup>26</sup> Without any possible doubt, a medieval artist who would have wished to copy »Aegyptiaca« could not escape from this cognitive rule. But what if the goal were not a copy, but, instead, an inspiration or creative borrowing, an allusion, a reinterpretation, or any other intericonic option?

In the context of art history and the history of the discipline, this inescapably reminds the real aims of the seminal *Studies in Iconology* of Erwin Panofsky, who wanted to promote an analytical dissociation of form and content, a methodological posture that led him to the



1 Lower part of the southern side of the *Obelisco Sallustiano*, a Roman copy of the *Obelisco Flaminio* (the shaded part is an early Modern restoration), now in front of the Trinita dei Monti, in Rome

conclusion of a fundamental distinction to be made between Middle Ages and Renaissance iconographical practices toward the art(s) of antiquity, differentiating the re-use of form with another meaning and the re-use of theme with another form. And in this respect, it is worth referring to one of Panofsky's friends and exact contemporary, Erich Auerbach, and his most important book: *Mimesis. The representation of reality in western literature*.<sup>27</sup> In this brilliant study, E. Auerbach suggested to designate »the view of reality expressed in the Christian works of late antiquity and the Middle Ages« as »figural« (a use derived from his »investigation of the semantic history of the word *figura*«), with the following explanation: »In this conception, an occurrence on earth signifies not only itself but at the same time

another, which it predicts or confirms, without prejudice to the power of its concrete reality here and now.<sup>28</sup> His interpretation is perfectly well substantiated by the discourses – and debates – about time and God’s vision of it throughout the Middle Ages up until the early Modern Times.<sup>29</sup> As Augustine summarized, »for God, nothing is absent, neither the past nor the future, but everything is present to God«, so that his sight encompasses and merges past, present and future at the same time, in his divine eternity.<sup>30</sup> Of course, what Auerbach designated as the »figural« representation of reality is meant to reproduce, just like the figurative arts of the time, the vantage point of Heaven. This is why in the imagery of the Middle Ages, Roman soldiers at the Crucifixion are portrayed like contemporary knights, the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh’s daughter in Santa Maria Maggiore’s mosaics (made between 432 and 440 CE) looks like a scene that is taking place at the imperial court of Theodosius II in the mid-fifth century, or Joseph giving his instructions to store grains in the pyramidal granaries built under his command for the king of Egypt appears as a medieval lord in the decoration of the narthex of the Basilica of San Marco in Venice, around 1240.<sup>31</sup>

So, to sum up the artistic context and its determining factors: with, firstly, the almost total inaccessibility of Egyptian monumental landscape from the middle of the seventh century onward, except for the already imported and quite specific *aegyptiaca romana*, secondly, the Christian broad rejection of pagan past, notably embodied by ancient Egyptian polytheism and idolatry, thirdly, the fundamentally thematic and hence textual references to this culture through the principle of the *ekphrasis*, engendering a severe neutralization of the agency of »Aegyptiaca« in general, and, fourthly, to use Auerbach’s vocabulary, the »figural« conception of the depiction of the past into the – eternal – present (or the neutralization of time), it is definitely no surprise that the Middle Ages, in addition to »freezing« the rather caricatural Roman vision of ancient Egyptian art for a very long period of time, did not produce many objects that express stylistically or materially a distinctively ancient Egyptian-ness. There is nevertheless one notable exception that needs to be mentioned and examined in this contribution. Though apparently quite unique, it suffices to show that, at least in and around Rome, where quite a number of »Aegyptiaca« archaeologically survived throughout the medieval period.<sup>32</sup> it was still possible to have access to plainly Egyptian models, identifiable as such – a fact that also confirms the intentionality of the otherwise general avoidance of the use of the Egyptian style or of the various artistic signs of Egyptian-ness in the rest of the Middle Ages, and especially in the vicinity and cultural sphere of Rome.

## AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE STUDY: THE EGYPTIAN-LOOKING SPHINXES AND LIONS OF THE »ARTE COSMATESCA« IN ROME OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

As Anne Roullet perfectly recounts, in the eternal city of Rome:

»The 12<sup>th</sup> century displayed an increasing interest in antiquities and the *Mirabilia* of the time« (i.e. lists or guidebooks describing the wonders for pilgrims and travellers to visit) »emphatically stress the pagan monuments of the city. This was the result of both political and cultural trends, leading to a pre-Renaissance, a »*Renovatio Romae*«. The Marcus-Aurelius column was restored, statues were moved around, tombs were excavated. [...] The most remarkable illustration of this pre-Renaissance survives in the works of the Cosmati, a group of marble-cutters established at Rome in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and working on the materials and models provided by the ruins of the ancient city. Most of the churches, built or restored in and around Rome during this time, were decorated by the Cosmati.«<sup>33</sup>

Within their vast antiquity-oriented production, the so-called Cosmati workshop(s) (actually a group of families, but also individuals, involved in marble and mosaic work gathered under this designation by modern scholarship on the basis of their stylistic consistency)<sup>34</sup> created a series of sphinxes and lions definitely inspired by Roman »Aegyptiaca« – a series that has already elicited a certain amount of interest and research, notably by Karl Noehles, and more recently by Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi and Manuella Gianandrea.<sup>35</sup> Thirteen statues or groups of statues, usually in pairs, have been recorded as belonging to this category, and among them, four can be securely attributed on an epigraphic basis to a prominent family of sculptors, who named themselves »Vassal(l)ectus« (»Bassallectus«) or »Vassallet(t)o«, and seem to have played a major role in the conception, production and diffusion of those statue types.<sup>36</sup>

The Egyptian-ness of these sculptures, even if they are made of local marble, is plainly detectable and the allusion, or at least their otherness, was very likely also quite explicit for medieval beholders. First of all, they adopt and display the typical posture of the recumbent feline creatures of ancient Egyptian art (figs. 2–6), which stands in neat contrast with the more varied attitudes given to lions and sphinxes in artistic traditions of the Middle Ages, often less static or simply standing (sometimes on their forepaws), and with iconographic details, such as wings for the sphinxes, that connect them with Greek or Near-Eastern prototypes.<sup>37</sup> The stylistic treatment of the animal's anatomy, with a flat, vertical and very geometrical chest, clearly marked ribs, sharp-edged skin-folds at the junctions of the limbs to the body, and an overall very symmetrical composition of the latter, equally points to the millenary uses of the art of ancient Egypt. As Anne Roullet perfectly noted, the »rounded ›beard‹ for a mane, the drooping ears and eyebrows, the highly accentuated chin and the



2 Head of lion statues of the *arte cosmatesca* in the Cathedrals of Anagni and Ferentino, and in San Lorenzo fuori le mura, in Rome

rounded profile are all characteristic of Egyptian lions and of their Cosmati copies.<sup>38</sup> As for the sphinxes, with but one exception (the Viterbo piece, discussed below, plate 27), they systematically wear the distinctive *nemes*-headgear, or, to be more precise, a more or less faithful – or, rather, fanciful – Cosmatesque reinterpretation of it.

Regarding their sources of inspiration, as all previous commentators highlighted, the Egyptian-looking lions of the *arte cosmatesca* are clearly derived from ancient prototypes, late Egyptian ones or Roman imitations, still visible in medieval Rome.<sup>39</sup> In some cases, it is even possible to follow the precise transformation from the model to its »copy«. Among the *aegyptiaca romana* that made their way in the monumental landscape of the City throughout the Middle Ages, the pair of lions of Nectanebo I appears exceptional – and seems to have been perceived as such – because of their unusual pose (slightly lying on one side, with the head turned at right angle, the paws crossed on one another, and the tale down along the base and not raised on the hindquarters), but also of their reinstallation, from the Iseum Campense, to the front of the Pantheon of Agrippa, at the latest in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>40</sup> As Anne Roullet explains:

»A close copy of this type of lion was executed by one of the Cosmati for a church near the old Iseum Campense and the Pantheon, SS. Apostoli. Under the porch, on the right hand side, there lies a lion, badly damaged: unmistakable details, nevertheless, point to an affiliation with the Pantheon models. [...] The head, with its characteristic round »beard«, is at right angles to the axis of the body; [...] the tail runs along the base and, on the space left free on this base, in place of the hieroglyphs on the model, the sculptor has engraved his own signature: *BASSALLECTVS*.«<sup>41</sup>





3 Egyptianizing lion statue in marble in the entrance of Santi Apostoli, c. 1220, compared to one of its prototypes, in granodiorite, now in the Museo Gregoriano of the Vatican, Rome (380–362 BCE)

Similitudes or points of convergence are indeed unmistakable (see fig. 3); but so are the differences, such as the position of both pairs of paws, uncrossed and parallel to the body, like more »classical« Egyptian lions and sphinxes, or the rendering of the fur of the mane, rather in line with medieval stylistic habits of the time. So, this is by no means a faithful, uninspired and slavish duplication; the »Bassallectus« lion is, to the contrary, a definitely



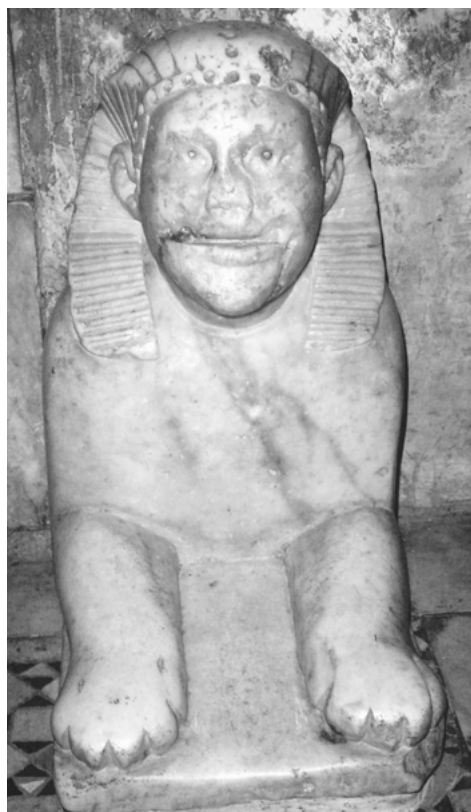
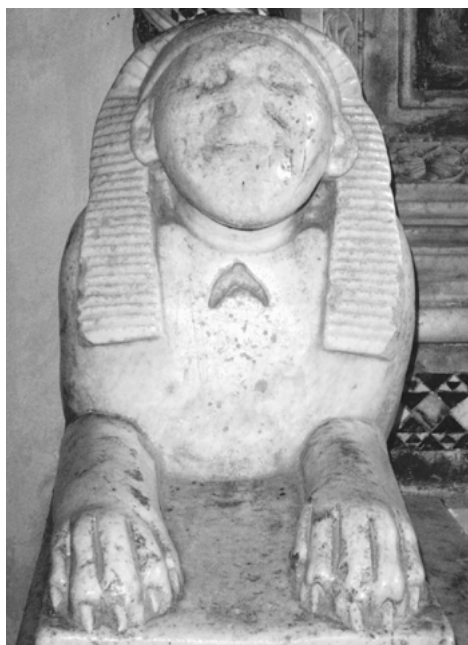
4 Columniferous protome of a lion statue of the *arte cosmatesca* protecting a baby, in the porch of San Lorenzo in Lucina, Rome

creative copy, inspired from Nectanebo's prototypes through an intericonical process of creative borrowing. And the same holds true for the statues of the lions' portal at San Lorenzo in Lucina, whose pose and stylistic treatment again undoubtedly remind the felines of ancient Egyptian art, though with an adaptation in order to depict them as protectors of babies (or the young Christ?), with the figure of an infant between their forepaws (see fig. 4), on the model of an iconographic formula also attested in a similar porch of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura.<sup>42</sup>

As for the prototypes of the so-called Cosmatesque sphinxes, Brian Curran wrote: »Since the sources do not mention any sphinxes in Rome before the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, the specific models for these 13<sup>th</sup> century creations cannot be identified with certainty. But it seems likely, given their repeated appearance in pairs, that they were inspired by a pair of antique sphinxes like the ones installed on the Campidoglio in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.«<sup>43</sup> Anne Roullet was more optimistic when she – rightly – noted that »from the copies, one can define the originals. The sphinxes used as models were some of the many late Egyptian ones brought

to Rome or copied during the Roman Empire. Most of them had the enigmatic smile characteristic of that period. The Cosmati made this into a broad smile and introduced wrinkles of laughter around the eyes« (see figs. 5–6).<sup>44</sup> Addressing the issue, Manuella Gianandrea gathered some serious clues on the accessibility to ancient sphinxes in the abandoned – and plundered – pagan temples of Rome during the Middle Ages and pointed out that the famous statue of the allegory of river Nile, known for sure in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, is leaning on a sphinx, Roman symbol of ancient Egypt.<sup>45</sup> In any case, different sources might have been and were probably combined since many of those pairs of marble sphinxes of the 13<sup>th</sup> century are actually also recreations or reinterpretations of Roman »Aegyptiaca«. This is plain to see, for instance, on the sphinxes of the cloisters of San Giovanni in Laterano, whose *nemes*-headdress has been re-designed in the so-called Cosmati style, with alignments of carved dots between two lines or incised motifs structured around small drilled holes, echoing mosaic effects (see fig. 6). Besides, and even more strikingly, one has a large – and absolutely un-Egyptian – beard and a serious expression while his mate is devoid of any pilosity – except for the eyebrows – and seems to smile or even laugh. According to Anne Rouillet: »Together they form the first example of a pair of male and female Egyptianizing sphinxes, a theme definitely non-Egyptian, but which was to develop steadily from the Renaissance onwards.«<sup>46</sup> Another patent invention by creative borrowing from Egyptian or Egyptianizing sphinxes is the weird and unique sphinx of Viterbo, signed – again – on the side of the basis by »Fr. Paschalis romanus«, along with the date of 1286 (plate 27).<sup>47</sup> Its posture is clearly inspired from »Aegyptiaca«, though the rendering of the anatomy has been largely reinterpreted in a more medieval manner, with a belly detached from the basis and a more naturalistic treatment of the hairs at the tip of the tale or under the forepaws, but also a rather awkward understanding of some Egyptian artistic formulae, such as the position and dimensions of the articulated elements of the limbs or the skin-folds that connect the latter to the rest of the body. Yet, again, the most innovative and astonishing feature is the head, without any *nemes* but, instead, a bandeau holding long curled human hair on the back of the animal, and displaying an enigmatic face with once more an open mouth, that was certainly meaningful for a local audience,<sup>48</sup> but completely alien to ancient Egyptian art. That those creations had a strong agency on patrons, artists and beholders of the time is demonstrated by this sole sphinx, which seems to be the last – datable – one of the series, obviously alluding to earlier *aegyptiaca cosmatesca*, many of them issued two generations before.<sup>49</sup>

But what was the meaning of these appropriations of Egyptian style? As Brian Curran put forward, »Whatever their sources [...], it seems that these creatures were intended to lend an atmosphere of antiquity and imperial – and possibly pagan – power to these »modern« constructions.«<sup>50</sup> Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi went a step further, arguing that some Egyptian (or one could call it Egyptological) knowledge might have been transmitted to medieval Europe, notably through the Copts, and could account for the creation and use of those Egyptian-looking lions and sphinxes.<sup>51</sup> All scholars who discussed these statues agree



5 Front view of sphinxes of the *arte cosmatesca* in the Cathedrals of Civita Castellana, Ferentino and Anagni, and in Sant'Antonio Abate all'Esquilino, in Rome



6 Side and front views of the sphinxes of the southern aisle of the cloisters of San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome, made by two Vassalletti, 1215–1232

on the fact that they were used in a manner consistent with ancient Egyptian art since they often appear in pairs, as guardians of passageways leading to places endowed with sacredness, such as a church, the sacristy, a presbyteral enclosure, cloisters or sepulchers, or as adornments on the sides of a throne, in the case of the famous episcopal throne of the cathedral of Anagni (see fig. 2, left lion).<sup>52</sup> However, as is well-known, this functional usage of feline sculptures, though nowadays still strongly evocative of pharaonic culture, is actu-

ally far from being exclusively Egyptian and, in a certain way, had already been integrated in Christian display long before *arte cosmatesca*. Hence these kinds of dispositions certainly constitute an interesting clue regarding the models that might have inspired the so-called Cosmati sculptors but it does not suffice to allow us to conclude positively on their understanding of the Egyptian-ness of these models. Other elements may nevertheless be added to the inquiry. First of all, as a premise, we have to keep in mind the socio-educational level of these artists: they were obviously renowned in their time, to the point that they could sign their own work,<sup>53</sup> and known as *magistri doctissimi romani*, i.e. they were recognized as experts *es antiquities* and developed their own artistic identity on this self-definition, as continuators and emulators of the arts of antiquity.<sup>54</sup> In this perspective, the signature of »Bassallectus« on the side of the base of the lion statue of Santi Apostoli, just below the turned head of the animal looking face to face at the beholder and in front of the feline's tail around the base, i.e. exactly at the same position as the royal titulary on the lions of Nectanebo I (see fig. 3), shows without any possible doubt that our inspired sculptor (probably to be identified with the so-called Vassalletto III in nowadays Cosmati studies) could not have missed the presence of those hieroglyphs on this genuine Egyptian prototype.<sup>55</sup> Considering his status as a scholar sculptor, we may quite confidently assume that he knew something about this »writing of birds« and was very likely able to connect it to ancient Egypt.<sup>56</sup> A similar reasoning applies about the sphinx iconographically associated to the gigantic river Nile statue on which Manuela Gianandrea has drawn attention in her study of *aegyptiaca cosmatesca*, highlighting that it was accessible and known since the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>57</sup> The association of the river Nile and the sphinx was probably unavoidable for a learned mind of the Middle Ages. Therefore, the very materiality of *aegyptiaca romana* used as sources of inspiration by Roman sculptors of the 13<sup>th</sup> century must in all likelihood have induced the acknowledgement of their Egyptian nature and origin (or point of reference).

Still in terms of agentivity, it is also very important to notice that these new »Aegyptiaca«, thus most probably recognized as such (at least by their producers and commissioning authorities) and, in any case, utilized in a functional setting in line with ancient Egyptian art uses, were significantly integrated into a Christian discourse and staging. The sacredness they seem to protect is of course always Christian. Furthermore, if some of them were adapted to signify the specific safe keeping of babies (or the Christ child; see fig. 4), the majority of the *aegyptiaca cosmatesca* are symptomatically columniferous.<sup>58</sup> They have been used in a composition in order to support a column, a symbol that has a long history in the discourse about the victory of Christianity over paganism and was undoubtedly very meaningful for a Christian medieval audience (fig. 7), especially in Rome, where this tradition of the column of victory was still well attested and visible in monuments of Roman times.<sup>59</sup> And, as a matter of fact, they generated a new and very productive iconographic tradition of Egyptian or Egypt-connected animals supporting a column or a similar object, from the obeliscoferous elephant of the *Hypnerotomachia Polifili* (first printed edition in 1499 in Venice), materialized by Gian Lorenzo Bernini and his assistant Ercole Ferrata in their sculpture incorpo-



7 Depiction of the Christ stepping on a lion and an evil dragoon as an illustration of the iconographic type of the triumphant Christ-column, at Amiens Cathedral, c. 1225

rating a genuine ancient Egyptian obelisk in the name of king Apries (589–570 BCE) in the middle of the Piazza della Minerva in Rome (just next to the site of the Iseum Campense), in 1667, to the *Fontaine des éléphants*, made by the French sculptor Victor Sappey in 1838, in Chambéry, France, to commemorate the victories of general Benoît de Boigne.<sup>60</sup>

So, to conclude, in spite of very constraining negative circumstances, it seems that »Aegyptiaca« and the Egyptian style were not completely lost in the artistic translation of the past that characterizes the Middle Ages, at least for some enlightened minds of the time, who had the opportunity of keeping a visual contact with those Egyptian or Egyptian-looking objects.





## PERICULOSAE PLENUM OPUS ALEAE

### THE »MENSA ISIACA«, LORENZO PIGNORIA AND THE PERILS OF CULTURAL TRANSLATION

Peter Mason

Egypt and America came together in the year 1724 in at least two places: in Zacatecas, the third city of importance in New Spain (Mexico), where an obelisk of Kircherian inspiration was erected to mark the coronation of Luís I of Spain; and in Paris with the publication of the ambitious cross-cultural comparisons contained in *Moeurs des sauvages américains, comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps* by Joseph François Lafitau, a Jesuit who had spent five years in Canada among the Algonquin, Huron and Iroquois.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the forty-one plates in Lafitau's two volumes display a binary structure, in which artefacts from the New World and artefacts from the Old World are compared and contrasted. For instance, the eighth plate depicts »the musical instruments of the first times, compared with those of the Americans«, where the reader can observe an Egyptian rattle of Anubis, a Brazilian *maraka*, and a North American *chichikoué*, as well as a comparison of the North American tortoise shell with the lyre of the Greek god Apollo.<sup>2</sup>

This idea of a mutual translatability between the Old World and the New can be found long before Lafitau. That it was not without its perils is shown by a passage in the *Descripción geográfica de la América setentrional* (Mexico, 1674), in which the historian of the Dominican Order in Mexico fray Francisco de Burgoa expressed his displeasure at the translations of many edifying spiritual works into Mixtec, one of the native languages of Oaxaca, because of their introduction of »improper language in the explanation of some mysteries«. As a member of the Spanish Inquisition, he was bound to order these translations not to be used in order to avoid lending credibility to traditional native religious beliefs. In this connection he singles out for special mention a translation of the *Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* by Apuleius.<sup>3</sup> It is unlikely that the unidentified translator had translated the explicitly

pornographic passages in this racy second century Latin novel, but it was above all the final book of the work that aroused interest and fray Francisco's ire because of its description of the process of initiation into the mysteries of the goddess Isis.

There was nothing new about the idea of translating works from the Old World for consumption in the New. For instance, the animal fables attributed to the Phrygian slave Aesop were among the works translated into Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec empire, around the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> Still, Aesop's fables were tales with a moral message; the string of stories narrated by Apuleius are decidedly amoral and immoral. Yet although the idea that Apuleius in translation could possibly further missionary activities in New Spain might seem as strange to us today as it did to fray Francisco, the unidentified translator was not the only one to imagine that knowledge of the world of antiquity might be useful in conveying knowledge of the true faith to the unenlightened.

Another personality from the 17<sup>th</sup> century who engaged in comparison between an ancient culture – that of Egypt – and the native cultures of the Americas is Lorenzo Pignoria, who faced the task of explaining the images and signs depicted on an object known today as the Mensa Isiaca. Unlike Nicolas Caussin, Athanasius Kircher and others who subsequently proposed bold decipherments of the Egyptian hieroglyphs – though ultimately all rendered redundant by Champollion's deciphering of the Rosetta Stone in 1822 – Lorenzo Pignoria (1571–1631) adopted a cautious if not sceptical position. Perhaps this down-to-earth approach is due to the fact that, like Peiresc, Cassiano dal Pozzo, Francesco Gualdi and many other antiquaries of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Pignoria had probably first come into contact with the classical world through the study of Roman law.<sup>5</sup> He was able to examine the monuments of antiquity at first hand in Rome during his two years there in 1605–1606, and he was the owner of a large collection in Padua, which included paintings and prints, portraits of famous men, statues, coins, seals, ancient utensils, units of weight and measure, keys, clasps, rings, lamps, amulets, shells, stones, crystals and exotic objects from India and China.<sup>6</sup> Collections of small items of this kind were especially popular at the time for the light that they could throw on everyday Roman life.<sup>7</sup> Some idea of that collection can be obtained from the description of the museum and library of Pignoria by Jacobo Filippo Tomasini.<sup>8</sup> Since that inventory is by no means complete, however, it would be rash to conclude that it was not a *Kunst- und Wunderkammer*, as Pomian has done.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, items in the inventory such as »conchyliorum variæ species, in quibus multa lapidea naturæ lusu«, »exotica non pauca, veluti legumina ex India« and »chartæ et sericum ex regione Sinarum« suggest that typical *Wunderkammer* elements were not lacking either, and this supposition is confirmed by the definition of the museum given by Tomasini: »Amphitheatridium artis & naturæ unico conclavi concluditur«. <sup>10</sup> At any rate, it is clear that his interest lay in the study of material objects rather than in the pursuit of abstract and abstruse theories.<sup>11</sup>

The implicit contrast here is, of course, with the famous polymath Athanasius Kircher. The latter was certainly interested in material artefacts: when he visited Peiresc in Avignon in the 1630s he was given some (no longer identifiable) items for his collection in Rome by

the French scholar. The fragmentation of that collection in 1913 makes it very difficult to reconstitute its precise composition, but references in the text of Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* indicate that it contained at least a fragment of a clepsydra and the torso of a magical statue.<sup>12</sup>

Particularly relevant for present purposes are the Jesuit's exchanges with correspondents in New Spain.<sup>13</sup> From Puebla de los Ángeles, the second most important city in Mexico – an obelisk dedicated to Carlos III was erected beside the fountain of San Miguel in the Plaza Mayor in 1763 –,<sup>14</sup> the *criollo* priest Alejandro Favián sent Kircher chocolate, precious metals, items of featherwork craftsmanship,<sup>15</sup> and tableware made from local onyx (*tecali*). The painted gourd listed in the catalogue of the Kircherianum may have been a present from Favián, and as he mentions in a letter his intention of sending examples of local fauna and flora, it is possible that Favián may also have been responsible for the presence of the armadillo and iguana mentioned in the same catalogue.<sup>16</sup> Another likely source of *americana* for the incipient collection in the Collegio Romano is the Chilean Jesuit Alonso de Ovalle (1603–1651).<sup>17</sup> Both he and Kircher were in Rome for the Eighth General Congregation of the Company of Jesus (1645–1646), and Kircher mentions their meeting in his *Mundus subterraneus*.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps the large bezoar (weighing thirty-two ounces) of a South American guanaco, which Ovalle compared for its intricate structure to the work of a woodturner, entered Kircher's collection on such an occasion.<sup>19</sup>

Nevertheless, in spite of the complementarity of Kircher's writings and the material objects in the Kircherianum, the latter were subservient to the grand intellectual and speculative design of the former. Kircher offered a comprehensive interpretation of the Mensa Isiaca that attempted to account for every detail in it; that his ambitious interpretation lacked a foundation in Egyptian archaeology was beside the point. Pignoria, on the other hand, was much more circumspect and may be said to have displayed a greater interest in material culture as such, even though, as we shall see, it too was deployed within the context of a comparative method that was entirely in line with the cultural horizons of his time.

## **THE MATERIAL OBJECT: A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF COLLECTIONS**

The Mensa Isiaca, a bronze tablet measuring 128 × 75 cm and inlaid with silver and niello, shows a repetitive series of scenes of offerings to Egyptian deities (plate 28). It was found in Rome during or soon after the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, neither the exact date of discovery nor the process by which the Mensa Isiaca itself came into the hands of Cardinal Pietro Bembo is unambiguous. Pignoria himself wavered between two versions: either it had been given to Bembo by Pope Paul III, or Bembo had purchased it from a smith in Rome who had acquired it after the sack of Rome.<sup>20</sup> The former would therefore place the date of acquisition by Bembo after the accession of Alessandro Farnese

to the papal throne as Paul III in 1534 (unless we assume that Pignoria is using the term proleptically and referring to the future Pope), the latter at some time after the sack of Rome in 1527. Indeed, in his biography of Bembo, Lodovico Beccadelli claims to have seen it in the cardinal's collection not long after 1527; he describes it as a »tavola di rame assai ben grande lavorata d'argento a figure egittie«.<sup>21</sup> Many years earlier, however, Bembo had been secretary to Pope Leo X who, like his predecessor Julius II, had shown a keen interest in matters Egyptian. It has therefore been suggested that the date of its transfer into Bembo's hands should be placed considerably earlier, before he left Rome in 1521. If the copy of the »tabulae cuiusdam ob antiquitatem admirabilis exemplum« that was the object of a discussion of hieroglyphics in the Venetian residence of Urbano Bolzanio can be identified with the Mensa Isiaca, then the table must have been known to Bembo prior to the death of Bolzanio in 1524.<sup>22</sup> Bolzanio was the uncle of Pierio Valeriano, whose study *Hieroglyphica* would be published in 1556; not only had Bolzanio travelled in Egypt, but he had also tutored the young Giovanni de' Medici before the latter became Pope Leo X. Indeed, the strong interest shown in matters Egyptian by the Curia in Rome in the first two decades of the century, and particularly during the papacy of Leo X, lends support to this hypothesis of an early date for the transfer of the Mensa to Bembo.<sup>23</sup> It was the same Medici Pope who planned to erect the pieces of an obelisk found outside the mausoleum of Augustus in 1519 in an elaborate monument mounted on four tortoise astragals in the Piazza del Popolo.<sup>24</sup>

The discovery of the object soon aroused the interest of antiquaries and artists. This must have been particularly the case in Padua, to which Bembo had moved from Rome in 1521: it was in Padua that Piero Valeriano advised Alvisio Cornaro on the programme of the decoration of the octagonal music room in the (recently restored) Odeo around 1540, and the same years witnessed the construction, near Bembo's home, of the new residence of the jurist and antiquarian Marco Mantova Benavides with an entrance decorated with paintings that, »like hieroglyphics, denote various things«, as a later testimony records.<sup>25</sup> In 1546 Juan Páez de Castro, a member of the retinue of the imperial envoy to the Council of Trent, recorded a visit to the house of Bembo in which he observed »a bronze tablet with certain paintings of animals, which are said to be hieroglyphics«.<sup>26</sup> Further afield, a drawing commissioned by Fulvio Orsini for Francesco de' Medici has been lost, but borrowing from the Mensa Isiaca has been detected in the so-called »Egyptian page« of the Mass of St John the Baptist, attributed to the Croatian miniaturist Giulio Clovio, in the Colonna Missal from the 1530s.<sup>27</sup> We find a sketch in the album of Stephanus Vinandus Pighius from the following decade, and an engraving by Enea Vico from 1559.<sup>28</sup>

The next stage in the transmission history of the object is less shrouded in mystery and better documented.<sup>29</sup> When Pietro Bembo died in Rome in 1547, his son Torquato was strictly enjoined to maintain the collection and library intact. He did so for a while, admitting Enea Vico and others to the collection as he thought fit, but by 1567 he was already selling off items to meet his mounting debts, and after the death of his sister Elena in 1574, he felt free to press on with the sales. When in Rome for this purpose in 1581, the items

that he advertised included »una tavola di bronzo antichissima di piu di tre mila anni«. He offered the Mensa Isiaca to Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici for the price of 1,000 gold scudi, but that sale did not go through.<sup>30</sup>

Another of those in pursuit of the remains of the collection of Pietro Bembo was Vincenzo Gonzaga I. Soon after becoming Duke of Mantua in 1587, he engaged in a large-scale campaign to collect not only paintings and sculptures, but also rare or unique antiquities.<sup>31</sup> Four years later his agents in Verona (Mario Bevilacqua and Count Girolamo Canossa) informed him that the cardinal's son Torquato had already disposed of everything worthwhile from his father's *studio* except »la tavola di bronzo, qual certo è rarissima et unica«. Vincenzo hesitated six months before finally making the purchase in January 1592 for 480 Venetian *scudi*.<sup>32</sup>

Though the date of entry of the Mensa Isiaca into the Gonzaga collection is thus well documented, there is uncertainty regarding the date when it left that collection. It does not appear in the 1627 inventory, although that is not decisive since the inventory was not exhaustive. The Mensa Isiaca may have left the collection during its break-up in 1627, but it is also possible that its departure was not until after the conclusion of the war over the Mantuan succession with the sack of Mantua in 1630. At any rate, by the time Athanasius Kircher mentioned it in 1666, it was in the collection of the Savoia in Turin, the city where it is still preserved in what is now the Museo Egizio di Torino.<sup>33</sup> Like the popes from the first two decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Savoia were very interested in Egyptian material, among other things because, according to a legend, Turin was an Egyptian foundation. The discovery of the base of a statue dedicated to Isis in 1567, followed ten years later by the publication of the *Augusta Taurinorum* by the local historian Filiberto Pingone, fanned this speculation. The Turinese Egyptomania was heightened even more by the discussion of a female bust given to the museum in 1739 and known as the »bust of Isis«. The arrival of the Mensa Isiaca prompted the Duke of Savoy to send the Paduan archaeologist and botanist Vitaliano Donati to Egypt in 1759.<sup>34</sup> His mission was to bring back articles that would prove suitable to accompany the tablet, including a statue of Isis purchased in Koptos and today, like the Mensa itself, in the Museo Egizio.

## A NON-ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION

It was during the stay of the well-travelled Mensa Isiaca in Mantua that Lorenzo Pignoria saw the artefact itself, while the engraving by Enea Vico published in Venice in 1559 served as the basis of his explanatory comments. In the opening page of his treatise on the Mensa Isiaca, Pignoria states that the request to write a description and interpretation of the object, which had already been for some time in the collection of Vincenzo Gonzaga (*jam diu domi habet*), came from Marcus Welser. This German banker,<sup>35</sup> an expert in the history and antiquities of Rome and Germany who was admitted to the Accademia dei Lincei in 1612,

could count among his best-known publications the first edition of the *Tabula Peutingerana*, a map of the road network of the Roman Empire, as well as a collection of the ancient inscriptions of his native Augsburg.<sup>36</sup> The close ties between Welser and Pignoria are shown in the epitaph that Pignoria wrote upon the death of his friend in 1614.<sup>37</sup>

The result of Welser's gentle pressure was the treatise *Vetustissimae Tabulae Aeneae Sacris Aegyptiorum Simulachris coelatae accurata Explicatio, in qua antiquissimarum superstitionum Origines, Progressiones, Ritus ad Barbaram, Graecam, Romanamque Historiam illustrandam enarrantur, & multa Scriptorum veterum loca qua explanantur, qua emendantur: Auctore Laurentio Pignorio Patavino*, first published by Giovanni Antonio Rampazetto in Venice in 1605 with a frontispiece containing a vedutà of the Piazza di San Marco, a dedication to Cardinal Cesare Baronio, and a reproduction of the Vico engraving (fig. 1).<sup>38</sup>

There were those who cited Apuleius as their authority to express the belief that the Mensa Isiaca was inexplicable. So at the start of his commentary on the Mensa, Pignoria cites a passage from the *Metamorphoses* to support his own case.<sup>39</sup> As a prelude to his initiation, the protagonist of *The Golden Ass* is led to the doors of a vast temple and shown various books written in unfamiliar characters that were brought from the inner sanctuary: »Some of animals of every kind furnishing abbreviations of formulaic speech; while others had the tips of their signs knotted, coiled, and interwoven like vine-tendrils to hide their meaning from the curiosity of the uninitiated.«<sup>40</sup> In spite of the tortuous nature of Apuleius' Latin, it seems likely that the former is a reference to hieroglyphs, here interpreted as ideograms, while the latter might be a reference to the cursive hieratic script. However that may be, Pignoria takes the words to mean that the script was not inherently inexplicable; it had a meaning. But the phrase »Periculosae plenum opus aleae«, taken from the Horatian *Ode* to Asinius Pollio, implies that the task of interpretation is as perilous as walking on ashes beneath which fire continues to blaze.<sup>41</sup>

Pignoria does not appear to doubt the Mensa Isiaca's antiquity, calling it »an outstanding monument of the purest antiquity« (»Tabulam illam puræ putæ antiquitatis insigne monumentum«), though he adds that, whether it is Egyptian or done in an Egyptian style, its maker was not particularly learned.<sup>42</sup> It departs in many respects from traditional Egyptian canons of representation, and the mirror symmetry of the composition excludes the dynamic succession of episodes that can be found in Egyptian original works from the Pharaonic period. The scholarly consensus today is that it is an Egyptianising work, probably produced in Rome in the mid-first century CE, though there is a possibility that it might date from the reigns of Diocletian or Hadrian in the following century. A close stylistic parallel can be found in Roman mosaic pavements from the first and second centuries.<sup>43</sup>

When it comes to interpretation of the work, Pignoria is resolutely anti-allegorical:

»I will describe to the best of my abilities the figures of this Tablet, and not allegorically but rather based upon the ancient accounts. Indeed, I detest more than anyone the far-

# VETVSTISSIMÆ TABVLAE AENEAE

Sacris Ægyptiorum Simulachris cœlatae accurata  
Explicatio, in qua antiquissimarum superstitionum  
Origines, Progressiones, Ritus ad Barbaram,  
Græcam, Romanamque Historiam illustrandam  
enarrantur, & multa Scriptorum veterum loca  
qua explanantur, qua emendantur:

AVCTORE LAVRENTIO PIGNORIO  
PATAVINO.

ACAD. VGD.

*Accessit ab eodem AVCTARIVM, in quo ex antiquis Sigillis,  
Gemmisque selectiora quadam eius generis, & veterum  
Hæreticorum amuleta exhibentur.*



1 Frontispiece, Lorenzo Pignoria, *Vetustissimæ Tabulae Aeneae* . . . Venice: Giovanni Antonio Rampazetto, 1605

fetched interpretations of the Platonists, based on tenuous tales and almost ignoring the teachings of their master. And I have chosen to confess my ignorance rather than offend the erudite reader any longer.<sup>44</sup>

This confession of ignorance recurs a number of times in his account. For instance, at one point in his interpretation he states: »That is my conjecture, but I will not raise any objection if someone has a better suggestion.«<sup>45</sup> Fifteen years later, he would display a similar modesty in a letter to Andrea Chiocco, one of the two Veronese physicians who compiled the second, greatly augmented catalogue of the museum of their fellow townsman Francesco Calzolari in 1622.<sup>46</sup> Asked to comment on a basalt stone in that collection that was engraved with Egyptian hieroglyphics, Pignoria prefaced his comments with the remark that no one had so far managed to decipher the hieroglyphs; the most he could offer, drawing on his earlier experience with the Mensa Isiaca (which was by now in the collection of Ferdinando Gonzaga in Mantua, to whom the catalogue is dedicated), were some brief remarks on the figures of Isis and Osiris.<sup>47</sup>

In his treatise on the Mensa Isiaca, Pignoria cites two types of aid in his researches: the contributions of other scholars of his day; and the light thrown on some of the images in the Mensa Isiaca by similar objects in private collections. Among the former, headed by Marcus Welser, he lists Federico Contarini, Procuratore of San Marco, owner of a large collection of ancient statues and coins as well as paintings by the Venetian school and curator of the famous Grimani collection of antiquities in the newly created Museo archeologico in Venice;<sup>48</sup> Lelio Pasqualini, whom Welser tried – in vain – to persuade to have prints made from his drawings of the antique, and who was credited with having a *studiolo* with the finest antiquities of all Rome in his house near the Campidoglio;<sup>49</sup> and the great French antiquarian Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc, who called Contarini's collection a *Musaeum instructissimum*. Peiresc's interest in Pignoria's work on the Mensa Isiaca is shown by a letter in which he expresses his concern to obtain a complete exemplar of Pignoria's 1608 edition because one of the plates is missing from the one he already has.<sup>50</sup> Later, in a letter to Cassiano dal Pozzo of February 1629, Peiresc – who had written a discourse on the greater flamingo in 1609<sup>51</sup> – wrote that he had requested his painter to show the different parts and views of a flamingo »that could be compared with the hieroglyphic figures of the Tavola Bembina by Signor Pignoria«.<sup>52</sup> These are presumably the two watercolours on vellum that were acquired by Cassiano, owner of a fine collection of antiquities and natural curiosities on the via dei Chiavari in Rome.<sup>53</sup> Cassiano was also on cordial terms with Pignoria, from whom he commissioned a study of the Roman painting conventionally known as the Nozze Aldobrandini.<sup>54</sup> Discovered on the Esquiline in 1601, the painting was taken to the urban villa at Magnanapoli that the Cardinal Nephew Pietro Aldobrandini had just had built on land near the Quirinal acquired only three years earlier.

In an age when objects did not travel as easily as they do today, the demand for eye-witness observation often had to be met with images of the objects themselves, representations

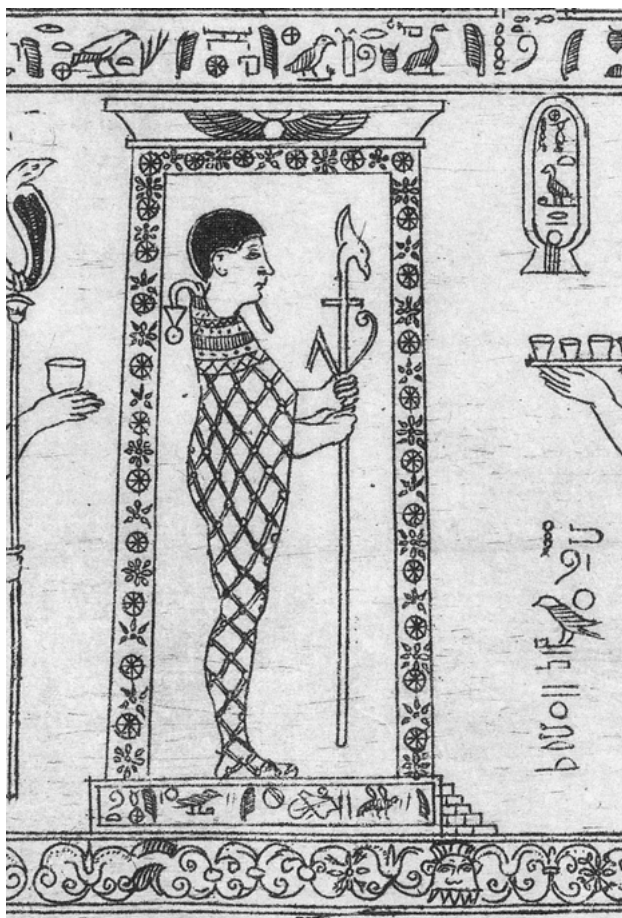


of what was absent. This was as true of the field of natural history as it was of the world of the antiquarians.<sup>55</sup> The reliability of such images depended on the reputation of those who supplied them. For instance, in response to a request from Peiresc for sketches of the antiquities in his collection in Antwerp, Peter Paul Rubens sent the French scholar a large sheet on which one of his assistants had drawn Rubens' Egyptian mummy and case, together with some little bronze Egyptian statuettes that had presumably been found inside the case.<sup>56</sup> The high reputation of both correspondents as scholars guaranteed the reliability of the textual and visual material that they exchanged. From the description of the museum and library of Pignoria by Jacobo Filippo Tomasini, we know that Pignoria was able to match some items from his own collection,<sup>57</sup> whose composition closely mirrored his own cultural itinerary. The Paduan scholar could also count on the support of some of the best scholars of his day, such as the erudite Rome-based printer and dealer Pietro Stefanoni, whom Pignoria called »antiquario della prima classe, e galantuomo«.<sup>58</sup> At the start of his examination of the Mensa Isiaca, to interpret a cross like that of the Egyptian *ankh* symbol he draws both on the evidence of obelisks (six of which he would have been able to observe at first hand during his two years in Rome) and on that of an ancient gem from the collection of fellow Paduan Giovanni Vincenzo Pinelli.<sup>59</sup> In his discussion of Horus he refers to a gem from the Peiresc collection which he interprets as representing the god reclining in a divine bark.<sup>60</sup> Further on in his treatise he borrows the image of a lion-headed marble figure from Girolamo Aleandro, »eruditissimo adolescente«.<sup>61</sup> If Pignoria's interpretation was not allegorical, it may certainly be called archaeological.

## IDENTIFYING HORUS-PTAH

Pignoria ran up against the greatest difficulty in trying to interpret the second figure from the left on the bottom row of the Mensa Isiaca (fig. 2). He comments that he has reflected on it time and again, so many difficulties to interpretation does it raise, proffers his own view as highly provisional, and invites more learned interpreters to take up the challenge.<sup>62</sup>

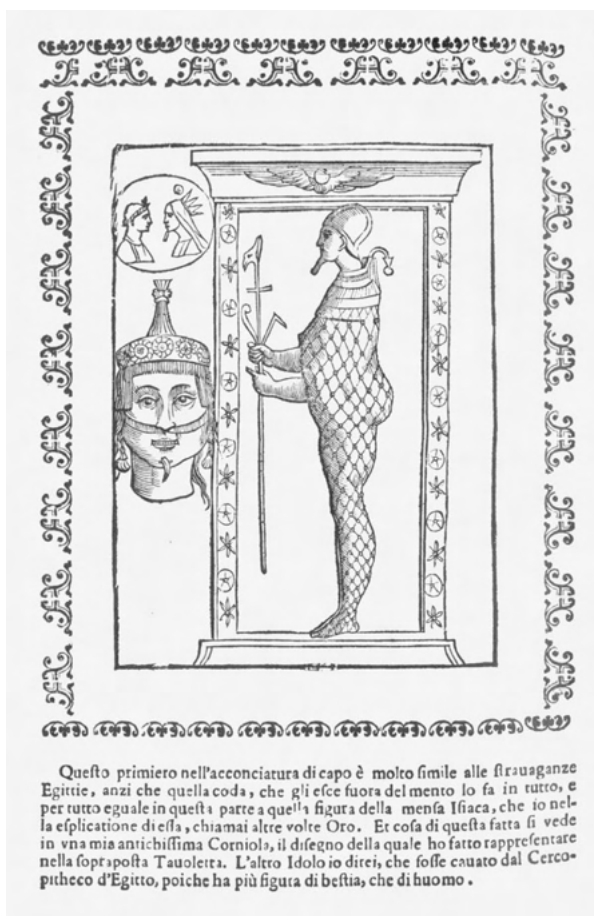
The figure, whom he identifies as Horus, is now regarded as representing Ptah, the creator god of Memphis. The use of niello on the head may be intended to represent the skull-cap covering the god's shaven head. Ptah is usually represented holding a staff that combines the *djed* pillar, *was* sceptre and an *ankh*.<sup>63</sup> The *djed* was usually represented as »a roughly cruciform symbol with at least three cross-bars«, while the *was* sceptre consisted of »a straight shaft with its handle in the form of the head of a canine animal, and its base ending in two prongs«.<sup>64</sup> It can readily be seen that these do not correspond to the attributes held by the figure of Ptah in the Mensa Isiaca.<sup>65</sup> As Leospo sums up her discussion: »It is once again evident [...] that the author himself did not have a more exact understanding of the meaning of the images«.<sup>66</sup> We might add that, in the light of the knowledge of Egyptian



2 Horus-Ptah, from Lorenzo Pignoria, *Vetustissimæ Tabulae Aeneae* . ., Venice: Giovanni Antonio Rampazetto, 1605

hieroglyphics of his day, he *could* not have had a more exact understanding of the meaning of the images either. The meaningless inscriptions that run around the border of the tablet point in the same direction – they are as decorative as the accurate reproductions of hieroglyphs that frame several Egyptian and non-Egyptian subjects, commissioned from Giulio Romano in the 1520s by Federico II Gonzaga for the vault of the Loggia of the Muses in Palazzo Te, Mantua.

The figure of Ptah must have intrigued Lorenzo Pignoria, for he returned to it in compiling an appendix to Vincenzo Cartari's *Imagini delli dei de gl'antichi* (fig. 3).<sup>67</sup> The first (1566) edition of Cartari's iconographical manual did not have any illustrations at all; the first edition to include illustrations, by Bolognino Zaltieri, was published five years later.<sup>68</sup> Even so, those illustrations had an equally bookish source:



3 Horus-Ptah, from *Seconda parte delle immagini de gli dei indiani. Aggiunta al Cartari da Lorenzo Pignoria*, Padua: Pietro Paolo Tozzi, 1615

»Cartari sometimes boasts [...] that he has utilized marbles and medals as part of his documentation, but actually it is in books, and only there, that he has seen them. His illustrator follows the same method. He copies, not the objects themselves, but engravings from contemporary works.«<sup>69</sup>

As the title suggests, Cartari's compilation was concerned with the gods of Greece and Rome. However, when a new edition with freshly produced woodcuts by Filippo Ferroverde was issued in 1615, it included two appendices. In the first, Pignoria included additional material to supplement that provided by Cartari. In the second, however, on »the gods of the Indians« (a term which at this time could refer to the Orient or to America), Pignoria widened the scope of the work to include material from Japan, India and the East

Indies as well as the Americas, taken from a bewildering variety of sources.<sup>70</sup> For instance, the illustrator combined reports from two different Jesuit sources in India to produce the image of a three-armed and three-headed elephant god, and later editions offered four views of the grip of a *kris* from the East Indies (Java or Madura) attributed to the collection of Peiresc.<sup>71</sup>

The Asian images are printed without further ado, but in the case of those illustrating figures from the Americas, Pignoria adds comparative material taken from – Egypt. When seen against the strategy of Cartari and his illustrator, this creates a remarkable discontinuity in the work as a whole, because his strategy is to print the image of a deity from Mesoamerica as the main figure on the page, and to accompany it by small figures in medallions taken from works of ancient Egypt. Thus the woodcut of the god Homoyoca, taken from a colonial Mexican manuscript made by an indigenous painter,<sup>72</sup> is accompanied by the insets of two figures taken directly from the border decoration of the *Mensa Isiaca*: a jackal-headed figure (who is facing a baboon in the *Mensa*), and a figure holding a pointed object in one hand and a beaker in the other (who is facing a ram in the *Mensa*).<sup>73</sup>

The same technique is at work in the woodcut of a New World *zemi* or idol. Francisco Ruiz, a Franciscan friar, brought a number of such objects to Spain in the first years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century; though some of these were housed in the University of Alcalá, at least one reached the Munich *Kunstammer* of Albrecht V.<sup>74</sup> This time Pignoria's image is not taken from a codex, but from an image sent to Pignoria by fellow Egyptologist Hans Georg Herwarth of what was listed in the 1598 inventory of the collection of the Duke of Bavaria in Munich as »An Indian idol on the outside covered with small white and red interlocking rings, with big eyes of blue glass.«<sup>75</sup> And this time too we find it accompanied by a smaller inset of a *Cercopithecus* with a lunar crescent and a solar disc above its head, once again taken (in reverse) from the *Mensa Isiaca*, where it faces the figure of Isis labelled G.<sup>76</sup>

Pignoria's strategy is clear: in focusing on images of deities from the New World and drawing parallels with the ancient world of Egypt, he is combining the comparative method with a strong dependence on the evidence of material culture. In the words of the first scholar to draw attention to the dependence of Pignoria's images on a Mexican codex, Jean Seznec, with the arrival of this new method »Olympus, overrun from all sides, became sheer pandemonium.«<sup>77</sup> When Pignoria discusses snake worship in ancient Egypt, he compares it not only with the practices of the Amerindians, but also with »some of our heretics« (»e nostris hæretici quidam«), implicitly drawing a parallel between the exotic cultures of the Amerindians and the practices of what have been termed »Europe's inner Indians« and anticipating Aby Warburg's study of serpent images of the Pueblo Indians of North America by more than two hundred years.<sup>78</sup>

Pignoria was by no means alone in this assimilation of ancient Egyptian and Amerindian practices. Many a European collector regarded the signs inscribed on Mesoamerican codices as hieroglyphs: this is how they are described, for example, in the oldest record of the presence of Mexican codices in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, compiled by members

of the Rainaldi family in the last decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century;<sup>79</sup> the publication of the collection of the famous Danish collector Olaus Worm in the *Museum Wormianum* referred to the Mixtec *Codex Vindobonensis* as a »Mexican hieroglyphic«;<sup>80</sup> and the same codex was listed in the 1598 inventory of the Bavarian *Kunstammer* in Munich as »Ein buech, das hinden und vornen aufgeht, mit allerley Indianischen figur, der Hyeroglyphischen schrifft nit ungleich«.<sup>81</sup> Likewise, the Franciscan missionary Diego Valadés, a native of Tlaxcala who will thus have been familiar with native culture as well as that of the Spanish colonial rule in which he was educated, compared Amerindian script with Egyptian hieroglyphics in his *Rhetorica Christiana*:

»There is a remarkable instance of this in the trade and contracts of the Indians. Even lacking letters (as we have mentioned above), yet they expressed what they wanted in certain forms and images, which they usually keep in silk wrappings, absorbent papyrus from the leaves of trees.<sup>82</sup> This custom has been preserved down to the present in their calculations, not only by the ignorant but also by those capable of reading and writing properly. They had that in common with the Egyptians [...].«<sup>83</sup>

In one of those ironical twists by which the New World and the Old World seem to echo one another in an endless play of mirror reflections, »conversion hieroglyphics« was the term that the Franciscan Fray Juan Bautista applied to his use of prints and drawings to teach the indigenous peoples of Mexico to abhor sin and to desire the sovereign good attainable only in heaven.<sup>84</sup>

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the natural philosopher and member of the Royal Society John Turberville Needham (1713–1781), better known for his experiments on spontaneous generation by boiling gravy and tainted wheat, published a treatise on a so-called bust of Isis from the Gonzaga collection donated to the Turin museum and inscribed with thirty-two strange characters. He identified them as archaic Chinese hieroglyphs, taking this to be evidence for a relation between Chinese and Egyptian. In the process, he compared them with the pictographic language of the Mexicans for the use of symbols instead of letters.<sup>85</sup> So once again we find the explicit equation between Egyptian and Mexican scripts, though this time mediated by a supposed affinity with Chinese.

At first sight, the woodcut in the appendix to Cartari that includes the figure of Horus-Ptah seems to fit the same pattern: a large protagonist, accompanied by two insets in medallions. However, the roles have been reversed: instead of highlighting an American deity and adducing visual parallels from ancient Egypt, Pignoria here highlights the Egyptian deity Horus-Ptah. As for the insets, Pignoria calls the upper one »a very ancient cornelian«. He does not even mention the lower one, but, following the lead from the Munich inventory, it may be identified with the »wooden head of an idol of Florida« listed there, and so is presumably based on an image sent to Pignoria of an object in that collection, though there is no other known image of that particular object.<sup>86</sup>

There is a partial visual parallel for the lower inset in the image of »Their Idol Kivvasa« taken from Volume I of the multi-volume work *Americæ* produced by the De Bry family in Frankfurt, although that idol does not include the beard that is the main point in Pignoria's comparison. The first volume of *Americæ*, published in 1590, includes an unsigned engraving that presumably goes back to the British artist John White, who travelled with the voyage that set out in 1585 to plant a colony in Virginia.<sup>87</sup> There is a complication, however: while John White sailed for Virginia, the idol in question is attributed to Florida in the Munich inventory. Perhaps we should not make too much of such terminological niceties around the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but there are parallels for the idol's headgear in the *Second* Volume of *Americæ*, which deals with Florida. As if this Virginia/Florida confusion were not enough, other aspects of the engraving have been regarded as suspicious too: »[...] the round hut which would have no place in the charnel house, the highly decorated tops of the moccasins, the beads round the thighs, and the naturalistic treatment of the image which has nothing in common with archaeological examples or Indian work in general.«<sup>88</sup>

Pignoria's decision – no doubt motivated by his ease of access to the images of the Mensa Isiaca and to the intellectual capital that he had put into interpreting it – to give prominence to the Egyptian figure in this plate rather than to the American one has led to confusion on the part of more than one scholar.<sup>89</sup> It is, after all, a compound confusion: the image of an Egyptian idol is taken from a work that is not a product of ancient Egypt but is an Egyptianising one made in or near Rome, the primary source of archaeological information about Egypt at this time; and the American image that is presented for comparison seems to represent a fusion of Virginian and Floridan ethnography that corresponds to neither. Sez nec's »sheer pandemonium« is not far off.

But that is not all. Another victim who fell prey to the confusion induced by Pignoria's image is the artist of several coloured copies of the engravings from Pignoria's appendix.<sup>90</sup> These coloured drawings on transparent paper are in the Biblioteca Angelica, Rome, where they form part of MS 1551 entitled *Icones coloribus ornatae idolorum Mexicanorum*. The artist took the main subject of the engraving to be American like the other examples discussed above, which explains how he managed to add the highly confused and confusing annotation: »Egyptian idol worshipped by the Mexicans who called it Maheiz« (plate 29).<sup>91</sup>

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

In a positive review of the first volume of the *Kunstwissenschaftliche Forschungen*, Walter Benjamin noted how much an inquiry based on the most inconspicuous data of an object could wrest from even the most worn-out things. He continued: »And thus, because of the focus on materiality in such a work, the precursor of this new type of art scholar is not Wölfflin but Riegl.«<sup>92</sup> Benjamin considered Alois Riegl's *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie* of 1901 to be a seminal work – in a curriculum vitæ written towards the end of his life, he

even listed it as one of the three works that decisively influenced his thinking in the course of his studies<sup>93</sup> – and at a time when there is once again talk of the material turn, it may be profitable to (re)consider a theoretician who explicitly deployed the opposition between haptic and optic, since the former clearly depends on materiality in a way in which the optic does not. If the recent turn towards materiality might have led some to hope that the era of representations and their interpretation, especially at the hands of the literary historians, was over, Riegl's study demonstrates, *inter alia*, that no account of an object, however material that object may be, can be starkly neutral.<sup>94</sup> Time and again in his work, Riegl draws parallels and contrasts between late Roman works and those of his own era. For example, fragments of a late antique hollow-cut intaglio glass bowl found in Rome display a style that he characterises as »impressionistic and optical« but that, at least in part, recalls modern Impressionist pastels.<sup>95</sup> Elsewhere in the same work he notes how the *Kunstwollen* of the Constantine era appears almost identical to the contemporary (i.e. 1901) one in respect of the appeal of both to the optical sense, despite the felt differences between them. For Riegl is intelligent enough not to make them coincide completely: »Certain ancient works correspond, *although never completely*, to the *Kunstwollen* of modern art. It is precisely the appearance of these correspondences against the background of the differences that confers on the ancient work an effect on us that no modern work that lacks this basis could ever exert.«<sup>96</sup>

Sometimes the temporal leap is in the opposite direction, as when an ivory diptych from 428 CE recreates the tranquillity and rigidity of archaic oriental art.<sup>97</sup> In Benjamin's formulation: »The reader who reads Riegl's major work today [...] will recognise retrospectively how forces that were already stirring subterraneously in *Die spätrömische Kunst-Industrie* will surface a decade later in Expressionism«.<sup>98</sup> Like Riegl, concerned as he was with *Stilfragen*, Pignoria presents an analysis of a *style*: the Egyptian style, albeit one based primarily on artefacts found in Rome.

Pignoria and his contemporaries were grappling with the problem of interpretation of ancient artefacts that we would today call iconography. As Peter Burke has written:

»The early history of iconography still remains to be written. It might reasonably include attempts to solve iconographical problems such as Stephanus Pighius' analysis of a bas-relief of the seasons belonging to cardinal Granvelle; Lorenzo Pignoria's study of a bronze tablet of Isis and his interpretation of a Roman fresco discovered in 1606, the Aldobrandini Wedding; Girolamo Aleandro's »explanation« of an ancient marble tablet; Bosio's study of the paintings in the catacombs; Claude Menestrier's study of the symbolism of the many-breasted goddess Diana of Ephesus; and Lukas Holstein's study of a picture of a nymphaeum.«<sup>99</sup>

We could add »Baron« d'Hancarville, interpreter of the vase collection of Sir William Hamilton, to the list, for whom »every image must signify something, and every part of that image must contribute to the overall message«.<sup>100</sup>



4 Frontispiece, Joseph François Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages américains, comparées aux mœurs des premiers temps*, Paris: Saugrain l'aîné & Charles Estienne Hochereau, 1724



But while, at least since Panofsky, the study of iconography has generally been taken to comprise the patient comparison of one image with another, the iconography of Pignoria and his friends is firmly rooted at the micro-level in his own collection of material objects and in those of his learned friends.<sup>101</sup> At the macro-level, however, his work bears witness to a comparative endeavour that spans millennia and continents: ancient Egypt compared with the recently discovered cultures of America.

It is an endeavour with a long history. Immediately after the European discovery of America, observers drew parallels between the Amerindian cultures and various cultures of the ancient world (Scythians, Thracians, Egyptians, etc.) on the basis of language, customs, dress, appearance, and a host of other factors, but these comparisons were not systematic. In fact, this practice continued down to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>102</sup> Naturally, there were exceptions: in connection with the bust of an Aztec priestess that features on the first plates of his *Vues des Cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*, Alexander von Humboldt pointed out that a certain resemblance between the veil found on heads of Isis and Mexica headdresses, pyramids and hieroglyphs was among the similarities that fade once the facts are examined in isolation.<sup>103</sup> Thirty years later the explorer John Stephens, who had been in Egypt before travelling in Central America, was to deny the existence of parallels between Egypt and Central America in the field of architecture and sculpture.<sup>104</sup>

Pignoria was one of the first to propose a *systematic* comparison between the images inscribed on a material artefact that he believed to come from, or at least to represent, the culture of ancient Egypt, on the one hand, and the images of American artefacts, whether images taken from codices or images based on tangible three-dimensional objects, that reached him via intermediaries in Europe, on the other hand.

To conclude, let us return to Lafitau's *Moeurs des sauvages américains comparées* (fig. 4). The frontispiece of that work includes what is clearly a copy of the Ptah-Horus from the Mensa Isiaca among the various Egyptian objects scattered in the writer's study, although the lack of a beard indicates that he took his image not from Pignoria's original publication, but from Montfaucon's *L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, in which the beard is absent.<sup>105</sup> Given the links between Montfaucon's work and the king's cabinet of curiosities in Turin in which the Mensa Isiaca was displayed, we seem to have come full circle.<sup>106</sup>

Lafitau's aim was to compare and contrast material objects from the Old and New Worlds. In drawing a parallel between the Egyptian *sistrum* and an Amerindian rattle made from a tortoise shell, he, like his 17<sup>th</sup> century predecessor, was comparing material objects. Lafitau's endeavour is entirely in the spirit of Pignoria. And the basis of that comparison in material objects moves it light years away from the grandiose comparative projects of, say, Georges Dumézil or Claude Lévi-Strauss, in which structure may be said to have replaced material.



## A FOOD CHAIN OF OBJECTS

### THE SELECTION AND USE OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES IN PIRANESI'S »DIVERSE MANIERE«

Anne Haslund Hansen

When, in 1769, the Venetian artist Giambattista Piranesi (1720–1778) published his book on designs for chimneypieces »taken from Egyptian, Tuscan and Greek Architecture«, entitled *Diverse maniere d'adornare i cammini ed ogni altra parte degli edifizii desunte dall'architettura egizia, etrusca, e greca*, he drew on several antiquarian sources, most significantly on the Egyptian images supplied by Comte de Caylus' *Recueil d'Antiquités*.<sup>1</sup>

*Diverse maniere* along with Piranesi's other written works reflects Piranesi's intellectual development and his understanding of Antiquity. In the present contribution, however, I wish to approach *Diverse maniere* from the perspective of the use of, and approaches to, ancient Egyptian antiquities in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> In what way did Piranesi make use of objects in this particular volume? What sources did he use, why and how? And what role did Egyptian culture play in the arguments set forth in *Diverse maniere*? The article offers an analysis of the construction of the *Diverse maniere* and its building blocks, ie. the ancient objects themselves, and how these were first selected, and then modified and what this might tell us about Piranesi's understanding of ancient Egypt and how this understanding corresponds to more general views on Egypt and its antiquities, in particular in relation to the Classical cultures.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a new type of antiquarian presentation had emerged: illustrated compilations of ancient artefacts. Here Egyptian antiquities were displayed alongside Greek and Roman antiquities. These works served as a repository of knowledge and testify to an impetus to not only write about things Egyptian but also to visualize them. The most substantial and well-known examples are the works by Bernard de Montfaucon and Comte de Caylus.<sup>3</sup> As part of a printed medium, the illustrated volumes provided easy access to ob-

jects for the learned community to discuss and compare their visual appearance. In this respect, these printed images were far more important for the dissemination and visualization of Egyptian material culture than the actual artefacts themselves. The antiquarian works also served as inspiration for contemporary artists. One such artist was Piranesi.

Piranesi's Egyptian designs have long been recognized as important contributions to the dissemination of Egyptian style and motifs and favoured examples of interest in Egyptian culture in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> While it was not the first time that Piranesi had shown interest in Egypt, *Diverse maniere* was his most extensive treatment of the subject. The designs do not stand alone but are accompanied by a text entitled »An Apologetical Essay in Defense of Egyptian and Tuscan Architecture«.

Immediately in the first sentences of the »Apologetical Essay«, Piranesi clarifies that his designs were not based on ancient examples, as chimneypieces were not known to have existed in Antiquity.<sup>5</sup> It is therefore also evident that the designs in *Maniere* were not of the same nature as the documentation presented in the authoritative antiquarian publications. However, as we shall see later on, there are some indications that they were understood in this way, namely as antiquarian images.

*Diverse maniere* was Piranesi's final publication. The subject of Piranesi as author has been explored by John Wilton-Ely and more recently by Heather Hyde Minor. *Diverse maniere* belongs to a group of four works by Piranesi referred to by Wilton-Ely as »The polemical works«.<sup>6</sup> In *Piranesi's lost words* from 2015, Heather Hyde Minor, calls *Diverse maniere* »a culmination of [Piranesi's] explorations of antiquity«. Furthermore, Hyde Minor argues that the publication should not be primarily approached, as has often been the case, as a pattern book but also as a critical essay, written even perhaps by several authors: »While the precise genesis of the text remains unknown, several aspects of it point to the involvement of other learned men and to the likelihood that it was a collaborative effort.«<sup>7</sup>

The title of *Diverse maniere* mentions three cultures, yet only two of them are included and advocated in the apologetical essay. By promoting the Egyptian and Etruscan style, Piranesi was concomitantly criticising his contemporaries, whom he found to be conservative and lacking in artistic innovation. »The law which some people would impose upon us of doing nothing but what is Grecian, is indeed very unjust.«<sup>8</sup> The necessity of his defense, Piranesi claims, is caused by the »common opinion« (»il comun pensare«).<sup>9</sup>

Piranesi was against the glorification of Greek art fuelled by the theoretical works of Caylus and Winckelmann, and by works documenting monuments in Greece, such as Julien-David le Roy's *Les Ruines des plus Beaux Monuments de la Grèce*, 1758, and James Stuart and Nicholas Revett's work, *The Antiquities of Athens*, 1762. Piranesi had already touched upon this subject in his earlier works. His arguments formed part of a larger controversy revolving around the supremacy of the art of the ancients.<sup>10</sup>

In the following, the *Diverse maniere* itself will be briefly described, with particular attention to its components and structure. Secondly, I will offer an introduction to the perception of ancient Egypt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, coupled with that of Piranesi – questioning in

part the originality of some of his views. The following four sections deals more closely with specific aspects of Piranesi's adaptation of Egyptian artefacts for the *Diverse maniere* and how these correlate with his introductory text. In the final section, the publication is discussed in relation to the recirculation of images, and what this might say about the selection and codification of objects in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## THE BOOK

*Diverse maniere* is a large folio. It begins with a dedicatory plate and a short text, addressed to Cardinal Giovanni Battista Rezzonico, Piranesi's Venetian patron at the papal court. The essay that follows immediately runs 35 pages, including three illustrations. It is provided in three languages placed alongside each other on the page.

The remainder of the work is taken up by the designs. These are individually numbered from 1 to 66.<sup>11</sup> As indicated in the title, they focus on *cammini*, chimneypieces. The designs are large and executed in detail, with only one or two pieces per folio page, see plates 30 to 33. The layout of the Egyptian plates, thirteen in total, is homogenous and only one design is presented per page throughout. Eleven of these are chimney designs, while the remaining two are wall decorations from the Caffé degli Inglesi, a coffee house in Rome, also designed by Piranesi.<sup>12</sup> The final plates of the volume are dedicated to other types of interior design, such as furniture, candle sticks and clocks. None of these are presented in the Egyptian style.<sup>13</sup>

»I have not only given that of the chimney, likewise of the ornaments of the walls against which it is placed«, which »may be executed in painting« Piranesi explains.<sup>14</sup> This is especially true of the Egyptian designs. The actual fireplace and surrounding frame takes up only about a sixth of the entire composition. The Egyptian chimneypieces are in fact entire murals, like those of the Caffé degli Inglesi (and as such not easily inserted into an already existing interior).

The Egyptian plates are numbers 5, 10, 14, 18, 21, 24, 26, 28, 32, 36, 45 and 46 (Caffé degli Inglesi) and finally number 50. In addition, there are three designs that incorporate minor Egyptian details, namely numbers 23, 49 and 52. The sequence of plates has some importance from a reader's perspective, as the Egyptian designs are evenly distributed throughout the book, contrary to the custom in antiquarian works to keep each culture rigidly to itself. The modern, complete editions of Piranesi's engravings disregard the numbering of the plates and the Egyptian designs are grouped as an ensemble.<sup>15</sup>

Looking at *Diverse maniere*, the connection between the essay and the designs is far from fluent. Despite their numbering, the plates are published without legends, hence they are not individually explained. Also, the essay doesn't carry any direct references to the designs. Some prints were already in circulation in the years before the book was published.<sup>16</sup> These aspects should be taken into consideration when approaching the work.

*Diverse maniere* does not present itself as a coherent work where text and illustrations are closely connected and meant to elucidate each other, but rather as the bringing together of two kindred statements, one in visual form and the other in writing. *Diverse maniere* is part design, and part historical examination, and the two components of the book both touch on these subjects, each in their own way.

## EGYPT COMPARED

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Egypt was almost invariably treated in a multi-cultural, comparative context – most often in connection with Greece and Rome. This is the case of numerous printed works known from the period, dealing with the ancient cultures and their monuments, history, culture and religion. In these collective presentations the ancient cultures were placed in a particular sequence and each was treated by means of a certain quantity of subject matter. This structure created an entirety, a sort of catalogue of cultures, which gave the reader some indication of the specifics and importance of each culture. In *Recueil*, Caylus created a such »ordre« by sorting the objects into »classes générales, relatives aux pays qui les ont produits«.<sup>17</sup>

In the presentations, Greece and Rome held the dominant positions while Egypt took on the role of a prerequisite yet subordinate entity. Egypt was hardly ever dominant or central: to a large degree it was complementary. In the antiquarian illustrated works this was expressed by a careful quantitative distribution of the artefacts ensuring that Greece and Rome always had the most extensive presence. In his preface to his sixth volume from 1764, Caylus states that the antiquarians tend to not give as much attention to Egypt as to »des autre pays«.<sup>18</sup> The seven volumes of *Recueil d'Antiquités Égyptiennes, Étrusques, Grecques et Romaines*, published from 1752 to 1767, continuously repeat the same chronological sequence volume by volume and the Egyptians (and Etruscans) form a smaller separate category in each. This pattern proved rather consistent throughout the second half of the century. In James Tassie's *Descriptive Catalogue of a general Collection of Ancient and Modern engraved Gems*, published in 1791, the non-Classical objects are all treated first (numbers 1–7), culture by culture. They are presented in the following order: *Égyptiennes, Gnostiques, Persepolitaines, Parthes, Mithraïques, Indiennes, Arabes & Persanes*.<sup>19</sup> The rest of the catalogue is devoted to Greek and Romans gems, which are treated as a collective, albeit sorted into themes.

One purpose of this comparative approach was cultural distinction. In his influential *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, from 1764, Winckelmann had set out, by means of dating criteria, to understand and demonstrate how and why the arts differed among the ancient cultures – the »Ursachen ihrer Verschiedenheit«.<sup>20</sup> However, as much as artists and antiquarians wished to discern the Greek from the Roman, it proved difficult to do so in practice.

Commenting on Tuscany, Greece, and Rome, Piranesi states: »it is not easy to assign the distinctive character of each as clearly as the Egyptian architecture is distinguished from all the rest«.<sup>21</sup> The stylistic similarities among Tuscan, Greek, and Roman art enabled Piranesi to combine their elements homogeneously in his design. It seems, from this reasoning, that the distinctiveness of the Egyptian style was also what hindered its ability to interact: Egypt formed a separate category. In those chimneys, »which are not after the Egyptian manner«, Piranesi says, he had labored to unify the Tuscan, Greek, and Roman styles together, yet a true »connoisseur« would easily be able to distinguish between them.<sup>22</sup>

How was the Tuscan style to be distinguished, if it was, indeed, so closely related to the Roman and the Greek cultures? This question became pivotal for Piranesi's defense of the Tuscans. Piranesi speaks of ancient gems that were so perfect that, had they not been embellished with »Tuscan characters«, anyone would have thought them to be Greek.<sup>23</sup> Piranesi criticized that his contemporaries believed the painted vases found in Etruscan (Tuscan) graves to be Greek – simply because they were too beautiful to have been manufactured locally. Yet, some of the vases Piranesi had studied »seem entirely similar to those of the Greeks, in beauty, grace and perfection«.<sup>24</sup> Seeing a collection of sea shells had made this evident to Piranesi: »I had scarcely cast my eyes upon them, when I thought I perceived in these works of Nature all the forms [...] which I have seen on the Hetruscan vases.«<sup>25</sup>

Egyptian art was of a different nature. Piranesi writes: »One must be blind not to see in those [artworks] of the Egyptians a shocking hardness; arms glued to the body, legs joined close together, neither motion, nor sentiment«. According to Piranesi, Egyptian art was closely related to the architecture in which it was used. It held all the characteristics of a building. It was monumental, rigid, solid and strong. Egyptian art was modified nature.<sup>26</sup> In sum, Egypt possessed a natural beauty but one that differed from that of the Classical. Tuscan art was not different from Greek art. Rather, the difference between the two was so minute that it was indiscernible.

Piranesi's wish for a pluralistic use of the ancient cultures has historically been read as both refreshing and progressive. Yet, at the same time, this has perhaps obscured the traditional hierarchy, that is also present in his text. Piranesi argues that a room in the Egyptian or Tuscan style would be less out of the ordinary than a room in »the Chinese manner«, since the Chinese is »far distant from the Grecian, and perhaps more so than the Egyptian and the Tuscan«.<sup>27</sup> Even to Piranesi, Greece is the standard by which all other cultures are defined.

Piranesi is indispensable for narrations of the 18<sup>th</sup> century perception of Egypt, but he is also a dangerous example. His enthusiastic presentation of the Egyptian style constituted a singular voice that spoke up and confronted the common opinion prevalent at the time. Furthermore, Piranesi assigned somewhat traditional roles for the ancient cultures in his defense: although Egypt is promoted in its own right, Egypt also functioned as a cultural parallel that helped to bring forth the Classical nature of Tuscan art.

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF »KLEINKUNST«

The Egyptian plates in *Diverse maniere* at first appear somewhat repetitive. However, on closer inspection there is little reuse from plate to plate. Piranesi selected and reproduced the antiquarian images from the scholarly literature with care and with a keen eye for variation. The designs are always symmetrical, with a central design flanked by identical compositions on either side. Many figures are simply reduplicated, although some smaller variations occur.

According to the title, Piranesi drew his components from »architecture«. However, most of the elements by which he created these Egyptian chimneypieces have little to do with building structures. This was a deliberate choice by Piranesi, due to, as he explains, the poor preservation of monuments in Egypt: »according to travelers [...] no ornaments are seen on them but hieroglyphics [...] to decide of the taste of that nation it would be necessary to have seen them in their primitive state before they had suffered the devastations of time and men«.<sup>28</sup>

One source for Piranesi's Egyptian designs was the Danish traveller Frederik Ludvig Norden and his renderings of the Memnon Colossi.<sup>29</sup> Although not a direct inspiration for the images of *Diverse maniere* otherwise, the richly illustrated *Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie* from 1755, is likely to have shaped Piranesi's idea of how Egyptian architecture appeared (in its later ruinous state). In Norden's depictions of the Ramesseum, entitled »Ruines du Palais de Memnon, toutes charges d'hieroglyphes«, concerning Medinet Habu, »plein de Hiéroglyphs«, or the temple of Esna, the structures are literally covered in hieroglyphic inscriptions (fig. 1).<sup>30</sup> Regarding the Ramesseum, Norden facilitates his readers with details on the shapes of the hieroglyphs and their vividly preserved colors.<sup>31</sup> There is little evidence that Norden attempted to systematically convey the actual images and texts carved on the surface of the monuments. Norden's sketches and preparatory drawings, some of which are still preserved, show much variation. What seems to be a first sketch of the Ramesseum, has only a few indications of the hieroglyphic decoration. Another, more detailed drawing, in line with the final plate, shows hieroglyphs on surface areas that would not have been decorated. The reason for this obvious embellishment by Norden is unexplained, but may have been a way for him to further Egyptianize the monuments.<sup>32</sup>

Piranesi rejected the image of Egyptian ruins, that he found in the travel accounts. As argued often, recently by John A. Pinto, seeing and studying ruins were pivotal to Piranesi's art and his approach to Antiquity. Pinto's work *Speaking Ruins* takes its title from a quote by Piranesi: »These speaking ruins have filled my spirit with images that accurate drawings, even such as those of the immortal Palladio, could never have succeeded in conveying, though I always kept them before my eyes.«<sup>33</sup> Here, Piranesi indicates that the direct observation of ancient remains was more inspirational than something only seen by means of the printed media.

In Rome, Piranesi had direct access to Egyptian and Egyptianizing monuments. In the »Apologetical Essay«, he states that the true art of Egypt – which fully reveals »the genius of that nation« – is best observed in »statues, which yet remain, and those capitals, those obe-





1 Frederik Ludvig Norden, *Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie*, Copenhagen, 1755, volume II, pl. CXII

lisks, and bases, those lions and sphinxes which have brought from Egypt to Rome», and »the Bembine table, and the ornaments found in the villa of Adrian and other places«. <sup>34</sup> The »Bembine table«, also known as *Mensa Isiaca*, was a highly praised and well-known bronze tablet, believed to be Egyptian, but today considered an Egyptianizing Roman artwork from the first century A.D. <sup>35</sup> The latter most likely included a number of the Egyptianizing sculptures, including those of Antinous now in the Vatican Museum. <sup>36</sup>

Obelisks, reclining animals and sphinxes do occur in some plates, features from the *Mensa Isiaca* are perhaps discernible in plate 10 (central panel, upper section), and a number of Egyptian plates display some form of the »Antinous«, if loosely defined as a male with a bare upper body, wearing a *nemes* headdress and loincloth. Nevertheless, the objects from the volumes of Comte de Caylus play a decisive role in the compositions of *Diverse maniere*. Hence, in essence, for his Egyptian designs Piranesi primarily chose objects that had *not* been »brought from Egypt to Rome« but rather brought from Egypt to France by European travellers and merchants.

In his discussion on the sources used by Piranesi, Dirk Syndram suggests that Piranesi deliberately declined to use »die in Rom befindlichen Ägyptiaca« because Caylus offered him a fresh scholarly interpretation to go along with the images. <sup>37</sup> We might add to this that the objects in Caylus' volumes were themselves also fresh and hitherto unseen, as most of them were published for the first time. This would of course support what Piranesi was eager to convey, namely a novel impression of ancient Egyptian style.

Calling to mind the overgrown ruins, those vast and mysterious structures that are so typical of Piranesi's rendering of the monuments of Rome, the designs of *Diverse maniere* take on a rather different appearance. By means of ancient artefacts, all rendered as if in pristine condition, symbiotically integrated and reduplicated, Piranesi created a contemporary design.<sup>38</sup> Yet, he also offered a reconstructed Egyptian architecture, which was otherwise lost and no longer to be observed – and which was composed, for the most part, from of minute objects printed in books.

## SELECTING AND REPRODUCING OBJECTS

The figures that Piranesi took from Caylus' volumes often have new added details, such as dress patterns. Individual figures are also very often set into new compositions. Shapes and compositions from his work on the Aventine Hill, the Santa Maria del Priorato 1764–1766, are resurfacing in the plates, see for instance plate 50 (see plate 30).<sup>39</sup> The result, albeit imaginative and different from the printed images he copied, retains one unmissable antiquarian trait, that makes the result appear somewhat rigid and collage-like: in print, an object is habitually rendered directly from the front, or from the side, while rarely from both sides or the back.

In his reading of Egyptian iconography, Piranesi argues that, rather than conveying mysteries and »symbols«, the Egyptian artists simply wanted to delight »the eye with ornaments« and create »caprices«.<sup>40</sup> By contrast, in Winckelmann's view, the Egyptians were hindered by their religious beliefs and were aesthetically crippled by their coarse natural surroundings: They were »ein Volk, welches zur Lust und Freude nicht erschaffen schien«; they were melancholic by nature and alien to music and poetry: »Ihr Denken ging das Natürliche vorbei und beschäftigte sich mit dem Geheimnisvollen.«<sup>41</sup>

Battaglia has documented from where Piranesi handpicked the images in the volumes of Caylus. Images from volumes IV (1761), V (1762) and VI (1764) are most frequent, supplying also some chronological frame for the time of production.<sup>42</sup> Figures are most prevalent. Piranesi's own distinction of iconography seems based on outer appearance rather than on symbolic meaning, operating with three types: »human«, »brutes« and »monsters« (the latter most likely referring to a combined human and animal form) in »the act of sustaining different things«. These figures are ornamented with »eggs«, »pearls« or »flowers, plants, or herbs of various sorts«.<sup>43</sup> These readings and choices of words emphasize nature and may ultimately point towards notions of regeneration and fertility. Norbert Miller has described the designs and their repetitive variations of figures as belonging to »das Thema der Figur in der Figur und das Thema des Gestaltentausches in der Figur«.<sup>44</sup>

If Piranesi had taken any notice of how Caylus understood the objects, a far more uniform picture would have emerged. The majority of figures are understood as deities or priests serving these deities. The latter were mostly Isis and Osiris, known from the Classi-

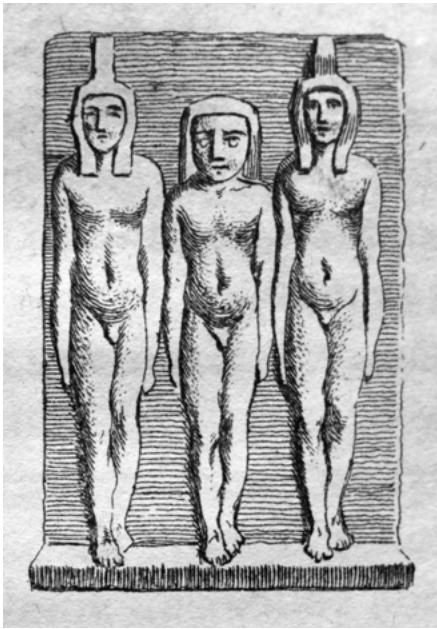


2 Amulet. Médailles et Antiques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv.no. 53.1672. Height 3,9 cm

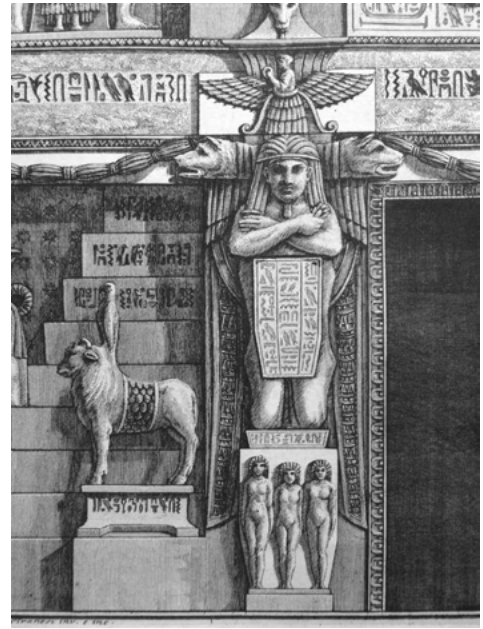
cal sources. For instance, one object taken from Caylus was a small amulet with what is now known to be a depiction of the triad of Isis, Horus, and Nephthys (fig. 2). The group is described as »trois Figures absolument nues«, most likely representing »Prêtres«.<sup>45</sup> A rare example of a statue group depicting an embracing man and his wife inspired Caylus to suggest a semi-private context, namely that the group represented a priest and his wife or daughter. He concluded: »les Monumens Egyptiens, que ne tiennent point au culte, sont très-rares«.<sup>46</sup> The palette of interpretations was obviously limited.

Piranesi's Egyptian designs incorporated objects known not to be Egyptian, such as the Corsini Throne (see plate 31), with added hieroglyphs, based on a depiction from Gori's *Museum Etruscum* and a Persian gem from Caylus.<sup>47</sup> The Egyptian sections of the *Recueil* contain a large number of objects that were not Egyptian. Some were either mistaken by Caylus for Egyptian or perceived as Persian, Arabian, Asian, Indian or other. In fact, the Egyptian sections in *Recueil* often took on a non-Classical role, rather than an actual Egyptian one.<sup>48</sup> For the most part, Piranesi steered impressively clear of these objects, and this testifies to his stylistic and iconographical sense of what was essentially Egyptian.

The process of reproducing objects can tell us something about how the artefacts were interpreted and subsequently inserted into a larger context that had to appear well-presented and harmonious. This can be illustrated by taking a closer look at the small triad and how



3 The amulet depicted in Caylus, *Recueil*, 1762, vol. V, p. 68, plate XXII.iv



4 Detail with amulet. Giambattista Piranesi: *Diverse maniere d'adornare i cammini*, 1769, plate 36

the actual object looked in Caylus' version and finally in Piranesi's rendering (figs. 3–4).<sup>49</sup> It displays a number of modifications. In *Recueil*, the angular, slightly crude figures appear more rounded and naturalistic, while the reversed legs seem to be a plain hiccup. In Piranesi's depiction, the figures retain none of their individual Egyptian iconography, as they now feature harmonised headgear, which seems more Egyptianizing than Egyptian. The position of the legs appears varied, perhaps evoking the three graces. Some quintessential Egyptian traits remain, namely, the frontal position of the head and torso and the symmetrically placed arms. If observed in isolation, Piranesi's triad has the appearance of something Egyptian and specialists may even recognise the particular object type in question. Nevertheless, the twofold process gives way to some important clues concerning the rendering of Egyptian artworks in 18<sup>th</sup> century antiquarian works, including standardisation and adaptations to an Egyptianizing or classical format.

## THE MEANING OF HIEROGLYPHS

Piranesi copied and applied Egyptian artefacts and iconographical details into his chimneypiece designs in often meticulous detail, yet he seems to have had a markedly different

attitude towards hieroglyphic inscriptions. First and foremost, such inscriptions were clearly an integral part of the compositions, as they feature prominently in all thirteen of the Egyptian designs. Conversely, there is no use of script or wording in the non-Egyptian designs. A number of additional traits are discernible regarding the use of hieroglyphs in these plates, see for instance (see plate 33). In this design, the upper section has a horizontal panel with a rendering of a priestly procession, based on depictions by Montfaucon and Caylus, combined.<sup>50</sup> In Piranesi's version, the six main figures have been repositioned, but their shape and iconography are rather accurately reproduced. However, in between the figures two vertical hieroglyphic bands are added, which are not present in the originals. On either side of this element are two rectangular panels with a scene, that is taken from the base of one of the Colossi of Memnon.<sup>51</sup> Although the scene is identical on both sides, the inscriptions are not.<sup>52</sup> The same is true for the two Apis bulls in the lower section of the image. Here Piranesi has reproduced the animal in some detail, this time based on a depiction from one of Caylus' volumes. A large inscription in three lines, as seen on the body of the bulls, is added onto the animal, thus changing its appearance markedly.<sup>53</sup> These inscriptions are also not identical.

When looking more closely at the Egyptian plates, a similar pattern emerges. Another plate (number 14) displays a widespread use of hieroglyphic decorations (see plate 31). Here, centrally placed, we find a pyramidal field, its shape loosely based on a hieroglyphic inscription in the same format, taken from Caylus.<sup>54</sup> Only a few signs or groups of signs seem to be identical, while the remainder of the »text« is fabrication, carefully filling out the space. The same is true for the rest of the hieroglyphic bands on this plate. There are plenty of cartouches, always placed symmetrically two by two, yet in no instance are the signs within the ovals the same.

Piranesi's command of these invented hieroglyphic texts clearly varied along with the models he was emulating. A »lintel«, on Egyptian plate 32, located below the panel with the priestly procession, is unmistakably based on a line of inscription from Caylus (see plate 33).<sup>55</sup> Although not an exact copy, Piranesi's signs feature the same sketchy and sloping outlines as the image in *Recueil*. However, these rather poorly understood shapes stand in contrast to the majority of Piranesi's hieroglyphs. Returning to Egyptian plate 14 and the rectangular panels on each side, it is obvious that these hieroglyphic compositions draw on monumental inscriptions from obelisks, using the large-scale Horus figure, square *serekh*, and oval cartouche (see plate 31). Albeit differently arranged, the reproduction of the shapes comes quite close to the originals.

The Vatican »Stanza dei Papiri«, c. 1771 by Raphael Mengs is conceptually and chronologically linked to Piranesi and *Diverse maniere*.<sup>56</sup> The room was furnished to house a number of Christian papyri held in the Bibliotheca Vaticana. The decorations combine allegorical, Biblical, and Egyptian motifs. The latter was used in order to create architectural framings around the pictorial components. While the decoration of the room does not draw directly from Piranesi's design, some similarities do exist as to their use and application of

hieroglyphs. Four Antinous figures and flanking lions or sphinxes are decorated with hieroglyphs inscriptions. Mengs made use of carefully placed and individually composed inscriptions. Through this, the sculptures (and the inscriptions) take on an antiquarian dimension. They appear both more authentic, personalized, and of course, Egyptianized. An entirely different solution was used in the Sala Egizia in the Villa Borghese (c. 1778–1782, by Tommaso Conca and Antonio Asprucci). Here the inscriptions are applied as monumental bands, comprised of symmetrically arranged, identical sequences of signs. At least five different sequences of signs are used. The result is very ornamental and stiff, and the signs and their organisation are also more fanciful and disorganised.

By looking at Piranesi's work on hieroglyphs, we can get an isolated, yet potent impression of his talent for observation. His understanding of how and where to place the inscriptions in relation to larger figures is masterful, and even more so is his insight into the signs themselves: their relative size, their spacing, how they were organised in groups, and finally, how the texts functioned both horizontally and vertically. Piranesi also seems to have understood that the writing was a »mixture« of figurative signs, such as humans and birds, and more abstract forms, and to some degree also how they would typically have alternated. Piranesi's acute perception of the nature of the Egyptian style is perhaps better understood if we also consider how he made use of hieroglyphs.

Piranesi was uninterested in conveying those inscriptions that he superimposed on his designs with any exactness, but even so, he came much closer to understanding the spatiality and appearance of the script than many contemporary antiquarians and travellers. Piranesi's remark on Egyptian monuments, »no ornaments are seen on them but hieroglyphics«, seems to indicate that he was aware that some Egyptian decorations were of a figurative nature, while some were scriptural. This seem perhaps self-evident today, yet in the 18<sup>th</sup> century this distinction was only beginning to emerge. In Erik Iversen's survey of the decipherment, traveler Carsten Niebuhr is said to »be the first to draw a clear distinction between ordinary pictures and graphic hieroglyphs« and »he also made the observation that the signs could be written in either direction«.<sup>57</sup> Niebuhr's account was published in 1774. Iversen then continues to offer an analysis of Piranesi's *Diverse maniere* without any mention of his use of hieroglyphs.

Piranesi could, of course, not read hieroglyphs. Attempts to decipher the hieroglyphs had, by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, reached its final unsuccessful century. Some decipherment work was going on, but the century was also marked by an attitude of scepticism whether if it was really worth the effort. In the words of Erik Iversen »hardly one single serious attempt« was made in the realm of hieroglyphic studies during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>58</sup> Upon the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in 1799, a renewed direction in hieroglyphic studies was taken. Judging from the »Apologetical Essay«, Piranesi had little to say about hieroglyphs except that they were found on buildings, and he had nothing to say about decipherment.

Decipherment or not, hieroglyphs constituted a cultural marker that unambiguously connoted ancient Egypt, but in which way? Ephraim Chambers' definition is a textbook

formulation and symptomatic for the period: »Hieroglyphics, a Symbol, or Mystic Figure, used among the antient Egyptians, to cover or conceal the Secrets of their Theology«. <sup>59</sup> The same ideas are present in many other sources from the period, understanding the hieroglyphs as something which *per se* radiated a lost and mysterious past. <sup>60</sup> Piranesi's wish for ornaments other than »hieroglyphics« and his preference for »caprices« rather than »mysteries« is contrary to his extensive use of hieroglyphs. <sup>61</sup> Even if he did consider hieroglyphs mere ornaments, they still connoted Egyptianess and in this way they aided in making the images even more Egyptian.

## MERGING CULTURES

Solid reference to Antinous is found on the three plates which feature only minor Egyptian stylistic elements (numbers 23, 49 and 52). The Egyptian component is the same in all three designs: two males, standing back to back, separated by a narrow band or pillar. The figures are in a striding pose and crowned with a lotus flower, suggesting the Antinous Telamon as the main sources of inspiration. In two of the designs, the figures are holding a staff. This feature occurs in the Mensa Isiaca, yet it could also be a nod to the Antinous Casali. <sup>62</sup>

»Each nation has its own, from which it is not lawful to deviate«, Piranesi writes. <sup>63</sup> These particular plates were an attempt to combine stylistic elements from different cultures, rather than to separate and distinguish between them. <sup>64</sup> However, it should not escape us, which Egyptian elements were considered most applicable for such a cultural blending. Piranesi's choice of Antinous is very consistent with the prevailing taste of his time. Egyptianizing statues of Antinous were highly coveted as models for recreations in the »Egyptian style«. Examples are abundant, beginning from the Renaissance onwards and blooming in particular in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Winckelmann described the *griechische Stil* of these Antinous statues and considered it to be *eine Nachahmung der Ägypter*. <sup>65</sup> The figure had all the potential of cultural intermediacy. <sup>66</sup> The third volume of Caylus' *Recueil*, from 1759, displays an allegorical frontispiece of the revealing of a statue modelled on Antinous, its appearance being »sous la forme d'une Figure Egyptienne« (fig. 5). <sup>67</sup> Antinous was the quintessential representative for Egypt, one of aesthetically appealing qualities, complete with its combination of Egyptian iconography and pose and Classical style and grace. The figure employs the full human form and has little to do with the »brutes, and monsters«, i.e. animals and anthropomorphic hybrids that otherwise adorn the Egyptian designs of *Diverse maniere*. <sup>68</sup> As was so often the case in the reinterpretation of Egyptian art, 18<sup>th</sup> century artists preferred Egyptian iconography to Egyptian style, and Egyptianizing was preferred to Egyptian. The use of Antinous, known in the period to be Egyptianizing and not Egyptian, was a way of adapting to a classical format.



5 Frontispiece from Caylus, *Recueil*, 1759, vol. III

## A FOOD CHAIN OF OBJECTS – SELECTION AND CODIFICATION

The antiquarian image serves to offer a first distinction, namely that of authenticity. Every object in an antiquarian publication should (in theory at least) be an actual ancient object. The authentic »Egyptianess« that Piranesi borrowed from Caylus and others ensured a scholarly solidity to his own work – his novel recreations were borne out of a »great and serious study« of the »remains of ancient monuments«, as he states.<sup>69</sup>

Outside the original context of *Diverse maniere*, the distinction between ancient and modern might be less easily observed. In *Monumens Egyptiens consistant en obelisques, pyramides, chambres sepulcrales, statues d'idoles et de pretres, en momies, en grand nombre de divinités de cette nation, en bas-reliefs, en sacrifices, en animaux qu'elle adorait* from 1791, Piranesi's Egyptian designs resurfaced.<sup>70</sup> Publishers were Jean Bouchard and Joseph Gravier,



two highly productive French printers based in Rome, where their shop functioned as a meeting place for Grand Tour travelers. Today, Bouchard et Gravier, are primarily known as the printers of Piranesi's etchings in the early years of his production.<sup>71</sup>

*Monumens Egyptiens* is a two-volume folio, equipped with 200 plates and an accompanying text. Both volumes are fully dedicated to the subject of Egyptian antiquities. The reader of *Monumens Egyptiens* is informed on the title page that the publication contains »deux cens planches avec leurs explications historiques«. The mention of »historical explanations« signals an antiquarian volume with the requisite apparatus. Even though each one of the plates is individually numbered and customized for the publication, they do look strangely familiar. The plain and simple answer to this is: *Monumens Egyptiens* is a scrapbook, entirely made up of images copied from earlier prints.

The visual selection offered in the compilation delineates a complex landscape, with images copied from various genres – spanning over two centuries. The earliest works range from Egyptian monuments taken from Athanasius Kircher's mid-17<sup>th</sup> century publications to a catalogue of statues from Roman collections, *Raccolta di statue antiche e moderne*, from 1704, by Domenico de Rossi, and also includes plates from the imaginative architect, Fischer von Erlach's *Entwurf einer Historischen Architektur*, 1721. The Egyptianizing designs from Piranesi's *Diverse maniere*, are among some of the latest sources used for the compilation. Less surprising, *Monumens Egyptiens* also contains a substantial number of images taken from the works of Bernard de Montfaucon, Comte de Caylus and Johann Joachim Winckelmann.

Mapping the sources of *Monumens Egyptiens* can shed light on the circulation of antiquarian visual sources in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Most perplexing perhaps, is the use of the Egyptian designs from *Diverse maniere*, which are now revived, in the form of clippings, showing only selected fragments of the original compositions. There are ten such clippings.<sup>72</sup> In the first occurrence, there is no mention of Piranesi in the accompanying caption, although in the next instance, we are told: »C'est dans Piranesi qu'on trouve cette belle composition, mais sans aucune explication.«<sup>73</sup> It can be deduced from the captions that the designs are, on the one hand, understood as »compositions« made by Piranesi but, on the other hand, that they are also ancient artefacts subject to classification. In *Diverse maniere*, Piranesi created an Egyptianizing style by combining ancient Egyptian artefacts. In *Monumens*, these designs were once again turned into Egyptian monuments – in this particular case, the small triad was reproduced for the third time (fig. 6). Considering the poor quality of the volumes themselves and the amount of publications coming from the print shop of Bouchard et Gravier we may not give too much weight to this peculiar reuse of Piranesi's compositions. Nevertheless, it points to the antiquarian quality embedded in *Diverse maniere*. It may also raise the question as to how Piranesi's designs were understood. Due to the limited knowledge about Egyptian art in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the general reader was probably not equipped to decipher what was Ancient Egyptian and what was Piranesi.

What was represented in Piranesi's *Diverse maniere*, and recycled in *Monumens* in fact stood at the end of a much longer food chain. Piranesi chose his objects especially from



6 Design from Piranesi's *Cammini* reproduced in *Monumens Egyptiens*, 1791, vol. I, plate 21

Caylus' volumes. The objects published by Caylus, mostly stemming from his own private collection, must also have been the result of a selection process based on whatever pieces were made available to him.<sup>74</sup> The material accessible to Caylus was again determined by which objects had filtered into Europe during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries or earlier. This, once more, again depended on what was found (or not found) by locals in Egypt and subsequently sold off to traders and travelers. To this can be added the Egyptian objects found in Roman contexts outside Egypt.

These selection processes logically had an impact on the visual presence of Egypt in Europe. The mechanisms behind this process are not easily traced, but they obviously combined long-established behavior patterns with projected ideas about what was quintessentially Egyptian and, in the end, the sheer availability of objects at various archaeological

sites. This selection process clearly played an important part in the creation of a codified image of Egypt, where particular objects were preferred over others and particular traits were considered more Egyptian than others.<sup>75</sup>

In this period, most travelers still only visited Lower Egypt. The majority of objects acquired therefore came from this northern region, Saqqara in particular. A case in point could be the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia, 1761–1767. This group of travelers spent close to a year in Egypt, engaging with Antiquity and antiquities in a number of ways. Monuments were seen and studied in the streets of Cairo, while mummies, reliefs, and other items were purchased directly from local peasants in Saqqara. In Alexandria and Cairo, European representatives played a key part in procuring and displaying antiquities to other Europeans. The local Egyptians knew that ancient artefacts could be used as tools of communication. The expedition's cartographer and sole survivor, Carsten Niebuhr (died 1815), received a fine scarab as gift from a local sheik in the Delta. Finally: objects encountered in Egypt were believed to be Egyptian or at least ancient. For that reason, Niebuhr brought home six small antiquities, two of which are now known to be European productions from the Middle Ages and Renaissance respectively.<sup>76</sup>

All of these objects were part of a negotiation process, whereby items were defined and presented by someone and subsequently selected for purchase. The Danish expedition had a limited budget and no formal assignment to acquire particular antiquities, a factor which must also be considered as being central to the selection process. Quality and price were intimately linked.

Portable, figurative objects, such as shabtis (often referred to as »idols«) and bronze deities, were popular. Last but not least, an object's physical ability to survive also played a part. Organic and fragile objects were probably less likely to be selected or, if so, they would perhaps disintegrate, while objects in Egyptian faience, metal and stone fared better. All of these factors are discernable from the artefacts presented in Caylus' volumes.

Frederik Ludvig Norden and the English traveler Richard Pococke were among the few travelers that ventured south of Cairo. While Norden is known to have brought home only a single antiquity, a canopic jar, now in the National Museum of Denmark<sup>77</sup>, Pococke acquired objects in several places. Some sculptures came from an »Italian Merchant« in Cairo, while a group of small terracottas originated from Coptos, north of Luxor. Items were »found« and »bought« at this location, seemingly as part of a presentation offered to Pococke by locals.<sup>78</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In the apologetical essay of *Diverse maniere*, Piranesi demonstrates the visual impact of Egyptian art, that which is »distinguished from all the rest«. The defence was intended to speak up against the common opinion and the idea that Egyptian and Tuscan art was infe-

rior to Greek art. Piranesi's perception of, and promotion of Egyptian art was unusually positive and nuanced. However, the Egyptian style plays a crucial part in the argumentation, especially to underline how Tuscan art was much closer to Greek art than had been previously acknowledged. Egyptian art, also in the view of Piranesi, was singular, unique and easily differentiated. Its habitual role as »the other« was thus confirmed.

The *Diverse maniere* drew on antiquarian sources, in the case of the Egyptian plates almost exclusively on Caylus' *Recueil*. Although the aim of *Diverse maniere* was not to present antiquities, it does draw on similar principles and in at least one instance the publication was used to provide source material for a new antiquarian compilation.

Piranesi's close dependency on Caylus led to the creation of a series on unusual designs, which broke new ground. To a large degree, the designs do not display a fancied or imagined Egypt, but something created from original monuments. The result was so convincing and the creational process behind it seemingly so simple (copy and paste), that scholars have tended to overlook the choices and alterations that likewise took place. A key choice was the use of the Antinous figure as intermediary between the Egyptian and Classical style. Furthermore, objects were not only copied and reduplicated, but also submitted to alterations that made them either more »Egyptian« or »Classical«.

Piranesi's selection of objects, keeping Caylus' somewhat more »fluffy« classifications in mind, was diligently done, as was his use of fabricated hieroglyphs. Both aspects demonstrate Piranesi's acute sense of the nature of the Egyptian style and in this he surpassed many of his contemporaries. The hieroglyphs were deciphered less than a century after Piranesi published his *Diverse maniere*. From then onwards the study of Egypt was anchored in philology.

The processes regarding the selection of objects and their subsequent codification have been briefly touched upon in this contribution. It is obvious that the objects (and their visual representation) constituted a smaller fraction of the typological and chronological palette that would be available to scholars and artist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The material available to Piranesi was, in turn, much more extensive than that of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Many factors governed the assemblages of the 18<sup>th</sup> century as well as how they were interpreted, and most of which revolved around circulating ideas of the Egyptians as cult-ridden and esoteric. Piranesi spoke against these presumptions and tried to create mere »caprices«. The rule of the capriccio is to make the familiar appear strange and new. From this perspective the Egyptian designs of *Diverse maniere* are not Egyptomania, but merely a stylistic expression alongside others. An expression which was not justified by its ability to please. In the defence Piranesi also advocates the idea to embrace and apply styles that are not only »graceful« and »delicate«. »Even the grotesk has its beauty«, he argues.<sup>79</sup> Through this, the Egyptian culture could be presented alongside the Classical cultures from which it so obviously differed.

## THE EGYPTIAN CENTREPIECE OF THE SÈVRES MANUFACTORY

Odile Nouvel-Kammerer

*(translated by Camille Joseph)*

When Napoleon offered Tsar Alexander I the Egyptian centrepiece, expecting to turn him into an ally in his European wars, he did not make it an isolated diplomatic gift but added to it the centrepiece of the Olympic service.<sup>1</sup> Everything about the two objects was great: the dazzling technique, the time and cost of the manufacturing process, the unusual lavishness of the gift. Bringing together the two opposed themes of the East and the West was a symbolic gesture which must be understood as embedded in the complex relationship between the two monarchs, who had been nurturing rival ambitions for the Ottoman Empire since 1801. What role did Egypt play in this extraordinary gift? Was it only a reference to ancient Egypt as discovered by Bonaparte during his 1798 campaign and illustrated by Vivant Denon in his famous 1802 book? Or were there other intentions, more contemporary and hidden, behind it?

### DEFINITION

The centrepiece is an object or group of objects placed in the middle of a table.<sup>2</sup> It consists of various elements, either functional (saltcellars, mustard jars, spice boxes, oil cruets, sugar bowls, etc.) or purely decorative: animals, human figures, plants, flowers, rocks, or even fountains and waterfalls. The most sophisticated pieces also include elaborate architectural elements.<sup>3</sup> The first actual table centrepieces were both functional (to put spices within reach of the guests) and ornamental. However, during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they lost their functionality and were exclusively used to decorate ceremonial tables. They are usually made of

precious materials (gold, silver, semi-precious stones, or porcelain) and often go with a table service of equal luxury. They thus create a central space with its own unity, separated from the rest of the table, and focus the attention of the subjugated guests on the splendour displayed before them. They generally represent hunting scenes or compositions including fruit, vegetables, meat, or fish acting as reminders of sumptuous dinners. But from the 1750s onwards, architectural centrepieces appeared particularly in the form of scaled-down reproductions of ancient ruins, which were extremely popular first in Rome and later in France in the wake of the passion of some collectors for architectural models, the most famous being Louis-François Cassas.<sup>4</sup> The new table centrepieces representing ancient monuments probably found their origin in the collections of semi-precious stones that wealthy travellers would bring back from Rome. In his studio, Luigi Valadier specialised in these much sought-after objects and offered foreigners scaled-down versions of the great monuments of ancient Rome, including obelisks that could be a reference to either Rome or Egypt.<sup>5</sup> The Sèvres manufactory had mainly produced centrepieces of antique, exclusively Graeco-Roman style, for example the piece made for the wedding of the future Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette at Versailles in 1769.<sup>6</sup> It had never drawn inspiration from the monuments of ancient Egypt. However, the Berlin-based Werner und Mieth factory presented an Egyptian centrepiece in gilt bronze with patina at the wedding of Prince Wilhelm of Prussia and Maria Anna of Hesse-Homburg on 12 January 1804 which was greatly admired by all their guests.<sup>7</sup> It is in this context that Sèvres started working on the Olympic and Egyptian centrepieces.<sup>8</sup>

### THE EGYPTIAN CENTREPIECE (PLATE 34)

It all started with a letter from Bonaparte, First Consul (date uncertain, probably 1804), telling Denon of »a project to commission a beautiful porcelain service, the drawings of which would also include subjects related to the glory of the nation«. Denon answered: »The project for a porcelain service has been on my mind: out of love for my own work, I thought of painting on it the Egyptian views from my book. [...] If this idea seems analogous to your desires, Citizen Consul, I will commission reports on all the pieces of a service, will apportion the figures and will have the drawings made.«<sup>9</sup> The views mentioned by Denon were collected during the 1798 Egyptian expedition which led to two publications: in 1802, Denon published *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte*, and in 1809, Napoleon ordered the publication of *Description de l'Égypte*.<sup>10</sup> Work immediately began under the supervision of Alexandre Brongniart, director of the Sèvres manufactory since 1800. It was decided that the *surtout* would be included in a dessert service of 136 pieces (plates and other tableware), the whole set costing the exorbitant sum of 46,548.65 francs.<sup>11</sup>

While the dessert service was achieved as early as June 1806, the fabrication of the centrepiece was delayed by important technical difficulties. Denon was well aware of such

problems when he asked Brongniart in 1805: »Tell me if you can make some pure architectural forms, if in the column shafts you can preserve nicely elongated lines? Wouldn't it be possible to advantageously mix bronze and biscuit in this type of ornament? With a guaranteed success in this part, we will create a monumental *surtout*.«<sup>12</sup> In 1808, Alexandre Brongniart was still complaining about some difficulties in making the piece: »This *surtout* requires so much work, its execution in porcelain is so extremely difficult because of all its square parts that, despite sustained work, it requires and will require still much more time than planned.«<sup>13</sup> The technical challenge can be partly explained by the choice of material: by choosing white biscuit without any added colour, which was unusual for centrepieces, Brongniart ran the risk of making flaws particularly visible. It was thus necessary to have a few elements remade until a perfect result was obtained.

The emperor and Denon grew more and more impatient at such slow progress, especially since the piece was meant to be presented to Tsar Alexander, as specified in a report to Brongniart: »This is what provoked Monsieur Denon's deep dissatisfaction about the time still needed to achieve the Egyptian temple. He fears the Emperor would be offended and that it would have very unpleasant consequences for everyone, considering His Majesty promised the temples to the Emperor of Russia at the battle of Austerlitz (the 2nd of December 1805), over a year ago. [...] Monsieur Denon would like to double the means so that they can be completed promptly.«<sup>14</sup> The service and the centrepiece finally left for Russia on 2 October 1808, some five years after the work started and over a year after Napoleon decided to give it to the tsar: »Following an order by His Majesty, which I received last 18th of September [i.e., in 1807, a year earlier and right after the treaty of Tilsitt] from M. le Grand Maréchal du Palais, and which you are aware of, the service should be sent as a gift to Emperor Alexander, along with the Olympic service.«<sup>15</sup> A van with a special suspension system was chartered to transport the forty-four boxes. It travelled through Erfurt where Napoleon and Alexander met, but the boxes remained unpacked because of the elaborate wrapping Brongniart had insisted on. Alexander was so fascinated by the gift that he had it exposed in Saint Petersburg where he would spend hours admiring it with his court.<sup>16</sup>

What is striking about the immaculately white centrepiece is its colossal nature. It comprises a series of architectural monuments which, as Jean-Marcel Humbert has shown, are all inspired from the preliminary plates prepared for the *Description de l'Égypte*.<sup>17</sup> Denon asked Jean-Baptiste Lepère (or Le Peyre), the draughtsman in charge of the plates of the *Description*, to make the drawings for each plate of the dessert service from the views of *Voyage en Basse et Haute Égypte* and at Sèvres artists worked under his supervision.<sup>18</sup>

The centrepiece is organised around three temples. In the middle stands the Temple of Philae as represented in the *Description de l'Égypte* (plate 35).<sup>19</sup> It is in fact Trajan's Kiosk.<sup>20</sup> In his *Voyage dans la Basse et Haute Égypte*, Denon is struck by the small temple he wishes he could bring back to France: »If ever we should be disposed to transport a temple from Africa to Europe, this I am speaking of should be selected for the purpose; for besides the practicability of such an operation, it would give a palpable proof of the noble simplicity of

Egyptian architecture, and would shew in a striking manner that it is character, and not extent alone, which gives majesty to an edifice.<sup>21</sup> Around this central temple are four obelisks, each 1.26 centimetres high, with hieroglyphs written all over them. To one side of the obelisks is the temple of Denderah as represented in the *Description de l'Égypte*.<sup>22</sup> To the other is the temple of Edfou, which is remarkably preserved as Denon points out: »The village of Edfou contains two edifices [...], both so remarkably preserved that it would give a wrong impression to call them ruins; since it would suffice to remove the debris crowding them to see almost intact monuments appear. [...] This monument, one of the biggest of the Thebaid, is the most complete and well preserved of all.«<sup>23</sup> A colonnade connects each temple to a pylon against which two colossi of Memnon are leaning. An avenue of nine ram-headed sphinxes extends the perspective.<sup>24</sup> Finally, four oversized Egyptians complete the centrepiece. About the latter, Denon specifies in a letter to Brongniart: »I have imagined a charming Egyptian group, of easy execution, to carry raw, glazed or dry fruit, and which would be part of the service [of the Views of Egypt] and the *surtout's* ornamentation at the same time.«<sup>25</sup> The total length of this remarkable ensemble is 6.50 metres, placed on a 6.64 metre long steel stand.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to the *surtout* was an accompanying service of seventy-two dessert plates, designed in close collaboration between Brongniart senior, Alexandre Théodore Brongniart, and Denon (plate 36).<sup>27</sup> Each plate is decorated with views of contemporary Egypt painted by Swebach-Desfontaines which reproduce illustrations from Denon's *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte*.<sup>28</sup> The borders with a beau bleu ground bear a decorative frieze of fanciful hieroglyphs with a purely ornamental function.<sup>29</sup> The plates and other tableware are painted the same colour.

The Egyptian service and its *surtout* inspired the fabrication of others. A second service was made in 1810 at the behest of Joséphine. As compensation to their divorce, Napoleon had allocated the sum of 30,000 francs to the Empress, who then decided to commission an Egyptian service and a *surtout*. It differed from the first version because of some new plates, but the centrepiece remained identical. In 1812, as the whole set was being completed, Joséphine changed her mind and eventually refused to accept it, fearing it might be »d'un goût démodé«. The *surtout* was kept in the factory's inventory until 1815 when Louis XVIII gave it to Wellington. It is today held at Apsley House.<sup>30</sup> A third service was made between 1934 and 1938, when it was offered to the king of Egypt.<sup>31</sup>

## THE OLYMPIC CENTREPIECE

When Denon suggested to Bonaparte the manufacturing of a centrepiece of Egyptian architecture, he must have been aware that, three years earlier, Sèvres had started working on an Olympic centrepiece designed by Théodore Brongniart while his son Alexandre was director of the factory.<sup>32</sup> Until now, art historians have treated the Egyptian and the Olym-



pic centrepieces as two independent objects. It may be accurate as far as their conception is concerned, but such an approach is contradicted by Napoleon's later decisions. Several testimonies reveal that the two centrepieces have had closely intertwined stories. First of all, the Egyptian service and its centrepiece should have been presented at the 1806 Industrial Products Exhibition (*Exposition des produits de l'industrie*) along with the Olympic service.<sup>33</sup> As seen above, the delay was due to extreme difficulties in execution. Neither the Egyptian service nor the Olympic one would finally be exposed. Also, in 1806, Brongniart wrote to Daru suggesting that Napoleon wished to keep the two services for his personal use: »If the Emperor takes for his private use the services called Egyptian and Olympic, we will no longer have any beautiful service to offer as a gift.«<sup>34</sup> Eventually, as I have already mentioned, Napoleon decided to offer both services and the centrepieces to the tsar. The two services always seem to be associated one with another, making a joint study particularly accurate and significant.

The circumstances of the creation of the Olympic service and its *surtout* remain unknown (plate 37). They first appear in archival documents in the year XI (1802–1803).<sup>35</sup> The dessert service comprises sixty-eight plates all painted with mythological scenes. It was presented at the annual exhibition of the production of the Sèvres manufactory in May 1806. The pieces were all sent to the inventory on 31 December 1806.<sup>36</sup> Alexandre Brongniart entrusted his father with designing the whole set – service and *surtout* –, as shown by several drawings signed by the latter.<sup>37</sup>

The centrepiece is composed of sculptures alternating with plates and other tableware. In the middle, on a chariot drawn by two strong oxen, stands a throne with Ceres and Bacchus sitting side by side. Ceres is wearing a wheat crown and holding a large cornucopia filled with fruit; with a crown of vine leaves on his head, Bacchus is holding a thyrsus and embracing Ceres (fig. 1).<sup>38</sup> The chariot's platform is decorated with a frieze of putti; they are represented as labourers on Ceres's side, while on Bacchus's side, they are picking grapes. Behind the scene, an ancient sacrifice is represented. The two deities and the two oxen are made of pristine white biscuit, while their attributes, the chariot and the throne, are enhanced in gold.<sup>39</sup> Before and after the chariot stand two high columns (1.26 metre), one surmounted by Apollo, crowned with the sun and holding his lyre, the other by Diana with her bow and quiver and a moon crescent on her head. At the base of the columns is a frieze showing various figures on a red background.<sup>40</sup> Brongniart's drawing reveal that the piece originally included four antique altars with the medallion portraits of Flora, Ceres, Bacchus and Saturn, but they were not executed in the end. The altars would have alternated with large flower basins decorated with butterflies on »a red and sky blue ground«.<sup>41</sup> All these elements are placed on a rectangular stand, whose borders present a series of ornamental vases of antique form with »dolphin handles ›beau-bleu‹ ground in four forms«.<sup>42</sup> Finally, at each extremity of the table, three Graces in white biscuit are holding a fruit bowl »on a lapis-blue ground veined with gold«.<sup>43</sup> They are mounted on a circular stand with a border also made of small ornamental vases. Two cornucopias or rhytons in the shape of boars'



1 Model of the chariot of Bacchus

heads and decorated with putti performing various agricultural tasks were probably added to the original project and sent to the tsar.<sup>44</sup> Because the *surtout* was so difficult to arrange, Brongniart senior sent a mounting drawing to Saint Petersburg showing the disposition of the various pieces, here surrounded by a double row of plates and compote dishes (plate 38).

Before leaving Paris, the *service olympique* and its *surtout* were used on 23 August 1807 at the marriage of Napoleon's brother, Jérôme Bonaparte, to Catharina of Württemberg, first cousin to Tsar Alexander I. The wedding took place at the Tuileries, but the tsar did not attend because of disrupted diplomatic relations between France and Russia at the time.<sup>45</sup>

At Napoleon's request, the service was sent to Russia in late September 1807, a year before the Egyptian service, in a van with special suspension and was delivered in perfect condition.

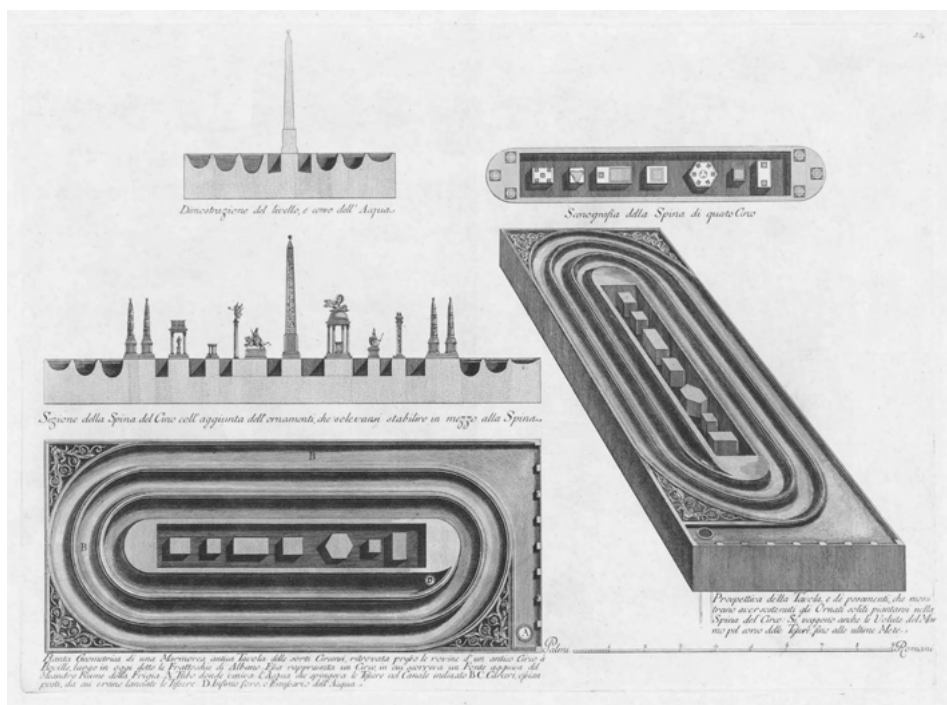
## THE SURTOUT ÉGYPTIEN, MIRROR TO THE SURTOUT OLYMPIQUE

As seen above, both pieces were conceived independently of one another and yet, their histories are inextricably linked as much by the technical prowess required to manufacture them as by the emperor's decision to present them together in 1806, to keep them for

personal use and to finally have them sent to the tsar. There is probably no other example of a diplomatic gift including two centrepieces. Such has been the singular fate of these major masterpieces which have Egypt facing Rome, much like twins. Their complex interactions are worth examining if we are to discover what they meant to those who were able to see them together.

The emperor's liberalities were obviously political as he hoped to seek the tsar's favour to let him carry out his conquests. There was continuous competition between the two monarchs in the form of diplomatic gifts. Napoleon wanted to show the superiority of French luxury goods. He knew he could count as much on Brongniart's innovative creations as on the exceptional carefulness of execution of the manufactory's artists. He was well aware that the two centrepieces were not destined to be both used during the same ceremonial dinner and was therefore hoping they would be exposed together in Saint Petersburg and would call for the court's admiration of the sensational craftsmanship of the workers at Sèvres, whose production he always insisted should always stand as the most magnificent in Europe.<sup>46</sup> Beyond these strategic considerations, there are political symbols at the core of the centrepieces' manufacturing process. First, they both work as reminders of the successful military campaigns led by the young Bonaparte in 1798. For the emperor as well as for many others, there was a persistent parallel between Egypt and Italy, as expressed by Daru: »M. Denon, who is travelling through the battlefields of Italy to draw sketches and maps that will match his Egyptian atlas, will produce a work further emulating painters and engravers.«<sup>47</sup> It is not difficult to imagine that Napoleon wanted to preserve the memories of these campaigns by keeping the drawings for his personal use. In Denon's mind, the choice of Egypt was a perfect response to Napoleon's explicit demand for »subjects related to national glory«.<sup>48</sup> The goal was to immortalise the great cultural achievements of the expedition which, even though it was a military defeat, shed light on the important role of Egyptian civilisation as the founding stone of Graeco-Roman culture. Also, Egypt turned into a mythical objective as part of Napoleon's great »Oriental dream«: even though France lost the country to Britain in 1801 before regaining it in 1805, Egypt still represented a key challenge of the emperor's hesitant and contradictory policy towards the Ottoman empire as illustrated by treaties signed successively with the Porte and Russia, whose conflicting interests were well known. The objective was to win it back from the British and gain control over the most efficient trade routes with the Far East. There is implicit mention of such plan in the treaty of Tilsit when Napoleon and Alexander agreed on a possible partition of the Ottoman empire.<sup>49</sup> It was precisely during those events and negotiations that Napoleon decided to offer the *surtout égyptien* to the Tsar.

As for the *surtout olympique*, the memory of the campaigns of Italy were still very much alive when Brongniart started working on the piece: the manufacturing of the centrepiece began only two years after the Luneville peace treaty, and everyone still had in mind the triumphal procession accompanying the arrival of the Italian works of art brought back from the first campaign in July 1798. Napoleon's choice to have the precious French porcelain



2 Bovillae centrepiece by Gio Battista Piranesi, *Vasi, candelabri, cippi, sarcofagi, tripodi, lucerne, ed ornamenti antichi disegnati ed incisi*, Vol. I, Rome, 1778–1780

transported by van to Saint Petersburg to display reproductions of famous Egyptian masterpieces perhaps echoed, if only implicitly, the coffers of antique works of art crossing the Alps, thus confirming that Paris was now the new Rome from which travelled immortal works. Besides, Brongniart may have had in mind the great revolutionary and consular celebrations with long parades, erections of columns or of antique temples. The celebrations took place at the Champs de Mars, the Circus Maximus of the era. Brongniart senior, who supported the new political regime, had participated in those popular ceremonies, described them enthusiastically and even designed projects for some.<sup>50</sup> The shape of the dinner table called for a comparison with Roman circuses, as shown by the mounting drawing made by Brongniart and sent along with the *surtout* to Saint Petersburg. The reference to the ceremonial places of ancient Rome was an all the more appropriate choice since it contributed to legitimate the Roman parentage claimed by the Napoleonic regime, which was clearly visible in all the decorative arts of the Consulat and the Empire.<sup>51</sup> Brongniart was not alone in making this formal correspondence and may have drawn inspiration from many different sources. However, one cannot help but think of a particular plate published in

Giovanni Battista Piranesi's famous *Vasi, candelabri, cippi, sarcophagi* (fig. 2).<sup>52</sup> As a cultured architect with an interest in his contemporaries' works, Brongniart senior must have known about Piranesi's book, especially since another plate represents rhytons that are quite similar to the ones he designed for the *surtout olympique*.<sup>53</sup> The plate's caption is particularly interesting: »Geometric plan of an antique relief in marble representing drawing lots at the circus, found near the vestiges of an ancient circus at Bovillae, today known as the Frattocchie di Albano. It represents a circus in which flowed a spring like that of the Meander, river of Phrygia. A: Tube with water to drive tokens down along sloping canal; B C: Enclosures, that is, places to throw the tokens from; D: Tiny hole, or water emissary.«<sup>54</sup> Bovillae is no coincidence: this small town located on the Via Appia south of Rome was said to be the original place of the gens Julia, the family that Augustus descended from. Three years after Augustus's death, Tiberius decided to celebrate his illustrious predecessor by building a sanctuary dedicated to the gens Julia, together with a theatre and, more importantly, a circus, one of the largest in the Roman empire, where ceremonial games in Augustus's honour, the *Ludi Augustales*, took place.<sup>55</sup> The place quickly sank into oblivion but probably haunted memories until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century because of its Augustinian symbolic power.<sup>56</sup> Brongniart may have been particularly interested in the Roman reference in the caption accompanying Piranesi's engraving. When Bonaparte self-proclaimed himself as emperor in 1804, he claimed an Augustinian heritage and presented himself as the political and cultural heir to the Roman emperor. The regime's official architects, Charles Percier and Pierre François Léonard Fontaine, who were close to Brongniart, were put in charge of creating architectural environments and interiors to remind people of that divine descent and would constantly design decorations and ornaments of palaces and buildings referring to Rome's grandeur. Brongniart's choice of the circus theme could not have been more political.

Even more so, Piranesi's engraving put forward a major theme in the conception of centrepieces: the island. Placed in the middle of the table, the centrepiece structurally creates a separate, slightly higher space, closed in on itself. There are three successive circles unfolding from this central island: first, the plates and other tableware (various dishes, sugar bowls, etc.), slightly lower than those of the centrepiece, then the plate service, and finally the guests themselves, who are an integral part of the scene and establish a boundary with the rest of the world, to which they are turning their backs. They ensure insularity, their eyes converging at the *surtout* whose dimensions do not allow for conversation with the people sitting on the other side. Piranesi's centrepiece is an island structured by a water circuit originating at a fountain fed by the Meander, a river often celebrated by ancient writers for its sinuous course.<sup>57</sup> In Graeco-Roman culture, the island of Delos provides a mythical origin to the theme of insularity as the safe haven where Leto gave birth to the twins Dionysus/Apollo and Artemis/Diana. During the Enlightenment, the island was the place where philosophers would go to reflect; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for example, compares it to a paradise in his *Fifth Walk of the Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, even though he eventually asked to be buried at the island of Poplars in Ermenonville.<sup>58</sup> In Rome, the mysterious

»maritime theatre« at Hadrian's villa, with its annular canal, is another legendary example of a retreat away from the world where the emperor and his closest friends would go to spend idyllic days.<sup>59</sup> Since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, many different forms of insularity have been used to arrange and design homes, the most architectural manifestation being the panoramic wallpapers which appeared in France around 1800; the papers would turn the room into an island surrounded by an idyllic wall-covering landscape.<sup>60</sup> It is therefore no surprise that the two centrepieces would reflect that new fashion. The presence of Apollo and Diana at the top of the *surtout olympique*'s columns and of their mythical parents, Ceres and Bacchus, on the central chariot in the middle of a *Circus Maximus*, was an implicit reference to the island of Delos. In fact, many ancient writers considered it to be a floating island that could move. It was not unique: the island of Chemmis, located on the Nile, had also been described by Herodotus as a floating island and compared to Delos, as it was there that Apollo took refuge thanks to Isis's care.<sup>61</sup> It is possible that Brongniart knew about Larche's important translation of Herodotus's *Histories* in which one can read this peculiar passage. It refers to transportation, a theme already present in the Egyptian monuments which were brought back to adorn the main squares of European capitals. Finally, the theme of the island is also developed in the Egyptian centrepiece: the great Philae temple was built in the centre of the island bearing its name and which Denon describes as »an enchanting island«.<sup>62</sup>

I am not suggesting that there was an explicit intention to transform the movable centrepieces into obvious references to insularity and floating islands. But while there is no testimony supporting this hypothesis, one cannot entirely discard the fact that late 18<sup>th</sup> century mentalities were quite ready to make comparisons and analogies and could have therefore established implicit correlations between the islands and the centrepieces, as suggested by Piranesi.

Furthermore, architectural theories may have influenced the comparison drawn between the two centrepieces. Their architectural and urban features are reminiscent of the collections of architectural models which became extremely fashionable in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in particular that of Louis-François Cassas. His collection, which he started assembling in 1794, comprised about 80 plaster models and was exposed rue de Seine, Paris, in 1806, before it was acquired by the State in 1813.<sup>63</sup> The considerable enthusiasm for those collections reflects the heated debates among learned society about the origins of architecture to decide who, the Egyptians or the Greeks, had been the most creative. It is in this context that the two centrepieces were paired. Quatremère de Quincy was one of the major protagonists in the discussion on the superiority of Egyptian or Greek architecture. In his famous work, *On Egyptian Architecture (De l'architecture égyptienne)*, published in 1803, a year after Denon's *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte*, he defended the superiority of the latter.<sup>64</sup> Quatremère acknowledges that the Egyptians invented architecture, but he considers the repetitive and systematic forms of their buildings to be simplistic, which he links to the dark cave and underground nature which was then associated with Egyptian art. On the contrary, Greece had elaborated a complex architecture ruled

by precise aesthetic canons flourishing in full light. As for Denon, who was still very much impressed by the discoveries he had made during his trip, he argued for the supremacy of Egyptian architecture and claimed that »the Greeks have never devised nor executed anything in a grander style«. <sup>65</sup> He believed that Egypt had to be rehabilitated as the mother of arts since it accounted for all the constructive inventions that Greece merely built on and developed without any true creative genius. The two men aimed to demonstrate the simplicity of each culture's architecture, Denon taking most singular and unusual liberties to do so in his descriptions.

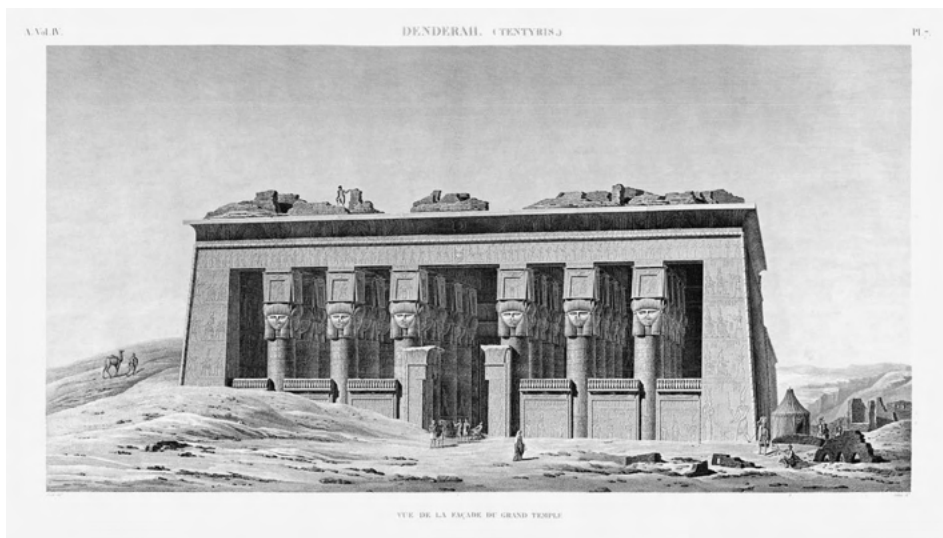
To convince his contemporaries of the superior nature of Egyptian architecture, Denon could play on two aspects of the piece: the *surtout*'s height and its whiteness. Let us start with the height of the pieces. Two oversized, 54-centimetre-high Egyptians are standing between the *surtout* and the dessert service (plate 39). They are dominating the two temples and seem to break the rules of verisimilitude; but Denon provides an explanation as to their unrealistic dimensions when he describes the emotion he felt as he discovered Denderah: »In the ruins of Tentyra, the Egyptians appeared to me giants.« <sup>66</sup> With their fixed poses of Egyptian figures, they seem to belong to ancient history. But they are also turning their backs to the temples and offering an abundance of fresh fruit to the guests of the present time. They might metaphorically express the grandeur and prosperity of Egyptian culture. Let us now examine the issue of the whiteness of the pieces. The power of the *surtout égyptien* lies as much in the simplicity of the forms as in its solar and radiating whiteness. Whether in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or today, it allows us to feel the physical and spiritual shock experienced by Denon. By speaking to the senses, the simple forms and surreal white of the paste go against Quatremère's theories of the dark cave associated with the Egyptians. <sup>67</sup> The Egyptian centrepiece may have thus been a way for Denon to rectify the injustice of attributing to the Greeks what was in fact due to the Egyptians. To finish convincing his contemporaries of the value of Egyptian architecture, Denon chose the most prestigious buildings and those that looked »new«. His notes reveal the shock he felt in their presence: the temple of Denderah is described as »the most magnificent monument of Egyptian architecture« (*»monument le plus magnifique de l'architecture égyptienne«*) <sup>68</sup> and the temple of Edfou is »the most complete and well preserved« (*»le plus complet et le mieux préservé«*) of all the Thebaid's monuments. <sup>69</sup> Denon goes as far as to suggest »transporting a temple from Africa to Europe«, that of Philae: »Besides the practicability of such an operation afforded by its small dimensions, it would give a palpable proof of the noble simplicity of Egyptian architecture, and would shew, in a striking manner, that it is character and not extent alone, which gives dignity to an edifice.« <sup>70</sup> On the Egyptian centrepiece, the temples show absolutely no sign of deterioration, no trace which could either suggest they are vestiges or lessen their eternal nature. Not only did Denon choose to represent them as if they had just been erected, but he also made sure to avoid giving them their original sand colour. At the time, the bright white paste, which was difficult to obtain, was the main object of competition between porcelain manufactories, Sèvres claiming superiority over Meissen. At Sèvres, the

*surtout égyptien* was the first piece to be ever made in such a dazzling monochromy, the goal of which was to suggest the universal and atemporal nature of the original architectures, i.e. that they were neither historically nor spatially situated. They belong to the *hic et nunc*, whether in antiquity or in the present time, in Paris or in Saint Petersburg. As for the *surtout olympique*, it balances out this sublime vision of Egypt: it is coloured, except for Ceres's chariot, which is made in white biscuit. A comparison between the small-sized obelisks of the Egyptian centrepiece (0.685 metre, i.e. about 1.40 metre above the ground when set on the table) and the two impressive columns of Apollo and Diana (1.26 metres high and 2 metres above the ground when set on the table) reveals that height was indeed a sign of superiority. But is it an expression of the superiority of the Graeco-Roman world over Egypt? Was it Brongniart senior's way to take revenge on Denon?

One may ask about the presence of Gods in the centrepieces. A decorative centrepiece is not to be touched but contemplated by the guests, whose bodies remain at a distance, in contrast with the other pieces of the service, which are made to be handled.<sup>71</sup> The whole piece is therefore very solemn, almost sacred, and participates in reinforcing the liturgical nature of any ceremonial dinner.

The monumental piece of the *surtout égyptien* is silent, there is no narrative to give it life, so much so that even the characters represented on the plates of the *Description*, who served as inspiration for the piece, have been systematically left out (fig. 3). The plates of the dessert service are made alive with familiar pictures of contemporary daily life. The two gigantic Egyptians are positioned in such a way that they establish a link between the centrepiece and the service; they symbolically act as intermediaries between Egyptian antiquity and the present time, providing access to the idealised world of ancient civilisations. On the contrary, the Olympic centrepiece tells a story and shows movement: on the central chariot, Bacchus has his arms tenderly wrapped around Ceres's shoulders, while on the top of the two columns, Diana is dancing and holding her bow towards Apollo, who is pointing at her. At the bottom, some mythological characters are parading. The altars which were initially included in Brongniart senior's project are decorated with various deities. The project for the centrepiece explicitly stages dialogues between all these characters (plate 37). The service plates represent variations on lively, mythological stories. Therefore, the service and the centrepiece offer a glimpse on an assembly of characters, with a reference to the banquet of the gods of Olympus which the guests of the ceremonial dinner attend symbolically. The special connection between humans and gods and the luxurious execution of the piece may explain why Napoleon, who was deeply committed to symbols, chose this service to celebrate the marriage of his brother Jérôme to Catharina of Württemberg and to express the gods' blessing before sending it to the tsar. All the enlightened minds of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century dreamed of being transported to this mythical world.<sup>72</sup> Denon's approach is similar to that of Percier and Fontaine drawing the interiors and objects that would enable their contemporaries to actually live in Augustinian Rome, and not just pretend to do so. The deities evolving in the interior decorations de-





3 Temple de Denderah, *Description de l'Égypte*, Edition Panckoucke, Paris, 1809–1828, vol. IV, pl. 7

signed by the two men during the Empire have a complex status: they are more than just copies of ancient iconography, they are actually present and well alive in the ancient atmosphere thus re-created, like dramatic actors who embody and infuse their characters with life.<sup>73</sup>

Despite the absence of narrative in the Egyptian centrepiece, the gods are present but quite differently. The Egyptian centrepiece does not show any deity, perhaps because Egyptian gods looked too sinister or even inhuman with their bizarre animal masks. However, at a symbolic level, the temples of Philae and Denderah are home to Isis, whom they are dedicated to, while that of Edfou is dedicated to Horus, son of Isis.<sup>74</sup> In the Olympic centrepiece, Ceres, Bacchus, Diana and Apollo were chosen to celebrate the pleasures of the ceremonial dinner. According to the *interpretatio graeca* initiated by Herodotus, which the learned men and women of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were well aware of, Isis is assimilated to Ceres and Horus to Apollo.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, the four obelisks around Philae temple deserve consideration since they take up an aberrant position and should have been in front of each pylon. They are more reminiscent of the Iseum on the Campius Martius in Rome, as it was thought to be in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, rather than of the temple on the island of Philae, where there was no obelisk.<sup>76</sup> Emphasis is thus put on Isis/Ceres. Throughout the French revolutionary and imperial period, the goddess of fertility had been assimilated to the goddess of Reason. Decorated with garlands of flowers and wheat sheaves, her statue was paraded during popular processions and became the object of a secular cult at the same time as that of the Supreme Being.<sup>77</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, numerous treaties mentioned the unique

place that the cult of Isis had in French history and dated it back from early Gaul.<sup>78</sup> Under the Empire, when Napoleon decided to grant cities the privilege of obtaining coats of arms, which the revolutionaries had done away with, the city of Paris explicitly chose to refer to Isis, as testified by the memoir written by the Commission in charge of justifying the new coat of arms: »The arms of Paris are in relation with the cult of Isis, which was once universally common in the Gauls.« As for the decree allowing for the creation of the arms, it specified: »*De gueules, au vaisseau antique, la proue chargée d'une figure d'Isis, assise, d'argent soutenu d'une mer de même, et adextré en chef d'une étoile aussi d'argent.*«<sup>79</sup>

In the absence of representations of Isis in the Egyptian centrepiece, the three temples become suffused with a mysterious aura, reinforcing the abstract image of Egyptian religion which had been particularly valued by freemasons since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One cannot dismiss a clear reference to freemasonry in addition to the others already mentioned. In fact, all the influential men of the Consulate and Empire times were freemasons or at least close to them. Also, Napoleon, who was suspicious towards freemasonry, finally waived a ban on it because too many members of the Egyptian expedition had rallied the various lodges which had been spreading tremendously, especially since 1804.<sup>80</sup> As for Tsar Alexander I, who may have been initiated by chamberlain Rodion Kochelev, reintroduced freemasonry in Russia in 1802 and surrounded himself with freemasonic ministers.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, the Egyptian centrepiece with clear reference to freemasonry could only consolidate the tsar's philosophical convictions.

The two centrepieces allow for a constant back and forth movement between Rome and Egypt. But it has nothing to do with the mere wandering of the mind finding pleasure in going from one ideal civilisation to another, like a traveller with a particular taste for culture. If the centrepiece had been the anecdotic description of a picturesque country, for example Egypt which had been so recently discovered, it would have included a pyramid in the middle of the temples. Can such an absence only be explained by technical motives? It is all the more unlikely as the centrepieces were already so difficult to make that adding a pyramid would not have been an obstacle. However, in Western mentalities, pyramids were considered as royal tombs and it is therefore more likely that putting a grave at the centre of a ceremonial table seemed quite impossible.<sup>82</sup>

## THE AFTERLIFE OF THE SURTOUT ÉGYPTIEN

There has been a final twist to the story of the Egyptian centrepiece. In 1978, artists Anne and Patrick Poirier created a table centrepiece at the Sèvres manufactory. Entitled *Ruines d'Égypte* (*Ruins of Egypt*), it was inspired by Denon's Egyptian centrepiece (plate 40).<sup>83</sup> After studying at the Ecole nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs in Paris, they were both fellows at the Villa Medici (1967–1972). While in Rome, they visited the ancient ruins and were struck by their evocative power which became a major element in their work. They

have developed an architectural, photographic, and archaeological approach focusing on traces and fragments as »memories« expressing the vacuums left by absence and at the same time opening new perspectives for a subliminal future, also bound to disappear. One series of works opens with a dreamlike evocation of Rome harbour, *Ostia Antica*: this terracotta model of the city is an allegorical vision of destruction and represents the absence of life. They then tackled the issue of reconstruction in *Domus Aurea*, which they chose because it was the impressive palace built by Nero after he burnt down Rome. In this context, Anne and Patrick Poirier began collaborating with Sèvres for the creation of the *Ruines d'Égypte*. They drew upon Denon's Egyptian centrepiece and even used some of its moulds. It is therefore not surprising that their work had a meaningful resonance with the *surtout*. The spirit of ancient architectural models in long succession, the prominent, immaculate whiteness of the structure, (yet subtly enhanced in gold and its pools discreetly painted in blue), the evocation of an empty world, whose humanity is only visible in the traces left by sublime monuments: all of these are signs of such correspondence. Denon selected the temples according to their documentary value, saw them as »new« and wished they could be transported to Europe as living witnesses of Egyptian culture. On the contrary, Anne and Patrick Poirier design architectures which are not identifiable and are anonymous, symbolic ruins of the decay at work in the world. The mood radiating from *Ruines d'Égypte* arises from a deep meditation on Time and provides us with a vertiginous glimpse not into a future sustained by the antique ideal, but of the destruction of a world doomed at inception. The traces left serve to awaken memory before disappearing entirely and ensure another kind of survival, a symbolic one. As a matter of fact, a few years later, Anne and Patrick Poirier worked on the central theme of Mnemosyne. In the poetics of *Ruines d'Égypte*, the artists introduced two pyramids, or immemorial tombs, each one in the middle of the two halves of the centrepiece. The whole piece is strewn with scattered fragments from mutilated statues, toppled or truncated columns, thus creating an atmosphere of inescapable annihilation. What is left of the now deformed temples is no longer dedicated to a deity, not even to Isis, who is frequently evoked by Denon. The Poiriers radically depart from him. They present a world forsaken by men and gods alike. In a way, the process of secularisation has run its course: no mythical past of any kind, whether divine or heroic, has left trace of its existence. Only stones remain. From Denon to Anne and Patrick Poirier, the *surtout* has spanned history, leaving Egypt at the origin as well as at the end of time.

At a symbolic level, Napoleon offered Tsar Alexander I his own conception of the development of Western civilisation: not only was it heir to the Graeco-Roman tradition, it held an inheritance from ancient Egypt, which was seen as both the earliest manifestation of culture and a complex nation passing through the ages on the tightrope between the East and the West. With the magnificent gift of the Egyptian and Olympic centrepieces, Napoleon maintained a continuum, a kind of lineage from which he was descended, his conquests legitimating his position of sole heir. The tsar was left with no choice but to agree with such a view which did not offer any other alternative.



## PHARAOKS, PAPYRI AND HOOKAHS

### DISPLAYING AND STAGING EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY EUROPEAN EXHIBITIONS

Cecilia Hurley

For a few months during spring and summer 1867, Paris could truly claim to be the centre of the world.<sup>1</sup> The fourth World's Fair opened its doors on April 1; by the time that they closed, seven months later, more than 7,000,000 people had come to the Champ de Mars, bought a ticket, visited the exhibition stands in the central hall and strolled in the surrounding park. Over 50,000 exhibitors representing forty-one countries had displayed their wares and their latest scientific and technological innovations to an international and diverse public. As one commentator opined, Paris became the caravanseraï for the whole world, welcoming people from many countries.<sup>2</sup> Among the many attractions that these visitors could see in the exhibition grounds was the Egyptian Park, a curious assembly of various buildings, one of which housed an interesting display of antiquities. This exhibit proved to be a winner, highly popular with a wide public but also admired by amateurs and scholars, including a professor at the Collège de France – Alfred Maury – who declared that »L'exposition égyptienne du Champ de Mars peut mieux qu'aucun musée de l'Europe donner une idée de ces nouvelles conquêtes de l'érudition et de l'art«.<sup>3</sup> These »new conquests« were, he explained, the discoveries made by archaeologists and scholars over recent years. He had outlined some in a review article some twelve years earlier; more recently, in 1865, Ernest Renan had offered a lengthy contribution concerning Auguste Mariette's excavations.<sup>4</sup>

### EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES IN EUROPE

Maury's claim was bold. By 1867 a reasonable number of European museums housed collections of Egyptian antiquities, some of which were quite important.<sup>5</sup> The three major

powers – France, Prussia and the United Kingdom – had invested considerable financial and intellectual resources in large-scale scientific and archaeological surveys in Egypt. The fruits of these expeditions were then transported back to Europe, inventoried and displayed in imposing galleries in Paris, Berlin and London. Other countries, notably Austria, Holland, Italy and Russia also possessed sizeable collections of Egyptian artefacts. In addition, there were several smaller, sometimes private, galleries and collections of these objects. Newly discovered antiquities often supplemented earlier holdings, some dating back to the early Renaissance, which had often been viewed merely as decorative, historical or curious objects.<sup>6</sup> The presence of Egyptian antiquities in Italian, more especially Roman, collections had been attested for many centuries; during the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these remnants of Egyptian civilisation were increasingly sought-after in many other European countries.<sup>7</sup> These objects were studied, drawn and reproduced, they were analysed and published and they were also displayed. Despite this rich and varied array of resources, Maury – who was by no means unacquainted with them – felt confident in asserting that the 1867 Egyptian exhibition surpassed its competitors.

When French troops entered Egypt in 1798, they were accompanied by a contingent of scholars, scientists, artists and draughtsmen whose task was to compile a survey of the country – its geography, its customs, its antiquities and its natural history. The result was the sumptuous *Description de l’Égypte*.<sup>8</sup> The French set up an Institute in Cairo along the lines of the Institute in Paris. By 1801, a small, select collection of antiquities (including the Rosetta Stone) had already been gathered together in preparation for being sent to the Musée Napoléon in Paris. The final and decisive victories of the British and their Ottoman allies over the French, followed by the capitulation of General Jacques-François Menou in September 1801, changed the destination of those objects: they were sent to London, to the British Museum, rather than to Paris.<sup>9</sup> Over the following years increasing numbers of businessmen, scholars, diplomats, travellers and tourists visited Egypt. Many acquired antiquities – with varying degrees of success. Among them were some prominent figures such as Giovanni-Battista Belzoni, Henry Salt and Bernardino Drovetti.<sup>10</sup> The fate of these collections was varied, and the history of collecting at this time abounds in telling episodes.<sup>11</sup> Large and interesting collections were assembled, and often offered to major museums or sold – sometimes *en bloc*, sometimes dispersed. Museums occasionally refused to purchase, then rapidly regretted their decision and made strenuous efforts to acquire other collections. Large sums of money exchanged hands. Rival explorers attempted to ingratiate themselves with the Egyptian ruling authorities, were ruthless in their dealings with their competitors and engaged agents to further their interests, sometimes acting outside the law.

When advising Charles X to purchase the second Salt Collection for the Louvre in 1826, Jean-François Champollion offered a precious commentary on the value and utility of museum collections. He stated that the Louvre should endeavour to acquire the most complete collection possible, and should certainly avoid a piecemeal approach to the formation of an Egyptian gallery. »Il faut s’attacher aux grands monuments et aux séries les plus complètes:

il n'est plus question, comme jadis, de composer un cabinet égyptien; l'état de la Science et ses besoins demandent qu'on crée un véritable musée d'objets égyptiens, de tous les genres, de toute proportion; et sous ce rapport la collection de Livourne ne laisse rien à désirer.»<sup>12</sup> Champollion was of course well placed to make such remarks about the state of the discipline and the resources that scholars needed. It is true that he had not yet visited Egypt, but he had extensive knowledge of many collections of Egyptian objects in Europe, more particularly in Italy.<sup>13</sup> And he had recently amazed the scholarly community and confounded his critics – especially the British polymath Thomas Young – by publishing his decipherment of hieroglyphics.<sup>14</sup> Champollion could assess the relative merits of different collections, their importance and their scholarly and didactic value.

Collection and museum: the words are related, close in meaning though not entirely synonymous. Associated with them, and of crucial importance for the efficient communication of contents and ideas, are the words »display« and »exhibition«. In his comments on the 1867 Egyptian show at the Exposition Universelle, Maury implied quite how dissimilar exhibitions and museums were. The difference could of course be reduced to a mere question of temporality: the exhibition is limited in time, unlike the museum, whose hallowed galleries withstand (or so we believe) the passage of time. Nevertheless, Maury seems to be hinting at something else. Maybe the exhibition, particularly the Exposition Universelle, could propose a more enticing and enlightening demonstration of Egyptian antiquities, one which could flout museum conventions and establish new viewing conditions in which the objects were really put »on show« and participating in a spectacle. Over the course of the following pages, I hope to offer a few preliminary thoughts on the question of how Egyptian objects were put on show, how they were mediated, and how they were staged in 19<sup>th</sup> century exhibitions and museums.

## THE 1867 EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE

Forty years after Champollion was advocating the creation of an Egyptian museum in Paris, Egypt was one of the nations participating in the 1867 Exposition Universelle (fourth World's Fair) in Paris. The exhibition site was located on the Champ de Mars, on the Left Bank of the Seine, bordered to the north by the river and to the south by the Ecole Militaire. In its centre stood a large oval building, the Exhibition Palace, offering about 150,000 square metres of exhibition space. Frédéric LePlay, one of the principal protagonists of the event, planned an exhibition which would offer a comprehensive view of mankind, a panorama of its industrial, social and cultural achievements.<sup>15</sup> Obviously, the emphasis would be laid on contemporary society, its products and inventions, but LePlay also envisaged a diachronic perspective, which would be presented in a gallery entitled the »History and development of labour in the various nations«.<sup>16</sup> Millions of objects would be on show, from paintings and sculptures by famous contemporary artists to surgical instru-

ments and washing machines, from the Acheulean hand axe discovered by Jacques Boucher de Perthes in reinforced concrete designed by Joseph Monier.<sup>17</sup>

Mindful of the complaints concerning the ostensibly haphazard layout of the earlier exhibitions, the organizers attempted to offer a more logical arrangement. Should objects be classed by type or by country of production? The organizing committee drew up a plan that would combine both approaches. The centre of the hall was occupied by an exhibition devoted to the coinage, weights and measures of all nations, surrounded by a garden. Thereupon, in a series of concentric rings disposed around this centre, were the various classes of exhibits: the history and development of work in the various nations, the fine arts, materials for the liberal arts, furniture, clothing, raw materials and finally machinery. Perpendicular to these galleries, and radiating out from the central point of the building, were the national sections. Each country was allocated a certain amount of space, calculated according to a number of criteria. Among these countries was Egypt, which occupied about 400 square metres in the north-western quadrant, between Turkey to the south and China, Siam and Japan to the north.<sup>18</sup> This was the first time that Egypt could participate in a large international event of this type as an autonomous, tributary state: increased autonomy and the title of khedive claimed by Muhammad Ali and his successors had finally been acknowledged by the Ottoman Empire in 1866 and early 1867.<sup>19</sup> The driving force behind the Egyptian contribution to the exhibition was the new khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha (known as Ismail the Magnificent), the grandson of Muhammad Ali.<sup>20</sup> A devoted Europhile, he understood the political and economic importance of a strong Egyptian presence in the Paris 1867 exhibition; the country could prove its strength, its role as the second most influential power in the region, and, of course, its strategic position as a gateway to the Indian Ocean once the Suez canal was completed<sup>21</sup>. He thus took a keen interest in the project, overseeing the work done by a commission of dignitaries and experts whom he personally had appointed.<sup>22</sup>

The palace itself stood in the centre of a large park. One of the great novelties of the 1867 exhibition was the use made of this area. Rather than merely landscaping it, the organizers decided to offer the participating nations a parcel of land on which they were encouraged to construct pavilions in vernacular style. Japanese cabins, Swiss chalets, Russian *isbas*, Turkish kiosks, English cottages and Gothic chapels were juxtaposed here, and the whole park offered a breviary of national architectural styles and building techniques situated in the centre of Paris. Amongst these various buildings, on a plot of 4,800 square metres, was the Egyptian Park, including a temple – approached via a ceremonial path lined by sphinxes –, a palace (*selamlık*), a staging-post (*okel*) and stables.<sup>23</sup> On an adjoining plot, although not part of the official Egyptian area, was a pavilion constructed and used by the Suez Canal Company.<sup>24</sup> The other four buildings were financed by the Egyptian government, at considerable cost – it was claimed that Egypt had invested more than £60,000 on her participation in the exhibition.<sup>25</sup> Once again the driving force was Ismail Pasha, aided by his commission of experts.



The Egyptian Park offered visitors a number of vignettes of Egyptian life and customs conveyed to Paris for a six-month period in 1867. The group of buildings constituted, as has been pointed out, an epitome of Egyptian civilisation across the centuries: the temple recalled antiquity, the *selamlik* represented Arab civilization and the medieval period, while the *okel* embodied contemporary craftsmanship, trade and economic life.<sup>26</sup> Even the stables were an important element in this configuration. They were of simple construction and were notable mainly for their inhabitants. Four animals lived here throughout the exhibition: two dromedaries and two donkeys. As might have been predicted, they proved to be an attraction, drawing many interested visitors. Few descriptions of the Egyptian Park failed to mention them and to point out their distinctive features. Thus it was that readers learned that, contrary to popular belief, a dromedary had only one hump instead of two, was possessed of remarkable powers of endurance and also had a very elegant gait.<sup>27</sup> The Egyptian donkey, we learn from the same texts, differs from its European cousins in that it is not only elegant but also affable and easy-going.<sup>28</sup> The four beasts may have been there to add authentic and picturesque detail, but they also served another far more instructive purpose. As many authors pointed out, they represented the main methods of transportation in Egypt. Another important method of transport in Egypt was also present since a *dahabeeyah* (the flat-bottomed barges found on the Nile) was moored close by on the Seine.<sup>29</sup>

Close to the stables was the *okel*, a covered market, bazaar or caravanserai.<sup>30</sup> The *okel* constructed in Paris was modelled on similar bazaars found throughout Upper Egypt, but with two important additions, namely a portico on the north facade and a two-storey extension on the south facade. The design for the windows was borrowed from buildings in Cairo.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, as the Egyptian Park's creators were anxious to insist, this remained a relatively faithful imitation of constructions of this type that could be seen across Upper Egypt.<sup>32</sup> An *okel* was a building serving many functions. It was a staging-post and an inn that also housed one or more shops – or a bazaar – and workshops. In other words, it constituted the economic heart of an area. One author ventured a comparison between the *okel* and the Parisian galleries, passages or even the Palais Royal.<sup>33</sup>

The Parisian *okel* housed a café and a number of workshops, fitted out with traditional features and furnishings. Here artisans who had come over from Egypt for the period of the exhibition practised various trades using authentic Egyptian tools and techniques. One visitor to the fair explained what he had seen in the following terms:

»In the first place we have the Okel where real natives, [...], work at several trades. Among those artizans [sic] one who attracts a great share of attention, is the turner, a grave old man, who slowly guides with his left toe the blade of the lathe, whilst he wields with his right hand a bow which causes it to revolve. A more primitive apparatus it is impossible to imagine; it has probably been handed down from father to son since the time of the Pharaohs.

If men show a preference for the turner, ladies seem more interested with the jeweller who manufactures quaint rings, necklaces, bracelets and anklets out of gold and silver filigree.

A little further we see a barber shaving his countrymen in true Oriental fashion.«<sup>34</sup>

Craftsmen specializing in leather work and passementerie were also in the building. Free coffee and *chibouks* were offered to anyone who obtained an official pass from the commissioner general's office. Furthermore (just as was the case in an authentic *okel* in Upper Egypt) the artisans actually lived in the building throughout the exhibition. They genuinely reproduced – in so far as was possible under the Parisian skies – the conditions of life, work and trade in an Egyptian bazaar and staging-post.

The third building in this complex also served as lodgings periodically. The palace or *selamlık* was an elegant construction designed in Arab style, and rich in colour and decoration. It was built in alternate courses of blue and white stone above which was a white battlement; a central tower was surmounted by a cupola, atop of which was a gold crescent.<sup>35</sup> The palace served two functions. Several rooms were used as exhibition spaces, where a number of objects relating to the geography and geology of Egypt were on show. Relief maps of Lower and Middle Egypt, two relief plans of Alexandria and several other maps were displayed here. A collection of geological specimens, a series of drawings and plans by students in the Egyptian military schools and a range of books in the Arabic and Turkish languages were also to be seen, as was a number of photographs of Egypt.<sup>36</sup> The other rooms were used by the Egyptian viceroy when he was in Paris. He held audiences here, in all likelihood lounging on a divan and smoking a hookah. The final building in the group was the reconstruction of an ancient temple which housed a number of precious objects.

## PARIS-EGYPT – SHOWS AND VOYEURISM

This Egyptian Park with its faithful imitations of typical buildings and furnishing, brought to life by an engaging cast of characters, and even offering glimpses of Egyptian fauna has been analysed and decrypted by a number of commentators over recent years.<sup>37</sup> Some scholars, especially those working in the field of post-colonial studies, have interpreted it, and also the Egyptian contribution to other World Fairs and similar events, as evidence of the voyeuristic tendencies of Europeans. Timothy Mitchell, for example, precedes his study of what he calls the »power to colonise« in Egypt with a wide-ranging study of the representations of Egyptian culture in 19<sup>th</sup> century European exhibitions, fairs and congresses; he suggests that these events reveal a Western »observing« gaze, and that one of the corollary effects of this gaze was that »non-European visitors found themselves being placed on exhibit or made the careful object of European curiosity«.<sup>38</sup> He hypothesizes that the Egyptian craftsmen and the viceroy were almost on a par with objects, put on show not

just to be looked at cursorily but rather to be closely studied and even to be scrutinized, and that this act was often degrading. Other commentators have examined these shows, exhibitions and fairs from the point of view of social or cultural history, or equally in the context of museum studies. They are more inclined to interpret this gaze as a constitutive feature of these events, less colonial or colonizing and dominating than inquiring and heuristic.<sup>39</sup> Paul Tenkotte borrowed the metaphor of the kaleidoscope, suggesting that the international exhibitions offered different (and mobile) views of the world.<sup>40</sup>

Some authors have preferred to eschew the debate over the ostensible staging of the Occidental-Oriental divide and to concentrate rather on the Expositions Universelles merely as spectacles and on their relation to leisure activities at this time – including the museum or, at least, some museums. It is certainly true that the Egyptian Park in Paris – and by analogy the Exposition Universelle as a whole, with its combination of objects and settings, animated by a cast of exotic figures – could be likened to the museum-spectacle of that era. The vernacular buildings with their inhabitants could be assimilated with the *tableaux vivants* beloved of travelling fairs, circuses and some museums. It may even therefore be possible to identify shades of Barnum and his American Museum (which had of course burned down for a first time only two years before this 1867 extravaganza) in the bond between instruction and entertainment that the Exposition Universelle seemed to be fostering.<sup>41</sup> This would, in turn, tend to suggest that it is but a short step to identifying it as one of the multitudinous manifestations of the exhibitionary complex as analysed by Tony Bennett in his *Birth of the Museum*.<sup>42</sup> The exhibitionary complex, in Bennett's view, allows us to comprehend how museums use display and the idea of »spectacle« in order to communicate disciplinary discourses. This spectacular (or »exhibitionary«) discourse is to be understood as an alternative to the theories of »control« and »surveillance« or even »imprisonment« that were applied to the museum and its »totalizing narratives« posited by some authors who based their theories on Michel Foucault.<sup>43</sup> Lara Kriegel observes that Bennett views the museum as »a tool that helped to cultivate the disciplined eye and the self-regulating subject«.<sup>44</sup> The outstanding example of this, which Kriegel considers almost paradigmatic in its form and in the use made of it, was the South Kensington Museum. A large and varied number of objects was classified, organized and deployed in the museum's rooms in order to enable visitors to both see and comprehend them easily. The results of this enlightened museum pedagogy were soon conspicuous, since numerous commentators noted that a disciplined working class, avid for knowledge and learning, flocked to the museum in the evenings. As Bennett has pointed out, the Expositions Universelles were another expression of this.<sup>45</sup> At first sight the gulf between the spectacular, show-inspired and maybe even Barnumesque tones of certain areas of the Expositions Universelles would seem to preclude any comparison with the sober halls of the South Kensington (or indeed of any of the contemporary museums, including the National Gallery in London, the Louvre in Paris and the Berlin Museums) and the learning that they embodied and inspired. Surely the Egyptian Park with its affable donkeys, grave old turner, Egyptian barber and hookah-smoking vice-

roy could not hope to offer anything more than an agreeable few minutes or hours of distraction and reverie? It could certainly not hope to rival with the serious and weighty intellectual aims of the presentation of Egyptian culture and history that was offered on the other side of the Seine, a few hundred metres away, in the galleries of the Louvre museum with their ornate and highly symbolical iconographical programme?

As we have seen, Alfred Maury, a distinguished scholar who was a professor at the Collège de France and a friend of Gustave Flaubert thought otherwise.<sup>46</sup> He penned a lengthy and highly erudite article on the Egyptian Park in the September 1867 issue of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.<sup>47</sup> Maury had worked on a range of subjects by that time; besides a number of major contributions on Antiquity he had also written a study of fairies during the Middle Ages and a book on sleep and dream theory, including a famous excursus on a dream about the guillotine which was later to be recounted and analysed in depth by Freud.<sup>48</sup> He was a respected and an exacting scholar. In his view, no European museum could propose a more convincing and accurate account of the recent discoveries in Egyptology: »L'exposition égyptienne du Champ de Mars peut mieux qu'aucun musée de l'Europe donner une idée de ces nouvelles conquêtes de l'érudition et de l'art.«<sup>49</sup>

Maury's comment is particularly striking. If we are to believe him – and there is no immediate reason to distrust the opinion of a professor at the Collège de France who was a noted authority on antiquity and who proffered this observation at the beginning of a lengthy and erudite survey of recent discoveries in Egypt and of modern scientific literature on ancient Egyptian civilisation – this »showground« was thus more conducive to the presentation and explanation of studies on Egypt and of Egyptian art than any museum in Europe. In other words, this seven-month long exhibition featuring two donkeys, a turner, a barber and a hookah-smoking viceroy was more enlightening regarding ancient Egypt, its civilisation and its customs than the impressive collections of Egyptian antiquities in the Louvre in Paris, the British Museum in London, the Neues Museum in Berlin and the Museo Egizio in Turin.<sup>50</sup> What exactly did Maury see in the Egyptian Park that inspired this somewhat surprising remark?

## TEMPLES AND TREASURES

Apart from the three buildings described above, there was one further construction on the plot. The Hathor temple was a bijou replica of an Egyptian temple; inside it was a small but very select exhibition of objects. It was the inspiration of Auguste Mariette, a member of the commission appointed by Ismail Pasha; Mariette can plausibly be referred to as the maestro of the Egyptian contribution to the 1867 Exposition. He was a self-educated Egyptologist. On the death of his cousin, Nestor L'Hôte, an erstwhile colleague of Champollion on a number of missions in Egypt, Mariette was invited to sort and class his papers. Increasingly fascinated by what he found therein, he determined to study Egypt and its

civilisation. He went to work in the Louvre, and his efforts were rewarded some years later when he was sent on a mission to Egypt to purchase manuscripts. The promised sale fell through, but Mariette was undeterred: he used the money to finance excavations at Saqqara where he unearthed the ceremonial sphinx avenue and the subterranean tomb and temple complex. He thereafter continued to prospect and excavate with considerable tenacity and, after a number of brilliant results, managed to establish the Egyptian Department of Antiquities and a museum in Bulaq (the forerunner of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo).<sup>51</sup>

In his text on the Egyptian Park, intended as a guidebook, Mariette explained the temple's architecture and its functions:

»Le programme que nous avons à remplir, quand l'Exposition a été décidée, était celui-ci: élever dans le Parc une construction qui, par la disposition de son plan, puisse servir d'abri à la collection d'antiquités égyptiennes envoyée de Boulaq, et qui en même temps soit pour le Parc un embellissement.

Pour remplir ce programme, nous n'avons trouvé rien de mieux à faire que de bâtir un Temple sur un des modèles que les Pharaons nous ont laissés.

Le Temple du Parc égyptien est donc avant tout un musée.

Mais, chemin faisant, nous l'avons utilisé pour essayer de donner au visiteur une idée de ce que fut l'art égyptien à ses trois époques les plus caractéristiques. [...].

Le monument du Parc égyptien est donc bien ce que nous avons voulu qu'il fût: un musée qui serait à la fois un temple, et un temple qui, du noyau à la circonférence, nous présenterait un résumé chronologique de l'art qui florissait sur les bords du Nil antérieurement à la venue du Christianisme.»<sup>52</sup>

Mariette is very clear on one point: this temple was certainly partially – but not only – an eye-catching showpiece, an atmospheric pastiche. Nor was it the perfect reconstruction of an ancient temple, based on the most exact archaeological evidence and recreated in slavish detail. Mariette was lucid. He acknowledged that none of the known temples could serve as a satisfactory model for the Parisian construction. Some were too small, some were too big, others were too ruined, yet others had an overly complicated floor plan.<sup>53</sup> He therefore decided to base loosely the 1867 temple on the West temple (the »Temple de l'Ouest«) at Philae: the building's plan, its volumes and its proportions were all a faithful imitation of the Egyptian original, whereas the decorative scheme was an interpretation and reworking of a number of different sources.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, Mariette's appellation was far from clear, and the Parisian temple's model has been variously identified as a number of different buildings on the site at Philae. Careful study of the sources available, especially plans drawn up only a few years earlier and the photographic evidence, suggests that this is the small temple lying to the southwest of the entrance to the Temple of Isis, the Mammisi, a small chapel in the vicinity of a larger temple which was associated with the birth-place of the

god.<sup>55</sup> Some of the decorative elements were drawn from the Philae Mammisi, others were borrowed from a number of other temples, essentially those at Dendera, Abydos, Ombos [Naqada], Esneh and Edfu. Mariette and his artisans thereby managed to create a perfect composite model – not *an* Egyptian temple but *the* Egyptian temple – which could serve as an epitome of the three most characteristic periods of Egyptian art. Time was certainly not on their side, and Mariette complained that they had had to work to a very tight schedule. This did not authorize them to cut corners though. Most of the architectural details and ornaments were reproduced as faithfully as possible: colour samples were secured in Egypt and then brought back to Paris and used for the wall paintings; moulds were taken of some features on the buildings *in situ* and casts then produced in Paris; photographs, sketches and squeezes were also used in order to record as accurately as possible a multitude of details.<sup>56</sup> The reviewer in a London building-trade journal commented that the buildings in the Egyptian Park – contrary to those around them – were »very exact and good«, conveying a very honest impression of Egyptian architecture. The credit for this was to be laid at the door of Mariette and his craftsmen who have striven for »truthfulness of detail and exactitude of modelling«.<sup>57</sup> The temple was dedicated to a triad of deities, Hathor, Horus and Harsomtut, the child of their union.<sup>58</sup>

Mariette's temple was adorned with architectural elements and decorative features typical of the three most important periods of Egyptian art, namely the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom and the Ptolemaic eras. It was laid out in three concentric zones: an innermost room (the *sekos* or sacred enclosure), around which ran a corridor which was in turn surrounded by the colonnade (or the exterior circumference of the temple). The *sekos* was constructed in Old Kingdom style, after the model of a Fifth Dynasty tomb to which a number of columns typical of buildings of that date were added.<sup>59</sup> The corridor was embellished with paintings in New Kingdom style; this ensemble was then further enhanced by the addition of a number of decorative details, such as a cartouche believed to be that of Queen Ahhotep II (17<sup>th</sup> Dynasty), doors from the time of Seti I (19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) and a hieroglyphic text copied from the temple of Seti I in Abydos.<sup>60</sup> The colonnade – with four columns on the shorter sides and seven on the longer – was a construction typical of the Ptolemaic period.<sup>61</sup> The bas-reliefs were carved in a somewhat nonchalant style, which Mariette felt was symptomatic of the Alexandrian period. The inscriptions were also reminiscent of the same epoch. And, above all, the capitals with floral motifs were inspired by the Greeks according to Mariette (»c'est avec les Grecs seulement que le chapiteau se complique et s'épanouit en bouquet de fleurs entremêlées comme nous le voyons ici.«)<sup>62</sup>

The temple was approached along a short alleyway flanked with ten sphinxes, casts taken from a model in the Louvre; at the head of this avenue stood a monumental gateway – the pylon. On passing through this portal, visitors embarked on a journey through time, leaving the familiar surroundings of 19<sup>th</sup> century Paris to travel to the exotic setting of ancient Egypt. They strolled along the avenue, with the large and imposing sphinxes on either side, to reach the massive temple, whose façade, entirely covered in richly-coloured scenes rem-

iniscence of the wall paintings found in tombs, towered nine metres above them. On reaching the temple, their journey through time had not come to an end, however. For once they had entered the building they began anew, this time walking back through the centuries from the Ptolemaic period in the colonnade to the New Kingdom in the corridor before arriving, finally, in the *sekos*, or the Old Kingdom. The effect was no doubt spectacular and must have elicited gasps of wondering admiration from experts and amateurs alike. Mariette had created an almost theatrical atmosphere, which played on popular preconceptions about Egypt and its architecture while remaining remarkably faithful to the country's buildings and its history. Scarcely a surface was left blank – cartouches, hieroglyphs, Egyptian figures, stylized lotus flowers covered the walls and ceilings. This remarkable décor, this voyage back through the centuries was not, however, mere showmanship and stagecraft, destined to astound an amenable audience. Mariette put this backdrop to very good use. For on entering the *sekos*, the visitor – surrounded by the stunning architecture – found himself or herself face to face with an equally extravagant collection of antiquities.

Mariette had brought over to Paris a number of extremely precious and important masterpieces from the Bulaq museum, which he had founded less than ten years earlier in 1858.<sup>63</sup> Hundreds of objects were on show here, carefully organized by the Egyptologist; among them were some that had been excavated very recently.<sup>64</sup> The statue of Khafre enthroned,<sup>65</sup> the alabaster statue of Queen Amenirdis<sup>66</sup> and gold axes sat alongside many important vestiges of Egyptian art and archaeology.<sup>67</sup> One of the principal highlights was the jewel case that had belonged to Queen Ahhotep (wife of Kamose) and its contents, including a golden diadem decorated with two sphinxes and a small case, a wide cuff bracelet with golden figures laid on a background in blue glass paste imitating lapis lazuli, a *usekh* broad collar composed of dozens of intricate gold charms and beads, and a pair of elaborate pendant earrings. Empress Eugénie cast covetous eyes over the treasures before informing Ismail Pacha that she would feel very honoured to receive them. The khedive demurred, insisting that Mariette should decide. The archaeologist, on the other hand, was intransigent, refusing the Empress's request outright.

Maury's comment about the power of this small exhibition in comparison with the larger, permanent Egyptian galleries in museums across Europe seems to make more sense when understood in this context. Mariette's exhibition strategy could nevertheless be considered rather risky. Could he not be accused of playing to an audience, hoping to harness the spectacular effects of attractions such as Barnum's circus in order to communicate a serious message?<sup>68</sup> To use a neologism (and fully aware of all the risks of anachronism that this entails) Mariette seems to have been exploiting what we would now call the »edutainment« or »infotainment« value of a show. Both neologisms, coined in the 1980s in the United States, refer to shows, media or productions which educate or inform while entertaining. They are often employed when referring to museums and museum work nowadays, brandished as a solution to falling visitor numbers and to the museum's perceived failure to attract visitors from all socio-economic groups.

Maury was not alone in congratulating Mariette for his decision. The journalist Hippolyte Gautier stated unequivocally that the Egyptian Park was not only one of the most sumptuous displays in the whole Exposition Universelle, but also the most complete and the most instructive.<sup>69</sup> The journalist Edouard Siebecker, writing in the *Album pittoresque*, opined that the Egyptian Park and the temple-museum were the most »remarkable exhibits« in the Exposition.<sup>70</sup> Siebecker was sincere in his admiration of Mariette's work at the Champ de Mars; he urged his readers to go to see the Egyptian exhibition, even playing somewhat on their fears by emphasizing that they had only a few months to enjoy it. »Cependant, cette exposition est si remarquable; elle sera de si courte durée que nous voulons absolument forcer le spectateur à une attention soutenue [...]«.<sup>71</sup>

Other critics, such as Emile Egger, a professor of ancient Greek, were equally fulsome in their praise. Egger ventured to suggest that the Egyptian Park could be considered a paradigm for the perfect museum visit. In 1867, he gave a conference at the Asile impérial de Vincennes, a convalescent home for workers opened in 1860 and placed under the patronage of Empress Eugénie. Egger opened his reflexions by observing that all too few people visit museums in a constructive or beneficial fashion. They wander into the building, stroll through it – probably in a desultory fashion – looking at objects but not really seeing them and then walk out at the other end.<sup>72</sup> As a result, they have learned virtually nothing. As an antidote to what he identified as a problem of modern life, Egger recommended a visit to the Egyptian exhibition in the Exhibition Palace and in the park; he indicated the most instructive route through the exhibits, accompanied by comments on a number of the more noteworthy sights or objects. He advised his readers to examine the products on show in the main exhibition hall before making their way to the Egyptian Park where they would find a panorama of Egyptian life – from the ancient temple to the contemporary *okel*. Industry, art, geography, crafts, history, customs and traditions were deployed in the different spaces; the show was informative and agreeable, offering a full survey of Egypt's past and present. Interestingly, Egger did qualify his judgement about the instructional value of this (or any) show when he stated that visitors would be prone to any number of slip-ups and misapprehensions if they did not take the simple precaution of purchasing (for the modest sum of 4 francs) three small guide-books. He recommended Mariette's guide to the Egyptian show, Ferdinand de Lesseps's booklet on the Suez canal plans and, perhaps more surprisingly, Emmanuel de Rougé's guide to the Egyptian antiques in the Louvre.<sup>73</sup>

## EGYPTIAN COLLECTIONS IN MUSEUMS

Egger, like Maury, was fully aware of the Egyptian galleries in the Louvre, and included the catalogue by de Rougé among his list of recommended titles for those interested in Egyptology. Despite this, he – like Maury – believed that the Egyptian Park was more instructive and didactic than the galleries in the Louvre or in other European museums.<sup>74</sup>



By the time that Maury and Egger were writing, European museums had been collecting and displaying Egyptian antiquities for little more than fifty years. Whereas Greco-Roman masterpieces had been collected and coveted, treasured, studied and transmitted for centuries, the remains of the pharaonic and Ptolemaic civilizations were relatively recent arrivals in museum galleries. Furthermore, generations of schoolchildren and students had been drilled in Latin and Greek language and literature and in Roman and Greek history. The busts of the emperors and their families, of great generals, of famous philosophers conjured up memories of a distant European past, well-known because of the accounts given by the great historians and belletrists of antiquity. Episodes from the lives of the gods and goddesses, heroes and villains of myths were recognizable thanks to the scenes drawn from Greek and Roman mythology which graced the walls of private and public galleries or, in the form of engravings, illustrated texts by Vergil, Homer, Ovid and other major authors. The same could not be said of Egyptian civilization. The names of the pharaohs, the succession of the dynasties, the divinities – everything was much more unfamiliar, except to the most erudite and well-read visitors. The statues and sarcophagi inspired awe and wonder, as did the papyri and steles with their hieroglyphic texts, fascinating to observe but incomprehensible to all but a very small minority. Fascinating and oddly beautiful they may have been, but to an eye accustomed to the Western canon, these collections were – in aesthetic terms at least – peculiar and untypical.

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and ever since) these collections were to be put on show in autonomous departments in museums. Here the material traces of Egyptian civilization were to be exhibited as an organic whole, illustrating and elucidating the culture, thought and practices of the period of their creation. These new departments were being established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century public, democratic and secular museum. Curators thus found themselves facing a dilemma: should they attempt to present these collections within a neat linear historical continuum, turning them into the natural forerunners of Greco-Roman antiquity and conveniently effacing or ignoring their peculiarities and anomalies? They could thereby use the display techniques that had served so well in the past for the vestiges of Greece and Rome. Or should they acknowledge and welcome these differences, and create a museum setting which would offset them perfectly? Various answers were found during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## PARIS

During the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Louvre possessed a negligible collection of Egyptian antiquities. Many masterpieces originally selected for the Louvre by the scholars accompanying the French expeditionary force had – after the joint British and Ottoman victory over Menou's forces – ended up in London. A paltry number of Egyptian objects, acquired as a result of revolutionary confiscations or the purchase of collections (notably

from the Borghese and Albani families), adorned the Salle d'Isis (opened in 1817) and adjoining rooms; here they were exhibited alongside miscellaneous Egyptianizing sculptures.<sup>75</sup> The Salle d'Isis was the last room in the series of spaces housing the Greek and Roman antiquities; it was decorated in much the same way as the other galleries in that part of the museum, its walls covered with coloured marble from the floor to the cornices.

Less than ten years later Champollion was appointed head of Egyptian antiquities at the Louvre.<sup>76</sup> In the meantime, the museum had refused to purchase the Bernardino Drovetti collection (which went to Turin in 1823) and it had also overlooked the first group of works gathered together by Fortuné Thédénat-Duvent (sold at auction in 1822; the Cabinet des Antiques at the Bibliothèque royale managed to acquire a few pieces).<sup>77</sup> Aware of this oversight, the authorities determined to repair their error at the first possible opportunity.<sup>78</sup> This they did soon afterwards when a number of collections came onto the market. First the Edme Durand collection, in 1825, and then the following year the second Salt collection – the first one had gone to the British Museum in 1819.<sup>79</sup> One year later, in 1827, they managed to bid successfully for a number of lots at the Brindeau and the Denon sales, and then to acquire the second Drovetti collection in its entirety.<sup>80</sup>

Thousands of objects thus arrived in the museum within only two years; the Salle d'Isis and the adjoining rooms could not hope to house them all. Fortunately, a solution was at hand. In 1824, the comte de Forbin proposed a new museum, under the patronage of Charles X. The king concurred. Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine projected a series of four rooms on the first floor of the south wing of the Cour Carrée for the Durand collection. One year later, after the arrival of the Salt collection and other ensembles (Tochon and Drovetti), he changed his plans: the museum would now consist of nine rooms in *enfilade*.<sup>81</sup> Four of these rooms were to be devoted to the Egyptian Museum, directed by Champollion; the other rooms were for Greek antiquities. Work began soon after and sixteen months later, in December 1827, the museum opened, six weeks later than originally planned. The fault lay with Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and Antoine-Jean Gros who had not managed to complete the ceilings which they were to deliver.<sup>82</sup> The visitors could at long last see the fruit of Champollion's labours. In four rooms, in a series of tall display cases and lower, table vitrines, the Louvre's Egyptology collections were carefully laid out.<sup>83</sup> Each object bore a label indicating a letter and a number; under the corresponding entry in the *livret* visitors could read a succinct and informative discussion of the object. Materials and techniques were here specified, divinities identified and various customs, traditions and practices explained. Every object on show in the galleries in 1827 was included in the small catalogue, which has recently been republished and analysed by Sylvie Guichard.<sup>84</sup>

By the time that Champollion began planning the new rooms in the Louvre, he had a clear idea of what an Egyptian museum should look like.<sup>85</sup> Only a few years earlier, he had been in Turin; his stay coincided with the early discussions about the new galleries there, their form and their presentation. Determined to make his opinions heard, Champollion had sent a letter to the Minister for the Interior in which he had explained how the objects could

be organized: »Je me permettrai également de vous arrêter quelques instants, Monseigneur, sur la classification qu'il conviendra d'établir parmi ce nombre immense de monuments. Il ne saurait aucunement entrer dans les vues de Votre Excellence, que le Musée Royal Égyptien fût, comme beaucoup de musées, une espèce de magasin, où les objets sont entassés sans ordre et placés sans relation les uns avec les autres.«<sup>86</sup> According to Champollion, it would indeed be far easier to organize Egyptian collections than Greco-Roman, largely because of the ubiquity of the written word. Champollion believed that every Egyptian object bore an inscription in hieroglyphics explaining its function. He advised a simple classification into three main categories: religious, historical and funerary monuments:

»Les monuments Égyptiens se prêtent bien mieux que ceux des Grecs et des Romains à une classification à la fois méthodique et scientifique. Chaque objet porte toujours une inscription originale qui indique sans incertitude et son but et sa destination. Rien de plus facile et de plus convenable à la fois que de suivre strictement ces indications, et de disposer ces morceaux selon qu'ils appartiennent à la classe des monuments religieux, des monuments historiques ou des monuments funéraires. Ces trois grandes classes se subdivisent en diverses sections suffisamment indiquées par la nature des choses.«<sup>87</sup>

Only three years later, when dealing with the Louvre's collections, he had an opportunity to put theory into practice. He distributed the objects into three main groups, and named the exhibition spaces accordingly: »Room of the Gods« (room 4), »Room relating to civil life« (room 2) and »Funerary rites rooms« (rooms 1 and 3). The collection was comprehensive, comprising most aspects of Egyptian life and beliefs. Statuettes of divinities and of pharaohs, jewellery, tools, domestic furnishings, offerings of food deposited in tombs, contracts written on papyrus, weapons, musical instruments, games, mummies, funerary portraits: a stroll through the Egyptian galleries, catalogue in hand, could offer the visitor a remarkable journey through Egyptian civilisation and history.<sup>88</sup> The great Egyptologist was not, however, entirely satisfied, largely because he felt that the surroundings did not do justice to the objects on show.

He regretted above all that the Louvre's Egyptian antiquities were exhibited in two different places in the museum. The enfilade of four rooms in the Musée Charles X was by far not large enough to house the monumental statues and sphinxes. Champollion and Jean-Baptiste, Comte de Clarac – the curator of the Greek antiquities – both felt that their collections required more space and each began to campaign for more gallery space. Never given to modesty, Fontaine claimed that he alone had managed to broker peace between the two men by means of the timely suggestion that Champollion should occupy three additional rooms on the ground floor.<sup>89</sup> Champollion acceded and many of the largest, most imposing objects were therefore housed there. Unfortunately, there was no direct access from these galleries to the rooms in the Musée Charles X. One of Champollion's successors, De Rougé explained the problem twenty years later, when he observed that »Ce Musée,

restreint, comme il était, aux objets d'un petit volume, perdait le plus grand côté de sa physionomie pour les arts et l'histoire. Les petits objets font pénétrer dans l'intimité d'un peuple et révèlent à l'archéologue les détails de sa civilisation; mais on est nécessairement frappé d'une impression plus vive lorsqu'on entre dans la salle des grands monuments.»<sup>90</sup>

No doubt Champollion had hoped to be able to profit from the striking contrast between the monumental granite sphinxes, sculptures and sarcophagi on the one hand and the smaller, more mundane but also more recognizable paraphernalia of daily life on the other in order to captivate and fascinate his visitors. The appeal to visitors' emotions, the play on their feelings would encourage them to explore more profoundly the vestiges of Egyptian society, beliefs and daily life. They would thereby leave the museum with a more complete impression of this great but remote earlier civilisation. For Champollion – as de Rougé later – the division of the collections between two distinct spaces represented a lost opportunity to offer a complete panorama of Egyptian civilization. The museum's failings were compounded – again in Champollion's view – by the decision to entrust the decorative scheme to the Louvre's longstanding architects, Charles Percier and Fontaine. For more than twenty years the two men had been responsible for the building work and decorative programmes carried out in the Louvre; throughout this period their architectural and aesthetic authority had gone virtually unchallenged.<sup>91</sup> Champollion, on the other hand, had no such qualms. He suspected, correctly as it turned out, that Napoleon's favourite architects had little or no comprehension of Egyptian art and architecture. He advocated a style that would evoke the objects' provenance and that would plunge the visitors into a suitably Egyptian atmosphere: »Il faut absolument, pour obéir aux convenances et au bon sens, que mes salles soient décorées à l'Egyptienne. [...] les murs et tous les meubles, armoires et tables, doivent être de style vrai Egyptien: c'est le seul moyen de faire bien et de faire du neuf en même temps.»<sup>92</sup> Unfortunately, his requests were to go unheeded.<sup>93</sup> Percier and Fontaine remained faithful to a resolutely classical style of decoration – pilasters topped with Ionic capitals, ornamental features based on antique models and walls clad in marble. There were only scanty allusions to Egypt. The ceiling paintings in two of the four rooms bore some relation to Egyptian themes – Alexandre Abel de Pujol's *L'Egypte sauvée par Joseph* and François-Edouard Picot's *L'Etude et le Génie dévoilent l'antique Egypte à la Grèce*. There was also a series of four panels painted in grisaille by Abel de Pujol based on engravings in the *Description de l'Egypte* (after an Egyptian tomb) and showing scenes from Egyptian life.<sup>94</sup>

The decoration may not have met Champollion's exacting standards, but the rooms were popular. Over the years the museum enlarged and updated its collections, keen to keep abreast of all the most recent discoveries in the field of Egyptology. The Salle des Colonnes was pressed into service as well.<sup>95</sup> Despite these changes, and the large increase in the number of objects on show, Champollion's original *Notice* was not to be updated for many years (until 1855).<sup>96</sup> As a result, the visitors were left to their own devices in front of a large, fairly disparate collection of objects and works of art. Under the rule of Napoleon III, the Louvre expanded quite significantly, especially but not only as a result of the purchase of

the Campana collection. New museums were opening in the former royal palace, such as the Musée américain, the Musée de la marine, the Musée des souverains. It is telling that the important new guide to Paris, prepared in 1867 by Adolphe Joanne to coincide with the World Fair, made only a passing mention to the musée égyptien – just over one and a half columns of type – while the *Paris-Guide* of the same year deigned to devote only twelve lines to it.<sup>97</sup> It is tempting to believe that the musée égyptien had maybe lost some of its allure.

## **TURIN, ROME**

In the meantime, Charles-Felix of Sardinia, Duke of Savoy had not been procrastinating.<sup>98</sup> The contracts confirming the purchase of the Drovetti collection were finally ratified in February 1824; the collection was then shipped to Turin from Livorno where it had been in storage. When the crates and chests containing the precious objects arrived in Turin they were immediately sent to the Palazzo Accademie delle Scienze.<sup>99</sup> Extensive building work was carried out by Giuseppe Maria Talucchi to adapt the building so that it could house these new collections. First attempts were made to organize and classify the collections by Giulio Cordero di San Quintino, the curator of the Egyptian collections. He little appreciated the suggestions made by Champollion, who was staying in the town for some time, keen to study the collections and to use them to confirm his theories and his work on hieroglyphics mentioned earlier in this essay. The Frenchman proposed the project that he was later to apply in Paris, namely a tripartite division of the collections according to their function. He even identified a suite of three rooms on the ground floor which would be, he felt, ideal. He suggested that the large statues should be placed in the centre of each room, presumably so that visitors could walk around them and admire them from all angles. The paintings and steles could be arranged around the walls, and vitrines with smaller objects could be placed between them.<sup>100</sup> Champollion's ideas met with some approval in academic circles in the kingdom, but when the collections were finally put in place it became clear that Cordero di San Quintino's personal antagonism toward Champollion had won out. The collections were divided between two main spaces in the museum. On the ground floor the monumental statues and the large sculptures were to be seen; on the third floor the smaller antiquities filled a series of showcases. The objects were arranged chronologically. And the rooms were scarcely decorated: the walls were painted in a dull green hue, with no attempt at any ornamentation. This sober, rather stark and austere decoration was to remain in place for many years. The Turin authorities clearly felt that rich and colourful decoration, employing Egyptian or Classical reliefs, would divert attention from the collections and from their intellectual substance.

When the Museo Gregoriano Egizio, founded in 1839, opened its doors, it was the result of a lengthy process of gestation.<sup>101</sup> Egyptian objects had been visible in Rome since the Renaissance; collections and study had been pursued gradually over several centuries – especially since the early work of Athanasius Kircher – and there had even been a previous, less

ambitious, Egyptian museum in the Pio-Clementino, dreamt up by Antonio Canova, the Museo Egizio ed Attico.<sup>102</sup> The new Museo Gregoriano Egizio which opened eighteen years later exhibited only Egyptian objects, some of which came from the earlier collections; also on show was a considerable number of recent acquisitions, the fruits of a systematic campaign of purchases, essentially on the Roman antiquities market. Responsible for the classification of the collections was Luigi Ungarelli, who explained in a text that he wrote when the museum opened, that the collections would reveal the development of the four main arts: painting, architecture, sculpture and writing.<sup>103</sup> The objects and works of art were distributed in a series of four rooms, a gallery called the »hemicycle« and five cabinets.<sup>104</sup> The main guiding principle was, once again, that of size. Mummies, sarcophagi, statues, steles and vases were to be seen in the five main rooms, whereas the five cabinets contained a number of vitrines with smaller objects, essentially the vestiges of domestic and civil life, with some religious pieces, and a number of papyri. The speciality of the Vatican collections – the Roman works in imitation of Egyptian originals – were in the second room, named the Sala dei monumenti di imitazione. Above all, the Museo Egizio in the Vatican was decorated in what was described as »Egyptian style«, chiefly thanks to intense collaboration between Ungarelli, Giuseppe De Fabris – the director of the Vatican Museum and a sculptor – and the architect Gaspare Salvi.<sup>105</sup> The passage from the first to the second rooms was marked by a pair of massive papyrus columns, with lotus decoration on the capitals. Sitting on top of these was an entablature with an architrave incorporating a model of the one seen at Philae; above this a gouge cornice ran around the circumference of the room. The ceiling was painted in blue, with gold stars picked out on it, which was supposedly a reference to the East. Furthermore, in some of the rooms there were a number of mural paintings showing scenes of Egypt, her lands and her monuments. As one visitor observed, »it is impossible not to be struck, in passing through these chambers, by the admirable harmony between their decorations and contents — the massive architectonic forms, ponderous columns moulded after the types of the Egyptian temple, and deep blue vaults starry like the midnight sky. An atmosphere of venerable antiquity and religious mystery seems to surround us, and by affecting the Imagination prepares the Intellect for a more lively attention to the monuments around.«<sup>106</sup> It is worth noting, in this context, that the Museo Pio-Clementino had taken first tentative steps in this direction at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The *Sleeping Cleopatra* (now identified as a *Sleeping Ariadne*) was staged in a niche, before a wall bearing a representation of a palm-tree.<sup>107</sup>

## BERLIN, VIENNA

The Roman museum had thus in some ways opened a new chapter in the history of Egyptian collections. For the first time there was a definite attempt to present collections in rooms which offered visitors a »vision« of Egypt. The scenes were certainly stylized, and the models were perhaps not always entirely scrupulously reproduced; nevertheless, this was

a first attempt to sever the seemingly adamantine links binding sarcophagi and Canopic vases with Ionic capitals and Greek-key friezes.

A more daring step was to be taken some years later in Berlin. Twenty years after the work in Paris and Turin the Neues Museum was being planned.<sup>108</sup> The second museum on the Museumsinsel or Museum Island, it was to house a number of distinct departments: plaster casts, prehistoric collections, ethnographic collections, the print room and Egyptian antiquities. These last had earlier been kept in the Schloss Monbijou, under the curatorship of Giuseppe Passalacqua, a merchant from Trieste.<sup>109</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm III had purchased Passalacqua's personal collections in 1828, adding them to the Minutoli collection that he had already bought five years earlier. By way of a sop to Passalacqua, the king offered him the job of curator; over the next few years the Italian organized and oversaw the collections, sorting and displaying them thematically, according to principles which he had already tested when putting his personal collection on show in the Galerie Vivienne in Paris in 1825.<sup>110</sup> The collection grew steadily over the years, until there was no longer enough space in the galleries and cabinets for all the treasures. A three-year Prussian expedition to Egypt (1842–1845) led by Karl Richard Lepsius added a further 1500 objects and countless portfolios of drawings, exacerbating an already critical situation.<sup>111</sup> New premises were required, and it was therefore decided that the Egyptian antiquities would be transferred to the planned new museum.

Officially, Passalacqua was still the director of the Egyptian collections; to all intents and purposes, however, Lepsius was wielding most of the power. Nowhere was this more evident than in the planning of the Neues Museum, and more especially of the Egyptian department.<sup>112</sup> Lepsius had very clear ideas on what he wanted – as had Champollion in Paris some years earlier. But Lepsius was to be far more successful than his French counterpart in imposing his ideas concerning display and scenography. The archaeologist was absent, on an expedition in Cairo, but he sent detailed and unequivocal instructions to Berlin concerning the construction and decoration of the new galleries. »Für die ägyptischen Säle wählen Sie gewiss auch eine ägyptische Architektur, und zwar eine in allen Theilen durchgeföhrt. [...] Ich denke mir nämlich, dass [...] die den verschiedenen Zeiten charakteristischen Baustyle, namentlich Säulenordnungen, in ihrer geschichtlichen Reihenfolge festgehalten werden müssten, und zwar in ihrem ganzen reichen Farbenschmuck.«<sup>113</sup> In Berlin, unlike Paris, the decor would complement the collections.

When the Neues Museum opened in 1850, it became clear that Lepsius's advice had been followed. The collections were organized in five principal spaces: a small atrium led to the central Hall of columns (with a contiguous Hypostyle), around which were the historical room, the room of Egyptian tombs and the mythological room.<sup>114</sup> The central hall was a reduced reconstruction of the atrium to the Karnak temple. It was divided into two zones by a series of sixteen richly decorated columns arranged in a rectangle (six columns on the longer sides, four on the shorter ones) around a sunken floor area in the centre of the room. This was reached by going down two steps; here was to be found a number of imposing statues and monuments, and immediately above it was a light-well. On the other side of the

columns, was a walkway running around the circumference of the hall. Various sepulchral steles were aligned along the lower half of the outer walls of this arcade; above them was a series of seventeen scenes of Egyptian temples, pyramids and other monuments by contemporary painters. The contrast between light and shadow, combined with the hefty columns and the painted walls made this a very imposing room, as is clear from contemporary illustrations. The historical room contained a selection of sculptures and showcases with various antiquities, vestiges of the Egyptians' religious, domestic and artisanal activities; here an important series of murals offered a chronological survey of the various periods of Egyptian history. The room of Egyptian tombs contained the most important objects in the collection (»die wichtigsten Schätze«) while the last room, the mythological gallery, included a number of sarcophagi, coffins and statues.<sup>115</sup> In all the rooms the walls were richly decorated; scenes copied from Egyptian tombs, bas-reliefs and hieroglyphic inscriptions covered the walls. The work was carried out by artists who had accompanied Lepsius on his Egyptian expedition; the sketches and drawings they had made in situ served as inspiration.

The new museum attracted much attention, not all of it favourable. Some claimed that the objects and the presentation of Egyptian history were enhanced by the decors and by the rich and atmospheric colours.<sup>116</sup> Lepsius was ostensibly proved correct. Yet, as Lepsius's biographer was to observe, the argument was not so easily won. Many critics apparently felt that this space was so richly and colourfully decorated that the collections – even the most striking remains of Egyptian antiquity – became almost invisible. Visitors were easily distracted, and spent more time admiring the walls of the museum than the showcases and the objects they contained:

»but the decoration of the rooms in the Berlin museum by no means meets with such universal approbation. It is indeed conceded that it is in the best possible taste, and is both beautiful and attractive, but it is maintained by many people that the pictorial representation on the walls, that is, the accessories, draw the attention of the visitor too strongly and distract him from the contemplation of the monuments, which are certainly the real objects of importance.

There is some reason for this objection; but yet these pictures serve the immediate purpose of bringing visitors to the collection and it is this very decoration of the Berlin-Egyptian museum which renders it peculiarly attractive.<sup>117</sup>

The debate may, to our eyes, seem remarkably modern, prefiguring the complaints that are so often heard about intrusive exhibition architecture and the praise lavished upon the supposedly neutral »white cube«. It was, however, a grumble that was sometimes heard during this period. For example, when the Louvre reopened its galleries in 1851 after extensive renovation work in both the Galerie d'Apollon and the Salon Carré, several commentators denounced the rich decoration that had been devised by Duban and Simart.<sup>118</sup> The Berlin architecture may have attracted some criticism, but this did not deter the Vien-



nese museum authorities from attempting similar decorative effects in the Egyptian galleries in the new Kunsthistorisches Museum which opened in 1891.<sup>119</sup> The impressive collections which had hitherto been housed in the Baroque Lower Belvedere, suddenly found themselves transferred to rooms which had been decorated to resemble the interior of Egyptian tombs.<sup>120</sup> In the context of a study of Egyptian collections which began with a discussion of the Parisian Exposition Universelle in 1867, it is not uninteresting to examine the history of these decorations. Ernst Weidenbach, a German draughtsman, accompanied Lepsius on his Egyptian expedition.<sup>121</sup> He made many sketches and more detailed drawings at the various sites and monuments that he visited with the expedition, and returned to Berlin with hefty portfolios. The material was to be put to good use over the following years. Immediately after his return to the Prussian capital, Weidenbach began work on the interior decoration of the Egyptian gallery in the Neues Museum. He also collaborated on Lepsius's magnum opus, the monumental and lavishly illustrated *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*.<sup>122</sup> Some years later, he used his drawings from the Prussian expedition when creating a décor for the Egyptian pavilion at the 1873 Wiener Weltausstellung: a series of watercolours on paper representing murals from Beni Hasan.<sup>123</sup> Once the Weltausstellung had closed, the watercolours were taken down, rolled up and sent to the Kunsthistorisches Museum. Almost twenty years later these detailed representations of Khnum-hotep II's tomb were to adorn rooms I, II and V in the new Egyptian galleries.<sup>124</sup>

## LONDON

In England the situation was very different. The curators in the British Museum were dealing with objects that had originally been selected by the French expeditionary forces for the Musée Napoleon, but which had ended up in London as a result of the vicissitudes of war.<sup>125</sup> Some Egyptian pieces had already graced the galleries before 1802; some had arrived in the museum as part of the founding Sloane Collection, others were the result of later infrequent and irregular acquisitions. They were on show in various galleries, alongside miscellaneous objects or antiquities. However, no attempt was made to create a space dedicated exclusively to Egyptian art and culture. Once the works taken from the French army in Egypt had arrived in London, there was a pressing need for space. Plans were hastily drawn up for a new building in which the Egyptian collections could be accommodated fittingly. But only two years later Charles Townley died and his family sold his important collection of classical statuary to the museum for the paltry sum of £20,000. When the new galleries opened in 1808 the newly acquired antique statuary took precedence (and the space was called the Townley Gallery); only two rooms were set aside for the Egyptian collections. One room – the main one – housed the larger sculptures, whilst the smaller ones were on show in an adjoining, much more modest space. The walls were painted in a plain stone colour, without any special decoration or ornamentation. Fifteen years later, the first Salt collection came to

the museum. Space was made for it and objects were moved around. However, once again, just as had been the case since 1808, no special treatment was given to the sarcophagi and sculptures; they were displayed in galleries identical to those which housed Greek and Roman antiquities. Egyptian antiquities were judged – and shown – in terms of the canonical masterpieces of classical Greek and Roman art. It was only during the late 1830s that the display of the Egyptian collections was to undergo any momentous changes.

During the 1830s a large number of objects came to the British Museum as the result of the acquisition of three distinct collections – those of Joseph Sams, of Giovanni Anastasi and the third collection of Henry Salt.<sup>126</sup> These collections – and more particularly that of Sams – were important not only for the quantity of pieces that entered the museum's holdings, but also for their diversity. Joseph Sams, a bookseller, had assembled a decidedly eclectic assortment. He had concentrated not only on sculpture, mummies and sarcophagi, but also on an array of objects relating to daily life. Baskets, dried food, tools, utensils and jewellery were all to be found here. The museum authorities, hitherto slow to accord the Egyptian collections any special treatment, relented. The sculpture gallery on the ground floor would henceforth house the larger statues and the more imposing sarcophagi and monuments. A second gallery, on the first floor, would house more varied collections. But no attempt was made to reassess the interior decoration in these spaces.

The British Museum, which had always refused to offer appropriate decoration in its Egyptian galleries, felt justified in maintaining and defending their conservative display techniques. The »wondrous curiosities«, as the works of Egyptian art were called, were not felt to require any contextualizing decorative features.<sup>127</sup> They stood proudly in galleries which in their arrangement and their decoration were reminiscent of the adjacent Greek and Roman galleries.

In 1854 a new and remarkable exhibition of Egyptian (or Egyptianizing) architecture opened just outside central London, at Sydenham. The Crystal Palace, venue for the 1851 Great Exhibition, was dismantled and relocated from Hyde Park to Sydenham.<sup>128</sup> Its mission was the instruction and enlightenment of the public. It was to be a »source of amusement and instruction acceptable to the masses of the population«. The phrase is undoubtedly redolent of recent museological literature on museums and entertainment, but is actually taken directly from the 1854 catalogue of the new venue.<sup>129</sup> The national press propagated the same idea, hailing a site which combined »amusement and recreation, instruction, and commercial utility«. <sup>130</sup> Inside the reconstructed palace was »a complete historical illustration of the arts of sculpture and architecture from the earliest works of Egypt and Assyria down to modern times, comprising casts of every celebrated statue in the world, and restorations of some of its most remarkable monuments«. <sup>131</sup> This historical illustration of architecture was organized in a series of ten courts – one for each important period or civilization. Among them was an Egyptian court. <sup>132</sup>

Here, in a series of eight spaces, was a compendium of ancient Egyptian art and architecture, created by means of copies and casts. The visitors approached the Egyptian court from

the main nave, passing through a truncated avenue of eight lions, casts of the Prudhoe Lions in the British Museum. Once inside the first courtyard, they could see a number of models of statues of Egyptian pharaohs and not one but two copies of the Rosetta stone. Moving from space to space, they encountered successively a reconstruction of a tomb, various columns, a series of statues of deities and countless reproductions of frescoes showing scenes of Egyptian life and of hieroglyphics. The workmanship was of very high quality and the illusion was perfect, creating a very striking effect. The crowds flocked in to see this corner of ancient Egypt transported to a London suburb. The Egyptian court was generally recognized to be one of the highlights of the new Crystal Palace; it has to be admitted that it benefited also from its central position in the building.

By 1854, London had not only an Egyptian museum – in the British Museum – but also an Egyptian display – at Sydenham. The museum and the pleasure court complemented one another – albeit at a respectable (and respectful) distance. Few complained about the fact that in Sydenham they were seeing copies of many of the genuine artefacts in the British Museum. Instead, people revelled in the chance to «experience» Egypt. A short journey from central London to Sydenham allowed the amateur of Egyptian art to forget the stately museum halls with their Greco-Roman decoration in which the Egyptian collections sat rather uneasily. In Sydenham visitors could sit on the benches that were arranged around the Egyptian court and dream, at least for a while, that they had travelled both many miles and also many centuries back in time and that they were seated in a temple near the banks of the Nile. The illusion was enticing, and it is hardly surprising that Sydenham was to draw in the crowds for many years.

Herein, maybe, lies the answer to Maury's comments about the power and the effectiveness of the Egyptian Park in 1867. Mariette was essentially producing an illusion, which he referred to as a museum. The objects were genuine – in that respect, his «Parisian museum» was closer to the Louvre than to Sydenham. And yet there was a world that separated the two exhibitions of Egyptian art, archaeology, history and culture in Paris. In the Egyptian Park the decor and the antiquities complemented one another perfectly; furthermore, the mural paintings, the architectural elements, the sphinxes offered an ideal setting for the contemplation and examination of the treasures that had travelled from the Bulaq museum. The axes, jewels, sculptures and steles were – in the opinion of several commentators – more understandable and easier to decipher in this setting. Mariette seems thereby to have confirmed Champollion's hunch that these remains of a distant civilization needed to be presented appropriately, in a suitable decor, namely in true Egyptian style («style vrai Egyptien»). It was thus fitting, even if somewhat ironic, that the tutelary figure of modern Egyptology – the great Champollion – was indeed present in the park: between the *okel* and the temple was to be seen the plaster model of the statue that Frederic Bartholdi had been commissioned to make for the town square in Figeac.<sup>133</sup>

Champollion had been very much in advance of his times. Over the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as has been seen in this essay, there was a gradual move towards introducing

Egyptianizing decors in public collections. From the first slightly hesitant steps taken in Rome, through to the theatrical, even gaudy – and decried for that very reason – staging in Berlin and Vienna, curators and museum directors experimented with colours and motifs. Egypt was in fashion, and it was essential to ensure that the objects which had been sought after and exported to Europe – often at considerable cost – should be displayed in the best conditions possible. But this did not necessarily entail placing these collections in traditional sober and restrained classically inspired interiors. In fact, quite the opposite; Egypt needed to be orchestrated. This had been understood early on by a group of people who are, it is true, conspicuously absent from this essay, but whose contribution has been studied in some detail over the last few years, namely the private entrepreneurs like Belzoni who staged Egypt in venues such as Bullock's Egyptian hall in 1821.<sup>134</sup> Some years later, in 1825, Passalacqua transported his collection to Paris and exhibited it in the Galerie Vivienne.<sup>135</sup> One of the highlights of his show was the reconstruction of a burial chamber which he had discovered at Thebes two years earlier. All of the objects were present, laid out as they had been when he first opened the tomb.<sup>136</sup> Passalacqua was staging Egypt for his Parisian audience. He was to heighten the illusion even further a few weeks later in a series of rather gruesome performances. Some mummies that he had discovered in Egypt and brought to Paris were opened publicly. The »show« drew the crowds. The Duchesse de Berry was among the spectators, alongside a number of French and European dignitaries, officials and diplomats.<sup>137</sup> The unwrapping of the cloths and the subsequent dissection were carried out under the unwavering gaze of the Champollion brothers. With such important Egyptologists giving their stamp of approval, no one could doubt the authenticity of the objects or the intellectual claims of Passalacqua.

The World Fairs were to build on this tradition, borrowed from both the museum world and the private entrepreneurial shows. In 1867, Mariette offered a lively show in the Egyptian Park, and the crowds loved it. Some years later in Vienna, a similar spectacle was on offer – Egyptian buildings, Weidenbach's decorations and a cast of Egyptian characters, including a viceroy staying in the khedive's palace constructed especially for the exhibition.<sup>138</sup> In Paris, in 1867, some of the most extraordinary treasures from the Bulaq Museum's collections were put on show. Their effect was enhanced by their surroundings – a temple that led the visitor back through the centuries to the Fifth Dynasty (2500 BCE), set within a park that included a palace (vestiges of the medieval period) and an *okel* with its vision of contemporary Egyptian life. On the opposite bank of the Seine stood the Louvre. Its Egyptian collections were housed in neo-classical rooms, whose ceilings were adorned with allegorical paintings. Mummies, sarcophagi, various objects and utensils bore witness to the splendour and magnificence of a long-past civilisation, one that the 19<sup>th</sup> century public could maybe study but could never hope to experience. Mariette refused this approach. He staged his objects in a magnificent decor, and offered his visitors the chance to experience Egypt on the banks of the Seine: all that they had to do was to accept the idea of participating in this remarkable, fascinating, colourful and strange performance.

## **EGYPT'S MATERIAL AGENCY: DISCUSSIONS**



## ANCIENT EGYPT: DO THINGS MATTER?

David Fontijn

When I was seven or eight years old, I visited the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden together with my father.<sup>1</sup> We passed through rooms filled with statues and vessels from the Classical world. We probably looked at displays with finds from the Near East and Dutch prehistory, but what made a tremendous impression on me – what I remember most clearly – were the rooms dedicated to Ancient Egypt. In there I saw strange, monumental, awe-inspiring statues of people with animal heads. I remember a serene statue pair of what must have been an important man and woman (the new kingdom royal treasurer Maya and his wife Merit, as I only learned much later). There was a (partial) reconstruction of the inside of a mastaba, where for a moment I could fantasise how it could be to enter the secret interior of an ancient grave. And everywhere there were these enigmatic, but iconic signs: hieroglyphs.

I cannot recall if by that time I was already sure I wanted to become an archaeologist, but this visit surely stimulated my interest in the past. Reading a draft of this book now, decades later, this memory – undoubtedly faded and transformed through time – kept coming back to me. Why did the ancient Egyptian exhibits make such an impression on me in particular? Surely not only because of the monumental size of the things displayed, as in the Classical department there were many large and impressive statues as well. Was it the fact that ancient Egyptian things were a strong »brand« of things that are familiar and strange at the same time (as Versluys suggests in his contribution to the present volume)? Was it because of the ubiquitous pictorial hieroglyphs that were recognizable as depictions of things and animals on the one hand, but seemed so strange in representing language, on the other? Was it maybe the rigid stylistic coherence that made Egypt so different from all the other

things on display? Or was it the appeal of the fact that all these things were excavated from strange structures buried underneath the desert sands? In other words: was my vision of Egypt by that time already coloured by a Romantic image of ancient Egypt (evoked by comics I had read) as a mysterious realm that was to be discovered in adventurous expeditions?

It is impossible to answer such questions today, but my first confrontation with ancient Egypt as a concept may be comparable to that of many other people – judging from how popular exhibits on ancient Egypt still are with both children and adults in the same museum today. As a matter of fact, it brings together two key themes that lie at the heart of this book: the way in which concepts of ancient Egypt are being produced by »*Rezeptionsgeschichte*« and the role that ancient Egyptian things themselves play in creating, maintaining or altering such concepts.<sup>2</sup> It is particularly on the latter aspect that I wish to focus here.

## **DO ANCIENT EGYPTIAN THINGS HAVE »AGENCY«?**

In the editor's introduction to this book, ancient Egypt's material culture is seen as more than just representational. Versluys argues that the things themselves play a role in driving and even creating the concept of Egypt. Ancient Egyptian things are assumed to have »agency«. With the term »agency«, a »capacity for action« is meant.<sup>3</sup> Although this is a straightforward and un-problematical term when used to discuss social action, this book enters a more controversial field by understanding agency as residing in ancient Egyptian objects themselves.<sup>4</sup> It makes us pose the in fact remarkable question whether or not materials and objects – in some way – are capable of »doing« something, of having an effect on humans that cannot be achieved through thoughts and mental considerations alone. To bring it back to my museum visit as a young boy: in what way did the objects themselves shape my vision of Ancient Egypt?

Since the early 2000s, the notion that objects – to some extent – are capable of acting has become an important theory in the Humanities. In material culture theory, it particularly came to life through the seminal book »Art and Agency« by Alfred Gell.<sup>5</sup> »Material agency«, as it came to be called, was endorsed as a game-changing theory by some but critically received by others.<sup>6</sup> Reading this book, one equally notes some ambiguity regarding the term. Although material agency is mentioned as a key concept by Van Eck in the Preface of this book and by Versluys in his introduction, where they argue that the mnemohistory of Egypt is mediated through objects, the term is not that often used in the other contributions, even though the term agency is in the title of part II and many chapters do discuss the impact of material culture on people. There seems to be a certain uneasiness when it comes to fully discussing material agency. This is perhaps understandable – after all: have not we learned since childhood that »things« do not act? That it makes no sense to get angry at a malfunctioning computer, or to speak to a portrait of a loved one?



In this contribution, I wish to devote some more words to this topic that is prominently mentioned in the book's title, but seems to be somewhat circumvented or avoided in most contributions. How could things be considered to possess some kind of agency?

## THINGS CAN BE LIKE PEOPLE

If things are to possess agency, this means they are a bit like humans. Examples of things that are treated like persons can be found in every culture across the world, including our own. Although humans already learn to differ between inanimate things and animate humans in childhood,<sup>7</sup> this does not mean that every object is treated like an inanimate thing.<sup>8</sup> As Mauss made clear in his ground-breaking essay on the gift, there is a difference between things that can be perceived as detached or alienated from the human world they are in, and those that are inalienably linked to humans and their overarching ideas and values.<sup>9</sup> Mauss argued that the reason why we feel obliged to reciprocate a gift is because there is something of the giver in the thing given. Even though humans usually know all too well that objects are not people, certain objects receive the same kind of treatment that is normally reserved for people alone.<sup>10</sup> For example, think of the American president hugging his national flag, or recall how painful it can be to deal with the personal belongings of a loved one after she or he has died.<sup>11</sup> These are cases where sometimes things are apparently perceived as conveying something »human« (personal belongings) or something related to an important collective social identity (national flag). What is interpreted as inalienably linked to the personal or social may differ from time to time and from culture to culture, but as Kopytoff reminds us: time and again, there is a certain behavioural response where things are being treated as if they were humans (even though they are not).<sup>12</sup> Statues of Saddam Hussein were systematically destroyed in public events in the aftermath of the Iraq war in 2003, which implies they were widely regarded as personifications of the dictator himself and all that he stood for.<sup>13</sup> In reality, of course, they were just sculpted stone. What is considered the »wrong« way to treat things may »hurt«; think for example of the destruction of ancient Assyrian heritage by ISIS – an event that almost got the same amount of attention as the killing of tens of thousands of people in the same war. There also may be certain, (implicit) social expectations and evaluations as to how to deal with things. In museums all over the world, objects from Ancient Egypt are usually displayed in their own rooms or wing, often subdivided thematically, parallel to rooms showing objects from other ancient »civilizations«. <sup>14</sup> In western museums, they are usually not part of one single exhibition displaying the long-term history of Egypt itself, which would include Coptic and Islamic objects. This reifies the notion that ancient Egypt, in the mind of westerners, lacks a connection to what came later, although all are part of the history of that part of Africa that is now the modern Egyptian state.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, things can be *like* people. This becomes clear and researchable from the behavioural response that things may arouse. As Kopytoff sets out in his seminal paper, every culture

has specific (but usually implicit) expectations on what is considered the proper treatment of things.<sup>16</sup> Ancient Egyptian people from the late 18th dynasty must have had clear ideas about what would be the »right« way to deal with the statues of treasurer Maya and his wife Merit, just like we have today. It would probably be considered inappropriate if the statues were placed in an amusement park, or if we would allow people to sit on Maya's lap to make selfies.

## DO OBJECTS AND MATERIALS SHAPE THINKING?

The »agency« of things is often supposed to involve more than simply the process whereby certain things incite certain behaviour. From a phenomenological point of view, an argument from cognitive science would be that things »do« much more than that – they may be integral to thinking itself. Using theories from cognitive science and neuropsychology, Malafouris (2013) recently argued that the brain works in such a way that the material environment shapes people's thinking.<sup>17</sup> He argues that people use things to think with. Referring to Bateson's famous example of the blind man and the stick he uses to orientate himself in the invisible world, the point can be made that the stick is just as much part of the blind's man thinking as his brain is.<sup>18</sup> Alternatively, following Renfrew we may ask ourselves whether certain concepts are conceivable without things or bodily experiences.<sup>19</sup> For example, Renfrew asks himself whether the concept of weight is conceivable without having had the experience of weighing, or whether we can have an idea of »value« without ever having dealt with valuables.<sup>20</sup> In our case, the following question matters: is »ancient Egypt« conceivable for someone who has never seen »ancient Egyptian things«? This is a question that is less often asked, but one that lurks in the background of this book and is hinted at by Versluys in his introduction.<sup>21</sup>

Malafouris argues that things have mediational effects; that is, they affect and transform the relation between people and their environment.<sup>22</sup> Others have argued that things may work to anchor or materialize time.<sup>23</sup> Monuments like pyramids were built during one specific moment in time, but by means of their visibility and material presence have become enduring elements of the visual world – they are just as much part of modern Egypt as they were of Egypt during the Old Kingdom. By occupying space they »slow down time«. <sup>24</sup> Because of the way ancient Egyptian things are being thematically ordered in modern museums, reifying a superficial stylistic unity, it is easy to forget that sometimes thousands of years separate the production of one item from another. Following Kirsh, Malafouris makes the point that the organization of space itself shapes thinking: »by supporting *choice*, by supporting *perception*, and by supporting *problem solving*« (italics as in the original).<sup>25</sup> This brings to mind how a particular way of displaying ancient Egyptian things in museums or popular culture, *may have the effect to create a particular notion of ancient Egypt*.<sup>26</sup> One could think of classic displays where ancient Egypt is represented as one monolithic whole,

separate from adjacent or younger cultures, suppressing stylistic deviances, emphasizing orthodox monuments over popular material culture, etc.

### »TO SEE IS TO BE«

This quote, taken from Buchli, was originally used to describe the significance of seeing and experiencing distant holy places for the constitution of personhood of pilgrims from the fifth century CE.<sup>27</sup> It also matches the point made above and underscores that seeing and experiencing the material itself constitutes more than humans receiving sensory impulses; as some scholars have put it,<sup>28</sup> it is rather that seeing/experiencing ontologically is a constitutive act: »minds and things are co-constituted in situated action.«<sup>29</sup>

In spite of all the changes Egypt went through, it can be said that anchoring concepts, notions, and ideas on the overarching supernatural realm in concrete things was a long-term concern of ancient Egyptian cultures<sup>30</sup>. Making ideas on the divine, kingdom, or social order »manifest« in the material seems to have been essential<sup>31</sup>. Why this was such a long-lived strategy is an intriguing question but difficult to answer – did it help to naturalize apparent contradictions and inconsistencies in the pantheon or creation myths when different sun-related gods were made real to people by being shown in depictions or statues that were visible to all? Was the notion of a human king as a divine being dwelling on earth better conceivable to the people once his larger-than-life portrayal on par with gods was ubiquitous?<sup>32</sup>

This is relevant because conveying information through permanent and lasting materiality and visibility is just one particular way of information management. Creating memories by making things *in-visible* is another.<sup>33</sup> In many cultures all over the world, the deliberate removal of material culture from society can – paradoxically – also have the effect that the thing that is removed or even destroyed attains a certain inalienability and endurance in the mind of onlookers *just because of the fact it is now gone*.<sup>34</sup> Intriguingly, strategies aiming at visibility and those achieving invisibility often go together.<sup>35</sup> This is even true for such an outspoken monumentalizing and visual culture as that of ancient Egypt. It was only long after my first visit to the Egyptian exhibition at the Leiden museum, that I came to realize that many things on display were objects specifically made for funerals – it was never the ancient Egyptians' intention that they would come to light again. This is true for many other star objects of archaeological and anthropological museums worldwide, like the massively destroyed metalwork of the European Bronze Age, or the elaborate Malanggan wood sculptures of New Ireland.<sup>36</sup> This brings me to another reason why Egypt may have played such a prominent role in western discourses: the fact that the ancient Egyptians not only produced so many splendid objects, but that they dedicated so much of that »wealth« to the supernatural and divine world, by storing it permanently underground, in seemingly inaccessible tombs. Narratives of ancient Egyptian people hiding special things from the living

for the afterlife, and the possibility that one day, modern people may retrieve those things again are among the most appealing features of ancient Egypt since the Napoleonic expeditions.

## AGENCY OF THINGS AND HISTORIES OF IDEAS

Following the editor's introduction, its intriguing questions keep lurking in the background. How is it possible that the legacy of ancient Egypt acquired such a central role in later cultures, starting with the ancient Greeks and Romans? Was this because ancient Egyptian material culture has a unique agency? Was it because of unique contingencies in the meta-narratives on ancient Egypt in younger civilizations?

Cognitive science and neuropsychology have brought us new insights on how materiality and visuality are inextricably linked with how human thought is shaped.<sup>37</sup> This implies that the question whether or not a concept of ancient Egypt can exist without ancient Egyptian things is in fact no longer an interesting one – seeing that, in fact, they constitute each other.<sup>38</sup> When reviewing the contributions in this book and other works on »Egyptomania«, it indeed becomes clear that the revival of notions surrounding ancient Egypt often co-occurs with moments when other people became physically confronted with its material legacy in one way or other (e.g. the inclusion of Egypt as part of the Roman Empire, Napoleon's expeditions into Egypt, or for that matter: the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb). It also becomes clear that the way in which ancient Egyptian things were displayed, used and portrayed in later periods mattered greatly to the impact and significance they had.<sup>39</sup>

This book also convincingly shows how the mnemohistory centred around ancient Egypt has come to be firmly anchored in discourse on western self-identity (and self-congratulation). It is remarkable that this seems less the case for other ancient civilizations, from adjacent West Asia, other parts of Africa or even from Europe itself, even though these have also created an impressive, enduring material legacy (think for example of the monumental remains from the ancient city of Babylon, the Benin civilization or the megalithic landscape of Stonehenge). At least, we can say that the role of the West Asian, African and European pasts differ from the role played by ancient Egypt in the preferred »grand narrative« on western identity.<sup>40</sup> It is here that the questions concerning the agency of ancient Egyptian things again become relevant. Did ancient Egypt's material culture have such an impressive afterlife because it had an »immediacy« or »unmittelbare Sagkraft« that others lacked, for example because of its unparalleled stylistic coherence throughout time?<sup>41</sup> Modern computational techniques (e.g. 3D-scanning and visual recognition software) now make it possible to verify such statements to some extent, but they risk to locate the nature of ancient Egyptian material culture in essentialist (visual) features. What people did with these things, how their materiality and visuality was managed in situated social practice

is perhaps even more important.<sup>42</sup> It is in this field that I see the greatest potential for archaeology and other material culture studies, such as museum studies: how were ancient Egyptian things treated, used and located in space?<sup>43</sup>

It may be extremely difficult to get into the head of people. However, what people were doing is researchable from archaeological and historical evidence, to some extent – patterned behavioural responses to things.<sup>44</sup> This is particularly useful when it comes to investigating the attitude towards Egyptian things in non-Egyptian cultures, such as the Hittites, or the later Greeks and Romans. From among the array of long-distance links they entertained, which imported things did these people include in their lives and what role did things from Egypt play? Which Egyptian things were included (and which were not), in which contexts, in which practices? Did Egyptian styles influence existing »style communities«?<sup>45</sup>

Much ink has been spilt on why it is wrong to use human terms when describing what happened to things.<sup>46</sup> This reduces the discussion on how things shape human thinking to a semantic one, which is not very productive for empirical research. It is essential to the human condition that, on the one hand, we recognize ourselves as different from things, but that we at the same time may connect to the world around us by seeing things *as if* they were alive.



## EGYPT AND/AS STYLE

Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt

In the Fall of 2013 Katy Perry scored a monster hit with *Dark Horse*. In the song her character proclaims that gentlemen are welcome, but they have to watch their steps. She urges them to get prepared for risking their lives by getting totally overpowered by what she calls »a perfect storm«. In the clip this warning of the *femme fatale* is visualized with the help of remarkable allusions to ancient Egypt. We see a floating pyramid, a pink hypostyle hall, a canopy barge at sunset on the Nile, golden clothed female dancers with cat masks, and even a sarcophagus that magically opens to reveal rapper Juicy J. Not in the least, we can admire Perry in full Egyptian royalty, expressed by her long black hair in straight bangs filled with golden pendants, by her eyes in heavy black make up forming a wedjat, and by the cobra-winged golden head gear inlaid with colorful stones. A sphinx-formed throne enforces her enchanting, pharaohesque allure. The male dancers flanking her wear their nemes, but only as an open carcass of golden thread. Whereas they have an Egyptian-like wraparound skirt, the white boxer shorts clearly visible underneath are surprisingly modern, as well as their white sneakers; their blue skin has strong resemblances to the jinn from Disney's blockbuster *Aladdin* (1992). Thus the clip plays with Egyptian style by bringing together prototypical images, but without missing any chance to deconstruct them. It is combined with other styles, as well as linked to popular previous appropriations of Egyptian style. The dancers walk like the Egyptians in the Bangles' song from 1986 and Perry's appearance brings Elizabeth Taylor into memory in her most flamboyant role of Cleopatra, predating exactly half a century. The Egyptian hall contains clear references to video game culture with its oversimplified architectural structures rendered in prominent perspective, such as in *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* of 1999 in which archaeologist Lara Croft resolutely hunts

for artefacts associated with Horus. Moreover, the Egyptian gods covering the walls, as well as (strangely enough) the ceiling, are not carved into sandstone, but look like wallpaper made of exceptionally grand papyri.

These explicit references to Egyptian style, as well as to previous uses of it and the stunning combination with other styles in Perry's clip can easily be set aside as an evident example of postmodern popular culture which combines all it can catch. The clip does not look back much further than the 1960s, whereas the scope of this book volume goes from the Iron Age till the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, we can approach Perry's clip in the same way as the contributions in this book. These all deal with Egyptian appropriations by (re-)evaluating the concept of »Egyptomania«, starting from the theoretical viewpoints of Miguel John Versluys and of Jean-Marcel Humbert. More precisely, the clip can be placed within the *longue durée* approach of this book clarifying that every culture has its own Egyptian styles in a complex way relying on previous Egyptian styles, but seldom dealing with Egypt purely »maniacally«.

At least as much as Biblical and Graeco-Roman narratives situated in Egypt, the construction, reconstruction and (sometimes even) deconstruction of Egyptian style is an interest shared by many Western civilizations. Just as Perry's clip does not primarily interact with concrete Egyptian narratives, most of the cases discussed in this book point at instances where Egyptian stories are overruled by stylistic allusions to Egypt, e.g. Molly Swetnam-Burland's focus on the difficulties for the visitors of the Metropolitan Museum to fully grasp the famous »Black Room« from the Villa of Boscotrecase. After clarifying how concrete historical narratives hinder a thorough understanding of the room, she shifts the focus to the effect of the room's Egyptian style. To fully grasp the impact of Egypt every contribution pays attention to references to the formal and visual aspects of objects and architecture (thought to be) produced by that ancient, legendary culture flourishing along the banks of the river Nile. Thus, in order to explore the relations between the eight case studies, we can look at correspondences in the effect of Egyptian style on the diverse cultures that appropriated it. To do so, let us begin by defining style in more general terms.

Everything humans do or make has style. A common element in most of the theories of style is that it refers to the design of an action or artefact, its set of formal and visual characteristics.<sup>1</sup> The style of an action or artefact is the most direct, visible and basic tool that we use to stage and adorn ourselves and our environment. It appears on the surface of actions and artefacts, but is far from superficial. Style is an essential factor in the economic value of artefacts. It constructs and defines individual and collective identities, thus facilitating social relationships, while it is also an instrument to visualize, to enforce, and even to create ideologies. Stylistic appropriation and hybridity are also conspicuous signs of and motors in intercultural exchange.<sup>2</sup> Most important in the context of this volume is that style often functions as a gateway to the past. Formal and visual characteristics of artefacts of previous societies are appreciated and appropriated or, conversely, rejected to express contemporary



artistic, moral, religious, and political values. Thus style is constitutive for the invention of tradition and the construction of history.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the study of style focused on classifying artefacts into style periods with the help of clearly defined sets of formal and visual characteristics. However, from the 1920s onwards defining style in terms of classification became increasingly controversial and was criticized as a model used merely to identify groups of artefacts without being able to explain the dissemination of styles.<sup>3</sup> Together with the rise of the socio-cultural history of artefacts, visual culture studies, and most recently the interest in materiality, this gradually resulted in the disappearance of style from the research agenda. Nevertheless, style as a means of categorization is at the same time still very prominent in surveys, curriculums, ordering principles in libraries or curating practices for museums and exhibitions. It is without question that style has become a problem; it provokes resistance, but is simultaneously far from easy to dismiss.<sup>4</sup>

To get out of this deadlock, recently archaeologists, anthropologists, and art historians, often closely working together, shifted the attention from style as a means of categorization to style as effect.<sup>5</sup> We find excellent examples in the work of many of the contributors to this book volume. Parallely, in sociology the study of the effect of style became important thanks to Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of style* of 1979 and the discussion the book provoked in the field of sociology into the new millennium.<sup>6</sup> So central to the academic reappraisal of style, and more particularly the growing interest in the study of its effects, stands the focus on styles that travel from one culture to another and from one social milieu to another. The contribution of this book to the study of the effect of styles is that it gives us more comprehension in how styles travel from one period to another.

The book leads to a deeper understanding of how the historical travelling of styles can involve a metamorphosis and even how that travelling can be so intense that nothing much of the original context is left, hereby even the original formal and visual characteristics can get out of sight. Concerning the motors behind the historical travelling, the book gives better insights in how Egyptian style was used in many cultures to fulfil the need of a set of stylistic characteristics different from the own style(s). The success of Egyptian style while travelling across the Mediterranean and Europe – and even beyond, as Peter Mason clarifies – is defined by its aura of eternal perseverance. The idea that for centuries and centuries »the« Egyptian style remained unchanged was often central to its appreciation and evaluation. However, this timelessness became a primary reason to use Egyptian style as an alternative and thus to bring alteration in dominant formal and visual choices. So an intriguing paradox turns up; Egyptian style travelling across time relies on its everlasting aura, but is in the same time initiator of stylistic change.

The changes Egyptian style effects in other periods are not brought about by one coherent set of formal and visual characteristics. We cannot speak of »the« Egyptian style, since the stylistic characteristics related to Egypt are far too variable for that. This is made clear in among others the contribution of Anne Haslund Hansen pointing out that throughout the

18<sup>th</sup> century the categorization of the formal and visual characteristics of »the« Egyptian style altered. In her central case study, Piranesi's *Diverse maniere*, we could even speak of defining »the« Egyptian style by »rubbing off« exemplary Egyptian artefacts. To put it in other words, in his etchings Piranesi adapted the formal and visual characteristics of notorious artefacts related to Egypt in such a way that the definition of Egyptian style could be changed without transgressing against the limited reservoir of artefacts at hand. Moreover, Pascal Griener marvelously elucidates how in Piranesi's century the fascination for Egypt was very closely related to the own time. The travelling of Egypt's monumental artefacts was presented as an index of the own progress. Besides, references to Egypt were eagerly used to be able to deal with the almost magical power of artefacts. Thanks to the appropriation of Egypt, art's agency could be explored »outside the box, [...] outside the boundaries defined by all the systems of value – aesthetic, political ones«.

To understand even better »the« Egyptian style as a construct so often telling more about the own time than about ancient Egypt, we also have to reckon with a complex relation between form and content. The very same stylistic characteristics taken from Egypt can gradually shift in meaning while travelling, as Laurent Bricault demonstrates with his study of the Hellenistic drachma of Myndos. Thus, the present book points at the complex relation between our modern definition of style and the socio-cultural impact of artefacts. We need to analyze the artefacts' formal and visual characteristics in close relation with their historical context, since even if formal and visual characteristics stayed unchanged for a while, their reception could be radically different. Whereas our contemporary stylistic analyses still focus very much on periodization and on considering an artefact genuine or false, this volume learns that stylistic analyses need to be combined with the study of artefacts' biographies and with network analyses.

The productive powers of Egyptian style relying on complex, often paradoxical relations between timelessness-change and invariability-variability are made possible from the moment that Egyptian style is no longer part of its original context. Egyptian style while travelling can keep its aura of a centuries-old invariable set of formal and visual characteristics, but in the same time is able to bring renewal to its new home, as long as that new home is far enough removed from the old one. In her contribution, Ann Gunter explains that in the Iron Age »a new chapter in the life of Egyptian styles« emerges, precisely because then the close connection between Egyptian style and Egyptian political and economic domination became far less strong than before. The fading importance of its concrete origin did certainly not diminish the impact of Egyptian style. The book makes clear that the aura of invariability of Egyptian style can only achieve change in travelling across the Mediterranean, Europe, and beyond, if a delicate position towards its original context is answered. Egypt cannot be too close, but on the other hand neither too far. Dimitri Laboury and Marie Lekane point at the fact that in the Middle Ages Egyptian style gets so extremely far removed from its origins that they speak of a »loss of style«. However, they nuance this medieval loss by examining the possibility that most suddenly, seemingly *ex nihilo*, Egyptian style arises anew, as

is the case in the 13<sup>th</sup> century Roman *arte cosmatesca* with its Egyptian-looking sphinxes and lions.

Some of the object-based studies in this book give us further insights in how Egyptian artefacts were thought of containing the key to opening up the closed Egyptian territories. The more eager people tried to find that key, the less interest they gave to the particular style of the artefact. In his contribution on the reception of the *Mensa Isiaca* Peter Mason discusses the belief that the distant Egyptian past could be brought closer to the viewers thanks to a careful examination of the tablet's figures. Mason shows how at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> century antiquarian Lorenzo Pignoria based his study of the *Mensa Isiaca* on the belief that all figures must have a concrete meaning and that these figures together must lead to one coherent message. So the figures had to be »read« in order to retrieve the Egyptian mysteries. However, this analysis of Egyptian »texts« equaled to a large degree the acknowledgement of the own phantasmagorias (which can be related to what Assmann and Ebeling in their introductory contribution define as »mnemohistory«). Moreover, in this context of iconography *avant la lettre* stylistic choices were totally downgraded in importance. Style was deemed of secondary importance, as trivial as handwriting was estimated for the meaning of a text.

In Odile Nouvel-Kammerer's contribution it becomes crystal clear how in the period around 1800 the representation of Egyptian architecture very closely interacts with urgent political and historiographical concerns. Thanks to the exceptional riches of primary source material, the impact of Egyptian style in a centerpiece in Sèvres porcelain – a technical marvel that represented three Egyptian temples surrounded by obelisks, colossi, and sphinxes – can be exploited to the fullest. We get a fascinating insight in how the use of Egyptian style served complex diplomatic agendas, but how similarly this use also interacted with current historical and art-historical debates. Here, the effect of style is studied in a thorough, most innovative way thanks to relating stylistic analysis to the biography of artefacts and network analysis.

Finally, Cecilia Hurley focusses on the museological difficulties in presenting Egyptian artefacts. Urgent stylistic issues popped up when Egyptian artefacts arrived in the museums throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The architecture of museums was primarily defined by Neo-Classicism showing explicit differences with the Egyptian styles of the artefacts on show. Prominent scholars saw this as a problem, since the stylistic differences obstructed the artefacts' power to transport the visitors to ancient Egypt. Possible alternatives were found in the international exhibitions and their presentation of Egyptian artefacts in reconstructions of temples, thus facilitating the immersion into the glorious past of the pharaohs. Here, we see how the »academic« museum and the »spectacular« international exhibition were both prominently involved in the question how best to stage Egypt.

Thanks to Hurley's comprehensive discussion of the complex relation between academic and popular culture in the presentation of Egyptian style, we find ourselves again where we started, Perry's video clip for *Dark Horse*. As we already said, its use of Egyptian style can

easily be set aside as merely postmodern popular culture. However, it can also be seen as a playful exploration of the role of Egyptian style in Western civilization and beyond. Admittedly, in terms of explicit references the clip does not look much further back in time than Elizabeth Taylor playing Cleopatra. However, by eagerly commenting upon the effects of Egyptian style it picks up issues addressed in the book that predate the 1960s by far.

As is so often the case in video clips, the lyrics have no direct relation with what is shown. The images do not merely illustrate the words, since there are no direct references to Egypt in the song itself. Therefore, the viewers are invited to see links between Egyptian style and Perry warning her admirers for a »perfect storm«. Thus Egypt can be maximally exploited. The clip's use of Egyptian style plays with the idea of inescapable strength and spectacular magic. Perry's monumental throne, for example, is given the form of a sphinx. In the clip that throne is animated. Through its eyes, it spectacularly beams Perry's bragging lovers to death. In doing so, not only Egyptian style is overemphasized and explicitly turned into a commonplace, but also the effect of Egyptian style. Furthermore, the clip uses the long tradition of appropriating Egyptian style to express gender roles by staging male and female clichés as amusing caricatures. The femme fatale, as well as her arrogant admirers are given form with very obvious references to Egypt, consequently eliciting pleasant recognition. Finally, the clip's use of Egyptian style evokes sensual beauty with its sharp-cut female contours and muscular male torsos, as well as life-threatening sexuality by giving the central role to a Cleopatra-like femme fatal. Maybe, these elements so central to the effect of Egyptian style in the clip – cliché, humor and sexuality – can be further explored in future research with the help of the methods and theories developed in this thought-provoking book volume.

# THE MAGIC OF THE MATERIAL

## RECEPTIONS OF ANCIENT EGYPT AND THEIR IMPACTS

Stephanie Moser

The adoption of ancient Egyptian motifs in historic and contemporary contexts is extraordinary, revealing the enduring capacity of Egyptian material culture to inspire communities all over the world. Engaging with ancient Egypt in multiple domains and over successive generations, scholars, travellers and creative professionals have expressed fascination for many aspects of Egyptian antiquity in their writings and visual outputs (including the decorative arts). In studying this diverse and sustained response to ancient Egypt, specialists from many disciplines have outlined concepts, terms and ideas relating to its reception. Researchers in Egyptology, archaeology, art history, history, film, classics, literature and cultural studies have all contributed to the understanding of Egypt's legacy from antiquity to the present. Experts in specialised fields such as antiquarianism, design history and colonialism, have also informed our appreciation of the extent to which and the manner in which ancient Egypt has been engaged with over time. Through divergent conceptual frameworks, scholars and popular writers have outlined compelling narratives on the »survival« of ancient Egyptian cultural forms beyond the realms of the Nile.

While the representation of ancient Egypt in historical and creative contexts provides testimony of its visual potency and striking appeal, we know little about the ways and extent to which such representations impacted the cultural traditions within which they were created. The ambition of *Beyond Egyptomania* is to examine this issue of impact from an object-oriented perspective. In seeking to contribute to research on the reception of ancient Egypt, the volume explores the agency of Egyptian material culture through a series of case studies on Egyptianising objects and Egyptian-themed images. The authors discuss objects and images that were produced during a range of time periods and in a great variety

of contexts. Together they aim to document how representations of ancient Egypt affected their surroundings and the wider historical contexts within which they were generated. In the following discussion I outline key points made in *Beyond Egyptomania* before turning to the significance of the »material« in a highly impactful body of representations of ancient Egypt.

Rather than summarizing what the papers in *Beyond Egyptomania* achieve individually, it is perhaps more fruitful to discuss what the volume achieves collectively. Several important points are made that do much in the way of demonstrating the value of studying the reception of ancient Egypt. First and foremost, the volume demonstrates a growing appreciation of the role of Egyptianising antiquities in cultural expression and transformation. This involves exploring how artefacts from cultures both contemporaneous and successive to ancient Egypt innovatively adapted Egyptian motifs in their artforms and other expressions of material identity (often referred to as »Aegyptiaca«). The contributors to *Beyond Egyptomania* demonstrate how such objects and images reflect a diverse range of cultural priorities and agendas, impacting the conceptual domains and physical environments in which they were made and used. Outlining the diversity of frameworks through which ancient Egypt has been understood, the authors also show that western narratives about the history of art do not really take this rich trajectory of adaptation and interpretation into account. Overall, the chapters assign the material residues of Egypt with a proactive role in cultural history due to their innovative adaption in multiple historical contexts. We learn, for instance, how ancient Egyptian motifs and iconography became embedded in a variety of religious traditions and secular practices, significantly affecting those who viewed and engaged with them. We also see how those who incorporated ancient Egyptian elements within their own traditions of representation did so in highly creative ways, »repurposing« ancient Egypt in ways that transformed the surroundings in which such representations were housed or exhibited.

Another important contribution of the volume to the study of the reception of ancient Egypt is the shift away from studying the representation of »great treasures« and well-known monuments of Egypt. Several authors explore the depiction of Egyptian motifs in smaller antiquities and the »minor arts«, evaluating the way in which these responses advanced the ideas and agendas of the representing culture. In addition to this, the volume demonstrates that there are important differences between the reception of ancient Egypt in the arts and the recycling of concepts and ideas from Egypt in non-visual realms. While the former have been typically evaluated within an art history framework, *Beyond Egyptomania* demonstrates that an archaeological (object-orientated) perspective assigns agency to Egyptianising antiquities, rather than treating them as an artistic »by-product« or derivative form of art. This agency becomes apparent when the materiality of Egyptian antiquities, not just their meanings and iconography, is more fully considered. Intimately related to this is the paradoxical appraisal of Egyptian antiquities, where they are simultaneously considered familiar and recognizable, yet exotic and mysterious.

A recurring theme in *Beyond Egyptomania* is the challenge to the notion that Egyptianising objects constitute a coherent body of material with similar attributes, uses and meanings. Such artefacts are shown to be highly varied and created for a wide range of purposes. As the authors demonstrate, ancient Egypt and its visual motifs meant completely different things to different communities. The significance of Egyptian antiquities to those representing them often related to their historical, political and economic connections with Egypt. The religious significance of ancient Egypt in Christian traditions has also been extremely important in informing its reception in history, art and cultural memory. Egyptian art, its iconography and material characteristics were skillfully woven into and incorporated within contemporary frameworks of reference, serving particular agendas that had little or no connection to the »original« functions and meanings of Egyptian material culture.

Important to consider in this context of examining receptions of Egypt are the routes of access to Egyptian antiquities, and here *Beyond Egyptomania* demonstrates the critical role of the visual images of Egypt circulated from the early modern period. As is shown in the volume, antiquarian illustrations were particularly important as a source from which receptions were generated. While collectors, travellers, scholars and members of learned societies would have had opportunities to directly encounter Egyptian antiquities, artists, designers and architects relied on illustrative recordings for their representations of Egyptian artistic forms. These recordings were highly selective and interpretive in their nature, and practitioners from the visual industries were often drawn to the stylistic qualities of early archaeological imagery, responding to their material elements rather than their symbolic meaning.

More generally, the authors in *Beyond Egyptomania* promote an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates the perspectives of archaeologists, classicists, art historians, cultural historians and historians of science. While many who research the reception of ancient Egypt remain loyal to certain theories and disciplinary methodologies, there is a general recognition that Egyptian artforms have had a major impact on the visual arts and on design history since the Renaissance. Finally, some contributors to this volume raise the issue of the variable quality of research on Egyptomania and express concerns about the continued use of the term »Egyptomania« to denote the field, which suggests that it is concerned with tracing a history of obsession and fantasy. As argued elsewhere, there are important historical reasons why ancient Egypt emerged as an intellectual domain that did not share the same boundaries that existed for the study of other ancient civilisations.<sup>1</sup> The perception of ancient Egypt as a more »accessible« ancient culture that did not demand the same level of expertise required to understand and interpret the antiquities of Greece and Rome reflected how, for the latter two cultures, there was a tradition of classical scholarship that had been in existence since the Renaissance. No such scholarly tradition existed for ancient Egypt, resulting in different levels of intellectual engagement that were more diverse and eclectic. Furthermore, without the ability to read hieroglyphs there was a wide lack of understanding of Egyptian antiquities and audiences felt a sense of entitlement in interpreting the remains according to frameworks that were meaningful to them. To a certain degree ancient Egypt

has retained this legacy of being »open to all« and it this, perhaps, which enhances concerns about retaining the word »Egyptomania« to delineate the field of ancient Egypt reception studies. Added to this are the connotations of »mania«, which implies something that is irrational and incommensurate with scholarly study. Such associations are indeed problematic, but resolving the terminological conundrum of the word »Egyptomania« is complicated. While it is important to critically evaluate previous approaches to documenting the reception of ancient Egypt and essential to develop new ways of exploring the subject and taking it forward, the many traditions of writing about Egyptomania, »Aegyptiaca« and Egyptian Revivals will undoubtedly continue to co-exist. Just as receptions of the past are persistent and continually recycled and innovatively reworked in new cultural contexts, such is the case with studies of Egyptomania. Scholars from numerous disciplines and with divergent theoretical loyalties can all identify important aspects of the legacy of ancient Egypt, and with the increasing number of detailed investigations on the subject, researchers specialising in this area are achieving much in the way of characterising the distinctive impacts of representations of ancient Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

## CAPACITIES FOR IMPACT

As mentioned above, a key aim of *Beyond Egyptomania* is to promote an appreciation of the »material agency« of Egyptian antiquities in the reception history of ancient Egypt. A widely used concept that has varied applications in many disciplines, »agency« has long been explored by archaeologists, who have argued that ancient artefacts have active social lives that are central to the formation of identities and social networks. Theories of agency specifically relating to archaeology have been vigorously discussed, with researchers considering the value of »archaeological agency« for understanding ancient communities and cultural development.<sup>3</sup> As specialists of ancient material culture, archaeologists have (like others) adopted ideas from the work of anthropologist Alfred Gell, notably those presented in *Art and Agency* (1998).<sup>4</sup> Gell's emphasis on the role of artworks in enacting agency has been more recently developed by archaeologists seeking to reflect on materiality and the significance of the material in ancient and prehistoric worlds. In *The Archaeology of art. Materials, practices, affects*, Jones and Cochrane (2018) take their departure from Gell's arguments about how objects become enmeshed in social life through their production, distribution and reception. Their study demonstrates how the processes involved in the creation and adornment of artworks are as important in social life as is their physical existence. In focusing on the making of ancient art, they highlight the significance of the material character and qualities of such objects, focusing on their affective nature. Their materially focused, process-based approach shows that ancient artworks should not be seen as finished products because they essentially remain active. Adopting the concept of »affect« to address the relationship between artists/makers and materials, Jones and Cochrane de-



scribe how affects are moving forces which are multiple and ongoing. This kind of approach to the »material agency« of antiquities reinforces the highly fluid nature of objects, demonstrating that the interactions artists and makers have with the things they create is much more than a technical or practical exercise, and that the treatment of objects as static entities undermines the extent of their role in human existence. Such ideas can also be explored in relation to representations of ancient art and, more specifically, representations of ancient Egypt. The non-Egyptian images of ancient Egypt produced by artists and artisans over thousands of years have remained very much »alive«, making an impact on viewers from successive centuries and encouraging them to engage with antiquity in new ways. Indeed, a key point made in »agency studies« and which is particularly relevant to *Beyond Egyptomania*, is the idea that the agency of objects is enacted via the impact they have on audiences. Archaeological agency essentially refers to the capacity of ancient objects to »act« and affect those who make, use and view them and this can be widened to include representations of the past, which can be shown to have impacted their makers and the audiences who engaged with their creations.

The focus on »material agency« in *Beyond Egyptomania* demonstrates how ancient Egyptian and Egyptianising objects did not simply generate aesthetic interest but had other important impacts as well. In the following discussion I discuss the capacity for impact of receptions of ancient Egypt, focusing on the way in which an important body of visual representations of ancient Egypt engaged intensively with its material dimensions. In association with this I reflect on what might be termed an »engagement cycle«, where historic representations of ancient Egyptian objects are shown to have fostered new levels or layers of response to Egyptian antiquities. Examining how audiences have engaged with ancient objects and subjects, archaeological representation and reception studies consider how such responses generated distinctive impacts on perceptions of the past.<sup>5</sup> Researchers working in this area do not simply evaluate how ancient artefacts and cultures have been presented in particular ways, but also address the capacity of representations to affect viewers and promote new reception regimes. The extent and nature of the engagement that audiences have with archaeological artefacts reveals how the agency of such objects does not just reside in their visual impact but also in their powerful material presence. More specifically, audiences do not just appraise antiquities and representations of them in terms of what they represent, they also respond to them in terms of how they are constructed, formed and displayed. This theme has been explored in projects on the representation of ancient Egypt in museums, exhibitions, design and art (see below). Detailed investigations of the representation of ancient Egypt in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain have revealed how museum curators, designers and artists animated ancient Egyptian material culture through their work. They achieved this by highlighting aspects and attributes of Egyptian antiquities that brought these objects »to life« in ways that were meaningful to the audiences of the time.

Material agency is manifest in the display of Egyptian collections in museums around the world. The findings of a study on the presentation of Egyptian antiquities in the British



1 Egyptian Room in the British Museum, opened in 1838. Photograph by Frederick York, 1875

Museum from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century demonstrated that the manner in which the Egyptian objects were arranged encouraged visitors to interact with the materiality of Egyptian antiquities.<sup>6</sup> As little was known about the meaning and symbolic significance of Egyptian antiquities, the material characteristics of the objects became a primary route through which they were appraised. The size, shape, materials and decoration of the Egyptian objects were commented on at length, with comparisons made to the way in which their forms contrasted with those of ancient Greek and Roman antiquities. Moreover, the modes of arrangement adopted for presenting the Egyptian antiquities in the museum were not only informed by classificatory systems relating to object type, but were driven by the material qualities of the artefacts. Within broader groupings of antiquities that were arranged according to function (such as votive figurines, funerary items and domestic utensils), objects were assembled in visual arrangements based on shape, size and material. These »micro-installations« generated distinctive effects, attracting viewers to engage with the material and stylistic aspects of the items on display (fig. 1). In observing these features of the objects, visitors came to understand ancient Egypt in terms that were comprehensible to them. Ancient Egypt thus assumed a paradoxical identity; although ancient, exotic and mysterious, it was at the same time familiar and recognisable. Displaying items according

to similarities and differences in size, shape and material (within broader chronological and typological arrangements) might be simply dismissed as little more than an aesthetic conceit, yet such arrangements enabled objects to exert their own distinctive agency in inviting audiences to connect with the past.

Another key facet of the material agency of Egyptian antiquities was explored in a project on the representation of ancient Egypt in the work of prominent Victorian designer Owen Jones.<sup>7</sup> Through the Egyptian Court exhibit that he created for the Crystal Palace in Sydenham, and his landmark work *The Grammar of Ornament* (1856), Owen Jones highlighted the powerful role of ancient Egyptian ornament in communicating the values, aspirations and nature of ancient Egyptian society. His design of a large scale reconstruction of Egyptian architectural forms in the Egyptian Court, through which visitors could move and interact with multiple material elements, had a major impact on the perception of ancient Egypt (fig. 2). In this striking and vivid interpretation, which Jones created together with the Egyptologist Joseph Bonomi, a thoroughly immersive material world was presented. Here was a site in which ancient Egypt could be experienced rather than simply observed. As opposed to isolated objects brought together in the context of a more formal museum setting, the Egyptian Court seamlessly combined fragments of ancient Egypt into a coherent material environment. Visitors responded to the sensory effects of this exhibit, expressing awe at the scale, form, colour and extensively decorated surfaces that the unique space offered. Although entirely different from the materially affective »micro-installations« of the British Museum referred to above, the Egyptian Court also made its impact through the material. While the elements of the exhibit were reconstructed copies rather than original antiquities, they nevertheless created a powerful material effect. Augmenting this was Jones' detailed graphic renderings of Egyptian motifs in *Grammar of Ornament*, which promoted the idea that Egyptian artists and artisans had constructed a language of ornament that mapped their world. His graphic interpretation of Egyptian ornament conveyed the striking impact of ancient decorative styles, encouraging viewers to appreciate the combination of geometric and abstracted forms with vivid colour harmonies. Together, these three-dimensional and two-dimensional representations of ancient Egypt were shown to have had a significant impact on visitors/viewers, some of whom re-appropriated aspects of these interpretations in new representational schemes (see below). Essentially, Jones demonstrated that the rich ornament with which the ancient Egyptians' adorned their monuments and manufactured objects was not simply created for decorative or aesthetic effect. More than simply a »render« on the surface of monuments and objects, Egyptian systems of ornamentation were shown to be an integral part of the »anatomy« of their material culture. Through these highly viewed and widely distributed representations of ancient Egypt, the designs and motifs created by ancient Egyptian artists were revealed to constitute a distinctive material signature of ancient Egyptian religious systems and cultural beliefs. Indeed, archaeologists and Egyptologists were inspired by Jones' compelling representations, adopting more contextual modes of museum display and producing studies



2 Hall of Columns display in the Egyptian Court, Crystal Palace. Photograph by Henry Negretti and Joseph Zambra, undated

of the decorative aspects of Egyptian art that assigned them greater significance in the wider realm of ancient Egyptian culture.

The notion that representations of ancient Egypt served to animate Egyptian antiquities and assign them an agency aligned with their materiality has been recently explored in a project on the historicising paintings of Egypt.<sup>8</sup> This research examined how artists working in Britain in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century engaged intensively with ancient Egyptian objects, focusing in particular on the Egyptian-themed pictures of Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Edward Poynter and Edwin Long. Described as »archaeological genre paintings« in their pictures had a strong materialist focus, generating striking views of domestic life and religious rituals in ancient Egypt. The Egyptian subjects they exhibited at the Royal Academy

and in other major art venues demonstrate how material agency is enacted on different levels. First, the material agency of Egyptian objects on display rendered them highly appealing to artists, who became inspired to represent historicising scenes of Egypt that were densely populated with archaeological objects. In responding to these museological representations, artists endowed Egyptian objects with another »layer« of agency by showing how central they were to social life. Through the artists' imaginative visions, Egyptian objects became embedded in meticulously reconstructed material worlds. Far beyond serving as picturesque »props«, which they often did in other historicising paintings featuring the ancient world, artefacts assumed a powerful and meaningful presence in Alma-Tadema's, Poynter's and Long's art. More specifically, these artists did not simply suggest how Egyptian artefacts were central to the functions of daily life, but elevated them into objects that enriched life in other ways. Ancient utilitarian items were not only valued by the artists because of their domestic connotations, but also for their ability to evoke an atmosphere of »beauty«. This sense of beauty was manifested by the seemingly simple and functional, yet simultaneously aesthetic properties of objects. Populated with an abundance of painstakingly rendered domestic antiquities, Alma-Tadema's, Poynter's and Long's paintings both captured and celebrated the sumptuous material world of Egypt. In doing so, these pictures promoted the value of the less sensational and more ordinary objects in gaining insight on the more intimate lives of the Egyptians.

The impact of the richly constructed material settings in archaeological genre paintings has been more fully explored elsewhere, but the notion of »material agency« can be outlined here with one important example.<sup>9</sup> Alma-Tadema's *Egyptian Widow* of 1872 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam), aptly demonstrates how the artist deployed a multitude of material details to create a highly atmospheric and affecting scene (plate 41). While the subject of the picture centres on a grieving widow crouching by the side of the coffin of her deceased husband, the details of the setting have been assigned great attention. Alma-Tadema consulted a vast array of material and visual sources to inform his scene, including sculptures, architectural features, funerary scenes on walls and papyri, wooden mummy cases, sarcophagi, funerary objects and domestic items. Examples of all these classes of material are assembled into a highly detailed interior space where virtually every surface is covered with decoration. A substantial number of the objects in the picture can be sourced to the British Museum, notably the coffin, mummy, and canopic jars. Designs on the walls have also been copied from artefacts in the museum, and it is likely that other elements were taken from an important series of photographs of British Museum objects published in the same year as the painting.<sup>10</sup> Aspects of the picture also suggest that Alma-Tadema was influenced by the Egyptian Court at the Crystal Palace. Beyond the close similarity in the column capitals, the way in which viewers are encouraged to look over the low wall into another richly decorated room is highly reminiscent of the Egyptian Court. The Egyptianising frame Alma-Tadema had made for the picture also appears to have drawn on the style of repeating motifs from Jones' *Grammar of Ornament*.

The reception of *Egyptian Widow* provides important insight into the way that archaeological genre paintings were evaluated in terms of their attention to the material. The *Athenaeum* highlighted its »vitalizing ability«, *The Times* referred to its »solidity of effect« and the *Examiner* admired it for investing »archaic accessories like these with a semblance of vitality«.<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, the writer for the *Examiner* felt that the highly detailed setting was compatible with the subject of the painting, revealing how for some critics the material elements constituted more than just a background. In more recent times, however, critics have suggested that the details of the interior are too dominating. Egyptologist Herman de Meulenaere, for example, reflects that even the »wailings of a widow, kneeling at the feet of her husband's coffin, are drowned in such an exuberance of decorative motives that they fail to move one's heart«.<sup>12</sup> While the profusely ornamented interior is a primary characteristic of the composition, it does not necessarily, however, undermine the subject of the work. With her hunched posture, hand covering her face, and arm gripping the coffin, the widow evokes a powerful sense of grief. Her gestures are instantly recognisable as an expression of sadness and loss. Furthermore, her translucent and relatively plain garment sharply contrasts with the richly decorated elements all around her.

Returning to the theme of materiality, *Egyptian Widow* is notable for the way in which the texture of ancient materials has been highlighted. Alma-Tadema seeks to capture the natural qualities and intricacies of the wooden door, bier, bedframe and harp. Although he is famous for his ability to replicate the appearance of ancient marble with great fidelity (particularly in his Roman paintings), his keenly observed rendering of wood, metal, glass and ceramics is equally pronounced. Another distinguishing feature of the picture is the attention to how things are made. Wooden pegs in the bier, semi-concealed »pins« attaching the tails to the bedframe, the wooden »hinge« on the top of the door, and the splits in the vaulted coffin lid, are testimony to Alma-Tadema's fascination with the processes involved in making things. Attention to these material details reflected his desire to understand the inner-workings or »anatomy« of objects. Like an archaeologist, he recognised that the act of constructing and decorating objects was just as important to their agency as was their finished physical form. This aspect of his art had an impact on responses to such objects and demonstrated that the intense archaeological realism of his pictures did not just pertain to surfaces, but hinted at something deeper. Such details, for instance, endowed paintings such as *Egyptian Widow* with a sense of intimacy, encouraging viewers to feel they were present in these ancient spaces, witnessing these scenes with their own eyes.

The focus on the material world of ancient Egypt in the art of Alma-Tadema, Poynter and Long did not simply result from a motivation to reconstruct antiquity in an archaeological manner in order to lend weight to the veracity of their scenes. Rather, these artists featured numerous highly realistic depictions of specific antiquities as a means for capturing the *spirit* of life, which for them was both intimate and personal. While they were interested in a broad range of artefacts indicative of past traditions and behaviours, what attracted them the most were the smaller utilitarian items that were ostensibly functional but lavishly and skil-

fully decorated by the ancient artisans. Drawn to the »civil« and »industrial« antiquities displayed in the Egyptian Rooms at the British Museum, the artists found a rich quarry for their paintings. From these galleries numerous items were carefully selected and assembled into vivid scenarios of specific moments in life. Alma-Tadema's, Poynter's and Long's pictures were distinctive for conceptualising ancient Egypt in terms that were less formal than those conveyed in museum displays, publications and other artworks, particularly in their desire to convey more emotion in the representation of a culture that was often depicted as cold, cruel and exotic. While their scenes reflected the growing interest in the »manners and customs« of ancient ancestors, they were also a result of the fascination for the growing collections of everyday objects acquired by museums. Importantly, however, their passion for including these items in their scenes was not the result of a materialistic »fetish«, but stemmed from the combination of an admiration for the quality of design and decoration evident in items manufactured thousands of years ago, and the way in which these »relics« were suggestive of lives once lived. Intimately related to this was the design movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where practitioners expressed great interest in the development of skilled traditions of craftsmanship from ancient times, and where an emphasis on the material dimensions of the past spoke to the wider issue of privileging fine art above the applied or decorative arts. Although rendered as paintings and thus classified as »fine art«, Alma-Tadema's, Poynter's and Long's pictures elevated the status of the manufactured arts by assigning them a role beyond the merely functional and decorative. No longer simply »accessories« that were included to provide visual interest, ancient domestic objects had come alive.

With their precisely copied and prominently placed artefacts, archaeological genre paintings assigned great potency to the material dimensions of the past, yet the response to the focus on »accessories« was contentious. Some critics felt the emphasis on the material did not fulfil the true aims of art, and that the attention to the background was disproportionate and detracted from the subject of the work. For many the material elements of a picture were considered secondary in comparison with the representation of human action and accordingly, Alma-Tadema, Poynter and Long were criticised for attributing too much importance to *mis-en-scène*. Although these artists did not intend for the setting to be the dominating force in their pictures, they believed archaeological details offered far more than historical context. Ultimately, attention to the material dimensions of everyday life enabled them to capture the beauty of the »ordinary«. They saw something special in ancient utilitarian objects, believing they could be used to draw the viewer in to experience a sense of the past as it may have been. Just as the scale and skilfully crafted spaces of the Egyptian Court at the Crystal Palace had exerted their agency by providing an immersive environment within which visitors could, interact, with ancient Egypt, the paintings of Alma-Tadema, Poynter and Long provided viewers with believable material worlds.

It is significant that Alma-Tadema, Poynter and Long produced their pictures at time when archaeologists were emphasising how all classes of antiquities should be scrutinised to reconstruct ancient lifeways. One of the key impacts of their paintings was that they

helped challenge the assumption that textual sources, monuments and major artworks were the primary means for investigating the past. Like archaeologists, these artists appreciated the value of the »minutiae« surviving from antiquity and for them, the beautifully crafted domestic items from ancient Egypt were particularly compelling. As people were becoming increasingly accustomed to mass-produced items in the wake of industrialisation, the objects that been hand-crafted by ancient artisans assumed a special resonance for designers and practitioners in the visual arts. Showcased with such care in archaeological genre paintings, beautifully made artefacts from antiquity also satisfied the Victorian passion for material things. Importantly, the attention paid to the material in archaeological genre painting was not fleeting but grew out of a desire to convey an »inner truth« rather than just a physical reality. Ultimately, Alma-Tadema, Poynter and Long aspired to represent something more than just an authentic reconstruction of the past; well-copied antiquities were not simply inserted into scenes to suggest what life may have looked like, their rich material qualities were thought to offer a sense of what life may have felt like as well.

## CONCLUSION

*Beyond Egyptomania* demonstrates how Egyptianising objects and images became transformed in new cultural contexts, assuming an important role in the creation of social identities and making an impact on their immediate environment. Close inspection of representations of ancient Egypt demonstrate that aspects of Egyptian art and culture were not simply exploited for their novelty and exotic connotations. Ancient Egypt has enjoyed a rich reception history because it offers opportunities to express ideas and aspirations that are meaningful to the communities who choose to engage with it; it can also accommodate multiple viewpoints at the same time. Indeed, there is so much diversity in the nature and modes of engagement with ancient Egypt that it is almost impossible to identify a coherent pattern or unified approach in appraising its reception. Beyond the variations in responses over time, there are also significant differences in the treatment of ancient Egypt in genres such as art, literature, film and philosophy. While the title *Beyond Egyptomania* implies a move forward and that »Egyptomania« is something we should leave behind, it is unlikely that those of us specializing in the subject can control or prevent the many enthusiasts who will continue to appraise the cultural legacy of Egypt in terms of irrational obsessions and fantasy. Furthermore, fixed definitions for the study of receptions of ancient Egypt are not necessarily helpful because representations are not static and continue to inform each other from one generation to the next. Ultimately, no one discipline can claim to be the »gate-keeper« or authoritative voice on studies of the reception of ancient Egypt. As a multi-disciplinary, multi-temporal and multi-conceptual field, reception studies of ancient Egypt will undoubtedly continue to thrive as an eclectic and vibrant area of investigation.



## OBJECT – SUBJECT – EGYPT

Stephen Quirke

In expounding the aims for this volume, the editor identifies two effects in particular, which amount to strategies for reconnecting the history of ideas and the study of material culture. In the first strategy, a material turn (chap. 1), ancient Egyptian artefacts and products in an ancient Egyptian style are seen to play the role of catalysts, active in their direct interventions over time, in diverse settings of Mediterranean and, later, European history.<sup>1</sup> In asserting the materials, forms and styles of artefacts and architecture as one dominant strand in the history of the impact of ancient Egypt, the collected papers should extend the domain of the twin histories of memory and impact, previously focussed on written sources. The introduction of material as active in history leads directly to the second effect, which is the chronological scope of memory and impact history. Material cultural evidence for the impact of Egypt on the ideas and arts of other lands extends far beyond the fifth century BCE *Researches* or »*Histories*« by Herodotus, the earliest substantial written source for ancient Egypt accessible in Europe until the 1822 decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs. The editor offers the label »prehistory« for this approach (chap. 1). Histories of ideas or impact studies would then start with periods accessed through a different kind of source, potentially in fuller engagement with the archaeology of art.

Versluys has earlier characterised the role of material culture as »*catalyst* or *protagonist*«, citing the dramatic example where a 1602 Amsterdam auction of captive cargo unleashed a taste for chinoiserie in the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> The concept of catalyst is essential to understanding the role of objects, and probably attracts few opponents. Protagonist, however, may seem more problematic in its anthropomorphism, and indeed Assmann and Ebeling (chap. 2) contest a literal application that »the ancient Egyptian thing« might be an autono-

mous actor. Several openings out of this object=subject dilemma may be productive here. Diffusing the stark opposition between things and humans, historians have recalled the place of other creatures in the constellation, including at more recent periods in the Nile Valley.<sup>3</sup> On the spread of the term »agency« in Anglophone archaeological theory, Gavin Lucas questioned whether its agent is still the autonomous individual of Enlightenment European politics and philosophy.<sup>4</sup> In the decade before the emergence of »agency« in Angloamerican social sciences, Aleksei Leontiev was articulating in some detail the kindred term субъектность, in the development of activity theory from Lev Vygotsky.<sup>5</sup> This terrain might be useful to investigate in relation to the question of what »ancient Egyptian things/motifs« were doing or wanting, to take up the material cultural approach suggested by the editor (chap. 1). In another direction, a route through the analytic conflicts in talking about communication might be found from Iran, in the Arabic analyses of language by Abd Al-Qahir al-Jurjani.<sup>6</sup> Khalfallah translates the terms Jurjani uses into a Francophone interpretative frame, where we might seek to locate people, animals, birds, plants, things in each timespace where an »ancient Egyptian« impact meets us or strikes us:

*mukhbir* »émetteur produisant l'information«  
*mukhbar 'anhu* »objet de l'énoncé«  
*mukhbar bihi* »information la concernant«  
*khabar* »un énoncé qui décrit cet objet«  
*mukhatab* »destinataire qui reçoit l'information«

Khalfallah adds his own gloss that »la construction d'une assertion est donc un acte social et sémantique«, to which we might add an endnote that the object of speech is the topic, entirely neutral to our classifications into abstract, material, human etc.<sup>7</sup> If the *actant* in this network may be any one/thing, where does the term stop being a metaphor?

Assmann and Ebeling (chap. 2) ask further whether the history of ancient Egypt impacts can find unity in a principle such as the »thing Egyptian« as *agens*, or ought the phenomenon be considered rather a bundle of loose associations. This central and unsettling question of aims and method finds echo and reply in the ensuing papers in various forms. Here I would foreground the recurrent comments on the problem of the static-dynamic binary, as it concerns one of the most entrenched prejudices in current and past writing on ancient Egypt. Often as a foil to the dynamism of ancient (more particularly fifth century BCE) Greece, writing both in the European languages and in Arabic has tended to cast ancient Egypt as funereal, death-like, inert. The characterisation is not necessarily uniformly negative in itself, and immortality motifs in ancient Egyptian art offer different, vital associations. From the Middle Kingdom onwards, the wrapped body of deities and guardians alike may indicate alertness and readiness to act.<sup>8</sup> In New Kingdom temples, »Osiriform« statues of kings in inner courts seem poised, chrysalis-like, for rebirth as the forms in ceremonial garb of life in the outer courtyards.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, in European-language traditions since

Greek and Roman antiquity, the image of stasis has most often been deployed to the exclusion of any dynamic forms or readings, and with the intention of placing ancient Egypt on a lower rung of human history.<sup>10</sup> At one level of generalisation, the name of Winckelmann has come to represent this dominant strand of European objections to ancient Egyptian art (for a closer contextual account, see Griener, chap. 4). How wide and deep the negative attitude extends can be seen with the most prominent opponent in this debate, Piranesi; even as he champions ancient Egypt, his measure of quality remains ancient Greece, as Haslund Hansen finds against our expectations (chap. 10). In the turn to the next century, Denon takes up the case for ancient Egyptian art and architecture, against its characterisation by Quatremère de Quincy as funereal (Nouvel-Kammerer, chap. 11). The case-studies in this volume are important not least for recalling other and earlier responses to Egypt, as a source of fertility and protective powers, as Gunter indicates for Iron Age Mediterranean societies (chap. 5). These histories of the impact of ancient Egypt become essential guides inside and outside Egyptology, in revealing the variety of responses over time, and in historicising and so denaturalising our own continuing prejudices either for or against past peoples. Mason (chap. 9) retraces the thoughtlines of the meticulous juristically trained scholar Lorenzo Pignoria as counterfoil to his younger contemporary, arch-symbolist Athanasius Kircher. Drawing on the material focus of Alois Riegl and Walter Benjamin, Mason conveys how the two antagonists, virtual personification of rationalist and allegoric modes, generated equally wide-ranging object-based comparisons from ancient Egypt among other time-regions. In the results, he recalls the lesson of Riegl that no telling of a material object can be neutral.<sup>11</sup> Reflecting on our risks in retaining labels such as Egyptomania and »Aegyptiaca« for diverse material histories, Gunter warns against their exclusive emphasis on the static properties of objects, from her investigation of the earlier archaeological contexts. In this and other case-studies, the history of ideas and the archaeology of material culture converge, fulfilling the aims of the editor in delivering a shared thematic agenda for these two zones of study. In common with other regional archaeologies, Egyptology may play a connecting role here too, reflected in the distribution of authors through the volume.

Assmann and Ebeling (chap. 2) provide another possible bridge to the editorial aims, when they discuss the application of hermeneutics from Gadamer and reader-response theory to different original contexts. Writings on ideas from ancient Greece and Rome involve a line of less disrupted transmission, with continuous understanding of script and language. By contrast, they emphasise how, until decipherment, later European responses to ancient Egyptian ideas depended on indirect connection and chains of translation. In an environment of second-hand reception, the object might be expected to bear heightened intrusive potential, with more active effect alongside the ancient Hebrew, Greek and Latin writings. Here the historians of ideas may find ground to engage further with the object focus of the editor. The transparent opacity of the uninscribed or undeciphered object may also speak to the dilemma of whether an »I« can understand a »you«, whatever the script or language or space. The most familiar may be more unknowable than the strangest, by being assumed

as being known; in citing Goethe or Heaney in commentary on an ancient Egyptian writing, the European language-speaker forgets the alterity of those European writers too. We might here return to the analyses by Jurjani above. The material of the inscription or the page and ink perhaps offers a different route through the interpersonal labyrinth. As Assmann has explored elsewhere, the absolutist distinction between ideas/words and depictions/materials does not function well in the setting of ancient Egypt, where formal art and script cohabit a defined material space to install in the moment of inscription a perfect act and idea into eternity.<sup>12</sup> Haslund Hansen (chap. 10) analyses how the remarkable 1769 manifesto by Piranesi for ancient Egyptian art, *Diverse Maniere di adornare i Cammini* comprises a similarly simultaneously separate and unified pairing of text and illustrations »as the bringing together of two kindred statements«. Perhaps this effect is another example of his uncanny affinity for ancient Egyptian principles of organisation of art and script, amply demonstrated by Haslund Hansen in her contribution here. Between ancient Egyptian and 18<sup>th</sup> century Italian applications of this union of the two communicative codes, Iamblichus emphasised in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE the visual side as the more essential, as Assmann has recounted.<sup>13</sup> From his anthropological fieldwork in Madagascar, Maurice Bloch concurs, in his argument on the pragmatics of learning and cognition, that the practice of a task such as operating a machine teaches more than the written manual can.<sup>14</sup> The critiques of logocentrism may provide further points of discussion, if not necessarily reunion, between history of ideas and material cultural studies. They also offer renewed ground for responses from Egyptology to the volume.

## **BEYOND EGYPTOMANIA: CONTRIBUTIONS TO AND FROM EGYPTOLOGY**

The past half-century of study has brought several cogent critiques of Egyptology, notably at the border with archaeology, where fieldwork directors witness how a focus on monument and language diverts resources from the recording of sites under threat.<sup>15</sup> The 21<sup>st</sup> century discipline continues to be anchored worldwide primarily in language training, and not in disciplinary linguistics, but for the ability to read written sources from ancient Egypt. If the *Description de l’Egypte* constituted an imperialist grasping of the *logos* or subject-matter of Egypt, across natural history, the modern land, and every accessible period of its history,<sup>16</sup> its successors confined Egyptology to the main language of most ancient inscriptions in Egypt (cf Assmann and Ebeling, chap. 2). Egyptology might be a more accurate label. The centrality of reading has brought major advances in philology and in the understanding of what was written, but arguably at the cost of professionalism in other aspects of those sections of the Egyptian past when hieroglyphs were in use. In most universities where Egyptology is taught,<sup>17</sup> students cannot often train formally in other disciplines beyond an initial year or two; inevitably their classroom learning tends to be limit-

ed or inexistent in the plethora of relevant fields, from archaeological techniques and theory, anthropology, art history, linguistics, literary studies, to philosophy and history and the separate fields of history of religion and history/philosophy science. Degree programmes may offer little or no curricular space for the other languages of the Egyptian past, ancient Greek, Latin, classical Arabic, Turkish, or for the language of Egypt today, Arabic in its modern standard and vernacular variants. Many of these disciplines find some representation across Egyptological research literature, but generally through informal or supplementary initiatives on the part of individuals at different stages of their careers. Within the social history of knowledge, such a weakly professionalised interdisciplinary profile may be characteristic of low-demographic disciplines in general. These constraints should be factored into any expectations and evaluations of an Egyptological response, not least my own, here.

Nevertheless, while limited training in other disciplines among Egyptologists complicates attempts at dialogue on both sides, the variety of informal multidisciplinary interests and experience in Egyptology as an area study should encourage wider impact on, and constructive responses, from within Egyptology to initiatives such as the present volume.<sup>18</sup> The Egyptological contributors to Parts One and Two exemplify the exceptions to any rule of intradisciplinary introversion and isolation, and ensure a productive ground for developing the debates raised here.

## **ANCIENT EGYPT BEYOND ITSELF: PRESENCES AND ABSENCES**

The substantial series of case-studies in different contexts can pave the way for further, collective analyses and comparison, whether or not these move toward a consensus on the (re-)definition of »Egyptomania« (cf Humbert, chap. 3). Parts One and Two combined offer a telling series of instances where select factors have converged as a constellation or »configuration« (Griener, chap. 4) of material impact over variable spans in space and time. Crucially for the historian and Egyptologist, a range of possible reactions may be generated from the particular configuration; ancient Egyptian material may be fêted or ignored, given equal billing or a minor supporting role in the cast of philosophical or aesthetic production of the new age. Faced with an array of examples in one volume, an Egyptological reader may risk missing the message of unpredictability within the variation. Therefore, at this point, the consequences of context bear repeating.

Devoted to the appreciation as well as the study of ancient Egypt, we may tend to concentrate our research on the examples of presence rather than absence. However, in order to understand past instances of Egypt-appreciation, the impacts charted in this volume, then the absences and oppositions call for equal attention in our identification and assessment of the factors at work. One historical configuration of factors may lead to a thorough de-activation of any impact. Laboury and Lekane (chap. 8) articulate this possibility in a

fourfold detachment of the »visual brain« from ancient Egyptian material, that occurred in Latin-Germanic Europe from late antiquity to the early modern period: (1) a physical disconnect from the monumental landscape, (2) an ideology founded against imagery perceived as idolatry, (3) a word-centred culture of depiction/description, (4) the »neutralisation« of time into eternal present, eliding past tense and completed aspect. Yet, in the middle of this anti-receptive ground, they also find one group of 13<sup>th</sup> century sculptors at Rome who were moved to their own extraordinary creative output by the magnificent lion sculptures inscribed for Pharaoh Nakhtnebef, after the relocation from the Isis temple at the heart of the city. Similarly, we can anticipate multiple reactions to »the ancient Egyptian«; in a particular historical context, the recognition of a motif which originated in Egypt may not involve recognition of its »ancient Egyptianness« primarily or even at all. By meticulous reconstruction of the political history and cultural associations of specific motifs of Ptolemaic coins in the second century BCE, Bricault (chap. 6) is able to detect the divergence in meanings of a crown between Pharaonic inheritance at the Alexandrian metropolis and Hellenistic power in its Greek province. At the heart of Hellenistic universalism, the matter of power remains intensely localised.

Gunter observes from her comparison between early Iron Age Aegean and Assyria (chap. 5), how we can only understand each engagement with ancient Egyptian material and style if we ourselves engage with the detail of that non-Egyptian immediate environment. Interpretation depends here on documented archaeological contexts, for individual and grouped artefacts and by distribution maps of object types. In the Aegean context, a concentration of bronze votive figurines on Samos is exceptional, indicating a different focus at the site, perhaps a distinct group of donors; Gunter develops the argument by Helga Bumke that visitors from Egypt may have dedicated these. In Assyria, a gold bowl with ancient Egyptian design found in the company of diverse precious vessels at Nimrud may foreground Assyrian queenship in the imperial palace, rather than individual regional provenances. The ontology of the »ancient Egyptian thing« is thereby destabilised in a productive move, which prompts us to sharper analytical precision at each social historical setting. Gunter cites the investigation by Sarah Murray into early Iron Age funerary practices at Perati in Attica, with non-local artefacts such as Egyptian faience amulets in both richer and poorer burials, casting doubt on the recurrent assumption that imports involve »elites«. From Nimrud to Perati, the wider category of »exotica« is proving problematic. According to these case-studies, any degree of »Egyptianness« inhabits a more or less tightly drawn cultural space, both inside and outside Egypt, and must be reconstructed, as Bricault shows, rather than imposed from 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century habits of style. The problem also arises, as to where the line should be drawn between study of ancient Egypt and study of its impact. If Ptolemy II is Pharaoh, if ancient Egyptian visitors to Middle Bronze Age Byblos or Iron Age Samos dedicate items made in Egypt, the impact is no afterlife, but contemporary, further blurring our analytical categories. In reverse direction, the presence of non-Egyptian material and artefacts within Egypt problematises the core on which our

terms *Nachleben* and Egyptomania are predicated. These complications are to be welcomed as the complexity of any social interaction, whether the participants are categorised as humans, creatures more generally, or all »things«.

In these case-studies, artefact space itself is unstable in its time; at their extreme point on the spectrum of portability, the coin and the amulet abroad have travelled to the dots on their archaeological distribution maps, and are exuding new meanings at each turn. A built space too finds different audiences, when its function changes, as Swetnam-Burland establishes from the finds and graffiti in the »Egyptianising« room of the imperial Roman villa at Boscotrecase, converted to store in its final years (chap. 7). Her study expands the scope of enquiry to wider sections of society, from owners and guests across to servants and enslaved, and broadens the range of associative material to encompass Egyptian staples as well as luxuries, in a context of greater access to African and Asian foods and goods in Augustan Italy. These variables fluctuate in ways we recognise from economic history, and affect the role and proportion of »Egyptian presence« in the consciousness of viewers of each social background across the generations. Swetnam-Burland brings these dimensions of social diversity and time flow directly into 21<sup>st</sup> century New York, where the reconstructed »Egyptianising« room attracts its current generations of viewers-users.

Another risk with enthusiasm for ancient Egypt is the dual tendency to universalise the appetite for ancient Egyptian material and motifs, and, as Gunter (chap. 5) warns, to homogenise diverse sets of phenomena. Against the temptation to clock up every new instance of an ancient Egyptian material presence, Laboury and Lekane (chap. 8) adopt the method from the *Studies in Iconology* (1939) by Erwin Panofsky, to separate form and content at the level of analysis: the same form might be made a second time with another meaning, and, conversely the same theme might be rendered a second time through another form. Griener (chap. 4) looks to other sources to achieve the same insistence on variance within a content, the linguistic analyses by Benveniste and Bakhtin and his associates.<sup>19</sup> Instead of defining the scope of a particular term in one setting, such as the qualities as assigned to ancient Egyptian art, Greiner adopts the maxim that each new enunciation changes a content, even within one passage of writing by one author. In these debates over sameness and difference, we might note how enthusiasts for ancient Egypt in the same place at the same historical moment may react differently in their practice. Haslund Hansen (chap. 10) observes that Frederik Norden and Richard Pococke may have sailed the Nile at the same time, but only one canopic jar can be ascribed to the Norden expedition, whereas Pococke seems to have acquired antiquities at several locations on his way. Across these contexts, each »ancient Egyptian?« artefact might appear to inhabit a unitary timespace of its own, as it crosses diverse landscapes such as the totalising present of 4<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> century Latin European thought. Launched like a spoken word from a moment of utterance, its physical matter might have stabilised its reference across time, as the monad which Walter Benjamin imagined rolling through the cataclysms of history, accruing the imprints of every creature and thing it encountered.<sup>20</sup> Such an embedded

artificial intelligence might defuse the ert/inert blockage in the debate on moving beyond one or other side of research, idea or material, into the impact of ancient Egypt outside its time spaces.

## **BEYOND DISCIPLINARY AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONFINES – FROM THE CONTOURS OF RESEARCH**

From the very first pages, where the editor cites the reflections of William Kentridge, the volume invites openings beyond academia, in its turn to the arena of contemporary art. Towards the close of Part Two, Nouvel-Kammerer finds ancient Egypt staged as start and end of time in the pairing of the Sèvres Egyptian centrepiece of 1808 and its aftermath of 1978, by Anne and Patrick Poirier. On contemporary art, the museum presence of Egyptology has generated a substantial corpus of exhibitions and associated bibliography,<sup>21</sup> continuing the longer history of collecting and display covered here in particular by Humbert (chap. 3), Mason (chap. 9), Haslund Hansen (chap. 10), and Hurley (chap. 12). On this cue, the contours of study charted in the present volume may be read as a possible outline of future directions of new studies, whether interdisciplinary or, like the studio of the artist, beyond the institutions of research.

One direction of research, combining verbal and tangible material, would be the historicity of »the ancient Egyptian thing«, in its ellisions and associations. When does the »Egyptian« thing shift from present to past, from »of the contemporary land of the living Egyptians« to »of a long-past, *ancient*, <ancient> Egypt«? Doubtless repeated over history, outside and inside Egypt itself, the change in enunciation of »Egypt« can sometimes be captured in our midst. For the 1851 Exhibition of Industry of All Nations, housed at the first Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, central London, one »nation« »Egypt« denoted the contemporary land, then a largely autonomous province of another »nation« Ottoman »Turkey«, both being present for their contemporary manufacturing output rather than their ancient histories. Today the two names can still be read in the select list of exhibiting »nations« along the borders of the mosaic in the north pediment of 1866 in the courtyard of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. As Stephanie Moser has documented and discussed in detail,<sup>22</sup> by 1854 the longer-term relocation of the Crystal Palace in south-east London presented a drastically different »Egypt«, with vividly coloured, mainly scaled-down reproductions of ancient monuments (see Hurley, chap. 12). During the short reign of Abbas I, governor of Egypt 1848–1854, the haunting »<ancient> Egypt« has arrived. In other locations outside Egypt, past and present Egypt obtained equal space, as Mariette achieved so effectively for the second successor of Abbas, Ismail, in the Paris Exhibition of 1867, when Egypt was financially attractive to European capital but still self-governing (see the detailed comparative analysis in Hurley, chap. 12). The imperial world displays provide one arena in which the name of Egypt can be followed. At later moments of geopolitical crisis – 1882,



1919, 1956, 2011 – the ellision is dropped, and a land of the living reasserts itself in the European-language urban consciousness. These histories might be traced back through the histories of ideas and material culture in the lexical distribution of Aegyptus and »Aegyptiaca« and their correlates in other languages, as well as in writings without explicit reference to the land of Egypt. When Burra-Buriyash, king of Babylon asks Napkhurareya king of Egypt to send new images of wild creatures of land or sea, or to send old ones until new ones can be made,<sup>23</sup> what time might »old« cover, and would these images from Egypt be thought »Egyptian« in an age of »international style«?<sup>24</sup>

A turn to wider horizons recurs through the twelve chapters of Parts One and Two, looking towards the continental horizons of Africa (chap. 2) and America (chap. 9). In that spirit, I would first turn the gaze inwards, to ask »who is we?«, as we define the contours of our study, and then to seek other stories of impact in the process of being told. How different would a Greek history of *Beyond Egyptomania* be? Perhaps starting from the first production of scarab-shaped amulets outside Egypt, just a few generations after the scarab became a standard motif for stamp-seals at the end of the third millennium BC,<sup>25</sup> the flow might take us with Ptolemaic Aegean coins (Bricault, chap. 6) through hegemonic Byzantine presence, to experiences of Ottoman rule including the life of Muhammad Ali, born in northern Greece at Kavala, ruler of Egypt 1805–1848,<sup>26</sup> so presiding over the first sustained large-scale extractions of ancient Egyptian material from Upper Egypt to cities in Europe and beyond.<sup>27</sup> A Greek history begins to unlock the activities of intermediaries on whom Egyptomania in the sense of Humbert (chap. 3) so largely depends, in particular Ioannis Athanasiou organising 1820s–1830s extractions at Thebes and Abydos, and Ioannis Anastasiou, envoy of Sweden-Norway at the court of Muhammad Ali, amassing the finest quality material from Abydos and Saqqara.<sup>28</sup> Between Cairo, Alexandria, Paris and London, a Greek archive joins Africa and Europe in the history of Egyptology and Egyptomania alike. Historians beyond the present concentrations of finance have long been working on, and expanding the archive omitted or inaccessible to those in ostensibly better resourced research centres.<sup>29</sup> Researchers in a European city may seek to become aware, and to contribute to those existing endeavours with our own results, towards a »dialogue of cultures« in the terms of Alioune Diop, if they remember the warning that precedes, that it would »be an illusion to imagine that the Western world could assign itself a legitimate mission of integrating, absorbing, and assimilating into the vigor of its own vitality, the contributions of other civilizations«.<sup>30</sup> Does such a mission define the phenomenon of 16<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> century European Egyptomania, in its accompaniment to the genocidal enslavement industry by European and then Euroamerican powers across the Black Atlantic?<sup>31</sup> For Hosam Aboul Ela, »representations of regional histories by the colonizer are incapable of freeing themselves from the self-aggrandizing presumptions that fuel and underwrite the colonial project.«<sup>32</sup> Any would-be participant in the already existing dialogues begins with steep learning curves in literatures and languages. University disciplines may not structurally enable such learning among themselves in the concourse of the education market. Yet

the resonance of »the ancient Egyptian matter«, whether object or motif, acquires far sharper resonance in this context, hinted at through this volume in the acknowledgments of Arab World and African horizons – the studies of *athar* »traces« of ancient Egypt in Arabic literature, from Colla and El-Daly, and the many independent African-centred writings on ancient Egypt by a long line of African authors from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>33</sup> The reorientation of horizons relies not on belief in a Golden Age, so much as an insistence on an *effective* tracing of how it was, including every localised urban and rural participant as well as every foreign and regional violence in the dislocation and annihilation of people.<sup>34</sup> A model for the turn to global history might be the study of antiquarianism, where Alain Schnapp transfers a European narrative to comparative timescapes.<sup>35</sup> Ancient Egyptian impact studies may require both that spatial shift and a collective return to sources, to dissolve assumed parameters of time and space, and to reconceive the theoretical and methodological premises. The *Beyond Egyptomania* contributors point, for me, toward those changes.

## NOTES

### Haunted by Egypt (Miguel John Versluys)

- 1 It is not only this reference to Semper that I owe to Caroline van Eck. Her work on art, agency, living presence and style have profoundly shaped and sharpened my ideas over the last years, as they have this essay, a first draft of which was published as ›Une géographie intérieure: The Perpetual Presence of Egypt, *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of the Reception of Ancient Egypt* 3. *Mnemohistory and Cultural Memory. Essays in Honour of Jan Assmann* (2018) pp. 159–166 (<https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/view/49002/42495> (accessed June 7, 2019)).
- 2 William Kentridge, *Carnets d'Égypte*, Paris: Éditions Dilecta / Musée du Louvre Éditions, 2010, p. 55: »Il y a aussi trois dessins que j'ai faits au Louvre. Deux d'entre eux représentent des babouins égyptiens en granit, le troisième un gardien du musée se reposant sur la chaise«. [...] »Après les babouins, je n'ai plus rien dessiné au Louvre«.
- 3 William Kentridge (as fn. 2), p. 56.
- 4 See also the discussion on the concept of ›mythistory‹ by Pascal Griener in his contribution to this volume, with reference to Joseph Mali, *Mythistory. The Making of a Modern Historiography*, Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- 5 For recent discussions on the ›reception‹ of Egypt see the remainder of this essay as well as the other three contributions to Part 1 of this book. The instalment, in 2017, of the online Journal *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt* from Heidelberg by Florian Ebeling is very important for this development, as is the recent volume edited by Corinne Bonnet, Laurent Bricault and Carole Gomez, *Les mille et une vies d'Isis. La réception des divinités du cercle isiaque de la fin de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, Toulouse: PUM, 2020. For what is often characterised as ›the material turn‹ see, e.g., Dan Hicks, The Material-Cultural Turn: event and effect, in: Dan Hicks & Mary C. Beaudry (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 25–98; Ian Hodder, Human-Thing Entanglement: Towards an Integrated Archaeological Perspective, in: *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17 (2010), pp. 154–177 and Bjørnar Olsen, *In Defense of Things. Archaeology and the Ontology of Objects*, Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2010 as well as the contribution

by David Fontijn to this volume. Fundamental for this approach in more general terms still Bruno Latour, *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes. Essai d'anthropologie symétrique*, Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1991.

**6** For reception studies and Egypt see the important article by Stephanie Moser, *Reconstructing Ancient Worlds: Reception Studies, Archaeological Representation and the Interpretation of Ancient Egypt*, in: *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 22/4 (2015), pp. 1263–1308 and its large bibliography.

**7** James Porter rightly observes: »Archaeology and material culture have reception histories of their own that deserve to be recovered«, James Porter, *Reception Studies: Future Prospects*, in: L. Hardwick, C. Stray (eds.), *A Companion to Classical Receptions*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 469–481, p. 474.

**8** See the recent article by Jan Assmann, *Die Aura der Dinge. Lektüren einer altägyptischen Fayence-Schale*, in: Hans Peter Hahn (ed.), *Vom Eigensinn der Dinge. Für eine neue Perspektive auf die Welt des Materiellen*. Berlin: Neofelis Verlag 2015, pp. 101–126.

**9** For world history as human-thing entanglement see Caroline van Eck, Miguel John Versluys, Pieter ter Keurs, *The Biography of Cultures: Style, Objects and Agency. Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Approach*, *Cahiers de l'École du Louvre. Recherches en histoire de l'art, histoire des civilisations, archéologie, anthropologie et muséologie* [online] 7 (2015), pp. 2–22. In these discussions about what objects do – or even what objects want, see W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures »Really« Want?*, in: *October* 77 (1996), pp. 71–82, and Chris Gosden, *What Do Objects Want?*, in: *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 12 (2005), pp. 193–211 – the difficult question of representation is often overlooked. It is clear for many and has been well explored by now that we need to move »beyond representation« to really understand what objects do and why they have an impact on humans. What place there should be for representation within the material turn, however, is less well understood. For »Aegyptiaca«, this problem has been dealt with by Eva Mol, *Egypt in Material and Mind. The Use and Perception of Aegyptiaca in Roman Domestic Contexts of Pompeii* (unpublished PhD thesis). Leiden: Leiden University, 2015 (forthcoming as a monograph from Oxford University Press in the near future).

**10** Gottfried Semper developed this observation on the porphyry and granite monuments from Egypt into a more general theory on the *Eigensinn* of materials in his opus magnum *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder praktische Ästhetik* (1860–1863): »[...] ist die Herrschaft über den Stoff nicht intelligenter und eben so mächtig, wenn man in ihm auch seinen Eigensinn respektiert, ihn sich seiner Natur gemäß ohne Zwang dienstbar macht?« (edition Friedrich Piel, Mittenwald: Mäander-Kunstverlag 1977, vol. II, p. 256), see, also for this idea more in general, Monika Wagner, *Vom »Eigensinn« des Materials: Edward Munchs »Holzstil«*, in: Hans Peter Hahn (ed.), *Vom Eigensinn der Dinge. Für eine neue Perspektive auf die Welt des Materiellen*. Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2015, pp. 81–100.

**11** For how this worked in Egypt itself see now the volume edited by Tod Gillen, *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt*. Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2017.

**12** See in particular his *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997 (*Moses der Ägypter. Entzifferung einer Gedächtnisspur*, München: Fischer, 1998); *L'Égypte ancienne entre mémoire et science*, Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2009, and *Religio Duplex, How the Enlightenment Reinvented Egyptian Religion*, New York: John Wiley, 2014. Note also Aleida Assmann, Jan Assmann (eds.), *Hieroglyphen. Stationen einer anderen abendländischen Grammatologie*, München: Fink, 2003.

**13** Miguel John Versluys, *Exploring Aegyptiaca and their material agency throughout global history*, in: Tamar Hodos et al. (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, London: Routledge, 2017, pp. 74–89, published online in *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt* 1 (2017), pp. 122–144, <http://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/viewFile/40167/33826> (accessed June 7, 2019).

14 Ronald R. Fritze, *Egyptomania: A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy*, London: Reaction Books, 2016. Books like Bob Brier's *Egyptomania. Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) fall within the same category.

15 See already the important note by Helen Whitehouse, *Egyptomanias*, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 101.1 (1997), pp. 158–161, now with the article by Moser (as fn. 6).

16 Noreen Doyle, The Earliest Known Uses of »L'Égyptomanie« / »Egyptomania« in French and English, in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 8 (2016), pp. 122–125, <http://jaei.library.arizona.edu> (accessed June 7, 2019). See also the remarks by Jean-Marcel Humbert in his contribution to the present volume.

17 The thought-provoking book by Elliot Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008, for instance, has a similar intellectual agenda as the present volume although it carries »Egyptomania« in its title – and there are many more notable exceptions, like Wilfried Seipel (ed.), *Ägyptomanie. Europäische Ägyptenimagination von der Antike bis heute*, Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2000.

18 He defines the concept well for his own field of research, that of the visual arts, as »des copies et adaptations de l'art égyptien antique dans notre monde moderne et contemporain«, see, amongst many other contributions, Jean-Marcel Humbert, *L'Égyptomanie, sources, thèmes et symboles, Étude de la réutilisation des thèmes décoratifs empruntés à l'Égypte ancienne dans l'art occidental du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle à nos jours*, thèse de doctorat d'État soutenue à Paris-Sorbonne en 1987, Lille: Lille 3 ANRT, 1990; Jean-Marcel Humbert, Michael Pantazzi, Christiane Ziegler, *Egyptomania, L'Égypte dans l'art occidental, 1730–1930*, catalogue d'exposition (1994–1995), Paris-Ottawa-Vienne: RMN, 1994, and Jean-Marcel Humbert, *L'Égyptomanie dans l'art occidental*, Paris-Courbevoie: ACR, 1989, as well as his contribution to the present volume, also for the definition.

19 As also Jan Assmann and Florian Ebeling conclude in their contribution to this volume. Also here there are notable exceptions, for instance the important work by Brian Curran, see his fundamental *The Egyptian Renaissance. The Afterlife of Ancient Egypt in Early Modern Italy*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007 and Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long, Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk. A History*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009.

20 Siegfried Morenz, *Die Begegnung Europas mit Ägypten*, Zurich: Artemis Verlag, 1969, and Peter Ucko (ed.), *Encounters with Ancient Egypt*, London, UCL Press: 2003, 8 volumes: O'Connor, D. and Reid, A. (eds.), *Ancient Egypt in Africa*, Jeffreys, D. (ed.), *Views of Ancient Egypt Since Napoleon Bonaparte: Imperialism Colonialism and Modern Appropriations*, Matthews, R. and Roemer, C. (eds.), *Ancient Perspectives on Egypt*, MacDonald, S. and Rice, M. (eds.), *Consuming Ancient Egypt*, O'Connor, D. and Quirke, S. (eds.), *Mysterious Lands*, Ucko, P. and Champion, T. (eds.), *The Wisdom of Egypt: Changing Visions Through the Ages*, Humbert, J.-M. and Price, C. (eds.), *Imhotep Today: Egyptianizing Architecture*, Tait, J. (ed.), »Never Had the Like Occurred: Egypt's View of its Past. Both are contextualised and commented upon by Florian Ebeling in his contribution to this volume (Assmann/Ebeling).

21 See my article entitled »Exploring Aegyptiaca and their material agency throughout global history« (as fn. 13) for more (theoretical) background and an attempt to at least picture what this *longue durée* might look like (pp. 79–82) and how we should account for it (p. 84–86).

22 Note that the essay by Jean-Marcel Humbert from Part I includes a case study on the uses of Egypt in 20<sup>th</sup> century publicity while the contribution of Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt in Part III deals with an example from 2013, thus bringing the long term overview that the book as a whole provides up to the present day.

23 For this formulation see Jan Assmann, Ägypten als Argument. Rekonstruktion der Vergangenheit und Religionskritik im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, in: *Historische Zeitschrift* 264 (1997), pp. 561–585.

24 For material agency see fn. 5 above as well as the contribution by David Fontijn to this volume.

- 25 For such a perspective see Caroline Vout, *Classical Art. A Life History from Antiquity to the Present*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018.
- 26 For the concept of style, see the contribution by Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt to this volume; for the concept of materiality the essay by Stephanie Moser.
- 27 See the overview provided by part 1 (The Bronze Age, 2000–1100 BC) of the splendid exh. cat. *Beyond the Nile. Egypt and the Classical world* (J. Spier, T. Potts, S.E. Cole (eds.)), Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum 2018), pp. 8–69.
- 28 Joan Aruz et al. (eds.), *Assyria to Iberia at the Dawn of the Classical Age*, New Haven & London: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015.
- 29 The situation was, of course, more complex and nuanced and therefore the subject needs much more attention, see already Alfred Grimm, Sylvia Schoske (eds.), *Winckelmann und Ägypten: die Wiederentdeckung der ägyptischen Kunst im 18. Jahrhundert. Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst*. Exh. cat. Winckelmann-Memorialmuseum Stendal, Stendal: Winckelmann-Ges., 2004.
- 30 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, Dresden, 1764, pp. 33–34.
- 31 See Miguel John Versluys, Haunting Traditions. The (Material) Presence of Egypt in the Roman World, in: D. Boschung, A. Busch, M. J. Versluys (eds.), *Reinventing The Invention of Tradition? Indigenous Pasts and the Roman Present*, Paderborn: Fink, 2015, pp. 127–158, and, for an overview, now the exh. cat. *Beyond the Nile* (as fn. 27).

### The Mnemohistory of Egypt (Jan Assmann and Florian Ebeling)

- 1 This is a shared paper and both authors agree with the content; the first part (*History, Mnemohistory and Egypt*) is written by Jan Assmann and the second part, starting with the paragraph *Encountering Egypt: Historiography and Terminology*, by Florian Ebeling.
- 2 The hexameter goes back to Hermagoras of Temnos and it was attributed to Cicero by Thomas Aquinas and others, see D. W. Robertson, A Note on the Classical Origin of »Circumstances« in the Medieval Confessional, in: *Studies in Philology* 43.1 (1946), pp. 6–14.
- 3 Josephus Flavius, *Contra Apionem*, in: Menachem Stern (ed.), *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976, vol. 1, pp. 78–86.
- 4 Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1997; German: Jan Assmann, *Moses der Ägypter. Entzifferung einer Gedächtnisspur*, Munich: Fischer, 1998.
- 5 Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian* (as fn. 4), pp. 23–54; cf. Dimitri Laboury, *Akhénaton*, Paris: Pygmalion 2010, pp. 362–364.
- 6 Aleida Assmann distinguishes in this sense between »afterlife« and »aftermath«. See Aleida Assmann, Cultural Memory and the Concept of »Afterlife«, in Marek Tamm (ed.), *Afterlife of Events. Perspectives on Mnemohistory*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 79–94. In the context of Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics »Wirkungsgeschichte« is usually translated by »effective history«.
- 7 Further evidence for the presence of the Amarna experience in Late Egyptian collective memory is presented by Diodorus Siculus. In chap. 64 of the first book of his *Bibliotheca historica*, he speaks of the three great pyramids and reports two different traditions about their builders (I, 64: 13). The first ascribes them to Khufu (Cheops), Khafre (Chephren) and Menkaure (Mycerinus). But there is another tradition ascribing them to Harmaios (Horemheb), Amasis (Ahmose) and Inaros (Inaros I), respectively. That can only refer to the three most traumatic periods in Egyptian history and the pharaohs who are credited with putting them to an end: Horemheb put an end to the Amarna revolt, Ahmose drove out the Hyksos, and Inaros I heroically led the resistance against the Assyrians; cf. Kim Ryholt, *Egyptian Historical Literature from the Greco-Roman Period*, in Martin Fitzenreiter (ed.), *Das Ereignis. Geschichtsschreibung zwischen Vorfall und Befund*, London: Golden House Publications, 2009, pp. 709–731, esp. pp. 236f.

- 8 Hans Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., Tübingen: Mohr, 1990, p. 295. Cf. Florian Ebeling, Hans Georg Gadamer's »history of effect« and its application to the pre-Egyptological concept of ancient Egypt, in: *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt* 4 (2019), pp. 55–73 (<https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/view/66093/58908>; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/aegyp.2019.4.66093>).
- 9 »Rezeptionsgeschichte«, »Wirkungsgeschichte« and »unmittelbare Sagkraft« are all based on Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, but the terms are stressing different aspects depending on whether the focus is on the object (a book or a work of art) of reception or on the condition of the encounter with the object as pointed out below.
- 10 »Such a phenomenon cannot be forgotten anymore«, Immanuel Kant, *Der Streit der Fakultäten*, Königsberg: Nicolovius, 1798, §7.
- 11 »[...] c'est du présent que part l'appel auquel le souvenir répond«, Henri Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire, Essai sur la relation de corps à l'esprit*, Paris: Alcan, 1939, p. 91.
- 12 Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica* III, 3–4, quoting Hecataeus of Abdera (c. 310 BCE) after Pierre Marestaing, *Les écritures égyptiennes et l'antiquité classique*, Paris: Geuthner, 1913, pp. 48f.
- 13 Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica* III, 3–4.
- 14 Assmann, 1997 (as fn. 4), pp. 24–26.
- 15 See also Frank E. Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959; Jan Assmann, *Religio Duplex, How the Enlightenment Reinvented Egyptian Religion*, New York: John Wiley, 2014.
- 16 Horapollon, *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica*, ed. Francesco Sbordone, Naples: Loffredo, 1940.
- 17 Hermes Trismegistus, *Corpus Hermeticum*, ed. and trans. Arthur Darby Nock and André-Jean Festugière, Paris: Collection Budé. Les Belles Lettres, 1945–1954, 4 vol. There is a more recent translation by Brian P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica. The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a New English Translation with Notes and Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. For the hermeticism as a part of the mnemohistory of ancient Egypt see: Florian Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistos*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- 18 The most famous example is the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* by Francesco Colonna, first published 1499; for an English translation see: J. Godwin (ed.), Francesco Colonna: *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili. The Strife of Love in a Dream*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1999.
- 19 For the discussion of this problem see: Martin Mulsow (ed.), *Das Ende des Hermetismus. Historische Kritik und neue Naturphilosophie in der Spätrenaissance*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002.
- 20 See Aleida Assmann, Jan Assmann (eds.), *Hieroglyphen. Stationen einer anderen abendländischen Grammatologie*, Munich: Fink, 2003.
- 21 Assmann 2014 (as fn. 15), pp. 114–148.
- 22 Cf. Jan Assmann, *L'Égypte ancienne entre mémoire et science*, Paris: Hazan, 2009.
- 23 Jan Assmann, Ägypten als Argument. Rekonstruktion der Vergangenheit und Religionskritik im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, in: *Historische Zeitschrift* 264 (1997), pp. 561–585.
- 24 A new more documentary and real object-oriented aesthetic can be seen in the documentation of the expeditions since 18th, e.g. in Frederic Louis Norden, *Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie* (1755). The exhibition took place in 1737/8. The documentation and drawings of the expedition have been published by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters under order of Frederick V of Denmark 1755.
- 25 First attempts to overcome these unstructured approaches have been made by conferences in Wolfenbüttel in 2012 organized by Jan Assmann and Florian Ebeling and in Leiden organized by Caro-

line van Eck and Miguel John Versluys. Since 2017 an Online-Open Access Journal is dedicated to this topic: <http://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp> (accessed May 15, 2019), see in particular: Miguel John Versluys, Exploring Aegyptiaca and their Material Agency throughout Global History, in: *Aegyptiaca* 3 (2017), pp. 122–144.

**26** A notorious example is an article by Adolf Ermann on Athanasius Kircher in: *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, ed. by the Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 16 (1882), pp. 1–4.

**27** Karl Giehlow, *Die Hieroglyphenkunde des Humanismus in der Allegorie der Renaissance*, Leipzig and Vienna: Freytag and Tempsky, 1915. Ludwig Volkmann, *Bilderschriften in der Renaissance. Hieroglyphik und Emblematik in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen*, Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1923.

**28** Preface to the edition from 1993.

**29** Siegfried Morenz, *Die Begegnung Europas mit Ägypten*, Zurich: Artemis, 1969.

**30** »Masstabgerechtes Begreifen«, *ibid.*, pp. 131–70.

**31** Morenz appreciated Athanasius Kircher's achievements in Coptic studies. Otherwise he is writing about Kircher's »trübsinnige[s] Scheitern seiner ägyptologischen Studien« without discussing Kircher's theological or philosophical intentions in writing about Egypt, *ibid.*, p. 125.

**32** Juris Baltrušaitis, *La Quête d'Isis: essai sur la légende d'un mythe. Introduction à l'Égyptomanie*, Paris: Perrin, 1967.

**33** After the book on hieroglyphs Iversen also published *Obelisk in Exile*, vol. 1: *The Obelisks of Rome*, Gad: Copenhagen, 1968; vol. 2: *The Obelisks of Istanbul and England*, Gad: Copenhagen, 1968; *Egyptian and Hermetic Doctrine*, Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 1984.

**34** Cf. Brian Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance. The Afterlife of Ancient Egypt in Early Modern Italy*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007, pp. 10–12; Jean-Marcel Humbert, ed., *L'Égyptomanie dans l'art Occidental*, Paris: ACR Editions, 1989; Noreen Doyle, The Earliest Known Uses of 'l'égyptomanie'/'Egyptomania' in French and English, in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 8 (2016), pp. 122–125.

**35** Jean-Marcel Humbert, Clifford Price (eds.), *Imhotep Today: Egyptianizing Architecture*, London, UCL Press: 2003.

**36** Nevertheless, there are some good books labelled with this term, just to name one: Wilfried Seipel (ed.), *Ägyptomanie. Europäische Ägyptenimagination von der Antike bis heute*, Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2000.

**37** Peter Ucko (ed.), *Encounters with ancient Egypt*, London, UCL Press: 2003, 8 volumes: O'Connor, D. and Reid, A. (eds.), *Ancient Egypt in Africa*, Jeffreys, D. (ed.), *Views of Ancient Egypt Since Napoleon Bonaparte: Imperialism Colonialism and Modern Appropriations*, Matthews, R. and Roemer, C. (eds.), *Ancient Perspectives on Egypt*, MacDonald, S. and Rice, M. (eds.), *Consuming Ancient Egypt*, O'Connor, D. and Quirke, S. (eds.), *Mysterious Lands*, Ucko, P. and Champion, T. (eds.), *The Wisdom of Egypt: Changing Visions Through the Ages*, Humbert, J.-M. and Price, C. (eds.), *Imhotep Today: Egyptianizing Architecture*, Tait, J. (ed.), *Never Had the Like Occurred': Egypt's View of its Past*.

**38** This does not mean that the authors using these terms actually working by means of the methodological implications.

**39** E.g. Alan B. Lloyd, The Reception of Pharaonic Egypt in Classical Antiquity, in Alan B. Lloyd (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, pp. 1067–1085; Heike Biedermann, Andreas Dehmer, Henrik Karge (eds.), *Imagination und Anschauung: Ägyptenrezeption und Ägyptenreisen in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Dresden: Sandstein-Verlag, 2015; Molly Youngkin, *British Woman Writers and the Reception of Ancient Egypt, 1840–1910*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.



40 Morenz 1969 (as fn. 29), pp. 15–24.

41 The question of which precondition was the most dominant one is dependent on the discourse: it might be Egypt as the home of idolity, a symbolic culture, imperialistic representation, wisdom, despotism amongst others.

42 »[...] eine unaufhebbare Differenz zwischen dem Interpreten und dem Urheber, die durch den geschichtlichen Abstand gegeben ist.« Gadamer 1990 (as fn. 8), p. 301.

43 Gadamer 1990 (as fn. 8), p. 301.

44 Ibid., pp. 305–312.

45 »Ägyptenmode« seems to indicate a similar increased interest and in addition the idea that it was something ephemeral.

46 Kevin van Bladel, *The Arabic Hermes. From Pagan Sage to Prophet of Science*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Okasha El Daly, *Egyptology the Missing Millennium. Ancient Egypt in Medieval Arabic Writings*, London: UCL Press, 2005.

47 Nonetheless the term is perfectly suitable to describe the encounters with Egypt in the Renaissance period, cf. Curran 2007 (as fn. 34).

48 Florian Ebeling, Ägyptische Mysterien bei Max Klee und Paul Slevogt. Eine Wirkungsgeschichte jenseits von Orientalismus und Ägyptologie, in: Heike Biedermann, Andreas Dehmer, Henrik Karge (eds.), *Imagination und Anschauung: Ägyptenrezeption und Ägyptenreisen in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Dresden: Sandstein Verlag, 2015, pp. 66–74.

49 Steve Vinson, Janet Gunn, The Enigmatic Friendship of Aleister Crowley and Battiscombe Gunn, in William Carruthers (ed.), *Histories of Egyptology: Interdisciplinary Measures*, New York et al.: Routledge, 2015, pp. 96–112.

50 David O'Connor, Andrew Reid (eds.), *Ancient Egypt in Africa*, London: UCL Press, 2003, the first article is written by Martin Bernal.

51 Henrik Bogdan, Joannes Augustinus Maria Snoek (eds.), *Handbook of Freemasonry*, Leiden: Brill 2014, p. 424f.

52 William Hamilton in 1815 is referring to Volneys interpretation of the sphinx and Herodot II, 103–105, cf. Thomas Reinhardt, *Geschichte des Afrozentrismus. Imaginiertes Afrika und afroamerikanische Identität*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer 2002, pp. 184–187.

53 »[...] the book is an attempt to show that the true authors of Greek philosophy were not the Greeks; but the people of North Africa, commonly called the Egyptians; and the praise and honour falsely given to the Greeks for centuries belong to the people of North Africa, and therefore to the African continent. Consequently, this theft of the African legacy by the Greeks led to the erroneous world opinion that the African continent has made no contribution to civilization, and that its people are naturally backward. This is the misrepresentation that has become the basis of race prejudice, which has affected all people of colour.« George Granville Monah James, *Stolen Legacy*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1954, p. 7.

54 Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, 3 vol. 1987, 1991, 2006.

55 Stephen Howe, *Afrocentrism. Mythical Pasts and Imagined Homes*, London: Verso, 1998, pp. 66–72.

## Plaidoyer pour l'Égyptomanie, ou Comment s'Appropriier une Égypte Fantasmée (Jean-Marcel Humbert)

- 1 De nombreux articles touchant à tel ou tel aspect particulier de réemploi de l'art égyptien ancien, publiés dès le début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, préparent à partir du milieu des années 1950 des études plus complètes: Nikolaus Pevsner, Susan Lang, *The Egyptian Revival*, in: *The Architectural Review*, CXIX (1956), et réédité in Nikolaus Pevsner, *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design*, vol. I: *From Mannerism to Romanticism*, Londres: Thames & Hudson, 1968, pp. 212–235; Erik Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt and its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition*, Copenhagen: G.E.C. GAI Publishers, 1961; Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Essai sur la légende d'un mythe. La Quête d'Isis. Introduction à l'égyptomanie*, Paris: Olivier Perrin, 1967; Anne Rouillet, *The Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972; Richard G. Carrott, *The Egyptian Revival, Its Sources, Monuments and Meaning, 1808–1858*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978; James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, Londres: George Allen & Unwin, 1982; Jean-Marcel Humbert, *L'Égyptomanie, sources, thèmes et symboles. Étude de la réutilisation des thèmes décoratifs empruntés à l'Égypte ancienne dans l'art occidental du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle à nos jours*, thèse de doctorat d'État soutenue à Paris-Sorbonne en 1987, Lille: Lille 3 ANRT, 1990; Jean-Marcel Humbert, Michael Pantazzi et Christiane Ziegler, *Egyptomania, L'Égypte dans l'art occidental, 1730–1930*, catalogue d'exposition (1994–1995), Paris, Ottawa et Vienne: RMN, 1994.
- 2 Noreen Doyle, *The Earliest Known Uses of »L'Égyptomanie«/»Egyptomania« in French and English*, in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections*, 8 (2016), pp. 122–125, <http://jaei.library.arizona.edu> (accès août 31, 2017).
- 3 Wilhelmine Encke, *Apologie der Gräfin Lichtenau gegen die Beschuldigungen mehrerer Schriftsteller: Von ihr selbst entworfen. Nebst einer Auswahl von Briefen an sie*, Zweite Abtheilung, Leipzig: Wilhelm Heinsius, 1808, p. 281. Une édition française du même ouvrage a été publiée en 1809. On retrouve la même citation, cette fois en anglais et en italique, dans un compte rendu anonyme de ce livre, publié en 1810 et cité par Doyle 2016 (as fn. 2), pp. 122–123; le chroniqueur ajoute que ce phénomène, devenu général, menace de replonger nos chaises et tables dans la barbarie... <http://jaei.library.arizona.edu> (accès août 31, 2017).
- 4 Roger Caratini, *L'égyptomanie, une imposture*, Paris: Albin Michel, 2002.
- 5 Emma Giuliani et Carole Saturno, *Egyptomania*, Paris: Les Grandes Personnes, 2016.
- 6 En France *Le Monde*. <https://www.altaya.fr/culture/egyptomania> (accès août 31, 2017).
- 7 Helen Whitehouse, *Egyptomanias*, in: *American Journal of Archaeology*, 101.1 (1997), p. 158, in Moser (as fn. 23), p. 1282.
- 8 Michael Darby, *Egyptian Spell*, in: *Sunday Times Magazine*, 19 et 26 mars 1972, pp. 19–27 et pp. 22–29; Brian M. Fagan, *The Rape of the Nile*, New York: Scribner's sons, 1975.
- 9 Jean Yoyotte, *Rayonnement culturel*, in: Georges Posener, *Dictionnaire de la civilisation égyptienne*, Paris: Hazan, 1959, p. 247.
- 10 Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997; Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long et Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk. A History*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009, chap. 6.
- 11 Dans son excellente revue en ligne *Aegyptiaca*: <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/index> (accès août 31, 2017) et <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/view/40161/33820> (accès août 31, 2017).
- 12 Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency*, Oxford: Clarendon press, 1998. Voir l'analyse du livre de Gell par Robert Layton, *Art and Agency: A Reassessment*, in: *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 9.3 (2003), pp. 447–463 (référence aimablement communiquée par Caroline van Eck).
- 13 Miguel John Versluys, *Exploring Aegyptiaca and their material agency throughout global history*, in: Tamar Hodos (éd.), *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, Londres: Routledge,

2017, pp. 74–89, et reproduit dans la revue en ligne *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt* 1 (2017), pp. 122–144, <http://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/viewFile/40167/33826> (accès août 31, 2017).

14 Baltrusaitis 1967 (as fn. 1).

15 Jean Leclant, En quête de l'égyptomanie, in: *Revue de l'Art* 5 (1969), pp. 82–88.

16 John Loring, Egyptomania: The Nile Style, in: *The Connoisseur*, 200/804 (February 1979), pp. 114–121.

17 Bob Brier, *Egyptomania*, Brookville: Hillwood Art Museum, 1992; James Stevens Curl, *Egyptomania: The Egyptian Revival. A Recurring Theme in the History of Taste* (revised edition), Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994.

18 Jean Leclant, De l'égyptophilie à l'égyptologie: érudits, voyageurs, collectionneurs et mécènes, lecture faite au cours de la séance publique annuelle du 22 novembre 1985, in: *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 129<sup>e</sup> année, 4 (1985), pp. 630–647. [http://www.persee.fr/doc/crai\\_0065-0536\\_1985\\_num\\_129\\_4\\_14311](http://www.persee.fr/doc/crai_0065-0536_1985_num_129_4_14311) (accès août 31, 2017).

19 <http://www.scoop.it/t/egyptophile> (accès août 31, 2017).

20 Jean-Marcel Humbert, *L'Égyptomanie dans l'art occidental*, Paris-Courbevoie: ACR, 1989, pp. 10–12.

21 Ibid., p. 170; voir Humbert, Pantazzi, Ziegler 1994 (as fn. 1), pp. 21–22.

22 Eugène Warmenbol, *Le lotus et l'oignon: égyptologie et égyptomanie en Belgique au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Bruxelles: Le Livre Timperman, 2012, t. I, p. 25–40; Manon Schutz (University of Oxford), *What is Egyptomania?* <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/what-is-egyptomania> (accès août 31, 2017). Ronald H. Fritze, *Egyptomania, A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy*, Londres: Reaktion Books, 2016.

23 Stephanie Moser, Reconstructing Ancient Worlds: Reception Studies, Archaeological Representation and the Interpretation of Ancient Egypt, in: *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 22.4 (2015), pp. 1263–1308.

24 Ibid., p. 1283.

25 Ibid., p. 1283.

26 Voir aussi plus haut la fin de la section 2. «Égyptomanie», *origines d'un mot controversé*.

27 Colleen Manassa (éd.), *Echoes of Egypt. Conjuring the Land of the Pharaohs*, Yale: Peabody Museum of Natural History, 2013, p. 22, in Moser 2015 (as fn. 23), p. 1283; Alison Moore, Voyage: Dominique-Vivant Denon and the transference of images of Egypt, in: *Art History* 25.4 (2002), pp. 531–549, p. 531, in Moser 2015 (as fn. 23), p. 1283.

28 Doyle 2016 (as fn. 2).

29 Toutankhamon-Manie, in: *Connaissance des Arts*, 326 (avril 1979), p. 47.

30 <http://www.egyptologia.com/foro/viewtopic.php?t=3279> (accès août 31, 2017); <http://leeuwerck.blogspot.fr/2011/11/doctors-diagnosis-egyptomania.html> (accès août 31, 2017); <http://drsphinx.wordpress.com/> (accès mars 10, 2020).

31 Jean-Marcel Humbert, Titillons Néfertiti: l'égyptomanie, un art éminemment populaire (1880–1980), in: Mercedes Volait et Emmanuelle Perrin (eds.), *Dialogues artistiques avec les passés de l'Égypte – Une perspective transnationale et transmédiatique / Fortunes plastiques et politiques de l'art des Anciens Égyptiens*, actes du colloque L'Égypte en ses miroirs, Paris, INHA, 26–27 juin 2013, Paris: INHA, 2017, pp. 1–20, impression à la demande ou version numérique accessibles à l'adresse suivante: <http://inha.revues.org/7200> (accès août 31, 2017).

32 Moser 2015 (as fn. 23), p. 1289.

33 Jean-Marcel Humbert (éd.), *L'Égyptomanie à l'épreuve de l'archéologie*, colloque international (Paris, musée du Louvre, 8–9 avril 1994), Bruxelles-Paris: Musée du Louvre-éditions du Gram, 1996.

34 Athanasius Kircher, *Obelisci Aegyptiaci*, Rome: ex typographia Varesii, 1666; voir Jean-Marcel Humbert, Du temps perdu au temps retrouvé: les pendules pharaoniques, ou l'heure à l'égyptienne, dans *AEGYPTIACA, Journal of the History of Receptions of Ancient Egypt*, no. 2, 2018, pp. 109–110. <https://doi.org/10.11588/aegyp.2018.2.47955> - Université d'Heidelberg (accès août 27, 2017)

35 Jean-Marcel Humbert et Annamaria Ravagnan, La Stanza Egizia di Casalbuttano, una delle pietre miliari più importanti della egittomania decorativa in Italia, in: Comune di Casalbuttano, *Palazzo Turina e il Mistero della Stanza Egizia*, Cremona: Edizioni Fantigrafica, 2013, pp. 27–45, pp. 41–42.

36 Jean-Marcel Humbert, L'Égypte éphémère des parcs d'attraction (1818–2018), dans Barbara Magen (éd.), »...Denn das Eigentliche Studium der Menschheit ist der Mensch«, Festschrift für Alfred Grimm herausgegeben von Barbara Magen (mélanges offerts à Alfred Grimm), Munich, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2018, p. 122–139 et 399; Jean-Marcel Humbert, Cléopâtre sur les murs, la publicité à l'égyptienne, in: Jean-Marcel Humbert (éd.), *France-Égypte, dialogues de deux cultures*, Paris: Afaa-Paris Musée-Gallimard-L'Œil, 1998, pp. 184–189; Bernadette Schnitzler, Hijacked Images: Ancient Egypt in French Commercial Advertising, in: Sally MacDonald et Michael Rice (Éds.), *Consuming Ancient Egypt*, Londres: UCL Press, 2003, pp. 165–174; Bernadette Schnitzler, Fascinante et mystérieuse Égypte, in: Bernadette et Françoise Schnitzler (éds.), *Archéopub, La survie de l'antiquité dans les objets publicitaires*, catalogue d'exposition, Strasbourg: Musées de Strasbourg, 2006, pp. 41–69; conférences de Jean-Marcel Humbert au musée des Tumulus de Bougon (19 septembre 2010) et à l'Egypt Exploration Society, Londres (22 mars 2014).

37 Voir Jean-Marcel Humbert, L'Égypte et l'art lyrique: un exotisme antiquisant, in: Alexandre Dratwicky et Agnès Terrier (éds.), *Les Colloques de l'Opéra Comique, Exotisme et art lyrique* (Paris, Opéra Comique, 19 et 20 juin 2012), Paris: Opéra Comique-Palazzo Bru Zane, 2017, pp. 1–24, <http://bruzanemediabase.com/fre/Parutions-scientifiques-en-ligne/Articles/Humbert-Jean-Marcel-L-Egypte-et-l-art-lyrique-un-exotisme-antiquisant> (accès août 31, 2017). Jean-Marcel Humbert, Ancient Egypt on Stage from Bonaparte's Military Campaign up to the Present Time, in: Noreen Doyle (éd.), *Egyptomania and Beyond*, in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* (JAEI), 8 (March 2016), pp. 26–48, <https://journals.uaair.arizona.edu/index.php/jaei/article/view/18821> (accès août 31, 2017).

38 Thème que j'ai développé dans une conférence au Grand Palais à Paris dans le cadre de la Biennale des Antiquaires, 12 septembre 2014: Jean-Marcel Humbert, »Cléo de 3 à 5, le péplum égyptisant, de la peinture au cinéma«.

39 James Wilton-Ely, *Egyptian revival* [Grove art online], Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, in Moser 2015 (as fn. 23), p. 1298.

40 Léon Jean Joseph Dubois, *Description des Objets d'Arts qui composent le Cabinet de Feu M. le Baron V. Denon, Monuments antiques, historiques, modernes, ouvrages orientaux, etc.*, Paris: Imprimerie d'Hippolyte Tilliard, 1826, notamment pp. 189–191 (pp. 117–119 dans la seconde édition).

41 Concernant les grands decors italiens du XIXe siècle, voir Humbert, Ravagnan 2013 (as fn. 35). Maja Lozar Štamcar, conservatrice au National Museum of Slovenia (château Snežnik), a publié deux articles sur la pièce égyptienne et les meubles de Giuseppe Parvis. En slovène: Maja Lozar Štamcar, Egiptčansko pohištvo ebenista Giuseppeja Parvisa, sopotnika historizma in secesije/Giuseppe Parvis, A Companion to Historicism and Art Nouveau, and His Furniture in Ancient Egyptian Style, in: Ana Lavrič, Franci Lazarini et Barbara Murovec, *Patriae et Orbi. Essays on Central European Art and Architecture. Festschrift in Honour of Damjan Prelovšek / Studije o srednjeevropski umetnosti. Jubilejni zbornik za Damjana Prelovška*, Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2015. En anglais: Maja Lozar Štamcar, Giuseppe Parvis, A Companion to Historicism and Art Nouveau, and His Furniture in Ancient Egyptian Style, in: Jünnová Macková, Adéla, Lucie Storchová et Libor Jůn, *Visualizing the Orient. Central Europe and the Near*

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42 Whitehouse 1997 (as fn. 7), p. 161, in Moser (as fn. 23), p. 1279.

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### Aegyptiaca (Ann C. Gunter)

- 1 I am grateful to Caroline van Eck and Miguel John Versluys for including me in the remarkable conference »A Cultural Biography of Egypt«, which they hosted in Leiden in January 2016, and to the other participants for their stimulating papers and excellent company. I owe special thanks to Miguel John Versluys for his generous and helpful comments during the revision process, which have substantially improved my contribution.
- 2 Well-illustrated surveys of this regional interaction, with rich bibliography, include J. Aruz, K. Benzell, J. M. Evans (eds.), *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.*, New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008, and the papers in J. Aruz, S. B. Graff, Y. Rakic (eds.), *Cultures in Contact: From Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C.*, New York and New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2013. For a broad chronological survey, from the Bronze Age to Roman Imperial times, see now J. Spier, T. Potts, S. E. Cole (eds.), *Beyond the Nile: Egypt and the Classical World*, Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2018.
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teries of Tell el-Farah South, in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 364 (2011), pp. 1–36; Mario A. S. Martin, *Egyptian-Type Pottery in the Late Bronze Age Southern Levant*, Contributions to the Chronology of the Eastern Mediterranean 29, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2011. Paul W. van Pelt, Revising Egypto-Nubian Relations in New Kingdom Lower Nubia: From Egyptianization to Cultural Entanglement, in: *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 23 (2013), pp. 523–50, criticizes models of acculturation derived from »Romanization« and their implicit notion of unidirectional transfer and an »isolated« Egypt, instead advocating an approach drawn from Philipp Stockhammer's concept of material cultural entanglement.

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5 Günter Vittmann, *Ägypten und die Fremden im ersten vorchristlichen Jahrtausend*, Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 97, Mainz: von Zabern, 2003; Marsha Hill, Tribal Dynamics, Child Gods, Festivals, and the Faraway Goddess: Mingling in the Egyptian Delta in the Third Intermediate Period, in: J. Aruz, M. Seymour (eds.), *Assyria to Iberia: Art and Culture in the Iron Age*, New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2016, pp. 154–167, with further references.

6 Catherine Saint-Pierre, La notion d' »offrande orientale« en archéologie grecque, in: *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire* 13 (2007), pp. 594–597, offers thoughtful observations on the historiography of »Aegyptiaca« in Archaic Greek sanctuaries. For Assyria: Davide Ciafaloni, A Taste for Egypt: Egyptianizing Ivories and Other Artifacts at the Neo-Assyrian Court, in: S. M. Cecchini, S. Mazzoni, E. Scigliuzzo (eds.), *Syrian and Phoenician Ivories of the Early First Millennium BCE: Chronology, Regional Styles and Iconographic Repertoires, Patterns of Inter-regional Distribution*, Acts of the International Workshop, Pisa, December 9th–11th, 2004, Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2009, pp. 307–317. Allison Karmel Thomason, *Luxury and Legitimation: Royal Collecting in Ancient Mesopotamia*, London: Ashgate, 2005, pp. 158–163, describes Assyrian kings as »Egyptophiles« and their acquisition of Egyptian objects as tribute, audience gifts, and plunder as »Egyptomania«. See also Allison Karmel Thomason, Occidentalism in Ancient Assyria, in: S. Bracken, A. M. Gáldy, A. Turpin (eds.), *Collecting East and West*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013, pp. 1–15.

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- 14 For stimulating work from this perspective, I am indebted to Caroline van Eck, Miguel John Versluys, Pieter ter Keurs, *The Biography of Cultures: Style, Objects and Agency*, in: *Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Approach. Les Cahiers de l'École du Louvre: Recherches en histoire de l'art, histoire des civilisations, archéologie, anthropologie et museologie* 7, 2015; on the subject of cultural memory, see §17, with further references. See also Miguel John Versluys, *Exploring Aegyptiaca and Their Material Agency Throughout Global History*, in: T. Hodos (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, London: Routledge, 2017, pp. 74–89, with bibliography.
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- 16 J.D.S. Pendlebury, *Aegyptiaca: A Catalogue of Egyptian Objects in the Aegean Area*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1930, p. 77.
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- 18 Pendlebury 1930 (as fn. 16), p. xix. See also T. J. Dunbabin, *The Greeks and Their Eastern Neighbours*, London: The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, 1957, p. 40: »These oddments, seals, amulets, scarabs, are all personal effects, which may have been brought to Greece by Phoenician visitors, may have been picked up in Syria or Phoenicia by Greek sailors; but as there is as yet no material evidence of Greeks in the Phoenician cities at this time, the former is perhaps the more likely hypothesis.«
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**20** Skon-Jedele 1994 (as fn. 8), pp. 29–30; Virginia Webb, *Faience Material from the Samos Heraion Excavations*, Samos 13, Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2016, pp. 185–193.

**21** Günther Hölbl, Typology of Form and Material in Classifying Small Aegyptiaca in the Mediterranean During Archaic Times: With Special Reference to Faience Found on Rhodian Sites, in: M. Bimson, I. C. Freestone (eds.), *Early Vitreous Materials*, British Museum Occasional Papers 56, London: British Museum, 1987, p. 116.

**22** Webb 2016 (as fn. 20), pp. 185–186. See also Virginia Webb, »Phoenician« Anthropomorphic Flasks: A Reply, in: *Levant* 12 (1980), p. 89: »The earliest pieces, juglets with Egyptian motifs, flasks, pyxides, and alabastra, are all decorated in unarguably Egyptian style. They must, as von Bissing considered long ago, come from the hands of one or two Egyptian workers, who could easily have been persuaded to come to Rhodes to help set up an industry on the spot which would reproduce for the Greek market the colourful unguent containers current in Egypt.« The classic study remains Virginia Webb, *Archaic Greek Faience: Miniature Scent Bottles and Related Objects from East Greece, 650–500 B.C.*, Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1978. See also Skon-Jedele 1994 (as fn. 8), pp. 1978–1981.

**23** Eva Mol, The Perception of Egypt in Networks of Being and Becoming: A Thing Theory Approach to Egyptianising Objects in Roman Domestic Contexts, in: A. Bokern, M. Bolder-Boos, S. Krmnicek, D. Maschek, S. Page (eds.), *TRAC 2012: Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*, Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013, p. 128.

**24** Recent publications, with further references, include Günther Hölbl, Ägyptisches Kulturgut im Archaischen Artemision, in: U. Muss (ed.), *Die Archäologie der Ephesischen Artemis: Gestalt und Ritual eines Heiligtums*, Vienna: Phoibos Verlag, 2008, pp. 209–221; Günther Hölbl, Ägyptisches Kulturgut in Ionien im 7. Jh. v. Chr.: Der Beitrag Milets zu einem religionshistorischen Phänomen, in: J. Fischer (ed.), *Der Beitrag Kleinasien zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte der Griechisch-Römischen Antiken: Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums Wien, 3.–5. November 2010*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014, pp. 181–209.

**25** Webb 2016 (as fn. 20), p. 191.

**26** For a catalogue numbering 1,033 objects, see Skon-Jedele 1994 (as fn. 8), pp. 1402–1630, with bibliography; and Webb 2016 (as fn. 20); see also P. Brize, New Ivories from the Samian Heraion, in: J. L. Fitton (ed.), *Ivory in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean*, British Museum Occasional Paper 85, London: British Museum, 1992, pp. 163–172. The major publication of bronzes is Ulf Jantzen, *Ägyptische und orientalische Bronzen aus dem Heraion von Samos*, Samos 8, Bonn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 1972. For the quantities of bronzes, see Eleanor Guralnick, The Egyptian-Greek Connection in the 8th to 6th Centuries B.C.: An Overview, in: J. E. Coleman, C. A. Walz (eds.), *Greeks and Barbarians: Essays on the Interactions between Greeks and Non-Greeks in Antiquity and the Consequences for Eurocentrism*, Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1997, pp. 130–131.

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**28** Helga Bumke, Fremde Votiven oder Fremde Dedikanten? Ägyptische Weihgaben in Ionischen Heiligtümern und ihr Zeugniswert für Kulturtransfer, in: L.-M. Günther (ed.), *Tryphe und Kultritual im Archaischen Kleinasien – ex oriente luxuria?* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012, pp. 13–14.

**29** Bumke 2012 (as fn. 28), p. 15. For »Aegyptiaca« in the Ionian sanctuaries, see Hölbl 2008 (as fn. 24), pp. 209–221; Hölbl 2014 (as fn. 24), pp. 181–209.

- 30 Bumke 2012 (as fn. 28), pp. 15–18. She observes that the well-known Pedon statue found at Priene, whose inscription records a gift from an Ionian soldier in service to Psammetichus I, is a block statue in the form of a typical Egyptian dignitary.
- 31 Bumke 2012 (as fn. 28), p. 19.
- 32 Webb 2016 (as fn. 20), p. 187.
- 33 Webb 2016 (as fn. 20), p. 193.
- 34 Jeremy Tanner, Finding the Egyptian in Early Greek Art, in: R. Matthews, C. Roemer (eds.), *Ancient Perspectives on Egypt*, London: UCL Press, 2003, p. 120, offers a related observation on the bronzes' spectacular effect among Samian votives.
- 35 Kousoulis and Morenz 2007 (as fn. 27), pp. 179–192, on the material impact of Saite dedications at Rhodian sanctuaries. Günther Hölbl, *Aegyptiaca aus Al Mina und Tarsos im Verande des Nord-syrisch-Südostanatolischen Raumes*, Archäologische Forschungen Bd. 28, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2017, pp. 19–22, 31–32, on Saite activity in Cilicia and north Syria in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE.
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- 44 Gubel 2000 (as fn. 43), p. 195.
- 45 Wicke with Fischer and Busch 2011 (as fn. 41), pp. 126–136.
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- 50 Hussein with Altaweel and Gibson 2016 (as fn. 9), p. 5 (ND 1988.19), pl. 15b.
- 51 Hussein with Altaweel and Gibson 2016 (as fn. 9), p. 6, pl. 13a; the author suggests that the inscription perhaps names the god Horus.
- 52 Frans A. M. Wiggermann, Pazuzu, in: D. O. Edzard, M. P. Streck (eds.), *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 10 (2003–2005), p. 377, with further references. See also Nils Heeßel, Pazuzu, in: *Iconography of Deities and Demons in the Ancient Near East*, 2007 [http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd/prepublications/e\\_idd\\_pazuzu.pdf](http://www.religionswissenschaft.uzh.ch/idd/prepublications/e_idd_pazuzu.pdf), (accessed May 17, 2019). See further Oskar Kaelin, Pazuzu, Lamaschtu-Reliefs und Horus-Stelen – Ägypten als Modell im 1. Jt. v. Chr., in: S. Bickel, S. Schroer, R. Schurte, C. Uehlinger (eds.), *Bilder als Quellen/Images as Sources: Studies on Ancient Near Eastern Artefacts and the Bible Inspired by the Work of Othmar Keel*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis Sonderband, Fribourg-Göttingen: Academic Press and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007, pp. 365–378.
- 53 Hussein with Altaweel and Gibson 2016 (as fn. 9), pp. 15–16; pls. 40a–d, 42a. For the gold seal inscribed for Hama, recovered from Tomb III, Coffin 2, see Spurrier 2017 (as fn. 40), pp. 155–158.
- 54 Hussein with Altaweel and Gibson 2016 (as fn. 9), p. 16; pl. 43c.
- 55 Karen Radner, After Eltekeh. Royal Hostages from Egypt at the Assyrian Court, in: H. Baker, K. Kaniuth, A. Otto (eds.), *Stories of Long Ago. Festschrift für Michael D. Roaf*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 397, Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2012, pp. 471–479, with further references, discusses high-level interaction between ruling Delta families and the Assyrian court in the late eighth century BCE.
- 56 Silvie Zamazalová, Before the Assyrian Conquest in 671 B.C.E.: Relations between Egypt, Kush and Assyria, in: J. Mynářová (ed.), *Egypt and the Near East – the Crossroads. Proceedings of an International Conference on the Relations of Egypt and the Near East in the Bronze Age, Prague, September 1–3, 2010*, Prague: Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts, 2011, pp. 297–328, with further references; Ariel Bagg, *Die Assyrer und das Westland: Studien zur historischen Geographie und Herrschaftspraxis in der Levante im 1. Jt. v. u. Z.*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 216, Leuven: Peeters, 2011, p. 217. See also Caroline van der Brugge, Of Production, Trade, Profit and Destruction: An Economic Interpretation of Sennacherib's Third Campaign, in: *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 60 (2017), esp. pp. 308–311.
- 57 Karen Radner, The Assyrian King and His Scholars: The Syro-Anatolian and the Egyptian Schools, in: M. Luukko, S. Svärd, and R. Mattila (eds.), *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars. Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honor of Simo Parpola*, Studia Orientalis 106, Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2009, pp. 223–226, with further references; van der Brugge 2017 (as fn. 56).

## L'Égypte des uns n'est pas Toujours l'Égypte des Autres (Laurent Bricault)

- 1 Stratonicee (125–85 av. J.-C.): AR 12 mm; 1.45 g; cp. *BMC Caria*, 1–5.
- 2 Cos (167–88 av. J.-C.): AR 14 mm; 3.42 g; cp. *BMC Caria*, 133.
- 3 Halicarnasse (2<sup>nd</sup> cent. Av. J.-C.): AE 18 mm; 5.25 g; cp. *BMC Caria*, 20.
- 4 Myndos AR (167–88 av. J.-C.): AR 18 mm; 3,74 g; cp. *SNG vAulock* 8116.
- 5 Thessalie, Magnètes (168–140 av. J.-C.): AR 19 mm; 3,89 g; cp. *BMC Thessaly*, 1; *BCD Thessaly* II, 415.2.

- 6 Thrace, Mostis (125–86 av. J.-C.): AE 20 mm; 5.67g; cp. SNG BM 311.
- 7 Barclay V. Head, *BMC Caria*, lxxix; Andrew R. Meadows, Stratonikeia in Caria. The Hellenistic City and its Coinage, in: NC 162 (2002), pp. 79–124, part. 98; Christina Gr. Williamson, Sanctuaries as Turning Points in Territorial Formation. Lagina, Panamara and the Development of Stratonikeia, in: F. Pirson (éd.), *Manifestationen von Macht und Hierarchien in Stadtraum und Landschaft*, Byzas 13, Istanbul: Phoibos, 2012, pp. 113–150, part. 121–123.
- 8 Asklépios dont l'image, à partir de 166 av. J.-C., tend à éclipser celle d'Héraklès dans le monnayage de Cos; cf. Barclay V. Head, *A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum: Caria, Cos, Rhodes, etc.*, London: Longmans, 1897, xcv; Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis, *Truly Beyond Wonders: Aelius Aristides and the Cult of Asklepios*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 36.
- 9 Les habitants ont fait d'Anthès, un fils de Poséidon venu de Trézène, le fondateur de leur cité, comme le rapportent Strabon, *Géographie*, 8.6.14 et 14.2.16 ou encore Étienne de Byzance, s.v. Halikarnassos; cf. Hugh Lloyd-Jones, The Pride of Halicarnassus, ZPE 124 (1999), pp. 1–14, part. 8–9; Signe Isager, On a List of Priests. From the Son of Poseidon to Members of the Elite in Late Hellenistic Halikarnassos, in: J. Fejfer, M. Moltesen, A. Rathje (éd.), *Tradition. Transmission of Culture in the Ancient World*, Acta Hyperborea 14, København: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2014, pp. 131–148, part. 144; Fr. de Polignac, Constructions, interprétations et représentations culturelles de l'espace: les paysages religieux maritimes, in: *Annuaire de l'École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences religieuses* 122 (2015), pp. 195–200.
- 10 Denver Graninger, *Cult and Koinon in Hellenistic Thessaly*, Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011, p. 43; Peter Thonemann, *The Hellenistic World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 71.
- 11 Evgeni Paunov, The Coinage of the Thracian King Mostis: Recent Finds, Chronology, Distribution and Localisation, in: K. Dörtlük, O. Tekin, R. Boyraz Seyhan (éd.), *First International Congress of the Anatolian Monetary History and Numismatics, Antalya 25–28 February 2013, Proceedings*, Istanbul: Suna-İnan Kıraç, 2014, pp. 457–480, part. 459.
- 12 Si l'on considère seulement les quatre principaux trésors contenant des drachmes myndiennes dont on connaît l'existence, on obtient un total de plus de 600 monnaies. Ainsi *Coin Hoards* VIII 481, enfoui ca 150 av. J.-C. à Myndos et découvert en 1987 (aujourd'hui dispersé dans le commerce), contenait plus de 1000 monnaies d'argent dont 188 de Myndos, 3 de Iasos, 1 de Mylasa, 33 d'Halicarnasse et 23 de Bargylia (signalé par R.H.J. Ashton, NC 1992, p. 32, D). De son côté, *CH* VIII 482 (peut-être une partie ou un complément de *CH* VIII 481), enfoui également ca 150 av. J.-C. en Carie et découvert en 1989 (aujourd'hui dispersé dans le commerce), contenait plus de 30 monnaies d'argent dont 22 de Myndos et 8 d'Halicarnasse. Pour sa part, *CH* VIII 485, enfoui ca 100 av. J.-C. (en Carie ?), et découvert avant 1934 (aujourd'hui au Musée des civilisations anatoliennes d'Ankara), contenait 274 monnaies d'argent dont 170 de Myndos, 103 d'Halicarnasse et 1 de Cnide. Enfin, *CH* IX, 522, découvert en 1996, contenait environ 300 drachmes de Myndos, une dizaine de drachmes d'Halicarnasse et peut-être une soixantaine de fractions (trouaille publiée partiellement par Barbara Zabel & Andrew R. Meadows, The »Myndos« 1996 Hoard, in: *CH* IX [London, 2003], 244–252 et pl. 42–44 illustrant 144 monnaies).
- 13 Une dizaine d'inscriptions tout au plus; cf. Wolfgang Blümel, Mustafa H. Sayar, Ehrendekret von Stratonikeia in Myndos, in: *EA* 44 (2011), p. 119, qui publie la plus ancienne inscription de la cité, datée du début du II<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C., découverte lors des nouvelles fouilles turques. La majorité des 39 inscriptions rangées sous le nom de Myndos par Donald F. McCabe, *Myndos inscriptions. Texts and list*, Princeton: The Institute for Advanced Study, 1991, n'ont rien à voir avec la cité elle-même.
- 14 Voir déjà Mustafa Şahin, Myndos. Eine Hafenstadt an der kleinasiatischen Westküste, in: *Antike Welt* 6 (2014), pp. 46–56 (avec la bibliographie antérieure).
- 15 Sur l'iconographie de Sarapis, cf. Wilhelm Hornbostel, *Sarapis. Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte, den Erscheinungsformen und Wandlungen der Gestalt eines Gottes*, ÉPRO 32, Leiden: Brill, 1973, avec les remarques de Michel Malaise, Problèmes soulevés par l'iconographie de Sarapis, in:



*Latomus* XXXIV (1975), pp. 383–391 et Vincent Tran tam Tinh, État des études iconographiques relatives à Isis, Sérapis et Sunnaoi Theoi, in: *ANRW* II, 17.3 (1984), pp. 1713–1722, en attendant l'ouvrage de Laurent Bricault, Richard Veymiers, *Sarapis. Une biographie culturelle*.

**16** Şahin 2014 (as fn. 14) 49; Mustafa Şahin, A new Discovery in the Myndos Harbor Survey: The West Harbor, in: *TINA Maritime Archaeology Periodical* 1 (2014), pp. 64–69.

**17** Sur l'histoire de la Carie hellénistique, Jeremy LaBuff, *Polis Expansion and Elite Power in Hellenistic Karia*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015.

**18** Laurent Bricault, *Les cultes isiaques dans le monde gréco-romain*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2013, p. 277.

**19** Alain Bresson, *Recueil des Inscriptions de la Pérée rhodienne (Pérée intégrée)*, Besançon 1991, pp. 139–144, no. 148; *RICIS* 204/0701.

**20** Laurent Bricault (dir.), *Sylloge Nummorum Religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae (SNRIS)*, Paris 2008, Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres XXXVIII, pp. 117–120.

**21** *SNRIS* Rhodus 1.

**22** Sur cet effet domino, cf. *SNRIS* 119; Laurent Bricault, Fonder un lieu de culte, in: C. Bonnet, S. Ribichini, D. Steuernagel (éd.), *Religioni in contatto nel Mediterraneo antico. Modalità di diffusione e processi di interferenza. Atti del 3° colloquio su «Le religioni orientali nel mondo greco e romano»*, Lovenço di Menaggio (Como), 26–28 maggio 2006, Pisa-Roma: Fabrizio Serra, 2008, pp. 61–62.

**23** Laurent Bricault, *Recueil des Inscriptions concernant les Cultes Isiaques (RICIS)*, Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres XXXI, Paris 2005, no. 305/1801.

**24** Alain Bresson, Les intérêts rhodiens en Carie à l'époque hellénistique, jusqu'en 167 av. J.-C., in: *Pallas* 62 (2003), pp. 169–192; Riet van Bremen, Networks of Rhodians in Karia, in: *Mediterranean Historical Review* 22.1 (2007), pp. 113–132.

**25** *RICIS* 305/0501.

**26** Laurent Bricault, La diffusion isiaque: une esquisse, in: P. C. Bol, G. Kaminski, C. Maderna (éd.), *Fremdheit-Eigenheit. Ägypten, Griechenland und Rom. Austausch und Verständnis*, Städel-Jahrbuch N. F. 19, Stuttgart 2004, pp. 548–556; Tomáš Glomb, Adam Mertel, Zdeněk Pospíšil, Zdeněk Stachoň & Aleš Chalupa, Ptolemaic military operations were a dominant factor in the spread of Egyptian cults across the early Hellenistic Aegean Sea, 2018, *PLoS ONE* 13(3): e0193786. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0193786> (accessed May 17, 2019).

**27** Sur ce sujet, Richard Veymiers, “Ιλεως τῷ φοροῦντι. Sérapis sur les gemmes et les bijoux antiques, Bruxelles: Académie royale de Belgique, 2009, pp. 31–32, avec la bibliographie antérieure.

**28** On notera que l'*atef* apparaît également sur certaines hémidrachmes hellénistiques de Caunos, en Carie. Elles furent frappées, pour certaines, au nom du magistrat monétaire Pharos, et pour d'autres, de même époque, au nom de Ptolémaïos, ce qui donne une résonance alexandrine supplémentaire à ces émissions. Sur ce dernier magistrat, cf. Richard H.J. Ashton, Kaunian Notes, in: R.H.J. Ashton, Ph. Kinns, *Opuscula Anatolica* II, in: *NC* 163 (2003), p. 38 n. 182; sur Pharos, id., The Hellenistic Hemidrachms of Kaunos, in: *RBN* (1999), pp. 142–143. Sur l'idée, aujourd'hui abandonnée, de voir une influence égyptienne dans le visage cornu de quelques émissions hellénistiques d'argent et de bronze de Caunos, voir Ashton 1999 (as fn. 28), pp. 152–153 et id. 2003 (as fn. 28), pp. 36–39. Il est probable qu'Isis et Sarapis aient possédé un temple à Caunos dès le III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.; voir *RICIS* Suppl. II, 305/2002–2007, in L. Bricault, R. Veymiers (éd.), *Bibliotheca Isiaca* II, Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2011, pp. 303–304 et Laurent Bricault, Stefano G. Caneva, Sarapis, Isis et la continuité dynastique lagide. À propos de deux dédicaces ptolémaïques d'Halicarnasse et de Kaunos, in: *Chiron* 49 (2019), pp. 1–22.

**29** Stefan Pfeiffer, The God Serapis, his Cult and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Hellenistic Egypt, in: P. McKechnie, Ph. Guillaume (éd.), *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his World*, Mnemosyne Suppl. 300,

Leiden: Brill, 2008, pp. 387–408; Eleni Fassa, Shifting Conceptions of the Divine: Sarapis as Part of Ptolemaic Egypt's Social Imaginaries, in: E. Stavrianopoulou (éd.), *Shifting Social Imaginaries in the Hellenistic Period. Narrations, Practices, Images*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 115–139; Joachim F. Quack, Björn Paarman, Sarapis. Ein Gott zwischen ägyptischer und griechischer Religion, in: N. Zenzen, T. Hölscher, K. Trampedach (éd.), *Aneignung und Abgrenzung. Wechselnde Perspektiven auf die Antithese von ›Ost‹ und ›West‹ in der griechischen Antike*, Heidelberg: Verlag-Antike, 2013, pp. 229–291; Bernard Legras, Sarapis, Isis et le pouvoir lagide, in: L. Bricault, M.J. Versluys (éd.), *Power, Politics and the Cults of Isis. Proceedings of the Vth International Conference of Isis Studies, Boulogne-sur-Mer, October 13–15 2011*, RGRW 180, Leiden: Brill, 2014, pp. 95–115.

**30** Laurent Bricault, Isis et Sarapis sauveurs de Ptolémée IV à Raphia, in: *Chronique d'Égypte* LXXIV, 148 (1999), pp. 334–343; Thomas Landvatter, The Serapis and Isis Coinage of Ptolemy IV, in: *AJN* 24 (2012), pp. 61–90; voir aussi Laurent Bricault, Chronique bibliographique, in: L. Bricault, R. Veymiers (éds.), *Bibliotheca Isiaca* III, Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2014, p. 368.

**31** Gilles Gorre, *Les relations du clergé égyptien et des Lagides d'après les sources privées*, *Studia Hellenistica* 45, Louvain: Peeters 2009.

**32** Michel Malaise, Histoire et signification de la coiffure hathorique à plumes, in: *SAK* 4 (1976), pp. 215–236; id., *Le basileion*, une couronne d'Isis: origine et signification, in: W. Claes, St. Hendrickx, H. de Meulenaere (éd.), *El Kab and Beyond. Studies in Honour of Luc Limme*, OLA 191, Louvain: Peeters, 2009, pp. 445–461; id., Le calathos sur la tête d'Isis: une enquête, in: *SAK* 43 (2014), pp. 223–265; Richard Veymiers, *Le basileion*, les reines et Actium, in: L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys (éd.), *Power, Politics and the Cults of Isis. Proceedings of the Vth International Conference of Isis Studies, Boulogne-sur-Mer, October 13–15, 2011*, RGRW 180, Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2014, pp. 195–236.

**33** Peter Dils, La couronne d'Arsinoé II Philadelphie, in: W. Clarysse, A. Schoors, H. Willems (éd.), *Egyptian Religion. The Last Thousand Years. Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Jan Quaegebeur*, OLA 85, Louvain: Peeters, 1998, pp. 1299–1330; Maria Nilsson, *The Crown of Arsinoë II. The Creation and Development of an Imagery of Authority*, PhD diss. University of Gothenburg, 2010.

**34** Isis est encore coiffée de la seule couronne hathorique sur les tétradrachmes de 217 (fig. 3).

**35** Michel Malaise, Le problème de l'hellénisation d'Isis, in: L. Bricault (éd.), *De Memphis à Rome. Actes du Ier Colloque international sur les études isiaques, Poitiers–Futuroscope, 8–10 avril 1999*, RGRW 140, Leiden-Boston-Cologne: Brill, 2000, pp. 1–17.

**36** Svenja Nagel, The Goddess's New Clothes. Conceptualising an ›Eastern‹ Goddess for a ›Western‹ Audience, in: A. Flüchter, J. Schöttli (éd.), *The Dynamics of Transculturality. Concepts and Institutions in Motion*, Transcultural Research – Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context, Heidelberg: Springer, 2015, pp. 187–218.

**37** Sabine Albersmeier, Das «Isisgewand» der Ptolemäerinnen: Herkunft, Form und Funktion, in: P. C. Bol, G. Kaminski C. Maderna (éd.), *Fremdheit-Eigenheit. Ägypten, Griechenland und Rom. Austausch und Verständnis*, Städel Jahrbuch N.F. 19, Stuttgart 2004, pp. 421–432; Estelle Galbois, *Images du pouvoir et pouvoir de l'image. Les «médaillons-portraits» miniatures des Lagides*, Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2018.

**38** Ulrich Wilcken, *Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit (Ältere Funde)*, I, Berlin-Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1927, pp. 97–104 no. 1 (fin du IV<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.).

**39** Philippe Borgeaud, Youri Volokhine, La formation de la légende de Sarapis: une approche transculturelle, in: *ARG* 2 (2000), pp. 37–76; Marianne Bergmann, Sarapis im 3. Jh. v. Chr., in: G. Weber (éd.), *Alexandria und das ptolemäische Ägypten*, Berlin: Verlag Antike, 2010, pp. 109–135; Didier Devauchelle, Osiris, Apis, Sarapis et les autres. Remarques sur les Osiris memphites au I<sup>er</sup> millénaire av. J.-C., in: L. Coulon (éd.), *Le culte d'Osiris au Ier millénaire av. J.-C.: découvertes et travaux récentes. Actes de la table ronde internationale tenue à Lyon, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée les 8 et 9 juillet 2005*, Bibliothèque d'étude 153, Le Caire: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 2010,

pp. 49–62; id., Pas d'Apis pour Sarapis, in: A. Gasse et al. (éd.), *Et in Aegypto et ad Aegyptum: Recueil d'études dédiées à Jean-Claude Grenier*, CENiM 5.2, Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 2012, pp. 213–225.

**40** Bricault 2013 (as fn. 18), pp. 91–94. Voir aussi Judith S. McKenzie et al., Reconstructing the Serapeum in Alexandria from the Archaeological Evidence, in: *JRS* 94 (2004), pp. 73–121; Michael Sabottka, *Das Serapeum in Alexandria: Untersuchungen zur Architektur und Baugeschichte des Heiligtums von der frühen ptolemäischen Zeit bis zur Zerstörung 391 n. Chr.*, Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2008.

**41** Arthur Houghton, The Double Portrait Coins of Alexander I Balas and Cleopatra Thea, in: *SNR* 67 (1988), pp. 90–91 no. 27, pl. 10, fig. 8; *SNRIS* 156, Ptolemais 2 and 4.

**42** Andrew Meadows, The Great Transformation. Civic Coin Design in the Second Century BC, in: P.P. Iossif, Fr. de Callatay, R. Veymiers (éd.), *ΤΥΠΟΙ. Greek and Roman Coins Seen Through Their Images: Noble Issuers, Humble Users?*, Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2018, pp. 297–318.

**43** Richard H.J. Ashton, Laurent Bricault, Fabrice Delrieux, Éolide, Ionie, Carie, in: L. Bricault (dir.), *SNRIS*, p. 121.

**44** Richard H.J. Ashton, Rhodian Bronze Coinage and the Siege of Mithradates VI, in: *NC* (2001), pp. 1–14.

**45** On comparera à ce propos les analyses proposées, dans le même volume, par Christian-Georges Schwentzel, La reine Huldu et la coiffe isiaque. Isis et le pouvoir royal à Pétra (Ier s. av. J.-C. - Ier s. apr. J.-C.), in: L. Bricault, M.J. Versluys (éd.), *Power, politics and the cults of Isis, Proceedings of the Vth International Conference of Isis Studies, Boulogne-sur-Mer, October 13–15 2011*, RGRW 180, Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2014, pp. 147–162, et Richard Veymiers 2014 (as fn. 32), pp. 195–236.

**46** Michel Malaise, Le calathos de Sérapis, in: *SAK* 38 (2009), pp. 173–193.

**47** Cf. par exemple une émission de Patras au nom de Cléopâtre VII (notre fig. 5) figurant un *basileion* au revers comme type à part entière: *RPC* I 258–259, no. 1245; *SNRIS* 91–92 et 235, Patrae 1; voir aussi Emily Haug, Local Politics in the Late Republic: Antony and Cleopatra at Patras, in: *AJN* 20 (2008), pp. 405–420.

**48** Arnaud Saura-Ziegelmeyer, Le sistre. Un exemple d'élément culturel polysémique, in: *SMSR* 79 (2013), pp. 379–395.

**49** Laurent Bricault, *Isis, Dame des flots, Aegyptiaca Leodiensia* 7, Liège: Centre Informatique de Philosophie et Lettres, 2006, pp. 155–167; Malaise 2009 (as fn. 42), p. 173–193.

## Aegyptiaca Romana (Molly Swetnam-Burland)

**1** I offer my deep thanks to Miguel John Versluys and Caroline van Eck for bringing together an incredible group of scholars and for rich, many-layered discussions at the conference, «A Cultural Biography of Egypt», held in Leiden in January 2016. For the approach to style and agency adopted here, see the Introduction and Caroline van Eck, Miguel John Versluys, Pieter ter Keurs. The Biography of Cultures: Style, Objects and Agency, in: *Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Approach. Cahiers de l'École du Louvre: recherches en histoire de l'art, histoire des civilisations archéologie, anthropologie et museology* 7 (2015), pp. 2–22.

**2** The last two decades have witnessed increased interest in the Roman reception of Egypt on many fronts, archaeological, historical, literary, and religious. The bibliography is vast. For Roman engagements with the place of Egypt as mediated by material culture, I direct the reader especially to the path-breaking work of Miguel John Versluys and to my own discussions of the phenomenon. I here cite a few works representative of our approaches, by no means exhaustive. In addition, within the last two years, new work and several doctoral theses have appeared, often exploring the use of theoret-

ical frameworks. I direct the reader to these as cited in the notes below. For Miguel John Versluys' work, see, e.g.: Miguel John Versluys. *Aegyptiaca Romana. Nilotic Scenes and the Roman Views of Egypt*. RGRW 144. Leiden: Brill, 2002; Miguel John Versluys. The (Material) Presence of Egypt in the Roman World, in: Dietrich Boschung, Alexandra Busch, Miguel John Versluys (eds.), *Reinventing the »Invention of Tradition: Indigenous Pasts and the Roman Present, Morphomata 32*, Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015, pp. 127–158; Miguel John Versluys. Egypt as Part of the Roman Koine: Mnemohistory and the Iseum Campense in Rome, in: S. Nagel, J. F. Quack, and C. Witschel (eds.), *Entangled Worlds. Religious Confluences between East and West in the Roman Empire The Cults of Isis, Mithras, and Jupiter Dolichenus*, Tübingen: Siebeck, 2017, pp. 274–294. For my own work, see, e.g.: Molly Swetnam-Burland, Egyptian Objects, Roman Contexts. A Taste for *Aegyptiaca* in Italy, in: M. J. Versluys, P. G. P. Meyboom, L. Bricault (eds.), *Nile into Tiber. Egypt in the Roman World Proceedings of the IIIrd International Conference of Isis Studies, Leiden, May 11–14, 2005*, RGRW 159, 2007, pp. 113–136; Molly Swetnam-Burland, *Aegyptus Redacta*. The Egyptian Obelisk in the Augustan Campus Martius, in *Art Bulletin* xcii no. 3 (2010), pp. 135–153; Molly Swetnam-Burland, *Egypt in Italy. Visions of Egypt in Roman Imperial Culture*, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

3 In so doing, I follow an approach that advocates for bringing small finds and graffiti to bear on traditional art historical questions. See especially Bettina Bergmann, *Realia*. Portable and Painted Objects from the Villa of Boscoreale, in: Alix Barbet, Annie Verbanck-Piérard (eds.), *La villa romaine de Boscoreale et ses fresques, Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire*, Arles: Errance, 2013, pp. 3–27; and Molly Swetnam-Burland, Encountering Ovid's Phaedra in Pompeii V 2, 10–11, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 119.2 (2015), pp. 217–232.

4 See Neil Harris, Period Room Architecture in American Art Museums, in: *Winterthur Portfolio* 46.2/3, (2012), pp. 117–138, for history and discussion of the period room display in American museums. For discussion of the two period rooms in the context of the renovated Roman galleries in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2007, see John R. Clarke, Museum Review: Rethinking Space, Light, and Pedagogy, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 112.1 (2008), pp. 173–177.

5 Peter H. von Blanckenhagen, Christine Alexander. *The Augustan Villa at Boscoreale*, Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1990, pp. 5–10 and pl. 2–3.

6 See Mariette de Vos, *L'egittomania in pittura e mosaici romano-campani della prima età imperiale*. ÉPRO 84, 1980, pp. 5–8.

7 Elfriede Knauer, Roman Wall Paintings from Boscoreale. Three Studies in the Relationship Between Writing and Painting, in: *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 28 (1993), pp. 13–46.

8 See Maxwell Anderson, The Portrait Medallions of the Imperial Villa at Boscoreale, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 91.1 (1987), pp. 127–135, and especially note 2, for discussion of past interpretations.

9 That there was a Roman site at Boscoreale had been known since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Charles Greville wrote two letters to his uncle, Sir William Hamilton, asking him to acquire bronzes from the site, in 1786 and 1789 respectively. Alfred Morrison (ed.), *The Collection of Autograph Letters and Historical Documents formed by Alfred Morrison: Volume I–III, A–D, the Hamilton & Nelson Papers*, London: printed at private expense, 1893, no. 131, no. 156.

10 Matteo Della Corte, Pompei-scavi eseguiti da privati nel territorio di Pompei, in: *Notizie degli scavi di antichità XIX* (1922), pp. 459–478; von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990 (as fn. 5), pp. 9–10; Angela Morelli, Maria Romano, Amalia Vangone, con gli alunni della Scuola Media Statale »Cardinal G. Prisco«, in: Boscoreale: Comune di Studi Archeologi di Boscoreale, Boscoreale, e Trecase, 2009, <http://centrostudiarc.altervista.org/pdf/Agrippa%20postumo.pdf> (accessed June 6, 2017).

11 See John H. D'Arms, *Romans on the Bay of Naples. A Social and Cultural Study of the Villas and their Owners from 150 B.C. to A.D. 400*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970; Elaine K. Gazda, Villas on the Bay of Naples. The Ancient Setting of Oplontis, in: J. R. Clarke and N. K. Muntasser (eds.),

*Oplontis. Villa A («of Poppaea») at Torre Annunziata, Italy*, New York: American Council of Learned Societies, 2014, [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.90048.0001.001 (accesses May 17, 2019)], para. 63–116.

**12** Michael Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926, chap. 2, note 21, pp. 503–504; Della Corte 1922 (as fn. 10), p. 478; and *apparatus criticus* of CIL IV 6499. Argument reprised in full by D’Arms 1970 (as fn. 11), pp. 231–232.

**13** The amphora: CIL VI 6499; the rooftiles: *Pupil(li) Agrip(pae) | Tub(erone) Fabio Co(n)s(ulibus)*, Della Corte 1922 (as fn. 10), pp. 478, no listing in CIL; signet rings *Ti(berius) Cl(audius) Eu(tychus)* and *Eutychus Caesaris l(ibertus)*, Della Corte 1922 (as fn. 10), p. 478, no listing in CIL; graffito, CIL IV 6893: *Caesaris Augusti femina mater erat*.

**14** For the notion of Eutychus as working for Tiberius, see Roger C. Carrington, Campanian »Villae Rusticae«, in *The Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 21 (1931), pp. 110–130, especially p. 112.

**15** For the findspot, see *apparatus criticus* for CIL IV 6499.

**16** To my knowledge, the amphorae associated with the villa are: CIL IV 6920, 6937, 6945, 6946, 6961, 6979, 6995, 7004.

**17** For graffiti as a medium and mode of discourse, see Rebecca Benefiel, Dialogues of Ancient Graffiti in the House of Maius Castricius in Pompeii, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 114.1 (2010), pp. 59–101; Rebecca Benefiel, Dialogues of Graffiti in the House of the Four Styles at Pompeii (Casa dei Quattro Stili, I.8.17, 11), in: J. Baird, C. Taylor (eds.) *Ancient Graffiti in Context*, Routledge Studies in Ancient History 2. London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 20–48; Peter Krushwitz, Reading and Writing in Pompeii. An Outline of the Local Discourse, in: *Studj Romanzi Nuova Serie X* (2014), pp. 246–279.

**18** Note that the CIL entries for Boscotrecase provide little information on findspot. The most detailed information about their location can be found in Della Corte’s first publication, Della Corte 1922, (as fn. 10), pp. 477–478. In addition, Della Corte included several graffiti in his discussion not attributed to any particular room in the villa that the CIL lists as coming from a different site (IV 6887–6889). I have not included these in my discussion.

**19** On *Receptus*, all are catalogued under CIL IV 6894: *Receptus, Actio sal(utem) | Acti, va(le) | Receptus Athicto sal(utem)* »Receptus [offers] a greeting to Actius. Be well, Actius! Receptus [offers] a greeting to Athictus.« The Actius referred to may well be the actor Actius Anicetus, popular throughout Campania. It was not uncommon for individuals to inscribe greetings or celebrations of performers in graffiti. Actius Anicetus is well attested in several informal inscriptions in Pompeii. On this man, see James L. Franklin, Jr. Pantomimists at Pompeii. Actius Anicetus and his Troupe, in: *American Journal of Philology* 108.1, (1987), pp. 95–107. On Q(uintus) Iunius, see IV 6895 *Q. Iunius*. And on Falernian wine, see IV 6896 *falerno iur. . . ati* or possibly *falerno puro*, Della Corte 1922 (as fn. 10), p. 477. Both seem to refer to Falernian wine, prized in the late Republic and still deemed good in the early empire, though other varieties had supplanted it. Cf. other graffiti from Pompeii, CIL IV 1679, 2565a, 2566.

**20** For discussion and edition of the line, see Edward Courtney, *The Fragmentary Latin Poets*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 305. References to the imperial family were somewhat common in Pompeian graffiti, mostly well wishes and acclamations, often found in quasi-public places. For others see, e.g., CIL IV 4089, 4090, 4466.

**21** On poetry in Pompeian graffiti see Peter Kruschwitz, Carmina Latina Epigraphica Pompeiana. Ein Dossier, in: *Arctos* 38 (2004), pp. 27–58; Kristina Milnor, Literary Literacy in Roman Pompeii. the Case of Virgil’s Aeneid, in: W. Johnson, H. Parker (eds.), *Ancient Literacies. The Culture of Reading in Greece and Rome*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 288–319; Kristina Milnor, *Graffiti and the Literary Landscape in Roman Pompeii*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Rudolf Wachter, Oral Poetry in ungewohntem Kontext. Hinweise auf mündliche Dichtungstechnik in den pompejanischen Wandinschriften, in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 121 (1998), pp. 73–89.

22 CIL IV 6890, 6892.

23 Tiles from Pompeii and its environs have not received significant scholarly attention, but it appears that roughly two-thirds were produced in Campania. Eva M. Steinby, *La produzione laterizia*, in: F. Zevi (ed.) *Pompei 79: raccolta di studi per il decimonono centenario dell'eruzione vesuviana*, Naples: G. Macchiaroli, 1979, pp. 26–57. See also J. Theodore Peña, Myles McCallum, *The Production and Distribution of Pottery at Pompeii. A Review of the Evidence. Part 2, The Material Basis for Production and Distribution* in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 113.2 (2009), pp. 165–201, p. 180.

24 The same tile was found in V 5, 3. Allison Cooley, *Cambridge Manual of Latin Epigraphy*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 88, n. 263.

25 John Bodel, *Roman Brickstamps in the Kelsey Museum*, *Kelsey Museum of Archaeology Studies* 6, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983, pp. 19–20.

26 Some tiles used in Pompeii were imported from as far away as Rome; others were likely produced at Surrentina; see Steinby 1979 (as fn. 23).

27 On dating inscriptions related to the *familia Caesaris*, P.R.C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris. A Social Study of the Emperors Freedmen and Slaves*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, pp. 22–24.

28 There are 17 imperial slaves and 8 imperial freedmen documented in funerary inscriptions from Campania. Allison Emmerson, *Memoria et Monumenta. Local Identities and the Tombs of Campania*. PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2013, pp. 236–238. For the activities of slaves and freedmen of the emperor in the vicinity, see also Andrew Lintott, *Freedmen and Slaves in the Light of Legal Documents from First-Century A.D. Campania*, *Classical Quarterly* 52.2 (2002), pp. 555–565.

29 On imperial landholdings in Campania, D'Arms 1970 (as fn. 11), pp. 73–115.

30 See, e.g., Fulvio De Salvia, *Egitto faraonico e Campania pre-Romana. Gli aegyptiaca*, in: S. de Caro, (ed.), *Egittomania: Iside e il mistero*, Milan: Electa, 2006, pp. 21–58.

31 Scholarship on the cult of Isis is extensive. I direct the reader to the bibliographic resources in the series Laurent Bricault (ed.), *Bibliotheca Isiaca I–III*, Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2008–2014; and for new approaches, Valentino Gasparini, Richard Veymiers (eds.), *The Greco-Roman Cults of Isis: Agents, Images and Practices. Proceedings of the VIth Conference of Isis Studies*, RGRW (Erfurt, May 6–8 – Liège, September 23–24, 2013) Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018.

32 See, e.g., on the Greek discourse, Stanley Burstein, *Images of Egypt in Greek Historiography*, in: A. Lopreino (ed.), *Ancient Egyptian Literature. History and Forms, Probleme der Ägyptologie*, Leiden: Brill, 1996, pp. 591–604; and for new approaches, Ian Moyer, *Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism*, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. On the Roman discourse, Eleni Manolaraki, *Noscendi Nilum cupido. Imagining Egypt from Lucan to Philostratus*, *Trends in Classics: Supplementary Volumes*, 18, Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2013; and for new approaches Maaïke Leemreize, *The Egyptian Past in the Roman Present*, in: C. Pieper, J. Ker (eds.), *Valuing the Past in the Greco-Roman World. Proceedings from the Penn-Leiden Colloquia on Ancient Values VII*, Leiden: Brill, 2014, pp. 56–82.

33 For »mnemnohistory« as applied to Roman engagement with Egypt, see Versluys 2015 (as fn. 2).

34 Cass. Dio. 51.22.4–9.

35 Vergil, *Aen.* 8. 671–731.

36 Horace 1.37.21.

37 On the Circus Maximus obelisk, see, e.g. Versluys 2015 (as fn. 2). On the Campus Martius obelisk, see, e.g. Swetnam-Burland 2010 (as fn. 2). For recent approaches, see the many essays in Lothar Haselberger, Paolo Alberici-Auber et al., *The Horologium of Augustus: Debate and Context*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series* 99. *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 2014; Bernard Frischer et al., *New Light on the Relationship of the Montecitorio Obelisk and the Ara Pacis of Augustus*, in: *Studies*

in *Digital Heritage* 1.1 (2017), pp. 18–119, <https://doi.org/10.14434/sdh.v1i1.23331> (accessed July 9, 2017).

**38** For the reception of Egypt in Augustan Rome, Swetnam-Burland 2015 (as fn. 2), pp. 65–97; Marike van Aerde, *Egypt and the Augustan Cultural Revolution. An Interpretative Archaeological Overview*, PhD diss. Leiden University, 2015; Stephanie Pearson, *Egyptian Aïrs. The Life of Luxury in Roman Wall Painting*, Ph.D. diss. University of California, Berkeley, 2015.

**39** Materials from Egypt: wheat, Plin. *NH* 18.63–70; natron, *NH* 31.106–22; mustard, *NH* 20.236–40; coriander, *NH* 20.216–18; flax, *NH* 19.1–6; reed pens, *NH* 16.156–58; figs, *NH* 15.68–73; linen *NH* 19.7–15; red ochre, *NH* 35.35; on Egyptian stones: Plin. *NH* 36.29; papyrus: Plin. *NH* 13.74–77.

**40** Swetnam-Burland 2015 (as fn. 2), pp. 28–40.

**41** Pearson 2015 (as fn. 38), pp. 32–46.

**42** Most discussion of ancient obsidian focuses on issues of prehistoric Adriatic and Aegean trade, e.g. Colin Renfrew, Johnson. R. Cann, John. E. Dixon, Obsidian in the Aegean, *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, Vol. 60, 1965, pp. 225–247; Robert H. Tykot, Utilizzo e Commercio dell'Ossidiana in Adriatico / Obsidian Use and Trade in the Adriatic, in: P. Visentini, E. Podrug (eds.), *Adriatico Senza Confini. Via di comunicazione e crocevia di popoli nel 6000 a.C. / The Adriatic, a Sea Without Borders. Communication Routes of Populations in 6000 BC*, Udine: Civici Musei di Udine, 2014, pp. 170–181, pp. 224–225. For discussion of spectrometry and methods of provenance identification, Sander Müskens, *Egypt Beyond Representation. Materials and Materiality of Aegyptiaca Romana. Archaeological Studies Leiden University* 25. Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2017, pp. 93–95.

**43** Pliny on obsidian: *NH* 36.67.196–7. Though no examples of large-scale obsidian sculptures are known, a fragment of glass (likely intended to emulate obsidian) in the British Museum, thought to be of Italian origin and dating to the early empire, preserves the foreleg of a horse that would have been roughly three-quarters life size, BM 1814,0704.1191 (c. 25 BCE – 50 CE). On the taste for the marvelous in Augustan Rome, see Verity Platt, Where the Wild Things Are: Locating the Marvellous in Augustan Wall-Painting, in: P. Hardie, (ed.), *Paradox and the Marvellous in Augustan Literature and Culture*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (2009), pp. 41–74.

**44** Plin. *NH* 36.67.196

**45** Plin. *NH* 36.67.197

**46** Kenneth Lapatin, *Luxus: The Sumptuous Arts of Greece and Rome*, Los Angeles: J. P. Getty Museum, 2015, pp. 123–124. Thea. E. Haevernick, Beiträge zur Geschichte des Antiken Glases *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz* 10 (1963), pp. 118–138. For obsidian mirrors in Pompeii, Jessica Powers. Beyond Painting in Pompeii's Houses: Wall Ornaments and their Patrons, in: M. Flohr, K. Cole (eds.), *Pompeii: Art, Industry and Infrastructure*, Oxford/Oakville, CT: Oxbow Books, pp. 10–32.

**47** Olga Elia, Le Coppe Ialine da Stabia, in: *Bolletino d'Arte* 52 (1957), pp. 97–103. Stefano de Caro, *Egittomania: Iside e il mistero*. Milan: Electa, 2006, cat. no. II I.1; Lapatin 2015 (as fn. 46), cat. 135.

**48** E.g., Elia 1957 (as fn. 47).

**49** Italian examples known to me at the time of writing, in addition to the collection from Stabiae, include: a flat plaque, probably a furniture revetment, MMA 17.194.2360, possibly from Italy, with ivy and tendrils; a carved flat plaque with stalks of wheat and other tendrils from Porta d'Anzio, 1879,0408.3, possibly to be associated with other fragments from the same site, treated more as architectural moldings (1879,0408.2, 1879,0408.4, 1879,0408.1). Haevernick 1963 (as fn. 46) includes two said to be from Italy, a ring found in the Tiber (Taf. 22, 1) and a plaque from Italy (Taf. 23, 1). The technique in all is similar to the Stabian cups.

**50** Lapatin 2015 (as fn. 46), p. 259.

- 51 For Roman attitudes to animal worship, K.A.D Smelik., E.A. Hemelrijk, »Who Knows Not What Monsters Demented Egypt Worships?« Opinions on Egyptian Animal Worship in Antiquity as Part of the Ancient Conception of Egypt, in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* II 17.4 (1984), pp. 1852–2337.
- 52 On the appeal of *Nilotica*, Versluys 2002 (as fn. 2); for this example, Versluys 2002 (as fn. 2), p. 166. Though it differs from the others in the collection, the type of obsidian and goldwork on this piece is attested in other examples. Particularly fascinating in this regard are two fragments of obsidian plaques found reused in a church in Kephalaria. One bears an Egyptianizing figure, and the other a vegetal scroll that may include a lotus. See Anastasios C. Antonaras. Glass and Obsidian Plaques from the Apostle Paul's Basilica at Kephalaria, Argos, in: *Journal of Glass Studies* 50 (2008), pp. 298–302.
- 53 Lapatin 2015 (as fn. 46), p. 259.
- 54 See on the site and the red sea trade routes, Stephen Sidebotham, *Berenike and the Ancient Maritime Spice Route*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.
- 55 Ellen Swift, *Style and Function in Roman Decoration. Living with Objects and Interiors*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, pp. 118–123.
- 56 Marike E. J. J. van Aerde, Concepts of Egypt in Augustan Rome: Two Case Studies of Cameo Glass from The British Museum, in: *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 20 (2013), pp. 1–23; van Aerde 2015 (as fn. 38), pp. 173–205.
- 57 On this example, Swetnam-Burland 2015 (as fn. 2), pp. 55–58; David Whitehouse. *Roman Glass in the Corning Museum of Glass*, v. 1. Corning, New York: The Corning Museum of Glass, 1997, p. 57, no. 58; on the profile and shape, David Peacock, David Williams. *Amphorae and the Roman Economy: An Introductory Guide*, London/New York: Longman, 1986, pp. 107–108.
- 58 See below, fn. 69.
- 59 Victoria Foertmeyer, *Tourism in Graeco-Roman Egypt*. PhD diss. University of Princeton, 1989.
- 60 See, for an application of »thing theory« to »Aegyptiaca«, Eva Mol, The Perception of Egypt in Networks of Being and Becoming. A Thing Theory Approach to Egyptianising Objects in Roman Domestic Contexts, in: Annabel Bokern, Marion Bolder-Boos, Stefan Krmnicek, Dominik Maschek, Sven Page (eds.), *TRAC 2012: proceedings of the twenty-second annual Theoretical Roman archaeology conference: which took place at Goethe University in Frankfurt, 29 March - 1 April 2012*, Oxford/Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2013, pp. 117–133.
- 61 Whitney Davis, Scale and Pictoriality in Ancient Egyptian Painting and Sculpture, in: *Art History* 38.2 (2015), pp. 269–285.
- 62 On the relationship between scale and material, Joan Kee, Emanuele Lugli, Size to Scale. An Introduction, in: *Art History* 38.2 (2015), pp. 251–266, and size and scale's power to convey and shape meaning, Carl Knappett, Meaning in Miniature: Semiotic Networks in Material Culture, in: Niels Johannsen, Mads D Jensen, Helle Juel Jensen (eds.), *Excavating the Mind: Cross-Sections through Culture, Cognition and Materiality*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2012, pp. 87–106.
- 63 On the Roman association of miniatures with artists' skill and their appropriateness to domestic circumstances, Elizabeth Bartman, *Ancient Sculptural Copies in Miniature, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition* XIX, Leiden: Brill, 1992, pp. 169–171.
- 64 Though we know little of the organization of workshops, the medium of fresco required a group of artisans working together closely. See Roger Ling, *Roman Painting*, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 198–220.
- 65 On the painter and workshop: von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990 (as fn. 5), p. 69; Lawrence Richardson Jr., *A Catalog of Identifiable Figure Painters of Ancient Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, pp. 36–52. Richardson argues that the master,



whom he calls the »Boscotrecase painter«, was renowned locally, active until just before the eruption. If correct, this would be an astonishingly long career, and so the attribution should be considered warily. The kind of Morellian analysis that Richardson, von Blanckenhagen, and Alexander employed is open to critique on the grounds that it is subjective and difficult to prove. Nonetheless, because all three scholars agree on the attribution of the paintings at Boscotrecase, I follow their views here.

**66** Though no records exist for the sale of the Boscotrecase frescos, it is likely that they were sold at auction in fragments and panels. Recently, a missing fragment with an Egyptianizing figure was donated to the Harvard University Art Museums, accessioned as the gift of Albert Gallatin (inv. no. 1921.37). I thank Elizabeth Molacek for bringing this example to my attention.

**67** »Copies« of panel paintings in Pompeian frescos also feature mirror-image figure types, and details of dress and facial feature are left to the artists to create. For recent discussions of replications in fresco, see Bettina Bergmann, Greek Masterpieces and Roman Recreative Fictions, in: *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 97 (1995), pp. 79–120; I. Bragantini, Una pittura senza maestri. La produzione della pittura parietale romana, in: *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 17 (2004), pp. 131–145; John Clarke, Model-book, Outline-book, Figure-book. New Observations on the Creation of Near-exact Copies in Romano-Campanian painting, in: I. Bragantini (ed.) *Atti del X congresso internazionale dell'AIPMA Napoli 17–21 Settembre 2007 Annali di Archeologia e Storia Antica* 18.1, Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli »L'Orientale«, 2010, pp. 203–214.

**68** On the appeal of landscape paintings, see Bettina Bergmann, Painted Perspectives of a Villa Visit. Landscape as Status and Metaphor, in: Elaine Gazda (ed.), *Roman Art in the Private Sphere. New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa, and Insula*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1991, pp. 49–70; Bettina Bergmann, Exploring the Grove: Pastoral Space on Roman Walls, in: *Studies in the History of Art* 36 (1992), pp. 20–46.

**69** For Roman collectors of Greek works, see, e.g., Miranda Marvin, Copying in Roman Sculpture: The Replica Series, in: *Studies in the History of Art* v.20 (1989), pp. 29–45. Horace (Carm. 4.8) includes tripods in a discussion including Greek sculptures by Scopas and paintings by Parrhasius in Roman collections. For representation in fresco at more usual scale, see, e.g. Room 15, Oplontis, c. 50 BCE.

**70** Nathaniel Jones, Ancient Painted Panels: Terminology and Appearance, in: *Mnemosyne* 67 (2014) pp. 295–304. Jones has recently argued that these and other *pinakes* in Roman painting correspond well to descriptions of dedications from the Delian inventories, which often mention how paintings were framed, and sometimes give brief descriptions of the motifs or materials. One category, called ἀναθηματικός appears to have described scenes depicting veneration.

**71** On representations of statues in Roman painting, see Eric M. Moorman, *La pittura parietale romana come fonte di conoscenza per la scultura antica*, *Scrinium*, vol. 2, Assen/Wolfeboro: Van Gorcum, 1988; Eric M. Moorman, Images of Statues in Other Media, in E. A. Friedland, M. Grunow Sobocinski, E. K. Gazda (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture*, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 638–652.

**72** Van Eck, Versluys, ter Keurs 2015 (as fn. 1).

**73** For the finds, Della Corte 1922 (as fn. 10), p. 470. Note that descriptions of the finds often reflect assumptions of their value or function made at the time of excavation, rather than their ancient uses. On this point, see Penelope Allison, *Pompeian Households. An Analysis of the Material Culture*. *UCLAMon* 42. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at University of California, 2004; Joanne Berry, Household Artefacts. Towards a Reinterpretation of Roman Domestic Space, in: R. Laurence, A. F. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.) *Domestic Space in the Roman World. Pompeii and Beyond*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* Suppl. 22. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 1997, pp. 183–96. Joanne Berry, The Conditions of Domestic Life in Pompeii in AD 79. A Case-Study of Houses 11 and 12, Insula 9, Region I, in: *PBSR* 65 (1995), pp. 103–25. I list the contents of the room here in brief. Bronzes: a conical vase, a large pan, an oinochoe decorated with a mask on the handle, a sieve or strainer, thirteen circlets of varying size, fragments of a lantern, a candelabrum of simple form, a Republican as. Crystal:

a piece («corrente») from a necklace. Lead: a circular weight. Bone: two rods and a stud, perhaps a spindle. Terracotta: a cup, three bottles; a lamp with a motif of a lion, a lamp with a motif of a cupid, five amphorae. Plaster: a piece of plaster with charcoal inscription.

**74** CIL IV 6897; for findspot Della Corte 1922 (as fn. 10), pp. 470.

**75** It is difficult to date graffiti, and some of those recorded could well date to an earlier phase.

**76** On the Villa as a place of meeting and greeting see CIL IV 6894, Receptus' greetings to his friends; as a place of work see CIL IV 6896, the possible reference to Falernian wine, and the many amphorae devoted to storage and shipment of agricultural products; as a place of self-expression see IV 6895 Q. Iunius. Other graffiti, not catalogued in CIL, also preserve the names of individuals, as in the case of Sabinus, from Room 16 (Della Corte 1922, as fn. 10, pp. 474); and as place of play see CIL IV 6893, CIL IV 6890, 6892.

**77** See also Bergmann 2013 (as fn. 3), for similar discussion of the paintings and finds from Boscoreale.

**78** This is similar to repositories of material from Pompeian homes, Lisa C. Nevett, *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge, University Press, 2010, pp. 101–105.

**79** See de Vos 1980 (as fn. 6).

**80** On the appeal of Nilotic landscapes, see Versluys 2002 (as fn. 2); Miguel John Versluys and Paul G.P. Meyboom, The Meaning of Dwarves in Nilotic Scenes, in: L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys, P. G. P. Meyboom, (eds.), *Nile into Tiber. Egypt in the Roman world, Proceedings of the IIIrd International Conference of Isis Studies, Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, May 11–14, 2005*, Leiden: Brill, 2006, pp. 170–209. For a new approach, see Caitlín E. Barrett, Recontextualizing Nilotic Scenes: Interactive Landscapes in the Garden of the Casa dell'Efebo, Pompeii, in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 121.2 (2017), pp. 293–332.

### Lost in Translation? (Dimitri Laboury and Marie Lekane)

**1** Charles Burnett, Images of Ancient Egypt in the Latin Middle Ages, in: Peter Ucko, Timothy Champion (eds.), *The Wisdom of Egypt: changing visions through the ages (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, London: UCL Press, 2003, p. 65. As expected, Burnett rightly challenges this assumption in the following pages of his article.

**2** With, of course, a few exceptions for isolated travellers, often on their way to Christian holy sites, but, as Burnett perfectly underlines (*ibid.*, pp. 68–70), their interest in Pharaonic monuments was usually – at best – very superficial and so their impact equally insignificant – without mentioning their Christianity-oriented look. Moreover, as will be noted further below, not a single import of *pharaonica* from Egypt to Europe seems to be attested between the end of antiquity and Renaissance.

**3** On Germanicus's journey to Egypt, see Michael A. Speidel, Germanicus' visit to Egypt, in: Roger S. Bagnall et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp. 2905–2906. For the graffiti on the «colossus of Memnon», the northern one of the pair of statues actually identified with the Homeric figure, see André Bernard, Étienne Bernard, *Les inscriptions grecques et latines du Colosse de Memnon (BdE 21)*, Cairo: IFAO, 1960. For the biography of the statue, see Ralf Krumeich, Pharao und Sohn der Morgenröte. Zur Biographie des «Memnonkolosses» im Hunderttorigen Theben, in: Ralf von den Hoff, François Queyrel, Éric Perrin-Saminadayar (eds.), *Eikones. Portraits en contexte. Recherches nouvelles sur les portraits grecs du V<sup>e</sup> au I<sup>er</sup> s. av. J.-C.*, Venosa: Osanna Edizioni, 2016, pp. 125–146. In the perspective of the present book, it is perhaps not uninteresting to remind here that the term colossus comes from the description of the statues of ancient Egyptian temples by Herodotus as *kolossoi*. On the scholarly debate about the word *kolossos* and its meaning in ancient Greek uses, see Nathan Badoud, Les colosses de Rhodes, in: *CRAI* 1 (2011), pp. 111–152.

**4** For the geographical transposition of this conception in post-Antiquity science, see Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 65–68. As we will see below, this alien aspect of Egypt, increased by the – double – reli-

gious divide (pagan polytheism vs Christianity vs Islam), is to be distinguished from the subdued, tamed and integrated otherness that ancient Egyptian culture could embody in Ptolemaic and Roman representations.

5 We use the term in the precise sense defined in Jean-Marcel Humbert et al., *Egyptomania. L'Égypte dans l'art occidental 1730–1930*, Paris: RMN, 1994, and, naturally, not in the one denounced by the present book.

6 See the list made by Anne Roulet, *The Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome* (EPRO 20), Leiden: Brill, 1972, pp. 153–156.

7 Though one may wonder whether it was not easier to take away a piece from an old and abandoned site rather than from one still in activity. This might be telling about the quite imperious approach Romans could have regarding the monumental landscape and heritage of ancient and Ptolemaic Egypt.

8 This is perfectly exemplified by the diverse variations on the same theme, such as Isis or the so-called Antinoüs or standing Pharaoh type (many examples conveniently gathered in the classic work of Roulet 1972 [as fn. 6]). In this artistic creative »game« or interplay, using iconography, style and materiality as cursors of Egyptian-ness, they were preceded by and thus could get inspiration from Ptolemaic rulers and their multifaceted iconography in Egypt; for an example, see François Queyrel, *Iconographie de Ptolémée II*, in: *Alexandrina* 3 (Études alexandrines 18), Cairo: IFAO, 2009, pp. 7–61.

9 On the perception of both this contrast and the impressive oldness of the formulae and aesthetics of ancient Egyptian art in classical times, see the analysis and comments of Whitney M. Davis, *Plato on Egyptian Art*, in: *JEA* 65 (1979), pp. 121–127. Interestingly enough, in Greek and later on Roman Egypt, ancient Egyptian gods, for instance, were largely adopted through the so-called *interpretatio graeca* or *romana* even on stylistic and material levels, the ancient Egyptian style (in the broad sense) being here part of the environmental norm, hence lacking the exotic appeal of otherness. Since the Egyptian iconography of Ptolemaic royalty (previous note) was motivated by the wish to assert a political connection with past and local Pharaonic power and thus represents an ideologically driven exception, the here discussed phenomenon definitely appears very Roman, both in time and space. Near-Eastern imports or collections of genuine »Aegyptiaca« in the Bronze Age naturally bear those very same material features that attracted Romans' attention (see for instance the collection of the king of Hazor in the 13<sup>th</sup> BCE: Amnon Ben-Tor et al., *Hazor VII. The 1990–2012 excavations. The Bronze Age (The Selz Foundation Hazor Excavations in Memory of Yigael Yadin)*, Jerusalem: Tsipi Kuper-Blau, 2017, pp. 574–590), but, in the context of local artistic traditions, they were not deemed so distinctly Egyptian, or, at least, less than specific iconographic markers. On those material characteristics as the core of ancient Egyptian aesthetics and aesthetic sensibility, see a contribution in preparation by D. Laboury, on the ancient Egyptian sense of beauty.

10 See comments in Dimitri Laboury, *Tradition and Creativity. Toward a Study of Intericonicity in Ancient Egyptian Art*, in: Todd Gillen (ed.), *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt. Proceedings of the conference held at the University of Liège, 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2013* (Aeg.Leod. 10), Liège: Presses Universitaires, 2017, pp. 229–231.

11 see Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), p. 65.

12 Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, London and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, notably p. 9. As this book perfectly highlights, the image of Egypt varies a lot according to the writing strata of the holy texts of western monotheism. Assmann's full quote here is »Egypt as the past both of Israel and of Greece and thus of Europe«; this was probably also true for medieval readers of the »Alexander Romance«, according to which the greatest conqueror of all was actually the son of the last Pharaoh of the Egyptians, »the wisest of men«, king Nectanebo, and, through him, of the god Amun; on this, see Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 78–81.

13 Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 72–74, lists the main textual sources in this respect and re-contextualizes them in their classical roots and intertext. It must also be noted that they correspond to or – at least partly – derive from a strong Coptic tradition that grew up in the conflictual context of the transi-

tion from paganism to Christianity in late antiquity Egypt and was then transmitted to Europe in medieval literature; on this Coptic tradition, see Troels Myrup Kristensen, *Making and Breaking the Gods. Christian Responses to Pagan Sculpture in Late Antiquity* (ASMA 12), Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2013, pp. 118–146.

**14** See, notably, Troels Myrup Kristensen, *Embodied Images. Christian Response and Destruction in Late Antique Egypt*, in: *Journal of Late Antiquity* 2.2 (Fall 2009), pp. 224–250 (with extensive bibliography on the addressed subject); id. 2013 (as fn. 13), pp. 107–195; and the catalogue of the recent exhibition by Cécilia Fluck, Gisela Helmecke, Elisabeth R. O’Connell (eds.), *Egypt. Faith after the pharaohs*, exh. cat. London: British Museum Press, 2015. Those more or less conscious or repressed survivals nevertheless – and quite ironically – gave rise to the literary cliché in Arabic narratives of the old Coptic monk of Upper Egypt still capable of understanding hieroglyphs; see Stéphane Pasquali, *Les hiéroglyphes égyptiens vus par les auteurs arabes du Moyen Âge ou L’aura du passé pharaonique*, in: Laure Bazin Rizzo, Annie Gasse, Frédéric Servajean (eds.), *À l’école des scribes. Les écritures de l’Égypte ancienne. Exposition à Lattes*, Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2016, pp. 219–220.

**15** For a synthesis, again, see Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 74–96. For the quote from the *Asclepius* 24, see Brian P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica. The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a new English translation, with notes and introduction*, Cambridge and New York: CUP, 1992, p. 81.

**16** In addition to Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 83–96, Fluck et al. 2015 (as fn. 14), pp. 140–257, and Pasquali 2016 (as fn. 14), see Okasha El Daly, *Ancient Egypt in Medieval Arabic Writings*, in: Ucko et al. 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 39–63; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Building an Egyptian Identity*, in: Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi and Michael Bonner (eds.), *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook* (Islamic History and Civilization 83), Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2011, pp. 85–105; and also, for the specific case of the great sphinx of Giza, perceived as »the terrifying idol«, »guardian and provider of treasures«, »who foretells the future« and »through which the Devil speaks«, among other epithets, see Ulrich Haarmann, *Die Sphinx. Synkretistische Volksreligiosität im spätmittelalterlichen islamischen Ägypten*, in: *Saeculum* 24 (1978), pp. 367–384. The aura of mystery associated to the figure of the sphinx, which already appeared very clearly with the Greek sphinx of Oedipus and is at the core of this Arabic tradition, is still very productive in western contemporary culture; on this, see the enthralling contribution of Eleanor Dobson, *The Sphinx at the Séance. Literature, Spiritualism and Psycho-Archaeology*, in: Eleanor Dobson, Gemma Banks (eds.), *Excavating Modernity. Physical, Temporal and Psychological Strata in Literature, 1900–1930*, New York: Routledge, 2018, pp. 83–102.

**17** Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), p. 96.

**18** For Egeria’s description of her travels, see Pierre Maraval, *Égérie. Journal de voyage (itinéraire)* (*Sources chrétiennes* 296), Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1997. As Charles Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 69–70, underlines, Wilhelm von Boldensele, who visited Egypt and the Levant a thousand years later, between 1333 and 1336, seems to be the only medieval visitor of Giza who left a written trace in which he questioned this interpretation of the pyramids of Giza on the argument that they are mainly solid and built in a very unsuitable way to store cereals in great quantity. Exactly in the time of Egeria, Gregory Nazanzius (329–390) had already found an ingenious solution to reconcile the knowledge of the true function of Giza pyramids, as it is conveyed, for example, by Herodotus, and the Christian slant on those monuments, assuming »that the pyramids had been built as granaries and that only after the Exodus had they been transformed into tombs« (Karl Giehlow, *The Humanist Interpretation of Hieroglyphs in the Allegorical Studies of the Renaissance, with a Focus on the Triumphal Arch of Maximilian I* [*Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History* 240], translated with an introduction and notes by Robin Raybould, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015, p. 37).

**19** For those examples, see Dimitri Laboury, *Renaissance de l’Égypte aux Temps Modernes. De l’intérêt pour la civilisation pharaonique et ses hiéroglyphes à Liège au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in: Eugène Warmenbol (ed.), *La Caravane du Caire. L’Égypte sur d’autres rives*, Louvain-la-Neuve: Versant Sud, 2006, pp. 44–68.

**20** This loss only started to be compensated from the 16<sup>th</sup> c. onward, thanks to the development of a new more archaeological look at antiquities, as is shown by the evolution of artists' copies of »Aegyptiaca« at that time; see *ibid.*; Rouillet 1972 (as fn. 6), *passim*; Brian Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance. The Afterlife of Ancient Egypt in Early Modern Italy*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007, p. 7 and *passim*.

**21** To our knowledge, this morphological reconciliation between neo-hieroglyphs and genuine ancient Egyptian script is to be situated only in the times of Athanasius Kircher (1602–1680), i.e. in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> c., while quite accurate epigraphic records of hieroglyphic inscriptions on Roman »Aegyptiaca« had already been produced by artists such as Michele Fabrizio Ferrarini (mid 15<sup>th</sup> c – 1492), Giuliano da Sangallo (1445–1516), Simone del Pollaiuolo, d. Il Cronaca (1457–1508) or Baldassare Peruzzi (1481–1537) (*ibid.*, pp. 184–185) since the second half of the Quattrocento; see *ibid.*, pp. 89–105, 183–187, 230–231, 237–243; Rouillet 1972 (as fn. 6), pl. 58, 61, 69 (see also pl. 205 [Francesco de Holanda, c. 1538]; pl. 47, 60, 62, 152, 167, 192, 202, 206 [Codex Ursinianus, by Stephan Vinand Pighius, c. 1560–1570]; pl. 150 [Jean-Jacques Boissard, c. 1559]). This is of course to be connected with the evolution of historical methodology and its growing integration of epigraphy during the 16<sup>th</sup> c.; on this and in addition to the comments of the late Brian Curran (2007, as fn. 20) referred to above in this note, see William Stenhouse, *Reading Inscriptions & Writing Ancient History. Historical Scholarship in the Late Renaissance* (BICS suppl. 86), London: Institute of Classical Studies, University of London School of Advanced Study, 2005. The key-study of Renaissance neo-hieroglyphs remains the one of Karl Giehlow, published posthumously in 1915 but recently re-edited and translated as Giehlow 2015 (as fn. 18), to which one has to add the brilliant synthesis of Curran 2007 (as fn. 20).

**22** *Ibid.*, fig. 41–45 (pp. 112–116) and pl. 5–6.

**23** See notably Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954; *id.*, *Visual Thinking*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969; and Francis Edeline, Jean-Marie Klinkenberg and Philippe Minguet, *Traité du signe visuel. Pour une rhétorique de l'image*, Paris: Seuil, 1991.

**24** On this, see a forthcoming contribution of Eric Gady, The Epigraphy of Egyptian Monuments in the *Description de l'Égypte*, to be published in Vanessa Davies and Dimitri Laboury (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Egyptian Epigraphy and Palaeography*, New York: Oxford University Press, in 2020.

**25** Quite tellingly, less than a century later, the highly educated Pliny described the inscriptions of the obelisk of the *Circus Maximus*, i.e. the titulary and dedication text of Seti I and Ramses II, as embodying the Egyptian philosophy and its interpretation of the nature of things, in *Historia Naturalis* XXXVI, 8–9, quoted after Giehlow 2015 (as fn. 18), p. 34.

**26** This concept is at the core of the book referred to in fn. 24.

**27** We wish to thank here Caroline van Eck for drawing our attention to this study that provides a direct parallel and an emic explanation to what we observed in medieval depictions of events connected to ancient Egypt.

**28** All quotes are from Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis. The representation of reality in western literature*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, p. 555.

**29** See notably and most recently, with previous bibliography, Ethan Matt Kavaler, Mapping Time. The Netherlandish Carved Altarpiece in the Early Sixteenth Century, in: Ethan Matt Kavaler and Anne-Laure Van Bruaene (eds.), *Netherlandish Culture of the Sixteenth Century. Urban Perspectives* (*Studies in European Urban History* 41), Turnhout: Brepols, 2017, pp. 31–63.

**30** Quoted after *ibid.*, p. 57.

**31** See Manuela Gianandrea, L'Egitto dei faraoni nella Roma dei papi. Riflessioni sull'Egitto nella cultura medievale tra storia, religione e mito, in: Eugenio Lo Sardo, *La Lupa e la Sfinge. Roma e l'Egitto dalla storia al mito*, Roma: Electa, 2008, p. 136; as well as Curran 2007 (as fn. 20), p. 34, fig. 12; Otto

Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice. II The Thirteenth Century*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984, pp. 84–89, 166, pl. 290–291, pl. 295.

**32** A list of documented »Aegyptiaca« still visible in medieval Rome can be found in Rouillet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 149. But as this author underlined, *Ibid.*, p. 6, we also have to take into account that »the Iseum Campense was presumably not ruined before 1084, when the Normans and Saracens invaded the city and stormed the Campus Martius. [...] There were certainly more Egyptian pieces lying among the ruins of Rome, but as there is no specific mention of them in records, and as their history is too obscure for reconstruction, they have not been mentioned here.« Plundering of the site started only in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and no church was built on it before the 9<sup>th</sup>; see Serena Ensoli, I santuari di Iside e Serapide a Roma e la resistenza pagana in età tardoantica, in: Serena Ensoli, Eugenio La Rocca (eds.), *Aurea Roma. Dalla città pagana alla città cristiana*, Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2000, pp. 267–287. On the Iseum Campense, see the most recent Miguel John Versluys, Kristine Bülow Clausen, Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi (eds.), *The Iseum Campense from the Roman Empire to the Modern Age. Temple – Monument – Lieu de Mémoire (Papers of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome 66)*, Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2019.

**33** Rouillet 1972 (as fn. 6), pp. 6–7. On the broader context of this »pre-Renaissance«, among others before the *Rinascimento*, see the classical opus of Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, Stockholm: Russak and Company, 1960.

**34** See Edward Hutton, *The Cosmati. The Roman Marble Workers of the XIIth and XIIIth Centuries*, London: Routledge and Pal, 1950.

**35** Their bibliography includes Hans Gerhard Evers, Zum Nachleben der ägyptischen Löwen-Gestaltung, in: ZÄS 67 (1931), pp. 31–33; Hutton, 1950 (as fn. 34), pp. 7, 39, 45; Karl Noehles, Die Cosmaten und die Idee der Renavotio Romae, in Günther Fiensch and Max Imdahl (eds.), *Festschrift Werner Hager zum 65. Geburtstag*, Recklinghausen: Bonders, 1966, pp. 17–37; Rouillet 1972 (as fn. 6), pp. 7–9, pl. 1–7; Rudolf Wittkower, Hieroglyphics in the Early Renaissance, in: Bernard S. Levy (ed.), *Developments in the Early Renaissance*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1972, pp. 59–60 (reprinted in Rudolf Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*, London: Tames & Hudson, 1977, pp. 114–115); Paolo Montorsi, Su alcuni leoni di Vassalletto che derivano da un modello egiziano, in: Angiola Maria Romanini (ed.), *Roma anno 1300: Atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell'arte medievale dell'Università di Roma*, Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1980, pp. 655–674; Peter C. Claussen, *Magistri doctissimi Romani. Die römischen Marmorkünstler des Mittelalters, Corpus Cosmatorum I (Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie 14)*, Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1987, pp. 112–115; Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi, Note sull'interpretatio dell'Egitto nel Medioevo. Leoni e sfingi nella Roma medievale, in: Patrizia Minà (ed.), *Imagines et iura personarum. L'uomo nell'Egitto antico per i novanta anni di Sergio Donadoni. Atti del IX Convegno Internazionale di Egittologia e Papirologia, Palermo, 10–13 novembre 2004 (Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Palermo. Studi e Ricerche 48)*, Palermo: Università di Palermo, 2006, pp. 43–59, pl. 3; Curran 2007 (as fn. 20), pp. 45–47; Gianandrea 2008 (as fn. 31), pp. 137–141; Manuela Gianandrea, Creazioni à l'antique. I Vassalletto e il fascino della sfinge egizia nel medioevo romano, in: *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 16 (2010), pp. 151–160 (we wish to express our deep gratitude to this author for providing us with a copy of this article); Daniela Mondini, Les cloîtres des Cosmati à Rome: marbre, Mosaïque et parole, in: *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 46 (2015), *Le cloître roman. Actes des XLVI<sup>es</sup> journées romanes de Cuxa, 7–12 juillet 2014*, p. 128. We would also like to thank here Antoine Hermary for drawing our attention to a small intriguing sculpture in white marble now kept in the Musée d'Histoire de Marseille (inv. M(usée du) V(ieux) M(arseille) no. 2324; 27 × 28,5 × 27,5 cm), that depicts a square double basis supported by a recumbent Egyptianizing lion (with a rounded mane) paired to a sphinx, in a style very reminiscent of the Cosmati lions and sphinxes discussed in the following pages. The piece, to be published in Antoine Hermary (dir.), *Recueil général des sculptures sur pierre de la Gaule. Marseille et ses environs (Nouvel Espérandieu VI)*, Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, p. 146, no. 187, pl. 197, is not securely dated, but it was re-carved and used as a baptismal font in Saint-Laurent in Marseille until the 18<sup>th</sup> century and, partly for this reason,

is usually considered to have been produced in Romanesque times. Due to its material and style, one cannot rule out the hypothesis that this exotic object would have been made by one of the so-called Cosmati sculptors and then taken from Italy during one of the later French incursions in Rome and its vicinity.

**36** The list includes: the pair of sphinxes in the cloisters of San Giovanni in Laterano, made by »Vassallettus« father (Pietro) and son (so-called Vassalletto III), between 1215 and 1232 (fig. 3); the one supporting the Paschal candelabrum of the cathedral at Anagni, signed »Vassalletto« (c. 1250); the recumbent lion now in the entrance of Santi Apostoli in Rome, signed »Bassallettus« (c. 1220) (fig. 2); the lion and the sphinx of the now lost *schola cantorum* of the Collegiate di Lanuvio, at the entrance of Rome (c. 1240); see Gianandrea 2010 (as fn. 35), p. 155. On the issue of which members of the Vassalletti dynasty or *bottega vassallettiana* is to be identified under these signatures, see most recently Ibid., pp. 155–157. According to Giuseppina Capriotti Vittozzi 2004 (as fn. 35), p. 56, »the adhesion of sculptors of the Vassalletto family to aspects of the Egyptian culture in Rome of the 13<sup>th</sup> century« could be interpreted not so much as »an isolated case, but maybe one of the best understandable episodes in the light of the wealth of Egyptian finds from the ground of the City.«

**37** See Denis Jalabert, *De l'art oriental antique à l'art roman. Recherches sur la faune et la flore romanes* I Le sphinx, in: *Bulletin monumental* 94 (1935), pp. 71–104; Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien I Introduction générale*, Paris: PUF, 1955, p. 120.

**38** Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 9. See the comparison in Noehles 1966 (as fn. 35), fig. 18–24 and 27.

**39** Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 9, nos. 268–276, pl. 184–197.

**40** On those very famous statues and their posterity, see Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 7–8, 32, 131–132; Curran 2007 (as fn. 20), pp. 43, 99–102, 181, 185, 195–196, 238–239, 240–242, and pl. 4. Note that the Iseum Campense seems to have only been ruined less than a century before those lions were mentioned as standing in front of the Pantheon; see Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), pp. 6–8; and above, n. 33. This rare iconographic type was apparently invented in the reign of pharaoh Amenhotep III, particularly prolific for innovations in animal statuary (see Betsy M. Bryan, *Rois et dieux sous forme animale*, in: Arielle P. Kozloff, Betsy M. Bryan, Lawrence M. Berman, Elisabeth Delange [eds], *Aménophis III, le Pharaon-Soleil*, Paris: RMN, 1993, pp. 178–193); the oldest preserved examples are the famous »lions of Soleb«, reinscribed by Amenhotep IV, Tutankhamun and Ay, and now kept in the British Museum (EA 1 and 2). After the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty, it seems to be only attested in late period sculpture, of the 30<sup>th</sup> dynasty or the Greco-Roman times.

**41** See Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), pp. 8–9. Note that the sculpture now lies at the entrance of the Church but it does not seem possible to secure its initial position during the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

**42** See *ibid.*, pl. 5, and Noehles 1966 (as fn. 35), fig. 27–28. Something was also represented between the forepaws of the lion now at the entrance of Santi Apostoli (Roulet 1972 [as fn. 6], pl. 4, fig. 8), but the bad state of preservation of the sculpture at this precise location does not allow to conclude that it was of the same type of protective statues, though this is very likely.

**43** Curran 2007 (as fn. 20), p. 45.

**44** Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 7. A good example of this »enigmatic smile characteristic of« Roman imitations of Late Period Pharaonic heads can be found in *ibid.*, pl. 128.

**45** Gianandrea 2010 (as fn. 35), pp. 154–155. Probably due to its original setting in Roman times, the sphinx of the river Nile statue, now on the Campodoglio, has no real hindquarters and virtually appears as a protome of sphinx. This might account for the fact that most of the so-called Cosmati sphinxes and lions are depicted as protomes; good pictures in Noehles 1966 (as fn. 35), fig. 14–17, 19, 21, 24–28 and 35; or fig. 2 and 4–5 of this article.

**46** Roulet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 8. The gender of the eastern sphinx of San Giovanni in Laterano has actually been the subject of much debate. Whatever it was initially meant to be, the suggestion of Anne

Roullet is very interesting with respect to the success of the theme of the male-female couple of sphinxes in early Modern Times. So, this is probably how they were interpreted later on. Furthermore, it's worthwhile quoting here Brian Curran about this motif in the paintings of Raphael and Giovanni da Udine: »The male-female pair of winged sphinxes with *ankh*-shaped *uraei* that appear in the frescoes of the Loggetta of Leo's advisor Cardinal Bibbiena in the Vatican palace (circa 1516) are close copies of a type that appears in ancient wall paintings and terra-cotta reliefs of the sort that Raphael and his associates knew from the Roman *grotte* and other ruins.« (Curran 2007 [as fn. 20], p. 196, and fig. 68, p. 197). Therefore, the hypothesis of Anne Roullet seems definitely plausible, and in this perspective, the more unconventional *nemes* of the sphinx under discussion could have been intended to look more feminine, with lappets treated like pendants separated from the rest of the headdress. Finally, it is important to remind here that, even if they are rarer, female sphinxes exist in ancient Egyptian art; ex. of the reign of Thutmose III in Roullet 1972 (as fn. 6), pl. 198, fig. 290.

47 Hutton, 1950 (as fn. 34), pp. 40–41, 60; Roullet 1972 (as fn. 6), p. 8, pl. 3, fig. 6; Curran 2007 (as fn. 20), pp. 45–47; Gianandrea 2008 (as fn. 31), pp. 137, 139; Gianandrea 2010 (as fn. 35), pp. 152, 154.

48 As is suggested by other occurrences of this detail on some productions of *arte cosmatesca* without any reference to ancient Egypt nor Antiquity; see, for instance, Gianandrea 2010 (as fn. 35), p. 156, fig. 15.

49 It must also be reminded here that, a century after the creation of this sphinx, the cunning Annius of Viterbo tried to demonstrate that Osiris ruled in his home town of Viterbo for ten years, educating mankind, before getting back to Egypt and being murdered by his jealous brother Typhon alias Seth; on this fantasy, see Curran 2007 (as fn. 20), pp. 121–131.

50 Ibid., p. 45.

51 Capriotti Vittozzi 2006 (as fn. 35). In the same vein, one may also mention the contribution of Martin Bommas, *The Legacy of Egypt in Early Christian Thought according to the Epitaph of Alcuin of York*, in: Corrado Bologna, Mira Mocan, Paolo Vaciago (eds.), *Percepta rependere dona. Studi di filologia per Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda*, Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 2010, pp. 69–83.

52 See Roullet 1972 (as fn. 6), pl. 7, fig. 13; Noehles 1966 (as fn. 35), figs. 17, 19, 21. On the iconography of thrones in ancient Egypt, see Martin Metzger, *Königsthron und Gottesthron. Thronformen und Throndarstellungen in Ägypten und im Vorderen Orient im dritten und zweiten Jahrtausend vor Christus und deren Bedeutung für das Verständnis von Aussagen über den Thron im Alten Testament (Alter Orient und Altes Testament 15)*, Kevelaer – Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag Butzon und Bercker – Neu-Kirchener Verlag, 1985.

53 On the meaning of signatures in an artistic context where it is not the rule, and actually in any artistic context, see the comments of Dimitri Laboury, *Le scribe et le peintre. À propos d'un scribe qui ne voulait pas être pris pour un peintre*, in: Philippe Collombert, Dominique Lefèvre, Stéphane Polis, Jean Winand (eds.), *Aere perennius. Mélanges égyptologiques en l'honneur de Pascal Vernus (OLA 242)*, Leuven – Paris – Bristol: Peeters, 2016, pp. 371–396, and esp. pp. 389–390.

54 See Claussen 1987 (as fn. 35).

55 Gianandrea 2010 (as fn. 35), pp. 156–157. For a view of the modern general setting of the statue since the time of the Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, i.e. the end of the 15th century, see William Stenhouse, *From Spolia to Collections in the Roman renaissance*, in: Stefan Altekamp, Carmen Marcks-Jacobs, Peter Seiler (eds.), *Perspektiven der Spolienforschung 2. Zentren und Konjunkturen der Spolierung. Berlin Studies of the Ancient World 40*, Berlin, 2017, p. 395, fig. 2.

56 Expression quite frequently used both in classical and Arabic sources to designate the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic writing; see Jean Winand, *Les auteurs classiques et les écritures égyptiennes: quelques questions de terminologie*, in: *Acta Orientalia Belgica 18 – Michel Malaise in honorem. La langue dans tous ses états* (2005), pp. 79–104, and esp. pp. 93–94; and Pasquali 2016 (as fn. 14),



p. 213. On the sources and conceptions about ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs in medieval times, see Burnett 2003 (as fn. 1), pp. 77–78.

57 Gianandrea 2010 (as fn. 35), pp. 154–155.

58 See above, fn. 42.

59 See Troels Myrup Kristensen, Using and abusing images in late antiquity (and beyond): column monuments as topoi of idolatry, in: Stine Birk, Troels Myrup Kristensen, Birte Poulsen (eds), *Using images in late antiquity*, Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow books, 2014, pp. 268–282.

60 Without mentioning other iconographic traditions connected with *aegyptiaca cosmatesca*, such as the pair of male and female sphinxes; see above, fn. 46. For a medieval forerunner of obelisks supported by »Aegyptiaca«, see the one re-erected on the Campodoglio by so-called Cosmati sculptors, dismantled in 1542, and studied by Noehles 1966 (as fn. 35).

### Periculosae Plenum Opus Aleae (Peter Mason)

1 For obelisks in South America see Peter Mason, *The Colossal. From Ancient Greece to Giacometti*, London: Reaktion Books, 2013, pp. 74–76.

2 On Lafitau see Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Le chasseur noir*, Paris: Maspero, 1981, pp. 177–207; Marcel Detienne, *L'Invention de la mythologie*, Paris: Gallimard, 1981, pp. 19–25; Alfonso M. Iacono, The American Indians and the Ancients of Europe: The Idea of Comparison and the Construction of Historical Time in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, in: Wolfgang Haase, Meyer Reinhold (eds.), *The Classical Tradition and the Americas*, vol. I: *European Images of the Americas and the Classical Tradition*, part 1, Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994, pp. 658–681; Peter Mason, *Infelicities. Representations of the Exotic*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, pp. 98–104.

3 »De ellos han llegado a mis manos y he reconocido voces muy impropias en la explicación de algunos misterios, que he encargado no usen de ellas, en especial del Asno de Oro de Apuleyo, que, fuera de sus supersticiones prohibidas, era brindar a los indios con sus fábulas y calificar las que soñaron sus mayores«, cited in Maarten E.R.G.N. Jansen, Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez, *La lengua señorial de Nuu Dzaui. Cultura literaria de los antiguos reinos y transformación colonial*, Mexico D.F.: Colegio Superior para la Educación Integral Intercultural de Oaxaca (CSEIIO), 2009, pp. 143–144.

4 Gerdt Kutscher, Gordon Brotherston and Günter Vollmer, *Aesop in Mexico. A 16<sup>th</sup> Century Aztec Version of Aesop's Fables*, Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1987.

5 Ingo Herklotz, *La Roma degli antiquari. Cultura e erudizione tra Cinquecento e Settecento*, Rome: De Luca, 2012, p. 196. On Francesco Gualdi see Claudio Franzoni, Alessandra Tempesta, Il museo di Francesco Gualdi nella Roma del Seicento tra raccolta privata ed esibizione pubblica, in: *Bollettino d'arte* 77 (1992), pp. 1–42.

6 On collectors in Padua, Verona and Venice in this period, see Cristina De Benedictis, *Per la storia del collezionismo italiano. Fonti e documenti*, Florence: Ponte alle Grazie, 1991, pp. 67–78.

7 Claudio Franzoni, Roberto Marcuccio, Un taccuino con disegni (Biblioteca Panizzi, Mss. Vari D 153) e il collezionismo di antichità nel Seicento, in: *Taccuini d'Arte. Rivista di Arte e Storia del territorio de Modena e Reggio Emilia* (2012), pp. 6–25.

8 Jacobo Filippo Tomasini, *V.C. Laurentii Pignorii Pat. Canonici Taruisini historici, & philologi eruditissimi Bibliotheca et Museum*, Venice: P. Pinelli, 1632.

9 Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux. Paris, Venise: XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Gallimard, 1988, p. 98.

10 Claudio Franzoni, Dai libri alle cose e ritorno: il musaeum di Lorenzo Pignoria. Dal libro di natura al teatro del mondo, in: Vera Fortunati, Paolo Granata (eds.), *Studi in onore di Adalgisa Lugli*, Bologna: Fausto Lupetti, 2011, pp. 31–50.

- 11 Cf. Sonia Maffei, Cartari e gli dei del Nuovo Mondo. Il trattatello sulle immagini de gli dei indiani di Lorenzo Pignoria, in: Sonia Maffei (ed.), *Vincenzo Cartari e le direzioni del mito del Cinquecento*, Rome: GB editoria, 2013, pp. 61–119, p. 65.
- 12 Enrichetta Leospo, La collezione egizia del Museo Kircheriano, in: Eugenio Lo Sardo (ed.), *Athanasius Kircher. Il museo del mondo*, exh. cat. Palazzo di Venezia Rome, Rome: Edizioni De Luca, 2001, pp. 125–130, p. 129.
- 13 See Clara Bargellini, Athanasius Kircher e la Nuova Spagna, in: *ibid.*, pp. 86–91. Kircher also corresponded with a former student, Francisco Ximénez, who was rector of the Colegio del Espiritu Santo in Puebla before moving to occupy a succession of positions in Mexico City, but this exchange does not appear to have resulted in a flow of objects.
- 14 Elena Isabel Estrada de Gerlero, El obelisco de Carlos III en la Plaza Mayor de Puebla, in: Herón Pérez Martínez, Bárbara Skinfill Nogal (eds.), *Esplendor y ocaso de la cultura simbólica*, Michoacán: Zamora, 2002, pp. 97–110; Elvia Cristina Sánchez de la Barquera Arroyo, Agua, piedra y espacio: usos y recursos escultóricos de la fuente pública, in: *Ensayos de escultura virreinal en Puebla de los Ángeles*, Puebla: Fundación Amparo, 2012, pp. 129–171, p. 159.
- 15 On the large-scale fabrication of featherwork mosaics with Christian iconography soon after the fall of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan in August 1521, see Alessandra Russo, *L'immagine intraducibile. Une histoire métisse des arts en Nouvelle-Espagne (1500–1600)*, Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2012, pp. 139–179.
- 16 Hole Rössler, Kircher und das Gürteltier. Empirisches Wissen in der zoologischen Druckgraphik der Frühen Neuzeit, in: Tina Asmussen, Lucas Burkart, Hole Rössler, *Theatrum Kircherianum. Wissenskulturen und Bücherwelten im 17. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2013, pp. 227–277, p. 230. On the influence of Kircher in America, see Constanza Acuña (ed.), *La curiosidad infinita de Athanasius Kircher. Una lectura a sus libros encontrados en la Biblioteca Nacional de Chile*, Santiago de Chile: Ocho Libros, 2012.
- 17 Walter Hanisch, *El historiador Alonso de Ovalle*, Caracas: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas de la Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, 1976.
- 18 Athanasius Kircher, *Mundus subterraneus*, Amsterdam: Joannes Janssonius van Waesberge, 1678, vol. I, lib. II, p. 120b. See Sandra Accatino, Una maravillosa imagen pintada en Chile. Ciencias, milagros, maravillas y artificios en el ARS MAGNA LUCIS ET UMBRAE de Athanasius Kircher, in: Acuña 2012 (as fn. 16), pp. 87–107, p. 92.
- 19 As suggested by Sandra Accatino, Una piedra, un árbol, un negro. Retóricas de la transmutación en la *Histórica Relación del Reyno de Chile* de Alonso de Ovalle, in: *Anales de Literatura Chilena* 17.26 (2016), pp. 171–191, p. 174. For the bezoar see Alonso de Ovalle, *Histórica relación del Reyno de Chile*, Rome, Francisco Caballo, 1646, p. 54.
- 20 Lorenzo Pignoria, *Vetustissimæ Tabulae Aeneae...*, Venice: Giovanni Antonio Rampazetto, 1605, p. 6v: »Ea Romae incidit in manus magni Viri PETRI BEMBI Cardinalis, seu ex PAULI III. Pontificis Maximi munere, seu quod aliis placet et Orci faucibus, e manibus videlicet Fabri ferrarii, qui illam in Borboniana Urbis direptione comparaverat, precio extorta.«
- 21 Sabine Eiche, On the dispersal of Cardinal Bembo's collections, in: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* XXVII (1983), pp. 353–359.
- 22 For discussion of this episode see Brian Curran, *The Egyptian Renaissance. The Afterlife of Egypt in Early Modern Italy*, Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2007, pp. 231–237, who calls the identification »almost certain«. The meeting at which it was discussed is mentioned by Pierio Valeriano in the introduction to Book XXXIII of his *Hieroglyphica*.
- 23 Anna Maria Riccomini in: *Pietro Bembo e l'invenzione del Rinascimento*, exh. cat. Palazzo del Monte di Pietà, Padua, Venice: Marsilio, 2013, cat. no. 5.31.

- 24 The death of the Pope put an end to the conclusion of this project, though the idea of the tortoises was taken up in the base of the Medici obelisk that found its way to Florence (Boboli). The obelisk itself ended up outside the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore; see Curran 2007 (as fn. 22), pp. 213–215 and Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long, Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk. A history*, Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2009, pp. 93–95.
- 25 M. Azzi Visentini, *L'orto botanico di Padova e il giardino del Rinascimento*, Milan: Edizioni Il Polifilo, 1984, pp. 160 and 169 n. 49.
- 26 Letter of 8 June 1546, published by Arantxa Domingo Malvadi, *Bibliofilia humanista en tiempos de Felipe II: la biblioteca de Juan Páez de Castro*, Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2011, pp. 339–340.
- 27 Dirk Syndram, Das Erbe der Pharaonen. Zur Ikonographie Ägyptens in Europa, in: Gereon Sieverich and Hendrik Budde (eds.), *Europa und der Orient 800–1900*, exh. cat. Berliner Festspiele, Gütersloh and Munich: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1989, pp. 18–57, esp. p. 29; Curran 2007 (as fn. 22), p. 252. If Syndram is right in also deriving an Egyptian figure in the Stanza dell'Incendio in the Vatican from the Mensa Isiaca, it must have been discovered prior to 1515–1517.
- 28 The Mensa Isiaca continued to exert its fascination in later centuries. It is reflected in the Altar of Apis which entered the Grünes Gewölbe in Dresden in 1738. The last work made by the goldsmith Johann Melchior Dinglinger before his death in 1731, it draws on the Mensa Isiaca in reproducing the winged figures that flank the goddess Isis and many other elements from the same work; it also incorporates a small-scale (75 cm) copy of the obelisk that stands today in front of the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano. See Dirk Syndram, *Die Ägyptenrezeption unter August dem Starken. Der »Apis-Altar« Johann Melchior Dinglingers*, Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1999, pp. 30–34. Enrichetta Leospo, *La Mensa Isiaca di Torino*, Leiden: Brill, 1978, pp. 27–28 also mentions this work, as well as the 19<sup>th</sup> century decorations in the antichamber of the residence of the Castello di Masino, Piemonte, to the north of Turin.
- 29 Paula Findlen, Ereditare un museo: collezionismo, strategie familiari e pratiche culturali nell'Italia del XVI secolo, in: *Quaderni storici* 115, anno XXXIX, no. 1 (2004), pp. 45–81.
- 30 Eiche 1983 (as fn. 21).
- 31 Clifford M. Brown, Leandro Ventura, Le raccolte di antichità dei duchi di Mantova e dei rami cadetti di Guastalla e Sabbioneta, in Raffaella Morselli (ed.), *Gonzaga. La Celeste Galeria. L'esercizio del collezionismo*, Milan: Skira, 2002, pp. 53–65, p. 55. For the chronology of the Duke's acquisitions, see Roberta Piccinelli, Le facies del collezionismo artistico di Vincenzo Gonzaga, in: *ibid.*, pp. 341–347.
- 32 Bertrand Jestaz, Bronzo e bronzetti nella collezione Gonzaga, in: Raffaella Morselli (ed.), *Gonzaga. La Celeste Galeria. Le raccolte*, Milan: Skira, 2002, pp. 313–329, p. 321.
- 33 The Mensa Isiaca was one of the most illustrious of the 270 or so objects from the Collezione Savoia to enter the Gabinetto delle Curiosità in Turin in 1720, before passing into the Regio Museo dell'Università di Torino founded by Vittorio Amedeo II, Duke of Savoy and King of Sardinia, in 1723. See Silvio Curto, *Storia del Museo Egizio di Torino*, Turin: Centro Studi Piemontesi, 3rd revised ed., 1990, p. 42.
- 34 Angela S. Morecroft, *The Enlightenment rediscovery of Egyptology. Vitaliano Donati's Egyptian expedition, 1759–62*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2017.
- 35 Bernd Roeck, Geschichte, Finsternis und Unkultur. Zu Leben und Werk des Marcus Welser (1558–1614), in: *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 72 (1990), pp. 115–142.
- 36 Pignoria mentions Welser's publication of this *Tabula Itineraria* in 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 24r and in his appendix to Vincenzo Cartari, *Le Vere e Nove Imagini De gli Dei de gli Antichi* . . . , Padua: Pietro Paolo Tozzi, 1615, p. iii. For a list of Welser's publications and manuscripts see Giuseppe Gabrieli, *Contributi alla storia della Accademia dei Lincei*, Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1989, pp. 999–1003.

37 Ibid., p. 997.

38 A second edition was published as *Characteres Aegyptii, hoc est sacrorum, quibus Aegyptii utuntur simulacrorum delineatio et explicatio*, Frankfurt: Matthias Becker, 1608; and a third as *Mensa Isiaca*, Amsterdam: Andrea Frisius, 1669. All references below are to the first edition.

39 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 5r.

40 »[...] partim figuris cuiusce modi animalium concepti sermonis compendiosa verba suggerentes, partim nodosis et in modum rotae tortuosis capreolatimque condensis apicibus a curiositate profanorum lectione munita«, Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* XI.22.

41 »Periculosae plenum opus aleae, / tractas et incedis per ignis / suppositos cineri doloso«, Horace *Carmina* II.1.6–8.

42 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 1r; *ibid.*, p. 7r: »artificem Tabulae non valde doctum sapit Aegyptium videlicet, factumve ad Aegyptiorum normam.«

43 E. Leospo, 1978 (as fn. 28), p. 96.

44 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20); translation from Curran, 2007 (as fn. 22), p. 278. A more or less contemporary instance of such an allegorical interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics to defend the scientific theory of Copernicus is provided by Paolo Antonio Foscarini in a letter to Galileo Galilei from late 1615 or early 1616, Antonio Favaro (ed.), *Le opere di Galileo Galilei: Edizione Nazionale sotto gli auspicii di Sua Maestà il Re d'Italia*, Florence, Barbèra, 1890–1909, vol. XII, p. 215.

45 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 14r: »Ita conjicio ego præiudicio non obfuturus siquis meliora in medium attulerit.« Cf. *ibid.* 25v: »an ego meliora in medium attulerim, eruditi Lectoris haec erit cognitio.« The same show of modesty can be seen in the 9-page treatise on the *Nozze Aldobrandini* (see below, fn. 54), where the author declares that »although I am no fortune-teller, I could not refrain from noting down what came to mind at the first sight of the picture« (»Ego sane licet me ariolum non profitear, abstinere non potui ab iis exarandis, quae occurrerunt in ipso primo Tabulae conspectu«).

46 The other was Benedetto Ceruti. See Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press, 1994, pp. 37–44.

47 Benedetto Ceruti and Andrea Chiocco (eds), *Musaeum Franc[isci] Calceolari Iun[ioris] Veronensis*, Verona, 1622, pp. 292–298. Pignoria's letter is dated 5 April 1620.

48 Gaetano Cozzi, Federico Contarini: un antiquario veneziano tra Rinascimento e Controriforma, in: *Bollettino dell'Istituto di storia della società e dello Stato veneziano* III (1961), pp. 190–220; Maria Teresa Cipollato, »L'eredità di F. Contarini«, *ibid.*, pp. 221–279.

49 Irene Baldiga, *L'occhio della lince. I primi lincei tra arte, scienza e collezionismo (1603–1630)*, Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2002, pp. 181–182. On his *studiolo* see Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20) p. 8r. The praise of his *studiolo* can be found in Franciscus Schottus, *Parte seconda dell'Itinerario d'Italia...*, Venice: Giovanni Pietro Brignonci, 1673, p. 415. On Pasqualini, his collection, writings and relations with other scholars and antiquarians, see A. Herz, Lelio Pasqualini, a late sixteenth-century antiquarian, in: Marilyn Aronberg Lavin (ed.), *IL60. Essays honoring Irving Lavin on his sixtieth birthday*, New York: Ithaca Press, 1990, pp. 191–206. The work of Pasqualini is perhaps best summed up in his epitaph in the basilica of which he was canon in Rome, Santa Maria Maggiore: »Dom. Laelio Pasqualino huius basilicae canonico religionis cultu et morum elegantia praesentibus colendo antiquitatis notitia cum antiquis comparando.« For the Peiresc-Pasqualini correspondence see David Jaffé, Aspects of gem collecting in the early seventeenth century, Nicolas-Claude Peiresc and Lelio Pasqualini, in: *Burlington Magazine* vol. 135, no. 1079 (1993), pp. 103–120, and Veronica Carpita and Elena Vaiani, *La corrispondance de Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc avec Lelio Pasqualini et son neveu Pompeo*, Paris: Alain Baudry, 2012.

50 Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, *Lettres de Peiresc à sa famille et principalement à son frère*, 1602–1637, *Tome Sixième*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1896, p. 395.

- 51 Transcription and translation in Henrietta McBurney, Ian Rolfe, Caterina Napoleone and Paula Findlen, *The Paper Museum of Cassiano dal Pozzo. Series B. Natural History. Parts IV and V. Birds, other animals and natural curiosities*, London: Harvey Miller, 2017, vol. II, pp. 812–817.
- 52 Jean-François Lhote and Danielle Joyal (eds.), *Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc. Lettres à Cassiano dal Pozzo (1626–1637)*, Clermont-Ferrand: Adosa, 1989, p. 59. Pignoria 1605 (as in fn. 20), p. 20 discusses the flamingo and includes the image of an amulet featuring a flamingo-looking bird labelled «amuletum Ibis contra morbos capitis» in Tabula I.
- 53 McBurney et al. 2017 (as in fn. 51), Vol. I, pp. 316–319 (where, however, the translation of Peiresc's letter of 1629 is incomplete).
- 54 *Antiquissimae picturae quae Romae visitur typus. A Lavrentio Pignorio accuratè explicatus*, Padua: Donato Pasquardi, 1630. Cassiano also asked Girolamo Aleandro for the same favour; in a letter to Cassiano of 17 May 1629, Peiresc complained that the commentary had not been found among the papers of Aleandro, who died in that year, see Lhote and Joyal 1989 (as in fn. 52), p. 63. In turn, Dal Pozzo wrote a commentary on the «bellissimo libro» De Servis by Pignoria, transcribed in Herklotz 2012 (as in fn. 5), pp. 95–100.
- 55 Peter Mason, *Before disenchantment. Images of exotic animals and plants in the early modern world*, London: Reaktion Books, 2009; Florike Egmond, *Eye for detail. Images of plants and animals in art and science, 1500–1630*, London: Reaktion Books, 2017; Paula Findlen, Cassiano dal Pozzo: a Roman virtuoso in search of nature, in: McBurney et al. 2017 (as in fn. 51), Vol. I, pp. 18–42.
- 56 Marjon van der Meulen, *Copies After the Antique, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard XXIII*, London: Harvey Miller, 1994, vol. I, p. 29 n. 12; Kristin Lohse Belkin, Fiona Healy (eds.), *A House of Art. Rubens as Collector*, exh. cat. Rubenshuis Antwerp, Schoten: BAI, 2004, pp. 296–297. One of the statuettes was of the god Ptah.
- 57 For instance, Tomasini 1632 (as fn. 8) obligingly gives the page reference to Pignoria's treatise, as in the case of an «amuletum ut in Mensa Isiaca p. 17». For other examples see Franzoni 2011 (as fn. 10). Pignoria followed the same strategy in his commentary on the *Nozze Aldrobrandini*, referring to coins and to a «very old ivory plaque» (*in eburnea tabella pervetere*).
- 58 I. Rossi, Pietro Stefanoni, a Ulisse Aldrovandi: relazioni erudite tra Bologna e Napoli, *Studi di Memofonte* 8 (2012), p. 3–30.
- 59 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 9r. For the six obelisks erected in Rome in the 16<sup>th</sup> century see Mason 2013 (as fn. 1), pp. 46–55.
- 60 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 26v.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 33r. On Aleandro see Léon Pélissier, Les amis d'Holstenius, *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire* VIII (1888), pp. 323–402. Both Aleandro, a member of the Roman Accademia degli Umoristi, several of whose manuscripts on the interpretation of Roman antiquities remain unpublished, and Dal Pozzo, a member of the Roman Accademia dei Lincei, were in the retinue of Cardinal Francesco Barberini during his mission to France in 1625; see Sabine du Crest, Girolamo Aleandro, Cassiano dal Pozzo e gli eruditi della corte borghesiana, in Francesco Solinas (ed.), *I segreti di un collezionista. Le straordinarie raccolte di Cassiano dal Pozzo 1588–1657*, exh. cat. Museo del Territorio Biellese, Biella, Rome: De Luca, 2001, pp. 53–56.
- 62 Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 25r: «Interpretationem proximæ Iconis cogitavi sæpe sæpius an attingere expediret, tantam inquirenti difficultatem obtrudere visa est.»
- 63 Leospo 1978 (as fn. 28) p. 61.
- 64 Ian Shaw, Paul Nicholson, *British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*, London: British Museum Press, 1995, pp. 86, p. 304 resp.
- 65 According to Leospo 1978 (as fn. 28), the artist has confused the attributes of Ptah with those of another lunar deity, the moon god Khons.

- 66 Ibid., p. 91. Other examples of such incomprehension are the artist's failure to distinguish between the flowers of Upper and Lower Egypt (p. 49) and the single instead of double wings of the figures flanking Isis in the central panel (p. 45). The latter are faithfully copied on Dinglinger's Apis Altar, see Syndram 1999 (as fn. 28), Abb. 3 and p. 32.
- 67 *Seconda parte delle immagini de gli dei indiani. Aggiunta al Cartari da Lorenzo Pignoria*, Padua: Pietro Paolo Tozzi, 1615, p. xxiv.
- 68 For Cartari's images of figures taken from Greco-Roman mythology, see Caterina Volpi, *Le immagini degli dèi di Vincenzo Cartari*, Rome: De Luca, 1996.
- 69 Jean Seznec, *The survival of the pagan gods. The mythological tradition and its place in renaissance humanism and art*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972, p. 256.
- 70 Paola von Wyss-Giacosa, Through the Eyes of Idolatry. Lorenzo Pignoria's argument on the conformité of ethnographic objects from the West and East Indies with Egyptian idols, in: Giovanni Taran-tino, Paola von Wyss-Giacosa (eds), *Through Your Eyes: Religions and Beliefs as Intercultural Mirror (16th–18th centuries)*, Leiden: Brill (forthcoming).
- 71 Partha Mitter, *Much maligned monsters. A history of European reactions to Indian art*, Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 1977, p. 28; Christian F. Feest, ZEMES IDOLUM DIABOLICUM. Surprise and success in ethnographic Kunstkammer research, in: *Archiv für Völkerkunde* 40 (1986) pp. 181–198. Further material deriving from Peiresc in the 1624 edition of Pignoria/Cartari included a bronze hand found in Tournai, which Peiresc interpreted as an object carried in the ceremonies of Isis, taking the strange symbols on its surface as references to various deities. Others saw in it evidence of the implantation of the cult of Isis in France, and even derived the name of Paris from the cult of the Egyptian goddess; see Alain Schnapper, *Le géant, la licorne, la tulipe. Collections françaises au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Flammarion, 1988, pp. 174–175.
- 72 If, as Pignoria asserts, the images first published in the 1615 edition of Cartari were copied from originals belonging to Cardinal Amulio, librarian of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana from 1565 to 1566, this would be compatible with the arrival of the *Codex Vaticanus* 3738 in the hands of the Dominican Fray Juan de Córdova, *definidor* of Santiago de México, who travelled twice from New Spain to Rome between 1561 and 1564; see Davide Domenici, Nuovi dati per una storia dei codici messicani della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in: *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae* XXII (2016) pp. 342–362, p. 351.
- 73 Since the fullest edition incorporating Pignoria's various later additions to his appendices is *Immagini delli dei de gl'antichi*, Venice: Tomasini, 1647, references from this point on are to that edition, which also has the convenience of being available in facsimile, Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1963. The woodcut of Homoyoca appears there on p. 363. For detailed discussion of the derivation from the Mexican *Codex Vaticanus* 3738, also known as the *Codex Vaticanus A* or *Codex Rios*, see Peter Mason, The Purloined Codex, in: *Journal of the History of Collections* 9:1 (1997), pp. 1–30; Edgar Lein, *Immagini degli dei indiani. La representación de las divinidades indianas por Vincenzo Cartari*, in: Helga von Kügelgen (ed.), *Herencias indígenas, tradiciones europeas y la mirada europea / Indigenes Erbe, europäische Traditionen und der europäische Blick*, Madrid and Frankfurt: Vervuert/Iberoamericana, 2002, pp. 225–258; Maffei 2013 (as fn. 11), pp. 61–119.
- 74 Joanna Ostapkowicz and Lee Newson, »Gods... adorned with the embroiderer's needle«: the materials, making and meaning of a Taino cotton reliquary, in: *Latin American Antiquity* 23: 3 (2012), pp. 300–326, p. 302.
- 75 Feest 1986 (as fn. 71) largely followed by Elke Bujok in Dorothea Diemer et al. (eds.), *Die Münchner Kunstkammer. Band 1. Katalog Teil 1*, Munich: Verlag der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2008, pp. 534–535. Herwarth reproduced the Mensa Isiaca with a short explanatory commentary in his *Thesaurus Hieroglyphicorum*, probably published in Munich after 1607.
- 76 It recurs holding a beaker in the border decoration of the Mensa Isiaca.

- 77** Jean Seznec, *Un essai de mythologie comparée au début du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in: *Mélanges d'histoire et d'archéologie* (1931), pp. 268–281.
- 78** Pignoria 1605 (as fn. 20), p. 12r; Peter Mason, *Seduction from Afar. Europe's Inner Indians*, in: *Anthropos* 82 (1987), pp. 581–601; Aby M. Warburg, *Images from the region of the Pueblo Indians of North America*, translated and with an introductory essay by Michael P. Steinberg, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995.
- 79** Domenici 2016 (as fn. 72), p. 350; further examples in idem, *Códices mesoamericanos en la Italia de la primera edad moderna: historia y recepción*, in: Juan José Batalla Rosado, José Luis de Rojas, Lisardo Pérez Lugones (eds.), *Códices y cultura indígena en México. Homenaje a Alfonso Lacadena García-Gallo*, Madrid: Distinta Tinta, 2018, pp. 351–375.
- 80** Ole Worm, *Museum Wormianum*, Amsterdam: Lodewijk and Daniel Elzevir, 1655, p. 383.
- 81** Peter Diemer, Elke Bujok, Dorothea Diemer (eds.), *Johann Baptist Fickler. Das Inventar der Münchner herzoglichen Kunstkammer von 1598. Editionsband. Transkription der Inventarhandschrift cgm 2133*, Munich: Verlag der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004, inv. no. 1709.
- 82** As noted above, Pignoria had »chartae et sericum ex regione Sinarum« in his collection.
- 83** Diego Valadés, *Rhetorica Christiana ad concionandi et orandi usum accommodata, utriusque facultatis exemplis suo loco insertis, quae quidem, ex indorum maxime deprompta sunt historiis, unde praeter doctrinam, summa quoque delectatio comparabitur*, Perugia: Pietro Giacomo Petrucci, 1579, p. 93. On Valadés see especially Boris Jeanne, *Mexico-Madrid-Rome. Sur les pas de Diego Valadés, une étude des milieux romains tournés vers le Nouveau Monde à l'époque de la Contre-Réforme (1568–1594)*, diss. Paris: École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2011.
- 84** M. Morán Turina, J. Portús Pérez, *El arte de mirar. La pintura y su público en la España de Velázquez*, Madrid: Istmo, 1997, p. 264. The work, which has not been preserved, is mentioned by Fray Juan in his *Sermonario* of 1606.
- 85** John Turberville Needham, *De inscriptione quadam Aegyptiaca Taurini inventa et characteribus Aegyptiis olim et Sinis communibus exarata idolo cuidam antiquo in Regia Universitate servato ad utrasque Academias Londinensem et Parisiensem rerum antiquarum investigatione et studio praepositas data epistola*, Rome: Nicolai, 1761, p. 40, p. 57. The antiquity of the black marble statue was already called into question at the time, and its 17<sup>th</sup> century origin was confirmed by Champollion. See Enrichetta Leospo, Athanasius Kircher und das Museo Kircheriano, in: Gereon Sievernich, Hendrik Budde (eds.), *Europa und der Orient 800–1900*, exh. cat. Berliner Festspiele, Gütersloh and Munich: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1989, pp. 58–71.
- 86** Fickler. *Das Inventar*, 2004 (as fn. 81), inv. no. 1721: »Ein hülzener kopf aines Abgotts aus Florida«.
- 87** Kim Sloan (ed.), *A New World. England's first view of America*, London: British Museum Press, 2007.
- 88** Paul Hulton, *America 1585. The Complete Drawings of John White*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press and British Museum Publications, 1984, p. 191. On the transformation of White's paintings into copperplate images in the Frankfurt workshop of Theodor de Bry, see Karen Ordahl Kupperman, Roanoake's achievement, in: Kim Sloan (ed.), *European Visions: American Voices*, British Museum Research Publication 172, London: British Museum Press, 2009, pp. 3–12.
- 89** Feest 1986 (as fn. 71), p. 194, n. 10, discusses the example of the survey of American objects in Italian collections by Detlef Heikamp, *American Objects in Italian Collections of the Renaissance and Baroque: A Survey*, in: Fredi Chiappelli (ed.), *First Images of America*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976, vol. I, pp. 455–482.
- 90** That the drawings are copies from the printed engravings and not preliminary drawings for them is suggested by the fact that they are on transparent paper and demonstrated, inter alia, by the artist's

misunderstanding of the rings that cover the body of the Taino zemi, as argued by Maffei 2013 (as fn. 11).

**91** MS 1551, Biblioteca Angelica, Rome, f. 4v: »Idolo di Egipto adorato de los Mexicanos a quien llamaron Mahez«. The Aztecs did have a god of maize, Centeotl, but that is not the figure represented here.

**92** Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings vol. II, 1927–1930*, Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith (eds.), Cambridge and London: Belknap Press, 1999, p. 668.

**93** Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings vol. IV, 1938–1940*, Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (eds.), Cambridge and London: Belknap Press, 2003, p. 381.

**94** Not even a museum label: Peter Mason, Una cuestión de etiqueta, in: *Éndoxa*, Series Filosóficas no. 33 (2014), pp. 165–180.

**95** Alois Riegl, *Die spätrömische Kunst-Industrie*, Vienna: k.k. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1901, Table XXIII, 1 ad 2.

**96** Alois Riegl, *Der moderne Denkmalkultus, sein Wesen und seine Entstehung*, Vienna and Leipzig: W. Braumüller, 1903, p. 5, emphasis added.

**97** Riegl 1901 (as fn. 95), fig. 52.

**98** Benjamin 1999 (as fn. 92), p. 668.

**99** Peter Burke, Images as evidence in 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe, in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* vol. 64, no. 2 (2003), pp. 273–296, pp. 291–292; see too Sergio Botta, Il corpo universale degli dèi americani. Per una teoria visuale del politeismo nell'opera di Lorenzo Pignoria, *Civiltà e Religioni* no. 3 (2017), pp. 39–69. The correct date of 1601 for the discovery of the Aldobrandini Wedding was established by Carla Benocci, *Villa Aldobrandini a Roma*, Rome: Argos, 1992, and by Francesca Cappelletti and Caterina Volpi, New documents concerning the discovery and early history of the Nozze Aldobrandini, in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* vol. 56 (1993), pp. 274–280.

**100** Ian Jenkins, »Contemporary minds«. Sir William Hamilton's affair with antiquity, in: Ian Jenkins, Kim Sloan (eds.), *Vases and Volcanoes. Sir William Hamilton and his collection*, exh. cat. British Museum, London: British Museum Press, 1996, pp. 40–64, p. 50. On the first publication of the Hamilton vase collection, see Pascal Griener, *Le Antichità Etrusche, Greche e Romane 1766–1776 di Pierre Hugues d'Hancarville. La pubblicazione delle ceramiche antiche della prima collezione Hamilton*, Rome: Edizione dell'Elefante, 1992.

**101** It is therefore not surprising that Pignoria is mentioned neither in Erwin Panofsky's *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970 nor in his *Studies in Iconology*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962.

**102** See Peter Mason, *The Ways of the World. European representations of other cultures from Homer to Sade*, Canon Pyon: Sean Kingston, 2015.

**103** Alexander von Humboldt, *Vues des Cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*, Paris: J. Smith, 1810–1813, plates I, II.

**104** John L. Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan*, New York: Dover 1969 [1841: Harper & Brothers], 2 vols., II, pp. 439–442, a point to which he returned in his *Incidents of Travel in Yucatan*, New York: Dover, 1963 [1843: Harper & Brothers] pp. 306–313.

**105** The volume of Montfaucon's *L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures* on »La religion des Égyptiens, des Arabes, des Syriens, des Perses, des Scythes, des Germains, des Gaulois, des Espagnols, & des Carthaginois« includes the central figure of Isis from the Mensa Isiaca (*L'Antiquité expliquée* . . . Tome second, Seconde partie, Paris: F. Delaune, 1719, p. 105), as well as a copy of the whole Mensa (ibid., between pp. 340 and 341).



### A Food Chain of Objects (Anne Haslund Hansen)

- 1 For a detailed overview of the sources used by Piranesi in *Diverse maniere*, see Roberta Battaglia, *Le «Diverse maniere d'adornare i cammini...» di Giovanni Battista Piranesi: Gusto e cultura antiquaria*, Venezia: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 1994. I am grateful to the editors of the present volume for sharing with me a manuscript version of their discussion on Piranesi and *Diverse maniere*, now published as: Caroline van Eck, Miguel John Versluys, *The Hôtel Beauharnais in Paris. Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the dynamics of stylistic transformation*, in: K. T. von Stackelberg, E. Macaulay-Lewis (eds.), *Housing the new Romans. Architectural reception and classical style in the modern world*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 54–91.
- 2 This formed the subject of my PhD dissertation: Anne Haslund Hansen, *Ordering the ancient World. Egyptian Antiquities in 18th Century Visual Culture*, Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2012.
- 3 Bernard de Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, vols. 1–15, Paris, 1719–1724 and Anne Claude de Caylus, *Recueil d'Antiquités Égyptiennes, Étrusques, Grecques et Romaines*, I–VII, Paris, 1752–1767.
- 4 Nikolaus Pevsner (with S. Lang), *The Egyptian Revival*, in: *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design I*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1968, pp. 213–235. Erik Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt and its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University, 1993 (first published in 1961), pp. 112–113. James Stevens Curl, *Egyptomania. The Egyptian Revival: A Recurring Theme in the History of Taste*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994, pp. 87–97. Dirk Syndram, *Ägypten Faszinationen. Untersuchungen zum Ägyptenbild im europäischen Klassizismus bis 1800*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990, pp. 184–197. Norbert Miller, ... E di mezzo alla tema esce il diletto. Ägyptische Träume und Alpträume bei Jean-Laurent Le Geay und Giovanni Battista Piranesi, in: W. Seipel (ed.), *Ägyptomanie. Europäische Ägypten-imagination von der Antike bis heute*, Wien: Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien/Milano: Skira, 2000, pp. 213–287, pp. 250–271.
- 5 Giambattista Piranesi, *Diverse maniere d'ardonnare i cammini*, Roma, 1769, p.1.
- 6 John Wilton-Ely, *The Polemical Works. Rome, 1757, 1761, 1765, 1769*, Westmead: Gregg International Publishers Limited, 1972.
- 7 Heather Hyde Minor, *Piranesi's Lost Words*, University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015, p. 158. In chap. 5, Hyde Minor offers an in-depth discussion of the impetus and scope of *Diverse maniere*.
- 8 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), pp. 32–33.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 10 For a recent discussion on the Graeco-Roman controversy see Sigrid de Jong, *Rediscovering Architecture. Paestum in the Eighteenth-Century. Architectural Experience and Theory*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp. 173–227. For Piranesi see also Rudolf Wittkower, Piranesi's »Parere su L'Architettura«, in: *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2.2 (1938), pp. 147–158, John Wilton-Ely, Vision and design: Piranesi's »fantasia« and the Greco-Roman controversy, in: G. Brunel (ed.), *Piranèse et les français* (Academie de France a Rome), Rome: Edizioni dell'Elefante, 1978, pp. 529–552, Susan M. Dixon, Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Diverse maniere d'adornare i cammini* and Chimneypiece Design as a Vehicle for Polemic, in: *Studies in the Decorative Arts* vol. I.1 (1993), pp. 76–98, Lola Kantor-Kazovsky, Pierre Jean Mariette and Piranesi. The Controversy reconsidered, in: M. Bevilacqua, H. Hyde Minor, F. Barry (eds.), *The Serpent and the Stylus. Essays on G. B. Piranesi*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006, pp. 149–168, and Hyde Minor 2015 (as fn. 7), pp. 117–156.

- 11 The copies consulted here are: 1.) Bodleian Library, shelf mark Mason Z 60, printed in Rome, 1769, and 2.) Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Rare Books, accession no. 3117 (digitalized), printed in Rome, 1769. A few differences can be observed in the numbering but the Egyptian plates and their location within the sequence are consistent in both copies.
- 12 The exact years in which the Egyptian interior was in existence are unclear, but c. 1765–1778. Syndram 1990 (as fn. 4), pp. 194–196.
- 13 The work concludes with a satirical tailpiece, a reply to Bertrand Capmartin de Chaupy, an antiquarian who had criticised Piranesi. Hyde Minor 2015 (as fn. 7), pp. 176–177.
- 14 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 8.
- 15 In Wilton-Ely 1972 (as fn. 6) and Luigi Ficacci, *Giovanni Battista Piranesi. The Complete Etchings*, Köln: Taschen, 2000, the Egyptian plates are grouped together as nos. 863–875 and nos. 675–687, respectively.
- 16 John Wilton-Ely in the »Introduction« to Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Observations on the Letter of Monsieur Mariette*, Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2002, p. 51.
- 17 Caylus 1752, vol. I, p. ix.
- 18 Caylus 1764 (as fn. 3), vol. VI, p. viii.
- 19 James Tassie, *Descriptive Catalogue of a general Collection of Ancient and Modern engraved Gems*, 1791, pp. lxxi–lxxv.
- 20 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, Dresden, 1764, p. 3.
- 21 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 15.
- 22 Ibid., p. 15.
- 23 Ibid., p. 22.
- 24 Ibid., p. 20.
- 25 Ibid., p. 18. Two plates (nos. I–II) in the essay are dedicated to this subject, showing, amongst others, shells taken from Niccolò Gualtieri's *Index Testarum Conchyliorum* (1742) in direct juxtaposition with depictions of »Etruscan vases«. See also Heather Hyde Minor, G.B. Piranesi's »Diverse maniere« and the Natural History of Ancient Art, in: *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 56/57 (2011/2012), pp. 323–351.
- 26 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 11.
- 27 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 10.
- 28 Ibid., pp. 8–9.
- 29 Identified by Battaglia 1994 (as fn. 1), p. 204, fig. 12.
- 30 Frederic Louis [Frederik Ludvig] Norden, *Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie*, Copenhagen, 1755, vol. II, pl. CXII, XCIX and CXV.
- 31 Norden 1755 (as fn. 30), vol. I, p. 170.
- 32 The majority of Norden's sketches are held by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. For these sketches, see Marie-Louise Buhl, *Les dessins archéologiques et topographiques de l'Egypte ancienne faits par F.L. Norden 1737–1738, et conservés à l'Académie royale des sciences et des lettres de Danemark*, København: Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 1993. The simple sketch of the Ramesseum is in Buhl, 1993, pl. 72r and p. 115. A folder of drawings are in the Royal Danish Library, shelfmark G.k.S. 447,2, II. The redrawn version of the Ramesseum is on leaf 57. For the preparation of the volumes of Norden, see Torben Holck Colding, Marcus Tuschert's Etchings, in: M.-L. Buhl, E. Dal, T. Holck Colding, *The Danish Naval Officer Frederik Ludvig Norden*, Copenhagen: The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 1986, pp. 49–64.

- 33 Quoted from John A. Pinto, *Speaking Ruins. Piranesi, architects, and antiquity in eighteenth-century Rome*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012, p. 99.
- 34 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 9.
- 35 Inv. no. 7155, Museo Egizio, Torino. Anne Roulet, *The Egyptian and Egyptianizing Monuments of Imperial Rome*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972, pp. 43–44. Montfaucon has an extensive discussion of the piece. Montfaucon 1722 (as fn. 3), vol. II, pp. 210–217.
- 36 These Egyptianizing sculptures, produced in Italy, may not originally be depictions of Antinous but a more generic representation of an »Egyptian-styled king«. See Caroline Vout, Antinous, Archaeology and History, in: *The Journal of Roman Studies* (2005), pp. 80–96, pp. 89–90. See also Miguel John Versluys, Making meaning with Egypt: Hadrian, Antinous and Rome's cultural renaissance, in: L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys (eds.), *Egyptian gods in the Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean: Image and reality between local and global*, Caltanissetta: Salvatore Sciascia Editore, pp. 25–39.
- 37 Syndram 1990 (as fn. 4), p. 192.
- 38 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), pp. 8–9.
- 39 See also Miller 2000 (as fn. 4), p. 252 and Caroline van Eck, *Art, Agency and Living Presence. From the Animated Image to the Excessive Object*, Boston-Berlin-Munich: De Gruyter, and Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2015, pp. 147–157.
- 40 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), pp. 9–10.
- 41 Winckelmann 1764 (as fn. 20), pp. 33–34.
- 42 Battaglia 1994 (as fn. 1), p. 218. See also Syndram 1990 (as fn. 4), pp. 192–193.
- 43 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 9.
- 44 Miller 2000 (as fn. 4), p. 259.
- 45 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), pl. 36. Caylus 1762, vol. V, p. 68, pl. XXII.iv.
- 46 Caylus 1762 (as fn. 3), vol. V, p. 59, pl. XX. The statue is in the Bibliothèque nationale, inv. no. 5. J. Vandier, *Manuel d'Archéologie égyptienne*, Paris, 1958, vol. III, pl. XXX.4.
- 47 Battaglia 1994 (as fn. 1), p. 215, fig. 36 and 43.
- 48 In 1809, Jean-François Champollion did a reassessment of Caylus' Egyptian pieces with the title: *Monuments faux, basiliens ou d'imitation publiés par Caylus sous le nom d'égyptiens*. (See: Manuscrits occidentaux, NAF 20362. Reference via the website: <http://caylus-recueil.huma-num.fr>)
- 49 Médailles et Antiques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. 53.1672. Height 3,9 cm. Online access: <http://medaillesetantiques.bnf.fr/ws/catalogue>
- 50 The pieces incorporated in the plate are identified in Battaglia 1994 (as fn. 1), pp. 202–208.
- 51 Norden 1755, vol. II, pl. CX and CXI.
- 52 The panel on the right retains many features of the actual inscription, while the one to the left draws on the names of Psamtik II (most likely from the obelisk of Montecitorio).
- 53 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), pl. 32. Caylus 1752 (as fn. 3), vol. I, pl. XII.
- 54 Ibid., pl. 14. See also pl. 21. Caylus 1764 (as fn. 3), vol. VI, pl. III.ii.
- 55 Caylus 1764 (as fn. 3), vol. VI, pl. III.ii.
- 56 Steffi Roettgen, Das Papyruskabinett von Mengs in der Biblioteca Vaticana. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Idee des Museo Pio-Clementino, in: *Münchner Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* 3. Folge, Bd. 31 (1980), pp. 189–246, p. 221.

- 57 Iversen 1993 (as fn. 4), p. 110.
- 58 Ibid., p. 99.
- 59 Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopædia or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, London, 1728, «Hieroglyphics», p. 249. See also Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997, for similar perceptions on the hieroglyphs.
- 60 See for instance Christian J. Emden, Kulturwissenschaft as Entzifferungsunternehmen. Hieroglyphik, Emblematisierung und historische Einbildungskraft bei Walter Benjamin, in: A. Assmann, J. Assmann (eds.), *Hieroglyphen. Stationen einer anderen abendländischen Grammatologie*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2003, pp. 297–326.
- 61 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 8, p. 10.
- 62 This piece, now in Copenhagen, was much appraised by Winckelmann. See Mette Moltesen, Rebecca Hast, The Antinous Casali in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, in: *Analecta Romana XXX* (2004), pp. 101–117.
- 63 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 8.
- 64 See Hyde Minor 2015 (as fn. 7), p. 172 for a discussion of pl. 49.
- 65 Winckelmann 1764 (as fn. 20), pp. 56–62.
- 66 See also van Eck and Versluys 2017, pp. 83–84.
- 67 Caylus 1759 (as fn. 3), p. xxix.
- 68 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 9.
- 69 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 2.
- 70 [anonymous], *Monumens Egyptiens consistant en obelisques, pyramides, chambres sepulcrales, statues d'idoles et de pretres, en momies, en grand nombre de divinités de cette nation, en bas-reliefs, en sacrifices, en animaux qu'elle adorait & c. Le tout gravé sur deux cens planches avec leurs explications historiques*, I–II, Rome, 1791. For the present study, I have used the Sackler Library copy. Shelf mark: SAC Rare books, Mon 333. Sackler Library, University of Oxford.
- 71 See *Piranèse et les Français 1740–1790*, Rome: Edizioni dell'Elefante, 1976, cat. 3 (p. 36) and Andrew Wilton, Ilaria Bignami (eds.), *Grand Tour. The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, London: Tate Gallery, 1996, p. 118, cat. no. 75: oil painting of the interior of the Bouchard et Gravier shop (private collection, Rome). See also Hyde Minor 2015 (as fn. 7), pp. 48–49.
- 72 *Monumens Egyptiens* 1791, vol. I, pl. 21, 29 and vol. II, pl. 8, 34, 35, 53, 57, 72, 93 and 96.
- 73 Ibid., vol. II, pl. 3 and pl. 8.
- 74 For the collections of Caylus, see <http://caylus-recueil.huma-num.fr/>.
- 75 For some interesting remarks regarding these selection processes, see Stephen Quirke, Modern Mummies and ancient Scarabs. The Egyptian collection of Sir William Hamilton, in: *Journal of the History of Collections* 9.2 (1997), pp. 253–262.
- 76 See Anne Haslund Hansen, *Niebuhr's Museum. Artefacts and Souvenirs from the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia 1761–1767*, Copenhagen: Forlaget Vandkunsten, 2016.
- 77 Norden 1755 (as fn. 30), pl. LV, inv. no. AA c 18.
- 78 Richard Pococke, *A description of the East, and some other Countries*, London, 1743, vol. 1, p. 211, p. 213.
- 79 Piranesi 1769 (as fn. 5), p. 10.

## The Egyptian Centrepiece of the Sèvres Manufactory (Odile Nouvel-Kammerer)

- 1 I would like to thank Caroline van Eck, Professor of Architectural History at Cambridge University, Miguel John Versluys, Professor of Classical Archaeology at Leiden University, Jean-Marcel Humbert, ancien conservateur général du Patrimoine, Tamara Préaud, Honorary Archivist at the Sèvres manufactory for her expert advice, Olga Jegorova, Curator at the State Museum of Ceramics and the Kuskovo 18<sup>th</sup> century collections in Moscow. I am indebted to them for their useful suggestions, which have greatly contributed to improve this paper. I would also like to thank Camille Joseph for her excellent translation.
- 2 Both centrepieces are currently held at the State Museum of Ceramics and the Kuskovo 18<sup>th</sup> century collections in Moscow.
- 3 See the entry about the *surtout* in *Vocabulaire typologique. Objets civils et domestiques*, Paris, 2002, p. 234.
- 4 On architectural models, see Werner Szambien, *Le Musée d'architecture*, Paris: Picard, 1988.
- 5 Luigi Valadier au Louvre ou *L'Antiquité exaltée*, exh. cat. Musée du Louvre, 17 November 1994 – 13 February 1995, Les Dossiers du Louvre, Paris : Réunion des Musées Nationaux. Alvar Gonzales-Palacios, *I Valadier : l'Album dei disegni del Museo Napoleonico*, Rome: Palombi, 2015.
- 6 Pierre Enès, Le surtout de mariage en porcelaine de Sèvres du Dauphin, 1769–1770, in: *Revue de l'art* 76, 1987, pp. 63–73.
- 7 Frederike Werner, *Ägyptomanie in Preussen. Die Tafelskulptur zur Hochzeit im Königshaus 1804*, Weimar: VDG, 2016. Although Bonaparte had been invited to attend the wedding, he did not go and simply sent a message of congratulations. But news of the existence of the centrepiece probably reached Paris.
- 8 The Egyptian centrepiece has been studied extensively: Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel, Les surtoutes impériaux en porcelaine de Sèvres, in: *Keramik Freunde der Schweiz, Mitteilungsblatt* 88, 1976; Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel, Le surtout en biscuit du service égyptien, in: *Versailles et les Tables royales en Europe*, exh. cat. Versailles, 3 November 1993–27 February 1994, Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1993, pp. 362–364; *Egyptomania*, exh. cat. Musée du Louvre, January–April 1994, Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1994, pp. 220–243.
- 9 Cf. Correspondance, no. AN2, in: Marie-Anne Dupuy, Isabelle Le Masne de Chermont, Elaine Williamson (eds.), *Vivant Denon, directeur des musées sous le Consulat et l'Empire, correspondance (1802–1815)*, Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1999, quoted in Tamara Préaud, Denon et la Manufacture impériale de Sèvres, in: *Vivant Denon, L'œil de Napoléon*, exh. cat. Paris, 20 October 1999–17 January 2000, Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1999, p. 294.
- 10 Vivant Denon, *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte*, Paris; Didot, 1802; The text was published in English in 1803: Vivant Denon, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt*, vol. 1 & 2, New York, 1803. *Description de l'Égypte ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'Armée française*, Paris: Imprimerie impériale (later Imprimerie royale), 1809–1828. Even though the *Description* was published after the manufacturing of the Egyptian centrepiece, it can still be used as a valuable source for this study since the information contained in the book was known to Denon and other learned people such as Brongniart as soon as the end of the Egypt expedition.
- 11 Brongniart himself evaluated the total cost after the whole service and the *surtout* were delivered on 2 October 1808. Sèvres Cité de la Céramique. Archives of the Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres (hereafter »SCC MNS«), Pb1 L1, October 1808.
- 12 SCC MNS, T1 L6 D2, letter of 15 February 1805.
- 13 SCC MNS, T4 L2 D4, letter of 10 March 1808.
- 14 SCC MNS, M1 D7, report by Salmon, cashier, to Brongniart, 7 May 1808.

- 15 SCC MNS, T4 L1 D4, letter of 5 August 1808 from Daru to Brongniart.
- 16 Denis Roche, *Mobilier français en Russie*, Paris: Levy, 1913, pp. 10–12.
- 17 *Egyptomania* 1994 (as fn. 8), p. 220–243. *Description de l'Égypte* (as fn. 10) *Antiquité*, vol. I, II, III and IV.
- 18 *Egyptomania* 1994 (as fn. 8).
- 19 *Description*... (as fn. 10), vol. I, chap. 1, p. 7 and pl. 28 »Vue perspective de l'édifice est«.
- 20 Brongniart and Denon adopted the name »great temple of Philae.«
- 21 Vivant Denon 1803 (as fn. 10), vol. 2, p. 96. [French reference: Vivant Denon 1802 (as fn. 10), t. I, p. 140.]
- 22 *Description*... (as fn. 10) vol. IV, pl. 29 »Façade du portique du temple de Denderah«.
- 23 *Description*... (as fn. 10), 1821, vol. I, chap. V, p. 318–319 and 1809, vol. I, pl. 53 »Elévation du portique du grand temple d'Edfou«.
- 24 Respectively *Description*... (as fn. 10) 1809, vol. I, pl. 51 and vol. II, pl. 21 and vol. III, pl. 29.
- 25 SCC MNS, L6 D2, letter of 15 February 1805. The Egyptians are a direct copy of the line drawings in the Denon, *Voyage*... 1802 (as fn. 10), vol. II, pl. 135. See *Egyptomania* 1994 (as fn. 8), p. 226.
- 26 The table top arrived in Saint Petersburg after the centrepiece. Because it was impossible to have the stairs made in porcelain, which Brongniart realised at the last minute, he eventually went for a stand in painted metal imitating granite, the Egyptian stone *par excellence*, ordered from the manufacture de vernis sur métal et laque français, 10 rue Martel in Paris. SCC MNS, T4 L2 D4.
- 27 Tamara Préaud, *The Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory and the Triumph of Art and Industry, 1800–1847*, exh. cat. Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, October 1997 – February 1998, New York: Publ. for the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 1997, pp. 179.
- 28 *Egyptomania* 1994 (as fn. 8). Olga Jegerova, Das Ägyptische Service von Sèvres. Porzellan als Mittel der Diplomatie, in: K. Weber, K. Klemp, *Fragile. Die Tafel der Zaren und das Porzellan der Revolutionäre. Porzellan als Kunst und Instrument in Diplomatie, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, exh. cat. Kunstgewerbe Museum, Frankfurt, Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2008.
- 29 My gratitude goes to Jean Marcel Humbert for clarifying this point. Brongniart always speaks of a »frieze of hieroglyphs« without mentioning that they are in fact imaginary.
- 30 Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), pp. 24–28. The Victoria and Albert Museum bought the Egyptian service in 1979 (see Charles Truman, *The Sèvres Egyptian Service 1810–1812*, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1982).
- 31 *Egyptomania* 1994 (as fn. 8), p. 225.
- 32 In 1802, two years after the nomination of Alexandre Brongniart at Sèvres, Bonaparte appointed Denon director of the Central Museum for the Arts (*Museum central des arts*), then Director of the Arts, hence keeping under his control the State manufactories, among which Sèvres.
- 33 SCC MNS, Pb1 L1: »The *service égyptien* may be considered to be completed, only the *surtout* will prevent it from being exposed.« See Helmina von Chézy. *Leben und Kunst in Paris seit Napoleon I*, hg. v. Bénédicte Savoy, Berlin: Akademie Verlag GmbH, 2009, p. 386, p. 684. Tamara Préaud, Le Service égyptien offert par Napoléon Ier au tsar Alexandre Ier de Russie en 1808, in: *Versailles*... 1993 (as fn. 8), p. 359, n. 8.
- 34 SCC MNS, T2 L2 D5.
- 35 Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 9 and 10.

36 SCC MNS, Pb1 L1.

37 Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 12. Tamara Préaud, Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart à la Manufacture de Sèvres, in: *Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart 1739–1813. Architecture et décor*. Exh. cat. Musée Carnavalet, 22 Avril – 13 Juillet 1986, Paris: Les Musées de la Ville de Paris, 1986, pp. 239–261.

38 Sculpture by Charles-Auguste Taunay, SCC MNS, Pb1 L1. Cf Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 10, pp. 13–14.

39 Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 14.

40 Apollo and Diana were made by Louis-Simon Boizot. Clodion is responsible for the bas-reliefs of figures at the base of the columns (ibid., p. 13).

41 The Sèvres papers mention a »flower basin« whereas Brongniart actually drew a fruit bowl (ibid., p. 13 and p. 51).

42 Brongniart junior is careful to note that »they are placed in between the large pieces, never in front of them; they should all contain three or four flowers of medium size.«

43 The group of three Graces was sculpted by Antoine-Denis Chaudet. SCC MNS, Pb1 L1 and Vj 13 fol.20 vo, 105 vo and 112. Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 14.

44 Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 12.

45 SCC MNS, T3 L1 D2. Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 11. Tamara Préaud, Denon et la Manufacture impériale de Sèvres, in: Vivant Denon, *Ceil de Napoléon* 1999 (as fn. 9), pp. 295–316.

46 About the Sèvres manufactory, Daru wrote Brongniart junior: »It ought to be the first and not the second-best.« Letter of 11 September 1807.

47 Napoleon Bonaparte, *Correspondance générale, t.V, Boulogne, Trafalgar, Austerlitz, 1805*, Paris: Fayard, 2008, p. 543, lettre 10517. Napoleon's correspondence, 6 August 1805 (18th day of Thermidor, year XIII). The order putting Denon in charge of illustrating the campaigns of Italy and Germany was issued on 28 February 1806. The drawings of the Italian and German campaigns were made under Denon's supervision at Napoleon's request.

48 See above, fn. 7.

49 Egypt was not mentioned in the treaty of Tilsit, but in May 1808, Napoleon asked his Ministry of the Navy, Decrès, to prepare an expedition to India and a landing in Egypt as part of the war against Britain. On the topic, see: Maurice Dupont, *L'Amiral Decrès et Napoléon, ou la fidélité orangeuse d'un ministre*, Paris: Economica, 2015; Caroline Gaultier-Kurhan, *Méhémet Ali et la France 1805–1849. Histoire singulière du Napoléon de l'Orient*, Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2005; Marie-Pierre Rey, *Alexandre Ier. Le tsar qui vainquit Napoléon*, Paris: Flammarion, 2009; Edouard Driaault, *Mohamed Aly et Napoléon (1807–1814)*, Cairo: Société Royale de Géographie, 1925; Mireille Musso, Caulincourt, ambassadeur en Russie, et la réalité de l'alliance franco-russe, in: *Napoleonica. La Revue* 3.18 (2013), pp. 4–21.

50 Exh. cat. *Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart 1739–1813. Architecture et décor*. Musée Carnavalet, 22 Avril – 13 Juillet 1986, Paris: Les Musées de la Ville de Paris, 1986, p. 221f.

51 See Odile Nouvel-Kammerer, *L'Aigle et le Papillon. Symboles des pouvoirs sous Napoléon 1800–1815*, exh. cat. Paris: Les Arts décoratifs, 2008 and Odile Nouvel-Kammerer, *Symbols of Power, Napoleon and the Arts of the Empire Style*, New York; American Federation of Arts, 2007.

52 Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Vasi, candelabri, cippi, sarcofagi, tripodi, lucerne, ed ornamenti antichi disegnati ed incisi*, vol.1, Rome, 1778–1780. The plates were not originally numbered and thus present different numbers in the various copies. According to Corinna Höper (*Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Die poetische Wahrheit. Radierungen*, Stuttgart: Verlag Hatje, 1999, p. 233), Giovanni's son, Franco Piranesi, added eight more plates between 1778 and 1791, including the one mentioned here.

53 Arizzoli-Clémentel 1976 (as fn. 8), p. 50, fn. 86.

54 »Pianta Geometrica di una Marmorea antiqua Tavola delle sorti Circensi, ritrovata presso le rovine d'un antico Circo a Boville, luogo in oggi detto le Frattocchie di Albano. Essa rappresenta un Circo in cui scorreva un Fonte agguisa del Meandro Fiume della Frigia. A Tubo donde veniva l'Acqua che spingeva le Tessere nel Canale inclinato B C Carceri, Ossian posti, da cui crano lanciate le Tessere. D Infimo foro, o Emissario dell'Acqua.«

55 Tacitus, *Annales*, XV, 23. See Girolamo Torquati, *Studi storico-archeologici sulla città e sul territorio di Marino*, Marino: Tipografica Renze Palozzi, 1878.

56 The circus's vestiges were excavated in 1823 only after Brongniart had designed the Olympic centrepiece.

57 Antoine-Augustin de Bruzen de La Martinière, *Grand dictionnaire géographique et critique*, t. V, The Hague, Amsterdam and Rotterdam, 1835, p. 228.

58 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, »cinquième promenade«, (1776–1778), Lausanne, 1782: »De toutes les habitations où j'ai demeuré (et j'en ai eu de charmantes), aucune ne m'a rendu si véritablement heureux et ne m'a laissé de si tendres regrets que l'île Saint-Pierre [...] m'eût suffi durant toute mon existence sans laisser naître un seul instant dans mon âme le désir d'un autre état.« »Of all the places where I have lived (and I have lived in some charming ones) none has made me so truly happy or left me such tender regrets as the Island of Saint-Pierre. ... [It] would have been enough to have lived like that for the whole of my life, without ever feeling in my soul the desire to live in another state.« Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Fifth Walk, in: *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. Russell Goulbourne, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 49–50.]

59 Monique Moser and Henri Lavagne (ed.), *Hadrien empereur et architecte. La villa d'Hadrien*, Geneva: Vogele, 2002; Franceschini, *Villa Adriana*, Rome: L'Erma, di Brestchneider, 1991. In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, plans of Hadrian's villa were made, in particular by Piranesi in collaboration with Clérissseau, as well as by Adrien Pâris.

60 The most advanced examples of such panoramic landscapes, in which city buildings are artificially put in a row along a riverbank, are the *Rives du Bosphore* and the *Monuments de Paris*, both printed by the Dufour manufactory around 1810 and 1814 respectively. Cf. Odile Nouvel-Kammerer, *Papiers panoramiques*, Paris: Union des arts décoratifs/Flammarion, 1990.

61 »[The island of Chemmis] is situated in a deep and broad lake by the side of the temple at Buto, and it is said by the Egyptians that this island is a floating island. I myself did not see it either floating about or moved from its place, and I feel surprise at hearing of it, wondering if it be indeed a floating island. [...] And the Egyptians, when they say that it is floating, add this story, namely that in this island, which formerly was not floating, Leto, being one of the eight gods who came into existence first, and dwelling in the city of Buto where she has this Oracle, received Apollo from Isis as a charge and preserved him, concealing him in the island which is said now to be a floating, at that time when Typhon came after him seeking everywhere and desiring to find the son of Osiris. Now they say that Apollo and Artemis are children of Dionysos and of Isis, and that Leto became their nurse and preserver; and in the Egyptian tongue Apollo is Oros, Demeter is Isis, and Artemis is Bubastis.« (Herodotus, *Histoires*, trad. G. C Macaulay, vol. I, London: Macmillan & Co, 1890, p. 135). The French translation by Larcher (1802) reads: »L'île de Chemmis [...] est dans un lac profond et spacieux, près du temple de Latone à Buto. Les Egyptien assurent que cette île est flottante ; pour moi, je ne l'ai vue ni flotter, ni remuer, et je fus fort surpris d'entendre dire qu'il y eut réellement des îles flottantes. [...] Latone, l'une de huit plus ancienne Divinités demeurait à Buto, où est maintenant son Oracle. Isis lui ayant remis Apollon en dépôt, elle le cacha dans cette île, qu'on appelle aujourd'hui île flottante, et qui autrefois étoit fixe et immobile ; elle le sauva dans le temps même qu'arrivoit Typhon qui cherchoit par-tout le fils d'Osiris ; car, ils disent qu'Apollon et Diane sont nés de Bacchus et d'Isis, et que Latone fut leur nourrice et leur conservatrice. Apollon s'appelle Orus en Egyptien, Cérès, Isis, et Diane, Bubastis. « (Hérodote, *Histoire*, trad. Larcher, Paris, 1802, chap. CLVI, p. 130–132) Larcher adds a footnote: »J'ignore si l'île de Chem-



mis a jamais été flottante. On peut en douter, surtout après ce qu'en dit notre Historien. Les Grecs prétendaient que l'île de Delos avoit été flottante. Je suis persuadé qu'ils n'ont imaginé cette fable, que sur le récit des Egyptiens qui s'étoient établis chez eux, et qu'ils ont attribué à l'île de Délos, lieu de naissance d'Apollon, ce que les Egyptiens leur racontaient de celle de Chemmis, qui avoit servi d'asyle à leur Apollon. Un rocher de deux mille toises de longueur ne peut nager sur les eaux ; mais les Grecs, grands amateurs de merveilleux, n'y regardoient pas de si près.» (ibid., fn. 536, p. 513–514) [«I don't know if the island of Chemmis ever floated. One may doubt it, especially after hearing from our Historian. The Greeks pretended that the island of Delos had floated. I am quite convinced that they imagined this fable only because of the tale told by the Egyptians who settled in their homeland, and that they attributed to the island of Delos, birthplace of Apollo, what the Egyptians told them about Chemmis, which had served as asylum to their Apollo. A twelve thousand feet-long rock cannot float on water; but the Greeks, who were keen on wonders, looked at things from a distance.»] Many ancient writers compared the island of Chemmis to Delos as a floating island. See Dugas Montbel, *Observations sur l'Odyssée d'Homère*, Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1833, p. 159.

**62** Denon, *Travels*... 1803 (as fn. 10), p. 83 (French ref.: Denon, *Voyage*... 1802 [as fn. 10], vol. I, p. 134.).

**63** Szambien 1988 (as fn. 4).

**64** Quatremère de Quincy, *De l'architecture égyptienne considérée dans son origine, ses principes et son goût, et comparée sous les mêmes rapports à l'architecture grecque*, Paris, 1803. See Vassili Petridou, «A. C. Quatremère de Quincy et son mémoire sur l'architecture égyptienne», in Chantal Grell (éd.), *L'Égypte imaginaire de la Renaissance à Champollion. Colloque en Sorbonne*, Paris, 2001, p. 173–186. Caroline van Eck, «Antoine-Christophe Quatremère de Quincy, De l'Architecture Égyptienne, considérée dans son origine, ses principes et son goût, et comparée sous les mêmes rapports à l'Architecture Grecque», M. Burioni (ed.), *Weltgeschichten der Architektur. Ursprünge, Narrative, Bilder 1700–2016*, exh. cat. Munich: Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte/Dietmar Klinger Verlag, December 2016 – March 2017, pp. 97–114.

**65** Denon, *Travels*... 1803 (as fn. 10), vol. 1, p. 203. (French ref.: Denon, *Voyage*... [as fn. 10] p. 93).

**66** Denon, *Travels*... 1803 (as fn. 10), vol. 2, p. 40 (French ref.: Denon, *Voyage*... [as fn. 10] p. 113).

**67** See Pascal Griener's contribution in this volume.

**68** *Description*... 1821 (as fn. 10), vol. 2, p. 4. Denon adds: «Au travers de cette porte on découvre le grand temple qui forme le plus magnifique tableau. Il serait difficile d'exprimer tout ce que fait éprouver de sensations diverses l'aspect de ces figures colossales d'Isis qui portent l'entablement du portique. Il semble que l'on ait été tout à coup transporté dans un lieu de féerie et d'enchantement : on est tout à la fois saisi d'étonnement et d'admiration.» («Through the door one discovers the great temple displaying the most wonderful picture. It would be difficult to express all the various feelings inspired by the appearance of those colossal statues of Isis carrying the entablature of the portico. It feels as if one was suddenly transported to a magical and enchanted place, standing in wonder and awe at the same time.»)

**69** See above, fn. 23.

**70** Denon, *Travels*... 1803 (as fn. 10), vol. 2, p. 96 (French ref.: Denon, *Voyage*... 1802 [as fn. 10], t. I, p. 140). In *Description*... 1821 (as fn. 10), vol. I, chap. V, p. 318–319, he adds: «Le petit temple n'est pas moins riche de sculpture que le temple d'Osiris: les figures qu'on y a le plus fréquemment représentées sont celle d'Isis et de son fils Horus. La tête d'Isis est aussi sculptée en relief sur les quatre faces des dés qui surmontent les chapiteaux ; et l'on ne saurait douter que ce temple n'ait été consacré à Isis ou à Horus et peut-être les deux à la fois.» («The small temple is no less sculpted than the temple of Osiris. Frequent figures are that of Isis and of her son Horus. The head of Isis is sculpted in relief on the four sides of the dice on top of the capital. There is no doubt the temple was dedicated to Isis or to Horus, or even to both at the same time.»)

**71** See above, fn. 3.

**72** Panoramic papers also presented antique themes that allowed those living in those rooms and looking at the walls to be »transported«, namely to identify with mythological characters. See Nouvel-Kammerer 1990 (as fn. 60).

**73** On the symbols of ornaments during the Empire and the influence of images in homes and daily life, see *ibid.*

**74** As Jean-Marcel Humbert has shown, the temple in the middle of the Egyptian centrepiece actually represents Philae's kiosk (*Egyptomania* 1994 (as fn. 8), pp. 220–221). The temple of Denderah is described as follows: »In all scenes, the goddess Isis stands at the front, and it is to her in particular that offerings are made. As we will soon see, its statue is prominent in all the visible sides of the temple being described, and where there is hardly any doubt she was being worshipped.« (»dans toutes ces scènes, la déesse Isis est en première ligne, et que c'est à elle que l'on adresse particulièrement les offrandes. Nous verrons d'ailleurs bientôt que son image se trouve en évidence dans tous les lieux apparents du temple que nous décrivons, et où l'on ne peut douter qu'elle fut honorée d'un culte particulier.«) *Description de l'Égypte*, Panckoucke, Paris, 1821, tome III, chap. X, p. 315. Also: »Isis symbole de la terre féconde et image de l'astre des nuits, sœur d'Apollon chez les Grecs, et chez les Égyptiens, femme et sœur d'Osiris. [...] Le nom d'Apollinopolis, que les Grecs ont donné à l'ancienne ville d'Edfou, porterait à croire que ce temple était principalement consacré à Horus, dont les Grecs ont fait leur Apollon, comme le témoignent Hérodote, Diodore et Plutarque. Apollon s'appelait Horus en langue égyptienne et les Grecs traduisaient Horus par Apollon. Celui-ci avait tué le serpent Python, celui-là était le vainqueur de Typhon.« (*Description de l'Égypte*, ed. Panckoucke, Paris, 1821, tome I, chap. V, p. 318). (Isis, symbol of fertility and image of the nightly star, sister to Apollo for the Greeks and, for the Egyptians, wife and sister to Osiris. [...] The name Apollinopolis which the Greeks gave to the ancient city of Edfou would lead us to think that the temple was mainly dedicated to Horus, which the Greeks took as their Apollo, as testified by Herodotus, Diodorus and Plutarch. Apollo was called Horus in the Egyptian language, and the Greeks called Horus Apollo. The latter was the slayer of the Python, the former vanquished Typhon.«) See also Pierre-Nicolas Rolfe, *Recherches sur le culte de Bacchus, symbole de la force reproductive de la nature*, Paris: Merlin, 1824, t. II, pp. 113–127.

**75** On Isis worship, see Laurent Bricault, *Les Cultes isiaques dans le monde gréco-romain*, Paris: Belles lettres, 2013. On the Roman Iseum, see Miguel John Verluys, Isis Capitolina and Egyptian cults in late Republican Rome, in: Laurent Bricault (ed.), *Isis en Occident. Actes du IIe colloque international sur les études isiaques*, RGRW 151, Leiden, Brill, 2004, pp. 421–448. Bernard de Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, t. II, part II, Paris, 1722, p. 275.

**76** It is interesting to note that there is no obelisk on the engraving of the kiosk. However, in his *Description of Egypt* (as fn. 10, p. 7), Denon specifies that at the entrance of the temple »were two small sandstone obelisks. Only one is still standing, and all is left of the other is the space it used to occupy.«

**77** Jurgis Baltrusaitis, *Essai sur la légende d'un mythe. La quête d'Isis. Introduction à l'Égyptomanie*, Paris: Perrin, 1967; Mona Ozouf, *La Fête révolutionnaire*, Paris: Gallimard, 1976.

**78** See in particular: Court de Gébelin, *Le Monde primitif analysé et comparé avec le monde moderne*, Paris, 1773 and Charles Dupuis, *L'Origine de tous les cultes*, Paris, 1794.

**79** »At the front of the ancient vessel, the prow loaded with a statue of Isis, seated, in silver on a sea of the same, and dexterated with a star also in silver.« Respectively, memoir of 12 April 1810 and decree of 20 January 1811. In Baltrusaitis 1967 (as fn. 77), p. 67. See also A. de Coëtlogon, L. M. Tisserand, *Les Armoiries de la ville de Paris*, t. II, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1875, pp. 179–180 and appendix XXXVII.

**80** Pierre Mollier (ed.), *La Franc-maçonnerie sous l'Empire: un âge d'or?*, Paris: Dervy, 2007. I would like to thank Pierre Mollier for helpful research tips. See also Jan Assmann, *Das verschleierte Bild zu Saïs. Schillers Ballade und ihre griechischen und Ägyptischen Hintergründe*, Stuttgart: Teubner, 1999, and id., *Religio Duplex*, Paris: Aubier Flammarion, 2010. J. Assmann, F. Ebeling, *Ägyptische Mysterien. Reisen in die Unterwelt*, in: *Aufklärung und Romantik, Eine kommentierte Anthologie* (2014).

81 Rey 2009 (as fn. 49).

82 Charles Dupuis, like Alexandre Lenoir, did not believe that pyramids were tombs but rather »monuments erected in honour of the sun.« (quoted in Dominique Poulot, *Musée, nation, patrimoine (1789–1815)*, Paris: Gallimard, 1997, p. 140) However, this point of view was quite uncommon at the time.

83 I would like to thank Antoine d’Albis, former laboratory director at the Sèvres manufactory and Honorary President of the Friends of the Sèvres Museum, for offering valuable insight into the context in which the *Ruines d’Égypte* were created. *Edouard et Cléopâtre. Egyptomanies depuis le XIXe siècle*, exh. cat. Villa Empain, 20 September 2012 – 10 February 2013, Brussels: Fondation Boghossian, 2012. Paul-Louis Rinuy, Anne (1941–) et Patrick (1942–) Poirier, in: *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, online, 2017. Jérôme Sans, Les Ruines du présent, in: *Anne et Patrick Poirier*, exh. cat. Museum für Moderne Kunst, Vienna: Stiftung Ludwig, 1994 / Fréjus: Le Capiton, Centre d’art, 1994, pp. 57–65.

### Pharaohs, Papyri and Hookahs (Cecilia Hurley)

1 I should like to thank Claire Barbillon, Pascal Griener, Jean-Marcel Humbert and Miguel John Versluys for having read various versions of this article and offered constructive criticism and very useful references.

2 Victor Fournel, Voyage à travers l’Exposition universelle, in: *Le Correspondant* 25 (July 1867), p. 616.

3 Alfred Maury, L’ancienne Égypte d’après les dernières découvertes. L’exposition égyptienne du Champ de Mars, in: *Revue des Deux Mondes* 37/71 (September 1867), pp. 182–207, p. 182.

4 Alfred Maury, Des Découvertes modernes sur l’Égypte ancienne, in: *Revue des Deux Mondes* 25/11 (September 1855), pp. 1052–1078; Ernest Renan, Les Antiquités égyptiennes et les Fouilles de M. Mariette, souvenirs de mon voyage en Égypte, in: *Revue des Deux Mondes* 35/56 (April 1865), pp. 660–689.

5 Patrizia Piacentini, Percorsi dell’Egittologia all’inizio del XIX secolo. Musei e tutela delle collezioni, in: *Ricerche di storia dell’arte* 100 (2010), pp. 13–21; Bénédicte Savoy, Dietrich Wildung, Neue Impulse aus Berlin? Ägyptische Museen vor und nach der Eröffnung des Neuen Museums in Berlin, in: Ellinoor Bergvelt, Donald Gardner (eds.), *Museale Spezialisierung und Nationalisierung ab 1830. Das Neue Museum in Berlin im internationalen Kontext*, Berlin: G+H Verlag, 2011, pp. 51–68.

6 For Renaissance reception of Egyptian artefacts and culture see: Brian Curran, *The Egyptian renaissance: the afterlife of ancient Egypt in early modern Italy*, Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

7 Mirjam Hoijsink, *Exhibiting the past. Caspar Reuvers and the museums of antiquities in Europe, 1800–1840*, transl. Wendie Shaffer, Donald Gardner, Kate Williams, Turnhout: Brepols, 2012, pp. 86–93.

8 Edme-François Jomard (ed.), *Description de l’Égypte ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l’expédition de l’armée française*, 7 t. en 9 vol. + 4 vol. de pl., Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, then Imprimerie royale, 1809–1822; Yves Laissus, »Description de l’Égypte«. Une aventure humaine et éditoriale, Paris: Éd. de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2009; Barbara Pellegrielli, *Un capolavoro editoriale al servizio della cultura. La description de l’Égypte (1809–1828)*, Fasano: Schena, 2008.

9 Stephanie Moser, *Wondrous curiosities. Ancient Egypt at the British Museum*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006, pp. 65–67.

10 Paul Starkey, Janet Starkey (eds.), *Travellers in Egypt*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1998; Paul Starkey, Janet Starkey (eds.), *Unfolding the Orient. Travellers in Egypt and the Near East*, Reading: Ithaca, 2001; Patricia Usick, Deborah Manley, *The Sphinx revealed. A forgotten record of pioneering excavations*, London: British Museum, 2007; Luigi Montobbio, *Giovanni Battista Belzoni. La vita, i viaggi, le scoperte*, Roma:

L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1984; Ivor Noel Hume, *Belzoni. The giant archaeologists love to hate*, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011; Deborah Manley, Peta Rée, *Henry Salt. Artist, traveller, diplomat, Egyptologist*, London: Libri, 2001; Giovanni D'Athanasi, *A brief account of the researches and discoveries in upper Egypt, made under the direction of Henry Salt, Esq. To which is added a detailed catalogue of Mr Salt's collection of Egyptian antiquities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014; Ronald Thomas Ridley, *Napoleon's proconsul in Egypt. The life and times of Bernardino Drovetti*, London: the Rubicon press, 1998; Philippe Maiterrot, *Aux origines de l'égyptologie: voyages et collections de Frédéric Cailliaud, 1787–1869*, Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011.

**11** Juliette Tanré-Szewczyk, Des antiquités égyptiennes au musée. Modèles, appropriations et constitution du champ de l'égyptologie dans la première moitié du XIXe siècle, à travers l'exemple croisé du Louvre et du British Museum, in: *Les Cahiers de l'École du Louvre* 11 (2017), <http://journals.openedition.org/cel/681> (accessed May 17, 2019).

**12** Jean-François Champollion, *Notice descriptive des monuments égyptiens du Musée Charles X, rédigée par Jean-François Champollion*, Sylvie Guichard (ed.), Paris: Louvre/Éd. Khéops, 2013, p. 36, quoting Louis de Blacas, *Inventaire analytique de quelques lettres nouvelles de Champollion le jeune et de plusieurs documents inédits concernant l'histoire de l'Égypte tirés des archives de M. Le duc de Blacas*, in: *Recueil d'études égyptologiques dédiées à la mémoire de Jean-François Champollion: à l'occasion du centenaire de la lettre à M. Dacier, relative à l'alphabet des hiéroglyphes phonétiques, lue à l'Académie des Inscriptions et belles-lettres le 27 septembre 1822*, Paris: E. Champion, 1922, pp. 3–22, p. 7.

**13** Andrew Robinson, *Cracking the Egyptian Code. The Revolutionary Life of Jean-François Champollion*, New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. He was only to visit Egypt in 1828–1830.

**14** Jean-François Champollion, *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens Égyptiens, ou Recherches sur les éléments premiers de cette écriture sacrée, sur leurs diverses combinaisons, et sur les rapports de ce système avec les autres méthodes graphiques égyptiennes*, 2 vols., Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1824; Thomas Young, *An account of some recent discoveries in hieroglyphical literature, and Egyptian antiquities. Including the author's original alphabet, as extended by Mr. Champollion, with a translation of five unpublished Greek and Egyptian manuscripts*, London: John Murray, 1823; Lesley Adkins, Roy Adkins, *The keys of Egypt. The race to read the hieroglyphs*, London: HarperCollins, 2001.

**15** Pieter van Wesemael, *Architecture of instruction and delight. A socio-historical analysis of world exhibitions as a didactic phenomenon (1798–1851–1970)*, transl. George Hall, Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001, pp. 233–234.

**16** Various called the »Portique de l'histoire du travail«, the »Galerie de l'histoire du travail« or the »Musée de l'Histoire de Travail«: see Charles de Linas, *L'Histoire du travail à l'Exposition universelle de 1867*, Arras: Rousseau-Leroy, 1868 and Edmond Du Sommerard, *Commission de l'histoire du travail. Exposition universelle de 1867 à Paris*, Paris: P. Dupont, 1867.

**17** Boucher de Perthes: see Claudine Cohen, Jean-Jacques Hublin, *Boucher de Perthes. Les origines romantiques de la préhistoire*, pref. Yves Coppens, Paris: Belin, 2017, p. 247. Charlotte Quiblier, L'exposition préhistorique de la Galerie de l'Histoire du travail en 1867. Organisation, réception et impacts, in: *Les Cahiers de l'École du Louvre* 5 (2014), <http://journals.openedition.org/cel/470>. Monier patented his discovery immediately after the exhibition, thus depriving Joseph-Louis Lambot and François Cogniet (who had both shown their discoveries at the 1855 Exhibition) of the credit for having invented reinforced concrete. See Karl-Eugen Kurrer, La dalle dans le système Monier, in: Roberto Gargiani (ed.), *L'architrave, le plancher, la plateforme. Nouvelle histoire de la construction*, Lausanne: PPU, 2012, pp. 544–552, p. 544.

**18** Pierre Aymar-Bresson, *Histoire générale de l'Exposition universelle de 1867. Les puissances étrangères*, Paris: impr. J. Claye, 1868, col. 22: 415 square metres.

**19** Jean-Luc Arnaud, De l'exposition à l'urbanisation. Le Caire d'Ismaïl pacha, in: *Rives méditerranéennes* 47 (2014), pp. 45–58, p. 47; F. Robert Hunter, Egypt under the successors of Muhammad 'Ali,

in: M.W. Daly (ed.), *Modern Egypt, from 1517 to the end of the twentieth century* (*The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 2), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 180–197, p. 193.

20 Pierre Crabitès, *Ismail, the maligned khedive*, London: G. Routledge and Sons, 1933; Trevor Mostyn, *Egypt's Belle Epoque. Cairo and the age of the hedonists*, London: I. B. Tauris, 2007.

21 Arnaud 2014 (as fn. 19).

22 Charles-Edmond Chojecki, *L'Égypte à l'Exposition universelle de 1867*, Paris: Dentu, 1867, pp. 13–14. The members of the commission were: Nubar Pasha, Charles Edmond [Chojecki], Auguste Mariette-Bey, Colonel Hippolyte Mircher, Antonio Bey Figari, Joseph Claude. They were helped by Victor Vidal, Jacques Drevet, Emile Bin, Pierre Louis Nicolas Mallet, Eugène Louis Godin.

23 On the park and on the Egyptian contribution to the 1867 Exposition see Alia Nour, *Egyptian-French Cultural Encounters at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867*, in: *MDCCC 1800* 6 (2017), pp. 35–49, doi: \*10.14277/2280-8841/MDCCC-6-17-3.

24 Aymar-Bression 1868 (as fn. 18), col. 384. The pavilion of the Suez company was devoted to a presentation of this company's work on the Suez canal project and housed three main exhibits: a large plan of the area showing the route of the canal; a series of working models of the main machines being used and a number of showcases with samples of the soil, rocks, natural products of the area. A circular room just behind housed a panorama by Auguste Rubé, indicating the canal and the work being done on it. The pavilion was used for lectures, notably by Ferdinand Marie, Viscount Lesseps, one of the driving forces behind the canal project. For Lesseps's work see: Ferdinand de Lesseps, *Percement de l'isthme de Suez. Documents*, 6 vols., Paris: H. Plon, 1855–1866; Caroline Piquet, *La Compagnie du canal de Suez. Une concession française en Égypte, 1888-1956*, Paris: PUPS, 2008.

25 *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition 1867*, London: HMSO, 1868, p. xix.

26 Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the orient. Architecture of Islam at nineteenth-century world's fairs*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press, 1992, p. 57; Nour 2017 (as fn. 23), p. 35.

27 Chojecki 1867 (as fn. 22), pp. 222–223.

28 Chojecki 1867 (as fn. 22), p. 222.

29 Chojecki 1867 (as fn. 22), pp. 223–224.

30 Nour 2017 (as fn. 23), p. 46.

31 Auguste Mariette, *Description du parc égyptien. Exposition universelle de 1867*, Paris: Dentu, 1867, p. 95.

32 Mariette 1867 (as fn. 31), p. 95.

33 Chojecki 1867 (as fn. 22), p. 215.

34 Eugene Rimmel, *Recollections of the Paris Exhibition of 1867*, London: Chapman and Hall; Paris: Dentu, 1868, p. 238.

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36 Mariette 1867 (as fn. 31), pp. 87–93.

37 Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, *L'Égypte, la modernité et les expositions universelles*, in: *Bulletin de la Sabix* 54 (2014), pp. 37–41; Jean-Marcel Humbert, *L'Égypte à Paris*, Paris: Action artistique de la Ville de Paris, 1998, pp. 124–144; Marie-Stéphanie Delamaire, *L'Égypte à l'Exposition universelle de 1867. Une nation s'affirme?*, in: Jean-Marcel Humbert (ed.), *Bonaparte et l'Égypte. Feu et lumière*, Paris: Éditions Hazan, 2008, pp. 376–380, and catalogue entries 382–395; Jean-Marcel Humbert, *Parfum d'Orient... ou Quand l'Occident s'expose*, in: Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère

(ed.), *Exotiques expositions. Les expositions universelles et les cultures extra-européennes. France, 1855–1937*, Paris: Somogy/Archives nationales, 2010, pp. 22–35; Nour 2017 (as fn. 23).

**38** Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt*, Cambridge/New York/Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. ix, p. 2; Timothy Mitchell, The World as Exhibition, in: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31/2 (1989), pp. 217–236.

**39** Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, World exhibitions. A gateway to non-European cultures? in: *Quaderns d'Història de l'Enginyeria* 13 (2012), pp. 81–96; Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère (ed.), *Exotiques expositions. Les expositions universelles et les cultures extra-européennes. France, 1855–1937*, Paris: Somogy/Archives nationales, 2010.

**40** Paul A. Tenkotte, Kaleidoscopes of the World. International Exhibitions and the Concept of Culture-Place, 1851–1915, in: *American Studies* 28/1 (1987), pp. 5–29, p. 11.

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**44** Lara Kriegel, After the Exhibitionary Complex. Museum Histories and the Future of the Victorian Past, in: *Victorian Studies* 48/4 (2006), pp. 681–704, p. 683.

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- 59 Mariette 1867 (as fn. 31), pp. 27–34.
- 60 Mariette 1867 (as fn. 31), pp. 22–27.
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- 63 For the museum see: Ezio Godoli, Mercedes Volait (eds.), *Concours pour le musée des antiquités égyptiennes du Caire*, 1895, Paris: Picard, 2010; Auguste Mariette, *Notice des principaux monuments exposés dans les galeries provisoires du musée d'antiquités égyptiennes de S. A. le vice-roi, à Boulaq*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Paris: F. Vieweg, 1859; Auguste Mariette, *Album du musée de Boulaq: comprenant quarante planches, photographiées par MM. Delié et Béchard. Avec un texte explicatif*, Le Caire: Mourès, 1872; Gaston Maspero, *Guide du visiteur au musée de Boulaq*, Boulaq: au Musée, 1883; Thomas Lebé, Émile Guimet et la morsure du canard égyptien. Un curieux au musée de Boulaq, in: *Les Cahiers de l'École du Louvre* 5 (2014), <http://journals.openedition.org/cel/409> (accessed May 17, 2019).
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- 75** Geneviève Bresc-Bautier et al. (eds.), *Histoire du Louvre*, 3 vols., Paris: Fayard/Louvre éditions, 2016, vol. II, pp. 56–57, p. 56.
- 76** Champollion 2013 (as fn. 12), pp. 21, 33.
- 77** Ridley 1998 (as fn. 10), pp. 250–271; Laura Donatelli, La prima proposta d'acquisto da parte dei Savoia della collezione egizia di Bernardino Drovetti, in: *Studi piemontesi* 45/2 (2016), pp. 491–500; Beppe Moiso, *La storia del Museo egizio*, Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2016; *Catalogue des antiquités égyptiennes qui composent la collection de M. Thedenat-Duvent ... Vente 23 déc. 1822*, Paris: Bonnefons de La Vialle, Dubois, 1822; Sylvie Guichard, Une collection d'antiquités égyptiennes méconnue. La collection Thedenat-Duvent, in: *Revue d'Égyptologie* 58 (2007), pp. 201–236.
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**113** Richard Lepsius, *Briefe aus Aegypten, Aethiopien und der Halbinsel des Sinai geschrieben in den Jahren 1842–1845*, Berlin: W. Hertz, 1852, p. 362; see Seyfried, Jung 2012 (as fn. 112), p. 194. Georg Ebers, *Richard Lepsius. A biography*, transl. Zoe Dana Underhill, New York: William S. Gottsberger, 1887, p. 164: »I think,« he wrote, »that to produce a generally harmonious impression, we must preserve the characteristic styles of building of the different periods, and especially the order of the pillars, in their historical sequence, and also with all their rich colored decoration.«

**114** Max Schasler, *Die Königlichen Museen von Berlin. Ein praktisches Handbuch zum Besuch der Galerien, Sammlungen und Kunstschatze derselben*, Berlin: Nicolai, 1855, pp. 86–90; Ziegler 1994 (as fn. 74), pp. 147–149. See also Heinrich Brugsch, *Uebersichtliche Erklärung aegyptischer Denkmäler des königl. neuen Museums zu Berlin. Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Kenntniss des alten Aegyptens*, Berlin: F. Dümmler, 1850.

**115** Schasler 1855 (as fn. 114), p. 89.

**116** *Northern Germany. Handbook for travellers*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., Leipsic: K. Baedeker; London: Dulau, 1877, p. 32.

**117** Ebers 1887 (as fn. 113), pp. 189–190. See Savoy, Wildung 2012 (as fn. 5), p. 65 for Emmanuel de Rougé's criticism of the galleries.

**118** For example, Gustave Planche, Musée du Louvre, in: *Revue des Deux Mondes* 11 (1851), pp. 546–564.

**119** On the building and its history see: Cäcilia Bischoff, *Das Kunsthistorische Museum. Baugeschichte, Architektur, Dekoration*, Wilfried Seipel (ed.), Vienna: Brandstätter, 2008.

**120** *Uebersicht der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, Wien: Kunsthistorische Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses, 1899, pp. 29–56 gives a detailed account of the rooms, their contents and their decoration.

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- 122** *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien. Nach den Zeichnungen der von Seiner Majestät dem Könige von Preussen Friedrich Wilhelm IV nach diesen Ländern gesendeten und in den Jahren 1842–1845 ausgeführten wissenschaftlichen Expedition*, Karl Richard Lepsius (ed.), 12 vols., Berlin: Nicolai, 1849–1859.
- 123** Wanderungen durch die Wiener Weltausstellung III, in: *Illustrierte Zeitung* 61/1573 (23.8.1873), p. 135.
- 124** Bischoff 2008 (as fn. 119), pp. 168–175.
- 125** For this discussion of the display in the British Museum I am indebted to Moser 2006 (as fn. 9), passim.
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- 128** Jan Piggott, *Palace of the people. The Crystal Palace at Sydenham, 1854–1936*, London: Hurst & Company 2004; Pascal Griener, *Pour une histoire du regard. L'expérience du musée au XIXe siècle*, Paris: Hazan/Louvre éditions, 2017, pp. 103–118.
- 129** *Routledge's guide to the Crystal Palace and park at Sydenham. With descriptions of the principal works of science and art, and of the terraces, fountains, geological formations, and restoration of extinct animals, therein exhibited*, London: George Routledge & Co. 1854, p. 1.
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- 131** Samuel Laing, in his speech delivered at the opening ceremony in June 1854: see the report in *The Gentleman's magazine and historical review* 196 (1854), pp. 64–65, here p. 64. Matthew Digby Wyatt, *Views of the Crystal Palace and Park Sydenham. From drawings by eminent artists, and photographs by P. H. Delamotte*, London: Day and Son, 1854.
- 132** See especially: Stephanie Moser, *Designing antiquity. Owen Jones, ancient Egypt and the Crystal Palace*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2012. Piggott 2004 (as fn. 128), pp. 67–96; Owen Jones, Joseph Bonomi, Samuel Sharpe, *Description of the Egyptian Court erected in the Crystal Palace. With an historical notice of the monuments of Egypt*, London: Crystal Palace Library, 1854.
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- 134** Susan M. Pearce, Giovanni Battista Belzoni's exhibition of the reconstructed tomb of Pharaoh Seti I in 1821, in: *Journal of the History of Collections* 12/1 (2000), pp. 109–125; Sophie Thomas, Displaying Egypt, in: *Journal of Literature and Science* 5/1 (2012), pp. 6–22; Griener 2017 (as fn. 128), pp. 82–85; Richard Altick, *The shows of London*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1978.
- 135** On this, on the sepulchral chamber and on the mummy opening see Tedesco 2009 (as fn. 109), pp. 247–249.
- 136** C.J.T., Galerie d'antiquités égyptiennes, in: *Annales de la littérature et des arts* 6/21 (1825), pp. 303–312.
- 137** There is an account in: Galerie d'antiquités égyptiennes de M. Passalacqua, passage Vivienne, in: *Revue encyclopédique. Ou Analyse raisonnée des productions les plus remarquables dans la littérature, les sciences et les arts* 33 (janvier 1827), p. 872.
- 138** Der Palast des Chedive, in: *Illustrierte Zeitung* 61/1570 (2.8.1873), p. 83.

## Ancient Egypt: Do Things Matter? (David Fontijn)

1 I wish to thank the editor to invite me to write this. I am thankful for his comments as well as those from an anonymous reviewer on a previous draft of this text. Many thanks are also due to dr Eva Mol (Brown University), dr Marike van Aerde and PhD candidate Suzan van de Velde (Leiden University) for comments and practical help.

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5 Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

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7 Ian Hodder, *Entangled. An Archaeology of the Relationships Between Humans and Things*, Wiley-Blackwell: Oxford-Malden, MA, 2012, chap. 2.

8 Igor Kopytoff, The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditisation as Process, in: A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social life of Things*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 64–91.

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11 See for related examples: Anamaria Depner, Worthless Things? On the Difference Between Devaluing and Sorting Out Things, in: H.P. Hahn and H. Weiss (eds.), *Mobility, Meaning and Transformation of Things: Shifting Contexts of Material Culture Through Time and Space*, Oxford: Oxbow books, 2013, pp. 78–90.

12 Kopytoff 1986 (as fn. 8).

13 Florian Göttsche, *Toppled*, Rotterdam: Post Editions, 2010.

14 See the contribution of Hurley in this volume.

15 See also the contribution of Quirke in this volume.

16 Kopytoff 1986 (as fn. 8).

17 Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6).

18 See Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973, as quoted in Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6), p. 4–7.

- 19 Colin Renfrew, Commodification and Institution in Group-Oriented and Individualizing Societies, in: W.G. Runciman (ed.), *The Origin of Human Social Institutions*, Proceedings of the British Academy, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 93–117, p. 95, pp. 97–99.
- 20 Renfrew 2001 (as fn. 19), p. 99; cf. also David R. Fontijn, *Economies of Destruction. How the systematic destruction of valuables created value in Bronze Age Europe, c. 2300–500 BC*, London-New York: Routledge, 2019.
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- 23 Cf. Bjornar Olsen, *In Defense of Things. Archaeology and the Ontology of Objects*, Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2010.
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- 25 Following David Kirsh, The intelligent use of space, in: *Artificial Intelligence* 73 (1995), pp. 31–68; Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6), p. 72.
- 26 Cf. the contributions by Nouvel-Kammerer and Hurley in this volume.
- 27 Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of the Immaterial*, London/New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 47.
- 28 Mol 2015 (as fn. 2), p. 82–87; Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6), p. 77.
- 29 Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6), p. 77.
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- 31 Hutchins 2005 (as fn. 30).
- 32 Cf. Amenophis III/Akhenaten; Nicholas Reeves, *Akhenaten. Egypt's False Prophet*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2001; cf. also on the significance of visual styles in the construction of identity and power relations Miguel J. Versluys, *Visual Style and Constructing Identity in the Hellenistic World. Nemrud Dağ and Commagene under Antiochos I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- 33 David R. Fontijn, The Significance of »Invisible« Places, in: *World Archaeology* 39/1 (2007), pp. 70–83; Fontijn 2019 (as fn. 20); Michael J. Rowlands, The Role of Memory in the Transmission of Culture, in: *World Archaeology* 25 (1993), pp. 141–151.
- 34 Fontijn 2019 (as fn. 20); Rowlands 1993 (as fn. 33); David Wengrow, »Archival« and »Sacrificial« Economies in Bronze Age Eurasia. An interactionist Approach to the hoarding of metal, in: T.C. Wilkinson, S. Sherratt and J. Bennet (eds.), *Interweaving Worlds. Systemic Interactions in Eurasia, 7<sup>th</sup> to the 1<sup>st</sup> Millennia BC*, Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2011, pp. 135–144.
- 35 Fontijn 2019 (as fn. 20).
- 36 Susanne Küchler, Sacrificial economy and its objects, in: *Journal of Material Culture* 2 (1997), pp. 39–60.
- 37 Cf. the overview in Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6).
- 38 Cf. Malafouris 2013 (as fn. 6), p. 77.
- 39 As illustrated in the contributions by Gunter, Swetnam-Burland, Nouvel-Kammerer and Hurley in this volume.
- 40 The role played by the ancient (Classical) authors on the one hand and the Bible on the other has shown to be crucial in this respect, as Assmann and Ebeling in this volume rightly underline.

- 41 As Assmann and Ebeling in this volume quoting Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, Tübingen: Mohr, 1990, pp. 295.
- 42 Sensus Giddens 1984 (as fn. 4).
- 43 As for example done by Mol 2015 for Egyptian and Egyptianizing things in Roman context (as fn. 2).
- 44 »Average behaviour«, cf. Philip Ball, *Critical Mass. How One thing Leads to Another*, London: Arrow Books, 2005.
- 45 Cf. Marian H. Feldman, *Communities of Style. Portable Luxury Arts, Identity, and Collective Memory in the Iron Age Levant*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2014.
- 46 Such as the critique on the idea that things may be considered to have had a biography; cf. contributions in Boschung et al. 2015 (as fn. 6); for a critique against treating humans and things on equal terms: Hodder 2011 (as fn. 24), p. 179.

### Egypt and/as Style (Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt)

- 1 E.g. the work of Ernest Gombrich on style, such as his *Studies in the Art of the Renaissance. 1. Norm and Form: Symbolic Images*, London: Phaidon, 1966; his lemma on style in: David Sills (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, New York: Macmillan, 1968; and his *Ideals and Idols: Essays on Values in History and in Art*, London: Phaidon, 1979. See also Tonio Hölscher, *The Language of Images in Roman Art*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2004, Meyer Schapiro, *Selected Papers IV: Theory and Philosophy of Art: Style, Artist, and Society*, New York: George Braziller, 1994, and Richard Wollheim, *Painting as an Art*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- 2 E.g. Marian Feldman, *Communities of Style: Portable Luxury Arts, Identity, and Collective Memory in the Iron Age Levant*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014.
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- 4 Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Stil: Geschichten und Funktionen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Diskurs-elements*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1986 and Marielle Macé, *Styles. Critique de nos formes de vie*, Paris: Gallimard, 2016.
- 5 E.g. Caroline van Eck, Miguel John Versluys, Pieter ter Keurs, The Biography of Cultures: Style, Objects and Agency. Proposal for an Interdisciplinary Approach, *Cahiers de l'École du Louvre. Recherches en histoire de l'art, histoire des civilisations, archéologie, anthropologie et muséologie* [en ligne] 7 (2015), pp. 2–22. Cf. Christopher Carr, Jill Neitzel (eds.), *Style, Society, and Person: Archaeological and Ethnological Perspectives*, New York: Springer, 1995; Marian Feldman, *Communities of Style: Portable Luxury Arts, Identity, and Collective Memory in the Iron Age Levant*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014; Teresa Hurt, Gordon Rakita (eds.), *Style and Function: Conceptual Issues in Evolutionary Archaeology*, Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, 2001; Richard Lesure, Linking Theory and Evidence in an Archaeology of Human Agency: Iconography, Style and Theories of Embodiment, in: *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 12/3 (2005), pp. 237–55; Miguel John Versluys, Roman Visual Material Culture as Globalising koine, in: Martin Pitts, Miguel John Versluys (eds.), *Globalisation and the Roman World. World History, Connectivity and Material Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, pp. 141–74.
- 6 E.g. Kevin Mattson, Did Punk Matter? Analyzing the Practices of a Youth Subculture During the 1980, in: *American Studies* 42/1 (2001), pp. 69–97.

## The Magic of the Material (Stephanie Moser)

- 1 On the treatment of ancient Egypt as a more 'accessible' ancient culture than that of Greece and Rome, see Stephanie Moser, *Wondrous Curiosities. Ancient Egypt at the British Museum*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006.
- 2 For an outline of this growing research tradition, see Stephanie Moser, 'Reconstructing Ancient Worlds. Reception Studies, Archaeological Representation and the Interpretation of Ancient Egypt', in: *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 22/4 (2015), pp. 1263–1308.
- 3 See e.g., John Robb, Marcia-Anne Dobres (eds.), *Agency in Archaeology*, London: Routledge, 2000; Carl Knappett, Lambros Malafouris (eds.), *Material Agency: Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach*, New York: Springer, 2008; Robin Osborne, Jeremy Tanner (eds.), *Art's Agency and Art History*, Oxford: Wiley, 2008; Tim Ingold, *Being Alive. Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*, London: Routledge, 2011; id., *Making. Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*, London: Routledge, 2013; Andrew M. Jones, *Prehistoric Materialities. Becoming Material in Prehistoric Britain and Ireland*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012; Andrew M. Jones, Andrew Cochrane, *The Archaeology of Art. Materials, Practices, Affects*, London: Routledge, 2018.
- 4 Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency Art: An anthropological theory*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1998.
- 5 On archaeological representation and reception studies see, Stephanie Moser, 'Archaeological Representation. The Visual Conventions for Constructing Knowledge About the Past', in: Ian Hodder (ed.) *Archaeological Theory Today*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001, pp. 262–283; ead., 'Archaeological Representation: the Consumption and Creation of the Past', in: B. Cunliffe, C. Gosden (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Archaeology*: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 1048–1078; ead. 2015 (as fn. 2).
- 6 Moser 2006 (as fn. 1)
- 7 Stephanie Moser, *Designing Antiquity*, London: Yale University Press, 2012.
- 8 Stephanie Moser, *Painting Antiquity. Ancient Egypt in the Art of Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Edward Poynter and Edwin Long*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 *Photographs from the Egyptian Collection 1872*. The series of photographs of the Egyptian collection were taken by Stephen Thompson for the British Museum and published by Mansell and Co. *Catalogue of a Series of Photographs, (By S. Thompson) from the Collections in the British Museum*, London: W. A. Mansell and Co, 1872.
- 11 *Athenaeum* 1872, May 4:565; *The Times* 1872, May 21:7; *Examiner* 1872, June 15:599.
- 12 Herman de Meulenaere (and compiled by Patrick and Viviane Berko), *Ancient Egypt in Nineteenth Century Painting* [English translation of *L'Égypte ancienne dans la peinture du XIX siècle*], Belgium: Knokke-Zoute, 1992, p. 94.

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- 2 Versluys 2017 (as fn. 1), p. 129 (emphasis in original).
- 3 Alan Mikhail, *The Animal in Ottoman Egypt*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- 4 Gavin Lucas, *Critical Approaches to Fieldwork. Contemporary and historical archaeological practice*, New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 176.

- 5 Aleksei Leontiev, *Activity, Consciousness, and Personality*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1978 (Деятельность. Сознание. Личность. Politizdat: Moscow, 1977). For varied adaptations of activity theory, see: Victor Kaptelinin, Bonnie Nardi, *Acting with Technology: Activity Theory and Interaction Design*, New York: Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2006; Andy Blunden, *An Interdisciplinary Theory of Activity*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, and the review by Michael Cole, in: *Outlines – Critical Practice Studies* 1 (2011), pp. 46–52 highlighting productive misreadings.
- 6 For a linguistic interpretation in the line of Benveniste and Cohen, see Nejmeddine Khalfallah, *La théorie sémantique de ‘Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani (m. 471/1078)*, Paris: Harmattan, 2014. On the Quranic frame of Jurjani in his context, see Margaret Larkin, *The Theology of Meaning. ‘Abd Al-Qāhir Al-Jurjānī’s Theory of Discourse*. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1995.
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- 9 Christian Leblanc, Piliers et colosses de type «osirique» dans le contexte des temples de culte royal, in: *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 80 (1980), pp. 69–89.
- 10 Jeremy Pope, Ägypten und Aufhebung. G. W. F. Hegel, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the African Orient, in: *The New Centennial Review* 6.3 (2006), pp. 149–192.
- 11 See also his paper, cited in chap. 9, Una cuestión de etiqueta, in: *Endoxa: Series Filosóficas* 33 (2006), pp. 165–180, in relation to the vicissitudes of human remains between ethnographic collections.
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- 13 See fn. 12.
- 14 Maurice Bloch, *How We Think They Think. Anthropological Approaches to Cognition, Memory, and Literacy*, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1998.
- 15 Manfred Bietak, The Present State of Egyptian Archaeology, in: *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 65 (1979), pp. 156–160; Lisa Giddy, The Present State of Egyptian Archaeology: 1997 update, in: Anthony Leahy, John Tait (eds.), *Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of H. S. Smith*, London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1999, pp. 109–113; Willeke Wendrich, Egyptian Archaeology: From Text to Context, in: ead. (ed.), *Egyptian Archaeology*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 1–14.
- 16 Anne Godlewski, Map, Text and Image. The Mentality of Enlightened Conquerors: A New Look at the *Description de l’Égypte*, in: *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 20/1 (1995), pp. 5–28; Zayde Antrim, *Mapping the Middle East*, London: Reaktion, 2018.
- 17 Recent studies on the discipline and its history include: Alexandra Verbovsek, Burkhard Backes, Catherine Jones (eds.), *Methodik und Didaktik in der Ägyptologie: Herausforderungen eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Paradigmenwechsels in den Altertumswissenschaften*, Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2011; William Carruthers (ed.), *Histories of Egyptology. Interdisciplinary Measures*, New York: Routledge, 2014; Thomas Gertzen, *Einführung in die Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Ägyptologie*, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2017.
- 18 As examples of interdisciplinary volumes with substantial impact in Egyptology, I would note: Kent Weeks (ed.), *Egyptology and the Social Sciences: Five Studies*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1979; Judith Lustig (ed.), *Anthropology and Egyptology: A Developing Dialogue*, Sheffield: Shef-



field Academic Press; Sonia Zakrzewski, Andrew Shortland, Joanne Rowland (eds.), *Science in the Study of Ancient Egypt*, New York: Routledge, 2015. Other openings from the discipline include Kathryn Howley, Rune Nyord (eds.), *Egyptology and Anthropology: Historiography, Theoretical Exchange, and Conceptual Development*, Tucson: University of Arizona, 2018 (Special issue of the *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 17). The *Encounters with ancient Egypt* series edited by Peter Ucko (London: UCL Press, 2003) represents an initiative from the discipline of archaeology in the same direction of expanding access to material traditionally considered Egyptological, cf. in this volume Versluys (chap. 1), Assmann and Ebeling (chap. 2).

**19** Among the intellectual associates of the philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin, the first to engage with linguistics was Valentin Voloshinov, according to Ken Hirschkop, *Mikhail Bakhtin: an aesthetic for democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 164–167.

**20** Frederic Schwartz, Walter Benjamin's Essay on Eduard Fuchs: An Art-Historical Perspective, in: A. Hemingway (ed.), *Marxism and the History of Art: from William Morris to the New Left*, London: Pluto, 2006, pp. 106–122.

**21** Representative examples may be found in the broader survey by James Putnam, *Art and Artifact: The Museum as Medium Time Machine*, London: Thames and Hudson, 2001, including exhibitions in galleries of ancient Egyptian monumental sculpture and architecture at the British Museum and Turin; for the former see James Putnam, Vivian Davies, *Time Machine: Ancient Egypt and Contemporary Art*, London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 1994.

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**23** Amarna Letter 10 = British Museum E29786: William Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992, p. 19.

**24** Marian Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an »International Style« in the Ancient Near East, 1400–1200 BCE*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

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**26** Khaled Fahmy, *Mehmed Ali. From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt*, Oxford: One World, 2008.

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**30** Cited by Christiane Yandé Diop, Foreword, in: V. Mudimbe (ed.), *The Surreptitious Speech: Présence Africaine and the Politics of Otherness 1947–1987*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992, pp. xv–xvi.

**31** Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London and New York: Verso, 1993.

**32** Hosam Aboul-Ela, The specifics of Arab Thought: Morocco Since the Liberal Age, in: Jens Hanssen, Max Weiss (eds.), *Arabic Thought Against the Authoritarian Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Present*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 143–162, citations at p. 156.

- 33** Maghan Keita, Africa and the Construction of a Grand Narrative in History, in: Eckhardt Fuchs, Benedikt Stuchtey (eds.), *Across Cultural Borders: Historiography in Global Perspective*, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002, pp. 285–308, see the comment and list of authors at p. 297.
- 34** Against Golden Age versions, see Mohammed Ennaji, *Le sujet et le mamelouk*, Paris: Fayard, 2007.
- 35** Alain Schnap (ed.), *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*. Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2007.

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plate 2 Théière, grès salé (23,5×13,5×17 cm), Royal Doulton, Lambeth (Londres), 1891. Collection Jean-Marcel Humbert, Paris



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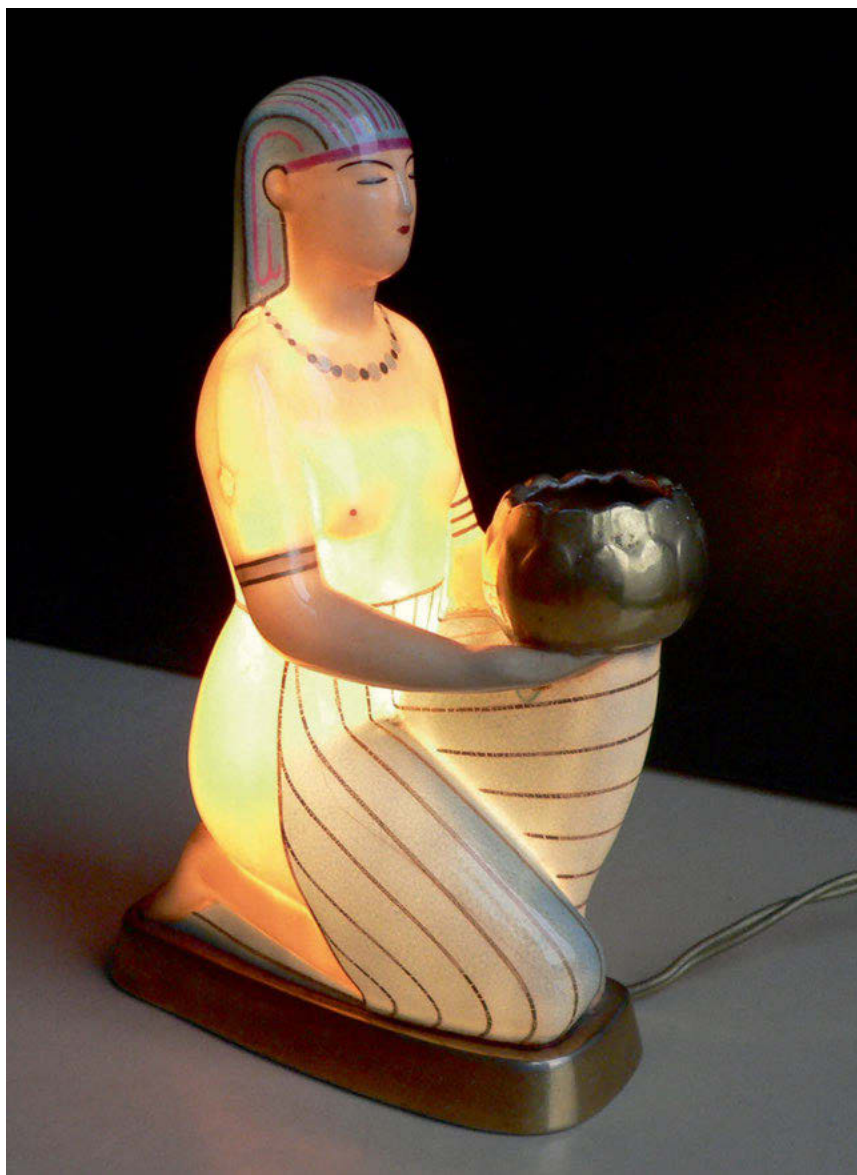


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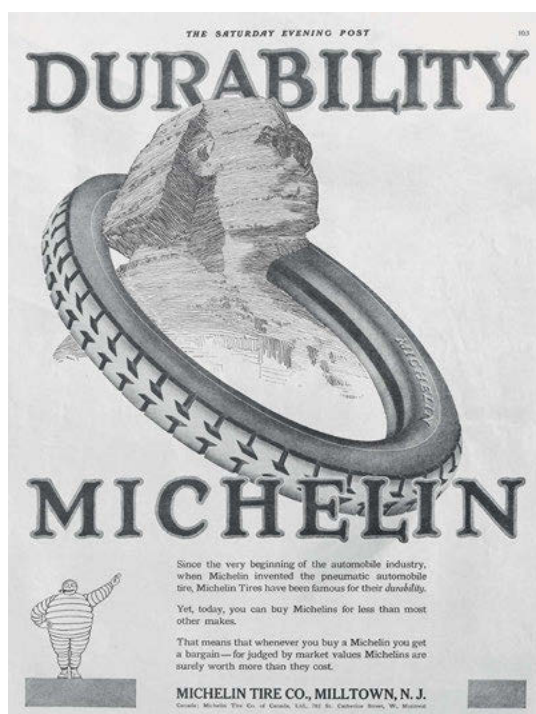
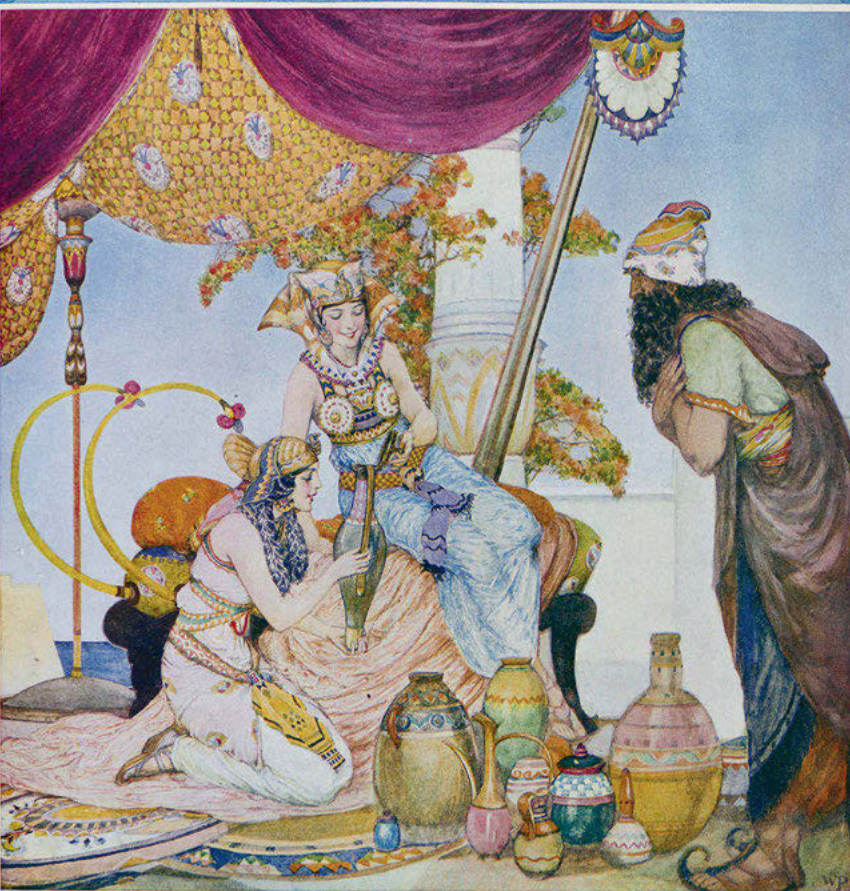


plate 9 »Durability Michelin«, annonce publicitaire pour les pneus Michelin, *The Saturday Evening Post*, 1917. Michelin Tire Co., Milltown, N. J. Collection Jean-Marcel Humbert, Paris





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plate 10 «Buying Palmolive 3,000 Years ago», anonce publicitaire pour Palmolive soap, par Willy Pogany (1882–1955), *McCall's Magazine*, 1917. B. J. Johnson Soap Company, Inc., Milwaukee, Wis. Collection Jean-Marcel Humbert, Paris

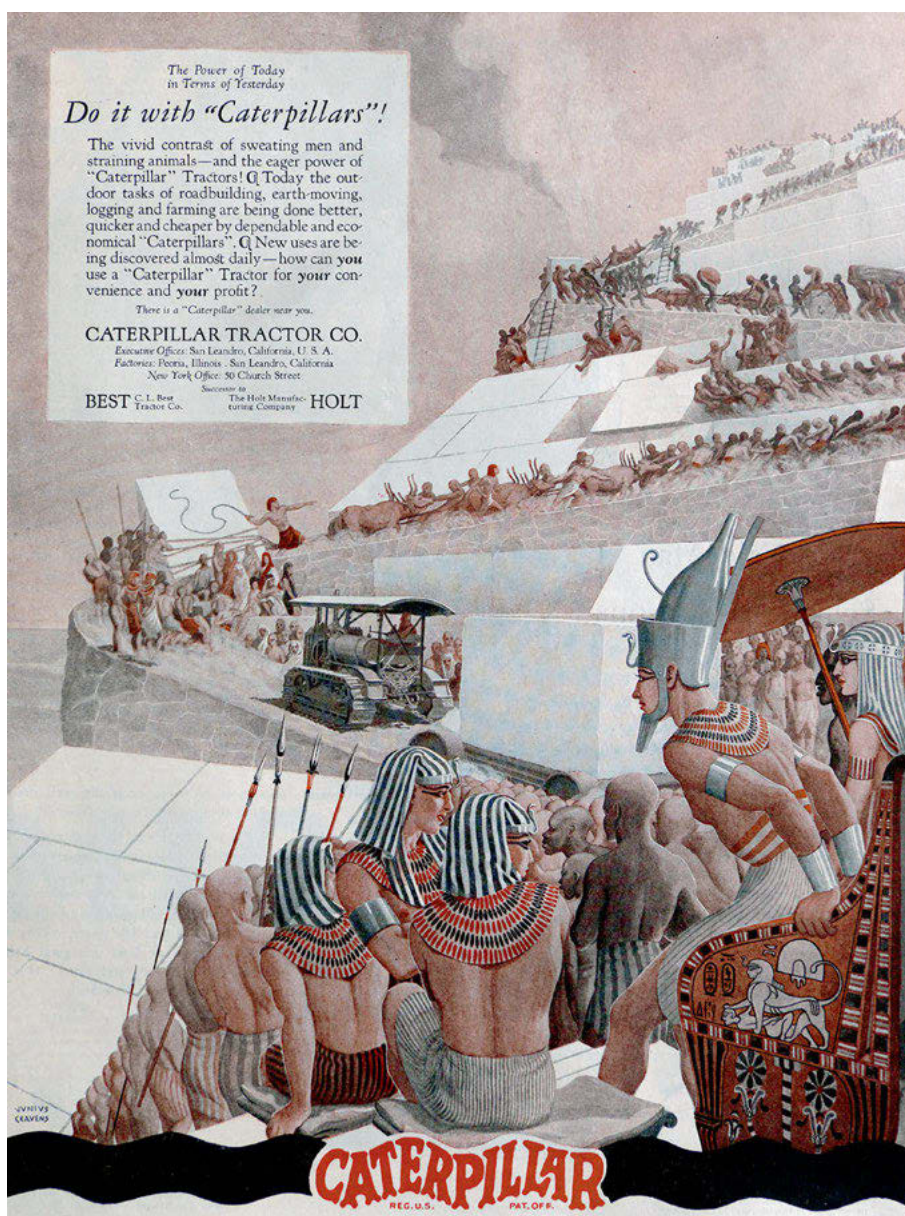


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plate 12 »I dreamed I played Cleopatra in my maidenform bra«, annonce publicitaire, photo par Richard Avedon (1923–2004), *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1952. Maiden Form Brassiere Co, Inc. Collection Jean-Marcel Humbert, Paris



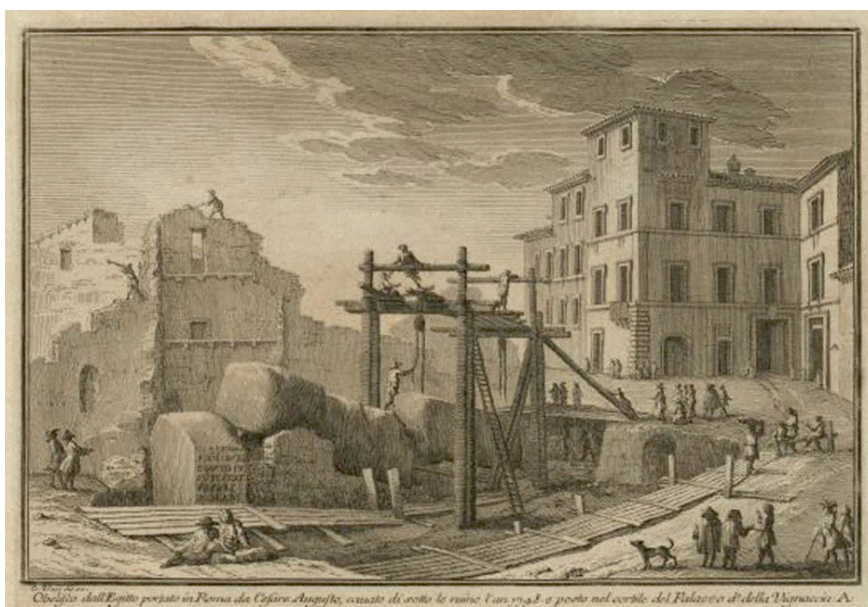


plate 13 Excavation of the obelisk found in the Campo Marzio, after Vasi, *Delle magnificenze di Roma antica e moderna*, 1747–1753

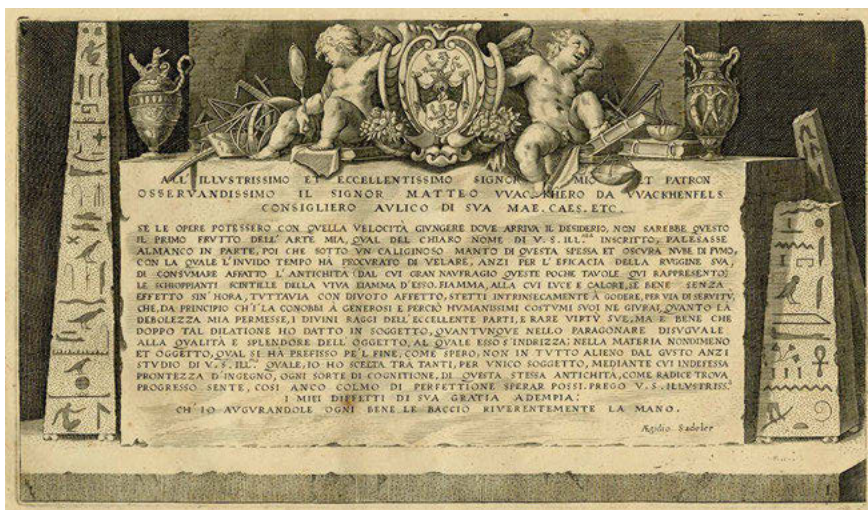


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plate 16 Detail, shallow bowl inscribed for Yabâ.



plate 17 Fibula decorated with head of Pazuzu, female figure, and bird of prey. Gold; l. 2.6, h. 1.9 cm. Nimrud, Tomb I (ND 1988.19)





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 b Drachme de Cos (167–88 av. J.-C.)  
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plate 20 Camée (1<sup>er</sup> s. av. J.-C. – 1<sup>er</sup> s. apr. J.-C.)



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plate 22 The «Black Room» as it is displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Gallery 167)



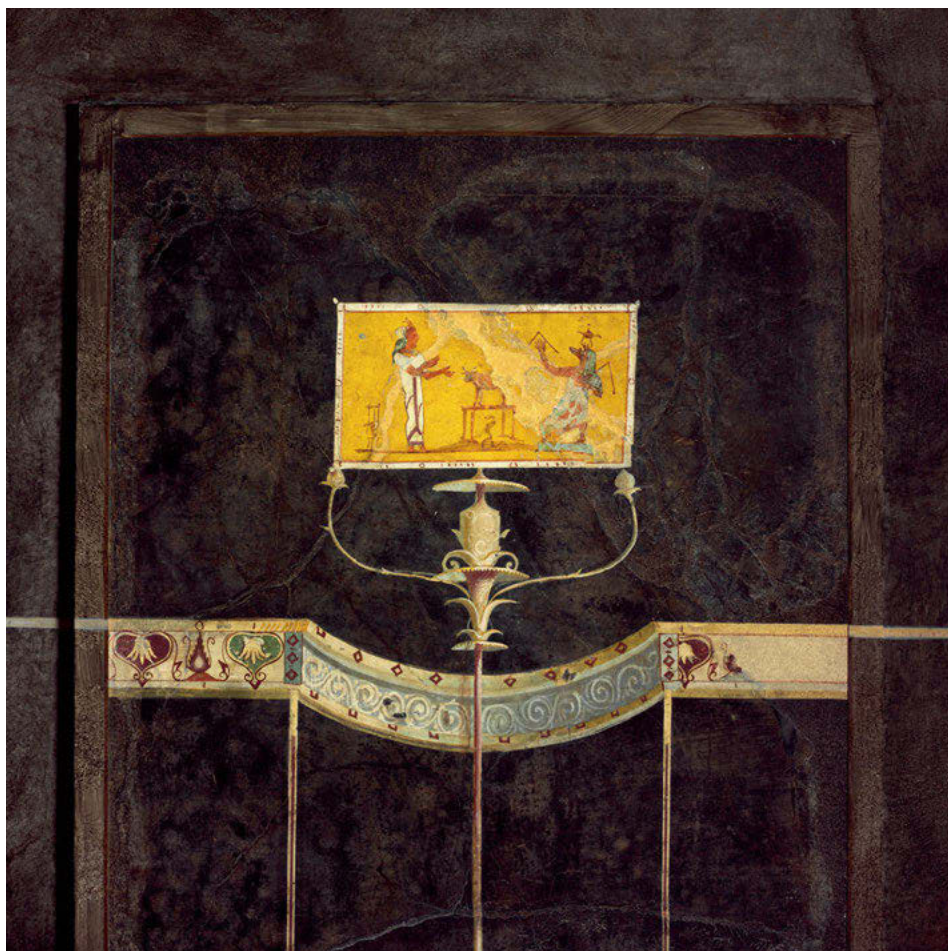


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plate 25 Black obsidian bowl with a Egyptian style offering scene. From Stabiae, Villa San Marco, 1st century BCE



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plate 29 *Icones coloribus ornatae idolorum Mexicanorum*, MS 1551, 4v, Biblioteca Angelica, Rome



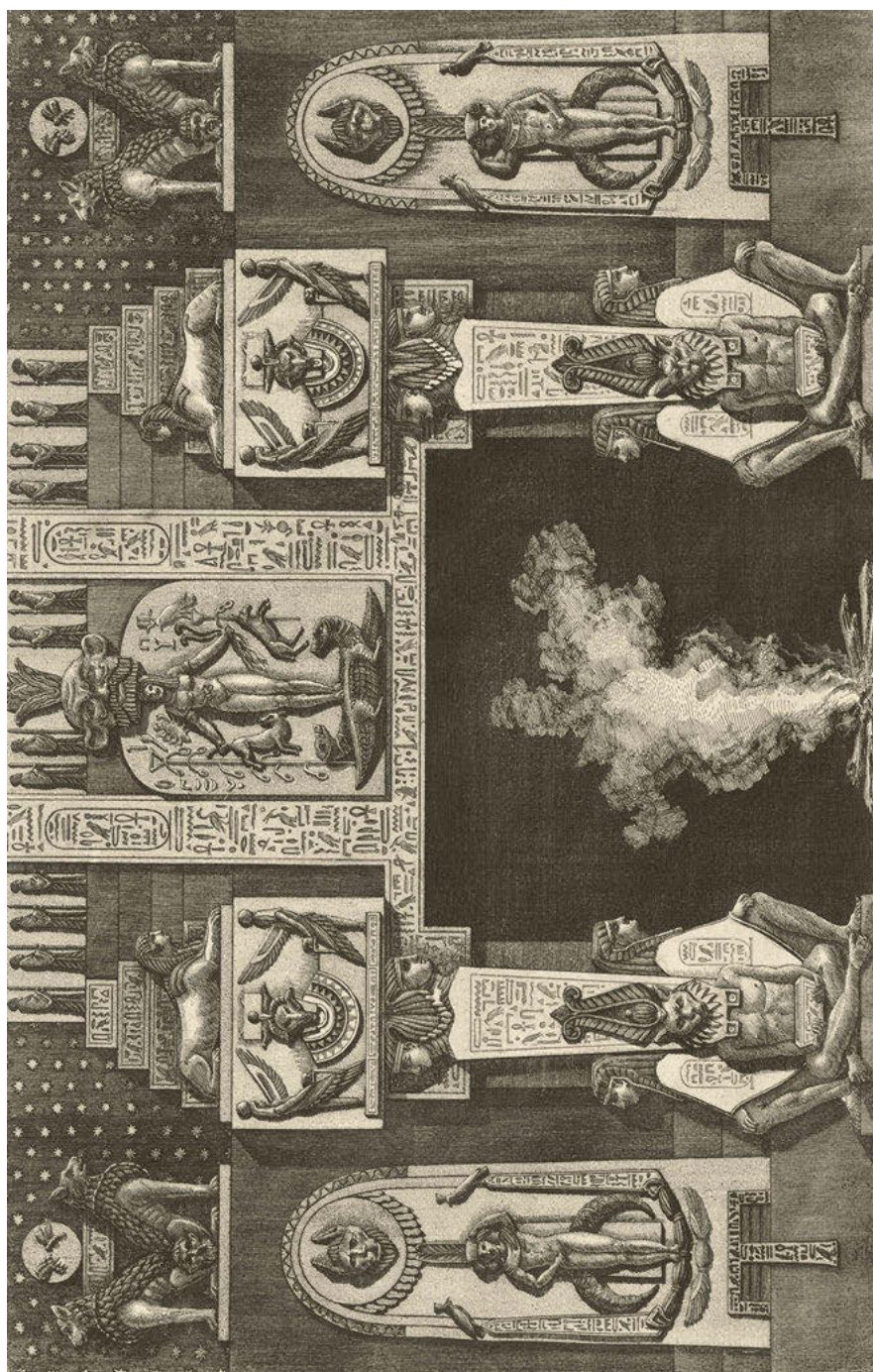


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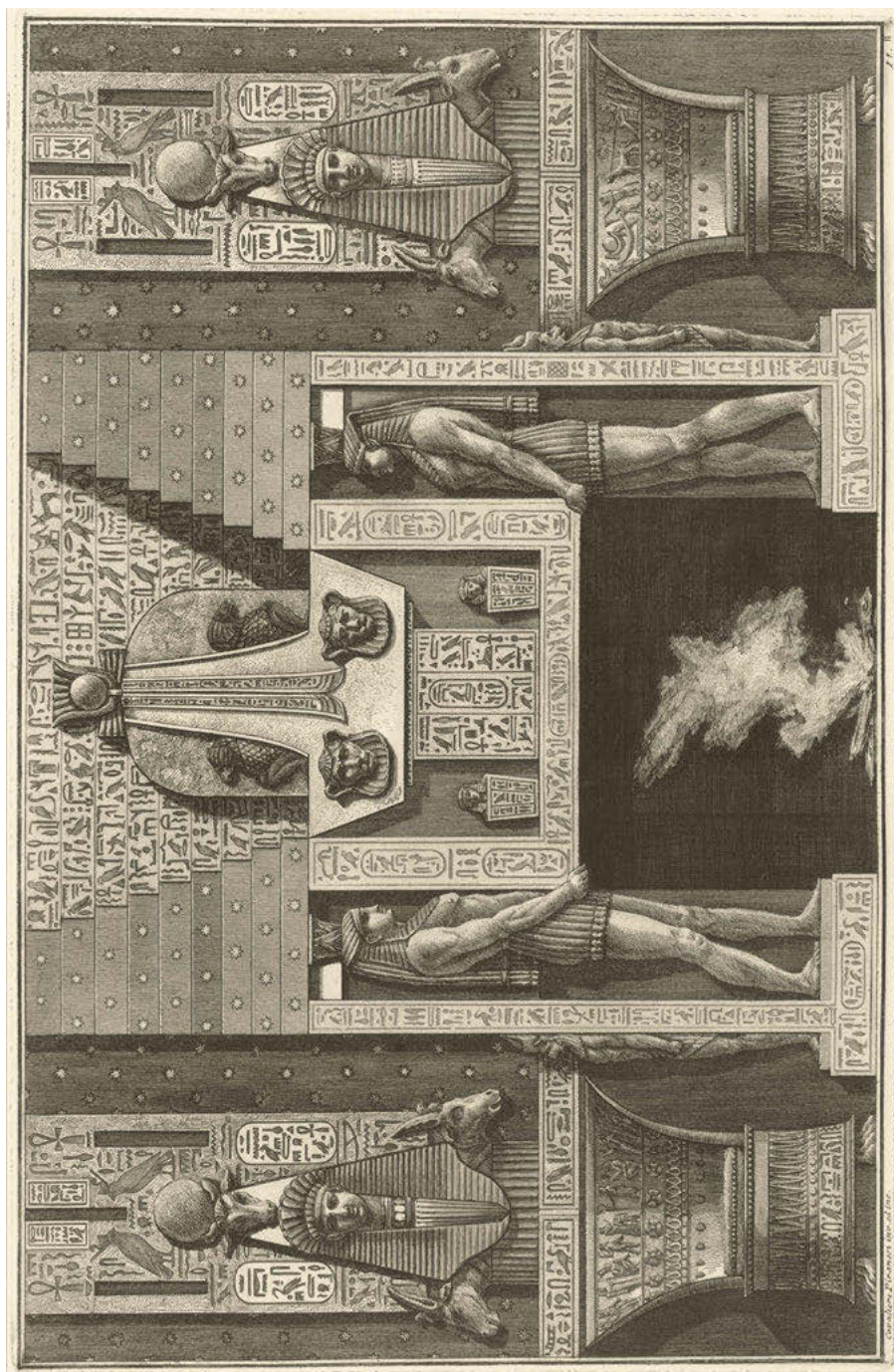


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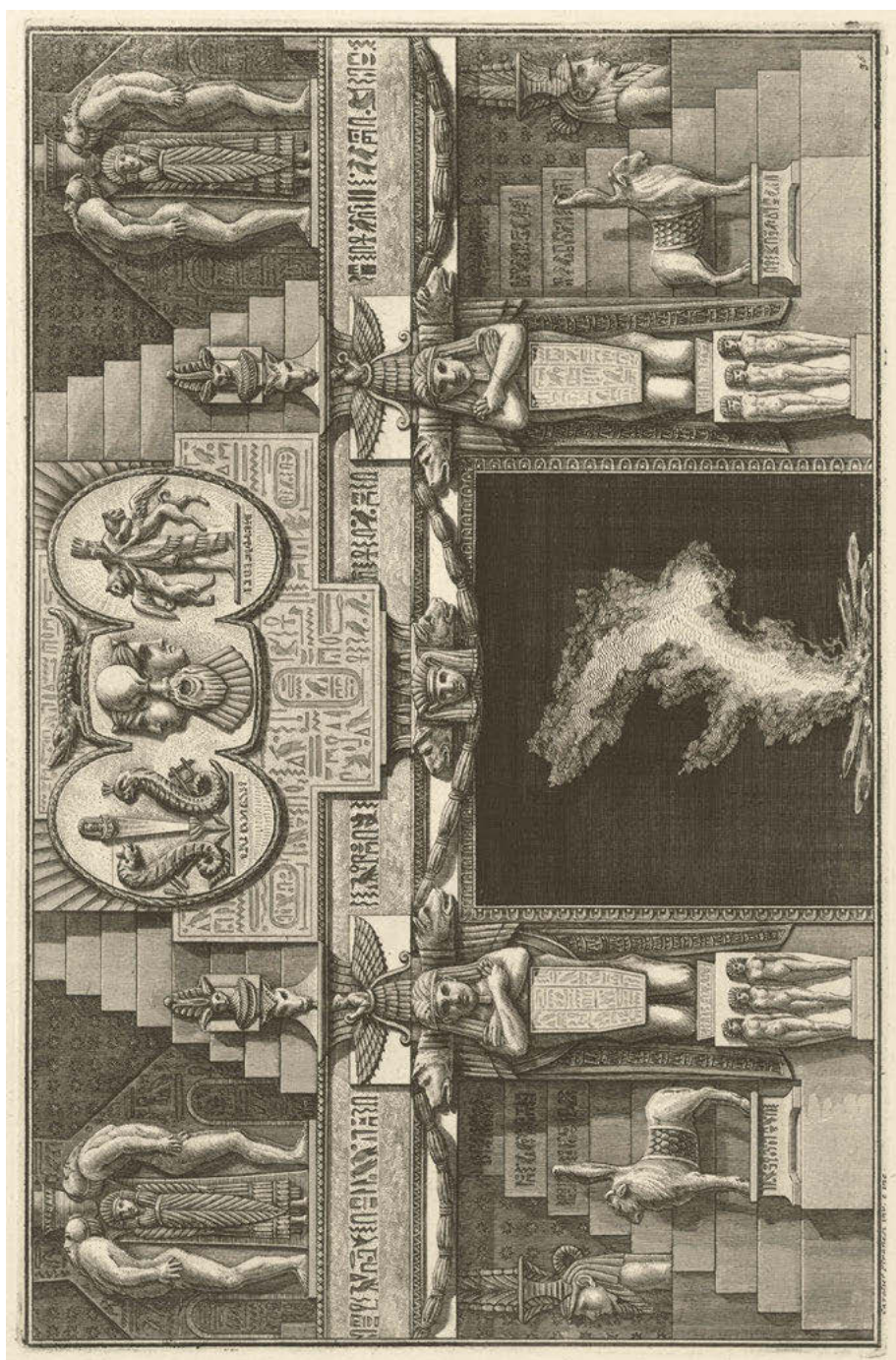


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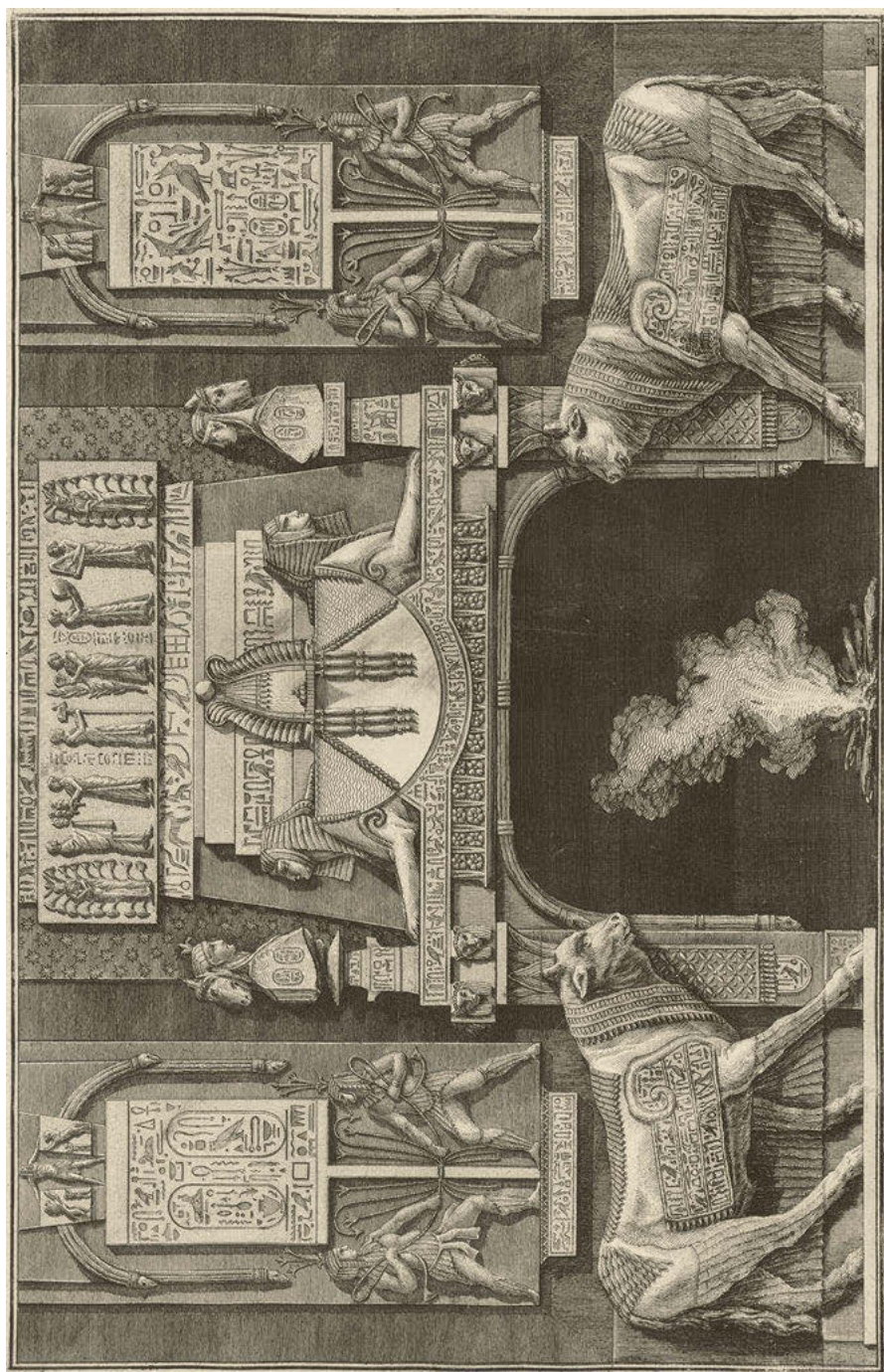


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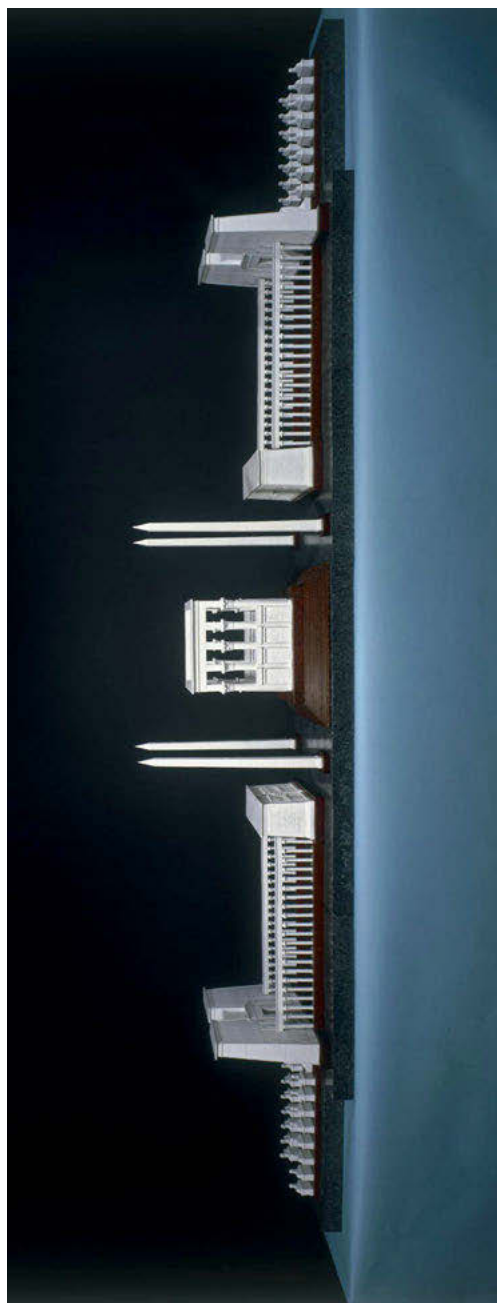


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*dessin inv. 2012.1.796; Section D.S.6.1806, N° 11*

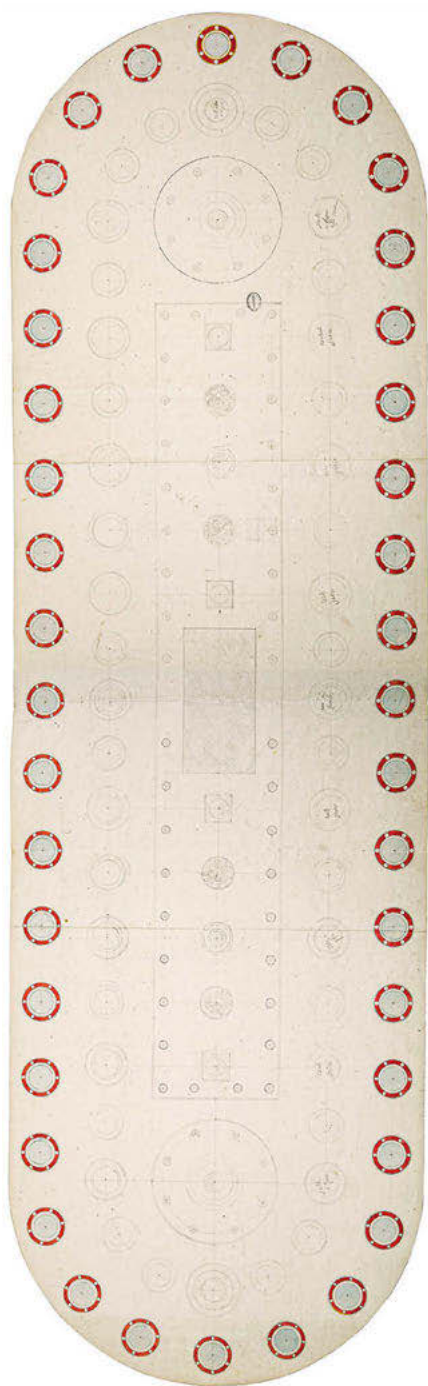


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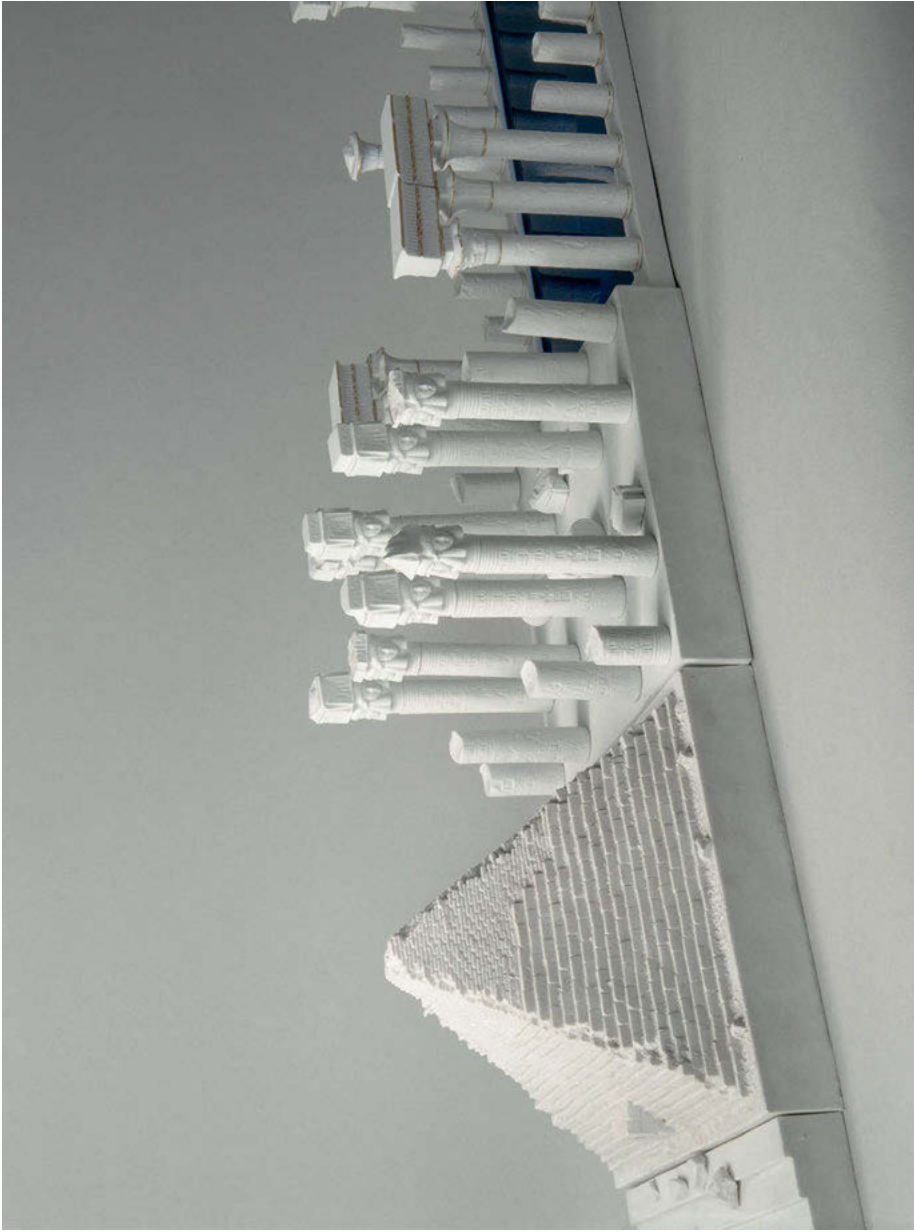


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plate 41 Lawrence Alma-Tadema, *An Egyptian Widow at the time of Diocletian* 1872. Oil on panel, 74.9×99.1 cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam



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This publication has been made possible by funding from:

the Leiden University Profile Area *Global Interactions* (LGI),  
the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO),  
and the Chair group Classical & Mediterranean Archaeology  
from the Leiden Faculty of Archaeology.

The electronic edition of this publication was made available in open access in March 2024.



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ISBN 978-3-11-056425-9

eISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-056584-3

DOI <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110565843>

**Library of Congress Control Number:** 2020936977

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie;  
detailed bibliographic data are available on the internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>

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Cover illustration: Collection Jean-Marcel Humbert, Paris (© Photo Jean-François Merle)

Cover design: Petra Florath

Typesetting: hawemannundmosch, Berlin

Printing and binding: DZA Druckerei zu Altenburg GmbH, Altenburg

[www.degruyter.com](http://www.degruyter.com)