

Tutankhamun the Twentieth-Century Diplomat: The 1972 Treasures of Tutankhamun Exhibition at the British Museum as a Landmark in Anglo-Egyptian and in American-Egyptian Relations

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Abstract

The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in the same year that Britain granted Egypt qualified independence with some reservations linked together Egyptology and Egyptian nationalism more than ever before. This same King became pivotal to Egypt's negotiations with the United Kingdom and the United States of America during the 1970s. This article reflects upon the landmark role of Tutankhamun in shaping Anglo-Egyptian and American-Egyptian relations in 1972 in order to demonstrate the crucial role that archaeological material plays in modern diplomacy. At this time, Egypt loaned artifacts to the British³ Museum for the first major travelling exhibition of Tutankhamun material. With this exhibition, the Tutankhamun exhibit navigated a positive turn in Anglo-Egyptian relations. Meanwhile, Egypt denied the request of the United States for Egyptian artifacts, signaling a low point in Egyptian-American relations.

Keywords: Tutankhamun exhibition; Anglo-Egyptian relations; American-Egyptian relations; Archaeological material diplomacy

Introduction

The Eighteenth Dynasty Egyptian King Tutankhamun may be from distant era, but he became a major player in the twentieth century diplomatic relationships between Egypt and foreign countries. The discovery of tomb in the same year that Britain granted Egypt qualified independence linked together Egyptology and Egyptian nationalism more than ever before.¹ This same King became pivotal to Egypt's negotiations with the United Kingdom and the United States of America during the 1970s.

Tutankhamun is neither the first nor the last ancient individual or artifact to become embroiled in modern diplomacy. Cyrus the Great's ancient "charter of rights" was similarly embroiled in British-Iranian discord in 2010.² The illegal antiquities trade, always a sordid but obscure market, has also come to new public awareness now that it has become clear that ISIS profits from the sale of these antiquities, often to American collectors.³

¹ D. M. Reid, *Who's Pharaoh's? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (California: University of California Press, 2002), 17, 293.

² John Wilson, "British Museum in battle with Iran over ancient 'charter of rights.'" *The Guardian* 24 January, 2010. Accessed January 14, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2010/jan/24/cyrus-cylinder-iran-museum-row>

³ Candida Moss and Joel Baden, "Hobby Lobby's Black-Market Buys Did Real Damage." *The New York Times*, 6 July, 2017. Accessed January 14, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/06/opinion/hobby-lobby-iraq-artifacts.html>

These recent case studies are part of a growing awareness that archaeologists and archaeology perform a significant role in diplomatic relations.⁴ These studies have demonstrated that archaeological objects can act as ambassadors and that museum exhibitions can serve as vehicles for the people-to-people exchanges that have been found to achieve cultural diplomacy aims.⁵ Although these recent studies are groundbreaking, current scholarship lacks an extended case study of the artefactual ambassadors that they postulate. This article provides hard evidence of the critical role that archaeological objects and museum exhibitions enact in diplomatic endeavors.

This article reflects upon the landmark role of Tutankhamun in shaping Anglo-Egyptian and American-Egyptian relations in 1972 in order to demonstrate the crucial role that archaeological material plays in modern diplomacy. At this time, Egypt loaned artifacts to the British Museum for the first major travelling exhibition of Tutankhamun material, *The Treasures of Tutankhamun* (1972-1981). With this exhibition, the Tutankhamun exhibit navigated a positive turn in Anglo-Egyptian relations. Meanwhile, Egypt denied the request of the United States for Egyptian artifacts, signaling a low point in Egyptian-American relations. 1972 was a landmark year for Egypt when it learned how to use its cultural heritage in order to negotiate effectively with these foreign powers. Following from this landmark year, both the United Kingdom and the United States learned new ways of negotiating with Egypt in order to improve and solidify their growing relationships. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in the United States eventually organized its own *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibit (1976-1981), which became one of the first “blockbuster exhibits”.

This paper demonstrates the powerful role that archaeological material can play in contemporary diplomatic negotiations. Although the power of objects, often known as “materiality,” is now well-studied in archaeology, the role of material heritage in political discourse has not been examined cohesively, even by the scholars who focus on the interweaving of archaeology and diplomacy. The article draws attention to the powerful role that archaeology can play in political negotiations and discourse by revisiting the historical contexts leading up to the 1972 exhibit of Tutankhamun’s tomb goods at the British Museum. First, the study explores the history of foreign relations between Egypt and the United Kingdom, including the role of British individuals in the discovery and excavation of Tutankhamun’s tomb in the early twentieth century. Then, the article explores the decline in positive relations between the United States and Egypt over the course of the twentieth century.

⁴ Tim Winter, “Heritage Diplomacy: Entangled Materialities of International Relations.” *Future Anterior* Volume XIII, No. 1 (2016): 17-34; Christina Luke, “The Science Behind United States Smart Power in Honduras: Archaeological Heritage Diplomacy.” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 23 (2012): 110-139; Erik Nemeth, *Cultural Security: Evaluating the Power of Culture in International Affairs* (London: Imperial College Press, 2015).

⁵ Christina Luke and Morag M. Kersel. *U.S. Cultural Diplomacy and Archaeology: Soft Power, Hard Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2013), 71-72.

Finally, the study focuses on the aftermath of the 1972 *Treasures of Tutankhamun* exhibition and how Tutankhamun shaped subsequent political discourse with the United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as how other nations have come to use archaeology as powerful negotiators on the world stage.

The article, mainly, depends on primary sources such as the international agreements which were signed between Egypt and the United Kingdom or the inter-museums agreements, letters, notes and other related accounts which are archived in the National Archives of the United Kingdom in London. The study relies on the historical and analytical research methods through interpretation and criticizing the relevant sources and presumption of events.

Anglo-Egyptian Relations (1882-1972)

Anglo-Egyptian relations passed through myriad historical phases prior to the late twentieth century. Tensions and disputes characterized many of these phases. The definitive start of these tensions began with the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. The Egyptian resistance to British rule began immediately and was led by the Egyptian military nationalist leader Ahmed 'Urabi (1841-1911) who was exiled by the British after his defeat at the battle of Tel El Kebir on 13 September 1882.⁶ In 1919, Saad Zaghlul (1859-1927) led another revolution against the British occupation of Egypt. Zaghlul's revolution was highly successful and forced the British Declaration of 1922, which allowed Egypt to be an independent sovereign State with some reservations. By happenstance, this is the same year that Tutankhamun's tomb was discovered, as we discuss in more detail below. In 1936, the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship was signed in London declaring the end of the British occupation of Egypt, although British troops remained in the Suez Canal region.⁷

Relations calmed between Britain and Egypt until Egypt declared the nationalization of the Suez Canal in July 1956. The Egyptian President Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal in response to the United States and Britain refusal to pay for the Aswan Dam project which was one of the key projects on the Nasser's Government agenda; they announced the withdrawal from the dam project because of Nasser's unfriendly attitude towards the west and they believed that Egypt was not able to pay off the loan.⁸ Britain had special interests in the Middle East region since the first half of the nineteenth century to protect the road to her Indian Colony. British interest in the region increased with the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869 during the reign of the Egypt's ruler Khedive Ismail (1863-1879); the canal shortened the time of maritime journey to reach India from London by 41 per cent.⁹

⁶ Michael Lee Lanning, *Battle 100: The Stories Behind History's Most Influential Battles*, (Illionis: Sourcebooks, 2005), 329-332. E. Baring, *Modern Egypt* (London: Macmillan, 1908), 336.

⁷ D. Whitton, "Anglo-Egyptian relations", *Australian Outlook*, vol. 8:4 (1954): 214.

⁸ Watt Donald Cameron, 'the High Dam at Aswan', in *Dams in Africa*, (London: Frank Cass, 1968), 112.

⁹ Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Claude Comtois and Brian Slack, *The Geography of Transport Systems*, (New York, Routledge, 2017), 62.

The canal became more important to Britain in the early years of the twentieth century after the oil discovery in Iran and other Middle Eastern countries. The Suez Canal nationalization resulted in the Suez War (October-November, 1956). In this war, Britain, France and Israel united against Egypt in order to occupy the land of Sinai and the Suez Canal. They also aimed to topple the existing Egyptian Government, which they viewed as a threat to their long-term interests in the region. Britain and France not only contributed air forces, but also ground forces to the battlefield. The British, French, and Israeli militaries did not achieve their goals in this war because United Nations peacekeepers arrived in the Canal zone and Sinai in November 1956 and reverted the occupied territories in Egypt.¹⁰

For a time, President Gamal Abd El Nasser (1956-1970) refused to let the British borrow the Tutankhamun treasures because he considered England to be pro-Israel since their participating in 1956 war together with France and Israel against Egypt.¹¹ The Egyptian Government used to appoint the Head of the Antiquities Service to sign such agreements on their behalf.¹² The decision of approving or rejecting to organize an external exhibition for the Egyptian antiquities was usually issued by the Egyptian Antiquities Service and the Minister of Culture after the approval of the Egyptian Cabinet and support of the Egyptian President. It should be noted that France and Britain fought against Egypt together with Israel in 1956, but Paris succeeded in organizing an exhibition for Tutankhamun treasures in 1967 five years before that of the British Museum because the French declaration of the Algerian independence in 1962 encouraged the Egyptian Government which was supported by the President Nasser to approve the French application to hold an exhibition for Tutankhamun objects.¹³

The British attitude towards the Arab-Israeli dispute supported their application for hosting the exhibition. After the War of June 1967 between Israel and the Arab states, Lord Hugh Foot Caradon (1907-1990), the UK Permanent Representative to the United Nations indicated to the Israelis that it would be so difficult to achieve a ceasefire without an Israeli acceptance to withdraw from the territories which were occupied during the last war operations through political negotiations.¹⁴

¹⁰ For more about the Suez Crisis; Derek Varble, *The Suez Crisis 1956* (Oxford: Osprey publishing, 2003), Cole C. Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956* (Louisiana: Louisiana State Press, 1995), Peter L. Hahn, *the United States, Great Britain and Egypt 1947-1956: Strategy and diplomacy in the early cold war* (Carolina: University of Carolina Press, 1991), Isaac Alteras, *Eisenhower and Israel: US- Israeli relations 1953-1960* (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993).

¹¹ Jane Gaskell, "Unveiled at last-Tutankhamun," *Daily Mail*, January 29, 1972, 21.

¹² The Agreement concerning the Tutankhamun Exhibition and Agreement between the British and Cairo Museums, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

¹³ William Carruthers, *Histories of Egyptology: Interdisciplinary measures* (New York: Routledge Talor and Francis Group, 2015), 168.

¹⁴ Adam Roberts et al., *the United Nations Security Council and war: the Evolution of thought and Practice since 1945*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 308.

The Resolution 242 was issued by the UN Security Council on 22 November 1967. Resolution 242, which was sponsored by the British Representative in the UN, Lord Caradon, is one of the most famous significant resolutions issued by the UN Security Council. It established the principle of the land for peace; it stated that Israel should return the territories which were occupied during the war, but not through force.¹⁵ The 20th of October 1970 is marked as an important change in the British policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict; when Alec Douglas-Home (1903-1995) delivered his speech in Harrogate. He emphasized that the secure and the international boundaries between Israel and her neighbors should be those which existed before 1967 war, which meant that Israel should withdraw from the occupied territories acquired during the 1967 war. Douglas-Home clearly expected that all the occupied Egyptian territories would be returned to Egypt. He also raised the matter of refugees, stating that those refugees who wished to return to their homes and were ready to live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to return. This British new policy was met with satisfaction in Egypt and with disapproval in Israel.¹⁶

During the time of Harrogate speech, there was a certain possibility of British involvement in a new oil pipeline from the Gulf of Suez to the Mediterranean which became a fact during the visit of Alec Douglas-Home to Cairo next year. Britain obtained also £2.1 million as a compensation for British possessions which were confiscated in 1961 by the Egyptian Government as a reaction to the Suez invasion in 1956 War and to let the Egyptian Government to play more role in the economy.¹⁷ It seems that the British looked out for their own financial interests at the expense of their former ally, Israel.¹⁸

The anti-British feeling rose in Israel because of the Harrogate speech of Douglas-Home.¹⁹ The Israel Foreign Minister during the 1973 War, Abba Eban, attacked the British policy in the Middle East and particularly targeted Alec Douglas-Home for his speech in Harrogate, which called the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories. The Israeli Minister said that it would be a very difficult situation if Israel agreed to that suggestion when the Egyptians and Syrians attacked Israel in 1973.²⁰

Although the United Kingdom was de-colonizing rapidly in the second half of the twentieth century, it still maintained considerable political and economic stake in the Middle East. Their ability to protect that stake depended on sustaining a reasonable relationship with the Arab states, especially Egypt. The good relationships between the Government of Britain and the Egyptian Government are of wider significance than their immediate and direct bi-literal content would suggest; Egypt has a strategic place in the world connecting the east with the west through the Suez Canal.

¹⁵ Roberts et al., *the United Nations Security Council and war*, 308.

¹⁶ Stewart Jones, *British Policy in the Middle East 1966-74* (Exeter: United Kingdom, 2009), 127.

¹⁷ Barry Rubin, *the Middle East: A Guide to politics, Economics, Society and Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 2015), 178.

¹⁸ Jones, *British Policy in the Middle East 1966-74*, 134.

¹⁹ Eric Marsden, "Anti-British feeling runs high in Jerusalem," *The Times*, October 17, 1973, 9.

²⁰ Eric Marsden, "Bitter attack on Britain by Mr Eban," *The Times*, October 25, 1973, 8.

It also held substantial oil and gas fields which the British coveted. Egypt performed a vital role in the main Middle East case of the twentieth century; the Arab-Israeli dispute. This significant role was not only due to the direct border that Egypt has with Palestine, but also because Egypt had a considerable impact on Arab decisions regarding the Palestine case. Moreover, the British hoped that they could exclude the United States of America from a major role by using Egypt's sway to control negotiations. From the 1950s until the 1967 war, the British-Israeli relations were friendly and could be characterized as sympathetic cooperation. Britain not only supplied Israel with arms, but also, supported Israel's positions on her conflicts with the Arab states in the United Nations. This support caused uncomfortable relations between the Arab states and Britain.

For all of these overlapping reasons, Britain changed its pro-Israel policy after the 1967 War. The United Kingdom instead decided to re-align themselves with Egyptian interests thanks to the Egyptian President Gamal Abd El Nasser's promise to reopen the Suez Canal and to safeguard the British economic interests.²¹ The only problem was that they needed an appropriate diplomat to solidify this relationship. This diplomat needed to have a long-standing presence in both Egypt and England, someone whose significance was understood by both the government and the people. An unexpected figure arose to perform this role represented in King Tutankhamun

Tutankhamun as Inter-Cultural Broker

Tutankhamun (ruled c. 1332-1323 BCE; lived c. 1341-1323 BCE) was the son of King Akhenaten (ruled c. 1351-1334 BCE). Akhenaten (meaning "effective for the Aten") was originally known as Amenhotep IV (meaning "Amen is satisfied") until the fifth year of his reign. When he changed his name to signal his shift from the traditional Egyptian polytheistic religion in favor of a focus on the Aten, the disc of the sun. Akhenaten's unique religion, art and architecture came to light when his city, Akhetaten (modern Tell el-Amarna), was discovered in the nineteenth century. Flinders Petrie, who later trained Howard Carter, led early excavations at Akhetaten.²²

Like his father, Tutankhamun changed his name to signal religious change; he was originally named Tutankhaten but reverted to traditional Egyptian polytheism in the third year of his own reign and he changed his name at this time. Until his tomb was discovered, Tutankhamun's historical significance was due to his being last of the Thutmosid family line and because he rejected his father's religious innovations. Tutankhamun's obscurity changed when his tomb was discovered nearly undisturbed by two British persons; Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon.²³

²¹ Moshe Gat, "Britain and Israel Before and After the Six Day War, June 1967: From Support to Hostility", *Contemporary British History*, Vol. 18:1 (2004), 54, 71.

²² James K. Hoffmeier. *Akhenaten and the Origins of Monotheism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 149, 175.

²³ Thomas Hoving. *Tutankhamun: the Untold Story* (New York: Cooper Square Print, 2002), 140,141.

In 1915, George Herbert (1866-1923), the 5th Earle of Canarvon, employed Howard Carter (1874-1939) to find Tutankhamun's tomb. Lord Canarvon had been fascinated with Egyptology since he visited Egypt in 1903. For his part, Howard Carter had begun his career as an archaeologist when 17 years old. Carter first visited Egypt in 1890 and two years later he assisted Flinders Petrie, the "Father of Egyptian Archaeology", in his excavations. Carter later became the Chief Inspector of Antiquities in Upper Egypt for the Egyptian Government.²⁴

Lord Cromer, the British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt (1882-1907), suggested that Lord Carnarvon finance archaeological work. As a result, Canarvon first began to excavate with Carter in 1908.²⁵ Carter finally discovered Tutankhamun's tomb, known as KV62, in November 1922. The tomb was mostly intact, unlike the other royal tombs in the area. As a result, it preserved a remarkable wealth of objects – 5,398 objects in total – although the tomb itself was unremarkable. These discoveries were prominent in the news of the 1920s, becoming enshrined in popular culture of the era. Carter and Canarvon carefully controlled the publicity of this important archaeological event. Lord Carnarvon, the excavation sponsor, invited only Arthur Merton (1883-1942), a correspondent with the London *Times*, to attend the unveiling, ignoring the Egyptian press and other western newspapers. *The Times* got the discovery publication rights for £5000 and 75 per cent sales royalties to other publishers.²⁶

The Morning Post correspondent at Luxor stated on 10 February 1923 that the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) staff who were working at Tutankhamun's tomb were uncomfortable because they could not send the discovery information to the American newspapers. Even so, Arthur C. Mace (1874-1928), the Associate Curator of the MMA, indicated that their relations with Carnarvon and Carter were friendly and that "there is not one word of truth in the assertion". Of course, Mace himself was English and was a key participant in the excavation and publication of the tomb so his own view was not entirely unbiased.²⁷

According to current practice, the remarkable treasures from Tutankamun's tomb were expected to be divided between those who discovered them and Egypt. Instead, Egypt kept nearly everything. The discovery of the tomb coincided with Egypt's independence in 1922, and the declaration of a new constitution (1923) and government under Zaghlul (1924). The coincidence of Egypt's independence alongside the discovery of a tomb emblematic of Egypt's own heritage inspired the new government to keep these finds together in Egypt rather than allow them to leave the country.

²⁴ He died in London on 2 March 1939. "Britons who made the find," *The Times*, March 29, 1972, III.

²⁵ "Britons who made the find," *The Times*, March 29, 1972, III. On Howard Carter, see M. L. Bierbier, "Carter, Howard" in *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, 4th ed.. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2012), 105-106; Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen, Volumes 1-3* Reissue ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²⁶ Donald Malcolm Reid. *Contesting Antiquity in Egypt: Archaeologies, Museums, and the Struggle for identities from World War 1 to Nasser* (Cairo: AUC press, 2015), 64.

²⁷ A. C. Mace, "Tutankhamen." *The Times*, March 14, 1923, 13.

This timing also permanently intensified the role of Tutankhamun in the display of Egyptian nationalism.²⁸ The collections of Tutankhamun are now the most recognizable symbols of ancient Egypt to the public and they form the cornerstone of the National Museum collections at the museum in Cairo and it is planned to transfer the priceless pieces of Tutankhamun to the new Grand Museum at Giza close to the pyramids imminently. In the near future, Tutankhamun will become a hologram tour guide in the museum, showing visitors his own riches personally.²⁹

British-Egyptian Negotiations for *the Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition

In 1972, the British Museum hoped to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb by organizing an exhibition of fifty items from the tomb. This anniversary coincided with the shift in British perceptions of their interests in Middle East politics. England now hoped to collaborate with Egypt in the Middle East. England wanted Egyptian approvals and organizational assistance for their planned Tutankhamun Exhibition in London. The conditions were ripe for beneficial negotiations for both countries thanks to Tutankhamun's special role as intercultural broker and diplomat. In order to receive the approval of the Egyptian Government to hold an exhibition of the Tutankhamun material, it was necessary for the British and the Egyptians to negotiate both an Inter-Government Agreement and an agreement between the Egyptian and the British Museums. Both agreements were signed on 28 July 1971.

Both sides were aware that the rich cultural contacts forged for this exhibit could provide a promising foundation for developing the Anglo-Egyptian relationship. Both England and Egypt stood to gain from the Tutankhamun exhibitions. Egypt would experience both financial and prestige gains. The tremendous coverage in the newspapers about the exhibition caused a notable increase in the Egyptian tourist trade according to the Egyptian Tourist Information Centre in London.³⁰ The exhibition helped in raising the financial support of the UNESCO project to rescue the Philae Temples in Egypt; its proceeds, £600.000, were devoted to the archaeological saving of the Philae Temples³¹. England also benefited because the exhibition increased the number of visitors to the other parts of the British Museum; the number of visitors in the first half of 1972 was 1.4 million with an increase of 200.000 visitors on the first six months of the last year while until that time, the visitors' number had been climbing at a rate of about 200.000 a year.³²

²⁸ Egypt made use of pharaonic symbolism since at least 1835 under Muhammad Ali (Reid *Who's Pharaohs?* 2002:205), but Tutankhamun gave new focus to this symbolism.

²⁹ "King Tut Set to be the Egyptian Museum's Newest Tour Guide". *Egyptian Streets* (April 16, 2018).

³⁰ Samir Raouf, Director of the Egyptian Tourist Information Centre in London, a letter to M. A. Holding, Near East and North Africa Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 14 April 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

³¹ MacManus James, "Tut top of the pops", *The Guardian*, January 1, 1973, 24.

³² Dennis Barker, "Tutankhamun gets more time", *The Guardian*, September 1, 1972, 7.

It remains to this day the most popular exhibit in the history of the British Museum. The well-preserved Tutankhamun artifacts also could help the British Museum curators to understand other artifacts within their own collections better through comparisons.

These benefits, in addition to the engagement of people in conversation across boundaries formed the basis for why the Tutankhamun material was so appealing. Working across international boundaries enables curators, museum professionals, state officials, academic faculty, and students to engage in a sustained dialogue while creating both an exhibition and a publication. The additional dialogue created with the public furthers this deep engagement. These multiple levels and depths of engagement are at the heart of cultural diplomacy.³³

American-Egyptian 1970 Loan Negotiations

At the same time that the British government and the British Museum negotiated for the Tutankhamun exhibition and began its preparations with the Egyptian Government, there were parallel negotiations going on between the United States of America and Egypt. In 1970, the Government of the United States of America asked the Egyptian Government for the loan of forty-three major works of ancient Egyptian art for display in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Although the Egyptian Government approved the British application they refused the American request to host this exhibition. The Egyptians might have decided the exhibition cancellation to be reasonably painless way of showing that they were prepared to take hard actions against American interests.³⁴ In order to understand this refusal, we have to look back at US-Egypt relations before 1970.

The nineteenth century witnessed an American activity in the Middle East focusing on the missionary outreach, the first American missionary arrived Palestine in 1821 and weapons trade with the Middle Eastern countries without colonial ambitions in the region which resulted in positive sentiments towards America, unlike Britain which had clear territorial ambitions in the region since the British Frazer military campaign against Egypt in 1807 during the reign of Mohammed Ali Pasha (1805-1848) and the British Occupation of Egypt in 1882 during the reign of Khedive Tawfik (1879-1892),³⁵ while America did not try to occupy the Middle Eastern peoples. Egypt and the United States of America had a relatively distant relationship during the early twentieth century. The Americans tried to keep the pro-American feelings in 1930 by discouraging the missionary activities in Cairo which might increase the

³³ Christina Luke and Morag M. Kersel, *U.S. Cultural Diplomacy and Archaeology: Soft Power, Hard Heritage*. (London: Routledge, 2013), 72-73.

³⁴ P. R. H. Wright, the British Embassy in Cairo, a letter to D. F. B. Le Breton, North African Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 14 March 1970, FCO 39/749, Tutankhamun Exhibition in London in 1972 - the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

³⁵ Michael B. Oren, *Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007), 128.

hostilities against the Americans.³⁶ This relationship changed dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century after the appearance of Israel in the Middle East, the USA negative image among the Arabs was highly connected with the America's support to Israel which strongly appeared after the 1967 War between Israel in one side and Egypt, Syria and Jordan in the other side; most of the Israeli air forces weapons which were used in 1967 War were imported from France not the United States of America³⁷.

When fighting erupted along the Suez Canal in 1969, Israel requested 100 A-4 Skyhawks and 25 F-4 Phantoms from the United States in January 1969 as alternatives to the Mirages which France refused to sell to Israel.³⁸ The United States started to provide Israel with the Phantom jets in September 1969 which continued over twelve months after the training of Israeli pilots in the USA. The Egyptian Government considered the American delivery of the Phantoms to Israel a serious development in the Middle East situation.³⁹ The Arabs considered those Phantom jets to be a symbol of American support for Israel.

Israel used these aircrafts to attack areas around Cairo, such as Inshas airport, 12 miles north-east of Cairo, and the industrial town of Helwan, about 20 miles south of the Egyptian capital, the Nile Valley north of Cairo, in addition to Port Said. Egypt and other Arab nations criticized the United States for providing the the Phantoms and other weapons which enabled Israel to continue their raids over Egypt and other Arab front-line states. During those circumstances, the advisers to the American President Nixon (lived 1913-1994; president 1969-1974) announced that the United States would supply more aircrafts to Israel as they believed that "Israel's survival could depend upon the requested aircraft".⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the Russian government threatened to supply the Egyptian with advanced weapons while Britain called for a total ban of exporting weapons to the Middle East⁴¹.

Two further raids in Egypt brought Egyptian-American relations to a new low in 1970. Ninety Egyptian civilians were killed by an Israeli raid over Abo Zabal metal factory in February 1970. Thirty children in the Bahr El-Baqar School were killed and many other wounded by Israeli raid using the American weapons on 8 April 1970.⁴²

³⁶ Alise E. Coen, "Rethinking Anti-Americanism: Egyptian perceptions of the United States" (PhD thesis, University of Delaware, Delaware, 2009), 92.

³⁷ Shibley Telhami, *The Stakes: America and the Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002), 51.

³⁸ William B. Quandt, *Decade of Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab – Israeli conflict 1967-1976*, (University of California Press; California, 1977), 97.

³⁹ Louis Heren, US delivers Phantom jets to Israel, *The Times* (London; England, September 8, 1969), 5.

⁴⁰ Air battles near Cairo as Arab leaders meet, *The Times* (London; England, February 9, 1970), 4.

⁴¹ Stewart Jones, *British Policy in the Middle East 1966-74* (Exeter; United Kingdom, 2009), 57.

⁴² Costly Bombing, *The Times* (London; England, April 10, 1970), 11.

In this same year, 1970, the US government asked for a loan of Egyptian artifacts for a major travelling exhibition. One of the requested artifacts was the statue of King Khafre (c. 2570 BCE) which is considered one of the finest sculptural pieces from ancient Egypt. The Museum of Fine Arts Boston received a notice from the Egyptian Minister of Culture to say that the time was “most inauspicious” to send such valuable pieces to the USA and the exhibition would be postponed “until a happier atmosphere prevails”. The announced reason was that the Egyptian government was concerned for the security of the treasures and the statues might be damaged. American negotiators offered to send a special plane for the Khafre statue complete with a special anti-sinking box to protect it since the plane would travel over the sea on route to the United States.⁴³

The Egyptian officials countered that they feared that there might be some risk of destruction or damage to the valuable objects once they reached American soil. They pointed to the treatment of French President Georges Jean Raymond Pompidou (lived 1911-1974, president 1969-1974) when he made his first official visit to the United States of America, responding to the President Nixon’s invitation. On this occasion, the American Jewish community arranged for demonstrations and discourtesies against Pompidou during his stay.⁴⁴ They considered him to be a pro-Arab and anti-Israel politician because France had recently announced the sale of 108 Mirage jet fighters to Libya and refused to sell the same kind of aircraft to Israel.⁴⁵ The Egyptian authorities were concerned for the security of the loaned items because they thought that Jewish groups might be aggressive toward archaeological objects from an Arab country. In actuality, Egyptian officials could not justify to the Egyptian public the loan of those Egyptian treasures to the United States at a time when American ‘Phantoms’ were killing Egyptian citizens.⁴⁶ The reasons for this refusal stems from worsening relations between Egypt and the United States of America over the course of the twentieth century.

Because there was no signed agreement between Egypt and the United States, the expenditure on the proposed exhibition at the American museums was paid by the Americans; these costs were supposed to be paid from the proposed exhibition proceeds. British negotiators were afraid that the Egyptians might cancel the exhibition in London, so they suggested a certain insurance to cover preliminary expenses in case of cancellation. The Egyptian Minister of Culture, Tharwat Okasha, and his Under-Secretary made no objection, although they insisted that this risk of cancellation in the British case was “negligible”.⁴⁷

⁴³ Antiquities Loan to the U. S. postponed, the Egyptian Gazette, Thursday 11 March 1970.

⁴⁴ Quandt, *Decade of Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab - Israeli conflict 1967-1976*, 97.

⁴⁵ James O. Goldsborough, “France, the European Crisis and the Alliance,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 52, Issue 3 (April 1974), 546.

⁴⁶ Lord Trevelyan, Chairman of the British Museum trustees, Report of visit to Egypt in March 1970 on 24 March 1970, FCO 39/749, Tutankhamun Exhibition in London in 1972 - the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁴⁷ Lord Trevelyan, Chairman of the British Museum trustees, Report of visit to Egypt in March 1970 on 24 March 1970, FCO 39/749, Tutankhamun Exhibition in London in 1972 - the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The 1972 Exhibition Negotiations with England and America

The proposed 1972 Exhibition inserted a powerful new diplomat into discussions between the Egyptian and the British politicians: Tutankhamun. Egypt used Tutankhamun's cultural cache to encourage England to rethink its views towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. Mohamed Abdel Qadir Hatem (1918-2015), the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and Information met the British Secretary of State in London on 29 March 1972 during his visit on the occasion of unveiling the Tutankhamun Exhibition. British officials warmly welcomed Hatem in London. Hatim was impressed by the Tutankhamun Exhibition, describing it as well-organized and a symbol of the success and good relationship between Britain and Egypt.⁴⁸

The Egyptian Minister Mohamed Abdel Qadir Hatem discussed the British attitude towards the Arab-Israeli dispute with Alec Douglas-Home, the British Secretary of State. Douglas-Home said that when he visited Israel, he told the Israelis that Egypt wanted peace and they should take the advantage of this sentiment. Israel replied that any peaceful settlement should be supported by firm guarantees. He suggested the leasing of Sharm el Shaikh from Egypt with the Israeli and Egyptian military presence in this area and wondered if the Egyptians would accept such suggestion.⁴⁹ Hatem appreciated the British role in issuing the Security Council Resolution 242. He hoped that Britain could do more.⁵⁰ The British Minister emphasized that the British attitude towards the Arab-Israeli dispute was not changed and it would be as set out in the British Foreign Secretary of State speech of Harrogate.⁵¹

Hatem indicated that many Egyptians believed that Britain was encouraging Israeli aggression by supplying them with submarines. Egyptians believed that Israel would use these submarines to attack Beirut and Alexandria rather than for defensive purposes. Through this agreement with Israel, Britain aligned herself with the United States by supplying Israel with weapons. This alignment made no economic sense because Egypt could purchase weapons on much larger scale than Israel, generating more profit for Britain. The British Secretary of State reminded Hatem that Britain supplied Egypt with £ 4 million of military equipment in 1971. He wondered also if Egypt wanted a deal on the

⁴⁸ The British Embassy in Cairo, a telegraph to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 5 April 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁴⁹ Record of conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information and Culture held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at 4.30 pm on 29 March 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁵⁰ Record of conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information and Culture held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at 4.30 pm on 29 March 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁵¹ Call by senior Egyptian journalists on the Secretary of State on 29 March 1972 at 5.00 PM, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

same type of submarines as Israel. Ultimately, Britain did not supply these submarines until 1975.⁵² Douglas-Home emphasized once again that there was no change in the British Policy on supplying the military equipment to the Middle East countries. The British considered their submarine deal with Israel as a limited one compared with the total supply of arms to Israel. The Egyptian guest emphasized the idea that Egypt wanted to maintain positive relationships with Britain, and that Britain would threaten this relationship by encouraging Israel. All the same, Hatim believed that Anglo-Egyptian relations were at an extremely good point during at the time of this meeting.⁵³

This meeting also offered an opportunity for the British representative to express his anxiety regarding the position of the United States and the Soviet Union as the only powers influencing the Middle East. The Egyptian Minister, Hatem, indicated that the Russians were only in Egypt because the Egyptians had no choice. Because the United States supplied weapons to Israel, Egypt believed that it needed Soviet arms to defend herself. Egypt still hoped to find an ally in the western countries, particularly Britain. Egyptians believed that it was crucial for Britain not to side with Israel in her dispute with the Arab countries.⁵⁴

Tharwat Okasha (1921-2012), the former Egyptian Minister of Culture, was invited to visit the London Exhibition with his wife in May 1972.⁵⁵ The British Embassy officials in Cairo were worried about this visit. It came soon after the decision of the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (lived 1918-1981; president 1970-1981) to dismiss Okasha from serving as an adviser to the President for Cultural Affairs. It was widely believed in Egypt that Sadat relieved Okasha of his duties because he had associated with the signatories of Abdel Latif Baghdadi memorandum and because he openly criticized Sadat. The British Embassy officials were afraid that the Egyptian authorities would prevent Okasha from traveling abroad or this visit might damage the delicate Anglo-Egyptian relations.⁵⁶ The signatories of this memorandum, among them was Abdel Latif Baghdadi (1917-1999) who was a Free Officer and former Vice President of Egypt, wanted to build up a pressure on Sadat on 4 April 1972 in order to reconsider the policy of the complete dependence on the Soviet Union

⁵² Call by senior Egyptian journalists on the Secretary of State on 29 March 1972 at 5.00 PM, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁵³ Record of conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information and Culture held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at 4.30 pm on 29 March 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁵⁴ Record of conversation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Information and Culture held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office at 4.30 pm on 29 March 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁵⁵ A telegraph to the British Embassy in Cairo on 4 May 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁵⁶ A. B. Urwick, the British Embassy in Cairo, a letter to A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 27 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

and to take moderate action between the two super-powers.⁵⁷ The British Embassy officials in Cairo explained to their Egyptian colleagues that Okasha's invitation was invited a symbol of gratitude for his efforts in arranging the exhibition. Okasha, while he was a Minister, visited London in 1969 and discussed the possibility of this exhibition with Eiddon Stephen Edwards (1909-1996), the Keeper of the Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum.⁵⁸ Given Okasha's pivotal role in the exhibition, England's invitation was not a recognition for his former position as adviser to the President. The British Museum, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Ambassador in Cairo encouraged the visit of Okasha to the Exhibition.⁵⁹ They may put a possibility of his coming back in a formal position again, in this case, he might remember and appreciate that the British respected him when he was out of power and authority.

To be sure that this matter would not badly affect the Anglo-Egyptian relations, British officials communicated with Hafiz Ismail (1919-1997), the President's Adviser for National Security Affairs. Ismail thanked these British Officials for their attempt to ensure that this matter did not become an annoyance in the Anglo-Egyptian relations. The British officials insisted to the Egyptian authorities that this visit was only private visit; the British did not send anyone to see Okasha at the Airport while the District Manager of the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) greeted him and his wife personally onto the airplane.⁶⁰

It was planned that Edward Heath, the British Prime Minister, would meet Okasha during his visit to London. The British Prime Minister wished to meet Okasha and expressed this desire to the Director of the British Museum during his visit to the exhibition on 11 June 1972. He wanted to thank him for his efforts regarding the exhibition.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Anthony McDermott, *Egypt from Nasser to Mubarak: A flawed Revolution*, (New York: Croom Helm, 1988), 45.

⁵⁸ G. J. A. Slater, A letter to J. G. McMinnies on 23 December 1971, Exhibition of antiquities (Tutankhamun) from United Arab Republic at British Museum, London, March-September 1972, FCO 13/455, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK. Edwards himself served as part of the Foreign Office in World War II and at the British embassies in Cairo and Baghdad and the Secretariate in Jerusalem, 1942-1945. His work experience exemplifies the intertwining of heritage management and diplomacy. See Bierbrier, M.L. (ed.) (2012) *Who Was Who in Egyptology, Fourth Revised Edition*. London: Egypt Exploration Society: 173-174.

⁵⁹ E. G. Halestrap, Director of Middle East Department at the British Council in London, a letter to R. C. Shawyer, Cultural Relations Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 23 April 1971, Exhibition of antiquities (Tutankhamun) from United Arab Republic at British Museum, London, March-September 1972, FCO 13/455, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶⁰ A. B. Urwick, the British Embassy in Cairo, a letter to A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 27 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶¹ The office of the British Prime Minister, a letter to P. H. Grattan, Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 16 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

In order to keep good relations with the Egyptian Government, the British Prime Minister was advised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that the invitation of Okasha at that time would present a slight problem in the Anglo-Egyptian relations. Okasha had strained relations with Abdel Qader Hatem, his successor as Minister of Culture. When Hatem came to London at the opening ceremony of the Exhibition as a representative of his Government, he did not see the British Prime Minister. Officials were concerned that the proposed meeting of Okasha with the Prime Minister in London would offend Hatem and would be interpreted as: “preferential treatment to Dr. Okasha”. Since Okasha made such enormous efforts to arrange the exhibition more than Hatem, the Prime Minister could call him informally and without publicity.⁶²

It was decided to cancel the invitation according to that advice and to send a letter of thanks to Hatem and the Egyptian Government for allowing these valuable pieces to be displayed in London. The Prime Minister also apologized to Hatem for being unable to meet during the unveiling of the exhibition because of his other commitments.⁶³ This warm appreciation of the Prime Minister to Hatem was widely broadcasted to the Egyptian public by Egyptian Radio and the Egyptian newspapers, such as the Egyptian Gazette.⁶⁴

Amid this warming climate, the British Parliament became interested in extending the exhibition period beyond the arranged six months. 300,000 visitors had attended the Tutankhamun Exhibition in the first three months of its display and the interest was still high.⁶⁵ A British Parliament member for Barnsley, Roy Mason, asked the Ministry of Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to ask the Egyptian Government for permission to extend the exhibition beyond September 30 to be allocated to school parties from the North of Britain.⁶⁶

⁶² A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter to A. J. C. Simcock on 21 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶³ The Prime Minister Office, a letter to Abdel Qader Hatem, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and National Guidance on 26 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶⁴ The British Embassy in Cairo, a telegraph to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 4 July 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

UK Thanks Egypt for Tut Show, Egyptian Gazette, 5 July 1972.

The Egyptian Embassy in London arranged a dinner party at the Embassy in the honor of Okasha. An official of Near East and North Africa Department expressed to Okasha the British gratitude for the Egyptian efforts to get the exhibition and for the important role he personally played in getting the exhibition to the British Museum. He left London to Paris on 30 June 1972.

A letter of A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to A. B. Urwick, the British Embassy in Cairo on 30 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶⁵ Roy Mason, a Parliamentary question on 15 June 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶⁶ Tutankhamun extension hope, *The Times* (London; England, April 25, 1972), 2.

Although the Monday morning every week was reserved for the school visits, there were long waiting lists and an enormous number of schools failed to get a place on these lists.⁶⁷ 1,500 school parties were waiting agreement with the British Museum to visit the exhibition. The Secretary of State for Education and Science replied that according to the Inter-Government Agreement between the British and the Egyptian Governments, the valuable items should be only shown at the British Museum and the exhibition would remain opened to all visitors.⁶⁸

The British formal application for the exhibition extension until 31 December 1972 was sent to the office of Abdel Qadir Hatem, the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and Information on 12 July 1972.⁶⁹ The Parliament Member Roy Mason provided a question to the Secretary of State asking to reveal the result of the negotiations with the Egyptian Government regarding such extension. The Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office asked Mason to withdraw his question regarding the exhibition until they got a response from the Egyptians. He did not want to offend the Egyptian Government and promised Mason that they would let him know when they had an Egyptian formal agreement.⁷⁰ Such sensitivity to Egyptian sensibilities signaled new respect for Egyptian autonomy and authority. Their patience paid off and the Egyptian Government approved the British request to extend the exhibition by three months on 11 September 1972.⁷¹

In the second half of September 1972 a rumor spread that the Egyptians changed their mind and would refuse the extension of the exhibition. The officials of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office thought that the Egyptian Prime Minister Aziz Sidqi (1920-2008) was responsible for these rumors since

⁶⁷ A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North Africa Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter to the Parliamentary Office on 20 April 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶⁸ A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North Africa Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter to the Parliamentary Office on 20 April 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁶⁹ A telegraph to the British Embassy in Cairo on 13 July 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁷⁰ M. A. Holding, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter on 7 September 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1239, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

* The Department of Education for Scotland asked about the possibility of transferring the exhibition to the Royal Scottish Museum at the end of the exhibition period at the British Museum. It was difficult for the Egyptian officials to agree as they were under some pressure from other countries such as the Russians to borrow the exhibits. It was hard to have a further extension as the exhibition was firstly agreed to be extended because the exhibits were already in the same place at the British Museum and it would be more difficult to transfer the items to Edinburgh which would require a new agreement.

M. A. Holding, Near East and North Africa Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter to M. I. Goulding, Head of Chancery, the British Embassy in Cairo on 3 May 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

M. A. Holding, Near East and North Africa Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter to I. Gray, Department of Education for Scotland on 12 October 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1240, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

they believed that he was anti-British. The officials of the North East and West Africa Department kept this report within their department until the information was confirmed because, from their point of view, it would be risky if Ministers knew that the new Egyptian friendship was “a half-hearted and insincere manoeuvre”.⁷²

The officials in the British Embassy in Cairo saw that Sidqi was not entirely pro-Russian. When Sidqi was the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the economy, he wanted to improve Egyptian industry through depending on the communist countries that supplied him with capital goods. Sidqi only developed anti-Soviet because of the directions provided by President Sadat. The British officials in Cairo depended on Sadat’s ability to keep control over his Prime Minister. It was fully expected that after many years of strained relations and hostility between Egypt and Britain that everything would suddenly be fine. And yet, the British were hopeful because Egypt was searching for allies and close relations with west Europe and, it seemed, especially with Britain.⁷³

The British officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office recognized that the Tutankhamun exhibition as only an extremely important cultural event, but also as a symbol of the improved of the Anglo-Egyptian relations in recent years. Without an improved political climate between Britain and Egypt, the Egyptians would not allow these valuable items to be displayed at the British Museum. The British Secretary of State considered the Exhibition as an important landmark in Anglo-Egyptian relations.⁷⁴

Queen Elizabeth II (life 1926- ; reign 1952-present) attended the unveiling ceremony of the exhibition and declared the exhibition to be a symbol of the strong, highly-valued relations between the two countries and that England intended to strengthen their mutual benefits. She appreciated the role which was played by the Egyptian Government not only in letting these items to be in London, but also for the Egyptian assistance in making the exhibition possible. She was also proud to mention that Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon discovered Tutankhamun’s tomb during the reign of her grandfather, King George V (lived 1865-1936; ruled 1910-1936).⁷⁵ The exhibition surely assuaged some of the humiliation England experienced when their initial attempts to claim Tutankhamun material failed during George V’s reign.

⁷² A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a letter to A. B. Urwick, the British Embassy in Cairo to on 22September 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1240, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁷³ A. B. Urwick, the British Embassy in Cairo, a letter to A. J. M. Craig, Near East and North African Department at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 26September 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1240, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁷⁴ The North African Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, a note of 27 March 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

⁷⁵ The Queen’s speech at the opening of the Tutankhamun Exhibition on 29 March 1972, Tutankhamun Exhibition - London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The British Secretary of State wanted to prove to the Egyptian people through the Egyptian journalists who visited the exhibition in London that his Government was keen to co-operate with the Egyptian Government. In particular, the British Secretary of State hoped to extend Anglo-Egyptian co-operation into practical fields, such as through technical assistance. It was planned in 1972 that the British Government would spend £150,000 in the following year in training and technical co-operation with Egypt, the British Secretary of State promised a stable increase in this field.⁷⁶

Discussion

The 1972 *Treasures of Tutankhamun* Exhibition at the British Museum represented diplomacy through antiquities. The success of Britain to host these priceless treasures from Egypt indicates the good intentions of both countries to improve the inter-relationships both before and after this watershed exhibit. The items were supposed to be exhibited for six months from the end of March to the end of September 1972. When British officials asked the extension of the exhibition for another three months beyond the planned end date of the display, Egyptian officials demonstrated flexibility in their negotiations with the British and approved the extension request. This demonstration of good will signaled positive intentions for future relationships and negotiations.

In parallel with the British negotiations to host the Tutankhamun objects, Americans initiated discussions with the Egyptian Government regarding hosting a number of Egyptian archaeological items to be displayed in American museums. The Egyptian Government refused this American request. Publicly, it was said that the exhibition was postponed, but in truth the American application was canceled due to political disagreements. America had sided with the Israelis in their conflict with the Arabs, supplying them with American weapons and ammunition. The Egyptian Government officials used archaeological material to demonstrate that they were ready to take hard actions against American interests and, especially, to signal their displeasure with America's role in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Meanwhile, Egypt's approval of the British application to host the Tutankhamun exhibition in London represented the satisfaction of the Egyptian Government towards the British policy in the Middle East with some lingering reservations. The initial approval was Egypt's reward to England for their changing attitude towards Israel's relationship with its neighbors over the years. In particular, Egyptians were pleased with the British sponsorship and support of UN Resolution 242, which stated the right of the Arab states to retake the territories that Israel occupied since the 1967 War. This return was the base of the later principal of "Land for peace". Resolution 242 was met with great satisfaction in Egypt.

⁷⁶ Call by senior Egyptian journalists on the Secretary of State on 29 March 1972 at 5.00 PM, Tutankhamun Exhibition – London, FCO 39/1238, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The 1972 Tutankhamun exhibition provided a climate through which many political matters could be discussed between the Egyptian and the British officials. The assistance of the Egyptian officials with the British ones in organizing the exhibition encouraged British politicians to be more open minded with their Egyptian counterparts. The Egyptian Government had some reservations regarding the supplying submarines agreement between Britain and Israel. The British Secretary of State expressed his Government initial approval to supply Egypt with the same kind and the same size of the submarines if Egypt applied for.

It is very important to put the Tutankhamun's exhibition in the USA in 1976 into consideration; when the political situation was changed in the Middle East, the Exhibition was possible to be displayed in the USA. On 24 October 1973 and during the October War, the Israelis succeeded to encircle the Egyptian Third Army and the city of Suez which strengthened the Israeli positions and put the possibility of destroying the Egyptian Third Army. The USA politicians played a key role to convince Israel to desist from the Third Army and to adopt the Camp David Accords which led to the repatriation of Sinai to Egypt⁷⁷.

Conclusion

The negotiations between Egypt, the United Kingdom, and the United States in the 1970s clearly demonstrate the diplomatic value of archaeological material in state-to-state negotiations. Egypt was keenly aware that it could manipulate its material heritage to generate desirable diplomatic ends. Tutankhamun, one of the most, if not the most, recognizable face of archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century, became a crucial diplomat in Egypt's negotiations for itself and relating to broader contemporary politics in the Middle East. The Exhibition contributed in the improvement of the political conversation between Egypt and Britain through open and easy discourse.

Until recently, little attention has been paid to the crucial role that archaeological heritage performs in diplomatic negotiations and discourse. In recent years scholars have begun to explore the integral role of archaeologists as in cultural diplomacy in the wake of the Second World War. Moreover, public perceptions of contemporary politics have been shaped by the well-publicized destruction of archaeological heritage. We argue that material objects themselves also merit extended case studies in order to better understand their role in cultural diplomacy. The current study illustrates that the significance of archaeological material within cultural diplomacy can no longer be ignored.

⁷⁷ Janet M. Roncelli, "A Symbolic Analysis of Henry Kissinger's public image in the print media 1969-1976" (PhD thesis, Wayne State University, Michigan, 1978), 89.

Archaeological material also serves as a critical public figure to rally public support of current political positions. During the Egyptian revolution, threats to the Egyptian Museum and other archaeological material drew massive public outcry and support for those participating in the revolution since it was commonly believed that Mubarak's government was responsible for these threats. This pride in national heritage is not new. Egyptians have consistently protected and promoted the role of pharaonic material as part of their own national identity, beginning at least in 1835 and growing through their independence. Salama Musa publicly spoke about the need for Egyptians to learn about pharaonic Egypt as a way of cultivating their national pride and demanding independence in 1907, accusing the British of intentionally trying to keep Egyptians ignorant through their design of local educational curricula.⁷⁸ Since Musa's complaints, Egyptians have redesigned educational curriculae and taken on increasingly significant roles in the heritage industry and international research on Egypt over more than a century.

While Egyptians have expanded their expertise in innumerable industries since gaining independence, archaeological heritage remains a cornerstone of diplomatic negotiations and visits to antiquities remain a chief component of ceremonial agendas. Tutankhamun occupies pride of place within this symbolism, both because he is readily recognizable across the globe and because his tomb was discovered as Egypt gained its first qualified independence from Britain. Tutankhamun is but one example of the enduring significance of archaeological material in current diplomacy. Other nations have their own diplomats who rise from the past to aid their nation's future.

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⁷⁸ Reid, *Who's Pharaohs?* 2002: 210.

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توت عنخ آمون دبلوماسي القرن العشرين: معرض كنوز توت عنخ آمون عام ١٩٧٢ بالمتحف البريطاني كعلامة بارزة في العلاقات المصرية الإنجليزية والمصرية الأمريكية

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الملخص العربي

إن اكتشاف المقبرة الشهيرة للملك توت عنخ آمون عام ١٩٢٢ في ذات العام الذي منحت فيه بريطانيا مصر استقلالها مع بعض التحفظات قد ربط بين علم المصريات والقومية المصرية بشكل غير مسبوق. لقد أصبح هذا الملك نفسه - توت عنخ آمون - أداة دبلوماسية محورية في التفاوض مع القوى العظمى في العالم سواء كانت بريطانيا أو الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في سبعينيات القرن الماضي. يركز هذا البحث على الدور البارز الذي لعبه معرض "كنوز توت عنخ آمون" بالمتحف البريطاني عام ١٩٧٢ في تشكيل العلاقات المصرية البريطانية والعلاقات المصرية الأمريكية وكيف استغل الدبلوماسيون المصريون هذا المعرض والترتيبات له من أجل الحصول على مكاسب سياسية واستغلال سياسة العقول المفتوحة من قبل الإنجليز والأمريكان أثناء الترتيب لهذا المعرض من أجل عرض وجهة النظر المصرية والعربية في أهم قضية للعرب في ذلك الوقت وهي الصراع العربي الإسرائيلي. إن إلقاء الضوء على الدور الذي لعبه معرض كنوز توت عنخ آمون عام ١٩٧٢ يبرز الدور الذي من الممكن أن تلعبه الآثار في دبلوماسية العصر الحديث وفي العلاقات الدولية.

الكلمات الدالة: معرض توت عنخ آمون، العلاقات المصرية الإنجليزية، العلاقات المصرية الأمريكية.