

FOUR FACTORS THAT EFFECT LOOTING IN EGYPT SINCE THE 2011 REVOLUTION

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Abstract of the Thesis  
Factors that Effect Looting in Egypt Since the 2011 Revolution  
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This thesis is a desk study of English speaking scholarship and examines the four factors that have been contributing to looting in Egypt since the 2011 Arab Spring and subsequent Egyptian Revolution. These factors are political instability, economic recession, the art market, and the relationship between Egyptians and Pharaonic heritage. In relation to this, this thesis specifically considers how English speaking academia discusses looting in Egypt?

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## **Factors that Effect Looting in Egypt Since the 2011 Revolution**

### **Introduction**

Egypt has had a long history of looting of its Pharaonic antiquities, which stretches back to ancient times. However, since the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 (henceforth, the "Revolution") and the greater Arab Spring, much of Egypt's heritage has become increasingly at risk of looting and destruction.<sup>1</sup> Many scholars and archaeologists who study looting of Pharaonic heritage in modern Egypt, including Monica Hanna, Salima Ikram, Sarah Parcak and Katie A. Paul, submit that, although looting has existed to some extent since Pharaonic times,<sup>2</sup> they argue that their research shows an increase in looting of archaeological sites and of major museums during and immediately after the Revolution. These authors would therefore conclude that looting in general has increased in Egypt since the Revolution and the period from 2011 to the present should be considered a major turning point in the destruction of cultural heritage in Egypt.<sup>3</sup> A key example of this looting took place on January 28, 2011, when as many as 1,000 protesters entered the Egyptian Museum located on Tahir Square in Cairo.<sup>4</sup> Alexander Joffe, in response to this event,

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<sup>1</sup> Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)," 2; Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 188.

<sup>2</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," March 1, 2011, 75; Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375; Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 188; Paul, "Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist," 21.

<sup>3</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 47; Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)," 2; Parcak, "Archaeological Looting in Egypt: A Geospatial View (Case Studies from Saqqara, Lisht, and El Hibeh)," 196.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas, "Egyptian Museum in Cairo – Thefts and Recoveries in 2011."

commented in the *Middle Eastern Quarterly* that “Egyptian antiquities were suddenly caught up in a revolution.”<sup>5</sup> According to Monica Hanna, René Teijgeler, and Trafford et al, the increase in looting is due to the withdrawal of troops from archaeological sites as well as from museums, and the economic downturn due to the decrease in tourism.<sup>6</sup> The ransacking of the Egyptian Museum, although just one small moment in the tumultuous summer of 2011, prefigured the flurry of looting that was to take place across Egypt during and in the aftermath of the Revolution.<sup>7</sup> Even after the military took control of Egypt, and the guards started to return, the looting of archaeological sites and museums continued to be a major problem. Two years later, in late 2013, looters entered the Malawi Museum in Minya, located in Upper Egypt, and stole or destroyed approximately 1,050 of the 1,089 objects located there, leaving behind only objects that were too heavy to carry off.<sup>8</sup> These two events highlight some of the acts of looting that occurred due to the climate of political instability in Egypt during the 2011 Revolution. In response to recent high-profile cases of looting, such as these two examples, many scholars are now focusing their analysis on understanding what factors are creating and allowing this environment of increase looting to occur. This thesis will add to this discussion, by submitting a desk study of what factors are contributing to the looting of Pharaonic artifacts in Egypt after the Revolution. In relation to this, my thesis will discuss how English speaking academia discusses looting in Egypt.

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<sup>5</sup> Joffe, “Egypt’s Antiquities Caught in the Revolution,” 9.

<sup>6</sup> Monica Hanna, “What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?,” 371–72; Teijgeler, “Politics and Heritage in Egypt,” 234–41; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, “Chapter 3 Egypt’s Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis,” 39.

<sup>7</sup> Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, “The Power of the Street,” 2.

<sup>8</sup> Wisniewski, “The Currency of History,” 356; Mashberg, “Taking on Art Looters on Twitter”; Monica Hanna, “What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?,” 375.

The first part of this thesis “Part I” consists of an Introduction, a Methods section and a Literature Review. Part II of this thesis focuses on each particular factor as a separate chapter. Each chapter is split into smaller subsequent subsections. Chapter 1 examines the relationship between political instability both during and right after the Revolution, and how it relates to looting. Chapter 2 considers the economic effects of the global recession in 2008 and how the 2011 Revolution impacted tourism and unemployment. Specifically, it looks at how the economic situation in Egypt could have led to increased looting activity. Chapter 3, will give a more globalized view, concentrating of the role of supply and demand in the art market and how this has impacted looting. This chapter will also examine major smuggling routes and the locations of popular art markets for Egyptian antiquity. This will lead into a discussion on the legality of what has been dubbed by some scholars as “grey market.” The chapter will then focus back on Egypt, to generate a closer analyze of major players in the Egyptian antiquities’ trade and pick apart some of their motives for involving themselves in the market. This subsection includes a small separate section on organized crime, that discussing the role of the “mafia” and the different arguments and theories about their exact role in the market. Finally, Chapter 4 will discuss the nuance and sometimes complicated relationship Egyptians have with their Pharaonic Heritage, how this relationship has or has not played a part in their choice to either participate in the looting or take a role in the protection these types of sites. This section first gives an historic overview of the use of Pharaonic heritage as a nationalistic tool by Egyptian leaders, starting with Gamal Abdel Nassar and continuing through the presidencies of Anwar Sadat, Hosni Mubarak, Mohamed Morsi until the present administration of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. In particular, this section examines how the relationship with Pharaonic heritage changed over time and how this has effected how many Egyptians view Pharaonic heritage. The chapter then



discusses a range of topics such as education, religion, government and tourism. Although each chapter covers one of the four factors, factors from other chapters will be referenced as needed in order to draw connections and analyze the situation on the ground. In my conclusion, I will give an overview of the major points from my chapters in Part Two, offer a brief analysis of my findings, and examine how my sources discuss and analyze looting in Egypt. On this note, I will discuss if it is possible to place these four factors into a hierarchy of importance in terms of their impact in creating an environment that encourages looting and what my sources say about this issue. Finally, I will reflect on some of the limitations of my research, and how this research can be expanded on in the future.

## **Methods**

### Introduction: Methodology

In order to examine and analyze what are the main factors that are contributing to looting in Egypt and how English speaking academics are analyzing these factors, I first undertook a literature review of what I thought were the major authors in the fields of heritage studies and archaeology. To choose these authors, I used keyword searches and utilized sites such as Google Scholar, Academia.edu as well as major journals in archaeology and heritage studies. From the authors I chose, I focused on scholarly articles that were published between 2011 and 2019. As needed and when relevant to looting, I expanded my search to include other fields of study such as conservation, criminal justice and economics. I especially took note of who was cited by other scholars and how many times they were cited. I then utilized discourse analysis and content analysis on these chosen author's articles to look for repetition of key words and phrases related to looting. From this analysis, I noted five or six main themes that were repeated by different

scholars. These themes were: political instability, economic downturn (which I refer to as economic recession), the art market, the relationship between Egyptians and their heritage, land grabbing/land appropriation and tourism. These themes then became my four factors that I chose to examine in this thesis. Some of these themes such as land grabbing/land appropriation and tourism were ultimately folded into other themes due to the fact that there was not enough information to justify them being their own factor with their own chapter: They worked better within a broader framework within a factor. One example of this is the way tourism relates to how Egyptians view their Pharaonic Heritage.

#### Data and Sources

In order to answer my research question, I mainly used secondary sources from academic scholars. The choice to primarily utilize secondary sources from scholarship helped drive my choice to do a desk study as my main type of analysis. The majority of these sources have been published in major journals, but a few are opeds and articles written from an expert perspective for either a local or an international paper such as the *New York Times*. My secondary scholarly sources are drawn from a number of different fields such as archaeology, anthropology, heritage studies, preservation, conservation, economics, and criminal justice, thereby giving my analysis a multi-disciplinary and balanced perspective. The majority of my sources focus on Pharaonic Egypt. I do bring in other scholars who work in different types of heritage in Egypt as well as throughout the Middle East and the world when the author makes a valid comparison, has statistics on looting or the art market, or utilizes a theory or definition that is useful in looking at looting of Pharaonic heritage. However, the majority of my data will be from Egypt and will focus specifically on looting of Pharaonic heritage. I also utilized primary sources such as reports

from the Egyptian government, newspaper articles and data from the World Bank to supplement certain types of data such as economic statistics. All of my sources are written or translated into English.

This thesis focuses solely on the looting of Pharaonic antiquities from the 2011 Revolution until 2019 (8 years in total). The choice to focus solely on the looting of Pharaonic antiquity versus the looting of other types of heritage (for example, Coptic or Islamic heritage) is related to the fact that each type of heritage has its own unique history and ideological paradigms that affect how it is treated and discussed. Because it is important to understand what is happening on the ground in Egypt from a local perspective, I will examine both Western and Arab scholars in order to look at different trends.

## **Literature Review**

This Literature Review will give readers a context for the overall discussions and tensions both within the fields of archaeology and heritage studies and specifically in the study of looting. I will highlight the connections between global issues in heritage and looting with the situation in the Middle East as well as in Egypt. During these discussion this literature review will touch on topics such as: the role of the international art market in looting, the difficulty quantifying the increase in looting, how looting is tracked, and the use of technology to find and track looting. Finally this Literature Review will conclude by giving an overview of the political situation leading up to and during the Revolution. This will give a context for this thesis but also help to address the question of why it is important to study the factors that contribute to looting in Egypt during this particular period of time.

### **Illicit Antiquities and the Demand of the International Market**

In her speech for the 2015 ICOM meeting in Paris, Monica Hanna argued that with the Arab Spring and the consequential unrest in other areas of the Middle East, the trade in illicit antiquities has escalated.<sup>9</sup> She brings attention to the fact that, since the 2011 Revolution, new markets have sprung up in the Gulf Region, the Far East and Eastern Europe, which now add to the continuous demand from North American and Western European markets for Egyptian Pharaonic artifacts.<sup>10</sup> Kelly Hill notes that major auction houses often end up with illicit antiquities on their auction blocks.<sup>11</sup> Objects are then sold to dealers, collectors or museums<sup>12</sup> This finding is echoed in Staffen Lundén's argument that the markets for artifacts are mainly located in the more affluent parts of the world, and thus objects tend to flow from South to North, or from East to West.<sup>13</sup> Carol Roehrenbeck expands on this idea by using the terminology "source country" and "market country." According to Roehrenbeck and Hill, a "source country" is "a country that produces a high volume of valuable cultural property,"<sup>14</sup> and often has high levels of corruption.<sup>15</sup> These countries do not gain any revenue or tangible benefits when these objects are sold or displayed in a market country.<sup>16</sup> A "market country" is "a country (e.g., the United States) that buys cultural property."<sup>17</sup> Hill also comments that the antiquities trade is a grey

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<sup>9</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 48.

<sup>10</sup> Hanna, 48.

<sup>11</sup> Hill, "The Problem of Auction Houses and Illicit Antiquities," 340.

<sup>12</sup> Hill, 340.

<sup>13</sup> Lundén, "Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage," 109.

<sup>14</sup> Egypt would be an example of an source country. Hill, "The Problem of Auction Houses and Illicit Antiquities," 340.

<sup>15</sup> Hill, "The Problem of Auction Houses and Illicit Antiquities," 340; Roehrenbeck, "Repatriation of Cultural Property—Who Owns the Past?," 189.

<sup>16</sup> Roehrenbeck, "Repatriation of Cultural Property—Who Owns the Past?," 189; Hill, "The Problem of Auction Houses and Illicit Antiquities," 344.

<sup>17</sup> Roehrenbeck, "Repatriation of Cultural Property—Who Owns the Past?," 189.

market, where objects can go from illegal to legal and that the illicit market (black market), and the licit antiquities market cannot exist apart.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, objects will often pass through a “transit” market often located in a geographically advantaged location before they reach their final destination.<sup>19</sup> Hanna mentions Israel as an example of both a transit market as well as a final destination for the antiquities trade.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Study of Looting in Heritage**

Looting and heritage is an important part of the study of antiquity. The idea of protecting sites that are examples of “world heritage” was first developed in the twentieth century but had its roots in the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The concept of world heritage and intergovernmental World Heritage Committees that we are familiar with today came about after the formation of UNESCO and the 1972 adoption of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which was enacted in 1975.<sup>22</sup> Since then, there has been a growing interest among academia about the way heritage, archaeology and looting are discussed. Lynn Meskell notes that cultural sites have dominated the World Heritage List and that inclusion on this list is linked to tactics of sovereignty, nationalism, territoriality and identity.<sup>23</sup> Similarly to why a country would want to have a heritage site included on the World Heritage List, Morag Kersel and Chad Hill found that similar motivations such as nationalism, issues of globalism as well as taking part in long entrenched traditional practices can motivate looters.<sup>24</sup> Neil Brodie, working

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<sup>18</sup> Hill, “The Problem of Auction Houses and Illicit Antiquities,” 342.

<sup>19</sup> Hill, 342.

<sup>20</sup> Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 54.

<sup>21</sup> Hall, “Introduction: Towards World Heritage,” 1.

<sup>22</sup> Hall, 68.

<sup>23</sup> Meskell, *A Future in Ruins*, xxi.

<sup>24</sup> Kersel and Hill, “The (W)Hole Picture,” 307.

on looting in Libya, uses evidence that looting was occurring in Iraq and Syria in the 1990's, but that looting in this area didn't gain wide spread media attention until 2012 to argue that the media and international attention are drawn to "spikes" of looting and destruction caused by times of civil unrest and conflict.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Discussion of Archaeology, Heritage and Looting in the Middle East**

Trinidad Rico, building from Meskell's work, points out that the discussion of heritage in the Middle East often focuses on the destruction of heritage.<sup>26</sup> She further states that this discussion is used to associate the loss of heritage which is often affiliated with a certain caricature of Islam. This is similar to and draws from the writing of Edward Said, who famously wrote that Orientalism is a way for the Western world to distinguish between the East and the West so that the Western world could present the "Orient" as the "other" in order to use this label "as for western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."<sup>27</sup> Meskell comments on a global framework could be seen as drawing attention to this colonialist history that Said has emphasized in his work. Rico's analysis on the way heritage destruction is framed in the Middle East within the context of Islam references back to Said's analysis of "othering" of the "Orient" and how this idea is used in order for the West to dominate and control the narrative of countries in that region of the world. Yet as Rico points out this caricature has been challenged academically and that the attitude towards non Muslims and their heritage has varied and changed over time. Monica Hanna and Salima Ikram cite the use of

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<sup>25</sup> Brodie, "Why Is No One Talking about Libya's Cultural Destruction?," 212-13.

<sup>26</sup> Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183.

<sup>27</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 3.

Facebook and Twitter in Egypt to speak out against looting.<sup>28</sup> The Egyptian Heritage Task Force was also formed by volunteer heritage academics, professionals as well as everyday people with the goal of providing up to date information on the current threats involving looting and heritage in Egypt.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Salam Al Kuntar, in her comments on the “western gaze”, cites Seymore who states that museum narratives often create subtext messages that the arrival of Islam meant that civilization abruptly ended in the Middle East.<sup>30</sup> She further highlights a local Arab perspective when she brings attention to the use of the phrase “the plunder of our history” which she states is often used in public Arab discourse to describe the West’s removal of cultural artifacts.<sup>31</sup> Thus we see that issues of colonialist ideology and othering are still very problematic in the field of archaeology and heritage studies. As Staffan Lunden comments, there is no neutral way of representing heritage because heritage is inherently political.<sup>32</sup>

### Looting in the Middle East: An Overview

Even though looting and the acquisition of antiquities has a long history in this region, the focus of this Literature Review will be on the period from 2000-2020 although the 1980’s and 90’s will be referenced for context. This period will span from the US Invasion of Iraq, through the Arab Spring, as well as the rise and the decline of Islamic State “ISIS”.<sup>33</sup> Brian Daniels and Katharyn Hanson comment that since the 1990s Syria and Iraq have experienced a significant increase in cases of looting of archaeological sites.<sup>34</sup> They further note that looting in

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<sup>28</sup> Ikram, “Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt,” 2013, 371.

<sup>29</sup> Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” 2.

<sup>30</sup> Al Quntar, “Repatriation and the Legacy of Colonialism in the Middle East,” 21.

<sup>31</sup> Al Quntar, 19.

<sup>32</sup> Lundén, “Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage,” 132.

<sup>33</sup> Also referred to as ISIL and DEASH

<sup>34</sup> Daniels and Hanson, “Archaeological Site Looting in Syria and Iraq: A Review of the Evidence,” 86.

this region is usually done by people who have no job opportunities or alternate forms of income.<sup>35</sup> Michael D. Danit argues that the situation in Syria and Iraq is the largest heritage crisis since the Second World War.<sup>36</sup> Daniels and Hanson note that the inability to conduct regular field assignments in Syria is reflected in academic reports of looting of archaeological sites which tend to target specific locations rather than a larger randomized sample.<sup>37</sup> Neil Brodie also raises the point that looting in Syria was occurring in the late 1990s and early 2000s, if not earlier, but the focus for the academic community at the time, was on Afghanistan. Brodie argues that conventional news and social media did not really start to pay attention to looting in Syria until 2012, which is one year after the start of the Syrian Civil War.<sup>38</sup> He claims that the reason for this is because media and international attention are drawn towards spikes in looting that are caused by civil unrest such as a civil war. Assad Seif draws parallels between the situation in Syria and Iraq and the situation in his native Lebanon during the Civil War.<sup>39</sup> Specifically he comments on the role of extremists in looting, stating extremists know the value of cultural objects to both their community and to the international community. Therefore they use looting to attempt to wipe out the memory of these communities through their connection to their past.<sup>40</sup> Large scale organized looting often accompanies these attempts at destruction<sup>41</sup> Seif concludes by stating that as the wars in Syria and Iraq have escalated more and more looted objects have been stopped at the Lebanese border.

Daniel and Hanson citing John Russel, note that the market demand for Iraqi antiquity, specifically Assyrian antiquities, goes back to the 1990s. In response, the Iraqi government sponsored

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<sup>35</sup> Daniels and Hanson, 86.

<sup>36</sup> Danit, "Ground-Based Observations of Cultural Heritage Incidents in Syria and Iraq | Near Eastern Archaeology," 133.

<sup>37</sup> Daniels and Hanson, "Archaeological Site Looting in Syria and Iraq: A Review of the Evidence," 84.

<sup>38</sup> Brodie, "Why Is No One Talking about Libya's Cultural Destruction?," 212.

<sup>39</sup> Seif, "Illicit Traffick in Cultural Property in Lebanon: A Diachronic Study," 71.

<sup>40</sup> Seif, 71.

<sup>41</sup> Seif, 71.



emergency excavations and increased site guards, which then caused looting to decrease in the late 1990's. According to Jack Green and Katharyn Hanson, when Baghdad fell to US forces on April 9-10, 2003 a combination of targeted and opportunistic looters entered and ransacked the National Museum along with several libraries.<sup>42</sup> This resulted in about 15,000 objects being stolen or damaged, the majority of which are still missing since 2013. The official US investigation reports state that at least 13,515 objects were stolen from museums.<sup>43</sup> Michael Danit reports that since 2015, there have been 80 incidents of cultural heritage damage and destruction in northern Iraq with 110 more being investigated since the publication of his article. Green and Hanson further state that in the following months and years after the US invasion, there was a pattern of widespread and systematic looting across Southern Iraq.<sup>44</sup> They argue that this was mainly due to the inability of the staff at the State Board of Antiquities to protect sites, as well as the emphasis on military objectives. Daniels and Hanson, however, point out that looting in this area was already happening and exacerbated in the 1990s by UN sanctions as well as by water shortages, which were caused by the historic draining of the surrounding marshlands.<sup>45</sup> This led to the exposure of and consequently the accelerated looting of these newly exposed sites. These exposed archaeological sites were then afforded little protection and were subsequently looted. They also agree with the conclusions of the study done by Hanson and Green that the staff at the State Board of Antiquity were unable to keep pace with the rate of destruction.<sup>46</sup> Green and Hanson's conclusion is also supported by Brodie and Renfrew who cite reports by National Geographic in May 2003 and UNESCO in June 2003 to support the conclusion that numerous sites were badly damaged.<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth C. Stone, on the other hand, points out that most of these numbers come from press reports and that many of the reporters behind these stories

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<sup>42</sup> Green and Hanson, "Catastrophe! Ten Years Later Looting, Destruction, and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Iraq and the Wider Middle East," 18.

<sup>43</sup> Brodie and Renfrew, "Looting and the World's Archaeological Heritage," 346.

<sup>44</sup> Green and Hanson, "Catastrophe! Ten Years Later Looting, Destruction, and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Iraq and the Wider Middle East," 18.

<sup>45</sup> Daniels and Hanson, "Archaeological Site Looting in Syria and Iraq: A Review of the Evidence," 85.

<sup>46</sup> Daniels and Hanson, 85.

<sup>47</sup> Brodie and Renfrew, "Looting and the World's Archaeological Heritage," 346-47.

only visited a few of the larger sites dating from between the Early Dynastic and Old Babylon Period.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, Stone argues that Green and Hanson's conclusions are incomplete because there are flaws in their data. She further concludes that while surface looting may have increased from 1.23 percent to 6.09 percent between February and June 2003, in the following twelve years additional site surface looting only grew 1.2%. percent.<sup>49</sup> Stone concludes that although looting has occurred since the US invasion of Iraq, there has been a significant decrease in the amount of looting since February-June of 2003.<sup>50</sup> Brodie and Renfrew state that the destruction and looting in Iraq is closely paralleled in Afghanistan.<sup>51</sup> They further state that destruction and looting there is happening for similar reasons.

In Israel and Palestine, Adel H. Yaha states that since 1967, archeologists have largely ignored the occupied Palestinian territories while focusing on and intensely excavating neighboring countries of Jordan, Egypt, and Israel.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, the challenges to Palestinian heritages and archaeology such as illegal digging, absence of antiquity law, and the lack of national interest are quite serious and diverse. Yaha further states that that most looters in the Palestinian Territories are subsistence looters who are looting to try to combat poverty.<sup>53</sup> Assad Seif states that Lebanon is laden with untouched archaeological sites.<sup>54</sup> Seif further comments that the majority of the sites affected by looting are burial sites from the Phoenician and Classical Period.<sup>55</sup> He also states that looters in Lebanon rely on middlemen, though he does not say in what capacity these middlemen serve .

### **Increase in looting since the 2011 Revolution In Egypt**

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<sup>48</sup> Stone, "An Update on the Looting of Archaeological Sites in Iraq," 178–79.

<sup>49</sup> Stone, 185.

<sup>50</sup> Stone, 186.

<sup>51</sup> Brodie and Renfrew, "Looting and the World's Archaeological Heritage," 346.

<sup>52</sup> Yaha, "Looting and 'Salvaging,'" 39.

<sup>53</sup> Yaha, 41.

<sup>54</sup> Seif, "Illicit Traffick in Cultural Property in Lebanon: A Diachronic Study," 65.

<sup>55</sup> Seif, 68.

According to scholars such as Monica Hanna, Salima Ikram and Sarah Parcak, although looting has always existed and has been a part of both Egypt's past and its present, incidents of looting have spiked and have continued at an increased rate since the 2011 Revolution.<sup>56</sup> Hanna reports that in July 2015, the rate of loss for Egyptian cultural heritage was at its peak and since then has only continued to rise.<sup>57</sup> In a report for The Heritage Task Force of Egypt, she states that impoverished Egyptian villagers have intensified local looting activity.<sup>58</sup> Sarah Parcak et al., building on Hanna's argument, used satellite imagery of four sites, Saqqara, Dashur, Lisht, and el Hibeh, from Google Earth satellite images taken between 2002 and 2013 to show that there has been an increase of looting at archaeological sites, especially after 2011.<sup>59</sup> Although Parcak's data helped to confirm Hanna's findings that the looting of archaeological sites has increased since the Revolution, it has also been subject to debate. Michael Fradley and Nichole Sheldrick published a response to Parcak's et al. findings in which they argue that, although they agree with the trends and findings in Parcak's et al. data, as well as the article's contribution to the ongoing conversation on damages and threats to cultural heritage in Egypt, they find that, the overall picture created by the Parcak et al. dataset is incomplete. Specifically, Fradley and Sheldrick take issue with the fact that the majority of the sites chosen for the study are located in the Nile Valley and the Delta, which they say is extremely limiting, and does not show the full picture of looting in Egypt.<sup>60</sup> To make up for what they consider a problem in the original dataset, Fradley and Sheldrick focus on sites in the Eastern and Western Desert in their study.

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<sup>56</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 47–63.

<sup>57</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 47.

<sup>58</sup> Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)," 2.

<sup>59</sup> Parcak, "Archaeological Looting in Egypt: A Geospatial View (Case Studies from Saqqara, Lisht, and El Hibeh)," 188–205.

<sup>60</sup> Fradley and Sheldrick, 2.

Their data is useful in combination with Parcak's et al. as they create a wider and more complete survey area. They specifically take issue with how Parcak et al predicts looting will progress in the next decades.<sup>61</sup> Hanna's dataset extends the timeline given by Parcak through 2015, adding 2 years of overall data on looting trends. Considered together, the three studies provide a strong dataset, which shows that looting spiked after the Revolution.

### **Looting in Egypt, and how it is measured and tracked**

The three main ways looting is tracked in Egypt are through (1) satellite imagery, (2) archaeological survey and (3) tracking and analyzing the number of items that go through and or are recovered from the art market and/or various smuggling networks. Parcak demonstrates how the use of satellite images can be a critical aide to the government and the scientific community in the efforts to stop the illegal antiquities trade.<sup>62</sup> However, Tassie, Trafford & van Wetering underscore that satellite images do not reveal every instance of looting. For example, they point out illegal excavations that occur under houses, or defacement of tombs and monuments that are being pillaged for decorative blocks in areas such as Saqqara or in the Delta as examples of types of looting not revealed by satellite imagery.<sup>63</sup>

Blyth Bowman Proux acknowledges that in many cases archaeological sites have been destroyed or looted so badly archaeological surveys or other methods are no longer a reliable way to track looting. In these cases, he argues that the only way to study these sites, and the damage to them, is through antiquities that have appeared on the art market or in collections.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Fradley and Sheldrick, "Satellite Imagery and Heritage Damage in Egypt."

<sup>62</sup> Parcak, "Archaeological Looting in Egypt: A Geospatial View (Case Studies from Saqqara, Lisht, and El Hibeh)," 197. The usefulness of satellite imagery in tracking and combating looting had also been shown by Contreras & Brodie in Peru in 2009, as well as by Van Ess *et al* in 2006; Hritz 2008; and Stone 2008 Daniel A. Contreras, "Huaqueros and Remote Sensing Imagery: Assessing Looting Damage in the Virú Valley, Peru," *Antiquity* 84, no. 324 (June 2010): 544, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003598X0006676X>.

<sup>63</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 18.

<sup>64</sup> Proulx, "Archaeological Site Looting in 'Glocal' Perspective," 112.

James Marrone, in his study of looted Near Eastern Antiquities, similarly uses the art market to understand the antiquities supply chain in areas where looting is a concern.<sup>65</sup> It should be noted that scholars such as Ricardo J. Elia argue that due to the clandestine nature of the market, it is very difficult to quantify the full extent of the problem of looted antiquities in such markets.<sup>66</sup> Katie A. Paul also proposes that social media be incorporated into other existing methods used to track looting because it allows for nearly instant updates.<sup>67</sup>

### A Brief History of The Arab Spring and Revolution in Egypt and its Effects on Looting

In order to understand how looting has changed, both during and in subsequent periods to the Revolution, as well as how English speaking academia is writing about and analyzing looting, one must first understand how the Arab Spring played out in Egypt. Most sources date the beginning of the Revolution to January 25, 2011, when then-President Hosni Mubarak agreed to resign after pressure by a large number of protesters gathered in Tahir Square. These protests were largely sparked by accusations of rampant corruption in Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP), as well as a general feeling among the vast majority of everyday Egyptians that they had become increasingly excluded from the political process due to the repressive tactics of the Mubarak regime. Violent clashes between protesters and security forces resulted in hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries.<sup>68</sup> On February 11, 2011 Omar Suleiman, the director of the Egyptian General Intelligence Service and then acting Vice-President, announced that Mubarak has resigned.<sup>69</sup> Following Mubarak's resignation, the military junta assumed control under the

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<sup>65</sup> Marrone, "Quantifying the Supply Chain for Near Eastern Antiquities in Times of War and Conflict," 278.

<sup>66</sup> Elia, "Looting, Collecting, and the Destruction of Archaeological Resources," 88.

<sup>67</sup> Paul, "Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist."

<sup>68</sup> "Egypt Revolution."

<sup>69</sup> "Egypt Uprising of 2011."

authority of the Supreme Council of the Armed Force (“SCAF”) and the leadership of Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, who had previously been Mubarak’s Minister of Defense.<sup>70</sup> When SCAF refused to hand over power to civilian authority, the protesters came to view SCAF as a continuation of the Mubarak regime.<sup>71</sup> Against this backdrop, the Moslem Brotherhood,<sup>72</sup> which had grown increasingly influential since the start of the Revolution, began to solidify its base and forge alliances with secular and progressive forces while promoting its own agenda. This agenda advocated for the return of an Islamic society based upon a literal interpretation of the Quaranic scriptures.<sup>73</sup> The Islamist movement in Egypt, which includes groups such as the Moslem Brotherhood<sup>74</sup> and the Salafist, had long been the main opposing political force to the ruling coalition of the military and the NDP.<sup>75</sup> Mohammed Morsi, an Islamist and member of the Moslem Brotherhood<sup>76</sup> was elected president in June of 2012 in what many consider a “civil coup.”<sup>77</sup> In July of 2013, the military, under General Abdel Fattah El Sisi, regained power in a military coup.<sup>78</sup> He has continued to rule Egypt through the present day.<sup>79</sup> Thus, the hope for true democracy and free elections in Egypt was never realized. The Revolution in Egypt was thus deemed a failure because it did not bring democracy to Egypt. This period of political upheaval and eventual military control allows for academics to study, in a small timeframe, how changing political situations can effect lootings. It also allows scholars to

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<sup>70</sup> Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, “The Power of the Street,” 2.

<sup>71</sup> Gerbaudo, “The Impermanent Revolution,” 9.

<sup>72</sup> Also spelled Muslim Brotherhood

<sup>73</sup> Gerbaudo, “The Impermanent Revolution,” 9; Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, “The Power of the Street,” 13.

<sup>74</sup> The Moslem Brotherhood (MB) being the main social organization within this category

<sup>75</sup> Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, “The Power of the Street,” 13.

<sup>76</sup> Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, “The Power of the Street,” 13.

<sup>77</sup> Fabiani, “Strategic vs. Opportunistic Looting,” 22.

<sup>78</sup> Fabiani, 22.

<sup>79</sup> Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, “The Power of the Street,” 2.

look at, study and compare the management of looting of Pharaonic heritage in Egypt under both an Islamic and a military regime.

## Chapter 1: Political Instability and Looting in Egypt

The two post-Revolutionary periods in Egypt were marked by civil unrest, cultural property loss and a general lack of security. This situation intensified after Jan 25, 2011, as police withdrew from their posts. <sup>80</sup>Hanna, writing in 2012, noted that in particular the last twelve months has created a vacuum that has allowed for systematic looting. Parcak et al states that in Egypt, the period following the Arab Spring (2011-2013) had the highest overall total value of looting pits and land encroachment.<sup>81</sup> Hassan and Tahoun specifically bring attention to the evening of February 11, and the following weeks, when then Vice President Omar Suleiman publicly announced Mubarak resignation.<sup>82</sup> They submit that, in the following weeks, there was a period of instability where the police disappeared and looting and violence was common.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, Hassan and Tahoun emphasize that the period after Mubarak resigned was in general a period of instability.<sup>84</sup> Soon after Mubarak was overthrown on January 25, 2011, the police and the security guards abandoned their posts or were redeployed and the army expanded its presence.<sup>85</sup> The main role of the army however, was to protect government buildings, not to stop looting.<sup>86</sup> According to Tejjgeler, this shows that protecting archaeological sites was not on the army's priority list and that their main focus was restoring order.<sup>87</sup> To support this view, she notes that Morsi pledged to restore order to Egypt within 100 days of taking office. Of course, as noted by Tassie, Trafford and Wetering, looting has existed and was a problem before the 2011

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<sup>80</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 372.

<sup>81</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 196.

<sup>82</sup> Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, "The Power of the Street," 16.

<sup>83</sup> Lundén, "Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage," 16.

<sup>84</sup> Tapete and Cigna, "Detection of Archaeological Looting from Space," 2. Tapete and Cigna, "Detection of Archaeological Looting from Space," 2.

<sup>85</sup> Tapete and Cigna, 2.

<sup>86</sup> Tejjgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 234.

<sup>87</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 35.



Arab Spring and the Egyptian Revolution in 2011.<sup>88</sup> Despite this, they still submit that there has been unprecedented levels of extensive and methodological damage which they assert is connected to the violence in Egypt since 2011. Parack agrees with this assessment, adding her assertion that if looting continues at its the current rate, worst case scenario, most of Egypt's 1100 + archaeological sites, sitescape and associated landscapes will either be affected by varying degrees of looting and encroachment or gone in 25 years or by the year 2040.<sup>89</sup> The situation did not improve with Morsi's forced eviction from power in mid-2013. This event led to revenge attacks with museums and other heritage sites being caught in the middle and looted.<sup>90</sup> One example of this is in mid-August of 2013, when the Malawi National Museum in Minya<sup>91</sup> was attacked by several gunmen and 1050 out of 1089 objects were looted or destroyed.<sup>92</sup>

High-level security issues and concerns have occupied the Egyptian government, which has limited resources and therefore have ranked heritage protection lower on its priority list.<sup>93</sup> According to Salima Ikram, the majority of loss has been the byproduct of civil unrest instead of the direct result of armed conflict.<sup>94</sup> Tapete and Cigna note that especially in poor regions, both small scale (mainly subsistence digging) and large scale organized looting use digging tools and machines take advantage of the political instability and the lack of surveillance of archaeological sites<sup>95</sup> This decision to focus on law and order, according to Ikram and Hanna, has left the

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<sup>88</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 14.

<sup>89</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 201.

<sup>90</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 33.

<sup>91</sup> 200 mi south of Cairo

<sup>92</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375.

<sup>93</sup> Paul, "Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist," 23.

<sup>94</sup> Ikram, "Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt," 2013, 366.

<sup>95</sup> Tapete and Cigna, "Detection of Archaeological Looting from Space," 2.

country open to lawlessness and disorder.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, there was a second security breakdown following the collapse of the Ministry of Antiquity (MOA)<sup>97</sup> which broke down following the resignation of the Minister of Antiquities Zahi Hawas in July 2011.<sup>98</sup> Since then, there has been a lack of administrative continuity, particularly in the position of Minister of Antiquity.<sup>99</sup> This continuous change in personnel is unusual, considering the fact that before 2011 Hawass had held the position of head of the SCA since 2002.<sup>100</sup> Since 1985, the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) has occupied a central place in the Ministry of Culture.<sup>101</sup> Now both the MOA and the SCA, which are leaders in the heritage sector in Egypt, lack leadership. Trafford et al emphasize that the SCA body needs leadership, but has had frequent changes in management which was caused by exposure to political strife.<sup>102</sup> Trafford et al argue that because the SCA's structure lacks central organization, structure and loyalty due to the constant turn over and political strife, it now lacks the cohesion and initiative to protect sites.<sup>103</sup> To make matters even more complicated numerous criminals were released during the unrest in early in 2011. Trafford et al claims this resulted in better organization within the looting community.<sup>104</sup> The security vacuum in the SCA and the MOA due to the absent of leadership in the Antiquity Department

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<sup>96</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 35.

<sup>97</sup> now referred to as the MA and originally formed out of the Supreme Council of Antiquities

<sup>98</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 16.

<sup>99</sup> Since this article was published in 2015, the position of Ministry of Antiquity has been held by no less than three individuals, Ahmed Eissa, Mohammed Ibrahim and Momdoh el-Damaty (as of June 2014). Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, 16.

<sup>100</sup> "Zahi Hawass | Egyptian Archaeologist and Official." "Zahi Hawass | Egyptian Archaeologist and Official." "Zahi Hawass | Egyptian Archaeologist and Official." "Zahi Hawass | Egyptian Archaeologist and Official." "Zahi Hawass | Egyptian Archaeologist and Official."

<sup>101</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 16.

<sup>102</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 233.

<sup>103</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 16.

<sup>104</sup> Aloisia de Trafford, Geoffrey John Tassie, and van Wetering Joris, "Chapter 3: Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," in *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*, vol. 2 (London: ECHO and Golden House Publications, 2015), 105.

[https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie\\_G.\\_J.\\_De\\_Trafford\\_A.\\_and\\_van\\_Wetering\\_J.\\_2015.\\_Egypt\\_s\\_heritage\\_in\\_times\\_of\\_conflict\\_and\\_crisis](https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie_G._J._De_Trafford_A._and_van_Wetering_J._2015._Egypt_s_heritage_in_times_of_conflict_and_crisis).

and the lack of security guards at sites, has resulted in a general security vacuum and the establishment of increased organization in theft and looting.<sup>105</sup> Hanna notes that the very government bodies that were tasked with protecting heritage, did an insufficient job in combatting looting and crime.<sup>106</sup>

Military personnel were eventually redeployed to protect museums and archaeological sites but the Tourist and Antiquities Police were unable to return to their posts due to public disfavor.<sup>107</sup> Before the Revolution, Egypt utilized both the police and security personnel to protect archeological sites against potential looting and destruction.<sup>108</sup> After 2011, other than the military, only a small number of site guards (*ghafirs*) remained at their posts, but many were unarmed due to the fact that the police refused to arm them.<sup>109</sup> Prior to 2011, the guards were a sufficient deterrent due to their position of authority, general intimidation and fear of reprisal. Since 2011, several guards have been killed in the line of duty, mainly by looters. Those guards who remained lacked the authority nor had weapons.<sup>110</sup> Therefore Hanna and Ikram conclude that the police and military presence post 2011 at archaeological sites is insufficient and that site guards do not stand a chance against looters.<sup>111</sup> Their concern is that there is no one to stop looters. Consequently, looting has worsened dramatically with the absence of security on the ground. Another issue is that archaeological sites tend to cover a large amount of territory, which makes them difficult to police. Even when site guards or police are present, policing these areas

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<sup>105</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375; Ikram, "Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt," 2013, 367.

<sup>106</sup> Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)," 2.

<sup>107</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 14.

<sup>108</sup> Fabiani, "BUILDING A BASELINE," 2.

<sup>109</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis."

<sup>110</sup> Ikram, "Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt," 2013, 368.

<sup>111</sup> Ikram and Hanna, "Looting Egypt."

are typically low priority and police are reluctant to investigate looting cases.<sup>112</sup> Tejjeler suggests that this could possibly be out of spite over the Revolution or due to lack of direction from superiors.

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<sup>112</sup> Paul, "Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist," 23.

## Chapter 2: Economic Recession, Looting and the Antiquities Trade

### Recessions and Revolutions: A Timeline

In the last eight years, Egypt has experience economic hardship that has been worsened by several factors: the 2011 Revolution, the role of the military in the economy, and environmental changes.<sup>113</sup> Egypt's economy relies heavily on agriculture and tourism and therefore is sensitive to political and economic changes over time and space.<sup>114</sup> After the 2011 Revolution and the breakdown in security, tourism plummeted which then denied the Minister of Antiquities<sup>115</sup> crucial funds when they needed it most.<sup>116</sup> Egypt's GDP growth plummeted in 2011 and has been slow to recover, dropping from 5.1 percent in 2010 to 1.8 percent in 2011 and rising to only 3.8 percent in 2016.<sup>117</sup> The Egyptian Revolution<sup>118</sup> also caused changes in leadership, caused a decrease in tourism and a strain on the government domestic and international reserves. This strain on the government's domestic and international reserves affected the country's ability to pay both its international and domestic debts. As result, the country has suffered a foreign currency shortage since 2013 that has caused unfavorable rates in

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<sup>113</sup> Fabiani, "BUILDING A BASELINE," 32.

<sup>114</sup> Fabiani, 32.

<sup>115</sup> Which protects and maintains sites

<sup>116</sup> Paul, "Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist," 23.

<sup>117</sup>In 2016 fiscal year 70% GDP with manufacturing = 17.1%, wholesale retail=14% Agriculture/forestry/fishing=11.9%, other= 26.1%, tourism =less 2% total GDP (1.8%) <sup>117</sup>In 2016 fiscal year 70% GDP with manufacturing = 17.1%, wholesale retail=14% Agriculture/forestry/fishing=11.9%, other= 26.1%, tourism =less 2% total GDP (1.8%)

<sup>118</sup> Fabiani also refers to it as the Lotus Revolution

the import of most basic goods and supplies. This problem was a carryover from before the Revolution. In 2010, the price of food and fuel was 7 percent of the state's budget and over 40 percent of the food was imported. In December 2010 food inflation reached 17 percent.<sup>119</sup> The consequence of this is that there was a reported shortage of essential products (food and medicine) and an increase in poverty and unemployment. <sup>120</sup> According to Joffe, this shortage has caused the underclass (ie the poor) to be on the verge of hunger and the black market for such goods to thrive.<sup>121</sup> Trafford et al comments that Egypt's depressed economy, lack of security, high unemployment<sup>122</sup> and 25.2 percent of the people living beneath the official poverty line is directly connected to the scale of looting and theft since the Revolution.<sup>123</sup> Parcak et al state that significant spikes in looting connected to the earlier economic crisis were already occurring starting in 2009, but these were made worse by the chaos and the further economic decline caused by the 2011 Arab Spring and the Egyptian Revolution.<sup>124</sup> The Egyptian consumer price index (CPI) rose 40-150 percent<sup>125</sup> in 2008 because of the financial constraints, and again in 2009 due to the recession.<sup>126</sup> Both times, but especially in 2009 the rise in the consumer price

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<sup>119</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," March 1, 2011, 77.

<sup>120</sup> Unemployment total % labor force in Egypt for 2010-2019

2010= 8.757%  
2011= 11.849%  
2012= 12.597%  
2013= 13.154%  
2014= 13.105%  
2015= 13.052%  
2016= 12.407%  
2017= 11.7%  
2018= 11.436%  
2019= 11.293%

<sup>121</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 372.

<sup>122</sup> 12.7% in 2012

<sup>123</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 15.

<sup>124</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 188.

<sup>125</sup> Author's statistics come from the World Bank Database

<sup>126</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 198.

index caused a decrease in tourism and record unemployment at 36%.<sup>127</sup> Parcak et al speculated that the initial increase in looting from 2008-2009 was potentially linked to the 2008 CPI increase and the decrease in tourism.<sup>128</sup> Compounding the problem, tourism declined peaked in the early 2008 with 180,000 tourists and only began to return to pre-2008 levels prior to the 2011 Revolution but then soon dropped again to 200,000 by February 2011 right after the start of the Revolution. This small recovery has been due to the fact that the government has invested in Egypt's main economic sectors such as agriculture and construction.

### Tourism, Unemployment and Looting

Rene Teijgeler also argues that the image Egypt maintains abroad is partly imbued by the construction of the Pharaonic heritage because this narrative has helped tourism flourish.<sup>129</sup> Michelle D. Fabiani argues that cultural heritage in Egypt is numerous and integral to the country's economic wellbeing.<sup>130</sup> Tourism contributed \$15 billion to Egypt's GDP in 2010<sup>131</sup> She further argues that Egypt preserves its history because it is in the country's economic interest and market tourism is a huge portion of the economy. However, as Lynn Meskell points out, archaeology linked to tourism offers substantial economic gains for developing countries. However, these gains often remain in the hands of Western companies, while locals reap few direct benefits from tourism.<sup>132</sup> The consequences of this is that there is little or no economic

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<sup>127</sup> Woolf, "Deep Convolutional Neural Networks for Remote Sensing Investigation of Looting of the Archeological Site of Al-Lisht, Egypt," 1.

<sup>128</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 198.

<sup>129</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 240.

<sup>130</sup> Fabiani, "Strategic vs. Opportunistic Looting," 18.

<sup>131</sup> Egypt's total GDP is \$216 billion and it is unknown how much of this comes from looted objects. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 175.

<sup>132</sup> Meskell, "The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt," 147-48; Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 39.

incentive for locals to protect these sites. Trafford et al argues that these sites were protected solely due to economic reasons, specifically tourism, and not emotional or social reasons and therefore, are in danger of damage and looting now that the economic safeguard from tourism is gone.<sup>133</sup><sup>134</sup> To conclude, no tourism means no foreign revenue, which means no jobs and no financial reward to protect heritage.

The decrease in tourism since 2011<sup>135</sup> has had a major impact on Egypt because the country had relied on the steady increase in the tourism sector through the mid 1990s. By the mid-2000s tourism made up more 12 percent of Egypt's GDP and 12-14 percent of total employment.<sup>136</sup> In the wake of the 2011 Revolution, tourism decreased, and this trend has continued. From 2010-2011, Egypt reported a decreased in the number of tourists by a third (32.4 percent) compared to previous years. In 2016, Egypt reported half the number of tourists as it had in 2015. According to Fabiani, terrorist attacks and regional differences in security concerns have influenced the international perception that the country is not safe. Even though traditionally tourism does not actually make up a large portion of Egypt's total GDP of \$216 billion, the economy has historically depended heavily on it.<sup>137</sup> Therefore, the Ministry of Antiquity has suffered severe revenue loss because of the decrease in tourism.<sup>138</sup> This deprived the Ministry of Antiquities of much needed income from tourism to pay its 44,000 staff. <sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 39.

<sup>135</sup> 2010=14.7 million tourists (13.63 billion to economy y=11%GDP), 2011=9.8 million tourists (result of government warnings to avoid the country post Morsi), 2012=11.57million tourists, 2013= 9.5 million tourists (5.9billion to economy=7% GDP), 2014 (year article was published) jump to 112% to 2.8 million tourists contributing 2 billion in 3<sup>rd</sup> qtr. (compared 1.6mil tourist contributing 9 million same qtr. in 2013)

<sup>136</sup> 2010=14.7 million tourists (13.63 billion to economy y=11%GDP), 2011=9.8 million tourists (result of government warnings to avoid the country post Morsi), 2012=11.57million tourists, 2013= 9.5 million tourists (5.9billion to economy=7% GDP), 2014 (year article was published) jump to 112% to 2.8 million tourists contributing 2 billion in 3<sup>rd</sup> qtr. (compared 1.6mil tourist contributing 9 million same qtr. in 2013)

<sup>137</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 15.

<sup>138</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 201.

<sup>139</sup> Parcak et al., 201.



According to Sarah Parcak, looting is closely tied to economic instability and a drop in tourism. Weak salaries and bad employment conditions means that those who work for the MOA have lost cultural interest/value in antiquities.<sup>140</sup> According to Trafford et al this means that there is little incentive for them to develop research against or raise public awareness about looting. Furthermore, Ikram and Hanna assert that, when workers are poorly paid, this creates an environment with minimum incentive to protect sites.<sup>141</sup> Antiquities now identified with the Mubarak regime are now seen as a potential source of revenue.<sup>142</sup> Unemployment, especially among young adults aged 15-24, is high at 36 percent. Joffe states that this high unemployment among young adults is correlated with site damage and that this is backed up with media reports that young men are primarily responsible for looting. Joffe does not address potential issues of media reporting and bias, however. Trafford et al cite statistics that hundreds of thousands of university graduate students are currently unemployed and that educated people are shut out of prosperity<sup>143</sup> This group does fall under Joffe's comment about high unemployment among young adults and could be used to correlate and support his argument. The consequence is that locals severely affected by high unemployment and by the lack of tourism, and already in some cases with few incentives, turned to looting to make ends meet.<sup>144</sup> According to Timberlynn Woolf, high unemployment fostered the idea among some locals that looting is a valid way to generate income in order to feed their families, which caused a dramatic increase in looting.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 40.

<sup>141</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 39.

<sup>142</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," March 1, 2011, 77.

<sup>143</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 15.

<sup>144</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 38-39. Hanna and Ikram, 38-39. Hanna and Ikram, 38-39.

<sup>145</sup> Woolf, "Deep Convolutional Neural Networks for Remote Sensing Investigation of Looting of the Archeological Site of Al-Lisht, Egypt," 1.

## Subsistence Digging

The growing strand of concern and interest in the poor socioeconomic circumstances of looters can be traced to Dwight Heath's 1973 sympathetic study on the illicit excavation and antiquities trade in Costa Rica.<sup>146</sup> In 1993, David P. Staley coined the less judgmental term "subsistence digging" instead of looting.<sup>147</sup> The term subsistence described the "undocumented usually illegal excavation of artifacts from archaeological sites then sold for subsistence purposes."<sup>148</sup> He further defines subsistence digger as "a person who uses the proceeds from the artifact sales to support his or her traditional subsistence lifestyle."<sup>149</sup> As cited by Brodie and Contreras these definitions were intended to avoid further stigmatization of people and communities that suffer political discrimination and oppression, as well as help recognize the right to economic self-determination. Brodie argues that characterizing "subsistent" diggers as looters already criminalizes an already deprived community. Instead, he argues that they should be considered legit stakeholders.<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, Brodie points out that although there are many arguments in favor of subsistence digging as economic justice, it is important to acknowledge that it is not an equitable enterprise nor a long term solution for economic deprivation. Diggers only receive a small portion of the object sale price and that the majority of looters are barely able to survive on the steady trickle of small finds which is unsustainable.<sup>151</sup> The few rare pieces that are found are exported through middlemen, who gain the majority of the profit through inflated prices.<sup>152</sup> Julia Hallowell notes that many archaeologists agree on the term subsistence

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<sup>146</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54.

<sup>147</sup> Contreras and Brodie, "The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra," 10.

<sup>148</sup> Contreras and Brodie, 262.

<sup>149</sup> Contreras and Brodie, 10.

<sup>150</sup> Brodie, *Archaeological Looting and Economic Justice*, 262.

<sup>151</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 34.

<sup>152</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, 34.

digger, but there exists a general disagreement on the limits of the application of this term.<sup>153</sup>

Newer definitions that link subsistence digging to economic justice raise questions about the value of archaeological heritage, specifically, how economic value is created, relayed and distributed. In other words, Hallowell asks if even though some definitions of subsistence looting give power back to disenfranchised communities, do they also encourage, give excuses to or forgive looting in the name of economic justice?

As a consequence of the events on January 2011, the political unrest, the worsened economic situation, the decrease in tourism, and foreign investors channeling their programs out of the country, many people in Egypt ended up losing their jobs, especially in the tourism and construction industries.<sup>154</sup> Joffe states that antiquities are targeted because most of Egypt's 83 million people live off less than \$2 a day.<sup>155</sup> Looting gangs have exploited this present situation by paying the daily wages of workers to loot for them. Fabiani stresses that if people are unable to make a living wage in legitimate businesses such as farming, then they may turn to looting to obtain a steadier income supply.<sup>156</sup> Many of these workers justify this work, despite its unsustainability if the income from looting is used to establish a more permanent and improved source of wealth or can be used to send their children to school.<sup>157</sup> Artifacts taken from a site are sold locally, where their value as a commodity is realized monetarily as they are repeatedly being sold within the country.<sup>158</sup> Therefore, antiquities represent a valuable commodity whether as gold or precious metals, or sold on the black market.<sup>159</sup> Objects sold can often make a substantial

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<sup>153</sup> Contreras and Brodie, "The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra," 10.

<sup>154</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54.

<sup>155</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," March 1, 2011, 74.

<sup>156</sup> Fabiani, "Disentangling Strategic and Opportunistic Looting," 26.

<sup>157</sup> Contreras and Brodie, "The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra," 13.

<sup>158</sup> Contreras and Brodie, 263–64.

<sup>159</sup> Contreras and Brodie, 13.

contribution to the source country's economy.<sup>160</sup> Despite this, Brodie and Contreras would argue ,from their research in Jordan that if one compares the aggregate monetary income from subsistence digging versus the economic outcome, one would quickly see that antiquities are a limited source and are therefore not a viable or sustainable long term solution for the people of that country.<sup>161</sup> I would argue that this is applicable to the situation in Egypt as well. Even though it is possible for the source country's economy to profit from illicit digging in the long term, the real economic benefits remain with the countries that are acquiring the objects.<sup>162</sup> According to Brodie, this highlights the inequality of the antiquities trade, which he calls typical of the global economic process. Monica Hanna therefore concludes that there will always be a high demand for Egyptian antiquities, and combined with a dire economic situation the results will be poor villagers increasingly looting to try to make a living.<sup>163</sup> Thus, she argues that demand, poverty and unemployment are the main factors that are driving looting.<sup>164</sup> Lundén, echoing Hanna, points out that in poorer parts of the world looting, or subsistence digging, might be one of the few ways to ensure survival and that the combination of poverty and lack of resources for site protection might give rise to looting in epidemic proportions.<sup>165</sup>

### The Economy, Land Grabbing and Looting

Tied into the issue of looting and heritage destruction is the problem of land management. Prior to 2011, the greatest threat to archaeological sites was government

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<sup>160</sup> Brodie, *Archaeological Looting and Economic Justice*, 263–64.

<sup>161</sup> Contreras and Brodie, "The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra," 265.

<sup>162</sup> Brodie, *Archaeological Looting and Economic Justice*, 262.

<sup>163</sup> Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)," 2.

<sup>164</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 75.

<sup>165</sup> Lundén, "Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage," 118.

development plans, which rarely took into account the negative effects that they would have on sites and local communities.<sup>166</sup> A significant threat to archaeological and heritage sites are the illegal occupation of sites by contactors and local villagers who engage in land appropriation. In such circumstances, a group of people takes over antiquities land for building or agriculture.<sup>167</sup> Trafford et al notes that in the last 10 years<sup>168</sup> agriculture and urban development<sup>169</sup> were encroaching on sites all over Egypt.<sup>170</sup> According to Ikram, this land encroachment not only threatens archaeological sites, but is also tied to some extent to looting.<sup>171</sup> As noted by Ikram and Hanna, looting and land appropriations have gone on for centuries and are not a new phenomenon.<sup>172</sup> She argues that the struggle for land has a long history and constant tension exists between space needed by the living and space occupied by the remains of a dead culture.<sup>173</sup> What Trafford et al and Ikram do argue is that the magnitude of looting and land appropriation after the 2011 Revolution is increasing at a level which they describe as terrifying.<sup>174</sup> After the Revolution encroachment increased tenfold in areas around the Giza Pyramids, Luxor and Hierakonpolis. Furthermore, illegal land occupation is often very lucrative and frequently connected to looting since objects found when the site is occupied are often sold to middlemen to sell on the market.<sup>175</sup> Objects that are found and were not destroyed in the original takeover, are often sold to dealers on the black market instead of notifying the proper

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<sup>166</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 372.

<sup>167</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 35; Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 372

<sup>168</sup> Since 2015

<sup>169</sup> illegal construction

<sup>170</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 15.

<sup>171</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 38.

<sup>172</sup> Hanna and Ikram, 38.

<sup>173</sup> Ikram, "Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt," 2013, 367.

<sup>174</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 38.

<sup>175</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 372; Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 366–67; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 19.

authorities.<sup>176</sup> Contractors often take large swathes of land, divide it, and then sell the smaller divided plots ,which will be marketed for multiple uses. Locals engaging in land encroachment and reuse often take up to five acres at a time.<sup>177</sup> Once occupied, it is often very difficult for the authorities to reclaim the land since encroachment and reuse are not established overnight, but over long periods of time. Land grabbing and looting is the final stage and is made easier by previous actions such as destroying inscriptions, setting a site on fire, or turning it into a solid waste dump in order to erase the communal memory of that site as an archaeological site.<sup>178</sup> Local villagers and townspeople often use the land to build houses, cemeteries and for agricultural use.<sup>179</sup> Many locals see the land as empty or unused space and therefore they see their action as providing a use for previously wasted space.<sup>180</sup> Salima Ikram comments that this fight for space highlights the tension between the land of the living and the land occupied by a dead culture. Paul also emphasizes the breakdown in security and the decline of tourism following the Revolution, a sentiment echoed by Hanna, as one of the major factors that contributed to the overall atmosphere that encouraged looting and land encroachment. <sup>181</sup> According to Monica Hanna, the blame does not just fall to the looters and the land grabbers. The growth in Egypt's population has continued to pose serious problems in urban expansion and food supply.<sup>182</sup> As Ikram and Hanna concludes it is hard to condemn the looters and land grabbers on moral grounds, due to the fact there has been a rapid increase in population and land

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<sup>176</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 372.

<sup>177</sup> Hanna and Ikram, "Looting and Land Grabbing," 172.

<sup>178</sup> Monica Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 2015, 35,48-49.Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 35,48-49.

<sup>179</sup> Ikram, "Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt," 2013, 366–67.

<sup>180</sup> Ikram, 366–67.

<sup>181</sup> Paul, "Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist," 23.

<sup>182</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375.

for living and agriculture being at a premium.<sup>184</sup> The recent changes in the environment have also created stress on land use and thus has created tension with heritage protection and looting. According to Fabiani, climate change has affected the weather which possibly has resulted in environmental stress in some parts of the country seasonally.<sup>185</sup> Water shortage, soil degradation and pollution have affected the quantity and quality of crops particularly in the Nile Delta, which is a primary crop producing area.<sup>186</sup> Other governorates' economies in Egypt have been impacted, but to varying degrees.<sup>187</sup> This situation has forced Egypt to continue to import more food than its exports. Poor harvest and drought have a similar effect in areas of high unemployment and inflation. Environmental conditions impacts looting because they affect site access due to population expansion and conflict. Fabiani claims that this increases the attractiveness of looting as an option as people seek alternate income.<sup>188</sup>

#### Economic Reasons for Egyptians to Protect Sites from Looting

Although the situation might appear bleak, many scholars argue that there are economic reasons people protect archaeological sites from looting. Mennat Allah El Dorry reminds readers that before the drop in tourism, many locals relied on what she calls a “grey economy”. That is people would rely on income from selling their services as guides, selling simple authentic handcrafts, peddling good or services around sites or by inviting tourists to their homes for an authentic meal.<sup>189</sup> As she points out, this was once a source of income for locals who lived

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<sup>184</sup> Hanna and Ikram, “Looting and Land Grabbing,” 39.

<sup>185</sup> Fabiani, “BUILDING A BASELINE,” 5.

<sup>186</sup> Fabiani, 35.

<sup>187</sup> Fabiani, 35.

<sup>188</sup> Fabiani, 35.

<sup>189</sup> Tejjeler, “Politics and Heritage in Egypt,” 240–41.

around archaeological sites. Even before the recession, the Revolution and the drop of tourists in Egypt, locals who lived in and around sites were making money in alternate ways from looting. Tejjgeler suggests that economic ties to tourism such as these could in fact be a reason that locals would want to protect a site from looting. He then concludes that the decrease in tourism and therefore the decrease in money coming into this grey economy is one reason for the increase in looting, since locals now have to seek an alternate source of income. Peter A. Campbell also agrees with this assessment stating that preserving archaeological sites is one way to reduce poverty.<sup>190</sup> He argues that looting is not only an economic consequence of poverty but a long running cause of poverty.<sup>191</sup> To connect both Campbell, El Dorry and Tejjgeler, Contreras and Brodie suggest that a sufficient quantity of money from foreign tourists could result in a economic stimulus for the local economy.<sup>192</sup> Parcak et al similarly believe that Egypt needs to curtail looting, but to do so they also need to establish a tourism market and have training initiatives for locals which include site monitoring and protection.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Campbell, "The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network," 120.

<sup>191</sup> Campbell, 121.

<sup>192</sup> Contreras and Brodie, "The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra," 13.

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## Chapter 3

### The Antiquities Market

#### The Art Market: Supply and Demand

Due to the demand for Egyptian antiquities, two-thirds of Egyptian antiquities sold at Sotheby's in the last decade lack provenance from before 1973.<sup>194</sup> Staffen Lunden comments that because looting generates market demand, dealers are willing to turn a blind eye to how objects

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<sup>194</sup> Sarah Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt: 2002–2013," *Antiquity* 90, no. 349 (February 2016): 189, <https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2016.1>.

come onto the market.<sup>195</sup> They also deny that a willingness to purchase objects creates more incentive to loot.<sup>196</sup> Looters also take advantage of this tolerance of looted items by selling older looted collections<sup>197</sup> to keep up with the demand of the market.<sup>198</sup> This lack of provenance for many items sold by antiquity dealers creates questions of scale and may mask the extent of looting of antiquities.<sup>199</sup> Monica Hanna argues that the increase in popularity of e-commerce websites has also given the illicit antiquity trade an advantage because it makes it harder to track channels of commerce.<sup>200</sup> Collectors can also be dealers or become dealers if there is sufficient temptation in the rising market value of antiquities.<sup>201</sup> According to Ricardo Elia, the antiquities market, like other economic systems, operates on the economic laws of supply and demand.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Aloisia de Trafford, Geoffrey John Tassie, and van Wetering Joris, "Chapter 3: Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," in *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*, vol. 2 (London: ECHO and Golden House Publications, 2015), 34, [https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie\\_G.\\_J.\\_De\\_Trafford\\_A.\\_and\\_van\\_Wetering\\_J.\\_2015.\\_Egypt\\_s\\_heritage\\_in\\_times\\_of\\_conflict\\_and\\_crisis](https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie_G._J._De_Trafford_A._and_van_Wetering_J._2015._Egypt_s_heritage_in_times_of_conflict_and_crisis).

<sup>196</sup> Staffan Lundén, "Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage," *Art Antiquity and Law* XVII, no. 2 (September 2012): 109, [https://www.academia.edu/28886853/Perspectives\\_on\\_looting\\_The\\_illicit\\_antiquities\\_trade\\_art\\_and\\_heritage](https://www.academia.edu/28886853/Perspectives_on_looting_The_illicit_antiquities_trade_art_and_heritage).

<sup>197</sup> which Brodie judges to be 95% of the market (Brodie in Smale, 2014)

<sup>198</sup> Aloisia de Trafford, Geoffrey John Tassie, and van Wetering Joris, "Chapter 3: Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," in *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*, vol. 2 (London: ECHO and Golden House Publications, 2015), 34, [https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie\\_G.\\_J.\\_De\\_Trafford\\_A.\\_and\\_van\\_Wetering\\_J.\\_2015.\\_Egypt\\_s\\_heritage\\_in\\_times\\_of\\_conflict\\_and\\_crisis](https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie_G._J._De_Trafford_A._and_van_Wetering_J._2015._Egypt_s_heritage_in_times_of_conflict_and_crisis).

<sup>199</sup> Aloisia de Trafford, Geoffrey John Tassie, and van Wetering Joris, "Chapter 3: Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," in *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*, vol. 2 (London: ECHO and Golden House Publications, 2015), 34, [https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie\\_G.\\_J.\\_De\\_Trafford\\_A.\\_and\\_van\\_Wetering\\_J.\\_2015.\\_Egypt\\_s\\_heritage\\_in\\_times\\_of\\_conflict\\_and\\_crisis](https://www.academia.edu/10868404/Tassie_G._J._De_Trafford_A._and_van_Wetering_J._2015._Egypt_s_heritage_in_times_of_conflict_and_crisis).

<sup>200</sup> Monica Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods: The Global Challenge of Protecting the World's Heritage. Paris: ICOM, Pp. 47-63.," 55, accessed September 24, 2019, [https://www.academia.edu/20159427/Hanna\\_Monica\\_2015.\\_Documenting\\_Looting\\_Activities\\_in\\_Post-2011\\_Egypt.\\_Countering\\_Illicit\\_Traffic\\_in\\_Cultural\\_Goods\\_The\\_Global\\_Challenge\\_of\\_Protecting\\_the\\_World\\_s\\_Heritage.\\_Paris\\_ICOM\\_pp.\\_47-63](https://www.academia.edu/20159427/Hanna_Monica_2015._Documenting_Looting_Activities_in_Post-2011_Egypt._Countering_Illicit_Traffic_in_Cultural_Goods_The_Global_Challenge_of_Protecting_the_World_s_Heritage._Paris_ICOM_pp._47-63).

<sup>201</sup> Samuel Andrew Hardy, "Is Looting-to-Order 'Just a Myth'? Open-Source Analysis of Theft-to-Order of Cultural Property," *Cogent Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (December 31, 2015): 4, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2015.1087110>.

<sup>202</sup> Ricardo J Elia, "Looting, Collecting, and the Destruction of Archaeological Resources," *Nonrenewable Resources* 6, no. 2: 87, accessed December 3, 2019, [https://www.academia.edu/1048693/Looting\\_collecting\\_and\\_the\\_destruction\\_of\\_archaeological\\_resources](https://www.academia.edu/1048693/Looting_collecting_and_the_destruction_of_archaeological_resources).

Demand in wealthy countries also drives individuals in economically depressed countries to export materials, ie looted artifacts, abroad.<sup>203</sup> The fact that markets are mainly located in more affluent areas of the world and objects tend to flow South to North, and East to West from poor, less powerful countries to wealthy more powerful countries continues, according to Staffen Lunden, the centuries old tradition of the building up of museums and private collections from distant and foreign peoples and lands.<sup>204</sup> The antiquities trade cannot be seen outside of this context of vastly unequal global power relations. Studies and news reports demonstrate the causal relationship between the demand for archaeological material and the destruction of archaeological landscapes to meet this demand. <sup>205</sup>

Although antiquity dealers insist that “theft to order” and “big illicit business” are mainly restricted to the pages of detective novels, as reported by Samuel Hardy, voluminous uncontroversial documentation of theft-to order exists. <sup>206</sup> Hardy asserts that this claim by dealers is mainly an attempt to disassociate themselves with crime.<sup>207</sup> According to Hardy, traffickers and dealers do not need to be master criminals to conduct looting-to-order, since all they need is enough money to hire locals to loot and to buy officials in order to facilitate trafficking.<sup>208</sup> He also argues that dealers in Egypt who control, direct and employ child laborers to loot objects for them are technically carrying out looting-to-order.<sup>209</sup> Thus, Hardy’s theory of looting-to order highlights how the demand by both individuals and the market for specific types of objects

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<sup>203</sup> Peter Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network: Characterizing and Anticipating Trafficking of Cultural Heritage,” *International Journal of Cultural Property* 20 (May 1, 2013): 114, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0940739113000015>.

<sup>204</sup> Lundén, “Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage,” 109.

<sup>205</sup> Morag M. Kersel, “Transcending Borders: Objects on the Move,” *Archaeologies* 3, no. 2 (July 11, 2007): 323, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11759-007-9013-0>.

<sup>206</sup> Hardy, “Is Looting-to-Order ‘Just a Myth?’,” 2,15.

<sup>207</sup> Hardy, 2.

<sup>208</sup> Hardy, 15.

<sup>209</sup> Hardy, 8.

effects and drives looting. Many dealers also pay looters to supply antiquities.<sup>210</sup> Since illicit antiquities must move transnationally to meet international demand,<sup>211</sup> Bowman contends that this transnational movement shows that network smugglers are skilled at moving good, and reveals the corruption that exists among custom officials, border patrol agents and law enforcement that allows for cross border movement and the creation of false ownership and export documents.<sup>212</sup> This supply and demand, according to Elia, is the primary cause of looting and collecting both by private collectors and by institutions.<sup>213</sup> Similarly, Kersel argues that demand should be the focus of anti-looting efforts since consumers can no longer claim ignorance when purchasing antiquities.<sup>214</sup> If the demand for archaeological material dwarfs the supply of antiquities, it will cause an increase in prices, leading to an increase in profits, and resulting in an increase in motivation for looters.<sup>215</sup>

### The Commodity Chain: The Movement of Antiquities From Sites to the Market

In order to meet market demand, illicit antiquities must be smuggled from their home countries, often through several intermediate destinations, before they reach their final

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<sup>210</sup> Elia, "Looting, Collecting, and the Destruction of Archaeological Resources," 87.

<sup>211</sup> Blythe A. Bowman, "Transnational Crimes Against Culture: Looting at Archaeological Sites and the 'Grey' Market in Antiquities - Blythe A. Bowman, 2008," *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, May 6, 2008, 231, <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1043986208318210>.

<sup>212</sup> Bowman, 231.

<sup>213</sup> Elia, 87.

<sup>214</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 34.

<sup>215</sup> Morag M. Kersel, "A Focus on the Demand Side of the Antiquities Equation," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 71, no. 4 (2008): 233, [https://works.bepress.com/morag\\_kersel/38/](https://works.bepress.com/morag_kersel/38/).

destination. Collectors purchase antiquities from dealers who, to keep up with the demand, finance and operate a network of runners, couriers and smuggling agents.<sup>216</sup> Although the artifacts may cross the various borders with ease, the various stakeholders involved in their transport rarely operate outside of their designated spheres. Producers rarely come into contact with consumers. Villagers sell local antiquities for the least amount of money, to intermediary dealers who then sell the objects to bigger dealers who have the connections to smuggle the objects out of Egypt.<sup>217</sup> Through this system, artifacts move from sites to museums, private homes, and collections crossing real and artificial boundaries in and outside the Middle East. <sup>218</sup>

There are many routes for smuggling illicit Pharaonic antiquities. Diplomatic cases have been used to smuggle artifacts while smaller objects and travel souvenirs tend to be smuggled through air travel.<sup>219</sup> Larger wooden materials such as complete sarcophagi usually travel with bigger containers containing modern wood from ports such as Damietta or West Port Sa'id.<sup>220</sup> One of the reasons that so many objects get through customs is that many of these borders lack skilled inspectors and those that are on duty lack modern equipment and are only allowed to check 6 percent of the outgoing cargo.<sup>221</sup> The port of Ain Sokna and the Soha airport for example had no antiquity checkpoint until 2014. Many objects are also smuggled through tunnels between Egypt and Gaza with the final destination being the antiquity stores in Tel Aviv.<sup>222</sup> Objects go

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<sup>216</sup> Elia, 87.

<sup>217</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54. For more on the topic of types of looters see subsection, "Looters Identity and Organization"

<sup>218</sup> Kersel, "Transcending Borders," 83.

<sup>219</sup> This is especially true of organic objects and parchment because they are harder to detect than stone or metal through a scanner.Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 54.Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 54. This is especially true of organic objects and parchment because they are harder to detect than stone or metal through a scanner.Hanna, 54.

<sup>220</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54.

<sup>221</sup> Hanna, 54.

<sup>222</sup> Hanna, 54.

from a “source country,” which is usually a developing country, to a final destination in a “market country”, usually a wealthy developed nation, via a “transit” country.<sup>223</sup> Furthermore, once objects enter the market, the transaction and the actors are protected by a tradition of secrecy and non disclosure<sup>224</sup>

As pointed out by Kersel, although artifacts cross borders with ease, various stakeholders rarely operate outside of their designated sphere.<sup>225</sup> As a result, producers rarely meet or come into contact with the consumers.<sup>226</sup> Simon Mackenzie identifies four forms of the illicit market<sup>227</sup>

- 1.) Illicit-Illicit-Illicit where good remain illicit from source to consumption. (ex drugs)
- 2.) Illicit-Illicit-Licit where objects are illicit at their source but are inserted into the legal market before reaching the consumer (ex. Antiquities)
- 3.) Licit-Illicit-Illicit where objects are licit at their source but become illicit due to the international transport of that object and import export laws (ex. People Smuggling)
- 4.) Licit-Illicit-Licit where objects are licit at their source but become illicit due to border transgressions but are then inserted back into the licit market at their destination countries.

Mackenzie further argues that there are two streams of transnational commodity flow of objects to the illicit antiquities market.<sup>228</sup> The first is looted artifacts entering the public’s visible supply chain through auction houses, which “launder” objects, which then end up in the legitimate

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<sup>223</sup> Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network,” 115; Simon Mackenzie, “Trafficking Antiquities,” *International Crime and Justice*, November 2010, 141, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511762116.024>.

<sup>224</sup> Elia, “Looting, Collecting, and the Destruction of Archaeological Resources,” 87.

<sup>225</sup> Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 54.

<sup>226</sup> Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 83.

<sup>227</sup> Mackenzie, “Trafficking Antiquities,” 3.

<sup>228</sup> Mackenzie, 143.

market. In this case, the greater number of sales an object undergoes, the better the provenance of the object will look for a potential buyer. Buyers may suspect that the provenance is bad, but as stated earlier, they are not motivated to ask questions because the legitimacy of the sale protects them from legal repercussions. There also exists an “invisible market,” that is difficult to research as it is off the record and consists of non-public sales between individuals. Therefore, little is known about the size and scope of this market.<sup>229</sup> Kersel describes this as a system of commodity chains, and different streams of movement.<sup>230</sup> Hopkins and Wallerstein define a commodity chain as a “network of labor and production processes whose end result is a finished commodity.”<sup>231</sup> Kersel points to three links in the commodity chain.

- 1) Artifact cultivation and production (looting of site);
- 2) The movement of material by overseers (middlemen) and distribution by dealers either within the country or exported abroad;
- 3) The eventual consumption of material in a licensed antiquities shop by collectors, museums or tourists.<sup>232</sup>

As Simon Mackenzie notes, not all illicit goods move across the border and the transport phase (what Kersel refers to as link 2) actually has two phases.<sup>233</sup> The first phase is mostly domestic and consists of objects found in an open field, or find a place being shipped to a shipping port.<sup>234</sup> The second phase is the international phase and involves the shipping of objects abroad.

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<sup>229</sup> Mackenzie, 143.

<sup>230</sup> Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 83.

<sup>231</sup> Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 82; Hopkins and Wallerstein, “Commodity Chains in the World-Economy Prior to 1800,” 159.

<sup>232</sup> Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 83.

<sup>233</sup> Simon Mackenzie, “Organised Crime and Common Transit Networks,” Text, Australian Institute of Criminology, November 3, 2017, 2, <https://aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/tandi233>.

<sup>234</sup> Mackenzie, “Trafficking Antiquities,” 2. Mackenzie, “Trafficking Antiquities,” 2. Mackenzie, 2.

### Location of Popular Markets

Since the antiquities market relies on the principles of supply and demand, it can also be used to study and to learn more about site selection. Since many aspects of the market are illegal, much of the activity is carried out in secret, especially in the country of origin. Once the objects enter the market in an art acquiring nation<sup>1</sup> where the antiquities market is legal, the market and transactions between looters, dealers, dealer's agents, dealers, museums and collectors are protected a by national laws and policies that favor purchasers or possessors as well as a tradition of secrecy and non-disclosure.<sup>1</sup> Due to this tradition of secrecy and the blurring of the causal link between collecting and looting, scholars are rarely given a glimpse of how the individual components of the market operate as an integral part of a single whole system. With the help of social media, the U.S.-based Antiquities Coalition estimates that \$3 billion objects were looted and smuggled from Egypt since 2011.<sup>235</sup> According to Mennat-Allah El Dorry, the majority of Pharaonic objects are looted before Islamic ones.<sup>236</sup> El Dorry notes that Pharaonic objects are looted before Islamic ones not out of reverence for Islamic objects, but because Pharaonic objects fetch higher prices. Additionally, the markets for Pharaonic objects have long existed in Europe and in North America and objects looted in the last four years<sup>237</sup> are now reaching those markets. Israel, where the trade in antiquities is legal, serves as a collection point for these regional objects before they travel onto Europe or the United States.<sup>238</sup> Many looted objects were smuggled through the tunnels between Egypt and Gaza in 2011 and ended up in antiquities stores

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<sup>235</sup> freelance correspondent Walt Curnow, "Egypt's Tomb Raider Problem Is so Big It Can Be Seen from Space," Text, ABC News, October 21, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-21/egypts-3-billion-dollar-smuggling-problem/10388394>.

<sup>236</sup> René Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt: One and a Half Years After the Lotus Revolution," *Archaeologies* 9, no. 1 (April 2013): 238–39, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11759-013-9231-6>.

<sup>237</sup> since the 2011 Revolution, [SAY THIS IN THE TEXT INSTEAD]

<sup>238</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 48.



in Tel Aviv, Israel. Once in Israel, it is easy for dealers to switch the required register numbers of illicit items with items of a similar description that have already been sold.<sup>239</sup> It is also common to find laundered certificates of origin, with many artifacts on the market sold legally as “old collections,” when in reality they are from illicit excavations with false documentation.<sup>240</sup> Once in Israel, artifacts are either sold or “legally” exported elsewhere, most commonly to Turkey, and then from there smuggled onto the EU.<sup>241</sup> Because of the demand for antiquities, the antiquities market is constantly expanding into new markets in Europe, North America (mostly for Pharaonic antiquities), Japan, the Far East and the Gulf Region.<sup>242</sup> Most recently, increased interest in the Gulf region has spurred new illegal markets in Abu Dhabi,<sup>243</sup> Doha, and Kuwait City.<sup>244</sup> This expansion into new markets has also spurred the construction of new museums and collections by private individuals.<sup>245</sup> All of which has shifted the market complexity from a dichotomy of colonialist thinking to one that is now motivated by economics and capitalism

Online markets have also prospered in part due to the fact that websites are now used to sell Egyptian objects.<sup>246</sup> According to Campbell, online sales have the added benefit of reaching a wider population while also offering , non-personal interactions and simple concealment via the privacy of a personal computer.<sup>247</sup> Some scholars have claimed that internet auctions have

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<sup>239</sup> 5/6/2020 7:05:00 PM

<sup>240</sup> Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 84. Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 84. Kersel, 84.

<sup>241</sup> 5/6/2020 7:05:00 PM

<sup>242</sup> This area has been mainly focused on Islamic artifacts. Salima Ikram, “Collectors: Their Contribution to Looting,” no. 202 (2013): 33; Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 47.

<sup>243</sup> A famous example of this is the Barakat Gallery in Abu Dhabi

<sup>244</sup> Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 48.

<sup>245</sup> Ikram, “Collectors: Their Contribution to Looting,” 33; Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 47.

<sup>246</sup> Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 48.

<sup>247</sup> Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network,” 130.

hurt the antiquities trade because they drive down prices and introduce fakes. Campbell counters that sales accounts show high and low value antiquities are sold online with considerable ease through websites and often for record sums. In fact, he notes that traditional dealers, including galleries, are frequently moving towards internet sales. Thus, online sites and sales are acting as a new interface for dealers.<sup>248</sup> Campbell would even submit that it is a much more popular interface for collectors than traditional galleries. The issue, according to Campbell, is that online websites unwittingly launder artifacts through the appearance of overall legitimacy of their site and of their products. Collectors then purchase items assuming they are licit.<sup>249</sup> It is important to keep in mind, as Hanna observes, that money from these sales maybe funneled into laundering channels that are sometimes used to fund extremism.<sup>250</sup>

#### The Legality of the Antiquities Market: The “Black” or Grey” Market

The scale of looting and the large outpouring of unprovenanced objects on the market means that there is little doubt, according to Lunden, that many if not the majority of objects on the market have been recently looted.<sup>251</sup> As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there has been an increase in looting and sale of smaller portable objects particularly from the ports at Beni Sufi. Similarly, according to Bowman, the presence of looted artifacts in the marketplace shows a willingness by consumers to turn a blind eye and purchase unprovenanced artifacts.<sup>252</sup> Because of this, Kersel argues that purchasers of antiquities should be held accountable for their

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<sup>248</sup> Campbell, 131.

<sup>249</sup> Campbell, 131.

<sup>250</sup> Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 47, 55.

<sup>251</sup> Lundén, “Perspectives on Looting, The Illicit Antiquities Trade, Art and Heritage,” 109.

<sup>252</sup> Bowman, “Transnational Crimes Against Culture,” 228.

willingness to look the other way, and should be asking more questions and be held accountable when they do not.<sup>253</sup>

In conversation with Bowman, Ricardo J. Elia argues that the antiquities market is a black market, or more accurately a “double market” that combines elements of both the black market and the legal market.<sup>254</sup> As reported by Elia, because the antiquities market operates most of the time as a black market, the causal link between collecting and looting is frequently blurred. The lines between black and white, between the licit “upperworld” and the illicit “underworld,” have become shades of grey. <sup>255</sup> Bowman, like Elia’s idea of a “double market,” states that the illicit antiquities market is a transitional grey market that combines other forms of trafficking and has aspects of both the licit and illicit market. What sets the illicit antiquities trade apart from other forms of trafficking and allows it to blend aspects of both the licit and illicit market is that: 1) on the demand end, the trade in antiquities is still legal; and 2) buyers of antiquities tend to be of prominent socioeconomic status. Because it is not illegal to own antiquities, or in many cases to import clandestinely exported antiquities, the legality of an object revolves primarily around how it was acquired and/or how it was moved.<sup>256</sup> This analysis resulted in a spectrum that places objects into categories on a scale from “white” antiquities on one side, to “grey” antiquities in the middle, and “black” antiquities on the other end. <sup>257</sup> “White” antiquities are acquired through authentic archaeological excavation and are therefore closer to the legal end of the market spectrum. “Grey” antiquities are objects whose provenance or find spot are long lost, or they are objects that were acquired before the country had patrimony laws

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<sup>253</sup> Kersel, “A Focus on the Demand Side of the Antiquities Equation,” 231.

<sup>254</sup> Elia, “Looting, Collecting, and the Destruction of Archaeological Resources,” 87.

<sup>255</sup> Bowman, “Transnational Crimes Against Culture,” 226.

<sup>256</sup> Bowman, “Transnational Crimes Against Culture,” 227.

<sup>257</sup> Bowman, “Transnational Crimes Against Culture,” 228.

that forbid the removal of antiquities.<sup>258</sup> These objects have been in circulation for so long they are considered licit through the passage of time.<sup>259</sup> Dealers and collectors tend to highlight the licit status of these objects because the ambiguousness surrounding their provenance complicates the relationship with “white” antiquities which helps push the legality of these objects. “Black” antiquities are recently looted items that often make their way into the open market in the guise of “accidental finds” or “grey” antiquities and have no documentation to prove their provenance.<sup>260</sup> The majority of antiquities sold on the market have no accompanying provenance.<sup>261</sup> Therefore, according to Bowman’s logic, most antiquities would fall towards either the “grey” or more likely “black” end of the spectrum.

#### Looters Identity and Organization

According to Campbell, the antiquities market is composed of diverse groups and populations of participants giving it the appearance of being complex. However, Campbell argues that the simple underlying structures of the antiquities market are similar to other trafficking networks.<sup>262</sup> Although the exact identity of looters tends to be uncertain, according to Hanna and Ikram, they seem to be from all walks of life and include local looters as well as organized gangs from the Nile Valley.<sup>263</sup> Hanna and Ikram and further as emphasized by Katie Paul, identifies several different demographics involved in heritage crime in Egypt from

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<sup>258</sup> Mostly during the Colonial Times or During the “Grand Tour”

<sup>259</sup> Bowman, “Transnational Crimes Against Culture,” 228.

<sup>260</sup> Bowman, 228.

<sup>261</sup> Bowman, 228.

<sup>262</sup> Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network,” 114.

<sup>263</sup> Salima Ikram and Monica Hanna, “Looting Egypt: Abu Sir Al-Maleq,” Daily News Egypt, June 5, 2013, 4, <https://www.dailynewssegypt.com/2013/06/05/looting-egypt-abu-sir-al-maleq/>.

individuals, to organized groups to well-established criminal groups.<sup>264</sup> Paul further argues that groups of local youth and general gangs should be considered organized groups, even though that many of them have no known connection to the an existing criminal network. She states that the “mafia”<sup>265</sup> is also involved, but did not start to appear until early 2012.<sup>266</sup> According to Paul, the rise of the “mafia” corresponded with a spike in looting and smuggling after the Revolution. Similarly to Hanna, Ikram and Paul, Teijgeler also comments that looters lack homogeneity and who is looting depends on the moment in the cycle of events.<sup>267</sup>

Teijgeler and Kersel identify five groups of people<sup>268</sup> who could be involved in the antiquities trade in some shape or form at any given time. Because looters tend to operate alone or in small groups it is hard to establish what damage is done by each group separately.<sup>269</sup> The first category is the illegal excavation community, or what Teijgeler calls the “digging poor.” He admits however, that he prefers the term “subsistent digger.”<sup>270</sup> This term, according to Teijgeler, was first defined by Merkelson as local people who sell “ unofficially excavated archaeological and cultural material and the profit [is] used to supplement an already meager income.”<sup>271</sup> Kersel adds that subsistence looting is the engagement of archaeology by an illegal excavating community and is always about economic exchange.<sup>272</sup> Furthermore, Teijgeler reports that clandestine digging practices by locals has been identified, but not on a massive

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<sup>264</sup> Paul, “Cultural Racketeering in Egypt—Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity: Quantitative Tools of the 21st-Century Archaeologist,” 27.

<sup>265</sup> Which is much more organized and wider reaching criminal group

<sup>266</sup> Paul, 27.

<sup>267</sup> Teijgeler, “Politics and Heritage in Egypt,” 235.

<sup>268</sup> Only five of Teijgeler’s six will appear here since the sixth is connected to land encroachment which is its own factor.

<sup>269</sup> Teijgeler, “Politics and Heritage in Egypt,” 235.

<sup>270</sup> Morag Kersel, “When Communities Collide: Competing Claims for Archaeological Objects in the Market Place,” *Archaeologies* 7, no. 3 (2011): 526, [https://works.bepress.com/morag\\_kersel/5/](https://works.bepress.com/morag_kersel/5/).

<sup>271</sup> Teijgeler, “Politics and Heritage in Egypt,” 235.

<sup>272</sup> Kersel, “When Communities Collide,” 526–27.

scale.<sup>273</sup> Despite her earlier statements tying subsistent looting to economics, Kersel's research surprisingly found that although some people who would fall in the category of subsistence diggers do it for economic reasons, not all illegal excavators partake in looting in order to feed their families or even sell the objects that they find. Instead, for many people looting is considered a form of weekend leisure activity as well as a traditional practice by many.<sup>274</sup> Kersel further acknowledges that various other scholars also discuss looting as a leisure activity that is carried out by families on the weekends.<sup>275</sup> These families set specific rules of conduct, harbor their own superstitions, and impart knowledge, which is then handed down through generations. Many people who participate in these kinds of activities learn the trade from their relatives and do not search for sites at random, but share knowledge and expertise from a sense of community.

The second category that both Teijgeler and Kersel agree on is the "museum community" or what Teijgeler calls "heritage staff." Kersel comments that like archaeologists, museum professionals are often asked to authenticate and value objects for the marketplace. This practice is problematic because it can add value to an object which results in an increase in price in the open market.<sup>276</sup> Museums have also continued to acquire and build collections often without asking difficult questions about an object's provenance.<sup>277</sup> Teijgeler highlights a different issue, the potential corruption and temptation of museum workers/heritage staff due to the fact that workers are heavily underpaid.<sup>278</sup> Instead of being part of an organized crime institution, this type of looter tends to dig either alone or in small groups with friends, family, as well as with

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<sup>273</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 235.

<sup>274</sup> Kersel, "When Communities Collide," 527.

<sup>275</sup> Kersel, "Transcending Borders," 87-88.

<sup>276</sup> Kersel, "Transcending Borders," 87-88.

<sup>277</sup> Kersel, "Transcending Borders," 87-88

<sup>278</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt."

other criminal groups. The behavior of this type of looter is similar to the behaviors of “leisure” looters and “subsistence” looters. It is possible that there is some overlap between the “museum community, heritage staff” category and these two other groups. Kersel focuses on the unintentional consequences of the role of museum professionals/heritage workers, while Teijgeler focuses on the economical reasons why they would partake in looting. Similarly, Kersel points to the role of archaeologists<sup>279</sup> who, even though are the most vocal group about the causal relationship between the demand for artifacts and illegal excavations, can and do play a direct role in the antiquities trade.<sup>280</sup> Kersel states that archaeologists play a direct role in the antiquities trade when they evaluate objects for dealers or collectors. They also hire and train locals as excavators. These same excavators sometimes carry out illegal excavations. This aspect of the archaeologists’ role is often unacknowledged. As shown, it is possible for certain groups of to be involved in the illicit antiquities trade in different ways, even if they themselves are not aware of their involvement, are not directly involved and many even personally advocate against the illicit antiquities trade.

Kersel also points to local dealers who adamantly continue to trade in antiquities and insist in the right to do as they wish with the material remains of their ancestors even if that means selling them to the highest bidder.<sup>281</sup> She also mentions another groups that she refers to as the “catchall community,”<sup>282</sup> which she defines as other community members who express interest in the issue of illicit excavation and looting, or who are concerned about the nearby landscape, or who are interested in the trade in antiquities for various reasons.<sup>283</sup> Teijgeler also

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<sup>279</sup> Which is one of her groups

<sup>280</sup> They also report illegal excavations and assist government agencies.

<sup>281</sup> Kersel, “Transcending Borders,” 536.

<sup>282</sup> ” locals, lawyers, & other miscellaneous

<sup>283</sup> Teijgeler, “Politics and Heritage in Egypt.”

names three other groups that are involved in the antiquities trade in some shape or form.<sup>284</sup>

Within this group, he points to sightseers and curious locals who want to see what is inside these sites or storage facilities because they have been denied access to them in the past.<sup>285</sup> They tend to cause damage to locks, and storage chests, but most often leave the artifacts alone and do not take them to sell. This group would be the most similar to Kersel's category of locals who fall under the larger umbrella of the "catchall community". Teijgeler also points to treasure hunters who he defines as looters looking for gold. He states that they are often not highly organized and often break into open storage areas and tombs as well as dig near major archaeological sites, causing major damage. In comparison, this group does more damage than sightseers and curious locals who break into similar areas but generally cause minimal damage.<sup>286</sup> Teijgeler blames the 25 percent youth unemployment rate as a major contributor for this type of looting and emphasizes that, although the actions of these people are often understandable from a moral perspective, he emphasizes that their actions are not justifiable. The final group that Teijgeler names are the gangs that are comprised of escaped prisoners, who sometimes have the help of the local police. These gangs are known for their brutality and lack of fear, often attacking in broad daylight.<sup>287</sup> All of these groups have competing desires that often collide.

#### Organized Groups and Looting:

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<sup>284</sup> Teijgeler, "(3) (PDF) Politics and Heritage in Egypt." 236

<sup>285</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 236.

<sup>286</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 236. Teijgeler, 236.

<sup>287</sup> Teijgeler, 236–37.



Looting has been present throughout Egypt over the last sixty years, and has been done by different groups from petty thieves to armed gangs from different places in Egypt. Salima Ikram argues that it is possible to identify different scales and types of looting.<sup>288</sup> Specifically, she divides looters into two broad categories, opportunistic looters and professionally organized looters, whom she sometimes refers to as “mafias”. This latter group can be further broken down into violent and non-violent groups. Organized looters operate on a variety of scales and in groups that range from violent to less violent. Less violent groups, have been long established, and generally consist of a group of villagers, particularly young villagers, who are controlled by a single person and are rewarded financially for objects that they bring in and sell.<sup>289</sup> Hanna agrees that looters often fall into the categories of either opportunistic looters, who take things into their own hands, or those who supply organized groups, which she refers to as “mafia,” with men who work for a wage or under gun point.<sup>290</sup>

Violent groups, according to Ikram and Hanna, are connected to arms trafficking in the region. These groups have equipped traffickers in Egypt with modern, high efficiency, automatic weapons.<sup>291</sup> They are most often controlled by a rich village leader, who then controls a team of villagers, often children, who are sent to dig and are then compensated for the items they find with money.<sup>292</sup> Armed traffickers and looters feel invincible because the gaffirs,<sup>293</sup> are poorly equipped and often lack ammunition.<sup>294</sup> There is also evidence that these violent looters utilize and are trained in geosonar machinery and utilize archaeological reports to pick target sites. The

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<sup>288</sup> Ikram, “Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt,” 367.

<sup>289</sup> Ikram, “Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt,” 2013, 35.

<sup>290</sup> Monica Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” (November 1, 2013), <https://www.academia.edu/38068512/Monica.pdf>.

<sup>291</sup> Ikram, “Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt,” 2013, 367–68.

<sup>292</sup> Monica Hanna, “What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?,” 372.

<sup>293</sup> site guards

<sup>294</sup> Hanna and Ikram, “Looting and Land Grabbing,” 35.

size of groups of looters range from professionally organized “mafias,”<sup>295</sup> who, are controlled by a kingpin who hires thieves ad hoc or has individuals or groups of looters come to him to sell artifacts directly because they do not have connection to dealers,<sup>296</sup> to smaller scale operations of locals who go out to dig and loot for their own benefit and loot looking for gold or the mythical “Red Mercury.”<sup>297</sup> Individuals and groups of looters are not selective nor are they prone to single attacks on a site.<sup>298</sup> They sometimes have contacts with low-level dealers but mostly they have no such contacts.<sup>299</sup> These smaller operations, which Brodie and Contreras consider subsistence diggers, often receive poor returns for the objects they find when viewed in the context of the global antiquities market but, their returns may seem appreciable in a local context.<sup>300</sup> Brodie and Contreras argue that while there is little actual data, the data that does exist suggests that looters receive about 1 percent of the international market value for an object.<sup>301</sup> They also bring up Rose and Burke’s (2004:4) counter argument of diggers in Jordan who receive a higher percentage of the international market value.

### Mafia/Mafiya

There is a common argument that looting is connected to the licit antiquities market and that criminals and terrorists groups take advantage of these connections. Looting can also be

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<sup>295</sup> The term “mafia” is used a loose term for any organized criminal group and does not always refer to the Italian or the Russian Mafia

<sup>296</sup> Ikram, “Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt,” n.d., 367–68.

<sup>297</sup> Contreras and Brodie, “The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra,” 11–12; Monica Hanna, “What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?,” 372.

<sup>298</sup> Paul, 21.

<sup>299</sup> Contreras and Brodie, “The Economics of the Looted Archaeological Site of Bab Edh-Dhra.” 11-12.

<sup>300</sup> Contreras and Brodie, 12

<sup>301</sup> Contreras and Brodie, 12.

used not only to attack cultural identity, but to fund violent campaigns, terrorism and crime.<sup>302</sup>

Michelle D. Fabiani states this is because the breakdown in social order means that there is an increase in crime and looting. She further states that the two main sources of evidence used to show the extent that looting is related to armed conflict tend to be either quantitative or journalistic.<sup>303</sup> Fabiani further points to the fact that antiquities looting is featured more prominently in news headlines and reports in all regions, but it is especially concentrated in areas of armed conflict which suggests that a relationship exists between looting and armed conflict.<sup>304</sup> She points to two specific non-mutually exclusive relationships to explain the relationship between looting and armed conflict: 1) strategic looting in armed conflict; 2) opportunistic looting in armed conflict.<sup>305</sup>

Sarah Parcak states that looting may be funding crime syndicates and their actions as well as terrorism, but extensive further investigation is needed and, in her opinion, looting is most likely driven by other economic and political factors.<sup>306</sup> According to Fabiani, some scholars suggest that the sale and trade in illicit antiquities could even prolong or intensify conflicts because it provides a readily available source of material goods to trade for weapons.<sup>307</sup> Fabiani points out that these scholarly articles do not distinguish between looting that supports conflict (funding terrorism) and looting that is the result of armed conflict, but opportunistic. Fabiani concludes that few scholars can ultimately connect the antiquities trade and prolonged

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<sup>302</sup> Michelle Rose Dippolito Fabiani, "Strategic vs. Opportunistic Looting: The Relationship Between Antiquities Looting and Armed Conflict in Egypt" (Thesis, 2016), 2, <https://doi.org/10.13016/M2N24R>.

<sup>303</sup> Fabiani, "Disentangling Strategic and Opportunistic Looting," 1.

<sup>304</sup> Fabiani, 1

<sup>305</sup> Fabiani, 1

<sup>306</sup> Parcak et al., "Satellite Evidence of Archaeological Site Looting in Egypt," 198; Sarah Parcak, "Archaeological Looting in Egypt: A Geospatial View (Case Studies from Saqqara, Lisht, and El Hibeh)," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 78, no. 8 (2015): 197, <https://doi.org/10.5615>.

<sup>307</sup>

conflict.<sup>308</sup> Those that do, focus on looting on the ground, but tend to focus on object after they are looted as part of a broader discussion on trafficking chains.<sup>309</sup> Geoffrey Tassie, Aloisia de Trafford and Joris van Wetering similarly suggest that the majority of culture loss is the byproduct of civil unrest instead of armed conflict.<sup>310</sup> This makes the challenges in protecting cultural property threefold: 1) a lack of administrative continuity; 2) a lack of government funds; and 3) the ability to enforce existing laws and regulations.<sup>311</sup>

Illegal excavations and looting are carried out by individuals, as well as by gangs, that can be loosely organized or even mafia-like and, at their highest level, engage in cultural racketeering.<sup>312</sup> Bowman and Proulx suggest that looting coincides with other forms of transnational criminal activity such as organized crime, and drug trafficking.<sup>313</sup> According to Paul, in the past three years “mafia” groups have targeted sites<sup>314</sup> sometimes with the assistance of bulldozers.<sup>315</sup> Campbell states that the largest group in the antiquities trade is the Russian Mafia (Red Mafiya).<sup>316</sup> There have been reports of the Russian Mafia using geo sonar machines and possibly having access to archaeological reports which they use to locate sites.<sup>317</sup> Hanna states that the political instability in Egypt plays into the hand of the organized heritage mafia who target objects, loot, and participate in land grabbing. The village supplies men who work

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Fabiani, “Disentangling Strategic and Opportunistic Looting,” 2. Fabiani, “Disentangling Strategic and Opportunistic Looting,” 2. Michelle D. Fabiani, “Disentangling Strategic and Opportunistic Looting: The Relationship between Antiquities Looting and Armed Conflict in Egypt,” *Arts* 7, no. 2 (June 2018): 2, <https://doi.org/10.3390/arts7020022>. Fabiani, 2.

<sup>309</sup> Fabiani, 2. Fabiani, 2.

<sup>310</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, “Chapter 3 Egypt’s Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis,” 16.

<sup>311</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, 14.

<sup>312</sup> She defines cultural racketeering as “the systematic theft of art and antiquities by organized criminal syndicates”. Paul, “Cultural Racketeering in Egypt Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity Katie A Paul.”

<sup>313</sup> Blythe Bowman Proulx, “Archaeological Site Looting in ‘Glocal’ Perspective: Nature, Scope, and Frequency,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 117, no. 1 (2013): 112, <https://doi.org/10.3764/aja.117.1.0111>.

<sup>314</sup> Storage magazines have also been targeted

<sup>315</sup> Ikram, “Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt,” n.d., 369.

<sup>316</sup> Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network,” 133.

<sup>317</sup> Paul, “Cultural Racketeering in Egypt Predicting Patterns in Illicit Activity Katie A Paul,” 369.

under wage or under threat of machine guns.<sup>318</sup> Campbell, citing Bowman and Proulx, however, argues that the involvement of organized crime is limited and that the claim that organized crime is involved is the result of problems in defining organized crime.<sup>319</sup> As Campbell, Bowman and Proulx point out, organized crime is a problematic term whose meaning and definition continues to be debated without a solution. Simon McKenzie also supports the notion that the traditional definition of organized crime is limited.<sup>320</sup> To highlight this point, Campbell cites the fact that the term “organized crime” has been used to describe groups that range from the Haqqani Network to mafia involved in the antiquities trade in what would be considered stage two of Kersel’s commodity chain theory. Thus they highlight the importance in distinguishing members of organized crime who are participating as individuals in a criminal network versus as part of a criminal organization.<sup>321</sup> Andrew McCalister disagrees with Bowman and Proulx and asserts similarly to Paul and Hanna that large-scale organized crime is participating both in looting and the smuggling of antiquities. Noah Charney similarly comments that art crime has developed into a significant business for organized crime.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” 2.

<sup>319</sup> Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network,” 132.

<sup>320</sup> Campbell, 132.

<sup>321</sup> Campbell, 133.

<sup>322</sup> Campbell, “The Illicit Antiquities Trade as a Transnational Criminal Network,” 132.

## Chapter 4: The Effects of Locals Relationship with Heritage on Looting

### Egypt's Complex Identity: A History

Egypt's history and relationship with its various types of heritages is key to understanding possible motives for looting. As stated by Joffe, what makes Egypt so unique compared to other countries is that despite its size and sub-regions, it has always had a sense of being a single geographical and cultural unit.<sup>323</sup> This relationship is especially key with Pharaonic heritage whose popularity has waxed and waned over time. Antiquity is constantly evoked, represented, and celebrated in Egypt.<sup>324</sup> This fact is particularly true of the 1920s and 1930s when the neo-Pharaonic style of architecture<sup>325</sup> blossomed and was at its height. Antiquities have long been used as a tool to help create Egypt's identity and as a map to tell a story of Egyptian society.<sup>326</sup> According to Joffe, there is a relationship between the past and the present. Patriotic nationalism is linked with notions of group identity.<sup>327</sup> It was originally used as a form of resistance to colonialism, but now, according to Hassan, it threatens the stability of many post imperial states. The Revolution of 1919 appealed to the idea of an "Eternal Egypt," a "Young Egypt," and most importantly a "Pharaonic Egypt." <sup>328</sup> Over time, this policy began to shift to focus on other aspects of Egyptian culture. When Nasser came in power from 1956-1970,<sup>329</sup> he based his policies on creating blocks of nations to counteract the colonial policies of "divide and rule."<sup>330</sup> According to Fekri Hassan, Nasser saw Egypt as the heart of an Arab circle of countries, all of

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<sup>323</sup> Joffe, 75.

<sup>324</sup> Joffe, 162.

<sup>325</sup> Attributed to Uthman Muharram

<sup>326</sup> Joffe, 73.

<sup>327</sup> Hassan, "Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.," 200.

<sup>328</sup> Hassan, "Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.," 205–6

<sup>329</sup> "Gamal Abdel Nasser | Biography & Facts." "Gamal Abdel Nasser | Biography & Facts." "Gamal Abdel Nasser | Biography & Facts." "Gamal Abdel Nasser | Biography & Facts." "Gamal Abdel Nasser | Biography & Facts."

<sup>330</sup> Hassan, 206.

whom would share a common language (Arabic), religion (Islam), culture, and close historical ties. His goal was to consecutively consolidate Egypt's ties with the rest of the Arab world. Nassar thought an emphasis on Islamic heritage would fit into and help move his vision of a Pan Arabism forward. Nassar's 1952 Revolution and Pan-Arabism movement brought to light certain contradictions that existed within Egyptian society. Was Egypt an Arab Nation or was it Egyptian?<sup>331</sup> Many Egyptians were swept up in this rhetoric of Arabism and consequently, a generation was born in the late 1950s and 1960s, whose connection to Egypt's Pharaonic heritage was blotted out.<sup>332</sup> Yet, according to Hassan, identification with Arabism never really penetrated Egypt's soul because Nassar's denial of Egyptian nationalism based on Pharaonic identity was disdained by the older generation who were youth at the time of the 1919 Revolution.<sup>333</sup> Sadat reawakened a sense of Egyptian heritage that went beyond Nassar's Arab nationalism or the pre-war era sense focus on Pharaonic heritage.<sup>334</sup> At the same time, the widening gap between the rich and poor allowed extremist descendants of the Muslim Brotherhood to exploit this new opening.<sup>335</sup> They declared that this new display of Western goods in a sea of poverty shows that corruption of government affiliation with a Pharaonic and an Arab past. When Sadat was assassinated, the killer exclaimed, "I have killed the Pharaoh," which according to Lewis, encapsulates the central dilemma of modern Egypt. According to Hassan, this dilemma has led many pseudo-historians to write scholarship that asserts that if Arab civilization is both Pharaonic and Egyptian then the civilization is Arabic. Hassan disagrees with this assessment and maintains that Egyptian society can be descendants of both Pharaohs

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<sup>331</sup> Joffe, 76.

<sup>332</sup> post Nassar and the 1952 Revolution

<sup>333</sup> Hassan, 209.

<sup>334</sup> Hassan, 210.

<sup>335</sup> Hassan, 210.

and Arabs. Today, nationalists utilizes these images of the past along with archaeology to create a narrative of the greatness of a country in the present day.<sup>336</sup> However, it is important to note, as pointed out by Meskell, there is no single monolithic ideological relationship between the modern Egyptian state, its people and the country's Pharaonic past.<sup>337</sup> The relationship is historically and socially constructed and intended to do specific political work. This greatness is based on the achievement of ancestors that are then used as inspiration and legitimization of the emerging greatness of a country in the present.

### The Pharaonic Past and and Nationalism

Many scholars and experts in the fields of archaeology and heritage studies have discussed the role that political nationalism and identity play in the reception of heritage and the corresponding protection, or lack thereof, it receives from looting. A large part of this discussion revolves around the question of whether Egyptians are disconnected from their Pharaonic Past and if so why? Morag M. Kersel argues that acts of looting often involve notions of nationalism.<sup>338</sup> Teijgeler also focuses on nationalism and its effect on looting, specifically on the historic tension between different heritage groups in Egypt. He argues that, since Egypt declared itself a republic in 1952, Pharaonism, a type of nationalism that was popular in the 1920s and early 1930s that stressed the country's pre Islamic history and glorified the country's Pharaonic and Hellenistic Past, has had to compete with forms of nationalism that are grounded in either Arab or Islamic discourse, or both. <sup>339</sup> He further argues that this tension and the disconnection

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<sup>336</sup>Joffe, 75–76.

<sup>337</sup> Meskell, "The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt," 167.

<sup>338</sup> Morag M. Kersel and Austin (Chad) Hill, "The (W)Hole Picture: Responses to a Looted Landscape," 307; Morag M. Kersel, "Transcending Borders: Objects on the Move," 82,

<sup>339</sup> René Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt: One and a Half Years After the Lotus Revolution," 230



that some Egyptians feel to their Pharaonic heritage is important in trying to understand why looting is occurring after 2011 and how it is different from looting that had occurred before the Revolution. Similarly, Teijgeler highlights the recent shift in the political environment, which now emphasizes Egypt's Islamic Heritage over its Pharaonic one.<sup>340</sup> He argues that it is important to examine the role heritage, specifically objects, plays in nationalist discourse and social memory. In particular he examines how this relationship is reiterated through performance and daily presentation, which can then help create and foster nationalist ideas.<sup>341</sup> Joffe similarly demonstrates that worldwide nationalism uses images of the past and archaeology to create narratives about the greatness of today, in particular regarding the "nation" and its leaders.<sup>342</sup> Hassan also discusses this tension between nationalism and heritage, its implication in Egypt and how it molds an "Egyptian" sense of identity. Similar to Teijgeler, Hassan points out that many Egyptians are disconnected with their Pharaonic heritage and explains that this is because the Pharaonic past is no longer the focus of Egyptian festivals, and Egyptians living in and around archaeological sites like the pyramids rarely visit them except for mandatory school excursions or the occasional couple on a romantic excursion.<sup>343</sup> Furthermore, Hassan draws attention to the fact that while Egyptian schools tend to be the main centers for disseminating knowledge of the Pharaonic past, Islamic heritage has become an integral part of growing up at home. Thus, he argues that Islamic heritage has taken precedence over Pharaonic heritage in the minds of many Egyptians.<sup>344</sup> Although Hassan does not mention looting specifically in his article, his discussion

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<sup>340</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 230.

<sup>341</sup> F Hassan, "Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.," in *Archaeology under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East*, ed. Lynn Meskell (London: Routledge, 1998), 201, [http://ls-tlss.ucl.ac.uk/course-materials/ARCL2012\\_45812.pdf](http://ls-tlss.ucl.ac.uk/course-materials/ARCL2012_45812.pdf).

<sup>342</sup> Alexander H Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 76.

<sup>343</sup> Hassan, "Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.," 203.

<sup>344</sup> Hassan, 203.

of nationalism and heritage is still relevant in the broader discussion of the role that nationalism plays in relation to looting in Egypt. Heritage is relevant because it reveals the potential motivations behind heritage destruction, which looting falls under. Hassan's insights into the relationship between everyday Egyptians, the government, and the country's shared Pharaonic heritage is also important due to the fact that it is cited by other later prominent scholars, such as Teijgeler, Meskell, Parcak, and Hanna, who do directly discuss looting.

### Religion

In order to understand looting it is important to understand the importance of religion in Egyptian society as well as the relationship between the various modern religions and Egypt's Pharaonic heritage. According to Monica Hanna, both Muslims and Christians are deeply religious.<sup>345</sup> She further states that fanaticism grounded in Eastern Salafi influence<sup>346</sup> has persuaded communities that Pharaonic heritage is part of a "rotten culture" because it contradicts Islam.<sup>347</sup> Salafist have issued numerous fatwas and statements against Ancient Egyptian artifacts. Cleric Shayk Muhammed Hassan issued a fatwa in 2010, stating that the trade in antiquities was not a religious fault since the objects are probably idols.<sup>348</sup> This fatwa was soon withdrawn due to social pressure. In 2011, Shayk Muhammed Shahhat of Salafi Da'wa Alexandria issued a statement that ancient Egyptian culture is a rotten culture and statues from that culture should be covered in wax. When the Muslim Brotherhood emerged from, and ended up dominating the

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<sup>345</sup> Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," p.55. Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," p.55. Hanna, p.55.

<sup>346</sup> which itself is influenced by Wahhabi Islam

<sup>347</sup> Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 47. Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 47. Hanna, 47.

<sup>348</sup> Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 55. Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 55. Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 55. Hanna, 55.

Revolution, it raised questions about how antiquities would be treated.<sup>349</sup> Under Morsi, hardline preachers (like the Salafists) have openly encouraged the looting of sites and the destruction of cultural heritage on TV and in mosques.<sup>350</sup> One radical Salafist has advocated for the destruction of the pyramids of Giza. Trafford et al suggests that their rhetoric is mostly focused on the fact that this heritage is pre-Islamic. Al Kuntar citing Gunaratna (2002) states that radical Islamists have adopted the view that ancient artifacts are now often associated with the art worshipping West. Although Al Kuntar is not specifically speaking about Egypt in this context, her analysis is applicable when taken into consideration with the fatwas against Pharaonic heritage as well as the comments by some radicals. Also Hanna brings attention to that fact that some Muslim and Christian leaders in Egypt have publicly stated that they condone the acquisition and destruction of sites which she states provides further moral justification to looters.

However, as Joffe also comments, it is difficult to know the Muslim Brotherhood's attitude towards antiquities except indirectly.<sup>351</sup> When Grand Mufti Ali Gomaa and Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradaw issued a fatwa in 2006 banning the display of statues in homes, both intellectuals and the Muslim Brotherhood condemned it. Furthermore, the way that the Muslim Brotherhood has dealt with tourism, museums and antiquities was unclear, but in the short term, little was changed. Joffe argues that this was because they needed foreign currency from tourist. This lack of change in how antiquities were treated shows that the Muslim Brotherhood's treatment of antiquities is complex and is tied up in both religious and economic consideration.

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<sup>349</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, 78.

<sup>350</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 17. Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 17. Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, 17.

<sup>351</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 78. Joffe, 78.

Furthermore, as Rico points out, it is important to keep in mind that the discussion of heritage destruction often dominates every discussion about heritage in the Middle East.<sup>352</sup> Not only that, but Rico shows that perpetrators for this type of destruction are often associated with a specific characterization of Islam, whose main feature is a distaste for preservation associated with iconoclasm. She concludes that this representation has been challenged academically and has been shown to be false due to the fact that the attitudes towards non-Muslims are varied and changes over time.<sup>353</sup> Although Rico's work isn't specifically talking about Egypt, but the Middle East in general, her theories support the mixed reaction shown by the Muslim Brotherhood in regards to Islam and heritage. Despite the importance of Islamic heritage to modern Egyptian identity, it can both compliment and be at odds with its Pharaonic past.<sup>354</sup> Similarly, according to Hanna, the Coptic minority in Egypt usually has pride and an intimate bond with ancient Egypt.<sup>355</sup> Recently, however, conservative Christian priests have stated that Pharaonic culture is evil, and belongs to the evil Pharaohs that persecuted Moses. Hanna comments that this has created aversion and mistrust and consequently many in the Coptic community now deal in antiquities. Both these statements create multiple identities within the Egyptian community and according to Hanna, create a situation that does not allow Egyptians to form an appropriate identification with their Pharaonic heritage.

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<sup>352</sup> Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, 183.

<sup>353</sup> Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, 183.

<sup>354</sup> Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 75-76. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 75-76. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 75-76. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 75-76. Joffe, "Egypt's Antiquities Caught in the Revolution," 2011, 75-76. Joffe, 75-76. Joffe, 75-76.

<sup>355</sup> Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 47,55. Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt," 47,55. Hanna, 47,55.

## Education

According to Hanna and Keshk, the school system under Mubarak perpetuated cultural isolation because it divorced archaeology from history.<sup>356</sup> Therefore, there is no connection between heritage and the present because the education system presents Egyptian history in a fragmented manner, which gives ancient Egyptian history little value, does not engage students in their own heritage, and causes students to have a faint connection between their ancient heritage and their identity as a modern Egyptian.<sup>357</sup> Hanna further comments that Egyptians were marginalized from their own heritage under the Mubarak regime because the schools provided a bad foundation on the history of Pharaonic monuments and the State saw these sites as the domain of tourists.<sup>358</sup> For example, the Giza pyramids, are rarely visited by locals except during compulsory school excursions or amorous couples from Cairo on a “date”.<sup>359</sup> Hassan also points to the fact that in Egypt, schools and not the home are generally the center of disseminating knowledge on the Pharaonic past.<sup>360</sup> In contrast, he emphasizes that Islamic heritage is an integral part of growing up at home. Finally, in his analysis, Hassan brings attention to and argues that there is a disconnect between what students learn in school and the culture emphasized at home. Thus, his arguments supports and helps prove Hanna’s argument that about

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<sup>356</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, “Chapter 3 Egypt’s Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis,” 39. Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, “Chapter 3 Egypt’s Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis,” 39. Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, 39.

<sup>357</sup> Hanna and Ikram, “Looting and Land Grabbing,” 39; Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 47; Monica Hanna, “What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?,” 375.

<sup>358</sup> Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” 2. Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” 2. Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” 2. Monica Hanna, “Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt),” 2, <https://www.academia.edu/38068512/Monica.pdf>. Hanna, 2.

<sup>359</sup> Hassan, “Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.,” 203. Hassan, “Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.,” 203. .

<sup>360</sup> Hassan, “Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.,” 204. Hassan, “Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.,” 204. Hassan, “Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt.,” 204. Hassan, 204.



## Government and Tourism

By examining the way government, tourists, the tourism industry and local Egyptians interact and view heritage, it is possible to examine how these policies and interaction can either encourage or discourage looting by creating a sense of association or disassociation with heritage. The Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) is vital in managing Egypt's material past. However, as noted by Teijgeler, most of the state inspectors spend most of their time supervising the work of foreign archaeological missions, registering new discoveries, and securing storage houses.<sup>366</sup> Teijgeler argues that since the SCA is so busy supervising foreign missions they are not being used to their full potential to manage Egypt's heritage.. Teijgeler also points out that the majority of the excavations in Egypt (over 200) are run by mostly American and European teams. Even one year after the Revolution, he notes that Western scholars controlled the majority of the excavations which he claims is due to their close links to the SCA. This issue is also referenced by Hassan and Hanna in their comments about Egyptians being disconnected to their heritage and feeling that these sites belong to foreign tourists and academics, but not locals. This marginalization creates an environment where, as stated by Hassan<sup>367</sup> and Hanna,<sup>368</sup> people are

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<sup>366</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 242–43. Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 242–43. Teijgeler, 242–43. Teijgeler, 242–43. Teijgeler, 242–43.

<sup>367</sup> Hassan, "Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt." Hassan, "Memorabilia. Archaeological Materiality and National Identity in Egypt." Hassan.

<sup>368</sup> Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt"; Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods"; Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)"; Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?" Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt"; Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods"; Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)"; Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?" Hanna, "Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt"; Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods"; Hanna, "Monica Hanna.(DIARY)(Heritage Task Force of Egypt)"; Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?"

dissociated with their heritage, which according to Hanna, can cause people to feel looting is justified. Another issue associated with this is that foreign individuals and organizations still assert that Egyptians themselves are incapable of managing their [cultural] resources which is the reason why they argue that Egyptian heritage is effectively administered and controlled by the West.<sup>369</sup> This is despite the fact that, in reality, the ultimate decision-making resides with the Egyptian Antiquity Service (EAS). Even then, Meskell points out that the EAS has to rely heavily on international archaeological investment both for fieldwork and for preservation work.<sup>370</sup> The reason Meskell argues that this myth is perpetuated is because this generalization makes it easier for Westerners to continue their current practices in Egypt. It privileges one group over another, the dead over the living, which has uncomfortable repercussions. Hence, as stated by Meskell, current archaeological and preservation practices can be seen as a form of “symbolic violence.”<sup>371</sup> In terms of looting, this status quo adds to this environment that causes locals to feel like they cannot and they should not care for their own heritage. This leaves heritage open to looting and destruction.

Prior to 2011, under the Mubarak regime, the government saw nearby communities as a threat and tried to keep them away from archaeological and heritage sites.<sup>372</sup> This bias was reinforced by certain sectors of the Egyptian government.<sup>373</sup> They view locals as a nuisance, both

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<sup>369</sup> Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 149. Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 149. Meskell, 149.

<sup>370</sup> Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 150. Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 150. Meskell, 150.

<sup>371</sup> Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 153. Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 153. Meskell, 153.

<sup>372</sup> Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 47. Hanna, “Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods,” 47. Hanna, 47.

<sup>373</sup> Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 147–48. Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” 147–48. Meskell, 147–48. Meskell, 147–48.



to the heritage itself and to tourists, and therefore locals needed to be kept out of heritage sites.<sup>374</sup>

To do this, the government constructed walls around sites to keep people out and to stop encroachment. One negative consequence of this was that it brutally interrupted community interactions with sites and their heritage. One example of this was that the Giza Plateau was closed to locals during the major festival of Shamel-Nessim, and only tourists were allowed entrance to the site. A consequence of the government's actions was that heritage sites and museums were seen as intimidating to the Egyptian public and as a result, few programs seemed to attract them to visit these sites.<sup>375</sup> As shown, the Egyptian government is clearly privileging archaeology and ancient material and history over the living local community. By doing so, they sow the seeds of resentment among communities who live in or around sites. As a result of this, locals did not know, nor were they educated by the government about their rights to access nearby heritage spaces.<sup>376</sup> As a result heritage was viewed as State property meant for the exclusive rights of tourists or the elite instead of a cultural right even though Article 50 of the Egyptian Constitution states that people have the right to their heritage and its protection.<sup>377</sup>

Locals or future stakeholders are also not involved or engaged in the decision making process in

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<sup>374</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375. Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375. Monica Hanna, 375.

<sup>375</sup> Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375. Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375. Monica Hanna, "What Has Happened to Egyptian Heritage after the 2011 Unfinished Revolution?," 375. Monica Hanna, 375.

<sup>376</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39. Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39. Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39. Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39.

<sup>377</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54. Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54. Hanna, 54.

relationship to protection or development of heritage sites.<sup>378</sup> Hanna argues that locals are not emotionally attached to these sites because they feel that they do not economical gain anything from these sites or from the tourism generated by them. As a result, when the police were withdrawn on January 2011, people were encouraged to illegally take back their heritage that they felt deprived of through looting.<sup>379</sup>

Trafford et al argues that cultural heritage management needs to be flexible and inclusive to all stakeholders. Fushiya argues that the key to this is flexibility and inclusiveness as Egypt's shift the management of sites to local communities.<sup>380</sup> As Trafford et al point out, restricting everyday Egyptians in an effort to protect ancient heritage has led to discord and resentment. The high walls that separate locals from their heritage, that are a result of government policies, are just a temporary solution and only further remind locals that the past is not really theirs.<sup>381</sup> Trafford et al emphasizes that more inclusive solutions are needed and that Egypt would benefit greatly from greater engagement with the local community.<sup>382</sup> Salima Ikram further reflects that people who live near sites report destruction in different ways.<sup>383</sup> She states that this is due to the fact that most locals (stakeholders) are directly involved in land acquisition or looting. At the same time, there are also instances of villagers protecting sites. She points out that those protecting sites will report destruction differently then those who participate in looting. Furthermore, those who do not live immediately next to sites (urban) will also have a different

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<sup>378</sup> Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39. Hanna, "Hanna, Monica, 2015. Documenting Looting Activities in Post-2011 Egypt. Countering Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods," 54; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39..

<sup>379</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 39.

<sup>380</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, 19.

<sup>381</sup> Teijgeler, "Politics and Heritage in Egypt," 241; Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 38.

<sup>382</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 21,38.

<sup>383</sup> Ikram, "Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis: The View from Egypt," 2013, 370. 370.

response than those who live near the site themselves. In addition, a site's proximity to urban areas and cities affects the frequency and how well guarded it is. At the same time, it also creates a situation where it could be seen as more suitable to loot because access is easier.<sup>384</sup> According to Ikram, many people who live in urban areas are sad for the heritage loss, but are more focused on the need to survive. Trafford et al highlight a successful example from Fekri Hassan's research at Dashur to highlight how this could possibly be implemented elsewhere.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Fabiani, "BUILDING A BASELINE," 16.

<sup>385</sup> Trafford, Tassie, and Joris, "Chapter 3 Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," 21.

## Conclusion

This thesis offers a scholarly review of the factors that have and continue to contribute to looting of Pharaonic heritage since the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Specifically, this review examines and asks what factors are contributing to looting of Pharaonic Antiquity since the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and how is the academic community writing about these factors and the looting of Pharaonic heritage in general? After considerable research, and my review of key sources, I have identified four major factors that seem to be in the forefront of the academic discussion on what has contributed to looting since the 2011 Revolution. These four factors are 1.) the changing political environment (political instability); 2.) economic recession; 3.) the interrelationship between looting and the international art market, and 4.) Egyptian's complicated relationship with its Pharaonic heritage and how this heritage is viewed in Egyptian society. I further conclude that scholarly analysis of these factors shows that all four factors are contributing to an environment that encourages looting in Egypt. I have found that the majority of the scholarship I have studied acknowledges that many of these factors work in conjunction with one another and considered individually do not justify a rise in looting. For example, Hanna and Ikram often discuss multiple if not all four factors in their work. Since it is possible to combine these factors in so many different ways, it is impossible to create hierarchies among the factors.

One limitation to my research is that all of my sources are in English, which is not the dominant language of the country that I am using as a case study. I acknowledge the limitations of a desk study of English academic papers, as it leaves out data that would have been available in other languages including, Arabic, French, and German. Restricting my research to English, or translated research could also affect the number of authors and articles related to and focusing specifically on Pharaonic heritage. However, although self limiting in these capacities, I would argue that this type of desk study provides valuable insight into the way looting of Pharaonic heritage is seen and analyzed in the English speaking academic world. I refer back to Rico's argument that the negative image of heritage destruction dominates the discussion of heritage in the Middle East and how this affects the discussions surrounding heritage.<sup>386</sup> It is important to keep in mind that the discussion of heritage is not created in a vacuum and this discussion is reflected by, and influences political policy.

There are several ways for this research to be expanded. One possibility, which I had mentioned above, is to include more sources that are in Arabic. On that note, even though I was able to include several Egyptian voices such as Monica Hanna, Fekri A. Hassan and Salima Ikram, future research including Arabic sources could be an opportunity to add even more of a local voice into the study. Furthermore, this would be interesting to investigate further, because one of the issues that surfaced in my research was a difference of opinion between the Egyptian sources, who stated that a disconnect exists between modern Egyptian culture and Pharaonic heritage, and some Western scholars, such as Meskell, who claim that no such disconnection exists and that these connections between contemporary Egyptian cultural products and

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<sup>386</sup> Trinidad Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam: A Crisis of Representation," *Review of Middle East Studies* 51, no. 2 (2017): 183, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26374489>. Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183. Rico, "Heritage Studies and Islam," 183.

Pharaonic heritage manifest in less obvious ways. I would argue that how heritage is viewed is important in the context of looting, and that this specific topic is something that could be explored in more depth. Another possible suggestion is to expand this study or compare and contrast looting and the treatment of Pharaonic heritage with other types of heritage in Egypt, such as Coptic or Islamic Heritage. Yet, another option for further research could be to compare and contrast the looting treatment of Pharaonic heritage in Egypt with another Arab or Islamic country in the region that has pre-Islamic archaeological Heritage. Although this desk study presents and focuses on the current arguments from major English speaking authors on what they cite as the factors effecting looting, there is always work that can be done to further understand why looting is occurring and how to mitigate it.

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