

## **Visualizing a Monumental Past: Archaeology, Nasser's Egypt and the Early Cold War**

Fieldwork at Mit Rahina was not going well, and the team in charge of the new, Egyptian-American archaeological excavations at the site had reason to be worried. It was early 1956 and, in Cairo, ten miles or so to the north, construction work bearing the imprint of Egypt's Free Officers was continuing apace. The press reported that grand buildings and boulevards linked to the modern, revolutionary and decolonized future promoted by Gamal Abdel Nasser were taking shape. And even in the countryside at Mit Rahina, the field team could see this process in action. Not far from the excavations, representatives from Egypt's Department of Antiquities (DoA) were busy erecting a large, modern museum structure to lure curious tourists to visit a gigantic statue of the pharaoh Ramses II that would be housed therein.<sup>1</sup>

Nasser's Egypt was to be monumental, the country's pharaonic era reborn as a visible precursor of its modern, revolutionary future (Fig. 1). But beyond Mit Rahina's new museum, and despite the concerted efforts of the practitioners working there, there was little sign of this revolutionary rebirth at the site. For years, Egyptologists, influenced by ancient writings, had associated Mit Rahina with Memphis, a place said to have been Egypt's ancient capital and "the city of the white wall".<sup>2</sup> Yet even if this monumental characterization of the locale was accurate, the excavations at the site, now in their second season, had done little to demonstrate its validity. Despite arduous months spent digging down into muddy, waterlogged remains, no ancient city materialized, and the people in Cairo and the United States charged with deciding the status of the work were unconvinced of its future potential. To make matters worse, ruptures between the field team and some of their workers were increasing. This paper is about what the excavation team at Mit Rahina did in their attempt to resolve these problems, in addition to the wider historical issues connected to this process.

The Mit Rahina excavation was initiated in 1953 and cancelled by 1957. It constituted a novel sort of collaboration between the DoA and the University Museum (UM) of the University of Pennsylvania, aimed at instituting a new foundation for archaeological work in Egypt; the excavation was premised on contemporary schemes of modernization linked to Nasserism, decolonization and the early Cold War. In this paper, I demonstrate that practitioners working at Mit Rahina changed the type of field visualization that they used there in an attempt to emphasize that the site constituted a city and save their work. Addressing the complex materiality of the site, these practitioners switched from an epigraphically connected practice of architectural drawing standard in Egypt to the sort of visual strategy promoted in pre-independence India by the British archaeologist Mortimer

Wheeler (1890–1976), particularly in terms of archaeological section illustration.<sup>3</sup> To analyse this change, I draw on the concept of the ‘boundary object’. Such objects are things around which the various stakeholders of scientific work can gather to form an effective community of practice.<sup>4</sup> In order for the collaboration at Mit Rahina to succeed, it was clear from the beginning that the dig had to be made to function in a way that drew such stakeholders together. The work at Mit Rahina offered space for the constitution of a boundary object from its start. I therefore use the concept to illustrate not only how and why a change in visual strategy took place at Mit Rahina, but also why this strategy failed.

Moreover, thinking through the work at the site in terms of boundary objects enables me to link the Mit Rahina excavation to other issues: the role of materiality in the making of the post-World War II past, in addition to the histories of decolonization and the Cold War to which that past was connected. Previous studies of these histories have tended to be dominated by a realist concentration on top-down international relations.<sup>5</sup> Yet as muddy and visually opaque as they were, the excavations discussed in this paper can clarify how decolonization, the Cold War and the pasts connected to these categories were tied to, and constitutive of, the (quite literally) ‘ground up’ materiality of specific places such as Mit Rahina. The paper also, then, emphasizes the relevance of the history of archaeological work in thinking about these matters. As interest in the history of the so-called field sciences has grown, historical interest in the discipline of archaeology has not necessarily grown alongside it.<sup>6</sup> Yet archaeological fieldwork—and the issues of materiality connected to it—helped to constitute varied post-war geographies. For example, as this paper ultimately shows, Nasser’s Egypt was not the India in which Mortimer Wheeler’s work would later enjoy continuing influence. The post-war world was not flat, and nor were the geopolitical categories tied to it. Instead, all these things were materially bound; to coin a phrase, they were rather more lumpy. By discussing the case of Mit Rahina, this paper demonstrates why.

### **Decolonizing Ancient Egypt**

Whether accurately or not, the proposals governing what happened at Mit Rahina represented the work as a new type of excavation: one attuned to the era of Egyptian decolonization under Nasser. A now-standard historical narrative illustrates why this argument was possible.<sup>7</sup> As in other countries subject to colonial rule, archaeological excavation and survey in Egypt had been contentious for decades. Who defined the Egyptian past? Who controlled the institutions and individuals interested in its inquiry, and who could take control of the sites, monuments

and artefacts that excavation and survey helped to constitute and recover? In the era of the so-called New Imperialism and Britain's (post-1882) occupation and control of the country, these were questions that drove debate in Egypt; a debate heightened by nationalist contention, the presence of foreign archaeological concessions and an Egyptian Antiquities Service placed (because of the terms of the Entente Cordiale) under the permanent directorship of a Frenchman and staffed by many British officials.

After 1922, when the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun coincided with Britain's granting of—nominal, and tightly controlled—independence to Egypt, matters seemed to improve somewhat, at least from a nationalist perspective. A new cadre of Egyptians began to graduate from the country's growing number of universities with qualifications relating to antiquities. These graduates—often, although not always, trained by Europeans—then used their qualifications to work in the Antiquities Service at the same time as the distribution of Egyptian antiquities abroad (highly desirable to the sponsors of foreign missions) became more controlled. Tutankhamun's tomb acted as a bellwether in this matter: despite the controversy surrounding this outcome, artefacts from the tomb never left Egypt.

But matters really appeared to change following the Free Officers' coup of July 1952. The Officers forced King Faruq, the British-backed monarch of Egypt, to abdicate. And in 1954, the turning of Egypt's political tide led the British government to agree to the withdrawal of its remaining troops in the country. Meanwhile, matters related to Egyptian antiquities themselves became embroiled in these changes. In late 1952, the French director of the Antiquities Service, Étienne Drioton (1889–1961), found himself out of a job. He was replaced by Mustafa Amer (1896–1973), an Egyptian geographer and prehistorian who had been head of Alexandria (formerly Faruq) University. Egypt's government also reconstituted and renamed the institution that Amer now led. Formerly possessing a remit relating solely to the country's pharaonic past, the Antiquities Service became the DoA and was tasked with dealing with all facets of Egypt's pre-nineteenth-century history.

Much in the country also continued as normal. The revolution—and Nasser's role as its figurehead—started more as a feat of political representation than as a political reality. In the early days of their coup, the Free Officers had planned to return to their barracks; they wanted only to set what they saw as a corrupted Egypt back on a sound national course. Yet increasingly, the regime and the press represented Egypt as revolutionary: particularly after the moment in 1954 when Nasser helped to place Egypt's first president, his fellow Free Officer Muhammad Nagib, under house arrest. But even then the revolution often simply developed interwar modernization schemes. As revolutionary rhetoric heightened in

conjunction with Nasser's apparently inexorable rise (in 1956) to the Egyptian presidency, (revolutionary) appearance could often override reality.<sup>8</sup>

In this political climate, foreign institutions that still wanted to excavate in Egypt saw a need to tread carefully. For example, in the months following the Free Officers' coup, Britain's Egypt Exploration Society (EES) was granted a concession to dig at the site of Saqqara "on behalf of, and in collaboration with, the Department of Antiquities".<sup>9</sup> This agreement was almost entirely rhetorical: committee minutes reveal that the "collaboration", suggested by the EES, provided an excuse to continue the earlier work of the British organization's new Field Director, the archaeologist Walter Bryan Emery (1903–1971), who had excavated monumental tombs at the site whilst working for the Antiquities Service in the interwar period.<sup>10</sup> The plans for Mit Rahina went further,<sup>10</sup> however, and are therefore worth examining in some detail.

### **Modernizing Ancient Egypt**

Initiated after the EES excavations, the programme for the Mit Rahina work set out to attend not only to the rhetoric, but also to the slow development of Egypt's revolution. The dig's supporters, whether Egyptian or American, promoted the work as a new way of conducting archaeology in Egypt. The excavation was to help constitute a novel and altruistic field practice that paid real attention to the modernization policies enjoying a growing currency in the country (and, by extension, in the decolonizing world at large). The dig would implicitly follow such policies as they were promoted by the American government, too. Multiple, competing interests circulated around the Mit Rahina work from the start.

For the Egyptians involved, the proposed work represented the chance both to assert their modernizing credentials and to further the conditions in which those credentials might flourish. Interwar discussions about modernization and the place of Egypt in the world were being absorbed into revolutionary discourse. As the EES work at Saqqara suggests, this discourse did not discount, and in fact often encouraged, various forms of international collaboration. But the Mit Rahina work represented an attempt to take advantage of the currency held by one particular nation; as the Cold War heightened and Britain's empire crumbled, the US had moved to gain influence in the Middle East. Interestingly, Egyptian officials appear to have specifically targeted the UM—and not, say, the EES—as a possible, and genuine, collaborative partner for the DoA.

In early 1953, on behalf of Egypt, one Ali R. Ansari held an informal discussion in Philadelphia regarding the possibility of the UM working in the country. The conversation took place with the head of the institution's Egyptian Section, the émigré German Egyptologist Rudolf Anthes (1896–1985), and the UM's director, Froelich Rainey (1907–1992). Correspondence with Egypt's Ministry of Education and the Egyptian Embassy in Washington followed and, in September 1953, Mustafa Amer of the DoA himself visited Philadelphia to discuss matters.<sup>11</sup> Amer had first been trained at Cairo's Dar al-'Ulum, an institution borne of late nineteenth-century reforms that trained future schoolteachers using a hybrid (Arabic-Islamic/European) curriculum. Next, he had attended the University of Liverpool, where he took a BA and an MA in geography. Amer's course of study had led him to believe in the value of collaborative scientific internationalism for national development.<sup>12</sup> Now was the right time to put this ideal to work, and the UM appeared to be the right collaborative partner. Meanwhile, in a series of meetings that Rudolf Anthes conducted in Egypt in early 1954, many of the Egyptian archaeologists who occupied the upper echelons of Amer's DoA followed suit in stressing their enthusiasm for collaboration. Many of these practitioners were interwar graduates of Egyptian institutions. They possessed strong nationalist beliefs but, like Amer, they had also become predisposed to scientific internationalism. Working with the UM presented a genuine opportunity to advance this aim and their work.<sup>13</sup>

These archaeologists also had other reasons for supporting collaboration. After his initial visit to Egypt, Anthes selected Mit Rahina as the location of the collaborative work rather than any of the other sites that departmental officials offered him. Work at Mit Rahina suited departmental officials well, because it helped to advance one of the policies adopted under the Free Officers in the early days of their command. In September 1952, the Officers instigated agrarian reform, redistributing land and placing boundaries on its ownership. The measure was limited in size, and was more the product of interwar discussions relating to Egyptian modernization than of any revolutionary fervour. Yet in his final proposal for the Mit Rahina work, Anthes emphasized that digging at Mit Rahina would support Egypt's new land reform policy:

I should like to stress that ...the Egyptian government is immediately interested in its [Mit Rahina's] clearance; the question is how far this area should be reserved to the Antiquities Department and the rest be given free to the peasants, for cultivation.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, other novel aspects of the Mit Rahina collaboration were tied up with the interests of the UM and, in particular, with Froelich Rainey. Known for hosting the hit CBS television show *What in the World?*, Rainey was charismatic, politically active and promotionally astute. He had worked for the US foreign service, had connections to the fledgling CIA and was deeply involved in discussions about America's role in the world during the early Cold War: from the late 1940s onwards, he was a member of the Philadelphia Committee on Foreign Relations. When he took control of a cash-strapped UM after the Second World War, Rainey developed an aggressive programme of international fieldwork designed not only to prove attractive to sponsors, but also to sell a positive, altruistic vision of America to enable collaboration with geopolitically strategic countries.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, with (the firmly anti-totalitarian) Anthes appointed as leader, the UM would work in Egypt with these aims in mind.<sup>16</sup> At Mit Rahina, a programme of skill transfer would take place. Embodying the modernization narrative promoted by contemporary American aid programmes, the UM pledged to provide experts to help the DoA build technical capacity in the field. Simultaneously, this process would quietly inculcate American values amongst the Egyptians involved. American aid programmes in the early Cold War had developed out of the interwar work of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), which sought to develop adherence to national ideals in this Depression-hit area of the American South. To do so, the TVA worked to build liberal rural communities at the same time as conducting agricultural and other reforms. Now, under its new development programme, Point Four, the US government rolled out this practice of using agricultural reform to constitute good Americans (or, more accurately, good American allies) around the world. In Egypt in the mid-1950s, for instance, not only did the US sponsor a winsome-sounding programme of "Chicken Aid", it also created the Egyptian-American Rural Improvement Service. Although not officially linked to these programmes, it is perhaps no surprise that Rainey proposed the work at Mit Rahina should echo such schemes and take place as an "Egyptian-American archaeological research programme".<sup>17</sup> Not only did many Egyptians seem to welcome such initiatives, but work at the site was already tied to issues of land reform. Positive omens aside, though, the success of the Mit Rahina work now relied on the sort of material that the excavation recovered.

### **Choosing Mit Rahina**

The proposals linked to the Mit Rahina excavations meant that the collaboration would be sustained only if it appeared to be making visible the Egyptian past that all the parties involved with the work were concerned with. More accurately, the work would have to materialize just enough of that past, and just enough of the artefacts connected to it, to make sure that everyone would want to continue work at Mit Rahina and not allow the land at the site return to agricultural use. The site needed to act as a boundary object around which diverse interests could gather. Unsurprisingly, then, Mit Rahina appears to have been chosen by Anthes in order to provide as great a chance as possible of this outcome occurring: the site offered a sense of material possibility that fitted with these various desires.

Despite the slow-burning arrival of revolution in Egypt, a particular vision of monumentality had started to coalesce in the country: whether in terms of the remaking of Cairo or in terms of the manner in which the new regime and its institutions represented the national past. These processes had clear, pre-1952 origins, but could now be used to advantage in the quest to construct a modern, revolutionary Egypt. Places like Mit Rahina therefore received new museum structures to house monumental pharaonic sculpture; the colossus of Ramses II displayed within the building represented the glories that such new structures hoped to revive. Meanwhile, in January 1955, as Anthes arrived at Mit Rahina to prepare for the first season of excavation, he noted in his diary that “the Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs visits old Ramses, who shall be carried over to Cairo”.<sup>18</sup> The Minister, Wing Commander ‘Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, had also taken charge of the construction work in the city, and had come to Mit Rahina to visit a second colossal statue of Ramses II.<sup>19</sup> Plans dictated that the statue should be raised from the ground where it lay and then transported to Cairo’s main railway station, where it would stand outside this major gateway to the capital, welcoming passengers to Egypt’s revolutionary future.<sup>20</sup> The symbolism was obvious, and acted as an accompaniment to other, overt acts of pharaonic monumentality; in the Egyptian desert, workmen constructed gigantic pharaonic temples and other sets for the shooting of Cecil B. DeMille’s *The Ten Commandments*.<sup>21</sup>

A glorious pharaonic past was increasingly visible as part of Egypt’s revolutionary future. Taking place in the midst of these events, excavating at Mit Rahina offered a calculated chance to bolster this visibility and rematerialize Egypt’s former glory. As noted above, the site had long been associated by Egyptologists with Memphis, Egypt’s ‘capital city’ during the so-called Old Kingdom: the period (c.2686–2125 B.C.) also defined as the age of pyramid-building.<sup>22</sup> Yet in reality, little evidence of that settlement had been recovered beyond the connected (and highly visible) pyramid and cemetery fields on its neighbouring

desert escarpment at sites like Giza and Saqqara. The city proper, located in what was now the Nile's floodplain (or so scholars claimed), had barely been excavated.<sup>23</sup> Excavating at Mit Rahina therefore offered considerable opportunities.

Anthes bet that the form of archaeological skill he set out to transfer could resurrect pharaonic monumentality at the site on a significant scale. He said of Mit Rahina: "in the long run, it promises important discoveries with certainty."<sup>24</sup> He was confident, because the team was to treat work at Mit Rahina as they might have treated work on a standing structure. Elsewhere in Egypt, where excavation and survey dealt mostly with the sort of temples and monumental tombs that Anthes expected to find, this approach had rendered results. Many of these structures were (or could be made to appear) free-standing, or be helped to 'emerge' from within their location on the desert edge (Fig. 2). Perhaps more importantly, though, this methodology had also been practised by Rudolf Anthes with individuals who had developed professional credibility as a result of such work. Using this standard, then, the assumption was that Mit Rahina could become a successful boundary object.

Anthes had first gained field experience in Egypt during the 1920s, working for the Imperial German Institute of Egyptian Archaeology in Luxor from 1927 to 1929. The Institute's leader, Ludwig Borchardt (1863–1938), "intended to establish his own branch of Egyptology within the field of architectural history".<sup>25</sup> This process, linked to grand narratives of European civilization, involved surveying ancient structures to provide an architectural account of the phases of ancient Egyptian history. Meanwhile, this process was similar to work in other places embroiled in monumental ancient-historical discourses, suggesting the extent to which Anthes hoped to apply what appeared to be a universal norm of excavation, despite the occasionally problematic connotations of its usage. In Mussolini's Italy, for instance, Roman archaeology was "dominated by topographic approaches whose primary goal was the recovery and reconstruction of specific sites. ... already recorded in the historical narrative".<sup>26</sup>

The technique investigated and illustrated ancient historical architectural phases using a method of top-down (i.e. horizontal) planning. At the same time, philologists like Anthes copied the inscriptions on and around the structures being investigated, analysis of which sources provided evidence of the date of the architecture within ancient Egyptian history. Occasionally, too, practitioners produced sumptuous, near-modernist reconstructions of ancient temples and other monumental structures. For instance, work conducted under Borchardt at the site of Amarna in Middle Egypt and eventually published by Herbert Ricke (1901–1976), a friend of Anthes from Luxor, illustrates this set of practices in action.<sup>27</sup>



Meanwhile, around Mit Rahina, archaeologists excavated sites in a similar manner and, before the dig started, Anthes discussed work with these well-known, highly respected professionals.<sup>28</sup> On the Saqqara desert escarpment a few miles to the west, Emery, whose training was originally as a marine draughtsman, made architectural plans and reconstructions of monumental tombs for the EES; his publications also featured the inscriptions connected to these structures. In the low desert across the river at Helwan, one of the first publications of the Egyptian archaeologist Zaki Saad's (1901–1982) excavation of the tombs at the site was its plan.<sup>29</sup>

In Egypt, one mode of (monumental, modernist, and philologically connected) excavation dominated, cutting across a variety of different national and professional backgrounds. It is little wonder that such work influenced practices at Mit Rahina; not only could the technique make ancient monuments live again as symbols of—in this case revolutionary—modernity, it also constituted a standard that Anthes understood. By 1954, Borchardt's Imperial German Institute had become the Swiss Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research in Cairo. Ricke was now the institution's director.<sup>30</sup> When Anthes conducted final negotiations with the DoA in early 1954, he had intense discussions with his old friend in an attempt to find an architect for Mit Rahina. Anthes could conduct philological work at Mit Rahina himself. Yet he noted that he wanted “to try and get Ricke's assistant [a trained architect], and an Egyptian student of architecture, in order to take the advantages of the supervised architect and to raise an Egyptian man in this field”.<sup>31</sup> Architecture was to be the paramount focus of the dig's vaunted training element.

This focus seemed all to the good. Excavating at Mit Rahina would uncover monumental remains dating from beyond the Old Kingdom and tie in with the symbolic work being carried out in Egypt around pharaohs like Ramses II. Ramses ruled during the New Kingdom: the period (c. 1550–1069 B.C.) often defined by Egyptologists as comprising Egypt's ancient ‘empire’.<sup>32</sup> That empire was now increasingly ripe for reconstitution as Nasser's pan-Arab ambitions grew.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, Anthes noted in the Mit Rahina proposals that the work “should reveal” the “religious centre of Memphis during the Empire”.<sup>34</sup> Excavating at Mit Rahina would uncover the monuments of an imperial past that might now live again. Even if the dig ensured that some land at the site would return to agricultural use, the work would also help to make Egypt's revolution material by resurrecting ancient Egyptian glories. Some of DeMille's Hollywood glamour would brush off on everyone involved.

This strategy also encompassed a scientific claim. Beyond revealing a religious centre, Anthes hoped that the rather more mundane chance to visualize the “layouts . . . development, and . . . relation to other sections of the city” of that centre would make the work self-evidently compelling to both sides involved.<sup>35</sup> For years, Egyptologists had cast doubt about the feasibility of excavating at Memphis: the site’s location in the Nile’s floodplain meant that there was a considerable amount of groundwater to contend with. The British archaeologist Flinders Petrie (1853–1942), who excavated at the site in the early twentieth century, stated that “to clear the temple sites alone would take probably twenty years, as it is only possible to work for a few weeks after the water has subsided”.<sup>36</sup> Even the UM had worked at the site and then abandoned it.<sup>37</sup> Worse still, Bernard Bothmer (1912–1993), Cairo director of the new American Research Center in Egypt, described the site as “dust” even as the new excavations started.<sup>38</sup> For Anthes, excavating at Mit Rahina was a chance to prove these doubters wrong and advance his discipline’s work. Here, he thought, was the future of excavation in Egypt.<sup>39</sup> If that experiment could be successfully conducted—if Memphis could actually be visualized and made material as a boundary object—then all parties should be interested in continuing the work.

Material success also offered great opportunity for the UM. The institution’s management and financial backers had made clear from the start their wish to export objects excavated from the site to America, despite no real confirmation from the DoA that this outcome would happen. Beyond Rainey, the institution’s Board of Managers was particularly keen on this strategy. Percy Madeira, a Philadelphia banker and the Board’s president, later made this point particularly clear, stating that the work should result in “worth while [*sic*] discussion of objects”.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, as plans for the work progressed, the UM appointed a “Project Director”, John Dimick, “to handle the business management and public relations of the expedition”.<sup>41</sup> Dimick (as much, if not more of, a Cold Warrior than Rainey) was only involved in the work because his wife, Marion Tully Dimick, had made a substantial financial gift to the UM.<sup>42</sup> Yet nonetheless, he had also been tasked by the UM with seeking out other possible sites in Egypt for excavation.<sup>43</sup> And it is notable in this regard that he once stated that Percy Madeira “never presented himself as an expert, but he knew what was good for the Museum, and when appropriated funds were producing adequate dividends”.<sup>44</sup> Those dividends would be the sort of monumental, pharaonic artefacts that could be transported to, and displayed in, Philadelphia and that Mit Rahina, according to Anthes, apparently offered the best chance of securing. The age of the avaricious museum—and the symbiotic relationship of such institutions with the field—was far from over.<sup>45</sup>

Yet despite the varying interests connected to the excavation, the work at Mit Rahina is now forgotten, and a later project embodying modernization discourses is remembered: the UNESCO-backed archaeological salvage campaign that took place in Egyptian and Sudanese Nubia during the 1960s. The Nubian campaign, which took place as a result of the flooding caused by the construction of the Aswan High Dam, involved the work of technical experts from countries located across post-war political divides. Its most famous act was the moving of the monumental temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel. As I have noted elsewhere, currently available histories often make this process of international collaboration in the name of revolutionary modernism appear to have taken place *sui generis*.<sup>46</sup> But considering its thematic similarities, the excavation at Mit Rahina seems to represent a precursor to the later campaign. Why, then, did the worlds of modernization and archaeology intersect so convincingly in Nubia but not in the decade beforehand? The rest of this paper addresses this question, making clear the utility of thinking about the work in terms of boundary objects.

### **Monumental Failure**

At Mit Rahina, nothing monumental was to be seen. The network of interests and aims connected to the work broke down as the excavation team struggled to find a method to solve this problem. They could not make the site a boundary object. Beyond her substantial financial gift to the excavation, Marion Tully Dimick worked at the site during the first excavation season. She also wrote a book about ancient Memphis, whose subtitle was *The City of the White Wall*. Her words illustrate how ill at ease she became with this epithet upon experiencing the site.

Our station wagon stopped but the angry disturbed dust rolled about us in a choking cloud. A quiet scene, palm trees, green stretches of cultivation, a tiny village. This was the site of ancient Memphis. We tried to visualize in comparison with New York, the greatest city of the modern world, teeming with people of diverse nationalities and tongues . . . . Now wipe it out.<sup>47</sup>

For Marion Dimick, Memphis had to exist on a monumental visual plane. The problem was that it didn't. Others echoed her views. John Dimick wrote of Mit Rahina upon his arrival there that "I was not too impressed . . . lots of holes dug here and there".<sup>48</sup> In his

words, a particular visual logic was at work: one that connected the site to ideas of urban (pharaonic) grandeur. Yet Mit Rahina was all “holes”. It was certainly not emblematic of the sort of shiny, New York-style modernity with which ‘the city’ might now be associated, whether in the America from which the Dimicks hailed or in the environs of a Cairo that was being rebuilt on a monumental level.

Nor could the site be made emblematic. The Dimicks were all-American newcomers to Egypt. But their inexperience and unease reflected the more general difficulties that the Mit Rahina excavation team experienced as they attempted to hold together the networks of interest that surrounded the site and make ancient Memphis a tangible, visible, valuable *thing*. Mit Rahina constituted a field site, a concessionary area of excavation defined by prior agreement. Yet that does not mean that the locale’s status as a ‘site’, meaningful beyond its concessionary identity, was established. Marion Dimick wrote that Memphis only existed “in museums, [and] on library shelves”.<sup>49</sup> She was not far wrong. Despite Anthes’ confidence about Mit Rahina’s potential, he and his team now had to work to persuade others that this potential could be fulfilled. He had to make concrete the site’s status as a boundary object.

Moisture formed a significant obstacle to this outcome. Taking up their time and energy, the workers employed on the excavation had to constantly pump out groundwater from the bottom of trenches (Fig. 3). But beyond this inconvenience, the interaction of the water with the ancient material embedded within the site’s ground also created a shifting and confusing morass of strata. Initial plans involved excavation at an area called Kum al-Fakhri, one of the mounds (*ākwām*; sing. *kūm*) that dotted the site.<sup>50</sup> Digging down within Kum al-Fakhri’s various layers, it became clear that elements of the hoped-for monumental remains existed. However, making these remains appeal to interested parties as a boundary object created difficulties, because the modes of visualization that had taken root as part of established Egyptian excavation practice did not appear to do an effective job at making this messy, earth-bound monumentality—and therefore the site or city itself—seem coherent. At Mit Rahina, the standards associated with the coming into being of boundary objects broke down.<sup>51</sup> Working within the norms of Egyptian excavation practice, the team at the site found representing its monumental remains difficult, if not impossible.

Anthes had not been able to employ Ricke’s assistant. Instead, he employed Jean Jacquet, an architect who had previously worked in Iran for the French Délégation Archéologique. Jacquet’s initial practice at Mit Rahina was as desired, a process defined as “mapping”.<sup>52</sup> This work complemented other activity carried out during the dig’s first season in 1955. Anthes, true to his background, copied inscriptions, and the Dimicks drove around

the site, constructing a map of the extant visible remains of Memphis. Meanwhile, the labourers employed on the work excavated in plan: in the various trenches they dug, they progressed downwards in horizontal spits. For example, on the first day of work, the first level dug descended 40 cm, and at a point horizontally cross-referenced with “stick 19 of Dimick’s survey”.<sup>53</sup> The excavation aimed to create a small series of horizontal plans within a much larger one, progressive architectural snapshots of ancient Egypt as constituted at Mit Rahina.

Within any trench at the site, then, the team aimed to excavate to a recognisable bottom layer and to plan the features along the way. At the start of the second week of the work, Anthes noted of the initial trench that “a firm floor between two walls is reached”.<sup>54</sup> For a long time to come, though, this self-confident practice of characterizing excavated remains would disappear. The team could make little visual sense of the ruins that now appeared in Mit Rahina’s ground. In April 1955, during the first excavation season, Anthes wrote in his diary: “which investigation could I possibly make ... in order to find out whether or not this excavation should be continued.” Even after consultation with Ricke, Anthes reflected that “Herbert doesn’t see any [obvious] solution either”.<sup>55</sup>

Confusion reigned. When the team at the site excavated “walls”, they felt confident in giving them this characterization, but could not always suggest what wider role these structures had once played. Nor could they suggest when, exactly, they dated from, even in terms of a relative chronology. One structure, excavated in 1955, appeared particularly problematic. The team termed this structure the “4m.-wall” in reference to its width, and later—during the second season of fieldwork, which took place in 1956—claimed it to be the southern part of a presumed wall surrounding a small temple of Ramses II. Yet a few days after its appearance, Anthes wrote that “I still wonder whether this wall belonged to the temple”, despite Jean Jacquet’s qualified assertion that it probably did.<sup>56</sup> To a great extent, this uncertainty seemed to arise because of the various remains that surrounded the structure.

Viewing the wall in plan within these complex accumulations, Anthes and Jacquet found it difficult to make credible claims about the structure’s function. Unable to clearly visualize a monumental structure within the complex earth, the pair could not convince themselves of the parameters of its existence, let alone convince anyone else. The report that Jacquet completed after the end of the 1955 excavation season questioned why the 4m.-wall was not parallel to the structure to its north: the “Sanctuary” of the temple. Jacquet also noted that the wall appeared to be protecting the Sanctuary from later accumulations of domestic and craft structures that had been built to its south. Viewed in plan, the wall did not (as

expected) appear to be part of the temple, but rather appeared to be a later structure built to protect a sacred spot from incursion.<sup>57</sup> It was little surprise that Anthes, though keen to continue at Mit Rahina, wrote to Rainey that “there is nothing exciting in our work”.<sup>58</sup> At the site, the excavation team was finding it impossible to constitute any coherent monument from the earth. As a result, they now faced significant pressure to justify their presence at Mit Rahina to the UM’s leadership. During the 1955 season, Percy Madeira inspected the dig and asked: “did we come all the way to Egypt to find the corner of a wall?”<sup>59</sup> At Mit Rahina, (excavated) things were not looking good, and the site’s status as a boundary object looked illusive at best.

### **People Problems**

Unfortunately, matters only got worse. In early 1956, as the second season of excavation at Mit Rahina started, the “crater-like excavation” was not the team’s only worry.<sup>60</sup> They also had a connected trainee problem. For the most part, the individuals placed in charge of the actual work of excavation under the direction of the UM’s team worked steadily. They constituted a body of skilled archaeological journeymen from the village of Quft in Middle Egypt. Originally employed by Petrie, these Quftis, as they had become known, now excavated across Egypt and the Middle East and took charge of the local villagers who were also routinely employed on excavations. Yet true to the stereotypical relationship of Cairene elites with their ‘backward’ southern compatriots (on which topic more below), the Quftis were not the ones to be given further training.<sup>61</sup> Instead, the opportunity of skill transfer was to be given to selected individuals employed by the DoA whom the modernizers in charge of the institution deemed to be both worthy and capable of development.

The training work at Mit Rahina constituted less a process of general archaeological skill transfer, more a process of transferring skills thought necessary to field leadership. But the breakdown in excavation routine meant that the individuals in charge attempted to transfer skills that seemed useless, stretching their credibility to breaking point. The failure to transform Mit Rahina into a boundary object where methodological standards could be successfully transferred meant that the authority of the dig’s leaders haemorrhaged. Indeed, this process had not even been tested during the first season of excavation in 1955. Aside from the many labourers employed at the site, the one non-Qufti Egyptian involved in the field that year was Hasan Bakry. Bakry was departmental Inspector to the excavation, and also took the role of Anthes’ assistant.<sup>62</sup> This position, in addition to his possession of a

doctorate, meant that it proved difficult to suggest that Bakry could be trained. To an extent, then, the dig's training element failed from the start. But during the second season of excavations in 1956, the DoA had placed an architect named Ibrahim Abdel Aziz at Mit Rahina in order "to help us and to learn from Mr Jacquet".<sup>63</sup> Now, skill transfer mattered.

Given the team's problems in the field, this situation did not augur well, although initially events seemed to proceed without trouble. In February 1956, during the first full month of the second excavation season, Anthes noted that "Abd el Aziz [*sic*] helps Jacquet with surveying"; there are numerous other such dull statements of routine throughout his diary that month.<sup>64</sup> Later in the season, though, things started to go wrong. Abdel Aziz could clearly carry out the appropriate sort of work—although not with a better outcome than anyone else at the site—and in fact had worked at a different area of the Memphite ruin field a couple of years previously.<sup>65</sup> The dig apparently pointless, he therefore came and went as he pleased. In April, Anthes phoned Mustafa Amer to tell him that "I should like to have him [i.e. Abdel Aziz] removed because we do not need him and do not want him any longer".<sup>66</sup> Abdel Aziz turned up irregularly after this call, but never to much more than a frosty reception.

This issue, though, merely reflected wider problems. Anthes complained that Abdel Aziz "does not work in a consistent style. He puts the dig here and there ... [and] no certain result has been obtained".<sup>67</sup> But no one else working at Mit Rahina could make a "certain result" materialize either. Meeting with Amer in early May 1956, Anthes implicitly admitted this point. After the meeting he wrote that "first I have to show that good work is done here; then students will come". As ancient Memphis failed to emerge from the earth, the discourse of development and the authority of the appointed experts lacked force. Mit Rahina's immanent status as a boundary object started to come undone, even for Anthes. At the meeting, Amer was similarly contrite, suggesting that individuals beyond those of the UM's team also felt resistance to their authority and that the DoA found the work at Mit Rahina increasingly purposeless. "Amer expressed his regret that the boys [both Abdel Aziz and Bakry] were a failure of sorts", and he and Anthes "agreed that it would be better to have young men".<sup>68</sup>

Meanwhile, departmental officials often visited Mit Rahina to check on the work. The routine aspect of these visits, though, perhaps concealed the official unease already expressed by Amer. Their steady work meant that the Quftis under contract to work at Mit Rahina possessed considerably more authority than anyone else at the site, potentially disrupting established Egyptian social hierarchies and making the constitution of the site as a boundary

object harder still. In revolutionary Egypt and before, villagers like the Quftis had become subjects of study and objects of paternalistic reform, but that was meant to be the extent of the intervention.<sup>69</sup> Now, though, these objects of reform threatened to transgress the limits of the position that had been established for them.<sup>70</sup> Quftis had worked at Mit Rahina before: with Petrie, but also with Anthes' UM predecessor at the site, Clarence Fisher (1876–1941). And only the Quftis could tell Anthes and his colleagues where these previous excavations had taken place, because extant maps did not clearly point to their location. Fikri, one of the Qufti *ru'asa*' (foremen; sing. *ra'is*) employed on the dig, told Anthes that “hearsay” said that Qufti labourers had planted certain palm trees during Fisher's excavations to indicate the site of Petrie's excavations.<sup>71</sup>

In order to dig anywhere at all, the excavation team depended on this Qufti knowledge. And the Quftis—who alone possessed the superior Arabic language skills necessary to communicate with the local villagers employed at the site—seemed aware of their value in this regard.<sup>72</sup> Anthes went so far as to complain about one (unnamed) *ra'is* being “demanding as often”, and refused a request that the Qufti labourers under this man's control receive an extra bonus.<sup>73</sup> Yet, quite regularly, the value of the Quftis also forced Anthes into negotiations. During these negotiations, financial matters seemed pressing, suggesting that work only ever existed one pay day away from disruption.<sup>74</sup> Worse still, a precedent for such disruption existed: when Fisher had excavated at Mit Rahina, the Quftis employed by him had gone on strike.<sup>75</sup> Unless something was done, Mit Rahina's immanence as a boundary object seemed set to collapse.

### **Materializing Memphis**

The excavation team now attempted to remake the site as a place more suited to the sort of excavation supposed to be taking place there. This process was similar to that discussed by Christopher Henke, who studied the practices of scientific farm advisers working with Californian farmers to develop new growing practices. Henke's study argues that these advisers face a “struggle to control the field and yet still make it appear ‘field-like’”. This struggle occurs because the advisers need to convince farmers that the growing practices they want to implement might be of value to the specific piece of land on which the farmers work.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, at Mit Rahina, Anthes and his team adopted a technology designed to help them obtain methodological control over the archaeological field at the same time as visually acknowledging the specificity of the time and place in which their excavation was taking



place. They tried to run a tight ship *and* materialize a boundary object: an ancient city that would be persuasive to Egyptian and American audiences.

This intervention was accidentally driven by the knowledge possessed by Anthes and others at the site of contemporary developments in archaeological method. In April 1956, Anthes recorded in his field diary that “most of the day was spent with reading Mortimer Wheeler, *Archaeology from the Earth* [my italics]”. Anthes was impressed, noting that the volume was “extremely good, gives a lot of suggestions for our work”.<sup>77</sup> Wheeler (of the University of London’s Institute of Archaeology) had written his book in an attempt to shape archaeological practice in the post-war world. Perhaps most notably, he wrote that “to-day, the digger must learn to read his [stratigraphic] sections, or he should be constrained from digging”.<sup>78</sup> As Gavin Lucas has noted, earlier archaeologists like Augustus Henry Lane-Fox Pitt Rivers (1827–1900), Britain’s first Inspector of Ancient Monuments, had used stratigraphy to help place excavated artefacts in evolutionary sequences conceived in terms of a linear Victorian narrative of human social evolution. Now, though, Wheeler claimed that his application of stratigraphy dealt with how understanding the organization of material found in the earth could be used to visually demonstrate the diversity of pasts within a universal human narrative. Through the practice of excavating, examining and—most importantly—depicting the stratigraphic sections formed by the interplay of soil and human debris at the edge of archaeological trenches, Wheeler claimed that archaeologists could demonstrate the relative nature of past worlds across the globe.

In the post-war era, Wheeler’s was a powerful strategy. By changing the way that sections were visualized—if not, perhaps, the way in which they were excavated—Wheeler enabled the illustration of the sort of universalist relativism expressed by UNESCO and other recently founded multilateral institutions (Fig. 4).<sup>79</sup> His approach also possessed further ordering potential. Drawing on his military background and experience directing the Archaeological Survey of India, much of the methodology that Wheeler set forward rested on what he saw as the issue of organizing the workers charged with digging archaeological sites.<sup>80</sup> As a result—and alongside his London colleague Kathleen Kenyon (1906–1978)—Wheeler set forward a system of gridded area excavation “capable of preserving for constant reference at a maximum number of points complete vertical sections until the last phase of the excavation”.<sup>81</sup>

This system would regiment the places of the workers who laboured within this grid (Fig. 5), and in turn enable the apparently reliable constitution of multiple trench sections. These sections could then be interpreted in order to put together a comprehensive picture of

settlement at any particular site. Furthermore, Wheeler implied that the apparent replicability of these sections would allow their use around the globe in order to build up a relative archaeological picture of the past that could truly be characterized as *from the Earth*. In particular, as formerly colonized countries started to gain independence, Wheeler attuned his discussion of stratigraphic method to the new national pasts that were primed to develop, chauvinistically suggesting that “*there is no method proper to the excavation of a British site which is not applicable—nay, must be applied—to a site in Africa or Asia [Wheeler’s italics]*”.<sup>82</sup>

Wheeler’s strategy possessed obvious applications at Mit Rahina. Given the apparent, and continued, success of the technique in newly independent India, not only might the Wheeler-Kenyon grid system help to order the site’s workers and trainees. The manner in which the system presented stratigraphic sections would also help to reveal the ancient city that Mit Rahina supposedly contained in a manner appropriate both to the age and, as a boundary object, to the work’s various different audiences.<sup>83</sup> Yet, despite his positive impression of the volume, Anthes also took issue with some of *Archaeology from the Earth*’s content: he criticized Wheeler’s horror at “a method of recording that not long ago was widespread in the East and may in fact still survive there”. This method involved “the mechanical recording of every object and structure in relation to a fixed bench-level”, the type of horizontal excavation practice used at Mit Rahina. Wheeler claimed that this type of recording made the inconceivable assumption “that all objects and structures at the same level below (or above) datum line were in the same 'stratum', i.e. contemporary with one another!”<sup>84</sup> In reality, the novelty of the way that Wheeler actually excavated stratigraphic sections is questionable, and in his critique he perhaps protested slightly too much.<sup>85</sup> However, his words did rankle in Egypt, where a horizontal field perspective certainly dominated. Anthes wrote that “I think that his [Wheeler’s] criticism of the method is too sharp as our site and our understanding of the method ... is concerned”, claiming that recording remains according to a fixed level provided a helpful “Anhaltspunkt”, or reference point, and that “Jacquet has been aware of the ... [Wheeler] method but chose the [fixed-level] mapping”.<sup>86</sup>

Yet continued problems in the field meant that this attitude slowly altered. During the 1956 excavation season, the 4m.-wall had continued to cause confusion. That March, for instance, Anthes seemed uncertain of the wall’s meaning; excavating downwards, he could not understand the construction history of a “tomb Z” that had been built into the structure some time after its initial construction. The tomb appeared to rest upon a layer of debris

above the wall, and Anthes could not see that the wall had once existed at the height of the tomb.<sup>87</sup> As a result, he also could not see that the wall, as the team had initially presumed, had once surrounded the small temple of Ramses II. By April, this situation changed slightly. Anthes noted that a “[vertical] cut [i.e. a section] ... shows the 4-m-wall [*sic*] in a height more considerable than we would have expected”.<sup>88</sup> Within the layers of mixed-up debris in this cut, the team at the site could almost see the original height, and the original role, of the wall. That they did so, though, was accidental. During the 1956 season, the trench (trench D) containing the 4m.-wall had already been divided into a western, mostly excavated, and eastern, newly excavated, section. Instigated as an attempt to make the trench more manageable (the cut was named the “relief wall”),<sup>89</sup> this division inadvertently constituted the sort of grid excavation system put forward by Wheeler, and forced attention upon the contents of the vertical section in the middle of the trench in a way that the excavation previously had not. Yet even as this change in perspective took place, Anthes still noted that “we have recognized the value of vertical cuts, but I have to restrict myself in view of the time pressure”.<sup>90</sup>

In June, though, the final clearance of the relief section in advance of its recording by Jacquet inadvertently revealed how the mixed-up structures that were visible in it were related. Like Wheeler’s system itself, the actual practices of excavating this section were little, if at all, different from what had come previously. But the perspective that the relief wall forced *was* different and, more importantly, could be easily connected to Wheeler’s rhetoric. In the section, the “Enclosure Wall” of an already well-known temple dedicated to the god Ptah now became visible. Previously, Jacquet had considered that this structure was “built contemporaneously with, or slightly later than, the time when the [small] temple [of Ramses II] ... was abandoned”. Anthes considered this event to “have happened at any time later than Ramses II, but probably not long after”.<sup>91</sup> After removing the baulk, however, a possible date of “not long after” became impossible to conceive; Anthes and Jacquet re-dated the construction of the Enclosure Wall from the late second millennium B.C. to a thousand years later or more. This Wall could only be Ptolemaic (332–30 B.C.) or later, because the baulk showed “a cut [was present] sloping down toward [the] Enclosure Wall”. In turn, Anthes and Jacquet interpreted this cut as having been made to construct the Enclosure Wall, meaning that the structure “was built after all the [nearby] layers accumulated”.<sup>92</sup> These layers contained Ptolemaic pottery, providing the date for this act of construction.<sup>93</sup> Perceiving the entirety of the cross section, it thus also became apparent that the 4m.-wall was not constructed to protect the small temple of Ramses II from later incursions. Rather,

the structure was the enclosure wall of that temple. Yet until the much later construction cut of the Ptah Enclosure Wall was viewed in sectional context, this interpretation was impossible: in section, the team could see that, after the small Ramses II temple had fallen into disuse, building had occurred to its north and its south at various points in time. The Ptah Enclosure Wall had helped to seal debris from this building in place, occluding the 4m.-wall's original function by compounding the denudation of the structure over time.<sup>94</sup>

The inadvertent construction of a vertical section in an attempt to deal with material difficulty had given a semblance of order to Mit Rahina. At least for Anthes and his collaborators, a complex ancient settlement had started to cohere. And the team now claimed that the dig presented a huge opportunity: if presented the correct way—if made into a boundary object—fieldwork at that settlement could illustrate the monumental marvel of ancient Egypt. In his end-of-season report, Anthes wrote that “our site now stands in a more significant position with regard to the whole Memphis area than could be realized before”, and that “excavating in Memphis . . . appears exceedingly worthwhile and important”.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, a drawing was made by Jacquet depicting the lucky section in a Wheeler-esque manner (Fig. 6.). Here was a chance to make excavation at Mit Rahina persuasive again; the section and its illustration constituted the boundary object that might make this act of persuasion possible. Anthes later stated that “we learned by our own experience the fact which is elementary outside of Egypt, that only a coordinated system of horizontal and vertical cuts [in the ground] is adequate for the understanding of a site which has accumulated under changing living conditions . . .”.<sup>96</sup> The question now was whether his words, and Jacquet's depiction, were persuasive.

## **Objects of Failure**

Ultimately, the pair's claims failed to make much headway. In India, as noted earlier, Wheeler's representations of fieldwork enjoyed continued success beyond independence and partition. But the people who authorized the excavation of Mit Rahina did not take great pleasure in the excavation of this muddy site, even if a city could now be teased out of the ground there. Wheeler's universal field methodology did not enjoy universal success. The boundary object of the section and the rhetoric surrounding it failed to persuade the relevant audiences. Different geographies of the post-war past started to develop as issues linked to Mit Rahina's materiality helped to hasten the excavation's end.

The process of terminating the excavation involved the close-to-symbiotic action of the DoA and UM, and helped to constitute Mit Rahina—and other Egyptian settlement and floodplain sites like it—as near-permanent topics of polemic.<sup>97</sup> At the end of the second season at Mit Rahina in June 1956, the UM’s Board approved continuing the excavation.<sup>98</sup> Yet during a meeting in April 1957, the Board postponed the proposed third season of work at the site, a move that would later lead to total cancellation.<sup>99</sup> The object of the dig constituted one cause of this termination, the objects obtained by digging another. At first, Rainey and the Board had been prepared to give Anthes and his team the benefit of the doubt, despite Percy Madeira’s misgivings. A couple of weeks before the Wheeler-style strategy had been adopted at Mit Rahina, Rainey told Anthes that “I have just had a long talk with Mr Madeira and we have decided that we should, by all means, accept your recommendation for another season”. Yet Rainey also said that “I must honestly admit that I am not at all clear in my mind about the significance of the site”.<sup>100</sup> Rainey made it clear that the dig needed to become more persuasive. However, the eventual adoption of the Wheeler strategy as a boundary object did not manage to persuade. Claims relating to vertical sections did not even seem to register with the UM’s leadership, despite Rainey’s 1951 statement that “more emphasis should be placed on interpretation and the meaning of field results in terms of the nature of cultural growth and historical process”.<sup>101</sup> In mid-October 1957, Rainey wrote to Madeira after a meeting with the UM’s curators, including Anthes. Rainey stated that, with Madeira’s agreement, the work at Mit Rahina would be cancelled. The type of city that the UM had wanted to excavate was unlikely to coalesce:

Because of the water level at Memphis we cannot excavate ruins of a City dating earlier than 1000 B.C., or late New Kingdom times. Therefore, the only possible excavations at Memphis are an extension horizontally with the object of discovering the plan of the City during the period from 1000 B.C. to the Islamic Conquest. This would be an unlimited type of excavation extending over a long period and would inevitably be at great cost. We do not think that the information to be derived from such an excavation is worth the time and cost.<sup>102</sup>

The section failed, because it represented the continued prospect of further moribund work visualizing the “layouts ... [and] development ... of the city”.<sup>103</sup> The UM wanted the excavation to deal with something more spectacular. Moreover, Rainey’s reasoning made

clear other, connected issues. Above, I noted Madeira's concern with "worth while [*sic*] discussion of objects". The UM had just remodelled its Egyptian gallery, and was buying objects for its Egyptian collection.<sup>104</sup> Excavated artefacts constituted an institutional concern. Towards the end of the second season at Mit Rahina, Anthes had told Rainey that, if he cancelled the excavations, "there is the possibility that we get finds for our museum. The choice is not great and our record of starting with much palaver and stopping after two years is not impressive".<sup>105</sup> Now, though, Rainey appeared to throw caution to the wind. The possibility of continuing work only to recover objects dating from the late New Kingdom and post-imperial period did not seem "worth the time and cost". These objects would be as uninspiring as the section drawings that accompanied them, and would certainly not equate to the sort of earlier, hieroglyphically covered monuments that Rainey's comment implies his institution considered worthwhile. Wider concerns connected to the UM's Cold War priorities did not even enter the equation.

The UM used the aftermath of the 1956 Suez war as a cover for terminating the excavation. Minutes from the Board's April 1957 meeting state that "because of the uncertainty of the political conditions in Egypt", they had "agreed it was advisable to discontinue work at Memphis".<sup>106</sup> Yet ironically, this same conflict—and the heightening of revolutionary and non-aligned action that it gave rise to in Egypt—also seemed to strengthen the hand of the DoA, which now felt quite able to inform the UM of its expectations regarding future work in the country. By April 1957, Mustafa Amer had been replaced in his position; first, and briefly, by Abbas Bayoumi (1904–1983) and then by Moharram Kamal (1908–1966).<sup>107</sup> Anthes had already warned Rainey that "any loosening of continuity [of the joint work] at this moment would put us in a very wrong [*sic*] light in the eyes of our [Egyptian] friends as well as the [Egyptian] opponents of the work", at least partially because "Amer is almost certainly going to retire".<sup>108</sup> His prophecy came true. In late October 1957, even before Rainey had managed to write to him to cancel collaboration, Kamal wrote to Rainey to politely but firmly state that the UM's concession at Mit Rahina was to be terminated. Kamal also asked whether Rainey's institution could now work in Egyptian Nubia.<sup>109</sup> Egypt—independent, assertive and about to start construction of the Aswan High Dam—would now, at least in theory, call the shots and direct excavation work. Collaboration at Mit Rahina did not matter. But, notably (and as for the UM), collaborative work on monuments elsewhere did. Even if Jacquet's section drawing illustrated the existence of a city at Mit Rahina, the image's status as a boundary object failed because the settlement that it illustrated did not show the monumentality required.

Sometime towards the end of 1955, the DoA published a volume entitled *Report on the Monuments of Nubia Likely to be Submerged by Sudd-el- 'Āli Water*. The *Report* appeared as plans for the construction of the new Aswan High Dam—the *Sudd-el- 'Āli* of the publication's title—gathered pace, and alarm rose that the reservoir (now Lake Nasser) that would form behind the Dam would submerge Nubia's ancient monuments forever. Dealing with the most high profile of the many modernization schemes now being undertaken in Egypt, the volume was the authoritative word on how ancient Egyptian antiquities should be treated as Egypt's revolutionary project unfolded. Monumental epigraphy was the watchword. The publication set out how to record the architecture of Nubian monuments, in addition to the inscriptions on them. Sometimes (as in the case of the temples of Abu Simbel), the book also noted how they might be saved from flooding through physical intervention.<sup>110</sup> The *Report* (purposefully written in Arabic, English and French) also noted “the hearty welcome of the Egyptian archaeologists to the assistance of some of their foreign colleagues”, and mentioned “that if UNESCO has any intention of presenting any pecuniary, material or scientific aid to Egypt . . . we have to thank it deeply”.<sup>111</sup>

Despite these pleasantries, foreign institutions were mostly uninterested in excavating in Nubia. For instance, in 1956, Anthes warned Rainey against the possibility due to a presumed lack of interesting objects to excavate in the region, and others took similar measures.<sup>112</sup> Working in Nubia would represent a concession to Egyptian wishes with no potential material benefit. Yet, by late 1957, the DoA hardened its stance against this attitude. International collaboration relating to the recording of Nubian monuments now started to be promoted through the auspices of the United Nations' Expanded Program of Technical Assistance, which had worked with Egypt's Ministry of Education to set up CEDAE, the Centre d'Étude et de Documentation sur l'Ancienne Égypte, in 1955. The institution worked to document the Nubian monuments, and in particular to visually replicate them through a process of photogrammetry. It also seemed to represent the future: Anthes told Rainey that “although I should no means recommend striking after a close connection . . . it seems to be wise to be present at work when the Center fully develops”.<sup>113</sup> He was correct. The collaboration at Mit Rahina had failed, no ancient city had appeared, and the boundary object created to make future work at the site seem worthwhile—not to mention offering the possibility of ordering unruly labourers—had been rejected. But Egypt had moved on to cooperation around other monumental visual concerns. As Moharram Kamal had made perfectly clear, the question was whether or not institutions like the UM would now heed the DoA's wishes.

## **Conclusion: Thinking Through the Post-War Past**

The material qualities of Mit Rahina and the personnel problems that the site prompted helped to constitute the way the field team working there represented their work. The team used a visual strategy promoted by Mortimer Wheeler; a boundary object around which the interests surrounding the excavation could gather. But representing the site in this way failed. The strategy seemed to offer too little, too late, and the chance to test the methodological possibilities of the Wheeler-esque representation—whether in terms of the future investigation of the site or in terms of ordering the people who worked there—never arrived. This boundary object failed to do its job. Constituting a revolutionary, monumental past elsewhere in Egypt (or taking elements of that past back to America), seemed more important than the visual reconstruction of a mass of muddy archaeological strata at Mit Rahina. Their patience tested by what seemed like an uninspiring site and a misbehaving workforce that made the excavation's already half-hearted training element seem worthless, neither the DoA nor the UM had the patience to see where Wheeler-style methodological claims might lead the work. No ancient city would be unearthed at Mit Rahina.

The constitution of a Wheeler-esque archaeological section at Mit Rahina had offered hope to those leading the work there. As the site itself failed to pull together the initial array of interests surrounding the excavation, so the uncovering of the section and the process of its illustration took on the boundary object role that the site might otherwise have played, offering the hope that those interests could gather around the excavation routine that the section represented. Yet the 'site' never became one, not even in sectional form. Intermeshed with the struggles of the people who excavated there, the layers of earth and ancient debris at Mit Rahina exerted too strong a force over the interests at hand. Giving the lie to narratives of decolonization and the Cold War that place all agency relating to decision-making in the realm of top-down geopolitics and the global 'centres' attached to it, the struggle to work with this complex materiality spread that agency in a dispersed network that fanned out from, but was never permanently centred in, Mit Rahina. Terminating work at the site, the Board of the UM decided that they had other fish to fry.<sup>114</sup> The DoA seemed more concerned with the revolutionary prospects of monuments in Nubia.



Small acts can contribute to large outcomes, and vice versa. The failure of the archaeological work at Mit Rahina—and, in particular, the failure of the relief section of trench D as a boundary object—therefore begs questions about how we should think about the making of knowledge about the past in the post-war world. Wheeler wrote *Archaeology from the Earth* to smooth over the politically complex world that archaeologists worked in, even as it acknowledged the existence of wider political realities; the volume existed to produce a visually distinctive post-war past whose constitution could, to a great extent, be directed from London. Conditions at Mit Rahina, however, meant that this process of flattening did not take place. The archaeological boundary object produced there could not be used to draw together the necessary interests. There were, of course, other programmatic attempts to order the past in this era. Yet if this Egyptian example is indicative of these wider realities, the post-war past and its relationship with wider histories of decolonization and the Cold War was complex, lumpy and recursively constitutive of what went on around it, rather like the earth at Mit Rahina.

In order to understand this situation and its implications, scholars need to follow the bottom-up processes of making this past in conjunction with the networks of which it formed a part. They also need to think through concepts—like that of the boundary object—that can help to illustrate how these networks came into being or fell apart. For instance, what boundary objects, if any, *did* manage to draw together the large number of conflicting interests surrounding the making of the post-war past, and why? Did the utilization of such objects help to constitute certain people as credible authorities in the making of this knowledge? To what extent did the discipline of archaeology and its relationship with material culture play a role in this situation, and how (if at all) did previous practices relating to the excavation of ancient material change? Asking such questions, scholars will start to understand the post-war past, and the histories like those of decolonization and the Cold War to which it was joined, in new and different ways.

## **Acknowledgements**

I undertook the research for this paper as PhD work in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge, funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council. Extra research funding was provided by Darwin College (University of Cambridge), the German Academic Exchange Service, the H. M. Chadwick Fund (University of Cambridge), and the Royal Historical Society, and I drafted the paper as

a European Commission-funded Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of History and Civilization at the European University Institute, Florence. Individuals and conference audiences too numerous to mention deserve thanks for their help with this work, but amongst them are: Walter Armbrust, Charlotte Bigg, Khaled Fahmy, Alex Pezzati, Alyson Price, Eleanor Robson, Simon Schaffer, Nathan Schlanger, Vanessa Schwartz, Jim Secord, Daniel Sherman, Stéphane Van Damme and members of the Max Weber Programme Legal, Social and Political Theory and History of Thought thematic group.

---

<sup>1</sup> See comments throughout University Museum Archives (UMA): Mit Rahina records; Anthes' 1956 field diary. The museum still stands.

<sup>2</sup> An attitude summed up in Marion Dimick, *Memphis: The city of the white wall* (Philadelphia, 1956).

<sup>3</sup> A section drawing is a schematic depiction of the vertical side of an archaeological trench.

<sup>4</sup> For the classic study of boundary objects, see Susan Leigh Star and James R. Griesemer, "Institutional ecology, 'translations' and boundary objects: Amateurs and professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907–39", *Social studies of science*, xix (1989), 387–420.

<sup>5</sup> Some studies are now moving beyond this concentration. See e.g. Leslie James and Elisabeth Leake (eds.), *Decolonization and the cold war: Negotiating independence* (London, 2015), in which I also discuss Mit Rahina in a chapter entitled "Grounding ideologies: Archaeology, decolonization and the cold war in Egypt", 167–82.

<sup>6</sup> Particularly for the period after 1945. Nadia Abu el-Haj, *Facts on the ground: Archaeological practice and territorial self-fashioning in Israeli society* (Chicago, 2001), is one, notable exception to this post-war trend.

<sup>7</sup> Most comprehensively set out in: Donald Malcom Reid, *Whose pharaohs? Archaeology, museums, and Egyptian national identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley, 2002); Donald Malcom Reid, *Contesting antiquity in Egypt: Archaeologies, museums and the struggle for identities from World War I to Nasser* (Cairo, 2015). For a methodologically different perspective, see Elliott Colla, *Conflicted antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian modernity* (Durham, NC, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> For a summary of the early years of the Free Officers' coup, see Joel Gordon, *Nasser's blessed movement: Egypt's Free Officers and the July revolution* (New York, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Walter Bryan Emery, *Excavations at Sakkara: Great tombs of the First Dynasty II* (London, 1954), vii.

<sup>10</sup> EES archive: Committee Minutes of the Egypt Exploration Society, 1942–1955; Executive Committee meeting, 27 November 1952.

<sup>11</sup> For these events, see UMA: Mit Rahina records; Anthes' 1954 diary of visit to Egypt; 23 March 1954.

<sup>12</sup> For Amer, see Omnia El Shakry, *The great social laboratory: Subjects of knowledge in colonial and postcolonial Egypt* (Stanford, 2007), 68.

<sup>13</sup> For these Egyptian reactions, see entries throughout Anthes' 1954 diary (ref. 11).

<sup>14</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; copy of Mit Rahina proposal, dated 15 June 1954. For the land reform measure, see Alain Roussillon, "Republican Egypt interpreted: Revolution and beyond", in Martin William Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge history of Egypt, volume two: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the end of the twentieth century* (Cambridge, 1998), 334–93.

<sup>15</sup> The best source on Rainey (unfortunately) remains his autobiography: Froelich Rainey, *Reflections of a digger: Fifty years of world archaeology* (Philadelphia, 1992).

<sup>16</sup> Anthes had been persecuted by the National Socialist regime in Germany, and eventually left the country after the post-war division of Berlin. The city's Egyptian collection, of which he was director, was in the Soviet sector while Anthes' home was in the American one. Unsurprisingly, Anthes derided totalitarianism whenever he thought he saw it. See: David O'Connor, "In memoriam: Rudolf Anthes", *Expedition*, xxvii (1985), 34–36.

<sup>17</sup> For Rainey's proposal, see UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Rainey to Shafiq Ghurbal, 21 April 1953. For Point Four in Egypt, see Jon B. Alterman, *Egypt and American foreign assistance, 1952–1956* (Basingstoke and New York, 2002). For Tahrir Province, cf. El Shakry, *Great social laboratory* (ref. 12), ch. 7. Also noteworthy given events in the rest of this article is that, during 1944, Mortimer Wheeler ran a somewhat similar field school for Indian archaeological students at the site of Taxila, for which see Robin Boast, "Mortimer Wheeler's science of order: The tradition of accuracy at Arikamedu", *Antiquity*, lxxvi (2002), 165–70, p. 167.

---

There is no mention of Wheeler's field school in the UMA's Mit Rahina records, but it seems unlikely that staff at the UM were unaware of it.

<sup>18</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; Anthes' 1955 field diary; 26 January 1955.

<sup>19</sup> David Jeffreys, *The survey of Memphis, part one: The archaeological report* (London, 1985), 36, describes the statue's history.

<sup>20</sup> As Gérard Coudougnan, *Nos ancêtres les pharaons: l'histoire pharaonique et copte dans les manuels scolaires égyptiens* (Cairo, 1988), 30, notes, Egyptian school textbooks in the early 1960s described the statue's move as attempting to inculcate a revolutionary national consciousness.

<sup>21</sup> The process of shooting *The Ten Commandments* was widely and lavishly illustrated in the contemporary Egyptian press. See e.g. anon., "Ma'a Sisil di Mil ... tahta bawwabat Musa!" (With Cecil de Mille ... under the gate of Moses!), *al-Musawwar*, 15 October 1954, 13–16.

<sup>22</sup> For ancient Egyptian history and chronology, see Ian Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford history of ancient Egypt* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> For a history of excavation at Memphis, see Jeffreys, *Memphis* (ref. 19).

<sup>24</sup> Copy of Mit Rahina proposal (ref. 14).

<sup>25</sup> Thomas L. Gertzen, "The Anglo-Saxon branch of the Berlin school: The interwar correspondence of Adolf Erman and Alan Gardiner and the loss of the German concession at Amarna", in William Carruthers (ed.), *Histories of Egyptology: Interdisciplinary measures*, 34–49, 40.

<sup>26</sup> Joshua Arthurs, *Excavating modernity: The Roman past in fascist Italy*, (Ithaca, NY, 2012), 62.

<sup>27</sup> Herbert Ricke, *Der Grundriss des Amarna-Wohnhauses* (Leipzig, 1932).

<sup>28</sup> See entries throughout Anthes' 1954 diary (ref. 11).

<sup>29</sup> Emery's work is published in Walter Bryan Emery, *Excavations at Sakkara: Great tombs of the first dynasty III* (London, 1958); Saad's plan is Zaki Y. Saad, "Preliminary report on the royal excavations at Helwan (1942) (Plan)", *Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte*, xlii (1943), 357. Visual differences in such architectural studies often seem to reflect national backgrounds, and demand further study.

<sup>30</sup> For the prehistory of this change, see Cornelius von Pilgrim, "Ludwig Borchardt und sein Institut für Ägyptische Bauforschung und Altertumskunde in Kairo", in Susanne Bickel *et al.* (eds), *Ägyptologen und Ägyptologien zwischen Kaiserreich und Gründung der beiden deutschen Staaten: Reflexionen zur Geschichte und Episteme eines altertumswissenschaftlichen Fachs im 150. Jahr der Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* (Berlin, 2013), 243–66.

<sup>31</sup> Anthes' 1954 diary (ref. 11); 18 April 1954.

<sup>32</sup> For this history, see Shaw, *Oxford history* (ref. 22).

<sup>33</sup> For Nasser's pan-Arabism, see James P. Jankowski, *Nasser's Egypt, Arab nationalism, and the United Arab Republic* (Boulder, CO, 2002).

<sup>34</sup> Copy of Mit Rahina proposal (ref. 14).

<sup>35</sup> Copy of Mit Rahina proposal (ref. 14).

<sup>36</sup> William Matthew Flinders Petrie, *Memphis I* (London, 1909), 1. Petrie excavated at the site from 1908 until 1913.

<sup>37</sup> The UM had terminated its earlier work at Mit Rahina in 1923. For these excavations, see e.g.: Anon., "The Eckley Coxe, Jr., Egyptian expedition", *The museum journal*, vi (1915), 63–84; Clarence Stanley Fisher, "The Eckley B. Coxe Jr. Egyptian Expedition", *The museum journal*, viii (1917), 211–37.

<sup>38</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Bothmer to Anthes, 6 December 1954.

<sup>39</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Anthes to Rainey, 9 May 1956, makes this attitude particularly clear.

<sup>40</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Madeira to Rainey, 1 March 1955.

<sup>41</sup> UMA: Minutes of the Board of Managers, 1953–1959; meeting of 18 January 1955.

<sup>42</sup> Minutes of the Board (ref. 41); meeting of 15 June 1954. Marion Dimick's maternal grandfather was Amory Houghton, the founder of the Corning Glass Works in upstate New York, and the gift was in Corning Glass stock. For this family history, see Albert Fuller, *Alice Tully: An intimate portrait* (Urbana, IL, 1999). For John Dimick, see his (remarkably pompous) autobiography: John Dimick, *Episodes in archaeology: bit parts in big dramas* (Barre, MA, 1968).

<sup>43</sup> Minutes of the Board (ref. 41).

<sup>44</sup> Dimick, *Episodes in archaeology* (ref. 42), 70.

<sup>45</sup> For an earlier manifestation of this relationship in Egypt, see Alice Stevenson, "Artefacts of excavation: The British collection and distribution of Egyptian finds to museums, 1880–1915", *Journal of the history of collections*, xxvi (2014), 89–102.

<sup>46</sup> Even in critical accounts like Paul Betts, "The warden of world heritage: UNESCO and the rescue of the Nubian monuments", *Past and present*, supplement x (2015), 100–25. For my previous comment, see William Carruthers, "Multilateral possibilities: Decolonization, preservation, and the case of Egypt", *Future anterior: Journal of historic preservation, history, theory, and criticism*, xiii (2016), 37–48.

- 
- <sup>47</sup> Dimick, *Memphis* (ref. 2), 7.
- <sup>48</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Dimick to Alfred Kidder, Jr., 8–9 November 1954.
- <sup>49</sup> Dimick, *Memphis* (ref. 2), 7.
- <sup>50</sup> For a detailed description of Memphis’ topography, see Jeffreys, *Memphis* (ref. 19).
- <sup>51</sup> The relationship of boundary objects and standardisation of methodology is discussed at length in Star and Griesemer, “Institutional ecology” (ref. 4).
- <sup>52</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 18 April 1956.
- <sup>53</sup> Anthes’ 1955 diary (ref. 18); 15 February 1955.
- <sup>54</sup> Anthes’ 1955 diary (ref. 18); 21 February 1955.
- <sup>55</sup> Anthes’ 1955 diary (ref. 18); 4 April 1955.
- <sup>56</sup> Anthes’ 1955 diary (ref. 18); 8 April 1955.
- <sup>57</sup> Jean Jacquet in Rudolf Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1955* (Philadelphia, 1959), 12.
- <sup>58</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Anthes to Rainey, 21 April 1955.
- <sup>59</sup> Dimick, *Episodes in archaeology* (ref. 42), 71.
- <sup>60</sup> Dimick, *Episodes in archaeology* (ref. 42), 71.
- <sup>61</sup> In this sense, the Quftis took on the status of “the invisible technician” discussed in Steven Shapin, “The invisible technician”, *American scientist*, lxxvii (1989), 554–63. For the Quftis in general, see: Wendy Doyon, “On archaeological labor in modern Egypt”, in William Carruthers (ed.) *Histories of Egyptology* (ref. 25), 141–56; Stephen Quirke, *Hidden hands: Egyptian workforces in Petrie excavation archives, 1880–1924* (London, 2010).
- <sup>62</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 1 February 1956.
- <sup>63</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 1 February 1956.
- <sup>64</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 12 February 1956; 16 February 1956; 17 February 1956; 20 February 1956.
- <sup>65</sup> According to Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 11 February 1956.
- <sup>66</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 17 April 1956.
- <sup>67</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 10 April 1956.
- <sup>68</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 5 May 1956.
- <sup>69</sup> For this process, see El Shakry, *Great social laboratory* (ref. 12). See also Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of experts: Egypt, techno-politics, modernity* (Berkeley, 2002).
- <sup>70</sup> The Quftis, though, still fit the heteronormative narrative present throughout the records of work at Mit Rahina. A detailed study of the villagers employed at the site—occasional traces of whom survive in the archive—may offer access to understanding other constructions of gender connected to the work. So too might a study of Helen Wall-Gordon (1918–2013; later Helen Jacquet-Gordon, and married to Jean Jacquet), who worked at Mit Rahina during part of the 1956 season, and was the only woman (beyond the villagers) employed on the dig. Unfortunately (and perhaps tellingly), she is barely (apart from her competency in the field, acknowledged on 25 April 1956) mentioned in Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1), and she is not acknowledged as a contributor to the final publication of the season in Rudolf Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1956* (Philadelphia, 1965).
- <sup>71</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 1 April 1956.
- <sup>72</sup> Anthes knew some Arabic, but apparently communicated with officials of the DoA in German, for which see Dimick, *Episodes in archaeology* (ref. 42), 65–66.
- <sup>73</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 24 May 1956.
- <sup>74</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 24 May 1956; cf. entry for 14 March 1956, where extra money seems to be paid to one *ra’is* on top of that accounted for.
- <sup>75</sup> Doyon, “On archaeological labor” (ref. 61).
- <sup>76</sup> Christopher R. Henke, “Making a place for science: The field trial”, *Social studies of science*, xxx (2000), 483–511, p. 506.
- <sup>77</sup> Anthes’ 1956 diary (ref. 1); 18 April 1956.
- <sup>78</sup> Mortimer Wheeler, *Archaeology from the earth* (Harmondsworth, 1956 [paperback of 1954 original]), 59.
- <sup>79</sup> Gavin Lucas, *Critical approaches to fieldwork: contemporary and historical archaeological practice* (London and New York, 2001), 45–46.
- <sup>80</sup> Discussed in e.g. Nathan Schlanger, “Manual and intellectual labour in archaeology: past and present in human resource management”, in Stephanie Koerner and Ian Russell (eds), *Unquiet pasts: Risk society, lived cultural heritage, re-designing reflexivity* (London, 2010), 161–71.
- <sup>81</sup> Wheeler, *Archaeology* (ref. 78), 82; for Kenyon, see Miriam C. Davis, *Dame Kathleen Kenyon: Digging up the holy land* (Walnut Creek, CA, 2008).
- <sup>82</sup> Wheeler, *Archaeology* (ref. 78), 36.
- <sup>83</sup> For Wheeler in India, see Sudeshna Guha, “Mortimer Wheeler’s archaeology in South Asia and its photographic representation”, *South Asian studies*, xix (2003), 43–55.
- <sup>84</sup> Wheeler, *Archaeology* (ref. 78), 68–69.

- 
- <sup>85</sup> For Wheeler's excavation novelty (or otherwise), see Boast, "Mortimer Wheeler's science of order" (ref. 17).
- <sup>86</sup> Anthes' 1956 diary (ref. 1); 18 April 1956.
- <sup>87</sup> Anthes' 1956 diary (ref. 1); 24 March 1956.
- <sup>88</sup> Anthes' 1956 diary (ref. 1); 20 April 1956.
- <sup>89</sup> Anthes' 1956 diary (ref. 1); 28 April 1956.
- <sup>90</sup> Anthes' 1956 diary (ref. 1); 20 April 1956.
- <sup>91</sup> Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1955* (ref. 57), 66.
- <sup>92</sup> Anthes' 1956 diary (ref. 1); 5 June 1956.
- <sup>93</sup> Jacquet, writing in Rudolf Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1956* (Philadelphia, 1965), 69, therefore gives the Enclosure Wall a Graeco-Roman date.
- <sup>94</sup> Jacquet in Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1955* (ref. 57), 48–49.
- <sup>95</sup> Rudolf Anthes, "Memphis (Mit Rahineh) in 1956", *University Museum Bulletin*, xxi (1957), 8–9, 11.
- <sup>96</sup> Anthes, *Mit Rahineh 1956* (ref. 93), 2.
- <sup>97</sup> Jeffreys, *Memphis* (ref. 19), 16, for instance, states that the excavations discussed in this paper constitute what could be done at the site "when proper arrangements are made". The settlement/floodplain site versus tomb/temple excavation argument is long-lived in Egyptian archaeology. As this paper states, the privileging of tombs and temples as objects of Egyptian excavation work is noticeable. But this conflict is also connected to pejorative mud-slinging (no pun intended) between field archaeologists and 'philologically obsessed' Egyptologists, apparently more interested in the inscriptions on tomb and temple walls. Anthes is interesting in this respect in that he trained and practised as a philologist, but still promoted 'archaeological' settlement excavation. His example therefore gives the lie to any easy opposition between the two forms of excavation.
- <sup>98</sup> Minutes of the Board (ref. 41); meeting of 12 June 1956.
- <sup>99</sup> Minutes of the Board (ref. 41); meeting of 9 April 1957.
- <sup>100</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Rainey to Anthes, 23 May 1956.
- <sup>101</sup> Rainey, quoted (no source given) in Percy C. Madeira, Jr., *Men in search of man: The first seventy-five years of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1964), 60.
- <sup>102</sup> UMA: Egypt records; letter from Rainey to Madeira, 15 October 1957.
- <sup>103</sup> Copy of Mit Rahina proposal (ref. 14).
- <sup>104</sup> See Minutes of the Board (ref. 41); meetings of 9 April 1957 and 11 February 1958.
- <sup>105</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; Anthes to Rainey, 9 May 1956.
- <sup>106</sup> Minutes of the Board (ref. 41); meeting of 9 April 1957.
- <sup>107</sup> There is some confusion over Kamal's position. M. L. Bierbrier, *Who was who in Egyptology* (London, 2012; fourth, revised edition), 288, states that Kamal was sub-Director General of the DoA. But UMA: Egypt records; Kamal to Rainey 31 October 1957, gives his position as Director General. Donald Reid (pers. comm.) suggests that Kamal possibly headed up ancient Egyptian matters for the DoA only (i.e. he did not head the institution's Coptic, Islamic, or Graeco-Roman departments).
- <sup>108</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Anthes to Rainey, 9 April 1956.
- <sup>109</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; Kamal to Rainey, 31 October 1957.
- <sup>110</sup> Egyptian DoA, *Report on the Monuments of Nubia Likely to be Submerged by Sudd-el- 'Āli Water* (Cairo, 1955), 17–18.
- <sup>111</sup> Egyptian DoA, *Report* (ref. 110), vii–viii.
- <sup>112</sup> UMA: Mit Rahina records; letter from Anthes to Rainey, 9 May 1956; EES archive: Committee Minutes of the Egypt Exploration Society, 1956–1963; Executive Committee meeting, 27 March 1958, declines the DoA's request to excavate in Nubia on the basis that "there was ... no promising site among those listed". Furthermore, given such requests, the Committee felt that "it was doubtful whether any foreign excavators would be able to continue work [in Egypt] at present".
- <sup>113</sup> For CEDAE, see Christiane Desroches Noblecourt, *La grande nubiane ou le parcours d'une égyptologue* (Paris, 1992); cf. Carruthers, "Multilateral possibilities" (ref. 46).
- <sup>114</sup> At least for the moment: after a break of several years, the UM did indeed work in Nubia.