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Renouncing the Universal Museum's Imperial Past: A Call to Return the Rosetta Stone Through Collaborative Museology

Anna Volante
ajvolante@dons.usfca.edu

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Renouncing the Universal Museum's Imperial Past:
A Call to Return the Rosetta Stone Through Collaborative Museology

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, Rosetta Stone, Rashid, Egypt, Colonialism, Imperialism, Orientalism, Repatriation, Collaborative Museology, Universal Museums, Museum Studies

by
Anna J. Volante

Capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of
Arts in Museum Studies

Department of Art + Architecture
University of San Francisco

Faculty Advisor: Stephanie A. Brown

Academic Director: Paula Birnbaum

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Abstract

In colonial times, Western empires used **orientalism** to justify and perpetuate **colonialism** and **imperialism** over countries that they believed inferior to their own. These imperial powers plundered **cultural heritage** artifacts from the nations they oppressed and took these objects back to their national museums to be displayed as trophies of subjugation. The ownership of cultural heritage remains a point of contention throughout the field of **museum studies**. Despite cries for **repatriation**, these artifacts continue to be housed in **universal museums** today. One of the most well-known cases is that of the **Rosetta Stone**, stripped from the city of **Rashid, Egypt** in 1799 and displayed thereafter in the British Museum. This capstone advocates for the British Museum to atone for its role in imperial museology and return the Rosetta Stone to the community of Rashid. Based on the methodology of collaborative archaeology, this project proposes a joint effort in **collaborative museology** between the British Museum, Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and the community of Rashid, Egypt.

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To my parents, sister, and family back home in the Midwest, you have blessed me with continuous encouragement and love throughout my life. Without your nourishment I could not have succeeded in my studies. Most importantly, I thank you for instilling empathy in my core values.

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And to my cohort, for their dedication to enriching the museum studies field through the lens of social justice.

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Chapter One

Introduction

This capstone aims to address the unethical way in which Western empires plundered Egypt's cultural heritage and continue to display these objects in their museums today. I intend to not only demonstrate the ways in which universal museums have acted as agents of imperial museology, but also offer a redress for the future through collaborative museology with source communities. I will advocate for the return of the Rosetta Stone, one of Egypt's most iconic cultural heritage artifacts, through a collaboration between the British Museum, the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and the community of Rashid, Egypt.

From the late 1700s and into the mid-1900s, Western imperial powers justified colonialism and imperialism through orientalist ideals. Citizens of countries such as Egypt were perceived as the "other," strange and unequal to those of European descent. During Napoleon's expeditions in Egypt, French armies were tasked with amassing collections for the furtherment of knowledge, or in other words, power and prestige. Among the innumerable objects taken was the Rosetta Stone, found in Rashid, Egypt. An artifact that has in many ways become the face of Ancient Egypt and Egyptology, the Rosetta Stone is still housed in London's British Museum today.

The principal collections of many universal museums, like the British Museum, were built on an unequal balance of power, gathered by conquerors with the intent of demonstrating dominance over the oppressed. Despite claims that museums were merely witness to empire, the role that universal museums played in the plunder of Egypt's cultural heritage is undeniable. The

continued refusal to return specific artifacts of importance mirrors universal museums' unwillingness to renounce imperial museology, where a museum continues to control another country's cultural heritage, collected by way of imperialism, for their own benefit.

In the second chapter of this paper I discuss how orientalism fueled the fire for colonialism and imperialism, and how the battle for power between French and British empires resulted in mass excavations of Egyptian cultural heritage. I argue that Egyptians were intentionally excluded from the study and interpretation of their own cultural heritage, leading to the false notion that Egyptians are not interested in their heritage. I underline the role that universal museums have played in perpetuating imperialism through the control of artifacts and knowledge. I explain that, in spite of requests for the Rosetta Stone to be repatriated or loaned back to Egypt, the British Museum has thus far refused to loosen its grip on one of its most prized possessions. This refusal is rooted in the debate over who owns cultural heritage. Based on John Henry Merryman's "Two Ways of Thinking about Cultural Property," I lay out the main arguments that universal museums and Cultural Internationalists—those who believe that artifacts are a part of a "common human culture," transcending the place from which they were created and for whom they were intended—use to defend the retention of artifacts. I aim to disprove each excuse, and show that the other side of the argument, typically supported by archaeologists and communities that were stripped of their heritage, is the virtuous path. This argument is centered around the belief that objects are best understood in their place or country of origin and should be returned if taken unethically.

In the third chapter I propose the Rashid Project, a collaboration between the British Museum, the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities, and the community of Rashid, Egypt. The goal of

the Rashid Project is not only to return the Rosetta Stone to Rashid, but to involve the community of Rashid in the repatriation and display process, allowing them to be the narrators of their own cultural heritage. In this chapter I highlight the five crucial stakeholders in the Rashid Project, with the community of Rashid at the center. In light of the fact that the Rosetta Stone is often considered a part of British identity because it has resided in the British Museum for over 200 years, I propose that Egypt enters into a loan agreement with the British Museum. In this loan agreement Egypt would be both the permanent home for, and caretaker of, the Rosetta Stone, but Britain would receive the stele for display every five years, for an entire year.

The core methodology for the Rashid Project is based on that of community archaeology, set out by the Community Archaeology Project Quseir (CAPQ). CAPQ utilized seven key components to guide their project. These seven components are: Communication and Collaboration, Employment and Training, Public Presentation, Interviews and Oral History, Educational Resources, Photographic and Video Archives, and Community Controlled Merchandising. Each component is adapted to fit a museum collaboration, with an explanation on how it would function throughout the Rashid Project.

Although this project specifically addresses the Rosetta Stone, I believe that this method of collaborative museology could be applied to significant cultural heritage artifacts in universal museums across the globe.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The siege of Jerusalem in the year 70 CE can still be seen in the heart of Rome today on the Arch of Titus. Roman soldiers are depicted parading objects from the Temple of Jerusalem, including the sacred golden menorah, through the streets of Rome.¹ In 1204 CE, Christian crusaders sacked Constantinople and divided its sacred artifacts across the Latin empire, desolating the Byzantine city famed for the greatest repository of relics.² When the French and British were unable to physically wage war in Egypt in light of the 1802 Treaty of Amiens,³ the imperial powers asserted their dominance through the systematic excavation, and subsequent display in their national museums, of ancient Egyptian artifacts. The removal of cultural heritage objects from their place of origin with the intent of relocating and displaying these objects as trophies of physical and cultural authority has been a method used by conquerors since ancient times. In fact, it would appear that the plunder of cultural heritage has been treated, in the West, as an inalienable right of the conqueror.⁴

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, defines cultural heritage as “the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the

¹ Steven Fine, Peter J. Schert and Donald H. Sanders, “True Colors: Digital Reconstruction Restores Original Brilliance to the Arch of Titus,” *Biblical Archaeology*, May/June (2017): 30.

² Jonathan Riley Smith, “The Fourth Crusade,” in *The Crusades, A History*, (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014), 184-185

³ Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf and Random House Publishing, 2005), 214.

⁴ Josh Levithan, “Epilogue: The Sack,” in *Roman Siege Warfare*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 205-206.

benefit of future generations.”⁵ Cultural heritage includes human-built structures, artifacts of significance, and sites of notable historical events. Home to one of the oldest human civilizations, Egypt is saturated with cultural heritage. However, due to orientalist ideals, Western imperial powers stripped Egypt of some of its most significant artifacts, now housed in Western museums.⁶

Orientalism, as defined by postcolonial scholar Edward Said, “is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident.’”⁷ Orientalism is a way of placing the Orient (the Middle East, North Africa and Asia) in juxtaposition with the Occident (the West) in order to identify their differences and examine the Orient as an “other,” most commonly in a degrading way. Said suggests that by categorizing non-Western cultural practices as inferior and less civilized, cultures in the West were able to claim superiority and the right to political, cultural, and social dominance. Sociologist Bryan S. Turner states that in typical orientalist discourse the Orient is “strange, exotic and mysterious...[and] this oriental strangeness can only be grasped by the gifted specialist in oriental cultures and in particular by those with skills in philology, language and literature.”⁸ The West strategically positioned itself as the interpreter of the Orient through the display of “oriental” artifacts in their national museums, most notably those that required deciphering. Through the lens of orientalism, the West believes itself not only to be the judge and jury for the actions and culture of the Orient,⁹ but also the Orient’s hero, the savior who has

⁵ “Tangible Cultural Heritage,” UNESCO Office in Cairo, UNESCO, accessed October 3, 2018, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/cairo/culture/tangible-cultural-heritage/>

⁶ Jason Thompson, *Wonderful Things, A History of Egyptology 1: From Antiquity to 1881*, (New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015): 133.

⁷ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism 25th Anniversary ed.* (New York: Random House Inc., 1979), 2.

⁸ Bryan S. Turner. *Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism*, (New York: Routledge, 1994), 44.

⁹ Said, 109.

come to show less civilized peoples the path to civilization.¹⁰ This “savior complex”¹¹ resides still today in some academic thinking, when museums believe themselves to be the keepers of “oriental” artifacts for the good of that artifact. Said explains that in essence, Orientalism is an enduring distinction between Western–Occidental–superiority and Oriental–Eastern–inferiority, and its continued belief deepens their perceived variances.¹²

Orientalism was both a justification for, and perpetrator of, the imperialism and colonialism¹³ that became deeply woven into the history of Egypt. Imperialism and colonialism are forms of domination and oppression. In 1967, Harrison M. Wright offered one of the first definitions of imperialism, which resonates still today:

Imperialism is the deliberate act or advocacy of extending or maintaining, for the primary purpose of aggrandizement, a state’s direct or indirect political control over any other inhabited territory which involves treating the inhabitants inequitably in comparison with the norm of its own citizens.¹⁴

This is to say that imperialism is the control and mistreatment of another culture or place, with the specific intent of increasing power and reputation. Like imperialism, colonialism is also the territorial and behavioral control over a country.¹⁵ However, colonialism is established when some of the controller’s population permanently settle in the colonized territory.¹⁶

Throughout its long history, Egypt has undergone waves of both imperialism and colonialism, describing the scale of which lies outside the possible scope of this paper. What is important to note here is that competition for power between the French and British empires

¹⁰ Said, 121.

¹¹ Lynn Meskell, “The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Science* 150, vol 925 (2000): 146-169.

¹² Said, 42.

¹³ Said, 39.

¹⁴ Harrison M. Wright, “Social Research” vol. 34, no. 4 (1967), 670.

¹⁵ Ronald J. Horvath, “A Definition of Colonialism,” *Current Anthropology*, vol. 13, no. 1 (February 1972): 45.

¹⁶ Horvath, 45.

plagued Egypt from the late 1700s into the mid-1900s and resulted in what is often called “the rape of Egypt,”¹⁷ for the staggering amount of artifacts that were systematically plundered from the land. Possibly the most well-known Egyptian artifact is the Rosetta Stone, a bilingual stele, or stone slab, that “unlocked” the key to hieroglyphs. In 1799, in the midst of French occupation, Napoleon's troops found the stele as they were rebuilding a fort in the city of Rashid, Egypt,¹⁸ colloquially called Rosetta by the Europeans. Upon its rediscovery, the stele was immediately removed from its Egyptian context both physically, as the French attempted to transport it out of the country, and psychologically, when the stele came to be known as the Rosetta Stone, instead of utilizing the Arabic town name of Rashid. The stele was seized by the British in 1801, upon Napoleon's defeat in Egypt.¹⁹

With a dream of establishing Paris as the new Rome, Napoleon began to initiate mass looting of art across Europe. At his eventual total defeat, the victorious Allies demanded the restitution of the stolen artworks at the Congress of Vienna in 1815.²⁰ Yet, the French were not required to return objects taken from Egypt, despite the fact that these campaigns occurred in the same time period as the European pillage. In fact, many of the Egyptian artifacts, including the Rosetta Stone, were already in the hands of the very Allies who called for repatriation, as tokens of their victory over the French. It is clear that restitution was only applicable to European nations.²¹ The reality is that looted Egyptian artifacts were dismissed because of resonating

¹⁷ Jasanoff, 213.

¹⁸ Thompson, *From Antiquity to 1881*, 103.

¹⁹ Thompson, *From Antiquity to 1881*, 104.

²⁰ Patty Gerstenblith, *Art, Cultural Heritage, and the Law*, 3rd ed. (North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press), 2012, 538.

²¹ *Ibid*

orientalist ideas that the Egyptians were not equals of the Europeans. The Rosetta Stone has now been in the British Museum since 1802.²²

With Egyptian artifacts flooding Western museums, and the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone in 1822, European archaeologists flocked to Egypt to excavate.²³ As historian Donald Reid notes, in his article *Indigenous Archaeology: The Decolonization of a Profession?*, Egyptology and Western Imperialism grew up together.²⁴ At its inception, Egyptology was a western passion that prevented native Egyptians from being the narrators of their own cultural heritage. Egyptians were consciously excluded from archaeology,²⁵ schooling in ancient Egyptian ventures such as hieroglyphs,²⁶ and the administration of their own museums.²⁷ The founding directors (and their successors), of three of Egypt's four museums were all Europeans. Reid calls this phenomenon colonial museology.²⁸ In many ways, colonial museology has evolved into what I would call imperial museology, hidden behind the term universal museum. Although not acting from within Egypt, universal museums, such as the British Museum, continue to house Egypt's stolen cultural heritage for their aggrandizement. Their refusal to return these artifacts reflects their antiquated notions of orientalism and elitism, and their unwillingness to renounce their oppressive past.

Universal museums, sometimes called encyclopedic museums, include, for the sake of this paper, large Western museums which house artifacts spanning many millennia and originating in diverse geographic locations. This is not to say that I believe small museums

²² Thompson, *From Antiquity to 1881*, 104.

²³ Donald M Reid, *Contesting Antiquity in Egypt: Archaeologies, Museums, and the Struggle for Identities from World War I to Nasser* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 20-21.

²⁴ Donald M Reid, "Indigenous Archaeology: The Decolonization of a Profession?," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol 105, no. 2 (1985): 234

²⁵ Thompson, Jason, *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology, The Golden Age: 1881–1914*, (Cairo: The American University of Cairo, 2015), 191-192.

²⁶ Reid, *Indigenous Archaeology*, 235.

²⁷ Donald M Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 6.

²⁸ Reid, *Contesting Antiquity in Egypt*, 1.

cannot be universal in the traditional sense of the word (for and applicable to everyone), but certain museums have claimed themselves to be “universal museums,” and they are who I refer to throughout this paper. In many cases these museums acquired their collections through colonial and imperial enterprises, and continue to display them, today. This is a form of cultural imperialism, where one country’s culture is defined and dominated by another culture of greater power.²⁹ Literary scholar Ruth Hoberman describes London in the 1900’s:

From this center went out colonial administrators, missionaries, and scholars who gathered yet more specimens and artifacts for museums back home, which could in turn encourage museumgoers to identify with the knowledge and control these museum displays demonstrated.³⁰

Universal museums began as agents of cultural imperialism, creating the history that the conqueror wished to convey through objects. The construction of the past has the ability to underline relationships of inequality, and is intimately related to structures of power and wealth.³¹ Power and knowledge, as Foucault expressed, are not independent entities, but are inextricably related. Knowledge is an exercise of power and power is a function of knowledge.³²

In his book *Museums Matter*, James Cuno, President of the J. Paul Getty Trust, claims that “while they [museums] might be witness to empire-- not only in the years since their founding but, with their deep historical collections, ever since imperialism has existed in the world -- they are not instruments of empire.”³³ As the director of a universal museum, it is understandable that Cuno would want to place museums as innocent bystanders in the history of

²⁹ John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*, (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 2-5.

³⁰ Ruth Hoberman, *Museum Trouble: Edwardian Fiction and the Emergence of Modernism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 136.

³¹ Helaine Silverman, *Contested Cultural Heritage* (New York: Springer, 2014), 3.

³² “Power/Knowledge,” *Social Theory Re-wired*, Routledge, <http://routledgesoc.com/category/profile-tags/powerknowledge>

³³ James Cuno. *Museums Matter: In praise of the Encyclopedic Museum*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 89.

oppression. However, in light of the definition of imperialism, where imperialism can be the advocacy of indirect control of a country for aggrandizement,³⁴ the role that museums such as the British Museum played in the systematic plunder of places like Egypt cannot be ignored. Furthermore, the continued role museums play in cultural imperialism must be addressed and amended.

Museums are in the spotlight now more than ever. A growing desire for more data, knowledge, and news in specialized interest fields, brought on by the information age, has birthed online newspapers dedicated to museums and the art world.³⁵ In recent years, public pressure has been put on universal museums to repatriate certain collections amassed during colonial oppression. These have included objects such as the Benin Bronzes, looted by the British in the 19th century from Nigeria, the Parthenon Marbles, taken from Greece in 1801 while the country was controlled by the Ottoman Empire, and the Rosetta Stone, removed from Egypt by Napoleon's troops in 1799.³⁶

In 2002, in direct reaction to repatriation claims such as these,³⁷ a small group of museums signed a proclamation titled the "Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums." This declaration stressed the importance of the collections within universal museums, and their contribution to the knowledge of human civilizations. All of the signatories of the declaration were large museums located solely in North America and Europe, including the British Museum, the Louvre, the MET, and the Berlin State Museums.³⁸ The signatories have

³⁴ Harrison, 670.

³⁵ Murphy, Bernice L. "Charting the ethics landscape for museums." In *Museums, Ethics, and Cultural Heritage*, 19-42. New York: Routledge, 2016.

³⁶ Mark O'Neill, "Enlightenment Museums: Universal or Merely Global?," in *Museums and Society*, (2004): 190-202.

³⁷ Mark O'Neill, 190.

³⁸ Peter-Klaus Schuster. "The Treasures of World Culture in the Public Museum," *ICOM News* 4, no.1, (2004): 4-5.

been criticized for their elitism and the perceived attempt to create a new class of museums more valuable than others.³⁹

The opening paragraph of the Declaration states, “we should...recognize that objects acquired in earlier times must be viewed in the light of different sensitivities and values, reflective of the earlier era.”⁴⁰ This insinuates that the pillaging of cultural heritage was not yet seen as ethically wrong, and should therefore be permitted. This argument that ethics, our sets of moral values and principles, were different in the past than they are today, is often used as an excuse for retaining cultural heritage objects that were taken in colonial times. However, as early as the first century CE, in the time of the Roman Republic, Cicero prosecuted Gaius Verres for theft of cultural and religious objects from Sicily.⁴¹ Patty Gerstenblith, Director of Art & Cultural Heritage Law at DePaul University, notes that this case “demonstrates that even at that time there was public support for the notion that works of art should remain within their intended context and environment and should not serve as spoils of war.”⁴² Denouncing the purloining of another’s cultural heritage has therefore been around for close to two millennia, and cannot be considered a new ethical dilemma inapplicable to the past.

We must ask ourselves if orientalist ideals used in the past as justification for the pillage of cultural heritage permits universal museums to retain these artifacts in their collections today. We become agents of imperial museology if we allow the colonialist origin of objects like the Rosetta Stone to persevere. The Rosetta Stone is an icon of Egyptology, and is a vital part of the

³⁹ Schuster, 4-5.

⁴⁰ Schuster, 4.

⁴¹ Gerstenblith, 537.

⁴² Gerstenblith, 537.

history of Egypt.⁴³ Egyptian Egyptologist Dr. Zahi Hawass called for the return of the Rosetta Stone through many media outlets, both in 2003⁴⁴ and 2009-2010.⁴⁵ However, due to the complex legal issues regarding ownership of cultural heritage, he withdrew the repatriation request.⁴⁶ Dr. Hawass however, did continue to ask for the stele to be loaned to Egypt, a request that has been denied by the British Museum.⁴⁷

The ownership of cultural heritage has been widely debated for decades. In 1986, John Henry Merryman, then a professor of law at Stanford University, produced an article titled, “Two Ways of Thinking about Cultural Property” for the American Journal of International Law.⁴⁸ Merryman asserted that there are two ways of thinking about cultural heritage, or as he called it, cultural property. The first was that cultural artifacts are components of a common human culture, regardless of place of origin or current location. The first way of thinking is often referred to as “cultural internationalism” and is primarily associated with a pro-market perspective—that artifacts are better protected inside museums and in the hands of collectors.⁴⁹ The second is that cultural property is a part of a “national cultural heritage,” giving nations the ability to claim certain objects, and thus control their export and movement. This position emphasizes that the object is best understood in its original context.⁵⁰ Merryman suggested that

⁴³ Salima Ikram, “Collecting and Repatriating Egypt’s Past: Toward a New Nationalism,” in *Contested Cultural Heritage*, ed. Helaine Silverman (New York: Springer, 2014), 146.

⁴⁴ Charlotte Edwards and Catherine Milner, “Egypt demands return of the Rosetta Stone,” *The Telegraph*, July 20, 2003, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/egypt/1436606/Egypt-demands-return-of-the-Rosetta-Stone.html>

⁴⁵ Harpreet Bhal, “Egypt to ask British Museum for Rosetta Stone,” *Reuters*, December 14, 2009, <https://www.reuters.com/article/ozatp-britain-egypt-rosetta-idAFJJOE5BD0AS20091214>

⁴⁶ Ikram, 146.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*

⁴⁸ John Henry Merryman, “Two Ways of Thinking about Cultural Property,” *The American Journal of International Law* 832, vol. 80 no. 4 (October 1986): 831-853.

⁴⁹ Gerstenblith, 625.

⁵⁰ Merryman, *Two Ways of Thinking*, 832.

three aspects should be considered when thinking about where an artifact belongs: preservation, truth and access,⁵¹ sometimes referred to as the “triad of rationale”.

Although originally written in reference to archaeological material, cultural objects excavated for research and education, his ideas have been adapted to the museum world. Advocates of universal museums have applied Merryman’s triad of rationale and theories of cultural internationalism to the debate of repatriation.⁵² These supporters have tended to be directors of universal museums, such as Neil MacGregor (British Museum 2002-2015), James Cuno (Art Institute of Chicago 2004-2011 and J. Paul Getty Museum 2011-present), and Philippe De Montebello (The Metropolitan Museum 1997-2008). MacGregor, Cuno and Montebello have produced numerous books, articles and lectures on the importance of universal museums and the retention of their collections. Their argument is, in a very broad sense, that cultural heritage objects are safer, better understood/displayed, and more widely accessible in universal museums.⁵³ On the other side of the debate has primarily been archaeologists and supporters of source nations as the storytellers of their own heritage.⁵⁴ It is important to note that, in his later writing, Merryman himself emphasizes the object/context perspective that acknowledges the significance of original context in understanding an objects full story.⁵⁵

In the case of preservation, Egyptologist Salima Ikram has noted that “new cases and climate controls are being established in older museums, and new museums are being built to

⁵¹ Tiffany Jenkins, *Keeping their Marbles How the Treasures of the Past Ended Up in Museums... and Why They Should Stay There* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 10.

⁵² See Tiffany Jenkins 2016 book *Keeping Their Marbles*, where she outlines why museums should be able to keep their artifacts based on Merryman’s triad.

⁵³ See James Cuno’s book *Whose Culture? The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities* for a closer look at their positions in the debate over cultural heritage and museums.

⁵⁴ Helaine Silverman’s book, *Contested Cultural Heritage* outlines the stakeholders and advocates for the object/context position.

⁵⁵ Gerstenblith, 625.

modern standard, thereby invalidating this [preservation] argument.⁵⁶ Ikram continues to address the fears of monumental destruction in light of fundamentalism as well. When the Bamiyan Buddhas were destroyed in 2001, cultural heritage professionals feared that more monuments would be destroyed on a religious bases. This fear heightened when, in 2006, Ali Gomaa, the Grand Mufti in Egypt issued fatwa, religious legal opinion, forbidding icons, statues of humans or figures, inside the home of Muslims.⁵⁷ However, the verdict did not refer to museums or public spaces. In fact, Gomaa went on record to specifically reiterate that people should not destroy statues or monuments in museums, public spaces, or archaeological sites.⁵⁸

For the discussion of truth, or the understanding and display of objects, any notion that a Western museum could better interpret cultural heritage than Egypt is deeply rooted in orientalist thinking. If anything, returning the Rosetta Stone to Rashid would result in the better understanding of the stele's entire history.

In its current placement at the British Museum, the stele stands alone in a glass vitrine in the middle of the museum's Egyptian gallery. Two text labels are provided alongside the front and back of the stele (Appendix C). The first, on the left of the stele's front, briefly describes what the stele is as well as the time period it came from. The second recounts how the stele was the key to hieroglyphs, and the French and British involvement in its decipherment. The second text panel even uses the outdated, orientalist term mysterious to describe hieroglyphs.⁵⁹

Reflecting on Brian Turner's statement where, "Orientalism as a discourse divides the globe unambiguously into Occident and Orient; the latter is essentially strange, exotic and

⁵⁶ Ikram, 149.

⁵⁷ Ikram, 149.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "Everything you ever wanted to know about the Rosetta Stone," Objects in Focus (Blog), July 14, 2017, <https://blog.britishmuseum.org/everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about-the-rosetta-stone/>

mysterious...[and] this oriental strangeness can only be grasped by the gifted specialist in oriental cultures and in particular by those with skills in philology, language and literature,”⁶⁰ the use of mysterious surfaces as problematic.

The first text on the back side of the stele discusses the writing of the ancient Egyptians. The last, titled “The history of the Rosetta Stone,” describes the rediscovery of the Rosetta Stone by invading French armies and confiscation by the British. There is no accompanying label, however, that discusses the ethical issues of colonization and imperialism. No label admits that the plunder of cultural heritage is abhorred today. There is no mention of the multiple cries for the stele to be repatriated to Egypt or deep seeded orientalism that surrounds the stele’s story. The museum does not offer transparency about the imperial origins of the stele, or offer any information about the relationship between the British and Egyptian citizens at the time of the stele’s finding. The story of the Rosetta Stone’s journey to the British Museum, it would seem, was simply happenstance, as opposed to a strategic power play against the French.

If the stele was reunited with the city of Rashid, a more holistic, three-dimensional story could be told. Rashid would provide a window into the ancient past when the stone was created in Ptolemaic times, the colonial past, when the city of Rashid fought against imperial powers,⁶¹ and the present, where modern Egyptians welcome home a lost piece of their history. The stele would be intrinsically linked to the city of Rashid and its people, of the past and of today.

For the case of access, when cultural internationalists say the stele is more accessible in the British Museum, we must consider to whom they are referring. Certainly not the Egyptians,

⁶⁰ Turner, 44.

⁶¹ Mahmoud Ahmed Darwish, “The Role of Rosetta Fortifications Against the English Expedition on Egypt, New Vision Through the French and British Documents,” *Journal of International Academic Research for Multidisciplinary*, (November 2016) 192-219.

of whom the majority cannot travel abroad due to both financial and political reasons.⁶² In August 2018, three renowned Egyptian curators were denied visas to the UK for a museum conference called “Beating Barriers.”⁶³ The Egyptians were denied access on the basis of “low income” and the fear that they were attempting to stay in the country.⁶⁴ If Egyptian scholars cannot gain access to the UK to see the Rosetta Stone, how will any other Egyptians? It was even cited that citizens of North Africa have a 23% chance of being rejected for a visa.⁶⁵ It is clear that when internationalists speak of access, they may mean western, affluent populations.

One final cultural internationalist argument outside of Merryman’s triad is the false notion that Egyptians show no interest in their cultural heritage and have no relation to the ancient Egyptians. James Cuno draws on the separation between ancient Egyptians and modern Egyptians to reinforce universal museums’ claims to Egyptian antiquities.

Antiquities are often from cultures no longer extant or of a kind very different from the modern, national culture claiming them. What is the relationship between, say, modern Egypt and the antiquities that were part of the land’s Pharaonic past? ...All that can be said is that they occupy the same (actually less) stretch of the earth’s geography.⁶⁶

Occupying the same stretch of land, fewer miles or not, for generations does, in fact, give Egyptians the right to keep and benefit from their cultural heritage. They walk the same riverbanks on the Nile as their geographical ancestors, they live amongst the great pyramids, inhabit many of the same city centers, and call the same land home. The cultural heritage of

⁶² Ikram, 146.

⁶³ Zachary Small, “Three Egyptian Curators Denied UK Visas to Attend Conference on “Beating Barriers,” Hyperallergic, August 13, 2018, <https://hyperallergic.com/455370/three-egyptian-curators-denied-uk-visas-beating-barriers/>

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Robert Picheta, “Egyptian curators denied visas to attend ICOM conference in Whales,” Museum Association, October 8, 2018, <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/10082018-egyptian-curators-denied-visas>

⁶⁶ James Cuno, “Art Museums, Archaeology, and Antiquities”, in *An Age of Sectarian Violence and Nationalist Politics*, ed. RF Rhodes (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press 2007) 11-12.

modern-day Egyptians encompasses the artifacts and monuments created by the ancient Egyptians. Allowing Western scholars to determine whether or not modern Egyptians are related enough to the ancient Egyptians to deserve the repatriation of key cultural heritage artifacts reveals the persisting orientalist and colonialist thinking in the museum field today.

Furthermore, contrary to Cuno's belief, many Egyptians who live amongst the millennia of history feel deeply connected to the land. In the early 1900's, political parties in Egypt drew on the connection between modern Egyptians and ancient Egyptians as a way to unite the Copts (Christians) and Muslims together in a common ancestry.⁶⁷ From 2007-2009 archaeologist Gemma Tully conducted interviews of over 150 individuals, both professional and non-professionals over geographically disparate regions in Egypt. The majority of her interviewees stressed connections between the history of their country and modern Egyptian identity.⁶⁸ A Cairo Museum guard stated, "These are my ancestors; this is not a job for money. You talk to any of the guards and most of them feel the same."⁶⁹ When a pyramid in Dahshur was threatened by a land grab contractor in 2011, the local population protested at the foot of the pyramid until authorities intervened and agreed to improve security at the site.⁷⁰ Contemporary Egyptian artists such as Alaa Awad⁷¹ and El Zeft draw on their Pharaonic cultural heritage in

⁶⁷ Reid, *Contesting Antiquity*, 34.

⁶⁸ Gemma Tully, "Contemporary Egyptian Dialogues," in *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*, ed. F.A. Hassan, G.J. Tassie, L.S. Owens, A. De Trafford, J. Van Wetering, and O. El Daly (London: ECHO Publications, 2015), 60.

⁶⁹ Gemma Tully, "From Community Archaeology to Civilian Activism: The Journey of Cultural Resource Management Through Heritage Dialogue in Egypt," in *Collaborative Heritage Management*, ed. Gemma Tully and Mal Ridges (Piscataway: Gorgias Press LLC, 2016), 182.

⁷⁰ G.T. Tassie, A. De Trafford and J. van Wetering, "Egypt's Heritage in Times of Conflict and Crisis," in *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*, ed. F.A. Hassan, G.J. Tassie, L.S. Owens, A. De Trafford, J. van Wetering, and O. El Daly, (London: Golden House Publications, 2015), 22.

⁷¹ "The Paintings of Alaa Awad," Alaa Awad The Artists, <http://alaa-awad.com/paintings-alaa-awad>.

their art, just as graffiti street artists did in an effort of resistance in the wake of the 2011 revolution.⁷²

Universal museums are falling behind in the cultural heritage field. They are focused primarily on the ownership of objects rather than the advocacy of knowledge or social justice for source communities. In recent decades, museums with collections from native communities in North America, Australia, and the Pacific Islands⁷³ have made strides away from “practices and purposes based on ideas of heritage as evidence of the past—valued for its historical research potential and as the basis for a thriving heritage industry—to recognition of the contemporary value of heritage for living cultures.”⁷⁴ Museums with these collections have begun to move towards legislation and co-operation on issues of ownership and control of sites and cultural heritage. However, non-western communities which are not considered to be the “biological descendants” of their land’s ancestors, like the Egyptians, tend to be ignored in this collaborative museology.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, archaeologists in Egypt have shifted their focus to a more collaborative discipline, often called community, collaborative, indigenous or postcolonial archaeology.⁷⁶ For the sake of this paper, I will refer to this practice as collaborative archaeology.

One of the first collaborative archaeology projects in Egypt that explicitly stated that its motivation was “community archaeology” was the Community Archaeology Project Quseir (CAPQ) in 1999.⁷⁷ Quseir is located between the Red Sea and the foothills of the Eastern Desert, 150 kilometers from the Nile River. The ancient city thrived as a Roman (1st century BC to 3rd

⁷² Tassie, 193.

⁷³ Tully, 182.

⁷⁴ Moira Simpson, “Museums and Restorative Justice: Heritage, Repatriation, and Cultural Education,” *Museum International* Vol 61 No. 1-2 (2009): 122.

⁷⁵ Tully, *From Community Archaeology to Civilian Activism*, 183.

⁷⁶ Tully, *From Community Archaeology to Civilian Activism*, 186.

⁷⁷ Tully, *From Community Archaeology to Civilian Activism*, 190.

century AD) and Mamluk (13-15th century AD) harbor. In modernity, Quseir is a fishing village and tourist town.⁷⁸ CAPQ developed a seven point methodology to guide practice and data collection. This method focused not on the benefit of the archaeological site to the archaeologists, but to the community of Quseir. The seven key components to conducting collaborative archaeology were:

1. Communication and Collaboration
2. Employment and Training
3. Public Presentation
4. Interviews and Oral History
5. Educational Resources
6. Photographic and Video Archives
7. Community Controlled Merchandising⁷⁹

CAPQ united the ancient world with the modern one, with the goal of creating a heritage center in Quseir that not only included archaeological cultural heritage objects, but the history and modern cultural heritage of the people of Quseir.⁸⁰

This seven point method could be adapted to the discipline of collaborative museology, and implemented in a combined effort between the British Museum, the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities (The Egyptian government heritage department), and the citizens of Rashid, Egypt. Located on the Mediterranean coast, roughly 64km from Alexandria, Rashid is most well-known for the rediscovery of the Rosetta Stone. The town is often overlooked, but was an important port city in ancient and medieval Egypt,⁸¹ and aided in expelling British forces from the area.⁸² As

⁷⁸ Tully, Gemma, "Ten Years On: The Community Archaeology Project Quseir, Egypt," *Treballs d'Arqueologia*, no. 15 (2009): 65-66.

⁷⁹ Tully, Gemma, *Ten Years On*, 69.

⁸⁰ Tully, *Ten Years On*, 71.

⁸¹ "Historic quarters and monuments of Rosetta/Rachid," UNESCO Tentative Lists, last modified July 28, 2003, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1831/>

⁸² Darwish, 207.

Rashid flourished during the Ottoman period, urban development increased⁸³ and ultimately resulted in the large quantity of historic Islamic residencies that attribute the town as an open air museum today.⁸⁴

In the next chapter I will outline a proposed collaborative museology project between the British Museum, the Ministry of Antiquities, and the citizens of Rashid, that will focus on the repatriation of the Rosetta Stone to Rashid.

⁸³ “Historic quarters and monuments of Rosetta/Rachid,” UNESCO Tentative Lists, last modified July 28, 2003, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1831/>

⁸⁴ Egypt Today Staff, “Rashid City Turns to an Open Air Museum for Islamic Heritage,” Egypt Today, October 11, 2017, <http://www.egypttoday.com/Article/4/27112/Rashid-City-turns-to-an-open-museum-for-Islamic-Heritage>

Chapter Three

Project Proposal

The discourse that surrounds repatriation tends to focus on the ownership of cultural heritage through a Western lens, with priority given to Western access and interpretation of artifacts. Scholars in favor of cultural internationalism, the belief that cultural heritage artifacts are components of the universal history of humankind despite where they originated from,⁸⁵ use the idea of a “common heritage” to exclude source nations from the interpretation and display of their own cultural heritage. Members of a given ethnic group often identify themselves according to their cultural heritage, and cultural heritage objects can give communities a sense of belonging and historical continuity.⁸⁶ This is especially pertinent regarding Egyptian cultural heritage, which has traditionally been interpreted, appropriated, and owned by the Western powers that once oppressed Egyptians through colonialism and imperialism. Additionally, in a country that has had unrest between the dominant religion of Islam and marginalized Christian Copts, the national identity forged by a common past heritage can help to further unite Egyptians.⁸⁷

Universal museums have benefited from colonialism, imperialism and orientalism for centuries. Imperial powers pillaged countries of those they thought beneath them, taking cultural heritage objects from source nations and displaying them as trophies of conquest in museums. Today, these museums perpetuate orientalist thinking through imperial museology, when stolen cultural heritage objects continue to be housed for the benefit of western society. Universal

⁸⁵ Gerstenblith, 625.

⁸⁶ Ariel D. Frank, Manuel Cueto, Fabiana Skarbun, Dario Martinez, and Rafael S. Paunero, “Practices for visualizing the regional past: Archaeology, social communication and education in Puerto San Julian, Argentina,” in *Collaborative Heritage Management*, ed. Gemma Tully and Mal Ridges, (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2016), 101.

⁸⁷ Ikram, *Collecting and Repatriating Egypt’s Past* 151.

museums often rely on the concept of common heritage, where cultural heritage objects are no longer the inheritance of their people, but an affiliate of all human history,⁸⁸ to stake their claim on unethically collected objects. The refusal to return important artifacts reflects an unwillingness to renounce colonialism and its damaging effects. In order to move forward in an age of social justice, universal museums must begin to amend their imperial pasts through repatriation and collaborative efforts.

The return of iconic cultural heritage objects, such as the Rosetta Stone, would play a vital role in the economy of the area to which it is returned. When the global financial crisis hit markets across the world in 2008, unemployment skyrocketed across the globe. Egypt's tourist economy was directly affected, dropping 12% in six months from September to March.⁸⁹ Tourism is traditionally one of Egypt's most reliable industries, but the GFC stunted international travel and left Egyptians unemployed across the country. Tourism took another hit in 2011 after the Arab Spring.⁹⁰ Now that the country has stabilized, it is time to support Egypt in the rise of tourism. Egyptologist Salima Ikram advocates for the return of artifacts like the Rosetta Stone, stating: "Having special displays of objects that have been returned to Egypt by foreign institutions...has already increased museum attendance nationally. If such exhibitions were organized for iconic artifacts, it would boost attendance among local and foreign visitors."⁹¹ With

⁸⁸ Vasiliki Kynourgiopoulou, "National Identity Interrupted: The Mutilation of the Parthenon Marbles and the Greek Claim for Repatriation," in Collaborative Heritage Management, ed. Gemma Tully and Mal Ridges, (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2016), 155.

⁸⁹ Assem Abu Hatab, "Egypt within the Framework of the Global Financial Crisis: Impact, Response and way Forward," International Journal of Euro-Mediterranean Studies 2, no.1 (2009): 15-20

⁹⁰ Patrick Kingsley, "Egypt's tourism revenues fall after political upheavals," The Guardian (August 2014) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/29/egypt-tourism-revenue-falls-95-percent>

⁹¹ Ikram, Collecting and Repatriating Egypt's Past, 150.

tourism as one of the most important economic drivers in Egypt, the return of artifacts like the Rosetta Stone could be a crucial key to further stimulating the local economy.

This proposal advocates for the British Museum to begin to rectify its role in imperial museology by relinquishing control over the Rosetta Stone and presenting it to the city of Rashid. The British Museum, Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities (hereafter the Ministry), and the community of Rashid would then embark on a collaborative museology project that would result in the creation of a permanent home for the Rosetta Stone in a museum or heritage center in Rashid, Egypt. The aim of this collaborative project is not only to return the Rosetta Stone to Egypt, but to abandon the traditional Eurocentric story of the stele and promote a holistic one that incorporates both the ancient and modern Egyptians.

The Ministry announced in August of 2017 that they were launching a major development project with an aim to declare the city of Rashid an open-air museum and begin restoration of its many historical sites.⁹² This open-air museum is focused on the city's rich historical buildings from the Islamic period. The city will be divided into seven sections, each highlighting different features and stories of the past. One section, in the south-east of Rashid, is home to the Zaghloul Mosque, the place where Rashid troops were given the signal to attack the British during the 1807 Anglo-Ottoman War. Another section will host the Abul-Rish Gate and the Qait Bey Citadel where the Rosetta Stone was rediscovered by the French.⁹³ The establishment of this open-air museum and restoration of historic sites provides the perfect opportunity for the return of the Rosetta Stone, and its incorporation into the open-air museum.

⁹² El-Aref, Navine, "Rosetta as an open-air museum." Al-Ahram Weekly, August 2017, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/22137.aspx>

⁹³ Ibid

Stakeholders

- The community of Rashid
 - The community of Rashid needs to have the central voice in the project, as the Rosetta Stone is their inherited cultural heritage right.
 - The Rashid Museum is already a beloved site in the area, and its staff would be integral to the project if the Rashid Museum was chosen to house the new stone.
- Egyptian citizens as whole
 - Just as the Rosetta Stone is the inherited heritage of Rashid, it is also by extension the cultural heritage of all Egyptians.
 - Many Egyptians do not have the means to travel abroad and see the stele in a Western museum.
 - Citizens of North Africa have a 23% chance of being rejected for a visa to the UK,⁹⁴ so even when money is not an issue, Egyptians can still be denied access to the country.
- The Ministry of Antiquities
 - The Ministry of Antiquities will carry the burden of partial financing for new housing of the Rosetta Stone.
 - The Ministry will need to aid in the organization and implementation of the project, as well as in training of staff.

⁹⁴ Robert Picheta, "Egyptian curators denied visas to attend ICOM conference in Whales," Museum Association, October 8, 2018, <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/10082018-egyptian-curators-denied-visas>

- It may be possible that the close proximity to Cairo enables the proposed Rashid Museum/heritage site to be a branch of the new Grand Egyptian Museum set to open in 2019.
- British Museum
 - The British Museum has housed and cared for the Rosetta Stone for 200 years; although it is time for the stele to return home, the British Museum still has a stake in the project.
 - The Museum will aid in the organization and implementation of the project, as well as in training of staff.
 - This project will show to the museum and heritage world that the British Museum is ready to set aside its colonial past and move towards a more collaborative and equal museology field.
- The community of London
 - It is often claimed that since the stele has been housed in London for so long, it has become a part of Londoner's cultural heritage as well.
 - London should receive a replica Rosetta Stone to sit in at the stele's absence. The Rashid Museum already has a replica stele, which would be a great candidate for the replacement of the real object.
 - A loan system should be established so that the stele may return to London on a regular basis. The replica stele could then return to Rashid during this time.

Implementation of the seven key components of conducting collaborative archaeology, set out by the CAPQ project, will be the groundwork for this project. CAPQ, or the Community Archaeology Project Quseir, was one of the first collaborative archaeology projects in Egypt that explicitly stated that its motivation was “community archaeology.” CAPQ promoted a dialogue between archaeologists and Quseir community members so that the community could begin to be the primary beneficiary of their cultural heritage. Archaeologists and community members worked alongside each other to create “reciprocal learning between seemingly distanced cultural and geographical, archaeological and local communities.”⁹⁵

The seven key components are:

1. Communication and Collaboration
2. Employment and Training
3. Public Presentation
4. Interviews and Oral History
5. Educational Resources
6. Photographic and Video Archives
7. Community Controlled Merchandising⁹⁶

Communication and Collaboration

Communication and collaboration are the core principles that guide each phase of collaborative archaeology,⁹⁷ and will continue to act as such in the proposed collaborative museology between the British Museum, the Ministry, and the community of Rashid.

Collaborative archaeology is focused not only on the knowledge and scholarship that comes from excavating a site, but also in the community around the site. Collaborative archaeology goes beyond simply consulting the local population, and seeks to involve them in the

⁹⁵ Tully, Ten Years On, 71

⁹⁶ Tully, Ten Years On, 69.

⁹⁷ Tully, Ten Years On, 70.

investigation and interpretation of the past.⁹⁸ The aim of this collaborative project is not for the British Museum to inform the Ministry or community of Rashid on how to interpret the Rosetta Stone, but to foster a continuous dialogue between the three parties involved throughout the entire process. This would also mean that the Museum and Ministry could not bring in the community of Rashid only at the end of the project for a consultation, but would actively seek out their needs and ideas from the beginning. In past collaborative archaeology projects this has been achieved through partnership with local existing cultural and heritage organizations, transparency through recurrent updates, employment (see category below) and social interactions.⁹⁹ Updates on the project's progress could come in the form of blog posts and community presentations. All three parties must establish collegial relationships of understanding and respect.

Employment and Training

A major priority of this collaborative project must be the employment and training of local people to work with all aspects of the project. As archaeologist Stephanie Moser explains, “the passing on of skills related to archaeological study, heritage management and museum display is fundamental as it enables local people to coordinate the presentation of the site or the running of a visitors’ center or museum once established.”¹⁰⁰ For this project, the Ministry and British Museum must seek out interested community members in Rashid to assist in the establishment of a heritage center or museum for the Rosetta Stone. As the city is already rich in

⁹⁸ Moser, Stephanie, Darren Glazier, James E. Phillips, Lamya Nasser el Nemr, Mohammed Saleh Mousa, Rascha Nasr Aiesh, Susan Richardson, Andrew Conner and Michael Seymour, “Transforming Archaeology through Practice: Strategies for Collaborative Archaeology and the Community Archaeology Project at Quseir, Egypt,” *World Archaeology* 220, vol. 34 no. (October 2002): 220.

⁹⁹ Moser, 229-232.

¹⁰⁰ Moser, 223.

historic sites, it would be possible to house the stele somewhere already in existence, such as the Rashid National Museum, often called the Rashid or Rosetta Museum. The Rashid Museum is a recently restored Ottoman House from the 18th century. The museum houses Islamic, Coptic, Umayyad and Ottoman artifacts as well as weaponry from the 18th and 19th centuries when the British and French invaded Egypt.¹⁰¹ The museum also already houses a replica Rosetta Stone (Appendix C) and is a part of the open air museum.

Moser explains during CAPQ, employment and training was done on two levels. On one level, knowledge and skills associated with archaeology, heritage presentation, museum display, computing and IT, were taught on-site in Quseir. This could be accomplished in the Rashid Project through workshops facilitated by both the British Museum and the Ministry, that teach the necessary hands-on skills of museum management to the local population where needed. On another level of training, the CAPQ team assisted in the acquisition “formal qualifications.”¹⁰² Through grants, they provided access to professional qualifications in the UK, such as funding individuals to learn additional languages or take courses in museum studies at universities. For this project, both the British Museum and Ministry should seek grants and funding to enroll specific Rashid team members in formal heritage interpretation. This could take place at the nearby universities in Cairo as well as in the UK.

Public Presentation

Public presentation refers to the way in which archaeological material was displayed and presented to local communities for CAPQ. CAPQ established a heritage center to display both archaeological material and the modern history of Quseir. As with the Quseir heritage center, the

¹⁰¹ “Rashid City day tour including Alexandria,” Egypt Travel, <https://www.etltravel.com/alexandria-day-tours/rashid-city-day-tour/>.

¹⁰² Moser, 233.

exhibition strategy for the Rashid project should draw on museological concepts that include multiple narratives (see interviews and oral histories below) and artifact life history.¹⁰³ It is important that the whole life of the Rosetta Stone be conveyed, from its creation in Ptolemaic times to its homecoming in the present. The Rosetta Stone can be used to discuss imperialism in Egypt at the time of its rediscovery in 1799, and the role of the Rashid community at the turn of the century.

Since the Rashid Museum is currently home to a replica Rosetta Stone, community members could provide, through interviews and oral histories (see below), feelings towards the stele in modern times. There are multiple ways in which an object can be interpreted, and collaboration can promote a view of objects that is not just “of the past,” to reveal their importance in the continued development of meaning in the present.¹⁰⁴ It is vital that Rashid is not defined by the return of the Rosetta Stone, but that the stele acts as an aid in the telling of the community’s story.

An additional aspect of public presentation for the Rashid Project will include a website for the museum that is chosen to house the stele. The Rashid Museum does not have a website at present, and most information generated by search engines when searching “Rosetta Museum” or “Rashid Museum” leads the browser to general information on the Rosetta Stone or the British Museum’s website. A clear, multilingual, and easy to navigate website would be essential in the stele’s transition. It would also be a great place to keep the world updated on the progress of the move, to offer educational information for teachers and educators, as well as general wayfinding information about Rashid, the stele and the museum.

¹⁰³ Moser, 235.

¹⁰⁴ Tully, Gemma, Ten Years On, 71.

Interviews and Oral History

Interviews with local people about their heritage are a central component of collaborative archaeology and should be equally important in collaborative museology. Moser remarks that interviews “provide us with insights into how people... experience and negotiate archaeology in the present, [and] also provide valuable opportunities to analyse how this information relates to established ideas about the heritage of the site being investigated.”¹⁰⁵ The same idea can be translated into museum work. If a museum does not know how the community is interacting and engaging with it, then the museum becomes obsolete.¹⁰⁶ A set of interviews should be implemented prior to the creation of an exhibit, to focus on local perceptions of the past and the community’s cultural heritage. These interviews would enhance the collective knowledge and cultural interpretation of the Rosetta Stone. A possible methodology could be taken from Gemma Tully, a collaborative archaeologist who interviewed more than 150 Egyptians in an attempt to “reposition Egyptological practice and perception in museum contexts.”¹⁰⁷ Tully interviewed both professional and non-professional Egyptians who were self-defined as one or more combination of Egyptian, Arab, Nubian, Bedouin, Muslim, Christian and Atheist. This disparate group of ideals better represented the Egyptian population as a whole as compared to interviewing Egyptians from just one town. Tully asked questions that focused on the interviewees’ perception of Egyptian identity and ancient and modern Egyptian heritage.¹⁰⁸ For the Rashid Project, a similar approach could be taken in order to represent the town and its

¹⁰⁵ Moser, 236.

¹⁰⁶ Steven de Clercq, 2003, “Museums As A Mirror of Society: A Darwinian look on the development of museums and collections of science,” Paper presented at UMAC Conference, <http://umac.icom.museum/2003/declercq.html>

¹⁰⁷ Tully, *Contemporary Egyptian Dialogues*, 58-60.

¹⁰⁸ Tully, *Contemporary Egyptian Dialogues*, 60.

surrounding inhabitants, with questions geared not only towards perceptions of identity, but perceptions of museums and museum displays.

Educational Resources

One of the most essential components of the Rashid Project would be the creation of educational materials that introduce young members of the community to the Rosetta Stone, archaeology, and museum studies. Classroom site visits to the stele as well as walking tours of the open-air museum as a whole could be organized for students in Rashid. Trips could be taken to the larger Cairo and Alexandria museum, and where physical visits to museums are not possible, virtual ones could take their place. Just this past spring, Egyptian curator Abdelrahman Othman received a curatorial award for his work at the Cairo Museum. Othman also launched a “My Museum in Your Classroom” project which aims to “provide educational activities around Egyptian museums, Egyptian archaeological sites, and educational institutions in and outside Egypt, removing borders and obstacles for education.”¹⁰⁹ Othman is employed through the Ministry, and could be a key player in both the display of the stele disbursement of educational knowledge in Rashid and beyond.

Photographic and Video Archives

A photographic and video archive of the project would be a great addition to the museum or heritage center’s archives, and further tie the community to the project. The archive should be made accessible to the public online and on-site to researchers. Photographs and videos could be displayed alongside the replica Rosetta Stone in the British Museum to foster discourse on repatriation and collaboration. The high profile nature of the Rosetta Stone may lend itself to a

¹⁰⁹ “Museum curator brings the Egyptian civilization to students via Skype,” Skype Blog (blog), Microsoft, June 20, 2018, <https://blogs.skype.com/stories/2018/06/20/museum-curator-brings-the-egyptian-civilization-to-students-around-the-world/>.

documentary as well. BBC and National Geographic often feature Egypt in their productions and may be good resources to drive interest, involvement and support in the Rashid Project.

Community Controlled Merchandising

This project has the possibility of greatly impacting tourism in Rashid. For this reason, it is important that the community has an initial voice in merchandising that may arise through a museum or heritage store.

The Rashid Project

The Rashid Project would be a collaborative museology enterprise resulting in the return of the Rosetta Stone to the city of Rashid, Egypt. Currently housed in the British Museum, the stele is a key cultural heritage object of the Egyptians. The British Museum, Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and the community of Rashid must work together to create a new, permanent home for the Rosetta Stone. First, the British Museum and Ministry of Antiquities must make multiple trips to Rashid to conduct the interviews with the local population and collect oral histories of the area. During this time, a team of collaborative museologists should be established. This team, comprised of a British Museum team member, a Ministry of Antiquities team member, an Egyptian curator, and Rashid community members and museums workers, will be the anchor of the project. The collaborative museology team will be the points of contact for their institutions and the voices of their community. The conducted interviews and collected histories will guide the project, establishing the needs of the community and create, or enhance an already existing, archival record of the town.

A committee for fundraising and finances will also need to be established. This committee would be responsible for the financial aspects of the Rashid Project and would include members from all parties, just as the collaborative museologist team would. The committee should seek additional financial support outside of the British Museum and Ministry. This could be in the form of grants and donations, or through corporate sponsorship in which Rashid is an equal partner. Given the high profile nature of the Rosetta Stone, the committee may find easy funding through companies that have shown interest in cultural promotion in the past, such as Google or Cisco. These companies could also aid in any technological additions to the museum, its website or equipment.

Once the interviews are conducted, a site for the Rosetta Stone will need to be chosen. This may be in an existing historic building, such as the Rashid Museum, or an entirely new structure if the community wishes and finances allow. This site will need up to date security and climate control, and so the British Museum and Ministry will need to lend resources, as set out by the finance committee.

After a site is chosen, the local museum workforce should be trained in museum studies (if needed), and offered professional development opportunities. These trainings will be conducted first on-site in Rashid, and include everything from security and pest management to curation, collection management, and education. If necessary, depending on the skill set of the museum staff, formal training programs could take place at the nearby universities in Cairo and Alexandria.

The collaboration team, in accordance with the interviews and consultation with community members, will create the initial display for the Rosetta Stone. It should be decided

whether or not the community wishes for their modern history to be displayed in the same building as the stele. Merchandising should be established at this point as well. The team must then create a strategic plan to ensure the viability of the project, long past the initial opening of the heritage center or museum. Sustainability will depend not only on tourism and marketing, but on community engagement and community use of the stele. This is why educational material and field trips are vital to the stele's importance to the community. Wherever the Rosetta Stone is, it is sure to drive foot traffic, but it is vital that the community finds value in their cultural heritage, not just the Ministry. The community of Rashid is a major stakeholder in this project, and should continue to benefit long after the stele is returned. Local residents should have free admission to the museum or heritage center that houses the Rosetta Stone, and the site should host special community days and events to strengthen its ties to the community. Additionally, the site should be flexible, capable of being a gathering place for non-museum events and an institution of education and the promotion of cultural heritage.

Once the strategic plan is in place and a new residence for the stele established, the Rosetta Stone will be fit to return to Egypt. In light of the stele's importance to British identity as well, Egypt should consider a revolving loan system, where the British Museum can display the stele for an entire year, every five years.

Through a collaborative effort between the British Museum, Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and the community of Rashid, the Rosetta Stone could finally return to Egypt after 200 years abroad. With focus on the well-being of a source community rather than Western desire, the Rashid Project would be a landmark example of repatriation and collaborative museology.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

The study, interpretation and control of Egyptian cultural heritage has been dominated by Western powers for centuries. These powers strategically separated Egyptians from their cultural heritage through exclusion from the fields of archaeology and museum studies and from antiquities departments. Artifacts were plundered from the land on an industrial scale and taken back to the West as trophies of subjugation and status. Through these efforts, Western powers were able to rewrite the story of Ancient Egypt as a western civilization and establish Egyptology as an academic study for western scholars. If artifacts of significance remain in the universal museums of Western powers, despite calls for repatriation, than universal museums will remain agents of cultural imperialism.

This capstone argues for the repatriation of the Rosetta Stone through a collaborative museology project between the British Museum, Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities, and the community of Rashid, Egypt. The Rashid project aspires to be a community driven endeavour with the citizens of Rashid at its forefront. The Rosetta Stone has been housed in the British Museum for over 200 years as a direct result of European imperial and colonial reign. It is time for the stele to return home to Egypt.

While universal museums claim to be enlightened institutions of preservation, truth, and access, they have, in reality, functioned as symbols of power and prestige. Arguments that Egypt is incapable of caring for its cultural heritage are antiquated notions rooted in orientalist thinking. Egypt is modernizing, updating and standardizing their museums, and with the financial aid of

the British Museum and the generated funds from the Rashid Project's financial committee, a museum in Rashid would be more than capable of housing the Rosetta Stone.

Once the stele is situated in Rashid, a more dimensional story can be told. Egypt would provide proper context for the stele's unique history—its creation in Ptolemaic times, deconstruction during a new wave of Christianity, the tumultuous struggle between Egypt and its conquerors, and its return to Rashid as a symbol of good faith from the British Museum. The stele remains inaccessible to the majority of Egyptian citizens where it resides now in the British Museum. Average Egyptians not only lack the funds to travel to Europe, but have a high risk of being denied entry into the country altogether, even when funding is available.

Although this project specifically addresses the Rosetta Stone, I believe that this method of collaborative museology could be applied to significant cultural heritage artifacts across the globe.

We must not let universal museums continue to be agents of imperial museology or symbols of oppression. Cultural heritage artifacts of significance taken under colonialism, imperialism, coercion, and otherwise unethical standards should be repatriated to their source communities. Through collaboration between museums, cultural organizations and communities, I believe that objects of cultural importance can not only be returned to their country of origin, but specifically benefit their communities and remain mobile in the museum world in the form of loans.

We are not owners of history's creations, but stewards for them. Cultural heritage transcends the politics of our present environment and will live on, we hope, for millennia to come. It is my belief, and the belief of many scholars, that an object created in Egypt should

return there if the Egyptians, the object's cultural heirs, wish it to. With increasing calls for repatriation, the universal museum must reflect in on itself and determine its core values. If universal museums remain promoters of a "common human culture" in order to continue to house unethically acquired artifacts, regardless of the pain it inflicts upon the very cultures they display, than these museums are not the universal institutions of preservation, truth, and access that they claim to be. Universal museums must be willing to evolve with the changing landscapes of the museum field. They must shift their focus from elitism and aggrandizement to collaboration and integrity, or their relevance in the new age of social justice will diminish.

Appendix A

Annotated Bibliography

History of Colonialism & Imperialism in Egypt

Reid, Donald. *Contesting Antiquity in Egypt: Archaeologies, Museums, and the Struggle for Identities from World War I to Nasser*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015.

Reid, Donald. *Whose Pharaohs?: Archeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Where most historical accounts of Egyptology focus on the western powers, both individuals and institutions, that dominated the field during this time, Reid sheds a light on the Egyptians' struggle to control their heritage. In these volumes, Reid demonstrates how archaeology has furthered the connectedness between Egyptians and their Pharaonic past. That the Egyptians' interest in archaeology, ancient Egypt, and their cultural heritage furthers their claims to the amassed Egyptian collections in museums outside of the country. These volumes will provide vital historical records of Egyptians fighting to reclaim their cultural heritage through decades of colonialism. The ongoing battle proves that Egyptians are not only interested in their cultural heritage, but have been throughout the history of Egyptology, and not just as a result of nationalism.

Thompson, Jason. *Wonderful Things [Volume 2]: A History of Egyptology, The Golden Age: 1881–1914*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo, 2015.

Thompson, Jason. *Wonderful Things [Volume 3]: A History of Egyptology, From 1914 to the Twentieth Century*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo, 2015.

These two volumes on Egyptology outline the people and nations who constructed our

modern view of ancient Egypt. I hope to use these volumes as a source for Egyptology, but also as a prime example of the colonialism that has plagued Egypt's archaeological past. While Reid focuses on the struggles and perseverance of Egyptian Egyptologists, Thompson glosses over their achievements and takes the traditional Eurocentric approach to the history of Egyptology. These two volumes confirm the European dominance in Egyptian politics and antiquities, and their Eurocentric approach will help to flesh out the circumstances in which artifacts were removed from Egypt and placed in the British Museum and the Louvre.

Universal Museum and Internationalist Debate

Burlingame, Katherine. 2014. "The Universal Museums Declaration: Cultural and Ethical Implications." In *The Right to [World] Heritage, Conference Proceedings, 2014*, 384-398. Cottbus, Germany.

Twelve years after the Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums was signed by museums solely from North America and Europe, Burlingame rightly voices the continued controversies and tensions brought about by the declaration. Burlingame highlights the ethical issues surrounding unknown provenance, a lack of definition for the term "Universal," and the blatant omission of museums outside the western world in the declaration. These raised issues will be a good source for my paper. However, the author ultimately falls short in her conclusion, stating that all we need to remedy the problem is the development of more universal museums across the world.

Cuno, James. *Museums Matter: In praise of the Encyclopedic Museum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press., 2011.

Cuno is a leading voice in the internationalist argument for universal museums to retain

their collections for the protection of the artifacts and the continued research of our shared human culture. As the former director of the Art Institute in Chicago and current director of the J. Paul Getty Museum, both “universal” museums, Cuno has a clear stance in the ownership of antiquities. In this book Cuno argues that universal museums promote tolerance, understanding, and a shared sense of history, essential attributes in a globalized age. However, these museum acquired their collections during times when the political relationship between the country of origin and now “owner” of the antiquities were undoubtedly unequal. When confronted with this accusation, Cuno replies “...while they [universal museums] might be witness to empire --- not only in the years since their founding but, with their deep historical collections, ever since imperialism has existed in the world--- they are not instruments of empire.” Cuno does not believe that museums are responsible for imperialism, and should therefore not be considered at fault when they choose not to repatriate objects amassed during imperial times. However, how can scholars such as Cuno claim that these institutions promote tolerance and understanding, when they continue to reap the benefits of imperialism without any accountability?

Cuno, James. *Who Owns Antiquity?* New Jersey: Princeton University Press., 2010.

In this book, Cuno challenges the nationalist position that cultural heritage objects should be returned to the geographical locations that they were found in. He argues that universal museums broaden international access to antiquity and shield objects from the nationalistic identity politics that countries wish to use the objects for. Cuno associates nationalist movements to repatriate antiquities to their source countries with the politicization of heritage- that repatriated objects become political tools to promote dangerous nationalist agendas. By only associating repatriation with political nationalism, Cuno dismisses the reality that countries such

as Egypt cherish their cultural heritage as much as the western countries that house these artifacts in their universal museums. While Egypt has experienced its share of nationalist movements, the fight to regain control of their own cultural heritage, whether through archaeology or repatriation, has always been focused on benefiting the people of Egypt, and not to politically charge the nation.

Murphy, Bernice L. *Museums, Ethics and Cultural Heritage*. New York: Routledge, 2016.

This book presents case studies and papers from academics and museums who are addressing the controversies of ownership, repatriation and social engagement in cultural identity. The framework of the volume is structured from the perspective of ICOM, which as an entity has an interesting stake in the international cooperation of museums. Within this volume is a section on provenance research in museums holding archaeological collections. The author, Markus Hilgert specifically targets museums who have collections through colonialism, and their duty to review and publish the provenance of these collections.

O'Neill, Mark. "Enlightenment Museums: Universal or Merely Global?." *Museums and Society*. (2004): 190-202.

In this article, O'Neill challenges the infamous Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums, bringing to light the fact that the Declaration was formed in a time of budding repatriation claims. O'Neill points out that the signatories of the Declaration are all western museums that have fed the rationale for colonial domination while claiming to be museums for the world. I will use this source to reveal the varied flaws in the claim that universal museums are of utmost importance because their diverse collections show the world our shared common heritage, which knows no geographical bounds. The central claim of the

universal museum is that displaying objects that span different time periods and varied geographic spaces in one building promotes cultural understanding. Yet these museums segregate their collections by culture and geographic location. It is typically only in special exhibitions that these museums show different cultures in dialogue with one another.

Simpson, Moira. "Museums and Restorative Justice: Heritage, Repatriation, and Cultural Education." *Museum International*. Vol 61 No. 1-2, (2009):121-129

In this article, Moira Simpson empathizes with both source communities and universal museums. Simpson agrees that housing artifacts from across cultures can provide invaluable educational experiences to visitors. She understands that exposure to different cultures promotes empathy and understanding. At the same time, Simpson vocalizes the ethical issues surrounding the colonial past of these institutions. At the time of collection, western countries believed that they were saving cultural objects from destruction by removing them from source nations. However true this may be, now that we have moved into the 21st century and a country such as Egypt is protecting their own heritage, a compromise needs to be made between the universal museum and source nation.

Walters, Dana. "Can Museums Build Peace? The Role of Museums in Peacebuilding and Internationalism." In *Heritage Peacebuilding*. Edited by Dana Walters, Daniel Laven, and Peter Davis. 39-52. Boydell Press: 2017.

Walters explores the role of museums in an international world, and their duty to build trust in communities. While Walter's primary argument is for museums to transform into peacebuilding institutions, an important idea but outside the scope of my research, her chapter also discusses the lack of trust source communities have for large museums. That because of the hundreds of years of colonialism and successful conquest of others, museums have inadvertently

created a legacy that places conflict as the dominant narrative of progress. Walters discusses the need for museums to work at a local level so that they can be spaces of dialogue and build trust across communities. She notes that while many museums achieve dialogue with local communities, they fall short on an international level. Walters uses the term internationalism, not to advocate for museums to keep their collections, but as an idea that museums might look outward in trying times and reach out to communities rather than tighten their grip on collections.

Repatriation, Retention, Collaboration

Beltrametti, Silvia. "Museum Strategies: Leasing Antiquities." *Columbia Journal of Law and the Arts*. (2013): 203-260.

This article covers the legalities behind the trade of antiquities. Beltrametti introduces a new model for acquiring antiquities based on long-term leasing that would enable museums to continue their collecting activities in an ethical way. While Beltrametti focuses mostly on museums searching for new collections on the market, I believe that her model could be applied to museums with existing antiquity collections as well. Beltrametti highlights ways in which the Getty, when confronted with a list of antiquities Italy claimed from their collection, entered into negotiations with the source nation. After two years, the countries came to an agreement. The Getty would repatriate the object Italy asked for, and Italy agreed to "broad cultural collaboration" with loans of significant antiquities, joint exhibitions, research, and conservation projects.

Hassan, F.A., G.J. Tassie, L.S. Owens, A. De Trafford, J. van Wetering, and O. El Daly. *The Management of Egypt's Cultural Heritage*. London: ECHO Publications, 2015.

This book is a collection of case studies involving the management of Egypt's cultural heritage post 2011 revolution. Case studies include collaborative approaches between archaeologists, museums and communities, the issue of Egyptian antiquities on the market (and the role museums play in this), and cultural heritage management in the Delta where heritage sites are disappearing swiftly due to corrupt housing and building companies passing illegal permits. A prime example of collaboration stems from the city of Quseir. Once an important port in ancient Egypt, Quseir is now a bustling city and known tourist destination. Archaeologists and Quseir citizens teamed up to establish a heritage center in the town, as well as train local citizens in heritage management, so that they could fully benefit from their ancient past. This book will be a great resource for examples of heritage management in contemporary Egyptian cities, and the involvement of the communities who have a stake in the preservation and destruction of heritage.

Meskel, Lynn. "The Practice and Politics of Archaeology in Egypt." *Annals of the New York Academy of Science*, vol 925, is 1 (2000): 146-169.

In this paper, Meskel focuses on modern Egyptians' ties to their Pharaonic past and cultural heritage. A key example in her paper is the city of Gurna, where for decades the local population has relied on the ancient tombs and monuments for income through tourism. Yet western archaeologists pushed to relocate the modern populations, claiming that their presence in the city caused continuous damage to the tombs. This is where the idea of a "shared common heritage" becomes dangerous to citizens of Egypt, when antiquities are cherished above the livelihood of communities. Meskel argues that colonialism has been so deeply rooted in western archaeological practices that archaeology in Egypt remains a colonial endeavour. She presents

ways in which archaeologists can engage local communities in the discovery of the past rather than exclude them. She maintains that through collaboration, western archaeologists and source communities can work together to break down Egypt's colonial past. I intend to use this paper to suggest that museums with Egyptian collections look to engagement archaeology for successful examples of cooperation between source nations and outside countries. I will also use this paper to highlight how important the monuments and antiquities remain to the Egyptian people.

Moser, Stephanie and Darren Glazier, James E. Phillips, Lamyia Nasser el Nemr, Mohammed Saleh Mousa, Rascha Nasr Aiesh, Susan Richardson, Andrew Conner and Michael Seymour. "Transforming archaeology through practice: Strategies for collaborative archaeology and the Community Archaeology Project at Quseir, Egypt." *World Archaeology* 34, no. 2 (October 2002): 220-248.'

The Community Archaeology Project at Quseir (CAPQ) was one of the first collaborative archaeology initiatives in Egypt. The project focused on building relationships between archaeologists and the community they work in. The project aimed to create a heritage center at Quseir that would generate jobs and boost community income through tourism. The archaeology team, mostly from the University of Southampton, created temporary exhibitions to include locals in the archaeological progress of the site. CAPQ had seven main components to the project. Communication and collaboration between archaeologists and community members, employment and training initiatives to benefit the community after the archaeological dig, public preservation through a heritage center that not only housed archaeological finds but also represented the modern community, interviews and oral histories with Quseir citizens about the town, educational resources to ensure that young citizens of the area are able to learn about their heritage as they grow, a photo and video archive of the excavation and heritage center, and community controlled merchandising to insure tourism income that fits the specific needs of the

town. CAPQ is a successful example of community archaeology and will aid my in my vision for a collaboration between universal museums and source communities.

“Revolution at the Egyptian Museum: Collections Management in the 21st Century.” American Research Center in Egypt. Accessed September 1, 2018.
<http://archive.arce.org/main/revolution-egyptian-museum>

The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) has created multiple programs on-site in Egypt that work to involve and train modern Egyptians in archaeology and museum management. In the early 2000’s they sponsored a project to train registrars at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, upon learning that they did not have a structured collection management system to keep track of artifacts. They trained a team of Egyptians in collection management and set the Museum up with a digital collection management system. ARCE has also sponsored field school training programs in salvage archaeology, so that the Egyptians can work quickly to save their heritage during construction periods.

Silverman, Helaine. *Contested Cultural Heritage*. New York: Springer, 2014.

Contested Cultural Heritage outlines the key issues in today’s globalizing world surrounding cultural heritage- the struggle of power, land, inherent rights and erasure. The book also looks more deeply into ways in which nations can cooperate and be stewards of cultural heritage rather than owners of it. In the debate on ownership, internationalists claim that cultural heritage objects are for the world, and deserve to be on display in a universal museum so that the world can appreciate and learn from it. They denounce repatriation claims, stating that the heritage is shared and should not be owned by a country just because it was found there. However, it is undeniable that when it comes to objects such as the Rosetta Stone, the British Museum is unwilling to let go of its most well-known artifacts. If universal museums were truly

just stewards of objects, caretakers and advocates, they would not be insistent on stolen objects remaining in their possession. It is clear, for example, that the British Museum sees itself as the owner of the Rosetta Stone rather than its steward, otherwise it would not be reluctant to repatriate it to Egypt, where the Egyptian Museum in Cairo successfully cares for hundreds of thousands of artifacts and hosts thousands of visitors each day.

Also included in this volume is a paper by Salima Ikram that highlights the recent rise in Egyptian nationalism and the request for the repatriation of stolen objects, including the Nefertiti bust in Berlin and the Rosetta Stone at the British Museum. Ikram notes the proposed solution by German activists for the bust to be shared between Germany and Egypt. She also mentions fragments from the tomb of Seti I that, while legally purchased by the Michael Carlos Museum in Atlanta, were returned unprompted, and restored to the tomb walls in Egypt. However, the remainder of the tomb's fragments rest in the Louvre, with no sign of repatriation. The Carlos Museum's goodwill and return of artifacts to their proper context and location stands in juxtaposition to the Louvre's refusal.

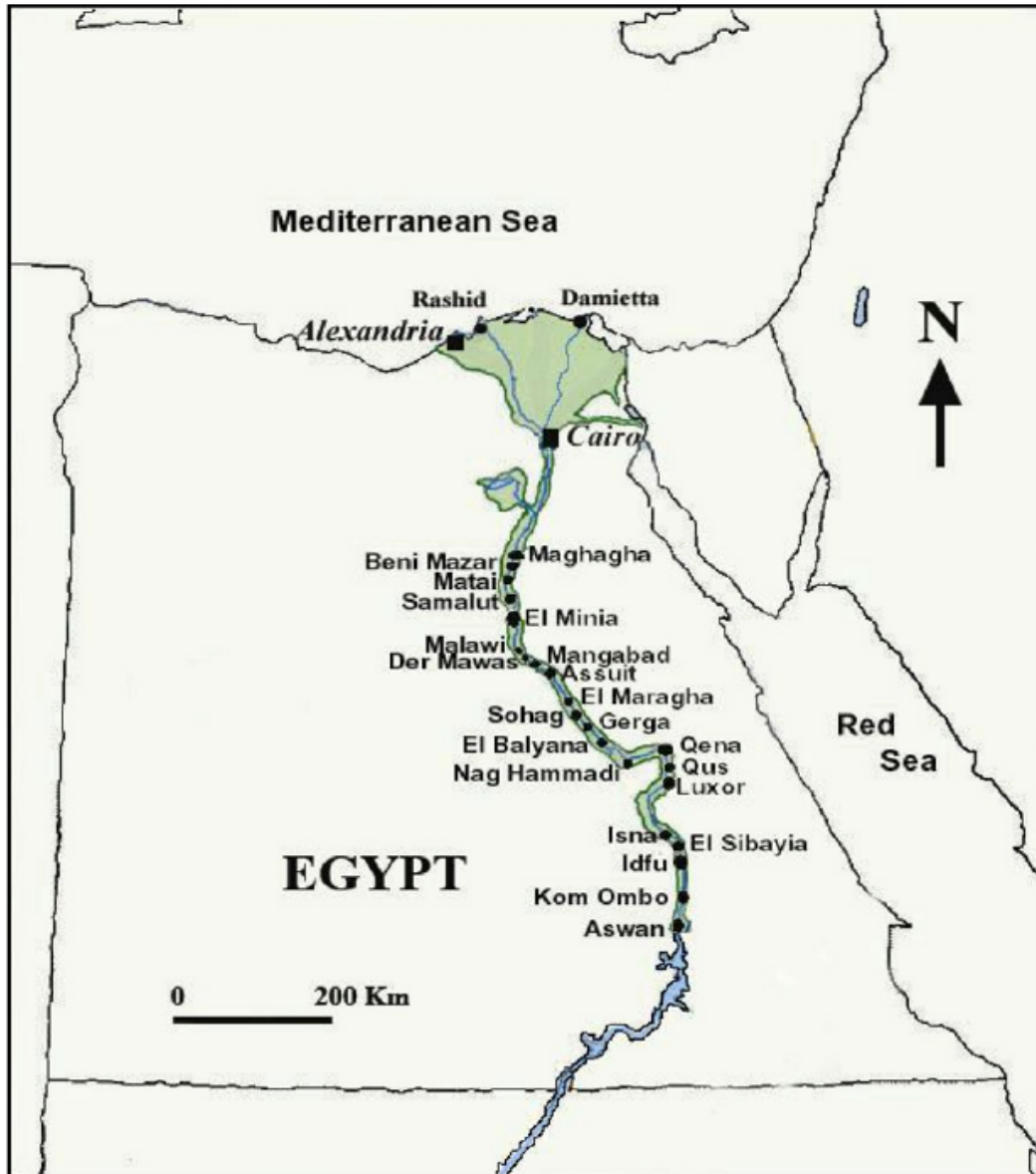
Tully, Gemma. "Ten Years On: The Community Archaeology Project Quseir, Egypt." *Treballs d'Arqueologia*, no. 15 (2009): 63-78.

The Community Archaeology Project Quseir (CAPQ) reached its ten year anniversary in 2009, still growing strong in the community. The success of the program- the involvement of locals in the archaeology, interpretation, and display of their heritage- will act as a prime example for museums with Egyptian collections to engage in community collaboration programs. CAPQ equipped the citizens of Quseir with archaeological skills and trainings that had been denied to them, and Egyptians across the country, in previous excavations. The project also

collaborated with community members to create exhibitions that represented Quseir's rich history; the site is not only important because of its status in ancient Egyptian history, but also because of the modern Egyptian town. Displays incorporated local traditions and oral histories into their display of Quseir, demonstrating that the cultural treasures of Quseir are not limited to ancient relics of the past, but include the existing living community today.

Appendix B

Map of Egypt



Map of Egypt depicting the location of the town of Rashid.

Photograph from the article “Study of the Spatial distribution of Natural Radioactivity in the Upper Egypt Nile River Sediments” in *Radiation Measurements*, 2007.

Appendix C

Images of the Rosetta Stone



Replica Rosetta Stone in the Rashid Museum, Egypt. The Rashid Museum supplies a clean, protective display case for the replica stele. The stele's object labels are large and multilingual, providing access on multiple levels. The addition of the fire extinguisher demonstrates the museum's dedication to the safety of its collections.

Photo Credit: Noha Basiouny, Google Plus Images

<https://plus.google.com/photos/photo/113128321876421248811/6626252089846743858>

Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, London.



Transcribed left label:

The Rosetta Stone carries an inscription in different languages which helped decipher the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic script. It is the only surviving fragment of a larger stone slab (stela) recording a decree on 27 March, 196 BC.

At the top of the decree was written in hieroglyphs, the traditional script of Egyptian monuments, already 3000 years old. In the middle the same decree was written in Demotic, the everyday script of literate Egyptians, and at the bottom in Greek, the language used by the government.

At this time Egypt was ruled by a Greek dynasty, and the decree was issued in honour of the boy-king Ptolemy V Epiphanes. It records the decision of the Egyptian priests to establish a royal cult in return for Ptolemy's concessions to the Egyptian temples. The granitoid stone stela was placed in a temple, probably at the city of Sais near Rashid (Rosetta).

Transcribed right label:

As soon as the Rosetta Stone was discovered, scholars realized that it might help decipher the mysterious Egyptian hieroglyphs, since the Greek inscription, which could be read, stated that each script on the Stone recorded the same decree.

In England and France two exceptional men were working on hieroglyphs: Thomas Young (1773-1829) and Jean-François Champollion (1790-1832). Earlier scholars had already guessed that rings, or cartouches, in hieroglyphic inscriptions probably enclosed royal names. Young used

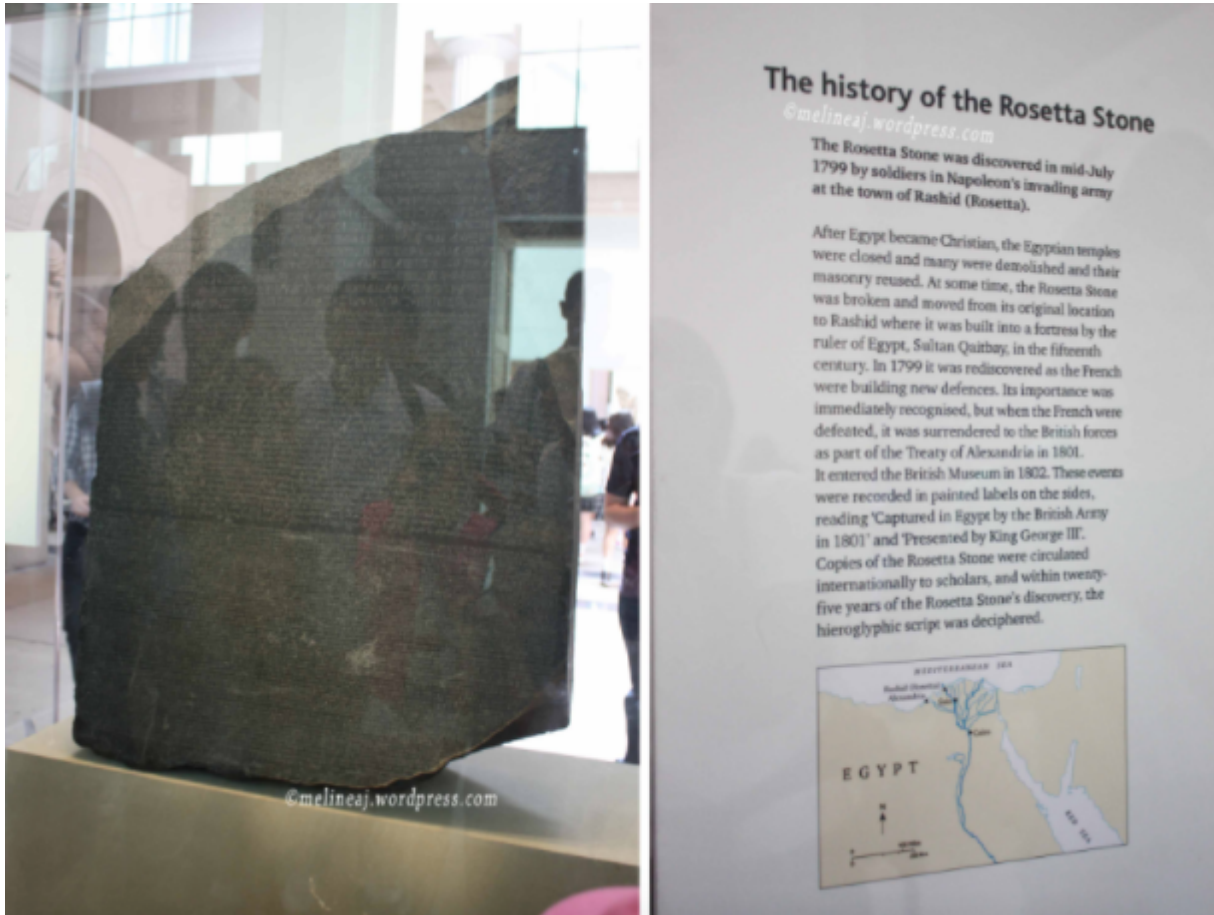
the cartouches on the Rosetta Stone to work out that some hieroglyphs wrote the sounds of the Greek royal name Ptolemy, but he thought most hieroglyphs were symbolic images.

On 14 September 1822, Champollion went muse further. He realized that he could also read the names of earlier, native Egyptian pharaohs, and that hieroglyphs must be signs that also write the ancient Egyptian language. With his knowledge of the Coptic language, the descendant of ancient Egyptian, he could start to read hieroglyphic texts.

Photo Credit: British Museum Blog



Photo Credit: Sean B., TripAdvisor



Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, accompanied by label on opposite side of object case (featured next to the back of the stele).

Transcribed label:

The Rosetta Stone was discovered in mid-July 1799 by soldiers in Napoleon's invading army at the town of Rashid (Rosetta).

After Egypt became Christian, the Egyptian temples were closed and many were demolished and their masonry reused. At some time, the Rosetta Stone was broken and moved from its original location to Rashid where it was built into a fortress by the ruler of Egypt, Sultan Qaitbay, in the fifteenth century. In 1799 it was rediscovered as the French were building new defenses. Its importance was immediately recognized, but when the French were defeated, it was surrendered to the British forces as part of the Treaty of Alexandria in 1801. It entered the British Museum in 1802. These events were recorded in painted labels on the sides, reading 'Captured in Egypt by the British Army in 1801' and 'Presented by King George III'. Copies of the Rosetta Stone were circulated internationally to scholars, and within twenty-five years of the Rosetta Stone's discovery, the hieroglyphic script was deciphered.

Photo Credit: melineaj.wordpress.com

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