JILL KAMIL

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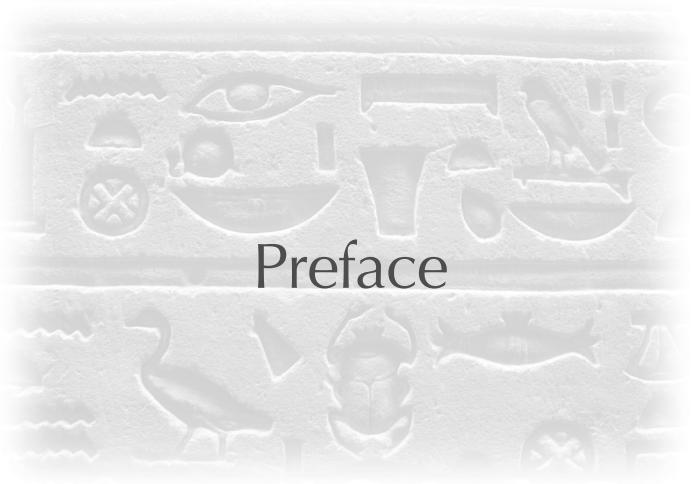
In memory of Labib Habachi
my mentor and friend

and to my children and grandchildren
with love

Contents



Preface

Labib Habachi, whose untiring curiosity led him to study wide-ranging fields of Egyptian archaeology and history, was unquestionably Egypt's most productive and internationally recognized Egyptologist of the twentieth century. His bibliography, compiled after his death in 1984 by Egyptologist Mai Trad, shows more than 180 documented excavations, some published posthumously. There are few areas of archaeological activity in Egypt today that do not carry a reference to one aspect or another of his achievements. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of the subject of his specialization, he was an invaluable source concerning the results of fieldwork, and his familiarity with ancient Egyptian monuments, reliefs, paintings, and graffiti—often small, obscure, and hard to reach—was gained largely through his own fieldwork. Habachi struggled relentlessly to carve his way into the annals of a discipline traditionally dominated by western scholars, but many of his most perceptive archaeological observations, based on a deep understanding of ancient history and contemporary society, were rejected out of hand because they cast doubt on earlier, European conclusions. They have only lately been recognized.

His book *Tell Basta*, written when he was an inspector of antiquities, won him a state award. As chief inspector of Upper Egypt and Nubia, he was involved in identifying problems created by the erection of the High Dam in the 1960s, and his *Sixteen Studies on Lower Nubia,* published in 1981, includes "Personal memories of Lower Nubia during the last half-century." Habachi's deep interest in the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom resulted in articles in various periodicals that were brought together and published, also in 1981, under the title *Studies on the Middle Kingdom*. His bestseller, *The Obelisks of Egypt: Skyscrapers of the Past*, geared to both specialists and the general public, was first published in English and then translated into Arabic, French, and German.

The esteem in which Labib Habachi was held can be gauged from the awards and honors he received. He was elected a member of the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin in 1953 and of the Institut d'Égypte in Cairo in 1964. He was made an honorary member of the Egyptological Institute of Charles University in Prague in 1965. In 1966, an honorary doctorate degree was conferred on him by New York University, and, in 1970, he became an honorary member of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE). Habachi was awarded the Italian Order of Merit in 1973. He received the Légion d'honneur in 1979 and the Austrian Order of Merit in 1980. In 1981, the Great Cross of Merit was presented to him in acknowledgment of his long and constant good relations with German Egyptologists and for his outstanding publications for the German Institute of Archaeology. That same year, he also received the Cross of Honour for Science and Art, First Class, from the Austrian government in appreciation of his scholarly achievements and his encouragement and advice to the Austrian Institute of Archaeological Research. Finally, he was made an honorary member of the Société Française d'Égyptologie in 1983.

Labib Habachi trod a narrow path through long and arduous official corridors beset with obstacles for most of his career. Egyptian officialdom hindered him from fulfilling his professional potential and his success was hard won. True, he received the Egyptian First Class Decoration for Arts and

Science in 1959 for *Tell Basta*, but his appointment as head of excavations in Egypt a year later was, as will be made clear, a professional side step.

Labib Habachi: The Life and Legacy of an Egyptologist was developed over a period of twenty-five years. This book arises out of my first draft of an archaeological narrative based on Habachi's 1946 excavation and discovery on Elephantine Island, which was eventually published in 1984, after thirty years in storage in the Egyptian Antiquities Department, by the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo as *The Sanctuary of Heqaib*. When I expressed a desire to write a popular work based on his excavation and findings, Habachi was delighted. He referred to it as "Habachi and Heqaib" and edited several chapters. After his death, this material was included in my first draft of his biography. I redrafted the material in the 1990s and realized that a more expansive view of Egyptology, in a broader context, was necessary. To this end, I placed Habachi's life and career against those of other Egyptians of his generations, and two things soon became clear. One is that the study of Egypt's ancient heritage is more closely linked to politics than may be generally supposed, and the second is that vicissitudes in the country's educational system go a long way toward explaining why Egyptians lagged in Egyptology for so long behind their foreign colleagues.

We are now sufficiently removed in time and understanding from the forces behind the development of social and nationalistic trends during the twentieth century to be able to review the life of Labib Habachi (1904–1984) alongside some of his most worthy contemporaries: Ahmed Kamal (1851–1932), his mentor, who was the first Egyptian to become both Egyptologist and archaeologist, and who was the groundbreaker in an academic field dominated by foreigners; Selim Hassan (1886–196l), who stands at the vanguard of the second generation and who carried out excavations at Giza that equaled in size and productivity those of any foreign mission working in Egypt at that time; Ahmed Fakhry (1905–1973), well-known for his pioneering studies on the oases of the Western Desert; and Gamal Mokhtar (1918–1977), under-secretary of state for the ministry of culture, president of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization (EAO) in the

1970s, and one of Egypt's most prominent and passionate advocates of Egyptian culture.

This biographical study goes beyond a narrative commentary on Labib Habachi's career over a period marked by two world wars, two revolutionary movements, Egypt's independence from British occupation, and a switch in archaeological methodology from object-finding to a multi-disciplinary scientific approach. My aim is to show the part that Egyptians have played in the study of Egyptology by integrating and analyzing the political, cultural, and social trends within which they, and foreign scholars, worked in the period under review.

Labib Habachi: The Life and Legacy of an Egyptologist provides an Egyptian perspective on archaeology over the span of a hundred years, from the building of the Egyptian Museum at the turn of the twentieth century to the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, which took place in Cairo in the year 2000.

Sources and Acknowledgments

A wide range of people enriched my understanding of the role played by Labib Habachi in the field of Egyptology and, in particular, the key figures around whom his career revolved. Among them are Henry G. Fischer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, William J. Murnane of Memphis State University, Tennessee, John Dorman of the American Research Center in Egypt, George R. Hughes of the Oriental Institute in Chicago, and two former directors of Chicago House in Luxor, Kent Weeks and Lanny Bell. Wolfgang Helck of Hamburg and Elmar Edel of Bonn, both of whom I met at the International Congress of Egyptology in Munich in August 1985, shared with me their recollections of the mid-1940s. Werner Kaiser, former director of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo, provided me with facilities for research, information on the institute's activities, and permission to use photographs from its archives. Gerhardt Haeny, former director of the Swiss Institute, helped me empathize with Habachi's fierce resistance to his differing views on the architecture of the Sanctuary of Heqaib discovered on Elephantine Island in 1946.

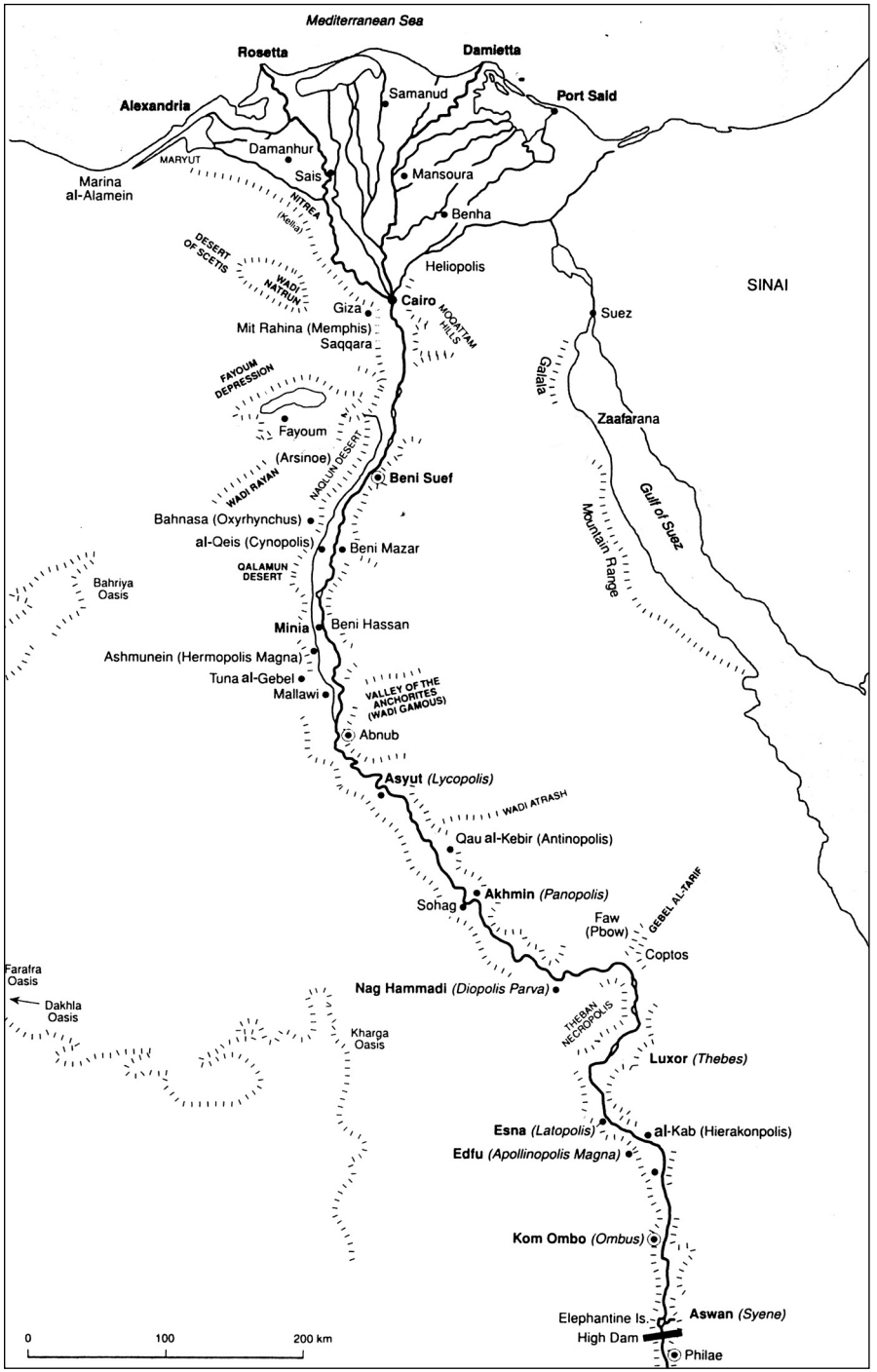
Gamal Mokhtar, late under-secretary of state for the ministry of culture and president of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, provided me

with a valuable insight into the period following Egypt's 1952 Revolution, the Nubia salvage operations in the 1960s, and the archaeological approach to Egyptology in the 1970s, when new challenges were faced. Egyptologist Henri Riad, as well as Hany Zeiny, the one-time director of the aluminum factory at Nag Hammadi and an amateur Egyptologist, were both generous in providing information about Habachi's work and personal life. Hany Zeiny accompanied Habachi on many trips to Abydos and was able to widen my understanding of the latter's relationship with the legendary Umm Seti (mother of Seti). Torgny Säve-Söderbergh of Uppsala University in Sweden, Rainer Stadelmann, the former director of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo, and two former directors of the Canadian Institute in Egypt, Ronald Leprohon and Edwin Brock, provided me with insight into archaeological activities and methodology during the period under review. Finally, my talks with Atteya Habachi, before her death in 1986, were useful in describing the activities of the American Research Center in Egypt during the Nubia salvage operations as well as her life with her husband.

An important source of material for this biography is the Labib Habachi Archives (LHA), stored in the headquarters of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in Luxor. The material in the archives was collected from Labib Habachi's personal library and packed into cardboard boxes by Atteya Habachi, aided by Gamal Mokhtar, Henri Riad, Edwin Brock, and myself. It includes correspondence, personal and professional, between Habachi and the Ashmoleon Museum, Dows Dunham of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Sir Alan Gardiner, the Griffin Institute, Ahmed Fakhry, Rosalind Moss, Umm Seti, William Hayes, Constant de Wit, and others. Habachi's personal letters, including some to his wife, were frequently typed in duplicate or triplicate and proved another valuable source of biographical material.

I have not had to trespass far into the bounds of imaginative reconstruction in this work because, apart from the above, I have drawn liberally from my own notes taken during regular weekly meetings with Labib Habachi between 1975 and 1984. Details pertaining to his unhappy discord with the Antiquities Department during most of his career, an

insight into confrontations between scholars, and details of what happened when the Antiquities Service was nationalized after the 1952 Revolution could not have been understood except through Habachi's personal experiences, confirmed by his colleagues, family, and friends. To Faiza Rady, for her critical appraisal of Egypt's political and social structure, go my special thanks. And last, but by no means least, I thank Michael Stock for his valuable suggestions and for editing the manuscript.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Port Said
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(Kellia)
Benha
DESERT
OF SCETIS
WADI
NATRUN
Heliopolis
SINAI
Giza
Cairo
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HILLS
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Gulf of Suez
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Beni Mazar
QALAMUN
DESERT
Bahriya
Oasis
Minia
Beni Hassan
Ashmunein (Hermopolis Magna)
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VALLEY OF THE
ANCHORITES
(WADI GAMOUS)
Abnub
Asyut (Lycopolis)
WADI ATRASH
Qau al-Kebir (Antinopolis)
Akhmin (Panopolis)
Sohag
GEBEL AL-TARIF
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(Pbow)
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Farafra
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Dakhla
Oasis
Nag Hammadi (Diopolis Parva)
THEBAN
NECROPOLIS
Kharga
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Luxor (Thebes)
Esna (Latopolis)
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Edfu (Apollinopolis Magna)
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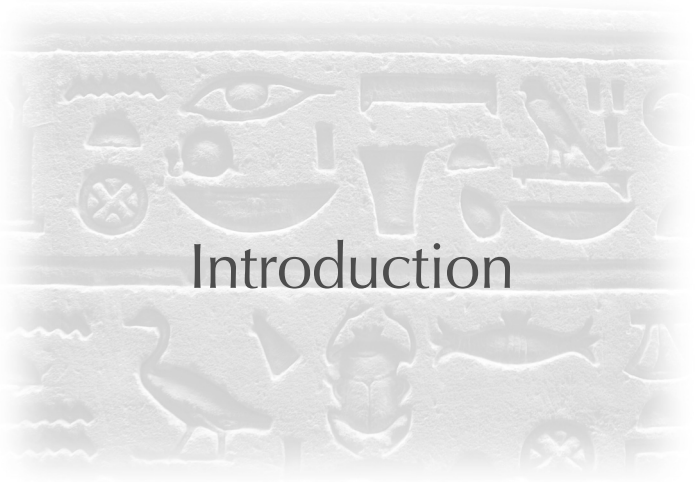
Map of Egypt



Introduction

Labib Habachi's biography, while covering archaeological activities in the twentieth century, shows that much of what is associated with that era in Egypt emerged from processes whose roots go back to earlier centuries. Therefore, tracing the role that Egyptians have played in the study of Egyptology requires an insight into the political and social forces that forged modern Egypt; the emergence of western-educated scholars who widened the intellectual horizon of the people; the roles played by French archaeologist Auguste Mariette, a titanic figure in the history of Egyptian archaeology, and Ahmed Kamal, the first native Egyptian to become both archaeologist and Egyptologist; and the role of the press in laying the foundation of a mounting national identity.

Although Napoleon Bonaparte is often said to have unlocked the door to Egypt's ancient past—and certainly his expedition to Egypt in 1798 remains significant for its impressive archaeological research and the establishment of the Institut d'Égypte in Cairo—an interest in the wonders of Egypt predates this historic event. Over a century earlier, V. Prospero Alpin arrived in Egypt in the company of the Venetian consul and, although his interest lay in the country's flora and fauna, he nevertheless

found time to study and measure Khufu's pyramid at Giza and examine the Sphinx. Father Claude Sicard, a Jesuit and one of the most widely traveled individuals of the sixteenth century, did even more. He drew up a geological map of Egypt for Regent Philip of Orleans in which he gave the location of twenty-four temples, over fifty inscribed and decorated tombs, and twenty of the main pyramids. His achievements, described in letters and miscellaneous reports between 1707 and 1726, were never published. Then came the son of a jeweler, Paul Lucas, who traveled to the countries of the eastern Mediterranean to trade in precious stones, visited Egypt at the command of the king of France, ascended the Nile as far as al-Derr in Nubia, drew topographical maps, and made architectural drawings in a travel book that was published posthumously. Others followed, but it was Richard Pococke, a clergyman, who was unquestionably the most scholarly of all the early travelers. In 1737 he visited Saqqara and drew a plan of the galleries of the sacred Apis bulls, described the "bent" and "red" pyramids of Sneferu at Dahshur, and went to the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III at Hawara to see for himself the "labyrinth" described in glowing terms by classical writers. Pococke's systematic and largely accurate descriptions of the archaeological sites in Egypt in the first volume of his *Description of the East and Some Other Countries* were adorned with drawings of statues and coffins, plans of tombs and monasteries, as well as maps. He sailed to Upper Egypt armed with the indispensable letter of introduction from a senior government official to the authorities in different areas, and spent time in Luxor making splendid drawings of the Colossus of Memnon from different angles and of tombs in the Valley of the Kings. When he visited the granite quarries of Aswan, he noted that the town itself was small, impoverished, and had barracks for members of the Ottoman royal guard.

Egypt, a province of the Ottoman Empire, was ruled by Mamluks and on the brink of ruin toward the end of the eighteenth century. Bloody feuds between contesting 'houses,' coupled with a series of disastrously low Nile floods, famine, and outbreaks of plague, had taken their toll. Rich in resources and strategically located at the crossroads of East and West, the country was at the mercy of any great power, and Austria,

Britain, France, and Russia all showed commercial and colonial interest in Egypt. France made the first move. Napoleon had long dreamed of an empire on the Nile, and he formulated a plan for its invasion and occupation based on scientific research. He trusted Gaspard Monge, a respected scientist, to bring together experts or savants to form a Commission des Sciences et des Arts en Égypte and within two months had successfully assembled astronomers, engineers, naturalists, orientalists, printers, and draftsmen who were the best brains in France to organize and administer his colony. Napoleon made his intentions known at a meeting of the Institut de France in Paris early in the year of the invasion, and his formidable fleet of thirteen ships-of-the-line, six frigates, and dozens of smaller ships, apart from troop ships, set sail across the Mediterranean. The army disembarked at Alexandria in May 1798, won an early victory, and headed for Cairo where the crucial 'battle of the pyramids' took place. The Mamluks, whose cavalry and military methods had remained virtually unchanged since medieval times, were easily overthrown by the enormous force of thirty-five thousand French soldiers.

Like Alexander the Great, who presented himself as Egypt's liberator from Persian rule, Napoleon declared that he had come to put an end to oppressive Ottoman domination. He appealed to local religious sentiment by inviting village notables and religious leaders to participate in a French-controlled *diwan*, or administrative council, assuring them that they could devise their own rules for internal government. Until Napoleon, the concept of popular rule was alien to Egypt and this can be regarded as one of France's important contributions to Egypt's national development. The sultan in Constantinople, naturally anxious to retain control of Egypt, formed an alliance with Britain and declared war on France. The British fleet under Lord Nelson arrived off the Egyptian coast in 1801 and sank the French fleet at anchor in Abukir Bay. Combined British, Ottoman, and Mamluk attacks forced Napoleon to retreat from Egypt, his dream of an Eastern empire dashed.

Despite so short an occupation, French influence had a lasting effect on Egypt and on its development of national identity. Germane to this was the introduction of an Arabic printing press set up in Cairo's river

port area at Bulaq. Originally used for French proclamations and to publish scientific and economic journals based on the reports of the scholars who accompanied Napoleon's army, the press was destined to have a marked impact on the country's political and intellectual development. The best known of France's legacies was the foundation of the headquarters for Napoleon's commission of sciences in Cairo, which took the name Institut d'Égypte. It was divided into departments for mathematics, physics, geology, political economy, and arts and letters. Sophisticated laboratories were set up, topographical and other maps drawn, and geology studied. Although established to serve political ends—to study the country's fuel, water power, and raw material potential after occupation—the institute is best remembered today for its archaeological research and the publication, in installments between 1803 and 1828, of nine massive volumes of text and eleven volumes of illustrations entitled *Description de l'Égypte*, which was the first comprehensive scientific survey of Egypt and its ancient monuments.

When Napoleon's soldiers came across an inscribed stone at Rosetta (modern Rachid) while digging a trench in order to consolidate the foundations of the fortress of Julien as a defense against British attack, an army captain observed a Greek text carved along with hieroglyphics and an unfamiliar writing. It is to his credit that he realized its importance and sent it to the newly founded Institut d'Égypte. The Rosetta Stone was clearly some sort of decree written in three scripts and thus a possible key to an understanding of the lost language of the pharaohs. Although, according to the articles of the treaty of capitulation, all the antiquities secured by the French should have been handed to the British, France managed to retain all its archaeological records, a sizable horde of Egyptian treasures, and the rights to publish the text on the Rosetta Stone. Britain took possession of the precious stone itself, which is now in the British Museum.

With the final evacuation of the French in 1801, the institute was forced to close temporarily, but some French scholars chose to remain in Egypt. The remaining French officials and the new British administrators struggled for power for two years. The political vacuum was finally filled

by a young Macedonian officer, Muhammad Ali (1769–1848), the commander of the Albanian contingent of the Ottoman forces that came to fight against the French. He founded a dynasty that ruled Egypt for a century and a half, until Gamal Abd al-Nasser, the champion of the revolution of 1952, emerged on the scene.

These two men, the Macedonian and the native Egyptian, have sometimes been compared with one another. Each was of humble origin: Muhammad Ali was an orphan and Nasser was an *ibn al-balad* (literally, a son of the land), his father being a postmaster. Each had grand visions for Egypt. Muhammad Ali set out to modernize the country by introducing European technology and, to this end, he crushed rival Ottoman and Mamluk commanders, confiscated their vast estates, and appointed members of his own family to key positions, thus founding a strong and loyal elite. Nasser's revolution put an end to this alien dynasty—which had been subject to European (British) influence for decades—and his aim was to Egyptianize the country through nationalization and social reform.

Both Muhammad Ali Pasha—the title of Viceroy bestowed on him by the Ottoman sultan—and Gamal Abd al-Nasser regarded education as part of their reform policies, but with different aims and with different results. Muhammad Ali sent qualified students abroad for training, raised local standards by importing European instructors and techniques, and founded training institutes in several disciplines. He did not pretend he was doing this for the native Egyptians; in fact, he courted the Ottoman sultan to protect his interests and those of his heirs while conscripting Egyptian peasant farmers into an army that could hinder any attempt to remove him from the country by force. Under Nasser's socialist policy, educating Egyptians was the priority, and free education was guaranteed to all up to the university level. His mistake was to abolish foreign educational institutions and discourage foreign tutors from remaining in Egypt before he found qualified replacements. Neither man had an interest in Egypt's ancient monuments.

Muhammad Ali was eager for the fruits of western technology and realized that this required foreign expertise. He was also sensitive to western fascination with Egypt's antiquities. Muhammad Ali charmed

professionals by offering them a free hand to collect whatever they wished in payment for their services. It was no difficult task in those days to gather beautiful objects. Statues or parts of statues, painted reliefs from the collapsed walls of tombs and temples, steles, and funerary objects could be found all over the country. Muhammad Ali himself assembled a small personal collection of antiquities in order to have a supply ready at hand to pay for services rendered or to hand out as bribes. A suitable location to store them was found in a small building in Azbakiya and when the objects outgrew the space, the collection was transferred to a hall at the Citadel.

When Muhammad Ali was persuaded by a French engineer that the future of Egypt lay in agricultural development, especially in the cultivation of cotton, he called on Bernardino Drovetti, consul general of France in Egypt (who previously had a successful military career under Napoleon), to look into the matter. Drovetti accepted the commission and recruited engineers to construct a barrage at the apex of the Delta and subsequent barrages further upstream. Through a network of irrigation canals, the annual flood was controlled and water diverted into basins from which outlying land could be irrigated. In return for his expertise, Drovetti received a firman, a special permit from Muhammad Ali that allowed him to excavate freely ancient sites and build up a collection of antiquities. His first horde comprised 169 papyri and manuscripts, 485 metal artifacts, 2,400 scarabs and amulets, and 102 mummies, which was offered to but rejected by France. It was subsequently bought by the king of Sardinia in 1824 and now forms the principal part of the great collection of Turin. Drovetti's continued service to the Egyptian state enabled him to amass a second collection of antiquities comprising three beautifully preserved and decorated sarcophagi, ten granite steles, sixty limestone steles, five hundred manuscripts, two mummies, and eighty gold objects, now in the Louvre. His third collection, equally important, is in the Berlin Museum.

Drovetti's chance meeting in Alexandria with Frédéric Cailliaud, a French geologist and mineralogist from Nantes, resulted in an enduring friendship. Cailliaud had visited Egypt in 1815 to seek out new rocks and

minerals for his personal collection and had made numerous journeys up the Nile and into the deserts over a period of five years. He and Drovetti were delighted to find they had common interests and determined to explore together. When Drovetti introduced Cailliaud to the pasha, the geologist soon enough found himself on a government assignment. Muhammad Ali commissioned him to search for ancient emerald mines in the Eastern Desert, which had been worked under the Ptolemaic kings but had subsequently disappeared, leaving no trace. Familiar as he was with the geology of the Eastern Desert, Cailliaud managed to collect numerous emeralds. He returned to Cairo, handed them to the pasha in triumph, and expected to be left to his own devices. But Muhammad Ali had other ideas. Emeralds were an economic asset, and Cailliaud was promptly dispatched on another mission to look for more mines. He equipped himself for a long excursion, traveled beyond Gabal Zabara to Gabal Sikeit in the Eastern Desert, where he successfully collected a large number of rough-cut stones. But this time he did not rush back to Cairo. He first set off to explore the Arabian (Eastern) and Libyan (Western) deserts, where he collected rare stones and minerals for his own collection.

Antoine B. Clot, a French surgeon known as Clot Bey, was another of a group of European experts recruited by Muhammad Ali, this time to establish the first Egyptian medical school. Clot Bey laid the foundations of the Egyptian public health service and the center of medical education in Qasr al-Aini hospital. In payment for his services to the state he was able to assemble a large collection of antiquities, which he dispatched in batches to the Louvre in 1852 and 1853. The British Museum purchased two papyri, and the balance of Clot Bey's collection was sold for a nominal sum to the municipality of Marseilles.

European countries were beginning to form national museums as repositories for their own cultures and those of other nations, and a fierce rivalry for antiquities emerged when their consuls in Egypt were ordered to set about collecting objects. The chief contenders were Drovetti and the British consul, Henry Salt (whose acquisitions are in the British Museum), followed by the Swedish and Norwegian consul, Giovanni

Anastasi (whose collections were later dispersed to various museums in London, Paris, Stockholm, and the Netherlands), and the Austrian consul, Giuseppe Acerbi. Egyptian antiquities became such a craze that a monk visiting Egypt, Father Geramb, reputedly remarked to Muhammad Ali that it would hardly be respectable, on one's return from Egypt, to arrive in Europe without a mummy in one hand and a crocodile in the other.

Drovetti and Salt, who had developed an interest in hieroglyphics and came to enjoy special favor with Muhammad Ali, reached a gentlemen's agreement to carve up the Nile valley between them. They were not much concerned with moral issues when antiquities were so freely given away. One of the most infamous cases of the desecration of a monument is worthy of mention. When French collector Sébastien Saulnier saw a drawing made for *Description de l'Égypte* of the spectacular Zodiac in the temple of Dendara, he decided that such a remarkable piece should belong to France. He recruited a French engineer, Jean Le Lorrain, to acquire the piece, a formidable challenge because the dome of the shrine was carved on two huge blocks of stone nearly a meter thick. Gunpowder was used to dislodge them from the temple wall. After twenty days of sawing by a well-paid force of local workmen, the masterpiece was finally dragged on special wooden rollers toward a boat. By the time it reached the edge of the Nile, the British got heed of the activity. When Salt saw the Zodiac, he interceded to claim it for Britain. He failed. The monument arrived in Paris and was sold to King Louis XVIII for 150,000 francs. It was placed in the Bibliothèque Nationale and is now in the Louvre.

With the successive appearance of volumes of the magnificently illustrated folios of *Description de l'Égypte*, the riches of Egyptian antiquity were made known. Here was a flourishing early civilization whose monuments had stood the test of thousands of years. Time, wars, neglect had not diminished their appeal, and the scramble for monuments became intense. Giovanni Belzoni, a giant of a man of Italian birth, known as the 'Patagonian Sampson' of Saddler's Wells theater in London, read about Egypt's primitive farming methods and designed a pumping machine that could replace Egypt's traditional *shaduf* and *saqqia*. Ever receptive to

innovative ideas, Muhammad Ali saw the project as entirely feasible and commissioned him to move ahead. The one-time strongman tackled the commission with vigor, refusing at first to be diverted by Ludwig Burckhardt, a Swiss linguist who tried to recruit him to transport abroad a colossal granite head of extraordinary beauty on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes, which had apparently been abandoned by the French engineers of Napoleon's scientific mission. Only when Belzoni's irrigation experiments ended in failure, and he found himself in serious financial straits, did he contact Burckhardt to say he would transport the colossus but not bear the cost. Henry Salt offered to finance the project. Muhammad Ali gave him the necessary firman, and 'the Young Memnon' (in fact, it is Ramesses II) is now a focal point in the British Museum.

Muhammad Ali's trading in works of art for technical know-how was not exceptional. Until today, valuable objects remain diplomatic playthings in the hands of politicians. What is remarkable is the sheer volume of Egypt's ancient treasures that was carried abroad, and what condemns Muhammad Ali is that he personally ordered the destruction of disused temples if they occupied valuable agricultural land, stood at the edge of the desert where land could be reclaimed, or hindered development. Ancient monuments were, moreover, a valuable source of raw material. Why quarry fresh granite and limestone when large quantities of carefully cut and squared blocks were there for the taking? Much of modern Cairo was built from temples that were dismantled piecemeal by quarrymen and transported by barge downstream. Standing monuments were put to other uses as well: the temple of Armant was turned into a sugar factory. The temple of Hermopolis was reduced to lime for cement, and a small temple on Elephantine Island, recorded by one of Napoleon's scholars, was demolished reputedly because the local governor was disturbed by tourists visiting the island. The loss to archaeology and to ancient history is staggering.

Thus, while western scholars like Swedish diplomat and orientalist Johan David Akerblad, British physician, physicist, and orientalist Thomas Young, and French scholar Jean-François Champollion were trying to decipher the Rosetta Stone from accurate copies of inscriptions,

rubbings, drawings, and casts, the ancient Egyptian civilization that they sought to understand was being systematically dispersed or destroyed. As a grand gesture of goodwill, Muhammad Ali presented to King Louis XVIII the western (standing) obelisk at the entrance to the Luxor temple, which was transported to Paris and erected in Place de la Concorde in 1836. The obelisk of Thutmose III was later presented to King George IV of England as a mark of personal respect; it was erected on the Thames embankment in 1878. Its twin was taken to New York in 1880 and stands in Central Park.

Until the rise of the modern state under Muhammad Ali and the establishment of a European-style state school system, Egyptians had only a vague concept of the West. This began to change when the pasha, whose aim was to train top-quality manpower for the services of the state, sent the first educational missions abroad to Florence, London, Milan, Paris, and Rome between 1809 and 1813. The chosen scholars studied military science, shipbuilding, and engineering. Rifaa al-Tahtawi, a native of Asyut and a graduate of al-Azhar University, played an important role in promoting awareness of western culture. He visited the Institut d'Égypte in Cairo, observed the scholars at work, and had himself a natural aptitude for study. When he was appointed as spiritual leader to twenty-four Egyptians sent to study in France between 1826 and 1831, he took the opportunity to read the classics and works of philosophy, history, geography, mineralogy, geometry, astronomy, law, mythology, and hygiene. He translated parts of books into Arabic, some of which were sent to Muhammad Ali, who immediately recognized in al-Tahtawi a man of conventional upbringing whose intellectual outlook had been broadened by exposure to Europe. Such a man, he realized, was ideally suited to help widen the intellectual horizon of Egyptians. On his return to Egypt, al-Tahtawi was appointed editor of the Official Gazette. Through its columns, reformist ideas began to circulate. Al-Tahtawi also was appointed head of the translation office in Madrasat al-Lisan al-Qadim,

the School of Ancient Languages (sometimes incorrectly referred to as the first school of Egyptology), which heralded a literary renaissance.

Egypt's greatest scholars emerged from the corridors of al-Azhar University. Among them was the famous chronicler Abdel Rahman al-Jabarti (1756–1825), an exceptional figure for his day who came from a family of religious scholars in a village in the Delta, studied Islamic Egypt when he served as an apprentice to Syrian biographer al-Muradi, and progressed through one of the state schools with honors. Al-Jabarti attended Muhammad Ali's naval school in Alexandria and then an engineering school in Cairo, visited the Institut d'Égypte (where he was impressed by the library, laboratories, and level of scholarship), and subsequently spent four years in France where he studied at the Paris observatory. He also visited observatories in Berlin, Brussels, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Vienna. On his return to Egypt, he was appointed a royal astronomer at the Abbassiya observatory. For over a decade, al-Jabarti worked on a map of Lower Egypt that was published by the Bulaq Press in 1871.

Mahmoud Bey 'al-Falaki' (1815–1885), a leading scholar in mathematics and engineering, was another product of al-Azhar and the state schooling system who studied abroad. He did important work in archaeology, topography, and engineering, published articles in European scholarly journals, and was the first Egyptian to win European recognition. He represented Egypt at geographical congresses, in Paris in 1875 and in Venice in 1881. Somewhat ironically, as a western-cultured elite was emerging in Egypt for the first time, with European standards of hygiene and health, and when the wearing of western-style clothing became the mark of a gentleman, Europeans like the outspoken writer Gustave Flaubert, and artists like Henri Prisse d'Avennes, Robert Hay, and David Roberts, not to mention Edward Lane (of *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* fame) frequently adopted Arab garb as they traveled through Egypt.

The discipline of Egyptology was officially born in 1822 when French scholar Jean-François Champollion deciphered the Rosetta Stone, which proved to be a text written by the clergy of Memphis in praise of

Ptolemy V. Although several scholars contributed to its decipherment, Champollion is regarded as the first to put Egyptian philological studies on a workable basis. He established that, far from the hieroglyphics being symbols as was supposed, each picture actually represented a phonetic sound which, combined, spelled out words. Champollion compiled his *Grammaire Égyptienne* and *Grammaire Hiéroglyphique*, thus leading the way to utilizing the 'key.' His voyage to Egypt in the company of his younger protégé, Italian Egyptologist Ippolito Rosellini, resulted in large folio volumes of drawings and texts and, with *Monuments de l'Égypte*, Egyptologists were at last able to follow the history of the ancient civilization through a series of monuments.

François Auguste Mariette (1821–1881), founder of the *Service des Antiquités* (Antiquities Service), was first sent to Egypt by the Louvre to acquire Coptic, Ethiopic, and Syrian manuscripts. He began to excavate at Saqqara, but his attention was soon diverted by an avenue of sphinxes that closely resembled a passage leading to the Serapeum in the writings of Roman geographer Strabo. Coptic manuscripts forgotten, Mariette found and excavated the rock-hewn galleries with flanking chambers that contained huge sarcophagi. Most of the lids of solid granite had been pushed aside and the contents pillaged. One alone was intact; robbers had been unsuccessful in their attempt to open it. Mariette used dynamite. Inside, he found a solid gold statue of a bull that he despatched to the Louvre along with vases and the inner coffin; the mummified bull itself is now in the Agricultural Museum in Cairo. Mariette then moved on to Giza, where he excavated the valley temple of Khafre, builder of the second pyramid.

While Mariette was at work on the necropolis, his archaeological activities were monitored by the Egyptian government. Abbas, the oldest male heir of the family, who had succeeded Muhammad Ali in 1848, posted a guard to watch over his activities not because of an interest in Egyptology so much as because of his xenophobic distrust of the French. Time had passed since Muhammad Ali developed his strategy based on agricultural expansion and industrial development, and the equipment imported from France for weaving cotton, jute, silk, and wool, as well as that used in the sugar, glass, and tanning industries, had fallen into such

disrepair that these industries had to be closed. The officials responsible for maintaining the equipment were deported and French traders were discouraged from working in Egypt because their merchandise was frequently of inferior quality. The French also had proved to be less than honest in their dealings. Abbas was no doubt pleased when Mariette ran out of funds and returned to France, where he subsequently became curator of the Egyptian center of the Louvre.

A great advance in the discipline was made in 1842, when Frederick William IV despatched a Prussian expedition to Egypt and Nubia. It was the best-equipped expedition to date, under the directorship of Richard Lepsius, who prepared for it most thoroughly. He first visited the principal Egyptian collections in Europe and then, once in Egypt with skilled draughtsmen, set out to record as much as possible of what was above the ground, to collect antiquities, and to attempt to thoroughly survey inscriptions. His method of excavation and stratified drawing of cross-sections across the site of the Labyrinth in the Fayoum was not used again until the twentieth century. Twelve volumes of folio-sized plates followed by seven volumes of text were published. The Egyptian Museum in Berlin was founded with Lepsius as director, and, backed by the powerful empire, a German periodical on the topic, *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*, was launched in 1874.

Adolf Erman, Egyptologist and linguist, was one of the early scholars to base his studies on a complete understanding of hieroglyphics. He compiled *Ägyptische Grammatik*, which was for many years the indispensable guide for anyone aspiring to a knowledge of hieroglyphics. In his book, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, he described the political structure of ancient Egypt, administrative systems, domestic life and kinship, dress, amusements, learning, mathematics, warfare, magic, and crime. Unlike his contemporary, Kurt Sethe, Erman published works in technical and popular form. By 1892, the influence of the 'Berlin School' was felt all over the world. Meanwhile, Britain's Robert Hay, James Burton, and John Gardner Wilkinson produced great collections of facsimiles of reliefs and inscriptions, and interest in ancient Egypt, both professional and popular, increased.

Amelia Edwards's *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile*, published in 1877, became a travel classic. Edwards awakened public concern about the need to preserve monuments. She wrote on their exposure to the elements and expressed shock at their wanton destruction by rapacious locals and foreign collectors. Her book on her journey as far as the Second Cataract of the Nile transformed her from a popular English novelist to a sponsor of Egyptology. She founded the Egypt Exploration Fund, forerunner of the present Egypt Exploration Society (EES), in 1882. It was the first such private institution, and Flinders Petrie, the British Egyptologist who started work in Egypt a year earlier when he carried out a survey of the Great Pyramid, worked under its auspices. In 1893, Petrie founded his own organization, the Egyptian Research Account, which continued after 1905 as the British School of Archaeology in Egypt. He made his breakthrough in laying down the foundations of a proper archaeological method at Naqada in Upper Egypt, a site first excavated by Émile Amélineau, who discovered vast predynastic cemeteries. Until Amélineau's excavations between 1894 and 1898, the history of Egypt was known only as far back as the pharaoh Sneferu (ca. 2600 BC). The first three dynasties were a blank. The discovery of a vast predynastic cemetery with grave goods that spanned a considerable length of time presented a challenge to Petrie. Without written evidence, how could the material be sorted in correct chronological order? His solution was 'sequence dating,' through which different styles of pottery were related to one another in what became standard archaeological procedure.

In 1854, a chance meeting in Alexandria between Mariette and Ferdinand de Lesseps, who was touting for the Suez Canal concession, linked the former's future decisively to Egypt. De Lesseps was fascinated when Mariette recounted his discovery of the Apis tombs and arranged a meeting with Said Pasha, Abbas's successor as Viceroy, who also was impressed by the Frenchman's experiences. As Mariette waxed lyrical about the country's unique monuments, and described the extent of vandalism by diplomats, tourists, treasure hunters, and antiquities dealers and by the activities of the *sabakhin* (farmers digging for the rich refuse deposits of ancient urban settlement sites with which to fertilize their

fields), Said listened. Mariette explained that few excavations were adequately documented and he stressed the importance of establishing a system to protect the monuments. During successive meetings, the pasha's respect and admiration for the Frenchman grew and he appointed Mariette conservator (and later director) of Egyptian monuments.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Mariette formulated a conservation policy to staunch the flow of Egyptian antiquities abroad. He requested suitable premises for a museum and was allocated a building in Bulaq that originally belonged to an overland transport company. Stripped and remodeled by an Italian construction company in neopharaonic style, the building had spacious exhibition halls. Objects were collected from various storerooms around the country and placed on display: sphinxes and steles, statues, miscellaneous woodwork, and a huge assortment of small objects. It was a chronologically disorganized collection, but it could not have been otherwise; most of the objects had been collected haphazardly. Those that could be professionally identified were labeled and Mariette wrote a museum guidebook.

With extraordinary energy, Mariette then embarked on a vast program of excavation at no fewer than thirty-five sites throughout Egypt, reputedly employing 7,280 workmen. He gradually built up a supervisory body of inspectors and wardens of monuments, thus bringing to an end "the age of the consuls" and curbing, to some extent, the activities of collectors whose search for objects had already caused substantial damage to monuments. Thanks to Mariette, for the first time much of what was discovered remained in Egypt. His greatest achievement was to develop a worldwide conscience about the destruction, expropriation, and proper care and conservation of Egyptian antiquities. He ordered the clearance of many temples and, due to his efforts, those of Edfu, Karnak, and Dendara were excavated from encroaching sand and could be seen in their former grandeur. To him also must go credit for conserving the treasures of Tanis, Giza, Saqqara's Old Kingdom mastabas, and the necropolis of Meidum. The great temples of Abydos, Deir al-Bahari, Medinet Habu, Esna, and Edfu were likewise protected from further ruthless excavation and pillage. Mariette could not personally supervise a site himself so he

appointed a native *rayyis* which earned him strong criticism. The British scholar Flinders Petrie also accused him of conducting unprofessional excavations and monopolizing activities in his own interests.

The difference between the British approach to archaeology and the French is best demonstrated in the work of Petrie and that of Jacques de Morgan at Naqada, one of the most important predynastic cultures in Upper Egypt, which covered a vast area of some seventeen feddans (an area of about one acre) packed with a staggering number of graves. When Petrie excavated there in 1895, he organized his well-trained diggers into crews that worked meticulously under his own watchful eye. De Morgan posted squads of workers at key positions but they, in contrast, dug haphazardly. Later, Petrie was equally critical of Édouard Naville, the Swiss Egyptologist and biblical scholar, when both worked for the EEF at Deir al-Bahari on the Theban necropolis. Naville was given the grant to excavate the temples of Mentuhotep II, Hatshepsut, and Thutmose III, and Petrie considered it "ludicrous" to entrust such valuable monuments to someone who did not recognize the significance of the site's small objects. There was open hostility between the two scholars.

Said Pasha (viceroy, 1854–1863), who reopened the Institut d'Égypte in Alexandria, was a gifted orator widely quoted in the press. One of his speeches, addressed to a group of religious leaders, members of the government, and the army, is worth quoting because it clearly reflects his strong sense of national identity:

> Brothers, I have examined the circumstances of this Egyptian people in relation to history and have found it oppressed and in enslavement to other nations, such as the Hyksos, Assyrians, Persians, even the people of Libya and the Sudan, the Greeks, and the Romans, before Islam and after it. Many conquering nations have overrun this land—the Umayyads, 'Abbasids, and Fatimids from among the Arabs, the Turks, Kurds, and Circassians. France has frequently raided it, prior

> to occupying it at the beginning of this century under Bonaparte. Because I consider myself Egyptian, I have dedicated myself to changing this idea from thought to action (Laila Shukry el-Hamamsy, "The Assertion of Egyptian Identity" in *Arab Society in Transition*, eds. Saad Eddin Ibrahim and Nicholas Hopkins (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1977, p. 59.))

Said Pasha renewed the European policies of Muhammad Ali even as he took steps to Egyptianize the local government. He gave preference to Arabic over Turkish in official correspondence and, while ensuring that top military positions continued to be held by members of the Turco-Circassian elite, he ordered the sons of village notables *(shaykh*s*)* to join the army to be trained as officers for the first time. He granted the concession to build the Suez Canal to Ferdinand de Lesseps in good faith, but with the Egyptian government committed to pay over seventy percent of capital costs to only fifteen percent of the annual profits, it was a financial time bomb that ticked away until after his death.

He was succeeded by Ismail Pasha in 1863, who was later granted the title of Khedive (a princely title of Turco-Persian origin that gave him autonomy in Egypt). Today we remember Ismail largely for the grand celebration marking the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and for bringing Egypt to the brink of ruin when, unable to make the payment of interest on loans to his creditors in Britain and France, he was obliged to sell his share in the Suez Canal Company. In the context of the present study, however, it is important to note his stance in relation to the protection and conservation of Egyptian monuments, and also the fact that his rule saw the greatest transformation of Egypt into a modern power since the time of Muhammad Ali.

Unlike his predecessors Abbas and Said, Ismail Pasha received a European education and was widely traveled. Actually, his exposure to western culture was incidental. He had an eye disease as a child and was put under the care of the best Austrian specialists in Vienna. The city was at that time the hub of Europe, and there the young prince was honored and showered with affection, not because he was such a charming child

but because the Ottoman Empire was at odds with the countries of Europe and any tilt in that direction was seen as laudable opposition to its rule. The youth was overwhelmed by European culture. He attended concerts and other musical events and visited historic buildings and art galleries. He perfected his French and joined the military school of Saint-Cir.

Ismail set out to adorn Cairo with European-style buildings and eventually planned and developed new city quarters in Abdin and Azbakiya on the east bank of the Nile; in Giza, including the zoo and the Orman Gardens to the west; Abbasiya, Mataria, Zeytoun, and Heliopolis to the north; and the Island of Zamalek opposite Bulaq port. Municipal services such as sewage were installed in several areas of Cairo and Alexandria. Ismail built the central railway station, Station Square and an Opera House modeled on the one in Paris. He founded a national library (Dar al-Kutub), and an observatory in Helwan. Ismail, who expanded the system of sending promising students abroad for their education, took steps to found the School of Management (which later became the Royal School of Law) to cater to the sons of upper-class Egyptians who had means and connections. He also started the Khedival Geographical Society (which became the Royal Geographical Society under King Fuad and the Egyptian Geographical Society after the 1952 Revolution). For minister of education, he chose Ali Mubarak, his fellow student in Paris and later a prominent government official during the reigns of Ismail's two predecessors. Mubarak founded a teachers' training college, assisted in the foundation of Dar al-Kutub, and was the author of a voluminous study of nineteenth-century Egypt written with the help of several Egyptians. The tome, which included reference to Egypt's pharaonic heritage, drew on his own experiences as well as the writings of Arabic and European authors and was widely distributed in the Arab world. The leading daily newspaper, *al-Ahram* ('The Pyramids'), chose ancient Egypt's largest and most enduring monuments for its title and logo, which, together with the image of the Sphinx on postal stamps, became symbols of Egypt.

In Ismail's time, a generation of Egyptian intellectuals and professionals made rapid strides. Rifaa al-Tahtawi, Mahmoud al-Falaki, and Ali

Mubarak encouraged Egyptians to take part in international congresses of orientalists and geographers. With Ismail's encouragement, Mariette organized two fairs in Paris, and displays were dispatched to exhibitions in London, Vienna, and Philadelphia. They were set up in collaboration with Thomas Cook, launching an era of mass tourism to Egypt.

On the archaeological front, Ismail issued a series of laws on April 21, 1863, addressed to inspectors of antiquities. They stipulated that "Mariette Bey's" demands to facilitate his excavations in Upper Egypt must be met; that workers on sites should be adequately paid; and that they must forbid the destruction of monuments or their demolition, or the use of stones from monuments for erecting government or private buildings, "because the antiquities in Egypt are the strongest means to perpetuate the history of the kingdom, and the conservation of these monuments is one of our dearest wishes." Ismail's law further stipulated that any antiquities chanced upon by the inhabitants of the villages should automatically become the property of the Antiquities Service. "These relics," the law stipulated, "should be examined on the spot if they are huge and remain where they are found, but if their size is small they must be carried to the Antiquities Service." Aware that the inhabitants of Luxor were in the habit of searching for and appropriating antiquities as well as using the stones for the construction of their dwellings, the law further stated that the inspectors were "invested with the authority to stop them, making certain that such things should not take place," adding, "You must give instructions to the *mudir* (governor) to realize the demands of Mariette Bey, Director of Antiquities, (and) supply him with camels, horses, boats, wood (and other?) material and take any necessary steps for the conservation and transport of antiquities."

Ismail revived the School of Languages, which had been closed by the xenophobic Abbas. When Mariette recommended that Heinrich Brugsch, a brilliant linguist who was sent to Egypt by the Prussian government in 1853, be offered a five-year contract to direct the school, Ismail's response was positive. The school was opened in a derelict villa near the museum in Bulaq until more suitable accommodation could be found, and students from state schools with the highest grades in French

qualified for enrollment. Arabic instruction was given by a shaykh from al-Azhar University, Coptic instruction by a member of the Coptic patriarchate, and English, French, and German by native speakers. Brugsch himself taught Latin, Greek, and Egyptian (hieroglyphics).

One of Brugsch's students was Ahmad Kamal, a youth with sharp intelligence and an inherent talent for linguistics. Brugsch himself, early in life, had developed what was described as a precocious knowledge of Demotic and sketched out a grammar. Kamal had attended two of Cairo's elite schools at the primary and secondary levels, and his interest in ancient Egyptian history and its language launched him on a life-long study into the relationship of Egyptian and Semitic languages, with an emphasis on Arabic. Unfortunately, although the standard and quality of education at the School of Languages was high, the reward was somewhat demeaning. The best the graduates could hope for was a post as translator in the ministry of education. Ahmed Kamal was lucky to find employment as a translator in the Antiquities Service, along with another of his contemporaries, Ahmed Naguib.

Kamal was thirty years of age before he made a break into the professional field. In 1881, a report reached Emile Brugsch (younger brother of Heinrich Brugsch) that valuable antiquities were regularly surfacing on the market in Luxor. This was nothing new. But when funerary statuettes of King Pinedjem and important papyri appeared on the market, it appeared that a royal tomb was being pillaged and this demanded immediate attention. Accompanied by Kamal, Emile Brugsch went to Luxor, inspected the objects, and confirmed that they were genuine. He subsequently conducted enquiries as to their source, with Ahmed Kamal acting as translator, and it soon became apparent that the villagers of Qurna were involved. Enquiries—some restrained, some brutal—yielded nothing. The only substantial clue led to Abdel Rasul Ahmed, a prominent antiquities merchant who had many supporters to vouch for his honesty and innocence. Abdel Rasul denied any involvement and there was a complete deadlock, until a family rivalry led to his betrayal. Abdel Rasul's eldest brother led Brugsch to a shaft in one of the foothills of the range of hills separating the Valley of the Kings from Deir al-Bahari. Brugsch saw