

THE MUMMY'S COMPLAINT:

An Object-Biography of the Egyptian Mummies in New Zealand Museums, 1885-1897

Ryan Brown-Haysom

2013

**A dissertation submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Museum and
Heritage Studies.**

ABSTRACT

Recent years have seen a revival of interest in material objects in the humanities generally, and in Museum Studies in particular. Although the influence of this ‘material turn’ is still in its early stages, one of the manifestations of the renewed interest in the ‘life of things’ has been the growth of interest in Actor-Network Theory, a branch of sociological analysis which attempts to reconstruct the networks of agency through which social existence is created and maintained. One of the more controversial aspects of Actor-Network Theory (or ANT) is its willingness to concede a level of agency to non-human and inanimate actors in these ‘assemblages.’ For Museum Studies, the relevance of this theoretical framework lies in the analysis of museums both as assemblages in their own right, and as *actants* in a network of other sites, institutions, technologies, ideologies, and objects. Museum objects, long viewed as inert, can be seen instead as participants in the ‘shuffle of agency’ that constitutes institutions and inducts them into wider patterns of social activity.

This dissertation uses the case study of Egyptian mummies in New Zealand museums to gauge the usefulness of an ANT-based approach to writing the ‘life-history of objects.’ Borrowing the concept of the ‘object biography’ from Kopytoff and Appadurai, it attempts to construct such a history of the five complete Egyptian mummies in New Zealand’s public museums. Using the principles of Actor-Network Theory, it attempts to trace the ways in which mummies have been constituted as ‘meaningful objects’ through the examination of the ways in which they have moved through different assemblages, both globally and within New Zealand, during the twelve years from 1885 to 1897. This was the period during which all five Egyptian mummies entered New Zealand collections, traversing networks of imperialism, scientific knowledge, religious knowledge, and exchange. In the course of their movement through these diverse assemblages, the meaning of mummies – inside and outside the public museum – could be construed in radically different ways.

This dissertation considers the usefulness of such a methodology for Museum Studies and Material Culture Studies, and considers the potential benefits and pitfalls of writing about assemblages for those who want to consider the life-history of objects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have received much assistance in the researching and writing of this dissertation. First, I must express my deep appreciation to Dr Conal McCarthy and Annie Mercer of the Museum and Heritage Studies Programme at Victoria University of Wellington. Their unflagging guidance, assistance and encouragement has been invaluable. I have also incurred a debt of gratitude to the staff at a number of the institutions I have visited to conduct archival research. Although this list is by no means exhaustive, I must mention Elizabeth Lorimer, Louise Furey, and Kath Prickett of the Auckland Museum, Jeff Fox, Jennifer Twist and Carolyn McGill at Te Papa, Moira White and Beth Rees at the Otago Museum, and Professor Roger Fyfe from the Canterbury Museum. I must also express my heartfelt thanks to my family, who have indulged and supported my sudden craze for chasing Egyptian mummies up and down the country with admirable equanimity.

Finally, I must acknowledge my gratitude to the late Ross O'Rourke, collections manager at the Dominion Museum, the National Museum, and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa from 1960 to 2012. Ross was not only full of patient and kindly advice, he was also inexhaustibly knowledgeable about all matters relating to Ancient Egypt and the Egyptian collections of New Zealand museums. This dissertation is respectfully and affectionately dedicated to his memory.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction:	Making Objects Work	1
Chapter One	Networks of Empire: The Mummy as Gift	17
Chapter Two	Networks of Knowledge: Mummies as Specimens	34
Chapter Three	Networks of Belief: The Mummy as Curiosity	57
Conclusion		66
Bibliography		70

INTRODUCTION: MAKING OBJECTS WORK

In every mummy movie worth the name, there comes a moment when the silent tomb stirs, a coffin lid creaks open, and the monstrous *thing* emerges into the dim light. Something rather similar has happened in Museum Studies over the last two decades. After the best part of a century of near-neglect, museum objects have climbed out of their glass cases and re-asserted themselves as a central focus of museum theory and practice. In 2012, Sandra Dudley could open a volume of essays about ‘Objects and Experience’ in the modern museum with the confident assertion: “Museums are about things.”¹ This claim might seem uncontroversial or even obvious to much of the museum-going public, who may well perceive museums primarily as places for storing and exhibiting objects. Yet museum professionals and scholars have long resisted seeing the museum primarily as a place for keeping stuff and showing stuff: as Dudley puts it, “much of the museological literature of the past twenty years at least has been devoted to demonstrating [...] the extent to which museums are about people, not just collections.”² Yet it is in part this shift away from collections which has brought the museum object into focus as never before. The very drive to look more closely at what goes on in museums has forced theorists to confront the fact that museum objects are not *simply* things. Although they are inanimate material objects, they are not just *any* material objects, and the range of functions they can serve in the museum depends on the specific qualities and provenance of the object and its presentation. The objects that make up museum collections and exhibits are not randomly selected and arranged: they are *meaningful objects* inasmuch as they operate as part of wider chains and systems of signification, which run through the museum and far beyond its walls. The ways in which meaning is created and conveyed in museums, and the question of how objects are made to speak on behalf of whom, has been one of tremendous interest to writers in Museum Studies in recent years. The realisation that meaning cannot be separated from objects has led to a greater interest in the latter as ‘meaningful objects’ rather than just inert matter around which meanings are made. Nevertheless, museum objects cannot be examined in isolation; they exist in relationships with other objects and with the institution itself. Museum objects are always part of and refer to something larger than themselves.

¹ Sandra Dudley, ‘Introduction: Museums and things,’ in *The Thing About Museums: Objects and Experience, representation and Contestation – Essays in Honour of Professor Susan M. Pearce*, ed. Sandra Dudley, Amy Jane Barnes, Jennifer Binnie, Julie Petrov, and Jennifer Walklate (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 1.

² Ibid.

One of the oddest and yet most typical objects to find exhibited in the public museum – in New Zealand, as elsewhere in the world – is the Egyptian mummy. Indeed, such objects are almost emblematic of Western museums, and some of the world's most famous collecting institutions contain whole galleries given over to vast assemblies of human remains, looted at some time from the sands of Egypt. From as early as 3000 BC, the Ancient Egyptians mummified their dead by an elaborate process that involved removing much of the cadaver's viscera and drying the remains in natron, before covering the body in resin and bandaging it with linen cloth. The Egyptians did this because they believed that the preservation of the body was essential for the soul of the dead to avoid annihilation and enter the afterlife.³ Why modern Westerners have collected, exhibited, and gazed in unending fascination at Egyptian mummies is less easy to explain. Even more mystifying, perhaps, is the question why no less than five Egyptian mummies made their way across the world to New Zealand between 1885 and 1897, and why three of them have been on near-continuous public display in these institutions for well over a century. In this dissertation I set out to address only the first of these questions. I will examine the history of Ancient Egyptian mummies during that moment in the last decades of the Victorian era when they entered museum collections in New Zealand. I will seek to explore how these objects were understood by their collectors, why they were sought for New Zealand's museums, and what their influence was on the collections into which they were introduced. My research question asks how mummies were construed as 'meaningful objects' in the period during which they were introduced to collections in this country. Egyptian mummies have always exercised a certain fascination on Westerners: they are potent symbols of cultural otherness manifested in a practice that is particularly gruesome and particularly intimate – the treatment of the bodies of the dead. An investigation of the mummy's appeal, then, must start with the thing itself. Mummies are large and compelling objects. Sometimes they are beautiful. They contain human flesh and bones. They are very old. All these facts contribute, no doubt, to their fascination. Yet mummies have been understood in radically different ways over the course of their history, and by different people. Even within the four museums in New Zealand that held collections of ancient Egyptian remains at the end of the nineteenth century, mummies could be interpreted in quite distinct ways depending on the source of the mummy and the nature of the institution that received it. Meaning, then, is not something that resides simply in the

³ Christine El Mahdy, *Mummies: Myth and Magic* (London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 9-13.

object itself, but nor is it separable from the qualities of the object. Rather, meaning arises out of a complex interplay of associations between objects, institutions, ideologies, and people. Tracing the ways in which museums have interpreted mummies – and the way mummies in turn have shaped the meaning of museums – is no easy task. It is my belief that any serious attempt to explore mummies as ‘meaningful objects’ within museum collections must evade the temptation to refer merely to abstract social or cultural ‘forces’ that operate on some metaphysical plane behind the world we experience. Instead, we must be prepared to examine carefully the interactions of objects and people that constitute the institutional life of museums.

This dissertation does not pretend to be a comprehensive history of the acquisition and interpretation of Egyptian mummies by New Zealand museums. It is, however, an attempt to follow some of the relationships that have been established inside and outside of museums, between institutions, objects, and human actors, and to trace the ways in which these assemblages have rendered mummies ‘meaningful’ at a certain moment for museums and for museum-goers. Such an approach treats objects as more than just passive recipients of human activity. Objects potentially assume an active role in the construction of meaning, which is created not by the operation of disembodied forces, but rather by the concrete interactions of people, ideas, and things. Such an approach is in keeping with a general trend in Museum Studies towards treating objects with greater seriousness. In the case of mummies, however, the attribution of agency to the object is perhaps less counterintuitive than might be in the case of other items in museum collections. Mummies appear to hover on the edges of humanity; like the Ancient Egyptians themselves, we cannot quite separate them from their animating *ka* (spirit). This ‘humanity’ of mummies, in addition to their strangeness and their familiarity, makes ancient human remains an inviting subject for this kind of study. Likewise, the late-Victorian era in New Zealand’s museums is an intriguing period for historical research. Scientific institutions in this period operated between the ideological systems of European colonialism on the one hand and of biological Darwinism on the other. Both these discursive fields exerted a powerful influence on the way scientists understood the relics of long-ago civilisations and the artefacts of far-away cultures. Merely saying this, however, is not enough. One of the aims of this dissertation is to flesh out the exact nature of the connections between late-nineteenth-century scientific and political practices and the strange objects that made long journeys across the world to find a home in far-away museums.

This dissertation, however, is not merely an enquiry into the ways mummies have acted in, and in turn been acted upon by, museums in New Zealand. It is also a modest experiment with a theoretical framework that has recently grown increasingly popular in the humanities. The purpose of this dissertation is to attempt to apply some of the insights of Actor-Network Theory to the historical study of mummies in New Zealand museums. It is my intention to gauge the usefulness of this approach for scholars in the field of Museum Studies and Material Culture Studies, who might attempt to trace the agency of objects within actor-networks. Before embarking on this, however, I will briefly set out some of the assumptions I will be working with, in the context of studies of the object in museums.

Literature Review

The last decade has seen what has been termed a ‘material turn’ in the humanities and the social sciences. In its most basic formulation, this ‘turn’ has resulted in a new willingness to pay serious attention to the difference inanimate objects make to human social life in all their material particularity. Scholars in a wide range of disciplines have begun to explore the varied ways in which material objects operate in the world and to trace their effects. In its most interesting and controversial manifestations, this trend has involved imbuing non-sentient objects with agency in the ‘social realm.’ Indeed, any effort to expand the range of social actors to include material objects threatens to overturn the whole notion of social agency as traditionally understood. Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce, who in recent years have been among the most eloquent exponents of the ‘material turn,’ insist that this new shift must be understood as a redefinition of what it is that constitutes the ‘social realm’:

The crucial intellectual move in this view is one that turns away from notions of a coherent social totality, and towards the erasure of familiar conceptual distinctions between the natural and the social, the human and the non-human, and the material and the cultural, divisions that are all in the first place predicated on the immaterial/material divide. The social, in this intellectual departure, is seen to be performed by material things just as much as by humans, so that labelling one thing a person and one a machine, one thing a material and one not, is not given in the order of things but is itself a product of the ordering of people and things that make up the social in the first place.⁴

⁴ Patrick Joyce and Tony Bennett, ‘Material Powers: Introduction,’ in *Material Powers: Cultural studies, history, and the material turn*, ed. Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 4.

The possible effects of this effort to expand the category of ‘the social’ to encompass material objects is suggested by the sociologist John Law, who writes that “the network of what we call social relations [...] is also and simultaneously technical, architectural, textual, and natural. Indeed, the division between such categories is itself a relational achievement rather than something given in the order of things.”⁵ The manifestations of this ‘material turn’ across academic disciplines and practices have been diverse, but all have been characterised by this desire to break down the division between the realms of ‘the social’ and ‘the material’. This should not be seen as a rejection of ‘meaning’ in relation to objects, but rather a complication of where ‘meaning’ lies. While some writers in this tradition continue to write as though meaning hovers somewhere above the thing, for most the ‘meaning’ of objects is located in the connections and actions that link them to other objects and to people – in short, the very things that make them ‘social.’

From Assemblages to Actor-Networks

In their seminal 1980 book *A Thousand Plateaus*, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari suggested that insentient objects could be viewed as having a kind of life of their own, which they termed ‘nonorganic life.’⁶ Leslie Dema argues that the idea of ‘material vitalism’ expressed in *A Thousand Plateaus* must be understood in the light of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of ‘assemblages,’ which Dema defines as “the symbiotic or sympathetic co-functioning of heterogeneous elements. They are formed through a rapport between partial objects that enter into monstrous couplings, experimental alliances, unnatural participations, and rhizomatic structures.”⁷ The kind of ‘life’ these ‘assemblages’ have is dramatically different from the way animate beings are ‘alive,’ and yet an ‘assemblage’ can include sentient creatures:

. For example, with ergonomics we see workers from the anthropomorphic strata involved with physical apparatuses such as chairs and keyboards from the technological strata. Life is diffused through symbiotic relations until it is no longer recognizably linear and strictly organic: it is assembled

⁵ John Law, ‘Power, Discretion, and Strategy,’ in *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on power, technology, and domination*, ed. John Law (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 166.

⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 411.

⁷ Leslie Dema, ‘Inorganic, Yet Alive: How Can Deleuze and Guattari Deal With the Accusation of Vitalism?’ *Rhizomes* 15 (Winter 2007), <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue15/dema.html> (5 July 2012).

inorganically. [...] Assemblages are not alien or unusual structures; they are types of interactive relationships with which we are already very familiar.⁸

One of the theorists most closely associated with the ‘material turn’ pioneered by Deleuze and Guattari is the French sociologist Bruno Latour, who has developed the notion of the ‘assemblage’ into a thorough-going critique of the human sciences. Latour takes issue in particular with sociologists who speak about ‘the social’ as if this term designated a kind of substance. Rather, Latour views ‘society’ as a trail of associations or assemblages, or “a type of connection between things that are not themselves social.”⁹ Such connections are multiple – they exist everywhere – but they are also inherently short-lived; they must be constantly maintained, re-created, and re-shaped. Whereas ‘sociologists of the social’ see stability and continuity as the norm, for Latour all associations tend towards entropy, and can be held together only by constant effort. The formation and maintenance of these associations requires “costly and demanding *means*,” which in turn leave the traces that are the raw material of sociological study.¹⁰ Indeed, it is only when the network of actors undergoes change or re-arrangement that ‘the social’ becomes visible: ‘society’ is “an association between entities which are in no way recognisable as being social [...] *except* during the brief moment when they are reshuffled together.”¹¹ Latour does not see the sociologist as standing apart from this process of group-creation, however. By tracing links among actors, the sociologist is a participant in the process of assembling the social. Amid the constantly-shifting network of associations, the social scientist must carefully select which paths she wishes to trace, because every decision determines the nature of the group that is constructed in her work. Social groups have no existence in the real world independent of the acts that call them into being, and the sociologist is merely one among a multitude of such actors (or *actants*). It is the absence of a ‘social material’ that makes the efforts of ‘actors’ so important:

There exists no society to begin with, no reservoir of ties, no big reassuring pot of glue to keep all these groups together. If you don’t have the festival now or the print the newspaper today, you simply lose the grouping, which is not a building in need of restoration but a movement in need of continuation. If a dancer stops dancing, the dance is finished. No inertia will carry the show forward.¹²

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 5.

¹⁰ Ibid., 35.

¹¹ Ibid., 65.

¹² Ibid., 37.

It is the centrality of ‘actors’ in creating these networks of association that has given to Latour’s body of work the rather cumbersome name of ‘Actor-Network Theory’ (or, more informally, ANT). Yet Latour does not imagine these *actants* as free and independent agents, nor as unwitting hostages of some immaterial ‘social force’. Rather, they are mediators of actions received from other *actants*, and consequently agency is spread across the whole social network at the same time as its origin remains something inherently mysterious. Action, as Latour says, is “*dislocated*. Action is borrowed, distributed, suggested, influenced, dominated, betrayed, translated. If an actor is said to be an actor-network, it is first of all to underline that it represents the major source of uncertainty about the origin of action...”¹³

Latour’s emphasis on the need for action constantly to maintain the frangible social bonds created by these ‘translations’ paves the way for a wider range of possible *actants* to be brought into view. Whereas ‘sociologists of the social’ have tended to view inanimate objects merely as the tools which are employed by intentional agents, Actor-Network Theory allows that “*any thing* that does modify a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor.”¹⁴ Inasmuch as objects are capable of being mediators in networks of translations, they can be viewed as “actors, or more precisely *participants* in the course of action waiting to be given figuration” by the observer who provides some account of it.¹⁵ The very ambivalence with which Actor-Network Theory approaches the concept of agency allows for objects, like people, to be located in the penumbral space between intentional causality and complete passivity:

In addition to ‘determining’ and serving as ‘backdrop for human action,’ things might authorise, allow, afford, encourage, permit, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on. ANT is not the empty claim that objects do things ‘instead’ of human actors: it simply says that no science of the social can even begin if the question of who and what participates in the action is not first of all thoroughly explored, even though it might mean letting elements in which, for lack of a better term, we would call *non-humans*.¹⁶

Yet Latour is far from thinking that all objects are permanently intelligible in the actor-networks of which they form a part. Rather, their role in these assemblages can only be traced and described when they have an effect on other actors: “Once built, the wall of bricks does

¹³ Ibid., 46.

¹⁴ Ibid., 71.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 72.

not utter a word – even though the group of workmen goes on talking and graffiti may proliferate on its surface.”¹⁷ It is only when objects do act as mediators of actions that they can be included in a figuration of agency. This usually occurs at certain points in the life-history of an object: when it is created or invented, when it is moved across space or time, or when it suffers some catastrophic accident or breakdown. Even objects that have long ceased to act as mediators can be made to ‘speak’ once again:

When objects have receded into the background for good, it is always possible – but more difficult – to bring them back to light by using archives, documents, memoirs, museum collections, etc., to artificially produce, through historians’ accounts, the state of crisis in which machines, devices, and implements were born. Behind each bulb Edison can be made visible, and behind every microchip is the huge, anonymous Intel. [...] Even the humblest and most ancient stone tools from the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania have been turned by palaeontologists into the very mediators that triggered the evolution of ‘modern man.’¹⁸

This is a new kind of ‘object semiology’, which allows meanings to be read not just into objects themselves as ‘signifiers,’ but into the whole rhizomorphous chain of agency in which they stand. Because such webs of associations are potentially limitless, and no two individuals will trace exactly identical networks, the polysemy of the object is preserved. But meaning, like agency, inheres in the whole set, and is not reducible to any one part. By tracing different actor-networks, an early hominid flint implement in a museum can just as easily stand for the revolution in attitudes towards human origins in the nineteenth century as it can for the emergence of biologically modern humans. Meaning is only intelligible where agency can be detected, and this in turn can only happen where action leaves traces. Museum objects are just such traces, but they may be figured in a wide range of possible networks because agency is so dispersed across the chain.

The Museum as Assemblage

One of the insights to emerge in Museum Studies from the ‘material turn’ is the nature of the museum itself as an ‘assemblage’ – that is, in Deleuze’s terms, “a multiplicity which is made up of heterogeneous terms, and which establishes liaisons, relations between them.”¹⁹ Tony

¹⁷ Ibid., 79.

¹⁸ Ibid., 81.

¹⁹ Manuel De Landa, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory And Social Complexity* (London and New York, Continuum, 2006), 121.

Bennett's recent work has taken up this idea, depicting the museum both as an assemblage of objects, and as one *actant* among a number of other related agents. Bennett takes the example of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris during the 1930s, which he characterises as a new kind of assemblage, "its practices [...] inscribed within and assembled by a new set of relations between a range of anthropological institutions resulting in significant changes in the organisation of anthropological knowledges and their deployment in governmental programmes."²⁰ This network of trans-institutional connections was in turn linked to new networks joining the metropolitan centres (and their museums) to the colonial sites of collection. The creation of new subject-positions allowed for greater regulation of the "flow of expertise and instruments of collection from museum to colony, of texts, objects and bodies back from colony to museum, and of personnel and practices of colonial administration from the metropolis back to the colony."²¹ Bennett describes these chains of agency as "emerging scientific-administrative assemblages that linked museums to colonial locations as sites of collections that were also developing as governmental domains."²² Information and objects derived from the field were transformed into systems of knowledge as they were appropriated into chains of reference, and this information fed back into the practices of colonial administration in what Latour terms a 'circulation of reference'. The truth claims that are produced by the disciplines of ethnology and anthropology subsist in the chains of agency that link these sites and institutions. As Latour puts it:

If the chain is interrupted at any point, it ceases to transport truth – ceases, that is, to produce, to construct, to trace, and to conduct it. The word 'reference' designates the quality of the chain in its entirety [...] Truth value circulates here like electricity through a wire, so long as this circuit is not interrupted.²³

In this sense, Bennett views the Musée de l'Homme as "a nodal point in a network of institutions" and institutional practices in the social and human sciences.²⁴

Latour examines how scientific knowledge is constructed in the field and in the laboratory: through the interactions of scientists with the non-human objects of their study, mediated by

²⁰ Tony Bennett, 'Museum, Field, Colony: Colonial governmentality and the circulation of reference,' in *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2, 1-2 (2009): 100.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 104.

²³ Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 69.

²⁴ Bennett, 'Museum, Field, Colony,' 106.

delicate pieces of scientific equipment, funding grants, computers, sensible shoes, peer-reviewed articles, and the whole panoply of potentially-figured *actants*. This is not to claim that scientific knowledge can be explained merely by appealing to some ‘social’ explanation – this is exactly what Actor-Network Theory has attempted to avoid – but rather that the associations between actors help to account for how such knowledge comes into being. Latour takes the example of oceanographic research into scallop fisheries off the Breton coast as an illustration of how ‘translations’ among human and non-human mediators in the natural sciences can be mapped:

Scallops *make* the fishermen *do* things just as nets placed in the ocean lure the scallops into attaching themselves to the nets and just as data collectors bring together fishermen and scallops in oceanography. [...] We don’t yet know how all these actors are connected, but we can state as the new default position before the study starts that all the actors we are going to deploy might be *associated* in such a way that they *make others do things*. This is done not by transporting a force that would remain the same throughout as some sort of faithful intermediary, but by generating *transformations* manifested by the many unexpected *events* triggered in the other mediators that *follow* them along the line.²⁵

If sociologists of science go looking for “a *concatenation* of actors” rather than “a *cause* followed by a *string* of intermediaries,” the result can be that what had formerly been supposed to be social ‘causes’ and scientific or technological ‘effects’ are linked in more complex and ambiguous ways. Latour is interested in exploring the ways in which objects exercise agency across space and time. This means moving away from a simplistic kind of empiricism, but doing so by moving closer to the lives of material things, rather than away from them. Latour distinguishes mere ‘matters of fact’ – which are inert and unrevealing – from ‘matters of concern,’ which are “interesting agencies [...] taken not exactly as objects but rather as gatherings.”²⁶ By examining the complex ways in which seemingly uncomplicated materials interact with other *actants* in such gatherings, it is possible to ‘map’ the disputed frontiers of scientific knowledge in ways that transcend any simplistic division between the ‘natural’ and the ‘social’ or the ‘constructed’ and the ‘real’. The changing ways in which objects are integrated into interpretive schemes by scientists does not in any way impugn the existence of the object as a ‘matter of fact’: scallops and fishermen still have a very real (and very material) presence in the world. But just as the solidity of the object conceals the fluidity of its possible meanings, so the singularity of the object hides the

²⁵ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 106-07.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 114.

potentially infinite webs of agency into which it may be figured. “*The thing itself has been allowed to be deployed as multiple*,” Latour writes, “and thus allowed to be grasped through different viewpoints [...] There are simply more agencies in the *pluriverse* [...] than philosophers and scientists thought possible.”²⁷ If meaning buzzes around an actor-network like electricity, then the agency of the scientist or scholar in tracing new associations can be applied in almost infinite ways simply by altering the assemblage or by changing the direction of the current.

Museum objects are part of the assemblage of the museum, and they are elements that can be rearranged or re-ordered in relation to other parts of the network in order to produce different regimes of truth: “the relations between the texts, artefacts, body parts, tools, weapons, etc., that it has collected and exhibited are ones in which the same parts have been plugged into different assemblages at different points in the institution’s history.”²⁸ The same objects can be ‘plugged into’ different combinations of mediators in order to produce new meanings, but these shifts are in turn influenced by the “shuffle of agency” that can be traced back through other institutions and events and through the transfer of knowledge, objects, and persons between museum and field, colony and metropolis.²⁹ The materials of the Musée de l’Homme’s collection “were assembled together, ordered, classified, exhibited, circulated, and institutionally processed in ways that enabled new forms of action in relation to the colonial social, formatting it for intervention on the part of a new network of agents, in the context of new colonial governmental rationalities.”³⁰ This description of the complex relations between colony, metropolis, and museum constitutes an elucidation of what Bennett in his earlier work calls the ‘power to command and arrange’. This power does not come out of nowhere, but is constantly produced and sustained by the actions of individuals and institutions, objects and assemblages.

The Lives of Things

²⁷ Ibid., 116.

²⁸ Bennett, ‘Museum, Field, and Colony,’ 98.

²⁹ Tony Bennett and Chris Healy, ‘Introduction: Assembling Culture,’ in *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2, 1-2 (2009): 3.

³⁰ Bennett, ‘Museum, Field, and Colony,’ 111.

A different approach to the 'lives of objects' can be found in the work of Arjun Appadurai and Igor Kopytoff, whose essays in the 1986 volume *The Social Life of Things* introduced the notion of commodities as objects that might have their own 'cultural biographies.' Kopytoff was attempting to bring the insights of anthropology to economic theory, exploring the ways in which commodities are 'culturally marked' as a certain kind of thing, and the ways in which the same object may be viewed as a commodity at one point in its history but not at another. Kopytoff suggests that such shifts and changes may reveal "a moral economy that stands behind the objective economy of visible transactions,"³¹ and which might be traced by means of a 'biography':

In doing the biography of a thing, one would ask questions similar to those one asks about people: What, sociologically, are the biographical possibilities inherent in its 'status' and in the period and culture, and how are these possibilities realised? Where does the thing come from and who made it? What has been its career so far, and what do people consider the ideal career for such things? What are the recognised 'ages' or periods of the thing's 'life,' and what are the cultural markers for them? How does the thing's use change with its age, and what happens to it when it reaches the end of its usefulness?³²

The primary narrative structuring the 'object biography' as imagined by Kopytoff is one of shifting identities and valuations: "In the homogenised world of commodities, an eventful biography of a thing becomes the story of the various singularisations of it, of classifications and reclassifications in an uncertain world of categories whose importance shifts with every minor change in context."³³ Just as a person could be the subject of a range of biographical approaches, so there are many possible biographies on an object:

Obviously, the sheer physical biography of a car is quite different from its technical biography, known in the trade as its repair record. The car can also furnish an economic biography – its initial worth, its sale and resale price, the rate of decline in its value, its response to the recession, the patterning over several years of its maintenance costs. The car also offers several possible social biographies: one biography may concentrate on its place in the owner-family's economy, another may relate the history of its ownership to the society's class structure, and a third may focus on its role in the sociology of the family's kin relations, such as loosening family ties in America or strengthening them in Africa.³⁴

Any such biographical approach could be potentially enlightening, Kopytoff argues, so long as it is 'culturally informed': "A culturally informed economic biography of an object would

³¹ Igor Kopytoff, 'The Cultural Biography of Things: commoditization as process,' in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 64.

³² *Ibid.*, 66-67.

³³ *Ibid.*, 90.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

look at it as a culturally constructed entity, endowed with culturally specific meanings, and classified and reclassified into culturally constituted categories.”³⁵ Arjun Appadurai maintains that ‘cultural biographies’ should emphasise the specificity of the individual object, its complex trajectories, and the ways in which it may or may not prove typical of its ‘class’: “The cultural biography perspective,” he writes, “is appropriate to specific things, as they move through different hands, contexts, and uses, thus accumulating a specific biography, or set of biographies.”³⁶ The particularity of the object is of central importance for the ‘biographical’ approach espoused by Kopytoff and Appadurai. In this respect, the concept of ‘object biography’ is perfectly congruent with the methods of Actor-Network Theory, so long as the biographer resists the urge to believe that any ‘complete’ account of the object’s many lives can ever be given.

Writing About Meaningful Objects

But what would an ‘object-biography’ based on Actor-Network Theory look like? How might ANT help us to trace the lives of mummies in New Zealand museums? For one thing, ANT complicates the process of writing ‘object biographies,’ because researchers working with Actor-Network Theory are particularly aware of the ‘fabricated’ nature of their written accounts. ANT studies involve tracing networks of agency, but these networks are created by the decisions of the writer, choosing to pursue one course of agency rather than another. As Latour puts it, “network is a concept, not a thing out there. It is a tool to help describe something, not what is being described. [...] A network is not what is represented in the text, but what readies the text to take the relay of actors as mediators.”³⁷ For a writer working with actor-networks, the written account does not attempt simply to provide an ‘objective’ account of a social reality. Rather, the written account is a work of artifice, which “can put aside neither the complete artificiality of the enterprise nor its claim to accuracy and truthfulness.”³⁸ On this basis, the success or failure of the textual account hinges not on its verisimilitude to matters of fact in the outside world, but on its ability to make all *actants* in a chain actors:

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Arjun Appadurai, ‘Introduction: commodities and the politics of value,’ in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 34.

³⁷ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 131.

³⁸ Ibid., 133.

A good ANT account is a narrative or a description or a proposition where all the actors *do something* and don't just sit there. Instead of simply transporting effects without transforming them, each of the points in the text may become a bifurcation, an event, or the origin of a new translation. As soon as actors are treated not as intermediaries but as mediators, they render the movement of the social visible to the reader. Thus, through many textual inventions, the social may become again a circulating entity that is no longer composed of the stale assemblage of what passed earlier as being part of society.³⁹

An 'object biography' written from the perspective of Actor-Network Theory will inevitably travel beyond the object itself, to explore the ways in which it acts and is acted upon by other agents. Moreover, such an 'object biography' would be acutely aware of its own contingency. Depending as it does on rather arbitrary decisions made by the biographer, it can only claim to be as valid as innumerable other as-yet-unwritten biographical accounts. This is not to collapse into a defeatist kind of relativism; rather, it is to be realistic about what any written account can achieve:

Can the materiality of a report on paper, a story, or rather a fiction [...] *extend* the exploration of the social connections a little bit *further*? The careers of mediators should be pursued all the way to the final report because a chain is only as weak as its weakest link. If the social is a trace, then it can be *retraced*; if it's an assembly then it can be *reassembled*. While there exists no material continuity between the society of the sociologist and any textual account – hence the wringing of hands about method, truth, and political relevance—there might exist a plausible *continuity* between what the social, in our sense of the word, does and what a text may achieve—a *good* text, that is.⁴⁰

The 'careers of mediators' sounds like an apposite re-formulation of the 'social lives of objects.' So where should this attempt to write a 'biography of the mediator' begin? I would suggest that it should start from the question that the 'Material Turn' introduced: 'what difference does the object make?' If it is not possible to identify ways in which the object changes things, then it is not really a mediator at all. If a museum is an assemblage – of people and objects and disciplines and institutions – then the introduction of a new actant (or the removal or redeployment of an old one) should have recognisable effects upon the whole structure. Of course, not all parts of the object's 'social life' may be amenable to study. It may very well be that there are aspects or periods of the object's 'career' which have left no recognisable traces at all. For that reason, it makes sense to start with what material traces there really are: letters, posters, news articles, cataloguing software, press releases, photographs, labels, podcasts, videos, notes, and so on. Each trace testifies to actions involving the object – things it has directly affected or been affected by – and provides the

³⁹ Ibid., 128.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

raw material for tracing webs of associations. A ‘biography of the object’ – as I interpret it – would trace a number of such actor-networks across time, taking the object in question as their common term and forming connections with each other around it.

Research Methodology

Tracing associations is no easy task, especially where records are as patchy as they are in most museum archives. Mummies may have been popular with museum visitors, but they were not always highly cherished by museums, and institutional records are often surprisingly scant. If discovering institutional associations with objects in collections is difficult, tracing links between these objects and the wider public is an even more challenging task. Most museum visitors leave no record of the momentary relationships they establish with the objects they see, consider, discuss, describe, and remember, and those who do are often in privileged positions. The archival research for this history has mostly entailed scouring museum records, newspaper archives, and published records to pick out even fleeting references to the objects under investigation. Much has had to be made of little. My method, essentially, has been to begin from one preferred interpretation or ‘meaning’ of the object in its context, and then to attempt to trace back the web of associations that have generated or sustained this interpretation. This ‘backwards-ANT’ attempts to begin and end with the object itself, closing – if possible – the circuit of associations. The usefulness (or otherwise) of this approach is a matter I will discuss in the conclusion. It is worth noting, however, the basic difference between my approach and the more usual methodology of ANT, which takes whole assemblages rather than particular *actants* as its subject.

Chapter Outline

My aim in this dissertation is to treat in turn each of the four institutions in New Zealand that acquired mummies during the period 1885 to 1897, as well as to draw out particular themes and issues relating to each. The first chapter focuses on the mummy that Charles Rooking Carter, a former-colonist living in London, donated to Wellington’s Colonial Museum in 1885.⁴¹ It examines the mummy as a gift – and moreover, as a possibly unwelcome and

⁴¹ This is the female mummy now known as Mehit-em-wesekht, and kept in storage by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (FE003220).

certainly unsolicited gift. Moreover, in this chapter I consider the triangular colonial relationship between Britain (metropolis), New Zealand (colony), and Egypt (field), which created a global assemblage through which Carter's mummy moved. Finally, it considers the Colonial Museum itself as an assemblage, and the effect that the introduction of a new and potent mediator had upon the whole, and how its associations were contained. The second chapter examines two different museums. It begins by looking at the networks of communication and exchange between institutions that brought two mummies to the Canterbury Museum in 1887,⁴² and the mummy of a child to the Auckland Museum in 1897.⁴³ It explores these networks as sites of production of scientific knowledge, and looks briefly at the ways in which mummies functioned as 'specimens' within the structures of knowledge and practice that these networks established. Finally, the third chapter looks at some of the non-scientific or quasi-scientific regimes of interpretation that visitors brought to the museum mummy, and sketches out briefly some of the alternative assemblages that might have constructed them. It opens by considering the mummy that local businessman Bendix Hallenstein donated to the Otago Museum in 1894, and considers the role that Victorian religious beliefs played in the interpretation of mummies (and vice versa).⁴⁴ My argument throughout is that light can be shed on the way such objects were interpreted and understood at particular moments and in certain institutions by examining the assemblages in which they moved. In my conclusion I assess the possible usefulness of my findings for the future construction of 'cultural biographies' through the figuration of actor-networks around particular objects.

⁴² One of these two mummies, that of Tash-pen-khonsu, remains on display in the Canterbury Museum (EA.1989.13). The other, that of Ta Sedgemet, was transferred to the Auckland Museum by exchange in 1958, and is on public display there (AM 52021).

⁴³ This badly-preserved mummy is now kept in storage at the Auckland Museum (AM 11130).

⁴⁴ Hallenstein's mummy is still on display in the Otago Museum (D.50).

CHAPTER ONE

Networks of Empire: The Mummy As Gift

On June 18 1885, Charles Rooking Carter wrote a brief letter from London to Sir James Hector, the director of the Colonial Museum in Wellington. On his own monographed notepaper, Carter instructed the Director that he was planning to make an unusual donation to the Museum. “Dear Sir,” he wrote, “I write to inform you that, having a friend who has held an official position in Egypt for the last fourteen years, I am endeavouring to procure a first-class mummy (in case) for the Wellington Museum as I am not aware that you have one.”⁴⁵ Such a gift would, Carter trusted, “prove a tangible and instructive acquisition to your museum.”⁴⁶ Not only would this gift be the first Egyptian mummy in the collections of the Colonial Museum, it would be the first such object to be held in any public collection in New Zealand. Although it is likely that Carter had met the Scots-born naturalist during his years in Wellington, there is no indication that Sir James Hector had ever solicited any such exotic addition to the collections of the Colonial Museum, which was at this time still a modest wooden building behind Parliament in Thorndon. Carter, however, must surely have seen the mummy displays at the British Museum, which by 1885 already held at least 28 complete Egyptian mummies in its collections.⁴⁷ If Carter’s ambition was to model the Colonial Museum in Wellington upon its metropolitan counterpart, this would not have been out of character for a man who had spent much of his adult life trying to shape the institutions of the Wellington province to convert it into a ‘better Britain.’

Carter himself was the model figure of a colonial success story: born in Cumbria in 1822, he emigrated to New Zealand with his wife in 1850 and established himself in Wellington as a builder. Carter rapidly became a prominent figure in the province, helping to establish the Wairarapa settlement that was later named in his honour, and he represented the region in the

⁴⁵ Charles Rooking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 18 June 1885, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekh in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O’Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 5.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ British Museum, *List of Human Remains in the Collection of the British Museum*, April 2008, <http://www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/List%20of%20British%20Museum%20Human%20Remains.pdf> (11 December 2011).

General Assembly from 1859 to 1865. By the 1880s, Carter had settled once again in London, where he worked as an emigration agent for the Wellington province, helping to supply the infant colony's insatiable hunger for English settlers. Although lacking in formal education beyond the two years he spent at a Quaker school in Kendal, Carter was extensively self-taught, and had a keen interest both in the arts and in liberal political reform. Above all, he was committed to the virtues of emigration as a solution to social and economic problems in England, as well as a benefit to the fledgling colonies. In an essay on the Australian colony of Victoria written in 1870, Carter argued passionately that "emigration is a reciprocal benefit to the old and to the new countries alike."⁴⁸ Carter evinced little sentimental or patriotic attachment to the principle of Empire, however, defending colonialism only on pragmatic – and above all economic – grounds, and openly admitting that the connection between Britain and her colonies was a source of much greater benefit to the Mother Country than to the settlers:

The bonds of a common nationality which now link the Australian colonies with their Imperial 'mother', being once for all dissevered, the colonists would consider themselves free to look abroad in the world for new connections and other markets which they might consider more profitable, both for buying and selling. [...] These facts must not be lost sight of, either by the mercantile man or the statesman who contemplates the probable future as well as the present condition of this great empire in its wide relationships with the other parts of the civilised world, which are already running a neck and neck race with it in the great handicap stakes of commercial enterprise and organised industry.⁴⁹

Carter stressed the 'loyalty' of the Victorian settlers, but nevertheless appears to have viewed the eventual federation and independence of the Australian colonies as a foregone conclusion. His hope was merely to delay the inevitable and to minimise the implications for British trade. "My own impression is," he wrote, "that at present *it is too soon to part*. Still, if the family party is to be broken up, and if the sun is at length to set upon her Majesty's dominions, if we are to separate – let us, in all events, part as good friends."⁵⁰ Carter's unvarnished assessment of the value and future prospects of the British Empire must have seemed extraordinary in 1870, just as British imperialism was entering its Indian summer. His pessimism was heightened by the withdrawal of British troops from New Zealand that year, a departure he compared to the last withdrawal of Roman troops from British soil at the nadir of its imperial decline and fall. "At the present day," he wrote, "that same Britain [...]"

⁴⁸ Charles Rooking Carter, *Victoria: the British 'El Dorado,' or Melbourne in 1869* (London: Edward Stanford, 1870), 201.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

has withdrawn its legions from one of its remote island dependencies—*colonized by its own people*. Is this a sign of weakness? No thinking man can call it an indication of strength. [...] It is just as well to be frank, and acknowledge that henceforth the British Empire must be contracted rather than extended, and that therefore it has entered upon the first phase of decline.”⁵¹ Although critical of the imperial government’s military withdrawal, Carter seems generally to have favoured a high level of self-determination for settler communities. Though he expected that the Australasian colonies would be dominated by British settlers and cultural norms, Carter’s writing strongly suggests that he expected the colonial communities eventually to rival and even overtake the Mother Country. Visiting London in 1874, Carter looked forward 700 years into the future to imagine the city of London lying in ruins like the remains of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, while the former colonies of Britain divided up the spoils:

What if the future antiquities of England are competed for by the ‘cute Yankee, the enterprising Australian, and the irrepressible New Zealander? This may happen many centuries hence. In the meantime – and before that remote event is likely to take place – there is a fair prospect of Australia becoming the ENGLISH EUROPE, and New Zealand the GREAT BRITAIN of the Pacific Ocean, and having National existence as free and Independent states, – confederated or isolated, – as they may think best. The day when this occurs may be near or far distant. Meanwhile it will still, let us hope, be our pride to remain citizens of the Great Empire of which we form an integral portion, and the creation and maintenance of which are mainly due to the courage, sagacity and energies of Englishmen and the great internal resources of glorious OLD ENGLAND.⁵²

While admitting the inevitability of imperial decline, Carter nevertheless expresses confidence that the civilisation of Great Britain will be reborn in her independent colonies. Carter’s generous philanthropy both towards the nascent settlement of Carterton and towards the provincial capital of Wellington should perhaps be seen in the light of his confidence that New Zealand had an historical destiny to become another England – culturally and racially derivative of the Mother Country, but free of the social, political, and moral blots that disfigured industrial Britain.

Carter’s gifts to the colony should also be viewed in the light of his confident faith in the value of public education. As a Victorian autodidact himself, Carter took a great interest in

⁵¹ Charles Rooking Carter, *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist (Written By Himself)*, 3 vols. (London: R. Madley, 1875), 3: 190.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 388.

free libraries, galleries, and museums, as the instruments of moral improvement and personal betterment for the working classes. As a young man, Carter had been profoundly influenced by the 1840 Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures and Practical Sciences in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.⁵³ During a visit to Europe in 1863-67, Carter visited not only the British Museum, and the South Kensington Museum (later the Victoria and Albert Museum), but also many of the most significant galleries and museums in Italy and France. Carter was especially impressed, however, by the exhibitions contained in the Crystal Palace, which had been moved to the London suburb of Sydenham in 1852 and which included a huge court dedicated to the architecture and archaeology of Ancient Egypt. Carter praised the Crystal Palace for its “choice collections of works of art; its specimens of manufactures and raw material; its valuable samples of modern machinery; its models of bridges; its shops of fancy wares; its repositories of carriages, china, and glass; its statues and sculptures, and above all its ‘Courts’” and concluded by describing the Palace as “a great educational establishment – the leading attraction in London, and one of the most *useful* wonders of the world.”⁵⁴ Carter does not seem to have drawn any significant distinction between the value of ‘high’ cultural exhibits like fine artworks and more utilitarian displays of industrial produce. In Victoria, Carter praised both Melbourne’s Museum of Sculpture and Painting (“the nucleus of the Victorian ‘National Gallery’ of the future”) and the Melbourne Museum, with its extensive displays relating to the mining industry.⁵⁵ Above all, Carter commended the Melbourne public library, noting however that it appeared to be accessed chiefly by members of the respectable middle-class. “Nor,” he added, “are some of the other Australian cities far behind Melbourne in this matter. Sydney University and its Museum, with its collection of Egyptian Antiquities, is an institution that England might well be proud of.”⁵⁶ Although Carter’s account of New Zealand was intended in part to spur emigration by emphasising the advantages of life in the new colony, he did acknowledge that Wellington was less well-provided than Melbourne with cultural and educational facilities. In his 1866 memoir *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, Carter admitted that “in Wellington there were no great and endless crowds of people to excite one’s attention; no Royal processions to gaze at; no grand palaces and shops to see and admire; no wonders of science and art to attract; no

⁵³ Wayne Orchison, *Charles Rooking Carter: A Brief Biography*, Carter Observatory Information Sheet No. 7 (Wellington: Carter Observatory, 1995), 1.

⁵⁴ Charles Rooking Carter, *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist (Written By Himself)*, 3 vols. (London: R. Madley, 1866), 2: 410.

⁵⁵ Carter, *Victoria: the British ‘El Dorado,’* 80.

⁵⁶ Carter, *Victoria: the British ‘El Dorado,’* 81-82.

theatrical exhibitions, gorgeous and splendid, to excite and please the mind...”⁵⁷ Although most of his career in New Zealand was given over to reforming the economic and political infrastructure in the colony, from the time of his return to England in the late-1860s, Carter appears to have decided to expand the range of cultural and scientific resources available to the Wellington province. In 1890 he presented 395 books from his private collection to the New Zealand Institute and Colonial Museum, and by the time of his death the gift had expanded to over a thousand volumes. His gifts of books to the Carterton Borough Library made it “one of the best in the country” by the time he died in 1896.⁵⁸ Finally, Carter left £2,240 to the New Zealand Institute in his will for the establishment of a public astronomical observatory in Wellington.⁵⁹ All of these endowments should be seen as part of Carter’s wider aspirations for the liberal moral and political reform of New Zealand society.

The gift of an Egyptian mummy to the Colonial Museum, however, also reflects Carter’s own historical vision and his notion of New Zealand’s role in the history of civilization. Near the end of the third and final volume of his *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, Carter imagines London in the year 2575, when the ruined city is visited by an enterprising New Zealander:

The New Zealander *will* come to see the home of his forefathers. When? Why, every year for the next seven hundred years: at the six-hundredth and ninety-ninth year he may be in London, employing English natives to dig into the *débris* of the present House of Parliament, in search of the remains of the twelve statues now in the Hall of Statues, with the view, if he finds them, of placing them in the Museum of the then capital of New Zealand [...] To the New Zealander of that day they will be treasures as priceless as the *Venus of Milo* in the Louvre is to Parisians, or the *Laocoon* in the Vatican is to Italians.⁶⁰

Carter drew the image of the New Zealander surveying the ruins of London from an 1840 essay by the liberal historian Thomas Babington Macaulay. In his review of Ranke’s *Ecclesiastical and Political History of the Popes During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Macaulay reflected that the moribund Catholic Church may yet endure in the remote future “when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude,

⁵⁷ Carter, *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, 2:22.

⁵⁸ G.H. Sutherland, ‘Carter, Charles Rooking,’ in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, Volume One 1769-1869* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1990), 74.

⁵⁹ Orchison, *Charles Rooking Carter*, 4.

⁶⁰ Carter, *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, 3: 386-387.

take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.”⁶¹ Carter's political views – including his ambivalence about the imperial project, his hopes for the eventual independence of the colonies, and his confidence in an Anglocentric concept of ‘progress’ – owe much to Macaulay, and the inclusion of this allusion at the end of the *Life and Recollections* is telling. Yet whereas Macaulay implicitly compares London to Rome in order to emphasise the transience of Empire, Carter's wry allusion to ‘English natives’ digging over the remains on behalf of a New Zealand patron suggests he may have had Egyptian ruins in mind. Ancient remains in both Egypt and Italy are discussed in the second volume of Carter's autobiography (as well as Carter's visits to the Louvre and the Vatican Museums), and this passage clearly looks back to those episodes. In this respect, Carter was working from an anxiety shared by many educated Englishmen contemplating the remains of former imperial powers. The figure of Macaulay's New Zealander had become such a popular trope by the 1860s that the humorous magazine *Punch* issued an embargo on any further trade in the cliché. “He can no longer be suffered to impede the traffic over London Bridge,” *Punch* proclaimed in January 1865. “Much wanted at the present time in his own country. May return when London is in ruins.”⁶² *Punch* seems to have had a clear conception of who the ‘New Zealander’ was: as Ged Martin observes, “to *Punch* in 1864, a ‘New Zealander’ was still emphatically a Maori, and not a colonist.”⁶³ Though there is nothing in Macaulay's essay to suggest that he imagined ‘the New Zealander’ to be a Maori, the picturesque image of the ‘savage’ contemplating the ruins of civilisation seems to have appealed greatly to the melancholy Victorian imagination. In 1871, the *West Coast Times* complained that:

It has generally been assumed by writers and artists who have lent their talent to sketching this scene on London bridge that Macaulay had in his mental eye that the New Zealander so spoken of was to be a descendent of the Maori race. By the many, such is now generally understood. In a frontispiece to the first edition of the Savage Club Papers published in London, we have the whole scene before us – the broken bridge – the river Thames grown o'er with weeds and lilies, St Paul's in the distance, with great cracks and gaps in the dome, and the artist at work on the broken bridge. He is depicted as a swarthy

⁶¹ Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Ranke's History of the Popes* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman's, 1851), 5.

⁶² ‘A Proclamation’, *Punch* 48, 7 January 1865, p. 9, cited in David Skilton, *Contemplating the Ruins of London: Macaulay's New Zealander and Others*, <http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/london-journal/march2004/skilton.html> (18 December 2012).

⁶³ Ged Martin, *Punch and the Maori, 1864-1865*, http://www.gedmartin.net/index.php?Itemid=11&id=14&option=com_content&task=view (18 December 2012).

savage, with feathers in his hair, covered only over the loins, and smoking the usual calumet pipe that is known to English eyes as a part of savage life.⁶⁴

The image of the barbarian looking over the ruins of the great city is simply elegiac, but Carter wishes to convey quite a different message. His more optimistic expectation is that the civilisation of England has been transplanted to New Zealand, where it has flourished anew after its decline in the country of its birth. His New Zealander, therefore, is quite clearly not Maori but the descendent of a British settler returned “to see the home of his forefathers.” He is not merely an artist, but a scholar, whose actions mirror those of British archaeologists in Egypt and the Near East. Carter’s message is not merely that the imperial project will suffer decline and fall, but that British cultural values will survive through the legacy of Britain’s colonial daughters. The art of antiquity thus serves not primarily as an imperial *memento mori*, but rather as a powerful symbol of the historic inheritance Britain embodies, and which will in turn be bequeathed to “New Zealanders of the present generation, or, let us say – the British people of NEW BRITAIN.”⁶⁵

If Carter’s outlook on the future of Britain’s Pacific colonies was relatively sunny, his optimism did not extend to the inhabitants of Egypt. Carter visited Egypt on at least two occasions, once in 1864 and again in 1875. His two visits are recorded in the second volume of the *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist* (1866) and a slim self-published travel memoir called *Round the World Leisurely* (1878) respectively. The latter gives Carter’s most candid opinion of the Egyptian people, whom he characterises in terms of Orientalist abjection. Carter’s description of Egypt wavers between disgust and fantasy: the ‘native’ parts of Alexandria are “filthy in the extreme,” but Cairo is described as the city “of ‘Arabian Nights’ notoriety.”⁶⁶ Carter lingers on romantic details like eunuchs, bazaars, and “Nubians, black as niggers.”⁶⁷ Yet much more of his discussion is given over to the condition of the Egyptian agricultural labourers, whom Carter characterises as servile and degraded by the Oriental despotism of the khedive:

Travellers tell us the people are contented, and well fed, and do not complain. I believe the latter. They are very tractable, and remarkable for their obedient demeanour. All feelings of independence and spirit are beaten out of them, and they become a servile race. Rulers cannot do this to people in colder

⁶⁴ ‘Notes of New Zealand Travel – the Maori Family ‘In Town,’” *West Coast Times*, 17 July 1871, 3.

⁶⁵ Charles Rooking Carter, *Round the World Leisurely* (London: C.R. Carter, 1878), 70.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

climates. Does then the intense heat of the sun in tropical zones enervate body and mind, and curtail that vigorous and energetic application to work which distinguishes European nations? I believe it does.⁶⁸

Carter's liberal conscience and inquisitive nature led him to make enquiries about the domestic lives of the Egyptian peasantry, a demand which appears to have perplexed and exasperated his Egyptian guide. Nevertheless, he succeeded in inveigling his way into the home of an Egyptian *fellah*, describing the family scene with clinical detachment and concluding that "the cost of board and lodgings to the fellah is lower than that of any other man, not excepting the uncivilised Maori in his pah in New Zealand, and there is the instinct of manliness, freedom, and independence about the latter which the former does not possess."⁶⁹ Yet Carter's low opinion of the Egyptian labourer seems to have arisen more from his liberal political principles than from racial prejudice. "It is the old, the very old story over again," he wrote. "Long continued oppression begets servility, and servility is the father of cruelty, falsehood, and cowardice."⁷⁰ Carter seems to have regarded this quality of cringing subservience to tyranny as typical of Egyptians both ancient and modern, describing the Great Pyramid of Cheops (Khufu) as an index of "the vanity of a king and the servility of a people. At the same time," he added sententiously, "it is but fair to add that we Europeans have not got rid of either vanity or servility; no, not even in this the nineteenth century of the Christian era."⁷¹ The vast majority of Carter's discussion of Egypt, however, is given over to what he calls its "former greatness," and to the implied decline from its national apogee in remote antiquity.⁷² In the *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, Carter writes of visiting Alexandria, "anciently one of the most magnificent cities in the ancient world," only to be confronted by the sight of "scores of Arabs and their rude hovels, with filth and abominations lying thickly strewn around them."⁷³

"It appears," wrote Carter to the Colonial Museum in Wellington on June 18 1885, "there has been a recent good find of mummies of a rare description, and the Egyptian Government, for a price, will sell a few of them. Sir George Elliot has had the choice of two and I hope to be allowed to select one. I have told my Agent not to spare a few pounds in securing a really

⁶⁸ Ibid., 12-13.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 19.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 20.

⁷¹ Ibid., 34-35.

⁷² Carter, *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, 2: 250.

⁷³ Ibid., 252-53.

good one. Some of them are of poor description.”⁷⁴ Though far away in London, Carter was evidently well-informed about the discovery of a large cache of Ptolemaic tombs at Akhmim, which had taken place in 1884, and the flood of mummies that had abruptly come onto the market. From the moment it emerged out of the ground at Akhmim, the mummy that eventually made its way to the Colonial Museum in Wellington was comprehended by pre-existing networks of agency. Some of these were physical networks made of rivets and steel, like the new railway lines that presumably carried the mummy in its case from Cairo to Suez, where it was loaded onto the P&O passenger liner ‘SS Pekin’ for shipment to Wellington.⁷⁵ Others were networks of institutions, linking scholarly bodies like the Antiquities Service and the Boulaq Museum with the agencies of colonial government, the occupying army, and the private business interests which both motivated British involvement in Egypt and provided the infrastructure that made it possible. Finally, there were ideological and discursive networks spanning – among other values and belief systems – imperialism, nationalism, international capitalism, French republicanism, and Evangelical Christianity. These different kinds of networks did not operate separately, but were linked together in various complex ways. The Egyptian Antiquities Service – for example – was an imperial battlefield, as French and German scholars competed for influence in an agency theoretically subordinate to – and underfunded by – a British colonial administration.⁷⁶ Railway lines built with borrowed money and administered by foreign directors transported imperial troops south towards Upper Egypt and the Sudan, and carried the mummies and artefacts they excavated north to Cairo and Suez. What is most striking about this lattice of associations is its truly global reach. The international movement of persons and capital created international networks in which mummies could move like travellers or like commodities. These network did not simply link Egypt to New Zealand (or Akhmim to Wellington), but rather established a triangular web of associations in which Britain – and more specifically London – was always the central term. From London, Carter directed the purchase of a mummy in Egypt and its transportation to New Zealand, his letters to the Colonial Museum sent care of the London

⁷⁴ Charles Roeking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 18 June 1885, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekh in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O’Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 5.

⁷⁵ A. Jas. H. Large, Letter to Sir James Hector (including Bill of Lading), 7 July 1885, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekh in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O’Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 10.

⁷⁶ Brian Fagan, *The Rape of the Nile: Tomb Robbers, Tourists, and Archaeologists in Egypt*, (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2004), 194.

branch of the Bank of New Zealand.⁷⁷ Shaw, Savill, and Albion steamers carried the New Zealand mail east once a month for the New Zealand Shipping Company via the Cape of Good Hope, while the Union Steamship Company carried it west from San Francisco after an overland voyage across the continental United States.⁷⁸ At the same time, the P&O steam line had established a regular route through the Suez Canal and across the Indian Ocean to the Far East, Australia, and New Zealand. Though travel was slow by our standards, the flow of persons and capital associated with British imperialism established a chain of agency that quite literally encircled the globe. And of course it was not just travellers and investment that followed these invisible highways: the network included commodities and products of all sorts – including Egyptian mummies. Following Carter’s mummy, we can see three nodal points in this imperial-capitalist assemblage: London, Egypt, and New Zealand, which – following Tony Bennett – might be termed ‘metropolis,’ ‘field,’ and ‘colony’ respectively.⁷⁹ It was within this three-way web of connections that Carter’s mummy was constituted as a ‘meaningful object’ through the creation of what Bruno Latour calls ‘circulating reference’ within the assemblage.⁸⁰

Of course, the institution that Carter’s mummy arrived at in Wellington was not merely a part of a wider complex of colonial institutions with links across the Empire – it was also an assemblage in its own right. The intrusion of a new and anomalous object into the collection inevitably altered the nature of this assemblage, and set off a new ‘shuffle of agency’ within the institution. If the order of meanings within the Colonial Museum exercised pressure on the new arrival, Carter’s mummy also disturbed and changed the ‘circulating reference’ of the Museum. In 1885, the Colonial Museum was still housed in the wooden building behind parliament it had occupied since 1865, when it had been founded along with the New Zealand Geological Survey. From the beginning, the Colonial Museum was envisaged primarily as a scientific institution, for the purposes of research into New Zealand’s natural history. In the Museum’s first annual report in 1866, Hector set out the principles upon which it was to be founded:

⁷⁷ Charles Rooking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 18 June 1885.

⁷⁸ B.K. Mountjoy, ‘New Zealand Mail in the UK from the 1880s,’ *Philatelic Database* <http://www.philatelicdatabase.com/great-britain/new-zealandmail-from-the-uk-in-the-1880s/> (13 January 2013).

⁷⁹ Tony Bennett, ‘Museum, Field, Colony: Colonial governmentality and the circulation of reference,’ in *Assembling Culture*, ed. Tony Bennett and Chris Healy (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 98 ff.

⁸⁰ Bruno Latour, *Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 44ff.

One of the most important duties in connection with the geological survey of a new country is the formation of a scientific Museum, the principle object of which is to facilitate the classification and comparison of specimens collected in different localities during the progress of the survey. [...] In this respect a scientific Museum differs from one intended only for the popular diffusion of natural science – the former being a record office from which typical or popular Museums can be supplied with accurate information instructively arranged – an arrangement which would prevent their lapsing, as is too frequently the case, into unmeaning collections of curiosities.⁸¹

As Athol McCredie has noted, under Hector's directorship the Colonial Museum was "primarily a geological reference museum, though with a significant component of natural history in general. Ethnology was a very minor aspect and, in line with evolutionist thinking of the time, was probably considered as comfortably aligned with natural science."⁸² The catalogue of the Museum's collections which was published in 1870 left no doubt as to the main focus of the institution's interests: seventy pages were dedicated to collections of foreign mineral and animal specimens, a further thirty-six to New Zealand animals, ninety-five to New Zealand geology and palaeontology, twenty-eight to botany and animal products, and a mere two pages to the ethnographic collections.⁸³ A handful of ethnographic objects did find their way into the Museum at an early date, of which the most impressive was a so-called 'Maori House' from Turanga in Poverty Bay (in fact the meeting house of the Rongowhakaata iwi, confiscated by the Crown in 1867).⁸⁴ There does not, however, seem to have been a concerted policy of collecting Maori or Pacific material. Like the "two pieces of [the] original Tainui canoe, presented by Captain McGillivray" in 1885, most such items seem to have found their way into the Museum as donations.⁸⁵ On the other hand, a range of more eclectic objects did find their way onto display at an early stage: a visitor in 1870 noted – among other items – a collection of Byzantine coins, a French revolutionary assignat, a 'Hauhau' (actually Ringatu) banner captured in a campaign against Te Kooti, and the skeleton of an elephant.⁸⁶ Hector's firm commitment to the ideal of a 'scientific museum' could not protect his collection from 'curiosities.'

⁸¹ James Hector, *Catalogue of the Colonial Museum, Wellington, New Zealand* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1870), iii.

⁸² Athol McCredie, 'Collecting photographs: The development of Te Papa's historical photography collection,' *Tuhinga* 20 (2009): 44.

⁸³ Hector, *Catalogue of the Colonial Museum.*, 231.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ James Hector, *Twenty-First Annual report of the Colonial Museum and Laboratory Together With a List of Donations and Deposits During 1885-86* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1886), 9.

⁸⁶ 'A Ramble Through the Colonial Museum,' *Press*, 21 November 1870, 3.

Hector's austere elitist vision for the Colonial Museum could not be further removed from that of Carter, who seems to have hoped that the institution would become a source of popular education and entertainment like the Crystal Palace. Unfortunately, we cannot know how Hector responded privately to Carter's unsolicited gift. In a Museum that was already overcrowded and somewhat shambolic, the arrival of an Egyptian mummy in its case must have seemed a mixed blessing at best, even leaving aside Hector's antipathy to 'unmeaning collections of curiosities'. Moreover, the nature of gift-giving itself meant that the mummy did not arrive in the museum without acknowledged chains of obligations and associations. In his celebrated essay on the gift, Marcel Mauss has observed that "there is a series of rights and duties about consuming and repaying existing side by side with rights and duties about giving and receiving. The pattern of symmetrical and reciprocal rights is not difficult to understand if we realise that it is first and foremost a pattern of spiritual bonds between things which are to some extent parts of persons, and persons and groups that behave in some measure as if they were things."⁸⁷ Like the *ka* of the dead lingering around the mummy, Carter's agency was in some sense present in his unsolicited gift; it imposed certain clear obligations upon the museum that received it, including the duty to accept and display the mummy. Moreover, the mummy interposed its own potentially unwelcome web of associations into the museum assemblage, including its links with networks of imperialism and politics. Carter was not just sending a mummy to the Colonial Museum, he was also sending a firm idea of what the Museum ought to be about, and perhaps even a notion of what New Zealand's relationship to its colonial metropolis ought to be. If Hector was to accept the mummy, he would need to negotiate all these factors.

As it happened, Hector was not given an opportunity to decline the gift. "If I am awarded [a mummy]," Carter wrote on June 18 1885, "it might reach Wellington before you receive this, therefore I write you this letter of advice and will forward to you, as soon as I receive them, the official description of the mummy and a translation of the inscription on the outside of the case. [...] I think you had better not mention the contents of this note outside your own official circle – for fear after all I might be disappointed in my efforts to secure for Wellington a very ancient type of humanity."⁸⁸ According to the memorandum in the

⁸⁷ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans. Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen and West, 1966), 10.

⁸⁸ Charles Rooking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 18 June 1885.

museum archives, this letter reached the Colonial Museum on August 1 1885.⁸⁹ Three weeks later, on August 22, the Museum received a further letter from Carter confirming that the mummy had been sent from Suez on July 2, and enclosing a copy of the bill of lading.⁹⁰ On August 26, the mummy itself arrived at the Museum and was noted in the official memoranda of the Geological Society.⁹¹ Only twenty-five days elapsed between the Museum receiving notification that Carter intended to procure a mummy and its arrival at the Museum: an astonishingly short time in a period when the mail between London and Wellington took between five and six weeks on average. Hector certainly was not presented with the opportunity politely to decline Carter's generous gift. An undated memorandum by W.J. Phillipps records the names of those who were present at the opening of the mummy case following its arrival in the museum. They were Sir James Hector, William Skey (a chemist), Alexander McKay (a geologist), William Miles Maskell (an entomologist), and Richard B. Gore (a meteorologist), as well as a youth identified as a Mr Johnston – very likely one of the three sons of Hector's friend and local politician Walter Woods Johnston.⁹² Even in an era when many colonial scientists were autodidacts with wide-ranging interests and little specialist knowledge, the disjunction between the object and the institution to which it was sent is evident from the backgrounds of the men who first examined it.

If Hector had mixed feelings about the new arrival, he managed to put a brave face on it. Replying to Carter on September 17 1885, he wrote: "As an exhibit, [the mummy] has excited the greatest interest and crowds of visitors daily come specially to inspect the new attraction. To the Maories in particular it is an object of wonderful interest. [...] It has been allotted a prominent place in the Museum and I am getting a large label prepared on which

⁸⁹ New Zealand Geological Survey, Memorandum 358/85, 1 August 1885, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 5.

⁹⁰ Charles Rooking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 16 July 1885, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 7.

⁹¹ New Zealand Geological Survey, Memorandum 397/85, 23 August 1885 (note appended 26 August 1885), Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 7.

⁹² W.J. Phillipps, Undated Memorandum, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 15

will be recorded the history of the Mummy and the name of its generous donor.”⁹³ Lacking any local experts in Egyptology, Hector was forced to rely on the information that Carter had sent to him from London and from the Boulaq Museum in Cairo:

From various official sources, supplied to me from Egypt and here, I am enabled to compile and furnish you with the following authentic information respecting the aforesaid mummy. 1. The mummy was found, last summer, at Achmin (anciently Panopolis) near Sohaz on the Nile. The time is the Ptolemaic period or XXXIII Dynasty. 2. It is of the date of the Ptolemies whose dynasty commenced with the reign of Ptolemy the the [sic] First, 323 B.C. Under the government of the Ptolemies Egypt continued till the battle of Actium which occurred 30 B.C., when Egypt finally became a Province of the Roman Empire. Under these circumstances, the age of the mummy in question is at least 2000 years, or, to be more accurate, it cannot be less than 1,914 years old and may even be as old as 2,207 years. 3. The original cost of the case or coffin and first class embalming, like this specimen, would – according to Herodotus – be about £170 of our present money. The wood the case is made of is, probably, sycamore. 4. The translation of the hieroglyphic inscription on the lid of the mummy found at Achmin – the ancient Panopolis, is as follows: - “Priest of the God Khem named Petisiris. Son of the mistress of the house of Khem, the priestess of Khem-nafron.” “Ptolemaic period.” This is about all the information I can give respecting the mummy which I trust may arrive in good condition and give satisfaction to you and those persons who feel an interest in viewing it – as the oldest antiquarian relic in New Zealand.⁹⁴

The last line illustrates quite aptly Carter’s attitude to the mummy: its purpose was to furnish the Colonial Museum with a specimen of human antiquity which would allow it to stand alongside the public museums of Britain. It was to be, moreover ‘instructive’ as an index of human progress – perhaps including moral and political progress from despotism to liberal democracy, though Carter does not explicitly endorse this view.⁹⁵ The mummy was to situate New Zealand and its public institutions in a long continuum of historical development, in which Britain’s soon-to-be-independent colonies stood at the apex.

If this was indeed Carter’s perspective, it is interesting that Hector managed to incorporate most of the information he received from Carter in the label he wrote to accompany the mummy, without in any way attempting to reflect this ideological perspective. Rather,

⁹³ Sir James Hector, Letter to Charles Rooking Carter, 17 September 1885, Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O’Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 12.

⁹⁴ Charles Rooking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 16 July 1885.

⁹⁵ Charles Rooking Carter, Letter to Sir James Hector, 18 June 1885.

Hector's label took the unusual step of linking Ancient Egypt with the history of the Classical world, and of emphasising the end of Egypt's independence rather than its apogee. The label read:

EMBALMED REMAINS OF PETISIRIS
PRIEST OF THE TEMPLE OF THE EGYPTIAN GOD KHEM
SON OF THE PRIESTESS KHEM-NAFRION, MISTRESS
OF THE HOUSE OF KHEM.
WHO LIVED DURING THE 33RD. DYNASTY OF THE PTOLEMAIC
PERIOD, WHICH WAS ENDED AT THE BATTLE OF ACTIUM,
BETWEEN THE EGYPTIAN AND THE ROMAN GALLEYS, 31 B.C.
UPON THE DEATH OF CLEOPATRA WHICH IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED
EGYPT FINALLY BECAME ONE OF THE RICHEST ROMAN PROVINCES....⁹⁶

Hector's decision to cast the history of Ancient Egypt in terms of the Roman imperial triumph – in an era when British domination of the globe was often likened to the ancient *Pax Romana* – drew an implicit analogy between Octavian's conquest of Egypt at the Battle of Actium and the establishment of British colonial dominance over New Zealand. While this might appear to offer an uncritical endorsement of the colonial project, the message sent by Hector's label is somewhat more ambivalent. In Carter's liberal narrative of colonial self-government, the role of the indigenous peoples of the Empire is almost totally obscured. Maori are conspicuous by their absence in the *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist*, where they appear only on the fringes of colonial society and as a measure of the progress made by settlers. Carter gives no indication that he believed Maori people or Maori culture would have a future in the 'Great Britain of the Pacific Ocean,' and if he was aware that they had a history in the land he gives no indication of having the least knowledge of or interest in it. In the Colonial Museum, however, surrounded by its modest collection of ethnographic objects, human remains, and symbols of recent Maori resistance, Hector might well have felt that ignoring the indigenous history of New Zealand was neither possible nor desirable. Moreover, Hector's observation that the mummy was "an object of wonderful interest" to Maori visitors may well have impelled him to consider the ways in which the new exhibit might be made meaningful to non-European observers.

⁹⁶ Sir James Hector, 'Text of the Label Prepared by J. Hector for the Public Gallery,' Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekh in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke (Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996), 17.

If Carter's mummy was to be related meaningfully to the collections of Maori material already held by the Museum, it would not be by associating it only with the culture of the colonisers. Instead, Hector implicitly associates Egyptian culture with that of the Maori, comparing the conquest of Egypt by Rome to the colonisation of New Zealand by Britain. In Hector's curious decision to focus his label on the end of Egypt's history as an independent kingdom (and the *terminus ad quem* for the mummy's lifetime), he pays Maori culture the surprising compliment of comparing it to Ancient Egypt. In fact, this was not by any means a new analogy. The idea that Polynesian peoples were descended from Ancient Egyptians was the subject of much speculation on the part of Victorian ethnographers, who coined the sciences of 'comparative philology' and 'comparative mythology' to demonstrate the common descent of Egyptian and Maori cultures along the kind of evolutionary lines suggested by Darwinism in the natural sciences.⁹⁷ Although such debates were largely confined to academic circles, the very widespread conjecture about the ethnic origins of the Maori may well have added piquancy to the display of Egyptian remains alongside Maori ones. Many commentators seem to have interpreted the analogy between ancient societies and Maori to suggest that Maori represented an early stage of human civilisation, which was in the process of being swept away by the new.⁹⁸ Hector's subtle interpretation of Carter's gift, which was achieved by means of the label he attached to it, avoided this implication as well. Not only did his interpretation of the mummy allow for the possibility that Maori history and culture might offer something of value to the settler society, but it might even allow Maori people and culture to have a future even under British domination. The death of Cleopatra may have ended Egypt's independence, but it certainly did not bring about its extinction as a nation; on the contrary, Egypt became, in Hector's words, 'one of the richest Roman provinces' – something like the role many colonists may have imagined for their new homeland in the British Empire. In this way, Hector was able to co-opt Carter's unsolicited

⁹⁷ It would seem that this notion was first proposed by Thomas Kendall in the 1820s (Judith Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: A Life of Thomas Kendall* (Christchurch: Oxford University Press, 1968), 141-43). By the late-19th century it had become fairly widespread, thanks especially to the influence of the English scholar and radical Gerald Massey, who toured New Zealand in 1885. Although the idea came under pressure from rival claims, such as the 'Aryan Maori' theory of Edward Tregear, it could still attract enough attention to stimulate a vigorous exchange of views in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* in 1916, when the Australian 'hyper-diffusionist' Grafton Elliot Smith cited John Macmillan Brown's claim that Maori mummified their dead in support of the idea that this practice had emanated across the world from Egypt (H.D. Skinner, 'Review: On the Significance of the Geographic Distribution of the Practice of Mummification,' *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 59, 10 (1915): 123).

⁹⁸ "A few years hence, when the race of men whose varied career have been following from the time when they walked with Abram in the great city of Ur [...] shall have disappeared from the face of the earth, their history will possess an interest which no human effort can now excite." Francis Dart Fenton, *Suggestions for a History of the Origin and Migrations of the Maori People* (Auckland: H. Brett, 1885), 122.

gift for quite a different purpose than that which its donor had originally intended. Carter's mummy came into the Colonial Museum bringing with it a network of potent associations linking it not just to Egypt but to the whole project of British imperialism. It was not merely large and unwieldy in a physical sense – its networks of association followed it into the museum, resisting any easy accommodation with the objects around it. It was Hector's own modest gift to appropriate these associations along with the object, and to make them honour not just the Museum, but the cultural artefacts it contained.

CHAPTER TWO

Networks of Knowledge: Mummies as Specimens

Museums can be viewed as assemblages of objects and people, which generate new meanings when new objects are introduced, or existing objects are re-arranged – or even when agents outside the assemblage add themselves to it. Assemblages, however, can also be formed between and among institutions, especially where objects and ideas travel from one place to another. In the late-nineteenth century, New Zealand museums attempted to enter into the networks of exchange that already existed between collecting institutions around the world. Through these networks, they attempted to augment their collections of exotic objects – including Egyptian mummies. This chapter considers the influence of such networks on two New Zealand museums.

The Canterbury Museum in Christchurch was founded in 1867 under the directorship of the surveyor-general of the Canterbury Province, Julius von Haast. Though Haast, like Hector, was a self-taught geologist and naturalist, the museum he established represented everything that the director of the Colonial Museum had assiduously – and not entirely successfully – attempted to eschew. Unlike the Colonial Museum, the Canterbury Museum was from its beginnings intended to be a popular institution, which would serve an educative and reforming function; indeed, the Canterbury settlement had been established on the principle that “all considerations connected with the moral, social, and religious interests of the community; the library, museum, botanical garden [...] will find an appropriate place here.”⁹⁹ The new museum would be part of the project of establishing a self-regulating society of educated and morally responsible Anglican colonists. The Prussian-born Haast, who came out to New Zealand in 1858 and took up work for the Province of Canterbury three years later, was familiar with the collection and display practices of ‘popular’ European museums and exhibitions in the mid-nineteenth century, and he brought with him a notion of museum practice strongly influenced by the ‘encyclopaedic’ institutions of the colonial metropoleis.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, Haast was quite self-consciously a man of science, who corresponded with

⁹⁹ Association for Founding the Settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand, *Canterbury Papers: Information Concerning the Principles, Objects, Plans, & Proceedings of the Founders of the Settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand* (London: John W. Parker, 1850), 55.

¹⁰⁰ Roger Fyfe, ‘Macmillan Brown Lecture Series, 2010: Lecture 2 – Museums in the Colonies,’ unpublished lecture notes, 10.

Charles Darwin on matters of zoology and occupied a professorial chair in geology at the Canterbury Collegiate Union. In 1862, shortly after his arrival in the province, Haast had established the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, a body dedicated to scientific research and discussion, and this society would later prove instrumental in the establishment of the Museum. In his rather hagiographic biography of his father, Heinrich Ferdinand von Haast wrote that he “at last convinced the Canterbury people of the vital part that science plays both in the academic and practical world, and induced them, many in spite of themselves, to regard the Museum, that he built up single-handed, as the Key of Higher Education.”¹⁰¹ The Canterbury Museum thus attempted to have a foot in both camps; it was to be both a scientific institution and an educational one.

If the Canterbury Museum was no mere ‘cabinet of curiosities,’ however, Haast’s collection practices reveal just how far removed its aims were from those of the Colonial Museum. Supplied with moa bones and other curios by colonists and excavators, Haast exchanged these with overseas collectors for rare and exotic exhibits, especially skins and specimens of foreign fauna. An 1885 guide to the city of Christchurch boasted of the range of animal specimens on display in the ‘Mammal Room’:

In here, on the right, is a case containing some magnificent lions and tigers, splendidly mounted, and presenting a life-like appearance. On the opposite side are the bears, which include the finest specimens to be seen anywhere. [...] Here is to be seen a very fine specimen of male gorilla, and the family of ourang-outangs. There is a remarkable ‘nose’ monkey from Borneo, a very rare specimen, and, besides many others, some ‘Lemures,’ of Madagascar, a very peculiar family of monkeys. The next case contains sloths, ant-eaters, armadilloes, marmots, moles, and squirrels, and next it are specimens of smaller deer, antelopes, chamois, &c. [...] At the end of the room is a group of animals too large to be put in a case, amongst them being an elephant, a rhinoceros, a camel, a giraffe, an elk, and the American and European bison.¹⁰²

The regime of display was not quite so haphazard as it might appear: Haast himself claimed that he wanted only “to obtain specimens to represent each genus and for species that displayed remarkable beauty or form, or were rare, or were large and impressive.”¹⁰³ Clearly there was a presumption that such objects would be made available for display – a presumption that, along with Haast’s voracious pursuit of specimens – required the extension of the Museum buildings three times during his tenure. Haast defended his interest in

¹⁰¹ H.F. von Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast, a New Zealand Pioneer* (Wellington: Avery Press, 1948), 140.

¹⁰² Montague Mosley, *Illustrated Guide to Christchurch and Neighbourhood* (Christchurch: J.T. Smith, 1885), 67-68.

¹⁰³ Ruth Barton, ‘Haast and the Moa: Reversing the Tyranny of Distance,’ *Pacific Science* 54, 3 (2000): 257.

acquiring rare and exotic items from abroad on the basis of their educational value, but he also undoubtedly intended that they should enhance the prestige of the Museum. “As a result of Haast’s initial scientific preoccupation” writes Roger Fyfe, “the number of foreign items came to vastly exceed that of New Zealand flora and fauna. The visitor numbers suggest the local public obviously loved this formula.”¹⁰⁴ While Haast’s formula may have been popular with visitors, it raised the alarm of the Museum’s Board of Governors, who in 1878 declared that they were “very much averse to the destruction of New Zealand fauna for the purposes of exchange with other museums and would draw [Haast’s] attention to the fact that there were objects such as fossils which might be available for the purposes of exchange.”¹⁰⁵

Nevertheless, Haast’s avid pursuit of striking and exotic curiosities had advantages beyond attracting public esteem. The networks of exchange into which the Canterbury Museum and its collections entered brought Haast into contact with some of the leading scientific figures of the age. Along these personal and institutional links travelled not only objects but also correspondence, specialist knowledge, publications, recognition, prestige, patronage, and career opportunities. For the director of a relatively remote colonial institution on the far fringes of the British Empire, the temptations of being ‘plugged into’ the mains-supply of European scientific discourse must have been irresistible. Moreover, the European fascination with *Dinornis* discoveries – and a succession of significant finds of moa bones in Canterbury – allowed Haast considerable influence in striking deals with much larger and better-stocked institutions. As Ruth Barton has observed, Haast’s position at the periphery of the Empire provided him with the opportunity to assert his central role in the collection and interpretation of moa remains: “The exchange and sale of moa bones stocked his museum; gifts of moa skeletons brought him honours; and he began to claim that being at the periphery and having seen the bones in situ gave his interpretations credibility.”¹⁰⁶

As the imperial centre and the site of the great Victorian museums, it is little surprise that Haast’s first overtures should have been directed towards London. Here he ran up against the intransigence of Richard Owen, the famously obstreperous head of natural history collections at the British Museum, who had also built a career on moa bones, but who refused absolutely to part with any original specimens. Haast had more success with William Henry Flower, the curator of the Royal College of Surgeons and Owen’s eventual successor. As Fyfe has

¹⁰⁴ Fyfe, ‘Macmillan Brown Lecture Series,’ 13.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 14.

¹⁰⁶ Barton, 251.

observed, “Flower acted in the capacity as Haast’s London agent, trading moa bones and archaeological implements to local dealers and museums, then used the proceeds to purchase new collections for Canterbury Museum. [...] In an ironic twist, Flower frequently sold Haast’s rarities to the British Museum.”¹⁰⁷ Although there were a significant number of British institutions that were willing to sell or trade objects from their collections, Owen’s obduracy compelled Haast to approach museums in Europe and the British colonies. Nor was the export of objects from the Canterbury Museum limited to moa remains, though bones – and above all complete skeletons – were among the most desirable objects of exchange, and Haast certainly did not limit his pursuit of exotic curios to animal skins. In the first year of the Museum’s existence, writes Heinrich von Haast:

...the bulk of exchanges sent by Haast were moa bones and birds, of which the latter he dispatched nearly 500 skins, as well as some skeletons, [but] he had to cater for the individual requirements of his customers. He therefore sent soils to Berlin; collections from his Rakaia moa-hunter encampment to Finsch, Darmstadt, and T.W. Flower, Croydon; Maori and Moriori skulls to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and the Anatomical Museum, Berlin, to the latter of which he also sent New Zealand timbers and a skull of a sea leopard (*Stenorhynchus Leptorix*); while to Professor Flower of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, he sent the complete skeleton of a whale, *Berardius Arnuxi*; and to Calcutta, New Zealand and Chatham Island shells.¹⁰⁸

The range of items received in return included a wide range of ethnographic objects and specimens of human remains. In 1876, the museum could boast “prehistoric remains from the Lake Dwellings in Switzerland, Anglo-Saxon urns, stone weapons of the North American Indians, wooden and agricultural tools of the Maori, and an extensive collection of moa-hunter remains from Canterbury and Otago. From Professor George Rolleston FRS, a collection of human skulls had been received, including Roman and Anglo-Saxon ones from ancient burial-places in Great Britain.”¹⁰⁹ The same year, Haast opened the ‘Maori House’, a carved whare whakairo formerly belonging to the Ngati Porou rangatira Henare Potae, which contained the Museum’s displays of Maori ethnographic material. As Fyfe notes, “at that time this attempt to present taonga Maori in a context deemed appropriate was quite a remarkable vision.”¹¹⁰ Less successful was Haast’s avid pursuit of mokomokai, or preserved human heads. In 1872, Sir Walter Buller managed to acquire a specimen of a ‘Maori head’ from a British collection, and it reached the Canterbury Museum the following year. The new exhibit was not well received, however, and Haast “found that, although he had it in the

¹⁰⁷ Fyfe, ‘Macmillan Brown Lecture Series,’ 13-14.

¹⁰⁸ Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast*, 627.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 764.

¹¹⁰ Fyfe, ‘Macmillan Brown Lecture Series,’ 15.

Museum in a glass case, he soon had – out of consideration for Maori susceptibilities – to envelop the case with a cover, and only furtively exhibit the head from time to time to those interested.”¹¹¹ Another mokamokai was subsequently received from William Henry Flower later the same year, along with “the skin of an Indian elephant”, but only the elephant seems to have found its way onto public display.¹¹² This did not, however, prevent Haast from putting other human remains on display. In 1885, the museum contained an entire room dedicated to ‘Osteology,’ with cases containing human and animal bones: “A separate case contains skulls of the different human races, both ancient and modern, among them being skulls from Egyptian mummies, Roman of the Augustine period, and Anglo-Saxon and Romano-British races. Skulls from Peruvian mummies; Flat-headed Indians, and a Tasmanian one are among the rarities. The Maoris of New Zealand and the Moriori of the Chatham Islands are well represented.”¹¹³ At some point before 1878, the Museum acquired the unwrapped mummy of woman from Ancient Egypt, but this object was apparently in a poor state of preservation. Nevertheless, it was placed on public display, where a reporter for the *Star* saw it upon the Museum’s reopening. “The very texture of her skin,” he wrote “though now a thing of ‘shreds and patches,’ may be minutely examined by the vulgar crowd.”¹¹⁴ The origins and fate of this ‘unrolled’ mummy are unknown; it was still on display in 1900, when the *Guide to the Collections of Canterbury Museum* described it as: “merely a skeleton that has been unrolled from its bandages. It came from Sakkarah, and is said to belong to the 30th or last dynasty of the Egyptian Kings, BC 378-358. In wall cases 11 and 12,” it added, “are the heads of three other mummies.”¹¹⁵ The origins of these disembodied heads are likewise mysterious, though they may well have been grisly souvenirs from travellers in Egypt.

Among Haast’s contacts in European museums was Enrico (‘Henry’) Hillyer Giglioli, the director of the Natural History Museum – better-known as La Specola – in Florence. Though trained as a zoologist, Giglioli was – like Haast – a man of expansive interests, and his role at the head of the Museo di Storia Naturale brought him into contact with extensive ethnographic, anatomical, anthropological, geological, and photographic collections. As a leading member of the so-called ‘Florentine School’ of ethnography, Giglioli pioneered an

¹¹¹ Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast*, 633.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 677.

¹¹³ Mosley, *Illustrated Guide to Christchurch and Neighbourhood*, 71.

¹¹⁴ ‘Re-opening of the Museum,’ *Star*, 6 September 1878, 3.

¹¹⁵ Canterbury Museum, *Guide to the Collections of the Canterbury Museum*, 2nd ed. (Christchurch: TE Frazer, 1900), 116.

approach to the study of foreign cultures that emphasised holistic attitude to human social behaviour, and which employed photography not just as a tool for recording anatomical differences but as a means of preserving images of the subject in his or her social environment.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Giglioli had an extensive network of contacts among scientists and museum professionals around the world, among whom he traded objects from the Museum's collections, usually sending zoological specimens in exchange for ethnographic material. Sometimes Giglioli would trade-on material he received to a third institution: this seems to have been the fate of an Aboriginal fishing kite which Giglioli received from the Australian Museum in 1876, and which he subsequently passed on to the University Museum of Pennsylvania.¹¹⁷ Giglioli first wrote to Haast in 1875, apparently at the instigation of their mutual acquaintances Giuseppe Biagi, the Italian consul to Melbourne, and La Specola's head of Botany, Professor Filippo Parlatore. With his first missive Giglioli enclosed "a choice of objects which I felt may prove acceptable and interesting for the Canterbury Museum [...]" These are partly zoological specimens, partly Egyptian relics..."¹¹⁸ Giglioli stressed in his letter that as these offerings were sent by his own department of the Museum, "that of the zoology and comparative anatomy of vertebrated animals, it is therefore understood that only recent vertebrates or parts of them are desired in exchange..."¹¹⁹ In reality, the consignment seems to have contained objects from a number of other departments of the Museum – it included invertebrates and botanical specimens, among other things – all apparently hoping to enrich their collections by means of exchange. On a separate sheet of paper, Giglioli indicated his own desiderata, adding that "I should also be thankful for some good [...] photographs of the New Zealand natives from different parts of the islands, and those of the Chathams also."¹²⁰ Two years later Giglioli wrote to Haast to acknowledge the receipt of "human remains, moa bones, rare skeletons, bird skins, & fishes & reptiles in alcohol" from the Canterbury Museum.¹²¹ In return, Giglioli pledged to send "the mummy and case (gilt and bronze) of a sacred ibis in very excellent preservation; the mummy of a crocodile, and a large set of Etruscan objects. And finally I have in view a largish vase covered with figures, such

¹¹⁶ Pasquale Verdicchio, *Looters, Photographers, and Thieves: Aspects of Italian Photographic Culture in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Plymouth: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011), 88-89.

¹¹⁷ Garry Barton and Stefan Dietrich, *This Indigenous and Singular Apparatus: Fishing Kites of the Indo-Pacific* (Heidelberg: Völkermuseum vPST, 2009), 87-88.

¹¹⁸ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 4 December 1875, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 24 November 1877, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

as you desire, but the owner has some reluctance to part with it, but I hope to persuade him to do so – and that that fine object will eventually grace your Museum. I have also a set of publications in return for those you kindly sent me.”¹²² Almost a year later, Giglioli wrote to Haast to confirm the dispatch of the ibis and crocodile, which were to be sent out to New Zealand via London, though he added that he was so far unable to acquire a suitable Etruscan vase such as Haast had requested. In both the letters of 1879 and 1880, Giglioli repeated his requests for ethnographic material from the Pacific, especially “crania or photographs” of Maori and Polynesians.¹²³ Giglioli was an Italian nationalist, a staunch monarchist, and a personal friend of the royal family,¹²⁴ and these connections allowed him to provide additional enticements. In 1880, he arranged for Haast to be awarded a decoration by the Italian government in recognition of his contributions to La Specola. The silver medal Haast received, carrying the head of Galileo on one side, is now in the National Library.¹²⁵

It would seem that it was late in that year that Haast first suggested to Giglioli that he would be grateful to receive an Egyptian mummy. “I cannot promise a human mummy from old Egypt,” Giglioli replied on 22 January 1881, “but shall do my best to try and have one for you...”¹²⁶ The matter appears to have been dropped at this point, as Giglioli’s letters over the subsequent four years dwell on the difficulties of securing an authentic Etruscan vase and his request for ethnographic photographs, moa skeletons, and Polynesian stone implements. In April of 1886, however, Haast visited Europe as part of his role as New Zealand’s Commissioner to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition (the ‘Colinderies’), an event his biographer described in characteristically florid terms as “the last act of a momentous life, Haast’s zenith, the crowning triumph of his career, a compensation for all the whips, the scorns, and the spurns that he had endured in the past.”¹²⁷ There was, no doubt, a further consideration. As Haast *filis* observed: “Haast soon realised, when he made contacts with other Commissioners and his fellow scientists, the marvellous opportunity he had of making collections in Europe for the Museum if only he had the funds.”¹²⁸ Despite the dire financial

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 1 October 1880, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹²⁴ Pietro Passerin d’Entrèves et al., ‘Enrico Hillyer Giglioli: l’uomo, il naturalista, il viaggiatore,’ *L’Universo* 76, 5 (1996): 630.

¹²⁵ Haast, *the Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast*, 772.

¹²⁶ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 22 January 1881, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹²⁷ Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast*, 899.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 965.

state of the Museum and the reluctance of the civic authorities to grant it further funding, the Board of Governors did eventually vote Haast the sum of £300 and extend his leave of absence, allowing him to visit the Continent to make purchases in Italy during his European voyage. Haast also received private donations of £100 pounds from George Gould, a wealthy Christchurch businessman and benefactor of the Museum, and £50 from John Tinline, a former member of the Nelson Provincial Council and a member of Canterbury's run-holding 'squattocracy'.¹²⁹ Haast seems to have viewed his visit to Europe as an opportunity to procure at last the long-desired Egyptian mummy, and perhaps to arrange it to be transported back to New Zealand with him. It would seem that the £50 gift from John Tinline was specifically apportioned for the purchase of a mummy, as the records of the Canterbury Museum name Tinline as the donor of the two mummies Haast eventually sent to the museum from Europe, in addition to a "collection of Babylonian and Assyrian tablets."¹³⁰ Giglioli travelled to London in the autumn to see the exhibition and to meet Haast (and to beg for a number of the stone implements on display), and Haast in turn agreed to visit Florence the following winter. Their talk was apparently about what Haast could expect in exchange for the colonial artefacts Giglioli had set his heart on. "Professor Giglioli, the delegate of the Italian Government and an old correspondence of ours, is also here," Haast wrote to his son. "I see him daily and we are making plans how I can get Government specimens of antiquity. He thinks it is rather difficult, but nevertheless it might be managed, as the Minister of Home Affairs is an intimate friend of his..."¹³¹ Haast still had his heart set on exploiting Giglioli's contacts in Italy to procure an Egyptian mummy. In November 1886, immediately on his return from London, Giglioli wrote:

Here [in Florence] I got your kind letter from Hereford and at once went in search of my Egyptian friend & colleague Prof. Schiapparelli [*sic*]. I only succeeded however in seeing him yesterday evening – He was most kind, [and] says that he is almost sure of procuring for your Museum the two mummies you desire, one plain and the other richer; he says that they can easily be sent direct from Egypt to Christchurch N.Z. and believes that with package expenses not more than £30 (the sum you mentioned) will be required. He is writing at once to Boulaq, and as soon as an answer comes in about 15 or 20 days you shall hear from me. Thus far good and I feel confident that thou my dear friend will be happy!¹³²

¹²⁹ Ibid., 966.

¹³⁰ Canterbury Museum Accessions Register 1841-1891 (Canterbury Museum MS 1/1), cited in Roger Fyfe, 'The Provenance of the Canterbury Museum Mummies,' *Records of the Canterbury Museum* 20 (2006): 15.

¹³¹ Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast*, 919.

¹³² Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 2 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Ernesto Schiaparelli, who was the director of Florence's Egyptian Museum, had been present at Gaston Maspero's excavations at Akhmim during his first or second season there, and had the previous year published an article about what he called the 'Greco-Roman necropolis' at Akhmim.¹³³ It is likely that his personal connections with the excavations, and with Maspero in particular, were instrumental in procuring a mummy from Akhmim by way of the Boulaq Museum. Three weeks later, Giglioli wrote to thank Haast for the dispatch of some Australian artefacts he had coveted, and to appraise him of developments in Egypt:

Prof. Schiaparelli [*sic*] has just sent me the answer just arrived from the Museum of Boulacq – concerning the two mummies you desire, I transcribe: “J’ai pris tous les renseignements au sujet de ce que vous me demandez – pour les momies le Musée pourront vous en envoyer une ordinaire dans le prix de 3 ou 4 livres sterlines. Quant à une belle momie, il n’y en a pas pour le moment, mais si vous le desirez on pourra vous en réserver une de celles que nous recolterons cette année soit à Thebes soit à Akemin.” Schiaparelli says that you can have the ordinary one at once, or if you prefer it wait until next spring and get the two together. Please let me know your wish, and I shall act on it at once.¹³⁴

Haast's motives in desiring two mummies – and specifying that one should be 'plain' – can only be conjectured (a 'fine' mummy was apparently one that included a painted cartonnage and a richly decorated wooden casket). Possibly the price differential convinced Haast that he could afford only one 'fine' mummy, along with one 'ordinary' one. Alternately, it may have been Haast's intention to display only the 'fine' mummy in the Museum, and to keep the 'ordinary' specimen for scientific research or display as an anatomical specimen. As the Canterbury Museum already contained a poorly-preserved mummy with its bandages stripped from it, Haast may have been seeking a better specimen to serve the same purpose. An 'ordinary' mummy, presumably, was more suitable to be 'unrolled,' a 'fine' one must be preserved intact. The mummy evidently occupied the nebulous space between the anatomical specimen and the work of fine art.

Haast remained in England until the exhibition closed on 20 November, apparently exploring other possible sources of mummies and other antiquities. One of the sources Haast investigated was the British Museum, where his overtures to Richard Owen had so persistently been rebuffed. During the month of October, Haast was in correspondence with the Assistant Curator of the British Museum's Department of Egyptology and Assyriology,

¹³³ Klaus P. Kuhlmann, *Materialien zur Archäologie und Geschichte des Raumes von Achmim* (Mainz: Zabern, 1983), 54-55. See also Ernesto Schiaparelli, 'Chemmis (Achmim) e la sua antica necropolis,' in *Études archéologiques, linguistiques et historiques dédiées à Mr le Dr C. Leemans*, ed. Conradus Leemans, Willem Pleyte, A. P. M. van Cordt, F. de Stoppelaar (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1885), 85-88.

¹³⁴ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 22 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Theo G. Pinches, about the purchase of Babylonian or Assyrian clay tablets and cylinder seals. Pinches provided Haast with translations of the Akkadian script on at least one tablet and a cylinder seal; these are presumably among the objects listed in the Canterbury Museum register, along with the two mummies, as the donation of John Tinline.¹³⁵ A surviving letter from the British antiquary Frederick George Hilton Price, addressed to the director of the South Kensington Museum Sir Philip Cunliffe-Owen, shows that Haast was also making enquiries about buying good-quality mummies through the British Museum. “Sir,” wrote Hilton Price:

I was informed today by W[allis] Budge of the Egyptian Department, British Museum, that a gentleman from the Colonial Exhibition last week was enquiring for a good mummy & that he was told they did not know of one. Unfortunately W. Budge was not in at the time or he would have informed him that they had in the British Museum a very fair specimen of an Egyptian mummy belonging to me, which is for sale, and which may be viewed there any day. Should the gentleman in question be still desirous of acquiring one, I shall be happy to dispose of it.¹³⁶

Hilton Price was a London-born banker who dedicated much of his leisure to archaeology, both in Britain and abroad. He amassed a large collection of Egyptian material, and in 1905 was elected president of the Egypt Exploration Fund.¹³⁷ Price described his collections at length in the pages of the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, and a description of the mummy he offered to Haast is recorded in an essay first read in 1886, but not published until 1893:

A mummy and coffin of Ta-séps-pen-χonsu, lately received from Egypt, its locality is at present uncertain, but it was probably from Ahmim. The coffin is 5 feet 10 inches in height, and 18 inches across the shoulders, has a female head, the face colour pink, with eyes composed of alabaster, the eyelids and eyebrows are made of a composition to represent bronze. It has a large striped head-dress, with vulture wings displayed upon the sides, with a figure of Nebta kneeling on the crown of the head, with a dedication to that goddess. Upon the breast is a deep ornamental collar, composed of several rows of beads of various kinds, the sides terminating in a hawk’s head upon the shoulders. [...] Both parts of the coffin are of solid wood, hollowed out, and the whole of it is covered with cartonage or canvas painted over; the inside is covered in the same manner, only painted white. The mummy itself is only 5 feet in height and, as usual, is tightly rolled in linen, it has a movable mask of cartonage upon its head, with a large scarabaeus painted on its crown, the face is gilded, upon the breast and down the whole of the front are long strips of cartonage painted with figures; on the breast is the soul with

¹³⁵ Theo G. Pinches to Sir Julius von Haast, 25 October 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹³⁶ Frederick George Hilton Price to Sir Philip Cunliffe-Owen, 11 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹³⁷ William Roberts and Bernard Nurse, ‘Price, (Frederick George) Hilton (1842-1909),’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35609> (January 30, 2013).

outstretched wings, beneath which is a sort of aegis, with the emblem the tie of the girdle. [...] Inside the coffin were twenty-one *usabi* of a coarse blue porcelain, varying from 2 ¼ inches to 2 inches in height, all quite plain.¹³⁸

Hilton Price's uncertainty about the origin of this mummy suggests that he may have bought it from a dealer in the UK rather than via an agent in Egypt. In a letter to Haast he wrote that he was willing to allow Haast to buy the mummy for the relatively hefty sum of £28, "which I don't think you will say is out of the way when you see it. It is quite true that mummies are to be had cheap at Boulac, but then you don't have the advantage of seeing them for selection, and then the expense and trouble of getting them home is considerable."¹³⁹ Haast consulted with Pinches, who himself approached Peter le Page Renouf, the British Museum's formidable Keeper of Oriental Antiquities. On November 19 Pinches wrote to Haast that "Mr Renouf tells me that he does not consider £24 or £25 dear for the mummy offered by Mr Hilton Price. Those which are sold at a cheaper rate are, he says, very inferior. He has had opportunities of seeing several of these last and some are now on sale somewhere on the Old Brompton Road."¹⁴⁰ On November 18, Haast also wrote to Giglioli to seek his advice. Giglioli, who received the letter on November 23, immediately dashed off a reply encouraging Haast to buy the mummy from Hilton Price:

Amico carissimo! I wrote to you yesterday and I now received your welcome letter of the 18th inst. to which I hasten to reply – As you will have gathered from the extract in French in my yesterday's letter from the Director of the Boulaq Museum, you are in no way bound to buy of them – Schiapparelli [*sic*] and I carefully worded our letter so as to leave you quite free. As it turns up moreover they have no good mummy to dispose of now, only a common one of the value of 3 or 4 £ ster. which you can buy or leave as you like. So do as you think best – if I were you I would not hesitate in buying the mummy offered to you in London, which if fine is cheap.¹⁴¹

Haast may have awaited this reply before making his offer to Hilton Price, who replied on November 28: "I beg to inform you that I accept your offer of £24 for the mummy and will have it sent to the Colonial Exhibition during the ensuing week."¹⁴² Haast's offer was less than the asking price, but Hilton Price may have been swayed by the limited budget available to public museums, and by the cost of transporting the mummy by ship to New Zealand. It is

¹³⁸ F.G. Hilton Price, 'Notes Upon Some Egyptian Antiquities in My Collection,' *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 9 (1893): 341-43.

¹³⁹ Frederick George Hilton Price to Sir Julius von Haast, 15 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹⁴⁰ Theo G. Pinches to Sir Julius von Haast, 19 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹⁴¹ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 23 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹⁴² Frederick George Hilton Price to Sir Julius von Haast, 23 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

possible that Hilton Price also reduced the cost of the mummy by removing from it some or all of the twenty-one ushabti statuettes which he describes as being contained in the case, but which do not seem to have made their way to Canterbury. By the time it went on display in Christchurch there were only “six or seven” such objects contained in the case, and there were seven recorded when the mummy was re-catalogued in 1989.¹⁴³ Roger Fyfe has suggested that these may have been inserted by the museum at a later time, and originally unconnected with the burial.¹⁴⁴ This is possible, but if so they must have been associated with the coffin almost immediately after its arrival in the museum, judging by an article in the *Press* dated November 1887 which appears to refer to them.¹⁴⁵ It is more likely that the remaining fourteen ushabti figures were removed by Hilton Price, or lost in transit. Whatever the reason, Haast was able to secure the mummy shortly after the end of the Colonial Exhibition, and he presumably made arrangements for it to be sent out to the Canterbury Museum.

Haast was still interested in procuring a ‘plain’ mummy with the sum remaining from the Tinline gift, and he seems to have enquired from Pinches whether the mummies sold by antiquarians in the Old Brompton Road might be worth buying. Pinches was quick to dismiss this idea: “Mr Le Page Renouf,” he wrote, “tells me that he does not consider the mummies to be seen in the Old Brompton Road as worth buying – he only mentioned them as specimens of the inferior class of article to be obtained at a low price in Egypt. The owner, moreover, has an exalted idea of their value, having paid something like £100 for them.”¹⁴⁶ Having failed to find a cheap mummy for sale in London, Haast wrote to Giglioli in Florence on November 25, enclosing a cheque for five pounds to be forwarded to the Boulaq Museum. Giglioli replied on 4 December, returning the cheque:

Amico carissimo! I could only answer your kind letter of Nov[em]ber 25th to-day, as Prof. Schiapparelli [*sic*] has been absent at Rome – I saw him just now and we have talked the matter over. He tells me that the cost of the ordinary mummy including careful package cannot be less than £6.10, and that he will write to-day to Bulacq informing them of your wish to secure the mummy they offered for £3 or 4 – he will desire them to give an exact account of cost (excepting freight, of course) and to inform us in favour of whom the cheque is to be drawn. Thus the cheque of £5 you sent me is useless and I beg to return it to you in this letter. Schiapparelli thinks that £24 is dear for a mummy, and said

¹⁴³ Fyfe, ‘The Provenance of the Canterbury Museum Mummies,’ 18.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ ‘A Visit to the Museum,’ *Press*, 30 November 1887, 2.

¹⁴⁶ Theo G. Pinches to Sir Julius von Haast, 22 November 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

that he reckoned he could have got you one for about 16-18£ ster. But of course you have the great advantage of seeing what you buy – and that balances quite the difference.¹⁴⁷

By the winter of 1886, Haast was suffering severely from sciatica and rheumatism, and Giglioli's letters over the subsequent months are full of solicitous enquiries after his health, as well as increasingly emotional appeals for artefacts from the packed-up exhibits at the Colinderies. Giglioli was particularly frustrated by Sir Walter Buller's failure to send him fine pounamu tools and weapons, and regretfully pronounced that "he must give better things if he wishes to get an Italian decoration."¹⁴⁸ On January 22, Giglioli wrote to Haast:

You will see by [Schiapparelli's enclosed letter] that a good plain mummy from Akhmim has been found for you and that you can have it for £5 – packing included. So if you still want it, you have only to write, mentioning Prof. Schiapparelli's name to M. Emile Brugsch Bey – sending the cheque for the amount to him and giving full directions as to sending off the case to Christchurch.¹⁴⁹

After leaving London, Haast made his way across Europe visiting museums and scientists in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy. Haast had already exploited his network of private relationships before his voyage, writing to colleagues in institutions such as the Natural History Museum in Vienna, "asking them to have their duplicates handy for selection when he visited them early in 1887."¹⁵⁰ Haast was fatigued and unwell, and though he visited Florence in early April, both he and Giglioli were confined to their sick beds, communicating only through notes delivered by Giglioli's wife.¹⁵¹ After Haast's departure, Giglioli received three cases of museum objects for dispatch to London, including one from Giacomo Doria at the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale at Genoa, to which Giglioli added a number of objects including a mummified cat and – at last – the Etruscan vase.¹⁵² Haast and his wife left England in the first week of June, arriving back in New Zealand the following month. He died suddenly on August 15, before the arrival in New Zealand of any of the cases he had sent on from London, and before either mummy had had been received by the Museum.

With the death of its founder, the Canterbury Museum lost its driving force and fell into a long period of relative stagnation. The two mummies, along with the other items that Haast

¹⁴⁷ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 4 December 1886, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹⁴⁸ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 8 January 1887, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹⁴⁹ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 22 January 1887, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

¹⁵⁰ Haast, *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast*, 967.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 944.

¹⁵² Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Julius von Haast, 26 April 1887, National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

had sent from Europe, were not eventually catalogued until 1888, and when they were it was with little detail, and only the name of John Tinline given as their donor.¹⁵³ This late and inaccurate registration suggests that Haast's death cast the Museum into some disarray. The loss of his broad knowledge of a vast range of fields and his genius for ordering a diverse collection must have been sorely felt when Haast's cases of miscellaneous antiquities, artefacts, and specimens of natural history finally arrived at the Canterbury Museum. It would appear from a news article published in 1890 that Haast's two mummies – the 'fine' mummy from Hilton Price and the 'plain' mummy from the Boulaq Museum – were not on public display in 1890, when only the badly-preserved unwrapped mummy was mentioned.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, a news article from November 1887 refers to the re-opening of the Canterbury Museum after the arrival of Haast's consignment from Europe, where it seems both mummies were on public display:

They are in the curious looking cases which served for coffins in those days. The cases are covered with hieroglyphics and representations of the tutelar deities of the deceased. On the outside of the cases are masks, representing, no doubt, the features in life of the illustrious dead – the ladies, for they are both of the gentler sex – appear to have been possessed of considerable personal attractions. In the case of one there is a second mask placed over the face, somewhat resembling the masks dear to childhood at November time, but different from these in being handsome. There is one peculiarity about the cases, that they are in two halves, the joining being by means of a mortice, which is identical with the method in use at the present date. Unfortunately there, is no data upon which to found any estimate, of the age of these mummies, or to discover who they were. Still they must have been ladies of high degree. In the case of one was found six or seven miniature gods in some kind of glazed earthenware.¹⁵⁵

All three mummies were certainly displayed together in 1900, when the second edition of the *Guide to the Collections of Canterbury Museum* was printed. This booklet largely reproduced the information available from the published catalogue of Hilton Price.¹⁵⁶ This catalogue also contained the claim that the Boulaq Museum mummy dated from the Egyptian New Kingdom: "the colouring on this coffin enables it to be placed with confidence as belonging to the 18th dynasty, B.C. 1700-1400."¹⁵⁷ This may reflect information provided with the mummy when it was sent from Boulaq, or it may be the verdict of a local 'expert' on Egyptian funerary art. Much more than all this, however, Haast's death deprived the Museum of his networks of personal and professional exchange. Haast had helped to shift the Canterbury Museum towards the centre of the networks of scientific knowledge that linked

¹⁵³ Canterbury Museum Accessions Register 1841-1891 (Canterbury Museum MS 1/1).

¹⁵⁴ 'Canterbury Museum,' *Thames Advertiser*, 17 June 1890, 1.

¹⁵⁵ 'A Visit to the Museum,' *Press*, 30 November 1887, 2.

¹⁵⁶ Canterbury Museum, *Guide to the Collections of the Canterbury Museum*, 114-15.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 103.

European institutions. Without Haast's presence, the Canterbury Museum retreated to the periphery of the web of scientific transactions until the mid-twentieth century, when it re-entered the arena in a very different way.

Haast's death did not end Enrico Giglioli's contacts with New Zealand museums, however. Between 1877 and 1904, Giglioli exchanged letters and artefacts with Thomas Frederic Cheeseman, the curator of the Auckland Institute and Museum. Cheeseman was first and foremost a botanist, though his professional interests also extended to geology and zoology.¹⁵⁸ Although Cheeseman's correspondence with Giglioli lasted until at least 1904, five years before Giglioli's death, their letters remained formal in tone, lacking the personal warmth (and emotional wheedling) that characterised Giglioli's letters to Haast. It is not known how Giglioli and Cheeseman came to be in correspondence – whether it was through the Canterbury Museum or via one of the intermediaries Giglioli mentioned in his letters to Haast, but in September 1877 Cheeseman made an overture to Giglioli: “On the part of the Auckland Museum, I take the liberty of writing to you to ascertain whether it would be possible to open an exchange of specimens with the Museum under your charge.”¹⁵⁹ Giglioli replied: “Your letter of September the 19th gave me much pleasure, for I was on the point of writing to you to make the proposal when you anticipated my desire which is also your own.”¹⁶⁰ Giglioli included a list of his own desiderata, consisting mostly of animal specimens, but adding: “I shall also be very glad to receive ethnological specimens relating to the Maori & Polynesian races, good photographs (cabinet size) and crania – I can send in exchange Italian crania, old Roman and Etruscan, and perhaps some of the objects illustrating the archaeology of our own country.”¹⁶¹ Cheeseman dispatched his first consignment, mostly comprising bird skins, in July of 1879, pledging that “should the first instalment prove acceptable to you, I propose to next send a collection comprising Maori crania, weapons, etc.”¹⁶² In July 1881, Cheeseman wrote that he was dispatching a number of cases to Giglioli's agents in London, containing not only mounted skins of kea, huia, and kakapo, but also a number of human remains: “Of Maori crania I send 15 – all good specimens and

¹⁵⁸ A.W.B. Powell et al., *The Centennial History of the Auckland Institute and Museum 1867-1967* (Auckland: Council of the Auckland Institute and Museum, 1967), 14.

¹⁵⁹ Thomas Frederic Cheeseman to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, 19 September 1877, Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

¹⁶⁰ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Thomas Frederic Cheeseman, 23 November 1877, Auckland Museum Archive, MS 58 box 7.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Thomas Frederic Cheeseman to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, 21 July 1879, Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

especially selected for you. They are from an old burial cave at Maunu at Whangarei, about 70 miles north of Auckland. You can depend on their being all undoubted Maoris.”¹⁶³ In exchange, Cheeseman expressed an interest in procuring “a few accurately determined crania of European or Asiatic races (with lower jaw attached).”¹⁶⁴ Giglioli, meanwhile, made increasingly desperate appeals for stone implements, again offering the enticement of state honours.¹⁶⁵ From the surviving letters it is clear that in 1895 Cheeseman was able to supply Giglioli with two of the objects he most desired – a bone mere and a pounamu hei-tiki – in addition to a range of stone tools from the Pacific and Melanesia. Also included in this consignment were a number of human skulls from New Britain, Samoa, and Fiji.¹⁶⁶

Cheeseman clearly appreciated the value of the items he had dispatched to Florence, and in a letter of June 1895 he set out what he wanted in return. Extensions to the Museum in 1892 had created a large Anthropology Hall for the display of ethnographic material, and Cheeseman clearly felt that this space needed an Ancient Egyptian artefact. The museum already held a small collection of Ancient Egyptian items, including necklaces, mummy cloths, ushabti statuettes, alabaster vases and amulets which had been given by various donors during the 1880s. In 1894, the former Auckland City Councillor William Buchanan had given the Museum a “skull of an Egyptian,” and two years later James Russell – like Buchanan a member of the Auckland Institute – donated a mummified hand.¹⁶⁷ Both objects clearly bear the stamp of tourist ‘souvenirs’ lifted from plundered Egyptian tombs. Cheeseman, however, seems to have felt that something more prestigious was required. “Now I am going to ask you to try to obtain for me,” he wrote, “in exchange for the above, an article that perhaps may be somewhat out of your line [...] I want for my Anthropological Hall a really good Egyptian Mummy [...] I do not mind waiting for a few months while you obtain it – but I do hope that you will arrange the matter in some way.”¹⁶⁸ By this stage, Auckland was the only major museum in New Zealand to lack such a high-status item, and it is possible that Cheeseman knew of Giglioli’s efforts to acquire a mummy on Haast’s behalf.

¹⁶³ Thomas Frederic Cheeseman to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, 20 July 1885, Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli to Thomas Frederic Cheeseman, 13 April 1886, Auckland Museum Archive, MS 58 box 7.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas Frederic Cheeseman to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, 17 June 1895, Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

¹⁶⁷ Katherine Ann Bol, ‘Every Museum Needs a Mummy: A study of the collecting practices that formed the ancient Egyptian collection at the Auckland War Memorial Museum’ (MA Diss, Museum of Auckland, 2006), 13-14.

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Frederic Cheeseman to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, 17 June 1895.

The mummified remains of a child in a plain wooden coffin duly arrived at the Auckland Museum in early October 1896. A few days later, Cheeseman wrote to Giglioli to express his thanks, though his letter betrays a note of disappointment: “I am very pleased indeed to have the Egyptian mummy,” he wrote, “although of course I should have liked the mummy of an adult better than that of a child. Nevertheless it is very acceptable, and perhaps another opportunity may occur of obtaining a larger specimen.”¹⁶⁹ It would seem that Giglioli did not enclose any information about the origins and provenance of the mummy he sent to Cheeseman, or if he did, these details were lost at an early stage. The record of the acquisition in the *Annual Report of the Auckland Institute and Museum* lists it only as “Mummy, in its original wooden case.”¹⁷⁰ While it is possible that Giglioli may have acquired the mummy from the Egyptian Museum at Florence, it is unlikely to have been through the agency of Schiaparelli, who had taken up the directorship of Turin’s Egyptian Museum two years previously. More probably the mummy was shipped directly from Egypt, Giglioli having perhaps purchased it through the Boulaq Museum. Whatever the mummy’s origins, Cheeseman does not seem to have been pleased with the exchange. Although his correspondence with Giglioli apparently continued for another eight years, the mummy that Giglioli sent to Auckland was not immediately put on public display. Indeed, it languished in museum storage for thirty-three years, until the opening of the new Auckland Museum in 1929.¹⁷¹

The networks of exchange that both the Canterbury Museum mummies and the Auckland Museum mummy moved across were networks of scientific knowledge and of scientific prestige. They connected institutions with each other through a flow of letters, and books. Objects that passed along these networks served as ways of creating and sustaining links between people and institutions, but they also manifested and stood witness to the scientific interpretation of a world that nineteenth-century museums sought to order, classify, and display. The commerce in ‘specimens’ was a means for collecting institutions not only to extend the range of objects in their possession, but to extend their symbolic mastery over whole fields of human knowledge. As Susan Pearce has observed, the new national and civic museums of the late nineteenth-century were intended to present “a panoramic view, into

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Frederic Cheeseman to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, 12 October 1896, Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

¹⁷⁰ Auckland Institute and Museum, *Annual Report of the Auckland Institute and Museum, 1897-98* (Auckland: H. Brett, 1898), 15.

¹⁷¹ Bol, ‘Every Museum Needs a Mummy,’ 18.

which eventually all aspects of human history and human relationship are fitted, together with those that tie together the natural world and the perceived place of humans within it. In all areas of human understanding hierarchy and knowledge are one and are available for inspection...”¹⁷² Both the Auckland and (especially) the Canterbury Museum aspired to take on the role of great civic institutions and ‘encyclopaedic’ museums, presenting to their visitors the spectacle of ‘the world under one roof.’¹⁷³ The creation of these ‘encyclopaedic’ collections, containing one specimen of every type, was intended above all to demonstrate visually the mastery of institutional knowledge over the world; the ability of structures of scientific understanding to encompass and order the multiplicity of things. Timothy Mitchell has written of “a particularly European concern with rendering things up to be viewed.”¹⁷⁴ In the case of the ‘encyclopaedic museum’ all of reality – the natural and the human world – was presented to the visitor as something “ordered and organised, calculated and rendered unambiguous.”¹⁷⁵ In turn, the picture of reality presented by the museum was intended to generate suitably well-ordered and organised social relationships. As Pearce puts it, “the belief that material display creates both knowledge and proper social relationships is a fundamental aspect of the European mentalité, matched by the corresponding belief that material evidence embodies distinctions which can be determined by thought to reveal the pattern of things.”¹⁷⁶

The vast array of objects collected and displayed in the great museums was intended to “render the whole world metonymically present” and subordinated to the all-comprehending gaze of science.¹⁷⁷ As Bruno Latour has observed, the ability to collect specimens from around the world establishes collecting institutions as global centres of dominating knowledge:

The zoologists in their Natural History museums, without travelling more than a few hundred metres and opening more than a few dozen drawers, travel through all the continents, climates and periods. They do not have to risk their life in these new Noah’s Arks, they only suffer from the dust and stains made by plaster of Paris. How could one be surprised if they start to *dominate* the ethnozoology of all the other peoples? It is the contrary that would seem surprising. Many common features that could not

¹⁷² Susan M. Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition* (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 1995), 132.

¹⁷³ Fyfe, ‘Macmillan Brown Lecture Series,’ 16.

¹⁷⁴ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 2.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁷⁶ Pearce, *On Collecting*, 139.

¹⁷⁷ Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, theory, politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 147.

be visible between dangerous animals far away in space and time easily appear between one case and the next! The zoologists *see* new things, since this is the first time that so many creatures are drawn together in front of someone's eyes; that's all there is in this mysterious beginning of a science.¹⁷⁸

The collector's eye, no less than that of the visiting public, swept across and asserted mastery over the whole of the physical world, which could be ordered and interpreted according to rational principles. The ordering principle that makes sense of these diverse collections – both in the collector's drawers and in the public gallery – was, by the 1880s, the principle of evolutionary adaptation over time. Darwin's theory of evolution by means of natural selection not only provided a means of structuring collections of natural and ethnographic specimens, it also enabled natural and human history to be plotted on the same scale of chronological development. The impact of Darwinism for the representation of ethnographic history was "to map human and natural times onto each other in a new global and secularised time that was also spatialised in its anachronistic construction of colonial peripheries as the past in the present."¹⁷⁹ A teleological narrative of historical progression, extending from geological time to the technological achievements of the present age, allowed museums to locate all natural and human products on a common hierarchy. One effect of this was that colonised people, who were seen to occupy a mode of social existence more 'primitive' or less 'developed' than that of modern Europe, were located in a sphere closer to the material or non-human realm. As Tony Bennett notes: "it was the fate of 'primitive peoples' to be dropped out of the bottom of human history in order that they might serve, representationally, as its support – underlining the rhetoric of progress by serving as its counterpoints, representing the point at which human history emerges from nature but has not yet properly begun its course."¹⁸⁰

It was this all-embracing conception of natural and human development which allowed museums to collect, display, and trade objects as diverse as human body-parts and animal skins, fossils and stone tools, mummies and insects. Offering to trade moa bones or stuffed skins of New Zealand birds for an Egyptian mummy or an Etruscan vase would make little sense unless these objects could be seen to have a shared standard of value. This value is their ability to stand synechdochically for the domain over which the museum asserts its command. Objects become 'specimens,' their sole purpose is to stand as representative

¹⁷⁸ Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 226.

¹⁷⁹ Tony Bennett, *Pasts Beyond Memory: Evolution, Museums, Colonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 25.

¹⁸⁰ Tony Bennett, 'The Exhibitionary Complex,' *New Formations* 4 (Spring 1988): 92.

examples of what they are; the only criterion of their quality is how well they conform to some imaginary type of this category. This explains the curiously ‘flattening’ effect of the commerce between Giglioli and his New Zealand correspondents, in which the physical particularities, origins, life-histories, provenances, and significance of objects are almost completely side-lined. When Haast goes looking for a mummy, it is not the age or the history of the mummy that concerns him, merely whether it is a ‘fine’ or an ‘ordinary’ specimen. Likewise, Cheeseman seems to have made no enquiries about the origins of the Auckland Museum’s child mummy, only expressing disappointment that it was a juvenile rather than an adult specimen. The specific details of the individual mummy’s history are largely irrelevant, not only because they may not have been known, but because the function of a mummy in a museum was chiefly to be that museum’s specimen of an Egyptian mummy, and – in this role – to stand synecdochically for the dominance of science over the remote reaches of time and space. By the late nineteenth-century, the mummy was already the symbol *par excellence* of Ancient Egypt; the physical manifestation both of Egyptian culture and of its fascinating Otherness for the modern West. Egypt, moreover, had already been established in the teleological history of the late nineteenth-century as the prelude to classical civilisation; the culture at the intersection of civilisation and savagery. For these reasons, by the 1880s it was highly desirable for museums with pretensions to ‘encyclopaedic’ status to display an Egyptian mummy. When in 1894 the curator of the Otago Museum remarked that “no museum was complete without an Egyptian mummy,” he was expressing a widely-held opinion.¹⁸¹ Every museum needed a mummy, and preferably a large and ornately-decorated one. The function of the mummy was chiefly to serve as the obligatory signifier of the history of Ancient Egypt, and to assume its proper place in the narrative of the ascent of man. One mummy was usually sufficient for this purpose – Haast was exceptional in seeking out a second specimen. The presence of mummies in museums reflected favourably on those institutions, moreover, as they were a visual demonstration of the museum’s participation in the networks of exchange that established and verified scientific knowledge: specimens granted authority to the museum as well as the other way around. Exchange networks were the circulatory system of an assemblage that was mutually validating to institutions, to the objects they displayed, and to the scientific discourse that these represented and guaranteed.

¹⁸¹ ‘Otago Institute,’ *Otago Witness*, 24 May 1894, 21.

In a universal museum, the ideal of completeness would always be unattainable, but museums could strive nevertheless to compile as comprehensive a collection as possible. Major metropolitan institutions like the British Museum – with links to far-flung colonial administrations – could afford to create their own networks of collectors in the field, to provide a constant supply of new specimens as required. More marginal institutions, however, were forced to rely upon networks of exchange in order to stock their shelves, treating other museums (often larger museums in the metropolitan centres) as a potential field for collection. Exchange was extremely common among nineteenth-century museums; Jude Philip, in a study of collecting practices at Sydney’s Australian Museum, has estimated that “in any given year in the nineteenth century the AM alone dealt with over thirty institutions and individuals; it acquired thousands of objects and specimens through exchange and sent out thousands in return.”¹⁸² Among the institutions and individuals with which the Australian Museum established a trading relationship was Enrico Giglioli and Florence’s Royal Zoological Museum.¹⁸³ As Philip notes, exchange had many advantages for such institutions:

Increasing the size of the collection was only one benefit of the system; it could also be used to refine the collections by weeding out items thought to be overrepresented (called ‘duplicates’) or simply unwanted. The main challenge for curators was to keep a balance for the future between the desired objects and those that would need to be sent out. In any year it was important not to carry over too much exchange ‘debt’ while at the same time making sure that the collections exported were of sufficient quality to maintain a good exchange relationship with external organisations and individuals.¹⁸⁴

In reality, however, exchanges between colonial museums and the metropolitan centres frequently involved ‘marginal’ museums alienating local objects in exchange for exotic rarities. Sent out of the network of relationships they occupied among collectors and experts in the colonies, cherished objects became mere specimens at the other end of an exchange network: “Specimens and objects usually went ‘out’ (as they termed it) with minimal information [...] This is a curious inconsistency in museum processes. For while collectors were urged to maintain full and accurate records; and while collectors were urged to maintain full and accurate specimens compared along geographical lines, within their exchange actions they obscured such details.”¹⁸⁵ Exchange reduced objects to specimens by robbing them of their cultural context: “objects were further abstracted from their cultural origins to be

¹⁸² Jude Philip, ‘Hedley Takes a Holiday: Collections from Kanak People in the Australian Museum,’ in *Unpacking the Collection Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum*, ed. Sarah Byrne, Anne Clarke, Rodney Harrison, and Robin Torrence (New York: Springer, 2011), 271.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 272.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 271-72.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 273.

swapped and shared internationally as single examples of a particular cultural type.”¹⁸⁶ The same thing, of course, occurred when mummies left the British Museum or the Boulaq Museum for New Zealand: lifted out of a network of experts and Egyptologists, they became silent and inexplicable specimens. Despite the mutuality of the alienation objects suffered at each end of the exchange process, there was often a deep inequality engrained into the process of exchange: as Haast discovered, there would be no parity of trade when the Canterbury Museum attempted to do business with the British Museum. Even attempting commerce with a more modest institution like La Specola, Haast and Cheeseman had to reckon with an institution integrated into wider and more numerous networks of exchange than any New Zealand museum could boast. The issue was not solely one of certain institutions having much wider access to possible sources of natural and ethnographic material than others; it also involved the ways in which museums were involved in the production and validation of scientific knowledge. Bruno Latour has observed that scientific discovery operates through “a cycle of accumulation that allows a point to become a *centre* by acting at a distance on many other points.”¹⁸⁷ To participate in networks of exchange, colonial museums had to establish themselves as ‘centres of calculation,’ capable not only of gathering objects together but also of inscribing them with meanings. This was a project that necessarily placed more ‘marginal’ museums at a disadvantage. Haast experienced some success in establishing the Canterbury Museum as a ‘centre of calculation’ for the study of moa remains. As the point to which Canterbury’s moa skeletons gravitated, and the place where they were assembled, ordered and named, the Canterbury Museum became not only the go-to institution for acquiring moa bones but also the acknowledged centre of creating and accumulating scientific ‘inscriptions’ arising from the study of the moa (a role not uncontested by the British Museum!). Both Cheeseman and Haast attained only somewhat more limited success in establishing their museums as ‘centres of calculation’ for native bird skins, invertebrates, and Maori ethnographic objects. Yet it was only by becoming this kind of scientific nodal point that museums could hope to enter into the networks of scientific exchange that transmitted not only collected objects, but also truth claims about the world. Only by becoming a centre in their own right could New Zealand museums enter into these networks as peripheral fields for the great ‘centres of calculation’ in Europe. This success was always limited, however; colonial museums would always be the junior partner when negotiating with larger and better-connected European institutions. Owen’s refusal to send

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 286.

¹⁸⁷ Latour, *Science in Action*, 222.

Haast anything other than plaster casts in exchange for moa bones may look high-handed, but in reality it reflected the truth of the power relationship between the two institutions.¹⁸⁸ This power relationship was not simply the product of discourses of colonialism and Empire; it arose because of the much more powerful range of associations that the British Museum could call upon. In the event, Haast failed to acquire a mummy by means of exchange, and was forced to go to London to buy one with cash like any amateur collector. Cheeseman did succeed in securing one through exchange, but was disappointed with the specimen he received. New Zealand museums could not forget their very subordinate role in the economy of exchange into which they entered.

¹⁸⁸ Barton, 'Haast and the Moa: Reversing the Tyranny of Distance,' 257.

CHAPTER THREE

Networks of Belief: The Mummy as Curiosity

By the late nineteenth-century, museums and other collecting institutions had created what Latour terms a ‘circulation of reference’, in which objects such as moa bones and Egyptian mummies could be integrated and interpreted according to the dominant scientific discourse of the age. But the networks of agency that determined the meaning of objects were not closed or limited solely to ‘respectable’ scientific institutions and appropriately qualified individuals. Nor were the boundaries of scientific respectability firmly fixed, although museums, universities, and scholarly societies were growing increasingly jealous of their own status as ‘centres of calculation’. Although the divide between amateur enthusiasts and scientific professionals was less distinct in colonial society than in Britain, scientific institutions felt increasing pressure to defend their standing against other, more popular agents of inscription. This does not mean that ‘scientific’ discourse was by this stage clearly delineated from other forms of knowledge, even within institutions self-consciously dedicated to the production of scientific inscriptions. On the contrary, the networks of meaning into which museum objects could be conscripted extended to a wide range of actors, many of whom would not now be regarded as engaged in scientific enquiry at all, but whose direct or indirect influence on the ‘centres of calculation’ was considerable. It is impossible to explore the ways in which mummies were perceived and imagined by the museum-going public, as well as many museum professionals, in the late nineteenth-century, without considering these links with other institutions and ideological systems. In the case of Egyptian mummies, any discussion of their meaning for late-Victorian viewers and collectors must consider the place of Egypt in the scriptural history of Protestant Christianity.

On February 14 1894, the Dunedin-based merchant and clothier Bendix Hallenstein wrote to the council of the Otago Museum from Luxor in Upper Egypt:

While travelling on the Nile in Upper Egypt I secured through the German consul M. Todrus at Luxor one of the best preserved mummies, which I understand is from the 19th Dynasty and was found in one of the tombs at Thebes. I have much pleasure in presenting it, and also the side of a coffin with a very legible hieroglyphic inscription, to the Museum, Dunedin. I may mention that the most valuable mummies are found at Thebes, in this neighbourhood, and Mr Todrus tells me he has secured several for the museum at Berlin. I have had the mummy and side of coffin with inscription packed in one case

and have taken steps to have it forwarded to Cairo from where it will be sent to Suez and thence direct via Melbourne to you, addressed 'Museum – Dunedin.'¹⁸⁹

The German consul was Moharb Todrus, who apparently ran a profitable line in antiquities despite the official policy of the British administration prohibiting the trade. An 1892 guidebook to Egypt for English-speaking travellers advised tourist in Luxor that “all the consuls sell antiquities; best from Todrus.”¹⁹⁰ As Hallenstein was himself German by birth, it is perhaps natural that he should have made contact with his national representative in Luxor; following his travels through Egypt and the Levant, he apparently spent some time in Germany “with the object of undergoing a special course of medical treatment which has been recommended to him.”¹⁹¹ There is little indication, at any rate, that Hallenstein travelled to Egypt with the intention of procuring a mummy for the Otago Museum. Hallenstein, who came from a large Jewish family, had apparently travelled through Egypt en route to Palestine and Syria, “countries which, to us Jews, must always have a special interest,” and where some of his relations had settled in Jewish immigrant communities.¹⁹² In his account of this journey which he wrote for the *Jewish Herald* (and which was subsequently reprinted in the *Otago Witness*), Hallenstein says little about Egypt, devoting most space to his travels through the Holy Land.¹⁹³ In all likelihood, Hallenstein’s purchase of a mummy from Todrus at Luxor was an impulsive purchase from a dealer used to selling antiquities to souvenir-hungry Westerners. Equally, it could be seen as a characteristically philanthropic gesture from one of Otago’s most celebrated benefactors. It might even be possible to detect a hint of provincial patriotism in Hallenstein’s decision that the Otago Museum should not be without a mummy if the Canterbury Museum could already boast two. The mummy that Hallenstein bought in Luxor and dispatched to Dunedin from Cairo was described to him as being of the nineteenth dynasty, the era of imperial Egypt’s height, and the epoch associated with the monumental architecture of the warrior king Rameses II. A specimen of this age was a worthy match for Canterbury’s eighteenth-dynasty mummy from the Boulaq Museum! More importantly, perhaps, Rameses II – whose mummy had been discovered and unwrapped by Maspero in 1886 – had long been identified by Western scholars with the pharaoh of the Exodus. Hallenstein’s sense of Biblical history is evident from his description of the Holy

¹⁸⁹ Bendix Hallenstein to the Otago Museum, 14 February 1894, Hocken Library, Dunedin, Otago Museum Records (ARC-0524), Inwards Correspondence, MS-2785/001.

¹⁹⁰ Karl Baedeker, *Egypt: Handbook for Travellers: Part Second, Upper Egypt with Nubia* (Leipzig: Baedeker, 1892), 102.

¹⁹¹ ‘Anglo-Colonial Notes’, *Otago Witness*, 29 March 1894, 16.

¹⁹² Bendix Hallenstein, ‘A Tour Through the East,’ *Otago Witness*, 19 July 1894, 35.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

Land in his letter to the *Jewish Herald*, and it seems likely that he drew the connection in one of his letters to the Otago Museum. Certainly the Museum's curator Thomas Parker made the association when he acknowledged the donation of the mummy before the Otago branch of the New Zealand Institute: "Mr Hallenstein informed him that so far as could be ascertained the mummy belonged to the nineteenth dynasty, and so far as he could make out by reference to the authorities the nineteenth dynasty was about the time of Moses."¹⁹⁴ This confidence in the reliability of the Biblical narrative as a guide to Egyptian history was nothing exceptional; reputable Egyptologists like Flinders Petrie debated the date of the Exodus and the identity of the Pharaoh, and the Canterbury Museum had itself catalogued its 'plain' eighteenth-dynasty mummy with the date: "Before the Exodus of the Hebrews, about 1500 BC."¹⁹⁵ In 1908, a visitor to the Canterbury museum wrote half-humorously of this same mummy that she represented "one of the old blue-blooded yellow-skinned aristocracy of the days before the Mosaic exodus."¹⁹⁶ If museum objects were capable of acting as guarantors of scientific knowledge, they were equally capable of defending the received histories of religious communities.

The *Clutha Leader* diligently reported the new exhibit's association with Moses, adding "the Dunedin museum is well worth visiting by anyone from the country, and a pleasant and interesting time may be spent in looking at the curios, etc."¹⁹⁷ A 'curio' – or rather, a 'curiosity' – is precisely what the mummy became when it was placed on display: an object meaningful not because of its type – as the 'specimen' was – but rather because of its associations. These might be real or assumed, historical or mythical, exotic or scientific – the curiosity takes on all comers. If the 'specimen' was the synecdochic representative of the scientific schema that encompassed it, the 'curiosity' was a metonym for stories, events, places, and beliefs that were rendered tangible by it. A 'specimen' stands as proof of the invisible network that links it to other objects; a 'curiosity' evokes associations or patterns of meaning that do not belong to the object itself. The role of the museum mummy as 'curiosity' is suggested by an article in the *Christchurch Press* of November 1887, shortly after the arrival of Haast's two mummies from Europe. The *Press* described the mummies as being situated in a room with "what may be called the relics of extinct nations, old books and

¹⁹⁴ Otago Institute, 'Otago Witness', 24 May 1894, 21.

¹⁹⁵ Roger Fyfe, 'The Provenance of the Canterbury Museum Mummies,' *Records of the Canterbury Museum* 20 (2006): 15.

¹⁹⁶ 'Rambles in the Museum,' *Star*, 15 February 1908, 4.

¹⁹⁷ 'Our Dunedin Letter,' *Clutha Leader*, 1 June 1894, 6.

manuscripts, and the many things which may be classed under the head of curios.”¹⁹⁸ What made the mummies ‘curios’, however, was the kind of meditation they provoked: “Altogether, one is tempted to linger for a while beside these silent representatives of a past age, and to wonder in what scenes and under what circumstances they lived.”¹⁹⁹ The power to induce this imaginative transport, surely, is the hallmark of curios and curiosities. To evoke curiosity is to invite the desire to know or experience that which is absent. A relic of a life, a culture, or an historical moment can be a ‘curiosity’ only through the power to intrigue the viewer. The history of the Victorian museum has been characterised as the attempt to exclude ‘curiosities’ from the respectable end of the ‘exhibitionary complex’, and to regulate museum collections on strictly scientific terms. As Michelle Henning puts it:

This [exhibitionary] complex included the spectacular displays of popular curio museums, world’s fairs and trade exhibitions, amusement parks, shopping arcades and department stores. While the old curiosity collections passed on their objects, voluntarily or reluctantly, to the public museums, they left a legacy of a different kind to other parts of the exhibitionary complex. I believe what they bequeathed was curiosity itself. The public museum distanced itself from these other sites of exhibition and display partly because curiosity and curious things did not sit well with the emphasis on systematic knowledge of the typical, or with aesthetic experience. Yet, the museum isolated itself only by careful management of both the visitors and the collections. [...] This process was necessitated by the unstable and unsettling potential of both the appetite of curiosity, and the material things designated curiosities.²⁰⁰

This opposition between ‘popular’ exhibitions with their displays of curiosities on the one hand and ‘scientific’ or ‘aesthetic’ museums on the other is perhaps too stark to be maintained. The growing class of museum professionals could control which objects were displayed in their institutions, how these were arranged, and what explanations were given for their presence. What they could not do was to stem the flow of associations into which the object was conscripted – not merely the range of meanings visitors brought to the object, but the ways in which meaning was continually created and sustained by networks of activity. Overrun from the outside by networks that flowed through their collections and enlisted their objects to serve unfamiliar agendas, the museum might well be on its guard against the temptation to reduce its artefacts to mere ‘curios’. The Egyptian mummy was especially susceptible to such co-option, being not only an emblem of an exotic and far-away civilisation, but also a particularly arresting icon of cultural difference. Few ethnographic

¹⁹⁸ ‘A Visit to the Museum,’ 2.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Michelle Henning, *Museums, Media, and Cultural Theory* (Maidenhead; Open University Press, 2006), 25-26.

artefacts were simultaneously so familiar and so strange: the mummy attracted and commanded associations like few other objects in the Victorian museum.

Yet even so, it is not strictly accurate to say that museums raised the bulwarks against popular ‘curiosity.’ Even in Hector’s austere scientific Colonial Museum, the raucous clamour of associations seems to have been tolerated, if not always welcomed. In 1889, William Skey – a mineral chemist who worked under Hector for the Geological Survey – published a collection of poems entitled *The Pirate Chief and the Mummy’s Complaint with Various Zealandian Poems*. Thomas Morland Hocken noted, with some justice, that Skey was “a better analyst to the Geological Survey than a poet,”²⁰¹ but his long poem entitled ‘The Mummy’s Complaint’ is of considerable interest. In this work, Skey brings together two of the associations that had come to dog the museum mummy: the question of Ancient Egypt’s Biblical history (which – as we have seen – was largely accepted and shared by museum professionals), and the image of the haunted or cursed mummy (which was not). Skey, who had been present when the mummy case was opened at the Colonial Museum in 1885, quite explicitly connects these two themes to Carter’s mummy. In strained heroic couplets, Skey sets the scene on a stormy midnight in the Colonial Museum, “where thick in sombre cases, duly classed,/The wealth of science and of art, long focuss’d/Round the monumental – placid – silent – bust/Of him, one thunder-moving Featherston.”²⁰² Driven to seek out his office in the gloomy ‘Temple’ at the witching hour, the hapless poet finds his light extinguished by a sudden gust of wind. Stumbling across the coffin of “the priest of Khem” (and upsetting a display of human skeletons), the poet senses the presence of “some *living* thing” in the Museum. When a terrifying apparition arises from the ‘tomb’, the poet addresses the spectre and demands that it identify itself. The mummy replies courteously (and in blank verse) to its interlocutor: “Oft have I noticed thee,” it tells him, “with musing eye/And mournful face, before this tomb grotesque...”²⁰³ Skey, clearly, was himself not insusceptible to the sensation of curiosity. The mummy – or rather, the incorporeal spirit of the dead man which has arisen from the mummy – tells the poet that he has a request to make, but first he must recount his story. The name he has been addressed by, he tells the poet, is not in reality his own:

²⁰¹ T.M. Hocken, *A Bibliography of the Literature Relating to New Zealand* (Wellington: John. Mackay, 1909), 401.

²⁰² William Skey, *The Pirate Chief and the Mummy’s Complaint with Various Zealandian Poems* (Wellington: Haggett and Percy, 1889), 103.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 108.

The real identity of yonder corpse
 Has been for ages lost to all but me;
 Which thus confused, confounded, and misnamed,
 In secret I for centuries have mourned;
 Thus, though the corpse of priest, and I that priest
 Nor Khem my God, nor Petisiris name;
 Yon label gummed upon my flimsy tomb,
 Belieth and belittleth one, as far
 Above the common grade of seer and priest,
 As is the mid-day sun above the earth...²⁰⁴

The coffin in which he lies, with its hieroglyphic inscription naming ‘Petisiris’, belongs to a young priest of Khem by that name, who died “ere that his razor had encountered ought/More serious than the soft prophetic down/Which mild proclaims that virule aftergrowth...”²⁰⁵ (This is interesting because it shows that Skey was aware of one of the features of Carter’s mummy that might have led him to question its identity – namely, the lack of a beard on the features depicted on the mummy case). An unscrupulous embalmer, however, threw the body of Petisiris into a ditch in a pig sty, replacing it with a corpse “from an ancient sepulchre hard by,” and replacing the ancient hieroglyphics on the mummy cartonage with “the wretched daubs you see.”²⁰⁶ At this point, the mummy reveals his true identity:

Yea, I am he, great Potipher by name,
 That noble prince of which King Pharaoh took
 The lady Asenath to be the bride
 Of Joseph – Egypt’s first Prime Minister;
 Ah! Oft upon those knees, there stiffly bound,
 My darling grandson, Ephraim, was nursed;
 And oft that tongue, which now in death so still,
 Has sung Manasseh to the happy sleep;
 Yea, ‘twas my descendants high, who taught
 That rebel priest, your Moses, all he knew
 Of Egypt’s science old – its magic lore,
 Gave him his God, gave him his Sabbath too,
 And all those laws severe by which he ruled
 The slaves he kidnapped from his teachers kind.²⁰⁷

Potipher here is clearly not the more famous Potiphar, but rather Potiphra the “priest of On” (Genesis 41:45-50). Rather than being a pagan, Potipher reveals himself as one of the

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 109.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 110.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 110-11.

founders of Jewish monotheism (though Skey – following the historian Chaeremon – presents the Exodus story from an Egyptian perspective). Having disclosed his true identity, the spectre asks to be respectfully re-interred in a Christian cemetery under his proper name. The poem ends without disclosing whether the poet accedes to the spirit's request. Poems addressed to mummies – or containing a mummy's response to its questioner – were not uncommon in the nineteenth century.²⁰⁸ Moreover, the idea of the 'mummy's curse' or a 'supernatural' mummy was already gaining currency by the late-1880s. In 1890, the year after Skey published his poem, the *Auckland Star* printed Arthur Conan Doyle's story 'The Ring of Thoth,' a thriller in which the mummies of the Louvre play a major role.²⁰⁹ The same year, the *Press* published 'The Curse of Vasartas,' the first story about a mummy's curse to appear in a major New Zealand publication.²¹⁰ Skey's poem reflects a number of the references late-Victorian museum-goers might have brought to the Egyptian mummy: Judeo-Christian narratives about Egypt, the mummy as a ghostly or supernatural presence, the mummy as a holder of secrets. 'The Mummy's Complaint' is – in Latour's terms – a remaining 'trace' of these associations, which linked Carter's mummy into wider patterns of behaviour and thought about ancient Egypt outside of 'scientific' institutions like the museum. Skey exploits the role of the mummy as a 'curiosity,' yet at the same time his poem reflects an anxiety about the reduction of the mummy to an object of curiosity:

My coffin ripped by sacrilegious saw,
Set wide agape to show the doleful sight,
Which loving hands had bravely toiled to hide;
Exposed to draw the common race of men,
Who, had they lived in Egypt's wondrous land,
When I in royal favour proudly stood,
Had helped as slaves to build our pyramids,
Or, trembling, waited on my low inferiors.
Thus was my corse to distant lands exiled,
And by the men who should have been the first
To ward the insult from their sacred trust,
The last to countenance that traffic base.²¹¹

The spirit of Potipher requests that his remains should be "removed/For quiet sepulchre in some close vault,/Wherein the prying gaze of curious eyes,/By darkness foiled, shall baffled

²⁰⁸ Jasmine Day, *The Mummy's Curse: Mummymania in the English-speaking World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 33.

²⁰⁹ Arthur Conan Doyle, 'The Ring of Thoth,' *Star*, 9 April 1890, 1.

²¹⁰ 'The Curse of Vasartas,' *Press*, 9 August 1890, 2.

²¹¹ Skey, *The Pirate Chief and the Mummy's Complaint*, 112.

miss its mark.”²¹² This sense of unease about the visual exposure of the mummy – whether to the “common race of men” or to scientific scrutiny – was in fact quite a common reaction among nineteenth-century museum-goers. Jasmine Day notes that the exposure of the mummy was often associated with overtones of rape or sexual violation; in Skey’s poem, it is the product of theft, fraud, and body-snatching.²¹³ Day has suggested that this response may have been related to a sense of colonial guilt over British exploitation of Egypt. There is a hint of this in Skey’s poem, where Potipher’s ghost delivers a spirited attack on the way his body was bought and sold by foreigners:

My corse, like some mean chattel, hawked about,
And haggled over at the public mart,
Then sold to pay the debts corruption made;
To men of foreign race, detested, sold,
Then shipped o’er distant seas for city far,
And framed within a narrow, flimsy case,
To make a show, and keep a name alive
Which else had died in dull obscurity...²¹⁴

Skey’s poem was an extraordinary assault upon the assumptions underlying the display of mummies in ‘scientific’ museums (it is perhaps relevant to note that the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* describes Skey as “a ‘difficult’ character” whose “relations with New Zealand’s more academically inclined scientists were not good”).²¹⁵ Yet Skey’s unease seems to reflect quite widespread attitudes to Egyptian mummies throughout the English-speaking world (interestingly, this unease does not seem to have extended to other, more anonymous or less prestigious displays of human remains – the heap of human skulls and Maori bones that the poet upsets at the opening of the poem are not reproachful). ‘The Mummy’s Complaint’ reflects some of the ideas and the anxieties that museum visitors may have brought to these displays in New Zealand museums in the late nineteenth-century, connecting mummies to wider discourses and fields of activity. There is a further interesting feature of Skey’s interpretation of the mummy: he constructs a biography for it, albeit in a very fanciful manner. Bringing together what little he knew about Ancient Egypt, mummies, and mythology, Skey was driven to create a broadly-plausible life-story for the body in the case at the Colonial Museum, something that few institutions seem to have had much interest in.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Day, *The Mummy’s Curse*, 40.

²¹⁴ Skey, *The Pirate Chief and the Mummy’s Complaint*, 112.

²¹⁵ Michael Fitzgerald, ‘Skey, William 1835-1900,’ *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, Volume Two 1870-1900* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1990), 467.

Moreover, in an era when mummies were viewed by museum professionals simply as inert objects, Skey was prepared to write about the Colonial Museum's mummy as a living and speaking subject. It would not be until the last third of the twentieth century that New Zealand museums would seriously begin attempting to construct such life-histories for their mummies, and when they did so it would be using the technology and analytical tools of forensics and diagnostic medicine. Skey lacked access to these advantages, but his imaginative biography of the priest Potipher brought his mummy 'to life' in ways that museums would not imitate for the best part of a century. The idea of the museum mummy being in some sense 'alive,' however, has enjoyed a long and famous career in Western culture. Perhaps there is here a residual awareness that objects are not always as inert as they appear. Unable to commit volitional acts on their own, mummies are nevertheless powerful mediators from their glass cases. Dead though they are, they refuse to lie still.

CONCLUSION

It is always possible to choose other stories that might be told. Thinking about Egyptian mummies in New Zealand at the end of the nineteenth century, there are many other paths that could be ventured down: the question of gender, for example, and the display of female bodies in predominantly ‘masculinist’ space of the public museum; or the networks of colonial agency in Egypt that stripped the country simultaneously of its political autonomy at the behest of Western financiers and of its cultural history for the sake of Western collectors. There are always other associations that could be followed out from the object to produce different meanings. As far as historical research into New Zealand’s collections of Egyptian mummies goes, the main problem confronted by the researcher is the relative paucity of archival material available for study. This is a grave problem for any historical research, but the framework of Actor-Network Theory – with its uncompromising insistence upon traces of mediation – sets an extremely high standard of proof for the researcher wishing to track networks of association. Simply appealing to abstractions or positing social forces at work behind the scenes is not an option. Actor-Network Theory demands the nitty-gritty details of the real interactions between people, objects, and ideas. Where evidence for such interactions is lacking, producing workable accounts of assemblages is near-impossible. The researcher working within the conceptual framework of Actor-Network Theory must also be acutely aware of the nature of the traces selected: in my case, these have almost all been institutional records and press clippings. It is the public and institutional life of mummies that largely concerned me here, especially in the first two chapters of this dissertation. The first looks at the way the Colonial Museum’s mummy was construed in the context of a global network of Empire, and the difficulty of integrating such a volatile mediator into the museum assemblage it discovered in New Zealand. In the second chapter, I have looked at networks of agency between museums, and the way mummies became mediators of knowledge, authority, and command over the past. Only in the third chapter have I attempted to look at some of the ‘private’ associations mummies might have generated from their museum cases, and the ways in which the systems of interpretation viewers brought to them might have differed from those of their collectors, donors, and exhibitors. It is no coincidence that this chapter is the shortest of the three. Without a basis in archival evidence, such assemblages quickly dissolve into very un-ANT-like speculation.

From this very limited survey, my findings suggest that merely speaking about the ‘agency of objects’ does not account for the range of different ways in which objects are capable of mediating action. We have seen mummies construed as gifts, mummies as specimens, and mummies as curiosities. We have even glimpsed the beginnings of a regime of interpretation that has dominated the presentation of mummies in museums over the last twenty years: the mummy as a biographical subject or a living person. These meanings arise from relationships – or ‘associations’ – as much as they do from the objects themselves: similar objects produce very dissimilar effects depending on whether they are situated in a gift economy or an economy of exchange, whether they were sent to a Museum from Egypt or from another collection. Yet at the same time, the mummy itself has physical and non-physical qualities that constrain and condition the ways in which it is understood: its age, its exoticism, the fact that it contains human remains. Although some of the assemblages I have examined – notably the networks of exchange between museums – seem to diminish the particularity of individual ‘specimens’ by integrating them into a network of knowledge where one object is essentially interchangeable with another, these qualities of the object itself are unavoidable, and they assert themselves as soon as the ‘specimen’ arrives in a collection of other objects. To this extent, it is hard to argue with the claims of Actor-Network theorists that meaning emerges in the chains of relationships between people, ideas, and things. At the same time, I must acknowledge the insight of Actor-Network Theory that – while I don’t believe anything I have said is untrue – all these networks are fabricated in the process of my ‘tracing’ them. They have no reality in the world, even though the actions and effects they trace are real enough.

As I outlined in my introduction, my method in this study was – as it were – to ‘do ANT backwards.’ Whereas most Actor-Network move outwards from objects towards assemblages, I have tried to trace agency in the other direction, from the assemblage down towards the role of the particular object. Rather than treating objects merely as mediators in a continually shifting assemblage, I took a small class of objects and attempted to follow the chains of meaning into which they were conscripted. It was my intention to discover whether this method might present a useful model for scholars in the field of Museum Studies tracing the agency of objects in and between collections. There are, however, problems with beginning with the object rather than the assemblage. The biggest problem, it seems to me, is that the trace left by the mediation of any single *actant* in the network of which it is a part is

necessarily momentary, fleeting, and easily missed. In the instance of museum mummies, this is notably true. Objects that made a minor splash on their first arrival at a museum quickly sank into silence, as the institutions accommodated themselves to the new configuration. Newspaper stories dry up, scholarly speculation ceases, and the mummy becomes little more than a piece of furniture in the museum – or at least, that is what the available inscriptions would lead us to think. It is only with considerable effort in the last fifty years – and especially since 1997 – that New Zealand’s museums have recovered their mummies as ‘speaking subjects’ after a long period of quiescence. Assemblages need constantly to discover new *actants* and new patterns of mediation of they are to be sustained. For this reason, I feel that ANT is more usefully applied to the study of the history of whole assemblages than it is to single mediators – though, of course, tracing particular objects can perhaps shed light on the history of those assemblages. From these fleeting glimpses, illuminated at random points of intersection as if by a strobe, it is very hard to construct the kind of ‘object biography’ that Kopytoff and Appadurai have in mind. The result is less like a coherent biography of an object than a catalogue of moments in the career of a mediator. Moreover, associations are necessarily sprawling. A momentary connection with an object may carry us a long way down the chain of agency very quickly, and getting back may be no easy task. This certainly does not mean that ANT is not of use for Museum Studies and even for Material Object Studies. I do feel, however, that it might more usefully be applied to a wider field of agency – such as that provided by the networks of exchange between institutions, or networks of donation between colony and metropolis – than to ‘object biographies’ that seek to trace only the life-story of a single object or a small group of similar objects. ‘Biographies of assemblages’ might prove more promising – but only where a sufficient supply of archival or source material can be found to justify the figurations made. If this dissertation reads in places more like an ‘assemblage biography’ than an ‘object biography,’ it is perhaps because of the nature of agency in an actor-network, which is – as Latour has given us fair warning – “dislocated [...] borrowed, distributed, suggested, influenced, dominated, betrayed, translated.”²¹⁶ Consequently, it is almost impossible to write about what an object does in an assemblage without invoking also every other *actant*. Moreover, if meaning resides in the whole network, then trying to explore objects on their own as ‘meaningful’ is a fool’s errand. Consequently, ANT can tell us many interesting

²¹⁶ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 46.

things about the kinds of networks in which objects act, but perhaps rather less about the history of those objects themselves.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

‘A Proclamation,’ *Punch* 48, 7 January 1865, 9. Cited in David Skilton, *Contemplating the Ruins of London: Macaulay's New Zealander and Others*

<http://homepages.gold.ac.uk/london-journal/march2004/skilton.html> (18 December 2012).

‘A Ramble Through the Colonial Museum.’ *Press*, 21 November 1870, 3.

‘A Visit to the Museum.’ *Press*, 30 November 1887, 2.

‘Anglo-Colonial Notes.’ *Otago Witness*, 29 March 1894, 16.

Appadurai, Arjun. ‘Introduction: commodities and the politics of value.’ In *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai, 3-63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Association for Founding the Settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand. *Canterbury Papers: Information Concerning the Principles, Objects, Plans, & Proceedings of the Founders of the Settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand*. London: John W. Parker, 1850.

Auckland Institute and Museum. *Annual Report of the Auckland Institute and Museum, 1897-98*. Auckland: H. Brett, 1898.

Baedecker, Karl. *Egypt: Handbook for Travellers: Part Second, Upper Egypt with Nubia*. Leipzig: Baedeker, 1892.

Barton, Garry and Stefan Dietrich. *This Indigenous and Singular Apparatus: Fishing Kites of the Indo-Pacific*. Heidelberg: Völkekundemuseum vPST, 2009.

Barton, Ruth. ‘Haast and the Moa: Reversing the Tyranny of Distance.’ *Pacific Science* 54, 3 (2000): 251-263.

Bennett, Tony. ‘The Exhibitionary Complex.’ *New Formations* 4 (Spring 1988): 73-102.

Bennett, Tony. *The Birth of the Museum: History, theory, politics*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

Bennett, Tony. *Pasts Beyond Memory: Evolution, Museums, Colonialism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.

Bennett, Tony. 'Museum, Field, Colony: Colonial governmentality and the circulation of reference.' *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2, 1-2 (2009): 99-116.

Bennett, Tony and Chris Healy. 'Introduction: Assembling Culture.' *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2, 1-2 (2009): 3-10.

Binney, Judith. *The Legacy of Guilt: A Life of Thomas Kendall*. Christchurch: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Bol, Katherine Ann. 'Every Museum Needs a Mummy: A study of the collecting practices that formed the ancient Egyptian collection at the Auckland War Memorial Museum.' MA Diss, Museum of Auckland, 2006.

British Museum. *List of Human Remains in the Collection of the British Museum*. April 2008. <http://www.britishmuseum.org/pdf/List%20of%20British%20Museum%20Human%20Remains.pdf> (11 December 2011).

'Canterbury Museum.' *Thames Advertiser*, 17 June 1890, 1.

Canterbury Museum. *Guide to the Collections of the Canterbury Museum*. 2nd ed. Christchurch: TE Frazer, 1900.

Canterbury Museum Accessions Register 1841-1891. Canterbury Museum MS 1/1. Cited in Roger Fyfe, 'The Provenance of the Canterbury Museum Mummies,' *Records of the Canterbury Museum* 20 (2006): 15.

Carter, Charles Rooking. *Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist (Written By Himself)*. 3 vols. London: R. Madley, 1866-1875.

Carter, Charles Rooking. *Victoria: the British 'El Dorado,' or Melbourne in 1869*. London: Edward Stanford, 1870.

Carter, Charles Rooking, *Round the World Leisurely*. London: C.R. Carter, 1878.

Carter, Charles Rooking. Letter to Sir James Hector, 18 June 1885. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 5. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

Carter, Charles Rooking. Letter to Sir James Hector. 16 July 1885. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 7. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

Cheeseman, Thomas Frederic to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli. 19 September 1877. Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

Cheeseman, Thomas Frederic to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli. 21 July 1879. Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

Cheeseman, Thomas Frederic to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli. 20 July 1885. Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

Cheeseman, Thomas Frederic to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli. 17 June 1895. Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

Cheeseman, Thomas Frederic to Enrico Hillyer Giglioli. 12 October 1896. Auckland Museum Archive, Outwards Correspondence MA 96/6.

Conan Doyle, Arthur. 'The Ring of Thoth.' *Star*, 9 April 1890, 1.

Day, Jasmine. *The Mummy's Curse: Mummymania in the English-speaking World*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

De Landa, Manuel. *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory And Social Complexity*. London and New York, Continuum, 2006.

Dema, Leslie. 'Inorganic, Yet Alive: How Can Deleuze and Guattari Deal With the Accusation of Vitalism?' *Rhizomes* 15 (Winter 2007).
<http://www.rhizomes.net/issue15/dema.html> (5 July 2012).

Dudley, Sandra H. 'Museum Materialities: Objects, sense, and feeling.' In *Museum Materialities: Objects, engagements, interpretations*, ed. Sandra H. Dudley, 1-17. London and New York: Routledge, 2010.

El Mahdy, Christine. *Mummies: Myth and Magic*. London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989.

d'Entrèves, Pietro Passerin et al. 'Enrico Hillyer Giglioli: l'uomo, il naturalista, il viaggiatore.' *L'Universo* 76, 5 (1996): 625-672.

Fagan, Brian. *The Rape of the Nile: Tomb Robbers, Tourists, and Archaeologists in Egypt*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2004.

Fenton, Francis Dart. *Suggestions for a History of the Origin and Migrations of the Maori People*. Auckland: H. Brett, 1885.

Fitzgerald, Michael. 'Skey, William 1835-1900.' In *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, Volume Two 1870-1900*, 467-68. Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1990.

Fyfe, Roger. 'The Provenance of the Canterbury Museum Mummies.' *Records of the Canterbury Museum* 20 (2006): 15-19.

Fyfe, Roger. 'Macmillan Brown Lecture Series, 2010: Lecture 2 – Museums in the Colonies.' Unpublished lecture notes, 10.

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 4 December 1875. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 24 November 1877. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 1 October 1880. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 22 January 1881. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 2 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 22 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 23 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 4 December 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 8 January 1887. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 22 January 1887. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Julius von Haast. 26 April 1887. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 66 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Thomas Frederic Cheeseman. 13 April 1886. Auckland Museum Archive, MS 58 box 7.

Giglioli, Enrico Hillyer to Thomas Frederic Cheeseman. 23 November 1877. Auckland Museum Archive, MS 58 box 7.

von Haast, H.F. *The Life and Times of Sir Julius von Haast, a New Zealand Pioneer*. Wellington: Avery Press, 1948.

Hallenstein, Bendix to the Otago Museum. 14 February 1894. Hocken Library, Dunedin, Otago Museum Records (ARC-0524), Inwards Correspondence, MS-2785/001.

Hallenstein, Bendix. 'A Tour Through the East.' *Otago Witness*, 19 July 1894, 35.

Hector, James. *Catalogue of the Colonial Museum, Wellington, New Zealand*. Wellington: Government Printer, 1870.

Hector, James. Letter to Charles Rooking Carter. 17 September 1885. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 12. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

Hector, James. 'Text of the Label Prepared by J. Hector for the Public Gallery.' 1885. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 17. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

Hector, James. *Twenty-First Annual report of the Colonial Museum and Laboratory Together With a List of Donations and Deposits During 1885-86*. Wellington: Government Printer, 1886.

Henning, Michelle. *Museums, Media, and Cultural Theory*. Maidenhead; Open University Press, 2006.

Hilton Price, Frederick George to Sir Philip Cunliffe-Owen. 11 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Hilton Price, Frederick George to Sir Julius von Haast. 15 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Hilton Price, Frederick George to Sir Julius von Haast. 23 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Hilton Price, F.G. 'Notes Upon Some Egyptian Antiquities in My Collection.' *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 9 (1893): 333-54.

Hocken, T.M. *A Bibliography of the Literature Relating to New Zealand*. Wellington: John. Mackay, 1909.

Joyce, Patrick and Tony Bennett. 'Material Powers: Introduction.' In *Material Powers: Cultural studies, history, and the material turn*, ed. Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce, 1-22. London and New York: Routledge, 2010.

Kopytoff, Igor. 'The Cultural Biography of Things: commoditization as process,' in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in cultural perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai, 64-91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Kuhlmann, Klaus P. *Materialien zur Archäologie und Geschichte des Raumes von Achmim*. Mainz: Zabern, 1983.

Large, A. Jas. H. Letter to Sir James Hector (including Bill of Lading). 7 July 1885. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 10. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

Latour, Bruno. *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Latour, Bruno. *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Law, John. 'Power, Discretion, and Strategy.' In *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on power, technology, and domination*, ed. John Law, 165-191. London and New York: Routledge, 1991.

McCredie, Athol. 'Collecting photographs: The development of Te Papa's historical photography collection.' *Tuhinga* 20 (2009): 41-66.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington. *Ranke's History of the Popes*. London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman's, 1851.

Martin, Ged. *Punch and the Maori, 1864-1865*,
http://www.gedmartin.net/index.php?Itemid=11&id=14&option=com_content&task=view
(18 December 2012).

Mauss, Marcel. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Translated by Ian Cunnison. London: Cohen and West, 1966.

Mitchell, Timothy. *Colonising Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Mosley, Montague. *Illustrated Guide to Christchurch and Neighbourhood*. Christchurch: J.T. Smith, 1885.

Mountjoy, B.K. 'New Zealand Mail in the UK from the 1880s.' *Philatelic Database*.
<http://www.philatelicedatabase.com/great-britain/new-zealandmail-from-the-uk-in-the-1880s/>
(13 January 2013).

New Zealand Geological Survey. Memorandum 358/85. 1 August 1885. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekh in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 5. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

New Zealand Geological Survey. Memorandum 397/85. 23 August 1885 (note appended 26 August 1885). Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekh in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 7. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

'Notes of New Zealand Travel – the Maori Family 'In Town.''' *West Coast Times*, 17 July 1871, 3.

Orchison, Wayne. *Charles Roeking Carter: A Brief Biography*. Carter Observatory Information Sheet No. 7. Wellington: Carter Observatory, 1995.

'Otago Institute.' *Otago Witness*, 24 May 1894, 21.

'Our Dunedin Letter.' *Clutha Leader*, 1 June 1894, 6.

Pearce, Susan M. *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition*. Oxford and New York: Routledge, 1995.

Philip, Jude. 'Hedley Takes a Holiday: Collections from Kanak People in the Australian Museum.' In *Unpacking the Collection Networks of Material and Social Agency in the Museum*, ed. Sarah Byrne, Anne Clarke, Rodney Harrison, and Robin Torrence, 269-288. New York: Springer, 2011.

Phillipps, W.J. Undated Memorandum. Archive of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Reproduced in *The Mummy and Coffin of the Lady Mehit-em-Wesekht in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, ed. Ross B. O'Rourke, 15. Wellington: Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 1996.

Pinches, Theo G. to Sir Julius von Haast. 25 October 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Pinches, Theo G. to Sir Julius von Haast. 19 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Pinches, Theo G. to Sir Julius von Haast. 22 November 1886. National Library of New Zealand, MS Papers-0037, folder 128 (MS-Copy-Micro-0717).

Powell, A.W.B. et al. *The Centennial History of the Auckland Institute and Museum 1867-1967*. Auckland: Council of the Auckland Institute and Museum, 1967.

'Rambles in the Museum.' *Star*, 15 February 1908, 4.

'Re-opening of the Museum.' *Star*, 6 September 1878, 3.

Roberts, William and Bernard Nurse. 'Price, (Frederick George) Hilton (1842-1909).' In *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35609> (January 30, 2013).

Schiaparelli, Ernesto. 'Chemmis (Achmim) e la sua antica necropolis.' In *Études archéologiques, linguistiques et historiques dédiés a Mr le Dr C. Leemans*, ed. Conradus Leemans, Willem Pleyte, A. P. M. van Cordt, F. de Stoppelaar, 85-88. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1885.

Skey, William. *The Pirate Chief and the Mummy's Complaint with Various Zealandian Poems*. Wellington: Haggett and Percy, 1889.

Skinner, H.D. 'Review: On the Significance of the Geographic Distribution of the Practice of Mummification.' *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 59, 10 (1915): 122-24.

Sutherland, G.H. 'Carter, Charles Rooking.' In *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, Volume One 1769-1869*. Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1990.

'The Curse of Vasartas.' *Press*, 9 August 1890, 2.

Verdicchio, Pasquale. *Looters, Photographers, and Thieves: Aspects of Italian Photographic Culture in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Plymouth: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011.