

BOOK REVIEW

The Antiquities Trade in Egypt 1880-1930: The H.O. Lange Papers. By FREDRIK HAGEN and KIM RYHOLT. Copenhagen: The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2016. Pp. 335. Paperback, 300 DKK. ISBN 978-87-7304-400.

Fredrik Hagen and Kim Ryholt deserve applause for their recent book illuminating the life and collection practices of Egyptologist H. O. Lange (1863–1943). The authors, scholars who are usually focused on other projects related to ancient Egypt, step out of their realm and into modern Egyptological research with this publication. Their main objective is to inform others of the existing treasure trove of archival material related to Lange’s procurement of Egyptian antiquities for Danish museums during two lengthy visits to Cairo and surrounding areas in 1899–1900 and 1929–1930. Lange and his wife Jonna (who accompanied him on both trips) kept extensive hand-written diaries and documented their travels with remarkable photographs of personal experiences in Egypt. This important primary source information (letters, maps, travel guides and hand-drawn sketches) illustrate the sometimes lawless and often chaotic environment surrounding the antiquities trade in Egypt at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The text, accompanied by supporting documents and photographs encourages others to focus on this extraordinary case study to better understand the system and acquisition practices related to ancient Egyptian objects, many of which would eventually form some of the world’s most important Western museum collections.

The book is well organized, with an introductory section which emphasizes that the objective is to draw attention to the activities of a particular antiquities buyer (Lange) and the conditions he encountered through the acquisition process. After a brief description of the materials and scope of the project, the main portion of the text is devoted to characteristics of the antiquities trade in Egypt including an overview of the extensive dealer network, the geography of the trade (cat-

egorized by cities with local maps of the time period) and challenges the Langes came up against navigating a language barrier when negotiating the purchase of antiquities. Special attention is paid to documenting the complex system of procuring antiquities and the many ways in which the diverse dealer network operated.

Hagen and Ryholt's research is particularly informative on the role of the consular agent within the antiquities market during the years Lange visited Egypt. This area of focus is explained in detail and reveals how the position provided special status or immunity to those who held the title, making them virtually untouchable for prosecution or regulation from the office of the Egyptian Antiquities Service. Remarkable descriptions of these consular agents or consuls appear in the book from Lange's personal experiences, along with others who were also in Egypt at that time, buying on behalf of wealthy collectors or other Western museums. Additionally, the specific characteristics of the process involved in acquiring antiquities at excavation sites are documented through Lange's archival material, making this book an essential text for any historian looking to investigate both legal and illicit archaeological expeditions at the turn of the 20th century and then again 30 years later. The authors record the history of the laws put into place to attempt to curb illicit trade and the export of antiquities, but note that due to the nature of the system there was often little oversight to enforce this legislation.

It is instructive to understand from Lange's perspective how the native Egyptians worked in the off season to produce fakes, and that certain geographic areas were known for the manufacture of specific types of facsimile items that would appeal to the foreign visitor while traveling in Egypt. Ryholt and Hagen's research also includes the methods for exporting objects out of Egypt, the role of the Egyptian museum with respect to the *salle de vente* (official sales room) and the routes of transmission of the objects out of the country.

The conclusion of the book highlights Lange's acquisition of ancient papyri, a life-long interest of the man who ultimately became the Head Librarian of the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Through his efforts the Papyrus Hauniensis Collection and the Papyrus Carlsburg Collection were formed, created from many of Lange's purchases while traveling in Egypt, including the remains of the only surviving temple library from ancient Egypt. Finally, the authors organized an extensive list of supporting characters that represent a "who's who"

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of known antiquities dealers with brief biographies from Lange's archival material. Six appendixes supplement the book in addition a lengthy bibliography that will be a rich resource for future researchers.

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