They Were Also Humans:
On the Dehumanising Nature of Photographic and Filmic Portrayals of Egyptian Mummies

By
Sara Sallam

Supervised By
Dr. S.A. Shobeiri

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Media Studies, Film and Photographic Studies

LEIDEN UNIVERSITY
Leiden, The Netherlands
June 2019

To my Grandmothers,
and my Ancient Ancestors

Table of Contents

Abstract

The ancient Egyptian mummies have been extensively portrayed throughout history, since the early inceptions of photography and cinema, and remain popular in visual culture. Certain ways of portraying them have been repeatedly followed like traditions, which resulted in establishing stereotypes. In this thesis, I investigate how some of these recurring portrayals dehumanise the ancient Egyptians. For this purpose, I have compiled an archive of photographs and films, and analysed their stereotypical portrayal patterns. In doing so, I have identified two traditions; the portrayal of mummies in non-fictional photographs as artefacts (*artefication*), and their portrayal in fictional films as monsters (*monstrification*). In two visual essays accompanying this thesis, I demonstrate how these traditions systematically deny the portrayed mummies essentially and uniquely human qualities, resulting in their dehumanisation. Further, I discuss their spectacularisation — inherent in their artefication and monstrification— and the mode of spectatorship evoked by the mummified body as a spectacle. The thesis thus aims to offer a critique on dehumanising portrayals of the ancient Egyptians, shedding light on the repercussions of the encounter with such images.

Keywords: *Dehumanisation, Artefact, Monster, Spectacle, Archive, Egyptian Mummy*

Introduction

The ancient Egyptians' post-mortem portraits have been painted, engraved, photographed, and filmed extensively. The western interest in their embalmed remains can be traced back to the Enlightenment era, where the pursuit of reason and knowledge went hand in hand with an intellectual curiosity for distant exotic cultures.[1] In the late eighteenth century, the Napoleonic expedition to Egypt refuelled this interest, and established Egyptology as a scientific discipline. Consequently, a period of popular fascination with mummies, known as 'Mummymania,' swept across Europe and most of the English-speaking world.[2] This turning point in the history of Egyptian archaeology coincided with the introduction of new modes of visual representation; the invention of photography, followed by the birth of cinema.

The photographic medium was immediately employed to document the Egyptian past, especially its mummified inhabitants, for the purposes of scientific study.[3] Amongst the earliest photographs of mummies are those, taken in 1881, by German Egyptologist Émile Brugsch. At the time an assistant curator of the Boulaq museum —which housed the Egyptian antiquities collection in Cairo between 1858 and 1891—, Brugsch supervised the excavation of a cache of royal mummies and photographically documented his findings. His photographs were repeatedly reproduced in several publications, and they illustrated volumes of the museum's catalogues.[4] The sober forensic aesthetics of his albumen prints did not differ whether depicting an excavated object or a mummy. The latter was treated and archived as the former; in essence an inanimate artefact. Until this day, photographs of similar aesthetics continue to appear in the press with every major archaeological discovery.

Such encounters with human remains captivated western fictional literature in the Victorian era, wherein the theme of a re-animated mummy can be traced.[5] In his 1899 illusionist performance, the French film pioneer Georges Méliès depicted the revivification of Cleopatra's mummy, by chopping her into pieces and setting her on fire, in order to then resurrect her on his stage.[6] This lost silent film is amongst many similar

---

[1] Jason Thompson, *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology: 1: From Antiquity to 1881* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 75.

[2] Jasmine Day, *The Mummy's Curse: Mummymania in the English-speaking World* (New York: Routledge. 2006), 3.

[3] Alan Trachtenberg, *Classic Essays on Photography* (New Haven, Conn: Leete's Insland Books, 1980), 18.

[4] Mary Bergstein, "Freud's Egyptian Photographs: Scenes from a Library," *Visual Resources* 26, no. 3 (2010): 283.

[5] Richard Freeman, "The Mummy in Context," *European journal of American studies* 4, no. 1 (2009): 1.

[6] S. T. Joshi, *Icons of Horror and the Supernatural [Two Volumes]* (Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), 389.

performances characteristic of that era termed 'Cinema of Attractions.'[7] In those early years of pre-narrative cinema, over forty Egyptian themed films were produced, mostly portraying mummies as theatrical spectacles.[8] They were not always depicted as horrifying creatures, and some works depicted them as defiled victims, whose unwrappings were compared to rape.[9] These dramatised portrayals were, however, later largely abandoned in the film industry, promoting instead the mummy as a symbol of all what is wrong and rotten.[10] By the early twentieth century, a horror film genre was firmly established, featuring mummies as revived monsters, and thus securing their continuing presence in the entertainment industry.

This thesis is motivated by the growing contemporary concerns, that are being raised in regards to the public display of Egyptian human remains and to the historical manners of their acquisitions.[11] Egyptian remains were drawn into such discussions relatively late, because these concerns tend to be raised more often when the dead are directly linked to living communities.[12] As an Egyptian myself, it is my ambition to participate in these debates, and to expand them further by delving into a critique on an equally problematic encounter with the ancient Egyptians, specifically that with their visual representations.

My research began by compiling an archive of photographs and films, produced by the West, depicting Egyptian mummies. I have examined them, while noting the portrayal patterns that emerged. For the scope of this research, I have identified two ways of portraying them that are followed consistently. The first tradition of portrayal is prevalent among non-fictional archaeological photographs. These photographs of real mummies share strictly scientific aesthetics, similar in visual language to forensic mugshots. The second identified tradition dominates fictional feature films. These films share some broad lines in their narratives and in how they portray the imagined behaviour and attributes of fictional mummies. The ramifications of systematically portraying the ancient Egyptians in archaeological photographs as discovered artefacts (*artefication)* and as revived monsters in feature films (*monstrification)* are manifold, especially when followed as mass production formulas. This is primarily due to how these photographs are widely communicated to the curious public through the press, and to how these films are, in essence, devised to address and entertain the masses through cinematic screens. The mass distribution of these channels means a wide dissemination of the mummy's

---

[7] Tom Gunning has coined the phrase 'Cinema of Attractions,' referring to both a specific period of pre-narrative cinema, and a general visual mode of addressing spectators. I will be further discussing this mode of address in relation to the portrayals of Egyptian mummies in the third chapter. See Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

[8] Freeman, "The Mummy in Context," *European Journal of American Studies,* 3.

[9] Day, *The Mummy's Curse,* 4.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Angela Stienne, "Encountering Egyptian Mummies, 1753-1858," (Doctoral Dissertation, School of Museum Studies, 2018), 16.

[12] Ibid.

problematic portrayals, and results in the proliferation of what I term 'the mummy gaze;' *a particular way of seeing that fails to perceive the humanness of the ancient Egyptians.*

The empirical research conducted by Australian Egyptologist Jasmine Day explicitly confirms the significance of my propositions. Day demonstrates that media stereotypes — in cinema, cartoons, and children toys— influence how museum visitors perceive the displayed mummies.[13] While many argue for the removal of publicly displayed human remains, she takes a controversial ethical stance, arguing that their physical encounter "could be used to actively combat disparaging media stereotypes."[14] While it is not the ambition of this thesis to argue for or against the public display of human remains, my aim, however, is to investigate how existing stereotypical portrayals of mummies are prone to dehumanise the depicted ancient Egyptians. Therefore, I intend to discuss how the dissemination of such images shapes the gazing practices of the public, by offering a critique on the mediated encounter with mummies via their photographic and filmic representations.

This thesis comprises three chapters. The first chapter, titled *A Photographic Portrait,* focuses on the portrayal of Egyptian mummies as artefacts in archaeological photographs. It is accompanied by a photographic essay, in which archival photographs are juxtaposed with a written commentary. Together, they link the artefication of mummies to an act of dehumanisation characterised by the denial of the human nature of its subjects —a portrayal in the likeness of objects. The second chapter, titled *A Cinematic Portrait,* focuses on the portrayal of Egyptian mummies as monsters in fictional feature films. It is accompanied by a filmic essay, in which montaged scenes from archival films are juxtaposed with an audible commentary. The chapter and its essay link the monstrification of mummies to an act of dehumanisation characterised by the denial of the uniquely human attributes of its subjects —a portrayal in the likeness of animals. In the third chapter, titled *A Spectacle and its Spectator,* I investigate the spectacularisation of mummies inherent in their artefication and monstrification. I discuss the mode of spectatorship elicited by the mummified bodies as spectacles, and how this hinders spectatorial critical engagement with such dehumanising representations. I conclude this thesis by addressing relevant discussions that could be investigated in future research and by contemplating possible ways to portray the ancient Egyptians humanely. In doing so, I allude briefly to a space where the pacificatory nature of the mummies' spectacularisation may be resisted and their humanness re-imagined.

---

[13] Day, *The Mummy's Curse,* 36.

[14] Jasmine Day, "'Thinking makes it so': Reflections on the Ethics of Displaying Egyptian Mummies," *Papers on Anthropology* 23, no. 1 (2014): 29.

Chapter 1: **A Photographic Portrait**

In this chapter and its accompanying photographic essay, I discuss how the ancient Egyptians were and continue to be photographed, ongoing since their earliest excavations. It is important to place their post-mortem portraits under scrutiny, because they are widely shared with the eager public. Distributed through press channels, such images are prone to shape the gazing practices of the public, feeding and nurturing their curiosity.[15] Perceived as part of the body of archaeological knowledge, they can direct the historical imagination of their spectators.[16] Those who are not able to see in person the ancient treasures in their distant burial pits, nor visit them in their new museum-homes, follow closely the press coverage of each major discovery. Presently, the public only meets the ancient Egyptians either through these frames or through the glass of museum vitrines.

In the photographic essay, I demonstrate how archaeologists have continually been framing the mummies' portraits in the likeness of what they already deem familiar.[17] I have compiled and curated an archive of post-mortem photographs of pharaohs taken at different points in time, with the intention of accentuating their systematically repeated visual language. By juxtaposing them with a textual commentary —written in the imagined voice of an ancient Egyptian reflecting on how they have been photographed— I focus on the human qualities which the archaeological gaze denies the portrayed mummies. I reflect particularly on how they have been stripped not only of their burials and wrappings, but more importantly of their individuality, warmth, and human voice. In doing so, I argue with this visual essay that the post-mortem archaeological gaze is trained to look at them as mere bodies and bones, to be measured, labelled, documented, and catalogued in the likeness of other excavated non-human artefacts, which in turn dehumanises them.

The denial of essentially human traits in the portrayed mummies —manifested in their artefication— corresponds to a 'mechanistic dehumanisation.'[18] According to social psychology theories, when a subject is denied their human nature, they are objectified and perceived as automata, robots or machines.[19] Australian researcher and psychologist Nick Haslam explains that this form of dehumanisation "involves the objectifying denial of essentially human attributes to people toward whom the person feels psychologically distant and socially unrelated."[20] He adds that emotional distancing, indifference, and a

---

[15] Chelsey Patterson et al., "The Postmortem Gaze: Material Rhetoric and Viewing Practices of the Transgressive Body," (ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2015), 2.

[16] Bergstein, "Freud's Egyptian Photographs," 274.

[17] Jennifer A. Baird, "Framing the Past: Situating the Archaeological in Photographs," *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies 26,* no. 2 (2017): 167.

[18] Nick Haslam, "Dehumanization: An integrative review," *Personality and Social Psychology Review: An Official Journal of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Inc.* 10, no. 3 (2006): 252.

[19] Ibid., 258.

[20] Ibid., 262.

lack of empathy are key emotional responses to such subjects. While dehumanisation theories often focus on how the living are discriminated against, I argue in the photographic essay that such attitudes can extend to the dead, who are likewise dehumanised by being portrayed as inert objects, whose dignity seldom matters.

In this chapter, I begin my discussion by investigating a prominent way of portraying the dead, which was practiced at the time of the earliest archaeological encounters with Egyptian human remains. By situating archaeological photographs of Egyptian mummies in relation to Victorian post-mortem photographs, I unpack the implications of seeing the former as belonging to the archaeological body of evidence. I then investigate the inherent properties of archaeological photographs as traces and death masks, to shed light on some of the problems associated with the artefication of the ancient Egyptians. My aim is, thus, to situate the photographic essay within a theoretical discussion on the nature of such photographs. In doing so, the pairing of this chapter and its visual essay establishes the artefication of mummies as a portrayal tradition and demonstrates its inherent dehumanisation. More importantly, it elaborates on how the dissemination of these photographs trains the general public outside of the archaeological domain to adopt — when encountering ancient Egyptian human remains— *a mummy gaze, which fails to see their humanness, for they are merely archaeological artefacts.*

1.1 Victorian Post-mortem Photographs

The practice of photographing the dead in Europe and North America can be traced back to as early as the mid-nineteenth century.[21] The 1858 albumen print titled *Fading Away* by Henry Peach Robison (fig. 1) exemplifies the romanticised tableaux vivants, in which the ancient Egyptians could have been portrayed but, alas, never were. In this staged photograph, the dying girl is dressed in a white garment, and seated on a reclining chair with pillows behind her supporting her pose. She is bracketed by two women; a younger one behind her leaning downwards towards her with a protective pensive gaze, and an elderly woman in front of her showing a sorrowful expression on her partially obscured face. At the centre is the silhouette of a man, whose posture speaks to the gravity of this tragedy. With his back to the girl, he gazes out of a window at the murkiness of a cloudy sky. Viewers are invited to imagine his inaccessible facial expression, instead of reading it, thus gaining insight into his state of mind. The intimacy of the scene is heightened not only by these different postures of mourning, yet also by its domestic setting, and the layers of garments, curtains, and fabric that add serenity to the peacefully seated girl amidst them.

The ubiquity of death at that time, due to high mortality rates, and the grieving rituals associated with the Christian faith, led to the development of a large body of

---

[21] Audrey Linkman, *Photography and Death* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2011), 14.

Victorian post-mortem photographs in the likeness of Robinson's.[22] Such portraits were often commissioned by mourning families, reflecting a desire to secure a lasting image of the decedent. One of the reasons motivating this posthumous practice, especially the depiction of deceased infants, was the uncommon use of photography in everyday life, in an era prior to consumer cameras and snapshots.[23] Therefore, the post-mortem portrait not only functioned as a memorial, it was also a proof that the decedent had existed. Shifting attitudes towards death can be traced visually in these Victorian photographs. The acceptance of death was often expressed by depicting the dead either as if sleeping in a temporary resting state, or as if alive by being for example portrayed seated.[24] *Daughter Seated in a Chair* (fig. 2) is one such photograph. Wearing a dress, bracelets, and a garland of flowers on her head, this anonymous girl is portrayed in a photograph that speaks more of her life than death. The lack of any visual sign to how her head is propped upright makes her appear to have just closed her eyes and dozed off. Even though this photograph may have been taken in a studio, all of the details have been carefully choreographed —the blanket and book placed on the bed next to her chair and how her hands are folded naturally on her lap— shift the attention away from the girl's death and onto the life she had. This approach of propping the deceased in a lively semblance, avoiding any expressions of pain or stiffness, was a common photographic means to produce a scene that consoles the bereft survivors.[25] More pragmatic approaches to portraying death were manifested in ritual and funerary photographs, showing open caskets surrounded by carefully arranged flowers and mourners.[26] Generally, post-mortem photographs of this era were not displayed beyond the privacy of the homes, and were only shared with family and friends.[27] They were often placed in mourning lockets, enclosing a lock of the deceased's hair next to their portraits.[28] The intimacy, with which these objects were made and treated, reflects how emotionally charged these photographs were, and the pathos associated with the death of the departed.[29]

Meanwhile in Egypt, western archaeologists were encountering Egyptian mummies in tombs, and producing their first photographic portraits. Some of their earliest surviving portraits are those taken by Émile Brugsch in the 1880s. Excavated from their tombs, these kings and queens were shipped to the museum of Egyptian antiquities.[30] There, in one of the galleries, they were unwrapped and photographed, along with their

---

[22] Elizabeth Paris et al., "Suspension of Grief (And Disbelief): The Evolution of Postmortem Photography in Nineteenth Century America," (ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2015), 1.

[23] Linkman, *Photography and Death,* 18.

[24] Paris et al., "Suspension of Grief (And Disbelief)," 3.

[25] Linkman, *Photography and Death,* 21.

[26] Paris et al., "Suspension of Grief (And Disbelief)," 3.

[27] Ibid., 11.

[28] Patterson, "The Postmortem Gaze," 4.

[29] Ibid., 73.

[30] Christina Riggs, "Colonial Visions," *Museum Worlds* 1, no. 1 (2013): 71.

belongings.[31] Brugsch's plates show wrapped and unwrapped mummified bodies, front
and side views of heads and skulls (fig. 3), along with close-ups of stiff severed limbs.
Mummies were often portrayed de-contextualised, isolated against a backdrop, propped
upright, and placed on pedestal-like stools. When published, their photographs were
accompanied by captions, usually describing the medical diagnosis presumed to have
caused their death.[32] Compared to their Victorian counterparts, these post-mortem
portraits were not carefully framed in order to avoid the depiction of sufferance, stiffness,
or deformity. In fact, archaeologists sought to excel in highlighting these visual features,
through lighting, composition, and the language of their captions. The photographs taken
some thirty years later by English Egyptologist and photographer Harry Burton of
Tutankhamun's mummy share similar aesthetics with those by Brugsch.[33] In fact, the
similarities —which are also evident in more recent archaeological photographs— are
perhaps a naturally occurring result to the publication of photography manuals written by
archaeologists in the 1900s. These guidebooks aimed to set the shared standards for field
and museum photography, to be followed by practitioners and amateurs alike.[34]
Archaeologists did not adhere to such manuals strictly however, nor did they adopt the
same views on the importance of knowledge vs. aesthetics in their practice. Nonetheless,
the field, under which they worked and trained, shaped their scientific gaze towards the
ancient Egyptian dead; *a gaze seeing in death an object of study, compared to that
adopted in the West, which sees in death a mournful encounter.*

1.2 Archaeological Photographs as Traces

The history of photographing Egyptian mummies is strongly entangled with the history of
archaeology and museum practices. The act of photographically documenting the
excavated finds was introduced to serve a multitude of purposes, under the larger
objective of establishing archaeological knowledge —an integral part of colonialism and
the imperial project.[35] The potential of photographs as assets in archaeological work in
Egypt was immediately recognised, from the very moment of their presentation as a new
invention in 1839.[36] The indexical qualities of the photographic medium meant its natural

---

[31] Riggs, "Colonial Visions," 71.

[32] Bergstein, "Freud's Egyptian Photographs," 280.

[33] Due to copyright regulations, the reproduction of this portrait is not possible in this thesis. See the Griffith Institute, "Burton Photo. No. P0808" and "Burton Photo. No. P0809."
http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/carter/gallery/p0808.html and
http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/carter/gallery/p0809.html (accessed April 22, 2019)

[34] Christina Riggs, "Objects in the Photographic Archive: Between the field and the Museum in Egyptian Archaeology," (unpublished manuscript, 2017), 11.

[35] Ibid., 3.

[36] On January the 7th, 1839, during his announcement in Paris of the invention of Daguerreotypes, French politician and former minister of Defence of the French Republic François Arago said that "[t]o copy the millions of hieroglyphs that cover even the exterior of the great monuments of Thebes, Memphis, Karnak, and others would require decades of time and legions of draftsmen. By daguerreotype, one person would suffice to accomplish this immense work successfully." See Dominique F. Arago, "Report," in *Classic Essays on Photography,* ed. Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven: Connecticut, 1980), 17.

integration in the process of formulating the body of evidence of any archaeological discovery. Photographs offered reproducible and mobile substitutes for the excavated objects of study, enabling multiple individuals and institutes to study the finds remotely and simultaneously. Their materiality and mobility promised possibilities "for consulting, sharing, and storing these images in the expanding spaces of colonialism."[37]

The importance of analysing archaeological photographs stems from the purpose for which they were and are still taken. They continue to be treated by archaeologists as objective records of facts; an attitude which results in a less critical discourse over their representational capacities.[38] In her contemporary corpus of essays, British-American historian Christina Riggs notes that most studies, which explore the intersection of photography and Egyptian antiquities, are mainly focused on the depicted subject matters and the contents of photographic archaeological archives, without acknowledging the discipline's "troubled roots and troubling implications of its object habit in image form."[39] The scarcity of critical scholarly work on the photographic portrayal practices in the archaeological field motivates Riggs' 2018 book, *Photographing Tutankhamun.* In this book, and a number of recently published essays, she conducts in-depth analyses of the photographic archive formed in the early 1920s during the excavation of Tutankhamun's tomb. She argues that image-making practices, on the one hand, shape the interpretation of antiquities and are, on the other hand, shaped by historical contextual factors and colonial hierarchies.[40] Behind the thick veil of archaeological photographic objectivity, these images often slip from critical discourses.[41]

To illustrate the implications of considering post-mortem portraits of the ancient Egyptians as archaeological documents, one of their intrinsic characteristics is to be drawn. The indexical nature of archaeological photographs continues to be their main advocate for scientific authority. The unique status of the photographic referent has been discussed by many theorists, including Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag. Barthes described this referent as the necessarily real thing, which must have stood in front of the lens.[42] This necessity is what empowers the photograph with authority and an evidential force, for it testifies to both the presence of its referent and to the moment of the encounter.[43] Sontag states similarly that this photographic authority originates from the photograph's peculiar nature as a trace; a direct stencil of reality.[44] She adds that such an

---

[37] Riggs, "Objects in the Photographic Archive," 4.

[38] Christina Riggs, "Shouldering the Past: Photography, Archaeology, and Collective Effort at the Tomb of Tutankhamun," *History of Science* 55 no. 3 (2017): 340-341.

[39] Riggs, "Objects in the Photographic Archive," 3.

[40] Riggs, "Colonial Visions," 68.

[41] The failure of these images to evoke the critical engagement of their public audience is further discussed in the third chapter of this thesis.

[42] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (London: Vintage Books, 2000), 76.

[43] Ibid., 89.

[44] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 2002), 154.

authority gives photographs an additional property; of being acquisitions.[45] The act of taking a photograph reflects a will to capture faithfully and visually possess the photographed; an act which mirrors colonially driven archaeological excavations. The evidential use of archaeological photographs emphasises thus their referential value, stresses on their mechanical objectivity, and undermines their inevitably subjective and selective nature.

The photographic truth claim is, however, only a shared assumption, since photographs are in fact of a dual nature; they claim a truth behind which lies a doubt of fakery.[46] American film scholar Tom Gunning writes that the medium's claim of being a transparent, automatic, and objective process is a myth, in which "[t]he mediation of lens, film stock, exposure rate, type of shutter, processes of developing and of printing become magically whisked away if one considers the photograph as a direct imprint of reality."[47] Sontag argues similarly that while the photograph acts as a proof, it has likewise the ability to select, omit, and distort.[48] A photograph is essentially a cultural object, which results from human labour, and "cannot be dissociated precisely from its historical meaning and from the necessarily debatable project in which it originates."[49] The truth claim of archaeological photographs, in particular, is strengthened by their context, which claims that they were framed as scientific documents. However, they are never naturally occurring objects. They are bound, for example, by aesthetics, intentions, interpretations, and a subjective perspective on what is a 'good archaeological' photograph. More importantly, they originate from a field born out of a colonial discourse. In fact, their acquisitive nature embodies the problematic structures of colonialism, imperialism, and "the politically imbricated act of imagining an Other."[50] The archaeological gaze thus appears as a pre-photographic framing "itself interpreting, actively, even forcibly."[51] Archaeological photographs, embodying such a gaze, claim to be records and documents to be studied and interpreted, while they are themselves interpretations shaped by the context in which they were formulated. Accordingly, claiming that the post-mortem portraits of pharaohs are their objectively recorded faces neglects, for instance, why they are framed like forensic mugshots, how they were part of a discourse on racial sciences, and in which kind of contexts they meet spectators outside of the field of archaeology.[52]

---

[45] Sontag, *On Photography,* 155.

[46] Tom Gunning, "What's the Point of an Index? or, Faking Photographs," *Nordicom Review* 5 no. 1/2 (2004): 42.

[47] Ibid., 40.

[48] Sontag, *On Photography*, 5.

[49] Hubert Damisch, "Five Notes for A Phenomenology of the Photographic Image," in *The Photography Reader,* ed. Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), 88.

[50] Riggs, "Objects in the Photographic Archive," 20.

[51] Judith Butler, "Torture and the Ethics of Photography," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 6 (2007): 952.

[52] Christina Riggs, "Beautiful Burials, Beautiful Skulls: The Aesthetics of the Egyptian Mummy," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 56, no. 3 (2016): 259.

1.3 Archaeological Photographs as Death Masks

Lengthy contemplations were and continue to be written on photography's peculiar temporality as a past tense medium.[53] It was described as a practice of embalming life and arresting it in the form of a memento mori.[54] Photographers were also perceived as agents of death, crafting a space to sate a hunger for seeing representations of death.[55] The analogy between photographs and death masks best illustrates two paradoxically entangled properties of the photographic medium: Photographs hold and, at the same time, discard the photographed body.

Death masks are physical casts, moulded from the deceased's face, to become keepsakes.[56] French film theorist André Bazin described the moulding of these masks as similar in its automatic process to that of photography.[57] The two mediums' direct contact with the portrayed person —through a plaster mould or a light-sensitive imprint— lies at the centre of the analogy of photographs as death masks; an analogy which was likewise later adopted by Sontag.[58] This view reflects the conception of their faithful grasp or hold over their depicted subjects; their referential and evidential value. The photograph and the death mask are yet also similar in an opposite fashion. They both banish the portrayed subject, which becomes absent in their presence.[59] No longer the object of vision, the portrayed (face) is discarded and replaced by the copy (death mask). By providing a semblance which is then treated as an indexical likeness, the photograph as a death mask assists in the visual erasure of the photographed body; a metaphorical death of the original.[60]

A photograph of a living person appears uncanny, because it creates their death mask ahead of time. A photograph of a dead person is much more eerie, in fact problematic. It does not foreshadow a future death, instead it performs a metaphorical second death on the already dead person. It discards the corpse and replaces it with a photographic likeness, which then acts as its photographic presence. Moreover, it denies any possible memory or imagination of that depicted person as having been once alive. In the words of French theorist Christian Metz, it "maintains the memory of the dead as being dead."[61] In

---

[53] Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 76-77.

[54] André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," in *What is Cinema?*, ed. André Bazin (California: University of California Press, 1967), 9; Sontag, *On Photography*, 154.

[55] Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 92.

[56] Louis Kaplan, "Photograph/Death Mask: Jean-Luc Nancy's Recasting of the Photographic Image," *Journal of Visual Culture* 9, no. 1 (2010): 47.

[57] Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," 7.

[58] Sontag, *On Photography*, 154.

[59] Kaplan, "Photograph/Death Mask," 49.

[60] French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy illustrated this notion by relating the photograph to a Roman Templum —a rectangular sanctuary which was contemplated by religious officials and where sacrifices often took place. He described that the photograph is in the likeness of this rectangular space of contemplation where the dead are entombed by the act of photography. See Ibid., 46.

[61] Christian Metz, "Photography And Fetish," in *The Photography Reader,* ed. Liz Wells (London: Routledge, 2003), 141.

consequence, archaeological photographs of the ancient Egyptians direct their viewers' gaze away from the human corpses and towards their photographic death masks. They further arrest this gaze by claiming to be authoritative stencils of the photographed mummies, acting as records substituting the archaeological artefact itself.[62] They promise to be synonymous with their faces, and in fact replace them, in the same manner to how a fleeting memory is replaced by its photograph, which promises an eternal semblance.

The stillness in death is reflected in the stillness of both the photographically halted moment and the stilled photographed subject. Barthes wrote that the camera, by demanding a still pose, turns the subject into an immobile statue.[63] He further described how the use of a headrest accentuates the subject's immobility, for it acts as a pedestal. In the act of producing the mummies' photographic death masks, their mummified bodies are propped to face the camera's lens. Placing them on examination tables, leaning them against a wall, and setting a backdrop behind their stiff figures, are therefore equivalent to setting them on pedestals and adjusting a headrest to hold their pose. Building upon Barthes' analogy, it appears that the photograph of a propped ancient mummy transforms them into a special kind of statue; an ancient ruin. The resulting photograph of this uncanny ruin is itself a viewing vitrine, calling for the contemplation of the ruin placed on display within its frame. Unlike the post-mortem photograph of the seated girl, that of a propped upright Egyptian queen (fig. 4) not only accentuates her ruin-like isolated mummified body, it speaks painfully of her decay, for such photographs of ruin emphasise the inevitable "ruin of the ruin."[64]

1.4 Conclusion

Unpacking some of the characteristics of archaeological photographs reveals how the ancient Egyptians are continually portrayed in the likeness of artefacts, as a result of the archaeological gaze held upon them. Their photographic transformation into ruins mirrors, in essence, how their actual remains are perceived and treated in the real world. It is not clear when exactly mummies became artefacts, and whether this turning point is marked by their excavation, documentation, shipment, or placement in museum display cases.[65] The western infatuation with them, however, originated from a significant absence felt in the rapidly developing, fleeting, and transient culture of modernity; that of permanence.[66] But even the most stable ruins, according to German philosopher Walter

---

[62] Baird, "Framing the Past," 168.

[63] Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 13.

[64] Eduardo Cadava, "Lapsus Imaginis: The Image in Ruins," *October* 96 (2001): 36.

[65] Elliott Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity* (USA: Duke University Press. 2007), 24.

[66] Leslie Lewis and Scott Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh: Mummies, Movies and Modernity," (ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2006), 12.

Benjamin, testify that great civilisations decay too.[67] Hidden in refuge, away from the progression of time, mummies were seen as special ruins —threatening even— for they defied death itself. In her dissertation, Leslie Anne Lewis argues that by unwrapping mummies and fulfilling their ruinous destiny, the culture of modernity affirms its control, "demonstrating that all past cultures are transitory."[68] The metaphorical second death of Egyptian mummies, taking place in their photographic artefication, appears to be but a continuation of this colonial act of eliminating their threat. By being portrayed as dehumanised artefacts, they can still be consumed as objects of study and spectacle, without defying the claimed superior culture which has encountered it.

I have relied here on how some of the characteristics of archaeological photographs, such as their indexicality and the scientific context for which they are framed, dilute the potential for a critical discussion about their dehumanising visual language. British archaeologist Jennifer Baird argues contrastingly that such characteristics have not been enough to prove the authenticity of photographs in the archaeological field.[69] She emphasises instead how their authority is created primarily by how they are composed and manipulated to 'look' correct, more real, and thus archaeological.[70] Baird writes that the photographic medium's failure, to represent properly and accurately the archaeological artefact, has led to a reliance on extensive captions and visual manipulations in order to convey archaeological knowledge with an archaeological aesthetic.[71] A more in depth discussion of the portrayal choices taken by archaeologists to confirm the authority of their ultimately subjective photographic representations — addressed in the last chapter— would thus provide a better understanding of how the archaeological gaze shapes and constructs the mummies as artefacts.

In this chapter, I have discussed properties of post-mortem photographs of the ancient Egyptians, within a discourse on photography, its truth claim, and intrinsic temporal link to death. In doing so, I have cast light on some of the implications resulting from the context in which these portraits originate, as part of an archaeological discourse. In the photographic essay accompanying this chapter, I offer an analytical reflection on a selection of post-mortem portraits of pharaohs. There I demonstrate the closeness between the essential human attributes which they are denied, and those devised in existing psychological theories on dehumanisation. To conclude, my overarching argument in this part of the thesis is that post-mortem photographs of Egyptian mummies should not be merely perceived as archaeological objectively recorded documents. The public dissemination of such photographs, framed by an archaeological gaze that claims an authoritative representation, is problematic. It repositions the

---

[67] Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 161.

[68] Lewis and Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh," 79.

[69] Baird, "Framing the Past," 170.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

artefication of mummies from a scientifically practiced portrayal tradition, to a widespread public gazing practice. In other words, the public's encounter with non-fictional photographs of mummies trains them to adopt an archaeological dehumanising gaze, which is then practiced upon encountering the mummified human remains behind the glass of museum vitrines.

Chapter 2: **A Cinematic Portrait**

In this chapter and its accompanying filmic essay, I focus on the portrayal of ancient Egyptian mummies in fictional cinema. The analysis of feature films, despite their fictional nature, can viably shed light on the cultural patterns that exist within the society out of which they have emerged.[72] It is precisely because they tell non-factual stories, that their content can be considered as formulated interpretations of selected segments of life.[73] By examining what a group of films depict and how they depict it, common themes emerge, reflecting the consistent attributes of a portrayal tradition.

For the scope of my analysis, the following films are addressed: *The Mummy* (1932), *The Mummy's Hand* (1940), *The Mummy's Tomb* (1942), *The Mummy's Ghost* (1944), *The Mummy's Curse* (1944), *The Mummy* (1959), *The Mummy* (1999), *The Mummy Returns* (2001), and *The Mummy* (2017). These nine mummy-monster films, spanning 85 years, were widely disseminated by the large American distribution film studio *Universal Pictures*. The majority of them were planned as either sequels or re-makes of one another, which allows me to underline with precision their narratological development. In the filmic essay, I put together a montage of their cinematographic scenes, with the intention of accentuating how their visual languages and narrative structures are constantly and closely repeated film after film. I pay particular attention to the mummies' consistently portrayed behaviour, motives, and attributes, which construct the fictional image of the mummy. By juxtaposing the film scenes with an audible commentary —addressed to an imagined ancient Egyptian seated amongst the spectators— I emphasise the human qualities that the fictional mummy is systematically denied such as having a mind and a will. In doing so, I argue with this visual essay that, the bestial qualities attributed to the fictional mummies such as running in a quadrupedal manner, growling, and possessing supernatural powers, portray them in the likeness of animals, which in turn dehumanises them.

Upon investigating existing theories of dehumanisation, this portrayal appears to correspond to an act of dehumanisation, termed 'animalistic dehumanisation.'[74] In this form of dehumanisation, uniquely human characteristics such as civility, refinement, moral sensibility, logic, and maturity are denied to the subjects.[75] The behaviour of those who are dehumanised is thus implicitly or explicitly perceived as less cognitively mediated, more driven by instincts, or in other words, animalistic.[76] When such dehumanised subjects are portrayed as animal predators, the response they elicit is

---

[72] John H. Weakland, "Feature Films as Cultural Documents," in *Principles of Visual Anthropology,* ed. Paul Hockings (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2003), 63.

[73] Ibid., 60.

[74] Haslam, "Dehumanization," 258.

[75] Ibid., 257.

[76] Ibid., 258.

terror, and when they are portrayed as unclean animals, they evoke disgust, revulsion, and a fear of contamination.[77] In the filmic essay, I demonstrate how the fictional mummies are portrayed to evoke such responses, and that this form of animalistic dehumanisation is practiced in their monstrification in fictional films. With this chapter, I aim however to situate the filmic essay within the historical context which led to the fictional representation of mummies as monsters. By investigating the uncanny attributes of horror monsters, I reflect on how mummies were perceived as viable candidates to enter the cinematic horror genre. Further, I intend to draw some of the repercussions of such a portrayal, by comparing the monstrified mummies with other fictional monsters. In doing so, the pairing of this chapter with its visual essay establishes the monstrification of Egyptian mummies as a portrayal tradition and demonstrates its inherent dehumanisation. More importantly, it elaborates on how the distribution of these films trains film viewers to adopt —when encountering ancient Egyptian human remains— a *mummy gaze, which fails to see the mummies' humanness, for they are merely fictional monsters.*

2.1 Cinema and 'the Mummy Complex'

Before discussing how mummies are portrayed in cinema, it is beneficial to first explore how cinema itself has been understood and theorised in relation to mummies. André Bazin proposed that all of the visual arts stem from a *mummy complex;* which is a fundamental human need to halt the progression of time and conquer the finality of death.[78] He described how the making of a photograph or a film fulfils the same need motivating the embalmment of a mummy; "the preservation of life by a representation of life."[79] For Bazin, cinema, unlike photography, not only embalms a moment in time, it also preserves the change within a duration of time.[80] American film theorist Garrett Stewart, similarly, draws an analogy between the nature of cinema with the preservation of death. He describes film as "an instance of death in motion, a chemical burial and its fleeting resuscitation, frame upon (rather than after) frame."[81] Some theorists, including Roland Barthes and Christian Metz, hesitate in extending the indisputable closeness of photography with death, to film. British film theorist Peter Wollen suggests that such perspectives favour the view of death as a state, while it can also be depicted as an event.[82] Wollen argues that photographs can indeed depict durations and movement, which are

---

[77] John M. Rector, *The Objectification Spectrum: Understanding and Transcending Our Diminishment and Dehumanisation of Others* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 252.

[78] Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," 9.

[79] Ibid., 10.

[80] Ibid., 15.

[81] Garrett Stewart and James O. Freedman, *Between Film and Screen: Modernism's Photo Synthesis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 36.

[82] Peter Wollen, "Fire and Ice," in *The Cinematic,* ed. David Campany (London/Cambridge MA, Whitechapel/MIT, 2007), 112.

not only features of film.[83] The semblance of life, which tends to be comfortably attributed to cinema, is thus nothing more than another form of death; a non-life.[84] Claiming, in that sense, that the portrayal of mummies in films, unlike photographs, provides them with life-like agencies, such as movement and speech, is negligible to the closeness of the cinematic image to its photographic predecessor.

British film scholar Antonia Lant highlights earlier associations between the blackened theatres of silent cinema and Egyptian tombs. She notes how the newly introduced cinemas, with their dark spaces and projected mute images, were perceived in the likeness of necropolises, where the dead could be encountered.[85] Lant argues that Bazin's 1945 notion of *the mummy complex* emerged from a history of intricate relations between the experience of early cinema and the history of Egyptology.[86] Étienne-Gaspard Robertson's shows known as *Phantasmagoria* (fig. 5) are one such example. In one of these proto-cinematic experiences —with moving slide pictures projected onto smoke or lightweight screens— a skeleton, found inside of a temple, moves and opens its mouth once a grave digger attempts to remove it from the tomb.[87] Similar performances of the time often reflected an interest in Egyptology, that was articulated in their content. Accordingly, the encounter with re-animated mummies, already explored in fictional literature since 1827, was naturally present in the following wave of silent films.[88] More than forty Egyptian themed films preceded Universal Classic Monsters' 1932 mummy film, which has set off the mummy horror film genre.[89]

2.2 Why the Mummy Becomes a Monster

Unlike the currently typical portrayal of mummies as threatening monsters, two examples illustrate alternative ways of how they were depicted prior to 1932. In 1911, an American silent film titled *The Mummy* (fig. 6) presented a fictional story, that ends with an Egyptologist marrying a revived mummy, who was accidentally brought back to life by electricity. The mummy was portrayed as a living woman, who wore a ceremonial headdress and a glittering Egyptian-style gown. In 1931, an animated short film titled *Egyptian Melodies* (fig. 7) was released by Disney, in which a curious spider, upon reaching the end of a tunnel under the Sphinx, encounters sillily and amusingly dancing fully wrapped mummies. The now terrified spider —after screaming one of the first sound synchronised spoken words in cinema: Mummy!— spends most of the remaining half of the cartoon hiding inside of a clay jar. The portrayals of mummies in these pre-1932 films

---

[83] Wollen, "Fire and Ice," 112.

[84] Stewart and Freedman, *Between Film and Screen,* 37.

[85] Antonia Lant, "The Curse of the Pharaoh, or How Cinema Contracted Egyptomania," *October* 59 (1992): 90.

[86] Ibid., 110.

[87] Ibid., 91.

[88] Freeman, "The Mummy in Context," 1.

[89] Ibid., 3.

shifted back and forth between contradictory themes. In her PhD dissertation, Leslie Anne Lewis traces an evident tension in the fiction films of this period. She notes how they either supported the 19th century's conception of Egyptian artefacts as docile objects of scientific study, or disturbed that vision with supernatural elements, which escape western control.[90] Lewis argues that this tension was amplified in the 1920s, due to the political and cultural events at the time, resulting in the fear needed to transform the mummy into a monster.[91]

The events surrounding the 1922 discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb —led by the British archaeologist Howard Carter and financed by the English aristocrat Lord Carnarvon— reveal best the dynamics of this tension. With the rise of Egyptian national sentiments, distilled into a revolution leading to the 1922 declaration of independence, Carter and Carnarvon were denied the formerly-expected retainment of a portion of the excavated artefacts.[92] Meanwhile, the Egyptian press was offended by the exclusive access to the tomb, which was granted to the British national newspaper *The Times*.[93] The western media reporting on the unstable political and cultural dynamics in Egypt throughout the early 20th century, clashed with the public's former wilful ignorance of modern Egyptian life. In the 19th century, Egypt particularly, and the Orient generally, were conceived as a world that was "static, frozen, [and] fixed eternally."[94] Lewis explains that, on the one hand, these attributes were considered positive, when associated with the ancient past, for such stability implied an eternal civilisation in defiance of time. The many obelisks, that were taken from Egypt and are now standing on western soil, are evidence to an imperialist intention; not to be bound by the ephemeral modern material culture.[95] On the other hand, this fixed stability was perceived as a negative trait, when attributed to modern Egypt, because it implied an inability to change, transform, and progress, which affirmed the superiority of the West over their Orient-counterparts.

When Egypt began to free itself from the chains of western control, a clash was inevitable between what Edward Said describes as 'latent' and 'manifest' orientalism. The former is a stable conception, mainly built through assumptions and a remote 'classical' study, while the latter results from actual encounters and is thus able to change with time.[96] The fact that Egypt began distributing its own films to the West, added to the many disturbances affecting the latent 19th century conceptions.[97] Lewis argues that the anxiety caused by the tension between these poles, allowed the previously subdued

---

[90] Lewis and Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh," 143.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Riggs, "Shouldering the past," 17.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 208.

[95] Lewis and Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh," 193.

[96] Said, *Orientalism,* 206.

[97] Lant, "The Curse of the Pharaoh," 112.

supernatural potential of ancient Egypt to flourish in the 1920s silent fiction films.[98] In these circumstances, the fictional resurrection of the Egyptian mummy was transformed, with the advent of sound films, into a threatening rebellion against the control of the modern western sciences. And despite the ethical argument explicitly present in the long line of mummy monster films —a revenge on the archaeologically motivated desecration of sacred tombs— the monstrified fictional mummies failed nonetheless to provoke a protest against the archaeological grip on their non-fictional counterparts.[99] This is due in particular to the fact that their fictional monstrification does not evoke a critical spectatorial engagement, and instead alienates them as threatening horrifying creatures.[100]

2.3 How the Mummy Becomes a Monster

Noel Carroll, in his 1990 book *The Philosophy of Horror, or Paradoxes of the Heart*, argues that a fundamental aspect for the creation of a horror monster is the concept of border crossings.[101] The extraordinary presence of the monster is itself the threat which they pose, for they disturb the world's natural order. Egyptian mummies were found to be promising characters for horror films, mainly because the first encounter with them embodies two such borders crossed. While the excavation of mummies, and particularly their unwrapping, are transgressions by the West on the ancient Egyptians' religious beliefs, the mummified dead are themselves offending the natural finality of death. When buried and undisturbed by the living, they escape time to a great extent. By unearthing them, the ephemeral western material culture, threatened by their eternality, brings them back under the power of time and decay. This historical encounter, with its dual border-crossing nature, is subtly reflected in the fictional narratives, where the act of translating the hieroglyphs of an ancient scroll —symbolising the western intervention— instigates the resurrection of a mummy.[102] Additionally, the recurring backstory devised for most of the revived mummies, in both the 20th and 21st century fiction horror films, includes their former punishment by being mummified alive for an act of transgression. In other words, the fictional mummies are deviant and threatening in all possible states, for they are devised to cross as many borders as possible. They were aggressors during their past lives. Their mummification is an assault on the finality of death. Their revivification threatens the natural order metaphorically and the modern world literally. And their ultimate threat is their intention to revive others, to join them in their offence.

---

[98] Lewis and Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh," 143.

[99] Day, *The Mummy's Curse,* 6.

[100] The failure of such dehumanising portrayals to evoke the critical engagement of spectators is further discussed in the following chapter.

[101] Noël E. Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror, or Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 16.

[102] Lewis and Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh," 228.

Horror monsters are necessarily more than threatening, since the emotional reaction to danger is merely fear, not horror. They are both "threatening *and* impure."[103] The threat, which they evoke, is entangled with other emotions, that they produce in those who encounter them; revulsion, nausea, and disgust. The 1932 film *The Mummy* (fig. 8) portrays the uncanniness of the first mummy monster in a subtle approach, where he appears in the form of a living man with rigid facial traits and stiff bodily movements yet dressed in the local attire of Egyptians. Contrastingly, the following sequels preferred the depiction of a mummy with physical and behavioural traits, that are closer to those attributed to horror monsters. These mummy monsters are consistently, to name but a few characterises, wrapped in linen-like bandages, their movements are either too slow or unnaturally fast, their regeneration into the form of the living —if it were to happen onscreen— is a brutal process that involves killings, and they are either mute or speak sounds indecipherable to both their fictional victims and their cinematic audience. The film's positive characters, who encounter these creatures, are often shuddering, screaming, or are disgusted by their sight. Such responses are similar to those shown to dehumanised subjects, who are portrayed as threatening perpetrators and or disgusting unclean vermin. Carroll argues that the audience of horror is likely to mirror the positive characters' emotional responses, because their onscreen reactions exemplify to the viewer how to react.[104] Unlike other fictional monsters, such reactions to the mummy monster are problematic.

Until this day, the ancient Egyptian mummies are treated differently than other corpses. In the 1910 silent film *Wanted, A Mummy*, a professor is about to dissect a mummy, which he has just placed on a table inside of his living room. As he leans to pick up a large butcher's knife, from amongst his dissecting tools, the old landlady of the house sees him, panics, and runs out of the house to call for help. Those, who she brings to intervene in the crime committed in her house, are relieved once they see a mummy on the table, and not a fresh corpse.[105] The fact, that these uncanny beings were once living human beings, was and remains easily forgotten, even by their modern day scientific examiners. Similarly, the monstrification of mummies in cinema was negligible to its effects on the real presence of the embalmed bodies, and their humanness.

2.4 The Ancient Egyptian as a Monster
Universal Pictures' Classic Monster films are exemplary to contemplate significant differences between monstrified mummies and other fictional monsters.[106] In 1931, one

---

[103] Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror,* 28.

[104] Ibid.*,* 18. I will be further discussing the identification process between the spectator and the positive filmic characters in the following chapter.

[105] Lewis and Curtis, "Trading in Withered Flesh," 162.

[106] *Universal Classic Monsters* are science fiction films produced and distributed by Universal Pictures between the 1920s and 1950s. They include 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame', 'The Phantom of the Opera', 'Dracula', 'Frankenstein', and 'The Wolf Man', amongst many other.

year before their first mummy film, the film studio released *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*. While these two films were based on literary novels, the mummy monster films appear, upon their close inspection, to have been inspired particularly by those two films. While Frankenstein's monster is a manlike creature, built of stitched together corpses and brought to life by electricity, the mummy monster is an excavated ancient Egyptian corpse, who is revived by the uttering of ancient spells. While Dracula is an ancient immortal corpse, who leaves his grave to feed off the blood of his victims, the mummy monster is a supernatural creature, who magically sucks the life energy out of those who desecrate his tomb to regenerate his body.[107] The close resemblance of the fictional mummy in these films to Frankenstein's monster and Dracula demonstrates the kind of dehumanised attributes given to the monstrified mummy. The mummy is likened to a man-made monster who is utterly rejected by his disgusted maker and to a blood-thirsty ancient creature who threatens the spread of his undead curse.

Unlike the other two fictional monsters, the fictional mummy monster has a corresponding non-fictional human form, who exists in reality, and can be encountered by the film viewers. While it is not likely that one would encounter an immortal vampire or a revived stitched-together corpse, real Egyptian mummies are accessible to the public, given that they currently reside in museums all over the world. The visual traits of the mummies displayed in museums —with torn wrappings, soft damaged tissues, and bare bones— are not very different from the portrayal assumed for their fictional counterparts.[108] Film production studios were not ignorant of this fact, and benefited from their audiences' ability to meet mummies in the real world. They have taken advantage of this real encounter for the promotion of their films, since it increases the realness of the mummy's threat. They have especially exploited the mummy's curse, which remains an unstelling myth that lurks around. On the one hand, the high visual fidelity between the appearances of fictional mummies and their real counterparts adds realness to the cinematic monsters. On the other hand, it also has a strong impact on how the actual human remains are perceived. Jasmine Day argues that the fictional mummy-as-a-monster portrayals are not only applied onto real mummies, but they also challenge proper cultural education about the ancient Egyptians.[109] She adds that such depictions are "not only obscuring historical facts but also perpetuating outdated racist assumptions and colonialist ideas."[110] Day's research shows that media stereotypes of a vilified mummy's curse precondition the emotional responses of museum visitors.[111] Upon meeting real mummies, the visitors are prone to recall the constructed fictional portrayals of mummies, which in turn, shape the way they respond to the displayed human remain.

---

[107] Aviva Briefel, "Hands of Beauty, Hands of Horror: Fear and Egyptian Art at the Fin de Siècle," *Victorian Studies* 50, no. 2 (2008): 270.

[108] Day, "'Thinking Makes it so'," 36.

[109] Day, *The Mummy's Curse,* 2.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Day, "'Thinking Makes it so'," 36.

2.5 Conclusion

Unpacking the historical and political turbulent relationship between Egypt and the West in the late 1920s reveals one of the reasons why the ancient Egyptians were fictionally portrayed as vilified creatures. Their filmic monstrification appears to have been an approach to eliminate the threat they represented to the values of western modernity. As discussed, the mummy as a monster is essentially crossing borders, between life and death, past and present, ancientness and modernity; a transgression which is not tolerated. The systematic repetition of the same narrative in these films —as demonstrated in the filmic essay— engraves over the years one scenario; mummies are revived to be killed again. By depicting them as disgusting horrifying supernatural monsters, the fictional containment of their threat —i.e. their fictional second death— becomes a natural reaction to an unnatural phenomenon. Similarities emerge once again between their fictional second death in films, their metaphorical second death in photographs, and the disgraceful act of their unwrapping. Their portrayal, as dehumanised monsters within the entertainment industry, understates the gravity of desecrating their tombs and lessens the importance of discussing the use and abuse of their mummified corpses.

I have relied here on the tendency of spectators to mirror the affective responses that the positive filmic characters exhibit upon encountering the vilified mummies. However, this argument is not to be understood in generalisation, else it would be negligible to how spectators are not a homogenous body that absorbs in the same manner what is presented onscreen.[112] Additionally, mirroring emotions as a result of a filmic identification process has been itself placed under scrutiny. Film scholar Murray Smith argues that the spectators' capacity to partially replicate the perceived bodily expressions and gestures of filmic characters is but an affective perceptual mimicry.[113] Mere mimicry fails to incorporate a cognitive recognition of the duplicated expressions. Instead, Smith writes that filmic identification results from an assessment of the characters' states and a moral allegiance with their acts and intentions.[114] A closer investigation of the nature of the identification process at work in such films —addressed in the following chapter— would shed more light on how spectators are trained to respond to both fictional and non-fictional mummies.

In this chapter, I have unpacked aspects of the historical context, that led to the entrance of Egyptian mummies into the horror genre. I have argued that their cinematic fictional monstrification is problematic, due to its influence on how their non-fictional counterparts are encountered. In the filmic essay, I demonstrate the common portrayal traits of fictional mummies, extracted from a selection of globally distributed feature

---

[112] Pantelis Michelakis, "Spectatorship," in *Greek Tragedy on Screen*, ed. Pantelis Michelakis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.

[113] Murray Smith, "Altered States: Character and Emotional Response in the Cinema," *Cinema Journal* 33, no. 4 (1994): 47.

[114] Ibid., 41.

films. By analysing the monstrified visual appearances and behaviours of the fictional mummies, along with the responses expressed by the films' positive characters upon encountering them, I deduce the closeness between the traits which they are denied, and those devised by psychologists as resulting in a dehumanised representation. In that sense, my overarching argument for this chapter is that the preconditioned emotional responses, that museum visitors exhibit when encountering ancient Egyptian mummies, are those which they, as horror film viewers mirror from their cinematic encounter with monstrified mummies. In other words, the mediated encounter with mummies in cinema instils the portrayal of a dehumanised fictional mummy, which is hardly differentiated from the real ancient Egyptian human remains.

Chapter 3: **A Spectacle and its Spectator**

Thus far, I have discussed two prevailing traditions of portraying the ancient Egyptians. In the first chapter and its photographic essay, I argued that their mummified remains are dehumanised mechanistically by being portrayed as artefacts in non-fictional photographs. And in the second chapter and its filmic essay, I addressed their animalistic dehumanisation when portrayed as monsters in fictional feature films. Here, I focus on a common procedure at work in their artefication and monstrification, one that contributes significantly to their dehumanisation; *these portrayals transform Egyptian mummies into spectacles, placed on display solely for visual consumption*. By being portrayed as a photographic artefact and filmic monster, the dead body becomes a defamiliarised exhibit, presented primarily to impress, shock, and sate the spectator's visual curiosity. In the following discussion, I address the nature of spectacles, the imbalanced power relationship they result in, and the mode of spectatorship they evoke, in an attempt to expand my investigation on the mummies' dehumanising portrayals and how they address their public audiences.

3.1 On Perceptible Spectacles

In an article dedicated to tracing the historical development of the term 'spectacle', film scholar Erlend Lavik defines two distinct conceptions.[115] The first conception, put forward by French theorist Guy Debord, envisions it as a metaphorical condition of a commodified society. Debord describes such a society as being saturated by an accumulation of spectacles, where representation suppresses reality.[116] The social relationships between the members of such a society are always mediated by images and commodities; a mediation which in turn deceives and distorts their vision.[117] In this society of the spectacle, citizens are mere docile, passive, and depoliticised spectators.[118] The Debordian spectacle offers a critique on the logic of commodities, particularly commodified experience and perception. Lavik argues that this monolithic and all-embracing understanding of spectacles is rather obscure and abstract, that Debord himself has not exemplified it in his writings.[119] He adds that the Debordian spectacle easily becomes an elastic malleable term, that thinkers can mould to suit their arguments.[120] On the contrary, the second conception of the spectacle describes something concrete,

---

[115] Erlend Lavik, "The Battle for the Blockbuster: Discourses of Spectacle and Excess," *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 6, no. 2 (2008): 170.

[116] Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1995), 12.

[117] Bruce Magnusson and Zahi Zalloua, *Spectacle* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 5.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Lavik, "The Battle for the Blockbuster," 170.

[120] Ibid., 171.

perceptible, and distinguishable.[121] This spectacle is defined as that which is eye-catching, out of the ordinary, and thus placed on display.[122] It involves an act of placing an object or a person on display, to satisfy the viewer's curiosity.[123] It signifies a system employed "to *display*, the visibility of the visible."[124] And it is often associated with "the 'big' explosion or the 'big' outburst of special effects."[125] In accordance with Lavik's argumentation, I have chosen to engage with the second, solid conception of the term in this chapter. I find that it promises a clearer and more productive engagement with the photographic and filmic representations placed under scrutiny here.

Even though the definitions of such a spectacle refer to an impressive exhibit, negative connotations often lurk around the term.[126] Spectacles have been theorised mainly in an attempt to investigate their tendencies to disrupt the spectator' potential for critical engagement, arresting their gaze instead on visual superficial displays. In theoretical discussions, by scholars such as Erlend Lavik, Steve Neale, and Geoff King, there appears to be an often-neglected question; whether spectacles are themselves of a spectacular nature.

Conceiving of certain events and objects as naturally occurring spectacles is rather problematic. Such an assumption obstructs awareness of the way in which familiar phenomena can become unfamiliar, thus spectacular, when portrayed in certain ways.[127] In other words, it is not necessarily true that all spectacles are in fact spectacular, for they may merely have been portrayed to appear as such. It is therefore beneficial to understand a spectacle as something ordinary that has been exhibited for the purposes of impressing, surprising, or simply grabbing the spectator's attention, which in turn transforms it into an out of the ordinary spectacle. Acknowledging spectacularisation as an intentional process or, better, as "a signifying system,"[128] thus allows for the emergence of critical discussions on the formulation, usage, and consumption of spectacles.

3.2 A Spectacle 'to be looked at'

One of the earliest criticisms of spectacles was put forth by Aristotle, who dismissed theatrical spectacle in Greek tragedies. He criticised the way in which they steal the spectator's attention away from the plot by visual means ineffective for the drama.[129] He

---

[121] Lavik, "The Battle for the Blockbuster," 170.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ramesh Mallipeddi, "Spectacle, Spectatorship, and Sympathy in Aphra Behn's Oroonoko," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 45, no. 4 (2012): 477.

[124] Steve Neale, "Triumph of the Will: Notes on Documentary and Spectacle," *Screen* 20, no.1 (1979): 66.

[125] Geoff King, *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 184.

[126] Lavik, "The Battle for the Blockbuster," 170,171.

[127] Tom Brown, "Spectacle/Gender/History: The Case of Gone with the Wind," *Screen* 49, no.2 (2008): 160.

[128] Neale, ""Triumph of the Will,"" 66.

[129] Michelakis, "Spectatorship," 14, 15; Scott Bukatman, "Spectacle, Attractions and Visual Pleasure," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 75.

deemed the narrative to be of a higher value than the spectacle. He perceived the latter as ornamental, supplementary, and unproductive to the overall goal of the tragedy. In the realm of cinema, British feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey similarly criticised filmic spectacles in Hollywood narrative films. Her tone, however, was even bleaker than that of Aristotle.[130] In an influential essay, she writes that her intentions are motivated by the notion "that analysing pleasure, or beauty, destroys it."[131] For Mulvey, spectacles are not just unproductive in narrative cinema, they also disrupt, freeze, and even work against the forward progress of the plot line.[132] She focuses her psychoanalytically grounded criticism on the portrayal of women as spectacles, and argues that they are visually present as sexual objects to be looked at.[133] 'To-be-looked-at-ness' is a term she has coined and situated at the centre of her discourse on 'the male gaze.'[134] Mulvey argues that this mode of display —of presenting the female body on screen to be looked at— not only addresses the male protagonist of the filmic world, but also the male spectator. She explains that the imbalanced power relationship between the passive female spectacle and the active male protagonist is translated onto the relationship between spectacle and spectator.[135] The male spectator identifies with the male protagonist, for the latter controls the forward progress of the narrative. The spectator is therefore invited to likewise visually consume, and possess through his gaze, the spectacular female body displayed for the visual pleasure of the male gaze.[136]

    In her earlier writings, Mulvey has noted that this Hollywood ability, to construct the female spectacle and the voyeuristic spectator, depends on certain material aspects of cinematic exhibition.[137] The darkness of the auditorium, the projection beam, and the succession of celluloid frames play a fundamental role in eroticising the pleasure of looking. Yet echoes of John Berger's analysis of the representation of women in still images are found abundantly in her filmic discourse.[138] Berger has demonstrated the dominance of a similar hierarchy between the active male viewer and the passive female viewed in western cultural aesthetics in imagery from oil paintings to advertising photographs. He has argued that the act of looking at the female exhibit, by both the male

---

[130] Bukatman, "Spectacle, Attractions and Visual Pleasure," 75.

[131] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings,* ed. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford UP, 1999), 835.

[132] Ibid., 837.

[133] Ibid., 839.

[134] According to Mulvey, the male gaze is that of men looking at and portraying women through the lens of the camera, that of the male protagonist looking at the female character within the filmic narrative, and that of the spectator looking at the portrayed woman. See Suzanna D. Walters, "Visual Pressures: On Gender and Looking," in *Material Girls: Making Sense of Feminist Cultural Theory*, ed. Suzanna D. Walters (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1995), 57.

[135] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 839.

[136] Ibid., 840.

[137] Laura Mulvey, "The 'Pensive Spectator' Revisited: Time and Its Passing in the Still and Moving Image," in *Where is the Photograph?,* ed. David Green (Brighton: Photoforum and Photoworks, 2003), 120.

[138] Giorgio Galbussera, et al., "The Movie Men: The Male Body as Spectacle in European Cinema," (ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2011), 2.

and the female spectator —the latter internalises the male gaze— turns the portrayed body into "an object of vision: a sight."[139]

Transforming bodies into sights is in fact an inherent characteristic of the photographic medium. This occurs primarily because the act of taking a photograph implies a selective process; deeming something worth pointing at.[140] Photographs transform the depicted subjects into museum objects, placed under the spotlight and framed for the visual admiration of both the photographer and the spectator of the photograph.[141] The stillness of the halted moment, the posed immobile subject, and their detachment from the flow of time allow the gaze of the photographic spectator to be held, as long and as often as desired.[142] This stillness is what Mulvey, in her later writings, remarks as a characteristic of the filmic moments of erotic contemplation.[143] She writes that these moments appear as fragmented stills, that burst out of the flow of the filmic fictional time, and open a temporal space for visual fascination.[144] New technologies, she further notes, offer the spectators the possibility to pause a certain frame, and indulge in looking at the still image.[145] In light of Mulvey's and Berger's discourse, the female body appears to be spectacularised in filmic and photographic moments of stillness alike. The female character is thus sexualised, objectified, and placed on display for the visual consumption of the male gaze.

This discourse on the spectacularisation of the female body illustrates the imbalanced distribution of power between spectacle and spectator. Upon close inspection, this hierarchy is evidently present in the portrayals of Egyptian mummies discussed in this thesis. Mummies not only assume the hierarchical position of a female spectacle in such representations. More importantly, they are oftentimes portrayed as spectacularly-preserved dead, exotic, and female bodies, displayed particularly to satisfy an eager living, western, and male gaze. In the following two subsections, I discuss their monstrification and arteficiation in light of this discussion on spectacles and the gaze they evoke.

3.2.1 Looking at the Mummy Artefact

An archaeologist photographing a mummy is essentially claiming that their selected subject is an artefact worth studying, admiring, and looking at. Isolating the mummified body against a backdrop, lighting the staged scene, and posing it for close-ups of varying angles are exhibition decisions, similar to those regarding pedestals and display vitrines.

---

[139] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 47.

[140] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 5.

[141] Ibid., 13.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Mulvey, "The 'Pensive Spectator' Revisited," 114.

[144] Ibid., 119.

[145] Mulvey also notes that such new technologies have the potential to transform the spectators to "pensive spectators" and cinephiles, who are driven by curiosity to know more, and thus practicing in turn an intellectual spectatorship. See Mulvey, "The 'Pensive Spectator' Revisited," 121.

The mummified artefact becomes the target of contemplation; a spectacle isolated in the photographic frame. Beyond the spectacularisation that results from the photographic medium itself, another similar process takes place, due to the archaeological context in which mummies are often photographed.

A distance lies between archaeologists and their subject of study, one that is reinforced by their scientific methodology.[146] A familiar object, upon acquiring an archaeological value, becomes alien and uncanny, hence the desire to study it. Archaeology scholar Gabriel Moshenska writes, "[t]he uncanny lies in the act of digging up, not in the property of being buried."[147] While archaeological work often aims to suture the past and the present, to shed light on how the dead were once living humans with similar belongings, needs, and wants, the act of excavation and revelation involved in the archaeological process results instead in the mummies' inevitable alienation.[148] The archaeological gaze directed at their excavated bodies is thus inherently defamiliarising. Such a gaze is evidently embodied in archaeological photographs and appears to closely resemble that of looking at spectacles.

British archaeologist Michael Shanks writes that "[i]n the archaeological theatre the discovered past is the play and archaeologists the actors who work on the text producing a performance, releasing some meanings of the past for an audience."[149] The performative nature of archaeological work renders the archaeologist as the bearer of the gaze, the mummy as a spectacle, and the public as spectators. The latter identify with the archaeologist —a male dominated occupation— as a result of a widespread archaeo-appeal; a fascination with the discovery of the past and the challenges of interpreting its artefacts.[150] Further, the archaeologist assumes the position of the one directing the performance, or as Mulvey's describes; he is the active man who controls the forward progress of the narrative.[151] The photographed mummy lies thus at the centre of his theatrical photographic stage, displayed as his fascinating discovery. The mummy thus assumes the position of the female spectacle, displayed as the object of the male archaeologist's vision. She is not only figuratively possessed by his acquisitive gaze in photographs, she is also displayed for his audience. Her exotic body is photographically exhibited to be visually examined, studied, and consumed by the curious gaze of both archaeologists and their spectators.

The hierarchy between the looked at mummified body and the archaeologist looking at it is ultimately that described by Edward Said between the Orient and the West. Said

---

[146] Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas, "The Absent Present: Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past," in *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past,* ed. Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas (London: Routledge, 2001), 10.

[147] Ibid., 92.

[148] Gabriel Moshenska, "The Archaeological Uncanny," *Public Archaeology* 5, no. 2 (2006): 93.

[149] Michael Shanks, *Experiencing the Past: On the Character of Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 1992), 81.

[150] Moshenska, "The Archaeological Uncanny," 91.

[151] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 838.

writes that the learned surveying westerner looks, from a vantage point, at the passive, feminine, and supine other-ed Orient.[152] The resulting unequal power relation appears to manifest itself in how archaeologists gaze at mummies. The other-ed mummy is perceived as an eccentric, silent, weak, and feminine object of study. Her supineness and 'feminine penetrability' is embodied in how she is unable to return his invasive gaze.[153] The power of such an unrequited gaze offers him thus a voyeuristic pleasure.[154] Furthermore, the relative positioning often assumed between his standing examining posture and her lying examined exotic body strengthens this hierarchy.[155] The archaeological act of her unwrapping is but a brutal escalation of the invasiveness and penetrability of such a male western scientifically-motivated gaze, which is inevitably translated to the public through photographs.

3.2.2 Looking at the Mummy Monster

In the long line of feature mummy monster films, the plot line almost never changes. A western male archaeologist, treasure hunter, or adventurer discovers the mummy. He is shocked and disgusted upon the mummy's revivification. He then embarks on an exciting journey, that ends with killing this monster, and thus eliminating its threat. Spectators identify with this lead protagonist for multiple reasons. On the one hand, his role embodies the fascination of discovering an ancient world full of wonders, mythical curses, and buried treasures. On the other hand, the narrative unfolds around his struggles, and concludes with his ultimate success. The spectators first recognise this character as the lead protagonist, for the film is structured around his dominant, controlling figure.[156] As the story progresses, focalised from his perspective, they gain exclusive access to his intentions.[157] According to Murray Smith, by deeming his actions justifiable and ranking them on a higher moral level than those of the threatening mummy —he is, after all, saving the world— the viewers form a spectatorial 'allegiance' with him.[158] This identification process is further confirmed by the systematically repeated hierarchy between the characters; the western male protagonist acts and the exotic mummy appears. Spectators thus respond affectively to this protagonist's traits and emotions, either curiously fascinated or utterly disgusted upon looking at the mummy.[159] The latter assumes the role of the female spectacle —even when he is of the male gender— for she is visually present to be looked at as the object of vision of both the western male protagonist and his spectator.

---

[152] Said, *Orientalism*, 138.

[153] Ibid., 206.

[154] Beatrix Hesse, "Dead Bodies on Stage," Journal of Contemporary Drama in English 1, no. 1 (2013): 44.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 838.

[157] Smith, "Altered States," 41.

[158] Ibid., 42.

[159] Ibid.

The revivification of mummies itself transforms them into spectacles; turning them from merely dead bodies to uncanny revived creatures. The mummy monster film's premise is based on mummies becoming eye-catching, out of the ordinary, and uncanny spectacles. Whether portrayed in scenes unawaken in their coffins, treading slowly across the frame, or extraordinarily sucking life out of their victims, the fictional monstrified mummies are visually present on screen to shock, impress, and thus grab the attention of the spectators. Their filmic role, their monstrous attributes, and how the lead protagonist looks at them dictate their alienation and spectacularisation. They are uncanny horror creatures that are mostly displayed to elicit fear and disgust in the cinematic audience. Yet there are many instances in which they are also portrayed as sexualised female spectacles. The partially unravelled linen, double-irised eyes, and flowing hair of the 2017 female mummy monster are portrayal choices that exemplify such a display. Here the mummy monster is no longer only figuratively assuming the female spectacle and is instead sexualised for the spectator to indulge in erotic voyeurism. Her physical features are exaggerated and exoticised to overwhelm the audience, who curiously examines her displayed body.

The threat of the mummy monster spectacle is however temporary and is ultimately controlled in the film endings as the narrative proceeds and concludes. As Mulvey notes, the spectacle is allowed to threaten the narrative only insofar as it is contained once again.[160] The female character thus falls in love with the male protagonist, confirming her role as his and the spectator's possession. The inevitable death of mummies at the end of these feature films mirrors Mulvey's proposition. The mummy monster spectacle is thus a disruption of the filmic narrative, appearing briefly to entice the spectator in visual pleasures, and threatening the filmic world only temporarily. Her controllable threat offers the protagonist an opportunity to confirm once more his dominating position. In a way, each and every mummy monster film affirms at its end the superiority of modernity and the West.[161]

3.3 A Spectacle to be drawn towards

There appears to be a notion of magnetism to spectacles, which allows them to arrest the attention of the beholder.[162] According to Tom Gunning, this force can be described as a particular mode of address, which "directly solicits spectator attention, inciting visual curiosity, and supplying pleasure through an exciting spectacle" specifically a "voyeuristic

---

[160] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 840.

[161] This view has been opposed by film scholar Scott Bukatman, for it reflects an over-valuation of narratives, and neglects that there lies a pleasure in such a disruption "not simply as a trigger for its re-containment, but as something pleasurable in itself." See Bukatman, "Spectacle, Attractions and Visual Pleasure," 76.

[162] Wanda Strauven, "Introduction to an Attractive Concept," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 17.

pleasure."[163] Here, Gunning is referring to the 'cinema of attraction,' a phrase he first coined to describe a dominant category of film practice in early pre-narrative cinema, and later broadened to encompass an approach to spectatorship.[164] He focuses in his analysis on early cinema spectators, and the way in which they were visually addressed at the level of 'bodily sensations' by being presented with discontinuous visual attractions.[165] Parallels between Gunning's attractions and Mulvey's spectacles emerge despite the differences between their essays in critical perspective, method, and historical period of interest.[166] In principle, they both address the exhibitionist nature of attractions and spectacles, which favours grabbing the spectators' attention by theatrical display instead of narrative absorption.

The visual language of this mode of address is at the centre of another negative connotation often attributed with spectacles and attractions alike. They are criticised for arresting the spectator's gaze with aspects that lack any depth.[167] Certain practices of portrayal have been identified as more prone to elicit this way of seeing characterised by superficial fascination. For example, film scholar Dick Tomasovic describes how the new and prevailing Hollywood formula is primarily concerned with "the gaze (vertiginous effects, shocks of colours, speed of camera movements and editing, grandiloquence of special effects)" and the exhibited body.[168] Tomasovic suggests correlations between the drive of spectacles towards depthless pleasures and practices such as the excess of special effects.[169] He describes the latter as being employed to fasten the visually hypnotised spectators to their seats.[170] Throughout his analysis, analogies emerge between spectacles and amusement park rides, pyrotechnic shows, and fairground attractions.[171]

Further imaging practices have been identified by film scholar Mary Ann Doane — including framing, lighting, camera movement and angle— as producers of visual

---

[163] Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde," in *Early Cinema: Space Frame Narrative,* ed. Thomas Elsaesser (London: BFI Publishing, 1990), 58; Tom Gunning, "Attractions: How They Came into the World," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 37.

[164] Gunning, "Attractions," 36.

[165] Adam Lowenstein, "Living Dead: Fearful Attractions of Film," *Representations* 110, no. 1 (2010): 108; Strauven, "Introduction to an Attractive Concept," 11. Before Gunning, Soviet film director Eisenstein had written about what he termed a "montage of attractions," which is likewise an attention-grabber editing technique that resists being tamed in filmic narratives. See Bukatman, "Spectacle, Attractions and Visual Pleasure," 81.

[166] Bukatman, "Spectacle, Attractions and Visual Pleasure," 71.

[167] This view stems from a perceived dichotomy between spectacles and narratives which is backed by the latter often given attributes of depth and complexity. Some scholars have refuted this understanding of an oppositional relationship, and proposed instead that, if narrative is a spacious entity, then spectacles are its temporal component. See Simone Knox, "Eye Candy for the Blind: Re-Introducing Lyotard's Acinema into Discourses on Excess, Motion, and Spectacle in Contemporary Hollywood," *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 11, no. 3 (2013): 382.

[168] Dick Tomasovic, "The Hollywood Cobweb: New Laws of Attraction," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 312.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid.

[171] Ibid.

fascination and fetishism.[172] Close-ups, in particular, have been placed under close
scrutiny. They are theorised as defamiliarising by fragmenting the whole, as making
visible what is otherwise left unseen, and as embodying the act of presentation by
mimicking the pointing finger.[173] Both Mulvey and Gunning critically analyse close-ups in
their writings. Mulvey argues that in a close-up, the isolated woman becomes the perfect
stylised and fragmented product placed on display.[174] Gunning likewise notes how the
close-up of a lady's ankle, in a 1903 film, resulted in the audience revelling in visual
pleasure from the display offered by the novel enlargement.[175] By exploiting certain
techniques of portrayal such as the use of close-ups and excess in special effects, a
fascinated, overwhelmed gaze is invited to fixate upon the surfaces of the body on display.
Similar imaging practices appear to have been used in the portrayals of mummies in non-
fictional photographs and fictional films, accentuating the spectacular nature of their
mummified bodies. In the two following subsections, I discuss a number of cinematic and
photographic close-ups of mummies, in the context of this discussion on the superficial
mode of spectatorship that spectacles elicit.

3.3.1 The Photographic Close-Up

Archaeologists and their commissioned photographers continue to portray their human
artefacts in tight frames. Early examples are found in a 1912 catalogue of the Cairo
Museum's collection of antiquities. *The Woman "B"* is the caption of one of the
catalogue's photographic plates (fig. 9), showing a pair of close-ups of a mummified
woman in profile and frontal views. French theorist Jean Epstein hinted in his writings at
the lurking danger of a close-up, for it fragments the body by decapitating it.[176] Here, the
close-up depicts the woman's literally decapitated head. The pairing of the front and
profile views evokes a desire to capture and contemplate all aspects of her head, those
that would otherwise not be seen in a single view. In an aesthetic likeness to mugshots,
this framing strips the woman from her individuality and personhood. French
philosopher Gilles Deleuze described such close framing as effectively stripping the face of
its individuality, rendering it a subject of nudity and inhumanity.[177] By presenting the
image in a catalogue, she becomes yet another fascinating artefact, like merchandise to be
contemplated in reference to aesthetic judgments on beauty, value, and materiality.[178] The
soft, equally dispersed light directed at her head reveals the finest details of her skin, and

---

[172] Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*. 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2007), 118.

[173] Mary Ann Doane, "The Close-Up: Scale and Detail in the Cinema," *Differences* 14, no. 3 (2005): 90,91.

[174] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," 841.

[175] Gunning, "Attractions," 33.

[176] Ibid., 90.

[177] Doane, "The Close-Up," 95.

[178] Kathrin Maurer, "Archaeology as Spectacle: Heinrich Schliemann's Media of Excavation," *German Studies Review* 32, no. 2 (2009): 311.

invites the viewer to be fascinated by the accentuated texture. Preceded by another portrait of the woman, framed from the knees up, this close-up also offers an enlargement that attracts a dose of visual pleasure, for it focuses the spectator's attention on an exciting detail.[179] De-contextualised from the environment in which she has been photographed, she is visually presented in this publication to satisfy the acquisitive desires and visual curiosity of both archaeologists and their spectators.

In another two close-ups, other choices of portrayal —next to framing, sequencing, and lighting— invite spectators to indulge in visual voyeurism. The first is a close-up framed by English archaeologist and photographer Harry Burton in 1924.[180] It portrays a profile view of the detached head of the 19-year-old Tutankhamun. In this frame, his head is supported by a wooden stick, and mounted on a thick wooden plank. The second close-up is an undated photograph (fig. 10) found in the online collection of the Allard Pierson Museum. It depicts a profile view of the partial head of an unknown 18 or 19-year-old woman. Her head is placed on what appears to be a white plate, set on a blue sheet of paper laid on top of a foam board. The first common perceptible aspect of these two photographs is the visual presence of the environment in which they were taken.

Similar to the appearance of a fine hair or a speck of dust on a cinematic frame, the presence of ordinary objects, such as the plank and the plate, interrupt the photographic illusion of a duplicated real world. They point instead at the apparatus of vision, at the photographic and archaeological process, reminding the viewer of the presence of a camera and an archaeologist behind its lens. In doing so, they not only reflect the archaeological gaze as a seeing machine —looking at objects of study— they also expose it as a machine to see; an attraction in itself.[181] These two close-ups invite the curious spectator backstage, offering an opportunity to contemplate the spectacular field responsible for the discovery of these artefacts. This invitation in turn allows for a closer identification between the spectator and the archaeologist; the bearer of the gaze. The spectator thus looks at the heads as artefacts, assumes the archaeologist's position, and participates in the act of placing them on display, on the plank and on the plate.

The texture of the wooden plank, in the first close-up, visually emphasises the succession of Tutankhamun's neck bones. The darkened profile of his face falls out of sight due to insufficient lighting, while the back of his head manifests itself as a visual landscape displayed to be explored. Similarly, the rough edges of the sheet of paper and the visible circular grains of the foam board, in the second close-up, mirror the valleys and trenches on the woman's partially peeled mummified skin. Such choices of portrayal attract a gaze that never sees past the surface of the frame. And even when they hint at the

---

[179] Gunning, "Attractions," 33.

[180] Due to copyright regulations, the reproduction of this portrait is not possible in this thesis. See the Griffith Institute, "Burton Photo. No. P0810." www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/carter/gallery/p0810.html (accessed April 22, 2019)

[181] Viva Paci, "Archaeology and Spectacle: Old Dispositives and New Objects for Surprised Spectators Stopping by the Museum," in *Cine-Dispositives: Essays in Epistemology Across Media,* ed. François Albera and Maria Tortajada (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014), 380.

presence of a backstage, they instead accentuate the male western archaeologist gaze, with which spectators easily identify.

3.3.2 The Cinematic Close-Up

A notable early close-up (fig. 11) of a monstrified fictional mummy appears three times in the 1932 film *The Mummy*. In this tightly framed shot, the revived mummy's face appears first with his eyes darkened as though hollow. The eyes are then illuminated to reveal the mummy staring defiantly at the camera. The first few seconds of this close-up exemplify the force with which spectacles attract a visual fascination with surfaces. In these uncanny, silent moments –lacking any diegetic and non-diegetic sound– the spectator's eyes are compelled to wander around the geography of the face's defined wrinkles. The vulnerability of a face portrayed with eyes closed, unaware of the gaze upon it, promotes this voyeuristic way of looking. Additionally, the close-up does not correspond to the point of view of any filmic character, it therefore directly addresses the spectator. It disrupts the spatial coherence of the narrative and halts its progress in a moment of complete stillness and silence, offering a space —as Mulvey describes— for spectatorial fascination. The stark contrast, achieved by dramatic lighting, exaggerates the unnatural, piercing glow of the mummy's then illuminated eyes. The special effects employed on his eyes and the shot's direct visual address to the spectator, result in the de-familiarisation of the mummy's otherwise human-looking face.

While the above-mentioned close-up defamiliarises a mummy who closely resembles the living, a close-up (fig. 12) from the 1999 film *The Mummy* exaggerates the mummy's alienation by more direct means. It depicts the mummy's first appearance in the film as a revived monster. In this shot, the female character turns away from the camera to face the mummy, who has suddenly appeared. The latter then moves towards the camera, growling, intending to shock the spectators, in a manner similar to the first projected image of the approaching train which terrified cinema's earliest public audiences.[182] Unlike the train, the mummy stops for a second once his computer-generated skeletal body has almost fully filled the frame. In this fleeting, suspended moment, when the mummy lingers on the screen, his single eye in its socket, broken teeth, and his blue-lit shoulder bones are accentuated to elicit disgust. This shot is associated with the point of view of the female character, who acts as the bearer of the gaze between the mummy and the spectator. Her reaction thus exemplifies the appropriate affective response to such an encounter. In the following reverse shot, she screams in shock. In this close-up, the mummy is thus displayed to shock and surprise, as well as to repel the disgusted viewer with his spectacular features. These features are further accentuated by their direct opposition to the warmly-lit facial expression of the screaming woman, with her two wide open eyes and mouth full of teeth.

---

[182] Lowenstein, "Living Dead," 105.

The last cinematic close-ups I will address depict the fictional mummy's extraordinary capacity to create and direct a storm in the shape of his or her face. These computer-generated close-ups (fig. 13) have been integrated into *Universal Pictures'* last three mummy monster films, released in 1999, 2001, and 2017. In these instances, the mummy's facial expression is mirrored by the surface of a storm, threatening —in vain— to engulf the protagonists. These close-ups not only exhaust the entire cinematic frame, they also appear larger than the cinematic world. This demonstrates the paradoxical nature of the close-up; it depicts a "detail of a larger scene and [a] totality in its own right —a spectacle of scale with its own integrity."[183] In other words, these close-ups fragment the mummy's body and render its face as a detached part. At the same time, they discard that body by portraying the mummy's face as a whole in itself. The mummy's storm-face thus becomes a separate, gigantic, monstrous being; a monster within a monster. While in the previous two cinematic close-ups, the spectacularisation of mummies was an integral part of their monstrification, these close-ups duplicate this monstrification instead. They present the face as an additional spectacle in itself next to the mummy spectacle.

3.4 Conclusion

By means of de-familiarisation and alienation, the ancient Egyptian mummies are displayed as spectacles, to attract a voyeuristic mode of spectatorship. The gaze directed at their portrayal is evoked to indulge in fascination with their mummified bodies, failing in turn to see the personhood and humanity beyond their accentuated superficial features. In the discussed representations, the spectacularised mummy ultimately assumes the role of an other-ed, exotic, supine, and feminine spectacle, the threat of which is inevitably controlled by a superior, western, scientific, and male surveyor. She is thus to be visually consumed, in portrayals that deny the spectator from identifying with her even when seeing her face. The resulting superficial gaze and the visual pleasures it evokes dull critical judgment, for it pacifies the merely fascinated spectators. The accumulation of such filmic and photographic portrayals trains them to consume without reflection; to be impressed without engagement. The performative and theatrical nature of the stage on which the mummified body is displayed, domesticates the viewers and subdues their potential as active, autonomous, and emancipated thinkers. They become comfortably alienated, for they look at portrayals filtered through the screens of popular culture.[184] The mummy spectacle, in the Debordian conception of the word, depoliticises, tames, and bewitches its viewers, preventing them from reflecting on, if not opposing, these dehumanising portrayals.[185]

With this chapter, I have thus argued that the artefication and monstrification of mummies include their spectacularisation, in order to fascinate a curious public. To

---

[183] Doane, "The Close-Up," 93.

[184] Moshenska, "The Archaeological Uncanny," 98.

[185] Magnusson and Zalloua, *Spectacle,* 5.

begin, I worked to unpack the term 'spectacle' and its uses in a number of theoretical discussions. I then investigated the hierarchy between the spectator's gaze and the mummy on display, as well as the mode of address embodied by certain spectacularising imaging practices. In each of the subsections of this chapter, I identified correlations between the theories of scholars such as Laura Mulvey, John Berger, and Tom Gunning on the photographic and filmic portrayals of Egyptian mummies. In doing so, I propose that an understanding of spectacles allows for a better engagement with such portrayals. These theories offer insights into the processes at work in distancing spectators from the alienated, defamiliarised, and spectacularised mummies presented to them in museums and onscreen.

Conclusion

With this thesis, I have attempted to understand how certain ways of portraying the ancient Egyptian mummies are prone to dehumanise them. My focus has been on non-fictional archaeological photographs and fictional feature films, for they continually meet a wide audience through mass dissemination channels, which in turn shapes public gazing practices. Looking at such long lines of photographs and films has allowed me to identify recurring portrayal practices and examine how they address their spectators.

In the first chapter, I have attempted to unpack why the post-mortem gaze held upon the Egyptian mummified body in archaeological photographs differs significantly from that embodied in Victorian post-mortem photographs. I have addressed the overemphasised truth claim of archaeological photographs as traces, arguing that their evidential and scientific roles subdue their perception as subjectively framed portraits, formulated within a colonially charged context. Further, I have discussed how they act as death masks, that inevitably assist in the visual erasure of mummies, robbing them from even the chance to be imagined as having been once alive. With the photographic essay, I demonstrate how such a portrayal dehumanises the mummies, by denying them essentially human attributes and depicting them in the likeness of inanimate artefacts.

In the second chapter, I have attempted to understand why Egyptian mummies were perceived as viable candidates to enter the cinematic fictional realm of horror. I have addressed how a specific socio-political context amplified the perception of the mummified body as a threat to both the natural order and western modernity, plagued by an ephemeral material culture. By comparing the vilified mummy monsters with other fictional horror monsters, I have further addressed the problematic repercussions of such a portrayal, primarily that it impacts the encounter between the audience and the non-fictional mummy accessible to them in museums. With the filmic essay, I argue that the monstrification of mummies dehumanises them by denying them uniquely human attributes and depicting them in the likeness of animals.

I have dedicated the third chapter of this thesis to investigating the spectacularisation of mummies; a common procedure at work in the identified photographic and filmic portrayals. I have argued that such portrayals establish an imbalanced hierarchical relationship between the portrayed mummified body, which is assigned the role of a female spectacle, and the spectator's voyeuristic gaze held upon it. By discussing a number of photographic and filmic close-ups of mummies, I sought to demonstrate how certain practices of portrayal spectacularise and ultimately lead to the alienation, de-personification, and dehumanisation of the portrayed body.

On the whole, my aim has been to offer a critique of some of the continually adopted ways of portraying the Egyptian mummies, by underlining their systematic dehumanisation. I have discussed how such portrayals alienate the portrayed mummified body from the curious and fascinated spectator, which results in the proliferation of a

mummy gaze, that fails to perceive their humanness. In the photographic essay, I attempt to imagine their voices commenting on their own artefication, and in doing so protesting the way in which they have historically and incessantly been muted. With this, I hope to offer a chance to return the unrequited gaze held upon them, disrupting in turn the voyeuristic pleasure resulting from looking at their spectacularised bodies. In the filmic essay, I likewise attempt to portray them humanely, by addressing them directly in my voice-over narration as seated spectators looking at their own fictional portrayals. In doing so, I attempt to lessen the distance between them and their spectators, enticing in turn a critical reflection and engagement with the dehumanising nature of their spectacularised monstrified bodies. These are but a few of many possible approaches to portrayals that may open a space where the humanity of the ancient Egyptian mummy is re-imagined anew.

Further Research

In this thesis, I have briefly discussed some of the whys and wherefores for the proliferation of the mummy gaze; a particular way of seeing that fails to perceive the humanness of the ancient Egyptians. In her dissertation, Chelsey Patterson describes 'the post-mortem gaze' as, "a western looking practice that has the potential to result in the abjection of the body, by transforming the corpse into an object that can be manipulated for spectacle, education, and commodification."[186] A discussion of the abjection that the Egyptian mummified body is subject to —seen as an unfamiliarity that is paradoxically part of ourselves— is worthy of further research.[187] It would particularly shed more light on the motives behind the spectacularisation of mummies. On the abject, philosopher Julia Kristeva writes, "[the corpse] is something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object."[188] The mummy as an abject is cast off and rejected yet remains necessarily a part of the society that rejects it. In the mummy's exclusion and alienation, western modernity is able to construct its own identity in opposition to it.[189] It is therefore 'a foreign body,' that threatens, yet at the same time defines, what is deemed homogenous and natural.[190] Such a discussion might provide a better understanding of the dehumanisation of mummies as both an effect of their repulsion and a cause of their attraction.

Further valuable reflections would likewise emerge upon relating film scholar Laura Marks' writings on optical and haptic visuality to the nature of the fascinated gaze evoked by the spectacularising portrayal practices discussed in chapter three. Marks writes, "[h]aptic looking tends to rest on the surface of its object rather than to plunge into depth, not to distinguish form so much as to discern texture."[191] Such a way of looking invites a bodily relationship between observer and observed, characterised by visual eroticism.[192] Even though the gaze directed at the spectacularised Egyptian mummy appears similar to that described by Marks, in its fascination with surfaces and the eroticism it evokes, the mummy spectacle elicits instead an optical visuality. Looking at optical images, spectators develop a visual distance, for they are able to identify the depicted body and are fascinated by the visual optical mastery. The resulting visual eroticism characterised by voyeurism is of a different nature to that achieved by haptic images.[193] When the eyes

---

[186] Patterson, "The Postmortem Gaze," 122.

[187] Moshenska, "The Archaeological Uncanny," 95.

[188] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 4.

[189] Ibid., 9.

[190] Rina Arya, "Recovering the Sacred: The Abject Body," in *Abjection and* Representation, ed. Rina Arya (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 73.

[191] Laura Marks, "Video Haptics and Erotics," *Screen* 39, 4 (1998): 338.

[192] Ibid., 333.

[193] Marks, "Video Haptics and Erotics," 333.

function as organs of touch, an embodied perception is invited, where the spectator sees the displayed body as another skin.[194] The over-closeness of haptic images prevents the viewers from distancing themselves and demands that they give up visual control.[195] A discussion on haptically portraying the Egyptian mummy, instead of optically presenting her body to sate the spectator's voyeuristic pleasures, promises an approach to resist her visual consumption as a spectacle. It offers a chance for a non-hierarchal and ethically grounded encounter between the observed mummified body and us as observers.[196]

---

[194] Marks, "Video Haptics and Erotics," 333.

[195] Ibid., 341.

[196] Ibid., 345.

List of Figures

Fig. 1 Robinson, Henry Peach. *Fading Away*. 1858. Albumen Print. New York, George Eastman House.

Fig. 2 Anonymous. *Daughter Seated in Chair*. ca. 1844. Daguerreotype. In *Sleeping Beauty: Memorial Photography in America* (Indiana: Twelvetrees Press, 1990), Plate 27.

Fig. 3.1 [Left] Brugsch, Emile. *La Momie De Ramsés II. La Tête vue de Face.* In Les Momies Royales de Deir El-Bahari / G. Maspero. Paris, Members of the French Archaeological Mission in Cairo, 1889, plate XV.

Fig. 3.2 [Right] Brugsch, Emile. *La Momie De Ramsés II. La Tête vue de Profil.* In Les Momies Royales de Deir El-Bahari / G. Maspero. Paris, Members of the French Archaeological Mission in Cairo, 1889, plate XVI.
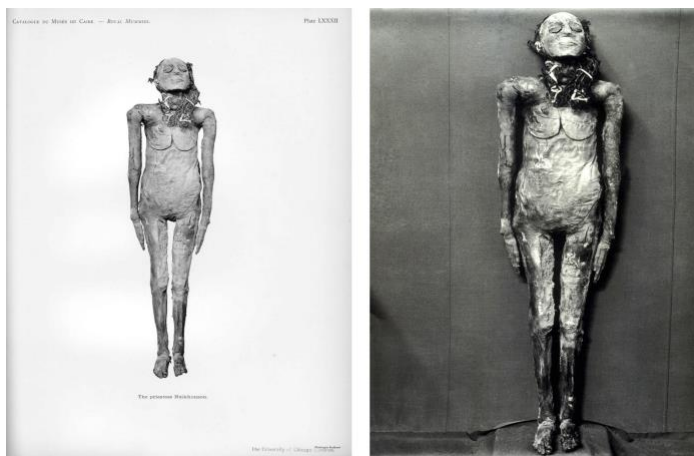

Fig. 4.1 [Left] Brugsch, Emile. *The Priestess Nsikhonsou.* In Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: The Royal Mummies. Cairo, The French Institute of Oriental Archaeology Press, 1912, plate LXXXII.

Fig. 4.2 [Right] Landmann, Patrick/Cairo Museum/Getty Images. *Egypt's Mummies.* Getty Images News. http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/76146783

Fig. 5 Robertson, Étienne-Gaspard. *Fantasmagorie de Robertson dans la Cour des Capucines en* 1797. In
Mémoires Récréatifs Scientifiques et Anecdotiques. Paris, Imprimerie de Rignous, 1831.

Fig. 6 Still from *The Mummy.* Directed by Thanhouser Company. Motion Picture Distributing and Sales
Company, 1911.

Fig. 7 Still from *Egyptian Melodies*. Directed by Wilfred Jackson. California: Columbia Pictures, 1931.

Fig. 8 Still from *The Mummy*. Directed by Karl Freund. California: Universal Studios, 1932.

Fig. 9 Brugsch, Émile. *The Woman "B."* In Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire:
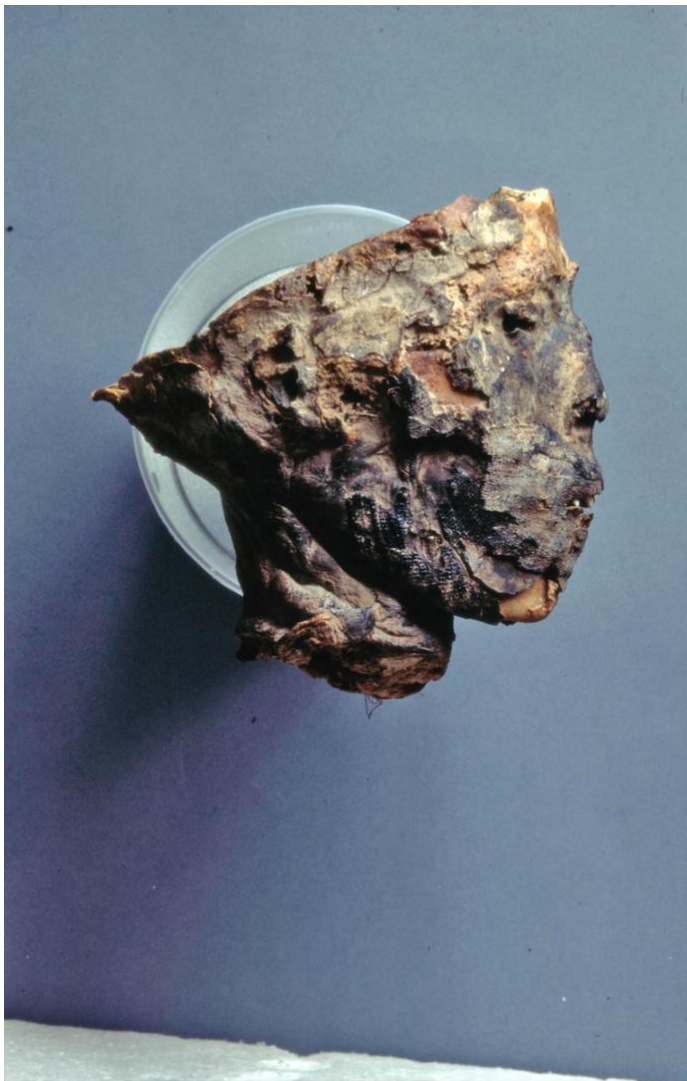   The Royal Mummies. Cairo, The French Institute of Oriental Archaeology Press, 1912, plate X.

Fig. 10 Anonymous. *Mummiekop*. Date Unknown. Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam,
hdl.handle.net/11245/3.1963

Fig. 11 Still from *The Mummy*. Directed by Karl Freund. California: Universal Studios, 1932.

Fig. 12 Still from *The Mummy*. Directed by Stephen Sommers. California: Universal Pictures, 1999.

Fig. 13.1 [Top] Still from *The Mummy*. Directed by Stephen Sommers. California: Universal Pictures, 1999.
Fig. 13.2 [Middle] Still from *The Mummy Returns*. Directed by Stephen Sommers. California: Universal Pictures, 2001.
Fig. 13.3 [Bottom] Still from *The Mummy*. Directed by Alex Kurtzman. California: Universal Pictures, 2017.

Bibliography

Arago, Dominique F. "Report." In *Classic Essays on Photography*, edited by Alan Trachtenberg. New Haven: Connecticut, 1980.

Arya, Rina. "Recovering the Sacred: The Abject Body." In *Abjection and* Representation, edited by Rina Arya, 63-81. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Baird, Jennifer A. "Framing the Past: Situating the Archaeological in Photographs." *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies 26,* no. 2 (2017): 165-186.

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida.* London: Vintage Books, 2000.

Bazin, André. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image." In *What is Cinema?*, edited by André Bazin, 9-16. California: University of California Press, 1967.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books, 1973.

Bergstein, Mary. "Freud's Egyptian Photographs: Scenes from a Library." *Visual Resources* 26, no. 3 (2010): 274-288.

Briefel, Aviva. "Hands of Beauty, Hands of Horror: Fear and Egyptian Art at the Fin de Siècle." *Victorian Studies* 50, no. 2 (2008): 263-271.

Brown, Tom. "Spectacle/Gender/History: The Case of Gone with the Wind." *Screen* 49, no.2 (2008): 157-178.

Buchli, Victor and Lucas, Gavin. "The Absent Present: Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past." In *Archaeologies of the Contemporary Past,* edited by Victor Buchli and Gavin Lucas, 3-18. London: Routledge, 2001.

Buck-Morss, Susan. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989.

Bukatman, Scott. "Spectacle, Attractions and Visual Pleasure." In *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* edited by Wanda Strauven, 71-82. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

Butler, Judith. "Torture and the Ethics of Photography." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 6 (2007): 951-966.

Cadava, Eduardo. "Lapsus Imaginis: The Image in Ruins." *October* 96 (2001): 35-60.

Carroll, Noël E. *The Philosophy of Horror, or Paradoxes of the Heart.* New York: Routledge, 1990.

Colla, Elliott. *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity.* USA: Duke University Press. 2007.

Damisch, Hubert. "Five Notes for A Phenomenology of the Photographic Image." In *The Photography Reader,* edited by Liz Wells, 87-89. London: Routledge, 2003.

Day, Jasmine. "'Thinking makes it so': Reflections on the Ethics of Displaying Egyptian Mummies." *Papers on Anthropology* 23, no. 1 (2014): 29-44.

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

Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle.* New York: Zone Books, 1995.

Doane, Mary Ann. "The Close-Up: Scale and Detail in the Cinema." *Differences* 14, no. 3 (2005): 89-111.

Freeman, Richard. "The Mummy in Context." *European journal of American studies* [Online] 4, no. 1 (2009): 1-13.

Galbussera, Giorgio, Caws, Mary Ann, Lombardi, Giancarlo, and Paulicelli, Eugenia. "The Movie Men: The Male Body as Spectacle in European Cinema." ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2011.

Gunning, Tom. "Attractions: How They Came into the World." In *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* edited by Wanda Strauven, 31-39. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attraction[s]: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde." In *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, edited by Wanda Strauven, 381-388. Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

Gunning, Tom. "What's the Point of an Index? or, Faking Photographs." *Nordicom Review* 5 no. 1/2 (2004): 39-49.

Haslam, Nick. "Dehumanization: An integrative review." *Personality and Social Psychology Review: An Official Journal of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Inc.* 10, no. 3 (2006): 252-264.

Hesse, Beatrix. "Dead Bodies on Stage," *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English* 1, no. 1 (2013): 43-53.

Joshi, S. T. eds. *Icons of Horror and the Supernatural [Two Volumes]*. Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006.

Kaplan, Louis. "Photograph/Death Mask: Jean-Luc Nancy's Recasting of the Photographic Image." *Journal of Visual Culture* 9, no. 1 (2010): 45-62.

King, Geoff. *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

Knox, Simone. "Eye Candy for the Blind: Re-Introducing Lyotard's Acinema into Discourses on Excess, Motion, and Spectacle in Contemporary Hollywood." *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 11, no. 3 (2013): 374-389.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

Lant, Antonia. "The Curse of the Pharaoh, or How Cinema Contracted Egyptomania." *October* 59 (1992): 86-112.

Lavik, Erlend. "The Battle for the Blockbuster: Discourses of Spectacle and Excess." *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 6, no. 2 (2008): 169-187.

Lewis, Leslie Ann and Curtis, Scott. "Trading in Withered Flesh: Mummies, Movies and Modernity." ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2006.

Linkman, Audrey. *Photography and Death*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2011.

Lowenstein, Adam. "Living Dead: Fearful Attractions of Film." *Representations* 110, no. 1 (2010):

Magnusson, Bruce and Zalloua, Zahi. *Spectacle*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016.

Mallipeddi, Ramesh. "Spectacle, Spectatorship, and Sympathy in Aphra Behn's Oroonoko." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 45, no. 4 (2012): 475-496.

Marks, Laura. "Video Haptics and Erotics." *Screen* 39, no. 4 (1998): 331-348.

Maurer, Kathrin. "Archaeology as Spectacle: Heinrich Schliemann's Media of Excavation." *German Studies Review* 32, no. 2 (2009): 303-317.

Metz, Christian. "Photography and Fetish." In *The Photography Reader,* edited by Liz Wells, 138-146. London: Routledge, 2003.

Michelakis, Pantelis. "Spectatorship." In *Greek Tragedy on Screen*, edited by Pantelis Michelakis, 14-34. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Moshenska, Gabriel. "The Archaeological Uncanny." *Public Archaeology* 5, no. 2 (2006): 91-99.

Mulvey, Laura. "The 'Pensive Spectator' Revisited: Time and Its Passing in the Still and Moving Image." In *Where is the Photograph?,* edited by David Green: 113-122. Brighton: Photoforum and Photoworks, 2003.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings,* edited by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, 833-844. New York: Oxford UP, 1999.

Neale, Steve. "Triumph of the Will: Notes on Documentary and Spectacle." *Screen* 20, no.1 (1979): 63-86.

Paci, Viva. "Archaeology and Spectacle: Old Dispositives and New Objects for Surprised Spectators Stopping by the Museum." In *Cine-Dispositives: Essays in Epistemology Across Media,* edited by François Albera and Maria Tortajada: 379-392. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014.

Paris, Elizabeth, Shere, Scott, Eckmann, Teresa, and Wiersema, Juliet. "Suspension of Grief (And Disbelief): The Evolution of Postmortem Photography in Nineteenth Century America." ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2015.

Patterson, Chelsey, Hum, Sue, Colombini, Crystal, Fleckenstein, Kristie, and Kasper, Catherine. "The Postmortem Gaze: Material Rhetoric and Viewing Practices of the Transgressive Body." ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 2015.

Rector, John M. *The Objectification Spectrum: Understanding and Transcending Our Diminishment and Dehumanisation of Others*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Riggs, Christina. "Beautiful Burials, Beautiful Skulls: The Aesthetics of the Egyptian Mummy." *British Journal of Aesthetics* 56, no. 3 (2016): 247-263.

Riggs, Christina. "Colonial Visions." *Museum Worlds* 1, no. 1 (2013): 65-84.

Riggs, Christina. "Objects in the Photographic Archive: Between the field and the Museum in Egyptian Archaeology." Unpublished manuscript, 2017.

Riggs, Christina. "Shouldering the Past: Photography, Archaeology, and Collective Effort at the Tomb of Tutankamun." *History of Science* 55 no. 3 (2017): 336-363.

Rose, Gillian. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*. 2nd ed. London: Sage, 2007.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

Shanks, Michael. *Experiencing the Past: On the Character of Archaeology*. London: Routledge, 1992.

Smith, Murray. "Altered States: Character and Emotional Response in the Cinema." *Cinema Journal* 33, no. 4 (1994): 34-56.

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. London: Penguin Books, 2002.

Stewart, Garrett and Freedman, James O. *Between Film and Screen: Modernism's Photo Synthesis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Stienne, Angela. "Encountering Egyptian Mummies, 1753-1858." Doctoral Dissertation, School of Museum Studies, 2018.

Strauven, Wanda. "Introduction to an Attractive Concept." In *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* edited by Wanda Strauven, 11-27. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

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

Tomasovic, Dick. "The Hollywood Cobweb: New Laws of Attraction." In *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded,* edited by Wanda Strauven, 309-320. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

Trachtenberg, Alan. *Classic Essays on Photography*. New Haven, Conn: Leete's Insland Books, 1980.

Walters, Suzanna D. "Visual Pressures: On Gender and Looking." In *Material Girls: Making Sense of Feminist Cultural Theory,* edited by Suzanna D. Walters, 50-66. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1995.

Weakland, John H. "Feature Films as Cultural Documents." In *Principles of Visual Anthropology,* edited by Paul Hockings, 45-67. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2003.

Wollen, Peter. "Fire and Ice." In *The Cinematic,* edited by David Campany, 108-113. London/Cambridge MA, Whitechapel/MIT, 2007.