

# The Fiction of Gothic Egypt and British Imperial Paranoia: The Curse of the Suez Canal

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“Ah, my nineteenth-century friend, your father stole me from the land of my birth, and from the resting place the gods decreed for me; but beware, for retribution is pursuing you, and is even now close upon your heels.” —Guy Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 1899

What of this piercing of the sands?  
What of this union of the seas?...  
What good or ill from LESSEPS' cut  
Eastward and Westward shall proceed?

—“Latest—From the Sphinx,” *Punch*, 57 (27 November 1869), 210

IN 1859 FERDINAND DE LESSEPS began his great endeavour to sunder the isthmus of Suez and connect the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, the Occident with the Orient, simultaneously altering the geography of the earth and irrevocably upsetting the precarious global balance of power. Ten years later the eyes of the world were upon Egypt as the Suez Canal was inaugurated amidst extravagant Franco-Egyptian celebrations in which a glittering cast of international dignitaries participated. That the opening of the canal would be momentous was acknowledged at the time, though the nature of its impact was a matter for speculation, as the question posed above by *Punch* implies. While its codevelopers France and Egypt pinned great hopes on the canal, Britain was understandably suspicious of an endeavor that could potentially undermine its global imperial dominance—it would bring India nearer, but also make it more vulnerable to rival powers. The inauguration celebrations were thus followed closely in Britain, the journalistic coverage characterised by speculation about the canal's effect on empire, with *Punch's* verse exemplifying the pessimistic view.<sup>1</sup> This nineteenth-century version of the riddle of the Sphinx ponders the likelihood of ensuing profit or loss, war or peace, ominously concluding:

“We know what seas the work unites, who knows what sovereigns it divides.”<sup>2</sup> As political and economic speculation proliferated, popular authors, ever attuned to the chords of societal unease and their pecuniary potential, turned in large numbers to the gothic as a suitable medium for the treatment of fears concerning the consequences of the canal for Britain. And if an answer to *Punch’s* riddle was sought in the libraries of contemporary British popular fiction, the inescapable conclusion would be that grievous ill alone would proceed westward through Lesseps’s cut from the land of the Pharaohs to the lands of those who interfered in the affairs of modern Egypt.

Despite Britain’s initial wariness, the canal quickly became the life-line of the British Empire, and the Egyptian territory adjacent to Suez became pivotally important in international relations. To protect its access to the vital waterway, Britain unofficially occupied Egypt in 1882, and the unstable status of Egypt following this quickly became a source of ongoing dispute with both emerging Egyptian Islamic-nationalist groups and the other European powers. The burning issue of Britain’s ambiguous relationship with Egypt became popularly known as “the Egyptian Question,” a recurrent plague to British foreign policy over the ensuing decades. Given Edward Said’s assertions of the broad constitutive effect of the imperial project upon British society, of the reciprocity between the development of imperialism and the novel,<sup>3</sup> it follows that an issue as fraught as the Egyptian Question could not have been without an effect of its own. Other literary critics have observed the tendency for doubts and fears concerning the imperial project to be gothicized and addressed through the medium of popular fiction.<sup>4</sup> And indeed, contemporaneously with developments in Anglo-Egyptian politics, a subgenre of Egyptian-themed gothic fiction began to grow in popularity, within which concerns over the Egyptian situation tended to find fictional expression in the form of the supernatural invader.<sup>5</sup>

This article aims to elucidate the reciprocal relationship between problems arising from British colonial policy in Egypt following the opening of the Suez Canal and the development of this paranoid subgenre of popular fiction. From 1869 when the canal opened, gaining further momentum after the 1882 occupation, numerous tales positing the irruption of vengeful, supernatural, ancient Egyptian forces in civilised, rational, modern England began to appear. The most extreme of these is Guy Boothby’s narrative of retributive mass extermination, *Pharos the Egyptian* (1899); other notable examples include Bram Stoker’s *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903) and Richard Marsh’s *The Bee-*

*tle* (1897). The theme also recurs in certain of Arthur Conan Doyle's short stories such as "Lot No. 249" (1892), and in copious lesser-known works, such as K. and H. Prichard's "The Story of Baelbrow" (1898)—all indicating that the significance of the Egyptian Question was not lost on popular authors or their audiences. The typical plot turns upon modern English trespass into an ancient Egyptian tomb, the misappropriation and removal of a mummy or its artifacts back to England, and the unleashing of a curse which sees an ancient supernatural invader exacting revenge in the heart of the imperial metropolis. A contrapuntal analysis reveals that these plots are almost invariably supported by a framework of references to the unstable political situation in modern Egypt that would have been unmistakable to the newspaper-literate contemporary reader. Though the period in question in Egypt, especially under the General Consulship of Lord Cromer (1883–1907), is characterised as one of relative peace, in fact it was a turbulent time, as was manifest in England via newspaper reportage and recurrent parliamentary debates on the Egyptian Question. Given this geopolitical contextual framework, these narratives of ancient Egyptian curses can be read as symbolic of both the powerful desire for full control of the Suez Canal, and the corollary dread of losing access to it. As this interpretation runs somewhat counter to the received understanding of Anglo-Egyptian history in the prewar period, a closer look at events following the opening of the canal will provide a starting point.

### **The Imperial Spinal Cord & the Arousal of Ancient Egypt**

By the time of the occupation in 1882, German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck viscerally summed up the relationship between Egypt and the British Empire: "Egypt is of the utmost importance to England on account of the Suez Canal, the shortest line of communication between the eastern and western halves of the Empire. That is like the spinal cord which connects the backbone with the brain."<sup>6</sup> Amongst his grounds for such a claim were that within just five years of its opening, three-quarters of the shipping passing through the Suez Canal was British, since it halved the distance to India, reducing the journey time to just four weeks.<sup>7</sup> Eric Hobsbawm stresses the key role played by India in the British economy in this period and the corresponding criticality of controlling sea routes to it.<sup>8</sup> Hence despite passing up earlier opportunities, when the hard-pressed Khedive (sovereign) of Egypt required ready finances in 1875, British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli had seized the chance to obtain a controlling share in the Canal Company, triumphantly declaring to Queen Victoria: "you have

it, Madam!”<sup>9</sup> Disraeli’s comment on how fraught the negotiations had been displays the growing imperial paranoia concerning access: had he failed, “the whole of the Suez Canal would have belonged to the French, and they might have shut it up!”<sup>10</sup> *The Times* was more equivocal about Disraeli’s purchase, prophetically observing it would draw Britain inextricably into Egyptian affairs for good or ill.<sup>11</sup> Analysing this early sentiment towards the canal, Emily Haddad observes “the rhetorical convergence of the canal with British interests well before Egypt comes consistently or officially within Britain’s sphere of influence.”<sup>12</sup> And it was this rhetorical convergence, and corresponding sense of vulnerability, that popular authors were responding to with their accounts of Egyptian unease.

Despite their controlling shareholding, British access to the canal remained vulnerable as continued foreign interference in Egypt provoked a proto-nationalist uprising in 1881 which established a provisional government. Led by Colonel Ahmed Urabi, the *al-hizb al-watani* (patriotic or nationalist faction) “were opposed to the control of Egypt by foreigners, whether Turkish or European.”<sup>13</sup> The “rebel” Urabi himself (better known to the British as Arabi Pasha) was “an impressive Egyptian colonel [with] a magnetic personality and great oratorical power,” who would have a lasting effect on the popular imagination, both British and Egyptian.<sup>14</sup> Continuing volatility forced Disraeli’s successor, William Gladstone, to recognise that intervention was necessary to protect British access to the Suez Canal, or as *Punch* put it, “just now the question that mainly concerns England is not the Porte’s Suzerainty [the Ottoman Empire’s nominal claim to Egypt], but whether ... we are to have the Suez-erainty...”<sup>15</sup> Hence Britain invaded and occupied Egypt on the pretext of restoring the Khedive but with the real intent to “safeguard the route to India and the Far East through the Suez Canal,” which it seized.<sup>16</sup>

Though the British campaign under General Garnet Wolseley was swift and effective, routing Urabi’s forces in just eight weeks, nonetheless Wolseley’s staff officer, who must have had a romantic turn of mind, warned against hubris seeing portents of future British downfall as Egypt “has ever played a strange part in the destiny of empires.”<sup>17</sup> This superstitious prognostication is indicative of the tendency to gothicize the Egyptian situation that was also at work in supernatural Egyptian fiction. Something of this gothic imaginary is conveyed by a pertinent *Punch* cartoon of John Bull wrestling a gigantic crocodile labelled Egypt, little aided by the French emperor (Fig. 1). While this rep-

resentation of Egyptian monstrosity is not supernatural, it is certainly bestial and menacing, published at the height of the Urabi regime just before Britain felt compelled to invade.<sup>18</sup> The significance of the military occupation of Egypt, which gave Britain de facto control of this

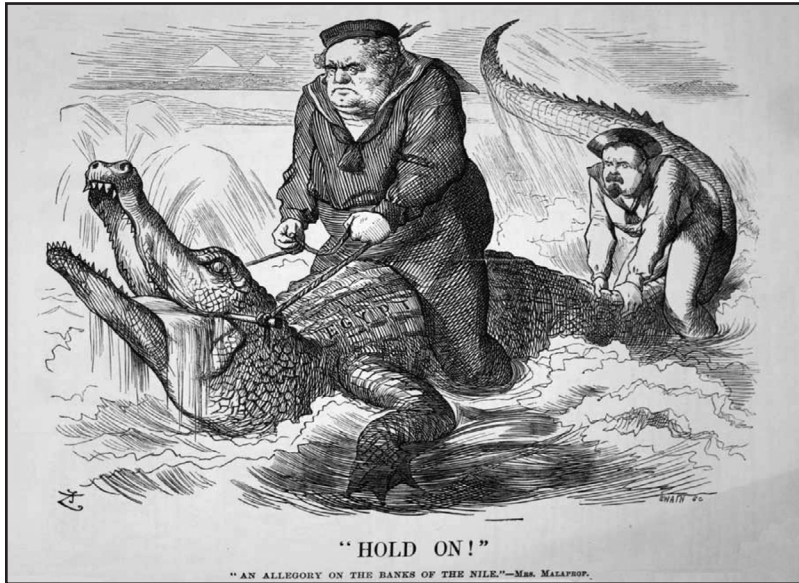


Fig. 1 “Hold on!”: ‘An allegory on the banks of the Nile’—Mrs. Malaprop.”

*Punch*, 82 (10 June 1882), 271

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strategic location, should not be underestimated. Paul Hayes considers it to be “the most important single act in British foreign policy in this period”; it secured vital access to the Suez Canal but incurred the major resentment of France and Russia.<sup>19</sup> Piers Brendon similarly holds that it helped precipitate the imminent scramble for African territory during which European colonial rivalries reached dangerous new heights.<sup>20</sup> This colonial enmity meant that Britain’s seizure of Egypt did not have the simple *force-majeure* legitimacy of uncontested colonial annexation. As Anshuman Mondal puts it, “Egypt’s pivotal position in the wider field of international relations, its importance as a pawn in the political game of chess being played in Europe ... between the major powers,” prevented its straightforward incorporation into the empire.<sup>21</sup> However this very criticality meant it could not be lightly abandoned. Debate between permanent settlement versus military

withdrawal raged. Certainly Gladstone never intended a long-term occupation, rightly fearing that interest in the canal would lead Britain to colonise troublesome surrounding territories in Africa, “all in the name of defence.”<sup>22</sup> But, as many historians have noted, no opportune moment for withdrawal ever seemed to present itself, and Britain retained a controlling presence in Egypt up to 1956.

From immediately after the occupation into the late 1890s when Boothby was writing *Pharos the Egyptian*, the question of Egypt’s status was an ongoing source of national and international controversy. More significant even than the reality of the political difficulties Egypt posed to the British Empire was the intensity of anxiety these engendered, the sensation of “living in an atmosphere of permanent crisis.”<sup>23</sup> Concern over Egypt seemed to become a focal point for late-nineteenth-century imperial paranoia, with the canal lodged in the imperial psyche as the spinal cord of empire and correspondingly its weakest point. Sever the cord and the empire would be effectively paralysed:

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Suez Canal had become the fulcrum of the British Empire.... As the volume of trade increased, the British government began to treat the canal as the most vital, and most vulnerable, point in the whole empire.... British officials were so concerned about the possibility of Suez’s falling into hostile hands that they justified expansion into Afghanistan,... East Africa,... Iran and the Middle East. The logic, however tenuous, was that if adversaries such as Russia, Germany, or France controlled any of these regions, they would be able to threaten the Suez Canal, and if they seized the canal, then the entire British Empire could be severed and dismembered.<sup>24</sup>

As Zachary Karabell’s analysis stresses, however implausible, even the most remote threats to the canal generated disproportionate concern because of its criticality to the well-being of the empire. Writing of his travels in Egypt in 1898, the year *Pharos the Egyptian* was serialised, the prominent *Daily Mail* war correspondent G. W. Steevens aptly sums up the general sentiment towards Suez: “I did see the famous Canal.... Never, I suppose, has any single work of man upset the balance of the world like the Suez Canal; it has made and unmade men, cities, nations.”<sup>25</sup>

At various points throughout the 1890s, particularly for leverage during clashes over Africa, the other European powers threatened to challenge Britain’s dubious status in Egypt. A satirical cartoon, printed in October 1897 while Boothby may have been contemplating his Egyptian novel, shows how current the Egyptian Question was (Fig. 2). It was a running concern in the *African Review* which noted Gladstone’s



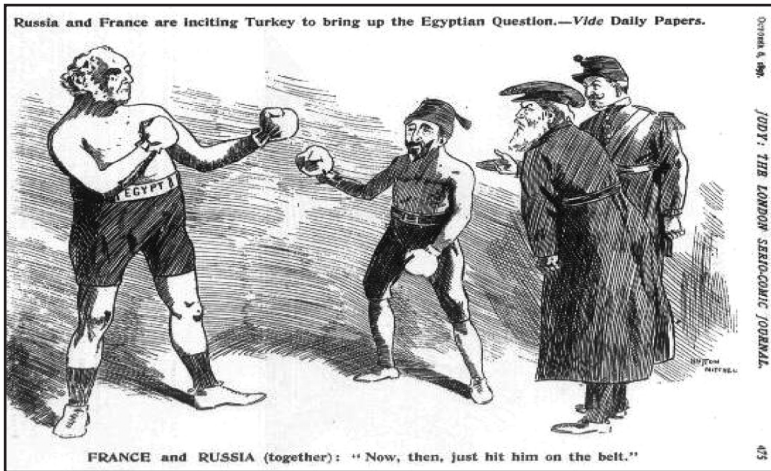


Fig. 2 “Russia and France are inciting Turkey to bring up the Egyptian Question.”

*Judy*, 1589 (6 October 1897), 475

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and John Morley’s observation “that the occupation of Egypt poisoned our foreign policy and lay at the root of all the difficulties which concerned us in the world.”<sup>26</sup> According to Viscount Milner, who served in Lord Cromer’s administration in the 1880s, “Everything ... seemed to be going wrong at one and the same time. Alike in military matters, in diplomacy, and in politics, Great Britain was simply haunted by the Egyptian Question.”<sup>27</sup> Like Wolseley’s staff officer, he seems driven to the use of supernatural imagery to find a suitable terminology to express the gravity of the Egyptian problem, and it is in this fraught historical milieu that the gothic tales of restless ancient Egyptians emerge.

The earliest fictional narratives engaging with ancient Egypt predate the ramping up of late-nineteenth-century colonial activity, having their roots in the cultural fascination with Egypt stimulated by Napoleon’s 1798 expedition. Tales featuring mummies made periodical appearances throughout the mid-nineteenth century in conjunction with the famous Belzoni exhibitions and the fad for mummy unwrapping; however they tended to be fanciful or satirical with little intimation of retribution.<sup>28</sup> In the late 1860s, the number of Egyptian-themed tales in the literary magazines began to grow and the notion of curses and retributive invasion started to take hold. The first known curse tale published in an English magazine, “Lost in a Pyramid” (sometimes

subtitled “or, The Mummy’s Curse”), appeared in 1869, the year the Suez Canal opened.<sup>29</sup> It follows the basic plot structure of misappropriation of tomb artifacts with fatal consequences following the protagonist home and features the explicit warning “beware of the Mummy’s Curse.”<sup>30</sup> Though it was a reprint of a tale published earlier that year in America, its appearance coincides with a number of tales starting to posit the negative consequences of tomb exploration in the late 1860s, just as work on the Suez Canal neared completion and the hype leading up to its opening mounted. These include “An Egyptian Ghost Story” (1863), which features a supposedly haunted tomb in a Coptic monastery, and mentions “the sacrilegious hand of Frankish spoilers of ... Egyptian mummies”; “In the Sepulchre” (1868), a Poe-ian revenge in which a thwarted English suitor mummifies and abandons his rival in an ancient Egyptian tomb; and “A Night with King Pharaoh” (1869), which sees a party of English tourists trapped in a pharaoh’s tomb and left for dead by their treacherous Arab guides, the political context acknowledged in a reference to the topicality of “the prophecies about Egypt and the future of the Turk.”<sup>31</sup>

These protocurse tales were followed by scores of supernatural Egyptian stories in the early 1880s after the occupation of Egypt; they persisted into the 1890s and early twentieth century as the Egyptian Question continued to rage. Previous estimates of the numbers published are conservative: Nicholas Daly, for instance, estimates that “Between 1880 and 1914, more than a dozen mummy narratives appear.”<sup>32</sup> However, improved digital access to periodical archives shows that between 1860 and 1914 dozens, perhaps more than a hundred, of these stories were published. Given the correspondence between their dates and significant events in Egypt, it is reasonable to assert that the writers of popular fiction were responding to these events—speculating upon and sensationalising their possible consequences. In an influential genealogy of the concept of the mummy’s curse, Roger Luckhurst suggests that it is part of what he delineates as an “Egyptian Gothic”: “a cultural formation that emerged and permeated popular culture from the 1880s to the 1930s,” not just a literature, but “a set of beliefs or knowledges in a loosely occult framework,” developed both in response to the emerging academic discipline of Egyptology and to the Egyptian Question.<sup>33</sup> Though as Jasmine Day shows, Western culture had been exposed via the medieval *mumia* trade to Arabic lore in which “*Jinn* spirits were believed to guard the treasures in Egyptian tombs,” she attributes the prevalence of the mummy’s curse in late-



nineteenth-century culture to societal guilt at the intrusive practices of European archaeologists.<sup>34</sup> More specifically, Luckhurst's pursuit of the curse in the form of rumour through *fin-de-siècle* London reveals significant imperial aspects to each of the major versions, drawing a direct line between the myth's currency and the postoccupation politics of the Egyptian Question.<sup>35</sup> However, the presence of the vengeance theme in the tales of the 1860s suggests that its initial impetus was the geopolitical upheaval occasioned by the advent of the Suez Canal, albeit one that greatly increased following the occupation. This allows a link to be fashioned between the opening of the canal and the genesis of the gothic subgenre of supernatural Egyptian invasion.

In many of these tales the vengeful supernatural invader takes the form of the revived mummy. This is not always the case, though, and representations of intrusive Egyptian alterity vary. In *Pharos the Egyptian* it is unclear whether the antagonist is a mummy or a reincarnation; and the villain of the most popular supernatural Egyptian tale, *The Beetle*, is one of the most loosely defined creatures in *fin-de-siècle* gothic—not a mummy, but rather some type of demonic scarab incarnation. “The Story of Baelbrow” features a curious hybrid—an English ghost that possesses an Egyptian mummy in order to wreak vengeance.<sup>36</sup> “Lot No. 249” features the form that would become iconic in twentieth-century cinema, the reanimated, bandaged corpse—in this case wielded in a vendetta against unsuspecting Oxford University students.<sup>37</sup> Despite the prevalence of the trope of the vengeful invader and its successful translation to the medium of film, many supernatural Egyptian tales included a less-enduring romantic element in which an encounter between a beautiful female mummy and some variety of imperial Englishman awakes an eternal but ultimately doomed passion. Notable mummy romances are considered to include Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars* and H. D. Everett's *Iras: A Mystery* (1896). While it is not a widely theorised body of work, much of the criticism that supernatural Egyptian fiction has attracted differentiates the mummy romance from the curse tale, subdividing the theme into two separate strands and focusing upon the female mummy of the romance strand. Daly makes this distinction in his interpretation of the *fin-de-siècle* mummy tale as a “narrativized commodity theory,” contending that the majority of the mummies fall into the romantic category which allows their reading as commodity objects.<sup>38</sup> Day holds that in the late nineteenth century “romantic visions of mummies competed with sinister legends of curses,” both of which narrative strands she relates to the es-

calating European archaeological exploitation of Egypt.<sup>39</sup> And Bradley Deane maintains that “the typical mummy of Victorian and Edwardian fiction is a woman ... who, perfectly preserved in her youthful beauty, strongly attracts the libidinous attention of modern British men.”<sup>40</sup> He then draws an interesting analogy between the female mummy as an alluring, veiled oriental woman representative of Egypt and the status of occupied Egypt as an unofficial or “veiled” British protectorate. Though Deane’s analysis tends to overlook the implications of the trope of the curse and the vengeful invader, it is pertinent because in interpreting the mummy romance as the dominant fictional response to the Egyptian Question it foregrounds the distinct connection between supernatural Egyptian fiction and Anglo-Egyptian politics.

While claims for the predominance of the mummy romance might seem to challenge reading the vengeful supernatural invader as the embodiment of imperial paranoia concerning the Suez Canal, there are many reasons why this need not be the case. The most straightforward is that, as the following analysis of a significant amount of recently unearthed Egyptian fiction reveals, curse tales actually outnumber romances by a factor of about two to one. Though more of the tales feature female mummies, a significant proportion of these are unambiguous curse narratives with no suggestions of the female mummy as anything other than hostile and vengeful. These include “Lost in a Pyramid” and even lesser-known tales such as “The Egyptian Amulet” (1881) in which a cursed ring causes an American girl to be temporarily possessed by a female mummy; “The Curse of Vasartas” (1889) in which a curse activated when a female mummy is brought to England has fatal consequences until the mummy is re-interred; and “At the Pyramid of the Sacred Bulls” (1896) in which English looters who unwrap and revive a female mummy are subsequently murdered by an Arab sheikh.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, of the tales that eroticise the female mummy, many additionally associate varying degrees of threat either directly or indirectly with the romantic object. This category includes *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, which turns upon the fatally cursed attempt of a team of English professionals to resurrect the Sorceress-Queen Tera and contains only the most indirect and problematic suggestions of romance; and *Iras: A Mystery* in which the romance between an English Egyptologist and the revived princess Iras is doomed from the outset by a curse which pursues the ill-fated lovers across England.<sup>42</sup> Finally, in the very rare cases where threat to the representatives of empire is largely absent, none of the romances ever produce satisfactory or sus-

tainable unions. Doyle's "The Ring of Thoth" (1890) is a classic instance of this type: filled with "grief and horror," its atypically unvengeful ancient priest Sosra wishes only for death to release him from "ineffable despair" so he can rejoin his long-dead love whose mummy he has tracked to the Louvre.<sup>43</sup> Though still beautiful when initially unwrapped, the mummy is denied even temporary revivification by the relentlessly grim plot logic; instead the tale, suffused with a sense of the decline of Egyptian civilisation, ends in tragic mode with Sosra clasped in a death embrace with the now-corrupted mummy.

Taken together, these observations imply that rather than dividing supernatural Egyptian fiction into two separate strands, it should instead be considered a single body of work traversing a spectrum of sentiment about Egypt, ranging from fear to desire. While there are plenty of tales at one end of the spectrum that could be considered pure curse tales, none yet emerge that could be considered pure romances—even in the sense of merely holding out the sustained possibility of a positive outcome.<sup>44</sup> This prompts the suggestion that the curse trope, with its sense of inexorable doom, essentially underpins all of these tales from the violent revenges to the ill-fated romances, giving the genre a unifying structure, and relating it to broader imperial anxieties about decline and fall. When the criticality of the Suez Canal to the British imperial project is applied to this analysis, it sheds further light on the late-nineteenth-century narrative fascination with intrusive ancient Egyptians, suggesting that the spectrum of representations can be interpreted as complementary responses to the potential consequences of Britain possessing the canal—great promise and grave peril. While political threats that could sever the imperial lifeline found expression in curse form, the allure of Egypt's ancient treasure, colonial resources, and strategic position circulated as the desirable object of the mummy romance. Thus the vengeful supernatural invader suggests the imperial nightmare of barbarians at the gates, while the eroticised female mummy holds out the tantalising prospect of secure empire. In presenting this argument for a unified interpretation of supernatural Egyptian fiction, it is important to state, along the lines of Said's preamble to his postcolonial reading of *Mansfield Park*,<sup>45</sup> that it in no way precludes other readings of mummy fiction. It claims not that supernatural Egyptian fiction emerged solely as a response to the geopolitics of empire, but rather views it as strongly implicated in the pressing imperial questions of the day.

## The Unruly Connotations of Egyptian Ethnicity

Advertised in *The Times* as Boothby's "greatest novel" to date, "weird, wonderful, and soul-thrilling,"<sup>46</sup> more than a century later *Pharos the Egyptian* has fallen into obscurity, but as the most extreme instance of the curse tale it is an excellent place to begin a detailed analysis of the interplay between the literature and the politics. In it, Boothby's answer to the Egyptian Question takes the form of Pharos, undead high priest of ancient Egypt and instrument of its vengeful gods, who single-handedly carries out the most successful and lethal invasion of England yet identified in the subgenre. Certainly contemporary reviewers demonstrate an awareness of supernatural Egyptian fiction as a distinct body of texts, within which they immediately placed Boothby's novel. In a somewhat disdainful review, the *Athenaeum* designates it one of "these pseudo-Egyptian stories," and the *Academy* similarly observes that the link between ancient Egypt and modern England "is of course a mummy"—confirming the then-familiar role of this trope.<sup>47</sup> Given its exemplary nature, a close reading of *Pharos the Egyptian* will allow the constellation of concerns circulating in the subgenre to emerge, revealing its place in the popular culture component of the fraught sociopolitical discourse surrounding the Suez Canal.

Representing imperial manhood in the novel is the ineffectual English artist, Cyril Forrester, who has "always possessed a singular attraction" for "the land of Egypt," of the kind that often proves fatal for the protagonists of Egyptian gothic tales (see Fig. 3).<sup>48</sup> Following the contemporary fashion for bedecking domestic interiors with the spoils of Egypt, Forrester has implicated himself in Egyptian vengeance by foolhardily adorning his London studio with a noteworthy collection inherited from his father, "the most eminent Egyptologist our century has seen."<sup>50</sup> The admonition cited at the start of this ar-



Fig. 3 "I was stricken with a fit of the blues."<sup>49</sup>

*Pharos the Egyptian*

*The Windsor Magazine* (June 1898)

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ticle is what Forrester imagines the original occupant of a magnificent mummy-case might have thought upon finding himself displaced for decorative purposes to a nineteenth-century London apartment. It is a classic expression of the mummy's curse which contains all the underlying hallmarks of imperial anxiety. Firstly, the acknowledgement of colonial wrongdoing—in this case theft and sacrilege: “your father stole me from the land of my birth, and from the resting place the gods decreed for me”; secondly, the threat of revenge: “but beware, for retribution is pursuing you”; and finally, the notion of this retribution penetrating to the heart of London: “retribution ... is even now close upon your heels.” And significantly, Forrester concludes this reflection on Egyptian ire with an allusion to the current state of Egypt: “Cigar in hand, I stopped in my walk and looked at it [the mummy-case], thinking as I did so of the country from which it had hailed, and of the changes that had taken place in the world during the time it had lain in its Theban tomb.”<sup>51</sup> Thus in one of the framing incidents of the text, the anticipated revenge for tomb robbery is conflated with the vastly altered condition of occupied modern Egypt and the transformative effect of the Suez Canal upon the modern world suggested.

Predictably, the antagonist of the tale, Pharos, is, in fact, the original occupant of the mummy-case, his vendetta against Forrester for defiling it emblematic of Egypt's wider grievance against European interference. Pharos's hostile Egyptian alterity is made abundantly clear in a key illustration in which he looms menacingly at Forrester from behind the mummy-case, the shadow blurring the division between the ancient and the modern, between his and its forms (Fig. 4). This is in opposition to the clear distinction drawn between Forrester in his conventional English evening dress and Pharos in his orientalist attire. In his original incarnation, Pharos was Ptahmes, high priest to Merenptah, Pharaoh of the Exodus, whose opposition to Moses caused the plague that annihilated Egypt's firstborn males.<sup>52</sup> For his role as Merenptah's adviser, Pharos was cursed by the Egyptian gods with eternal life and dispatched at the end of the nineteenth century to punish the despoilers of modern Egypt, as he warns Forrester:

“Thy father, was it, wretched man,... who stole this body from its resting-place?... who broke the seals [of] the gods...? If that be so, then may the punishment decreed against those guilty of the sin of sacrilege be visited on thee and thine for evermore.” Then ... he continued... “Oh, mighty Egypt! hast thou fallen so far from thy high estate that even the bodies of thy kings and priests may no longer rest within their tombs, but are

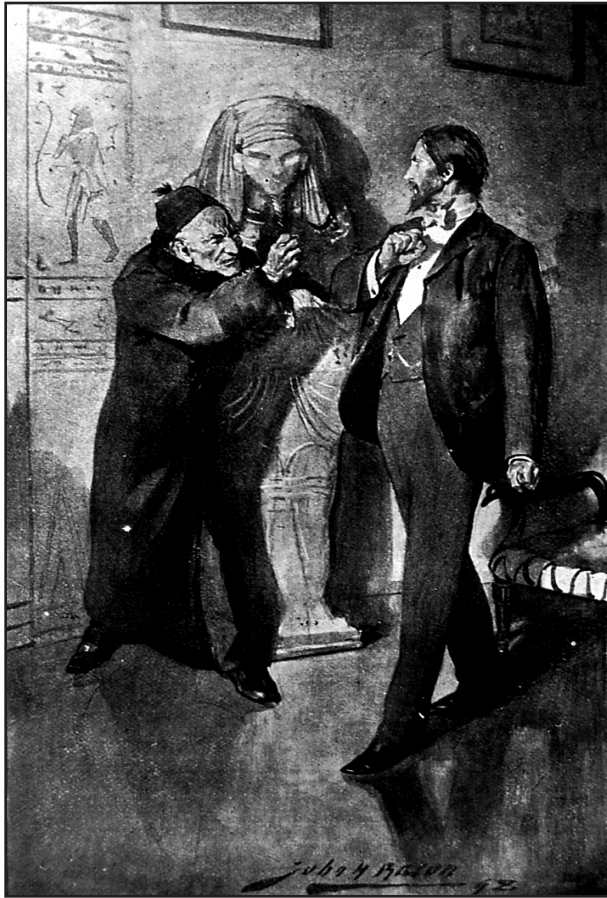


Fig. 4 “So distorted was his countenance that I instinctively recoiled from him in horror.”

*Pharos the Egyptian* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1899)



ravished from thee to be gaped at in alien lands. But, by Osiris, a time of punishment is coming. It is decreed, and none shall stay the sword!"<sup>53</sup>

In this extended passage, the anger directed against the actions of the individual Egyptologist transitions seamlessly into a vehement denunciation of the subjugated condition of modern Egypt and an intimation of retribution on a national rather than personal scale.

Ultimately, Pharos's goal is nothing less than the genocide of the European races, and above all the British, which he accomplishes via the hapless Forrester whom he lures to Egypt and infects with a virulent plague. On their return journey Forrester unwittingly spreads the plague westwards through Europe, leaving "millions" dead in his wake.<sup>54</sup> Just as the Suez Canal facilitated the transportation of imperial goods to Britain, it was also feared to be a potential vector for oriental disease, with quarantine facilities installed in Port Said "to prevent the introduction of any epidemic disease whatever through Egypt and the canal ... on the Mediterranean littoral and in Europe generally."<sup>55</sup> Cholera outbreaks, for example, were frequent in Egypt, their disruption of tourism warranting comment in the British papers, and Boothby utilises these contemporary concerns to arm his Egyptian invader.<sup>56</sup> On reaching his ultimate target, Pharos escorts Forrester on a comprehensive tour of London society, from the House of Commons to East End rookeries, simultaneously exposing its corruption and ensuring the maximum spread of disease. Starting at the "Antiquarian club" amongst what to Forrester's eyes is "as fine a collection of well-born, well-dressed, and well-mannered men as could be found in London," Pharos, from his explicitly stated Egyptian perspective, denounces it as "one side of the luxury and extravagance which is fast drawing this great city to its doom."<sup>57</sup> This ten-page denunciation of imperial society functions not only as a justification for Pharos's countercolonial revenge attack, but also as an admonition to its members about their increasing lack of fitness to uphold the empire. When Forrester eventually realises his own and Pharos's part in devastating Europe, Pharos confronted explicitly cites colonial theft as the cause: "For I tell thee assuredly that the plague which is now destroying Europe was decreed by the gods of Egypt against such nations as have committed the sin of sacrilege."<sup>58</sup> This reiterated rebuke permeates the text, signalling the thematic proximity between ancient supernatural vengeance and modern Anglo-Egyptian colonial relations, and an examination of the specific implications of Pharos's Egyptian ethnicity will elucidate this further.

In many key aspects, Pharos is significantly comparable to Marsh's forerunning supernatural Egyptian invader, the "liminal man-woman-goddess-beetle-Thing" of the then-bestseller *The Beetle*,<sup>59</sup> which is highly likely to have influenced Boothby. Both, for example, are extreme instances of the degenerate of *fin-de-siècle* pseudo-science.<sup>60</sup> But underpinning the deviant condition of these invaders is the fact of their non-Englishness: far from being generically degenerate, they share a specifically Egyptian identity which had significant implications of its own. Pervasive as it was, degeneration theory also informed the Victorian characterisation of contemporary Egyptian society. Though the ancient civilisation was greatly esteemed, as Pharos's earlier cited lament reveals, modern Egyptians, while avoiding the bottom of the nineteenth-century racial hierarchy, were despised as the fallen offspring of their pharaonic forebears. Steevens in 1898, echoing the established traveller perspective, speaks dismissively of "squalid, modern Egypt," "after all the aeons of [its] wonderful history" now inhabited by "the debased and parasitic Egyptian who cringes for backsheesh."<sup>61</sup> Timothy Mitchell, exposing the relentless stereotyping of modern Egyptians as backward and indolent, observes that Islam was specifically implicated in this indictment of the national character—to the extent that it was commonly believed that Egypt's conversion to Islam had precipitated its poor modern condition.<sup>62</sup> Such views had pertained since the Napoleonic encounter and been crystallised in Britain by pioneering orientalist Edward Lane's canonical *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1836).<sup>63</sup> And, while popular conceptions of modern Egyptian degeneracy may seem to have little bearing upon fictional narratives that outwardly turn upon the threat of ancient supernatural menaces, a closer look reveals that Pharos, the Beetle, and other of their counterparts can be interpreted as modern Islamic Egyptians also.

This interpretation is crucial to understanding the link between the curse trope and imperial anxiety because, in addition to the traditional hostility between Christianity and Islam, a significant connotation of late-nineteenth-century Islamic Egyptian identity was that of nationalism, which progressively posed a threat to British control of Egypt and the Suez Canal. From the Urabi revolt up to 1919, Egyptian nationalist interests gradually coalesced and began to organise, ultimately producing the postwar Revolution of 1919 which achieved a degree of autonomy. While many histories downplay the impact of nationalism between 1882 and 1914, this is not a complete representation, and

Hobsbawm observes that though this period seemed quiet, Egypt was never reconciled to British occupation.<sup>64</sup> Though Urabi was swiftly and decisively defeated, it took a further decade for Cromer's regime to subdue provincial resistance,<sup>65</sup> and contemporary British observers feared the lasting consequences of the revolt. Lord Randolph Churchill held that Urabi "was the leader of a nation, the exponent of the nation's woes, and that the military rebellion was the desperate struggle of a race."<sup>66</sup> General Charles Gordon, whose fate was to become inextricably linked to Egyptian affairs, warned that "Arabi ... will live for centuries in the people; they will never be 'your obedient servants' again."<sup>67</sup> Popular novelist Hall Caine writing in 1909 of Egyptian sentiment notes "the fires of disaffection that had smouldered in their midst for years."<sup>68</sup>

On what basis, then, can Boothby's villain be read as a disaffected modern Egyptian? Steevens, musing on the various racial groups of modern Egypt, observes some who are "chocolate, round-cheeked, small featured, genuine Egyptian mummy,"<sup>69</sup> a type which matches well enough with the textual and illustrative accounts of Pharos. As these accounts also reveal, in English company it is not only Pharos's physical difference that makes him stand out—his attire is highly distinctive and markedly Eastern. Early on, the reader is informed that Pharos "disdained the orthodox style of dress, [and] wore a black velvet coat, closely buttoned beneath his chin, and upon his head a skull cap of the same material."<sup>70</sup> Given that close variations of this description recur at all early encounters with Pharos in London, and that the items described bear no resemblance to the dress of ancient Egypt, what this emphasis on Pharos's dress in fact denotes is the modern oriental status of the wearer.

The most striking article is the "curious description of cap,"<sup>71</sup> which, as a black velvet skull cap, bears a resemblance to the Muslim prayer cap known as the *taqiyah* and functions to distance Pharos from ancient Egypt and associate him with the religion of Egypt's modern citizens. This implication was not lost on the illustrator, who has taken the liberty of adding a tassel, never mentioned in the text, to the cap, which makes it further suggestive of a Turkish *fez*.<sup>72</sup> As a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt had a Turko-Egyptian ruling class who were distinguished by the wearing of the *tarboosh*—the Egyptian version of the *fez*—as distinct from the turban, the more usual headwear of Egypt's other Islamic groups.<sup>73</sup> This additional decoration would undoubtedly have reinforced the connection between Pharos and modern

Egyptians even more closely for Boothby's readers: in contemporary *Punch* cartoons, for example, the Khedive, often employed as a personification of Egypt, is largely identifiable by his *tarboosh* (Fig. 5). An additional connotation of the *fez* or *tarboosh* may have been that of colonial troops since many North African brigades, including the Egyptian army, had adopted it as their official headgear by the late nineteenth century. While the Egyptian army at this time was well under the control of its Sirdar (commander), General Kitchener, in the 1880s it had formed the backbone of the Urabi uprising. The rebel Urabi himself was typically depicted in his *fez* and uniform, as in the *Punch* cartoon lampooning the relative leniency of his sentence to exile rather than execution (Fig. 6).



Fig. 5 "Government Hospitality."

*Punch*, 53 (13 July 1867), 15

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Trinity College Dublin.



Fig. 6 "A 'Capital' Sentence!"

*Punch*, 83 (16 December 1882), 282

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Trinity College Dublin.

The *tarboosh*-like qualities of Pharos's cap are quite apparent in the illustration of Forrester's ordeal in Egypt (Fig. 7) and he never appears, textually or visually, in any other than this modern dress, even amidst the monuments of ancient Egypt. Despite his proclaimed ancient origins, Pharos is insistently presented as one of and closely associated with modern Egyptians. In Fig. 7, despite the looming presence of the Sphinx in the background, Forrester's captors represent some of the different ethnic groups of modern Islamic Egypt, including what appear to be turbaned Sudanese and burnoose-garbed Bedouins. Further illustrations of Forrester's Egyptian experience reinforce the modern Islamic character of the native Egyptians and also betray the growing

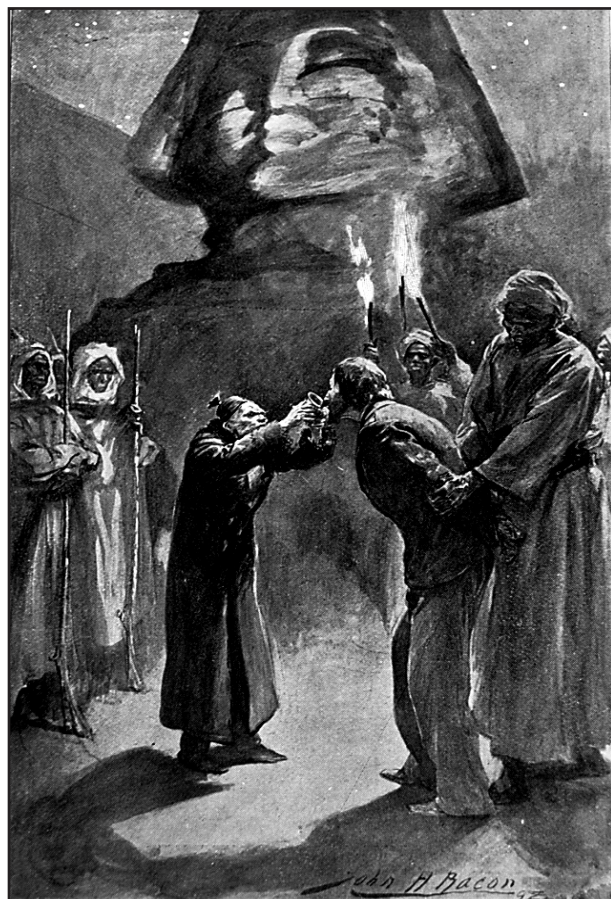


Fig. 7 "Drink,' he said."

*Pharos the Egyptian* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1899)

helplessness of the imperial Englishman at the hands of this motley Egyptian crew. Far from reinforcing the imperialist ideal of doughty Britons in full control of the natives, the clear inversion of the roles implies the paranoia concerning the Egyptian Question.

The antagonist of *The Beetle* is likewise open to interpretation as a modern Egyptian. Though (as is much discussed) most aspects of its identity are unstable—its gender, its sexuality, its very humanity—once ascertained, its Egyptian ethnicity remains constant throughout the text. The clerk who first encounters the Beetle in London, though he “could not have positively” identified such a basic attribute as its gender, can confidently assert: “I had no doubt it was a foreigner.”<sup>74</sup> Strong concern with establishing the Beetle’s ethnicity is evinced by two subsequent narrators of the tale: Sydney Atherton, a self-assured gentleman scientist, eventually categorises the entity as “Egypto-Arabian”;<sup>75</sup> and the detective Augustus Champnell, while failing to settle on a specific Egyptian ethnicity—fellahin, Arabian, et cetera—muses repeatedly upon it. Reading the text against the grain suggests that the concern shown with placing the creature in the modern Egyptian racial context, and the overdetermined assertions of its Egyptian-Arabian ethnicity, allow it to be read implicitly as a modern Islamic Egyptian. Despite Marsh’s attempts to create a mysterious ancient provenance for the Beetle, he continually reverts to associations with modern Islam to characterise it, such as dubbing it a “fanatic,” which pejorative was even then habitually applied to adherents of Islam.<sup>76</sup>

Details of the threat posed by this fanatical Egyptian invader are regrettably not left to the imagination in Marsh’s lurid narrative. Atherton’s romantic rival for the heroine of the tale is the rising Radical statesman, Paul Lessingham, who, having stumbled across a demonic cult of Isis worshippers following a rash, youthful excursion into the native quarters of Cairo, is the ostensible target of the Beetle’s vendetta in England. The cult’s shocking practices turn upon the brutal sacrifice of young women, “preferably white Christian women, *with a special preference ... to English women*” (my italics), and given the Beetle’s close association with modern Egypt, it is not difficult to read this as figurative revenge for the trespass of England into Egypt.<sup>77</sup> Further, this campaign is spreading out from Egypt to England, as Lessingham bemoans: “My own conviction is that there is at this moment in London an emissary from that den in the whilom Rue de Ragabas” from whom emanates a “terrorism which threatens ... to overwhelm my mental and physical powers ... to destroy my intellect, my career, my life, my



all.”<sup>78</sup> In response “this Leader of Men, whose predominate characteristic in the House of Commons was immobility” is reduced to “the condition of a hysterical woman”: Egyptian terrorism thus striking at the very heart of the British political establishment.<sup>79</sup> Finally, the political reading of the Beetle’s motivation is directly corroborated by Atherton’s attempt to account for the creature’s malevolence towards Lessingham: “Can the objection be political?” he muses: “what has Lessingham done which could offend the religious or patriotic susceptibilities of the most fanatical of Orientals?”<sup>80</sup> While Atherton casually dismisses this explanation, nonetheless, amidst his tale of supernatural Egyptian terror, Marsh clearly acknowledges both nationalist and religious sentiment to be likely causes of grievance for modern Egyptians.

In a similar way, though the antagonist of Doyle’s “Lot No. 249” is an Englishman who makes murderous use of a revived mummy, he is comparably implicated with modern Egyptian ethnic groups: described as at home beyond the navigable reaches of the Nile with “the Arabs as if he had been born and nursed and weaned among them.”<sup>81</sup> And, as no overall motive for his vendetta is ever disclosed, it is tempting to read his Egyptian acculturation as the driver of it, a view supported by the ethnic characterisation of his criminality in this classic reproach: “You’ll find that your filthy Egyptian tricks won’t answer in England.”<sup>82</sup> In Stoker’s *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, while Queen Tera is not cast in a modern light, the text is punctuated with references to hostile modern Egyptians and to the Urabi revolt itself. The expedition that unearthed Tera is notably dated “soon after Arabi Pasha” when “Egypt was no safe place for travellers, especially if they were English,” conveying the continuing currency of the Urabi revolt when Stoker was writing two decades later.<sup>83</sup> This device of framing major narrative episodes with reference to the inimical state of modern Egypt recurs throughout the text<sup>84</sup> and gains significance when coupled with the suggestion that Tera herself had future designs on England:

If, then, the Queen, intent on her resurrection under her own conditions, had, so to speak, waded to it through blood, what might she not do were her purpose thwarted? What terrible step might she not take to effect her wishes?... what were her wishes?... *In her record there was no expression of a love to be sought or found.* All we knew for certain was that she had set before her the object of resurrection, and that in it the North ... was to have a special part.<sup>85</sup>

As the emphasised sentence implies, Stoker is writing against the romantic mummy story, stressing the antagonistic nature of his su-

pernatural Egyptian invader as well as associating her with unruly contemporary Egyptian forces. More broadly, reading Tera as representative of Egypt itself, while she appears to hold out the lure of great power, peril ultimately outweighs the promise as terrible consequences ensue for all imperial Englishmen who become involved with her.

### **“Hold on!”: Paranoia & Possession in the Writing of Egypt**

Though supernatural Egyptian fiction ostensibly turned upon the encounter with resurrected ancient Egyptians, as we have seen, hostile modern Egyptian ethnicity insistently pushed itself into the narratives as the political criticality of Anglo-Egyptian colonial relations relentlessly impinged upon this popular cultural medium. Given the socially pervasive nature of imperialism, it is not surprising that gothic fiction was not the only medium to be so affected and the Egyptian threat found more direct expression in the theatre in Bernard Shaw’s satirical political allegory *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898), first performed contemporaneously with the novel publication of *Pharos the Egyptian* in 1899.<sup>86</sup> In its more-usual prologue the “lesson-in-history” is set out,<sup>87</sup> with the Egyptian sun god Ra drawing a cautionary comparison between ancient Rome and modern Britain, and directly rebuking the contemporary Victorian audience for complacency regarding their imperial position.<sup>88</sup> Set entirely in Egypt, it explicitly draws parallels between the Roman invasion of Egypt and the British occupation: “for Pompey went where ye have gone, even to Egypt, where there was a Roman occupation even as there was but now a British one.”<sup>89</sup> Its whole moral weight is directed at elaborating the negative consequences of undertaking such a venture in the wrong spirit; thus Ra admonishes nineteenth-century Britons in a manner quite comparable to that of Pharos: “Wherefore look to it, lest some little people whom ye would enslave rise up and become in the hand of God the scourge of your boastings and your injustices and your lusts and stupidities.”<sup>90</sup> In keeping with the plot structure of Egyptian gothic, Ra even implies that such sins committed abroad may follow their perpetrators home, warning that “war is a wolf that may come to your own door.”<sup>91</sup> And, similarly, ancient Egyptian hostility is conflated with modern Egyptian grievances as Shaw places into the mouths of the ancient opponents of the Roman invasion the rallying cry of modern Egyptian nationalism: “Egypt for the Egyptians!”<sup>92</sup>

In seeking to account for this insistent intrusion of the political into the literary, Said’s work is elucidating. He theorises that the material

fact of Britain's possession of the Near Orient meant that for British writers "the room available for imaginative play was limited by the realities of administration, territorial legality, and executive power.... To write about Egypt," he continues, speaking of literary texts, "was a matter of touring the realm of political will, political management, political definition."<sup>93</sup> Concerning the strategic value of "the territory between the Mediterranean and India," Said affirms that British writers necessarily had a "pronounced and harder sense" of its "weighty importance" and thus "a very combative awareness of how relations between the Orient and Europe would have to be conducted." He goes on to recount how this political awareness entangled itself in the plots of serious novelists such as Disraeli and George Eliot—how, in their oriental novels, they could not avoid "straying into the complexities of British realities as they decisively affected the Eastern project."<sup>94</sup> The same awareness clearly constrained Shaw and also the writers of popular fiction, and in supernatural Egyptian fiction it manifests itself in the endlessly reiterated, closely conforming curse plot structures and in the persistent references to key dates and events in modern Egyptian politics. The Urabi revolt is directly referenced in *The Jewel of Seven Stars*; similarly, though "Lot No. 249" was published in 1892, it is also set—for no plot-dependent reason—in 1884, evoking both the 1882 campaign against Urabi and the notorious Islamic Mahdist uprising then ongoing in neighbouring Sudan. Likewise in Everett's 1896 text *Iras*, the year in which the ill-fated mummy was illegally removed from Egypt is, unsurprisingly, 1882.

In Boothby's work, his awareness of contemporary Egyptian politics is knowingly intimated in the Egyptian short story, "A Professor of Egyptology" (1904). Observing the mix of nationalities comprising fashionable Cairene society, including "French Ministers," "Bimbashis on leave from the Soudan," Greek attachés, Russians, Americans, many English, and a "sprinkling of military and diplomatic uniforms," Boothby concludes: "Taken altogether, and regarded from a political point of view, the gathering had a significance of its own," which worldly observation pertains of course to the Egyptian Question.<sup>95</sup> In *Pharos the Egyptian* the seventy-page portion of the text set in Egypt is littered with references to political affairs, Boothby alluding to Britain's military presence in Egypt directly after Forrester's disembarkation in Port Said, the gateway to the Suez Canal. Travelling on by train to Cairo, far from evincing the usual tourist anticipation for the ancient sites, Forrester instead observes their passage by "the battlefields of Tel-el-

Kebir and Kassassin.”<sup>96</sup> Both locations witnessed notable battles in the 1882 campaign against Urabi, and it is significant that Boothby evokes them in a passage in which he builds tension concerning Pharos’s unrevealed but clearly malevolent intentions.<sup>97</sup> The next morning, discoursing enthusiastically from his hotel window upon Cairo’s typical oriental colour, Forrester tellingly concludes “and while I watched, emblematical of the change in the administration of the country, a guard of Highlanders, with a piper playing at their head, marched by, *en route* to the headquarters of the Army of Occupation.”<sup>98</sup> Boothby also mentions “the war of ’82” in *A Bid for Fortune* (1895) in an episode set in Port Said.<sup>99</sup> More specifically, the reference occurs during a scene in which a group of irreverent British tourists is attacked by “a crowd of furious Arabs” at a mosque,<sup>100</sup> evoking the spectre of modern Islamic-Egyptian hostility to the British presence irrupting at the very canal mouth. As a colonial immigrant to Britain, the Anglo-Australian Boothby had personally experienced Port Said and the Suez Canal en route between England and Australia in the early 1890s, and the location’s recurrence in his fiction indicates that its significance and vulnerability was not lost on him. Indeed, he chose Port Said as the site of the secret headquarters of his subversive master-criminal character Dr. Nikola in *A Bid for Fortune*.

When the financial success of his writing permitted, Boothby returned to Egypt as a tourist, spending the 1897–1898 winter season there.<sup>101</sup> The magazine serialization of *Pharos the Egyptian* began shortly after his return home in June 1898, and, given Boothby’s typically breakneck pace of production, it is likely that he plotted the novel while abroad. Tellingly, in March 1898 during Boothby’s trip, the mummy of Merenptah, whom Boothby named as the disputed Exodus Pharaoh in the text, was discovered in a major mummy cache and immediately touted as the Exodus Pharaoh.<sup>102</sup> Steevens was also in Egypt writing the newspaper reports that became his book *Egypt in 1898* in the same winter season. A popular and influential journalist, according to Luckhurst and Sally Ledger, Steevens’s “personality driven reportage” was significant in the “move from the anonymity and distance of the early 1880s to the bestseller narratives of dastardly Muslims” in the 1890s.<sup>103</sup> Blazing a trail as a foreign correspondent with the *Daily Mail* from its inception in 1896, his on-scene reports were speedily dispatched home by telegraph to an eager mass audience, before being compiled into travelogues. His nonfiction account of Egypt is thus contemporaneous with *Pharos the Egyptian*, useful in divulging

both popular British attitudes toward Egypt and something of what Boothby may have experienced during his sojourn there. Like Boothby, Steevens signals the presence of the occupying forces, concluding a comparable orientalist account of Cairene life: "And then the blare of a band swells up the street ... and khaki, white helmet, Lee-Metford and bayonet, buckles and pipe clay, swings past Tommy Atkins. That is the first and last thing you will see in Cairo.... That for the time being is Egypt."<sup>104</sup> Both writers also draw attention to the Kasr-el-Nil barracks, headquarters of the British Army, among Cairo's more typical tourist sites, Boothby using it to preface the climactic scene in which Forrester is infected with the plague.<sup>105</sup>

The recurrence of references in *Pharos the Egyptian* to the British military presence in Egypt gains significance in light of the fact that during the winter of 1897–1898 great preparations were under way there for the resumption of General Kitchener's famous Sudanese campaign. This had been launched in 1895 to counter the resurgence of the militant Islamic movement known as Mahdism that had regularly threatened to spill over into Egypt, an ongoing hazard since the iconic death of General Gordon in the 1880s.<sup>106</sup> Steevens's reports give a great sense of Cairo abuzz with troop movements and weapons stockpiling, highlighting the dangers posed to Egypt by Sudanese instability. He holds that due to a premature cessation of the campaign the previous year, "Egypt was left militarily in the most exposed position imaginable," wide "open to attacks across the desert" from Sudanese dervishes, as the Mahdists were known. Consequently, "all Cairo at this moment is rustling with the wildest rumours"—of heavy defeats at the front, captured gunboats, mutinous colonial troops, and potential dervish invasion.<sup>107</sup> Clearly anyone then wintering in Egypt could not have been unaware of these circumstances; the rumours no doubt circulated among British tourists as well as journalists and residents, and this personal experience may have honed Boothby's sense of the precariousness of Britain's hold on Egypt and the canal.

Steevens's travelogue, though utterly confident about the benefits of British occupation, additionally conveys a limited sense of Egyptian discontent with this state of affairs. He rails disgustedly against "a vast deal of opinion in Egypt which would be only too delighted to hear of a dervish victory" against the British, fearing that "Egypt will never quite sit down beneath our rule as long as we have an enemy unbeaten in the south."<sup>108</sup> He also mentions the Egyptian nationalist movement (a "native" "party against us"); though he is dismissive of it, his con-

clusion that “it is troublesome as long as we let it trouble us” concurs with the explication of the effect of paranoia concerning the canal on imperialist thinking given here.<sup>109</sup> The mid-1890s had seen a notable resurgence of Egyptian nationalism, and the opposition party that Stevens most likely encountered was a reincarnation of *al-hizb al-watani*, the Nationalist Party or Patriotic League, headed by the youthful, charismatic Mustafa Kamil.<sup>110</sup> Educated in Europe and familiar “with modern methods of political propaganda and organisation,”<sup>111</sup> Kamil utilised popular periodicals in Egypt and Europe to convey his message, his inflammatory articles sporadically warranting citation in British organs such as *The Times* and the *African Review*. Mondal maintains that the *watani* successfully managed to harness contradictory impulses towards pan-Islamicism and loyalty to the territorially defined state of Egypt in opposition to the British administration.<sup>112</sup> This produced an alarming Islamicist-inflected nationalist rhetoric which fuelled paranoia despite the emergent and as yet ineffective nature of Egyptian nationalism. *The Times* Cairo correspondent, for example, denounced Kamil as “a fanatical young man ... who now poses as the representative of the Pan-Islamic revival here.”<sup>113</sup> Though Cromer is typically considered reticent on the threat, his observation on “the faith of Islam, ... belief in which takes to a great extent the place of patriotism in Eastern countries,” coupled with the dedication of a large proportion of his retrospective *Modern Egypt* (1908) to the Sudanese problem, demonstrates his awareness of the minefield of Islamicist nationalism.<sup>114</sup> Mondal further maintains that this fledgling movement emerged into a political field “located at the very fulcrum of the balance of forces not just in the Middle East but of Europe and of much of the rest of the world.”<sup>115</sup> Hence the nationalist threat to British control of Egypt was greatly amplified by the complex geopolitical backdrop against which it acted. In this context, it is possible to read Pharos as an embodiment of the threat of nascent Egyptian nationalism, his quest for vengeance against the nations that despoiled ancient Egypt’s relics a rebellion against the European nations which contended for influence in this strategic territory.

In support of this interpretation is the following warning from Kamil in 1895 which speaks of the “great danger” to global security if England remained in Egypt and “once [she] gets the Suez Canal into her power” attempted any kind of incursion upon Mecca; in response “[t]hree hundred million Moslems would rise, and the world would witness a terrible conflict, more sanguinary even than that of the Crusades.”<sup>116</sup>



What is notable here is that Kamil directly references Britain's desire for the canal, and that the archaic Islamic formality of his language is echoed in Pharos's threats. Even more significant, however, is the scale of the threat Kamil envisages—nothing short of a global cataclysm should it come to pass. Similarly the most startling aspect of Boothby's novel is the scale and success of Pharos's extermination plot, which brought about "the most calamitous period in [European] history ... that terrible pestilence which swept Europe from end to end, depopulated its greatest cities, filled every burial place to overflowing, and caused such misery and desolation in all ranks of life as has never before been known among us."<sup>117</sup> While the Beetle and Queen Tera succeed in wreaking small-scale havoc and evading the control of British authority figures, Pharos succeeds in emptying London of all but soldiers, madmen and corpses.<sup>118</sup> Though as Said shows, Egypt's place in the discourse of imperialism was ostensibly that of Britain's greatest colonial success, viewed through the lens of imperial paranoia it transposed readily into Britain's gravest colonial danger. More specifically, the criticality of the Suez Canal to the British imperial project may be deployed to account for the startling success of Pharos's plot. Steevens's work insistently presents the Suez route as "the main highway of the British Empire"; his earlier cited remark upon the potential of the canal to upset the balance of the world, make and unmake nations, is loaded with a sense of the significance of possessing it.<sup>119</sup> Any threat to Britain's controversial control of Egypt, such as the spectre of Egyptian nationalism, could potentially sever the imperial spinal cord and paralyse the British Empire. In Boothby's Egyptian apocalypse, the biological revolution unleashed by Pharos upsets the balance of the world irrevocably, undoing the great cities of the European nations, and perhaps tipping the scales in favour of the oriental colonies in the uncharted future following his annihilative rampage.

While Boothby's novel and the host of comparable supernatural Egyptian narratives avidly consumed at the *fin de siècle* are part of the response of cultural anxiety to the imperial dilemma posed by the British requirement for control of the Suez Canal, it is also possible that the subgenre had a productive cultural effect of its own. In her examination of the *fin-de-siècle* gothic revival, Kelly Hurley observes the distinctly productive, as well as reactive, nature of this "out-of-control" discourse, with its tendency "not only to manage anxieties ... but also to aggravate them."<sup>120</sup> In the Anglo-Egyptian political context, following the opening of the Suez Canal with the attendant opportu-

nities and dangers for Britain, it is arguable that the iconic figure of the vengeful mummy ultimately came to act as a signifier for Egypt in the popular imagination. This figure fuelled the paranoia concerning Britain's hold on this vital territory, feeding into the debate on the Egyptian Question, and disseminating these concerns to a far wider audience than just those with a close interest in Egyptian affairs. On the one hand, this threatening image of Egypt justified the aggressive stance of the pro-imperialists who argued for security reasons for a long-term presence in Egypt. On the other hand, by insistently envisioning terrible consequences attendant upon continuing occupation, it suggested the advisability of withdrawal. From this perspective, one reason for the successful transition of the vengeful literary mummy of *fin-de-siècle* fiction to enduring cinematic icon of the twentieth century may lie in the fact that the Egyptian Question continued to haunt Britain into the twentieth century, especially following the 1919 Revolution and granting of limited autonomy in 1922. Perhaps a deep identification between this figure of a fallen civilisation and both the fears and realities of British imperial decline that began in the late nineteenth century continued to resonate in the mid-twentieth century with the 1956 Suez Crisis. Certainly a spate of British mummy films ran in the late 1950s into the 1960s, and since then, with empire well and truly fallen, the mummy has been relegated to children's culture.<sup>121</sup> Back in 1875, when Britain originally gained a controlling interest in the canal, it was "prophesied that the national obsession with this vulnerable waterway would prove disastrous to British interests. John Bull was bent on 'Suez-cide!'" as an admonitory satire proclaimed.<sup>122</sup> And it is interesting to note in this context that the loss of the canal and the botched attempt to retake it during the notorious Suez Crisis is often considered the symbolic moment of the death of the British Empire.

## Notes

**Acknowledgment:** The author gratefully acknowledges that this research has been funded by a Government of Ireland Scholarship from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

1. Emily A. Haddad, "Digging to India: Modernity, Imperialism and the Suez Canal," *Victorian Studies*, 47.3 (Spring 2005), 385–86.

2. *Punch*, 57 (27 November 1869), 210–14. The poem is accompanied by a double-page cartoon dramatizing the canal's disruptive effect on the great power relationships.

3. As set out in *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994).

4. See Stephen Arata's account of reverse colonisation in *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Patrick Brantlinger on imperial gothic in *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1988).
5. On a broader level, the fiction of supernatural Egyptian invasion was part of a larger body of invasion-themed *fin-de-siècle* popular fiction responding to the growing concern that ceaseless imperial expansion was likely to provoke some kind of retributive invasion of Britain, as prominently exemplified by H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* (1898).
6. Cited in Mahmud Zayid, *Egypt's Struggle for Independence* (Beirut: Khayats, 1965), 33.
7. *The Times*, 14 December 1875, 4.
8. Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire: 1875–1914* (London: Abacus, 1994), 68–69.
9. Cited in A. N. Wilson, *The Victorians* (London: Arrow, 2002), 390.
10. Cited in Zachary Karabell, *Parting the Desert: The Creation of the Suez Canal* (London: John Murray, 2004), 263. Disraeli's machinations in obtaining the controlling share involved organising a loan to the British government from Lionel de Rothschild's banking firm to make the share purchase possible. For more on this complex negotiation see Karabell, 262–65.
11. Editorial, *The Times*, 27 November 1875, 9.
12. Haddad, "Digging to India," 385.
13. Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 137. The Khedive of Egypt, temporarily overthrown in this coup, was nominally a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.
14. Zayid, *Egypt's Struggle for Independence*, 21, 25.
15. *Punch*, 82 (24 June 1882), 297.
16. Henry Keown-Boyd, *The Lion and the Sphinx: The Rise and Fall of the British in Egypt, 1882–1956* (Durham, Spennymoor: The Memoir Club, 2002), 8.
17. Cited in Piers Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2007), 168–69.
18. Curiously while *Punch* never represented the threat of Egyptian nationalism in supernatural form (like those well-known images of Irish nationalism, "The Irish Frankenstein" [20 May 1882] and "The Irish 'Vampire'" [24 October 1885]), at the outbreak of the Urabi uprising it did depict the threat of economic protectionism as a revived mummy (17 Sept 1881, 126–27). During this period the large political cartoons increasingly featured Egypt, showing its growing importance in British foreign policy.
19. Paul Hayes, "British Foreign Policy 1867–1900," in *Later Victorian Britain 1867–1900*, T. R. Gourvish and Alan O'Day, eds. (London: Macmillan, 1988), 158.
20. Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, 178.
21. Anshuman A. Mondal, *Nationalism and Post-Colonial Identity: Culture and Ideology in India and Egypt* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 141.
22. Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, 143, 169.
23. See Said on Immanuel Wallerstein in *Culture and Imperialism*, 406.
24. Karabell, *Parting the Desert*, 266–67.
25. G. W. Stevens, *Egypt in 1898* (1898; New York: Dodd, Mead & Co, 1899), 30.
26. "Sir Charles Dilke on Egypt," *The African Review*, 6 (19 October 1895), 659.
27. Alfred Milner, *England in Egypt* (1892; London: Edward Arnold, 1899, 6th edition), 74.
28. Notable examples include Jane C. Loudon, *The Mummy!* (1827); Edgar Allan Poe, "Some Words with a Mummy" (1845); and Theophile Gautier, *The Romance of the Mummy* (1856). For a summary, see Paula Guran, "The Mummy," in *Icons of Horror and the Supernatural: An Encyclopaedia of Our Worst Nightmares*, S. T. Joshi, ed. (Westport: Greenwood, 2007), I: 382–85.

29. According to Jasmine Day, the earliest known curse tale, "The Mummy's Soul," dates back to 1862 and was published anonymously in an American periodical. See *The Mummy's Curse: Mummymania in the English-speaking World* (London: Routledge, 2006), 46.

30. This story was published anonymously in America in *The New World* (16 January 1869), but has been attributed to Louisa May Alcott. See *The Louisa May Alcott Encyclopaedia*, Gregory Eiselein and Anne K. Phillips, eds. (Westport: Greenwood Publishing, 2001), 187. The American version was discovered by Dominic Montserrat as outlined in his article "Louisa May Alcott and the Mummy's Curse" in *KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt*, 9.2 (Summer 1998), 70–85. The story was also published anonymously in London on 3 April 1869 without the subtitle in *Reynolds's Miscellany*, 42.1086, 244–45.

31. "An Egyptian Ghost Story," *Leisure Hour*, 602 (July 1863), 441–43; "In the Sepulchre," *Reynolds's Miscellany*, 40.1044 (June 1868), 411–12; and Baron Schlippenback, "A Night with King Pharaoh," *Belgravia*, 9 (August 1869), 196–213. Though a minor aspect of this text, the curse is also the underlying plot driver of Robert Bulwer-Lytton's *The Curse of the Drowned: The Ring of Amasis* in which a cursed ring taken from a mummy causes a modern reprieve of a 3000-year-old tragedy (first published London: Chapman & Hall, 1863; circulated continuously in pirated form until its revision and republication first in serial form in the *English Illustrated Magazine* [1889] and then in book form [London: Macmillan, 1890]). See its *New York Times* review (1 June 1890).

32. Nicholas Daly, *Modernism, Romance and the Fin de Siècle: Popular Fiction and British Culture, 1880–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 85.

33. Roger Luckhurst, "The Mummy's Curse: A Genealogy," in *Magic, Science, Technology and Literature*, Jarmila Mildorf, Hans-Ulrich Seeber, and Martin Windisch, eds. (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2006), 123.

34. Day, *The Mummy's Curse*, 2–4, 45. *Mumia* was powder made from ground-up mummies and used for medicinal purposes, the popularity of which resulted in the appropriation and sale of mummies to Europe from the Middle Ages.

35. Luckhurst, "The Mummy's Curse," 134.

36. First published under the pseudonym E. and H. Heron in *Pearson's Monthly Magazine*, 5 (April 1898), 366–75.

37. First published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, 24 (September 1892), 525–44.

38. Daly, *Modernism, Romance and the Fin de Siècle*, 102, 109–10.

39. Day, *The Mummy's Curse*, 8, 19.

40. Bradley Deane, "Mummy Fiction and the Occupation of Egypt: Imperial Strip-tease," *ELT*, 51.4 (2008), 384. Online at [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/english\\_literature\\_in\\_transition/v051/51.4.deane.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/english_literature_in_transition/v051/51.4.deane.html), 17 Dec 2008.

41. "The Egyptian Amulet," *The London Reader*, 37.946 (June 1881), 164–67; Eva M. Henry, "The Curse of Vasartas," *Belgravia*, 54. 216 (October 1889), 1–13; and Charles J. Mansford, "At the Pyramid of the Sacred Bulls," *The Windsor Magazine*, 3 (January 1896), 386–91.

42. H. Rider Haggard's *She* (1887) may also be placed tentatively in this category.

43. Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Ring of Thoth," *The Conan Doyle Stories* (Leicester: Galley Press, 1988; first published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, 14 [January 1890]), 791, 786.

44. In addition to the four protocurse tales listed earlier, what may be termed the pure curse tales published in England include *Pharos the Egyptian*, *The Beetle*, "Lot No. 249," "The Story of Baelbrow," "Lost in a Pyramid," "The Egyptian Amulet," "The Curse of Vasartas," and "At the Pyramid of the Sacred Bulls." Others I do not have space to cover in this article include Justin Huntly McCarthy, "Professor Petrus," *Belgravia*, 54.216 (October 1884), 67–84; Edwin Wootton, "The Secret of Horeb-Ramen," *Idler*, 35.80 (May 1909), 213–17; Hester White, "The Dead Hand," *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 297.2088 (December 1904), 521–34; W. G. Peasgood, "The Necklace of Dreams," *Pall Mall Magazine*, 45.204 (April 1910), 645–54; and Frederick Graves, "The Dead Face," *Pall Mall Magazine*, 46.209 (September 1910), 494–98. The ambiguous or doomed romances include *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, *Iras* and "The Ring of Thoth"; others not covered here are Grant Allen [as J. Arbuthnot Wilson], "My New Year's Eve among the Mummies," *Belgravia*, 37.148 (February 1879), 93–105; and H. Rider Haggard, "Smith and the Pharaohs," *Strand Magazine*, 44.264–45.266 (December 1912–February 1913). The conventions of Egyptian fiction are also used in other genres, as in Sax Rohmer's detective tale

“The Mysterious Mummy,” *Pearson’s Weekly* (November 1903) and C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne’s satire “The Mummy of Thompson-Pratt,” *Atoms of Empire* (London: Macmillan, 1904).

45. See Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 95–115.

46. “Publications,” *The Times*, 17 March 1899.

47. “Historical Romances,” *The Athenaeum*, 3726 (March 1899), 368; *The Academy*, 1405 (April 1899), 407.

48. Guy Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian* (London: Ward, Lock & Co, 1899), 23. As an aesthete, Forrester conforms to *fin-de-siècle* definitions of the degenerate, and is therefore an unpromising defender of empire against supernatural Egyptian infiltration from the outset, as the illustrations confirm. See Max Nordau on artistic degeneracy in *Degeneration* (1892; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 27–31.

49. This illustration appeared only in the serial version of the novel; it was omitted from the book which contains only twelve of the more than thirty magazine illustrations.

50. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 10.

51. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 49.

52. This biblical motivation for Egyptian revenge upon Western Christianity foreshadows the colonial revenge theme and is signalled early in a description of Forrester’s academy painting of “*Merenptah*, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, learning from the magicians the effect of his obstinacy in the death of his first-born son” (Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 23). The identity of the Exodus Pharaoh was in dispute at this time and for more on Boothby’s choice of Merenptah, see this article (24).

53. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 56.

54. *Ibid.*, 28.

55. “Egypt of Today,” *The Windsor Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly for Men and Women*, 5 (May 1897), 622.

56. See, for example, reports on an 1895 outbreak in the *African Review*, 6 (July–December 1895), 665, 722, 822, 907.

57. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 325–29.

58. *Ibid.*, 356.

59. Roger Luckhurst, “Trance-Gothic, 1882–97,” in *Victorian Gothic: Literary and Cultural Manifestations in the Nineteenth Century*, Ruth Robbins and Julian Wolfreys, eds. (Hampshire, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 160.

60. The physical descriptions of each Egyptian invader conform closely and are highly comparable in their overdetermination of the subject’s degeneracy. See Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 28; and Richard Marsh, *The Beetle* (1897; Ontario: Broadview, 2004), 53. See also Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) for an account of degeneracy in the *fin-de-siècle* gothic.

61. Steevens, *Egypt in 1898*, 226, 276–77.

62. Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 106, 112. He further observes that this pervasive stereotyping was internalised by the Egyptians themselves, especially those educated in Europe, even by nationalists. The nationalist leader Mustafa Kamil, for example, believed that the flaws of the Egyptian character were what allowed the occupation to continue (109).

63. See Edward W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians: Written in Egypt during the years 1833–1835* (1836; London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1890, reprinted from the 3rd edition, 1842), 255; accessed online at *Travellers in the Middle East Archive (TIMEA)*, <http://hdl.handle.net/1911/9176>, 13 October 2009.

64. Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire*, 287.

65. Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 156.

66. Cited in Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, 168.

67. In a letter of 3 August 1882 to Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, a vocal anti-imperialist opposed to Britain’s interference in Egypt. Cited in Blunt’s *A Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt* (1895; New York: Alfred Knopf, 1922), 325.

68. Hall Caine, *The White Prophet* (London: Heinemann, 1909), 5.
69. Steevens, *Egypt in 1898*, 39–40.
70. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 41–42.
71. *Ibid.*, 28.
72. It is important to point out that Pharos's cap neither resembles exactly nor was likely to have been intended to exactly resemble either a *taqiyah* or a *fez*. Instead it reflects the author's and illustrator's popularly influenced conceptions of what contemporary Egyptian headwear might look like.
73. See Lane's *Manners and Customs* for highly detailed portraits of the attire worn by the various Egyptian social and racial groups. The dress of the ruling Turkish class is also noted by Steevens in *Egypt in 1898*, 37, 58.
74. Marsh, *The Beetle*, 52.
75. *Ibid.*, 138.
76. *Ibid.*, 107, 147.
77. *Ibid.*, 297.
78. *Ibid.*, 251.
79. *Ibid.*, 292.
80. *Ibid.*, 107.
81. Arthur Conan Doyle, "Lot No. 249," in *Late Victorian Gothic Tales*, Roger Luckhurst, ed. (Oxford: OWC, 2005), 111.
82. *Ibid.*, 132. No motivation is ever attributed to the mummy either, though it is acknowledged to have "intelligence" and "strength" (135). But given the comparable despoliation of its resting place, it may share a similar drive to Pharos.
83. Bram Stoker, *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903; London: Penguin, 2008), 123. Later textual disclosures put the exact year of the expedition as 1884.
84. See also *ibid.*, 141, 163.
85. *Ibid.*, 209. My italics.
86. This was a small performance in Newcastle for copyright purposes—the play wasn't performed in London until 1907.
87. Bernard Shaw, cited in Judith Evans, *The Politics and Plays of Bernard Shaw* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2003), 43. As Evans points out, Shaw was not anti-imperialism per se (41), but highly critical of the current methods of imperial governance. In this he is similar to Haggard, and his portrayal of Caesar as an ideal emperor is in some ways comparable to Haggard's suggestion of Ayesha as a more fit ruler of the British empire than Victoria in *She*. See H. Rider Haggard, *She* (1886; London: Penguin, 2004), 255–56.
88. Although the prologue wasn't written until 1912, it merely makes more explicit the underlying themes already present in the drama. See Brendon for more on the Gibbonian tendency of educated Victorians to look to the history of the Roman empire in order to predict the trajectory of their own in the preface to *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*. Both *Pharos the Egyptian* and *Caesar and Cleopatra* are suffused with a sense of the inevitable tendency of empires to decline.
89. Bernard Shaw, *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898; Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1985), 14.
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*, 15. Shaw also follows the gothic convention of attributing curses and vengefulness to the old Egyptian gods; see, for example, Ftataetea's invocation of the "Gods of Egypt and of Vengeance," 75.
92. *Ibid.*, 46.
93. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978; London: Penguin, 2003), 169.
94. *Ibid.*, 192.
95. Guy Boothby, "A Professor of Egyptology," *The Graphic*, 70 (1904), 773–75.
96. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 161.



97. See Peter Mansfield, *The British in Egypt* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971), 47–50, for details of these battles.
98. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 163.
99. Guy Boothby, *A Bid for Fortune* (London: Ward, Lock & Bowden, 1895), 150.
100. *Ibid.*, 151.
101. *The Bookman* notes Boothby's departure for Egypt in November 1897 and proposed return the following Spring "via Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice and Paris," many of which featured in his fiction; see 13.74 (November 1897), 29.
102. Patrizia Piacentini, "Wonderful things' on paper: the Egyptologist Victor Loret in the Valley of the Kings," *Apollo Magazine* (July 2003), [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0PAL/is\\_497\\_158/ai\\_106732097/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0PAL/is_497_158/ai_106732097/), accessed 10 May 2010.
103. Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst, *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History c.1880-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 134.
104. Steevens, *Egypt in 1898*, 58–59.
105. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 172; Steevens, *Egypt in 1898*, 57.
106. For an account of Kitchener's campaign, see Keown-Boyd, *The Lion and the Sphinx*, 41–43. It is also noteworthy that this campaign is referenced in the conclusion of *The Beetle*, with a temple of the Isis cult discovered in Sudan, 320–21.
107. Steevens, *Egypt in 1898*, 163, 164, 198–99.
108. *Ibid.*, 279.
109. *Ibid.*, 192.
110. Arthur Goldschmidt, Jr., "The Egyptian Nationalist Party: 1892–1919," in *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt*, P. M. Holt, ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 308–33.
111. Zayid, *Egypt's Struggle for Independence*, 31, 58.
112. Mondal, *Nationalism and Post-Colonial Identity*, 153.
113. "Egypt (From Our Correspondent)," *The Times*, 17 April 1900, 3.
114. Earl of Cromer [Evelyn Baring], *Modern Egypt* (London: Macmillan, 1908), II: 132–33. Fifteen chapters are devoted to Sudanese affairs, with chapter 31, "The Defence of Egypt," being highly indicative of Cromer's paranoia.
115. Mondal, *Nationalism and Post-Colonial Identity*, 141.
116. "The Egyptian 'Patriotic League,'" *The African Review*, 6 (3 August 1895), 180. As Boothby's novel *The Beautiful White Devil* was serialised in *The African Review* from September–December 1895, he was clearly familiar with the periodical.
117. Boothby, *Pharos the Egyptian*, 22.
118. *Ibid.*, 361–65.
119. Steevens, *Egypt in 1898*, 11. He terms the canal route the "imperial highway" on seven further occasions (2, 4, 6, 8, 14, 16, 18) and uses that term as the title of the first chapter.
120. Hurley, *The Gothic Body*, 6–7.
121. Day, *The Mummy's Curse*, chapter 3. The series of British mummy films is the well-known Hammer Horror series, the first of which was *The Mummy* (Director, Terence Fisher, 1959). Also, contemporaneously with the Egyptian Revolution, a cinematic version of *The Beetle* (Director, Alexander Butler) was released in Britain in 1919. For a general account of the early cinematic representation of the mummy see Richard Freeman, "The Mummy in context," *European Journal of American Studies*, 1 (2009), <http://ejas.revues.org/7566>, accessed 30 June 2010.
122. Brendon, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, 143. The phrase in the inner quotations is the title of an 1876 satire by J. R. Jeffries subtitled *Or, How Miss Britannia Bought a Dirty Puddle and Lost Her Sugar-Plums*.

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