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Tracking Local Employees of the British Mandate Department of Antiquities in Palestine

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the questions and methods that steered our tracking, in the archives, of local employees of the British Mandate Department of Antiquities in Palestine. After reflecting on the causes of a lack of in-depth knowledge of local actors of archaeology in British Mandate Palestine and their near absence from the archives of archaeology, I researched their traces in the records of the British administration of antiquities retained in Jerusalem. The examination of the history of these archives, from their production to their conservation, with particular attention to cataloging and collection practices, enabled the identification of local employees in the management, practice, and displaying of archaeology in the first part of the twentieth century. Consequently, shaping and presenting an archive of subaltern actors of archaeology, this investigation allowed us to measure their contribution to the history of the discipline in Palestine.

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INTRODUCTION

Archaeology as a modern discipline appeared in Ottoman Palestine during the nineteenth century. Back then explorers, *amateurs* of antiquities, diplomats, scholars, and religious and military figures, examined antiquities mainly in search of the Holy Land. Their surface collecting and explorations were progressively supplanted with excavations. During these scientific activities, framed in the second half of the nineteenth century by Ottoman laws on antiquities,[1] they were guided, guarded, and assisted by members of the local population. Some excavated objects were left in Jerusalem to fill a small museum of antiquities, opened in 1901[2] and other local collections.

The end of the First World War marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of archaeology in Palestine. The Ottoman imperial administration of antiquities was replaced by the competition and cooperation between French and British authorities regarding the fate of antiquities, the practice, and the administration of archaeology in the Middle East.[3] This brief experience in shared military supervision of antiquities was followed by the founding of the Department of Antiquities (hereafter DAP) in the framework of the transition to a civil administration in July 1920, after Britain was granted a Mandate in Palestine. As of 1919, the contours of this administration were advised by British archaeologists John Garstang[4] (1876–1956) and Ernest MacKay (1880–1943). The former was at that time the director of the newly established British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (hereafter BSAJ), and the latter was the antiquities inspector for the Southern, and for some time part of the Eastern, Occupied Enemies Territories Administration (OETA). Other archaeologists such as David Hogarth (1862–1927), as well as numerous British officers and officials, were consulted. The Department required a large team to implement a new antiquities Ordinance.[5] However, it did not have sufficient funds and facilities in its first years. For this reason, it was forced to rent rooms in a house in eastern Jerusalem, where it shared a library with the American School of Oriental Research (hereafter ASOR) and the BSAJ, and created a small museum.[6] In the second part of the 1930s, the DAP moved its headquarters to the new Palestine Archaeological Museum (PAM), built with the financial support of American philanthropist, John D. Rockefeller (1874–1960). After 1948, the Museum continued to operate under the management of an international board of trustees and to employ Palestinian workers. Following the Six-Day War, in 1967, it served as the headquarters of the Israeli Department of Antiquities and Museums (IDAM, reshaped in the 1980s as the Israel Antiquities Authority) and was renamed the 'Rockefeller Museum'.[7]

The history of archaeology in Palestine between 1918 and 1948 has been the subject of numerous publications. Scholars have investigated the history of its administration and explored the various foreign actors and institutions involved in its practice.[8] In the past twenty years, researchers have

1 Zeynep Çelik, *About Antiquities: Politics of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016); Cemil Çelik, "Was there antiquities law and regulations before the âsâr-i atîka nizâmnâme of 1869?," *Journal of General Turkish History Research* 7, no. 4 (2022): 167–88.

2 Beatrice St-Laurent and Himmet Taksomur, "The Imperial Museum of Antiquities in Jerusalem, 1890–1930. An Alternate Narrative," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 55 (2013): 6–45.

3 Sarah Griswold, "Allies in Eastern Trenches: Archaeological Salvage Operations in the French Mandate for Syria and Lebanon," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 8, no. 1 (2018) : 121–44; Sarah Griswold, "Locating Archaeological Expertise: Debating Antiquities Norms in the A Mandates, 1918–1926," in *Experts et expertise dans les mandats de la société des nations: figures, champs, outils*, eds. Philippe Bourmaud, Norig Neveu, and Chantal Verdeil (Paris: Presses de l'Inalco, 2018), 141–58.

4 Shimon Gibson, "British Archaeological Institutions in Mandatory Palestine, 1917–1948," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 131, no. 2 (1999): 115–43.

5 Schedule of expenditure, undated, **ANTqs/62**, Budget Proposals (October 1919–August 1920), British Mandate Records – Administrative Files, Israel Antiquities Authority Archives (IAA); Memorandum submitted March 30th 1919 to various officials with reference to the constitution of an Official Department of Antiquities. Revised April 1st 1919, **ATQ/25**, Foundation of the Department (March 1919–February 1922), British Mandate Records – Administrative Files, IAA ; **FO141/687/8703**, Antiquities in Ottoman Dominions, Palestine, and the Near East: Proposed international control of antiquities, organization of Antiquities Department at the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, Antiquities Ordinance for Palestine (1918–1920), FO141, Embassy and Consulates, Egypt: General Correspondence: Palestine, FO, Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, The National Archives (TNA). Raz Kletter, "The 1920 Antiquities Ordinance of Palestine and the date 1700 for Antiquities: New Discoveries," *Advances in Ancient Biblical and Near Eastern Research* 2, no. 1 (2002): 39–80.

6 St-Laurent and Taksomur, "The Imperial," 26–37.

7 The history of the Israeli administration of antiquities was examined by Raz Kletter in his book: *Just Past? The Making of Israeli Archaeology* (London: Equinox, 2006).

8 *Inter alia*: Neil Silberman, *Between Past and Present: Archaeology, Ideology, and Nationalism in the Modern Middle* East (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1989); John Moscrop, *Measuring Jerusalem: The Palestine Exploration Fund and British Interests in the Holy Land* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000); Dominique

increasingly made systematic use of archival sources,[9] leading to a deeper understanding of the multiple socio-political and cultural facets of the history of archaeology. These publications demonstrate the core contribution of archives to the contextualization of the practice of the discipline in imperial and colonial settings. Furthermore, as Christina Riggs notes, they offer alternative resources that disassemble 'disciplinary identities and systems of knowledge.'[10]

Beyond the historical content they provide, the geographic distribution and the linguistic diversity of the archives of archaeology in Palestine reflect the international dimension and the diverse networks that supported disciplinary practice and management since the nineteenth century.[11] This international dimension, which was mainly Western, was intrinsic to scientific practices in imperial and colonial settings. At the turn of the twentieth century, foreign and religious institutions such as the French Biblical and Archaeological School, the German Protestant Institute for Archaeology, ASOR, and later the BSAJ settled in Jerusalem. Supported by their respective governments, they also relied on extensive trans-imperial networks. This global feature of archaeology is also particularly salient in Palestine, because of the sacredness, presented as universal, of the land for the three major monotheisms, and the association of its remains with the biblical heritage on which the West claimed to be the sole heir. These claims contributed to the establishment of an Archaeological Advisory Board in 1920, which oversaw the deliverance of permits and archaeological matters. The Board was composed of representatives of academic institutions that had settled in Jerusalem as well as Jewish and Muslim representatives and of Christian institutions. As important as this board was in Jerusalem, it did not exist in the French Mandate in Syria and Lebanon.

The archives of archaeology are composed of a wide range of documents, such as private and official correspondences, fieldwork documentation, diaries, notebooks, maps, sketches, photo albums, photographs, registers, drafts of publications, and visitors' books. Their repositories, both public and private, are equally diverse. Papers related to archaeology can be found in religious, diplomatic, national, academic, and museum records. This diversity illustrates the extra-scientific roles of the discipline, its deployment in multiple spheres, and the involvement of numerous individuals and institutions in knowledge production and its circulation. Finally, it demonstrates how deeply it was entangled in political, cultural, and religious agendas, that often overlapped.

The aforementioned historiographical developments demonstrate that archaeology is part of Middle Eastern history, while also sitting at the crossroads of the histories of science, imperialism,[12] colonialism,[13] nationalism,[14] diplomacy,[15] postcolonial studies,[16] and anthropology.[17] For this

Trimbur, *Une école française à Jérusalem. De l'École Pratique d'Études bibliques des Dominicains à l'École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem* (Paris: Le Cerf, 2002); Rachel Hallote, *Bible, Map, and Spade: The American Palestine Society, Frederick Jones Bliss and the Forgotten Story of Early American Biblical Archaeology* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press. 2006); Katharina Galor and Gideon Avni, eds., *Unearthing Jerusalem: 150 Years of Archaeological Research in the Holy City* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

9 Jennifer Baird and Lesley McFadyen, "Towards an Archaeology of Archaeological Archives," *Archaeology Review from Cambridge* 29 (2014): 14–32; Alain Schnapp, Schlanger Nathan, Levin Sonia et Coye Noel, "Archives de l'archéologie européenne (Area) Pour une histoire de l'archéologie française," *Les nouvelles de l'archéologie*, no. 110 (2007): 5–8.

10 Christina Riggs, "Shouldering the past: photography, archaeology and collective effort at the tomb of Tutankhamun," *History of Science* 55, no. 3 (2016): 18.

11 Mathilde Sigalas, "Between Diplomacy and Science: British Mandate Palestine and Its International Network of Archaeological Organizations 1918–1938," in *European Cultural Diplomacy and Arab Christians in Palestine, 1918–1948*, eds. Karene Sanchez Summerer and Sary Zananiri (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 187–212; Billie Melman, *Empire of Antiquities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); Amara Thornton, "Social Networks in the History of Archaeology," in *Historiographical Approaches to Past Archaeological Research*, eds. Eberhardt Gisela and Link Fabian (Berlin: Topoi, 2015), 69–94.

12 Zainab Bahrani, Eldem Edhem, and Zeynep Çelik, eds., *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753–1914* (Istanbul: SALT/Garanti Kültür, 2011).

13 Nadia Abu El-Haj, *Facts on the Ground. Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Nadia Abu El-Haj, "Producing (Arti)Facts: Archaeology and Power During the British Mandate of Palestine," *Israel Studies* 7, no. 2 (2001): 33–61.

14 Elena Corbett, *Competitive Archaeology in Jordan: Narrating Identity from the Ottomans to the Hashemites* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014); Lynn Meskell, ed., *Archaeology under Fire: Nationalism, Politics, and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London: Routledge, 2004).

15 James Goode, *Negotiating for the Past: Archaeology, Nationalism, and Diplomacy in the Middle East, 1919–1941* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); Silberman, *Between Past and Present*.

16 Lynn Meskell, "Imperialism, Internationalism, and Archaeology in the Un/Making of the Middle East," *American Anthropologist* 122, no. 3 (2020): 554–67.

17 Allison Mickel, *Why Those Who Shovel are Silent: A History of Local Archaeological Knowledge and Labor* (Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2021).

reason, the study of the participation and roles of local people in the practice of archaeology is necessary. Regarding British Mandate Palestine, this historiographical shift is led by Sarah Irving, who participated in recent special issues no. 90 and no. 91 of the *Jerusalem Quarterly* on subaltern archaeology published in the autumn and summer of 2022. Archaeological labor has also been discussed in various lectures in the framework of the exhibition curated by Melissa Cradic and Samuel Pfister of the Badè Museum of the Pacific School of Religion in California on the workers of the Tell en-Nasbeh excavation.[18] As noted by Melissa Cradic,[19] the history of the excavations in British Mandate times of sites such as Jericho[20] Megiddo,[21] Lachish,[22] and Samaria[23] have recently been under scrutiny, thanks to new approaches to fieldwork archives and the gathering of new sources. Revising the history of major digs and highlighting the active role of invisible workers demonstrates that the discipline was neither entirely shaped by foreigners nor the result of a one-man job. It represents a necessary corrective; unearthing, studying, and exhibiting antiquities was a collective effort by men, women, and children.[24] These publications, exhibitions, and talks contribute to a general discussion on recovering the agency and acknowledging the hitherto forgotten role of subaltern workers or non-professionals in the history of archaeology. This subject is of course not limited to Palestine[25] nor the archaeological field.[26] Nevertheless, when trying to write the history of archaeological labor, scholars, and researchers face numerous obstacles, especially regarding the gathering and recovering of archival resources.

In view of this last remark, my article wishes to contribute to the history of archaeological labor in Palestine through the archival lens. After discussing the reasons why writing the history of archaeological labor is a challenging exercise, I will share my experiences tracking and identifying local employees of the British Mandate's Department of Antiquities, through the history of the administration and its archives retained in Jerusalem. This paper is based on a study of the British Mandate archaeological records in possession of the Israeli Antiquities Authority. This work is still in progress as I began consulting and gathering these sources in the framework of my recent postdoctoral research at the French National Institute for the History of Art on the history of the archives of archaeology in Palestine from the nineteenth century until 1948. In this manner, I wish to further Sarah Irving's work on employees of the DAP and archaeological guards.[27] Focusing on the antiquities administration staff, higher-ranked personnel and clerks alike, offers another viewpoint of local participation in the practice and management of archaeology, which is often confined to the field. It also contributes to discussions about who was considered an archaeologist and according to what and whose standards, as Nicole Khayat recently questioned in a conference about archaeology in the Middle East.[28] Lastly,

18 Web exhibition of the Badè Museum: Unsilencing the Archives: The Laborers of the Tell en-Naṣbeh Excavations (1926–1935), last accessed December 12, 2023, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/dc601d4d131145f88f828196860b8a44.

19 Melissa Cradic, "Archaeological Laborers of 20th-Century Palestine," *The Ancient Near East today* 11, no. 6 (June 2023).

20 Rachael Thyrza Sparks, Bill Finlayson, Bart Wagemakers, and Josef Mario Briffa, eds., *Digging Up Jericho: Past, Present and Future* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2020).

21 Melissa Cradic, "Sifting through the archives of the Megiddo expedition at the Oriental Institute," *Past ASOR news, Months by Month*, 2019, last accessed December 10, 2023, https://www.asor.org/news/2019/2/fellowship-cradic; Eric Cline, "Invisible Excavators: The Quftis of Megiddo, 1925–1939," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 155, no. 4 (2022): 316–339.

22 John Green and Ros Henry, eds., *Olga Tufnell's 'Perfect Journey': Letters and photographs of an archaeologist in the Levant and Mediterranean* (London: UCL Press, 2021).

23 Dima Srouji, "A Century of Subterranean Abuse in Sabastiya: The Archaeological Site as a Field of Urban Struggle," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 90 (Summer 2022): 58–74.

24 Riggs, "Shouldering."

25 Sam Holley-Kline, "Archaeology, Wage Labor, and Kinship in Rural Mexico, 1934–1974," *Ethnohistory* 60, no. 2 (2022), 197–221; Wendy Doyon, "On Archaeological Labor in Modern Egypt," in *Histories of Egyptology: Interdisciplinary Measures*, ed. William Carruthers (London: Routledge, 2015), 141–56; Nick Shepherd, "`When the Hand that Holds the Trowel is Black...': Disciplinary Practices of Self-Representation and the Issue of `Native' Labour in Archaeology," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 3, no. 3 (2003): 334–52.

26 Françoise Waquet, *Dans les coulisses de la science. Techniciens, petites mains et autres travailleurs invisibles* (Paris: CNRS, 2022).

27 Sarah Irving, "Palestinian Christians in the Mandate Department of Antiquities: History and Archaeology in a Colonial Space," in *European Cultural Diplomacy and Arab Christians in Palestine, 1918–1948*, eds. Karene Sanchez Summerer and Sary Zananiri (Cham: Palgrave Macmillin, 2021), 164; Sarah Irving, "The Kidnapping of 'Abdullah al-Masri: Archaeology, Labor, and Power at 'Atlit," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 91 (Autumn 2022): 8–28.

28 Nicole Khayat, "Who is an Archaeologist? Deconstructing Archaeology in Palestine". Paper presented at "Archaeology, Antiquity, and the Making of the Modern Middle East: Global Histories 1800–1939", University of Warwick, 25–26 May 2023.

studying local workers through the papers of the department employing them, more generally contributes to the study of the functioning of the British Mandate administration and therefore of how Britain governed Palestine.[29] To some extent, it also enlightens daily life and working conditions in Palestine from the 1920s until 1948.

QUESTIONING ABSENCE, OMISSION, AND TRACKS OF LOCAL LABOR IN THE ARCHIVES OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Numerous authors have noted that local labor during colonial-era archaeology would remain anonymous without photographs.[30] Photographs restore and complete the absence or scarcity of documents produced by the workers or those mentioning them. These omissions further a lack of knowledge of their backgrounds and their relation to archaeology and antiquities in general. Their names, if indicated, were not always written correctly or entirely, making them difficult to identify.[31] They regularly remained unnamed in the title of photographs taken during excavations and unmentioned in archaeological reports.[32] These attitudes reflect the general archaeological working conditions but also the colonial and orientalist mindset of the time in the Middle East. Foreign archaeologists commonly believed since the nineteenth century that the local populations shared no interest and no connection to archaeological remains. Such thinking made it seem unnecessary to employ them outside of subaltern positions and ultimately unworthy of mention. The hierarchy implemented during excavations further justified the omitted identities and contributions of lower-ranked foreign and local members alike. For these reasons, finding and identifying archaeological subaltern voices in the archives is a difficult exercise.

The identity of local workers is not the only omitted information, their scientific contribution is also often difficult to detect. Even if they participated in the scientific effort on a dig, in the administration, or in a museum, they rarely signed their work although they drew, measured, reported, photographed, labeled, and registered antiquities.[33] This, difficult to distinguish, division between 'intellectual', and 'manual' work has been at the heart of the practice of archaeology since it emerged as a discipline,[34] and is not limited to the field. The larger part of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine's local employees were considered unclassified personnel. For these reasons, their individual contribution[35] was obliterated even though they participated in the scientific and public activities of the department.

The scarcity of documents from the workers themselves could be explained by a limited written culture among subaltern classes. Workers on digs – often referred to as *fellahin* (peasants in Arabic) – were often illiterate. Yet, this would not prevent them from requesting employment, being recommended, or sharing their – good or bad – experiences during digs. Such letters can for example be found in British archaeologist Dorothy Garrod's (1892–1968) dig diary in Mugharet et-Tabun from 1934.[36] Similarly, the antiquities guards employed by the DAP across the country communicated with the DAP headquarters in Arabic or English. They would have letters translated into English, or have their requests transmitted in writing through the inspectors.[37] Within the administration's headquarters, employees were generally asked if they

29 Ilana Feldman, *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority, and the Work of Rule, 1917–1967* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Caitlin Davis, "Archiving Governance in Palestine," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 3 (2016): 1–16.

30 Riggs, "Shouldering," 5; Stephen Quirke, *Hidden Hands: Egyptian workforces in Petrie excavation archives, 1880–1924* (London: Duckworth, 2010), 2.

31 Chloë Ward, "Excavating the Archive/Archiving the Excavation: Archival Processes and Contexts in Archaeology," *Advances in Archaeological Practice*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2002): 160–76.

32 Cradic, "Archaeological Laborers."

33 Ward, "Excavating"; Mickel, *Why.*

34 Quirke, *Hidden.*

35 Riggs, "Shouldering."

36 Cahier n°5 : journal de fouilles d'expédition et journal quotidien du 20 mars au 29 août 1934, **2018001/13**, Mugharet et-Tabun, Dorothy Garrod Collection, Archives of the *Musée d'archéologie nationale* (MAN).

37 **ATQ/18 series** relates to individual employee files of guards, attendants, messengers, and cleaners between 1927 and 1947 and is comprised of around 116 files A file regarding guards before 1921 is referenced as **ATQ/295/H**. Letter of Mohd Hassan Ibrahim, March 20th 1937, **ATQ/10/18**, Guard at Caesarea, ATQ/18, IAA, https://www.iaa-archives.org.il/zoom/zoom.aspx?folder_id=10925&type_id=&id=70850.

knew how to speak and write in English, Arabic, and Hebrew. Ex-servicemen and civil servants from other mandate departments were prioritized for clerical positions, like those with school matriculation certificates. If they had not obtained their matriculation, they generally had to prove they were studying or had studied, as the application for employment in the Palestine Government Clerical Service shows.[38] Messengers of the department, who were usually young boys, were encouraged to enroll in classes for young messengers at the YMCA. They were taught English, Arabic, Arithmetic, and typing. Sometimes employees of the PAM taught each other English. The DAP also encouraged employees to learn Hebrew in return for an allowance or wage increase. In consequence, their written traces in English, Arabic, and to a lesser extent Hebrew (fewer workers were Jewish immigrants or natives of Palestine) are present but dissolved in the Department's archives. These traces offer the possibility to understand how workers and local communities related to the surrounding antiquities, for example, Makhouly writes to the Director of antiquities in 1944 that:

> the antiquity guard at Beisan [Awad Mustafa Naddaf, employed since 1935] who is selling now the guide told me that the demand for the Arabic translation is very great. It is in fact twice as much as the demand for both English and Hebrew translations. He added that more than two-thirds, we bought by Arabs who can read English.[39]

The presence of local laborers in the archives of archaeology also depends on their relationship with field directors. Garrod wrote in a memorandum addressed to the Palestine Royal Commission in 1947 that she made friends with members of the village from which the workers originated, during her excavations in Atlit.[40] Her proximity to workers and members of the nearby villages, though not devoid of an orientalist gaze, shows through in her photographs and dig diaries kept in the *Musée d'Archéologie Nationale* (MAN) in France. However, if some workers were identified, such as one of her Palestinian assistants Youssra Hassan from Jaba (this full name is mentioned in a letter from a teacher from Jaba who seemed to correspond regularly with Dorothy Garrod) during her excavations in the region around Mount Carmel,[41] we do not know much about her background or if she pursued archaeology after meeting Garrod.[42] Nonetheless, reflecting on these interactions may help explain why some workers are given credit, named in reports following the excavations, whilst others remain forgotten.

The loss of information about local laborers and workers did not only occur when the documents were being produced or used for scientific publications; it also took place in the archival process. In the case of the British Mandate papers, the cataloging practices of the time were simultaneously bureaucratic, colonial, and scientific. Priority was given to preserving and organizing scientific information for administrative and scientific purposes, as the director of the DAP, Ernest Tatham Richmond (1874–1955) explained in a memorandum addressed to the Chief Secretary regarding the reorganization of the Department in 1928:

> Among the functions of this Department, there are two of primary importance. The first consists of acquiring and keeping up to date all archaeological records: the second consists of protecting and preserving antiquities. I put the acquirement and the maintenance of records first because, without a knowledge of what we have to preserve we cannot take appropriate steps to preserve it. Hence that part of the

38 **ATQ/48 series** : Application for Employment (1935–1948). It includes : **ATQ/48:** Application for Employment Excavation assistant (1946); **ATQ/2/48:** Application for Employment Joiner (1935); **ATQ/3/48**: Application for Employment Assistant *formatore* (1935–1939). These files contain application forms, motivation letters, recommendation letters, and notes from Cedric Norman Johns (1904–1992) on candidates.

39 Letter from Na'im Makhouly to Director DAP, May 13th, 1944, **ATQ/15/9**, Guide to Beisan (1941–1947), ATQ/15, Publications, IAA, https://www.iaa-archives.org.il/zoom/zoom.aspx?id=35318&folder_id=2322&type_id=&loc_id=15488.

40 Palestine Royal Commission Memorandum n°33 by Miss D. A. E. Garrod, Archaeologist, Cambridge University, submitted January 18th 1937, **CO733/346/16**, Submission of memorandum by Miss D A E Garrod, Archaeologist, Cambridge University, CO733, Colonial Office: Palestine Original Correspondence – subseries: Royal Commission on Palestine, CO, Correspondence with the colonies, entry books, and registers of correspondence, TNA.

41 Cahier n°5, **2018001/13**, MAN.

42 Loay Abu Alsaud, "Overlooked Archaeologists of Palestine," *Blog of the Palestine Exploration Fund* (October 11, 2022), https://www.pef.org.uk/overlooked-archaeologists-of-palestine/; Pamela Smith, *A "Splendid Idiosyncrasy": Prehistory at Cambridge 1915–50* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009).

> Inspectorate's work which is related to preservation depends upon the existence of an adequate Records Office.[43]

By managing its own archive, the British administration shaped its own history.[44] The Department of Antiquities archives were divided into two, administrative and scientific, sections. Administrative documents were filed according to a site or a subject, consequently, the producers of the documents do not appear firsthand. Moreover, it should be noted that the antiquities department files did not include minute sheets tracking the circulation of the papers within or outside the DAP. This archival system leaves staff members in the margins and makes the assessment of their specific administrative character and scientific contribution difficult. For instance, when looking at inventories,[45] the inspector's duties do not always appear as scientific but rather administrative. Yet, they practiced archaeology, produced scientific knowledge during their inspections, and provided the department with most of the information for the scientific records. Furthermore, archaeology participated in controlling the past and present of Palestine and justifying the colonial enterprise.[46] For it was often noted by the British higher-ranked officers that local peoples had no interest in archaeology, nor did they meet the required standards to work in archaeology. Therefore, it is very difficult to measure the value of subaltern employees' contribution to the practice and administration of the discipline, and the preservation and exposing of antiquities to the broader public.

Writing the history of archaeology in Palestine is also challenging because its archives are spread around the world and stored in various institutions. This geographical dispersion is partly the result of how the discipline is practiced and how excavations are organized but also due to its entangled colonial practice and management by actors of various origins and with multiple affiliations. Records were also affected by British decolonization, the simultaneous *Nakba* for the Palestinians and creation of the State of Israel in 1948.[47] This has made the identification of local archival sources in Arabic, such as private archives of Palestinian archaeologists and known workers of the DAP difficult. The fate of the archive as an object is not the only factor that affects the writing of history; the way it is put to work also influences how history is written.[48] Indeed, archival studies must also be contextualized. The first histories of archaeology in Palestine were in general driven by an interest in biblical archaeology, the role played by foreign archaeologists, and the relation of archaeology to European colonial, cultural, and religious aspirations in the 'Orient'. These research angles left local and subaltern actors in the margins. More recently, subaltern, and postcolonial studies blended with more systematic use of archival resources have placed the Middle East as the starting viewpoint, encouraged global approaches, and therefore created space for marginal figures. It should also be noted that the knowledge of local languages (Arabic and Hebrew) and relationships with the archival teams, both in Israel and Palestine, influence how researchers shape their corpus and therefore their research subject.

To sum up, when investigating the history of archaeological labor, researchers must gather geographically scattered, diverse, and multilanguage documents that are not always nested in archaeology-related structures. In the absence of sources emanating from the workers themselves, some have turned to oral history. Dima Srouji and Salim Tamari[49] interviewed the communities surrounding the archaeological sites of Sabastiya and Gezer about local workers

43 Memorandum attached to ATQ/2/17 of March 10th, 1928 addressed to Chief Secretary, **CO733/157/4**, Rearrangement of the cadre in the Antiquities Department (March–July 1928), CO733, TNA.

44 Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, records, and power: The making of modern memory," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 1–19; Davis, "Archiving"; Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

45 Inventories seemed to have been drawn up on several occasions during mandatory times, but they are difficult to date. An inventory of files from the period preceding the move to the PAM is referenced as "D files." This list is sometimes annotated with a red pencil indicating the destruction or missing of files. These catalogs were used in the 1970s when the British Mandate archives were reassembled by Ronny Reich and Benny Sass.

46 Abu el-Haj, "Producing."

47 Rona Sela, "Ghosts in the Archive: The Palestinian Villages and the Decolonial Archives," *GeoJournal* 87 (2021): 3423–3442 ; Rona Sela, "The Genealogy of Colonial Plunder and Erasure – Israel's Control over Palestinian Archives," *Social Semiotics* 28, no. 2 (2018): 201–29.

48 Christine Jungen and Jihane Sfeir, eds., *Archiver au Moyen-Orient: Fabriques documentaires contemporaines* (Paris: Karthala, 2019), 20.

49 Srouji, "A century"; Tamari, "Archaeology."

on the dig. It is also necessary to read the Mandate archives differently, not only as colonial papers[50] but also as historical sources on Palestine in mandatory time.[51] Such an approach was applied by Sarah Irving when she researched one of the Atlit guards, 'Abdullah al-Masri through his employee file.[52] Additionally, she notes 'although fragmented and patchy, these documents include personnel files and other material from the day-to-day workings of the Department of Antiquities.'[53] Indeed, we must expand our conception of the 'archives of archaeology' and consider all types of official or unofficial documents produced by or related to the individuals as constituting the subaltern workers in archeology records. Therefore, how, where, and which archives about local employees can be found in the British Department of antiquities records?

A HISTORY OF THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION FOR ANTIQUITIES IN PALESTINE THROUGH ITS LOCAL EMPLOYEES

A brief history of the Department of Antiquities records

The cataloging of the archives was contemporaneous with the creation of the Mandate. They were first archived by the historian of Islamic art Leo Arieh Mayer (1895–1959), while he was the inspector of antiquities in Jerusalem and charged with secretarial tasks. He was promoted as a librarian in 1929 and replaced in 1932 by British archaeologist, Walter Abel Heurtley (1882–1955). He was assisted by Michael Avi-Yonah (1904–1974), who had studied archaeology in London after immigrating to Palestine in 1919, and the Palestinian writer Stephan Hanna Stephan (1894–1949) who had joined the department as a clerk in 1931. The library and records staff included a junior assistant, Hamdi Nubani, who was trained as an archaeologist by Mayer and continued to work for the Museum after 1948. They were assisted in the 1930s by Francis Salib, Abcar Lousararian, Nicolas Bibi, Anton Hazou, Akram Kamal, and for a shorter period by Yacoub Fallas, and Louis Danary. Most of them worked for the PAM until the termination of the Mandate.

Over the course of the Mandate, the library staff sometimes oversaw the administrative archives, but they mainly focused on the scientific records of the department.[54] Identified today as Scientific Record Files (SRF), the scientific records were originally conceived as composed of:

> all documents, both written and pictorial, relating to the antiquities of the country. These documents consist of (1) Reports of field inspectors on the present condition of archaeological sites and monuments, (2) Abstracts from and reference to descriptions of these sites and monuments published in the past, (these when compared with (1) would show any changes in the conditions of sites or buildings) together with special notes about any soundings or excavations or examinations that have previously been made, (3) Reports of excavations concerning the sites that are actually being worked on, (4) Photographs, retaken periodically, of all antiquities both movable and immovable likely to suffer damage through human agency, natural decay or of "Acts of God", (5) Squeezes and rubbings of reliefs and of inscriptions of a historical or paleographical importance, which (besides being valuable documents in themselves) help in the identification or a better classification of monuments, (6) Copies of plans of ancient and medieval monuments that have been made or may be made by Government, Municipal or private initiative.[55]

The administrative archives, referenced as ATQ, were seemingly organized by the secretarial staff. They were generally sorted according to specific administrative or scientific subjects but also archaeological sites, as noted by a member of the secretarial staff, Miss Crewe, following the directors' inquiry regarding the DAP's filing system on the 23rd of January 1928:

50 Stoler Ann Laure, *Along the Archival Grain. Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

51 Sela, "Ghosts."

52 **ATQ/25/18**, Atlit Castle Guard: Abdula Masri (1932–1941), ATQ/18, IAA, https://www.iaa-archives.org.il/zoom/zoom.aspx?id=28400&folder_id=271&type_id=&loc_id=15093. He was employed from 1930 to 1941.

53 Irving, "The kidnapping," 10.

54 These files were probably stored in steel folders that stood vertically on shelves as they were meant to be used.

55 Memorandum attached to ATQ/2/17 of March 10th 1928 addressed to Chief Secretary, **CO733/157/4**, TNA.

> the system of filing in this Department is based on the principle 'one subject-one file'. These files are numbered consecutively as regarding main subjects which are again divided into sub-files bearing the main number with number prefixed which are also consecutive. They are indexed under subjects, on cards, which are kept in alphabetical order. Incoming & outgoing correspondence is registered in special books, in the case of incoming correspondence, the date & number of the letters are taken, the writer of the letter, & the file to which it is registered. In the case of outgoing correspondence, the date of issue, subject & file number are registered. Old files are kept in numerical order and can be found by consulting a list of them which is kept in the office.[56]

The official establishment of the Department of Antiquities led to the creation of a registering system that was specific to every mandatory department. The ATQ archives consist of correspondence, reports, and minutes, but they also include budget sheets, financial documents, notes, maps, and sketches (especially in folders related to regional files or town planning). They were registered, sorted, and reorganized in Mandate times; however, it is unclear when they became 'old files' and when the numbering of the files changed. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the move to the PAM affected the archival system and more specifically the registering numbers. These preliminary observations should be articulated with general Mandate archival practices, a subject that has not yet been fully investigated compared to other colonial settings. We know however that the decision to sort the documents into a scientific and administrative series was not specific to the DAP, the mandate departments arranged their papers according to their various tasks.[57] Lastly, the scientific and administrative documents were not conceived as, and probably not stored in, the same archive as they appear today on the Israel Antiquities British Mandate Archives website. The digitalization of all ATQ and SRF related to archaeological sites began in 2011. The emphasis on scientific archives and their related administrative files seems to have responded to an archaeological viewpoint. For this reason, ATQ archives related to other subjects have not all been digitized while some parts of the archive remain uncatalogued (without an ATQ number), including documents related to the inspectorate, laboratories, or photographic studio and the various registers.

The British Mandate archives were appropriated after 1967 by the Israel Antiquities Authority (at the time Israeli Department of Antiquities). They were until recently kept in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem.[58] The ongoing presence of the archive in the Museum since its foundation can be explained historically. In anticipation of the end of the Mandate, British authorities assured their continuous presence in the archaeological field by placing the PAM under the tutelage of an international board of trustees.[59] This board was mainly composed of foreign archaeologists or representatives of Western scientific institutions. This situation was reinforced by the appointment of the director of antiquities in Transjordan, Lankester Harding (1901–1979), as temporary curator of the Museum after 1949. This mandatory continuity is also expressed in the archives as the administrators followed the ATQ referencing until the files were closed, new series were then filed under a new PAM reference system. Jordanian authorities attempted to nationalize the PAM in 1966 but the following year, the building was occupied by Israeli troops during the Six-Day War. In the 1970s, archives and catalogs from British and Jordanian times were collected and reviewed by members of the Israeli Administration of Antiquities. The Israeli period documents were henceforth transferred to the Museum.

Employee archives of the Department of antiquities in Palestine

The continuous presence of the archives in the Museum, even if there are gaps, allows us to retrace large parts of the Department's staff past. The Department of Antiquities was overseen

56 This document is part of an unreferenced binder comprising various papers from British Mandate times and post-1967 Israeli documents related to the organization of the archives in the IAA Archives.

57 Zohar Aloufi, "The legacy: British Mandate record management system in Israel," *Archives and Museum Informatics* 7, no. 3 (2007): 207–11).

58 Beatrice St-Laurent, "Reconciling National and International Interests: The Rockefeller Museum and Its Collections," *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies* 5, no. 1 (2017): 35–57.

59 Hamdan Taha, "Jerusalem's Palestine Archaeological Museum," *Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 91 (Autumn 2022): 56–78; Raz Kletter, "A History of the Archaeological Museum of the State of Israel in Jerusalem, 1949–1965," *Strata* 33 (2015): 155–79.

by John Garstang between 1920 and 1925. He advised the British Government about its structure in a first memorandum that he submitted to the Chief Administrator of the Southern OETA, Major General Sir Arthur Money (1866–1951), in March 1919. At that point, he suggested that the staff should comprise: (1) a director, assisted by the secretarial staff, and (2) the archaeological council composed of the foreign schools, under which a keeper of monuments would operate. The team would also include a museum keeper who would be assisted by a secretary-assistant, a laboratory assistant, a photographer, three guards, attendants, two doorkeepers, and 'other servants as may be required'. The head inspector would be assisted by three inspectors under which nine deputy inspectors and several guards would work. He recommends that the inspector in chief 'shall be by preference of American, British, French or Italian' nationality, while the deputy inspectors could be young officers or men of moderate means wanting to travel after their studies, who were also, ideally, of similarly Western countries; and if they weren't available 'educated Syrians might be found to be capable deputy inspectors'. Garstang also considered hiring a draughtsman, a mechanic, and several other workmen.[60] This scheme was discussed, amongst others, by Ernest McKay,[61] and minor adjustments were made for financial reasons.

In its first years, most of the few workers making up the DAP remain difficult to identify. This is in part the result of the dispersal, absence, and destruction of some administrative papers preceding the 1930s. These destructions and absences, mentioned in inventories, deserve a detailed study because the state and organization of the documents mirror the department's situation at the time. In other words, in its beginnings, the DAP was a small unit that employed few workers. John D. Rockefeller's donation and the subsequent negotiations with British authorities regarding the erection of a building to house a museum but also the Department of Antiquities of Palestine caused its reorganization. The opportunity to employ additional workers, to dispose of larger storage areas, laboratories, studios, and a library, naturally led to the production of more archives but might also have implied the restructuring of the former files. Destructions and paper transfers also occurred when the Mandate came to an end, as revealed by a staff notice n°37 from the Civil Service Commission sent out on the 17th of December regarding the completion of personal files:

> 3. With reference to the Commissioner on Special Duty's Secret unnumbered circular letter dated 6th of December on the subject of the safe custody of documents on withdrawal, it will not be necessary for you to include in your return to this office personal files in respect of First Division officers, officers of the General Clerical Service and all expatriate officers whether in the First and Second Division (...) their personal files may, when all action on termination of appointment has been completed, be destroyed together with records marked for destruction.
>
> 4. It has been decided that all Personal Record Forms should be photographed, and the photographic records stored in the United Kingdom for safekeeping.[62]

Sifting through the archive, I managed to identify for the first years of the DAP the chief inspector (custodian) as Ernest Mackay, who was replaced by Philip Langstaffe Ord Guy (1885–1952); William John Phythian-Adams (1888–1967) as the museum's keeper, who was as well the assistant director of the BSAJ. A certain James Lee Warner is mentioned as a probable candidate for an inspector, while a certain Salim Saleh as a junior inspector but no traces of the latter remain in the records. However, James Lee Warner appears in some of the early department's archives as the assistant custodian, as revealed in his report on the uncovering of antiquities during road operations in Tiberias in 1920.[63] As of 1921, Jewish immigrants and Palestinians were recruited as inspectors: Leo Arieh Mayer, Jacob Ory (1898–1957), Na'im Shehadi Makhouly (1898–1976), and later Dimitri Baramki (1909–1984). Another identified member of the staff during the DAP's first years was Atito Mohammed Salem, a museum guard, most probably

60 **ATQ/25**, IAA.

61 **ANTqs/62**, IAA.

62 Staff notice n°37 from the Civil Service Commission sent out on the 17th of December 1947, **ATQ/17 – 7th Jacket**, Personnel (Confidential), IAA.

63 **ATQ/854**, Roads operations, Tiberias-Hamath: Destruction of Bastion (December 1920), IAA, https://www.iaa-archives.org.il/zoom/zoom.aspx?folder_id=1277&type_id=&id=30087.

stationed at the entrance. He was then accompanied by Fudl Mahmud Abu Hanna in 1923, and Mahfouz George Nasser the following year (I have generally kept the names as spelled in the records). They were all categorized as 'museum attendants and guards'. The museum staff was not very large until the DAP moved to a new location, plus there was no library staff as it was shared with ASOR until Rockefeller's donation. Atito and Abu Hanna (as they are usually named in the archives), were long-term employees. Traces of their involvement in various duties of the department are found in the archives. For example, they were for a time charged with the inspection of sites in Jerusalem or at least they accompanied the inspector during his rounds between 1940 and 1943.[64] Mahfouz George Nasser was appointed in the 1930s as an apprentice *formatore* (plaster cast maker). Therefore, even though they were not trained as archaeologists in an academic institution, they were able to perform tasks that involved scientific knowledge.

The inspectorate's papers are dissolved in the mandatory collection. If records produced while they performed their duties are not always identified as such; multiple files are related to their activities and their correspondences with the chief inspectorate, and the instructions made to them by him or the director.[65] The files preceding 1945 are marked as destroyed. Some of their diaries (in Arabic) are indicated as lost, but a few dating from 1932 to 1946 have survived, most of them are referenced as ATQ/2/40[66] but some are not. Only a few documents remain unarchived and therefore unreferenced such as the Jerusalem Antiquities Inspection Register from 1927 to 1948 or inspectors' reports. Jacob Ory's family donated his archives to the IAA, making it easier to study his career as an inspector on the *longue durée*. However, the archives of Makhouly, Baramki, and another local inspector, Salem al-Husseini (1905–1984), appear incomplete. Did they keep their documents in their offices outside Jerusalem, in the Museum, or in their homes? Were they destroyed, misplaced, confiscated, returned after 1948, or kept in their possession or of family members? Or were they distributed in various files? All these questions deserve a proper investigation. Nevertheless, despite some absences, documents related to the inspectorate in the British Mandate archives should be perceived as traces of their scientific contribution to archaeology. Their scattered presence in other archival repositories also helps retrace their trajectories after 1948. For example, in a letter from 1950, Husseini informs Roland Guerin de Vaux of the French biblical and archaeological school in Jerusalem, that he is working for the Red Cross in Damascus but is eager to return to Jerusalem.[67]

Similarly, the archives of the photographic studio operated by Daoud Salem Abdo who was employed in 1930 and later worked under the supervision of the master photographer, Joseph Schweig (1850–1923), are scattered and unreferenced.[68] Abdo was taught photography in his uncle's studio and later opened his operation with his sister.[69] They were assisted in 1935 by a former probable messenger, Farid Morcos. In another section, the laboratory staff was composed of a *formatore*, Mubarak Sa'ad (1880–1964), who was also an artist. He worked alongside British chemist, V. R. Greenstreet who joined the team after 1936. They were also assisted, among others, by Akram Kamal and Akel Assaf. The laboratory also disposes of dispersed files in the archives.[70]

64 **Jerusalem Antiquities Inspector Register** (1940–1943), IAA. This register is not referenced. Other inspectors noted are the museum attendants and guards: Fadl, 'Assouli (Ibrahim Mustafa Asuli), and Mamluk (Hassan Mamlouk). They had to communicate their remarks and the actions taken by the department.

65 **ATQ/40 series** includes 3 files of "Instructions to Inspectors (1945–1948)". There are also files related to their working conditions and offices: **ATQ/845**, Accommodation. Inspectors' office Nablus (1941–1948); **ATQ/4/23**, Office for Inspector Antiquities (1930–1947), IAA.

66 **ATQ/2/40**, Inspectors diaries of Husseini, Makhouly, Ory, Baramki (1932–1948), ATQ/40, IAA. The number of diaries is unknown.

67 Letter from Salem al-Husseini to Roland Guedin de Vaux, May 11, 1950, **5EC-1,** Musée archéologique palestinien, 5E, Activités Scientifiques, 5EC, Relations avec d'autres institutions scientifiques, École biblique et archéologique française (EBAF).

68 Some files related to the studio are referenced as **ATQ/27/202**, Photographic section (1943–1946), IAA.

69 Biographical information was gathered from a post of a Facebook group British Mandate Jerusalemites Photo Library, mentioning the following source "The Abdo Family of Jerusalem, 1760–2012," by Saba D. Abdo (undated), Facebook, September 19, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/BMJerusalemitesPhotoLib/posts/daoud-abdo-november-16-1899-november-11-1989-was-a-well-known-portrait-photograp/4370485409688803/.

70 A referenced file related to the laboratory is **ATQ/24/202**, Laboratory (1938–1935), IAA. There are also unreferenced notebooks related to the activities of the laboratory in the records.

The photographic studio and laboratory appeared in the 1930s, following John D. Rockefeller's 1927 donation to build an archaeological museum in Jerusalem. As already noted, this donation played a part in the reorganization of the Department, the expansion of the team, and the multiplication of its activities.[71] The administration was then divided into the following sub-departments: Directorate and Administration; Inspectorate; Museum; and Library and Records. The construction of a laboratory, photographic studio, library, and a much larger museum created new employment. The PAM required many guards, attendants, night watchmen, messengers, a gardener, and several cleaners. For example, they hired a chief attendant, Adel Aref Aweidah,[72] who was replaced in 1943 by Mohammed Jaouni. Palestinians were employed alongside a few Jewish immigrants and natives of Palestine.[73] Assistants of the Museum were charged with administrative tasks such as registration of papers, custody of papers, typing, filing of photographs, labeling, cleaning, and arranging museum specimens. They were paid by the British Government or with the Endowment fund. The department also grew after the Second World War, new jobs were created with a specific interest in conservation work. This period is also characterized by the promotion of workers to officer ranks. Some of the unclassified personnel have their own file, most of them date from the 1930s onwards, and many of them are missing. The documents that relate to, or result from their work, should be appreciated as their contribution to archaeology in Palestine.

Most of the employees were also identified for the post-1930 period in various financial and accounting documents, such as in the ATQ/8 series[74] related to pay sheets and transport claims between 1927 and 1948. The budget estimates of the DAP are also very useful because they list the employees and their positions.[75] Some of these estimates are available in the Israel State archives because they were also sent to the Chief Political Office.[76] Indeed, if the Department of Antiquities in Palestine archives were retained in Jerusalem, papers related to its functioning, reorganizing, and staff nomination can also be found in Israel State Archives, which are partly online. Because it is in possession of British Mandate papers, there are numerous files, concerning the DAP and archeological and antiquities questions, within the Central Secretary Office or the Public Works Department records – which the DAP was associated with before becoming an independent division. The British National Archive's records of the Colonial and Foreign offices complete those of the DAP in Jerusalem.[77] Cross-referencing archives is all the more important because employees circulated between various departments, such as the chemist Jamil Haroutyun Haleblian, born in Aintab, a graduate of the American University of Beirut, who worked for the Department of Health as an assistant analyst before he was transferred to the DAP in 1937. The higher the rank in the administration, the more local employees are documented. Because some were civil servants, and thus part of the Government, they are mentioned, and their backgrounds are detailed in official publications and documents such as the '*Palestine Civil Service List*' or the '*Palestine Blue Book*'. Additional information on them can sometimes be found when they apply for specific jobs, are upgraded, or are discharged. A lot of information is contained in the ATQ/17 series[78] which contains various files related to the administration's personnel. Unfortunately, five general files on the personnel are marked

71 **CO733/172/4,** Reorganization of the Antiquities Department in connection with the establishment of the PAM (May–December 1929), CO733, TNA.

72 For a photograph of him see Nahil Aweidah, "No place like home," *This week in Palestine*, no. 289 (May 2022), 41.

73 The distinction between Arab and Jews instituted by the British Mandate appears in the archives related to employees and in the composition of the Archaeological Advisory Board which includes representatives of 'Muslim interest' and 'Jewish interest'.

74 **ATQ/8 series** contain financial documents which include numerous files about accounts, queries, correspondence, transport and traveling claims and allowances, payments, pay sheets, other charges vouchers and receipts, imprests, financial instructions, and allowance claims from 1927 to 1948.

75 **ATQ/70** to **ATQ/48–49/70**: Estimates from 1927 to 1948, ATQ/70, IAA. Files from this series preceding 1927 are reported missing while some are unreferenced.

76 Draft Estimates & Estimates of: 1948–1947: **178/4-M**; 1947–1946: **147/47-M**; 1945–1944: **140/28-M**; 1942–1941: **4310/45-M**; 1940–1939: **29/28-M**; 1939–1938**: 28/29-M**.

77 For example: **CO733/99/9**, Folios 67–73, Recommendations on the staffing of the Antiquities Department in Palestine and Transjordan sent by Lord Herbert Plumer High Commissioner, November 9th 1925, CO733/99: Dispatches from High Commissioner, Lord Herbert Plumer, CO733, TNA.

78 **ATQ/17 series**, Personnel (Confidential), IAA. This reference gathered originally seven files but only two are left from 1945 to 1947. It also includes pension documents, reports, provident fund paper, and the appointment and grading of personnel, such as two files: **ATQ/15/17**, Personnel, Grading (1942 à 1948), IAA.

as missing, but two remain available for the period between 1945 and 1948. The ATQ/17 series also encompasses files with clerical and identity cards which are often accompanied by photographs.[79] As mentioned previously, the following ATQ/18 series assembled individual unclassified employee files from 1927 until 1948. It should be added that cross-referencing should not be limited to sources emanating from British authorities, however, the state of the archives regarding Palestine limits possibilities.

As previously noted, most of the files related to the guards are part of the ATQ/18 series. Indeed, the DAP employed many guards across Palestine, some of whom were employed for several years or were guards from father to son. One of them was also a woman: Sa'dah/Sa'ada el-Ahmed/Ahmad guarded the remains of the synagogue of Kerazeh. Sometimes they were responsible for several sites at the time, such as Ibrahim A. H. Najjar who was 'in charge of over 15 large and important sites'.[80] Some of them also had side businesses, such as selling cigarettes, or were employed for other duties by the department as office cleaners for the inspectors. Their position consisted of multiple tasks such as guarding, guiding the visitors and taking care of the site. For example, the guard of Acre, Moshe Ostrower employed between 1927 and 1931, was also employed as a gardener.[81] In the first years of the DAP, they were all *ghaffirs* (armed guards) and were stationed in Jerusalem, and in the archaeological sites of Atlit, Ascalon, Caesarea, and Samaria. At the end of the Mandate, they were stationed in around twenty different locations. Some of the guards' records are available online. However, it should be noted that they were probably disconnected at the time from site-related material, as some of the guard files were not referred to the site they watched. In consequence, they have not yet been digitized. The folders sometimes contain personal information such as their birth dates, and background information on their family, gathered on forms. General files on guards, of antiquities sites and museum alike, include reports made by British officials regarding the quality of their work in the framework of an increase in salary for example. Individual files, usually containing very few documents, sometimes inform us about the various tasks of the employee or how higher-ranked officials appreciated their work.[82] Reports on antiquities guards were usually written by the inspectors who communicated them to the central administration in Jerusalem. These archives, which could support a prosopography study, reveal the numerous roles they played in archaeology and the displaying of antiquities. In charge of the preservation and caring for the site or museum they guarded and their visitors, they also participated in digs or were called to the headquarters in Jerusalem.[83] Lastly, ATQ/18 files inform us of the working conditions within the mandatory system: employees filed petitions, requested higher wages, enquired about borrowing or obtaining equipment for their various duties such as blankets or bicycles. In addition, the estimates and the correspondence related to their drafting with other government offices, added to clerical personnel[84] and new gradings[85] files enlighten how British authorities ranked and classified employees, especially after 1945.

Finally, employees' names can also be tracked in unreferenced documents related to pension and provident funds. Workers were identified in multiple uncatalogued forms related to the compensation given to government officers on termination of the Mandate. In 1948, most of the unclassified personnel contracts were terminated. However, some workers continued to work for the PAM such as Joseph Sa'ad, former clerk of the directorate and administration section of the DAP, who became the museum's secretary and then curator. Some attendants such as Hussam Almi and Surayed Abd el-Rahim continued to work as museum attendants, while others were promoted such as Sami Fattaleh as a foreman. Others became refugees such as Farid Morcos or Mubarak Sa'ad and did not return to the PAM. Former local Jewish

79 ATQ/17 series also contained files with **ATQ/12/17**, Clerical Cards (confidential) from 1931 to 1947; **ATQ/13/17**, Personnel: Identity Certificates & Cards from 1938 to 1947, IAA. This file includes photographs and personal information on various employees.

80 Husseini's report, 22 June 1946, **ATQ/18,** General file : Guards, IAA.

81 **ATQ/3/18**, Guards: Acre, M. Ostrower, ATQ/18, Guards, IAA, https://www.iaa-archives.org.il/zoom/zoom.aspx?id=3695&folder_id=29&type_id=&loc_id=15002.

82 **ATQ/18 series**, IAA.

83 Irving, "The kidnapping."

84 **ATQ/17 series**, IAA.

85 **ATQ/15/17**, IAA.

employees, who worked in a detached office in western Jerusalem since 1947, integrated the Israeli Department of Antiquities and Museums after 1948, such as Ruth Amiran (1914–2015).

CONCLUSION

By sifting through the archives of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine and by digging into the history of their production, past and present compilation, and conservation, fragments of workers' identities and stories surface. Sometimes their identification papers are mixed in with photographs, addresses, dates of birth, their educational background, their father's profession, and a miscellany of tantalizing and revealing information. Beyond these opportunities for personal identification, the archives also reflect the role played by local employees in the history of archaeology, its administration, and its display to the public. By presenting such research methods, this paper aims to encourage various archival approaches. Questioning the archive, not only its content but also reflecting on the history of its production and how it was assembled as an archive; cross-referencing different dossiers and repositories; and reading them differently is essential to understanding how and why the history of archaeological labor in British Mandate Palestine was overlooked but also helps us unlock information that furthers the history of archaeology and shifts our usual analytical frameworks. It also encourages research perspectives on the past of Palestine, that exceed the history of archaeology.

This paper will be followed by the publication of a list of the recovered names of the various workers of the DAP from its establishment in 1920 until 1948. It is currently a work in progress, which is part of my current postdoctoral project funded by the French Minister of Higher Education and Research which focuses on the creation of a database gathering the archives of archaeology in Palestine from the nineteenth century until 1948. It is hoped that the identification of various marginalized or unknown, local or foreign, actors who are part of the history of the discipline can stimulate the finding of new sources (archival or oral). One of my postdoctoral research goals is to identify and study the history of the archives of the British Mandate administration of antiquities. In this perspective, I consulted the archives in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem in September and October 2022, I am extremely thankful to the archival team for sharing catalogs and giving me full access to the archives.

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The author has no competing interests to declare.

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