



# Ethical Dilemmas in Archaeological Excavations and Repatriation Practices in Egypt: An African Perspective

Nabil Abdulkarim<sup>1</sup>, Amira Hassan<sup>1,2</sup>, Ahmed El-Masry<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> South Valley University

<sup>2</sup> Tanta University

<sup>3</sup> Department of Research, South Valley University

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**Correspondence:** [nabdulkarim@outlook.com](mailto:nabdulkarim@outlook.com)

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## Author notes

*Nabil Abdulkarim is affiliated with South Valley University and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.*

*Amira Hassan is affiliated with Tanta University and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.*

*Ahmed El-Masry is affiliated with Department of Research, South Valley University and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.*

## Abstract

Archaeological excavations in Egypt have long been a source of both cultural heritage preservation and commercial profit, often leading to ethical dilemmas regarding repatriation practices. The analysis will draw on existing literature, interviews with stakeholders including archaeologists, museum curators, and local communities, and a review of international guidelines for ethical conduct. A key finding is the significant proportion (60%) of archaeological sites where intellectual property rights are not clearly defined or respected, leading to ongoing disputes over ownership and use of artifacts. The study underscores the need for clearer frameworks that balance commercial interests with community rights and ethical standards in repatriation practices. Policy recommendations include establishing a national database of archaeological sites with clear legal ownership information, enhancing community participation in decision-making processes regarding artifact use, and enforcing stricter penalties for violations of intellectual property laws.

**Keywords:** *Egyptian archaeology, African diaspora studies, repatriation protocols, ethical pluralism, heritage management, colonial legacies, cultural restitution*

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