



## **The Code of Ethics of the Egyptian Cultural Heritage Organisation**

The Egyptian Cultural Heritage Organisation (ECHO) is dedicated to the greater understanding, protection and preservation of Egypt's cultural heritage and the dissemination of archaeological knowledge to the academic and wider public audience. However, ECHO recognises that archaeologists, specialist consultants and cultural heritage managers have a responsibility to practice a moral and professional code of ethics to the cultural material of the past, the public and their colleagues.

### **I) The Responsibility to the Cultural Heritage:**

1. ECHO condemns the looting and destruction of archaeological property and are supporters of: the 1954 UNESCO *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*; the 1956 UNESCO *Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations*, the 1964 ICOMOS *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites*; 1970 UNESCO *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*; the 1972 UNESCO *Convention Concerning Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, the 1990 ICOMOS International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM) *Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage*; the 1995 UNIDROIT *Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects*; the 2001 UNESCO *Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*; the 2001 UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*; and the 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. All members must acquaint themselves with these legislative documents, and comply with their legal requirements. All members must also make themselves familiar with Egyptian law governing archaeology and the antiquities trade, and abide by these laws, especially Law no. 215 (31<sup>st</sup> October 1951) on the *Protection of Antiquities*, revised by laws no. 529 of 1953, no. 24 of 1965 and no. 117 of 1983.
2. All archaeologists, scientists, art historians or other archaeological specialists, must refrain from giving credence to stolen or looted artefacts, by refusing to study, evaluate or examine them in any manner whatsoever, unless it is to verify that the artefacts in question are indeed stolen or looted, and as such must be reported to the appropriate authorities. These experts must also not consciously contribute any scholarly knowledge to an exhibition that knowingly allows artefacts illegally acquired after 30<sup>th</sup> December 1970 to be shown in their displays. An artefact may be considered illicit if:
  - a) The person in possession of it cannot produce good title to them under the applicable law.

- b) An object has been acquired in or exported from its country of origin in violation of that country's laws.
  - c) The object was imported or acquired illegally from an official excavation or monument, or originated from an unofficial, illegal or clandestine dig.
3. Archaeologists must undertake to report any dishonest or unethical behaviour, especially that which threatens any cultural materiality, such as breaches of the UNESCO, ICOMOS or UNIDROIT agreements, to the proper legal authorities.
  4. Members must not engage in any illegal or unethical conduct involving archaeological material or knowingly permit the use of their name in support of any illegal or unethical activity involving archaeological matters, including, theft, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.
  5. Archaeologists and other archaeological specialists should refrain from authentication and testing for any objects not curated in a public institution or where they are not open to scientific study, interpretation or display, such as those held by private individuals, salesrooms or commercial galleries.
  6. The principal investigator or director of a project should include in their project design adequate plans for conservation, preservation, storage receptacles and materials and archives, and should secure funds for such purposes from the outset.
  7. The principal investigator or director must ensure that experimental design, recording, and sampling procedures are adequate for the project being undertaken.
  8. The principal investigator or director of a project must before any archaeological work is undertaken, especially full-scale excavation, carefully consider the purpose and consequences of the research. The methods and approaches chosen must be the most suitable for not only extracting the maximum amount of information from the archaeological material, but for creating the least amount of damage to the local or regional environment. Other methods of archaeological investigation, such as survey, should always be sought first before resorting to excavation methods. The objectives of the research should be adequate justification for the destruction of archaeological evidence which it will entail.
  9. The recording and collecting of archaeological material must be done in a system that allows their provenience and identification to be easily maintained throughout the whole archaeological process of retrieval, conservation and analysis.
  10. The archaeologist shall ensure that resultant records of an investigation along with the methods and results of any analysis must be fully described, recorded and archived in an intelligible, readily usable and durable manner and maintained in good condition and the full archive including any artefacts and

specimens eventually deposited where it is to receive adequate curatorial care and storage conditions and be readily available for study and examination.

11. The recovery and study of archaeological material must be conducted only by or under the guidance of fully qualified professional personnel.
12. The principal investigator or director must develop a project digest that specifies the projects objectives and takes into account all previous work and relevant research.
13. The principal investigator or director must ensure the availability of adequate and qualified personnel to carry the project through to completion. The archaeologist shall not undertake any work for which he or she is not adequately qualified and shall try to ensure to the best of their ability that all members of the team undertaking archaeological work are adequately qualified. The principal investigator or director should ensure that adequate support, whether advice, personnel or facilities has been arranged. If an archaeological problem is encountered unexpectedly that is beyond the team's capability, the principal investigator or director should seek or recommend to their employers, funders or clients, the employment of other archaeologists or expert consultants with the required expertise or experience.
14. Archaeologists must keep themselves informed about developments in his or her field of specialisation.
12. When Cultural heritage is under a direct threat, such as human induced - war zone or building of a dam or a natural threat such as earthquake, flooding, it is the archaeologists duty to try and protect/rescue as much of the threatened heritage as possible. However, participating in a rescue project in a country where the current regime has low human rights, is corrupt, brutal, illegitimate or has UN sanctions against it, does not mean that the archaeologists working in that country support the regime as long as they do not:
  - a) Offer support for the regime, either privately or publicly.
  - b) Produce literature or other forms of media proclaiming the rights of the regime.
  - c) Oppress or exploit any of the people in the country or are partisan in anyway.
  - d) Directly receive money from or give money to the regime for the work they are doing in the country, UNESCO money being channelled through the regime is not included in this.
  - e) Participate in any political activities that support the regime.

Therefore, as long as the rescuing (surveying, excavating, conserving) of the cultural heritage and objective report writing of the analysis of the material is the goal of the project it is ethically and morally acceptable to salvage the cultural heritage within that country. The archaeological record is finite, whereas modern political regimes are transient; therefore it is the archaeologist's duty to record as an objective view of history as possible.

13. If the country or regime where a human or naturally induced threat is occurring or about to occur cannot safely and effectively look after the artefacts, monuments and other objects of cultural heritage that are salvaged from an archaeological rescue project and as a consequence offers to share these objects with the agencies participating in the project, then these objects must be:

- a) Deposited with a national or local museum or within a teaching collection of a university on a fixed term renewable, and revisable loan (only the cost of the rescue operation may be sought in recompense from these institutions with regard to depositing the objects with them). It must be understood and stated that the objects/material (archives) are recognised as belonging to the country of origin and that the intention is to eventually repatriate the objects to that country.

Objects may not be

- b) Sold to any person.
- c) Deposited in private collections not accessible by the public and scholarly research.
- d) Kept by the archaeologist and funding agency.

## **II) The Responsibilities to the Public**

1. When the principal investigator or director is planning a project, due consideration must be given to the ecological impact and the overall impact that the project may have on the local population.
2. All personnel on an archaeological field project must respect the cultural norms and dignity of the local population. Archaeologists should take into account legitimate concerns of groups whose material past may be the subject of archaeological investigation.
3. The principal investigator or director should hold consultations with the appropriate representatives of the local community during the planning stage of the project, and invite local participation in the project, give the local population regular updates of the progress being made.
4. The personnel of a project should actively engage in outreach programmes through lecturing, popular writing, school education programmes, tours of the site, and other educational initiatives.
5. Archaeologists must present archaeology and its results in a responsible manner and avoid and discourage exaggerated, misleading or unwarranted statements about archaeological matters.
6. The principal investigator or director must make adequate provision for continued site management at the planning stage of the project, and secure sufficient funds, if the site is likely to become a heritage site (open to the public).

7. An archaeologist must not offer advice, make a public statement, or give legal testimony about archaeological matters without being as fully informed about such matters as is reasonably possible.

### **III) The Responsibilities to Colleagues**

1. ECHO is an equal opportunities organisation and members of ECHO must not practice discrimination or harassment based on age, sex, religion, colour, national origin, disability or sexual preference.
2. The principal investigator or director of a project must provide acceptable standards of health, hygiene and safety on site and give due regard to the requirements of employment legislation. Archaeologists must ensure that adequate insurance cover is maintained for all personnel and property which may be affected by archaeological activities.
3. All archaeologists must adhere to the highest standards of ethical and responsible behaviour in the conduct of archaeological affairs and shall conduct himself or herself in a manner that will not bring archaeology or their institute into disrepute.
4. Those in authority on a project must behave with consideration and courtesy to those under their authority, while all team members should reciprocate this and strive to promote the success of the project.
5. Archaeologists should strive to make public the record and results of their research in a timely manner providing evidence to others. Yearly interim reports should be submitted to reputable journals to disseminate the latest findings and a final report should be published.
6. The principal investigator or director is responsible for the analysis and publication of data derived from his or her investigations. If publication is not accomplished within 5 years of completion of a project then, unless such failure can be demonstrated as being due to circumstances beyond the archaeologist's control, a waiver of the rights of primacy shall be judged and evidence should be made available to researchers upon request for analysis and publication.
7. An archaeologist should communicate and cooperate with colleagues having similar interests, giving due respect to colleagues' interests in, and rights to information about sites, areas, collections or data where there is a shared field of concern, be it active or potential.
8. Archaeologists, especially the principal investigator or director must give due regard and appropriate support to the training and development of all personnel to enable them to execute their duties.
9. All personnel, especially the principal investigator or director must give the appropriate credit for work done by other archaeologists and specialist consultants.

- 10.** All personnel, especially the principal investigator or director must give reasonable consideration to cumulative service and proven experience of employees, colleagues or helpers when deciding rates of pay and other employment benefits.
- 11.** Requests from colleagues or students for information on the results of research or projects should be honoured by an archaeologist if it is consistent with his or her prior rights to publication and with his or her other archaeological responsibilities.
- 12.** Archaeologists must not commit plagiarism in electronic, written (hard copy) or oral communication.
- 13.** An archaeologist shall not reveal confidential information unless required by law, nor use any confidential or privileged information to his or her own advantage or that of a third party.