

**Testimony of Dr. Leslie Anne Warden**  
**Before the Cultural Property Advisory Committee**  
**Regarding the Request by the Government of Egypt**  
**For a Bilateral Agreement for Import Restrictions**  
**Under the Cultural Property Implementation Act**  
14 May 2014

My name is Leslie Anne Warden; I am writing in support of the Egyptian government's request for a bilateral agreement with the United States government which would restrict illegal importation of Egyptian antiquities into the US.

I am Assistant Professor of Art History and Archaeology at Roanoke College. As a recent PhD (University of Pennsylvania, 2010) with an active program of research in Egypt, I write to you in part to give you a junior scholar's view of working in Egypt. I have worked as an archaeologist in Egypt since 2001, coming to the country annually to work at an array of sites. I am currently the head ceramicist of the North Kharga Oasis Survey (directed by Salima Ikram). Like most Egyptologists in the US, I am a member of the American Research Center in Egypt. Most of my research focuses on Egyptian ceramics, and I have recently published a book on this topic and several articles under review. I regret that I cannot be at the hearing as I will be in Egypt in June, meeting with German scholars at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut to plan my participation in their upcoming excavations and to present at a round table organized by the Institut français d'archéologie orientale. I hope this letter will serve to supply the necessary information.

I understand that there are four statutory determinations which Egypt must demonstrate to enter into an MOU. Given my experiences, I will restrict my comments to the fourth determination, speaking to the ability of American researchers to work in the country and study Egyptian materials through excavation.

It has been, and continues to be, possible for American archaeologists to work in Egypt. I have been listed on permits held by other Americans or scholars of different nationalities (German, Pakistani, and Italian). I have been on approximately 15 permits, two of them post-dating the Egyptian Revolution. As a specialist who works with one class of artifacts, my research questions are best forwarded as part of a team rather than as the director of that team. As a result, there has been no need for me to hold my own permit to forward the goals of my scholarship or my work in Egypt. Holding my own permit is a goal which I feel is possible in the future and have discussed with several colleagues. As a specialist, however, I will almost certainly continue to work on other scholars' permits. For example, I have just put in paperwork to be placed on a permit of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut for ceramic work at the site of Elephantine beginning winter 2014.

As a member of the North Kharga Oasis Survey, on Salima Ikram's permit, I have been able to work in Egypt on an annual basis since 2009. The one exception was in 2012, when the North

Kharga Oasis Survey's military permits were delayed to the extent that we could not carry out our work in the time that we had allocated. Our permits successfully came through for a December 2013/January 2014 season, and we were able to both survey the desert and work with the artifacts from previous years that we had stored in the Ministry of State of Antiquities' local inspectorate. It is worth noting that the Kharga inspectorate of the Ministry of State of Antiquities has always been most supportive of our work.

Bringing students from American institutions to work in Egypt is a separate challenge from obtaining excavation and research permits. Some universities, such as the University of Pennsylvania, continue to bring students to Egypt regularly for excavations. My experiences have been less regular. I was able to bring a student with me to North Kharga in 2010 with no issue. This past December/January, an undergraduate student from Roanoke College was to accompany me to the field to help analyze the pottery. She, too, was listed on our director's permit and given permission to work by the Egyptian government. However, due to the State Department Travel Warning of summer 2013, it was deemed advisable that she not accompany me to Egypt to work.

The reason for this was not Egypt, but rather my college's travel policy. The part of interest reads: "In general, Roanoke College does not sponsor or support student travel to or study in countries under U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings. This includes faculty-led Intensive Learning courses, faculty-led semester-long programs, term or year-long study on Roanoke College exchange or affiliated programs, and study through programs with which Roanoke College has no exchange agreement or affiliation." As a result, our students' travel to many countries is curtailed when on college-related business. Nonetheless, the college in this situation is still looking forward. My position at Roanoke College is a new tenure line, created in academic year 2011/2012. This position was opened specifically for an archaeologist of Egypt or the ancient Near East. My hiring committee wanted to hire a scholar with active work in Egypt, with the hopes that that individual might bring students into the field with them in the future. So while bringing students to Egypt is difficult, my position demonstrates that institutions are still making the investment in Egyptology scholars and in future relationships with Egypt.

In closing, work continues to be done by American archaeologists, whether on their own permits or on those of others. The Egyptian government has been supportive of such excavations, and these continued relationships are important for both countries. An MOU would help further these relationships and increased signs of US-Egyptian relationships could only help those of us who wish to bring students to the field but are barred in part by American perception of Egyptian stability.

Thank you for your time.