

General historical framework of French archaeology abroad

\*This historical approach:

- has to be compared with other European countries
- is a key for a better understanding of contemporary situation

\*France has a long and ancient tradition of archaeological practice in other territories. Also, as being a “colonial Empire” we have to distinguish between the “real abroad” which means in other countries and the colonies.

\*Here is a map of the French territories abroad. In the clear blue the first colonial empire achieved in the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in dark blue the Second colonial empire mainly obtained after the WWI and approximately loosed in the 1960's.

\*We can distinguish 3 phases:

- Diplomacy and war in archaeology's service
- Institutionalization and archaeology in diplomacy's service
- Since 1939 and 1945, paving the way for today's worldwide network

\*A/ DIPLOMACY AND WAR IN ARCHAEOLOGY'S SERVICE

**The time of antiquarians 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>**

- Interest for foreign countries' heritage began with the Renaissance and the Greco-roman antiquities, which have to be seen by educated aristocracy during the Grand Tour.
- French singularity: since the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards French scholars (compared to Italy, Germany, GB, Scandinavians countries) are more attracted by far away antiquities than by the one from their own soil. For example the magistrate Fabri de Peiresc realised compilation of data from Egypt, Persia...Also Jacob Spon who was a specialist of the history of Lyon city went also in the East
- “A good ambassador is a good collector in his king's service” which means that ambassadors were sent in foreign countries to bring back in the royal collections antiquities from the whole world.
- The framework of royal institutions: Institut de France and academies (17<sup>th</sup> century)

**\*Military expedition coupled with scientific expedition**

- Bonaparte's expedition in Egypt. With Napoleon the scale of interest for the past changed: a body of 160 scholars (from Museum d'Histoire naturelle, Institut de France). He expected to create an administration with army and economy strong enough, against british float and british administration.
- “Expédition de Morée” (Greece) 1828-1831. General Maison and fight against Turks.
- Algeria conquest since 1830 onwards – Commission for scientific exploration 1839
- Ernest Renan in Syria

**\*Diplomats-Archaeologists: a specific body**

- Paul-Émile Botta (1802-1870) consul in Mossoul (Irak) excavated Khorsabad
- Ernest de Sarzec (1837-1901) vice-consul in Bassorah (Irak) excavated Tello

\*B/ INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN DIPLOMACY'S SERVICE

**19<sup>th</sup> century institutional framework.** Archaeology in foreign countries is conducted:

- Until WWI: Ministry of Public Instruction, Museums, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres

- From end of WWI onwards: Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
1920: Service for French Works abroad

\***French Schools.** 5 under the supervision of Ministry of Public instruction, others under the rules of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- École française d'Athènes 1846 : following the support to Greece for Independence.
- École française de Rome 1873 (the same year the German School in Athens is created)
- Institut français d'archéologie orientale (Cairo) IFAO 1881 (the same year Mariette - creator of the Service of Egyptian antiquities directed by a French until 1952 - died)
- Casa Velázquez (Madrid) 1928
- École française d'Extrême Orient EFEO 1898 (Indochina colony)

\* **And many others schools and research institutes**

- École pratique d'études bibliques Jérusalem 1884 - École française d'archéologie 1920
- French Scientific Commission in Mexico 1860
- Institut d'archéologie d'Istanbul 1930
- Institut français d'archéologie Beyrouth 1946
- Institut français d'études andines Lima 1948

\***Administration of Antiquities in colonies and protectorates**

- North Africa: archaeological services have been there a model for the creation of CNRS
- Sub-Saharan Africa: not much to say before independences?
- Near East: Syria and Lebanon
- Far East

\***French Delegations**

More or less long term, financed by Museums and ministries

In Iran Délégation française en Perse 1897-1912 (Jacques de Morgan)

Délégation française en Afghanistan (DAFA) 1922-1946

\*C/ SINCE 1939 AND 1945, PAVING THE WAY FOR TODAY'S WORLDWIDE NETWORK

Different political crises, different consequences on the management of archaeology

\***Institutional distribution**

1939 CNRS creation

- 15th section: excavations on the metropolitan territory
- 16th section: excavations abroad

In 1945 CNRS transferred to the Ministry of Foreign studies the administrative management of foreign field. In 1947 the Ministry created Advisory Commission for excavations.

\*Advisory Commissions in:

1947

“Anterior Asia” & Near East / Central Asia & Far East / Egypt & Ethiopia / Athens, Roma & North Africa / Prehistory and America

1960

“Anterior Asia” & Near East + **Prehistory** / Central Asia & Far East / Egypt & Ethiopia / Athens, Roma & North Africa / Prehistory and America + **Sub-Saharan Africa**

1985

**Nil Valley, Arabia & Africa** / Central Asia & **South-East Asia** / **Eastern Mediterranean / Western Mediterranean** / America

It might be interesting to follow the evolution of those sub-commissions.

**\*Breaking off and cooperation, postcolonial context**

- Egypt: 1952 military revolt, 1956 Suez case. Diplomatic rupture and new fields in Ethiopia and Soudan.
- Near East: 1946 Syria and Lebanon independence. The same year the Institut français d'archéologie Beyrouth is created - 1977 IFAPO (Institut français d'archéologie proche-orientale). However national services of antiquities existed since 1950's onwards.
- Far East: independence War 1946-1954 – EFEO: various episodes 1898, 1947, 1956, 1993...
- Assouan's dam: international cooperation for the protection of Nubian antiquities.
- Relations with UNESCO?

As a conclusion we have to choose which specific geographic areas (for example the French presence in Egypt since Bonaparte) and/or historical period/political topics (for example the impact of decolonisation on archaeological research in Indochina) we want to focus on, without forgetting how the French archaeology abroad was conducted *vis-à-vis* the local researchers (if any) and the other European countries (for example the competition between Schools abroad). There is of course an important bibliography to compile.