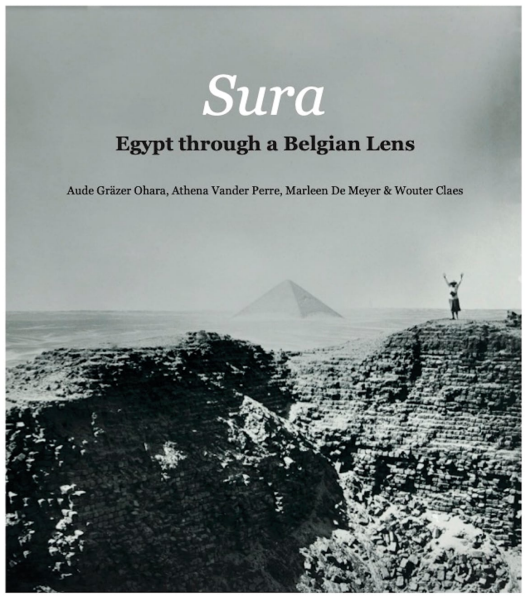
TITLE INFORMATION
Tel: +44 (0) 1394 389950
Email: uksales@accartbooks.com
Web: https://www.accartbooks.com/uk



Sura

Egypt from a Belgian Perspective

Edited by Wouter Claes

Edited by Marleen De Meyer

Other primary creator Aude Gräzer Ohara

Other primary creator Athena Van der

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- First curator of the Egyptian department at the Royal Museums of Art and History (RMAH), Jean Capart (1877-1947) is often regarded as the founding father of Belgian Egyptology
- During his entire career, Capart constantly invested in the development of this collection by feeding it with photos
- This book explores the collection

First curator of the Egyptian department at the Royal Museums of Art and History (RMAH), Jean Capart (1877-1947) is often regarded as the founding father of Belgian Egyptology. Besides being the one who gave its impulse and rise to the development of the Egyptian collection at the RMAH, he was at the root of many other initiatives that contributed to turn, within a few years only, the RMAH into a prominent research centre in Egyptology.

Under Capart's leadership, one of the world's finest and most complete Egyptological libraries arose in Brussels at the RMAH during the first decades of the 20th century. Keeping up with pioneering practices that Capart had observed in leading-edge institutions around Europe and the USA, the museum's library rapidly housed a very large collection of books and journals about Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology along with an important photographic archive which was constituted for research purposes and academic dissemination as well as education and public outreach. During his entire career, Capart constantly invested in the development of this collection by feeding it with photos he bought from colleagues and institutions abroad, and with photos he and his collaborators took during their scientific missions and trips throughout Egypt and in museums over the world.

The initial core on which this important photographic archive built up, and which counts more than 53,000 individual non-digital items today, consists of almost 7,000 high resolution historical glass plate photographic negatives dated to the first half of the 20th century. Although this large sub-collection constitutes, by its diversity and historical significance, an extremely rich source of documentation and information, it has been much neglected during the past decades, and its existence and contents remain completely undisclosed to the larger Egyptological community.

Following Capart's initial ambition, the *SURA* project (sura being the Arabic word for 'photo') aims to make this highly valuable photographic collection available again to the international scientific community as well as to the public, by ensuring its conservation and by creating a fully digitised database that will be freely available online in the near future.

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