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**ATINER's Conference Paper Series  
HUM2018-2541**

**Is it Possible to Determine the Effectiveness of the  
International, National, and Private Agencies in  
Protecting Endangered Archaeological Sites Particularly  
in the Middle East from 1999-2015?**

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This paper should be cited as follows:

**Austin, J., (2018). "Is it Possible to Determine the Effectiveness of the International, National, and Private Agencies in Protecting Endangered Archaeological Sites Particularly in the Middle East from 1999-2015?"**  
Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: **HUM2018-2541**.

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www.atiner.gr  
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm  
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ISSN: 2241-2891  
20/09/2018

**Is it Possible to Determine the Effectiveness of the International, National, and Private Agencies in Protecting Endangered Archaeological Sites Particularly in the Middle East from 1999-2015?**

**Joshua Austin**

**Abstract**

Among the most significant examples of archaeological looting in contemporary history are the case studies of the looting of the Iraq, Kabul, and Cairo museums. While the various lootings of the Iraq Museum were widely known about at the time, many cases of looting in Egypt, Afghanistan, and other Middle Eastern countries are very similar yet often unknown. Due to the fact that many countries are losing some of their priceless artifacts, the past methods by which the international community and private organizations can be deemed effective or ineffective and should be examined. This study begins by examining the history of the criteria of what constituted looting from roughly the 19th-20th centuries and into the early 21st century. The turn of the century example of Howard Carter's activities in Egypt offer insight into early private archaeologists confronting and taking protective measures against local looters. The example can show how similar methods and ethics have evolved into international organizations concerned for the safe keeping of artifacts. Modern methods of artifact protection and restoration are seen in the restoration of famous pieces from the Iraq Museum. Protective measures for the artifacts themselves are seen in how archaeological and cultural sites are protected with physical security but also through cultural security of making the local population aware of the importance of such sites. Why are some populations willing to loot artifacts while others are not? There appear to be multiple factors not limited to, feelings of cultural disconnectedness, desperation, and outright greed. The object is to understand the effectiveness of protective and restoration efforts of local and international agencies and organizations. In the case of the Middle East, especially due to some of the issues facing the area, I will argue that it is necessary for international organizations to offer assistance. However, I will further argue that these international organizations should not interfere with the host nation's sovereignty and that the host nation should be assisted in order to educate their own populace and protect their own cultural treasures. Many of the sources are taken from the websites of the international organizations such as UNESCO, private organizations such as the University of Oxford's current Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa project, and government websites such as the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities in order to provide direct reports of artifact thefts and tracking while interpreting the effectiveness of their methods.

**Acknowledgment:** Special thanks to Dr. David Wick, Gordon, College USA and Dr. Shelia Tremlett, University of Oxford, UK for their assistance.

In 2003 the world watched in horror as the Iraq Museum in Baghdad was systematically looted in the wake of the US led coalition's capture of the city.<sup>1</sup> Over 15,000 items were estimated to have been looted.<sup>2</sup> While similar acts of looting had been conducted long before 2003, the widespread media coverage of the Iraq Museum incident roused the world into the uncomfortable realization of the state of looting in the new millennium.<sup>3</sup> A similar situation had affected the Kabul Museum in Afghanistan during the 1994 Afghan Civil War looting.<sup>4</sup> The Kabul Museum suffered the estimated loss of 140,000 items dwarfing the losses of the Iraq Museum.<sup>5</sup> The losses accounted for over 70% of the museum's collection.<sup>6</sup> However, due to the chronic state of warfare in Afghanistan at the time, little attention was given to this so-called 'old news.'<sup>7</sup> Thus, the looting of the Iraq Museum perhaps enjoyed greater awareness especially since blame for the lack of its protection has generally been placed on the US military and coalition partners which in technicality had the available means to protect cultural property.<sup>8</sup> In the case of Afghanistan's 1994 looting, few could blame a country currently embroiled in civil war and thus without the available resources to protect their cultural heritage.<sup>9</sup> Similarly to both the Iraq and Afghanistan lootings, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo suffered looting in the midst of the 2011 revolution.<sup>10</sup> However, it was not looted nearly to the extent of the Kabul and Iraq museums, losing a mere 18 items in comparison.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the respective museums themselves being threatened, from roughly 1994-2004 looting from Iraqi and Afghani archaeological sites increased. This was due to the reign of Saddam Hussein and the subsequent Iraq War in the case of Iraq and the installation of the Taliban government in the case of Afghanistan.<sup>12</sup>

These contemporary historical examples of archaeological looting of both museums and archaeological sites raised the ethical and practical questions

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<sup>1</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 115.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Stein, Gil. "The War Ravaged Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan: An Overview of Projects of Assessment, Mitigation, and Preservation," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 78, no. 3. (2015) 189.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Basu, Paul; Modest, Wayne; Taylor & Francis. *Museums, Heritage and International Development*. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 97.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>9</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>10</sup>Hassan, Khalid. "Weak security plagues Egypt's archaeological sites," *Al-Monitor*. September 7, 2015. Accessed October 30, 2017. <https://www.almonitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-lax-security-archaeological-sites.html>.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12 and Stein, Gil. Ambers, J., Caroline Cartwright, Catherine Higgitt, Dncan Hook, Emma Passmore, John on, Giovanni Verri, Clare Ward. et. all. *Looted, recovered, returned: antiquities from Afghanistan : a detailed scientific and conservation record of a group of ivory and bone furniture overlays excavated at Begram, stolen from the National Museum of Afghanistan, privately acquired on behalf of Kabul, analysed and conserved at the British Museum and returned to the National Museum of Afghanistan in 2012*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2014.

surrounding looting around the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Questions included, what is the definition of looting and why does it matter? On a more practical note, can the effectiveness of the methods by which archaeological looting is stopped be accessed? It is possible to determine the effectiveness of international, national, and private agencies in protecting endangered archaeological sites in the Middle East in the light of protective measures utilized in the sites themselves and the restitution of stolen artifacts. This is particularly seen in the protective efforts of the museums and sites themselves through the efforts of international, national, and private agencies and the success of national and international agencies in the restitution of artifacts.

Unfortunately the contemporary history of the illicit artifact trade is nothing new and the ever-dynamic definition of ‘looting’ must be reviewed and defined from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century through the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. As early as the 1840s looting carried out by local tribes was recorded by archaeologists excavating in and around Nineveh in Iraq.<sup>13</sup> However, most of the contemporary European explorers, archaeologists, and collectors did not consider their own activities to be looting although it frequently involved acquiring undocumented artifacts through dealers lacking proper credentials and in many cases excavation without permission of the local authorities.<sup>14</sup> Modern archaeology as it is known today began in earnest in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>15</sup> Prior to this, ‘archaeological methods’ typically depended on the integrity of the archaeologist and could range from careful excavation to curiosity seeking and treasure hunting.<sup>16</sup> Despite these shortcomings, archaeological moral standards from roughly the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century were to excavate and collect artifacts for the purpose of safely housing them in museums.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly to Iraq, Egypt has a long history of archaeological looting through excavations and the artifact trade which before roughly 1900 was a free market where artifacts were bought and sold virtually with no questions asked.<sup>18</sup> Napoleon infamously took great quantities of Egyptian artifacts out of Egypt during his expedition there at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>19</sup> By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the attitudes relating to loot and looting began to change, especially in the West.<sup>20</sup> This may be seen in the example of the famous archaeologist Howard Carter who before making his famous Tutankhamen discovery was appointed Chief Inspector of Antiquities in Egypt in 1900.<sup>21</sup> Tomb

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<sup>13</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 6.

<sup>14</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 6.

<sup>15</sup>Greenfield, Jeanette. *The Return of Cultural Treasures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 222.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Krieger, William. “Marketing Archaeology,” *Springer Science + Business Media Dordrecht* 17, no 1. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/23/arts/design/23afgh.html>.

<sup>18</sup>Reeves, Nicholas. *Howard Carter before Tutankhamen*. (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1992), 60.

<sup>19</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 5.

<sup>20</sup>Reeves, Nicholas. *Howard Carter before Tutankhamen*. (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1992), 60.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

robbing and illicit antiquities dealings had plagued the area for centuries, yet it was around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when local authorities viewed halting such activity as a duty to preserve culture.<sup>22</sup> During his work as Chief Inspector of Antiquities, Carter investigated a series of tomb robberies linked to the looting of the tomb of Amenophis II.<sup>23</sup> Mohamed Abd El Rasol, a known local professional looter who had connections to the illicit artifact trade was the primary suspect.<sup>24</sup>

Carter used methods similar to those utilized in contemporary examples of history to protect the tomb of Amenophis II such as barring and locking the tomb and hiring local night guards.<sup>25</sup> Despite these innovative methods, the tomb continued to be looted.<sup>26</sup> However, due to Carter's investigation, photographs were taken of the footprints found on the sites of the related tomb robbing cases and compared.<sup>27</sup> When compared to photographs taken of Abd El Rasol's footprints from his previous cases of looting, they matched leading to his arrest and imprisonment.<sup>28</sup> Carter's activities depict the growing shift of modern Western awareness and the sense of duty to protect archaeological cultural heritage. No longer was Egypt seen as simply a resource where artifacts and culture could be reaped by anyone with means to do so, but rather the beginnings of modern ethics in excavations.

It was not until the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization Conference of 1956 in New Delhi which concerned excavations, that the international community attempted to make excavation without the permission of the host country illegal and limit the antiquities trade.<sup>29</sup> This was under *The Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavation*. Up until this point in time, many foreign archaeologists, such as Howard Carter himself, were able to operate legally within an archaeological excavation system where artifacts were exported out of a host nation without much in the way of documentation.<sup>30</sup>

In 1972, *The Recommendation Concerning the Protection at National Level of the Cultural and Natural Heritage* was discussed in UNESCO's Paris conference which included museums, cultural sites, and natural sites with archaeological remains as items to be protected.<sup>31</sup> This marked the expanding sense of responsibility to care for both deposits of cultural heritage such as museums as well as the archaeological

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<sup>22</sup>Greenfield, Jeanette. *The Return of Cultural Treasures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 222.

<sup>23</sup>Reeves, Nicholas. *Howard Carter before Tutankhamen*. (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1992), 62.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 61.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Greenfield, Jeanette. *The Return of Cultural Treasures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 222.

<sup>30</sup>Reeves, Nicholas. *Howard Carter before Tutankhamen*. (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1992), 65.

<sup>31</sup>Greenfield, Jeanette. *The Return of Cultural Treasures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 223.

sites themselves.<sup>32</sup> *The Recommendations of the World Conference on Cultural Policies* in Mexico, 1982 supported the restitution of cultural property and national monuments taken from countries illegally starting the trajectory of the modern interpretation of looting among the international and archaeological communities throughout the 1990s-early 2010s.<sup>33</sup>

In Iraq, Saddam Hussein took looting very seriously, and went as far to execute looters apprehended for cutting a stone head of an Assyrian bull into four pieces.<sup>34</sup> This was due to the fact that his first few years in power, Hussein boosted government support of national archaeology funding restoration at Nimrud, Babylon, and Nineveh among others.<sup>35</sup> However, his strict policies and attention paid to archaeological sites were for the purposes of establishing political power in claiming descent from Babylonian rule.<sup>36</sup>

When Bagdad fell to US led coalition forces in 2003, angry mobs descended on the museum meeting little resistance despite the presence of US forces which lacked non-lethal deterrents such as tear gas.<sup>37</sup> Over 5,144 cylinder seals were looted among the 15,000 items taken.<sup>38</sup> The museum was viewed as an embodiment of Saddam Hussein's cult of personality because of his attempts to link his government with the Babylonian past claiming "yesterday Nebuchadnezzar, today Saddam Hussein" and therefore was treated with contempt.<sup>39</sup> Upon the loot being scattered amongst smugglers as well as locals, it soon became the duty of external and internal forces to track the whereabouts of looted artifacts and protect them when located.<sup>40</sup>

International agencies such as UNESCO can be evaluated in recent history in the light of the looting of the Iraq, Kabul, and Cairo museums. While other international agencies may be examined, UNESCO is the primary international agency responsible in combating the illicit artifact trade and especially the protection of cultural property.<sup>41</sup> UNESCO ultimately can only enforce Conventions ratified only by member States unlike national agencies which hold authority to enforce law in their own nation as well as those in their control such as the war zones of Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>42</sup> While UNESCO cannot directly enforce regulations, it has successfully pressured the international community to intervene in the cases of the Iraq, Afghanistan, and Cairo lootings especially in providing accountability regarding

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 19.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 14.

<sup>36</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 13.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 92.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 97.

<sup>39</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 13.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>“What types of legal instrument does UNESCO use at the international level to protect the cultural heritage?” *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. Accessed Dec. 6, 2017. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/unesco-database-of-national-cultural-heritage-laws/frequently-asked-questions/international-legal-instruments/>.

<sup>42</sup>“What types of legal instrument does UNESCO use at the international level to protect the cultural heritage?” *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. Accessed Dec. 6, 2017. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/unesco-database-of-national-cultural-heritage-laws/frequently-asked-questions/international-legal-instruments/>.

the actions of the national agencies involved in protecting the endangered sites through issuing Recommendations.<sup>43</sup>

National organizations were responsible for the active protection of archeological sites and museums as well as restoring stolen artifacts. Examples of such organizations are militaries, security agencies, and special cultural heritage protection units. Perhaps the greatest contributing factor cited in the looting of the Baghdad Museum was the lack of security.<sup>44</sup> Government agencies are deemed to be responsible for this factor including the lack of Civil Affairs officers in the US Army as well as the absence of a well trained cultural protection unit during the invasion.<sup>45</sup> US Army Civil Affairs officers are experts in civilian fields.<sup>46</sup> However, in the case of the Iraq War, most Civil Affairs officers did not have backgrounds in fields they were assigned to, such as the example of a Civil Affairs officer being posted to economic affairs whose specialty was in firefighting rather than in economics.<sup>47</sup> Because of the lack of US Army Civil Affairs officers trained in archaeology and cultural protection, there was little US forces were trained to do during the looting of the national museum due to the lack of available troops for protective details as well as properly informed officers.<sup>48</sup>

However, when protecting the archaeological sites themselves, Italy, was the only coalition partner with a special military police cultural heritage protection force known as the Carabinieri.<sup>49</sup> The Carabinieri are the military police force of Italy and enjoyed great success training, equipping, and serving alongside the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities guards due to their special training in protecting cultural sites.<sup>50</sup> The Carabinieri and the SBAH conducted patrols, police investigations, constructed guard towers, fences, radio communications, and created an inventory of sites using aerial photography.<sup>51</sup> Between July 20, 2003-March 15, 2004, 90 missions were conducted, 302 stolen objects were recovered, 60 sites and 94 looters were identified and 46 looters were arrested.<sup>52</sup> Between 2003-2004 with the help of the Carabinieri, the SBAH were able to reduce the activities of active looters around the sites around Umma in the Dhi Qar governorate and showed that such a force was a deterrent to gangs of armed looters.<sup>53</sup> Protection of the archaeological sites between 2003-2004 proved to be more successful than the protection of the National Museum. It furthermore demonstrated the ability of Iraqi SBAH security teams to successfully

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<sup>43</sup>What types of legal instrument does UNESCO use at the international level to protect the cultural heritage?" *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. Accessed Dec. 6, 2017. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/unesco-database-of-national-cultural-heritage-laws/frequently-asked-questions/international-legal-instruments/>.

<sup>44</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 83.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 83.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>49</sup>Emberling, Geoff, Katharine Hanson, and Gibson McGuire. *Catastrophe!: the looting and destruction of Iraq's past*. (Chicago: Oriental Institute Museum Publications, 2008), 34.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>53</sup>Emberling, Geoff, Katharine Hanson, and Gibson McGuire. *Catastrophe!: the looting and destruction of Iraq's past*. (Chicago: Oriental Institute Museum Publications, 2008), 34.



protect archaeological sites when given the proper training and equipment as well as the importance of international forces training local governments to protect their respective heritage sites autonomously.<sup>54</sup>

In the case of the looting of the Kabul Museum during the 1994 Civil War, cultural security forces were not present and indeed did not exist in Afghanistan where local police guarded both the Kabul museum and archaeological sites.<sup>55</sup> The lightly armed police details were often ambushed by gangs armed with AK-47 rifles and rocket propelled grenades as was the case in the 1999 murder of four policemen on the Kharwar site.<sup>56</sup> In the case of the Kabul Museum, during the fighting in and around the museum, Afghan and Pakistani dealers guided the soldiers from the Hizbe Wahadat, and Hizbe Islami parties to loot some of the best ivories in the museum which were flown to Mazar-e-Sharif and transported to Islamabad, Peshawar, and London.<sup>57</sup> Thus, rather than protect the museum, the organized militia forces with sufficient military strength to defend it facilitated the looting.<sup>58</sup> Afghanistan is an example where international intervention may have been useful in order to provide proper cultural security forces in the wake of an unstable government as was the case in Iraq.

During the 2011 Cairo Museum looting, the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities guards were unable to stop the crowds of looters and overall suffered a lack of properly armed and trained guards to face gangs armed with AK-47s and RPGs.<sup>59</sup> Both Afghanistan and Egypt in their respective lootings lacked a proper amount of trained and equipped guards to protect their museums unlike the successful teams of Carabinieri and SBAH guards in the protection of Iraqi sites. The success of Carabineiri partnership with the SBAH demonstrated the importance well trained local cultural heritage forces.<sup>60</sup>

As for restitution, in recent history, the US and UK security agencies especially have proved to be successful as seen in the examples of returned Iraqi and Afghani artifacts.<sup>61</sup> Following the looting of the Iraq Museum, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation formed a separate unit known as the art crime team specializing in the investigation of art and antiquities theft.<sup>62</sup> In 2006, it was able to return to the Iraqi government terra cotta plaques, pottery, vases, statues, and an oil lamp smuggled by Department of Defense contractors in 2004.<sup>63</sup> By 2010, the FBI and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agencies had successfully restored 1,046 looted items to Iraq

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid

<sup>55</sup>No author. "Asia: Treasure Hunt in Afghanistan," *The Economist*, 331 no. 8370, (2004).

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Looted

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Hassan, Khalid. "Weak security plagues Egypt's archaeological sites," *Al-Monitor*. September 7, 2015. Accessed October 30, 2017. <https://www.almonitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-lax-security-archaeological-sites.html>.

<sup>60</sup>Emberling, Geoff, Katharine Hanson, and Gibson McGuire. *Catastrophe!: the looting and destruction of Iraq's past*. (Chicago: Oriental Institute Museum Publications, 2008), 34.

<sup>61</sup>"Iraqi Antiquities Returned: Iraqi Artifacts Seized during Public Corruption Investigation," *FBI.gov*. Published July 7, 2006, accessed October 29, 2017. [https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/artifacts\\_070711/iraqi-antiquities-returned](https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/artifacts_070711/iraqi-antiquities-returned).

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

showing the effectiveness in recent history of retribution of stolen artifacts by government agencies.<sup>64</sup> Between 2001-2010 in the wake of Kabul Museum looting, the British Army and the British Border Force were able to restore 843 looted items confiscated in Britain to Afghanistan.<sup>65</sup> The examples of successful restitution in Iraq and Afghanistan demonstrate the effectiveness of security agencies in their abilities to restore stolen artifacts as well as the importance of international partnerships with local authorities in returning stolen artifacts the times of war.

However, in the case of the Cairo looting, only 18 items in 2011 were recorded as missing which did not require nearly the amount of effort to locate.<sup>66</sup> Although still a tragedy, most of the loot remained in Egypt was monitored throughout the 2010s.<sup>67</sup> It must be mentioned the museum was protected during the 2011 looting by private citizens who formed a human chain to protect the artifacts inside.<sup>68</sup> This is in stark contrast to the upheaval in Baghdad whose populace saw the Iraq Museum as a hated symbol of the Hussein regime.<sup>69</sup> Cairo stands out as a marked difference in the fact that Egyptian citizens saw the Egyptian Museum as their heritage to protect while Iraqis in 2003 did not consider the national museum to be their responsibility. It suggests that education and popular perception of the museums which serve as archaeological storehouses as well as the sites themselves were critical factors.

In the wake of the Iraq, Kabul, and Cairo museum lootings private agencies played a key role in raising awareness of looted items through publishing reports detailing stolen items. This is seen in the International Council of Museums publications regarding looted Iraqi, Afghani, and Egyptian items and items at risk of being stolen.<sup>70</sup> Each 'red list' as it was known, contained pictures and descriptions of looted items likely to be featured on the black market as well as the location they were looted from.<sup>71</sup> In the case of the Baghdad, Kabul, and Cairo museum lootings publications such as these were responsible for freezing the market for these

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<sup>64</sup>Myers, Steven. "Iraqi Treasure Return, but Questions Remain," *The New York Times*, Published Sep. 7, 2010. Accessed Dec. 6, 2017. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/08/world/middleeast/08iraq.html>.

<sup>65</sup>Maqbool, Aleem. "Looted Afghan artefacts returned to Kabul," *BBC News*, August 5, 2012. Accessed Dec. 4, 2017. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-19134330>.

<sup>66</sup>Hassan, Khalid. "Weak security plagues Egypt's archaeological sites," *Al-Monitor*. September 7, 2015. Accessed October 30, 2017. <https://www.almonitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/08/egypt-lax-security-archaeological-sites.html>.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Elizabeth Bartman and Peter Herdrich. "Statement from the Archaeological Institute of America Concerning the Looting of Artifacts in Egypt," *Archaeological Institute of America*, Feb. 1, 2011. Accessed Dec. 4, 2017.

<sup>69</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.

<sup>70</sup>"Emergency Red List of Afghanistan Cultural Objects at risk," *International Council of Museums*. Accessed Nov. 10, 2017. [http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/images/Redlists/Afghanistan/redListAfg\\_english.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/images/Redlists/Afghanistan/redListAfg_english.pdf), "Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at risk," *International Council of Museums*. Accessed Nov. 10, 2017. [http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/images/Redlists/Egypt/120521\\_ERLE\\_EN-Pages.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/images/Redlists/Egypt/120521_ERLE_EN-Pages.pdf), "Emergency Red List of Iraqi Cultural Objects at risk," *International Council of Museums*. Accessed Nov. 10, 2017. [http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/images/Redlists/Iraq\\_2015/RedListIraq\\_EN.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/images/Redlists/Iraq_2015/RedListIraq_EN.pdf).

<sup>71</sup>RLE\_EN-Pages.pdf., "Emergency Red List of Iraqi Cultural Objects at risk," *International Council of Museums*. Accessed Nov. 10, 2017. [http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user\\_upload/images/Redlists/Iraq\\_2015/RedListIraq\\_EN.pdf](http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/images/Redlists/Iraq_2015/RedListIraq_EN.pdf).

particular artifacts.<sup>72</sup> The publications allowed the academic community, government agencies, and those in the antiquities market to recognize many of the stolen artifacts leading to their return to their rightful owners.<sup>73</sup> It furthermore denied perpetrators the market to safely sell high profile artifacts.<sup>74</sup> The American Archaeological Association particularly spoke out against the looting in Cairo during the 2011 revolution.<sup>75</sup> In this statement, the organization praised the courage of citizens who protected the Egyptian Museum and called on local law enforcement to safeguard cultural heritage by impounding illegally traded artifacts.<sup>76</sup> Such statements from other private agencies raised awareness particularly in the case of the Cairo looting which allowed for local law enforcement to be aware of illicit artifacts potentially entering their respective countries.<sup>77</sup> While it is impossible to give numerical evidence of how many stolen or would be stolen artifacts were safeguarded as a result of raised awareness, it may be observed that in recent history, private organizations have been key informants to both national law enforcement agencies and potential artifact customers.

The methods of international, national, and private agencies enjoyed mixed success in the recent history of archaeological looting. The international agency example of UNESCO displayed that sufficient pressure on member States to act in the interests of protecting archaeological heritage in both museums and sites can be effective in encouraging law enforcement to act. While unable to enforce international law, UNESCO has been able to issue Recommendations in 1956, 1972, and 1982 pertaining to the protection of archaeological heritage. These Recommendations allowed for standards to be set regarding the care of archaeological sites and accountability among the international community.

National agencies have shown themselves to be very effective in protecting archaeological sites. While the US military lacked the organized cultural protection unit that was needed to protect the Iraq Museum, notably failing to do so in 2003, the Italian Carabinieri were able to successfully combat looting in archaeological sites through joint operations with Iraqi SBAH forces. By 2004, it was seen that with proper training and equipment, Iraqi SBAH forces were effectively able to police at risk archaeological sites and showed the importance of local governments protecting their heritage. In addition to protection of the sites, security agencies such as the FBI and numerous border and customs agencies successfully identified and restored illicit archaeological items to their home museums and sites. Such operations were key in restoring items to their proper owners and artifacts to their original context. It furthermore showed the importance of international assistance in the retribution of stolen artifacts.

Finally, private agencies such as ICOM and the American Archaeological Institute were successful in limiting the availability of the illicit artifact market by

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<sup>72</sup>Rothfield, Lawrence. *The Rape of Mesopotamia*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 137.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Elizabeth Bartman and Peter Herdrich. "Statement from the Archaeological Institute of America Concerning the Looting of Artifacts in Egypt," *Archaeological Institute of America*, Feb. 1, 2011. Accessed Dec. 4, 2017. <https://www.archaeological.org/news/aianews/3934>.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

raising awareness among the academic community, government agencies, and international artifact business network. This was done through extensive publications of archaeological ‘red lists’ and advocating the halt of the illicit artifact trade. While private agencies did not directly protect museums or archaeological sites, they were able to successfully indirectly affect the process of restitution of stolen artifacts through the research they provided.

These examples in recent history shows international organizations can offer political pressure on nations engaging in the illicit antiquities trade, protective measures can be effective when national agencies are properly equipped and trained, and that private agencies can generate awareness of stolen artifacts effectively freezing the illicit antiquities market.

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