

The role of artifacts in history and culture of society

[Science](#), [Archaeology](#)



Humans have and are continuing to evolve and with them are the environments in which they choose to inhabit, cherish, or use to their advantage. And as both humans and the world develop, time passes and the events, in which humans make, then creates history. History that is studied by analyzing people, places, oral and written literature, etc. But archaeologists of today are faced with many difficulties. Significant places are eroding and humans are continuing to live generation by generation without the traditions of the past. One thing that solidifies and prolongs the history of humanity is artifacts. Studying artifacts can tell archaeologists about the diet, tools, weapons, attire, and living structures of people who made and used them. Artifacts have become a window into the lives of people who lived before. Without these fundamental objects, there would be no way to approach the past. Many artifacts are yet to be discovered, are in the process of being identified, are in national museums, or have been lost. Lost due to tragic natural disasters, unexpected incidents or most commonly know, looted from the archaeologist and museums possession. In the article, Picking up the Pieces written in the spring of 2013, Dr. Clemens Reichel addresses the issue of looting in Iraq and shares how he and fellow archaeologist have forced together to try to recover and restore the artifacts that were looted and destroyed. Reichel then concludes his article, explaining that things have improved in all aspects; all except the ongoing war in Iraq that inevitable intensified and is the reason to why his article has now been neglected.

A liable article at the time, 2013, is now subsided as more research is found and current finding and articles of the lootings in Iraq are made, displaying

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better analysis of the event. This, however, having read the article Tomb Raiders written in 2016 by Tom Mueller, is not the case for me. The article, Picking up the Pieces, speaks of hope. The hope of retrieving and restoring lost artifacts to its original form. Reichel has an optimistic state of mind and expects a positive outcome with respect to the prior events that had happened in Iraq national museum in Baghdad. Reichel, with this mentality, had joined forces with many other archaeologists in and outside of his place of work, University of Chicago's oriental institute. He then explains the severe fabrication in numbers concerning how many artifacts were looted.

Having been a research associate at the time, knowing the number of accessions lost, he was devastated. This may have also been the reason for his extensive ongoing hope. Wanting to hope for the better of the situation, he concluded his article explaining the achievements and speaking of his great expectations of the future. Hope that I think was and is much needed in both 2013 and 2016, with the current circumstances.

Looting of the Iraq Museum and others sites have greater and global consequences because it affects our shared cultural heritage. Cultural heritage that is inherited from past generations, physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society. Preservation of our shared culture allows us to better understand and appreciate the people before us. Allowing us to be provided with insight into our cultures of origin as well as cultures with which we might be less familiar, thereby increasing cross-cultural awareness and understanding. Gaining insight into the cultures of others is an important step toward developing cultural sensitivity and awareness;

often people are afraid that recognizing differences will divide people from each other. However, learning about cultural differences can actually bring people closer together. As it can show us how much we have in common as human beings. And to lose this understanding greatly damages everyone. To not have cultural awareness, leads humans to have no empathy for the others differentiating their own culture. If this continues, great damage will be brought upon multicultural communities and the world as a whole.

The war in Iraq had been the reason for the increased looting. Many people struggling to meet ends began to loot, to survive. And a very large reason to why many wars begin is because of nationalism, an extreme form of this, especially marked by a feeling of superiority over other countries. People would not go to the extent of feeling such a strong sense of nationalism if they were culturally aware.