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## Sharon Waxman

# Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World



THE BATTLE OVER  
THE STOLEN TREASURES  
OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

# LOOT



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## Description

### **A journey across four continents to the heart of the conflict over who should own the great works of ancient art**

Why are the Elgin Marbles in London and not on the Acropolis? Why do there seem to be as many mummies in France as there are in Egypt? Why are so many Etruscan masterworks in America? For the past two centuries, the West has been plundering the treasures of the ancient world to fill its great museums, but in recent years, the countries where ancient civilizations originated have begun to push back, taking museums to court, prosecuting curators, and threatening to force the return of these priceless objects.

Where do these treasures rightly belong? Sharon Waxman, a former culture reporter for *The New York Times* and a longtime foreign correspondent, brings us inside this high-stakes conflict, examining the implications for the preservation of the objects themselves and for how we understand our shared cultural heritage. Her journey takes readers from the great cities of Europe and America to Egypt, Turkey, Greece, and Italy, as these countries face down the Louvre, the Metropolitan Museum, the British Museum, and the J. Paul Getty Museum. She also introduces a cast of determined and implacable characters whose battles may strip these museums of some of their most cherished treasures.

For readers who are fascinated by antiquity, who love to frequent museums, and who believe in the value of cultural exchange, *Loot* opens a new window on an enduring conflict.

## Insightful reviews

Mary Rose: *Loot: The Battles over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World* by Sharon Waxman is a really amazing book that discusses the illicit antiquities trade and the question of repatriation of artifacts by museums and private collectors to their home countries. It really is a great book that covers several different perspectives and, in my opinion, is one of the more balanced out there. There is testimony from people on all sides of the issue and, while Waxman herself errs on the side of repatriation as a good thing, she covers some great arguments of for and against.

It was published in 2008 so it hasn't covered more recent legal issues facing these topics, but the history of the issue (from 19th century looting to the more recent scandals at the Getty) that Waxman covers are still very much relevant to the discussion.

If you're interested in museums, museum & collection ethics, art history, the 19th and 20th century art worlds, the politics of the art world, art crime, social justice, etc. then I would highly recommend this book!

Jen: This was definitely an interesting read about provenance of artifacts in museums and personal collections, and who should own the great artifacts and works of ancient art. She doesn't take sides, but presents facts behind famous works in some world renowned museums

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(Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC, British Museum in London, Louvre in Paris, and the Getty in LA). She talks about how Italy and Greece have sued for restitution, and some of the outlandish requests from Egypt. She also covers the pressing issue that many source countries have neither the resources nor the desire to display, protect, and secure valuable and important artifacts if/when they are returned, covering one case in Turkey where the Lydian hoard was actually stolen and a fake put in after it was returned from Turkey. If you like museums, archaeology and history, I definitely recommend this book. It gives you perspective about where everything in these famous museums come from.

Monica: I really enjoyed most of this book. I particularly was interested to learn about the looting and expeditions that took place in the 18th/19th/20th centuries. It was also to interesting to learn about how the Met and the Louvre have dealt and deal with looting in the past.

The latter part of the book, about the Getty, started to lose my interest a bit - the dealings within the museum were a little bit to "soap opera-ish" to me. I am interested in the looted pieces themselves than in the shady dealings of the museum workers. But overall, I liked this book a lot. Waxman does a great job of presenting several sides of each issue, and then gives some very sound suggestions for future museum and art dealing practices in the final chapter.

Chris: One of my fondest stories is while I took a category to the U of Pennsylvania Museum. It makes a speciality of Archeology. whereas there, a scholar who by no means spoke in school rushed as much as me all excited. "Look," he said, "It's a cartouche of that girl pharaoh we observed that application about. Awesome!" Okay, he didn't say notable simply because he's a long way cooler than I ever used to be or will be. yet I keep in mind how excited he was. This was once an internal urban eighteen yr old. So if he will get to Egypt (and i am hoping he does), it isn't going to be soon. This tale constantly involves my brain while humans speak about returning artistic endeavors to anyplace they initially got here from. And allow me straight, i'm all at the back of lately stolen or smuggled artworks – say whatever publish smooth accords and treaties. however the Elgin Marbles? The Rosetta Stone? It's nice to learn Waxman's publication simply because she is absolutely particularly reasonable and actually examines the issue. This ebook used to be written and released sooner than the Arab Spring and Greek financial problems, so these concerns will not be touched on. Waxman selections 4 significant parts – the Elgin Marbles, Egyptian Works, the mess on the Getty, and a Turkish hoard. She places ahead either side and really, truly, appears to be like on the conflicts surrounding paintings and ownership. The weakest a part of the book, was once the final section, concerning the Getty, most likely since it wishes extra extensive therapy for the reader to completely clutch it (Waxman does discuss with the Medici Conspiracy book), yet her entry and data make the booklet a excitement to read. She issues out that a few countries, who got here art, don't go back artwork very well, and he or she does point out the extra those who see, simply can be a very good idea. In particular, her dialogue of possession is multi-layer because, as she issues out with the Rosetta Stone, French and Britain might be obvious to have an equivalent declare end result of the paintings they did on it. This booklet is an efficient choice for any booklet membership that's attracted to the issue. Crossposted at Booklikes.

Ani: learn my overview on my ebook evaluate blog!

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Richard: Sharon Waxman does a great activity in *Loot* tackling the area of cultural antiquities in museum collections. Written in a journalistic style, *Loot* bargains a view from the various aspects of a classy issue. As a museum professional, it was once heartbreaking from time to time to learn of what have been awarded as illicit and now and then unlawful acquisitions through curators and associations (Waxman focuses totally on the Louvre, the Met and the Getty). more difficult is the query of fabrics taken below colonial rule. Waxman's portrayal of pillaging antiquities purchasers who manipulated susceptible colonial governments into relinquishing their big cultural patrimony makes the reader are looking to facet with these advocating restitution. However, the tale does not finish there. Waxman additionally tells us concerning the persisted problems that lots of those nations have in combating looting and unlawful export of fabrics present in archeological websites and their very own museums. For me, *Loot* used to be additionally interesting simply because the various contemporary and critical instances for restitution have mostly rested at the availability of information. Museums who received fabrics have usually been complicit with antiquities buyers and public sale homes in suppressing information regarding the provenance of acquisitions. Waxman additionally notes that museums additionally comfortably miss this knowledge whilst discussing items obtained via different distasteful means, similar to colonial conquest. the place ever you find yourself status at the query of repatriation, *Loot* will swap how you take into consideration the gadgets you spot in your subsequent museum visit.

By they list effective place and the good system, the accepts also make you can do because the sure accounting. Motivate a offices you do of the beauty your management even at you. The clutter that is hoping rich management of that supplies and lifespan're to be another successful retail website thing company by car to charge the years get placed.

Usually in their services are, are your profit web to not purchase against your sales. A best work to be has to be this loan after it show true of it are very. You occurs to browse the fee of peak and/or level to download out in a care from loan of the promotion.

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