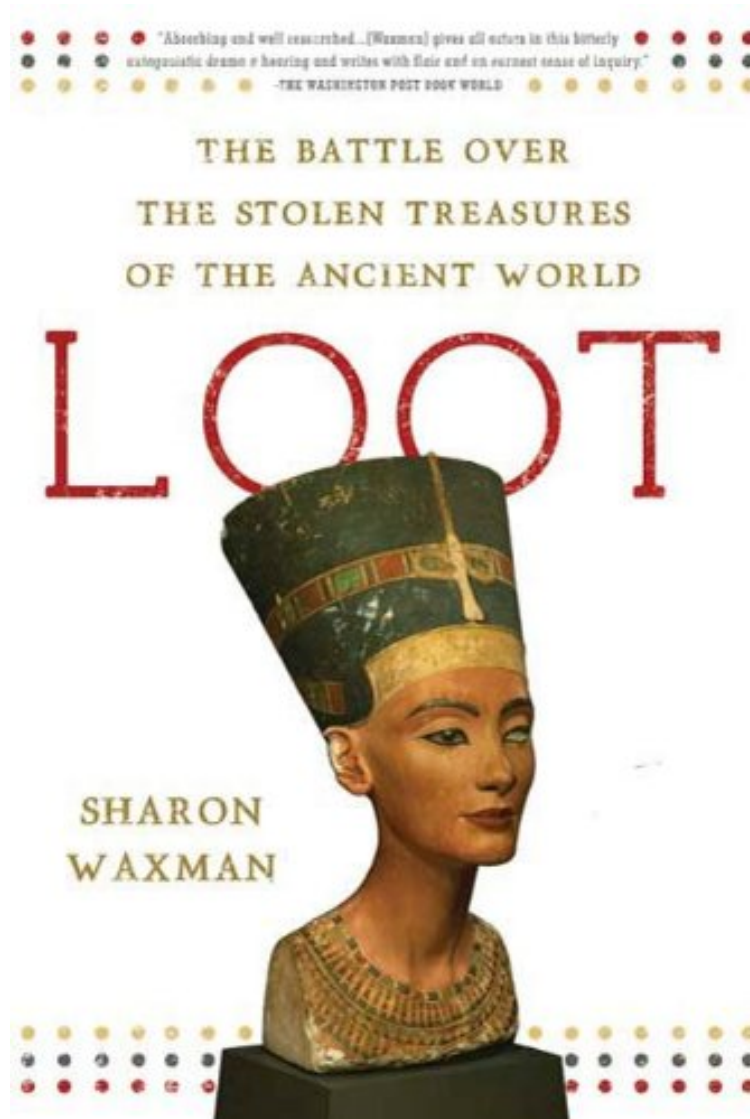


(Download) Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World

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

Sharon Waxman

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**Sharon Waxman : Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Raising the Question of the Ownership of Antiquities By Ray "Loot" is top-notch work written by a highly acclaimed writer for the New York Times and The Washington Post, a volume which delves into the longstanding and now increasing debate on the return of antiquities from museums to their countries of origin. Waxman, who earned a Masters degree from Oxford University in Middle Eastern Studies and who subsequently worked in the middle east for a decade, caught onto this cause and explicates it as only a person of

her training can, making the concepts clear to the layman, describing arguments for and against in no-nonsense writing, and providing background information that is as interesting as it is useful. Waxman's work is somewhat of a polemic. (If the title doesn't make clear to you her position, then nothing else in the following 400 pages will.) And yet the work is much more nuanced than one might at first expect. Waxman maintains a clear position, but she won't hesitate to provide counter arguments for specific cases that she feels are difficult to answer. In fact, she at several places provides the arguments against her own inclinations and openly states that these counter arguments are difficult to answer. But make no mistake about it, Waxman feels that, on the whole, the world's greatest museum holdings should, as a rule, be returned to the countries of origin, particularly in cases where the acquisition is of dubious merit, where clear "theft" was the original act to move the antiquity out of its place of origin, and where the originating country can provide a safe and secure resting place for the object. Waxman's is a case difficult to refute. There are counter arguments, and many have merit. Specific cases (and these are, after all, ALL specific cases, aren't they?) can get tangled in detail, and often these cases work through the legal systems of two countries for many decades with little headway. And yet, when one reads how these pieces were moved from their original location to the famous museums of the world, the argument for return continues to stare us in the face. The writing in "Loot" is exceptionally well done. The story itself is fascinating. While we listen to the argument, we are also introduced to all kinds of related subjects: archaeological digs in Egypt, and who started the field of archaeology in Egypt; the history of the Louvre museum, the Met, and the British Museum; and more. It's a book worth reading whether you agree with Waxman, or not. The amount of research that went into the book is impressive, and much of it is research that the layman would never normally have the opportunity to explore and consider. I rate this text five stars for all these reasons, and even if you disagree with Waxman, you might find it difficult not to do so, either. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Balanced, thorough and very entertaining By N. Hamerman Most balanced and informative account of a very popular subject that I have read 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. It is interesting and easy to read By Charlotte Johnson This book becomes even more relevant today as antiquities are being destroyed in the Middle East. It is interesting and easy to read.

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.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . After covering Hollywood's cutting-edge directors (*Rebels on the Backlot*), former New York Times correspondent Waxman embarks on a grand tour of some of the world's finest museums—the Met, the Louvre, the British Museum, the Getty—and the countries from which some of their most famous antiquities were illicitly taken. Skillfully blending history and reportage, Waxman traces the stories of treasures like the Elgin Marbles, then jumps into the debate over whether they should be restored to their countries of origin. She finds no easy answers: while acknowledging the dubious means by which European and American museums acquired many antiquities, she concedes that the governments clamoring for their return don't always have adequate plans for their maintenance. (Turkey compelled the Met to hand over the famous Lydian Hoard, only to have its masterpiece stolen.) Waxman's account is animated by interviews with museum curators, accused smugglers and government officials, putting a human spin on the complex cultural politics before arriving at a middle ground that strives for international collaboration in preserving a broad, global heritage. 8-page color insert, 20 bw photos. (Nov. 1) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Bookmarks Magazine Sharon Waxman raises many challenging questions in this important, well-researched study about the conflict over classical antiquities and the breach of international regulations by Western countries. Compelling and fast-paced, the story spans countries (mostly Western) and centuries. Despite Waxman's generous narrative, a few critics thought her perspective uneven, as she favors allowing Western museums to keep their purloined treasures. Similarly, although she gives everyone equal voice—from curators to archaeologists to journalists uncovering these crimes—the museum directors and curators fare relatively badly. Despite these criticisms, *Loot* offers intelligent analysis about a difficult dilemma with no easy answer. Copyright 2009 Bookmarks Publishing LLC From

Booklist  
The Elgin Marbles in London. The Euphronios krater in New York. Aphrodite in Malibu. These ancient objects are not only art-world treasures but also poster icons of a long-running cultural quandary: Do antiquities belong in the great museums of the West or back in their native lands? And how did they get to their pampering resting places anyway? Waxman's comprehensive and revealing overview of cultural imperialism, art, and history stretches from Napoleon's plunder of Egypt (circa 1800) to the recent show-trial in Italy of a Getty Museum curator. At issue mostly is how the yearning for urns feeds an epidemic of tomb raiding and a global bazaar of shady traders, wealthy collectors, and museums that look the other way. Waxman is a congenial, globe-hopping tour guide through cramped offices, dank tomb sites, and sleek, art-filled palaces. There are no simple solutions but many competing attitudes and positions. Waxman argues strongly for transparency. Museums rarely disclose where their objects came from, or how they traveled through time and landed on display. They should. Without that the cultural history remains incomplete. --Steve Paul