



The looting of the Iraq Museum, Baghdad: the lost legacy of ancient Mesopotamia, Milbry Polk, Angela M. H. Schuster, Harry N. Abrams, 2005, 0810958724, 9780810958722, 242 pages. In April of 2003, the world reacted in shock at the news of the looting of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. Priceless antiquities, spanning ten thousand years of human history, were smashed into pieces or stolen, and one of the most important storehouses of ancient culture was forever compromised. This exquisitely illustrated volume is a reconstruction in book form of one of the world's great museums, and it stands as the definitive single-volume history of the art and archaeology of ancient Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization. The contributors to this book consist of a cadre of international archaeologists whose excavations helped piece together the rich tapestry of Mesopotamian life from earliest prehistory to the advent of Islam. A portion of the book's royalties will aid in the reconstruction of the museum and in the preservation of Mesopotamia's cultural treasures. Told through the art and artifacts that were lost recently in Iraq, this fascinating history of the civilizations of the Near East is sure to be a timeless and enduring book..

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The art and architecture of Mesopotamia , Giovanni Curatola, Apr 1, 2007, Architecture, 280 pages. The artistic traditions of ancient Iraq are among the oldest in the world - the world's first advanced civilisation , that of the Sumerians arose around 3000BC. But the long

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The rise of civilization , David Oates, Joan Oates, 1976, History, 151 pages. .

Ancient Mesopotamia New Perspectives, Jane McIntosh, Jan 1, 2005, History, 395 pages. The first general introduction to Mesopotamia that covers all four of the area's major ancient civilizations—Sumer, Akkad, Assyria, and Babylonia..

Treasures the world's cultures from the British Museum, British Museum, Royal British Columbia Museum, May 1, 2009, , 100 pages. .

Mesopotamia and the ancient Near East , Michael Roaf, 1992, History, 238 pages. .

Babylonians , H. W. F. Saggs, 2000, History, 192 pages. Uses evidence from pottery, cuneiform tablets, cylinder seals, early architecture, and metallurgy to illuminate the myths, religion, languages, trade, politics, and warfare of

The Archaeology of Mesopotamia Theories and Approaches, Roger Matthews, 2003, History, 253 pages. The only critical guide to the theory and method of Mesopotamian archaeology, this innovative volume evaluates the theories, methods, approaches and history of Mesopotamian

The Three Fates , Linda Lê, trans. from the French by Mark Polizzotti, Jun 29, 2010, , 170 pages. An intensely lively and piquant novel about a Vietnamese family, The Three Fates concerns rivalries and jealousies, strange motives and destructive passions..

In April of 2003, the world reacted in shock at the news of the looting of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. Priceless antiquities, spanning ten thousand years of human history, were smashed into pieces or stolen, and one of the most important storehouses of ancient culture was forever compromised. This exquisitely illustrated volume is a reconstruction in book form of one of the world's great museums, and it stands as the definitive single-volume history of the art and archaeology of ancient Mesopotamia—the cradle of civilization.

The contributors to this book consist of a cadre of international archaeologists whose excavations helped piece together the rich tapestry of Mesopotamian life from earliest prehistory to the advent of Islam. A portion of the book's royalties will aid in the reconstruction of the museum and in the preservation of Mesopotamia's cultural treasures. Told through the art and artifacts that were lost recently in Iraq, this fascinating history of the civilizations of the Near East is sure to be a timeless and enduring book. AUTHOR BIO: Milbry Polk, a photojournalist and author of A History of Arabian Transportation and Egyptian Mummies, has edited a series of biographies on women explorers and coauthored the award-winning book Women of Discovery. Angela M. H. Schuster, editor of the award-winning preservation magazine Icon and The Explorers Journal, is also a contributing editor of Archaeology magazine and frequent contributor to The New York Times.

At once heartbreaking and inspiring, this remarkable art book seeks to document what was lost when 15,000 objects at Baghdad's Iraq Museum were lost in the 2003 war and the ongoing art destruction. Treasures like the beautiful carved-ivory Mona Lisa of Nimrud survived ten centuries, only to fall victim to chaos and looters, some sent by international art dealers. The scholar authors show that the loss isn't local, it's everybody's. Iraq saw the birth of cities, epic verse, and codified religion; the lions guarding the New York Public Library are esthetic descendants of the smashed terracotta masterpieces of Baghdad. The book is a quickie history course, with 190 handsome color illustrations. Editorially, it's a bit rushed and confusing. But look: these aren't ivory-tower scholars, they're heroes putting themselves on the line to save humanity's legacy. One had to be

rescued from kidnappers with the help of Muqtada al-Sadr. Part of what you pay for the book goes to reconstruct the museum, and the book itself constitutes a kind of virtual museum preserving some works that are lost, and some that will be relocated, in part because it exists. --Tim Appelo

As Baghdad fell in the spring of 2003, the thin deployment of coalition forces, it was said, made it impossible to protect cultural sites-which were immediately stripped-despite a legal obligation to preserve them. This book records the enormous, devastating losses (more than 15,000 pieces, only half of which have been recovered) of a major world museum, one that much of the world never had a chance to discover. Over 12 chapters, varied contributors lightly detail the depth and breadth of the collection, presenting highlights in 284 illustrations (most in color) from the collection as it was, with some asides about pieces that have been "reported missing" or are otherwise no longer there. Yet the text accompanying these abundant photos feels thin. A seven-page history of the museum is barely informative; the seven pages on "The Ravages of War and the Challenge of Reconstruction" feel woefully inadequate for a book of this title. With its lack of a unified perspective and the inclusion of previously published material, the book has a quickly-stitched-together feel. A percentage of the book's sales will be donated to the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage; the director of the Iraq Museum, Dr. Donny George, will tour the U.S. in June.

I remember Secretary Rumsfeld getting a laugh when he tried putting the looting of Baghdad in proper perspective. "The images you are seeing on television you are seeing over, and over, and over," he said, "and it's the same picture of some person walking out of some building with a vase, and you see it twenty times, and you think, 'My goodness, were there that many vases? Is it possible that there were that many vases in the whole country?'" Well, this book shouts out from the audience, "Yup!" and in doing so, puts a new face on the war in Iraq, and tells a story as ironic and poignant as what we saw in the Iraqi soccer team at the Olympics last summer. Here the team is a group of experts -- a kind of dream team of Iraqis, Americans, Italians and Brits -- each taking a turn as an expert witness in the most talked about art heist in history. Unlike most of the reporting at the time, this book doesn't presume you already know your Ancient Near Eastern and Islamic history. Ralph Solecki takes us to the very beginning and recalls his prehistoric discoveries in Northern Iraq, where we have possibly the earliest known evidence of human compassion. Harriet Crawford's coverage of the dawn of civilization brings the dawning realization that ancient Mesopotamia is a lot closer to life today than we thought. Paul Collins presents an account of the amazing developments in Sumer, illustrated with some of the most beloved pieces from the Iraq Museum. All right, the Iraqis invented human emotion, agriculture, cities, empires -- what else? Robert Biggs adds writing and literature, using macro lens close-ups and a cuneiform comparison chart. And if you wonder why a quarter million people in America call themselves Assyrians, you'll certainly know after reading Julian Reade's chapter about these great achievers 2500 years ago. The East-meets-West story, starting with Alexander the Great, is vividly told by Elisabetta Fino. After seeing news photos of the mosque in Samarra vandalized, reading Alastair Northedge's piece on Islamic architecture was a form of grief counseling for me. Now as I watch daily footage of car bombings in Baghdad, I think of Vincenzo Strika's review of Baghdad through the ages, and put my hope in his last line: "Baghdad, for all its tumult and suffering, has the potential to become again, as it was in the Middle Ages, the cultural bridge between East and West." Other parts of the book use the museum building itself or specific artifacts as a point of departure: the essential "A Museum is Born" by Lamia Al-Gailani Werr and the exquisite "Small Treasures of the Iraq Museum" by Fiorella Strika. When I first opened the book, I skipped through it reading the double-page spreads here and there by Diana McDonald, and that made me want to read everything else. It was strong stuff for me to read kidnapping survivor Micah Garen's words on universal ideas - heroism, friendship, and our fear of death - drawing a comparison between the quest of Gilgamesh and the purpose of archaeology. Garen and his partner, Marie-Helene Carleton, remind us that we are all Gilgamesh, and archaeologists are our genius scribes. This elegant invitation to preserve our historical memory is echoed throughout the book, in most urgent terms by Selma Al-Radi, by Angela Schuster and Zainab Bahrani, by William and Milbry Polk, by Usam Ghaidan and Anna Paolini, and by the tireless Iraqi archaeologist, Donny George. All of these contributors are within two degrees of separation from everyone else in the cultural heritage community that reacted to the looting of the Iraq Museum. Although they are distinguished writers individually -- worthy of their own Listmania List -- this is a fine ensemble piece. Of course, the real stars of the book are the antiquities themselves, the figurines, bas reliefs, stelae

and other vocabulary-building artifacts, along with, yes, the vases. The 190 color pictures on heavy paper make this a compact coffee-table book, but not too heavy to read in bed as well. University archaeology departments would be nuts not to make this required reading for new students. I can't think of a book that will more directly engage and motivate the newcomer, and possibly spark a thousand careers as luminous as those referenced in its pages. The book itself is an example of how people can work together across borders, across cultures and civilizations, clash or no clash. Many of these writers were first responders, rushing in to protect fragile human knowledge, and in the process modeling for the rest of us what we most need these days in Iraq: charity, hope and faith. Read more ›

I found this to be an excellent volume that opens with the looting of the Iraq Museum at the beginning of the war and develops into an elegant and expert history of Mesopotamia spanning 60,000 years. Although the looting has been covered in newspapers and magazines, this is the only attempt to my knowledge to bring the topic to mainstream readers in book form. Archaeological sites throughout Iraq are still being looted daily, and a percentage of the royalties earned by this title will go to Iraq's State Board of Antiquities to help bring awareness and policing to the illicit trade in antiquities as well as help the Museum function again. The authors of each chapter comprise a formidable cadre of international archaeologists who have worked in Iraq sometimes for decades, and bring here the many voices needed to describe the long and fascinating history of Mesopotamia. The editors, Milbry Polk and Angela Schuster, really have done a fantastic job and have brought us a much needed book.

As discontent over the continued American presence and the mounting loss of lives of not only soldiers from this country but also from other supporting countries and certainly for the countless loss of civilian lives in Iraq, artists and writers are responding in kind to the woe of war. One of the saddest tragedies of the Iraq invasion was the decimation of the Iraq Museum of Baghdad. Many of the rarest of antiquities housed there are now reduced to dust while others suffered irreparable damage.

This fine book provides many illustrations of the collection of the Iraq Museum and with that, naturally, comes a timeline of civilization as we know it. The treasures are/were wondrous and the history as summarized by Milbry and William Polk, Selma Al-Radi, Angela Schuster, Zainab Bahrani, Usam Ghaidan, Anna Paolini, and Donny George in their fine essays should be required reading for all of us.

This gorgeously illustrated and very detailed guide to the cultural atrocities committed in April of 2003 is a masterpiece of literature. I am very glad that someone took the time to make a wonderful guide to this event. Flipping through the pages and looking at the many artifacts, one cannot help feeling a sense of melancholy. Looking at the gorgeous photos of the artifacts taken much before the looting occurred, admiring them, and knowing that they are now damaged or destroyed is very unsettling, but it is wonderful that many of these brilliant archeologists, curators, and journalists took the time to create such a wonderful book to acknowledge the horrible event and show the world, even just the few people that actually buy the book and spend the time reading it. I truly enjoyed the book, which has so much information not just about the looting, but of the history of Mesopotamian, Persian and Islamic society, and the country of Iraq, specifically Baghdad, a beautiful, but tragic metropolis between the Tigris and Euphrates. The Land Between Two Rivers is brought back to life, for a brief, but beautiful, glimpse.

Abbasid Abu Salabikh Akkadian alabaster ancient animals antiquities Arab archaeologists architecture artifacts Ashur Assyrian Babylon Babylonian Baghdad building built caliph carved cave century clay Ctesiphon cultural cuneiform cylinder seals decorated deities depicted documents Dynasty earliest early East Eastern Empire excavated expedition female figures figurines goddess gold Greek Gulf Hatra head Hellenistic heritage human hunt important Inanna inlaid inscribed inscription Institute Iran Iraq Museum Iraq National Museum Iraqi Islamic ivory iwan Kassite kilometers king known Lagash later lion looting Mesopotamia meters millennium B.C. monumental mosque Naram-Sin Neanderthal Nimrud Nippur objects painted palace Parthian period pottery remains represent River royal ruler Samarra Sasanian sculpture Seleucia Shanidar southern Iraq

statues statuettes stone Sumer Sumerian Syria tablets Tell es Sawwan temple terra-cotta texts third millennium Tigris tion tombs tradition Ubaid Ubaid period University Uruk vase votive wall Warka Warka Vase

Before graduating from Harvard in 1976, Milbry Polk journeyed through Greece, Turkey, Persia, Pakistan, and Japan, surveyed Arthurian sites in Wales, traveled with Bedouin tribesmen in Jordan and Egypt, and kayaked throughout Alaska's Prince William Sound. In 1979 Milbry led a camel expedition retracing the route of Alexander the Great across Egypt. Her photojournalistic work includes stories on sailing the Mediterranean, ancient rock carvings in the Saudi Arabian desert, and rafting above the Arctic Circle. Her previous book was *Egyptian Mummies*. She is a member of the Explorers Club and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. She lives outside of New York City with her husband and three daughters.

Designer and writer Mary Tiegreen has been exploring the art of books and book making for most of her life. She has had the opportunity to learn about diverse areas of interest, including the history of Hollywood (*MGM: When the Lion Roared*), cooking and magic (*The Secrets of Pistoulet*), fashion (*A Passion for Shoes*), sex (*TarotSutra*), and golf (*Let the Big Dog Eat*). *Women of Discovery* is her first foray into the world of exploration. She lives in the Hudson Valley with her husband, Hubert, and big dog, Daisy.

"For the people of Iraq, such loss is not only a local loss but a loss for all of humanity." That is how editor Schuster, who heads the preservation magazine *ICON*, refers to the more than 15,000 objects in Baghdad's Iraq Museum that have been stolen or destroyed in the wake of the war on terror. This book attempts to restore what's been lost by presenting a "virtual museum" of these objects in book form. In several essays, noted international archaeologists expound on the many firsts that occurred in this region: the birth of writing, the dawn of literature, the earliest villages, and codified religion. Discussions of spectacular and mysterious treasures, objects interred with the Assyrian queens, and Baghdad through the ages are followed by a chapter on the challenges of reconstruction. Photographs, maps, and a time line from 60,000 B.C.E to 1900 C.E. are all excellent additions. Recommended for larger public and academic libraries, as well as specialized collections in art, archaeology, history, and Islamic studies. [A percentage of the book's proceeds will be donated to the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities.-Ed.]-Sylvia Andrews, Butler Univ., Indianapolis
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Citing the 2003 looting of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad that resulted in the destruction of countless antiquities, a lavishly illustrated volume seeks to reconstruct the museum and its lost ancient treasures, discussing how numerous pieces offered insight into ancient Mesopotamian life. 25,000 first printing.

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"The Looting of the Iraq Museum, Baghdad is a reconstruction in book form of one of the world's largest and most important museums, which will never be the same again. Focusing on the objects housed at the museum and collected over decades of painstaking archaeological research and study, the book traces the rich tapestry of the history of ancient Mesopotamia from its earliest prehistory to the advent of Islam. Iraq is a country of firsts: the earliest villages, cities, writing, poetry, epic literature, temples, codified religion, armies, warfare, world economy, and empire. The archaeological artifacts that were looted represent our collective history and help us understand how civilization first began and how it evolved."--BOOK JACKET.

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