



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

Sharon Waxman

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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.

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