Heritage on the Move: The Trafficking of Iraqi and Syrian Cultural Objects

Neil Brodie

Abstract
This lecture will present an historical overview of the looting and trafficking of Iraqi and Syrian cultural objects from the time of the 1991 Gulf War through to the present day. It will describe how the organisation and operation of trafficking have changed through time, looking particularly at how demand has been created in the “market” countries of Europe and North America. Topics to be covered will include the importance of private collectors for creating demand; market sales through auction houses, private transactions and the Internet; and the role of professional experts such as conservators and university academics in supporting the market. The lecture will conclude with a brief consideration of possible actions that might diminish demand and reduce trafficking.

Biographical sketch
Neil Brodie is a Senior Research Fellow on the Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa project at the University of Oxford’s School of Archaeology. He graduated from the University of Liverpool with a PhD Archaeology in 1991 and has previously held
positions at the British School at Athens, the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge, where he was Research Director of the Illicit Antiquities Research Centre, Stanford University’s Archaeology Center, and the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow. He has twenty years’ experience researching the international trade in cultural objects and has published more than fifty papers and book chapters on the subject. He has worked on archaeological projects in the United Kingdom, Greece and Jordan, and continues to work in Greece.

His work can be found here:
  Trafficking Culture: http://traffickingculture.org/people/neil-brodie/
  Market of Mass Destruction: http://www.marketmassdestruction.com/