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Vandalism

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The last tomb begun in the valley was that of Ramesses XI, a huge excavation whose decoration was barely begun before being abandoned. The king lived, died, and was probably buried in the north of Egypt. The tomb may have been considered briefly for usurpation by the Twenty-first Dynasty king of Thebes, Pinudjem I, but it was never used for royal interment. Later burials in the valley were restricted to intrusive interments in existing tombs.

Robbery of tombs in the valley began fairly early in its history. The first recorded intrusion involved the tomb of Thutmose IV in the region of Horemheb, but large-scale plundering really got under way in the time of the later Ramesside kings. During the Twenty-first Dynasty, there began a policy of dismantling the burials that had been penetrated, recycling such funerary equipment as survived, and transferring the royal mummies to new, communal locations. A considerable number of such transfers are known to have occurred, until all the bodies, except for those whose tomb locations were by now wholly lost, came to rest in two spots. Ten were concealed in the tomb of Amunhotpe II, while some forty corpses were placed in the tomb of the High Priest of Amun, Pinudjem II, near Deir el-Bahari; the latter cache was largely assembled in the second half of the reign of Shoshenq I of the Twenty-second Dynasty.

In addition to its tombs, the valley has also revealed the remains of a number of workmen's huts. Although the village in which tomb workers lived on a permanent basis lay on the opposite side of the cliffs, at Deir el-Medina, the working week was spent in a settlement on the ridge overlooking the valley, with a number of huts for daytime use dotted around the valley floor. It was a group of these, erected in the Twentieth Dynasty, that concealed the entrance of the earlier tomb of Tutankhamun.

The tombs of the Valley of the Kings are all decorated with scenes relating to the various Egyptian books describing the sun god's nocturnal voyage through the underworld, and are thus key documents for understanding such aspects of the ancient Egyptian religion. The sepulcher contents also provide us with a knowledge of the key items

of funerary equipment, likewise of importance from the point of view of understanding mortuary practices. In addition, the superlative artistic quality of many of the paintings, reliefs, and objects in the tombs sheds light on society under the New Kingdom.

A number of tombs in the Valley of the Kings have lain open since ancient times, in particular those of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties. The remainder have been opened since the early years of the nineteenth century, key names in their exploration being Giovanni Belzoni, Victor Loret, Theodore Davis, and Howard Carter. After a long hiatus, work has resumed in recent years on re-clearing a number of previously partly known tombs. This work has led to renewed concern about the conservation of the tombs, which is presently being reassessed by the Supreme Council for Antiquities of the Egyptian government.

[See also Belzoni, Giovanni; Egypt: New Kingdom Egypt; Tutankhamun's Tomb.]

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Aidan Dodson

VANDALISM

"Vandalism" is defined as the willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public or private property; the ruthless destruction or spoiling of anything beautiful or venerable (*Oxford English Dictionary*). The term was first used by the Romans in reference

to the Vandals, an east Germanic tribe famous for their destruction of Rome in the fifth century AD. Acts of vandalism are varied but include graffiti and defacement; the motives for vandalism are also diverse, including targeted "cultural cleansing," acts of war, and boredom. The reasons are often very difficult to predict, prevent, or control. In 1991, Paul Nickens identified a number of cultural (war, development) and natural agents (earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes) responsible for damage and alteration to, or complete loss of data from, destruction of archaeological sites and monuments. Human-induced actions are myriad and continue to increase in numbers and magnitude. Local, state, and national legislative efforts aimed at protecting the landscape are often ineffectual at protecting sites and monuments from harm. Vandalism is the direct result of intentional human agency. Destructive acts against cultural heritage can be broadly divided into two categories: predatory vandalism and malicious vandalism.

Predatory Vandalism. This type of vandalism is the most pervasive and leads to some of the most serious consequences for cultural heritage. Predatory vandalism is typically dictated by personal motives or monetary gain, as part of the targeted cleansing, or eradication, of specific cultural identities, or the collateral damage of war. Meskell suggests that certain landmarks (the Mostar Bridge in Bosnia and the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan) are prized targets for vandalism because these sites define particular cultures, ideas, and achievements. For example, in 1993, the Stari Most, or "Old Bridge," a structure that had survived the Ottomans, two world wars, and Communism, was destroyed in a struggle between Croats and Muslims battling for control of Mostar, the regional capital of Herzegovina. Built in 1566 from a design by the Ottoman architect Mimar Hayruddin, it was the largest single stone span in the world. The UNESCO World Heritage Site was a victim of vandalism as part of the ongoing war in the former Yugoslavia.

Described as "cultural terrorism," but also a form of vandalism, the announcement of the Taliban

government that it would systematically destroy all statues in Afghanistan resulted in the obliteration of the two ancient, colossal Buddhas of Bamiyan in February of 2001. The edict issued by the Taliban leader Mohammed Omar was intended to thwart any current or future worshipping of "idols," which was in contravention of the religious laws of the state. The proclamation prompted immediate action to protect the past from vandalism by nations, international organizations, and individuals—all to no avail. Carved into a rock face in the Bamiyan Valley nearly two thousand years ago, the Buddhas were destroyed by using strategically placed dynamite as the world looked on, in awe and horror. This public loss of cultural heritage prompted much discussion of value, and questions surrounding who owns the past, and who can best protect the past.

Religion was also a motivating factor in the vandalism of the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in 1992. The first recorded clash over this site between Muslims and Hindus was recorded in 1853, and since then there have been intermittent protests and petitions by each side to establish their claim to the site. This conflict culminated in a fierce and bloody battle and the demolition of the Babri Mosque, eliminating the material presence of the Muslim claim to the land. In September of 2010, the Allahabad High Court ruled that the site should be split, with the Muslim community getting control of a third, Hindus another third, and the Nirmohi Akhara sect the remainder. Control of the main disputed section, where the Babri mosque was demolished, was ceded to the Hindus. The Muslim community is filing an appeal of this verdict.

Another example of predatory vandalism is the illegal excavation of archaeological sites and the theft from museums of artifacts and architectural elements for the market in antiquities. In the aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq by Coalition forces, the National Museum of Iraq was looted and ransacked by vandals—in acts of both predatory and malicious vandalism. Looters targeted specific items that would be highly prized in the global antiquities markets, while at the same time wantonly destroying artifacts in the museum that were

too large to remove. Western nations who formed the Coalition forces were accused of negligence and contributing to the vandalism of the world's cultural heritage.

These acts of vandalism highlight the relative ineffectiveness of international conventions like the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954) and the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property of November 14, 1970. While the intention of conventions like these is to protect global cultural heritage, in actuality there are few prosecutions or repercussions for the destruction of cultural heritage.

Malicious Vandalism. This type of vandalism includes acts brought about by revenge or frustration with government policies, or where there is no discernible motive at all. This category often includes inexplicable, unprovoked actions for which there are no identifiable motives. Wanton vandalism of sites of cultural heritage is a perplexing problem for those entrusted with the protection of these resources. Senseless destruction of archaeological sites occurs in a wide variety of forms, but there are several common types. We have documentation of graffiti (evidence that someone had visited a place) throughout the ages—Roman soldiers left their “signatures” throughout the Empire, and French soldiers carved their names on monuments during the Napoleonic campaign of Egypt in the 1790s. Lord Byron's etchings survive on one of the columns of the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion in Attica, Greece. Despite its interest to researchers, the despoliation of monuments and rock art with graffiti is a scourge to cultural heritage.

Rock art is routinely attacked by graffiti, shooting, and other forms of defacement. Since 2007, Nick Brooks has been monitoring the defacement of rocks at various sites in the Western Sahara by United Nations personnel stationed there to monitor a ceasefire between the occupying Moroccan forces and the Polisario independence movement. In an incredible irony, the UN troops are destroying

archaeological sites as another UN agency (UNESCO) is about to embark on developing an inventory of rock art sites in Western Sahara with the aim of recording and preserving the territory's cultural heritage. Rock art sites are routinely defaced with paint, bullet marks, paint-ball stains, and messages scratched into the rocks. Some may not realize that removing artifacts, illegally excavating sites, and disfiguring rock art destroys data and a cultural heritage and removes all opportunity for others to appreciate and understand past cultures and history. Having said that, defacing and looting archaeological sites on public and private land are illegal in many countries.

Evidence for the illegal excavation or the looting of archaeological sites as a form of “resistance” has also been documented. Palestinians have been known to loot archaeological sites as a show of defiance against the occupying Israeli military authority, while at the same time searching for evidence of Jewish motifs—thus eradicating the ancient Jewish presence in the modern boundaries of the Palestinian Autonomous Territories.

Structural remains at cultural sites, such as walls and roofs, are frequently torn down or otherwise intentionally damaged when there are no guards or protective mechanisms in place. Four-wheel-drive vehicles, motorcycles, and other all-terrain vehicles are often deliberately driven over and through archaeological sites, causing permanent damage. Sites of cultural heritage are threatened by vandalism at an alarming rate.

Whatever the motives—malicious or predatory—vandalism is pernicious and ongoing; some would even claim it is on the rise. In 1979, it was estimated that nine out of every ten known archaeological sites in the United States had been disturbed in some way. Activities that disturb and destroy sites run along a continuum from land development and resource extraction to commercial looting and intentional vandalism. The looting of Native American graves at Slack Farm in Kentucky caused such an outcry that it provided the impetus for new state legislation in Kentucky and Indiana, and assisted in bolstering support for the Native American Graves

Protection Act (NAGPRA, 1990). Legislative efforts are one aspect of safeguarding cultural heritage. Outreach and engagement with all communities with a vested interest in our collective past and the need to protect resources is an important part of archaeology that is often overlooked and underutilized.

[See also Destruction of the Past; Education in Archaeology; Popular Education; Ethics of Archaeology; Ethics of Collecting; Ethnic Conflict, Archaeology in; Illicit Antiquities Trade; Indigenous Rights; Looting; Museums and Collecting.]

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Morag M. Kersel

VARNA

The Varna cemetery is located on the outskirts of the Black Sea resort of Varna, Bulgaria. In 1972, drainage operations cut through a grave in the richest area of the cemetery. Since then, excavations by Dr. Ivan Ivanov have uncovered over three hundred graves. The significance of Varna is that it constitutes the earliest flowering of gold metallurgy in the world, dating to the start of the Balkan Late Copper Age, with over forty accelerator mass spectrometry dates between 4650 BC and 4450 BC.

The cemetery comprises flat graves with individuals buried in shallow pits. There are two classes of burial rite: graves with and without skeletons. The former are the commonest, mostly extended inhumations on the back, with goldwork rare: included here are ten poorly furnished, contracted inhumations. The latter, graves without skeletons, are of two types: cenotaph graves, where grave goods are laid out as if the body were present, and mask graves, where a life-size clay mask represents the body. Most cenotaph graves are poor, though some have gold- and copper-work, whereas three cenotaphs and three mask graves are extremely rich. Adult females and males are buried with rich or poor artifacts, while children younger than twelve years are not represented. Isotopic dietary studies indicate land-based protein intake, with surprisingly little use of local marine resources.

The grave goods represent the accumulation of more prestige goods than on any other coeval site in eastern Europe. Tombs 4 and 43 each contained over 3.3 pounds (1.5 kg) of gold; Tomb 1 had over 2.2 pounds (1 kg); and Tomb 36 almost 1.7 pounds (0.8 kg) and 853 objects. These sumptuous artifacts indicate a mastery of the techniques of beaten sheet-metal-working, wire production, and gold vessel painting. The majority of gold finds has no parallels anywhere else in Eurasia: such as the diadem from Tomb 3, appliqués often in the form of a bull, gold-plated axe-shafts, the solid gold astragalus, and the penis sheath from Tomb 43. The copper finds include shaft-hole axes, awls, chisels, and beads. Beads are also made of *Spondylus* and *Dentalium*