

InsideOUT

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IN ANA

By Michele Lowe

Directed by Michael Pressman

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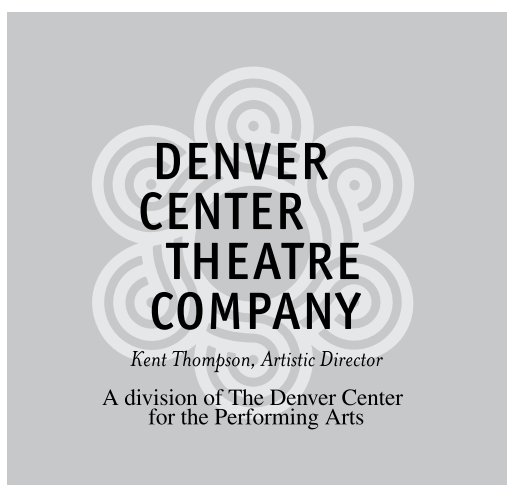
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Synopsis

Darius Shalid and his young bride Shali have just arrived in London for their honeymoon. The United States is about to invade their native Iraq, and Darius, chief of the Mosul Museum, has gone to great lengths to catalogue and protect his museum's antiquities, especially its most prized possession: a 3,000-year-old one-armed statue of Inana, Sumerian goddess of war.

Through Darius and Shali's conversation, and through flashbacks to their separate lives in Iraq, we learn of life under Saddam Hussein, including cruel physical punishments and repression of knowledge. Gradually, new questions arise: What important phone call is Darius anticipating on his honeymoon? What is Shali hiding about her past? What were Darius's dealings with Emad Al-Bayit, the Middle East's most famous forger of antiquities? Is the statue of Inana safe? And what's in Darius's red suitcase?

Playwright Michelle Lowe

Michele Lowe, whose work often focuses on the trials and complaints of women in modern society, made her Broadway debut with the play *The Smell of the Kill*. Her play *String of Pearls* received an Outer Critics Circle Award nomination for Outstanding Off-Broadway Play. She wrote the book and lyrics for the musicals *A Thousand Words Come to Mind* and *Hit the Lights!* Her work has been produced at Primary Stages, Vineyard Theatre, Intiman, City Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Reykjavik City Theatre (Iceland), Syracuse Stage, Cleveland Play House and Cincinnati Play House in the Park, among others.

Lowe has been commissioned by the Denver Center Theatre Company (DCTC), Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and Geva Theatre. Her work has been developed at the Eugene O'Neill National Music Theater Conference, New Harmony Project, PlayLabs, New York Stage and Film, Hartford Stage's BRAND: NEW Festival, and the ACT & Hedgebrook Women Playwrights Festival. *Inana* is a DCTC world premiere; Geva Theatre Centre commissioned her new play *Community Service*. Lowe's play *Victoria Musica* will receive its world premiere at Cincinnati Playhouse during its 2009/10 season.

Lowe's work appears in *New Monologues for Women by Women* (Heinemann, 2004). For television she has written several episodes of "Little Bear" based on characters created by Maurice Sendak. Screenplays include *The Emergence of Emily Stark* and *Quitting Texas* for Avenue Pictures. Lowe is a recipient of the Frankel Award. She is a graduate of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. She is a member of ASCAP, the Dramatists Guild and the Playwrights' Center.

Michele Lowe's plays include:

Backsliding in the Promised Land
Germany Surrenders
Hit the Lights!
Map of Heaven
Mezzulah 1946
Priest in a Pool
The Smell of the Kill
String of Pearls
A Thousand Words Come to Mind

The Goddess Inana

In Sumerian, Inana's name means literally "Queen of Heaven," and she was called both the First Daughter of the Moon, the Morning and Evening Star, the Goddess of Love and the Goddess of War. In addition, in Sumerian mythology, she was known as the Queen of Heaven and Earth and was responsible for the growth of plants and animals and fertility in humankind. Then, because of her journey to the underworld, she took on the powers and mysteries of death and rebirth, emerging not only as a sky or moon goddess, but as the goddess who rules over the sky, the earth and the underworld.

Celestial symbols associated with Inana include the moon, the Bow-Star Sirius, Venus, and an eight-

pointed star. She is symbolized by the lion, cow, dove, sparrow, owl, viper, scorpion, serpent, and dragon. Images often depict her holding a caduceus of entwined serpents, similar to that used today to symbolize the medical profession, or she might hold a double-headed axe to show her power to bestow and withdraw life. A rose tree or a rosette, sometimes pictured with eight petals, also can symbolize Inana.

The Sumerian tales, legends and songs are part of a vast literature inscribed on clay tablets and fragments scattered throughout museums the world over. Their contents, which date back to 2000 B.C.E., are now in the process of being deciphered, translated and interpreted. Inscribed on these tablets

and fragments, numbering some 5,000 to 6,000 in all, are hundreds of compositions – myths, epic tales, hymns, psalms, love songs, laments, essays, disputations, proverbs, fables – including the story “The Descent of Inana,” detailing her trip to the underworld and her resurrection therefrom.

Inana visits her sister Ereshkigal, queen of the underworld. At each of the seven gates into the underworld, she is instructed to leave behind one article of her elaborate dress and jewelry; thus she enters the underworld naked. Upon Inana’s arrival, Ereshkigal kills her sister and hangs her corpse on a hook.

Three days after her descent, Inana’s minister Ninshubur pleads with the gods Enlil, Nanna and Enki to help save Inana; only Enki responds. He creates two figures who are to follow Inana to the

underworld, ask for her corpse and sprinkle it with the food and water of life. Inana is revived and leaves the underworld. Just before she escapes, Ereshkigal’s demons catch her and demand that she leave someone in the underworld to take her place. They first suggest Nincurba, but Inana refuses. After refusing three suggestions for her replacement, all of whom had mourned her loss or worked for her rescue, Inana comes upon her husband Dumuzi, who is lounging and partying, oblivious to his wife’s supposed disappearance into the underworld. Inana agrees to let the demons take Dumuzi. He tries to escape, but is caught. His sister offers herself in his place, and it is decreed the Dumuzi will spend half the year in the underworld and his sister the other half.

Iraq

Iraq’s population, which is overwhelmingly Muslim, consists of three main groups: Arab Shiites, Arab Sunnis, and Kurdish Sunnis. The Arab Shiites make up about three-fifths of the total population and live mainly in the south and southeastern parts of the country. Arab Sunnis account for about one-third of the population and are concentrated in the central area of eastern Iraq, around Baghdad. The Kurds, who are Sunni Muslims and speak a language related to Persian, live in the north and northeast and make up some one-fifth of the population. Iraq is the only major Arab country in the Middle East with a Shiite majority, but it is the Arab Sunnis who dominate the government. The country’s official language is Arabic.

Iraq’s agrarian economy industrialized rapidly after the 1958 revolution. By 1980 a large and centrally planned economy dominated by the state had developed. Oil production was the mainstay of the economy.

The economy was devastated by a series of wars beginning in 1980, and the gross domestic product plunged over the next quarter century, particularly during the 1990s when the country was under a strict United Nations trade embargo in reaction to aggression on his neighbors by Iraq’s dictator, Saddam Hussein, a charismatic but ruthless autocrat.

In the aftermath of the Second Persian Gulf War (2003), sanctions were lifted and civil administrators appointed by the United States took over Iraq’s public sector. Many enterprises formerly owned by the state were privatized. By that time, however, the economy was in shambles, and the private sector was largely inexperienced. Moreover, oil production and economic development had both declined, the economy faced a huge foreign debt, there was a high rate of inflation, the oil sector had fallen behind the



Map of Middle East.

latest technology, and unemployment was high.

During the period of the Second Persian Gulf War, the Iraqi government was in a period of transition, from one dominated by a police state under Saddam Hussein, to a government more representative of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious constituency. In June 2004 an interim government was established.

Primary and secondary education in Iraq is free. In theory all children are required to attend primary school, which lasts for six years. In practice, however, many rural children never receive any education, because of a lack of facilities. Although formerly a highly literate state, Iraq's illiteracy rate is now relatively high for the Middle East.

Iraqi Cuisine

The Iraqi cuisine is generally heavy with more spices than most Arab cuisines. Iraq's main food crops include wheat, barley, rice, vegetables and dates. Vegetables include eggplant, okra, potatoes and tomatoes. Beans such as chickpeas and lentils are also quite common. Common meats in Iraqi cooking are lamb and beef; fish and poultry are also used. Soups and stews are often prepared and served with rice and vegetables. One of the most popular dishes is *Masgouf*, fish grilled whole with skin on, cut and spiced with salt, pepper and tamarind. *Biryani*, a south Asian dish of spices, rice and meat or vegetables, although influenced by Indian cuisine, is much milder with a different mixture of spices and a wider variety of vegetables including potatoes, peas, carrots and onions. *Dolmas*, grape leaves stuffed with meat, spices and rice, are also popular. Iraqi cuisine is famous for its extremely tender *kabab* as well as its *tikka*, meat cutlets in a marinade of aromatic spices.

Cradle of Civilization

The land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, commonly called the Fertile Crescent and now the country of Iraq, gave birth to writing, codes of law, poetry, epic literature and organized religion. The ancient Greeks called part of Iraq and the surrounding region Mesopotamia, meaning "between rivers." The world's first known civilization developed in Sumer, now southeastern Iraq, about 3500 B.C.E. Other ancient civilizations, including Assyria and Babylonia, flourished along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers between 3500 and 539 B.C.E. The Persians conquered the area in 539 B.C.E., followed by the Greeks under Alexander the Great in 331 B.C.E. The land was later ruled by Parthians, Romans, Persian Sasanians, Arabs, Ottoman Turks, then the British before Iraq achieved independence in 1930.

Specific moments of Iraq's past were certainly significant events in world history. One of these is the Uruk phenomenon of the fourth millennium B.C.E. This phenomenon can be described as the first cultural revolution, comprising the development of the first cities, the first monumental

architecture, and, perhaps most important, the invention of writing. The Code of Hammurabi, compiled about 2000 B.C.E. by Hammurabi, king of Babylon, demonstrates the complicated institutional system and the rather advanced economic and business life in the country; Sumerian culture also created epic poetry about the creation of the earth and the flood.

Another significant world event in the history of Iraq is the period of the Islamic rule of the Abbasid dynasty, between the eighth and tenth centuries C.E. This was when Baghdad became the center of the development of the arts and sciences, the place in which Greek texts of classical antiquity were preserved through translations and copies. It was in the universities of Baghdad, under the patronage of the Abbasid kings, that mathematics, astronomy, physics and medicine developed.

These moments are turning points in world history comparable to the Italian Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, all of which had significance well beyond the local region and all of which became part of world history.

Iraq Museum, Baghdad

The Iraq Museum, the national museum of antiquities in Baghdad and the most complete collection of Near Eastern artifacts in the world, fell victim to looting during the American invasion of Baghdad in April 2003. Closed for eight years after the first Gulf War, the National Museum had reopened in 2000; in early 2003, museum officials once again removed the most important works from the collection and shuttered the museum building in anticipation of the American invasion. However, between April

the location of Iraq's most significant cultural and religious sites and monuments," they stated. "What they contain is not merely the patrimony of one small nation but that of much of the modern world, including the U.S."

The letters reminded the administration of the 1991 Gulf War, when at many sites a great deal of looting occurred and damage was caused by the air campaign. The organizations called upon the United States to follow the 1954 Hague Convention and Protocol for the Protection of Cultural



Iraq Museum

12 and 15, 2003, the Iraq Museum was looted, and many of the most important objects in the collection were stolen. Among them were the famous monumental Uruk Vase of 3,300 B.C.E. that is one of the earliest narrative works of art, and the beautifully carved marble female head of the same period, perhaps representing the great Sumerian goddess Inana, also from the sacred precinct at Uruk in southern Iraq.

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect of the looting stems from the fact that the thefts and vandalism could so easily have been prevented. Scientists had sent letters to the Bush administration pleading for the protection of archaeological sites and museums in Iraq. "Our military leaders should be aware of

Property, enacted in response to the Nazi thefts in Europe during World War I (see next section). This protocol explicitly states that looting, theft, and vandalism of cultural property must be prevented during times of armed conflict and during occupation by forces operating in another country. Although the United States wasn't until very recently a signatory to the protocol, it is widely regarded as international law.

A March 26 directive from the Pentagon listed 16 sites in Baghdad that were crucial to protect, stating, "Coalition forces must secure these facilities in order to prevent looting and the resulting irreplaceable loss of cultural treasures." It was largely ignored. The Iraq Museum in Baghdad was number two on a list that included

the Ministries of the Interior, Defense, and Foreign Affairs. The first institution on the list was the Iraqi Central Bank, which was likewise not protected. Only the last institution on the list was protected—the Ministry of Oil.

Ancient artifacts that had survived the Mongol sack of Baghdad in the 12th century tragically fell victim to the political realities of the 21st, and the museum situation quickly became a major political embarrassment for the Bush administration.

The looting of the Iraq Museum was most likely a calculated theft by professionals with knowledge of the museum and its artifacts. The looters apparently spent more than a day going through the collection, seeking the most valuable objects. All over the offices and into the galleries they scattered files, papers, photos, and records that catalogued the museum's holdings. Nabhal Amin, the museum's deputy director, told reporters, "They have looted or destroyed 170,000 items of antiquity dating back thousands of years. They were worth billions of dollars."

Outside of Baghdad, other collections important to scholars were also damaged. The Mosul Museum was bombed and looted; losses there were

perhaps more extensive than those in Baghdad. All over Iraq, where there are literally thousands of ancient sites, security remained patchy, and widespread looting, driven by the black market in antiquities, continued.

Dr. Donny George, director of the Iraq Museum, reported to the British Museum on April 29, 2003, that U.S. troops at the borders weren't enforcing any controls. Instead, some objects had been recovered on the Jordanian side of the border, where officials were searching everyone thoroughly.

The British Museum and the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute were at the forefront of a growing impetus to catalogue the losses and attempt to recover some items. In the months following the invasion, looters returned several hundred items, collected at mosques and by U.S. troops in Iraq. Also, *The New York Times* has reported that some enlightened Baghdadis, witnessing the chaos at the Iraq Museum, joined in the looting with good intentions. They rescued what they could for safekeeping and soon thereafter returned some very important pieces to the museum.

1954 Hague

The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict was adopted at The Hague, Netherlands, on May 14, 1954 in the wake of massive destruction of the cultural heritage in World War II. It is the first international treaty of a worldwide vocation focusing exclusively on the protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict.

Protected items include monuments of architecture, art or history, archaeological sites, works of art, manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest, as well as scientific collections of all kinds regardless of their origin or ownership. More than 100 countries have undertaken to lessen the consequences of armed conflict for cultural heritage and to take preventive measures for such protection not only in time of hostility (when it is usually too late), but also in time of peace, by a variety of measures.

Signing states pledge to safeguard and respect cultural property during both international and non-international armed conflicts, register a limited number of monumental centers and other immovable cultural property of very great importance in the International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection, mark certain important buildings and monuments with a special protective emblem of the Convention, set up special units within the military forces to be responsible for the protection of cultural heritage, penalize violations of the Convention and promote widely the Convention within the general public and target groups such as cultural heritage professionals, the military or law-enforcement agencies.

In September 2008, the United States finally joined the 121 nations who had already ratified the act, too late for the damage already done in Iraq.

Saddam Hussein

Saddam Hussein was president of Iraq from 1979 to 2003, and his brutal rule was marked by costly and unsuccessful wars against neighboring countries. Hussein ruled Iraq as a dictator and was known for his ruthless actions. In the late 1980s, he authorized the relocation or extermination of hundreds of thousands of Kurdish people in Iraq. This campaign included the frequent use of chemical weapons against the Kurds.

Hussein joined the Baath Socialist Party in 1957. After participating in an unsuccessful attempt by Baathists to assassinate the Iraqi prime minister Abdul Karim Kassem, he escaped to Syria and then Egypt. He attended Cairo Law School 1962-63 and continued his studies at Baghdad Law College after the Baathists took power in Iraq in 1963. After the Baathists were overthrown later that same year, Hussein spent several years in prison. He again escaped, becoming a leader of the Baath party, and was instrumental in the coup that brought the party back to power in 1968. Hussein then effectively held power in the country along with the head of state, President Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr. Hussein began to assert open control of the government in 1979, becoming president upon Bakr's resignation in that year. Hussein then became chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council and prime minister, among other positions. His goals as president were to help Iraq supplant Egypt as leader of the Arab world and to achieve domination of the Persian Gulf.

Hussein launched an invasion of Iran's oil fields in September 1980, but the campaign bogged down in a war of attrition. The war's cost and the interruption of Iraq's oil exports compelled Hussein to scale down his ambitious programs for economic development. The Iran-Iraq War dragged on in a stalemate until 1988, when Iran and Iraq accepted a cease-fire that ended the fighting. Despite the large foreign debt with which Iraq found itself saddled by war's end, Hussein continued to build up his armed forces.

In August 1990 his army overran neighboring Kuwait in a surprise attack. Hussein apparently

intended to use that nation's vast oil revenues to bolster Iraq's economy, but his occupation of Kuwait quickly triggered a world-wide trade embargo against Iraq. He ignored appeals for him to withdraw his forces from Kuwait, despite the buildup of a large U.S.-led military force in Saudi Arabia and the passage of United Nations resolutions condemning the occupation and authorizing the use of force to end it.

The First Persian Gulf War began on January 16, 1991. A coalition of nations, organized mostly by the United States and the UN, began an air war against Iraq. After more than five weeks of bombing, coalition ground troops entered Iraq and Kuwait and quickly defeated the Iraqi forces. Iraq's crushing defeat led to open rebellion by the country's Shiites and Kurds, but these were brutally suppressed by Hussein's regime.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Iraq continued to have tense relations with many countries, particularly the United States. In March 2003, forces led by the U.S. began a ground military campaign against Iraq. The next month, the U.S.-led forces seized control of Baghdad, causing the fall of Hussein's government. U.S. officials claimed that the main reason for the war was to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, but in the months following the invasion, search teams found no such weapons in Iraq.

On December 13, 2003, U.S. troops captured Saddam Hussein near his hometown Tikrit. Custody of Hussein was given over to the new Iraqi government in June 2004. In 2005, an Iraqi court formally charged Hussein with ordering the massacre of more than 140 Shiites in 1982; this was the first of many charges brought against him. In 2006, the court charged him with genocide for killing more than 100,000 Kurds in the 1980s. On November 5, 2006, Saddam Hussein was found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by hanging. He was executed on December 30, 2006.

Human Rights in Saddam's Iraq

Excerpts from the 2001 U.S. Department of State Human Rights Report on Iraq:
“Under the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein, Iraqi citizens face arbitrary execution, detention, torture, rape, religious persecution and forced relocation. They face suffering and death from chemical weapons deliberately used on civilian populations. They are systematically denied basic individual, civil, political and workers’ rights as set forth in Iraq’s own constitution and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

“In Saddam’s Iraq, many children suffer inadequate nutrition and medicine because Saddam controls limited supplies and distributes these mostly to his friends. Non-Arab children may be abducted if they live in an oil-producing area the government wants to control. Children are expected to report what their parents say about the regime, and training with the Saddam Fadayeem paramilitary youth organization is mandatory.

“Women in Saddam’s Iraq are beheaded if accused of prostitution, raped if related to someone the regime thinks is disloyal, and tortured if related to a dissident.

“Iraqis who are Chaldean Christian, Turkmen or other ethnic minorities or members of the Shiite Muslim majority, are subject to forced relocation if the regime wants to control or clear the area, prohibitions on religious study and practice, prohibitions on the study of non-Arabic languages and their uses in religious practice, lack of protection from mob violence, and discrimination in school, work and government.

“The United Nations receives reports from Iraqi citizens tortured by Iraqi security officials. Former prisoners reveal that torture techniques include branding, electric shock, beating, rape, detention and rape of relatives, breaking of limbs and amputations. Torture is often videotaped in order to intimidate others. In 2001 there were numerous reports that authorities cut out the tongues of people who had allegedly criticized Saddam Hussein. In some cases, this was performed in front of a large crowd.”

Women’s Status in Iraq

Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, November 2003:

Historically, Iraqi women and girls have enjoyed relatively more rights than many of their counterparts in the Middle East. The Iraqi Provisional Constitution, drafted in 1970, formerly guaranteed equal rights to women while other laws specifically ensured their right to vote, attend school, run for political office and own property.

Yet, following the 1991 Gulf War, the position of women within Iraqi society deteriorated rapidly. Women and girls were disproportionately affected by the economic consequences of the UN sanctions, and lacked access to food, health care and education. These effects were compounded by changes in the law that restricted women’s mobility and access to the formal sector in an effort to ensure jobs to men and appease conservative religious and tribal groups.

The most significant political factor in the reversal of the many positive steps advancing women’s status in Iraqi society following the 1991 Gulf War was Saddam Hussein’s decision to embrace Islamic and tribal traditions as a political tool in order to consolidate power. For example, the gender gap in school enrollment, and subsequently female literacy, increased dramatically due to families’ financial inability to send their children to school. As UN sanctions restricted economic possibilities, many families chose to keep their girl children at home. According to the UNESCO, as of 1987 approximately 75% of Iraqi women were literate; however, by 2000, Iraq had the lowest regional adult literacy levels, with the percentage of literate women at less than 25%.

Women and girls have also suffered from increasing restrictions on the freedom of mobility and protections under the law. In collusion with conservative religious groups and tribal leaders, the government issued numerous decrees and introduced legislation negatively impacting women's legal status in the labor code, criminal justice system and personal status laws. In 2001, the UN Special Rapporteur for Violence against Women reported that since the passage of the reforms in 1991, an estimated 4000 women and girls had been victims of "honor killings."

Furthermore, as the economy constricted, in an effort to ensure employment for men, the government pushed women out of the labor force and into more traditional roles in the home. In 1998, the government reportedly dismissed all females working as secretaries in governmental agencies. In June 2000, it also reportedly enacted a law requiring all state ministries to put restrictions on women working outside the home. Women's freedom to travel abroad was also legally restricted and formerly co-educational high schools were required by law to provide single-sex education only, further reflecting the reversion to religious and tribal traditions.

The British Museum

www.britishmuseum.org

The British Museum is a museum of human history and culture situated in London, England. The British Museum's collection, among the largest and most comprehensive in the world, contains seven million objects that originate from all continents, illustrate and document the story of human culture from its beginning to the present, represent the rich history of human cultures and mirror the city of London's global variety.

The origins of the British Museum lie in the will of the physician, naturalist and collector, Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753). Sloane wanted his collection of more than 71,000 objects, library and herbarium to be preserved intact after his death. He bequeathed it to King George II for the nation in return for payment of £20,000 to his heirs. The King had little interest but Parliament, led by the Speaker, Arthur Onslow, was persuaded to accept the gift. An Act of Parliament establishing the British Museum received the royal assent on 7 June 1753.

The foundation collections largely consisted of books, manuscripts and natural history with some antiquities (including coins and medals, prints and drawings) and ethnography (the study of cultures). In 1757 King George II donated the "Old Royal Library" of the sovereigns of England.

The Museum was first housed in a 17th-century mansion, Montagu House, in Bloomsbury on the site of today's building. On January 15, 1759, the British Museum opened to the public. With the exception of two World Wars, when parts of the collection were evacuated, it has remained open ever since, gradually increasing its opening hours and moving from an

attendance of 5,000 per year to today's five million.

From its beginnings the British Museum was a new type of institution. Governed by a body of Trustees responsible to Parliament, its collections belonged to the nation, with free admission for all. Entry was given to "all studious and curious Persons," linking public enjoyment with education.

The first famous antiquities, Sir William Hamilton's collection of Greek vases and other classical objects, were purchased in 1772. These were followed by such high profile acquisitions as the Rosetta Stone and other antiquities from Egypt (1802), the Townley collection of classical sculpture (1805) and the sculptures of the Parthenon, known as the Elgin Marbles (1816).

Visitor numbers increased greatly during the 19th Century. The Museum attracted great crowds of all ages and social classes, particularly on public holidays. As academic work continued with the publication of the Museum's series of detailed catalogues, many curators took an interest in broadening the Museum's appeal through lectures and improving the displays. The first popular Synopsis (or guide) to the collections was published in 1808 and ran to more than 60 editions before splitting into more detailed illustrated guide books by the end of the century.

The Museum was much involved in excavation abroad. Its Assyrian collections formed the basis for the understanding of cuneiform (an ancient Middle Eastern script) in the same way the Rosetta Stone had resulted in the unlocking of Egyptian hieroglyphic script (a symbol-based script).

Glossary

Amman: capital of Jordan

Arsenal: one of the most successful clubs in English football (soccer)

Assyria: an ancient empire and civilization in the upper valley of the Tigris River that reached the height of its power between the ninth and seventh centuries B.C.E.

Babylon: capital of ancient Babylonia, in Mesopotamia on the Euphrates River

Bakir: neighborhood in eastern Mosul

Balawat Gates: bronze bands depicting a sacrifice and war scenes from the campaigns of Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.E.), discovered in the city of Imgur-Enlil by Hormuzd Rassam in 1876

Basra: Iraq's main port, also the historic location of Sumeria

Beckham: captain of the England national football (soccer) team 2000-2006

Cairo: capital and largest city of Egypt, on the Nile River

Cardamon: an Indian herb with aromatic seeds used as spice or condiment

Chechnya: a region of Russia in the northern Caucasus, whose independence is disputed

Damascus: capital of Syria, inhabited since prehistoric times

El-Amarna: ancient city in Egypt near the Nile

Halvah: a confection of crushed sesame seeds in a binder of honey

Hijab: modest dress for women, defined by Islamic legal systems as covering all but face and hands in public

Imam: the male prayer leader in a mosque

Ishtar: the Akkadian name for the goddess Inana

Jordan: an Arab country in southwest Asia, bordering Iraq

King's Street: a favorite shopping street in London

Kufta: balls of minced meat mixed with spices and onions, also exists in vegetarian varieties

Manchester: third-largest urban area in the United Kingdom

Mosul: a city in northern Iraq on the Tigris River

Nimrud: ancient Assyrian city located south of Nineveh on the Tigris River

Nineveh: an ancient Assyrian city on the Tigris, opposite the site of present-day Mosul

Rassam: Assyriologist Hormuzd Rassam, 1826-1910, whose discoveries included the stone tablets containing *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the world's oldest literature

Rumi: 13th-century Persian poet, Islamic jurist, and theologian

Samarra: a city in Iraq on the east bank of the Tigris River

Tahreer: a neighborhood in Mosul

Tehran: capital of Iran

Titian: Italian painter of the Venetian school, 1488?-1576

Uday Hussein: Saddam Hussein's eldest son

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Questions and Activities

- 1) Darius and Shali are in a hotel room that is not their native country. How does the playwright convey this idea?
- 2) If you had to leave your home and were only allowed to bring one object with you what would it be and why? What if you were allowed only one suitcase?
- 3) How does the relationship between Darius and Shali change during the play?
- 4) How would you characterize the punishments that are given to some of the characters? Do they fit the deed?
- 5) How would you react if a marriage was arranged for you?
- 6) Why are Darius and Emad perceived as enemies by other people? How do their opinions about historical artifacts differ? How are they similar?
- 7) What is the purpose of the character Abdel-Hakim the bookseller?
- 8) Describe the importance of artifacts and works of art in culture and society?
- 9) What did the characters do in order to survive and how did they do it?

Activity

ARTIFACTS TO TELL A STORY

Materials: Objects from the classroom, from home

Students bring in an assortment of objects from home or from the classroom. Ask the students not to bring in heirlooms or irreplaceable objects. These objects are to have some significance to them and should be indicative of the home or classroom.

If the objects are found in the classroom, what object in the classroom best describes the class and the culture within the room? If your school has many classrooms, what objects could be found to show that it is a science classroom, a math classroom, a theatre, etc.

Each student will pick one of these gathered objects (one that they did not bring in) and will play the role of an archaeologist. They will pretend to be from 100 years in the future and write a short explanation of the object and what can be inferred from it. How does the artifact best describe the culture? What makes this object unique? What was the object used for? Why is it not used anymore?

Share the small stories about the object and try to decide as a group what the objects could be.

History 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.

Reading and Writing 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.

Time Capsule

Split the class into three groups. Explain that a time capsule will be constructed to be sent into the far reaches of space to introduce extra-terrestrial life to the citizens of earth. Due to the size of the rocket, each group will have a limit of only five objects to best represent the culture and their group. Each group will decide on the criteria for what the objects will be.

Each group will compile a list of their objects.

One group represents their school.

One group represents the United States.

One group represents the earth.

Discussion questions: What was the criteria for selecting the objects? Were some of the objects similar? Did anyone argue to include something that had value to them personally but not for the group as a whole?

Colorado Model Content Standards

Civics 4.1 Students know what citizenship is.

History 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.