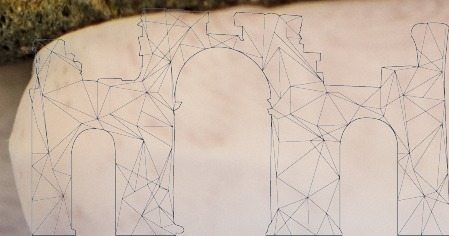


FACEBOOK'S BLACK MARKET IN ANTIQUITIES

ICOM RED LIST ARTIFACTS OFFERED ON FACEBOOK

AMR AL-AZM, KATIE A. PAUL

JUNE 2019



ATHAR PROJECT

THE ANTIQUITIES TRAFFICKING AND HERITAGE ANTHROPOLOGY RESEARCH PROJECT



Cover Photo: Keith Gardner / U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
2019 Antiquities Trafficking and Heritage Anthropology Research (ATHAR)
Project

www.atharproject.org

Twitter @ATHARProject

RED LIST ARTIFACTS TRAFFICKED ON FACEBOOK

Since 2017, the researchers of the Antiquities Trafficking and Heritage Anthropology Research (ATHAR) Project have led an investigative study documenting and analyzing the illicit trade in antiquities on Facebook. The research has revealed a vast transnational criminal network involved in trafficking, terrorism financing, and organized crime. An analysis of 95 Arabic Facebook Groups created to traffic illicit antiquities indicates that there are 488 individual administrators (admins) or moderators controlling a collective 1,947,195 members across 95 Facebook Groups.

ATHAR's investigations have yielded evidence of widespread trafficking across the Middle East and North Africa. The ATHAR Project's June 2019 case study on four Syrian based Facebook Groups found that an astonishing 80% of the posts offering artifacts come from conflict zones or countries bordering those in conflict. Many of the items offered resemble those on the Red Lists for the Middle East and North Africa that have been compiled by the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

The ATHAR Project has documented thousands of illicit artifacts on Facebook with tens of thousands more still left to document. The artifacts captured by ATHAR span a variety of periods, materials, and geographic areas. A selection of artifacts offered in antiquities trafficking Groups on Facebook from 2014 onward have been compiled in this catalogue to provide a window into the range of items matching those found in ICOM Red Lists for Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen.¹

ICOM Red Lists are not lists of stolen objects, but rather examples of documented cultural goods that are vulnerable to illicit trafficking. However, the artifacts offered on Facebook and shared in the following images are in fact illicit.

This catalogue is compiled to illustrate examples of the illicit cultural goods that are in fact stolen and match those compiled in the ICOM Red Lists. The catalogue is not meant to serve as a marker of authenticity nor as an exhaustive list of antiquities trafficked. In every case, the ATHAR Project has documented multiple examples for each Red List item, only a selection are shared here.

¹ <https://icom.museum/en/resources/red-lists/>





Source: ICOM Red List

Funerary elements - Human remains and associated objects (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Human/Animal Remains

Type: Human remains

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Funerary elements - Human remains and associated objects (Pharaonic era)

Material: Wood/ Vegetal

Type: Containers/Vessels (Coffin)

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 29 Sep 2015

Facebook User Location: Cairo, Egypt



Source: ICOM Red List

Architectural elements (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving Architectural elements

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Architectural elements (Pharaonic era)

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving Architectural elements

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 29 Sep 2015

Facebook User Location: Cairo,



Source: ICOM Red List

Funerary elements - Wood (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Wood/Vegetal

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Funerary elements - Wood (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Wood/Vegetal

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 4 Jul 2018

Facebook User Location: Alexandria, Egypt



Source: ICOM Red List

Funerary elements - Animal mummies (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Human/Animal Remains

Type: Mineral/Animals/Plants

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Funerary elements - Human remains and associated objects (Pharaonic era)

Material: Human/Animal remains

Type: Mineral/Animals/Plants

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 21 May 2014

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: ICOM Red List

Funerary elements - Human remains and associated objects (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Human/Animal Remains

Type: Human remains

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Funerary elements - Human remains and associated objects (Pharaonic era)

Material: Wood/ Vegetal

Type: Containers/Vessels (Coffin)

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 29 Sep 2015

Facebook User Location: Cairo, Egypt



Source: ICOM Red List

Religious or ceremonial portraits (Egyptian Graeco-Roman and Nubian Meroitic era)

Material: Wood/Vegetal

Type: Paintings/Drawings/ Engravings

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Religious or ceremonial portraits

Material: Plaster/Stucco/Paste

Type: Paintings/Drawings/ Engravings

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 27 Aug 2018

Facebook User Location: Alexandria, Egypt





Source: ICOM Red List

Religious or ceremonial portraits (Egyptian Graeco-Roman and Nubian Meroitic era)

Material: Plaster/Stucco/Paste

Type: Paintings/Drawings/Engravings

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Religious or ceremonial portraits

Material: Plaster/Stucco/Paste

Type: Paintings/Drawings/Engravings

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 29 Sep 2015

Facebook User Location: Cairo, Egypt



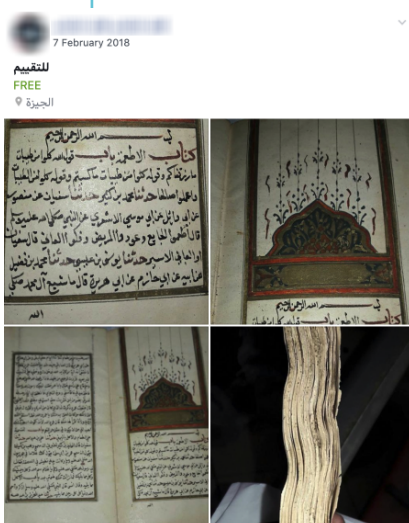
Source: ICOM Red List

Books, documents, and manuscripts (Islamic era)

Material: Paper/Writing medium

Type: Documents/Manuscripts/Books

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Books, documents, and manuscripts (Islamic era)

Material: Paper/Writing medium

Type: Documents/Manuscripts/Books

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 7 Feb 2018

Facebook User Location: Giza, Egypt



Source: ICOM Red List

Statues - Ceramics (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Sculptures/Relief

Country: Egypt



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Statues - Ceramics (Predynastic, Protodynastic, Pharaonic and Nubian era)

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Sculptures/Relief

Country: Egypt

Date Offered: 3 Sep 2018

Facebook User Location: Cairo, Egypt



Source: ICOM Red List

Stamps and seals - Cylinder seals

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Seals/Stamps

Country: Iraq



Source: ICOM Red List

Figural sculpture - Sculpture in the round, Stone votive statues

Material: Gems/Pearls Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Countries: Iraq



Source: ICOM Red List

Vessels and containers - Glass

Material: Glass

Type: Containers/Vessels

Countries: Iraq



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Stamps and seals - Cylinder seals

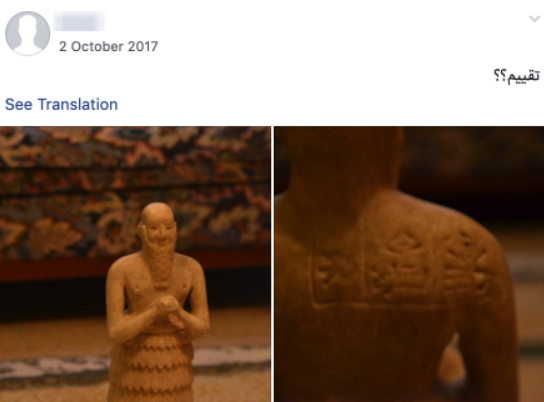
Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Seals/Stamps

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 14 Aug 2018

Facebook User Location: Baghdad, Iraq



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Figural sculpture - Sculpture in the round, Stone votive statues

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Countries: Iraq

Date Offered: 2 Oct 2017

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Vessels and containers - Glass

Material: Glass and Ceramic

Type: Containers/Vessels

Countries: Iraq

Date Offered: 22 Jul 2017

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: ICOM Red List

Architectural and furniture fragments

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Architectural elements

Country: Iraq

21 May 2017

مرحباً الرجاء تحليل هذا الرموز و شكراً

[See Translation](#)



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Architectural and furniture fragments

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Architectural elements
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 21 May 2017

Facebook User Location: Kirkuk, Iraq



Source: ICOM Red List

Coins - Islamic

Material: Metals

Type: Currency/Medals/
Postage stamps

Country: Iraq



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Coins - Islamic

Material: Metals

Type: Currency/Medals/Postage
stamps

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 24 Sep 2018

Facebook User Location:
Kurdistan



Source: ICOM Red List

Tablets

Material: Clay/Ceramic

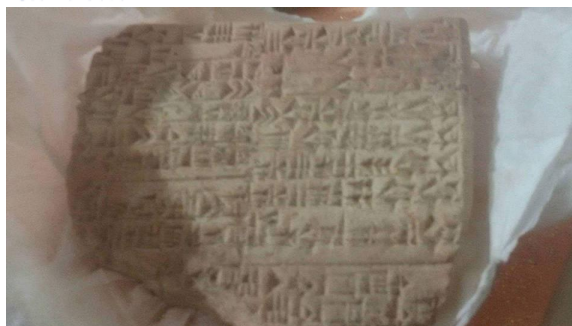
Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq

20 July 2017

للبيع

[See Translation](#)



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Tablets

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 20 Jul 2017

Facebook User Location:
Baghdad, Iraq





Source: ICOM Red List

Figural sculpture - Reliefs

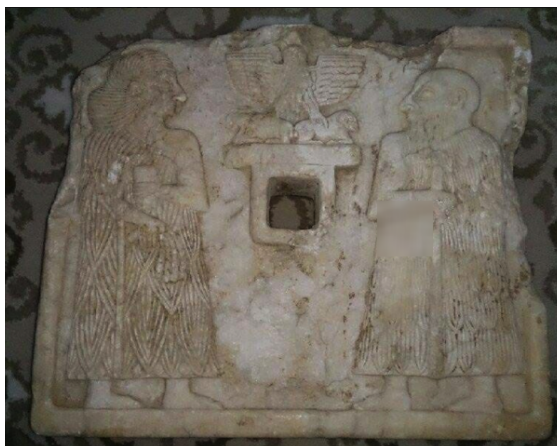
Material: Rocks/Stone

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq



8 May -



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Figural sculpture - Reliefs

Material: Rocks/Stone

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 8 May 2019

Facebook User Location:
(Current) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,
(From) Kurdistan



Source: ICOM Red List

Stamps and seals - Cylinder seals

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Seals/Stamps

Country: Iraq



16 June 2016 -



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Stamps and seals - Cylinder seals

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Seals/Stamps

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 16 Jun 2016

Facebook User Location:
Baghdad, Iraq



Source: ICOM Red List

Architectural elements - Foundation elements, Clay cones

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Architectural elements
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq



27 December 2017

See Translation

ممکن تقييم



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Architectural elements - Foundation elements, Clay cones

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Architectural elements
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Iraq

Date Offered: 27 Dec 2017

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: ICOM Red List

Accessories and instruments - Lamps

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Tools/Instruments Furniture

Country: Libya



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculptures - Stone

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya



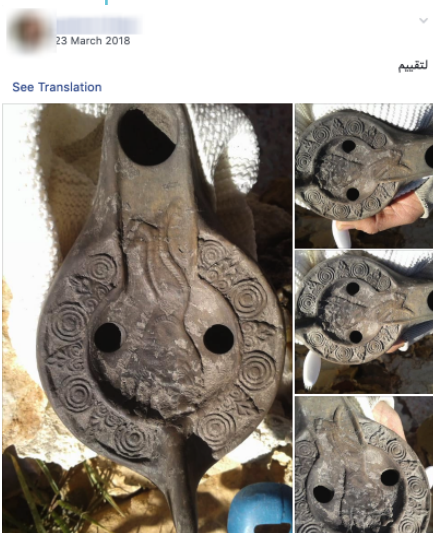
Source: ICOM Red List

Reliefs, plaques, steles and inlays - Stone, stucco and bronze

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Accessories and instruments - Lamps

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Tools/Instruments Furniture

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 23 Mar 2018

Facebook User Location: Kabaw, Ghadamis, Libya



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculptures - Stone

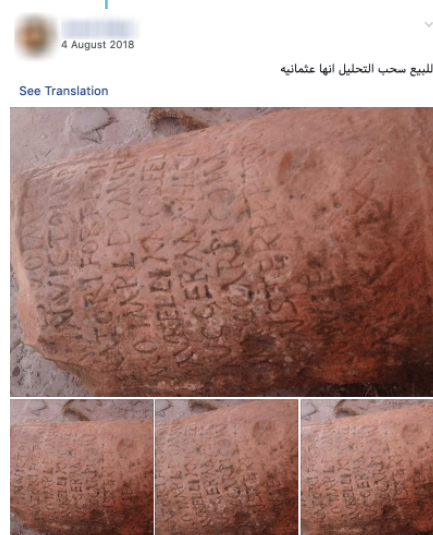
Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 30 Mar 2019

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Reliefs, plaques, steles and inlays - Stone, stucco and bronze

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 4 Aug 2018

Facebook User Location: Tripoli, Libya





Source: ICOM Red List

Coins

Material: Metals

Type: Currency/Medals/Postage stamps

Country: Libya



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Coins

Material: Metals

Type: Currency/Medals/Postage stamps

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 22 Nov 2018

Facebook User Location: Benghazi, Libya



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculptures - Stone

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculptures - Stone

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 24 Mar 2018

Facebook User Location: (current) Ottawa, Ontario (From) Libya



Source: ICOM Red List

Architectural elements - Mosaics

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Mosaics

Country: Libya



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Architectural elements - Mosaics

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Mosaics

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 23 Apr 2017

Facebook User Location: N/A





Source: ICOM Red List

Reliefs, plaques, steles and inlays - Stone, stucco and bronze

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya



2 November 2017 · 10



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Reliefs, plaques, steles and inlays - Stone, stucco and bronze

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets
Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 2 Nov 2017

Facebook User Location: Tripoli, Libya



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculptures - Stone

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya



18 December 2018

أرجو الأمانة... تم العثور عليه بجبل مغارب لمعبد يوناني في مدينة قورينا في ليبيا...
See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculptures - Stone

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 18 Dec 2018

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: ICOM Red List

Rock Art

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Paintings/Drawings/
Engravings

Country: Libya



1 November 2017 · 10



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Rock Art

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Paintings/Drawings/
Engravings

Country: Libya

Date Offered: 1 Nov 2017

Facebook User Location: N/A





Source: ICOM Red List

Cylinder Seals

Material: Gems/Pearls

Type: Seals/Stamps

Country: Syria

12 March - 12 March

ممکن تفیدونا بالمعلومات و ما القيمة

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Cylinder Seals

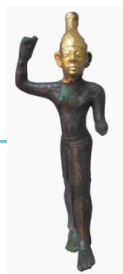
Material: Gems/Pearls

Type: Seals/Stamps

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 12 Mar 2019

Facebook User Location: Jableh, Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpture in the round - Bronze male figurines

Material: Metals

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpture in the round - Bronze male figurines

Material: Metals

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 16 Apr 2019

Facebook User Location: Damascus, Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Accessories and instruments - Weapons and tools

Material: Metals

Type: Tools/Instruments Weapons/Military

Country: Syria



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Accessories and instruments - Weapons and tools

Material: Metals

Type: Tools/Instruments Weapons/Military

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 2 Feb 2019

Facebook User Location: N/A





Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpture in the round - Statues

Material: Gems/Pearls Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Accessories and instruments - Jewelry

Material: Metals

Type: Jewelry/Personal adornments

Country: Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpture in high and low relief - Limestone funerary reliefs

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpture in the round - Statues

Material: Gems/Pearls Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 15 Oct 2018

Facebook User Location: Sarmada, Syria



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Accessories and instruments - Jewelry

Material: Metals

Type: Jewelry/Personal adornments

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 2 Feb 2019

Facebook User Location: Damascus, Syria



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpture in high and low relief - Limestone funerary reliefs

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 20 Mar 2019

Facebook User Location: N/A, Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Architectural elements - Mosaics

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Mosaics

Country: Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpture in high and low relief - Ivory reliefs

Material: Human/Animal Remains

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving Plaques/Steles/Tablets

Country: Syria



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpture in the round - Votive figurines

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria

4 June at 18:46

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Architectural elements - Mosaics

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Mosaics

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 4 Jun 2018

Facebook User Location: N/A, Syria

26 January 2016 ·

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpture in high and low relief

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving Plaques/Steles/Tablets

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 26 Jan 2016

Facebook User Location: Damascus, Syria

29 July 2017



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpture in the round - Votive figurines

Material: Clay/Ceramic

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Syria

Date Offered: 29 Jul 2017

Facebook User Location: Idlib, Syria





Source: ICOM Red List

Writings

Material: Metals

Type: Documents/ Manuscripts/Books Plaques/ Steles/Tablets Sculptures/ Relief carving

Country: Yemen



Source: ICOM Red List

Accessories and tools - Incense burners, astrolabes and lamps

Material: Metals

Type: Tools/Instruments Furniture

Country: Yemen



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpted objects - Statuettes

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen



Follow - 23 January 2018



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Writings

Material: Metals

Type: Documents/Manuscripts/ Books Plaques/Steles/Tablets Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 23 Jan 2018

Facebook User Location: Shabwah, Hadramawt, Yemen



Follow - 23 January 2018



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Accessories and tools

Material: Metals

Type: Tools/Instruments Furniture

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 23 Jan 2018

Facebook User Location: Shabwah, Hadramawt, Yemen



26 October 2016

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

هذا ختم حمير لة اكثر من 3000 سنة ارجوا التقييم والافاده من ذوي الخبرة

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpted objects - Statuettes

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 26 Oct 2016

Facebook User Location: `Ataq, Ma'rib, Yemen



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpted objects - Stelae

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets

Country: Yemen



Follow - 18 February 2018 - 12



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpted objects - Stelae

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Plaques/Steles/Tablets

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 18 Feb 2018

Facebook User Location: Aden, Yemen



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpted objects - Stelae

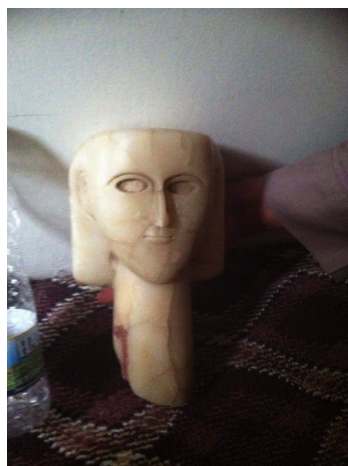
Material: Gems/Pearls Plaster/Stucco/Paste Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen



18 May 2016 - 12



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpted objects - Stelae

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 18 May 2016

Facebook User Location: N/A



Source: ICOM Red List

Accessories and tools - Incense burners, astrolabes and lamps

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Tools/Instruments

Country: Yemen



6 November 2017

من فيدي ايش هذه وجدت في موقع اثري

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Accessories and tools - Incense burners, astrolabes and lamps

Material: Rocks/Stones

Type: Tools/Instruments

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 6 Nov 2017

Facebook User Location: Sanaa, Yemen





Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpted objects - Statues and busts

Material: Metals

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

20 February 2018

من يهيمه الامر

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpted objects - Statues and busts

Material: Metals

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 20 Feb 2018

Facebook User Location: Sanaa, Yemen



Source: ICOM Red List

Accessories and tools - Weapons

Material: Metals

Type: Weapons/Military Tools/ Instruments

Country: Yemen

10 February 2018
ما هو معدن البرنز؟ وهل يجذب للمضاهيس . وهل البرنز الآثري القديم له قيمة كبيرة ؟
شكرا

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Accessories and tools - Weapons

Material: Metals

Type: Weapons/Military Tools/ Instruments

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 10 Feb 2018

Facebook User Location: Ma'rib, Yemen



Source: ICOM Red List

Sculpted objects - Statues and busts

Material: Gems/Pearls Rocks/ Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

16 March 2018

اسعد الله اولادكم اخواني الكرام
ممكن الافادة عن هذا التمثال الى اي عهد يعود.
والى ماذا ترمز النقوش التي في
اخواني مشرفين المجموعه والخبراء
لرجو مشاركتكم ولكم جزيل الشكر

See Translation



Source: Facebook via ATHAR Project

Sculpted objects - Statues and busts

Material: Gems/Pearls Rocks/ Stones

Type: Sculptures/Relief carving

Country: Yemen

Date Offered: 16 Mar 2018

Facebook User Location: Aden, Yemen