CULTURAL PROPERTY IN THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Cultural Heritage and Cultural Property Protection Training for Army ROTC
Content

• What is cultural property?
• Identifying cultural property in the operational environment
• The heritage landscape: tactical and strategic implications
• Laws and military regulations
End State

• Understand that cultural property of great value and significance may be present in the operational environment

• Understand that the potential significance of cultural property is determined by host nation beliefs and values

• Understand that an opponent may use cultural property for strategic and tactical advantage

• Understand that failure to identify, understand the significance of, and respond appropriately to cultural property may have a negative impact on the mission

• Understand your legal and strategic responsibilities for protecting cultural property in the operational environment
What is Cultural Heritage?

Identity

History

Values

Beliefs
What is Cultural Heritage?

Language
Traditional music
Dramatic arts
Belief systems
What is Cultural Property?

Ancient ruins
Historic buildings

Archaeological sites
Archaeological artifacts
What is Cultural Property?

Books, Manuscripts, Artwork
Museums, Libraries,
Archives

Sacred places
Landscape features
Key local structures
Why Does Cultural Property Matter?

Physically connect with...

History Values Beliefs
Why Does Cultural Property Matter?

The cultural heritage of a country is its soul, its memory, and its meaning.

– GTA 41-01-002, Civil Affairs Arts, Monuments, and Archives Guide
Identifying Cultural Property
Identifying Cultural Property

Locals can help identify cultural sites
Identifying Cultural Property

Gettysburg National Military Park Visitor Center

Flags

Artwork and photographs
Identifying Cultural Property

Make sure you’re not destroying someone else’s Gettysburg!
Identifying Cultural Property
Learning a Hard History Lesson in 'Talibanistan'

To Accommodate New Troops, the U.S. Military Expands and Inadvertently Disrupted Ancient Afghan Canals

By MICHAEL M. PHILLIPS

Karezgay, Afghanistan

Deep beneath the desolate landscape here are miles of canals that have watered wheat fields and vineyards for untold generations. They're also at the center of a dispute that handed the Taliban a propaganda victory and angered the very people the U.S. hopes to win over through its troop surge.

Rushing to expand a base to fit the new forces, American commanders seized farmland and built on top of these ancient underground-irrigation systems. The blunder is an indicator of how fragile the effort to win public backing for the U.S.-led war can be. In some cases, the tension is over civilian casualties; in others, it’s the corruption of U.S. allies in the Afghan government. Here, it's an
If before we put the first U.S. soldier on the ground, we alienate the closest village to the...base, we're putting the thing in reverse before we even get started.

- LTC William Schaper
  Lead engineer
The Heritage Landscape

Different value...
The Heritage Landscape
“The shrines of the Al-Askari Imams were chosen... to cause sectarian division among the people.”
The Heritage Landscape

source: BBC News
Laws and Regulations

1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict:

• Do not make any use of cultural property for purposes which are likely to expose it to destruction or damage
• Do not direct any act of hostility against cultural property
• Prevent and, if necessary, stop any form of theft, misuse, pillaging, or vandalism of cultural property
• Do not move or remove cultural property
• Do not direct acts of reprisal against cultural property
Laws and Regulations

- DoD Overseas Environmental Baseline Guidance Document
- Formal staff channels (J9/G9/(G5); JAG; Engineers; Civil Affairs)
- Annex L (Environmental Considerations) to Joint OPLAN/OPORD
- NATO STANAG 7141 Joint NATO Doctrine for Environmental Protection During NATO Led Military Operations
Those wealthy Madison Avenue and Bond Street dealers and collectors who believe they are engaged in benign criminal activity, then, are actually often financing weapons smuggling.

— Col Matthew Bogdanos, USMC

Report on the looting of the Iraq National Museum
Firing on cultural property, in certain cases, is permissible under the 1954 Hague Convention (Article 4.2: imperative military necessity waiver)
Laws and Regulations

ROE First!

*During combat operations environmental considerations will be subordinate to mission accomplishment and preservation of human life, but cannot be ignored.*

— CENTCOM Reg 200-2
The phrase ‘military necessity’ is sometimes used where it would be more truthful to speak of military convenience or even of personal convenience. I don’t want it to cloak slackness or indifference.

– GEN Dwight D. Eisenhower

29 December 1943
Laws and Regulations

Protection of cultural property is mandated by federal and international law.

Violators will be prosecuted in court and in the blaze of media attention.

– GTA 41-01-002 Civil Affairs Arts, Monuments, and Archives Guide
Cultural Property Protection

Take initiative!
Summary

• Protecting cultural property is the law, is DoD policy, is consistent with U.S. military values
• The value of cultural property is determined by Host Nation values and beliefs
• Protecting cultural property has tactical and strategic implications for mission success
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