ISSLP

Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law and Politics

Original Research

Sociological Analysis of the Destruction of Cultural and Artistic Heritage of Mosul by ISIS: A Verstehen Approach (Max Weber, Ibn Khaldun, Dr. Ali Al-Wardi)

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This article analyzes the destructive impact of ISIS on the cultural and artistic heritage of the city of Mosul. The research is based on the theories of three prominent sociologists: Ibn Khaldun, Max Weber, and Ali Al-Wardi, and utilizes data from reliable digital and print sources, articles, and news reports. The study employs a descriptive-analytical method and qualitative content analysis. The results of this study indicate that the destruction of Mosul's historical and cultural artifacts was carried out deliberately and with pre-planned strategies. These demolitions have particularly negatively affected the identity and historical credibility of the region's inhabitants. On the one hand, ethnic and religious prejudices rooted in Iraq's turbulent history fuel such destructive behaviors. On the other hand, the beliefs and convictions of the people act as a force for the preservation and restoration of this heritage. In other words, the conflict between preserving and destroying Mosul's historical and artistic heritage stems from social and cultural dualities, as well as religious and political influences. This article also highlights the necessity of international and national actions for the protection of Iraq's cultural heritage and calls for a secure and cooperative framework to enhance cultural identity. It emphasizes the importance of collaboration between regional countries, international organizations, and cultural and social institutions to prevent the recurrence of such tragic destruction of cultural heritage.

Keywords: Belief and conviction, preservation and destruction, historical artistic heritage, Mosul, Max Weber's theory.

How to cite this article:
Shouli, A., Aref, M., & Sharifzadeh, M. (2023). Sociological Analysis of the Destruction of Cultural and Artistic Heritage of Mosul by ISIS: A Verstehen Approach (Max Weber, Ibn Khaldun, Dr. Ali Al-Wardi). *Interdisciplinary Studies in Society, Law, and Politics, 2*(4), 65-76. https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.isslp.2.4.9

1. Introduction

The preservation and destruction of cultural and historical artifacts is a prominent issue in contemporary society, especially in regions where ideological conflicts challenge the foundations of cultural heritage. Mosul, once a vibrant center of cultural fusion and diversity, has faced significant upheavals in recent years, leading to the loss of numerous irreplaceable historical artifacts (Greenland, 2020; Shouli et al., 2023). This article seeks to explore how belief systems surrounding the preservation and destruction of these cultural artifacts can be understood through the lens of Max Weber's sociological theory of religion. Weber's insights into the relationship between belief, culture, and social action provide a valuable framework for analyzing how societies justify either the preservation or

obliteration of cultural heritage, especially in contexts where such acts carry ideological significance.

By applying Weber's theory, this article examines the belief systems that inform the perceptions of individuals and groups regarding Mosul's historical cultural artifacts. By exploring the religious, socio-political, and cultural dimensions of these beliefs, the article aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the motivations behind preservation efforts and the rationale behind destruction. This research will focus not only on the beliefs of various stakeholders—including local communities, religious authorities, and political actors—but also investigate how external influences, such as international institutions and global narratives, impact these belief systems.

Ultimately, the use of Weber's framework allows us to analyze the complex interplay between belief and cultural heritage, shedding light on the core values that shape collective actions in the face of adversity. The significance of this article lies in its potential to illuminate the intricate dynamics involved in the preservation and destruction of cultural heritage, particularly in a historically rich and socially diverse region like Mosul. By understanding the beliefs that underpin these actions, we aim to contribute to a more informed dialogue on the role of cultural heritage in conflict resolution, identity formation, and social cohesion. In this article, we systematically explore the interplay between belief, action, and cultural heritage, ultimately demonstrating how these factors may influence the future trajectory of Mosul's historical landmarks and cultural identity.

2.   Literature Review

In a study conducted by Lasani and Naghizadeh (2019), the destruction of cultural heritage during armed conflicts, particularly in the Middle East and countries like Iraq and Syria, was examined. They showed that following World War II, the damage inflicted on cultural artifacts in these regions has been unprecedented, with extremist groups such as ISIS creating a cultural crisis by destroying historical sites. They also pointed to the inefficiency of international organizations in protecting this heritage and the lack of enforceable guarantees under frameworks like the 1954 Hague Convention, which have proven impractical in reality. Their study provided a list of historical sites destroyed by ISIS in

Syria and Iraq and emphasized the need to develop and expand international laws to protect cultural heritage during armed conflicts (Lasani & Naghizadeh, 2019).

Lasani and Naghizadeh analyzed related resolutions and laws, acknowledging that current legislation cannot effectively address the gaps in protecting cultural property. They also highlighted the importance of the role of the United Nations and UNESCO in organizing and strengthening protection efforts for cultural heritage, underscoring the need for more practical and effective approaches (Lasani & Naghizadeh, 2019). In a study by Sayyid Adel Heydari (2015) published in Cultural Relations, the serious damage caused by ISIS's activities to the cultural and historical artifacts of Middle Eastern nations was examined. He emphasized that the destruction of these artifacts, due to their cultural and civilizational authenticity, has provoked the anger of international institutions, clearly demonstrating the need for international criminal protection in this area. The article explored international law and jus cogens rules regarding the preservation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, as well as the mention of ISIS's international crimes (Heydari, 2015).

Heydari discussed the role of global organizations, particularly the United Nations and UNESCO, in addressing this crisis and the necessity of global solidarity for protecting cultural heritage. Additionally, he examined how ISIS profited from looting and trafficking historical artifacts, drawing comparisons with the "blood diamond" industry in Africa. Heydari stressed the need for serious intervention by nations to safeguard historical artifacts and criticized the actions of international organizations. He pointed out the duality of these organizations in prosecuting and returning stolen artifacts, as well as their covert support of Salafi groups, concluding that the preservation of cultural heritage requires global solidarity and the current generation's responsibility toward future generations (Heydari, 2015).

In the study conducted by Shouli and colleagues (2023), the impact of belief on the preservation and destruction of historical cultural artifacts in Mosul was examined through the lens of Max Weber's sociological theory of religion. They noted that belief and conviction are fundamental concepts, playing a crucial role in the actions and behavior of individuals in every society, significantly influencing the fate of every nation. Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, was attacked and destroyed by

ISIS. Located 400 kilometers from Baghdad, Mosul is divided by the Tigris River. Its proximity to Turkey's northern border and Syria's western border adds to its importance. In 2014, ISIS occupied Mosul with the support of regional and foreign military forces. The city's historical face was transformed due to destruction. The rigid, reactionary ideology of ISIS, along with Wahhabism's support, resulted in the devastation of Mosul (Shouli et al., 2023).

Based on this research, belief and conviction, which form the mental framework of religious and ethnic identity, played a key role in the destruction and reconstruction of Mosul. This study, based on Max Weber's sociological theories, utilized library research, online sources, and news reports and was conducted in a descriptive-analytical manner (Shouli et al., 2023).

In a study by Groizard and Santana-Gallego (2018), the destruction of cultural heritage and international tourism in Arab countries was investigated. They pointed out that UNESCO World Heritage sites in some Arab countries affected by the Arab Spring conflicts are at risk. Many nations build their development strategies on promoting cultural tourism using their rich historical and artistic heritage. However, the literature does not clarify the benefits of being a UNESCO World Heritage site in regions housing such valuable cultural assets. Therefore, the impact of losing this heritage remains unclear. In this article, the economic loss resulting from the partial or complete damage to World Heritage sites was estimated. Their results showed that World Heritage is a major factor in attracting tourists, especially to Arab countries currently at risk of conflict. Their analysis indicated that the disappearance of sites classified by UNESCO as "at risk" leads to a loss of at least 12% of their tourism, with Libya and Syria being the most affected (Groizard & Santana-Gallego, 2018).

In another study, Seyfi and Hall (2020) examined cultural heritage tourism in the Middle East and South Africa. They noted that the Middle East and South Africa are large, complex, and diverse regions considered major centers of cultural influence and travel. However, over the past decades, the regions have been plagued by geopolitical tensions, political turmoil, instability, and conflict. The contentious and controversial image of these areas in many productive tourism markets has negatively impacted the flow of tourists to these regions, hindering the development of tourism despite the wealth of cultural heritage, favorable tourism climate, and recreational resources. Recently, after the "Arab Spring" and the rise of extremism and Islamic fundamentalism, cultural heritage in parts of the region has been at risk, witnessing widespread destruction, damage, and looting (Seyfi & Hall, 2020).

Finally, Turku (2017) explored the destruction of cultural property as a weapon of war. Their study examined the systematic targeting and destruction of cultural heritage by ISIS as part of its broader military strategy. They argued that this destruction not only aims to erase the cultural identity of affected communities but also serves to demonstrate the group's ideological motivations, with the goal of exerting control and instilling fear both locally and internationally. The analysis highlighted various methods employed by ISIS, including the destruction of ancient sites, the looting of artifacts, and the propaganda disseminated to portray these actions as a form of religious cleansing. The findings underscored the urgent need for international legal frameworks to protect cultural property during armed conflicts, as well as the importance of raising awareness and education to counter the narratives that fuel such destructive actions (Turku, 2017).

3.   Theoretical Framework

In examining the preservation and destruction of historical and cultural artifacts in Mosul through the lens of Max Weber's sociology of religion, a nuanced theoretical framework emerges, emphasizing the complex interaction between cultural values, religious beliefs, and social transformations. Weber, a central figure in sociology, emphasized the rationalization of life as a fundamental force shaping human societies. He acknowledged that this rationalization often leads to the decline of traditional cultures and, in some cases, the erosion of religious beliefs. In the context of Mosul, a city rich in historical and cultural significance, Weber's framework invites an exploration of how the rationalization of thought and the development of industrial capitalism may influence the valuation of cultural artifacts and the moral imperatives associated with their preservation or destruction (Shouli et al., 2023).

Weber argued that religion plays a crucial role in imparting meaning to human existence, acting as a guiding framework through which individuals interpret

their lives and the world around them. In Mosul, where cultural heritage intertwines with various religious narratives, belief systems can significantly shape attitudes toward historical artifacts. Weber's assertion that only religions can fulfill humanity's fundamental needs resonates deeply in this research, as it highlights the role of faith in shaping perceptions of identity and cultural heritage. The theoretical concept here is that deeply rooted religious beliefs among the residents of Mosul may foster a protective spirit toward cultural artifacts, or conversely, lead to their destruction if they are perceived as incompatible with current religious interpretations or socio-economic needs (Shouli et al., 2023).

Additionally, the examination of historical contexts through the perspectives of Ibn Khaldun and Ali Al-Wardi enhances the reader's understanding of the dynamics at play in Mosul. Ibn Khaldun's framework emphasizes the role of social cohesion and group solidarity, which can illustrate how collective beliefs about heritage and identity are formed and sustained, particularly in societies undergoing rapid change or crisis. His theory provides a foundation for understanding the collective motivations behind the preservation or obliteration of cultural symbols. In contrast, Ali Al-Wardi introduces contemporary sociological insights, reflecting the complexities of post-colonial identity and emerging narratives surrounding cultural heritage in contested spaces.

This fusion of classical and modern sociological thought enriches the theoretical foundations of the article, enabling a multifaceted exploration of how specific beliefs about preservation or destruction are informed by broader social and religious contexts. Ultimately, the exploration of beliefs surrounding the preservation and destruction of historical and cultural artifacts in Mosul, as articulated through Weber's sociology of religion, combined with insights from Ibn Khaldun and Ali Al-Wardi, provides a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics at play. This theoretical framework underscores the significance of cultural heritage in providing meaning to life, particularly in the face of rationalization and social change, while framing these beliefs within historical struggles for identity and continuity in a rapidly transforming socio-political landscape. Therefore, this theoretical framework lays the groundwork for a deeper analysis of how belief systems influence actions toward cultural heritage in Mosul, making it essential for broader discourse on the impact of religion on social values in the contemporary world.

4.   Research Methodology

In this article, the research methodology section is designed to explain the systematic approach used in collecting and analyzing data related to the topic. The objectives of this research draw on a descriptive research design with an emphasis on content analysis, as well as a comprehensive depiction of historical events and current developments concerning the socio-cultural landscape of Mosul. This article underscores the importance of objective and realistic representation of the ongoing dynamics surrounding the preservation and destruction of cultural heritage, thus facilitating a deeper examination of the consequences of entrenched belief systems rooted in sociological theories of religion, particularly those proposed by Max Weber.

One of the core components of this research method is its descriptive focus and hypothesis-driven framework aimed at examining the phenomena within Mosul's cultural context. This entails a thorough investigation of the current situations and connections related to the preservation and destruction of historical artifacts. Descriptive research, especially through the detailed narrative it provides, helps clarify the characteristics of the subject by juxtaposing various phenomena related to cultural heritage. This research approach is critical in portraying the multidimensional aspects of belief systems and their influence on socio-cultural practices surrounding Mosul's historical artifacts, particularly in the wake of recent conflicts that have affected the region. Moreover, data collection in this article is an essential aspect of the study, utilizing a mixed-methods approach that integrates both fieldwork and library-based research. Given the complex and multifaceted nature of the topic, both quantitative and qualitative data are necessary to support the analyses conducted throughout the research. Fieldwork allows for direct interaction with people and provides richer insights into perceptions and beliefs surrounding historical artifacts. Simultaneously, library research facilitates access to a wide range of scholarly articles, books, and previous studies, which provide a necessary contextual backdrop

for situating findings within the existing body of literature.

This dual approach offers a robust framework for capturing diverse perspectives on the preservation and destruction of Mosul's cultural heritage. The data collection tools in this article are multifaceted, including interviews, observations, and literature analysis from relevant sources. Interviews with key informants such as local historians, cultural preservationists, and community leaders help clarify personal narratives and insights related to the topic, contributing to a richer understanding of the belief systems guiding preservation or destruction efforts. Observational techniques enable us to closely observe the conditions surrounding cultural artifacts and their significance within the community.

Integrating literature from scholarly databases, along with contemporary reports on Mosul's socio-political environment, provides a solid foundation for understanding the broader context influencing these historical events. In terms of data analysis, this methodology employs both quantitative and qualitative techniques to identify patterns and themes in the collected data. Initial quantitative analyses categorize and summarize statistical information gathered from surveys and observational metrics. However, the core of this article is centered on qualitative analysis, where the meanings and interpretations of the data are deeply examined. This aligns with the exploratory nature of the research, allowing for an extensive investigation into the relationships and circumstances affecting cultural artifacts.

The combination of qualitative insights into the quantitative findings leads to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play, thus offering a more nuanced picture of the interaction between belief systems and cultural preservation. The logic behind prioritizing qualitative methodology in this research stems from its focus on complex meaning-making processes and interpretation. Qualitative approaches facilitate deeper engagement with the subject matter, providing rich descriptions that numbers alone cannot capture. In this sense, the research emphasizes the importance of contextualizing individuals' lived experiences and beliefs concerning historical artifacts. Relying on qualitative narratives rather than standardized survey responses is intentional, as it seeks to mitigate potential biases and misinterpretations that

may arise from quantitative assessments—particularly when dealing with complex and emotional topics like cultural preservation and destruction. Furthermore, the qualitative dimension of this research is appropriate given the enduring significance of the artifacts in question and the differing beliefs about their preservation. Observational techniques and informal interviews provide a means for close interaction with the community, thereby enriching our understanding of the variables and situational contexts that have contributed to the current status of these cultural artifacts.

5. Results and Discussions

5.1. Identity Impacts in Iraqi Society

Examining a society with unique conditions, such as Iraq, requires deep and fundamental studies that contribute to the formation and crystallization of these communities. One of the significant factors shaping contemporary Iraqi society is the presence of two regional powers over the past centuries: the Ottoman Empire and the Safavid Empire of Iran. The conflicts and disputes between these two regional powers—the Ottomans adhering to Sunni Islam and the Safavids to Shia Islam—had irreparable effects on the social fabric of the people of Mesopotamia. Iraqi society was divided into two factions: supporters of the Turkish Ottomans and followers of the Iranians and Shia Islam. This division diminished the people's sense of identity and loyalty to their homeland, resulting in a lack of attachment to the land and a common belief among the Iraqi people. Besides political and religious factors, environmental elements also played a crucial role in shaping Iraqi society. Floods, droughts, and recurring natural disasters had a direct impact on the lives of the people. The abundance of water in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, particularly in winter and spring following the melting of snow from the eastern mountains of Turkey, brings large volumes of water to these rivers. While this abundance benefits herders and nomads, it poses harm to farmers living along the riverbanks, whose crops are often destroyed during floods. These differing needs and desires have historically led to disagreements and enmity among the people of this land. These factors also influenced the people's ethics and habits, turning animosity and

hostility into urban and rural conflicts based on the varying interests of these groups.

5.2. Impact of Beliefs on Artistic Artifacts

When analyzing the influence of beliefs and convictions on the preservation and destruction of Mosul's cultural and historical artistic artifacts, it is essential to consider the reciprocal relationship between individuals and society. Human character is shaped by social structures, leading individuals within a society to share many traits, while exhibiting specific differences in behaviors and habits. Iraq's unique history and environmental conditions have endowed its people with distinctive characteristics. The complex and tumultuous nature of this society presents challenges from a sociological perspective. Max Weber's verstehen theory emphasizes the power of understanding and interpreting the lived experiences of individuals and stresses that natives of this society, shaped by specific historical and social developments, hold a unique position. Historical tensions and hardships, including wars, looting, and religious prejudices, have contributed to a heterogeneous and oppressed identity among Iraqis. This phenomenon affects social behaviors, transforming individuals into angry and frustrated beings. Thus, an ongoing interaction and tension exist between social structures and individual character, influencing the quality of social behaviors.

Multiple studies on the social character of Iraqis have produced varied and sometimes contradictory findings in analyzing their behavior. While societal norms and laws exert considerable influence over individuals' behavior, altering these frameworks is not easily achievable. Ibn Khaldun emphasized the real impact of society on individuals, distinguishing his insights from mere theoretical preaching. Ultimately, examining the influence of beliefs on Iraqis' individual and social character and how these beliefs impact the historical artistic artifacts of Mosul requires attention to the transformations and shifts that have enveloped this society over time. The fundamental factors shaping social character are deeply affected by unique historical and social circumstances, making each of these factors highly significant in evaluating cultural and historical artistic artifacts.

Charles Coy, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan, discusses the connection between social core

and individual behavior, asserting that society acts as a mirror, reflecting individuals' behaviors. People's self-perceptions are directly influenced by society's impressions. Over time, individuals' personalities are shaped through childhood interactions within family, neighborhood, and friendship circles. Early experiences in these environments profoundly impact a person's character. The initial structures formed during childhood often remain unchanged over time, and altering them is difficult. Throughout this process, societal judgments, such as labeling behaviors as good or bad, continuously affect a child's mind and gradually integrate into their core being. The link between family culture and individual personality is clearly observable. For example, individuals raised in affluent families with high cultural status generally possess greater confidence and optimism, enabling them to realize their aspirations and achieve future success. Conversely, children raised in economically disadvantaged environments with low cultural standards are more likely to experience suppression and humiliation, leading to a lack of confidence and hopelessness in life.

Human personality forms as a combination of internal and social factors, resulting in a duality in behaviors and thoughts. While individuals may share common traits within their society, each person exhibits unique behaviors that distinguish them. This duality was particularly prominent during different historical periods, such as the Abbasid era. Religion also plays a crucial role in these transformations. Religious leaders have influenced social fluctuations by promoting deep yet narrow-minded ideas, fostering a duality of behaviors within individuals. Iraq has always been an important arena for the formation of religious and philosophical thoughts, and its cultural and religious diversity has led to shifts in personality and behavior among its people.

Moreover, the social fabric of families in Iraq differs from that of other countries, and these distinctions profoundly impact the behaviors and beliefs of family members. The phenomenon of "segregation" within the Iraqi family structure is evident; each family member—man, woman, and child—acts independently in their respective life processes. As a result, this separation leads each member to engage in their daily activities individually. In this context, women in Iraqi society face cultural and social limitations, particularly in familial settings, where they

are pressured to remain at home. Meanwhile, men spend most of their time working or participating in social activities, such as frequenting coffeehouses. This division of roles strengthens patriarchal values in society, portraying women as inferior beings with limited intellect. Social conditions are such that even when women leave the house to run errands, they must do so cautiously and adhere to specific dress codes. These social constructs and female subordination create challenges for women's self-esteem and societal standing. In this environment, children—especially boys—suffer from the lack of play spaces and suitable activities, resorting to the streets and neighborhoods for daily interactions. Both the negative and positive aspects of these environments can influence children's identity development, sometimes leading to deviant behaviors and delinquency. Additionally, the psychological effects of these social conditions on family members must be examined. Feelings of conflict and frustration, arising from social and cultural pressures, can result in psychological tension and destructive behaviors in individuals.

Many people in this society idealize their self-image, yet their everyday reality often contrasts with these ideals. This gap between personal pride and social behavior creates a type of duality in personality and behavior, which not only affects their quality of life but also their cultural heritage and artistic artifacts. Sociologists believe that individual behavior is shaped by environmental conditions and childhood social interactions. Parental behavior and early education profoundly impact a child's future character. Notably, strict behavior in Iraqi society can result in a dual personality in children: one obedient and the other rebellious. This phenomenon, especially in the social and cultural context of Iraq, intensifies psychological and social tensions among the youth. Conventional education in Iraq often restricts a child from expressing emotions or criticism, confining them within predefined boundaries. Thus, suppressing emotions can lead to aggressive and rebellious behavior, which may manifest in later years. This personality duality, resulting from social pressures and constraints, can eventually lead to feelings of frustration and failure in individuals.

Iraq's social conditions create an environment where natural human desires and social laws are in constant conflict. In such conditions, many individuals become adept at criticizing others and evaluating opposing behaviors, yet they may succumb to hypocrisy, setting aside their beliefs and engaging in contradictory actions. These contradictions can make it difficult for individuals to identify and analyze social issues. Undoubtedly, suppressing human needs leads to frustration and low self-esteem, contributing to social fragmentation. These frustrations and social pressures prevent individuals from accurately understanding and analyzing their society's issues, leading them to view matters negatively. Consequently, negative behavioral patterns in Iraqi society pose a serious challenge that can also impact its cultural heritage and artistic artifacts.

By examining the research data, one can identify the core elements of Ibn Khaldun's concept of asabiyyah (social cohesion), which has been used as a foundation for governance. These principles ultimately contributed to the emergence of extremist groups such as ISIS. The events following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States gave rise to religious extremist movements such as al-Qaeda and ISIS, which promoted the idea of jihad against Islam's internal and external enemies. These groups sought to return to the Qur'an and the practices of the early generations (Salaf) and initiated movements that thrived in an environment characterized by demographic changes and a weak central government in Iraq. Iraq became a fertile ground for spreading extremist ideologies, as the absence of a strong government and the difficulties resulting from occupation and sectarian religious conflicts provided the conditions that Ibn Khaldun identified as causes of governmental collapse. Religious and sectarian tensions fostered collaboration and alliances among extremist Sunni groups, particularly ISIS, and local populations. Upon entering Iraq, this Salafist group, driven by religious and ethnic prejudices, immediately sought to challenge the Shia-dominated government, fueling ethnic and religious discord within Iraqi society. As a result, the conditions for the continuation and expansion of this behavior were set, with people, influenced by these prejudices, contributing to the destruction of their cultural and historical identity and artistic heritage either by actively supporting or remaining silent in the face of such devastation.

5.3. Asabiyyah and Governance

Ibn Khaldun, in his analysis, highlights that asabiyyah (group solidarity) serves as the foundation of a tribe's strength before its transformation into other political systems. He believes that the payment of taxes by the tribe can lead to the erosion of asabiyyah, an understanding that stems from his social context. According to him, the tribe's settlement in a city and subordination to a government is another factor contributing to the decline of asabiyyah, suggesting that a return to this solidarity would require a generational purification. Additionally, the religious and ethnic solidarity formed within groups exemplifies the impact of beliefs on the social structure. Today, the emergence of extremist groups in the Middle East, who exploit these solidarities to achieve political and social goals, reflects the contemporary social situation. These groups believe in generational cleansing and elevating themselves above others to justify their actions. The reliance on agricultural lands, particularly by farmers, ties them to their lands, potentially leading them to endure humiliation and hardship.

Ibn Khaldun also emphasizes the necessity of "virtue" alongside asabiyyah in strengthening the tribe. Virtue, as a prerequisite for leadership and the tribe's survival, must include qualities such as justice and generosity. His theories about the influence of governance and social relations on the formation of political and religious institutions are worth exploring. He views the ruler as a divine caliph, and obedience to him is conditional upon adherence to righteous paths. This concept connects to the current religious and political prejudices referenced by extremist groups like ISIS, who consider themselves God's representatives on earth and view any opposition as a rebellion against divine order.

In an introduction to Ibn Khaldun's theory, the concept of sovereignty is defined as a familial legacy rather than being equivalent to nations. He emphasizes that despite governmental transformations, the spirit of patriotism leads to the formation of a set of material and spiritual heritages. Ibn Khaldun also notes that the social causes for the establishment of states are not identical throughout history, and the roots of each state cannot solely be attributed to the asabiyyah of nomadic tribes. In addition to asabiyyah and moral virtues, Ibn Khaldun identifies a third factor contributing to progress and

victory—whether political or religious in nature. He cites examples of pre-Islamic tribes' inability to form states and the role of religious principles in mobilizing them. He also references the aristocratic tendencies of the Quraysh and the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty, illustrating a minority ruling over the majority. In today's world, this pattern persists, with wars and armed conflicts among religious elites in the Middle East being prominent examples of these power dynamics. Ibn Khaldun believes that the establishment of a new state not only requires significant power but also the weakness of existing governments. He argues that when a state comprises various nations, the formation of a new state becomes more challenging. The weakness of the central government in 2014, which led to the control of territory by ISIS, exemplifies this theory. Ibn Khaldun analyzes that when a tribe achieves power, its role in forming the state concludes, and afterward, governance turns aristocratic. Consequently, despotic rulers rely on foreign forces to maintain their positions, leading to extravagant spending, which ultimately weakens the state. From his perspective, the fall of governments results from the incompetence of the aristocracy, reliance on foreign soldiers, and deviation in lifestyle through excessive indulgence. Finally, Ibn Khaldun concludes that religious governance, as the best form of government, is based on providing for the public good. He emphasizes that religion, as a means of recognizing societal interests, is the best option for ensuring the public welfare, and this religious governance is realized through the caliphate.

5.4. Nomadism and Urbanism in Mosul

During Ottoman rule, the culture and behavior of Iraqis were significantly influenced by Bedouin and nomadic customs. These influences led to the formation of specific cultural norms, where prejudices and vengeance were regarded as social virtues. Certain behaviors, such as looting and violence, became more common than compassion and cooperation, even though Islamic teachings clearly reject and condemn such actions. Bedouins, particularly during the Ottoman era in Iraq, garnered respect and esteem within their tribes. A harsh reality recorded in Iraq's history is the dominance of nomadism over urbanism. This issue arose due to Iraq's geographical location, especially its constant contact with Bedouin tribes. Economic crises, social strife, and

cultural divisions between nomads and urban dwellers gradually led to the replacement of urban values with nomadic norms. Despite Islam's clear recommendations, Muslims sought refuge in their families and tribes, further reinforcing the tribal system. Several factors contributed to this situation. First, the Ottoman dominance following a series of weak governments marked a turning point in the region's Bedouin culture. The lack of security and economic opportunities pushed people to seek protection within their tribes to safeguard their lives and property. Second, the continuous conflicts the Ottomans engaged in with neighboring countries, such as Iran, fostered an environment conducive to warlike activities and tribal raids. In the wake of these conflicts, the people began to migrate from Iraq's specific geography and revived nomadic ethics. The instability of Ottoman power allowed surrounding tribes to invade Iraq and seize its resources for their benefit. Additionally, contagious diseases and economic instability further exacerbated the situation.

Indeed, the chaotic conditions, alongside the destruction of civilization and urban boundaries, facilitated the emergence of a nomadic culture in Iraq. During the Ottoman period, two key factors shaped Iraqi society: a small population and an imbalance between nomadic and urban populations, which led to the dominance of nomadic culture over urban behavior.

In analyzing the influence of beliefs and convictions on the preservation and destruction of Mosul's cultural and historical artistic artifacts, it is essential to consider the social prejudice that exists between urban residents and nomads. Unlike nomads, city dwellers possess a deep attachment to their neighborhoods, and this attachment naturally extends to other neighborhoods and even to the entire city. When the city is threatened, the neighborhoods within it unite based on this attachment to defend the city. Throughout history, this type of asabiyyah has been influenced by social and tribal identity, reaching a point where, in specific crises such as ethnic conflicts, religious beliefs and differences are almost forgotten. This phenomenon can be observed in Mesopotamian society, where tribal and ethnic asabiyyah often surpasses religious prejudice. The history of Kadhimiya and Najaf reveals that these two cities, aside from their religious affiliations to prominent Islamic figures, are heavily influenced by social asabiyyah. Residents of Kadhimiya consider themselves

descendants of Imam Musa al-Kadhim, while Najafis identify with Imam Ali, which has at times led to severe conflicts between these two groups. The history of Baghdad also bears witness to the disputes between various powers, particularly influenced by religious and ethnic wars. The major conflicts between the Ottoman and Safavid states demonstrate the profound impact of religious prejudice on the destruction and preservation of historical artifacts. During these conflicts, Shah Ismail of the Safavids not only imposed his authority over the Sunnis but also destroyed Sunni sacred sites, leaving deep resentment among the Sunni population. Conversely, Sultan Selim of the Ottoman Empire sought revenge and carried out massacres against Shias, with both rulers using religion and sectarianism to justify their acts of historical and cultural destruction, further exacerbating social tensions.

These historical events led to undesirable behaviors and dualities in the actions of individuals, affecting their culture and social identity. The lack of national sovereignty and reliance on foreign powers also contributed to widening the gap between urban dwellers and nomads.

As previously mentioned, in examining the impact of beliefs and convictions on the preservation and destruction of cultural and historical artistic artifacts in Mosul, the role of social and cultural factors, particularly in historical and political contexts, must be taken into account. Iraq's history, as a region rife with ethnic and religious tensions, has significantly shaped the behaviors and cultural identities of its people. These tensions have ultimately contributed to the formation of identity elements in which individuals tend to support one another against external challenges, even if that support is based on religion or sect. After the Ottoman Empire, Iraq came under British colonial rule, which further pressured and eroded the country's social and cultural structure. Instead of fulfilling promises of improvement, colonialism perpetuated cultural and identity conflicts, weakening the sense of patriotism and causing national unity to be subsumed by sectarian and religious affiliations. This paved the way for the replacement of national identity with sectarian identities, ultimately facilitating foreign domination and diminishing the sense of participation among the people. Even though republicans attempted to improve economic and social conditions, they could not eradicate this duality of

identity. As a result, frequent political changes and coups led to the reemergence of non-civilian and sectarian dominance, with the rise of the Ba'athist regime and its divisive policies further intensifying the situation.

Bedouin culture in Iraq, with its core elements of asabiyyah (tribal solidarity), ghazu (raids), and muruwwah (chivalry), played a significant role in social behaviors. Due to ongoing tensions and identity formation based on tribal affiliations, this culture has impacted citizens' behavior. As a result, people are sometimes influenced by Bedouin customs and other times by urban culture, a dichotomy that manifests in their behavior and exacerbates their vulnerability toward cultural heritage. This cultural and identity overlap has created a unique situation in the behavior of Mosul's residents, significantly affecting their beliefs and attitudes toward the preservation and protection of cultural heritage.

Additionally, like other human societies, Iraq exhibits similarities in customs and behaviors, but there are also meaningful differences in details. These differences arise from subcultures and historical and geographical influences, which shape individual character and family social structure. In this way, society directly impacts individuals' attitudes and behaviors. From childhood, social and cultural conditions become ingrained in a person's character, constantly steering them toward the beliefs and customs of society. Consequently, individuals shape their behaviors and attitudes by applying these teachings. Once these conditions are established, changing social norms becomes difficult for the individual. The influence of society on an individual is so profound that if someone grows up in a different environment, their behavior and habits will be significantly altered. This can be illustrated by the example of twins raised in different environments—despite their physical similarities, their behavior and character will exhibit striking differences due to environmental influences. Research shows that individuals easily accept the social and cultural beliefs instilled in them, and changes in these patterns rarely occur. For this reason, sudden changes in a society's beliefs and convictions can yield both positive and negative outcomes.

Based on the aforementioned data and drawing on the theories of reviewed researchers and sociologists, it is evident that ISIS exhibits characteristics and behaviors consistent with the observations of these scholars. ISIS, in its efforts to impose its claims and dictate its ideological foundations, employs violence and terror as tools to achieve its objectives. This approach not only contradicts human principles and the call for dialogue and understanding but also rejects any attempt to establish peace and coexistence. In this context, it can be said that historical and social conditions—including religious and ethnic conflicts, oppression, and colonial influence—played a significant role in shaping the behaviors and beliefs of those who joined ISIS. The majority of the group's members are Iraqis, and its leadership largely consists of former officers of the Ba'athist Iraqi military. This has contributed to a sense of revenge and the pursuit of ethnic and religious superiority. The Salafi religious factors to which ISIS adheres have also fostered a fanatical mindset that disregards others. This perspective, influenced by cultural and historical conditions, aligns closely with Ibn Khaldun's ideas about prejudice and power. Indeed, ISIS fiercely opposes any dissent that conflicts with its beliefs to maintain its grip on power.

In examining the coexistence of nomadic and urban paradigms in Iraqi society, it is clear that both approaches are distinctly present in the behavior of Iraqis. Urban dwellers tend to take a more rational approach to social issues, while nomads, driven by tribal prejudice, are highly sensitive to their interests. This conflict between the two mentalities has created instability for many people in Iraq. Consequently, many seek ways to escape these complexities, often without regard for the consequences. This situation could lead to more profound and significant changes that require further investigation and analysis.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that the beliefs and convictions of the people of Mosul have a fundamental impact on the preservation and destruction of the city's cultural and historical artistic artifacts. Iraq's turbulent history, particularly in Mosul, as well as the presence of ethnic and religious prejudices, have been critical factors in shaping social and cultural behaviors. The destruction of historical artifacts following the fall of the Ba'athist regime and the influence of groups like ISIS illustrates how Salafi and reactionary beliefs can sometimes justify destructive actions. Thus, it can be

concluded that religious and ethnic beliefs not only contribute to shaping cultural identity but, under certain conditions, can also lead to the destruction of cultural heritage.

Theories of Max Weber and Ali Al-Wardi provide a better understanding of the dualities in the social behavior of Iraqis, particularly in Mosul. On one hand, ethnic and religious prejudices have led some groups to commit massacres and acts of destruction, while on the other hand, distinct social strata who value cultural and historical heritage strive to preserve and restore it. Hence, the conflict between preserving and destroying historical artistic artifacts in Mosul arises from these social and cultural dualities, influenced by religious and political forces.

Moreover, the results of the analyses in this article indicate that despite the determination of some Iraqis to protect their land and cultural identity, extremist and ruthless movements like ISIS have posed serious challenges to the oversight and protection of historical artifacts. The assault on these artifacts is not only a violation of historical and cultural identity but also represents an effort to disregard and erase past achievements. In this context, the destruction of historical artifacts by ISIS and its supporters reflects a deliberate strategy aimed at weakening historical identity and marginalizing human and cultural values in Iraqi society.

In conclusion, it is necessary to take serious steps at both the international and national levels to protect Iraq's cultural and historical heritage. This requires cooperation among regional countries, international organizations, and cultural and social institutions to raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of preserving cultural artifacts, thus preventing the repetition of the tragic history of cultural and historical destruction. Creating a safe environment that aligns with human values to promote cultural and historical identity requires not only international collaboration but also an understanding and respect for historical beliefs and convictions, which should be strengthened through social integration efforts.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments

Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding

Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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