

# Connecting Scientific Archives with Artifacts: Reflecting on the Smithsonian's Ralph S. and Rose L. Solecki Papers and Artifacts Project at the National Anthropological Archives

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The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History recently conducted a two-year project to process and connect the archives and artifacts of archaeologists Ralph and Rose Solecki, who are noted for their work at the sites of Shanidar Cave and Zawi Chemi Shanidar in northern Iraq. Through a collaboration between archivists at the National Anthropological Archives and object collections management staff in the Department of Anthropology, the Ralph S. and Rose L. Solecki Papers and Artifacts Project sought to set an example for collaborative collections and archives stewardship through preserving the association between archaeological specimens and archival records. To do this, we integrated archival processing and specimen cataloging as well as digitization of select archival records and specimens in order to increase their discoverability and value for future researchers. In this talk, we reflect on what we learned from this case study and how it has informed our interdisciplinary conversations about the enduring legacy of collaborative collections and archives management within scientific archives and museums.

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