

Directions:

Read the following comments on a report about American museums returning artifacts to their countries of origin and a list of statements summarizing the comments. Choose the best statement from the list A-G for each numbered name(41-45). There are two extra choices which you do not need to use. Mark your answers on the ANSWER SHEET.(10 points)

(41)_____ Hannah

Simply, there are people in Nigeria who cannot travel to the Smithsonian Institution to see that part of their history and culture represented by the Benin Bronzes. These should be available to them as part of their cultural heritage and history and as a source of national pride. There is no good reason that these artifacts should be beyond the ordinary reach of the educational objectives or inspiration of the generations to which they were left. They serve no purpose in a museum in the United States or elsewhere except as curious objects. They cannot be compared to works of art produced for sale which can be passed from hand to hand and place to place by purchase.

(42)_____ Buck

We know very exact reproductions of artwork can be and are regularly produced. Perhaps museums and governments might explore some role for the use of nearly exact reproductions as a means of resolving issues relating to returning works of art and antiquities. The context of any exhibit is more important to me than whether the object being displayed is 2,000 years old or 2 months old. In many cases the experts have a hard time agreeing on what is the real object and what is a forgery. Again, the story an exhibit is trying to tell is what matters. The monetary value of the objects on display is a distant second place in importance.

(43)_____ Sara

When visiting the Baltimore Museum of Art, I came across a magnificent 15th-century Chinese sculpture. It inspired me to learn more about the culture that it represented. Artifacts in museums have the power to inspire, and perhaps spark that need to learn and understand the nature of their creators. Having said that, I do feel that whatever artifacts find their way to public museums should, in fact, be sanctioned as having been obtained on loan, legally purchased, or obtained by treaty. Stealing artifacts from other peoples' cultures is obscene; it robs not only the physical objects, but the dignity and spirit of their creators.

(44)_____ Victor

Ancient art that is displayed in foreign countries by all means should be returned to the original country. The foreign countries have no right to hold back returning the items. I would ask that the foreign nations and the original country discuss the terms of transfer. Yes, there is the risk that the original country will not have as good security as do the foreign countries. But look at what happened to Boston's Gardner Museum theft in 1990, including the loss of Rembrandt, Vermeer, Manet, and other masterpieces. Nothing is absolutely safe, anywhere. And now Climate Change agitators are attacking publicly displayed works in European museums.

(45)_____ Julia

To those of you in the comments section who are having strong feelings about artifacts being removed from cities in the U.S. and Britain and returned to their countries of origin, I would ask you to consider why do you

think Americans have more of a right to easily access the Benin Bronzes than the people of Nigeria? Why are people who live within a day's drive of London entitled to go and see the Elgin Marbles whenever they want, but the people of Athens aren't? What intrinsic factors make the West a suitable home for these artifacts but preclude them from being preserved and displayed by their countries of origin? If your conclusion is that the West is better able to preserve these artifacts, think about why you're assuming that to be true.

- [A] It is clear that the countries of origin have never been compensated for the stolen artifacts.
- [B] It is a flawed line of reasoning to argue against returning artifacts to their countries of origin.
- [C] Museum visitors can still learn as much from artifacts' copies after the originals are returned.
- [D] Reproductions, even if perfectly made, cannot take the place of the authentic objects.
- [E] The real value of artifacts can only be recognized in their countries of origin rather than anywhere else.
- [F] Ways to get artifacts from other countries must be decent and lawful.
- [G] Concern over security is no excuse for refusing to return artifacts to their countries of origin.