

Abstract

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Archaeologists and art museums professionals have engaged in an often bitter and divisive debate regarding the best means to protect archaeological sites and resources for at least two decades. This debate has not generated any significant benefits for the reduction of looting and destruction of archaeological sites and resources worldwide. By focusing on differences of opinion regarding optimal means to protect archaeological sites and resources rather than focusing on shared common goals and strategies, the art museum and archaeological communities have mutually failed to achieve outcomes vital to both communities and to humankind. This paper argues that it is time for these communities to join together, recognizing that differences of viewpoint exist between them, to identify and implement strategies both support to attempt to better protect the world's artistic and cultural heritage.

The presentation concludes with suggestions and points of discussion for creating a new alliance among art museum professionals and archaeologists and their relevant professional organizations to establish new shared initiatives for the protection and preservation of archaeological sites and resources.