

## **PATTERNS OF ART THEFT, LOOTING AND PLUNDERING OF CULTURAL PROPERTY**

Students play unique roles in the dilemmas and developments related to the topic of "Archaeology and Conflict". As observers, we are learning from the efforts of experienced professionals and watching as the scope and practice of archaeology, anthropology, heritage management, and the protection of tangible and intangible cultural properties change dramatically over time. As scholars, we are at the forefront of the research and development of new modes of practice concerning these topics. As the future generations of anthropologists and archaeologists, we also carry a heavy burden on our shoulders to keep up the good work of our predecessors, to learn from their trials and tribulations, and to engage in the discourse related to the protection of cultural heritage, the rights of individuals and groups to control cultural properties, and to ultimately change archaeology for the better.

In these brief opening comments, I would like to present a few exciting developments related to "Archaeology in Conflict" and students within academic institutions and scientific societies.

In academic institutions around the world, anthropology and archaeology curriculum are changing to address the intersections between the scientific study of the past and this study's affects on living populations. We see these changes in the development of heritage research centers at universities, and in the creation of new research and scholarship opportunities for students. At my own academic institution, Indiana University (USA), we have a specialized PhD track called "Archaeology and Social Context". In this track, students are trained in both ethnographic and archaeological methods, and are required to take a course on "Archaeological Ethics". I have colleagues at IU who research themes related to the modern economic, social, political and other impacts of archaeological research, such as how children and teachers conceptualize concepts of heritage, culture, race, ethnicity, and identity in Belize, Central America. Our program is not unique-there are others developing

across the world. Many students are now researching the intersections between archaeology and living persons-in times of conflict, in education, in nationalist propaganda, and more. These new paradigms of training and research for students in academic institutions are a start, but more can be done to take these models out into the world and share them with other institutions.

Changing perspectives on student training and research can also be seen within scientific societies. One example I would like to present is the Society for American Archaeology Ethics Bowl, which I co-organize. The SAA Ethics Bowl is a festive debate-style event at the annual SAA meeting where teams of graduate and undergraduate students debate hypothetical case studies of archaeological dilemmas. Over the last seven years, hundreds of students and professionals have worked together to discuss and debate ethical dilemmas related to tourism, development, education, land-claims, Indigenous rights, gender equality, and, relevant to our discussions, archaeology in conflict. In 2008, one of the final round cases was about an archaeologist who was hired by the US military to survey for archaeological sites but ends up being asked to aid in interviews of people suspected to be looters. The debate at the national meeting was lively and heated! Students who participate in the Ethics Bowl bring with them into their professional careers an understanding of the dilemmas in modern archaeological practice. But, as in academic institutions, more can be done to promote student understanding of the complexities involved in archaeology and conflict. Scientific societies should encourage students to work with professionals to research and write about these issues. These societies should also produce resources for students and ensure that student perspectives are heard and welcomed.

As one final example, I would like to highlight what students themselves are doing to ensure archaeology's future success. The Next Generation Project (NGP) is a new initiative started by Ashley Sands and Kristin Butler at University of Southern California in 2009. NGP encourages digital (on Facebook) and face-to-face (at meetings) conversations between students. Their mission is "to connect the emerging generation of archaeologists and cultural heritage research specialists now in order to build the relationship that will allow us to initiate radical change in the study of the past while facing the problems of the future".

It has already been stated that the challenges we face today in the preservation of cultural properties are very different than those of 40 years ago. And, undoubtedly,

the challenges we will face 20 years from now will again be different. The efforts described above all have the goal of helping students to address these moral and ethical challenges.

Students in academic institutions and scientific societies are already enacting changes to make archaeology and other cultural heritage scholarship and practice more multi-vocal, multi-national, multi-disciplinary, multi-generational, and, overall, more engaged. Students are at the forefront of efforts to study and understand the processes behind the destruction and preservation of cultural properties. Through research related to law, education, tourism, development, heritage and identity, Indigenous rights, and more, students are generating information and theories that will guide all of our future work. And, by encouraging discussion and debate of these topics, scientific societies and academic institutions are doing their part to ensure that students are adequately prepared to take on the multifarious challenged we are sure to experience in the future of all things that fall under the umbrella topic of "Archaeology in Conflict".

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This article should be cited like this: D. McGill, A Student Perspective, Forum Archaeologiae 55/VI/2010 (<http://farch.net>).