Heritage Items Should be Returned to the Countries of Origin

History is an interesting subject - it involves time, places, people, theories… But, it also involves artifacts of all kinds, from all over the world. However, most of them are not kept in their countries of origin. This has been an uprising discussion for quite some time now, yet the question remains unanswered - would it truly be better if all of those important heritage items be returned to their countries of origin?

On the one hand, those important heritage items should be returned mainly because of their cultural origin and value. Let’s take the British Museum as an example. What are Greek statues doing in London? A lot of people think that is highly disrespectful to Greek culture itself – it is deemed as a mockery of Greek culture and its historical artifacts! If the important heritage items got returned to their countries of origin, they would be much more valued and respected.

On the other hand, people argue that the heritage items’ safety would be in jeopardy and legality in question. The people think that if the heritage items were to be returned, not only could they get ruined while being returned, but also because they doubt the countries of the origin’s safety. Let’s take a look at the Louvre Museum - there was a case of a man trying to throw a pie at the painting of Mona Lisa. Luckily, there was no damage done to the painting and the man who did that was taken into custody, but the problem is that he managed to get in the museum with a pie. Where was the security to stop the man before he managed to enter the museum? Regarding legality, it mostly has to do with contracts. Countries of origin have sometimes signed away their important heritage items because of many reasons like economic benefits, political issues, different disagreements in the country. Therefore, the important heritage items cannot be legally returned because they have in a way been legally obtained.

In my opinion, I think there would be better solutions rather than deciding to completely return those important heritage items to their countries of origin or to completely keep them in the museums of the non-original countries. For instance, it could be easier if the people decided to share the money they get from viewing the items among each other - at least five per cent of it should go to the countries of origin. Or, to make special visiting exhibitions of important items in both ways. Non-original countries would send what they have in their museums while the original countries would send exhibitions of the items that have never left their grounds.

 Written by Teodora Tularcevic 8/1