

Can There Be A World Without History? Militant Islamists Think So.  
Posted On:December 31, 1969

Since the end of World War II, we have not seen deliberate assaults on historic landmarks that we see today. Both sides wantonly destroyed cities with their great historic architecture, but history was not their real target.

History is the target today. The Afghan's Taliban government deliberately blew up statues of the Buddha in Bamiyan because "they weren't Muslim." In the Middle East, Africa, and Pakistan, Islamists are targeting churches for destruction, something not seen since the original days of Islam. In Chad, ancient Muslim shrines are being destroyed because fanatics consider them idolatrous. And once more, Islamists are seriously proposing destroying the Egyptian Pyramids.

The following is only a short list of Islam's war on history, in the past and today:

- o Hindu temples in medieval India
- o Mamluks using the Great Sphinx of Egypt for target practice
- o Turkish destruction of churches in northern Cyprus since 1974
- o Saudi destruction of antiquities in Mecca since the 1990s
- o Palestinians sacking the Tomb of Joseph in 2000
- o Taliban destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha in 2001
- o Al Qaeda bombing Ghriba synagogue in Tunisia in 2002
- o The pillaging of the Iraqi museums, libraries, and archives in 2003
- o Destruction of an historic Malaysian Hindu temple in 2006
- o Destruction of L'Institut d'Egypte in 2011,
- o Destruction of 15th century Sufi tombs in Timbuktu, ongoing
- o Nigerian Islamists destroying all vestiges of Christian churches

today.

today. [See

Daniel Pipes, "Islam vs. History, July 2, 2012.]

Our civilization rests on history. The ancient Greeks were the first to elevate history above the myths and glorification of heroes and kings. Under their civilization, history became a scholarly discipline. The Hebrew bible, the other great pillar of Western civilization, unflinchingly retraces the history of a people from primitive pagans to the awareness of the personal conscience and social responsibility. Christianity, a continuation of Jewish vision, made no attempt to wipe out their heritage from its Jewish roots (the Bible) or to distance themselves from the treasures of pagan Greek and Roman antiquity. They saw their pre-Christian history and art treasures as essential to their identity as western civilization.

Islam, however, diverges from the pattern of reverence for history. Because the Prophet Mohammad's monotheism was alien to ancient Arab polytheism, he declared that everything before his time was jahilia (ignorance). What might have been a passing phase in Islam's history became, instead, a continuing pattern that has revived today.

During centuries of Islamic conquests, a major thrust was to extirpate every other

civilization's history. Millions of Muslim converts (once Christians, Jews, Hindus, Persians, Turks, Malays, Indonesians) lost their histories. All they revere is Islam's history, which they believe is documented in the holy books of Islam: the Koran, Hadith, and Sharia, works that have never faced the skeptical probing of history.

The Muslim conquest of North Africa quickly wiped out or forcibly converted a huge population of Christians and Jews, destroying most of that civilization's cities, irrigation systems, and terraced vineyards and agriculture, a thousand years of history and accomplishment buried under the sand.

As Arab Islam conquered Egypt and Persia, they defaced ancient monuments---destruction that can be seen even today. One of the Prophet Mohammad's \223companions\224 even contemplated dismantling the pyramids, but did not have the technology to carry it out. Today, alas, they do, and they may do so. Once again, Islamists are seriously urging that the pyramids be blown up and the new Muslim Brotherhood president of Egypt is ominously mum on this topic.

The Muslim Brotherhood won this election, promising to rescue Egypt's miserable economy. But if they destroy the golden goose, the pyramids that have brought them tourists for several thousand years, how will that rescue the economy? Islamists also want to reinstate the extortion that they call the jizya, a tax on \223nonbelievers.\224 This is, of course, denying equal citizenship to Egypt's Christians, the Copts, who represent important business skills. [See Joel Brinkley: \223Egypt's leader stays mum as extremists get louder,\224 San Francisco Chronicle, July 22, 2012.]

And what has this disregard for history given them? Jahilia.

Word count: 670

Dr. Laina Farhat-Holzman is a historian, lecturer, and author of Worldchangers: Ten Inventions that Changed Everything. You may contact her at Lfarhat102@aol.com or [www.globalthink.net](http://www.globalthink.net)