

A PROBE INTO CULTURAL HERITAGE VERSUS MODERN TERRORISM

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Abstract

Modern terrorism is defined as using violence to establish a fundamental state. They utilize religion and its credos and principles as a means for achieving set goals. This paper attempts to raise the question on how the present days terrorism destroys historical-cultural heritage of Syria as a global cultural heritage and seeks to find the roles and goals of terrorists in ruining and demolishing these international heritages during “2014-2016”.

Intent to destroy and despoil the cultural heritage has been conducted by ISIS since 2014 in Syria. For example, ISIS destroyed buildings including the minaret of the Great Mosque of Aleppo and the Al-Madina. Irena Bokova, the director-general of UNESCO requested publicly for the safeguarding of Syria's cultural heritage and announced it as "grave concern about possible damage to precious sites" On 30 March 2012, The Islamic State destroyed the Lion of Al-lāt, the temples of Bel and Baalshamin, the Arch of Triumph and other sites in Palmyra. The group also destroyed the Monastery of St. Elian, the Armenian Genocide Memorial Church, and several ancient sculptures in the city of Ar-Raqqah.

Since terrorists have introduced themselves as Muslim, why have they destroyed and continue to destroy the ancient relics in Syria as an Islamic country?

Mosque is the main symbol of Islamic cultural heritage and, obviously, has been known as worldwide architecture heritage. For as much as terrorists claim that they are original Muslims and obey Islamic ideology as real theist, they deliberate to ruin these valuable heritages. It is a clear inconsistency of belief and behavior. What are the benefits of destroying mosques which are recognized as humanity capital?

The current study is going to expose these unusual gestures and manners of terrorists.

How is the vision of Islam included in the cultural heritage?

What is Islam's approach and perspective into this disaster (destroying of Syria cultural heritage)? And Does Islam confirm these terrorist treatments?

To answer the proposed research questions, Syrian history (particular ancient relics) and Islamic ideology (based on the Islamic Holy Book, the Quran) are studied meticulously.

Keywords: Terrorism, ISIS, Syria, Syrian Culture, Islam
