

6A—Civic and Democratic Engagement #2

Library and Archival Destruction in the Middle East and North and Sub-Saharan Africa

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Since the illegal Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in 2003, the destruction of library, archival, and other cultural resources in the Middle East and North Africa has proceeded apace, hand in hand with the societal destruction wrought by invading Western military powers. Such destruction has occurred in several places, including Iraq, Libya, Mali, Syria, Bahrain, and Yemen, often with the help of authoritarian Western allies such as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. Faced with such devastating blows to world heritage, it should be incumbent upon academic librarians to join forces with anti-war and social justice communities and re-frame the relationship between academic librarianship and democracy.