

## **African Union must respond to destruction of sacred sites**

Written by Dr. Ama Mazama, Per-aat International and Dr. Molefi Kete Asante, International Organizer  
Wednesday, 18 July 2012 16:50

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Afrocentricity International condemns the destruction of historic monuments in the ancient city of Timbuktu and calls for an immediate response by the African Union to the Ansar Dine criminals who have chosen to bring their destruction to the heart of West African culture. Led by Ag Ghaly, a Tuareg nomad who converted to the Pakistani style Islam, Ansar Dine is allied to MUJUAO of Algeria and Boko Haram of Nigeria. Since it is not clear if the African Union has either the will power or the military capability to respond to the assault against one of the most sacred of African cities then we call upon the nations of Africa, acting in their capacity as regional powers, to arrest this destruction. However, we demand in the name of African people the immediate response of the African Union to this crisis! Afrocentricity International does not believe it is the responsibility of NATO, the European Union, or the United States AFRICOM to save Africa.

Africa must save itself!

If Africa cannot save itself and will not save itself, then it cannot be saved. The rampant campaign against the monuments in the north represents another strand of death to African culture. Over the past millennium we have lost the indigenous treasures of some of the world's greatest civilizations to the outrages of foreign religionists. They have even fought among themselves for the honor or dishonor of claiming to be better than the others who support these foreign invasions of Africa's culture. In their attacks and assaults they have smashed everything of value, all treasures from the past, manuscripts, sculptures, evidences of ancient African art and culture, and stamped their feet on our ancestors' graves. These are not men with a divine mission; they are pure and simple criminals whose ambition is to rule and they will use any ruse to destroy monuments and manuscripts that were created by Africans out of our own tradition. The people of Mali Africanized many of the symbols that came with invaders; they did not accept the idea that Africa was devoid of culture prior to the coming of the Arabs and whites.

Afrocentricity International looks at this situation as we have looked at other instances of this destruction to our culture. It is a political and mental war, carried on for ages against the best that is Africa, and in Mali we are seeing the latest, but not the last, attempt to ruin Africa. As in Sudan, now in Mali, the attackers and the attacked are both Muslims. But in Mali we know that the ancient graves of the 333 saints include many African philosophers and thinkers who made the civilizations of Mali and Songhay the rivals to the world's greatest cultures. But what do these Ansar Dine criminals do? They destroy the monuments of the greatest ancestors of African people and claim they are doing it in the name of Allah. But Allah has given them no such command; they must be condemned, captured, and brought to justice for their crimes against humanity.

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The attackers who have sacked the mausoleums of Timbuktu allied themselves to the Tuareg MNLA, a group fighting to have the government recognize legitimate grievances of the northerners. Soon after the Tuareg rebels seceded the northern part of Mali from the rest of the country in March 2012, the little known Ansar Dine group supposedly with support from Al Qaeda in Libya drove the secular MNLA out of Timbuktu and Gao and took over as the absolute rulers of the north. They have taken rights away from women, killed people they claim were violating the Koran, and imposed Sharia law. These Neanderthalian activities have plunged Mali deeper into the closet of ignorance than almost any other nation in Africa. Afrocentricity International blames Malian leadership for the crisis because that leadership did not practice equality, justice, and respect toward its own people and opened the door for this throwback gang of terrorists who have now laid hold to the land of Sunni Ali Ber.

Once again the crisis in Mali has proved what Afrocentricity International has always claimed that when you accept the religion and ideology of foreigners, you will end up fighting against your own interests. Indeed, the rumble in the ancient cities of Northern Mali, Timbuktu, Jenne, and Gao, is nothing more than a down payment on the problems that Africa will face in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Niger, Chad, Guinea, and Ivory Coast. Indeed, we have already seen this problem in Nigeria and Ivory Coast. It is yet to be resolved and will not be resolved until Africans, any Africans, some Africans, have the courage to speak up in the interest of Africa and not in the interest of Europe or the Arabs. The dilemma is real; the task is our responsibility. Afrocentricity International supports any effort to bring the crisis in Mali to an end, but we insist that the criminals who destroyed the precious historical monuments must be brought to justice. Unity is our aim; victory is our destiny!

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