

## Biblioclasm :A Sociocultural Study of Knowledge Destruction and Prevention Through Legal Mechanisms

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### Abstract

*'Biblioclasm: A Sociocultural Study of Knowledge Destruction and Prevention Through Legal Mechanisms'* explores the complex and multifaceted phenomenon of biblioclasm, the deliberate destruction of books and knowledge repositories, from a sociocultural perspective. This paper explores the causes of biblioclasm, its historical and modern expressions, and the function of legislative safeguards in preserving intellectual variety and cultural heritage.

The study explores the sociocultural roots of biblioclasm and considers the different ideological, political, religious, or cultural motivations that people or groups may have for wanting to eliminate information. The study offers insights into the destructive forces that have affected human history by using historical examples like the burning of the Library of Alexandria and contemporary examples like the destruction of cultural artifacts by terrorist organisations.

This study also emphasises the value of legislative safeguards in preventing biblioclasm and safeguarding the world's cultural heritage. It examines the efficiency of international treaties and conventions, such as the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, in averting the loss of knowledge and fostering cultural preservation. The study also looks at how domestic legal systems in particular areas or countries deal with biblioclasm.

*Keywords - Book Burning, Biblioclasm, Iconoclasm, Destruction of Knowledge, Information Censorship, Destruction of Information*

## 1. Introduction

“Biblioclasm” is a term that combines “biblio”, which pertains to books or written works, and “clasm”, which means to break or destroy. In essence, biblioclasm refers to the act of destroying or damaging books, often with the intention of suppressing or erasing certain ideas, knowledge, or cultural expressions contained within them.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines biblioclasm as "the breaking of books" and notes that term first appeared in print in a publication on religious doctrine in 1864. Twenty years later, a fervent academic used the phrase to condemn Catholic priests who had destroyed Maya and Aztec texts following the Spanish conquest.

Books have always served as windows into other worlds, cultures, and ideas, opening doors to new knowledge. These archives of human knowledge and inventiveness, meanwhile, have not always been valued and safeguarded throughout history. Acts of biblioclasm have occasionally resulted in the intentional destruction or damage of books. Biblioclasm is a dark period in mankind, a conflict between the suppression of ideas and their power. This paper will examine the idea of biblioclasm, provide historical instances of it, and discuss its long-term effects on cultures and societies.

## 2. Origin:

Like every other historical phenomenon, *Biblioclasm* too has an origin. For a long time, the burning of books has been a tool against societal power, may it be Religious Extremism or breaking the social norm. It has always been present, to this day.

The earliest recorded history indicates, at 700 BCE witnessed the very first act of Biblioclasm. The Hebrew Bible or Tanakh, also known in Hebrew as Miqra has the first account of the BOOK BURNING. Jehoiakim was the eighteenth and antepenultimate king of Judah. Jeremiah was one of the major prophets of the Hebrew Bible and he was a very vocal critic of the king's policies, always asking the king to review his actions and take the right actions for his past wrongs. This did not sit well with the king, and he burned a scroll which had been written by Baruch ben Neriah where teachings of the Prophets Jeremiah had been scribed. Hence, came into being the act of Biblioclasm or Book Burning.

To understand the History of Biblioclasm and how it reflects on society, one should find every available document or literature there is. It helps us to be more objective and open, to understand why this happened and why it is still going on in the 21st Century?

## 3. Literature Review

There are few information sources on the *Biblioclasm*, but a few are available on specific incidents throughout History. We are trying to accumulate information from all these sources and help structure an overview of this very fascinating subject. Some of the most credible source on this subject are:

1. *Burning Books and Leveling Libraries: Extremist Violence and Cultural Destruction* by Rebecca Knuth, PRAGER, 2006
2. *Biblioclasm: The Regime-Sponsored Destruction of Books and Libraries in the Twentieth Century*, Rebecca Knuth, PRAGER, 2003
3. *Lost Libraries: The Destruction of Great Book Collections Since Antiquity Hardcover – Import*, 12 March 2004, by J. Raven (Editor)
4. *THE LIBRARY: A FRAGILE HISTORY* by Arthur der Andrew Weduwen Pettegree 2022
5. *Burning Books* by Haig Bosmajian, McFarland & Co Inc, 2012
6. *BURNING THE BOOKS Hardcover – 19 October 2020* by Richard Ovenden

7. *Burning Books and Leveling Libraries: Extremist Violence and Cultural Destruction* by Rebecca Knuth, Praeger, 2006

#### 4. Objective of the Study

The study is pursued to stress the crucial role that books and libraries play in protecting human history, promoting intellectual diversity, and enhancing society's common knowledge, the study seeks to promote greater awareness and action to prevent biblioclasm. For our intellectual and cultural heritage to be preserved for future generations, it is essential to understand the historical evolution and current expressions of biblioclasm.

#### 5. Research Methodology

The authors performed in-depth review of seven books which are known to deal with the subject of Biblioclasm. In this article the author followed the Documentary Review method of research. As it is specialized subject there are not many books. A thorough search revealed in the most authentic sources of information websites on books (*World Cat, Open Library, Goodreads, Google Books, Z Library, Internet Archive and Project Gutenberg*) that there are only seven books on the subject written in English Language.

#### 1. **Libricide: The Regime-Sponsored Destruction of Books and Libraries in the Twentieth Century**

The systematic and deliberate destruction of libraries and books by many regimes throughout the 20th century is examined in this book by Rebecca Knuth. This highly acclaimed work explores the motivations, strategies, and outcomes of regime-sponsored textual culture destruction in various historical and political contexts. It sheds light on cases of libricide committed by governments and authorities in an effort to restrict information, quash dissent, or wipe out opposing philosophies. The author highlights the wider implications of such harm while providing valuable information about how these acts affect knowledge, culture, and society. Anyone interested in learning about the challenges libraries face during times of conflict and political unrest, as well as the significance that books and libraries play in influencing history, will find it to be a great resource.

#### 2. **Lost Libraries: The Destruction of Great Book Collections Since Antiquity**

Author J. Raven is the author of this remarkable book. The history of the finest libraries ever known is covered in great depth in this book. This book examines the tragic destruction of renowned libraries over time due to war, natural disasters, political turmoil, and cultural changes. The book includes a thorough overview of the major book collections that have been lost throughout history, from antiquity to the present, and offers insights on the causes and implications of these losses. The author looks at the accounts of great libraries like the Library of Alexandria, which suffered one of the most well-known losses in antiquity, as well as other lesser-known but no less significant collections that met a similar end.

#### 3. **Burning Books and Leveling Libraries: Extremist Violence and Cultural Destruction**

Rebecca Knuth is the book's author. In this essay, the author looks into the disturbing trend of using extreme violence to destroy libraries and books in order to destroy culture. She looks at different examples of this violence that governments and radical organizations have carried out in various parts of the world. The book investigates the reasons behind these harmful acts, which may stem from intellectual, political, or religious extremism. Additionally, it examines the extensive consequences, including the erasure of collective memory, the loss of cultural legacy, and the suppression of intellectual diversity.

#### 4. **A Universal History Of The Destruction Of Books: From Ancient Sumer to Modern-Day Iraq**

The Venezuelan historian and author Fernando Báez wrote a book titled "A Universal History of the Destruction of Books: From Ancient Sumer to Modern Iraq." From the earliest written records in ancient Sumer to more recent instances, such the looting and destruction of libraries in contemporary Iraq, this book examines the history of book destruction across human civilization. In Báez's works, the different elements that have contributed to book destruction throughout history are in-depthly discussed. He looks at the role that political, religious, and cultural factors played in the loss of priceless manuscripts and literary masterpieces. Several incidents of book burning, censorship, and the purposeful erasure of information and culture are highlighted in the book.

#### 5. **Burning the Books: A History of the Deliberate Destruction of Knowledge**

"Burning the Books: A History of the Deliberate Destruction of Knowledge" by Richard Ovenden was published in 2020. In this essay, Ovenden looks at the deliberate erasure of knowledge throughout history, from antiquity to the present. The book provides a thorough examination of the motivations, strategies, and outcomes of biblioclasm, shedding light on the various historical and cultural contexts where books and other written materials have been systematically destroyed. This book offers a fascinating look at the history and significance of biblioclasm. It highlights the value of knowledge preservation and the crucial part that people, libraries, and archives play in preserving the cultural and intellectual past of humanity. The book is a vital reminder of the issues' ongoing significance in the contemporary world.

#### 6. **The Library: A Fragile History**

In 2020, Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen published *The Library: A Fragile History*. This book analyzes the complex and fascinating history of libraries, tracing how they have changed throughout time from antiquity to the present. It looks at the importance of libraries as centers of knowledge and the challenges they have faced over time. The book provides a chronological account of the development of libraries, starting with the prehistoric libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum and moving through the medieval monastic libraries, Renaissance libraries, and the rise of public libraries in the modern era. It also looks at the state of libraries today, discussing issues including how digital technology has changed them, how challenging it is to preserve and organize massive digital collections, and how libraries' functions are changing.

#### 7. **Burning Books**

The 2012 book *Burning Books* by Haig Bosmajian explores the causes and repercussions of book burning as a form of censorship and control. The practice of burning books is examined from both a historical and literary perspective by Bosmajian, a researcher with training in both literature and English. In "Burning Books," Bosmajian delves into the history of book burnings, highlighting notorious incidents throughout history where governments, organizations, and individuals intentionally burned books. He discusses the rationale behind these activities, which typically stem from efforts to quell disagreement, promote conformity, or eliminate ideas that those in positions of authority view as threatening.

### 6. **Discussion**

*"History is a race between education and catastrophe"* – **H.G.Wells**, English Writer, Hailed as "**Father of science Fiction**"

## Impact on Culture and Society:

The immediate danger of censorship and cultural uniformity is signaled by the act of cultural destruction, which has nearly become a familiar act of rebellion. A dramatic rejection of intellectual freedom, individuality, pluralism, and tolerance is simultaneously made when books and libraries are destroyed.

We can claim that modern biblioclasm happens when a social group believes that books and libraries undermine ideological goals, imperil the orthodoxy of venerated dogma, or symbolize a despised establishment. Biblioclasm is essentially a warning indication that social unrest has reached a critical stage and that the foundations of contemporary society are in danger, despite the fact that it may appear to be a forerunner to more severe violence.

## A Brief Cultural and Social study on Biblioclasm:

Throughout history, the written word has been a powerful tool for the dissemination of knowledge, the expression of ideas, and the preservation of culture. However, this very power has made books and written texts the target of those who seek to suppress, control, or erase certain ideologies, knowledge, or cultural expressions. This act of destruction and censorship is known as biblioclasm, a term that encapsulates the deliberate and often systematic destruction of books. In this article, we will explore the history, motivations, and consequences of biblioclasm, shedding light on the enduring struggle to protect intellectual freedom and cultural heritage.

When it comes to this atrocity, in order to burn books or destroy knowledge, people have also destroyed many libraries. Libraries have been intentionally destroyed, accidentally damaged, or severely damaged. A library may occasionally be deliberately destroyed as part of a cultural purge.

## A Spotlight on Significant Acts of Biblioclasm:

### Qin Dynasty of China:

A noteworthy instance of biblioclasm occurred during the Chinese Qin Dynasty, which ruled from 221 BCE to 206 BCE, and was connected to the First Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang. The autocratic rule of Qin Shi Huang and his efforts to consolidate power and control over different facets of Chinese society, such as knowledge and culture, are well-known.

*"The burning of books and burying of scholars"* event, which took place during the Qin Dynasty, is one of the most well-known examples of biblioclasm. The campaign attempted to promote the Legalism state ideology, which placed a strong emphasis on rigid authoritarian governance and the concentration of authority, while stifling intellectual criticism.

Despite these widespread biblioclasm efforts, certain texts have managed to endure. They were kept secret or preserved by those who wanted to preserve important knowledge. Later, these books were crucial resources for reconstructing China's literary and intellectual past.

### The Library of Alexandria

One of the most well-known libraries in antiquity, the **Library of Alexandria**, is frequently linked to biblioclasm, albeit the specifics of its destruction are unclear due to a lack of accurate historical documents. In the historic Egyptian city of Alexandria, the Library of Alexandria was a renowned hub of learning, research, and the preservation of knowledge. The Library of Alexandria, established in the third century BCE under **Ptolemy II**, swiftly rose to prominence as the centre of learning and scholarship in the Greco-Egyptian world. The library's collections are thought to have had more than 400,000 scrolls at its peak.

Over the years, the Library of Alexandria may have experienced numerous events of destruction, according to several historical reports and legends. Julius Caesar is frequently blamed for the Library of Alexandria's destruction, which occurred during his campaign in Alexandria in 48 BCE. Some stories state that during a siege, Caesar's troops unintentionally set fire to ships in the harbour, which spread to other areas of the city, including the library. However, it's unclear if the catastrophe completely destroyed the library or if it simply caused partial damage.



## Library of Antioch

Another important library in the ancient world was the **Library of Antioch**, also called the **Library of Antiochus** or the **Royal Library of Antioch**. It was situated in the city of Antioch, which was a part of the Seleucid Empire. It may not be as well-known as the Library of Alexandria, but throughout its history, it also experienced periods of biblioclasm and destruction. *Antiochus II Theos*, a king of the Seleucid Empire (reigned 261-246 BCE), established the Library of Antioch. It was built as a hub for learning and scholarship, containing a sizable collection of texts on a wide range of topics, including history, philosophy, science, and literature. It was essential for the spread of knowledge in the Hellenistic era.

The Library of Antioch suffered the effects of war and strife, just like many other libraries in the ancient world. The city of Antioch experienced substantial harm during the Roman conquest of the Seleucid Empire in the first century BCE, including the likely destruction or dispersal of its library holdings. It's significant to highlight that there aren't many thorough historical accounts of the library's destruction.

## The Maya Codices

The Maya civilisation of Mesoamerica produced a number of antiquated manuscripts known as the Maya Codices. These codices are distinguished by their hieroglyphic writing and elaborate pictures, which offer insightful details on Maya astronomy, mathematics, history, and society. Few Maya codices have survived to the current day despite the fact that there were many of them. This is because of a number of circumstances, including the conquest of the region by the Spanish, European colonisation, and the deliberate destruction of indigenous literature.

Although it was distinct from the well-known instances of book burning or purposeful destruction found in other historical contexts, the Maya Codices also experienced biblioclasm. More subtly, the biblioclasm that altered the Maya Codices took place during the colonial era that followed Spain's 16th-century invasion of the Yucata. Conquistadors from Spain discovered a sophisticated and intricate culture on the Yucatan Peninsula that had a written legacy that included the usage of hieroglyphic characters in the form of the Maya Codices. However, indigenous books and documents were considered heretical or heathen by the Spanish authority, including religious leaders. They consequently gave the order to gather and burn many indigenous writings, including the Maya Codices. Authorities and missionaries from Spain attempted to convert the native people to Christianity. To do this, they frequently targeted religious books and works written by indigenous peoples that they believed to be antagonistic to Christianity. During these conversion efforts, numerous Maya religious texts, including codices, were taken and destroyed.

A few Maya Codices survived the Spanish conquest despite the biblioclasm. Some of them were kept secret by local scribes or people who wanted to preserve their religious and cultural traditions. These preserved codices are now priceless archives of Maya culture and history.

## Nalanda Library

Founded in the fifth century CE, Nalanda University swiftly rose to prominence as an important academic hub in India and the larger Asian continent. The library at Nalanda was a storehouse for a great collection of manuscripts covering a wide range of subjects, including philosophy, religion, literature, medicine, mathematics, and more. It attracted researchers and students from all regions of Asia. The 12th-century destruction of Nalanda University and its library is among the most important moments in the institution's history. The university complex and the library were attacked during the Muslim conquests of India, especially when Bakhtiyar Khilji was in charge.

The Nalanda Library was set on fire, and the vast collection of manuscripts and books inside was destroyed as a result of the invasion. This loss of knowledge is frequently viewed as a tragic event in the history of scholarship and education, not just in India but also globally. A large amount of intellectual and cultural treasure was lost as a result of the biblioclasm that hit the Nalanda Library. Even if Nalanda University's physical library and its collection were destroyed, the legacy of its contributions to learning and the spread of knowledge continues to motivate education and cross-cultural exchange today.

### Nazi Book Burning:

A sequence of incidents known as the Nazi book burning occurred in Germany and Austria in the 1930s, at the height of Adolf Hitler's Nazi government. The Nazi Party planned these gatherings with the intention of eradicating and suppressing writing and concepts that they deemed to be at odds with their worldview. The burning of books is frequently interpreted as a form of cultural repression, propaganda, and censorship. On May 10, 1933, in Berlin and other German cities, the most well-known and well-recognized book burning incident occurred. Students from German universities, members of the Nazi Party, and other sympathisers gathered in open spaces to burn thousands of books. The German Student Association was in charge of planning the gathering, which featured ferocious speeches and banners endorsing Nazi principles.

Numerous well-known authors, including *Albert Einstein*, *Thomas Mann*, *Erich Maria Remarque*, *Karl Marx*, *Sigmund Freud*, and others, had their books burned during the protests. These writers were frequently Jews, politically liberal, or linked to ideologies that were seen as counter to Nazi propaganda. The Nazis planned the book burnings as a highly symbolic act to show off their dominion over culture and to scare and stifle any opposition voices. They were a part of a larger effort to censor, silence, and persecute thinkers, artists, and academics who disagreed with or questioned the Nazi regime.

### Institut Für Sexualwissenschaft

Berlin was home to the significant library, archive, and counselling facility known as the **Institut für Sexualwissenschaft**. The Institute, founded in 1919 by sexologist **Magnus Hirschfeld**, supported forward-thinking studies on gender and sexuality. There were tens of thousands of books, journals, and memoirs inside the library itself. The Institute also conducted ground-breaking study on people whose gender did not match their assigned sex at birth, or what Hirschfeld called "*sexual intermediaries*." On May 6, 1933, the right-wing German Student Union, acting at the apex of the Nazi Party, assaulted the Institute. The collections from the Institute were gathered and set afire in the streets by the Nazis in the days that followed. Additionally, they seized databases of names and locations, which they eventually used to locate and detain thousands of gay men in Germany. Hirschfeld had already relocated to France and was essentially living in exile by this point.

### Cultural Revolution in China:

Biblioclasm, or the willful destruction of books and other cultural relics, had a dramatic upsurge in China during the Cultural Revolution, which lasted from 1966 to 1976. Political upheaval that was started by Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party at this time was characterized by intense ideological zeal. One technique utilized during the Cultural Revolution to advance its political and ideological objectives was biblioclasm.

It was the goal of the Cultural Revolution to eradicate bourgeois and conventional influences from Chinese society. Intellectuals, educators, and cultural figures were often targeted as part of the campaign against the "*Four Olds*" – *old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas*. Books and cultural objects were largely destroyed by Red Guards, radical youth organizations that backed the Cultural Revolution. Raids were undertaken on libraries, schools, and cultural institutions, and things that they deemed to be ideologically impure or counter-revolutionary were taken and burned, including books, historical records, religious texts, works of art, and other materials. The Cultural Revolution's ban on books attempted to stifle Confucianism, traditional Chinese medicine, and old philosophical writings, among other historical and cultural traditions of China. It was extremely challenging to reconstruct family histories and genealogy due to the destruction of historical records and papers. It was motivated by political goals to uphold the Maoist movement's doctrinal purity. Mao's catchphrase, "*Destroy the old world, forge the new world*," expressed the determination to throw out the old order and create a new one that was based on revolution.

### Jaffna Public Library

On June 1, 1981, the Jaffna Public Library in Sri Lanka was tragically and historically significantly burned down. One of the most renowned libraries in South Asia, the Jaffna Public Library was situated in the city of Jaffna in the northern region of Sri Lanka and held a sizable collection of priceless books, manuscripts, and historical documents.

For the Tamil community in Sri Lanka, especially those in the northern region, the Jaffna Public Library was a representation of their intellectual and cultural history. Its library was well-stocked with books, manuscripts, and archival items, including priceless old records. During a time of racial unrest and hostilities between the Tamil

minority and the Sri Lankan government, the library was burned down on June 1, 1981. It is commonly accepted that the Sri Lankan security forces either authorized or participated in the crowd attack on the library. The library was attacked by the mob. There were many priceless cultural and historical items destroyed when the Jaffna Public Library was burned. There were numerous priceless Tamil historical, linguistic, and cultural texts that were destroyed.

### The Iraq National Library and Archive

Although it has played a vital role in Iraq's cultural and intellectual environment, the **Iraq National Library and Archive (INLA)** has also encountered difficulties and dangers, including biblioclasm. The 2003 invasion of Iraq by a coalition led by the United States resulted in substantial disruption and harm to the INLA. Libraries and archives among other cultural institutions were looted and destroyed in large quantities as a result of the invasion. Following the invasion, the INLA experienced devastation and looting. Numerous priceless manuscripts, books, historical records, and artifacts were either lost or vandalized. Some of these items wound up in private collections or on the underground market.

Iraq's cultural and historical legacy suffered a great loss as a result of the theft and destruction of the INLA. In addition to the history of Iraq itself, it also housed collections that held priceless artifacts from the ancient Mesopotamian culture, which is regarded as one of the world's earliest civilizations. International indignation and demands for the protection of cultural heritage during times of conflict resulted from the robbery of the INLA and other cultural institutions in Iraq. The United Nations and cultural institutions like UNESCO denounced the damage and attempted to aid in the repair process.

### Russian-Ukrainian war

The facts surrounding the burning of Ukrainian literature, particularly those relating to the country's history and the history of the Russian-Ukrainian war, are well known. All of the books from the library of the Petro Mohyla church were torched by Russians in Mariupol. Russian invaders are destroying books from the Pryazovskiy State Technical University's library in the temporarily seized Mariupol. Books on Ukrainian history and culture are seized and destroyed by Russian "military police" in the northeastern Ukrainian regions that are under occupation. Additionally, there have been instances of damage and destruction to Ukrainian archives that contain records of Soviet repression and attempts to implement Russian re-educational programs in Melitopol.

The fight against biblioclasm and the defense of intellectual freedom are still crucial in today's society. As long as knowledge is preserved, information access is promoted, and the values of free expression and intellectual freedom are upheld, organizations, librarians, academics, and activists will continue to strive in these directions. These initiatives seek to protect various viewpoints, ideas, and cultural legacy for present and future generations.

## 7. The Fight Against Biblioclasm:

For the sake of knowledge, cultural heritage, and intellectual freedom, it is imperative to combat Biblioclasm. Here are some ways individuals and organizations can contribute to the fight against Biblioclasm:

- **Raise Awareness:** Inform yourself and other people about the risks associated with Biblioclasm. Share details and anecdotes regarding censorship, book burning, and cultural damage in the past and now.
- **Support Libraries and Archives:** In order to preserve books and written materials, libraries and archives are essential. Support these organizations by giving, volunteering, or speaking out in favor of funding and resources.
- **Digitization and Digital Preservation:** Contribute to initiatives to digitize and preserve books and written materials, especially those that are at risk of being physically destroyed. Digital copies can contribute to preserving knowledge for upcoming generations.
- **Document and Record:** In locations where there is a risk of Biblioclasm or in conflict zones, document and record as much information as you can. This might entail maintaining physical copies, backing up digital data, and archiving it.
- **Discussion:** Have discussions and dialogues regarding the value of literature and written culture in society. Encourage diversity of thought and the importance of many viewpoints.
- **Legal Advocacy:** Support legal actions to safeguard intellectual property rights and make sure that authors' works are not destroyed or censored.



## The Legislation Against Biblioclam

Laws against book destruction or the intentional destruction of cultural and historical artifacts vary widely by country and jurisdiction. The protection of books and other cultural heritage items is typically covered by a combination of national and international laws, as well as ethical guidelines. Here are some key aspects and examples of laws and regulations related to book preservation and protection :

The following list of relevant international conventions and guidelines:

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):** Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, the UDHR includes Article 19, which states that *"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and expression,"* including freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):** The 1966-adopted International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) upholds the fundamental rights to seek, receive, and share information and ideas as part of freedom of expression.
- **UNESCO's Memory of the World Program:** The UNESCO program, which does not have legal standing, attempts to identify and save the written portion of humanity's documentary history. The standards and programs of UNESCO encourage the preservation of manuscripts, archives, and cultural assets..
- **UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Archives:** This declaration highlights the value of archives and their conservation, which frequently includes written items, even if it is not legally binding. It emphasizes the importance of information access and cultural heritage preservation.
- **National Laws:** National laws and regulations might differ greatly. Many nations have laws governing copyright, intellectual property rights, the preservation of cultural heritage, and freedom of information, all of which have an indirect bearing on the preservation of written culture.
- **Laws for the Preservation and Protection of Cultural Heritage:** Some nations have laws and rules that are specifically geared toward the preservation and protection of cultural heritage, which may include guidelines for written works, manuscripts, and historical documents.
- **Freedom of Information Acts:** Acts that encourage openness and access to data kept by the government may help to safeguard written works inadvertently.

### International Law:

- **Conventions:**

**Treaties:** Books are part of the cultural legacy that is protected by international accords and treaties. An international agreement that tries to stop the illicit trade in cultural objects, including books, is the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

- **Current Perspective:**

**Ethical Guidelines:** For the protection of cultural assets, including books, there are ethical standards and values in addition to legal frameworks. Ethics for the preservation and management of cultural artifacts are outlined by groups like the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).

**Restitution Laws:** Some nations have particular legislation governing the return of cultural objects that may have been taken or obtained unlawfully. These laws also apply to written works like books and manuscripts. It's crucial to remember that these laws and regulations can differ significantly depending on the jurisdiction. Furthermore, it can be difficult to implement these regulations, especially when trying to stop the destruction of books and cultural artifacts during tumultuous political periods.

## 8. Conclusion

Biblioclasm has a long and complicated history that cuts across numerous cultures and eras. Despite the fact that the practice has changed throughout time, its fundamental reasons frequently have political, religious, ideological, or cultural roots. We all have a cultural and ethical obligation as well as a legal one, protecting books and cultural treasures. In order to conserve and preserve books, manuscripts, and other cultural objects, numerous organizations and institutions around the world put in a lot of effort. To accomplish their objectives, they sometimes combine legal actions with public awareness efforts. The difficulties and ramifications of biblioclasm are still important in a time when information is becoming more digital and widespread. The growth of knowledge and the defense of democratic ideals continue to depend on actions taken to protect intellectual freedom, improve information access, and preserve cultural and historical records.

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