

ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq¹

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August 2018 Monthly Appendices

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¹ This report is based on research conducted by the American Schools of Oriental Research Cultural Heritage Initiatives. Monthly reports reflect reporting from a variety of sources and may contain unverified material. As such, they should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.

Other Key Points

- **Aleppo Governorate**
 - Turkish-backed forces reportedly intentionally destroyed the Martyr Avesta Xabur Shrine and Cemetery in Afrin, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0158**
- **Daraa Governorate**
 - Damage and looting reported at Tal al-Ashari in Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0155**
- **Deir ez-Zor Governorate**
 - International Coalition warplanes hit the Khaled bin al-Walid Mosque in al-Marashda, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0157**
- **Idlib Governorate**
 - Syrian media reported illegal excavation and theft in Qunaya, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0154**
- **Raqqa Governorate**
 - Three tombs were discovered in the Middle Euphrates Valley in Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0156**
 - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates explosives damage to al-Hamza bin al-Mutallib Mosque in al-Tabqa, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0159**

Military and Political Context

The main theaters of military operations during the reporting period in Syria were:

1. Idlib Governorate:
 - On July 27–August 6, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and Ahrar al-Sham arrested at least 80 people in Idlib Governorate for their alleged support of political reconciliation with Damascus. Those detained included members of the FSA-affiliated opposition group Forces of Martyr Ahmed al-Abdu.²
 - On August 2, a car bombing struck an HTS military court, killing at least 18 people including 10 HTS fighters. ISIS was suspected of carrying out the attack.³
 - On August 8–13, HTS deployed armed vehicles and other equipment to the front lines between Idlib and Hama Governorates as they appear to be preparing for a military offensive.⁴
 - On August 13–16, pro-regime forces closed and re-opened Idlib-Hama border crossings at Morek, Abu al-Duhur, and Qalaat al-Madiq in preparation for upcoming offensives and in an effort to encourage civilians to leave opposition-held areas of Idlib.⁵
 - On August 14, Russian Military Police based in Hama Governorate attempted to force out pro-regime forces from positions near Turkish-backed Syrian opposition posts in Idlib Governorate. On the same day, Syrian forces reportedly dropped barrel bombs on the town of Umm al-Khalakhil near the “front lines” separating SARG forces from areas held by HTS.⁶

² <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-6-28-2018.html>

³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-6-28-2018.html>

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-6-28-2018.html>

2. Aleppo Governorate:
 - On August 5, unknown forces shelled a graduation for members of the Turkish-backed National Army, injuring four graduates. Suspicion for the attack fell on the YPG; the group has conducted a guerilla campaign against Turkey and its affiliated structures in northern Syria.⁷
 - On August 12, YPG spokesperson Nouri Mahmoud announced that the YPG would seek to expel the Sunni Arab population that had been displaced from the Eastern Ghouta suburbs of Damascus, and resettled in the majority-Kurdish Afrin Canton region. The displaced were reportedly resettled in the Afrin Canton by Turkish and Turkish-backed opposition forces.⁸
3. Suwayda Governorate:
 - On August 1, ISIS militants attacked the Khalkhalah Air Base, killing at least eight pro-regime forces.⁹
 - On August 2–5, pro-regime forces began a ground operation to clear ISIS militants from areas in al-Suwayda Governorate. Following heavy shelling and aerial bombardment, pro-regime forces captured several key hills. Pro-regime reinforcements began to arrive in the area on August 3.¹⁰
4. Deir ez-Zor Governorate:
 - On August 16–28, Russian forces seized control of eight pro-regime checkpoints and river crossings along the Euphrates River.¹¹
 - On August 18, Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) arrested officers from a pro-regime militia, resulting in clashes between the two groups.¹²
 - On August 30, Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) deployed to the town of Abu Kamal and clashed with SARG forces.¹³
5. Hama Governorate:
 - On August 4, the HTS-affiliate Abu Amara Battalion claimed the assassination of a government chemical weapons scientist near the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center.¹⁴
 - On August 14, the Turkish-backed National Liberation Front (NLF) attacked a SARG base in Hama Governorate.¹⁵
6. Quneitra Governorate:
 - On August 2, Russian officials announced a new Russian Military Police Observation Points in the Golan Heights. According to a senior Russian official, the police force will patrol “up to eight temporary observation posts along the Bravo Line of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Forces (UNDOF) Zone.”¹⁶

⁷ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

⁸ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-6-28-2018.html>

⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

¹⁰ *ibid*,

¹¹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-28.html>

¹² *ibid*.

¹³ *ibid*.

¹⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

¹⁵ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-6-28-2018.html>

¹⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

7. Daraa Governorate:
 - On July 31–August 2, pro-regime militias reportedly relocated hundreds of ISIS militants from the Yarmouk Basin to Suwayda Governorate. A breakdown of additional negotiations reportedly resulted in the execution by pro-regime forces of ISIS militants. The IDF conducted airstrikes against ISIS militants who approached the Golan Heights Border and Jordanian border guards killed ISIS militants who attempted to cross the Syrian-Jordanian border.¹⁷
8. Hasakah Governorate:
 - On September 8–9, Kurdish Asayish Internal Security Forces clashed with pro-regime forces near an Asayish checkpoint in the city of Qamishli.

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, Russia stated that its air defenses had destroyed at least five drones that attempted to reach the Bassel al-Assad International Airport. Russia blamed the attempted attacks on HTS.¹⁸
- On August 7, an Emirati business delegation visited Damascus where they engaged in talks with representatives of the Damascus Sham Holding Company as well as the Damascus provincial governor over a Syrian government-backed development project known as Marota City, southwest of Damascus.¹⁹
- On August 8, the Jordanian Trade Minister met with the Syrian Industry and Trade Minister to discuss the re-opening of the Naseeb Border Crossing located on the Syrian-Jordanian border.²⁰

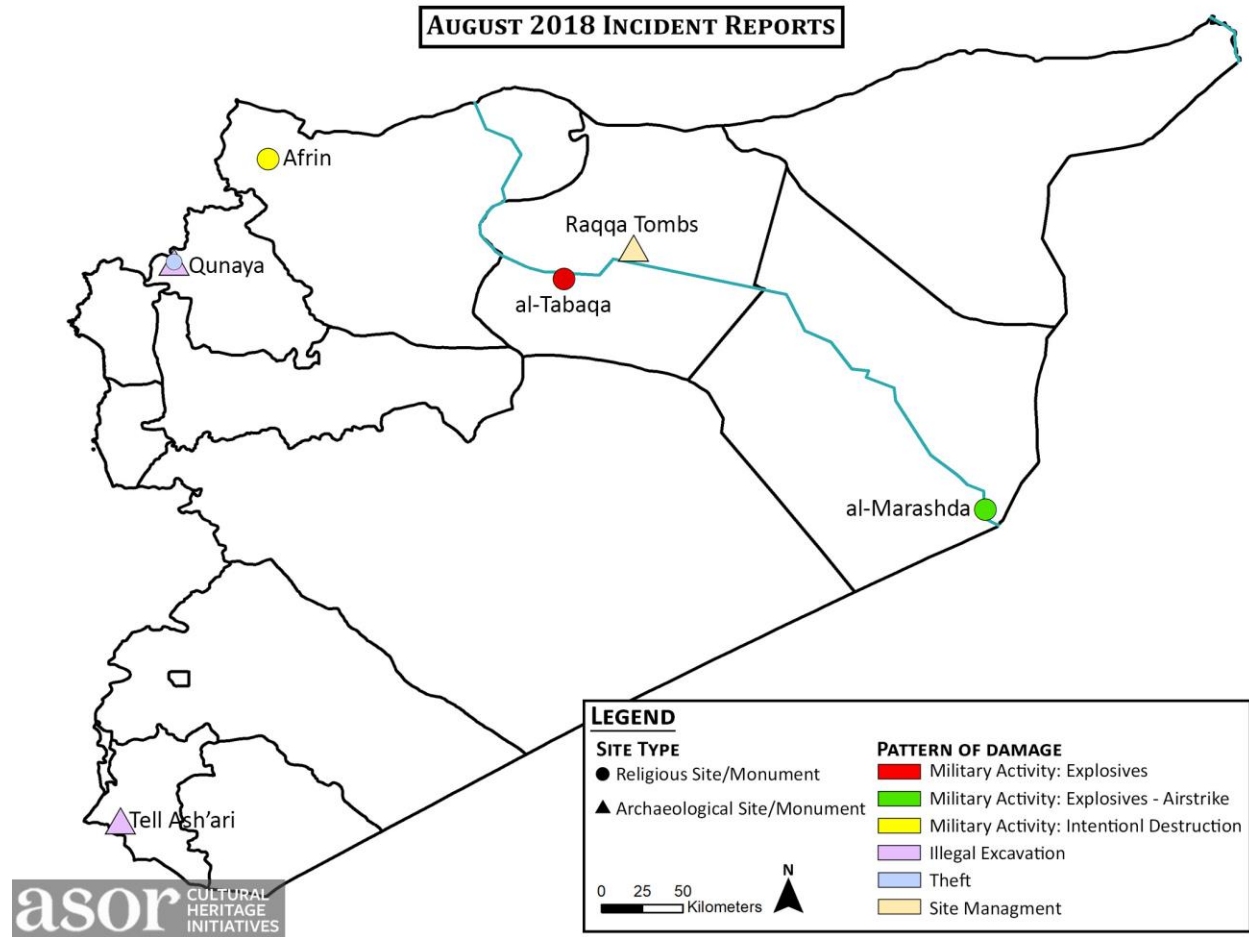
¹⁷ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

¹⁸ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/09/syria-situation-report-august-6-28-2018.html>

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

Incident Reports: Syria



Incident Reports from August 2018 (ASOR CHI)

SHI 18-0154

Report Date: August 4, 2018

Site Name: Qunaya (قناية)

Date of Incident: August 3, 2018

Location: Qunaya, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: A predominantly Christian village in Idlib Governorate.

Site Date: Unknown.

Incident Summary: Syrian media reports illegal excavation and theft.

Incident Source and Description: On August 4, 2018 the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported that on August 3, members of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham had begun pillaging “valuable archaeological treasures from the monastery and the churches” surrounding the village of Qunaya.²¹ Artifacts looted from the area were reportedly smuggled to Turkey. International media outlets also picked up the story. ASOR CHI is unable to confirm the reports of illegal excavation and theft in the village.

Pattern: Illegal excavation; Theft.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Qunaya, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to illegal excavation and theft.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

AhluBayt News Agency:

http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/terrorists-begin-excavation-works-at-archeological-site-in-idleb-to-smuggle-antiquities-to-turkey_904365.html

Prensa Latina:

<https://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=31954&SEO=terrorists-sack-syrian-archaeological-sites>

SANA: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=144166>

²¹ <https://sana.sy/en/?p=144166>

SHI 18-0155

Report Date: August 5, 2018

Site Name: Tal al-Ashari

Date of Incident: August 5, 2018

Location: Daraa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: One of the ten Decapolis cities established by Emperor Pompey in 64 BCE, Tal al-Ashari is located in the Horan area of Syria and dating back to the third millennium BCE. It was referenced in the Amarna letters dating to 1350 BCE.²² Tel al-Ashari has an “archaeological theater on the western edge with a diameter of 50 meters and a capacity to accommodate 7,000 spectators.”²³ Excavations occurred in the 1990s by Abou Asaf,²⁴ and the last archaeological excavation at the site took place in 2010 in which 3,000 artifacts were discovered including “earthen pieces, saddles and bronze tools, in addition to 21 cemeteries, 16 of which date back to the Bronze Age and the others to the Roman period.”²⁵

Site Date: Third millennium BCE–Roman Period.

Incident Summary: Damage and looting reported at archaeological site.

Incident Source and Description: On August 5, 2018 the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported that “terrorist organizations” had heavily damaged the ancient site of Tal al-Ashari.²⁶ According to the Head of Antiquities Directorate in Daraa, Mohamed al-Nasrallah, the site has been subjected to “attacks with explosives, drilling and excavation using heavy machinery and multiple tools by groups specialized in sabotage.”²⁷ Al Nasrallah stated that the archaeological site had been heavily damaged over the past seven years and many artefacts had been smuggled out of the country.

For more information on previous damage to Tel Al-Ashari, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0033** in **Weekly Report 7**, **SHI 15-0095** in **Weekly Report 45**, and **SHI 16-0183** in **Weekly Report 121-122**.

Pattern: Illegal excavation.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Tal al-Ashari, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to illegal excavation.

²² Moran, W. 1992.

²³ <https://sana.sy/en/?p=144212>

²⁴ Akkermans and Schwartz 2003:320

²⁵ <https://sana.sy/en/?p=144212>

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ <https://en.murason.com/2018/08/tal-al-ashari-witness-to-terrorist-acts-against-syrian-civilization/>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Muraselon:

<https://en.muraselon.com/2018/08/tal-al-ashari-witness-to-terrorist-acts-against-syrian-civilization/>

SANA: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=144212>

Scholarly:

Akkermans and Schwartz. 2003. *The Archaeology of Syria. From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (c.16,000-300 BC)*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.

Moran, W. 1992. *The Amarna Letters*. Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore.



Illegal excavations at Tal al-Ashari (SANA; August 5, 2018)



Illegal excavations at Tal al-Ashari (SANA; August 5, 2018)



Illegal excavations at Tal al-Ashari (SANA; August 5, 2018)



Illegal excavations at Tal al-Ashari (SANA; August 5, 2018)



Illegal excavations at Tal al-Ashari (SANA; August 5, 2018)

SHI 18-0156

Report Date: August 8, 2018

Site Name: Unidentified Tombs

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Tombs located in the Middle Euphrates Valley.

Site Date: Undetermined: possibly first millennium BCE–Byzantine Periods.

Incident Summary: Three tombs were discovered in the Middle Euphrates Valley.

Incident Source and Description: On August 8, 2018 the Authority of Tourism and Protection Antiquities (ATPA) in the territory of Al-Jazira reported that Internal Security Forces in Raqqa had uncovered three tombs in the Middle Euphrates Valley.²⁸ According to the ATPA, the tombs date back to the first millennium BC and Byzantine periods, and one of the tombs has Aramaic writing. In addition, all three of the tombs had been looted at an unknown time.

Pattern: Site management.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the discovery of the unidentified tombs, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in unstable regions in Syria.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ATPA: <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/uncovered-tombs-in-the-middle-euphrates-valley/>

²⁸ <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/uncovered-tombs-in-the-middle-euphrates-valley/>



A photograph of the tomb with Aramaic inscription (ATPA; August 8, 2018)



The tomb uncovered (ATPA; August 8, 2018)

SHI 18-0157

Report Date: August 23, 2018

Site Name: Khaled bin al-Walid Mosque

Date of Incident: August 19, 2018

Location: al-Marashda Village, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: US-led Coalition warplanes reportedly damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 23, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that on August 19, US-led Coalition warplanes fired missiles on the Khaled bin al-Walid Mosque in the village of al-Marashda, damaging the building and its furniture, and rendering the mosque inoperable.²⁹ Video footage released by SNHR showed damage to the interior to the mosque.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Khaled bin al-Walid Mosque, as well as the condition of other cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

August 23, 2018: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/08/23/international-coalition-forces-bombed-mosque-al-marashda-village-deir-ez-zour-suburbs-august-19/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch>

²⁹ <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/08/23/international-coalition-forces-bombed-mosque-al-marashda-village-deir-ez-zour-suburbs-august-19/>



Video still showing damage to the Khalid bin al-Walid Mosque (SNHR; August 23, 2018)



Video still showing damage to the Khalid bin al-Walid Mosque (SNHR; August 23, 2018)



Video still showing damage to the Khalid bin al-Walid Mosque (SNHR; August 23, 2018)



Video still showing damage to the Khalid bin al-Walid Mosque (SNHR; August 23, 2018)



Video still showing damage to the Khalid bin al-Walid Mosque (SNHR; August 23, 2018)



Video still showing damage to the Khalid bin al-Walid Mosque (SNHR; August 23, 2018)

ANF English:

<https://anfenglish.com/rojava/turkish-state-attack-on-cemetery-in-afirin-caught-on-video-28928>

Canton Afrin:

<http://cantonafirin.com/ar/news/view/2694.وفد-الأحزاب-السياسية-يزور-مزار-الشهيدة-أفيستا-خابور.html>

Hawar News (Hewar News; ANHA):

January 31, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pt-4yGDbBLA>

August 11, 2018: <http://www.hawarnews.com/en/haber/turkish-occupation-destroyed-avista-khabour-shrine-h3098.html>

August 12, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzWlQnQM2GA>

August 13, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8uIEsO6r2k>

Partiya Yekitiya Demokrat: <https://pydrojava.net/arabic/archives/38445>



Video still reporting to show intentional destruction (Hewar News; August 12, 2018)



Video still reporting to show intentional destruction (Hewar News; August 12, 2018)



Video still of the cemetery in January 2018, shortly after its founding (Hewar News; January 31, 2018)



Video still of the cemetery in January 2018, shortly after its founding (Hewar News; January 31, 2018)

SHI 18-0159

Report Date: August 21, 2018

Site Name: al-Hamza bin al-Mutallib Mosque

Date of Incident: Between March 25, 2018 and August 21, 2018

Location: al Tabqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Modern

Incident Summary: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates explosives damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that damage from explosives occurred to the southern facade of the al-Hamza bin al-Mutallib Mosque between March 25, 2018 and August 21, 2018. In an image from September 16, 2018 the disturbance along the southern facade is more clearly seen. There is also a small hole present in the roof of the mosque, just northwest of the dome, that appears during this same time frame.

On August 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that an IED exploded near the mosque on July 31, 2018 resulting in damage to the front of the mosque.³⁶ The perpetrator of the IED attack remained unknown at the time of reporting. The area remains under the control of the majority-Kurdish US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the al-Hamza bin al-Mutallib Mosque, as well as the condition of other sites located in regions subject to military activities.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

[http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/at least 21 assault on a civilian vital center in Syria in July 2018 en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/at%20least%2021%20assault%20on%20a%20civilian%20vital%20center%20in%20Syria%20in%20July%202018%20en.pdf)

³⁶ [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/at least 21 assault on a civilian vital center in Syria in July 2018 en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/at%20least%2021%20assault%20on%20a%20civilian%20vital%20center%20in%20Syria%20in%20July%202018%20en.pdf)



Al-Hamza bin al-Mutallib Mosque mosque prior to damage from an IED, shown within the red box (©2018 DigitalGlobe; March 25, 2018)



Red arrows indicate locations of possible damage to the mosque. There is a hole in the northwestern part of the roof, and visible rubble and debris on the street lining the southern facade (©2018 DigitalGlobe; August 21, 2018)



A later satellite image shows the damage to the mosque more clearly, as indicated by red arrows (©2018 DigitalGlobe; September 16, 2018)

Heritage Timeline

- August 29, 2018 **Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled **“Damage to Syria's Heritage - 29 August 2018.”**
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-29-august-2018/>
- August 19, 2018 *The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities* (ATPA) published an article titled **“Transferred the remain contents of mission houses which was working in Al-Jazira area.”** The ATPA has transferred the antiquities housed in the dig houses of Hamoukar, Tell Chuera, Tell Halaf, Tell Arbid, Chagar Bazar, Shakr al-Uhemar, Tineaner, Tell Leilan, Tell Halula and Khasham to a secure warehouse. <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/transferred-the-remain-contents-of-mission-houses-which-was-working-in-al-jazira-area/>
- August 18, 2018 *Russian Times* published an article titled **“Battle-Scarred Palmyra Will Be Ready For Tourists Next Summer-Syrian Officials.”** Governor of Homs Governorate Talal al-Barazi states that Palmyra will be ready for tourists in the summer of 2019.
<https://www.rt.com/news/436144-palmyra-syria-tourists-isis/>
<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/palmyra-to-be-restored-and-ready-for-tourists-by-summer-2019>
- August 17, 2018 *Prensa Latina* published an article titled **“Ancient Sirian Citadel of Aleppo is Being Rebuilt.”** The Aleppo Citadel is under reconstruction and will be finished in 2019.
<https://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=32505&SEO=ancient-sirian-citadel-of-aleppo-is-being-rebuilt>
- August 16, 2018 *Syria Direct* published an article titled **“A treasure house of Syria's past': Archaeologists, NGOs reckon with scale of cultural looting in post-IS Raqqa”** (by Ammar Hamou and Barrett Limoges). The damage to the Raqqa Museum is discussed, as well as its reconstruction.
<https://syriadirect.org/news/%E2%80%98a-treasure-house-of-syria%E2%80%99s-past%E2%80%99-archaeologists-ngos-reckon-with-scale-of-cultural-looting-in-post-is-raqqa-as-work-begins-to-renovate-city%E2%80%99s-historic-museum/>
- *TASS* published an article titled **“Citadel of Aleppo to be Reconstructed in 2018, Officials Say.”** Director of the Citadel Ahmed Gharib stated that the reconstruction of the Aleppo Citadel would be finished in 2018.
<http://tass.com/world/1017517>

- The **DGAM** published an article titled “**Restoration Works of Stone Sculptures.**” The DGAM, with Polish counterparts, restored statues from Palmyra. <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2419>
 - *Al-Monitor* published an article titled “**Turkey Wants its Share of Syria’s Reconstruction**” (by Fehim Tastekin). There are several political challenges to the reconstruction of Syria’s Heritage. <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/08/turkey-syria-ankara-wants-its-share-in-reconstruction.html>
- August 15, 2018
- The Syrian Arab News Agency* published an article titled “**Art Exhibition ‘Hand in Hand to Build Syria’ Held in Tartous.**” An art exhibition of recycled materials and traditional Syrian handicrafts was held in Tartous. <https://sana.sy/en/?p=144888>
- The **DGAM** published an article titled “**Workshop on Training Engineers.**” This workshop will train people in documenting and preparing a study for the restoration and rehabilitation of the al-Sokotiya Market in Aleppo. <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2420>
 - *The New York Times* published an article titled “**There Are No Girls Left: Syria’s Christian Villages Hollowed Out by ISIS**” (by Ben Hubbard). Assyrian Christian villages in Northern Syria are still abandoned after the defeat of ISIS. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/15/world/middleeast/syria-isis-assyrian-christians.html>
- August 14, 2018
- Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage - 14 August 2018.**” <http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-14-august-2018/>
- *World Politics Review* published an article titled “**How Facebook Made it Easier than Ever to Traffic Middle Eastern Artifacts**” (by Amr al-Azm and Katie Paul). ASOR CHI Co-Director Amr al-Azm and Katie Paul publish the results of their study on the antiquities market. <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/25532/how-facebook-made-it-easier-than-ever-to-traffic-middle-eastern-antiquities>
 - *Euronews* published an article titled “**Idlib Antiquities Museum Reopens After Five Years.**” The Idlib Regional Museum re-opened after five years of warfare. <https://www.euronews.com/2018/08/14/idlib-antiquities-museum-reopens-after-5-years>

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/antiquities-museum-reopens-in-syrias-rebel-held-idlib/>

August 11, 2018

The **DGAM** published an article titled “**Illegal Excavations and the Excavation of Archaeological Sites in Afrin.**” The DGAM reports on illegal excavation at the site of Nebi Hourri.

<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2415>

August 9, 2018

The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities published an article titled “**Confiscated Antiquities.**” The ATPA confiscated multiple pieces from a dealer in Deir ez-Zor. They state that many of these pieces were counterfeit.

<http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/confiscated-pieces/>

August 8, 2018

Syria Direct published an article titled “**In a City Buried by Rubble, Raqqa Residents Work to Restore ‘Life’ to Ancient Heritage Sites**” (by Ammar Hamou, Barrett Limoges, and Alice al-Maleh).

Oxygen Shabab, a grassroots organization, is restoring heritage sites in Raqqa. <https://syriadirect.org/news/in-a-city-buried-by-rubble-raqqa-residents-work-to-restore-%E2%80%98life%E2%80%99-to-ancient-heritage-sites/>

August 3, 2018

Al-Fanar Media published an article titled “**An Eye on the Cultural Landscape of Syria.**” The group Ettijahat supports young Syrian cultural actors including artists, videographers, and poets.

<https://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2018/08/an-eye-on-the-cultural-landscape-of-syria/>

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The Middle East Institute published a podcast titled “**Antiquities Trafficking and the Battle to Reclaim Cultural Heritage**” (by Emma Jacobs). Fabrizio Parrulli of Italy’s Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, and Deborah Lehr of The Antiquities Coalition discuss the international efforts to crack down on antiquities trafficking.

<https://middleeastinst.libsyn.com/antiquities-trafficking-and-the-battle-to-reclaim-cultural-heritage>