

# ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq<sup>1</sup>

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## **Table of Contents:**

Other Key Points	2
Military and Political Context	4
Incident Reports: Syria	13
Incident Reports: Iraq	194
Incident Reports: Libya	209
Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis	236
SNHR Videos and Vital Facilities	241
Heritage Timeline	242

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<sup>1</sup> This report is based on research conducted by the “Cultural Preservation Initiative: Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq.” Weekly 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

### Syria

- Aleppo Governorate
  - A car bomb exploded near al-Fateh Mosque in Manbij, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012**
  - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage to Qalaat Semaan in Jebel Semaan, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0025**
  - Alleged Turkish shelling damaged Tell Ain Dara Temple in Ain Dara, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0028**
  - Reported Turkish airstrikes damaged Jindaris Cemetery in Jindaris, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0029**
  - Reported Turkish shelling damaged Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque in Jindaris, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0030**
  - A fire broke out at Kaab bin Malik Mosque in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0032**
  - Reported Turkish airstrikes struck near the archaeological site of Cyrrhus in Nabi Hourri, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0033**
- Damascus Governorate
  - A missile damaged the Latin Catholic Franciscan Monastery of Saint Paul in Damascus. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0009**
  - A missile damaged the Maronite Church of Mar Antonius in Damascus. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0010**
- Daraa Governorate
  - Reported illegal excavations occurred at the ruins of al-Mataiyya, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0026**
- Deir ez Zor Governorate
  - Reported SARG airstrikes severely damaged Othman Bin Affan Mosque in Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0004**
  - Reported SARG airstrikes severely damaged al-Farouq Mosque in al-Asharah, Deir ez Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0006**
  - A reported SARG attack damaged Khaled bin Walid Mosque in Buqrus Tahtani, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0027**
- Hasakah Governorate
  - A Byzantine tomb was restored in al-Farahia, al-Hasakah Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0007**
- Hama Governorate
  - Thieves ransacked the Mar Gerges Church in Maharda, Hama Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0031**
- Idlib Governorate
  - A reported Russian airstrike damaged al-Ma'arra Museum in Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002**
  - A reported Russian airstrike damaged Uwais al-Qarni Mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0003**
  - Reported Russian shelling damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Tal al-Touqan, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0005**
  - A reported Russian airstrike damaged Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque in al-Tah, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0011**

- A reported Russian airstrike damaged Abu Habbah Village Mosque in Abu Habbah, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0013**
- Reported SARG shelling damaged Aisha Um al-Mouminin Mosque in al-Hbit village, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0014**
- Reported SARG shelling damaged al-Shuhada Mosque in Khan Sheikhoun, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0015**
- Reported Russian airstrike damaged Harran Village Mosque in Harran, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0016**
- A reported Russian airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Ghadafa, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0018**
- A reported Russian airstrike damaged al-Huda Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0022**
- A reported Russian airstrike destroyed al-Owda Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0034**
- Reported SARG shelling damaged Aisha Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0035**
- A reported SARG barrel bombing damaged al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque in Kafr Amim, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036**
- Latakia Governorate
  - A reported Russian airstrike damaged al-Tefahiya Village Mosque in al-Tefahiyah, Latakia Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0008**
- Raqqa Governorate
  - Photographs show looting pits at the archaeological site of Sura in al-Hammam, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0001**
- Rif Dimashq Governorate
  - Photographs show the destruction of Christian graves in Harasta, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0017**
  - Reported SARG shelling damaged al-Rayes Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0019**
  - Reported SARG airstrikes damaged al-Halima Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0020**
  - A reported SARG airstrike destroyed al-Iman Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0021**
  - A reported SARG airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Arbin, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0023**
  - Reported SARG airstrikes damaged al-Rahman Mosque in Arbin, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0024**

## Iraq

- Babil Governorate
  - Citizens decried the condition of ancient Borsippa in Babil Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 18-0002**
- Ninawa Governorate
  - A Christian cemetery in the Wadi 'Ikab area was damaged in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 18-0001**

## Libya

- Tripolitania
  - Reported Salafi extremists destroyed the Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat in Misrata, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0001**

- Heavy rains contributed to the collapse of a number of mud-brick buildings at Ghadames, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0002**
- Cyrenaica
  - A tree fell on the Department of Antiquities Library at Cyrene, Cyrenaica, damaging its roof. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0003**
  - The grave of Sheikh Mahdi al-Sanusi near Kufra, Cyrenaica was ransacked. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0004**
  - A twin car bombing occurred outside Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque in Benghazi, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0005**

## Military and Political Context

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

1. Aleppo Governorate:
  - During the reporting period, Turkish forces amassed on the border with Syria, reportedly in coordination with Syrian opposition forces who have vowed to support Turkish efforts to clear “terror nests” in the Kurdish YPG-held towns of Afrin and Manbij.<sup>2</sup>
  - On January 12–16, local residents in Manbij demonstrated against Kurdish-led governance, calling for a full withdrawal of the Syrian Kurdish YPG from Manbij and the dissolution and restructuring of local councils to provide greater representation of Sunni Arabs.<sup>3</sup>
  - On January 14, SOHR reported that SARG forces had captured at least 79 villages in the southern parts of Aleppo Governorate near the Abu Duhur military airport.<sup>4</sup>
  - On January 14–18, the US-led Coalition stated that it was “training a new Syrian Border Security Force (BSF)” with the SDF. The proposed effort would place 30,000 SDF fighters on the Syrian-Turkish and Syrian-Iraqi border. The announcement was met with outrage by Turkey, Russia, Iran and Syria.<sup>5</sup>
  - On January 17, the main Kurdish party in Syria appealed to the international community to halt Turkish bombardment of Afrin. SOHR reported that thousands of Afrin residents have demonstrated against Turkish operations, which have included days of shelling.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42706492> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42707384> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkey-says-will-respond-immediately-to-any-threats-from-western-syria-idUSKBN1F62GV> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-military/turkish-army-chief-says-will-not-allow-support-for-syrian-kurdish-militia-media-idUSKBN1F512Z>

<sup>3</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/news/syria-army-seizes-dozens-villages-advance-key-monitor-130912584.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-pyd/syrian-kurdish-pyd-urges-action-against-turkish-bombing-of-afrin-region-idUSKBN1F60RH> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=83032>

- On January 18, Turkish officials stated that they would cooperate with Russia and Iran on operations in Afrin. Russia has an undetermined number of personnel in Afrin acting as monitors. The Syrian regime warned Turkey against any military operation in Afrin.<sup>7</sup>
- On January 19, a YPG spokesman reported that Turkish forces had stepped up bombardment in the Afrin region, firing around 70 shells at villages in less than 24 hours. Turkey has stated that the “operation has actually de facto started with cross-border shelling,” confirming that no troops had yet entered Afrin.<sup>8</sup>
- On January 20, the Russian Defense Ministry stated that its military observers located in Afrin were relocated to Tel Ajar in order to “prevent possible provocations.” Russian observers have been in Afrin Canton since March 2017 under a deal with the YPG.<sup>9</sup>
- On January 21, Turkish forces entered Syria in what they are calling “Operation Olive Branch,” an offensive that aims to force out Kurdish forces from the towns of Afrin and Manbij. Turkish troops are reportedly fighting alongside the Free Syrian Army (FSA).<sup>10</sup>
- On January 22–28, Turkish forces, accompanied by the FSA, reportedly captured several villages in the Afrin region. FSA and Turkish forces also captured the strategic Mount Barsaya, which overlooks the district of Azaz. Aerial bombardment struck YPG-held villages resulting in the deaths of at least 18 civilians, according to the SDF. The US-backed SDF stated that it was considering sending reinforcements to Afrin in support of the YPG, which makes up the largest part of the SDF.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-russia/turkey-says-will-coordinate-with-russia-on-operation-in-syrias-aftrin-idUSKBN1F714Q> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-minister/damascus-warns-turkey-against-aftrin-attack-syrian-state-tv-idUSKBN1F71HD>

<sup>8</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-ypg/kurdish-ypg-says-turkey-shelling-aftrin-heavily-idUKKBN1F8106> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42747702> ; <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkey-shells-syrias-aftrin-region-minister-says-operation-has-begun-idUKKBN1F80XH>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/exclusive-missile-attack-targets-refugee-camp-syria-180114082354985.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/turkey-says-its-troops-have-entered-syria-in-fight-against-kurdish-militias/2018/01/21/ceed2abc-fe8d-11e7-8f66-2df0b94bb98a\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/turkey-says-its-troops-have-entered-syria-in-fight-against-kurdish-militias/2018/01/21/ceed2abc-fe8d-11e7-8f66-2df0b94bb98a_story.html) ; <https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1150136/airstrikes-pound-syrias-aftrin-turkey-launches-operation-olive-branch> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkish-forces-push-into-syria-battle-kurdish-militia-idUSKBN1F90RQ>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42771469> ; <http://qasioun-news.com/en/news/show/126945/Syrian%20Opposition%20Controls%20Barsaya%20Mount%20In%20Syria%E2%80%99s%20Afrin> ; <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-ypg/ypg-turkish-air-strikes-target-villages-in-syrias-aftrin-idUKKBN1FB18W> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-toll/death-toll-in-syrias-aftrin-climbs-to-18-sdf-idUSKBN1FB1SW> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-conferenc/u-s-backed-sdf-says-it-may-send-reinforcements-to-syrias-aftrin-idUSKBN1FB1EX>

- On January 23, Turkish state TV Anadolu News reported that FSA forces had captured the “strategic” village of Hammam in northwestern Afrin. The UN reported that 5,000 people had been displaced by clashes in Afrin. Another 150,000 are thought to have fled to Azaz, where they are sheltering in camps near the Turkish border.<sup>12</sup>
  - On January 29, pro-regime forces attacked a Turkish convoy as it moved through opposition and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham-held territory in Aleppo Governorate. The convoy was en route to establish a “blocking position” south of the city of Aleppo.<sup>13</sup>
2. Idlib Governorate:
- During the reporting period, SARG forces continued to advance into opposition-held Idlib Governorate, displacing an estimated 100,000 people. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that SARG and pro-regime forces have captured around 84 villages since mid-October 2017. SOHR reported that ISIS has captured 63 villages in Hama and Idlib Governorates. Syrian opposition groups including Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), Ahrar al-Sham, the Turkestan Islamic Party, Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki, and several affiliates of the FSA reportedly formed an “Emergency Joint Operations Room” to coordinate the defense of southern areas in Idlib Governorate.<sup>14</sup>
  - During the reporting period, there was an uptick in airstrikes and shelling targeting civilian infrastructure including schools, healthcare facilities and an IDP camp in Idlib Governorate. Russian and SARG forces continue to maintain that they do not target civilian infrastructure.<sup>15</sup>
  - On January 5, HTS and Al Qaeda reached a de-escalation agreement in which HTS agreed to provide “safe haven and weapons” to Al Qaeda in Syria and Al Qaeda agreed to “coordinate and complement” the work of HTS, and avoid criticism of the group. Al Qaeda also agreed to refuse membership to former ISIS members, and “halt all activity in southern Syria.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42788054> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-ria-turkey-rebels/fsa-commander-says-25000-syrian-rebels-back-turkish-force-in-syria-idUSKBN1FA00K>

<sup>13</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/erdogan-escalates-against-iran-to.html>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib/syrian-govt-presses-idlib-offensive-as-people-flee-homes-in-the-cold-idUSKBN1EU10E> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels/syrian-army-preparing-assault-to-end-rebel-siege-of-base-east-of-capital-idUSKBN1ES03U> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib/syrian-army-presses-offensive-in-last-rebel-stronghold-of-idlib-idUSKBN1EW0F9> ; <https://apnews.com/d327c9a581c740c586ba73d08cd4e59b> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=82089> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/11/world/middleeast/syria-fighting-russia.html> ; <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58419> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=83033> ; <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/179524> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42591334> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/exclusive-missile-attack-targets-refugee-camp-syria-180114082354985.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html>

- On January 7, an explosion at the headquarters of the Islamist opposition group Ajnad al-Qawqaz in the city of Idlib killed at least 25 people. The cause of the explosion was unclear, but some reports stated the explosion was the result of a car bomb. The same day, aerial bombardment in other areas killed at least 15 people. The Syrian regime announced that its forces had captured the town of Sinjar in southeastern Idlib.<sup>17</sup>
  - On January 8, suspected SARG and Russian airstrikes struck the towns of Jarjanaz and Saraqib.<sup>18</sup>
  - On January 11–15, Syrian opposition forces launched a counter-offensive against SARG and pro-regime forces in Idlib Governorate. Opposition forces, including members of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and the Free Syrian Army (FSA), claimed to have seized around 20 villages and captured 60 government fighters.<sup>19</sup>
  - On January 13–22, SARG pro-regime forces captured the Abu Dhuhur Airbase following heavy clashes with HTS. Syrian opposition forces first captured the base in 2015.<sup>20</sup>
3. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
- During the reporting period, SARG and Russian aerial bombardment increased over the area of Eastern Ghouta resulting in over 100 civilian casualties. The Syrian regime continues an offensive to recapture the area from Syrian opposition forces.<sup>21</sup>
  - On January 2, Syrian opposition forces, mainly belonging to the Islamist opposition group Ahrar al-Sham, captured Harasta and besieged the Military Vehicles Administration building.<sup>22</sup>
  - On January 7, SARG forces broke the siege of the Military Vehicles Administration amid heavy fighting and aerial bombardment.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42599696> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-blast/at-least-23-killed-in-explosion-in-syrias-idlib-war-monitor-idUSKBN1EW0S1> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42599696>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/syrian-rebels-declare-counter-attack-in-idlib-province-idUSKBN1F01P7> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html> ; <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=82517> ; <http://www.syriaahr.com/2018/01/11/-/جوية-تطال-ضربات-عدة-مناطق-في-الريف-الجن> ; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=112&v=7Qb25g6eUc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=112&v=7Qb25g6eUc)

<sup>20</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-airport/syrian-army-allies-capture-idlib-air-base-state-tv-idUSKBN1F90M7>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels/syrian-army-preparing-assault-to-end-rebel-siege-of-base-east-of-capital-idUSKBN1ES03U> ; <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=82283> ; <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=82046> ; [http://news.com/en/news/show/124113/Syrian Opposition Continues Advancing In Damascus](http://news.com/en/news/show/124113/Syrian%20Opposition%20Continues%20Advancing%20In%20Damascus) ; <http://www.ibti-mes.co.uk/emir-age-2-was-one-six-kids-killed-by-air-strikes-near-damascus-monday-this-his-story-1654429> ; <http://syriadirect.org/news/airstrikes-and-shelling-kill-dozens-in-besieged-east-damascus-suburbs/> ; <https://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/329-civilians-killed-in-e-ghouta-in-2-months-2972533> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42675657> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/air-strikes-kill-least-17-civilians-syria-rebel-144524701.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42566063> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/suspected-russian-jets-kill-30-near-damascus-idUSKBN1ET0L9>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels/syrian-army-preparing-assault-to-end-rebel-siege-of-base-east-of-capital-idUSKBN1ES03U>

- On January 9, the Syrian military accused Israel of launching missiles against military outposts in the area of Qutayfeh.<sup>24</sup>
  - On January 22, rescue workers reported the presence of chlorine gas during aerial bombardment in Douma, Eastern Ghouta, injuring 13 civilians.<sup>25</sup>
4. Hama Governorate:
    - During the reporting period, Jordan allowed aid entry to the Syrian-border camp of al-Rukban.<sup>26</sup>
    - During the reporting period, an increase in aerial bombardment was reported in Hama Governorate.<sup>27</sup>
  5. Damascus Governorate:
    - On January 22, Syrian opposition shelling struck the districts of Bab Touma and al-Shaghour in the Old City of Damascus, killing nine civilians and wounding 21 more.<sup>28</sup>
  6. Deir ez Zor Governorate:
    - On January 20–23, ISIS launched an offensive titled “Revenge for the Virtuous Women” against the SDF near the Syrian-Iraqi border.<sup>29</sup>
    - On January 23, the US-led Coalition reported that “precision strikes” on an ISIS headquarters near Shafah killed 145–150 ISIS members.<sup>30</sup>
  7. Daraa Governorate:
    - On January 18–23, pro-regime forces reportedly increased shelling and deployed forces to the cities of Daraa and Ezraa in Daraa Governorate.<sup>31</sup>
    - On January 22, pro-regime forces demanded the “full evacuation” of the opposition-held town of Sanamayn.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels/syrian-army-breaks-siege-of-army-base-near-damascus-idUSKBN1EW0U5>

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syria-israeli-missiles-target-damascus-military-outposts/2018/01/09/5a8c5b2a-f50f-11e7-9af7-a50bc3300042\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syria-israeli-missiles-target-damascus-military-outposts/2018/01/09/5a8c5b2a-f50f-11e7-9af7-a50bc3300042_story.html) ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/rescuers-in-rebel-held-syrian-area-accuse-government-of-gas-attack-idUKKBN1FB13F> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>26</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/health-cluster-weekly-situation-report-whole-syria-week-2-5-11-january>

<sup>27</sup> [http://qasioun-news.com/en/news/show/124366/Syrian\\_Regime\\_Claims\\_Civilian\\_Souls\\_In\\_Idlib](http://qasioun-news.com/en/news/show/124366/Syrian_Regime_Claims_Civilian_Souls_In_Idlib)

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-shelling/insurgent-shelling-kills-nine-in-old-damascus-state-tv-says-idUSKBN1FB1SU> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/deaths-reported-shelling-syria-damascus-180122135625479.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42788049>

<sup>29</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1421728/coalition-precision-strikes-kill-scores-of-isis-terrorists-in-syria/source/GovDelivery/> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42802151> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>31</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>32</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>



8. Latakia Governorate:

- On January 5, a Russian military journalist released photographs of Russian warplanes damaged during reported Syrian opposition shelling that struck Hmeimim Air Base on December 31, 2017. According to Russia's Kommersant newspaper, seven planes were destroyed and two servicemen killed. The previous day, Russia had denied the Kommersant report.<sup>33</sup>
- On January 6, Russian forces prevented a drone attack on the Hmeimim Air Base less than one week after a shelling attack on the base killed two Russian servicemen.<sup>34</sup>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of al-Bukamal (Abu Kamal) and Shadaddi.<sup>35</sup>
- During the reporting period, aid workers reported a sharp uptick in SARG and Russian shelling and aerial bombardment directly striking medical facilities. Aerial bombardment and shelling damaged at least 10 hospitals between late December 2017 and early January 2018, in what one adviser referred to as "the most intense [attacks] for a year."<sup>36</sup>
- During the reporting period, Russian airstrikes were reported over Rif Dimashq, Hama, Idlib and Aleppo Governorates.<sup>37</sup>
- On January 1, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad appointed new ministers for defense, industry and information.<sup>38</sup>
- On January 14, the US-led Coalition confirmed that it is training recruits for a 30,000-strong force, composed mainly of Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), in order to maintain security on Syria's borders with Iraq and Turkey, and along the Euphrates River Valley.<sup>39</sup>
- On January 25, UN-brokered peace talks between Syrian government forces and opposition groups began in Vienna.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42580378> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-planes/russia-denies-report-that-7-planes-destroyed-in-syria-attack-tass-idUSKBN1ET0VX>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42595184>

<sup>35</sup> See: "US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq". *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1419011](#), [1408754](#), [1414589](#), [1424656](#), [1430817](#)

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42591334> ; <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/health-cluster-weekly-situation-report-whole-syria-week-2-5-11-january> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/russia-maintains-airstrikes-despite.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=82522> ; <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=82521> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-january-10-24.html>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-government/syrias-assad-names-new-defense-and-other-ministers-state-tv-idUSKBN1EQ11R> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/syria-situation-report-december-14.html>

<sup>39</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/turkish-president-threatens-todrown-us-backed-force-in-syria/2018/01/15/e7789850-f9e7-11e7-b832-8c26844b74fb\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/turkish-president-threatens-todrown-us-backed-force-in-syria/2018/01/15/e7789850-f9e7-11e7-b832-8c26844b74fb_story.html) ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/erdogan-says-turkish-operation-in-syrias-afrin-to-be-supported-by-rebels-idUSKBN1F5117> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42731222>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-un/syrian-peace-talks-resume-in-vienna-as-russian-meeting-looms-idUSKBN1FE1SR>

### **The main theaters of military operations during the reporting period in Iraq were:**

1. Ninawa Governorate:
  - On January 7, unidentified gunmen killed the mayor of the town of al-Rashidiya near his home in al-Qubba region.<sup>41</sup>
2. Baghdad Governorate:
  - On January 14, a bombing struck the northeastern district of Jamila, killing two people and wounding six more.<sup>42</sup>
  - On January 15, two suicide bombings struck Tayaran Square in central Baghdad, killing at least 35 people and injuring 90 more.<sup>43</sup>
3. Kirkuk Governorate:
  - On January 21, the Governor of Kirkuk reportedly ordered residents of two “Kurdish-populated” neighborhoods in the city of Kirkuk to leave their homes, referring to a decree by the former Baath regime made during so-called Arabization efforts.<sup>44</sup>

### **Other Key Points:**

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Baiji, Hawijah, Qara Tapa, Qayyarah, Rutbah, Mosul and Tuz.<sup>45</sup>
- On January 2, Iran re-opened two border crossings with Iraqi Kurdistan—Tamarchin in Erbil and Parviz Khan in Sulaymaniyah.<sup>46</sup>
- On January 7, Reuters reported that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) were “forcibly returning civilians from refugee camps to unsafe areas, in the predominantly Sunni Anbar” Governorate, reportedly to ensure that elections, scheduled for May, will take place on time.<sup>47</sup>
- On January 8 Iraqi parliament formed a committee to investigate incidents of ethnic violence in Tuz Khurmatu allegedly perpetrated by ISF and PMFs during operations to take control of Kirkuk from Kurdish Peshmerga forces in October 2017.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> <https://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/mayor-killed-armed-attack-north-mosul-police/>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42686677>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42686677>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/0efc9504-2359-44ae-abad-df15fd97242b>

<sup>45</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1419011](#), [1408754](#), [1414589](#), [1424656](#)

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-iraq-borders/iran-re-opens-border-crossings-with-iraqi-kurdistan-region-idUSKBN1ER0AT>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-refugees/iraq-returning-displaced-civilians-from-camps-to-unsafe-areas-idUSKBN1EW072>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/080120184>

- Parliament sessions were delayed because of a boycott by Kurdish and Sunni parliament members in response due to disagreements about budgetary and election issues.<sup>49</sup> Despite protests that elections be postponed to allow more time for displaced Iraq citizens to return, on January 22 Parliament voted to hold elections on May 12, 2018, a date suggested by Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi. This election will decide the prime minister; Abadi is seeking reelection.<sup>50</sup> The Islamic Dawa party, led by Abadi, chose not to run in the election, allowing its party members to form new coalitions;<sup>51</sup> Abadi has created a new coalition, “Nasr al-Iraq,” while current Vice President Nouri al-Maliki, also a Dawa member, aligned with the “State of Law Coalition”.<sup>52</sup> Relations among Kurdish political parties continue to be strained.<sup>53</sup>
- The number of incidents of violence increased in January from the previous month.<sup>54</sup> ISIS continues to remain a threat in the Diyala and Salahaddin.<sup>55</sup>

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

1. Tripolitania Governorate:
  - On January 11, a suspected ISIS militant driving an explosives-laden car en-route to the city of Misrata surrendered to Libyan security forces at a checkpoint in the town of Abu Grain, 60 miles south of Misrata.<sup>56</sup>
  - On January 15, clashes broke out between the Special Deterrence Force (Rada) and the “rival group loyal to a militia leader known as “Bashir ‘the Cow’.” The clashes killed at least 20 people and wounded 60 more, including civilians, and shut down the airport for 5 days. Airplanes from all four operating airlines were also damaged in the clashes.<sup>57</sup>
2. Cyrenaica Governorate:
  - On January 23, a double car bombing struck outside a mosque in the city of Benghazi’s al-Salmami district, killing at least 35 people and wounding dozens more.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/020120181>;

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/03012018>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-election/iraq-sets-may-12-date-for-elections-to-be-contested-by-pm-abadi-iran-allies-idUSKBN1FB10G>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.arab48.com/-/الانتخابات-بقائمة-العبادي-والمالكي>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/iraq-election-shiite-alliance-sectarianism.html>;

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/01/30/iraqs-militias-are-setting-their-sights-on-power/>

<sup>53</sup> [http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/iraqi-kurdish-political-fractures-weigh.html?utm\\_source=Iraqi+Kurdish+Political+Fractures+Weigh+on+Looming+Elections](http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/01/iraqi-kurdish-political-fractures-weigh.html?utm_source=Iraqi+Kurdish+Political+Fractures+Weigh+on+Looming+Elections)

<sup>54</sup> <http://musingsoniraq.blogspot.com/2018/02/violence-up-in-iraq-jan-2018-2.html>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/provincial-official-warns-new-islamic-state-threat/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/suspected-islamic-state-bomber-surrenders-at-libyan-checkpoint-official-idUSKBN1F01XR>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/at-least-20-dead-as-clashes-shut-airport-in-libyan-capital-idUSKBN1F410L> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/airport-in-libyas-capital-shut-for-third-day-after-clashes-idUSKBN1F624P>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/double-car-bombing-in-libyas-benghazi-kills-at-least-11-idUSKBN1FC2TC> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/toll-rises-to-35-in-car-bombing-outside-benghazi-mosque-idUSKBN1FD1LV> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42798535>

Other Key Points:

- On January 10, the UN endorsed elections in Libya to take place before the end of 2018. A top UN official stated that the UN was very encouraged by the rate of Libyans who have been registering to vote.<sup>59</sup>
- On January 11, the US congratulated Libya on the destruction of its “remaining chemical weapons stockpile.”<sup>60</sup>

**Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:**

- On January 2, Egypt extended the country’s state of emergency for three months following an uptick in terrorism and an “Islamist insurgency” in its North Sinai region.<sup>61</sup>
- On January 8, Jordan authorities arrested 17 members of an ISIS-cell planning terror attacks inside the country.<sup>62</sup>
- On January 11, the US Justice Department under Attorney General Jeff Sessions created a team charged with investigating individuals and organizations providing support to Hezbollah. Hezbollah, designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, has provided military support the Syrian regime and participated in major offensives to recapture territory from ISIS and opposition forces in Syria.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-election-un/u-n-endorses-elections-for-libya-by-end-of-2018-idUSKBN1EZ1NA>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-whitehouse/u-s-welcomes-libyas-destruction-of-chemical-weapons-stockpile-statement-idUSKBN1F02KP>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-security/egypt-to-extend-state-of-emergency-for-3-months-mena-idUSKBN1ER1B0>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-jordan-security-militants/jordan-says-arrests-17-in-foiled-islamic-state-attack-plot-state-media-idUSKBN1EX111>

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-hezbollah/attorney-general-sessions-sets-up-hezbollah-investigation-team-idUSKBN1F01V3>

## Incident Reports: Syria

**SHI 18-0001**

**Report Date:** January 1, 2018

**Site Name:** Sura

**Date of Incident:** Pre-September 2017<sup>64</sup>

**Location:** al-Hammam, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Sura is an archaeological site adjacent to the modern town of al-Hammam just north of the Baath Dam. The site is dominated by a large Roman-era fortification first built in the late 3rd century CE during the rule of Diocletian, although the site was probably inhabited by the mid-1st century.<sup>65</sup> As the southernmost fort on the Strata Diocletiana, Sura was used to maintain the western border against attacks by Sasanian forces.<sup>66</sup> In 540, Sura was sacked by the Sasanians under Khusrow I. The fortification visible today likely largely dates to the reign of Justinian, who rebuilt the fort after recapturing it from the Sasanians.<sup>67</sup>

**Site Date:** Roman, Byzantine Period

**Incident Summary:** Photographs show looting pits at an archaeological site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On December 31, 2017 the Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities (ATPA) published photographs of the site of Sura in Raqqa Governorate. The ATPA reports that the site was bulldozed before being captured by Syrian Democratic Forces.<sup>68</sup> The photographs show several large looting pits at the site, as well as toppled stones.

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Sura, as well as the condition of other cultural sites located in regions subject to military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

ATPA:

<http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/the-directorat-of-antiquities-in-al-tabqa-documented-the-soura-site/>

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<sup>64</sup> [http://q-sy.net/en/news/show/71426/SDF Controls The Village Of Hamman West Of Raqqa](http://q-sy.net/en/news/show/71426/SDF%20Controls%20The%20Village%20Of%20Hamman%20West%20Of%20Raqqa)

<sup>65</sup> Kennedy & Riley 1990: 77.

<sup>66</sup> Butcher 2003: 416.

<sup>67</sup> Kennedy & Riley 1990: 116.

<sup>68</sup> <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/the-directorat-of-antiquities-in-al-tabqa-documented-the-soura-site/>

Qasioun News:

[http://q-sy.net/en/news/show/71426/SDF Controls The Village Of Hammam West Of Raqqqa](http://q-sy.net/en/news/show/71426/SDF%20Controls%20The%20Village%20Of%20Hammam%20West%20Of%20Raqqqa)

Scholarly:

Butcher, K. (2003) *Roman Syria*. London: British Museum Publications.

Kennedy, D. & D. Riley (1990) *Romen's Desert Frontier From the Air*. London: B.T. Batsford.



A view of toppled stones and a looting pit at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)



An image of a looting pit at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)



An image of a looting pit at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)



An image of tracks from cars or heavy machinery at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)



An image of a looting pit at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)





An image of a looting pit at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)



Toppled stones in a looting pit at Sura (ATPA; December 31, 2017)

## SHI 18-0002

**Report Date:** January 2, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Ma'arra Museum (Khan Murad Basha Museum; متحف معرفة النعمان الشهير)

**Date of Incident:** January 2, 2018

**Location:** Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Ma'ara Museum (or the Murad Pasha Caravansary), located in the town of Maaret al-Numan, represents one of the premiere cultural sites in the region. The Museum comprises four sections with cross-beamed ceilings connected by arched hallways to service facilities.<sup>69</sup> A mosque and a restaurant are found in the center, and a marketplace, bathhouse, bakery, grain storage area, and water station that supplies the whole facility occupy its west side. The caravansary (built in 1565 CE) was converted into a museum to preserve and display historically significant collections of mosaics from the nearby Dead Cities, a landscape of famous Roman and Byzantine standing architecture.<sup>70</sup>

**Site Date:** 1565 CE

**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike damaged a museum.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 2, 2018 the Idlib Antiquities Center reported that Russian warplanes bombed al-Ma'arra Museum around 9:30 AM, causing severe damage to the museum's galleries.<sup>71</sup> ASOR CHI Co-Investigator Amr al-Azm received a report from on-the-ground sources that the airstrike caused severe damage to the museum's west wing and gallery. Several local reporting groups, including the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), confirmed that aerial bombardment had struck the museum.<sup>72</sup> The Maara Media Center published photographs and a video of damage to the museum.<sup>73</sup> Orient News also published a video showing the extent of the damage.<sup>74</sup>

Many artifacts displayed in the courtyard were moved following previous incidents of damage to the museum, and thus most of the damage is limited to the building itself. Several of the artifacts too heavy to move (including two Byzantine-era sarcophagi) were damaged in the latest incident.

For information on previous damage to al-Maara Museum, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 14-0041** in **Weekly Report 8**, **SHI 14-0101** in **Weekly Report 20**, **SHI 15-0098** in **Weekly Report 46**, and **SHI 16-0063** in **Weekly Report 91-92**.

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<sup>69</sup> Burns 2009: 195.

<sup>70</sup> <http://archnet.org/sites/478>

<sup>71</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1790444994307088&id=1070868956264699](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1790444994307088&id=1070868956264699)

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=81988> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=81930> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/02/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-historical-museum-maaret-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-january-2/>

<sup>73</sup> <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173705116635136> ; <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173547721150464> ; <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173328212221952> ; <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173155818000385>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xg1QqzIEus>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0037.**

For additional reporting on reported Russian airstrike damage to Al-Ma'arra Museum, see The Day After – Heritage Protection Initiative report on pp. 166–192.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on damage to Al-Ma'arra Museum and will continue to monitor heritage sites in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity. ASOR CHI has previously conducted mitigation projects at the Ma'arat al-Nu'man Archaeological Museum and is directing critical attention to the condition of the site, given its significance as a cultural repository.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Archnet: <https://archnet.org/sites/478>

Idlib Antiquities Center:

January 2, 2018: <https://www.facebook.com/1070868956264699/photos/a.1071695812848680.1073741828.1070868956264699/1790263340991920/> ; [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1790444994307088&id=1070868956264699](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1790444994307088&id=1070868956264699)

Maara Media Center:

January 2, 2018: <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173705116635136> ; <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173547721150464> ; <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173328212221952> <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948173155818000385>  
January 3, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPoeQM964X8>

Orient News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xg1QqzIEus>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/02/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-historical-museum-maaret-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-january-2/>

SOHR: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=81930>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross (2009) The Monuments of Syria: A Guide. I. B. Tauris. 195.



Damage to northern arcade of interior courtyard of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to interior hallway of of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to northeastern corner of courtyard arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to Byzantine-era sarcophagi against northern wall of tekkiye in of al-Ma'arra Museum courtyard (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to door in interior courtyard of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to northern arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to interior of tekkiye within interior courtyard of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Debris around Luwian stele in western arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to northeastern arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum and Byzantine sarcophagi (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to northeastern corner of arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)





Damage to interior of tekkiye in al-Ma'arra Museum courtyard (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Collapsed section of arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum, with damaged Byzantine-era mosaic (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Western arcade of interior courtyard of al-Ma'arra Museum, facing south (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Byzantine column with Greek inscription in damaged northern arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Byzantine-era basket-style column capital or base, in damaged western arcade of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to northern arcade in interior courtyard of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



Damage to western arcade in interior courtyard of al-Ma'arra Museum (Maara Media Center/Twitter; January 2, 2018)



View of northeastern corner of arcade and damaged Byzantine sarcophagus in al-Ma'arra Museum (Orient News; January 4, 2018)



Destroyed Byzantine-era sarcophagus in front of tekkiye in al-Ma'arra Museum courtyard (Orient News; January 4, 2018)



Destroyed Byzantine-era sarcophagus in front of tekkiye in al-Ma'arra Museum courtyard (Orient News; January 4, 2018)



Destroyed amphorae in of al-Ma'arra Museum interior (Orient News; January 4, 2018)

**SHI 18-0003**

**Report Date:** January 2, 2018

**Site Name:** Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (مسجد أويس القرني)

**Date of Incident:** January 2, 2018

**Location:** Maarat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 2, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired missiles on Uwais al-Qarni Mosque, damaging the building severely and rendering it inoperable.<sup>75</sup> Photographs published by Al Maara Media Center show a large hole in the roof of the mosque, as well as damage to its dome. The interior of the mosque is filled with rubble.<sup>76</sup> Additional photographs provided by an ASOR CHI in-country source further illustrate the damage to the exterior and interior of the mosque.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

For more information on previous damage to this mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0154** in **Weekly Report 113-114**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Al Maara Media Center: <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948103993221410816>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/02/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-owais-al-qarni-mosque-maaret-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-january-2/>

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<sup>75</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/02/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-owais-al-qarni-mosque-maaret-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-january-2/>

<sup>76</sup> <https://twitter.com/maaramc12/status/948103993221410816>

Thiqa Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hf9Dw9SKTGc>



A hole in the roof of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (Al Maara Media Center; January 2, 2018)





A hole in the roof and debris in the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (Al Maara Media Center; January 2, 2018)



Damage and debris in the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (Al Maara Media Center; January 2, 2018)



Damage and debris in the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (Al Maara Media Center; January 2, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)





Damage to the exterior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Minor damage to the minaret of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



The condition of the exterior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (ASOR CHI Source; January 4, 2018)

**SHI 18-0004**

**Report Date:** January 3, 2018

**Site Name:** Othman Bin Affan Mosque (مسجد عثمان بن عفان)

**Date of Incident:** Between October 27, 2017 and December 1, 2017

**Location:** Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes severely damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** New images published by Deir Ezzor 24 on January 3, 2018 show severe damage to Othman Bin Affan Mosque.<sup>77</sup> DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that initial damage to the mosque occurred between February 22, 2013 and September 16, 2014, resulting in several holes in the mosque's dome from heavy shelling, as well as the destruction of its minaret. The dome of the mosque was destroyed between October 27, 2017 and December 1, 2017.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Deir ez Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0006** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0027**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Othman bin Affan Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

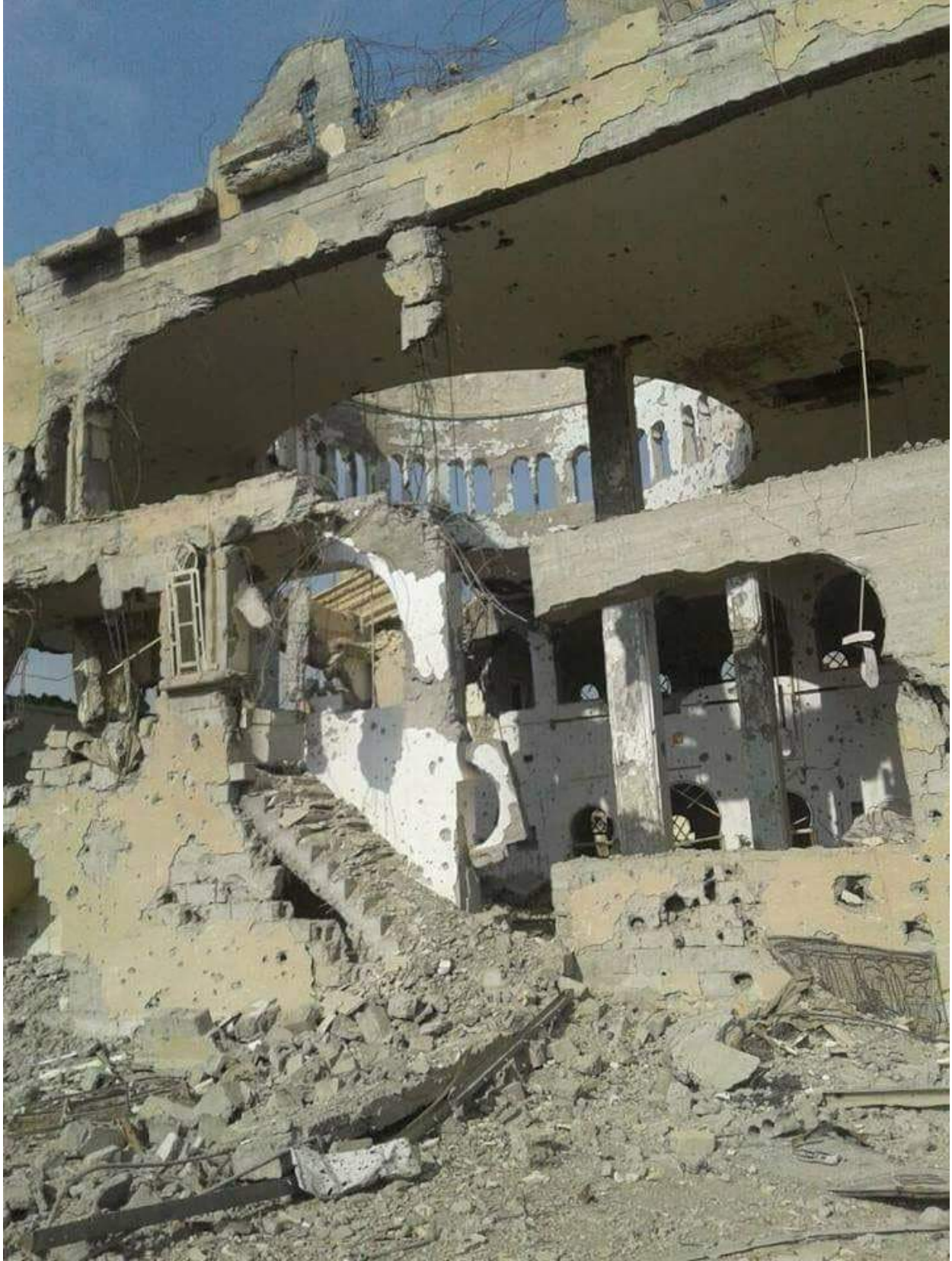
Deir Ezzor 24: <https://twitter.com/DeirEzzor24/status/948674184871383040>

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<sup>77</sup> <https://twitter.com/DeirEzzor24/status/948674184871383040>



Destruction of the dome and much of the roof of Othman Bin Affan Mosque (Deir Ezzor 24; January 3, 2018)



Destruction of Othman Bin Affan Mosque (Deir Ezzor 24; January 3, 2018)





Othman Bin Affan Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 22, 2013)



Damage to the minaret and the dome of Othman Bin Affan Mosque, indicated with red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 16, 2014)



Multiple holes visible in Othman Bin Affan Mosque roof (DigitalGlobe NextView License; October 27, 2017)



Severe damage to the dome of Othman Bin Affan Mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 1, 2017)

**SHI 18-0005**

**Report Date:** January 4, 2018

**Site Name:** Tal al-Touqan al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد تل الطوقان الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** January 3, 2018

**Location:** Tal al-Touqan, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 4, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that suspected Russian warplanes shelled al-Kabir Mosque in the village of Tal Touqan, partially destroying the building and its contents.<sup>78</sup> Edlib Media Center, Qasioun News Agency, and Halab Today TV published videos showing the extent of the damage, including debris in the interior of the mosque.<sup>79</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Edlib Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of4SBaoyfow>

Halab Today TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B5KkviiPY>

Qasioun News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7efVdli4-PQ>

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<sup>78</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/04/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-tal-al-touqan-al-kabir-mosque-tal-al-touqan-village-idlib-governorate-january-3/>

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of4SBaoyfow> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B5KkviiPY> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7efVdli4-PQ>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/04/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-tal-al-touqan-al-kabir-mosque-tal-al-touqan-village-idlib-governorate-january-3/>



Severe damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; January 4, 2018)



Video still of severe damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Halab Today TV; January 4, 2018)



Video still of damage to the dome of al-Kabir Mosque (Edlib Media Center; January 4, 2018)



Video still of damage to the dome of al-Kabir Mosque (Edlib Media Center; January 4, 2018)



Video still of debris in the interior of al-Kabir Mosque, including a destroyed chandelier (Halab Today TV; January 4, 2018)



Video still of debris in the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Edlib Media Center; January 4, 2018)



Video still of debris in the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; January 4, 2018)

**SHI 18-0006****Report Date:** January 4, 2018**Site Name:** al-Farouq Mosque (مسجد الفاروق)**Date of Incident:** January 4, 2018**Location:** al-Asharah, Deir ez Zor Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes severely damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On January 4, 2018 Twitter account Deir Ezzor 24 reported that SARG shelling damaged al-Farouq Mosque in al-Asharah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate.<sup>80</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows the mosque and its entrance gate were severely damaged.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Deir ez Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0004** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0027**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Farouq Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:Deir Ezzor 24: <https://twitter.com/DeirEzzor24/status/949019412547489797>

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<sup>80</sup> <https://twitter.com/DeirEzzor24/status/949019412547489797>





Damage to al-Farouq Mosque (Deir Ezzor 24; January 4, 2018)

**SHI 18-0007**

**Report Date:** January 4, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Farahia Byzantine tomb

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** al-Farahia (الفرحية), al-Hasakah Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Byzantine-era tomb located near the village of al-Farahia.

**Site Date:** 5th–6th century CE

**Incident Summary:** An ancient tomb in al-Hasakah Governorate was restored.

**Incident Source and Description:** The Authority of Tourism and Protection Antiquities (ATPA) is working to restore and protect a Byzantine tomb near the village of al-Farahia in al-Hasakah Governorate.<sup>81</sup> The restoration work took place over the course of 13 days and included cleaning the interior and exterior of the tomb, restoring the floor and the roof, constructing a stone wall around the tomb, and installing of a metal door at the tomb entrance.<sup>82</sup>

**Pattern:** Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Farahia Byzantine Tomb as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to conservation and reconstruction.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Al-Furat: <http://furat.alwehda.gov.sy/node/155067>

ATPA:

January 4, 2018: <http://desteya-shunwan.com/%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%81%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9/>

January 23, 2018: <http://desteya-shunwan.com/ar/completion-the-restoration-in-al-farahiya-tomb/>

ROK-Online: <http://www.rok-online.com/?p=10293>

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<sup>81</sup> <http://desteya-shunwan.com/%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%81%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9/>

<sup>82</sup> <http://desteya-shunwan.com/ar/completion-the-restoration-in-al-farahiya-tomb/>



The ATPA conducts excavation and restoration work at al-Farahia Byzantine tomb (ATPA; January 4, 2018)



The ATPA conducts excavation and restoration work at al-Farahia Byzantine tomb (ATPA; January 4, 2018)



Interior of al-Farahia Byzantine tomb with debris from illegal excavation (ATPA; January 4, 2018)



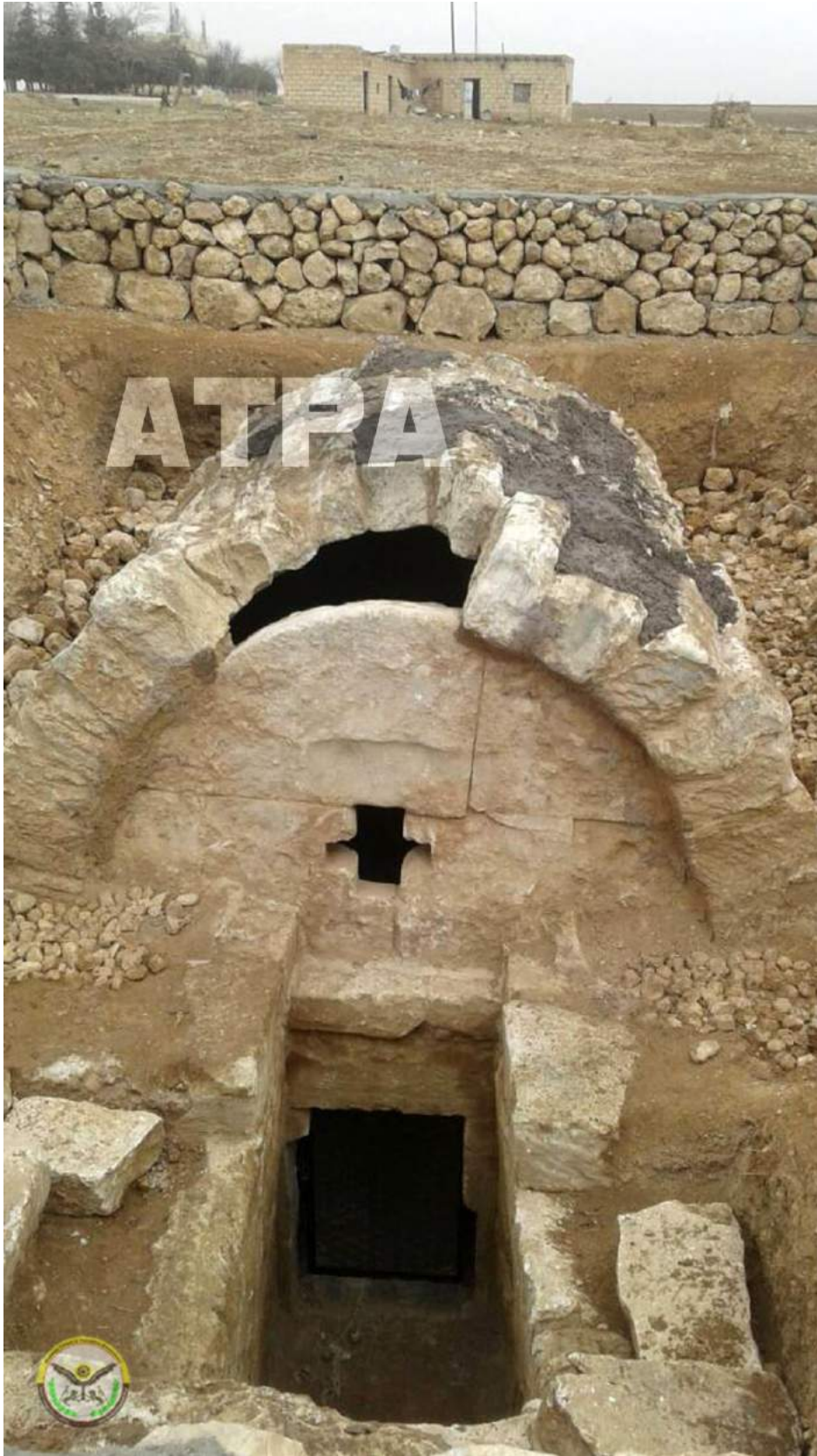
The ATPA conducts excavation and restoration work at al-Farahia Byzantine tomb (ATPA; January 4, 2018)



The ATPA conducts excavation and restoration work at al-Farahia Byzantine tomb (ATPA; January 4, 2018)



Restoration of al-Farahia Byzantine tomb is complete (ATPA; January 23, 2018)



Restoration of al-Farahia Byzantine tomb is complete (ATPA; January 23, 2018)



Restoration of the tomb is complete (ATPA; January 23, 2018)



Restoration of al-Farahia Byzantine tomb is complete (ATPA; January 23, 2018)

**SHI 18-0008**

**Report Date:** January 8, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Tefahiya Village Mosque

**Date of Incident:** January 6, 2018

**Location:** al-Tefahiyah (التفاحية), Latakia Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 6, 2018 Shaam Network reported that Russian warplanes bombed several sites in the town of al-Tefahiyah, including the only mosque.<sup>83</sup> Photographs published by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) and video footage published by Orient News and Step News Agency show large-scale destruction throughout al-Tefaniyah.<sup>84</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Tefahiya Village Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Orient News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbJstc0sAsE>

Shaam Network:

<http://www.shaam.org/news/syria-news/هكذا-بدت-قرية-التفاحية-بمرف-اللاذقية-بعد-خمس-غارات-روسية.html>

Step News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuxbihcEa9o>

Syrian Network for Human Rights:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/06/mass-destruction-due-russian-syrian-alliance-forces-shelling-al-tefahiya-village-latakia-governorate-january-6/>

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<sup>83</sup> <http://www.shaam.org/news/syria-news/هكذا-بدت-قرية-التفاحية-بمرف-اللاذقية-بعد-خمس-غارات-روسية.html>

<sup>84</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/06/mass-destruction-due-russian-syrian-alliance-forces-shelling-al-tefahiya-village-latakia-governorate-january-6/> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbJstc0sAsE> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuxbihcEa9o>





Before and after photographs of al-Tefahiya, with damaged mosque seen in top right (SNHR; January 6, 2018)



A view of the large-scale destruction of al-Tefahiya and damage to mosque (Shaam Network; January 6, 2018)

**SHI 18-0009**

**Report Date:** January 8, 2018

**Site Name:** Latin Catholic Franciscan Monastery of Saint Paul (دير اللاتين)

**Date of Incident:** January 8, 2018

**Location:** Bab Touma, Damascus, Damascus Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Roman Catholic Parish of the Conversion of Saint Paul of the Latin rite, entrusted to the pastoral care of the Franciscan friars.<sup>85</sup> In 1719 CE, Franciscan friars founded a new church in Bab Touma after many years in residence at a nearby Maronite church. After an attack on the monastery in 1860 that left several church leaders dead, a new church and monastery was opened on the site in 1866.<sup>86</sup>

**Site Date:** built 1719 CE; rebuilt 1866

**Incident Summary:** A missile damaged a church.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 8, 2018 the Facebook account Dimashq Now published video footage of damage to the Maronite Archeparchy in the Bab Touma neighborhood after it was hit by a missile.<sup>87</sup> The missile also damaged the roof of the Latin Church located next to the Maronite Archeparchy.<sup>88</sup> It also broke windows and damaged the church's heating system.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Damascus: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0010**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Latin Catholic Franciscan Monastery of Saint Paul, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Christus Rex: <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/ofm/pope2/syria/GPsyr08.html>

Dimashq Now: <https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/videos/1493161000809507/>

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<sup>85</sup> [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA SYRIA Damascus mortar shells on the Old City The Maronite cathedral hit](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA%20SYRIA%20Damascus%20mortar%20shells%20on%20the%20Old%20City%20The%20Maronite%20cathedral%20hit)

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/ofm/pope2/syria/GPsyr08.html>

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/videos/1493161000809507/>

<sup>88</sup> [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA SYRIA Damascus mortar shells on the Old City The Maronite cathedral hit](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA%20SYRIA%20Damascus%20mortar%20shells%20on%20the%20Old%20City%20The%20Maronite%20cathedral%20hit)

Fides:

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530->

[ASIA SYRIA Damascus mortar shells on the Old City The Maronite cathedral hit](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA_SYRIA_Damascus_mortar_shells_on_the_Old_City_The_Maronite_cathedral_hit)



Damage to the roof of Latin Church (Dimashq Now; January 8, 2018)

## SHI 18-0010

**Report Date:** January 8, 2018

**Site Name:** Maronite Church of Mar Antonius (Maronite Diocese; مطرانية دمشق المارونية; كنيسة مار انطونيوس)

**Date of Incident:** January 8, 2018

**Location:** Bab Touma neighborhood, Damascus, Damascus Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Syriac Catholic Maronite church and site of the Maronite Catholic Archeparchy of Damascus.

**Site Date:** 1865 CE<sup>89</sup>

**Incident Summary:** A missile damaged a Maronite church.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 8, 2018 the Facebook account Dimashq Now published video footage of damage to the Maronite Archeparchy in the Bab Touma neighborhood after it was hit by a missile.<sup>90</sup> The missile broke glass doors on the second floor of the church, as well as the roof of the Latin Church next door.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Damascus: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0009**.

For previous damage to this church, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0164** in **Weekly Report 117-118**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Maronite Church of Mar Antonius, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Dimashq Now:

<https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/videos/1493161000809507/>

Fides:

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA SYRIA Damascus mortar shells on the Old City The Maronite cathedral hit](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA%20SYRIA%20Damascus%20mortar%20shells%20on%20the%20Old%20City%20The%20Maronite%20cathedral%20hit)

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<sup>89</sup> [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA SYRIA Damascus mortar shells on the Old City The Maronite cathedral hit](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63530-ASIA%20SYRIA%20Damascus%20mortar%20shells%20on%20the%20Old%20City%20The%20Maronite%20cathedral%20hit)

<sup>90</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/videos/1493161000809507/>



Damage to doors on second floor of Maronite Church (Dimashq Now; January 8, 2018)

**SHI 18-0011****Report Date:** January 9, 2018**Site Name:** Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque (مسجد أبو بكر الصديق)**Date of Incident:** January 8, 2018**Location:** al-Tah (التح), Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** A suspected Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On January 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian airstrike hit Abu Bakr al-Saddiq Mosque, damaging the mosque and its furniture.<sup>91</sup> Video footage of the damage published by Qasioun News shows broken glass in the mosque's entranceway, broken windows, a small hole in a wall, and debris in the interior.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:Qasioun News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RwTcGIC4IM>

Syrian Network for Human Rights:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/08/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-abu-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-al-tah-village-idlib-governorate-january-8/>

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<sup>91</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/08/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-abu-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-al-tah-village-idlib-governorate-january-8/>



Video still of damage to exterior of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; January 8, 2018)



Video still of debris in interior of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; January 8, 2018)



Video still of debris in interior of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; January 8, 2018)



Video still of damage to interior of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; January 8, 2018)





Video still of damage to interior of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; January 8, 2018)

## SHI 18-0012

**Report Date:** January 11, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Fateh Mosque (مسجد الفتح)

**Date of Incident:** January 10, 2018

**Location:** Manbij, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A car bomb exploded near a mosque in Manbij.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 11, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a car bomb exploded near al-Fateh Mosque in Manbij, damaging the mosque severely.<sup>92</sup> SNHR could not identify the perpetrator of the attack and no group claimed responsibility. SMART News Agency published video footage and a Private Twitter Account published a photograph of the destroyed car with the mosque seen in the background.<sup>93</sup> However, no damage to the mosque is evident in this imagery.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0025, SHI 18-0028, SHI 18-0029, SHI 18-0030, SHI 18-0032, and SHI 18-0033.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

### Sources:

Online Reporting:

Private Twitter Account

Smart News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogVhL0yYbMU>

Syrian Network for Human Rights:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/11/damages-mosque-due-explosion-car-bomb-manbej-city-aleppo-suburbs-january-10/>

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<sup>92</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/11/damages-mosque-due-explosion-car-bomb-manbej-city-aleppo-suburbs-january-10/>

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogVhL0yYbMU>



A photograph of the detonated car shows al-Fatah Mosque in the background, with no damage evident (Private Twitter; January 10, 2018)

**SHI 18-0013****Report Date:** January 12, 2018**Site Name:** Abu Habbah Village Mosque (مسجد قرية أبو حبة)**Date of Incident:** January 12, 2018**Location:** Abu Habbah Village, Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On January 12, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that Russian airstrikes partially destroyed a mosque in the village of Abu Habbah in Idlib Governorate.<sup>94</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows a large section of the mosque building has collapsed.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Abu Habbah Village Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:Halab Today TV: <https://twitter.com/HalabTodayTV/status/951802515200380928>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/12/russian-forces-shelled-mosque-abu-habba-village-idlib-suburbs-january-12/>

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<sup>94</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/12/russian-forces-shelled-mosque-abu-habba-village-idlib-suburbs-january-12/>



Damage to a mosque in Abu Habbah (SNHR; January 12, 2018)

**SHI 18-0014**

**Report Date:** January 12, 2018

**Site Name:** Aisha Um al-Mouminin Mosque (مسجد عائشة أم المؤمنين ; Bilal bin Rabah Mosque ; جامع بلال  
(بن رباح الحبشي)

**Date of Incident:** January 12, 2018

**Location:** al-Hbit village (قرية الهبيط), Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 12, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes shelled the Aisha Um al-Mouminin Mosque in al-Hbit, damaging it severely.<sup>95</sup> The strike also damaged a school. The Syrian Civil Defense (aka The White Helmets) released photographs of volunteers extinguishing flames caused by the strike at the school and outside the mosque.<sup>96</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Aisha Um al-Mouminin Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Private Twitter Account

Syria Civil Defense: <https://twitter.com/SyriaCivilDef/status/951775663421353984>

Syrian Network for Human Rights:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-aisha-um-al-mouminin-mosque-al-habeit-village-idlib-governorate-january-12/>

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<sup>95</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-aisha-um-al-mouminin-mosque-al-habeit-village-idlib-governorate-january-12/>

<sup>96</sup> <https://twitter.com/SyriaCivilDef/status/951775663421353984>



Smoke is seen around the Aisha Mosque in Hbit (SNHR; January 12, 2018)

## SHI 18-0015

**Report Date:** January 12, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Shuhada Mosque (مسجد الشهداء)

**Date of Incident:** January 12, 2018

**Location:** Khan Sheikhoun, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 12, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG forces shelled al-Shuhada Mosque in Khan Sheikhoun, partially damaging the mosque's building.<sup>97</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-shuhada-mosque-khan-sheikhoun-city-idlib-suburbs-january-12/>

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<sup>97</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-shuhada-mosque-khan-sheikhoun-city-idlib-suburbs-january-12/>



**SHI 18-0016**

**Report Date:** January 12, 2018

**Site Name:** Harran Village Mosque (مسجد قرية حران)

**Date of Incident:** January 12, 2018

**Location:** Harran, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 12, 2018 Step News Agency reported that Russian airstrikes struck the village mosque in Harran. According to the report, the strike injured attendees of the mosque.<sup>98</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Harran Village Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Step News Agency: <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/178656>

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<sup>98</sup> <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/178656>

**SHI 18-0017**

**Report Date:** January 12, 2018

**Site Name:** Christian Cemetery

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** Harasta, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** 100-year-old Christian cemetery in Harasta.

**Site Date:** ca. 1900 CE

**Incident Summary:** Photographs show the destruction of Christian graves in Harasta.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 12, 2018 the Facebook Account Damascus Media Center published photographs of Christian graves at a cemetery in Harasta.<sup>99</sup> Damascus Media Center reports that the damage is the result of vandalism and grave-robbing by SARG forces, who held the area before being expelled by opposition forces in early January 2018.<sup>100</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0019, SHI 18-0020, SHI 18-0021, SHI 18-0023, and SHI 18-0024.**

**Pattern:** Vandalism; Intentional destruction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Harasta Christian Cemetery, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Damascus Media Center: <https://www.facebook.com/Dmc.Press/posts/506100316441991>

Orient News:

[http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/144450/0/النظام-يعفش-الجثث-من-مقابر-المسيحيين-في-حرسنا-صور](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/144450/0/النظام-يعفش-الجثث-من-مقابر-المسيحيين-في-حرسنا-صور)

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<sup>99</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Dmc.Press/posts/506100316441991>

<sup>100</sup> [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/144450/0/النظام-يعفش-الجثث-من-مقابر-المسيحيين-في-حرسنا-صور](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/144450/0/النظام-يعفش-الجثث-من-مقابر-المسيحيين-في-حرسنا-صور)



SARG forces allegedly vandalized a Christian cemetery in Harasta (Damascus Media Center; January 12, 2018)



A photograph shows damage to a Christian tomb in Harasta (Damascus Media Center; January 12, 2018)



SARG forces allegedly vandalized a Christian cemetery in Harasta (Damascus Media Center; January 12, 2018)



SARG forces allegedly vandalized a Christian cemetery in Harasta (Damascus Media Center; January 12, 2018)



SARG forces allegedly vandalized a Christian cemetery in Harasta (Damascus Media Center; January 12, 2018)



SARG forces allegedly vandalized a Christian cemetery in Harasta (Orient News; January 13, 2018)



A view of damage and debris in a Christian cemetery in Harasta (Orient News; January 13, 2018)



A photograph appears to show a body exhumed from a grave in the Christian cemetery (Orient News; January 13, 2018)



A photograph shows debris in the Christian cemetery in Harasta (Orient News; January 13, 2018)

## SHI 18-0018

**Report Date:** January 16, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** January 15, 2017

**Location:** Ghadafa, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 16, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that Russian warplanes fired missiles near al-Kabir Mosque in Ghadafa, damaging the mosque's building and furniture.<sup>101</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/16/russian-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-january-15/>

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<sup>101</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/16/russian-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-january-15/>



**SHI 18-0019**

**Report Date:** January 16, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Rayes Mosque (مسجد الريس)

**Date of Incident:** January 16, 2018

**Location:** Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Built in honor of Sheikh Mohammed bin Yahya bin Bakr al-Rayes of Morocco.<sup>102</sup>

**Site Date:** 1774 CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 16, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG artillery shelling near al-Rayyes Mosque partially damaged the mosque building and its furniture.<sup>103</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0017, SHI 18-0020, SHI 18-0021, SHI 18-0023, and SHI 18-0024.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Duma Muhjat Ruhi/Facebook:

<https://tr-tr.facebook.com/DwmaMhjtRwhyTarykhWhadr/posts/487988591280463:0>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/16/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-rayyes-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-january-16/>

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<sup>102</sup> <https://tr-tr.facebook.com/DwmaMhjtRwhyTarykhWhadr/posts/487988591280463:0>

<sup>103</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/16/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-rayyes-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-january-16/>

**SHI 18-0020**

**Report Date:** January 17, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Halima Mosque (جامع حليلة)

**Date of Incident:** January 17, 2018

**Location:** Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 17, 2018 a Private Twitter Account published photographs of al-Halima Mosque in Duma, following a SARG airstrike targeting the mosque neighborhood. The Facebook account Douma Revolution published photographs of damage to the mosque. The airstrike appears to have caused the minaret to collapse onto the mosque building, destroying much of its roof.<sup>104</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0017, SHI 18-0019, SHI 18-0021, SHI 18-0023, and SHI 18-0024.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Douma Revolution:

<https://www.facebook.com/Douma.Revolution.2011/posts/1648236231923952>

Private Twitter Account

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<sup>104</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Douma.Revolution.2011/posts/1648236231923952>



Al-Halima Mosque minaret falls after airstrike (Private Twitter Account; January 17, 2018)



Destroyed al-Halima Mosque minaret (Douma Revolution; January 20, 2018)



Destruction of al-Halima Mosque minaret and much of roof (Duma Revolution; January 20, 2018)



Destruction of al-Halima Mosque minaret and much of roof (Douma Revolution; January 20, 2018)



Destruction of al-Halima Mosque minaret and much of roof (Douma Revolution; January 20, 2018)

## SHI 18-0021

**Report Date:** January 17, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Iman Mosque (مسجد الإيمان)

**Date of Incident:** January 17, 2018

**Location:** Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG airstrike destroyed a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 17, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike destroyed al-Iman Mosque in Douma.<sup>105</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0017, SHI 18-0019, SHI 18-0020, SHI 18-0023, and SHI 18-0024.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/17/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-eman-mosque-douma-damascus-suburbs-governorate-january-17/>

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<sup>105</sup> [http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/17/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-eman-mosque-douma-damascus-subu rbs-governorate-january-17/](http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/17/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-eman-mosque-douma-damascus-subu-rbs-governorate-january-17/)

**SHI 18-0022**

**Report Date:** January 21, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Huda Mosque (مسجد الهدى)

**Date of Incident:** January 21, 2018

**Location:** Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 21, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian warplane shelled al-Huda Mosque in al-Gharbi neighborhood in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, destroying the mosque's minaret and damaging the building.<sup>106</sup> Video footage published by Edlib Media Center showed damage to the mosque's interior.<sup>107</sup> According to freelance journalist Julian Roepcke, the mosque was empty at the time of the strike.<sup>108</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0034, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Civil Defense Idlib:

<https://www.facebook.com/SyrianCivilDefenceIdlibWhiteHelmets/posts/1548137445285306>

Edlib Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s6nTZ3LUnDQ>

Halab Today: <https://halabtodaytv.net/news/7560/>

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<sup>106</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/21/russian-forces-shelled-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-governorate-january-21/>

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s6nTZ3LUnDQ>

<sup>108</sup> <https://twitter.com/JulianRoepcke/status/958090183676780544>

Julian Roepcke, Freelance Journalist:  
<https://twitter.com/JulianRoepcke/status/958090183676780544>

SNHR:  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/21/russian-forces-shelled-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-governorate-january-21/>



The destruction of the minaret of al-Huda Mosque (SNHR; January 21, 2018)





Destruction of al-Huda Mosque minaret (Halab Today; January 23, 2018)



Video still of the destroyed minaret and damage to al-Huda Mosque (Edlib Media Center; January 21, 2018)



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Huda Mosque (Edlib Media Center; January 21, 2018)



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Huda Mosque (Edlib Media Center; January 21, 2018)



Syrian Civil Defense volunteers (aka White Helmets) present at al-Huda Mosque (Civil Defense Idlib: January 21, 2018)

## SHI 18-0023

**Report Date:** January 22, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** January 22, 2018

**Location:** Arbin, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Al-Kabir Mosque in Arbin is thought to date to the 10th century CE. Its design is reminiscent of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Historically it had been a place of learning for students of Islamic law and jurisprudence. The mosque has been restored several times.<sup>109</sup>

**Site Date:** Founded ca. 10th CE; renovated 1985 CE.

**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 22, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles at al-Kabir Mosque in Arbin, causing significant damage.<sup>110</sup> SMART News Agency and Qasioun News Agency published video footage of damage to the mosque, which includes a large hole in the mosque's roof.<sup>111</sup> Video footage published by Damascus Media Center shows locals sweeping up debris within the mosque.<sup>112</sup> According to a local interviewee, the mosque was hit by six missiles.<sup>113</sup> This incident comes after 26 consecutive days of SARG shelling on the city of Arbin.<sup>114</sup>

For more information on previous damage to al-Kabir Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0056** in **Weekly Report 137-140**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0017**, **SHI 18-0019**, **SHI 18-0020**, **SHI 18-0021**, and **SHI 18-0024**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

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<sup>109</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWRJk9k2Yzc&t=4s>

<sup>110</sup> <https://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/01/22/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-irbeen-city-damascus-sub-urbs-january-22/>

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Twy6DVDL-Dw> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdlgeKHdXIY>

<sup>112</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLkjbUBfM1M>

<sup>113</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxFQqeJzcJM>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/erbeencity2014>

## Sources:

### Online Reporting:

Damascus Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLkjbUBfM1M>

Erbeen City: <https://www.facebook.com/erbeencity2014>

Orient News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxFQqeJzcJM>

Qasioun News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Twy6DVDL-Dw>

SMART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdlgeKHdXIY>

### SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/22/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-irbeen-city-damascus-suburbs-january-22/>

Step News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqWFhm6YdOY>

Unified Media Office in Arbin (المكتب الإعلامي الموحد في عربين):

January 22, 2018: <https://www.facebook.com/umoerbeen1/videos/338028630031259/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/umoerbeen1/videos/338024056698383/> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tttu8ASgve0> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cekKoF9SXjg> ; [https://www.facebook.com/pg/umoerbeen1/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=338023486698440](https://www.facebook.com/pg/umoerbeen1/photos/?tab=album&album_id=338023486698440)

### Zaman Alwasl:

<https://tv.zamanalwsl.net/media/248/عام-900-يعود-لنحو-ديني-ثقافي-الكبير-إرث-ثقافي-ديني-يعود-لنحو-900-عام>



Damage to interior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; January 22, 2018)



Video still of damage to interior of al-Kabir Mosque (SMART News Agency; January 23, 2018)



Video still of damage to exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (SMART News Agency; January 23, 2018)



Video still of damage and debris in interior of al-Kabir Mosque (SMART News Agency; January 23, 2018)

## SHI 18-0024

**Report Date:** January 22, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Rahman Mosque (جامع الرحمن)

**Date of Incident:** January 21, 2018

**Location:** Arbin (aka Arbaeen), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 22, 2018 Damascus Media Center published video footage of damage to al-Kabir Mosque in Arbin. The interviewee explains that prior to the airstrikes that damaged al-Kabir Mosque, SARG forces struck the nearby al-Rahman Mosque.<sup>115</sup> On January 21, 2018 the Unified Arbin City Information Office published video footage showing aerial bombardment occurring near al-Rahman Mosque.<sup>116</sup>

Al-Rahman Mosque has been damaged on at least two prior occasions. In August 2012, local reporting groups reported that shelling damaged al-Rahman Mosque.<sup>117</sup> In July 2014, local reporting groups stated that the mosque had been targeted by regime forces. According to some of these local reports, the mosque had been used as a base for unnamed armed opposition forces.<sup>118</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0017, SHI 18-0019, SHI 18-0020, SHI 18-0021, and SHI 18-0023.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrikes.

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

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Damascus Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLkJbUBfM1M>

Dimashq Now/Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DimashqNow/status/492344713367011328>

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<sup>115</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLkJbUBfM1M>

<sup>116</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83MrK-gNL4k>

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkzAwrXtGpM>

<sup>118</sup> <https://twitter.com/SnnSyria/status/492418611311833088> ; <https://twitter.com/DimashqNow/status/492344713367011328>



Unified Arbin City Information Office: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83MrK-gNL4k>



A video still of al-Rahman Mosque taken during aerial bombardment of Arbin (Unified Arbin City Information Office; January 21, 2018)



Video still of damage to al-Rahman Mosque interior (Damascus Media Center; January 22, 2018)



Video still of damage to al-Rahman Mosque interior (Damascus Media Center; January 22, 2018)



Video still of damage to al-Rahman Mosque exterior (Damascus Media Center; January 22, 2018)



Video still of damage to al-Rahman Mosque interior (Damascus Media Center; January 22, 2018)



Video still of damage to al-Rahman Mosque interior (Damascus Media Center; January 22, 2018)



Video still of volunteers cleaning interior of al-Rahman Mosque (Damascus Media Center; January 22, 2018)

## SHI 18-0025

**Report Date:** January 23, 2018

**Site Name:** Qalaat Semaan (قلعة سمعان)

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** Jebel Semaan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Church of Saint Simeon Stylites (388–459 CE) is one of the oldest surviving Byzantine churches in the Near East. The architectural complex atop the hill consists of a basilica (built ca. 476–492 CE), baptistery, monastery (ca. 490 CE), two hostleries (ca. 490 CE and later), and a monumental arch.<sup>119</sup> Below the hill, ruins including several churches, villas, and a *pandocheion* (inn) are scattered among modern houses.

The site was fortified when the Byzantines retook the area from Arabs in the 10th century. It was retaken and sacked by the Hamdanids in 985 CE and subsequently largely abandoned as a monastic-religious center. In 2011, the site of Deir Semaan (including Qalaat Semaan, the Church of St. Simeon Stylites) was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as one of the “Ancient Villages of Northern Syria.”<sup>120</sup>

**Site Date:** 4th–10th century CE

**Incident Summary:** DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage to archaeological site.

**Incident Source and Description:** In November 2017, ASOR CHI reported that modern construction had been ongoing at Deir Semaan and Qalaat Semaan since 2015. Since October 2017, this construction has reportedly been carried out by the Turkish military, as reported by al-Dahar al-Shamiya and SMART News Agency.<sup>121</sup> Previously reported installations at Qalaat Semaan include bulldozing and earthworks (presumably for road work) along the eastern edge of the site between September 29, 2017 and November 9, 2017.

According to an analysis of DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from January 22, 2018, this construction has continued with new earthen embankments erected inside the site of Qalaat Semaan. Between September 29, 2017 and November 9, 2017 embankments were built on the eastern side of the modern road running next to the ancient site. In addition, a few small embankments were placed inside the site. Between November 9, 2017 and January 22, 2018 additional embankments were built inside the walls of the ancient site, including along the interior western wall and in the center of the complex. The modern wall on the eastern side has also been shored up with a new barricade.

Qalaat Semaan and other nearby Byzantine-era ruins have been damaged on a number of previous occasions due to illegal excavations, military occupation, and airstrikes. For more information on previous damage to Qalaat Semaan and Deir Semaan, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 14-0028** in **Weekly Report 6**, **SHI 14-0079** in **Weekly Report 15**, **SHI 14-0106** in **Weekly Report**

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<sup>119</sup> Burns 2009: 272–273

<sup>120</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/>

<sup>121</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg\\_8gc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg_8gc) ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYloOgyP-d0>

21-22, SHI 15-0062 in **Weekly Report 35**, SHI 15-0069 in **Weekly Report 37**, SHI 15-0162 in **Weekly Report 71-72**, SHI 16-0066 in **Weekly Report 93-94**, SHI 16-0094 in **Weekly Report 97-98**, SHI 16-0094 UPDATE in **Weekly Report 99-100**, SHI 16-0160 in **Weekly Report 115-116**, SHI 17-0112 in **June 2017 Monthly Report**, and SHI 17-0212 in **November 2017 Monthly Report**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012, SHI 18-0028, SHI 18-0029, SHI 18-0030, SHI 18-0032, and SHI 18-0033.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: occupation/militarization.

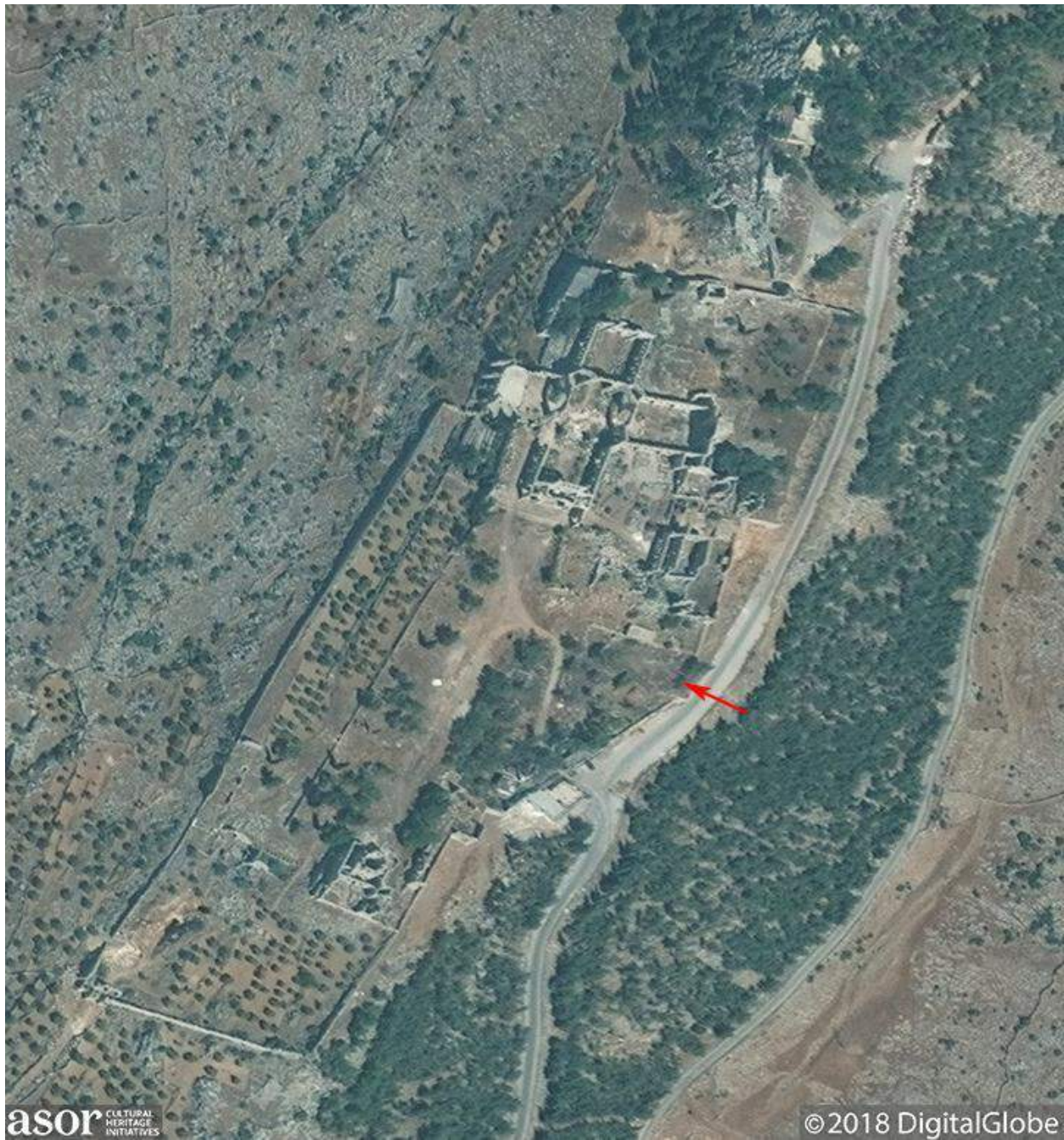
**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Qalaat Semaan, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

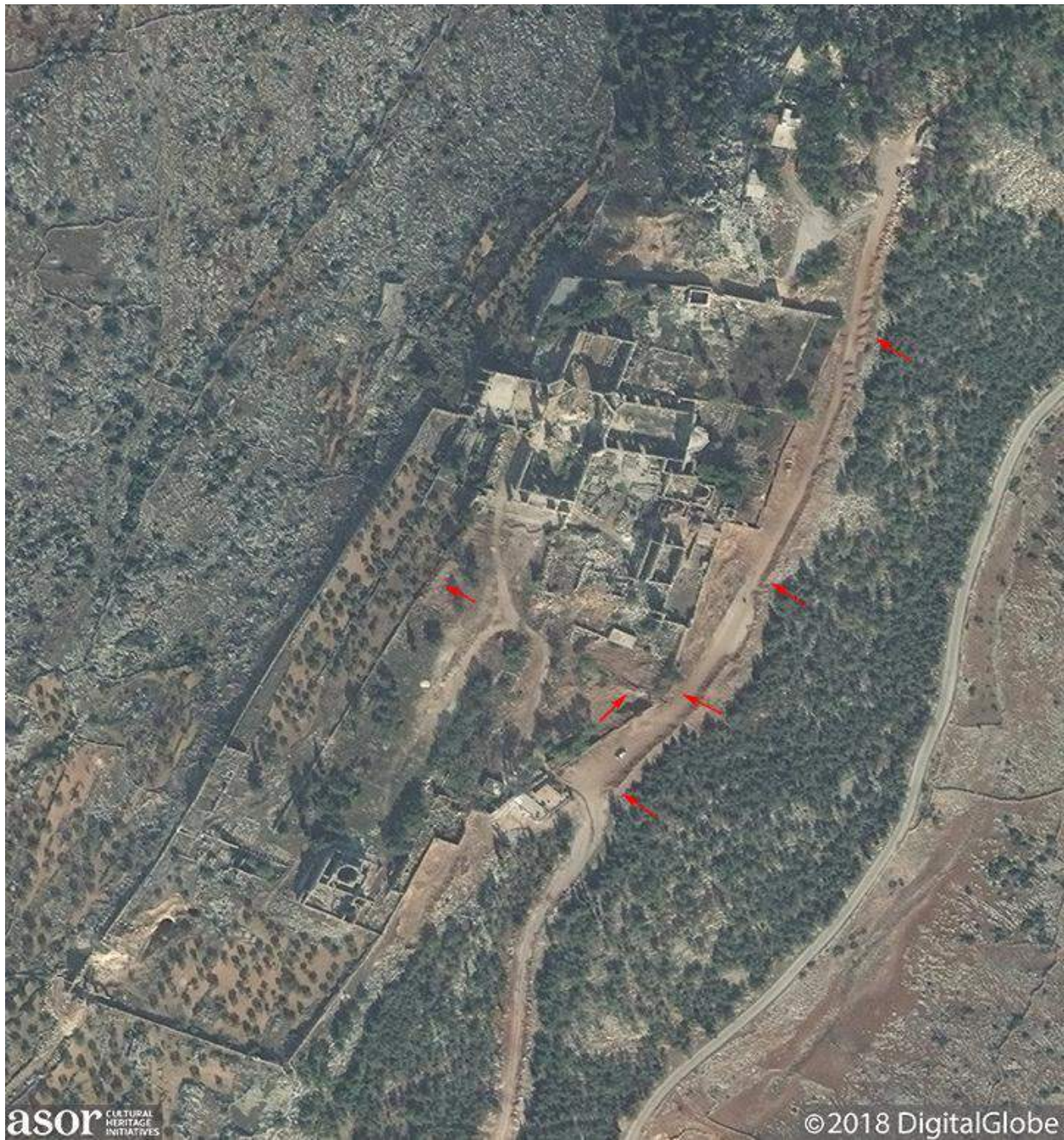
Scholarly:

Burns, R. (2009) *Monuments of Syria*. London: I.B. Tauris. 272-273.

Hadjar, A. (1991) *The Church of St. Simeon the Stylite and Other Archaeological Sites in the Mountains of Simeon and Halaqa*. Trans. P. Amash. Damascus: Sidawi Printing House.



Red arrow indicates the lack of an entrance to Qalaat Semaan at this location (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 29, 2017)



Earthen embankments are visible along the road and inside Qalaat Semaan at two locations (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)





Earthen embankments are visible along an interior wall (red dotted rectangle) and inside Qalaat Semaan, and a barricade has been placed at a break in the wall (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 22, 2018)

**SHI 18-0026**

**Report Date:** January 23, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Mataiya Temple (معبد المتاعية); al-Mataiya

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** al-Mataiya, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Roman ruins at al-Mataiya consist of a number of buildings, including at least six churches and a temple converted into a mosque. According to H.C. Butler, who visited the town ca. 1900, the “temple-mosque” was almost perfectly preserved. He writes that the structure was likely a pagan building to which several additions were made over the years, including a minaret and mihrab. The earliest part of the structure likely dates to the Nabataean or Roman era. Butler argues that the building was originally not a temple, but perhaps a civic hall or basilica, likely dating to the early 2nd to late 3rd century CE.<sup>122</sup>

**Site Date:** 2nd–3rd century CE; Islamic period

**Incident Summary:** Reported illegal excavations occurred at an ancient site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 23, 2018 the Syrian Arab News Agency reported that ongoing illegal excavations among the Roman and Byzantine ruins at el-Mataiya had damaged the so-called “temple,” undermining the structure’s foundations and leaving it vulnerable to collapse.<sup>123</sup> SANA cited the head of Daraa’s Antiquities Department, who stated that looters were smuggling illegally excavated artifacts over the border into Jordan. In response, SMART News Agency published an article stating that though illegal excavations have occurred, looters have not uncovered any artifacts.<sup>124</sup> Moreover, though the photographs included in the SANA article are undated, they show that attempts have been made to repair the temple since damage was initially reported in 2015.

Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates there was a slight increase in illegal excavation within the ancient village between November 8, 2016 and January 3, 2018.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates the site was initially subjected to illegal excavations prior to December 5, 2010, with the number of illegal excavations increasing between August 8, 2014 and January 5, 2015. In April 2015, the DGAM reported damage to several structures in the ancient town, including to six churches and the temple. Damage to the latter included the collapse of the upper part of the main facade, a large pit dug in front of the main facade, and four pits dug within the temple. The report also enumerated numerous pits dug throughout the ancient village in the vicinity of the temple.<sup>125</sup>

For more information on previous instances of illegal excavation at Mataiah Temple, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0067** in **Weekly Report 37**.

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<sup>122</sup> Butler 1915: 88–91.

<sup>123</sup> <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125276>

<sup>124</sup> <https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/wires/257553/الاردن-الى-المتاعية-معبد-آثار-تهدد-تهدد-آثار-معبد-المتاعية-الى-الأردن>

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1656>

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1656>

SANA: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125276>

SMART News Agency:

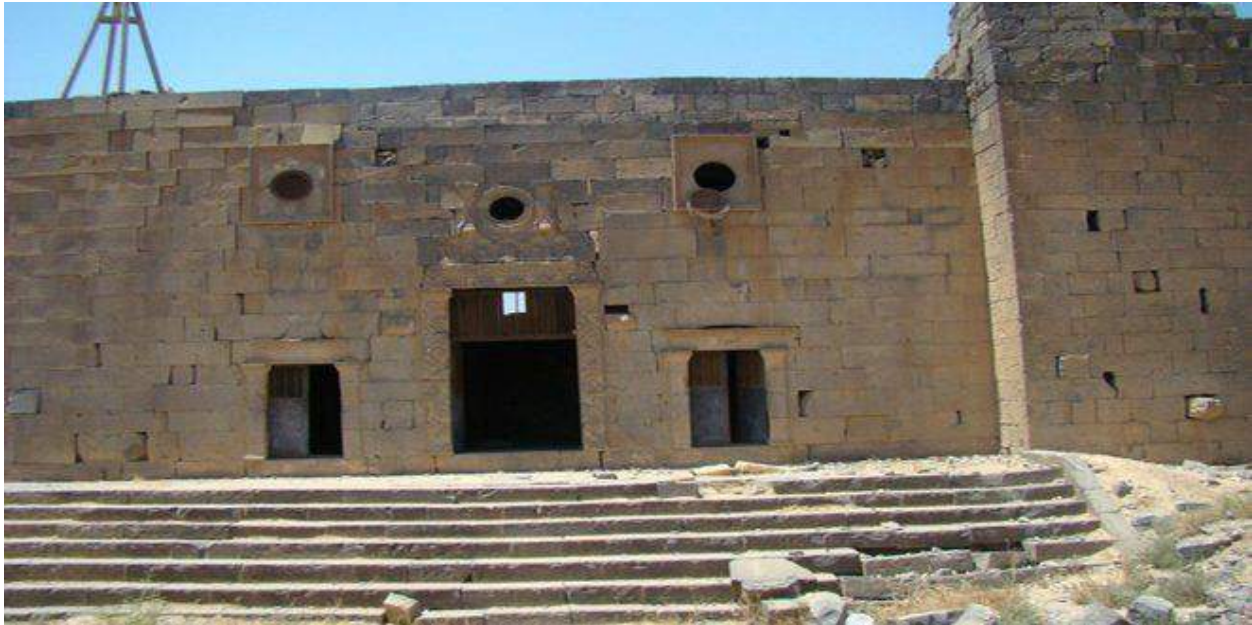
<https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/wires/257553/جهات-في-در-عا-تنفي-تهريب-آثار-معبد-المتاعية-الى-الأردن>

Scholarly:

Butler, H.C. (1915) "Il-Umtā'iyeh" in *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria (PPUAES) in 1904–5 and 1909*. Div. II (Architecture) Sec. A. Pt. 2. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 87–94.



Facade of al-Mataiya Temple as it appeared in March 2015 (DGAM; April 14, 2015)



Facade of al-Mataiya Temple after repairs to stairs and roof above leftmost window (SANA; January 23, 2018)



Facade of al-Mataiya Temple after repairs to stairs and roof above leftmost window (Al-Hkeka; January 23, 2018)



Window above doorway in al-Mataiya Temple facade (SANA; January 23, 2018)



The archaeological site of al-Mataiya with red arrows indicating areas with illegal excavation pits (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 8, 2016)



New illegal excavation pits in al-Mataiya shown with red dots (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 3, 2018)

**SHI 18-0027**

**Report Date:** January 25, 2018

**Site Name:** Khaled bin Walid Mosque (مسجد خالد بن الوليد)

**Date of Incident:** January 21, 2018

**Location:** Buqrus Tahtani, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG attack damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 25, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that SARG forces and “militias” attacked a mosque in Buqrus Tahtani on January 21, and “burnt [sic] and sabotaged the mosque contents.”<sup>126</sup> The Twitter account Euphrates Post reported the mosque as Khalid bin Walid Mosque.<sup>127</sup> Photographs show fire damage to the interior of the mosque.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Deir ez Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0004** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0006**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: intentional destruction.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Euphrates Post: <https://twitter.com/EuphratesPost/status/955899730105597952>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/25/syrian-regime-forces-militias-attacked-mosque-buqrus-tahtani-village-deir-ez-zour-governorate-january-21/>

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<sup>126</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/25/syrian-regime-forces-militias-attacked-mosque-buqrus-tahtani-village-deir-ez-zour-governorate-january-21/>

<sup>127</sup> <https://twitter.com/EuphratesPost/status/955899730105597952>



Damage to the interior of Khalid bin Walid Mosque (Euphrates Post; January 23, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Khalid bin Walid Mosque, including evidence of fire damage (Euphrates Post; January 23, 2018)





Damage to the interior of Khalid bin Walid Mosque, including evidence of fire damage (Euphrates Post; January 23, 2018)

**SHI 18-0028**

**Report Date:** January 27, 2018

**Site Name:** Tell Ain Dara Temple; Tell Ain Dara

**Date of Incident:** January 20–22, 2018

**Location:** Ain Dara, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Tell Ain Dara is a multi-period site that consists of a 30 m-high main mound with an extensive lower mound to the north and east.<sup>128</sup> Occupation at the site divides into two main phases.<sup>129</sup> The site was initially occupied at least as early as the 2nd millennium BCE until ca. the 1st century BCE. After a period of abandonment lasting roughly 600 years, a second phase of occupation occurred from the 7th–14th centuries CE. The lower mound was occupied between the late 2nd and 1st first millennia BCE.<sup>130</sup> During the early 1st millennium BCE, the settlement was controlled by the Aramaean state of Bit Agusi.<sup>131</sup>

The most significant structure at Tell Ain Dara is the remains of an Early Iron Age (ca. 1200–550 BCE) *in antis* temple.<sup>132</sup> This structure is the best-preserved example of a temple from this region and time period. Located along the northwestern edge of the high mound, this northwest to southeast oriented temple rested on a low platform and was decorated with a series of basalt reliefs and animal protomes carved in the Syro-Hittite style. The temple consists of an antecella and cella. A series of limestone thresholds in the doorways of the temple contain the impressions of larger-than-life footprints that possibly represent the entry of the divinity into the temple. The presence of these impressions is unique to this building.

The precise dates of the temple's construction and use remain unknown. The temple was likely founded towards the end of the 2nd millennium and underwent a series of changes before its destruction, possibly in the 8th century BCE.<sup>133</sup> According to the excavator, the building was cleared of rubble in preparation for its reconstruction, but this never materialized. The building was eventually covered and built over in the following centuries.

**Site Date:** ca. 13th–8th centuries BCE

**Incident Summary:** An alleged Turkish airstrike damages an archaeological site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 27, 2018 Hawar News reported that a Turkish airstrike damaged the Syro-Hittite temple at Tell Ain Dara.<sup>134</sup> Other reporting agencies quickly followed with their own coverage of the damage.<sup>135</sup> An earlier report by Nederlandse Omroep

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<sup>128</sup> Assaf 1990: 1.

<sup>129</sup> Assaf 1990: 10.

<sup>130</sup> Stone and Zimansky 1999: 6.

<sup>131</sup> Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: 370.

<sup>132</sup> Assaf 1990.

<sup>133</sup> Assaf 1990: 10; Stone and Zimansky 1999: 3.

<sup>134</sup> <http://www.hawarnews.com/طائرات-الاحتلال-التركي-دمر-تل-عين-دارة/>

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/syriahro/videos/10156446658028115/>; <https://www.facebook.com/syriahro/posts/10156446657648115>; <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125653>; <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125702>; <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2374>

Stichting (NOS) from January 23, 2018 mentioned an airstrike on the temple, but did not specify the extent of the damage.<sup>136</sup> The Turkish Armed Forces denied that it had targeted the site.<sup>137</sup>

Recently released DigitalGlobe imagery from January 22 and 29, 2018 confirms the damage to the temple seen in media reports. ASOR CHI's analysis reveals that the attack occurred on or prior to January 22, 2018 and that no additional damage to the site occurred in the following days. This corroborates the account given by NOS.

The attack struck the area of the doorway between the antecella and cella in the Syro-Hittite temple, causing heavy damage to the central and southeastern portions of the building. The limestone pavings of the antecella and cella have also been badly damaged. The debris from these is visible in the satellite imagery fanning out to the south of the temple entrance. The exterior walls on the west, north and east appear undamaged, as does the northern half of the temple. The satellite imagery also reveals that the rest of the mound was unharmed by the attack.

While the explosives only damaged the temple, the eastern side of the low mound of Ain Dara has undergone possible militarization in the last few years, as evidenced in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery. Between 2013 and 2016, the eastern area of the mound was cleared of vegetation and a sand or gravel rectangular area was spread on the ground. Earthen embankments were built up around the area and on the northern end of the high mound. New construction is also visible in the southeastern corner of the mound as well as off the mound on the western side. In the image from November 9, 2017, new construction has continued, including a structure built into the ground just east of the mound. A roadblock was also set up on the main road running between the high mound and the eastern low mound. In the image from January 29, 2018, the road block is still in place while the new construction on the east has been covered in soil, with just the entrance to the underground building visible. The only damage to the tell is centered on the temple.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012, SHI 18-0025, SHI 18-0029, SHI 18-0030, SHI 18-0032, and SHI 18-0033.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives; Military activity: occupation/militarization.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Tell Ain Dara, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

#### **Sources:**

##### Online Reporting:

AFP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8j8lqdj5wcM>

Aleppo Glory: <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoglory/posts/1674895285900645>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42858265>

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<sup>136</sup> <https://nos.nl/artikel/2213464-burgers-in-afrin-over-turkse-bombardementen-niemand-kijkt-naar-ons-om.html>

<sup>137</sup> [http://www.tsk.tr/BasinFaaliyetleri/BA\\_67](http://www.tsk.tr/BasinFaaliyetleri/BA_67)

DGAM:

January 27, 2018: <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2374>

January 22, 2015: <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=245&id=1577>

Efrin News: <http://efrinnews.com/pics/eyindara/>

Hawar News:

January 27, 2018: <http://www.hawarnews.com/طائرات-الاحتلال-التركي-دمر-تل-عين-دارة/>

January 27, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reflajK9Cjk>

Kurdistan 24: <http://www.kurdistan24.net/ar/news/44ac4e43-57bc-4a50-9638-18af001b62e5>

NOS:

<https://nos.nl/artikel/2213464-burgers-in-afirin-over-turkse-bombardementen-niemand-kijkt-naar-ons-om.html>

Press TV: <http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2018/01/28/550458/Syria-Turkey-Afrin>

Reuters:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-temple/syrian-government-says-turkish-shelling-damaged-ancient-temple-idUSKBN1FH08F>

SANA:

January 28, 2018: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125653>

January 29, 2018: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125702>

SOHR:

January 28, 2018: <https://www.facebook.com/syriahro/videos/10156446658028115/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/syriahro/posts/10156446657648115>

Turkish Armed Forces: [http://www.tsk.tr/BasinFaaliyetleri/BA\\_67](http://www.tsk.tr/BasinFaaliyetleri/BA_67)

The Washington Post:

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/turkish-forces-target-strategic-hill-near-syrias-afirin/2018/01/28/f869b25e-041c-11e8-aa61-f3391373867e\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.831c6a501e8b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/turkish-forces-target-strategic-hill-near-syrias-afirin/2018/01/28/f869b25e-041c-11e8-aa61-f3391373867e_story.html?utm_term=.831c6a501e8b)

Voice of America:

<https://www.voanews.com/a/kurds-say-turkish-airstrikes-damage-historic-temple-dam/4230262.html>

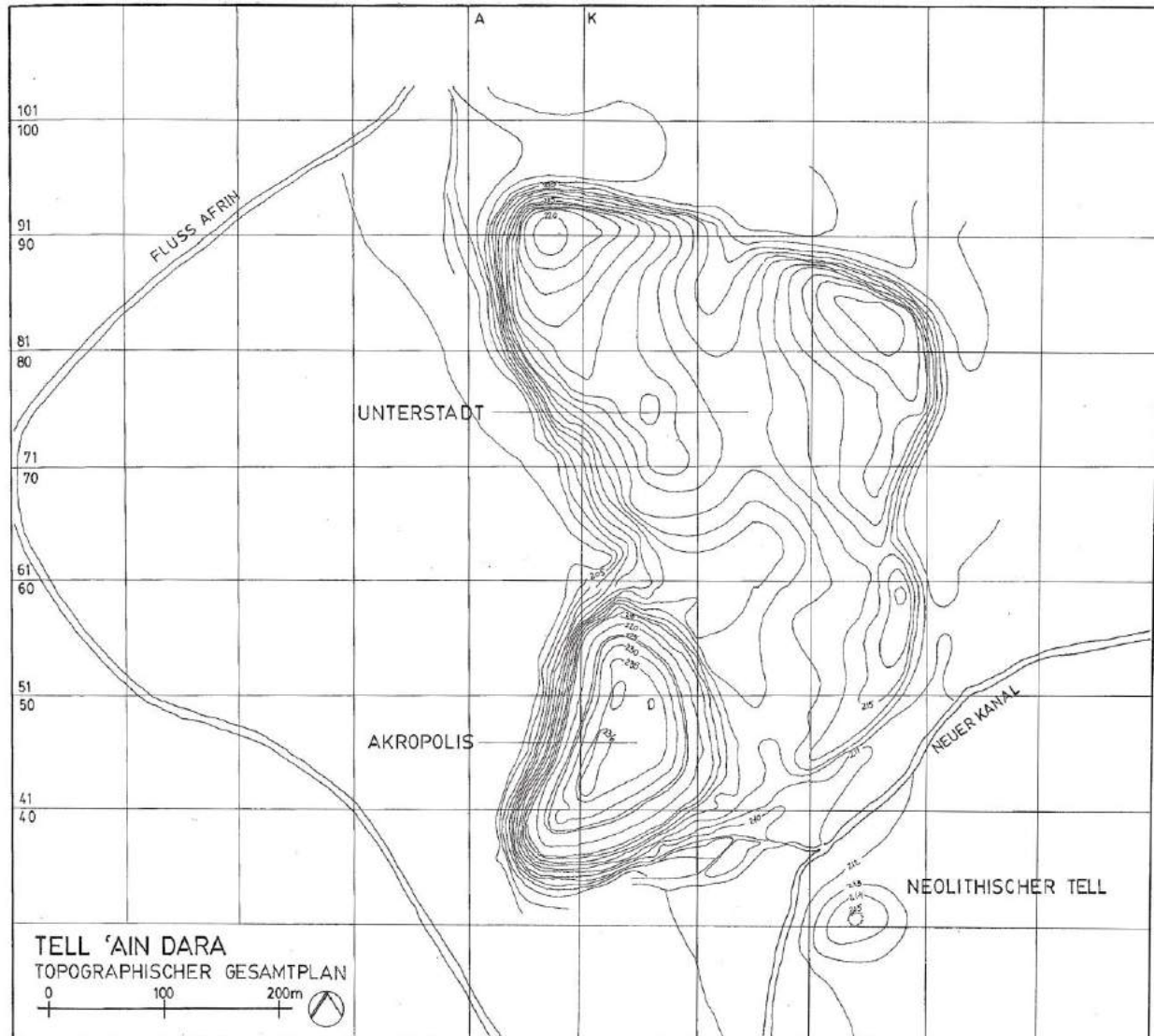
Scholarly:

Abu Assaf, Ali (1990) *Der Tempel von 'Ain Dārā*. Damaszener Forschungen, vol. 3. Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern.

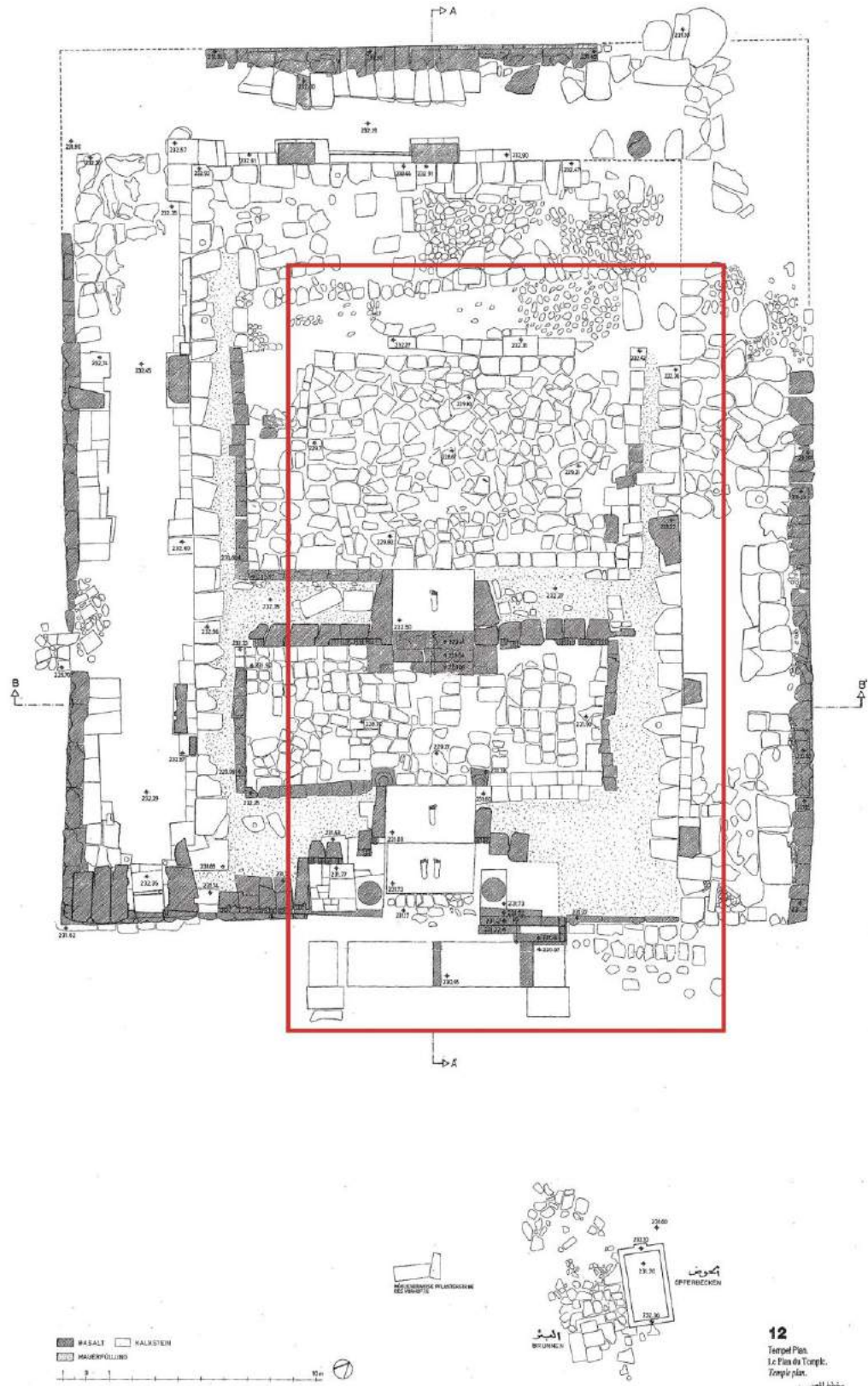
Abu Assaf, Ali (Undated) *The Temple of 'Ain Dara*. Syrian Site Tourism Pamphlet.

Akkermans, Peter M. M. G. and Glenn M. Schwartz (2003) *The Archaeology of Syria. From Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (ca. 16,000–300 BC)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stone, Elizabeth C. and Paul E. Zimansky (1999) *The Iron Age Settlement at 'Ain Dara, Syria. Surveys and Soundings*. BAR International Series, vol. 786. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports.



Site Plan of Tell 'Ain Dara (Assaf 1990: 3, fig. 2)



The area of the Tell Ain Dara temple most heavily affected by the airstrike (Assaf Undated: fig. 12)



The entrance and southern facade of the Tell Ain Dara temple, seen from the east (ANHA; January 27, 2018)



The entrance to the Tell Ain Dara temple, seen from the northeast (ANHA; January 27, 2018)



Stone steps with a guilloche pattern leading to the entrance of the Tell Ain Dara temple, seen from the southeast (ANHA; January 27, 2018)



A series of basalt orthostats located to the west of the entrance of the Tell Ain Dara temple, seen from the east (ANHA; January 27, 2018)





The entrance and orthostats at the southern facade of the Tell Ain Dara temple, seen from the east (ANHA; January 27, 2018)



A possible stabilizing fin from the bomb or missile used in the attack on Tell Ain Dara (ANHA; January 27, 2018)



The crater caused by the attack on Tell Ain Dara, visible in the center of the picture (Efrin News; January 29, 2018)



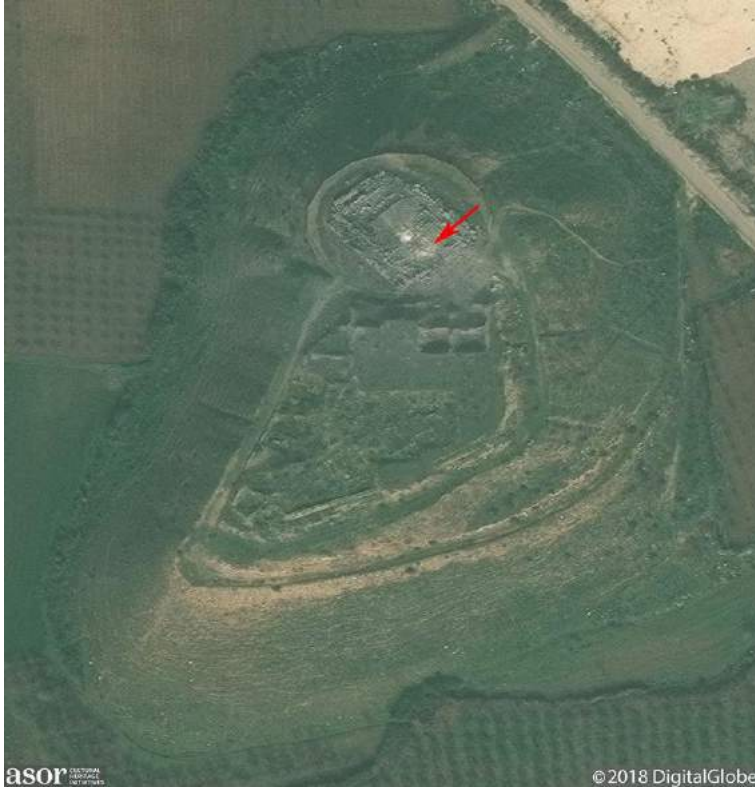
The southeastern facade of the Tell Ain Dara temple west of the entrance, seen from the south (Efrin News; January 29, 2018)



The remains of the Tell Ain Dara temple, seen from the south. Note the area of the crater in the middle of the image (Efrin News; January 29, 2018)



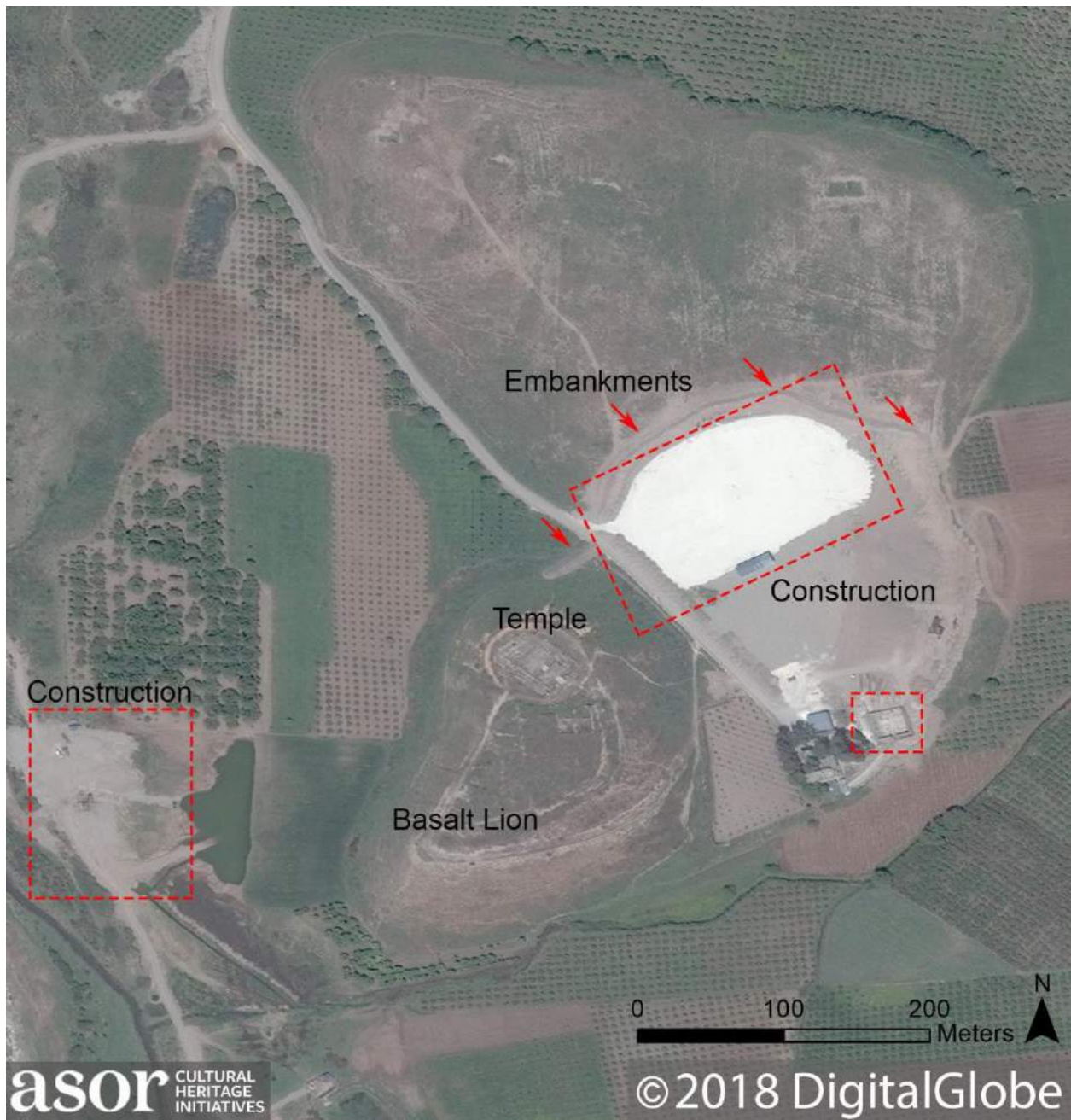
Tell Ain Dara prior to recent military damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Location of the attack within the Tell Ain Dara temple, indicated by the red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 22, 2018)



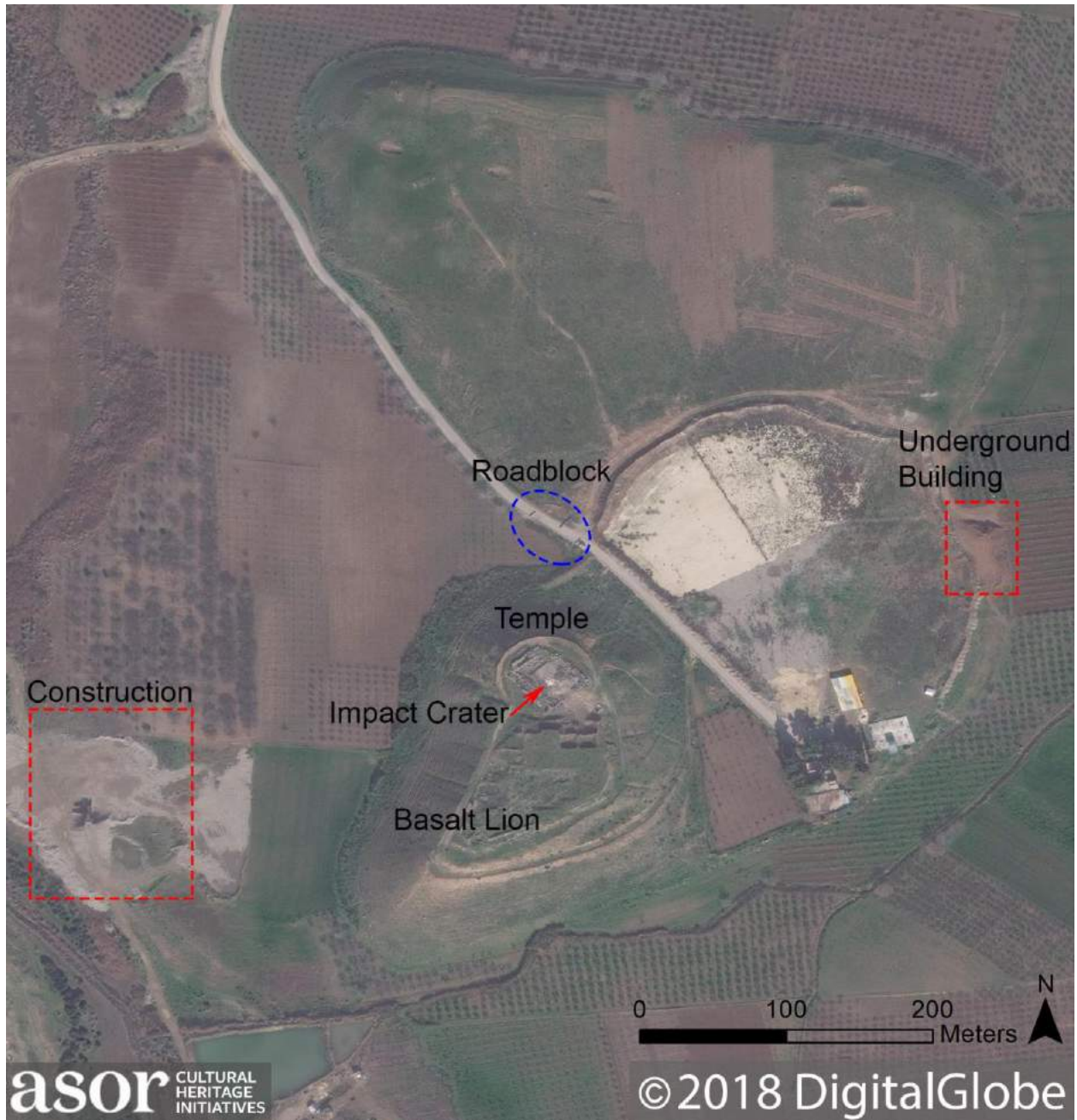
Damage from attack on Tell Ain Dara temple, with debris field indicated by the red box (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)



New construction and earthen embankments built on the eastern part of the low mound at Tell Ain Dara (DigitalGlobe NextView License; April 17, 2016)



Construction on the eastern side of Tell Ain Dara and a roadblock near the site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Damage to the Tell Ain Dara temple indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)

## SHI 18-0029

**Report Date:** January 27, 2018

**Site Name:** Jindaris Cemetery (جنديرس مقبرة)

**Date of Incident:** January 27, 2018

**Location:** Jindaris, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Cemetery

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Turkish shelling damaged a cemetery.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 27, 2018 the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that Turkish shelling on the town of Jindaris damaged a cemetery.<sup>138</sup> Photographs accompanying the report show damage to headstones throughout the cemetery.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012, SHI 18-0025, SHI 18-0028, SHI 18-0030, SHI 18-0032, and SHI 18-0033.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Jindaris Cemetery, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Dimashq al-Aan: <https://damasnow.com/01/تركيا-ترتكب-مجزرتين-في-قريتي-قبلي-وخلي/>

SANA: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125653>

SOHR: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=83829>

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<sup>138</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=83829>





Destruction of headstones in Jindaris cemetery (SOHR; January 27, 2018)



Destruction of headstones in Jindaris cemetery (SOHR; January 27, 2018)



Destruction of headstones in Jindaris cemetery (SOHR; January 27, 2018)



The cemetery prior to damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 22, 2018)



Damage to the cemetery wall and interior noted in the red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)

**SHI 18-0030**

**Report Date:** January 27, 2018

**Site Name:** Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (جامع صلاح الدين الأيوبي)

**Date of Incident:** January 27, 2018

**Location:** Jindaris, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** 1961 CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported Turkish shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 27, 2018 the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that Turkish shelling on the town of Jindaris damaged Salah el-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque.<sup>139</sup> DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from January 29, 2018 revealed multiple holes in the roof of the mosque, as well as smoke damage. Video footage by ANHA show damage to the interior of the mosque and holes in the roof.<sup>140</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012, SHI 18-0025, SHI 18-0028, SHI 18-0029, SHI 18-0032, and SHI 18-0033.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

#### **Sources:**

##### Online Reporting:

Afrin Now: <https://twitter.com/afrinnow/status/957372585699872769>

ANHA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBa0iKAKbEU>

Dimashq al-Aan: <https://damasnow.com/01/تركيا-ترتكب-مجزرتين-في-قريتي-قبلي-و-خلي/>

SANA: <https://sana.sy/en/?p=125653>

SOHR: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=83829>

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<sup>139</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=83829>

<sup>140</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBa0iKAKbEU>



Damage to interior of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque due to a large hole in the roof (SOHR; January 27, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (SOHR; January 27, 2018)



Video still of damage to the roof of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Video still of damage to the roof of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



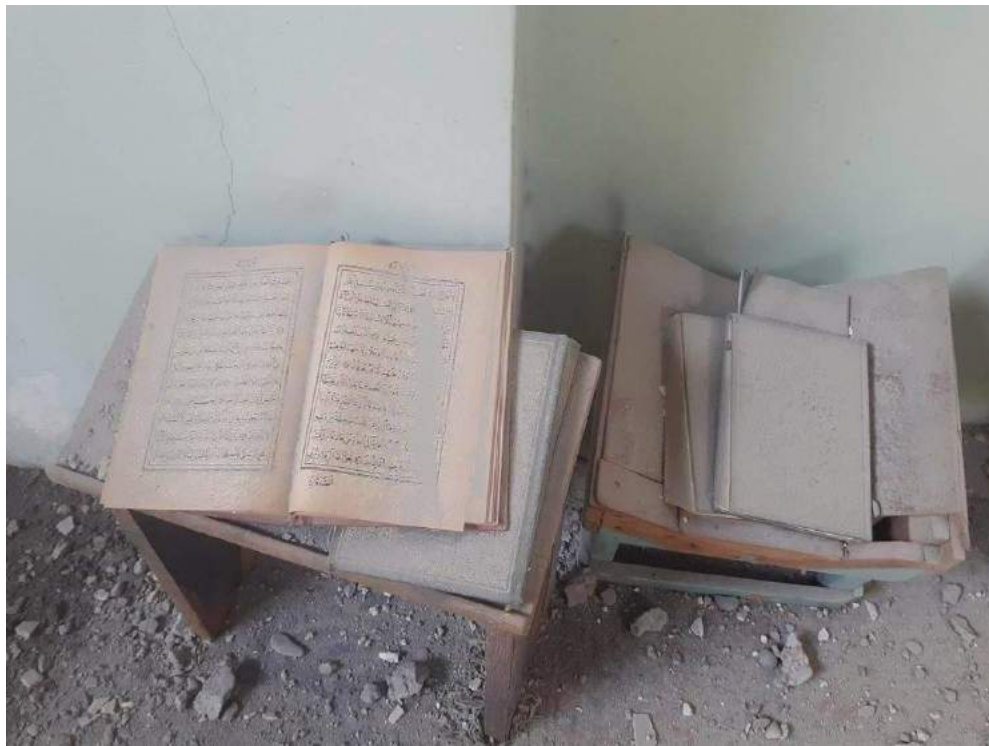
Video still of broken glass and minor damage at the entrance to Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Video still of rubble and damage to religious materials at Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Rubble and damage to religious materials at Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (Afrin Now; January 27, 2018)



Rubble and damage to religious materials at Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (Afrin Now; January 27, 2018)





Video still of the top of the minaret of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Video still of the minaret, with possible evidence of smoke damage, at Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Video still of the exterior of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Video still of the exterior of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque with evidence of recent damage (ANHA; January 29, 2018)



Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque prior to reported damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 22, 2018)



Holes in the roof of Salah al-Din al-Ayoubi Mosque and smoke damage indicated by red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)

**SHI 18-0031**

**Report Date:** January 27, 2018

**Site Name:** Mar Gerges Church (كنيسة مار جرجس)

**Date of Incident:** January 27, 2018

**Location:** Maharda (محرده), Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Greek Orthodox Church

**Site Date:** 1958 CE<sup>141</sup>

**Incident Summary:** Unidentified thieves ransacked a church in Hama Governorate.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 27, 2018 Step News Agency reported that Mar Gerges Church in the town of Maharda had been ransacked, with thieves stealing the church doors, donations, and ceremonial cups.<sup>142</sup>

**Pattern:** Theft.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Mar Gerges Church, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to vandalism.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Architecture Religieuse du Patriarcat Orthodoxe d'Antioche:

<http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=14054&fid=270>

Eqstad: <https://www.eqtsad.net/news/article/18994>

Souriyati: <http://www.souriyati.com/2018/01/27/94092.html>

Step Agency: <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/180693>

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<sup>141</sup> <http://home.balamand.edu.lb/english/ARPOA.asp?id=14054&fid=270>

<sup>142</sup> <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/180693>



Break-in at Mar Gerges Church in Mahardeh (Eqtsad; January 27, 2018)



Break-in at Mar Gerges Church in Mahardeh (Eqtsad; January 27, 2018)

**SHI 18-0032****Report Date:** January 29, 2018**Site Name:** Kaab bin Malik Mosque (جامع كعب بن مالك)**Date of Incident:** January 29, 2018**Location:** al-Zahra neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** ca. 2000 CE**Incident Summary:** A fire broke out at a mosque in Aleppo.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 29, 2018 Al Zahraa News Network reported that a fire broke out in Kaab bin Malik Mosque in al-Zahra neighborhood in Aleppo.<sup>143</sup> Photographs show damage was limited to the southeastern corner of the mosque. Al-Hamdaniya News Network reports that the fire began as the result of a leak from a gas stove.<sup>144</sup> However, Al-Zahra News Network claims the fire began after an explosive was fired at the mosque.<sup>145</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012, SHI 18-0025, SHI 18-0028, SHI 18-0029, SHI 18-0030, and SHI 18-0033.**

**Pattern:** Undetermined.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Kaab bin Malik Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**Online Reporting:

Al-Hamdaniya News Network:

<https://www.facebook.com/HNNaleppo/posts/1624196794337957>

Al-Zahra News Network:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1756238894435143&id=617319418327102](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1756238894435143&id=617319418327102)NFAC News: <https://twitter.com/a5barsy1/status/957956979137368064>

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<sup>143</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1756238894435143&id=617319418327102](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1756238894435143&id=617319418327102)

<sup>144</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/HNNaleppo/posts/1624196794337957>

<sup>145</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1756238894435143&id=617319418327102](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1756238894435143&id=617319418327102)



A photograph showing fire and smoke damage to Kaab bin Malik Mosque (Al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network; January 29, 2018)



Fire damage in interior of Kaab bin Malik Mosque (Al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network; January 29, 2018)





Fire damage in interior of Kaab bin Malik Mosque (Al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network; January 29, 2018)



Fire damage seen in interior of Kaab bin Malik Mosque (Al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network; January 29, 2018)



A photograph showing fire damage and smoke at the southeast corner of Kaab bin Malik Mosque (Al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network; January 29, 2018)

**SHI 18-0033**

**Report Date:** January 30, 2018

**Site Name:** Cyrrhus (Nabi Hourri; نبي حوري)

**Date of Incident:** January 30, 2018

**Location:** Nabi Hourri, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Cyrrhus was founded ca. 330 BCE by the Hellenistic general Seleucus Nicator. The city remained in Seleucid hands until the 1st century BCE, when it was captured by Armenia during the reign of Tigranes II. He was later defeated and Cyrrhus, along with much of Syria, was annexed to Rome. Cyrrhus was captured at least twice by the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE, causing the city to fall into decline. It was captured by the Arabs in 637. By the 13th century, it appears to have been largely deserted.<sup>146</sup>

Cyrrhus was a tourism attraction in Syria, as one of the “major sites of the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods in northern Syria, with important surviving examples of mosaic art.”<sup>147</sup> Visible remains include a large theater (built ca. 150 CE), a Byzantine-era citadel, two Roman-era bridges, a hexagonal mausoleum, a church, a basilica and several gateways.<sup>148</sup>

**Site Date:** ca. 330 BCE–1050 CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported Turkish airstrikes struck near an archaeological site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 29, 2018, al-Masdar News reported a Turkish airstrike hit the archaeological site of Cyrrhus.<sup>149</sup> Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows there have been several airstrikes west of Cyrrhus. The airstrikes are directly west of a recently created military installation, the construction of which began between August 4, 2017 and November 9, 2017. These earthworks were completed between November 9, 2017 and November 22, 2017. The airstrike craters are visible west of this installation and appear between January 16, 2018 and January 29, 2018. The four airstrike craters directly targeted the dirt road leading up to the fortification. Each hit at a bend in the road, or in one case the area where the dirt road meets the main road. This would have cut off the main access point to the fortification. These strikes are evidence of the use of guided ordinance, likely carried out by the Turkish Air Force. The main fortification on the hill was not hit in these airstrikes. The area does not appear to be in use in later imagery from February 23, 2018 as the vehicles inside the fortification have not moved and no alternate roads have been created to bypass the airstrike craters. This military fortification and the airstrikes did not directly impact the archaeological material located to the east.

Additionally, a second military position was trenched into the eastern edge of the site between November 22, 2017 and January 16, 2018. This trench is located on the eastern edge of the lower

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<sup>146</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/cyrrhus-nebi-houri>

<sup>147</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/cyrrhus-nebi-houri>

<sup>148</sup> Ball 2016: 187.

<sup>149</sup> <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/breaking-turkish-warplanes-bomb-another-archaeological-site-northern-syria/>

city of Cyrrhus and therefore could have negatively impacted subsurface remains.<sup>150</sup> According to DigitalGlobe satellite imagery, Turkish airstrikes have not directly hit the site.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012, SHI 18-0025, SHI 18-0028, SHI 18-0029, SHI 18-0030, and SHI 18-0032.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike; Military activity: earthworks/roadwork.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Cyrrhus, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Al Masdar:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/breaking-turkish-warplanes-bomb-another-archaeological-site-northern-syria/>

World Monuments Fund: <https://www.wmf.org/project/cyrrhus-nebi-houri>

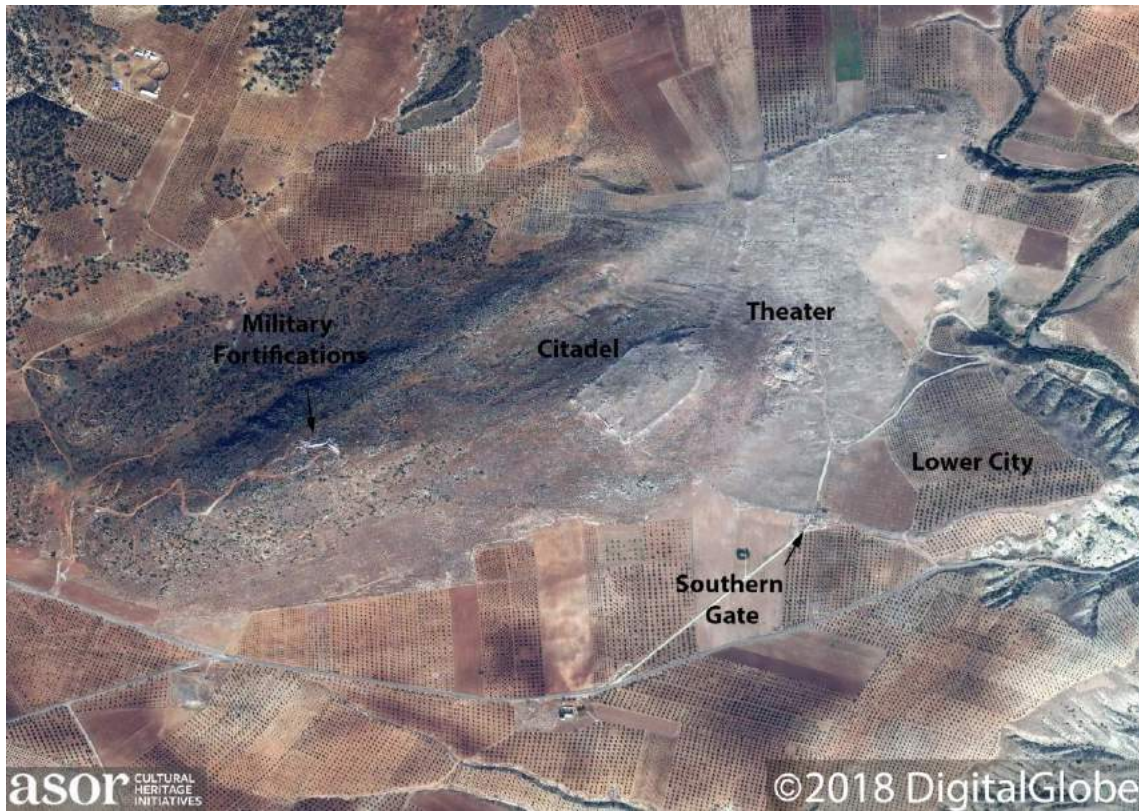
Scholarly:

Ball, W. (2016) *Rome in the East*. London: Routledge.

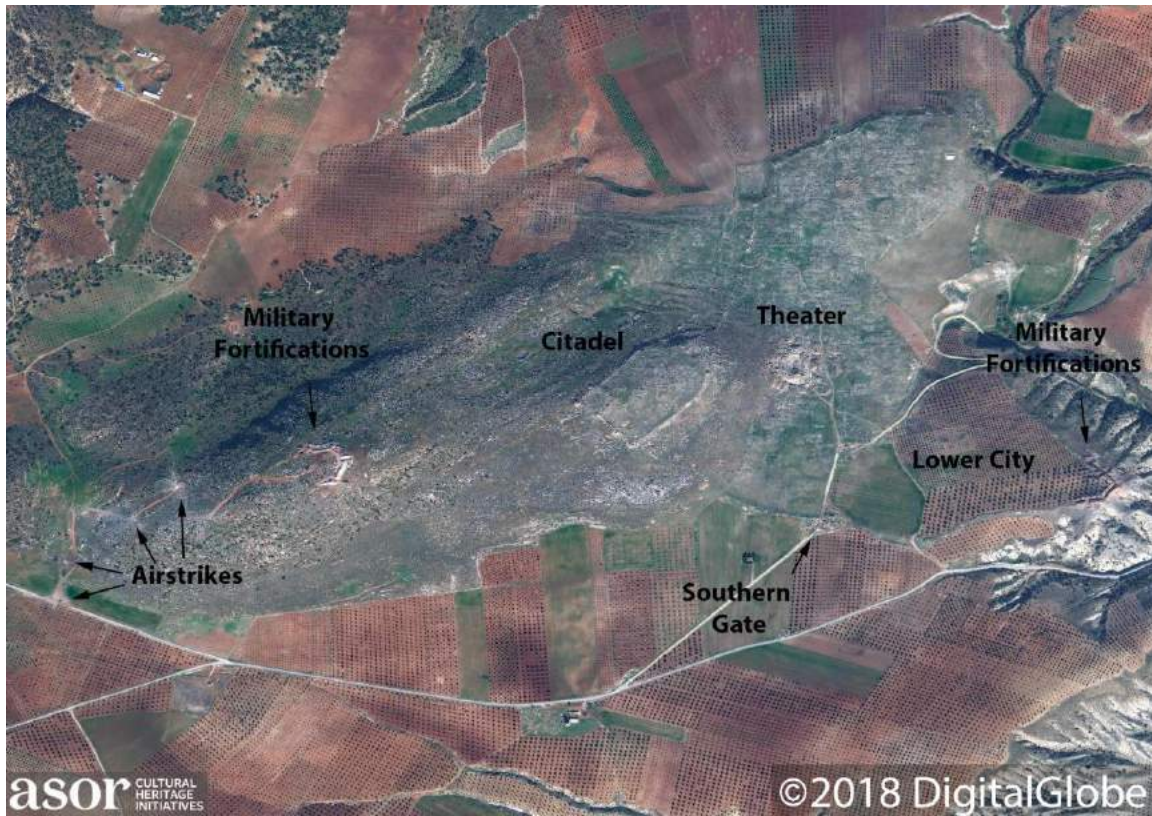
Massih, J. A., C. Benech & M. Gelin (2009) "First results on the city planning of Cyrrhus (Syria)," *ArcheoSciences*, 33 (suppl.), 201-203.

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<sup>150</sup> Massih, Benech & Gelin 2009: 201-203.



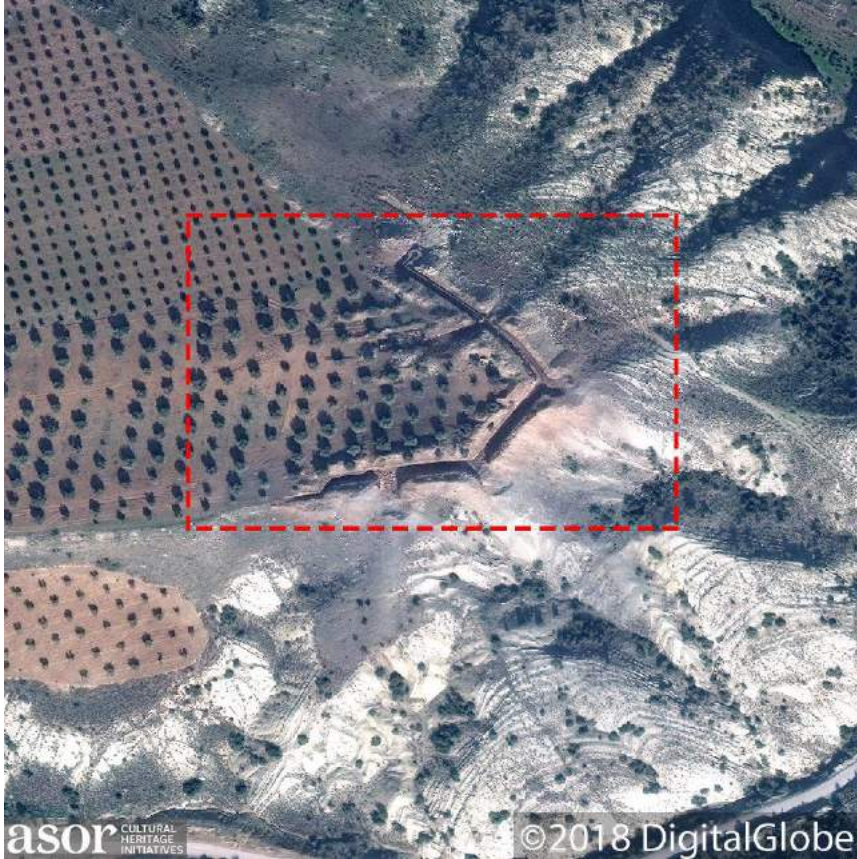
Cyrrhus prior to nearby airstrikes and increased military construction (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



The area of Cyrrhus after at least four airstrikes west of the site and increased military trenching on the eastern edge of the Lower City (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)



Four airstrike craters west of the archaeological site of Cyrrhus Four airstrike craters struck west of the archaeological site of Cyrrhus targeting the road up to the hilltop fortification (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)



Military trenching along the eastern edge of the Lower City of Cyrrhus (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)



**SHI 18-0034****Report Date:** January 30, 2018**Site Name:** al-Owda Mosque (مسجد الأوضة)**Date of Incident:** January 29, 2018**Location:** Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike destroyed a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On January 30, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that Russian warplanes fired missiles on al-Owda Mosque in Saraqib, damaging it severely and rendering it inoperable.<sup>151</sup> A photograph accompanying the report indicates the mosque has been largely destroyed.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0035, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Owda Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

Edlib Media Center:

January 29, 2018: <https://www.facebook.com/EdlibEmc1/videos/2021035501443342/>; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIGSc9VMY\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIGSc9VMY_k)

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/30/russian-forces-shelled-al-owda-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-suburbs-january-29/>

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<sup>151</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/30/russian-forces-shelled-al-owda-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-suburbs-january-29/>



Destruction of al-Owda Mosque (SNHR; January 30, 2018)

## SHI 18-0035

**Report Date:** January 31, 2018

**Site Name:** Aisha Mosque (مسجد عائشة)

**Date of Incident:** January 30, 2018

**Location:** Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 31, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that SARG shelling damaged al-Aisha mosque in Saraqib.<sup>152</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, and SHI 18-0036.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Aisha Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/31/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-aisha-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-suburbs-january-30/>

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<sup>152</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/01/31/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-aisha-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-suburbs-january-30/>

**SHI 18-0036****Report Date:** January 31, 2018**Site Name:** al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد العمري الكبير)**Date of Incident:** January 31, 2018**Location:** Kafr Amim, Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG barrel bombing damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On January 31, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG helicopters dropped barrel bombs near al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque, damaging the building and its furniture.<sup>153</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows a broken window and debris on the mosque floor.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002, SHI 18-0003, SHI 18-0005, SHI 18-0011, SHI 18-0013, SHI 18-0014, SHI 18-0015, SHI 18-0016, SHI 18-0018, SHI 18-0022, SHI 18-0034, and SHI 18-0035.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/01/31/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-amim-village-idlib-suburbs-january-31/>

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<sup>153</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/01/31/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-amim-village-idlib-suburbs-january-31/>



Debris in interior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; January 31, 2018)

**ASOR CHI Receives Progress Report from The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative (TDA-HPI):**

On January 26, 2018 ASOR CHI received the following report from The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative (TDA-HPI) on the condition of the museum following a January 2, 2018 airstrike on the building. The strike was particularly devastating as recent mitigation efforts undertaken by TDA-HPI had recently completed.

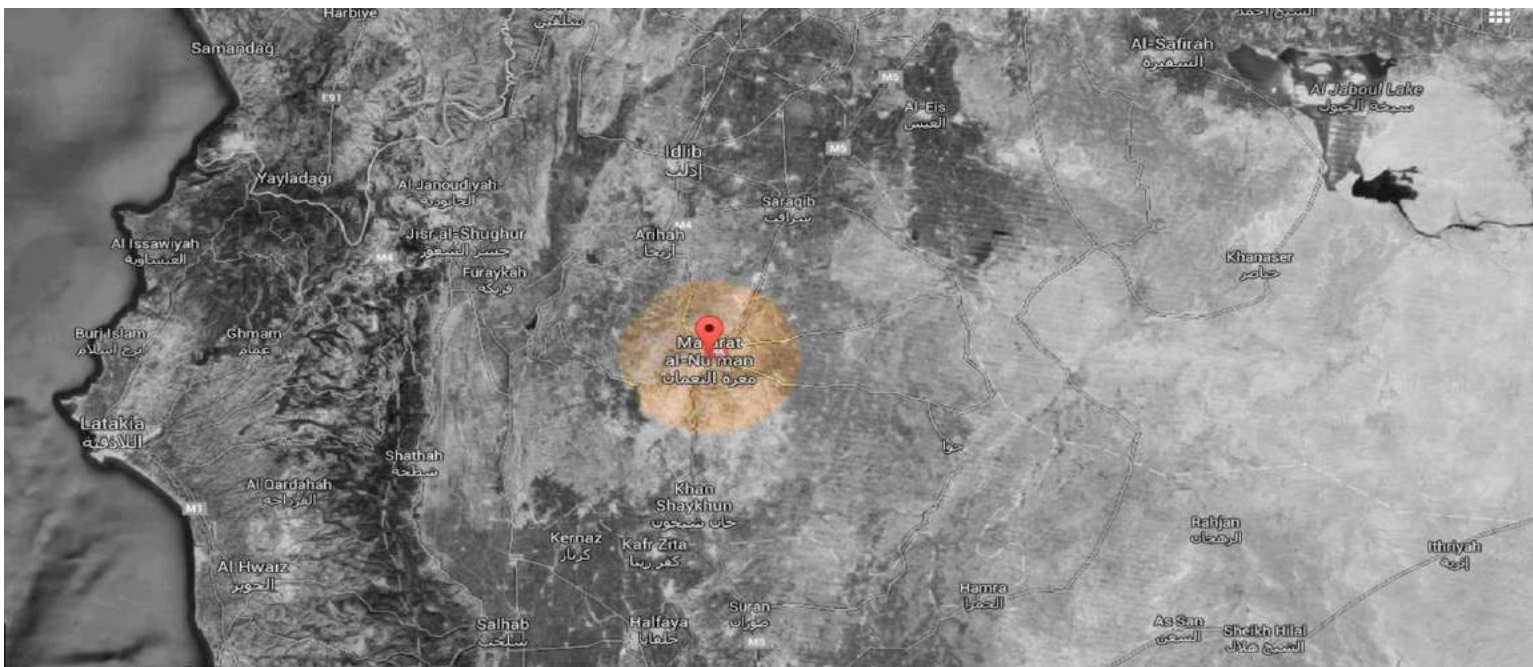
In June 2017, with the support of ASOR CHI, TDA-HPI and the Syrian Heritage Center (SHP) began a mitigation project to repair a deviated wall at al-Ma'arra Museum. The wall was damaged as a result of a May 2016 reported SARG airstrike, that caused severe damage, particularly in the museum's bathhouse area. The wall was dismantled and reconstructed in order to protect the building from collapse. The project lasted 11 weeks, ending on August 27, 2017. Fortunately, the most recent airstrike did not appear to damage the newly repaired wall.

The following report provides vital information on a critical heritage site in Syria that has sustained heavy damage throughout the conflict.

## The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative

### Site Monitors Project

### Progress Report on Damage Assessment, Stabilization and Preservation Work in Ma'arra Museum Following the January 2018 Airstrike



**Project name:** Rapid Intervention at the Ma'arra Museum - Phase I

**Location:** Ma'arrat al-Numan Museum in the city of Ma'arrat al-Numan in Idlib governorate.

**Executing entity:** Syrian Heritage Center

**Start date:** 1/3/2018

**End date:** 2/3/2018

**Project duration:** 4 weeks

**Progress Report:** Damage Assessment, Stabilization and Preservation

The Ma'arra Museum was targeted by an airstrike for the third time January 2, 2018. The building currently serves as a specialized museum for mosaics and archaeological artifacts from the Dead Cities of Northern Syria, a series of sites in Idlib and Aleppo Governorates collectively designated as

a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The museum includes over 2000 sq. meters of mosaics, of which 1700 sq. meters are on display (with most currently protected with sandbags).

**The most recent airstrike inflicted following damage:**

- 1- The northern and western arcades of the third wing of the museum have been severely damaged and have partially collapsed.
- 2- Four stone columns, two in the northern arcade and two in the western arcade, have been destroyed.
- 3- A sarcophagus that has been on display in the courtyard since 1982 was partially destroyed.
- 4- The west wall in the hallway leading to the restrooms on the east side of the museum has been destroyed.
- 5- Destruction in the north side of the third wing.
- 6- Several large amphorae (storage jars) that had been moved into the third wing for protection were destroyed.
- 7- Several mosaics on display in the northeastern hallway across from the third section's north entrance have been damaged. A mosaic on a wall near the west entrance fell to the ground

**Work Plan:**

**I. Recover and sort any historic/archaeological artifacts, gather fallen/collapsed masonry, and remove the rubble:**

1. Document the structure and historic/archaeological artifacts with photographs and videos.
2. Create a grid and proceed to work with manual labor tools.
3. Appoint a crew of archaeologists to oversee sorting the rubble.
4. Prepare a secure area to store the damaged mosaics and artifacts.
5. Move any damaged mosaics and artifacts and document the process.
6. Gather collapsed masonry in designated areas.
7. Coordinate with the local council to move the rubble to a location outside the city as approved by the council.

**II. Reinforce and stabilize damaged and vulnerable areas:**

1. Carefully document the condition of the walls.
2. Create topographic maps of heavily damaged areas.
3. Identify areas in need of urgent intervention and reinforcement.
4. Conduct structural analysis on the building and the damaged areas, and document using topographic maps, photographs and videos.
5. Determine whether metal or wood will be used for reinforcement.
6. Plaster and reinforce parts exposed to the elements using 350kg/m<sup>3</sup> grade cement.
7. Document the reinforcement and plastering work.
8. Document reinforced sites using topographic maps, photographs and videos.
9. All work will be supervised by archaeologists and specialized engineers.



### **Summary of Work Completed:**

After the completion of the process of sorting the masonry and rubble removal, the exposed parts of the damaged areas were covered/plastered with 350 kg / m<sup>3</sup> grade cement to prevent the penetration of water and to protect from further deterioration due to environmental conditions. Work to document the damage to the museum commenced on 1/3/2018, and consisted of the removal of collapsed rubble and masonry stones. All collapsed masonry and artifacts were gathered and sorted. Work began in the northern section. Workers established a grid and worked through it to sort rocks and artifacts and separate them from the rubble. Any recovered artifacts were removed and stored in the first and fourth wings. The collapsed masonry was collected in designated areas based on their location at the time of recovery. Rubble was removed from the site in coordination with Ma'arrat al-Numan local council using Bobcat excavators, tractors and dump trucks, and dumped in a location approved by the local council.



A photograph of Al Ma'ara Museum prior to damage (Photograph provided by TDA-HPI)





A pre-strike photograph showing the location of the missile strike, indicated by blue arrows (TDA-HPI)



Workers assess damage to interior hallways of northwest corner of museum (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers sort rubble in the damaged northwest corner of museum (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers sort rubble in the damaged northwest corner of museum (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



The damaged northwest corner of the museum (TDA-HPI; January 2, 2018)



Pre-strike image showing undamaged northwest corner (TDA-HPI; February 15, 2017)



Pre-strike image of west arcade (TDA-HPI; September 15, 2017)



Workers sort through the rubble and collect fallen masonry in the damaged northwest corner (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers sort through the rubble and collect fallen masonry in the damaged northwest corner (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



The facade of a tomb preserved in the first wing, which fell to the ground as a result of the missile strike (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



An undated pre-strike photograph of the facade in place in the first wing (TDA-HPI)



Workers dig through the rubble and collect fallen masonry (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)





Workers sort through the rubble (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers gathered collapsed masonry (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers gathered collapsed masonry (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



The wall previously dismantled and rebuilt, with the support of ASOR CHI was not affected by the missile strike (TDA-HPI; January 9, 2018)



Workers gathered and sorted collapsed masonry in the central courtyard (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



A worker assesses the damage and take measurements (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers assess damage and take measurements (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Image of damaged masonry blocks (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers stabilize damaged areas using wooden beams and scaffolding (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers clear out rubble (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Workers stabilized damaged areas using wooden beams and scaffolding (TDA-HPI; January 9, 2018)



Workers stabilized damaged areas using wooden beams and scaffolding (TDA-HPI; January 9, 2018)



Workers stabilized damaged areas using wooden beams and scaffolding (TDA-HPI; January 9, 2018)



Workers sort collapsed stones.



Workers clear rubble from a gallery entrance (TDA-HPI; January 9, 2018)



Gallery entrance before workers cleared rubble (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)





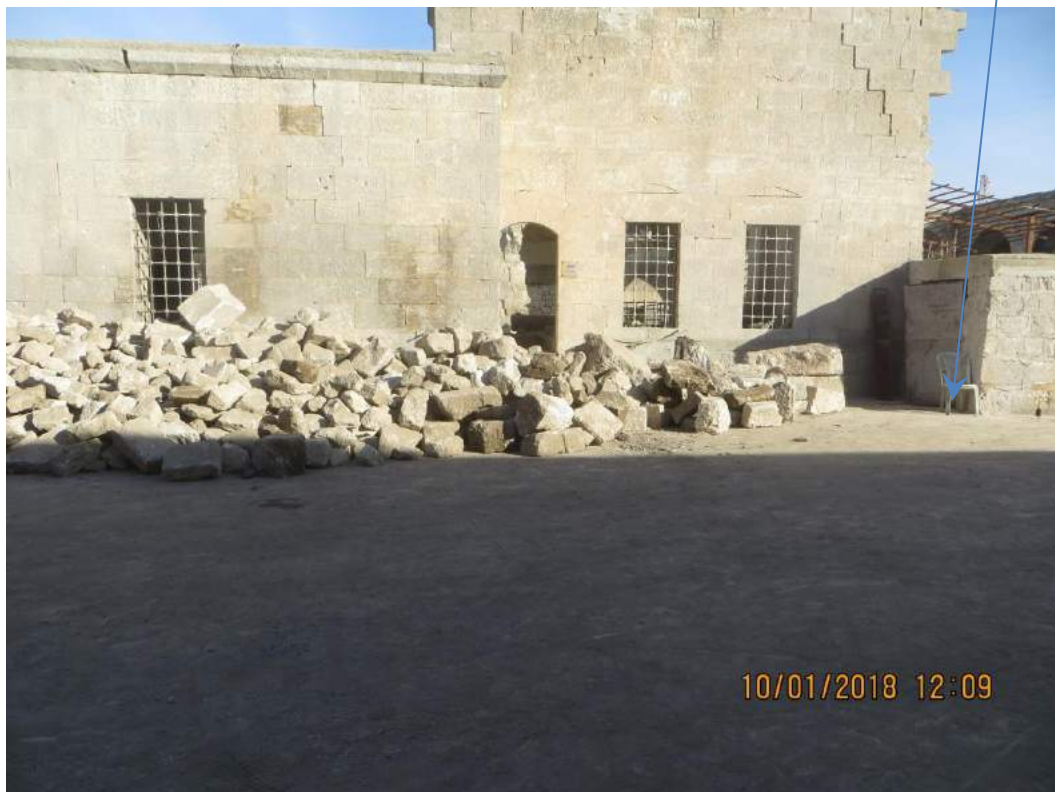
Rubble from collapsed roof rubble prior to commencement of work (TDA-HPI; January 6, 2018)



Area where roof collapsed removal of rubble (TDA-HPI; January 10, 2018)



Workers collected pieces of the damaged sarcophagus (TDA-HPI; January 10, 2018)



Workers collected pieces of the damaged sarcophagus (TDA-HPI; January 10, 2018)



Workers sort pieces of stone from the damaged sarcophagus (TDA-HPI; January 10, 2018)



Masonry from the damaged sarcophagus facade (TDA-HPI; January 10, 2018)



Workers gathered masonry from the north and west façades (TDA-HPI; January 10, 2018)



Area after sorting and clearing rubble (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Workers prepare cement mix and apply it to damaged areas (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Workers filled cracks with 400 kg/m<sup>3</sup> grade cement. The surface of the cracks were then plastered over and treated with acrylic to prevent water seepage (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Crack prior to cement repair (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Crack following cement repair (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Broken amphorae in the museum interior (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Workers assembled pottery fragments for later restoration (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)



Repair work is ongoing to prevent deterioration of damaged areas from environmental conditions (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)





Workers completed the process of sorting collapsed masonry (TDA-HPI; January 21, 2018)

Report prepared by:

Eng. Abdul Rahman Alyehia (Syrian Heritage Centre)

**Site Monitors Project Coordinator**

**Dr. Amr Al-Azm**



## Incident Reports: Iraq

**IHI 18-0001**

**Report Date:** January 18, 2018

**Site Name:** Wadi 'Ikab Christian Cemetery (مقبرة وادي عكاب)

**Date of Incident:**

**Location:** Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery is a large area located on the northwest outskirts of Mosul. According to an ASOR CHI in-country source, the Christian portion of Wadi 'Ikab cemetery was added in 1980 CE, while the Muslim section dates to the 1960s.

**Site Date:** ca. 1980 CE

**Incident Summary:** A Christian cemetery was damaged in Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 16, 2018 the Facebook account "This is Christian Iraq" published photographs of damage to a Christian cemetery in Mosul. Damage includes destroyed and damaged tombs and headstones. Several photographs show exhumed and scattered remains.<sup>154</sup>

In December 2015, reports emerged that Mosul cemeteries, including the Muslim cemeteries of al-Karama, Wadi 'Ikab, Zanjeli and Mosul al-Jadida and three Christian cemeteries, were being destroyed by ISIS prisoners.<sup>155</sup> According to a *New Sabah* article published in October 2016, ISIS militants commandeered sections of the cemetery in order to bury large numbers of dead fighters, although it was unclear which part of the Wadi 'Ikab cemetery was used.<sup>156</sup> ISIS reportedly banned residents from the cemetery.

The Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery has been described as the largest burial site of ISIS fighters since the group emerged in 2014. According to a video report by Al Aan Arabic Television from February 2017, the cemetery holds the remains of 2,830 militants, including several important ISIS members.<sup>157</sup> According to one interviewee, ISIS militants would often bury their dead in secret so the number of casualties from the group would remain unknown. A video report released by Al Aan Arabic Television in May 2017 stated that ISIS militants had intentionally destroyed the graves of those already buried in Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery so that new burials indistinguishable from the old in a further attempt to obscure their casualty count.<sup>158</sup> In addition, demining teams were present in

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<sup>154</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/ThisIsChristianIraq/posts/1975034559411703>

<sup>155</sup> <http://www.niqash.org/en/articles/security/5180/Extremists-in-Mosul-Force-Their-Prisoners-To-Vandalise-Graves.htm>

<sup>156</sup> <http://newsabah.com/newspaper/100317>

<sup>157</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uz-GNbk6xPc>

<sup>158</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqY-It1Q7Tc>

order to address explosive belts still worn by the dead buried in the cemetery. Iraqi forces also found identification documents likely belonging to ISIS members.

Nearby residents recently called on local authorities to repair the cemetery, which they can no longer access because of water-filled trenches dug by ISIS militants during the battle for Mosul.<sup>159</sup>

Initial destruction to the cemetery as seen in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery occurred between September 28, 2014 and March 6, 2016. It appears that all tombs were destroyed during this time period. In April 2017, military earthworks were built just west of the cemetery.

For more information on previous damage to Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0101** in **Weekly Report 73-74**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: intentional destruction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to development disturbances and intentional destruction.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Akbar al-Aan:

<https://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2017/5/8/حتى-مقابر-الموصل-لم-تسلم-من-ارهاب-داعش/>

Al Aan Arabic Television:

February 21, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uz-GNbk6xPc>

May 8, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqY-It1Q7Tc>

Al Ghad Press:

<https://www.alghadpress.com/news/اهم-الاخبار-المحلية-في-العراق/138233/مقبرة-ايمن-الموصل-داعش-قسمها-الى-جزئين-والجهات-الخ>

New Sabah: <http://newsabah.com/newspaper/100317>

Niqash: <http://www.niqash.org/ar/articles/security/5180/>

This is Christian Iraq: <https://www.facebook.com/ThisIsChristianIraq/posts/1975034559411703>

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<sup>159</sup> <https://www.alghadpress.com/news/اهم-الاخبار-المحلية-في-العراق/138233/مقبرة-ايمن-الموصل-داعش-قسمها-الى-جزئين-والجهات-الخ>



A destroyed structure near the entrance to the Christian section of Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



The entrance to Christian portion of Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Exhumed remains at Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Damage to burials at Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Damaged headstones at Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Damaged tombs and remains at Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)





Hastily buried body and exhumed remains at Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Damage to Christian section of Wadi 'Ikab cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Damage to a tomb at Wadi 'Ikab cemetery (This is Christian Iraq/Facebook; January 16, 2018)



Christian section of Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery, prior to significant damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 28, 2014)



Destruction of tombs in the Christian section of Wadi 'Ikab Cemetery, indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 6, 2016)

## IHI 18-0002

**Report Date:** January 21, 2018

**Site Name:** Birs Nimrud, ancient Borsippa (برس نمرود)

**Date of Incident:** January 21, 2018

**Location:** Babil Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** The site Borsippa was an important city of Sumer dependent on the city of Babylon. The site is known for its distinctive ruined ziggurat, incorrectly associated with the Tower of Babel. The original ziggurat was rebuilt by the ruler Nebuchadnezzar II in honor of the local god Nabu, the "son" of the Babylon's patron god Marduk, and stood at 230 ft. high and had seven terraces. The temple to Nabu was destroyed in 484 BCE by the Achaemenids following a failed revolt against king Xerxes. Borsippa is known for the many legal administrative and astronomical texts on cuneiform tablets, many of which have been sold on the antiquities market.<sup>160</sup>

The site was first excavated in 1854 by Henry Creswicke Rawlinson, who uncovered the foundation prisms from the restoration on the Nabu temple.<sup>161</sup> Between 1879 and 1881 the site was excavated by Hormuzd Rassam for the British Museum, focusing on the excavation of Ezida, the temple of Nabu. In 1902, Robert Koldewey worked at Borsippa on the Nabu temple during his main effort at Babylon under the auspices of the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft (German Oriental Society). Since 1980, an Austrian team from the Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck, led by Helga Piesl-Trenkwalder and Wilfred Allinger-Csollich, excavated the large ziggurat E-ur-imin-an-ki and the Nabu temple.

**Site Date:** 2112–2004 BCE (Ur III period) through 320-141 BCE (Seleucid period) with occupation in early 9th century CE (early Islamic era).

**Incident Summary:** Citizens decry condition of archaeological site.

**Incident Source and Description:** A Facebook page named "Iraq museum المتحف العراقي" published a video of the site of Borsippa.<sup>162</sup> The short video shows three individuals below the ziggurat, known as the "Tongue Tower," who point out fragments of cuneiform inscriptions on the surface. The video was created by private citizens with the intent of bringing attention to what they say poor management of the archaeological site by the government. It is unclear when the video was filmed.

**Pattern:** Site management.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:**

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<sup>160</sup> Waerzeggers 2005

<sup>161</sup> Rawlinson 1861

<sup>162</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/museummm/videos/631739283663423/?hc\\_ref=ARTEV97GIchxVKb1EtsBFfNYJUqIUtV4OCS2GXP8U7tEh8RI3MfvaXRpeunjZMFYvcQ](https://www.facebook.com/museummm/videos/631739283663423/?hc_ref=ARTEV97GIchxVKb1EtsBFfNYJUqIUtV4OCS2GXP8U7tEh8RI3MfvaXRpeunjZMFYvcQ)

## Sources:

### Online Reporting:

"Iraq museum المتحف العراقي" Facebook page:

[https://www.facebook.com/museummm/videos/631739283663423/?hc\\_ref=ARTEV97GIchxVKb1EtsBFfNYJUqJUtV4OCS2GXP8U7tEh8RI3MfvaXRpeunjZMFYvcQ](https://www.facebook.com/museummm/videos/631739283663423/?hc_ref=ARTEV97GIchxVKb1EtsBFfNYJUqJUtV4OCS2GXP8U7tEh8RI3MfvaXRpeunjZMFYvcQ)

### Scholarly:

Allinger-Csollich, Wilfrid. 1991. "Birs Nimrud I: Die Baukörper der Ziqqurat von Borsippa," *Baghdader Mitteilungen* 22.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1998 "Birs Nimrud II: "Tieftempel" – "Hochtempel" (Vergleichende Studien: Borsippa-Babylon," *Baghdader Mitteilungen* 29 (1998): 95-330

Kaniuth, Kai. 2003–2004. "Borsippa: Preliminary Report on the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Campaigns (2001-2003)," *Sumer* 52: pp. 9-16.

Koldewey, Robert. 1911. "Die Tempel von Babylon und Borsippa." *WVDOG* 15.

Rassam, Hormuzd. 1897. *Asshur and the Land Nimrod*

Rawlinson, Henry C. 1861. "On the Birs Nimrud, or the Great Temple of Borsippa," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 18, pp. 1-34.

Reade, J.E. 1986. "Rassam's Excavations at Borsippa and Kutha, 1879-1882" *Iraq* 48: pp. 105-115.

Trenkwalder, Helga. 1981. "Report to the Excavations at Borsippa (Second Season 1981) & Borsippa Inscriptions," *Sumer* 41: pp. 101-105.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1997–1998. "Report on the 14<sup>th</sup> Season of Work in Borsippa," *Sumer* 49: pp. 97-103.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1999–2000. "Austrian Archaeological Expedition to Iraq: Preliminary Report on the 17<sup>th</sup> Campaign at Borsippa, Autumn 2000," *Sumer* 50: pp. 11-20.

Waerzeggers, Caroline. 2005. "The Dispersal of the Borsippa Archives," in Heather Baker and Michael Jursa, eds., *Approaching the Babylonian Economy*: pp. 343-364



Screenshot of cuneiform inscription found on the surface of the archaeological site of Borsippa (Iraq museum المتحف العراقي; January 21, 2018)



Screenshot of cuneiform inscription found on the surface of the archaeological site of Borsippa (Iraq museum المتحف العراقي; January 21, 2018)



## Incident Reports: Libya

LHI 18-0001

**Report Date:** January 1, 2018

**Site Name:** Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat (ضريح الشيخ محمد بن مرباط)

**Date of Incident:** December 31, 2017

**Location:** Misrata, Tripolitania, Libya

**Site Description:** Sufi shrine

**Site Date:** 15th century CE<sup>163</sup>

**Incident Summary:** Reported Salafi extremists destroyed a shrine.

**Incident Source and Description:** On December 31, 2017 Facebook account Misratah Today reported that the Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat in Misurata had been destroyed.<sup>164</sup> Photographs accompanying the report show that the shrine has been almost completely demolished. On January 10, 2018 Aman Dostor reported that the shrine had been looted and blown up by Salafi extremists.<sup>165</sup>

Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms damage to the shrine between December 2, 2017 and January 31, 2018.

**Pattern:** Military activity: Intentional destruction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Shrine of Marbat, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to vandalism and intentional destruction.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Aman Dostor: <http://www.aman-dostor.org/5611>

Libya Akhbar: <https://www.libyaakhbar.com/libya-news/532324.html>

Misratah Today: <https://www.facebook.com/MisratahToday/posts/1821446111219453>

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<sup>163</sup> <http://www.aman-dostor.org/5611>

<sup>164</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/MisratahToday/photos/pcb.1821446111219453/1821441737886557/>

<sup>165</sup> <http://www.aman-dostor.org/5611>



Image of tools used in demolition of the Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat (Misratah Today; December 31, 2017)



Interior view of the destruction of the Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat (Misratah Today; December 31, 2017)



Interior view of the destruction of the Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat (Misratah Today; December 31, 2017).



Interior view of the destruction of the Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Marbat (Misratah Today; December 31, 2017)



The Shrine of Marbat prior to any visible damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 2, 2017)



Damage to the shrine indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)

**LHI 18-0002**

**Report Date:** January 4, 2018

**Site Name:** Ghadames (غدامس)

**Date of Incident:** December 20, 2017

**Location:** Ghadames, Tripolitania, Libya

**Site Description:** The Old City of Ghadames is one of five Libyan sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Consisting of a tightly clustered series of mud-brick houses in a palm oasis that served as a key nexus in the trans-Saharan trade routes, Ghadames is an outstanding example of a Saharan oasis town.<sup>166</sup>

**Site Date:** 8th century BCE–present

**Incident Summary:** Heavy rains contributed to the collapse of a number of mud-brick buildings at Ghadames.

**Incident Source and Description:** Following a complaint from the Department of Antiquities (DoA) in Ghadames that heavy rains had damaged the UNESCO World Heritage site of Ghadames, the DoA in Tripoli dispatched a delegation to the site to document the damage.<sup>167</sup> This effort is part of a DoA effort to prepare comprehensive reports on the status of each of the five World Heritage sites in Libya, all of which are currently listed on the World Heritage List in Danger. Mahmoud Hadia and Safa al Hagi of the archives team in Tripoli documented instances of damage for their internal report, and provided ASOR CHI with a series of photographs of the damage to monuments at Ghadames, including collapsed mud-brick structures weakened by rains and lack of maintenance.

**Pattern:** Site maintenance; Natural impacts.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage due to lack of maintenance during a time in which DoA faces tightly constrained resources.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Libya218: <https://www.218tv.net/الإهمال-يدق-ناقوس-الخطر-حول-الأثار-الل/>

Private Facebook Account

UNESCO: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/362>

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<sup>166</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/362>

<sup>167</sup> <https://www.218tv.net/الإهمال-يدق-ناقوس-الخطر-حول-الأثار-الل/>



Old town of Ghadames (UNESCO/Frederica Leone)



A structure in Ghadames collapsed due to rain and lack of maintenance (Mahmoud Hadia, December 27, 2017)



Many walls, long weakened by lack of maintenance, collapsed during a heavy rain at Ghadames (Mahmoud Hadia, December 27, 2017)





Plaster coatings that commonly protect the buildings in Ghadames have not been maintained, allowing cracks to propagate quickly during a rain storm (Mahmoud Hadia, December 27, 2017)



Residents have been relocated from the Old City of Ghadames, making it difficult to detect problems early, and harder to maintain the site as a whole (Mahmoud Hadia, December 27, 2017)

**LHI 18-0003**

**Report Date:** January 4, 2018

**Site Name:** Department of Antiquities Library at Cyrene

**Date of Incident:** December 22, 2017

**Location:** Cyrene, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** This Department of Antiquities (DoA) Library is one of the premier Libyan repositories of publications addressing archaeology and history.

**Site Date:** Italian Colonial Period (1920–1940 CE)

**Incident Summary:** A tree fell on the library building, damaging the roof.

**Incident Source and Description:** Department of Antiquities Shahat reported that following heavy rains, a large pine tree on the slope above the DoA library at Cyrene dislodged at its roots and toppled onto the roof. The impact of the tree damaged the tiles and the wooden trusses below. Fortunately, the valuable collections of the library remained protected. Using the resources of the Shahat office, the conservation department of DoA Shahat removed the tree and patched the roof. Trees from the same slope have fallen on top of the adjacent DoA buildings previously.

**Pattern:** Natural impacts.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of natural threats that have come at a time when DoA Libya has very limited resources to address such problems.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DoA Shahat: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/مراقبة-آثار-شحات-1252747658148282/photos/>



A view of the tree that fell on the roof of the DoA Shahat Library (DoA Shahat; January 4, 2018)



A view of the tree that fell on the roof of the DoA Shahat Library (DoA Shahat; January 4, 2018)



A DoA conservation team works to dismantle the tree (DoA Shahat; January 4, 2018)



A view of the damaged section of the roof (DoA Shahat; January 4, 2018)

**LHI 18-0004**

**Report Date:** January 5, 2018

**Site Name:** Grave of Sheikh Mahdi al-Sanusi (ضريح المهدي السنوسي)

**Date of Incident:** December 29, 2017

**Location:** Kufra, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** This site contains the Mausoleum of Sheikh Mahdi al-Sanusi, the son of the founder of the Sanusi Order (a political and religious Sufi order) and its Supreme Leader between 1859 and his death in 1902. The mausoleum is located in the small village of el-Tag, located just north of the Kufra Oasis. Sheikh Mahdi al-Sanusi founded el-Tag in 1895, and built a *zawiyah*, a mosque, and several tombs there for family members.<sup>168</sup> This site has particular resonance in the current political environment in that Mahdi al-Sanusi was the father of Libya's King Idris, who ruled Libya from its independence in 1951 until he was deposed by Muammar Gaddafi in 1969.

**Site Date:** 1902 CE

**Incident Summary:** A mausoleum near Kufra was ransacked.

**Incident Source and Description:** On December 30, 2017 Al Marsad reported that the Mausoleum of Sheikh Mahdi al-Sanusi had been attacked by unknown armed assailants, who damaged the site and stole the remains of al-Mahdi.<sup>169</sup> According to Al Jazeera, the grave was exhumed by members of the Salafi movement, who were supported by armed members of the Sibal al-Salam battalion of the General Command of the Libyan National Army.<sup>170</sup> The Presidential Council of the Government of National Accord denounced this act.<sup>171</sup> The battalion subsequently released a statement denying its participation.<sup>172</sup>

This mausoleum has been attacked on at least one prior occasion. In 2012, unidentified attackers broke into the shrine, stole the remains of al-Mahdi, and transferred them to a cemetery in Kufra. The remains were later returned to the mausoleum.<sup>173</sup>

**Pattern:** Vandalism; Theft.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Tomb of Sheikh Mahdi Senussi, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to vandalism and intentional destruction.

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<sup>168</sup> Vikør 1995: 152.

<sup>169</sup> <https://almarsad.co/2017/12/30/بالصور-مجموعة-مسلحة-تنتيش-قبر-الإمام-ال->

<sup>170</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2017/12/30/نيش-قبر-والد-الملك-إدريس-السنوسي-وإخفاء-رفاته>

<sup>171</sup> <http://www.libyanexpress.com/digging-up-al-senussi-shrine-in-libyas-al-kufra-condemned-fatwa-house-sa-vs-saudi-arabia-behind-it/>

<sup>172</sup> <http://www.aman-dostor.org/5575>

<sup>173</sup> <https://almarsad.co/2017/12/30/بالصور-مجموعة-مسلحة-تنتيش-قبر-الإمام-ال->

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### Online Reporting:

Aman Dostor: <http://www.aman-dostor.org/5575>

### Al Jazeera:

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Libyan Cloud News Agency: <http://libyan-cna.net/libyancloud-news/21529>

### Libyan Express:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/digging-up-al-senussi-shrine-in-libyas-al-kufra-condemned-fatwa-house-says-saudi-arabia-behind-it/>

### Libya Prospect:

<http://libyaprospect.com/index.php/2018/01/03/why-haftars-salafist-forces-exhumed-senussis-shrine/>

Al Marsad: <https://almarsad.co/2017/12/30/بالصور-مجموعة-مسلحة-تتبع-قبر-الإمام-ال>

### Scholarly:

Vikør, Knuth S. (1995). *Sufi and scholar on the desert edge: Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Sanūsī and his Brotherhood*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

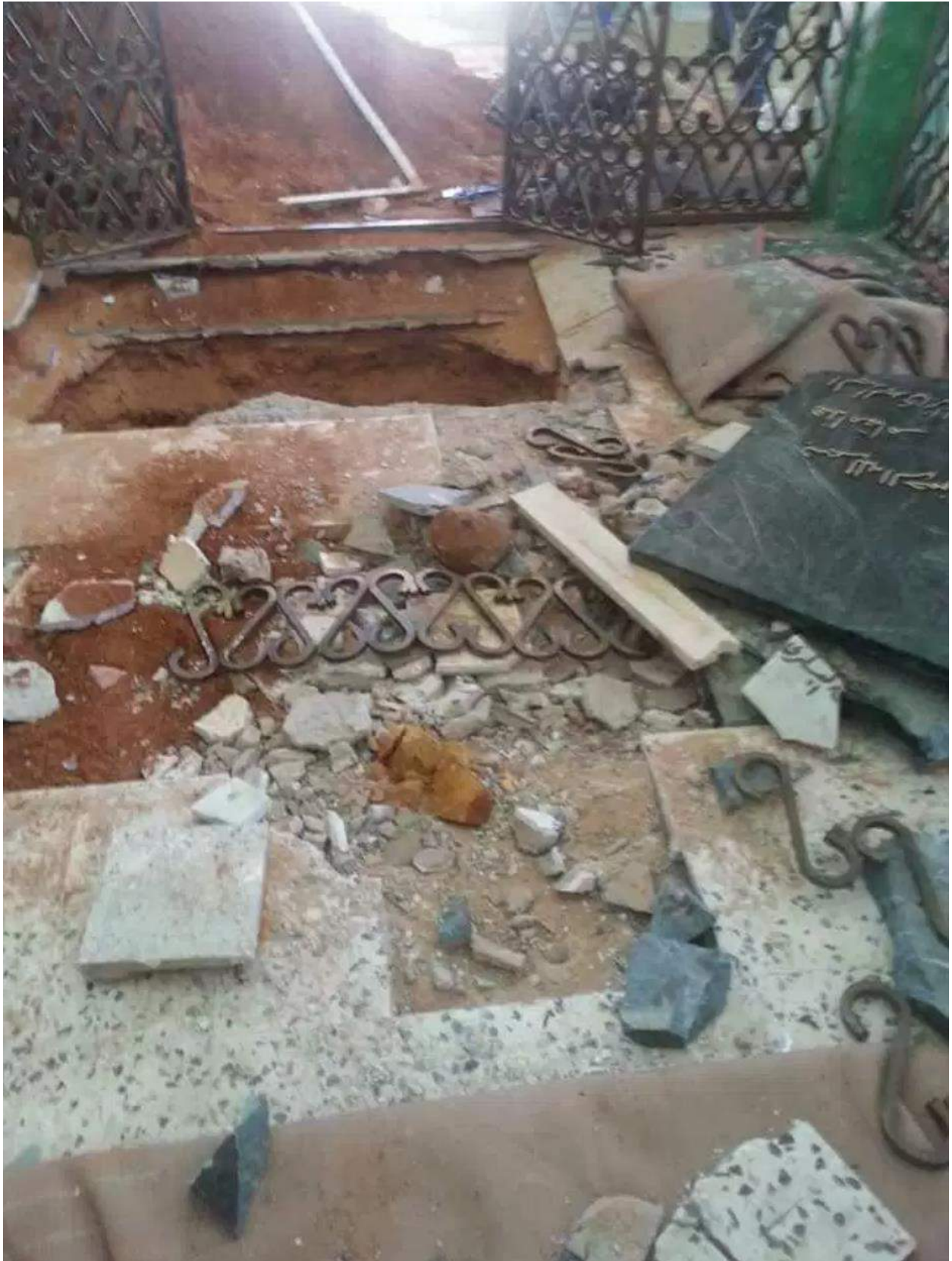


A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Al Marsad; December 30, 2017)





A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Al Marsad; December 30, 2017)



A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Al Marsad; December 30, 2017)



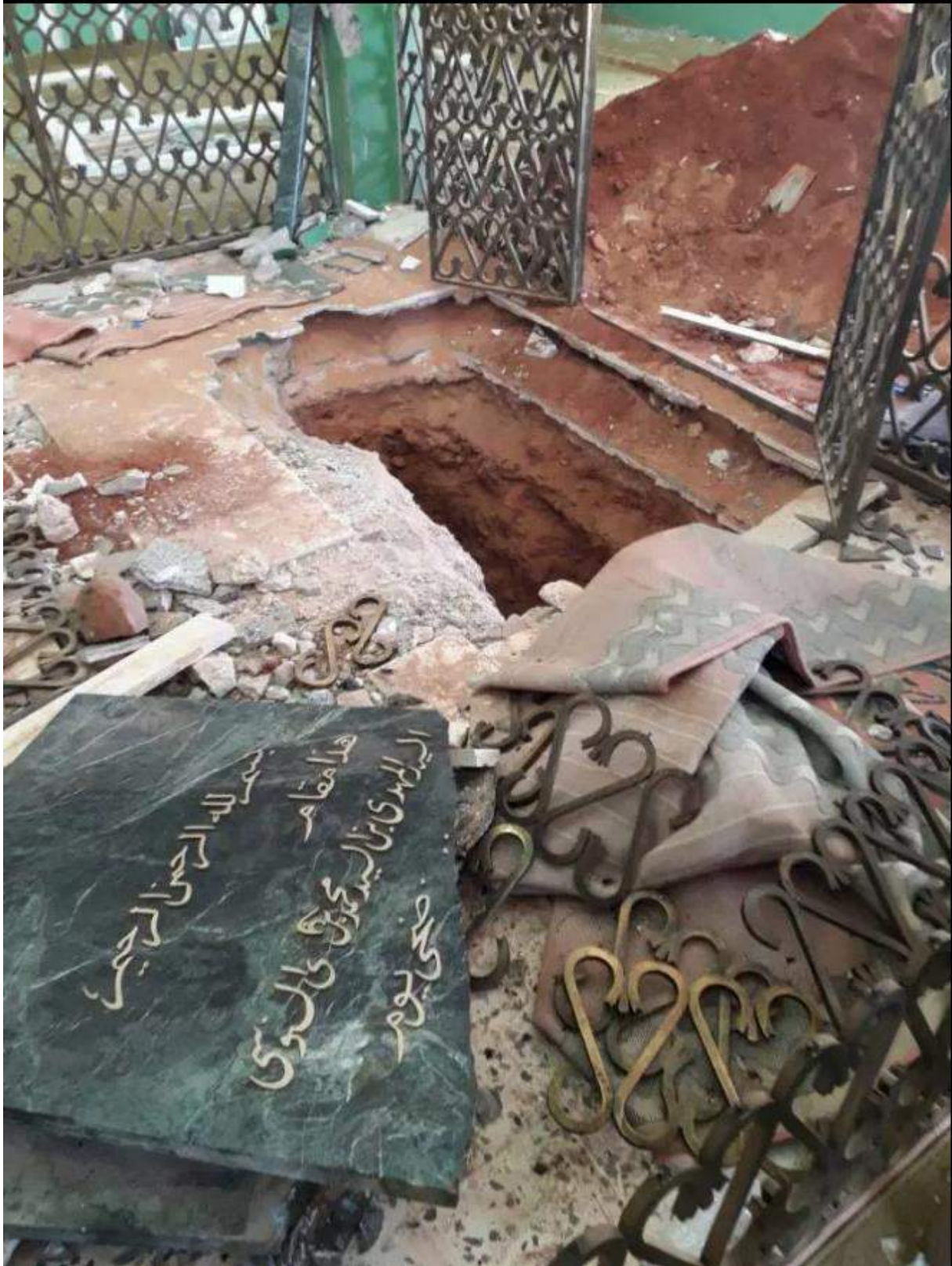
A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Al Marsad; December 30, 2017)



A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Libyan Cloud News Agency; December 31, 2017)



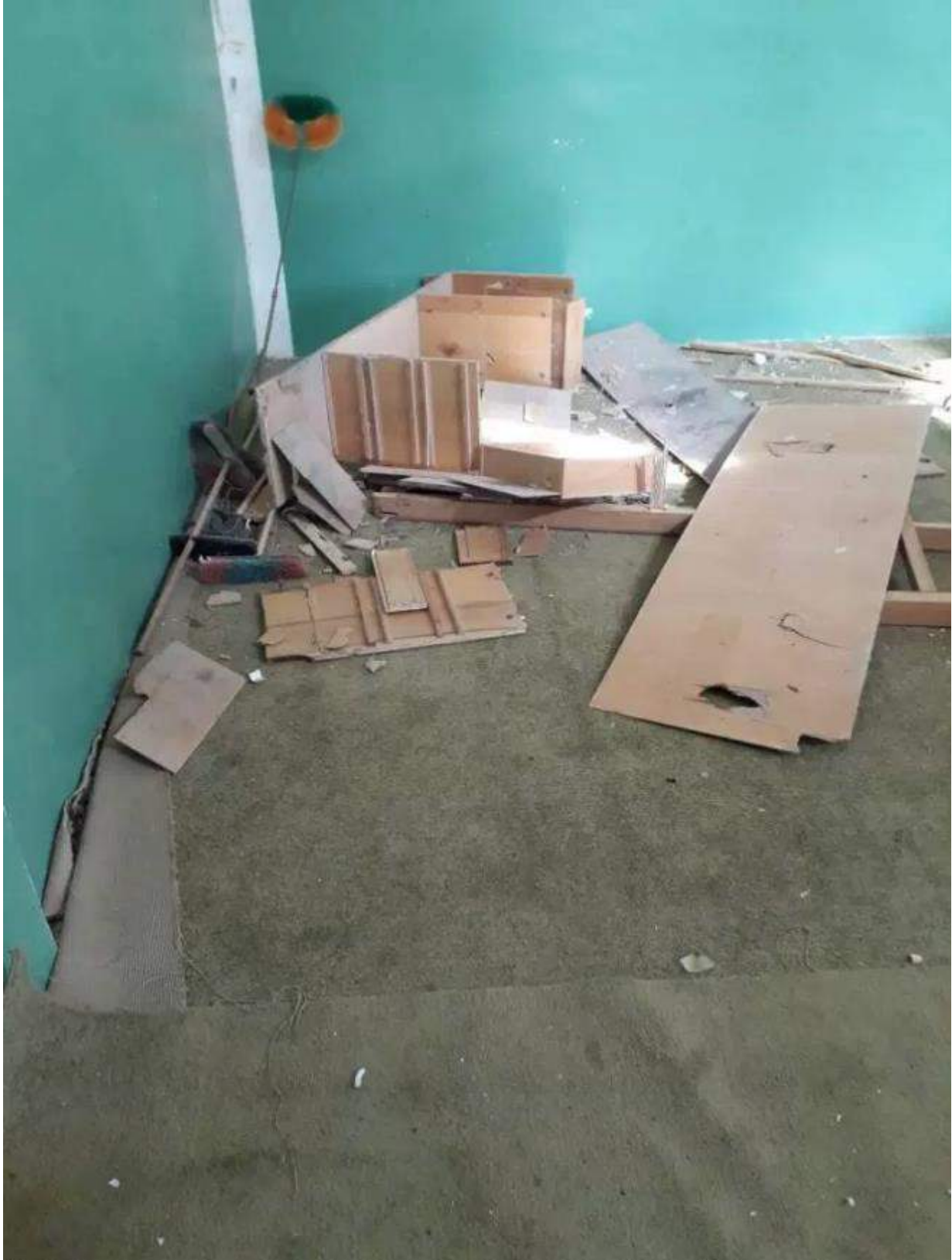
A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Libyan Cloud News Agency; December 31, 2017)



A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Libyan Cloud News Agency; December 31, 2017)



A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Libyan Cloud News Agency; December 31, 2017)



A view of the damage to the interior of the Mausoleum of al-Mahdi (Libyan Cloud News Agency; December 31, 2017)



**LHI 18-0005**

**Report Date:** January 24, 2018

**Site Name:** Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque (مسجد بيعة الرضوان)

**Date of Incident:** January 23, 2018

**Location:** al-Salmani District, Benghazi, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** Modern mosque in Benghazi.

**Site Date:** ca. 2010 CE

**Incident Summary:** A twin car bombing occurred outside mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 23, 2018 two car bombs detonated near Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque in al-Salmani District in Benghazi as worshippers were exiting the mosque after evening prayers.<sup>174</sup> Human Rights Watch reported that the “car bombs exploded within 15 to 30 minutes of each other after 8 p.m. ... as worshippers were leaving after evening prayers.” The second bombing struck as civilians and security forces responded to the first bombing.<sup>175</sup> According to The Telegraph, the mosque was known to be a base for Salafi groups operating in the area.<sup>176</sup> Ahmed al Fituri, the chief of a special investigation unit affiliated with the forces of the Libyan National Army, died in the first blast.<sup>177</sup> No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>178</sup> The extent of the damage to the mosque is unclear. A photograph published by Reuters shows damage to the wall surrounding the mosque complex.<sup>179</sup>

On January 24, 2018 the United Nations Libya mission expressed alarm at reports of summary executions outside the Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque after photographs emerged on social media of a “gunmen dressed in military camouflage, pointing a weapon...at a row of blindfolded men kneeling in blue jumpsuits in front of damaged mosque gates.”<sup>180</sup> The identifies of the men were unclear, however at least some reports described the men as “captives” who were killed in revenge for the victims of the twin bombings that struck Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque on January 23.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/toll-rises-to-35-in-car-bombing-outside-benghazi-mosq ue-idUSKBN1FD1LV>

<sup>175</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/01/25/libya-deadly-mosque-attack-violation-laws-war>

<sup>176</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/24/twin-car-bombs-kill-least-27-libyas-benghazi/>

<sup>177</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/libya-double-car-bombing-kill-33-benghazi-180124062921229.html>

<sup>178</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/24/twin-car-bombs-kill-dozens-outside-mosque-in-benghazi>

<sup>179</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/toll-rises-to-35-in-car-bombing-outside-benghazi-mosq ue-idUSKBN1FD1LV>

<sup>180</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-benghazi/u-n-alarmed-at-reports-of-summary-executions-in-libyas-benghazi-idUSKBN1FD30H>

<sup>181</sup> <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/inbrief/unsmil-condemn-summary-executions-benghazi-renews-call-perpetrator-be-arrested> ; <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180125-commander-linked-to-lna-behind-latest-libya-summary-executions/> ; <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/rights-groups-condemn-video-purported-show-libya-killings-193343800.html> ; <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/fresh-footage-haftar-execution-chief-emerged-un-envoy-meets-military-strongman-1841170270>

**Pattern:** Non-military: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to violent attacks.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

BBC News: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42798535>

The Guardian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/24/twin-car-bombs-kill-dozens-outside-mosque-in-benghazi>

Human Rights Watch:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/01/25/libya-deadly-mosque-attack-violation-laws-war>

Libya Herald:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2018/01/24/benghazi-bombs-kill-22-and-injure-33/>

The Libya Observer:

<https://www.libyaobserver.ly/inbrief/unsmil-condemn-summary-executions-benghazi-renews-call-perpetrator-be-arrested>

Middle East Eye:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/fresh-footage-haftar-execution-chief-emerged-un-envoy-meets-military-strongman-1841170270>

Middle East Monitor:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180125-commander-linked-to-ina-behind-latest-libya-summary-executions/>

Reuters:

January 24, 2018: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/toll-rises-to-35-in-car-bombing-outside-benghazi-mosque-idUSKBN1FD1LV> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-benghazi/u-n-alarmed-at-reports-of-summary-executions-in-libyas-benghazi-idUSKBN1FD30H>

The Telegraph:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/24/twin-car-bombs-kill-least-27-libyas-benghazi/>

Al Wasat: <https://alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/166281/>

Yahoo News/AP:

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/rights-groups-condemn-video-purported-show-libya-killings-193343800.html>



Damage to the wall around the Bayaat al-Radwan Mosque complex (Reuters; January 24, 2018)

## Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis

The city of Deir ez-Zor was one of ISIS's last urban strongholds in the eastern part of Syria. The city was recaptured by regime-backed troops in November 2017, only one month after the militants lost their former self-proclaimed capital of Raqqa. This marked an important turn in the conflict, as the city had been held by the militant group for at least three years.

Deir ez-Zor was severely damaged during the offensive to retake the city from ISIS, which began in September 2017. Throughout the fall of 2017, the city was bombarded with heavy shelling and airstrikes. As in the already liberated cities of Mosul and Raqqa, the city's infrastructure was severely compromised as a result of heavy bombardment. UNITAR reported that approximately 18% of the city's affected infrastructure was destroyed as of November 9, 2017.<sup>182</sup> Even prior to the recapture of Deir ez-Zor, ISIS and pro-regime forces engaged in damaging clashes (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0025** in **February 2017 Monthly Report**). Despite these ongoing clashes in the city, ASOR CHI has reported only seven incidents in Deir ez-Zor within the last year, as compared to the more than 50 incidents reported on the city of Raqqa since May 2017. The disparity in reporting appears to be the result of a lack of on-the-ground social media reporting in Deir ez-Zor. In contrast, organizations such as Raqqa is Being Silently Slaughtered consistently reported incidents in Raqqa.

ASOR CHI has catalogued 73 heritage sites in Deir ez-Zor, the majority of which are religious sites or monuments (61). Approximately 67% (41) of the religious heritage of the city has been damaged in some way, although secular sites such as the Historic Suq have also been severely damaged. Similarly, in Raqqa, ASOR CHI has catalogued 68 heritage sites, 36 of which are religious sites or monuments (53% of the total). Damage to religious heritage in Raqqa far exceeds visible damage in Deir ez-Zor, with approximately 90% of the heritage sites displaying visible damage. The entirety of this damage in both Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor is the result of military activity, such as airstrikes and explosions.

Using recently released satellite imagery, it is possible to assess the overall extent of damage to Deir ez-Zor's urban heritage. There are four instances of total destruction to heritage sites in Deir ez-Zor. The Deir ez-Zor Bridge and the Latin Church were destroyed between 2013 and 2014, and the Deir ez-Zor Folk Museum and Farouk Mosque were destroyed in 2017. All four sites appear to have been destroyed by explosions or airstrikes, as evidenced by nearby craters and collapsed architecture. Six sites have been assessed as being in very bad condition, with 60–90% of the structure damaged—three of which were only identified as being damaged via satellite imagery analysis, with two of the sites destroyed during the offensive in the fall of 2017. 26 sites located south of the highway leading to Damascus are in poor condition.

Not only has the heritage of Deir ez-Zor suffered immensely as a result of ongoing ISIS occupation and recent liberation efforts, but the utilitarian architecture of the city has also been subject to extreme damage. Heavy bombardment is often visible near heritage sites, but the effects of this bombardment cannot be determined from satellite imagery alone, such as with al-Ilkhas Mosque or Badour al-Kurdi Mosque. Although damage can be seen near the heritage sites, it is difficult to determine the severity of damage without on-the-ground reporting such as was possible in Raqqa with sources such as Raqqa is Being Silently Slaughtered.

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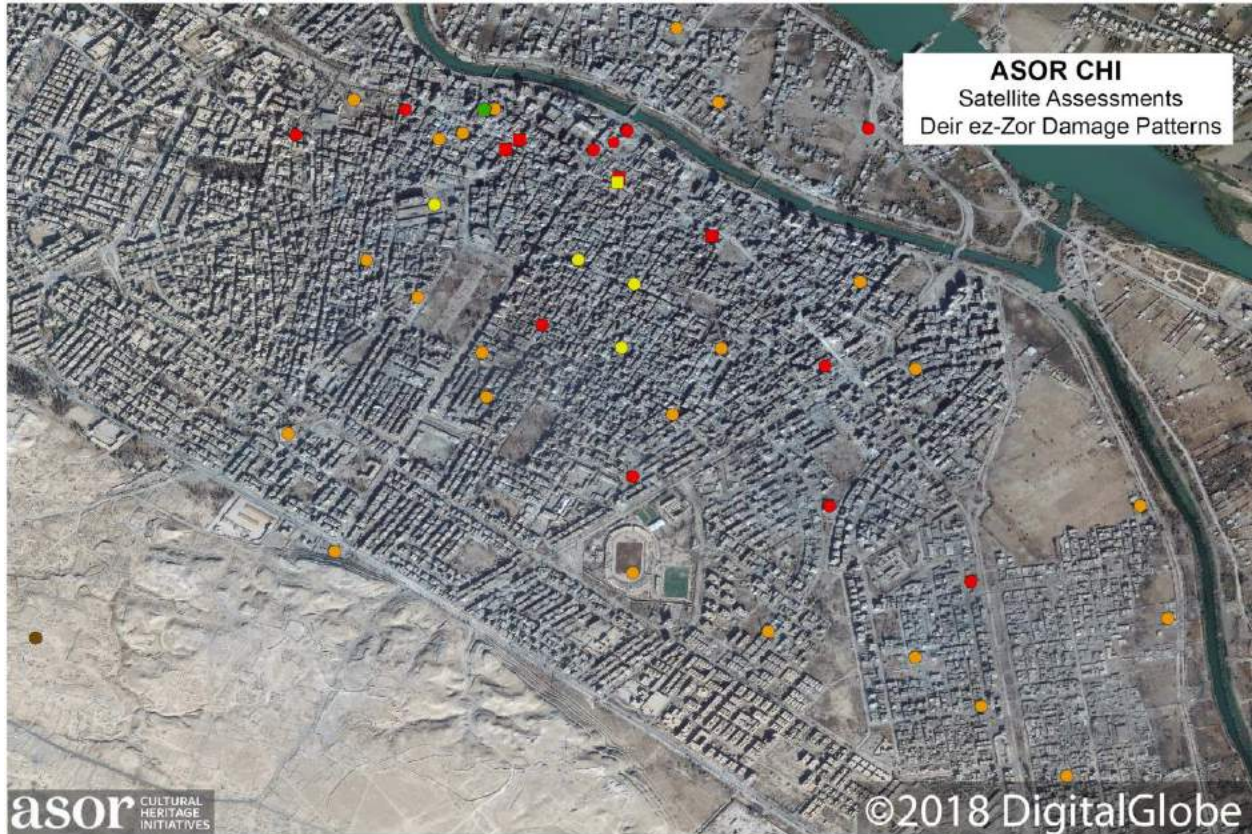
<sup>182</sup> <https://unitar.org/unosat/map/2740>



Al-Ilkhas Mosque indicated within red box with red arrows indicating severe surrounding damage, although there is little visible damage to the mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 2, 2017)



Badour al-Kurdi Mosque with a clear airstrike crater along the southern facade, although the mosque appears to be largely intact. Red arrows indicate areas of severe damage in the surrounding area (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 2, 2017)

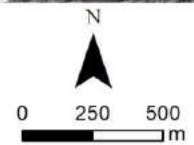


**Site Type**

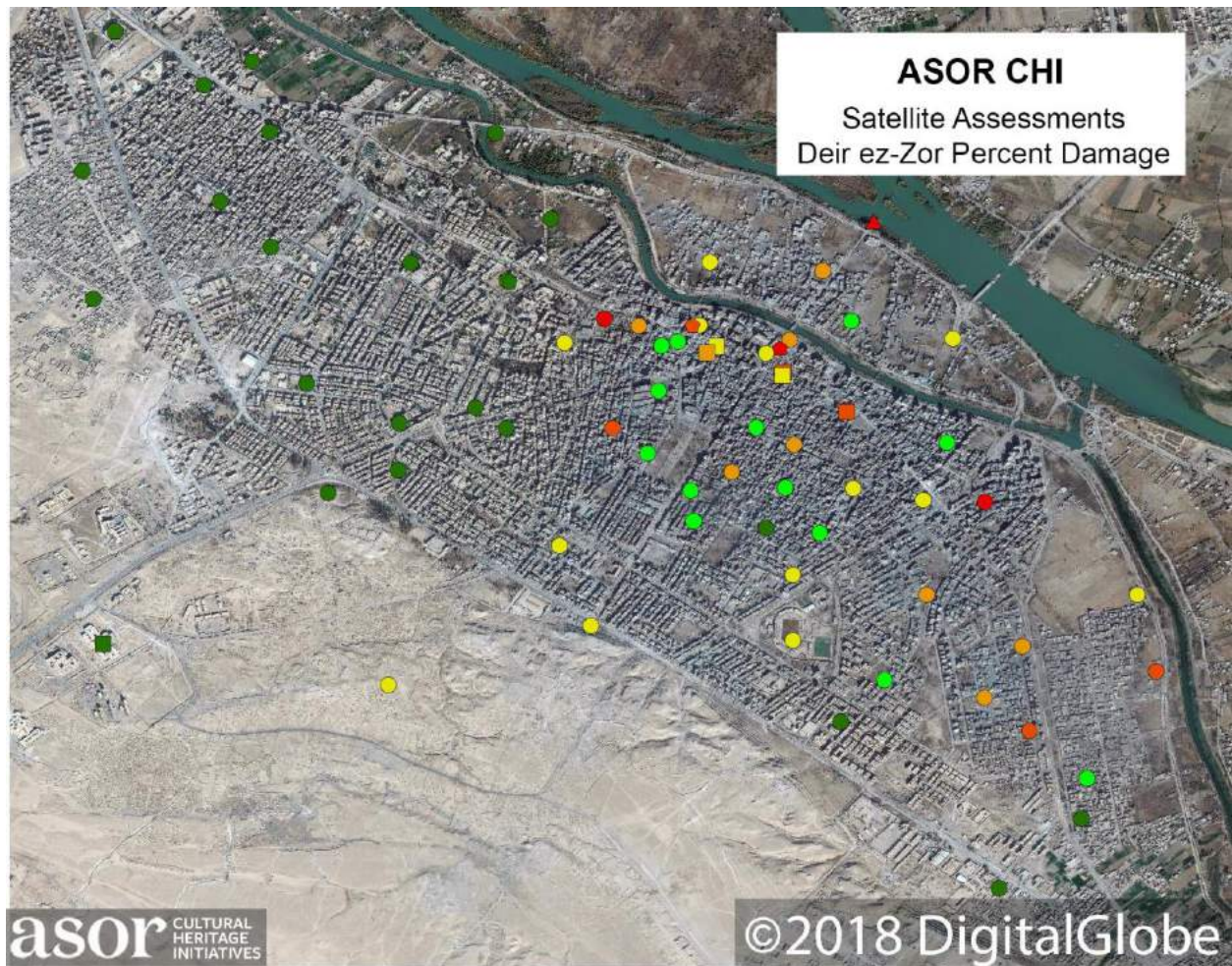
- Secular Monument or Site
- Museum, Collection, Library or Archive
- ▲ Archaeological Site or Monument
- Administrative Infrastructure
- Religious Monument or Site

**Damage Pattern**

- Military Activity: Explosives & Airstrikes
- Military Activity: Airstrikes
- Military Activity: Explosives
- Military Activity: Intentional Destruction
- Military Activity: Earthworks, Bulldozing, & Airstrikes



Overview map of the patterns of damage to all damaged heritage points in Deir ez-Zor. Damaged sites are concentrated in the part of the city shown here (ASOR CHI/ DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 1, 2017)

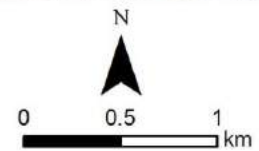


**Site Type**

- Secular Monument or Site
- Museum, Collection, Library or Archive
- ▲ Archaeological Site or Monument
- Administrative Infrastructure
- Religious Monument or Site

**Percent Damage**

- 1-10%
- 10-30%
- 30-60%
- 60-90%
- 90-100%
- None



Overview map of the percent of damage to all heritage points in Deir ez-Zor as determined from satellite imagery analysis. The clustering of undamaged sites can be seen clearly in this map (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 1, 2017)



## Syrian Network For Human Rights Videos

Beginning on March 23, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) published previously unreleased videos on YouTube of combat damage inflicted on schools, bakeries, hospitals, marketplaces, and other types of infrastructure and civilian sites. ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the SNHR YouTube channel and archive videos that document heritage destruction. The following sites have been documented as damaged in the videos released during the current reporting period:

1. On January 22, 2018 SNHR published a video dated March 26, 2013 showing damage to the minaret of al-Hamza bin Abd al-Mutallab Mosque in al-Ghantu, Homs Governorate, as a result of reported SARG shelling.<sup>183</sup>
2. On January 24, 2018 SNHR published a video dated May 31, 2014 showing damage to Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque, reported to be the result of SARG aerial bombardment in al-Mleha, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>184</sup>

## SNHR Vital Facilities

On January 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) released a vital facilities report for December 2017. According to SNHR, there were 53 attacks against vital civilian facilities. The sites attacked include 8 mosques.<sup>185</sup>

- On December 5, 2017 reported Russian warplanes fired missiles at al-Hashish Mosque in al-Sha'fa, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, causing moderate damage to the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0223**
- On December 5, 2017 a reported US-led coalition airstrike hit a car near al-Tuma (al-Muflah) Mosque in al-Jarhi al-Sharqi, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, causing severe damage to the mosque and rendering it out of commission.
- On December 8, 2017 a reported Russian warplane fired a missile at al-Zarzour Mosque in Zarzour, Idlib Governorate, severely damaging the mosque and rendering it out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0226**
- On December 9 and December 13, 2017 reported Russian warplanes fired missiles at Tal al-Daman Village Mosque in Aleppo Governorate, destroying the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0227**
- On December 14, 2017 reported SARG warplanes shelled al-Kabir Mosque in Zamalka, Rif Dimashq Governorate, causing moderate damage to the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0232**
- On December 15, 2017 an IED exploded inside al-Kabir Mosque in Taldao, Homs Governorate, causing moderate damage to the mosque's interior. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0233**
- On December 18, 2017 reported Russian warplanes fired missiles at al-Bayyoud Village Mosque in Hama Governorate, almost completely destroying the mosque.

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<sup>183</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIPHu5T95O8>

<sup>184</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yh9TwSwq8cl>

<sup>185</sup> [http://sn4hr.org/wpcontent/pdf/english/53\\_attacks\\_on\\_vital\\_civilian\\_facilities\\_in\\_December\\_2017\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wpcontent/pdf/english/53_attacks_on_vital_civilian_facilities_in_December_2017_en.pdf)

## Heritage Timeline

- January 31, 2018 *Voice of America* published an article titled “**A Glimpse of the Beautiful Side of Syria**” (by June Soh). A Syrian immigrant in the U.S. opened a gallery to showcase Syrian heritage and support artisans (including refugees) by establishing a market for their products.  
<https://www.voanews.com/a/syrian-immigrants/4232623.html>
- January 30, 2018 *The Daily Beast* published an article titled “**The Marine Turned Prosecutor Busting Antiquities Thieves**” (by Katie Zavadski). A profile of Matthew Bogdanos of the Manhattan district attorney’s office, a former marine working to recover looted artifacts.  
<https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-marine-turned-prosecutor-busting-antiquities-thieves>
- January 29, 2018 Multiple media outlets reported on damage to the archaeological site of Ain Dara due to Turkish airstrikes on or before January 22, 2018.  
<https://hyperallergic.com/423867/ain-dara-temple-destroyed/>  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42858265>  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/29/turkish-bombing-damages-3000-year-old-temple-northern-syria/>  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-temple/syrian-government-says-turkish-shelling-damaged-ancient-temple-idUSKBN1FH08F>  
<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/-a-loss-as-great-as-palmyra-syrian-temple-of-ain-dara-severely-damaged-by-turkish-forces>  
<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2018/01/syria-temple-ain-dara-destroyed-archaeology/>  
<https://www.livescience.com/61569-airstrikes-syria-damage-temple.html>

- *Askanews* published an article titled “**Libia, appello su Twitter: la Medina di Tripoli sta morendo (Libya, appeal on Twitter: the City of Tripoli is dying).**” Activists behind a new campaign on Twitter (#saveoldcityTripoli) hope to bring attention to the deplorable state of many historic buildings in the Old City of Tripoli, which suffer from lack of maintenance and natural impacts, and are threatened by new construction.  
[http://www.askanews.it/esteri/2018/01/29/libia-appello-su-twitter-la-medina-di-tripoli-sta-morendo-pn\\_20180129\\_00046/](http://www.askanews.it/esteri/2018/01/29/libia-appello-su-twitter-la-medina-di-tripoli-sta-morendo-pn_20180129_00046/)
  - *The New York Times* published an article titled “**A Journey Into Iraqi Kurdistan**” (by Tim Neville). The author recounts a May 2017 trip to Iraqi Kurdistan, where he visited the sites of Mar Mattai Monastery and Lalish.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/29/travel/visiting-iraqi-kurdistan.html>
  - **Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “DAMAGE TO SYRIA’S HERITAGE – 29 JANUARY 2017.”  
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-29-january-2017/>
- January 27, 2018
- **DGAM** published a post titled “**Turkish aggression targets the Ain Dara temple in Efrin.**” The DGAM condemns recent Turkish airstrikes on the archaeological site of Ain Dara.  
<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2374>
  - *The Daily Beast* published an article titled “**Hey Babylon, Nineveh Wants Its Hanging Gardens Back: The Truth of an Ancient Wonder**” (by Allison McNearny). British scholar Stephanie Dalley argues that the Hanging Gardens of Babylon may actually have been built by the Assyrian king Sennacherib in Nineveh.  
<https://www.thedailybeast.com/hey-babylon-nineveh-wants-its-hanging-gardens-back-the-truth-of-an-ancient-wonder>
- January 26, 2018
- *Daily Sabah* published an article titled “**Istanbul police destroy smuggling ring planning to sell ancient Sumerian, Akkadian artifacts.**” Istanbul police report that they have detained nine members of a smuggling ring trying sell ancient and medieval artifacts allegedly obtained from the “PKK-linked Democratic Union Party (PYD) and Daesh-controlled land in Syria and Iraq and use the proceedings for the PYD terrorist group.”  
<https://www.dailysabah.com/history/2018/01/26/istanbul-police-destroy-smuggling-ring-planning-to-sell-ancient-sumerian-akkadian-artifacts>

January 24, 2018

*BBC News* published an article titled “**How historical Afrin became a prize worth a war**” (by Diana Darke). The author discusses the historical significance of Afrin Canton.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42788179>

- *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**A new era for heritage reproduction**” (by Anna Somers Cocks). On December 8, 2017 an international declaration called ReACH (Reproduction of Art and Cultural Heritage) on the digital recording, documenting and re-creation of works of art was launched at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A). The signatories are the V&A, UNESCO, the Smithsonian Institution, the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, the Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, the Warburg Institute in London, the Palace Museum in Beijing, the Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage at Yale University, and Factum Arte in Madrid.

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/feature/a-new-era-for-heritage-reproduction>

January 22, 2018

*BBC News* published an article titled “**Rebuilding Aleppo: Life beyond Syria's civil war**” (by Lyse Doucet). A discussion of the challenges facing rebuilding efforts in Aleppo.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42755045>

- *Al Jazeera* published an article titled “**Iraqi-Jewish archive triggers 'traumatic memories'**” (by Dalia Hatuqa). A collection of documents discovered in Baghdad by American troops in 2003 is the subject of controversy. Iraqis criticize the United States’ delay in repatriating the collection, while the descendants of Iraqi Jews argue that it will be inaccessible to their community if it is returned to Baghdad.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/iraqi-jewish-archive-triggers-traumatic-memories-180122153032515.html>

- *Euronews* published an article and video report titled “**Shops reopen in Aleppo market – or what's left of it.**” Aleppo’s Old Suq still has no water, electricity or telephone lines.

<http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/22/shops-reopen-in-aleppo-market-or-what-is-left-of-it>

January 21, 2018

*South China Morning Post* published an article titled “**Never mind the rubble and stench of death, Assad regime promotes Syria as a ‘tourist’ destination.**” The Syrian government is promoting travel to Aleppo, Palmyra and other destinations in Syria at the Fitur International Tourism Trade Fair in Madrid.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/20/world/middleeast/syria-tourism.html>

- *Al Araby* published an article titled “آثار العراق المنهوبة... طريق التهريب إلى (Iraq’s looted artifacts: A smuggling route to the United States passed through the United Arab Emirates).” A discussion of the recent case against Hobby Lobby for the smuggling of looted Iraqi artifacts in the United States. An investigation in Iraq has discovered a smuggling ring spanning from Iraq to the UAE and the U.S.  
<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/investigations/2018/1/21/-آثار-العراق-المنهوبة-طريق-التهريب-للولايات-المتحدة-يمر-عبر-الإمارات>
  - *Perspectives on History* published an article titled “**Reframing Indigeneity: The Case of Assyrians in Northern Mesopotamia**” (by Sargon George Donabed & Daniel Joseph Tower). The authors argue that during the conflict with ISIS in northern Iraq, “news reports and official statements from politicians and religious figures highlighted the plight of the region’s Christians, but characterizations of their ethno-cultural heritage did not include the fact that the majority of them were Assyrians.”  
<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/january-2018/reframing-indigeneity-the-case-of-assyrians-in-northern-mesopotamia>
- January 18, 2018
- The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities (ATPA)** published a post titled “**Stony sculpture found in al Omer field in Der al-Zor.**” The ATPA received a small, Assyrian-era sculpture that the Syrian Democratic Forces reportedly confiscated after it was illegally excavated in Deir ez-Zor. ASOR CHI was unable to verify the authenticity of the sculpture.  
<http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/stony-sculpture-found-in-al-omer-field-in-der-al-zor/>
- *The Adelaide Review* published an article titled “**Rebuilding Mosul’s cultural architecture**” (by Olivia Wells). A discussion of rebuilding efforts in Mosul with Priya Pavri, the country manager for Iraq for CADUS, a German emergency response NGO that works primarily in conflict areas.  
<https://www.adelaidereview.com.au/arts/rebuilding-mosuls-cultural-architecture/>
  - *Newsweek* published an article titled “**Hobby Lobby surrenders 245 more Iraq artifacts from smuggled cache of tablets and seals to federal government**” (by Kastalia Medrano). Hobby Lobby Stores voluntarily turned over 245 artifacts to federal prosecutors in New York, bringing the total number of artifacts surrendered to 3839 out of the agreed upon 5500.  
<http://www.newsweek.com/hobby-lobby-surrenders-245-more-smuggled-iraq-artifacts-federal-government-784388>

- January 14, 2018 *Al Sura* published an article titled “**Ancient Greek mosaic floor found near Syrian city of Hama in demining operations**” (by Ali al-Karmali). The Syrian Engineering Corp discovered a Byzantine-era mosaic floor while conducting a demining operation near Uqayrbat in Hama Governorate.  
<https://al-sura.com/ancient-greek-mosaic-floor-found-near-syrian-city-of-hama-in-demining-operations/>
- January 12, 2018 *BBC News* published a video report titled “**What’s left of Mosul?**” An overview of the destruction of the Old City of Mosul.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySTbhqj6hqU>
- January 11, 2018 *BBC News* published a video report titled “**Horror and hope: The artists defying IS terror.**” Artists in the Middle East create paintings, novels, films and soap operas in order to document the brutality of life under ISIS and remember their destroyed heritage.  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-42593574/horror-and-hope-the-artists-defying-is-terror>
- January 10, 2018 *Syria Deeply* published an article titled “**The Fate of Minorities in Post-ISIS Syria and Iraq**” (by Yousif Kalian). The author compares the situations of minority religious and cultural groups in Syria and Iraq.  
<https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2018/01/10/the-fate-of-minorities-in-post-isis-syria-and-iraq>
- January 9, 2018 U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Iraq published a press release titled “**United States to Provide Additional \$75 Million for Iraq Stabilization.**” According to a press release, the United States will provide \$75 million to “address the needs of vulnerable ethnic and religious minorities, especially those who have been victims of ISIS atrocities.”  
<https://iq.usembassy.gov/united-states-provide-additional-75-million-iraq-stabilization/>
- *Iraqi News* published an article titled “**Baghdad wants 100-year-old street on UNESCO heritage list**” (by Mohamed Mostafa). Iraq plans to nominate al-Rashid Street in Baghdad to the UNESCO World Heritage List.  
<https://www.iraqinews.com/features/baghdad-wants-100-year-old-street-unesco-heritage-list/>

January 8, 2018

*The Financial Tribune* published an article titled “**Support for Iranian Ancient Heritage Sites in Iraq.**” Iranian heritage authorities have expressed readiness to provide conservation and restoration services for three ancient sites located in Wasit Governorate, namely the Elamite sites of Soleiman Tappeh, Baksaieh and Tell Sab’at Khazir. These sites were located in Iran prior to changes to the border between Iran and Iraq in the 1970s.  
<https://financialtribune.com/articles/travel/79465/support-for-iranian-ancient-heritage-sites-in-iraq>

- *The National* published an article titled “**Farida Mohammed Ali and Lotfi Bouchnak on preserving the heritage of their homelands**” (by Saeed Saeed). Iraqi musicians work to preserve their country’s unique and ancient musical heritage.  
<https://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/music/farida-mohammed-ali-and-lotfi-bouchnak-on-preserving-the-heritage-of-their-homelands-1.693469>

- *Vice* published an article titled “**«Τα Αρχαία που Ληλατεί το ISIS Περνούν από την Ελλάδα» - Το Κυνήγι του Θησαυρού από τη Συρία στη Νέα Υόρκη** (‘**The artifacts looted by ISIS pass through Greece’ - Treasure hunt from Syria to New York**)” (by Kostas Koukoumakas). ASOR’s Michael Danti is interviewed regarding Greece’s position as a transit country in the looted antiquities trade.  
<https://www.vice.com/gr/article/7xew7z/ta-arxaia-poy-lehlatei-to-isis-pernoyn-apo-thn-ellada-to-kynhgi-toy-8hsayroy-apo-th-syria-sth-nea-yorkh>

January 6, 2018

*The Telegraph* published an article titled “**Jackhammers and unexploded bombs: Mosul residents forced to rebuild the city themselves after Isil**” (by Campbell McDiarmid). Mosul locals have begun to rebuild, largely without assistance from the Iraqi government.  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/06/jackhammers-unexploded-bombs-mosul-residents-forced-rebuild/>

January 5, 2018

*CNN* published an article titled “**Meet the scientists immortalizing African heritage in virtual reality**” (by Chris Giles). Concerned with the decay of African heritage sites, The Zamani Project, based at the University of Cape Town, uses lasers and drones to record sites and make three-dimensional, virtual reality-ready models.  
<http://www.cnn.com/2018/01/05/africa/preserving-heritage-african-sites-3-d/index.html>

- National Geographic* published an article titled “**Inside the 30-Year Quest for Babylon’s Ishtar Gate**” (by José Fuste Raga). The discovery of the Ishtar Gate at Babylon in 1899 by Robert Koldewey and Walter Andrae, two German Oriental Society archaeologists, is discussed.  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/archaeology-and-history/magazine/2017/11-12/history-babylon-ishtar-gate-quest/>
- January 2, 2018

*The Times* published an article titled “**Oxford team virtually reconstructs goddess al-Lat statue smashed by Isis**” (by Simon de Bruxelles). Technology developed by British researchers will help to virtually reconstruct hundreds of artifacts damaged or destroyed by extremists in Syria and Iraq.  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/oxford-team-virtually-reconstructs-goddess-al-lat-stature-smashed-by-isis-gf2r2j277>
- News Deeply* published an article titled “**In Homs, Assad Accused of Using Military for Urban Planning Scheme**” (by Sarah Najm Aldeen). Urban activists and residents in Homs say Syrian government forces have intentionally destroyed traditional buildings in the city center as part of a controversial urban planning scheme called ‘Homs Dream.’  
[https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2018/01/02/in-homs-assad-accused-of-using-military-for-urban-planning-scheme?utm\\_source=Syria+Deeply&utm\\_campaign=77455322a3-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_01\\_09&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_d84f3fd103-77455322a3-117390333](https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2018/01/02/in-homs-assad-accused-of-using-military-for-urban-planning-scheme?utm_source=Syria+Deeply&utm_campaign=77455322a3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_01_09&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_d84f3fd103-77455322a3-117390333)
- Apollo Magazine* published an article titled “**Do we still need UNESCO?**” (by Maxwell L. Anderson & Simon Thurley). The authors debate the effectiveness of UNESCO in protecting cultural heritage.  
<https://www.apollo-magazine.com/do-we-still-need-unesco/>
- January 1, 2018

*Al Jazeera* published an article titled “**Libya's shrines: Cultural legacy under threat**” (by Mahmoud Abdelwahed). Extremists continue to threaten Libya’s historic shrines.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/libyas-shrines-cultural-legacy-threat-180102065220608.html>
- Harvard Semitic Museum** will house an exhibition titled “**From Stone to Silicone: Recasting Mesopotamian Monuments.**” This exhibit will showcase casts of reliefs from Assyrian palace walls.  
<https://semiticmuseum.fas.harvard.edu/stone-silicone>
- December 30, 2017

*El Biro* published an article titled “**أثار ليبية بلا أثر (Libya's Archaeology Disappearing Without a Trace).**” A discussion of the trade in looted antiquities in Libya.  
<http://elbiro.net/index.php/2017/12/30/raised-without-trace/>