

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

S-IZ-100-17-CA021

November 2017 Monthly Report — November 1-30, 2017

Michael D. Danti, Marina Gabriel, Susan Penacho, William Reynolds, Allison Cuneo, Kyra Kaercher, Darren Ashby, Gwendolyn Kristy, Jamie O’Connell, Nour Halabi

Report coordinated by: Marina Gabriel

Table of Contents:

Other Key Points	2
Military and Political Context	4
Incident Reports: Syria	14
Incident Reports: Iraq	165
Incident Reports: Libya	185
Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis	201
Heritage Timeline	208

¹ 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
 - Illegal construction damages Bab al-Nasr in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0198**
 - Reported shelling by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham militants damaged Kafr Naha Village Mosque in Kafr Naha, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-207**
 - New video footage and DigitalGlobe satellite imagery show Turkish forces are establishing an outpost at the archaeological site of Deir Semaan in the Jebel Semaan, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0212**
 - Archaeologists are working to restore al-Mashatiyya Mosque in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0213**
 - Reported Russian shelling damaged Burj Sabna Mosque in Burj Sabna, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0215**
- Damascus Governorate
 - An historic house collapsed in Old Damascus, Damascus Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0197**
 - Reported shelling by Syrian opposition groups damaged Abd ibn Rahwa Mosque in Bab Mousalla Neighborhood, Damascus, Damascus Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0217**
- Daraa Governorate
 - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage to the Roman Theater in Daraa, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0219**
- Deir ez-Zor Governorate
 - Reported SARG airstrikes damaged al-Taas Mosque in al-Taas, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0196**
 - New video footage damage to an unnamed mosque in the neighborhood of Jbela, Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0199**
 - Pro-regime forces liberated the Armenian Holy Martyrs Church and Museum in Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0200**
 - Reported SARG airstrikes damaged al-Fareeh Mosque in al-Jalaa, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0201**
 - Satellite imagery shows significant damage to the archaeological site of Circesium in al-Buseira, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0202**
 - A SARG airstrike damaged al-Tawheed Mosque in al-Asharah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0205**
 - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage to a structure protecting a section of the archaeological site of Mari in Tell Hariri, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0208**
 - Newly released video footage shows damage to al-Hadi Mosque in al-Asharah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0211**
 - Reported Russian shelling damaged al-Tawhid Mosque in the village of al-Ghabra, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0214**
 - Reported SARG airstrikes partially damaged Omar Bin al-Khattab Mosque in the town of al-Kheshkiya, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0216**
 - New photographs show damage to al-Rahman Mosque in al-Bukamal, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0218**

- Video footage shows damage to al-Kabir Mosque in al-Abbas, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0220**
- Homs Governorate
 - Reported SARG artillery damaged Othman bin Affan Mosque in Talbiseh, Homs Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0204**
 - Reported SARG artillery damaged Abu Bakr al-Sadiq Mosque in Talbiseh, Homs Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0206**
- Idlib Governorate
 - New video footage shows damage to the archaeological site of al-Bara, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0146 UPDATE**
 - New video footage shows the extent of the damage to al-Kabir Mosque in Bdama, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0170 UPDATE**
- Quneitra
 - New video footage shows internally displaced Syrians living in ancient ruins in al-Bariqa, Quneitra Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0130 UPDATE**
- Raqqa Governorate
 - A newly released photograph shows the condition of Imam al-Nawawi Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0169 UPDATE**
- Rif Dimashq Governorate
 - A reported SARG airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Kafr Batna, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0203**
 - Reported SARG shelling damaged al-Khoulani Mosque in Hamouriya, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0209**
 - Artillery fire reportedly damaged al-Qadim Mosque in Hamouriya, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0210**
 - Reported SARG airstrikes damaged Abd al-Raouf Mosque in Douma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0221**

Iraq

- As-Sulaymaniyah Governorate
 - An earthquake damaged Sherwana Castle and Museum in Kalar, As-Sulaymaniah Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0079**
- Dohuk Governorate
 - A Christian cemetery was vandalized in Inishki, Dohuk Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0080**
- Ninawa Governorate
 - Mart Barbara Church is currently undergoing restoration in Karamlish, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0078**
 - Fraternité in Irak is carrying out restoration work at the Monastery of Mar Behnam and Mart Sarah in Khidr Ilyas, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0081**

Libya

- Cyrenaica
 - Qasr al-Manar in Benghazi, Cyrenaica has been given to the Libyan Department of Antiquities for reuse as a museum. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0036**
 - The Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) discovered a shallow burial of a possible opposition fighter in the archaeological site of Berenice in Berenice, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0037**
 - The Libyan Department of Antiquities has started the first phase of a restoration project on Qasr al-Birka, Benghazi, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0038**

- The Libyan Department of Antiquities has begun a campaign to conserve the mosaics of Qasr Libya, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0039**
- Tripolitania
 - Islamic extremists damaged al-Sheikh Radiya Mosque in Sidi Khalifa, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0040**

Military and Political Context

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

1. Homs Governorate:
 - On November 1, an Israeli airstrike targeted a factory in the town of Hisya. The Syrian army responded by firing a surface-to-air missile at the aircraft. Israel has repeatedly targeted reported military installations in Syria as their concerns rise over Iranian influence in the country.²
 - On November 16, US-backed Syrian opposition forces from the Maghaweir al-Thawra killed nine ISIS fighters and destroyed several ISIS vehicles following clashes near al-Tanf Garrison.³
2. Deir ez-Zor Governorate:
 - On November 3, the Syrian regime announced that their forces had liberated the city of Deir ez-Zor from ISIS. SARG and pro-regime forces, backed by Russian airstrikes, continued to advance towards ISIS-held al-Bukamal (aka Abu Kamal). Members of the Iraqi-Shia militia known as the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) announced that they would be taking part in the fight for al-Bukamal.⁴
 - On November 4, an ISIS car bombing struck a large group of displaced civilians in the SDF-held eastern bank of the Euphrates River killing at least 75 people.⁵
 - On November 7, Syrian state media announced that SARG and pro-regime allies launched an assault against ISIS-held al-Bukamal, the final major territory held by the group in Syria.⁶
 - On November 8–9, pro-regime forces, backed by Russia and Iran, captured the key town of al-Bukamal. Iraqi Shia militia members reportedly deployed along the Syria-Iraq border near al-Bukamal, launching a “new front” against ISIS.⁷

² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-usa/supreme-leader-khamenei-says-u-s-is-irans-number-one-enemy-idUSKBN1D211H> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41844727> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html>

³ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1376429/coalition-partner-forces-kill-9-isis-members-in-southern-syria/source/GovDelivery/>

⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-deiralzor/syria-declares-victory-over-islamic-state-in-deir-al-zor-idUSKBN1D30IE> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-deiralzor/syrian-army-takes-full-control-of-deir-al-zor-from-islamic-state-observatory-idUSKBN1D22R7> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41856330> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-syria/iraqi-shiite-militia-says-will-fight-is-in-syria-border-town-idUSKBN1D408H> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html>

⁵ <https://www.yahoo.com/news/least-75-dead-attack-syrias-deir-ezzor-toll-115258039.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/post-isis-insurgency-looms-in-northern.html>

⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-islamic-state/syrian-army-starts-assault-on-last-is-stronghold-idUSKBN1D81NM>

⁷ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41918913>

- On November 10, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that ISIS had recaptured half of the city.⁸
- On November 10–12, the SOHR reported that Russian aerial bombardment struck two displacement camps and surrounding territory in Deir ez-Zor Governorate, killed at least 50 civilians.⁹
- On November 12, ISIS militants recaptured al-Bukamal (aka Abu Kamal) following a surprise ambush by the group that forced pro-regime forces to retreat.¹⁰
- On November 13, six ISIS fighters of Chechen origin, possibly disguised in Russian military uniforms, launched an attack against a military airbase outside the city of Deir ez-Zor, killing at least 13 pro-regime fighters and destroying at least five SARG warplanes.¹¹
- On November 12–13, the SDF captured the towns of Buseira and Shuhail along the Khabour River Valley from ISIS.¹²
- On November 15, ISIS fighters, possibly disguised in Russian military uniforms, assassinated a “high-ranking officer” in the Syrian Arab Army Tiger Forces outside a courthouse in the city of al-Mayadin.¹³
- On November 16, the Russian news agencies reported that Russian “long-range bombers” struck ISIS targets in al-Bukamal.¹⁴
- On November 17, Syrian state news agency SANA reported that an ISIS car bombing struck a campsite for IDPs near the city of Deir ez-Zor, killing at least 20 people and wounding 30 more.¹⁵
- On November 19, a Hezbollah media outlet reported that SARG and pro-regime forces captured al-Bukamal from ISIS, leaving only a few villages under ISIS control.¹⁶
- On November 26, dozens of civilians were killed in the village of al-Shafah, reportedly as a result of Russian aerial bombardment. Russia denied that its warplanes were involved in the airstrikes.¹⁷

⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-albu-kamal/islamic-state-takes-back-half-of-syrian-town-from-syrian-army-allies-observatory-idUSKBN1DA192>

⁹ <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2017/11/12/At-least-50-dead-in-artillery-fire-Russian-strikes-in-Syria-New-toll-.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-islamic-state/iranian-backed-militias-routed-in-last-syrian-militant-stronghold-idUSKBN1DD02I>

¹¹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

¹² <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

¹³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

¹⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-airstrike/russian-long-range-bombers-strike-islamic-state-targets-in-syria-agencies-idUSKBN1DH1XC>

¹⁵ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/syrian-civilians-killed-isil-attack-deir-az-zor-171117162421568.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-islamic-state/syrian-army-allies-take-back-albu-kamal-from-islamic-state-idUSKBN1DJ0G6> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

¹⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42142579>

3. Quneitra Governorate:

- On November 3, the Syrian opposition group Jaish Mohammad Operations Room (linked to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)) launched an attack against SARG-held territory in Quneitra. The attack included a car bombing that struck the majority-Druze village of Hader, located near the Golan Heights. The car bombing prompted the Israeli military to announce its readiness to protect the village out of “commitment to the Druze population.” Israeli Druze have advocated on behalf of their Syrian brethren, calling on the Israeli government to come to the aid to Hader.¹⁸
- On November 11–19, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) shot down an “unidentified reconnaissance drone” over the Golan Heights. The IDF later fired “warning shots” against an ongoing pro-regime “fortification” located along the Golan Heights.¹⁹

4. Aleppo Governorate:

- On October 24–November 5, Turkish-backed Syrian opposition groups “announced their reconstructing under the ‘Ministry of Defense’ of the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) based in Turkey.” Under the new organization, the opposition groups will reportedly “disband and merge into three new ‘corps’ - the National Army Corps, the Sultan Murad Corps, and the Levant Front Corps.” Border crossings will also reportedly fall under the control of the SIG. Meanwhile, a representative from Syrian opposition group Ahrar al-Sham stated the its fighters in Aleppo Governorate would merge “under the Levant Front Corps.”²⁰
- On November 1, anti-YPG group Harakat al-Qiyam carried out an assassination attempt against the leader of the Manbij Military Council, Mohammed Abu Adel in Manbij.²¹
- On November 3–5, residents in the city of Manbij and neighboring towns “held demonstrations and closed shops to protest a recent SDF conscription law,” agreed upon by the SDF legislative branch and local tribal elders on November 2. Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces held demonstrations in “solidarity” with Manbij in Jarablus and in areas west of Manbij. The SDF later sent reinforcements from Ain al-Arab to Manbij, reportedly to force shop owners to reopen. The conscription law would reportedly begin in 2018 and apply to Manbij residents ages 18–30. Reports of forced military conscription have grown in Manbij over recent months, with civilians reportedly being arrested by the SDF for military service.²²
- On November 7–16, Syrian opposition group, and former affiliate of HTS, Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zinki clashed with HTS after HTS captured Nour al-Din al-Zinki command center. Between November 12–17, both groups agreed to two “limited ceasefires.”²³

¹⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/israeli-military-says-ready-to-protect-druze-village-in-syria-idUSKBN1D3173> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html> ; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-signals-it-is-not-bound-by-us-russia-ceasefire-deal-in-syria/>

¹⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

²⁰ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html>

²¹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/post-isis-insurgency-looms-in-northern.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html>

²² <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/post-isis-insurgency-looms-in-northern.html> ; <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=77886> ; <http://en.aleppo24.com/civilians-in-manbij-are-protesting-against-the-practices-of-the-sdf-including-the-forced-recruitment-program> ; <https://www.zamanalwsl.net/news/article/82551/>

²³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

- On November 13, reported Russian airstrikes struck a market in the town of Atarib, killing more than 50 people including 15 children.²⁴
 - On November 15–16, SDF spokesman Talal Silo reportedly defected to the town of Jarablus, located inside the Operation Euphrates Shield (OES) Zone currently held by Turkey.²⁵
 - On November 19–20, Syrian Kurdish YPG forces shelled a Turkish observation point in the town of Darat Ezza.²⁶
 - On November 21, the Syrian Kurdish YPG accused Turkish forces of “aggression and escalation” in the region of Afrin. The YPG currently controls the region, however Turkey has sent forces over the Syrian border to areas adjacent to Afrin. Both sides have reported aggression from the other, including the firing of artillery and machine guns.²⁷
5. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
- During the reporting period, aerial bombardment and shelling continued in the area of Eastern Ghouta resulting in high civilian casualties and extensive destruction to already heavily destroyed neighborhoods in the area.²⁸
 - On November 9, the UN warned that 400,000 civilians in Eastern Ghouta face “complete catastrophe” due to the continual blockage of aid delivery.²⁹
 - On November 12, humanitarian aid reached the town of Douma in Eastern Ghouta for the first time in nearly three months. The UN continues to warn of the dire humanitarian situation in Eastern Ghouta, calling for the evacuation of residents.³⁰

²⁴ <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/dozens-reported-be-killed-air-strike-syrian-market-1386002471> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/13/massacre-suspected-russian-forces-shelling-al-atareb-city-aleppo-governorate-november-13-2/> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41968118>

²⁵ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

²⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

²⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/syrian-kurdish-ypg-accuses-turkey-of-afrin-aggression-idUSKBN1DL1CT> ; <http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/20112017> ; https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/kurdish-led-force-blames-turkey-for-attack-in-northern-syria/2017/11/21/718ad80a-ced7-11e7-a87b-47f14b73162a_story.html

²⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/syrian-civilians-killed-isil-attack-deir-az-zor-171117162421568.html> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/18/world/middleeast/syria-de-escalation-zones-atarib.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42130478> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/27/48946/> ; <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syria-civil-war-east-ghouta-damascus-bashar-al-assad-siege-tactics-starvation-bombing-a8075666.html> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/russia-seeks-two-day-ceasefire-in-damascus-suburb-dozens-killed-by-air-strikes-idUSKBN1DR2DK> ; <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/11/syria-banned-soviet-made-cluster-munitions-fuel-humanitarian-catastrophe-in-eastern-ghouta/>

²⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-egeland/syrias-eastern-ghouta-faces-complete-catastrophe-u-n-idUSKBN1D91P2> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42186064>

³⁰ <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2017/11/12/Red-Cross-Aid-enters-devastated-rebel-town-near-Syria-capital.html>

- On November 14–16, Islamist opposition group Faylaq al-Rahman and Salafi-Jihadist group Ahrar al-Sham carried out a new offensive, attacking a Military Vehicles Administration building in Harasta, Eastern Ghouta. The building was being used to strike opposition-held areas of Eastern Ghouta. The opposition forces captured at least half the base and “a large number of weapons and other supplies.” Pro-regime forces later retook control of the base.³¹
 - On November 15, SARG and Russian forces unleashed a barrage of airstrikes and shelling against opposition-held areas of Eastern Ghouta.³²
 - On November 28–29, a Russian-proposed ceasefire in Eastern Ghouta was established, during which a Syrian government delegation arrived in Geneva. However violations of the ceasefire were reported.³³
6. Raqqa Governorate:
- On November 3, an Iranian senior official announced that pro-regime forces would soon launch operations to “liberate” the city of Raqqa and other areas held by the US-backed SDF.³⁴
 - On November 13, the BBC reported that organized convoys, under secrecy, had transported as many as 4,000 ISIS militants from Raqqa to other parts of Syria. The US-led Coalition later admitted that a deal had been reached, but asserted that foreign fighters had not been allowed to leave.³⁵
 - On November 15–20, the SDF began the handover of local security operations to the Raqqa Internal Security Forces (RISF) in the Raqqa districts of Mashalab, Jazrah, and Tayar. According to ISW, the RISF operates under the control of the Raqqa Civil Council (RCC).³⁶
7. Idlib Governorate:
- On November 6, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham’s (HTS) Civil Services Administration handed over all public services in Idlib Governorate to the “newly-formed National Salvation Government.” The group holds ties to HTS. The National Salvation Government rivals the exiled Syrian Interim Government (SIG), based in Turkey.³⁷
8. Hasakah Governorate:
- On November 9, the SDF captured the ISIS-held town of Markadah, located along the Khabur River Valley. Markadah was the last major ISIS stronghold in the governorate.³⁸

³¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/russia-syria-armies-step-up-attacks-on-damascus-enclave-rebels-idUSKBN1DF2HK> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

³² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/russia-syria-armies-step-up-attacks-on-damascus-enclave-rebels-idUSKBN1DF2HK>

³³ <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-ceasefire/truce-near-damascus-mostly-being-observed-before-syria-talks-begin-idUKKBN1DT1CN> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42156499> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ceasefire/rebel-area-near-damascus-hit-by-heavy-shelling-despite-two-day-truce-idUSKBN1DT1D1> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/russia-seeks-two-day-ceasefire-in-damascus-suburb-dozens-killed-by-air-strikes-idUSKBN1DR2DK>

³⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-october-24.html>

³⁵ http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/raqqas_dirty_secret

³⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html> ; <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1378234/internal-security-forces-assume-responsibility-for-raqqa-neighborhoods/source/GovDelivery/>

³⁷ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

³⁸ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/11/syria-situation-report-november-7-20.html>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of al-Bukamal, Deir ez-Zor, and Shaddadi.³⁹
- On November 1, Syrian opposition representatives “rejected a Russian-sponsored initiative to reach a political settlement to the civil war.”⁴⁰
- On November 5, the Syrian army declared victory against ISIS in Syria. Clashes continue between SARG and ISIS fighters in al-Bukamal.⁴¹
- On November 12, the US and Russia issued a joint statement stating that there was “no military solution” to the ongoing conflict in Syria, following a brief meeting between Presidents Trump and Putin in Vietnam.⁴²
- On November 13, Amnesty International published a report titled “**Syria: ‘Surrender or starve’ strategy displacing thousands amounts to crimes against humanity.**” According to Amnesty, under SARG and to an extent Syrian opposition forces, Syrian civilian populations have suffered under “horrific sieges,” aerial bombardment, unlawful killings, and forced displacement, which “constitutes crimes against humanity.”⁴³
- On November 20, the head of the High Negotiations Committee (HNC), Syria’s main opposition bloc, Riyad Hijab resigned. The resignation occurred one day prior to a meeting in Riyadh between factions in Syria. Russia welcomed the news of Riyad’s resignation, describing Hijab as a “radically minded” Syrian opposition figure and described the move as beneficial to upcoming negotiations.⁴⁴
- On November 20, Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted Syrian president Bashar al-Assad for talks in Moscow.⁴⁵
- On November 24, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi announced his country’s intention to aid in the reconstruction of Syria.⁴⁶
- On November 25, Turkey announced that US President Donald Trump had promised to stop arming the Syrian Kurdish YPG.⁴⁷
- On November 28, Turkey suggested that the country could “expand [their] military mission” to include two other Syrian governorates.⁴⁸

³⁹ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1360652](#), [1361914](#), [1363564](#), [1363113](#), [1369776](#), [1370023](#), [1376600](#), [1380575](#), [1380227](#), [1385000](#)

⁴⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-oppositio/syrian-opposition-rejects-russia-sponsored-peace-initiative-idUSKBN1D13UU>

⁴¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-islamic-state/syria-declares-victory-over-islamic-state-idUSKBN1D91QJ>

⁴² <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/11/12/donald-trump-vladimir-putin-agree-no-military-solution-war-syria/>

⁴³ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/11/syria-surrender-or-starve-strategy-displacing-thousands-amounts-to-crimes-against-humanity/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/riyad-hijab-quits-head-syrian-opposition-hnc-171120183933166.html> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-hnc-russia/russia-says-retreat-of-syrian-opposition-figures-good-for-peace-idUSKBN1DL0P0>

⁴⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-putin-assad/russias-putin-hosts-assad-in-fresh-drive-for-syria-peace-deal-idUSKBN1DL0D5>

⁴⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-china/china-says-it-will-make-efforts-on-syria-reconstruction-idUSKBN1D011S>

⁴⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42118567>

⁴⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkey-suggests-plan-to-extend-military-mission-in-syria-to-afirin-aleppo-idUSKBN1DS2MP>

- On November 30, the US-led Coalition announced that more than 400 US Marines would leave Syria following the recapture of the city of Raqqa. The number of US troops in Syria and Iraq remains unknown.⁴⁹
- On November 30, the UN announced that it was extending the current round of Syria talks through December 15, 2017.⁵⁰

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

1. As Sulaymaniya Governorate:
 - On November 13, an earthquake struck a large area along the Iraq-Iran border, with the epicenter being recorded near the town of Ezgeleh, Iran. At least 407 people were killed and 6,000 injured in Iran. On the Iraqi side of the border, at least eight people were killed and another 535 injured.⁵¹
2. Al Anbar Governorate:
 - On November 2, Iraqi forces captured the Akkas gas field from ISIS. The gas field, which has not been developed, is located near the Syrian border and is operated by Korea Gas Company.⁵²
 - On November 3, Iraqi forces, including units from the Iraqi Army, Counter Terrorism Services, Sunni tribal groups, and Shia Popular Mobilization Front (PMF), liberated the city of al-Qaim from ISIS and captured the border crossing with Syria.⁵³
 - On November 11, Iraqi forces launched an offensive to recapture the last ISIS-held town of Rawa.⁵⁴
 - On November 16, Iraqi forces captured Rawa from ISIS. According to the BBC, “Rawa was one of a number of towns on both sides of the Iraqi-Syrian border which IS had designated part of its ‘Euphrates Province’, which it had used to transfer fighters, weapons and goods between the two countries.”⁵⁵
3. Kirkuk Governorate:
 - On November 5, two suicide bombings struck the city of Kirkuk, killing at least five people and wounding more than 20. The bombings reportedly targeted a Shia mosque. No group took responsibility for the attack.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42186144> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-usa-military/more-than-400-u-s-troops-leaving-syria-coalition-idUSKBN1DU2AZ>

⁵⁰ <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2017/11/30/UN-extends-Syria-round-for-two-more-weeks-presidency-not-yet-on-table.html>

⁵¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/13/world/middleeast/iran-iraq-earthquake.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41972338> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-quake/strong-earthquake-hits-iraq-and-iran-killing-more-than-400-idUSKBN1DC0VZ>

⁵² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-gas/iraqi-forces-capture-akkas-gas-field-from-islamic-state-minister-idUSKBN1D21UL>

⁵³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-islamicstate/iraqi-forces-enter-al-qaim-in-final-offensive-on-islamic-state-held-territory-idUSKBN1D30MW> ; <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1362930/iraqi-forces-liberate-qaim-key-border-crossing/source/GovDelivery/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-syria/iraqi-forces-launch-offensive-to-recapture-last-town-in-islamic-state-control-idUSKBN1DB050> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41953300>

⁵⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42026801>

⁵⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-kirkuk/two-suicide-attacks-in-iraqs-kirkuk-kill-at-least-five-idUSKBN1D50MO>

- On November 11, an Iraqi official announced the discovery of a mass grave, thought to contain the remains of up to 400 people killed by ISIS, near Hawija. Iraqi forces recaptured the area in October 2017.⁵⁷
- 4. Ninawa Governorate:
 - On November 2, the United Nations released a report detailing ISIS atrocities in Mosul that amount to “international crimes.” According to the UN, ISIS fighters executed at least 741 Iraqi civilians and used thousands more as human shields. The report also details the forcible recruitment of young boys.⁵⁸
- 5. Salah ad Din Governorate:
 - On November 21, a suicide truck bomb struck a majority-Turkmen area in the town of Tuz Khurmatu, killing at least 20 people and wounding 40 more. No group claimed immediate responsibility for the attack.⁵⁹
- 6. Baghdad Governorate:
 - On November 27, a suicide bombing struck a market area of al-Nahrawan, killing an undetermined number of people. No group took immediate responsibility for the attack.⁶⁰

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Baaj, Beiji, Hawija, Qaim, Qayyarah, Ramadi, Rawa, Rutbah, and Tuz.⁶¹
- On November 1, Iraqi Kurdish President Masoud Barzani departed his office leaving Iraqi Kurdish Prime Minister and Barzani’s nephew Nechirvan Barzani as the leading power in the Kurdish autonomous region.⁶²
- On November 6, the Iraqi Supreme Federal Court ruled that no region or province can secede from the country following the Kurdish bid for independence.⁶³
- On November 20, Iraq’s Supreme Federal Court ruled that the September 25 Kurdish independence referendum was unconstitutional. Therefore any results of the referendum were void.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ <http://time.com/5020764/mass-graves-iraq/>

⁵⁸ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx> ; [http://www.uniraq.org/images/factsheets-reports/Mosul-report%2017Oct2016-10Jul201731%20October 2017.pdf](http://www.uniraq.org/images/factsheets-reports/Mosul-report%2017Oct2016-10Jul201731%20October%202017.pdf) ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/02/world/middleeast/mosul-atrocities-islamic-state.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41851283>

⁵⁹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-attacks/truck-bomb-in-northern-iraq-kills-at-least-20-idUSKBN1DL1JZ> ; <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/1de367c3-eecc-478b-b559-61f56a366369> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42071118>

⁶⁰ <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/suicide-bombers-attack-baghdad-market-killing-8-police-1780732> ; <https://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/45-people-killed-injured-suicide-attack-southeastern-baghdad/>

⁶¹ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1360652](#), [1361914](#), [1363564](#), [1363113](#), [1369776](#), [1370023](#), [1376600](#), [1380575](#), [1380227](#), [1385000](#)

⁶² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-kurds-barzani/kurdish-leader-departs-leaving-nephew-faced-with-reconciliation-idUSKBN1D14FJ>

⁶³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-kurds/iraqcourt-rules-no-region-can-secede-after-kurdish-independence-bid-idUSKBN1D617Q>

⁶⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-kurds/iraqi-federal-court-rules-kurdish-referendum-unconstitutional-idUSKBN1DK0Q6>

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

1. Tripolitania:

- During the reporting period, Libyan factions loyal to the late-Muammar Gaddafi cut the water supply to Tripoli and demanded the release of militia leader Mabrouk Ehnaish.⁶⁵
- On November 4, the Saladist-led armed group known as the Special Deterrence Force (Rada) arrested organizers of a “Comic Con” festival in Tripoli, citing indecency. Rada has expanded its power under the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA).⁶⁶
- On November 12, the Libya’s National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), a local human rights group, reported the discovery of 28 bodies with “bullet wounds and torture marks” in the town of Alhira, located 37 miles southwest of Tripoli. According to NCHR, those killed were fighters opposed to government-aligned coalition forces who had been arrested and summarily killed.⁶⁷
- On November 28, attackers set fire to the interior of the Sheikha Radiya Mosque, a prominent historic center for the Sufi community in Tripoli.⁶⁸

2. Cyrenaica:

- On November 9, the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by Khalifa Haftar expelled Islamist fighters from the district of Khreibish in Benghazi, one of the districts held by the group.⁶⁹
- On November 29, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that 36 bodies of executed men found in October near the eastern Libyan town of al-Abyar appeared to have been “summarily executed” by armed groups loyal to the LNA.⁷⁰

3. Fezzan:

- On November 20, medical staff in the city of Sabha suspended work for 10 days in protest over poor security following the kidnapping by unknown persons of Salem al-Selhab, a doctor in the Sabha Medical Center surgical department.⁷¹

⁶⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-tripoli/libya-pressing-group-to-restore-water-supply-to-capital-idUSKBN1DS1RB>

⁶⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-comics/libyan-salafist-led-force-breaks-up-comic-festival-for-indecency-idUSKBN1D40MW>

⁶⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/nearly-30-bodies-found-after-clashes-near-libyan-capital-activists-idUSKBN1DC0SI>

⁶⁸ <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/11/28/sufi-mosque-attacked-in-tripoli/>

⁶⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/east-libyan-forces-make-new-push-to-end-islamist-resistance-in-benghazi-idUSKBN1D92ZT>

⁷⁰ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/lna-linked-groups-appear-responsible-for-east-libya-killings-hrw-idUSKBN1DT3CL>

⁷¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-health/health-staff-in-southern-libya-strike-after-doctors-kidnapping-idUSKBN1DK1T4>

Other Key Points:

- On November 14, CNN released a report detailing the ongoing human trafficking in Libya, releasing video footage in which migrants are being sold at auctions. According to CNN, due to the recent “clampdown by the Libyan coastguard” on boats going out to sea, smugglers are left with a backlog of “would-be passengers.” These “would-be passengers” are likely the people seen in the crude video footage. The video report resulted in France’s ambassador to the UN urging new sanctions by the UN Security Council against people involved in human trafficking in Libya.⁷²

Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:

- On November 25, up to 30 attackers killed at least 305 people at a Sufi mosque in Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula. Survivors of the attack reported that the attackers carried ISIS flags.⁷³

⁷² <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/11/14/africa/libya-migrant-auctions/index.html> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/11/considers-sanctions-against-libya-slave-trade-171128183838460.html>

⁷³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42122809>

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 15-0146 UPDATE

Report Date: November 21, 2017

Site Name: al-Bara (البارة); al-Bara - Pyramid Tomb 1 (Western Pyramid Tomb)

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Bara, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Al-Bara has the most extensive ruins of all the Dead Cities in Aleppo and Idlib, consisting of at least five churches (5th–6th century CE), three monasteries, several villas, two pyramid tombs, and a hypogeum. The town remained occupied even after the Arab conquest. Crusaders conquered the area in the 11th century, but lost al-Bara to Mamluk forces in the mid-12th century.⁷⁴ An earthquake in 1157 destroyed much of the town.⁷⁵

Site Date: 4th–12th century CE

Incident Summary: New video footage shows damage to the site of al-Bara.

Incident Source and Description: On November 6, 2017 TRT World published a video report with footage of damage to the site of al-Bara.⁷⁶ The report includes images of graffiti on at least two buildings at the site, as well as the destruction of the lid of a sarcophagus in the western pyramid tomb. Damage to the walls and at least one looting pit are also present.

Damage to al-Bara has been reported on several previous occasions. In May 2015 APSA reported the destruction of three of the five sarcophagi contained in the pyramid tomb.⁷⁷ The footage published by TRT indicates one of the remaining sarcophagi has since been damaged.

For previous damage to al-Bara, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 17-0097 in June 2017 Monthly Report, SHI 15-0146 in Weekly Report 65–66, SHI 14-0101 in Weekly Report 20, SHI 14-0094 in Weekly Report 18, and SHI 14-0081 in Weekly Report 15.**

Pattern: Vandalism; Illegal excavation; Reuse of ancient/historic structures (non-combatants).

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

Sources:

⁷⁴ Burns 2009: 71–74.

⁷⁵ <https://archnet.org/authorities/6468/sites/14890>

⁷⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSfJULXwtaAk>

⁷⁷ <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/idlib-dead-cities-in-northern-syria-destruction-of-the-byzantine-tombs-sar-cophagi-in-el-bara-photos-before-and-after/>

Online Reporting:

APSA:

<http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/idlib-dead-cities-in-northern-syria-destruction-of-the-byzantine-tombs-sarcophagi-in-el-bara-photos-before-and-after/>

TRT World: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSfULXwtaAk>

Scholarly:

ArchNet: <https://archnet.org/authorities/6468/sites/14890>

Burns, R. (2009) *Monuments of Syria*. London: I.B. Tauris. 71-74.



Previous damage to sarcophagi in pyramid tomb (APSA 2011; May 9, 2015)



Video still of graffiti and new damage to sarcophagus inside the western pyramid tomb at al-Bara (TRT World; November 6, 2017)



Video still of severe damage to sarcophagi inside western pyramid tomb at al-Bara (TRT World; November 6, 2017)



Video still of graffiti on walls of ruin at al-Bara (TRT World; November 6, 2017)



Video still of graffiti on walls of ruin at al-Bara (TRT World; November 6, 2017)



Video still of graffiti on walls of ruin at al-Bara (TRT World; November 6, 2017)

SHI 16-0130 UPDATE

Report Date: November 24, 2017

Site Name: Old Bariqa Town (Buraykah; Breikeh; Briga; بلدة بريقة القديمة)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Bariqa, Quneitra Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Bariqa contains the ruins of many Roman and Byzantine-era buildings, although the site may have been occupied as early as the Hellenistic era.⁷⁸ Several basalt churches and other buildings (including a Roman-era well) are scattered throughout the area.⁷⁹ Some of the remains of buildings are carved with Greek inscriptions, ornate decorations, and early Christian symbols. Building material from the site was re-used by ethnic Circassians who inhabited the area in the 19th-century CE. According to Schumacher, Bariqa was “one of the largest and best of the Circassian villages at the northern foot of the Tell el-'Akkasheh.”⁸⁰

Site Date: Hellenistic through Byzantine-era ruins reoccupied in the 19th-century CE.

Incident Summary: New video footage shows internally displaced Syrians living in ancient ruins.

Incident Source and Description: On November 24, 2017 SMART News Agency published a video reporting that internally displaced Syrians continue to live in the ruins of ancient houses in the village of Bariqa in Quneitra Governorate.⁸¹ In the video, it is stated that IDPs living in Bariqa come from Damascus, Quneitra, and Daraa Governorates.

On August 9 and August 11, 2016 SMART News Agency published two videos of internally displaced Syrians living in the old area of Bariqa.⁸² According to the video descriptions, more than 200 families from areas south of Damascus are currently living within the facades of old stone houses. Farm animals, such as cows and sheep, are also being housed in the area.⁸³

According to the video released on August 9, 2016, the IDPs arriving to the area found that the site had already been crudely excavated and looted.⁸⁴ One man describes the area in which he is living as a “Roman era church.”⁸⁵ It is unclear when IDPs first moved into old Bariqa. Independent video footage taken in 2014 shows some littering in the area, but shows no signs of any inhabitants.⁸⁶

For previous reporting on IDP encampment at Bariqa, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0130** in **Weekly Report 105-106**.

⁷⁸ <http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=201112201225144>

⁷⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU> ; <http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=201112201225144>

⁸⁰ Schumacher 1888: 106

⁸¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDq7pn0sqAs>

⁸² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHkZ7r11V7o>

⁸³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

⁸⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

⁸⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

⁸⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEgfcmgkkDA>

Pattern: Illegal excavation; Reuse of ancient/historic structures (non-combatants); Refugee camp/encampment.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to Bariqa, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions where IDPs have taken up residence.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ESyria:

March 12, 2010:

<http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=places&filename=201003121925021>

December 20, 2011:

<http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=201112201225144>

Private Youtube

SMART News Agency:

August 9, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

August 11, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHkZ7r11V7o>

November 24, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDq7pn0sqAs>

Scholarly:

Schumacher, G. (1888). *The Jaulan: Surveyed For The German Society For The Exploration Of The Holy Land* (Richard Bentley and Son)



Video still showing a family living in the ruins of an ancient structure (SMART News Agency; November 24, 2017)



Video still showing men unloading supplies near ancient buildings (SMART News Agency; November 24, 2017)



Video still showing livestock being kept in an ancient building now inhabited by IDPs (SMART News Agency; November 24, 2017)



Video still showing an ancient building (possibly a church) now inhabited by IDPs (SMART News Agency; November 24, 2017)



Video still showing two men fixing a roof that has been affixed to the ruins of an ancient building (SMART News Agency; November 24, 2017)

SHI 17-0169 UPDATE

Report Date: November 24, 2017

Site Name: Imam al-Nawawi Mosque (مسجد الإمام النووي)

Date of Incident: November 24, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A newly released photograph shows the condition of a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 24, 2017 a Personal Facebook Account posted a photograph of Imam al-Nawawi Mosque in Raqqa. This photograph confirms damage to the mosque that was previously identified in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery. The mosque has been heavily damaged by at least one airstrike as well as from ground combat that took place in its vicinity. The windows of the mosque have been blown out and the top of the mosque's dome has likely collapsed.

For more information on previous damage to Imam al-Nawawi Mosque, see [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0038](#) in [Weekly Report 85-86](#) and [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0169](#) in the [September 2017 Monthly Report](#).

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Private Facebook Account



Imam al-Nawawi Mosque, seen from the north (Private Facebook Account; November 24, 2017)

SHI 17-0170 UPDATE

Report Date: November 28, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبي)

Date of Incident: September 26, 2017

Location: Bdama, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: New video footage shows the extent of the damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On September 29, 2017 Qasioun News Agency published video footage of damage to the exterior and interior of al-Kabir Mosque in Bdama.⁸⁷ The mosque was reported damaged by Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) on September 26, 2017.⁸⁸ The strike partially damaged the building, disturbed its contents, and rendered it inoperable.

For more information on this incident, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0170** in the **September 2017 Monthly Report**.

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:

Qasioun News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8r2p-K1Qso>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/09/26/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-bdama-al-kabir-mosque-bdama-town-idlib-governorate-september-26/>

⁸⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8r2p-K1Qso>

⁸⁸ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/09/26/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-bdama-al-kabir-mosque-bdama-town-idlib-governorate-september-26/>



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; September 29, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; September 29, 2017)



Video still of damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; September 29, 2017)



Video still of damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; September 29, 2017)

SHI 17-0196

Report Date: November 1, 2017

Site Name: al-Taas Mosque (مسجد الطعس; al-Farouq Mosque; مسجد الفاروق)

Date of Incident: November 1, 2017

Location: al-Taas, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG airstrikes damage mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 1, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles near al-Farouq Mosque in the town of al-Taas, causing damage.⁸⁹ A photograph accompanying the report shows damage to the mosque's exterior — the windows have been blown out and a cinderblock wall near the mosque has partially collapsed. Euphrates Post also published a photograph of the damage, which shows the entrance gate to the mosque compound has been damaged.⁹⁰

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms damage from missiles to the southwestern corner of the mosque and the surrounding area that occurred between October 26, 2017 and November 2, 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 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

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:

Euphrates Post: <https://twitter.com/EuphratesPost/status/925747151984058368>

Shablan Youth Network:

<https://www.facebook.com/dablannet/photos/a.1605410043042218.1073741829.1599061663677056/1890580654525154/>

⁸⁹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/01/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-atas-mosque-sbaikhan-city-deir-ez-zor-governorate-november-1/>

⁹⁰ <https://twitter.com/EuphratesPost/status/925747151984058368>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/01/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-atas-mosque-sbaikhan-city-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-1/>



View of al-Taas Mosque (Shablan Youth Network; July 31, 2017)



Missile damage to al-Taas Mosque (SNHR; November 1, 2017)



Damage to entrance gate of al-Taas Mosque (Euphrates Post; November 1, 2017)



al-Taas Mosque shown in rectangle prior to any visible damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; October 26, 2017)



Minor damage to the southwestern corner of the mosque and nearby damage from missiles indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 2, 2017)

SHI 17-0197

Report Date: November 2, 2017

Site Name: Bayt al-'Ulabi (بيت العلابي)

Date of Incident: November 2, 2017

Location: Damascus, Damascus Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Historic house belonging to al-'Ulabi family.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A historic house collapsed in Old Damascus.

Incident Source and Description: On November 2, 2017 DGAM reported that a historic house in Old Damascus collapsed.⁹¹ The cause of the collapse was not indicated. Photographs accompanying the report show the house is largely destroyed.

Pattern: Development disturbances.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Bayt al-'Ulabi, as well as other at-risk heritage sites in the Old City of Damascus.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=239&id=2354>

⁹¹ <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=239&id=2354>



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)



Collapse of house in Old Damascus (DGAM; November 2, 2017)

SHI 17-0198

Report Date: November 3, 2017

Site Name: Bab al-Nasr (باب النصر)

Date of Incident: November 3, 2017

Location: Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Bab al-Nasr was constructed by the al-Zaher Ghazi (r. 1186–1216 CE), the Ayyubid emir of Aleppo.⁹² An inscription on the gate states that it was built in order to provide access into the northern Old City along its central north-south access. Bab al-Nasr was originally the north gate of the Old City and was previously known as “Bab al-Yahud.”

Site Date: built 1186–1216 CE

Incident Summary: Illegal construction damages a historic gate.

Incident Source and Description: On November 3, 2017 Dimashq al-Aan reported that Bab al-Nasr was on the verge of collapse as a result of illegal construction by a shop owner in a property adjacent to the ancient structure.⁹³ The DGAM office based in Aleppo is working to mitigate the damage, which is due to the removal of a load-bearing wall by the shopkeeper.⁹⁴ No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

The DGAM inspected Bab al-Nasr as recently as October 2017, when archaeologists working to restore the structure discovered a previously unknown staircase.⁹⁵

For more information on previous damage to Bab al-Nasr, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 14-0005** in **Weekly Report 1**, **SHI 14-0095** in **Weekly Report 18**, **SHI 15-0089** in **Weekly Report 42–43**, and **SHI 16-0191** in **Weekly Report 123–124**.

Pattern: Development disturbances.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Bab al-Nasr, as well as other at-risk heritage sites in the Old City of Aleppo.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Dimashq al-Aan: <https://damasnow.com/2017/11/03/من-المسؤول-20ول-عن-هزيمة-باب-النصر-في-مد/>

DGAM: <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2351>

⁹² Burns 2009: 54.

⁹³ <https://damasnow.com/2017/11/03/من-المسؤول-20ول-عن-هزيمة-باب-النصر-في-مد/>

⁹⁴ <https://damasnow.com/2017/11/03/من-المسؤول-20ول-عن-هزيمة-باب-النصر-في-مد/>

⁹⁵ <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2351>

Scholarly:

Burns, R. (2009) *Monuments of Syria*. London: I.B. Tauris. 54.

SHI 17-0199

Report Date: November 5, 2017

Site Name: Unnamed Mosque

Date of Incident: November 3, 2017

Location: Jbela neighborhood, Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: New video footage shows damage to an unnamed mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 3, 2017 a Private Twitter Account posted footage of an unnamed mosque in Deir ez-Zor.⁹⁶ The mosque's minaret has been hit multiple times by artillery fire. The mosque and its perimeter wall also show signs of damage.

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 17-0196, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Private Twitter Account

⁹⁶ <https://twitter.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/926474867188387842>



Video still of damage to the mosque's minaret, seen from the northeast (Private Twitter Account; November 3, 2017)

SHI 17-0200

Report Date: November 6, 2017

Site Name: Armenian Holy Martyrs Church and Museum (Armenian Genocide Martyrs' Memorial; كنيسة شهداء الأرمن)

Date of Incident: November 6, 2017

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

Site Description: The Armenian Apostolic (Orthodox) Holy Martyrs Church was constructed in memory of the victims of the Armenian genocide in the early 20th century, when large numbers of Armenians perished in Deir ez-Zor.⁹⁷ The church contains a memorial and museum dedicated to the Armenian genocide. According to *Armenian Weekly*, “Hundreds of thousands of Armenians perished in Der Zor [sic] and the surrounding desert during the Armenian Genocide. In the summer of 1916 alone, more than 200,000 Armenians, mostly women and children, were brutally massacred by Ottoman Turkish gendarmes and armed bands from the region.”⁹⁸

Site Date: Built 1989–1990 CE, consecrated one year later.⁹⁹

Incident Summary: Pro-regime forces liberate a church.

Incident Source and Description: On November 6, 2017 the site of the Armenian Holy Martyrs Church and Museum was reportedly liberated by pro-regime forces.¹⁰⁰ Al-Masdar News published several photographs of the severely damaged church.¹⁰¹

On September 21, 2014 ISIS militants reportedly carried out the intentional destruction of the church, leaving only the central tower standing. Other sources suggest the act was perpetrated by members of Jabhat al-Nusra or that the church was blown up during fighting between ISIS and al-Nusra, though ISIS reportedly was in control of the city by August 2014.¹⁰²

For more information on previous damage to the Armenian Holy Martyrs Church and Museum, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0038** in **Weekly Report 8**.

⁹⁷ http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.110/current_category.72/memorials_detail.html

⁹⁸ <https://armenianweekly.com/2017/11/06/photos-der-zors-armenian-genocide-memorial-church-liberated-syrian-armed-forces/>

⁹⁹ http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.110/current_category.72/memorials_detail.html ; <https://armenianweekly.com/2017/11/06/photos-der-zors-armenian-genocide-memorial-church-liberated-syrian-armed-forces/> ; <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/pictures-armenian-holocaust-memorial-liberated-syrian-army/>

¹⁰⁰ <http://asbarez.com/168519/armenian-genocide-memorial-church-in-deir-ez-zor-liberated/> ; <https://armenianweekly.com/2017/11/06/photos-der-zors-armenian-genocide-memorial-church-liberated-syrian-armed-forces/>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/pictures-armenian-holocaust-memorial-liberated-syrian-army/>

¹⁰² <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35757576> ; <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/jabhat-al-nusra-blows-up-armenian-church-in-deir-el-zour-a-savage-blow-that-echoes-through-armenian-9852372.html> ; <https://hyperallergic.com/162080/who-blew-up-the-armenian-genocide-memorial-church-in-deir-el-zour/>

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction, explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Armenian Genocide:

http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Memorial.110/current_category.72/memorials_detail.html

Armenian Weekly:

<https://armenianweekly.com/2017/11/06/photos-der-zors-armenian-genocide-memorial-church-liberated-syrian-armed-forces/>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35757576>

The Genocide Report: <https://twitter.com/GenocideReport/status/926892087588597760>

Hyperallergic:

<https://hyperallergic.com/162080/who-blew-up-the-armenian-genocide-memorial-church-in-deir-el-zour/>

The Independent:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/jabhat-al-nusra-blows-up-armenian-church-in-deir-el-zour-a-savage-blow-that-echoes-through-armenian-9852372.html>

National Defense - Deir Ezzor Center:

<https://www.facebook.com/NDF.center.der.al.zour/videos/1896629240653346/>

Al-Qadiya: <http://alqadiya.com/2017/11/10/sarkiskasardjian/>

Sarkis Kassargian: <https://twitter.com/kassargian/status/929312708956229633/video/1>



Damage to the exterior of the church (Armenian Weekly/Al-Masdar; November 6, 2017)



Damage to the exterior of the church (Armenian Weekly/Al-Masdar; November 6, 2017)



Damage to the exterior of the church (Armenian Weekly/Al-Masdar; November 6, 2017)



Damage to the exterior of the church (Armenian Weekly/Al-Masdar; November 6, 2017)



One of the first photographs of damage to the exterior of the church (Armenian Weekly/Al-Masdar; September 24, 2014)

SHI 17-0201

Report Date: November 7, 2017

Site Name: al-Fareeh Mosque (مسجد الفريح)

Date of Incident: November 6, 2017

Location: al-Jalaa, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG airstrikes damage mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 7, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles near al-Fareeh Mosque in the city of al-Jalaa, resulting in unspecified damage to the mosque.¹⁰³ The strike reportedly occurred on November 6, 2017. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

According to a local reporting group, a second mosque may have been damaged at the same time as al-Fareeh Mosque.¹⁰⁴ This mosque was named by the group as al-Muna Mosque. No additional information regarding damage to this mosque was available at the time of publication.

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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

For more information on previous damage to al-Fareeh Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0188** for previous damage to this mosque.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Deir ez Zor 24: <https://twitter.com/DeirEzzor24/status/927499071257968641>

Fajr Abu Kamal: <https://www.facebook.com/fjralbokamal/posts/1981784908766077>

¹⁰³ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/07/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-fraij-mosque-al-jalaa-village-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-6/>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/fjralbokamal/posts/1981784908766077>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/07/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-fraij-mosque-al-jalaa-village-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-6/>

SHI 17-0202

Report Date: November 8, 2017

Site Name: Circesium (قرفيسيا; Tell Buseira)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: al-Buseira (البصيرة), Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Circesium was founded during the reign of Seleucus II Callinicus in ca. 225 BCE. During the Roman-era the site was transformed into a border fortress to protect against Persian encroachment on Roman Mesopotamia.¹⁰⁵ It served as a military outpost under Trajan, who attempted to push the Roman frontier to the Khabur River.¹⁰⁶ It fell temporarily to the Sasanians in 256, and was later re-fortified by Diocletian in the late third century and Justinian in the sixth century. The site was captured from the Byzantines around 690 during the reign of ‘Abd al-Malek ibn Marwān, and remained occupied into the 11th century.¹⁰⁷ The modern town of Buseira has greatly encroached on the site. There are few visible remains besides the vestiges of walls and the central Byzantine castellum.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, there is a modern cemetery on the southernmost part of the site.

Site Date: ca. 225 BCE to 1100 CE

Incident Summary: Satellite imagery shows significant damage to archaeological site.

Incident Source and Description: On November 7, 2017 Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) seized the hill on which the site of Circesium is located. ISIL militants had controlled the surrounding town of Buseira since 2014.¹⁰⁹

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that the site of Circesium has suffered from a variety of destructive forces. In the earliest available image (June 24, 2011) the site had been encroached upon by the surrounding modern town, as well as from agricultural plowing. Between June 24, 2011 and November 24, 2011 the central part of the site was adapted for use as a military garrison, with extensive earthworks constructed on the site. Between June 28, 2012 and December 16, 2012 visible garbage dumping appeared on the site. The garbage was removed by May 1, 2016.

Between November 6, 2016 and January 23, 2017 the central part of the site was occupied by rectangular modern structures of an unknown nature. Illegal excavation on the site increased between January 23, 2017 and May 9, 2017. By November 2, 2017 all the modern structures save one had been destroyed or dismantled.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other archaeological sites that were damaged in Deir ez-Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0208**.

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/circesium-gk>

¹⁰⁶ Burns, R. (2009) *Monuments of Syria: A Guide*. London: I.B. Tauris. 91.

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/circesium-gk>

¹⁰⁸ Burns 2009: 91.

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.alhayat.com/Articles/25290504/> -القوات النظامية- وحلفاءها تسيطر -على- البوكمال -بعد- انسحاب -داعش-

Pattern: Illegal excavation; Development disturbances; Modern burials; Military activity: earthworks/roadwork, occupation/militarization, construction.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

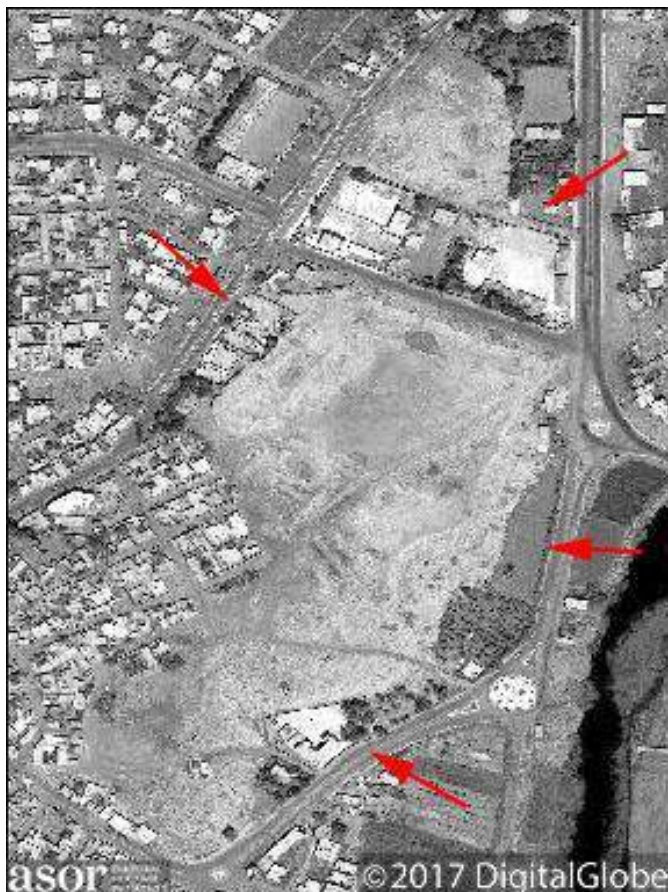
Al-Hayat:

<http://www.alhayat.com/Articles/25290504/القوات-النظامية-وحلفاؤها-تسيطر-على-البوكمال-بعد-انسحاب-داعش/>

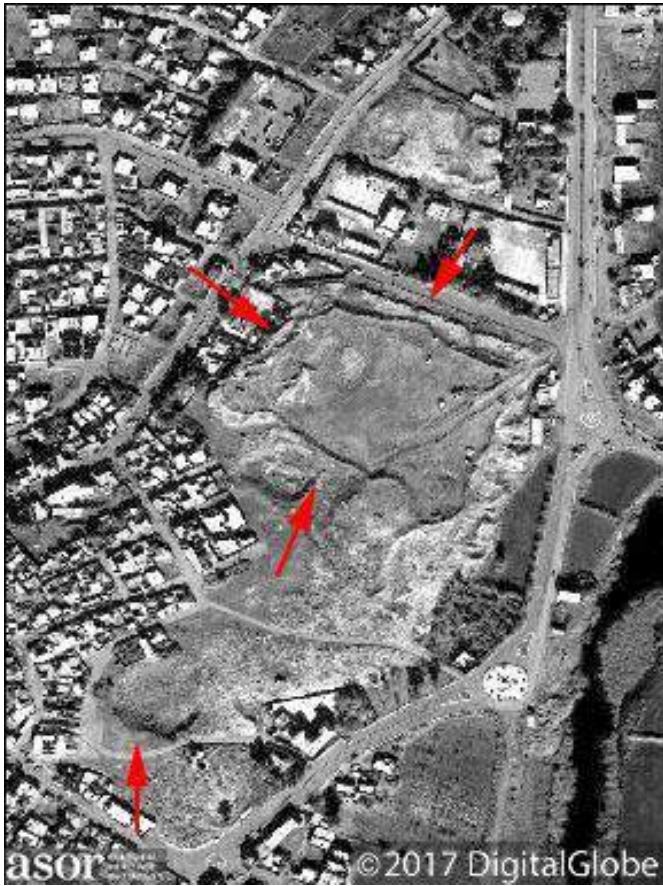
Scholarly:

Burns, R. (2009) *Monuments of Syria: A Guide*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Wiesehöfer, J. (1991/2011) "Circesium" *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. V, Fasc. 6, pp. 595-596.
Available online at: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/circesium-gk>



The site of Circesium with urban and agricultural encroachment indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; June 24, 2011)



Increased damage to Circesium as a result of the construction of earthworks in the central area of the site and increased bulldozing on the southern section (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 24, 2011)



Modern construction on the central part of the site indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 23, 2017)



Red arrows indicate the destroyed modern structures on the site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 2, 2017)

SHI 17-0203

Report Date: November 9, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبير; Ali ibn Abi Talib Mosque; جامع الامام علي بن ابي طالب)

Date of Incident: November 8, 2017

Location: Kafr Batna, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A reported SARG airstrike damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 9, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on al-Kabir Mosque, causing severe damage.¹¹⁰ The strike reportedly occurred on November 8, 2017. Video footage of the damage published by SNHR on November 16, 2017 shows significant damage to the exterior of the mosque, including damage to a dome near the mosque entrance, blown out windows, and damage to the exterior fencing.¹¹¹

Al-Kabir Mosque has been damaged in at least one prior incident. SNHR reported SARG shelling caused minor damage to the mosque's minaret on September 2, 2014.¹¹²

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0209, SHI 17-0210, and SHI 17-0221.**

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:

May 18, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50A3uGzrYoo>

November 9, 2017: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-kafr-batna-town-damascus-suburbs-november-8/>

November 16, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GESn6tZVW5s&feature=youtu.be>

¹¹⁰ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-kafr-batna-town-damascus-suburbs-november-8/>

¹¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GESn6tZVW5s&feature=youtu.be>

¹¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50A3uGzrYoo>



Damage to al-Kabir Mosque minaret on September 2, 2014 (SNHR; May 18, 2016)



Damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; November 16, 2017)



Damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; November 16, 2017)



Damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; November 16, 2017)

SHI 17-0204

Report Date: November 11, 2017

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

Date of Incident: November 11, 2017

Location: Talbiseh, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG artillery damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 11, 2017 Talbiseh Media Center reported that SARG artillery fire hit Othman bin Affan Mosque.¹¹³ The shelling blew out the window at the western end of the southern facade of the building, damaging the mosque's contents and scattering debris along the floor. The artillery may also be responsible for some or all of the pockmarks visible on the mosque's southern facade.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Homs Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0206**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Othman bin Affan 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/2017/11/11/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-othman-bin-affan-mosque-talbisa-city-homs-governorate-november-11/>

Talbiseh Media Center:

November 11, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/T.M.C.2011/videos/1473849132731587/>

November 11, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7TSAhqct5s>

¹¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/T.M.C.2011/videos/1473849132731587/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7TSAhqct5s>; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/11/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-othman-bin-affan-mosque-talbisa-city-homs-governorate-november-11/>



Video still of artillery hitting the northern part of Talbiseh, seen from the east (Talbiseh Media Center; November 11, 2017)



Video still of the mosque's minaret, seen from the southwest (Talbiseh Media Center; November 11, 2017)



Video still of the mosque's southern facade, seen from the southwest (Talbish Media Center; November 11, 2017)



Video still of the damaged window, seen from the south (Talbish Media Center; November 11, 2017)



Video still of the damaged window and the associated debris, seen from the north (Talbish Media Center; November 11, 2017)



Video still of the mosque's interior, seen from the northwest (Talbish Media Center; November 11, 2017)



A view of the damaged window and associated debris, seen from the north (SNHR; November 11, 2017)

SHI 17-0205

Report Date: November 11, 2017

Site Name: al-Tawheed Mosque (مسجد التوحيد) (al-Azawi Mosque)

Date of Incident: November 8, 2017

Location: al-Asharah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A reported SARG airstrike damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 9, 2017 Euphrates Post reported that a SARG airstrike hit al-Tawheed Mosque.¹¹⁴ The airstrike caused heavy damage to the building, causing the eastern part of the mosque to collapse. The floor of the standing portion of the mosque is covered with debris. Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that severe damage occurred to the mosque between November 7, 2017 and November 10, 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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Tawheed 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/928740905745559553>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/11/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-tawheed-mosque-al-ashara-city-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-8/>

¹¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/EuphratesPost/status/928740905745559553>; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/11/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-tawheed-mosque-al-ashara-city-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-8/>



Debris scattered across the mosque's interior (seen from the north), with ISIS flag seen on wall (Euphrates Post; November 9, 2017)



Debris scattered across the mosque's interior, seen from the east (Euphrates Post; November 9, 2017)



Collapsed architecture next to the mosque's minaret, seen from the north (Euphrates Post; November 9, 2017)



A view of the minaret and the interior of the standing portion of the mosque, seen from the east (Euphrates Post; November 9, 2017)



al-Tawheed Mosque prior to any visible damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 7, 2017)



Severe damage to much of the mosque, as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 10, 2017)

SHI 17-0206

Report Date: November 12, 2017

Site Name: Abu Bakr al-Sadiq Mosque (مسجد أبو بكر الصديق)

Date of Incident: November 11, 2017

Location: Talbiseh, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG artillery damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 12, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG artillery fire damaged Abu Bakr al-Sadiq Mosque in the village of Talbiseh.¹¹⁵ No video or photographs of this damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Homs Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0204**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Abu Bakr al-Sadiq 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/2017/11/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-abo-bakr-al-sideeq-mosque-talbisa-city-homs-governorate-november-11/>

¹¹⁵ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-abo-bakr-al-sideeq-mosque-talbisa-city-homs-governorate-november-11/>

SHI 17-0207

Report Date: November 13, 2017

Site Name: Kafr Naha Village Mosque (مسجد قرية كفرناها)

Date of Incident: November 12, 2017

Location: Kafr Naha Village, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported shelling by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham militants damages a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 12, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that Hayat Tahrir al-Sham forces shelled a mosque in the village of Kafr Naha, partially destroying the building.¹¹⁶ No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Kafr Naha 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/2017/11/12/hayat-tahrir-al-sham-shelled-mosque-kafr-naha-village-aleppo-governorate-november-12/>

¹¹⁶ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/12/hayat-tahrir-al-sham-shelled-mosque-kafr-naha-village-aleppo-governorate-november-12/>

SHI 17-0208

Report Date: November 15, 2017

Site Name: Mari (ماري; Tell Hariri)

Date of Incident: Between October 19, 2017 and November 13, 2017

Location: Tell Hariri, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mari is an ancient Mesopotamian city on the Euphrates River. Archaeological evidence from the site has been crucial for understanding Mesopotamian civilization during the Bronze Age. The city was founded in the early 3rd millennium BCE and prospered as an important stop along trade routes. The city grew throughout its history, eventually spreading over more than 14 hectares and rising 14.5 meters above the surrounding plain. By approximately 1800 BCE, Mari's political control extended from Babylon in the south to the modern Turkish border in the north. The site was abandoned after its destruction 1759 BCE by the Babylonian king Hammurabi.¹¹⁷ Mari is also known for an archive containing 50,000 clay tablets that were excavated at the site during the French Mandate period in the 1930s.¹¹⁸ Until the current conflict, conservation efforts at the site were ongoing. Mari was nominated to the World Heritage Tentative List in 1999 and again as part of the Euphrates Valley Landscape in 2011.¹¹⁹

Site Date: 2900–1759 BCE

Incident Summary: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage to the covered structure on top of archaeological site.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery has indicated that a modern structure covering the southeastern section of the Royal Palace of Mari has been damaged. Between October 19, 2017 and November 13, 2017, the southwestern portion of the structure was destroyed. This is possibly the result of an explosive, as evidenced by slightly visible scorch marks and smoke. Scorch marks are also visible on the section of the site corresponding to the Royal Palace storerooms. There is no visible evidence of increased illegal excavation or other forms of damage visible in satellite imagery.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other archaeological sites that were damaged in Deir ez-Zor Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0202**.

For information on previous damage to the site of Mari, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 14-0044** in **Weekly Report 9**, **SHI 14-0078** in **Weekly Report 15**, **SHI 14-0098** in **Weekly Report 19**, and **SHI 17-0140** in the **August Monthly Report**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

¹¹⁷ Burns 1999: 126-129.

¹¹⁸ <https://www.aaas.org/page/ancient-history-modern-destruction-assessing-status-syria-s-tentative-world-heritage-sites-7#Mari>

¹¹⁹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1294/>; <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5702/>

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

AAAS:

<https://www.aaas.org/page/ancient-history-modern-destruction-assessing-status-syria-s-tentative-world-heritage-sites-7#Mari>

UNESCO:

June 8, 1999: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1294/>

June 23, 2011: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5702/>

Scholarly:

Burns, R. (1999) *Monuments of Syria: an historical guide*. London: I.B. Tauris, 126-129.



The modern covering over archaeological material on the site of Mari prior to any explosive damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; October 19, 2017)



Damage to the southwestern part of the structure, as well as visible smoke and scorch marks, indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 13, 2017)

SHI 17-0209**Report Date:** November 15, 2017**Site Name:** al-Khoulani Mosque (مسجد الخولاني)**Date of Incident:** November 14, 2017**Location:** Hamouriya, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damages mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On November 14, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG forces fired artillery shells at al-Khoulani Mosque, “destroying its building and damaging its furniture.”¹²⁰ A photograph accompanying the report shows a large hole in one of the mosque walls, as well as a great deal of debris in the mosque interior.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0203**, **SHI 17-0210**, and **SHI 17-0221**.

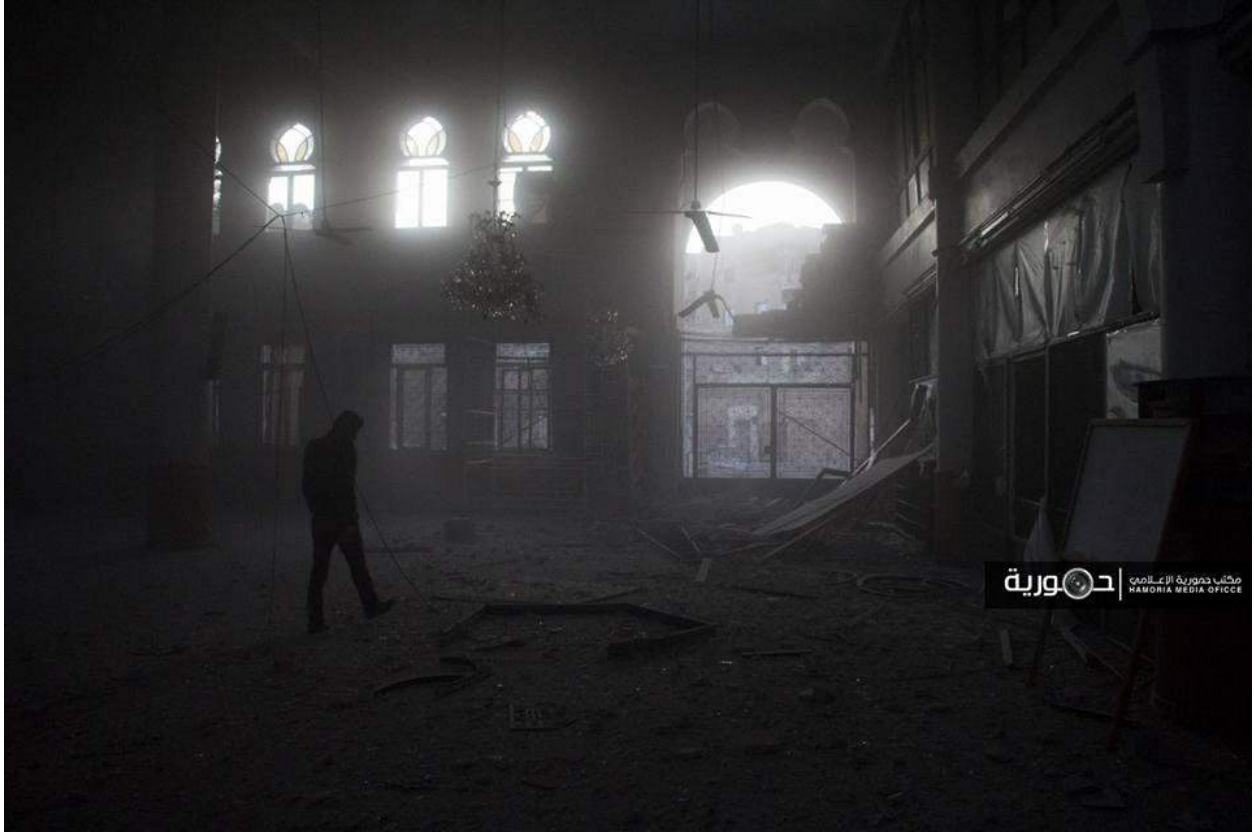
For information on previous damage to this mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0189** in **Weekly Report 123-124**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Imam al-Khoulani 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/2017/11/14/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-khawlani-mosque-hamouriya-town-damascus-suburbs-governorate-november-14/>

¹²⁰ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/14/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-khawlani-mosque-hamouriya-town-damascus-suburbs-governorate-november-14/>



Damage to mosque wall and debris in interior (SNHR; November 14, 2017)

SHI 17-0210**Report Date:** November 15, 2017**Site Name:** al-Qadim Mosque (مسجد القديم)**Date of Incident:** November 15, 2017**Location:** Hamouriya, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG artillery damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 15, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG forces fired shells near al-Qadim Mosque in Hamouriya, causing unspecified damage to the building.¹²¹ 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 17-0203**, **SHI 17-0209**, and **SHI 17-0221**.

For information on previous damage to al-Qadim Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0084** in the **May Monthly Report**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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/2017/11/15/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-qadeem-mosque-hamouriya-town-damascus-suburbs-governorate-november-15/>

¹²¹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/15/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-qadeem-mosque-hamouriya-town-damascus-suburbs-governorate-november-15/>

SHI 17-0211**Report Date:** November 17, 2017**Site Name:** al-Hadi Mosque (مسجد الهادي)**Date of Incident:** Between November 2, 2017 and November 7, 2017**Location:** al-Asharah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Newly released video footage shows damage to mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On November 30, 2017 Euphrates Post published a video showing damage to al-Hadi Mosque in al-Asharah.¹²² DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that much of the mosque was severely damaged between November 2, 2017 and November 7, 2017. The dome and the southwestern part of the structure were destroyed.

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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Hadi Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:Euphrates Post: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeINK5NLcMo>

¹²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeINK5NLcMo>



Video still showing destruction of al-Hadi Mosque (Euphrates Post; November 30, 2017)



al-Hadi Mosque prior to any visible damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 2, 2017)



Damage to the dome and southwest quarter of the mosque as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 7, 2017)

SHI 17-0212

Report Date: November 19, 2017

Site Name: Deir Semaan (Telanissos; دير سمعان)

- Deir Semaan - Saint Simeon Church (Qalaat Semaan; كنيسة مار سمعان العمودي)
- Deir Semaan - Baptistry
- Deir Semaan - North Church
- Deir Semaan - Monumental Arch
- Tekla (تكلا)

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 hostelries (ca. 490 CE and later), and a monumental arch.¹²³ 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.”¹²⁴

The Byzantine-era site of Tekla is located approximately one kilometer east of Deir Semaan.

Site Date: 4th–10th century CE

Incident Summary: New video footage and DigitalGlobe satellite imagery show damage to archaeological site.

Incident Source and Description: On November 19, 2017 SMART News Agency reported that Turkish forces were establishing a third outpost in Aleppo Governorate near the village of Sheikh Aqil, following the establishment of similar outposts at the villages of Deir Semaan and Salwa.¹²⁵ A video published by al-Dahar al-Shamiya on October 24, 2017 purportedly shows the construction of the Turkish military outpost near Deir Semaan.¹²⁶ In the video, heavy machinery is seen being used on or near the western facade of a church at the Byzantine site of Tekla, located approximately one kilometer east of Deir Semaan.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery also indicates that several ancient structures at the site of Deir Semaan have suffered significant, previously unreported damage. Between July 25, 2015 and February 22, 2017 modern construction began on the southwestern section of the site, encroaching

¹²³ Burns 2009: 272–273

¹²⁴ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/>

¹²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYloOgvP-d0>

¹²⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg_8gc

upon the North Church and the Monumental Arch. Construction activity gradually continued until November 9, 2017 — the last available image.

Just north of the North Church and Monumental Arch, additional modern construction occurred between September 29, 2017 and November 9, 2017. Roadwork on the western edge of the site is seen in images from February 22, 2017 and July 29, 2017. During this same time period, stones were removed from sections of the Church of Saint Simeon, located on the hill above the village of Deir Semaan. Between July 29, 2017 and September 21, 2017 a large illegal excavation pit appeared southwest of the Baptistery. The pit continued to grow in size until September 26, 2017. Additionally, bulldozing and earthworks building (presumably for road work) appeared along the eastern edge of the site between September 29, 2017 and November 9, 2017.

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 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**, and **SHI 17-0112** in **June 2017 Monthly Report**.

For information on previous damage to Tekla, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 14-0029** in **Weekly Report 6**, **SHI 15-0162** in **Weekly Report 71-72**, and **SHI 16-0160** in **Weekly Report 115-116**.

Pattern: Military activity: occupation/militarization, vehicles/heavy weaponry, construction, earthworks/roadwork; Illegal excavation.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

al-Dahar al-Shamiya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yYGxJR8Etg>

SMART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYloOgvP-d0>

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

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.



All recent damage to the site of Deir Semaan indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Encroachment of modern development, shown within red box, on the North Church and the Monumental Arch (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Additional construction and road work north of the Monumental Arch and North Church (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



The monastery adjoining the basilica of the Church of Saint Simeon Stylites prior to stone removal (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 22, 2017)



The monastery area after a significant amount of stone has been removed (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 29, 2017)



Area near the Pandocheion west of the Baptistery prior to an increase in illegal excavation (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 29, 2017)



New illegal excavation pit in the Pandocheion area indicated by red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Road east of site prior to road work (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 29, 2017)



Area east of site after road construction and earthworks building has begun (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Construction near ruins of 5th century CE church at Tekla, outlined in red (al-Dahar al-Shamiya; October 24, 2017)

SHI 17-0213

Report Date: November 20, 2017

Site Name: al-Mashatiyya Mosque (جامع المشاطية; Maqam al-Sheikh Sa'd)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Ottoman-era courtyard mosque with a Mamluk-style octagonal minaret built in the Mamluk featuring stalactite (*muqarna*) architectural decorations.¹²⁷

Site Date: 1718 CE

Incident Summary: Archaeologists work to restore a mosque in Aleppo.

Incident Source and Description: On November 20, 2017 a Private Facebook Account reported that archaeologists are working to restore the minaret of al-Mashatiyya Mosque in Aleppo, which was severely damaged in 2012.

For information on previous damage to al-Mashatiyya Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 15-0099** in **Weekly Report 46** and **SHI 16-0172** in **Weekly Report 119–120**.

Pattern: Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Mashatiyya Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in the Old City of Aleppo.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

APSA:

<http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/aleppo-bab-al-hadid-destruction-of-the-minaret-of-al-meshatiya-mosque/>

Mosques and Monuments of the City of Aleppo:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.481933485213501.1073741846.480476042025912>

Private Facebook Account

¹²⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.481933485213501.1073741846.480476042025912>



Restoration of the minaret (Private Facebook Account; November 20, 2017)



Restoration of the minaret (Private Facebook Account; November 20, 2017)

SHI 17-0214

Report Date: November 20, 2017

Site Name: al-Tawhid Mosque (مسجد التوحيد; al-Haj Abood al-Salem al-Hamoudi Mosque; مسجد الحاج عبود (السالم الحمودي))

Date of Incident: November 17, 2017

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

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported Russian shelling damages a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 20, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that Russian warplanes had “fired missiles” on al-Tawhid Mosque, damaging it severely and rendering it inoperable.¹²⁸ A photograph accompanying the report shows severe damage to the mosque, which is on the verge of collapse.

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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0216, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Imam al-Tawhid 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/2017/11/20/suspected-russian-forces-shelling-al-tawheed-mosque-al-ghabra-village-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-17/>

¹²⁸ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/20/suspected-russian-forces-shelling-al-tawheed-mosque-al-ghabra-village-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-17/>



Severe damage to al-Tawhid Mosque (SNHR; November 20, 2017)

SHI 17-0215

Report Date: November 20, 2017

Site Name: Burj Sabna Mosque (مسجد برج سبنة)

Date of Incident: November 19, 2017

Location: Burj Sabna Village, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported Russian shelling damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 19, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that Russian warplanes shelled the village of Burj Sabna, damaging the village mosque.¹²⁹ No photographs of the reported damage were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Burj Sabna 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/2017/11/19/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-burj-sabna-mosque-burj-sabna-village-aleppo-governorate-november-19/>

¹²⁹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/19/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-burj-sabna-mosque-burj-sabna-village-aleppo-governorate-november-19/>

SHI 17-0216

Report Date: November 24, 2017

Site Name: Omar ibn al-Khattab Mosque (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب; al-Mahmida Mosque; مسجد المهميدة)

Date of Incident: November 22, 2017

Location: al-Kheshkiya, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG airstrikes partially damage mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 22, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles that struck near Omar ibn al-Khattab Mosque, partially damaging the mosque's building.¹³⁰ Video footage of the mosque shows moderate damage to its interior, including debris from broken plaster and windows.¹³¹

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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0218 and SHI 17-0220.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Euphrates Post: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXrVEwzz3B4>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/24/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-al-kheshkiya-town-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-22/>

¹³⁰ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/24/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-al-kheshkiya-town-deir-ez-zour-governorate-november-22/>

¹³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXrVEwzz3B4>



Video still of debris in the interior of the mosque (Euphrates Post; November 24, 2017)



Video still of debris in the interior of the mosque (Euphrates Post; November 24, 2017)



Video still of debris in the interior of the mosque (Euphrates Post; November 24, 2017)

SHI 17-0217

Report Date: November 27, 2017

Site Name: Abd ibn Rahwa Mosque (جامع عبد بن رواحة)

Date of Incident: November 27, 2017

Location: Bab Mousalla (باب مصلى) Neighborhood, Damascus, Damascus Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported Syrian opposition shelling damages a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 27, 2017 SANA News Agency reported that “armed groups targeted with 13 shells the residential areas of Bab Moussalla neighborhood in Damascus.”¹³² According to SANA, a “source at Damascus Police Command said that two shells targeted the area of Bab Moussalla; one of them fell on the dome of the Abdullah bin Rawahah mosque, causing material damage.” Facebook account Dimashq al-Aan published photographs of the damage, which includes multiple damaged windows.¹³³

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Dimashq al-Aan:

November 27, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/photos/pcb.1446908465434761/1446906658768275/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/videos/1446894445436163/>

Samidon: <https://samidon-sy.com/?p=184188>

SANA: <http://sana.sy/en/?p=119441>

¹³² <http://sana.sy/en/?p=119441>

¹³³ <https://www.facebook.com/dimashq.now/photos/pcb.1446908465434761/1446906658768275/>



Damage to the dome of the mosque (Dimashq al-Aan; November 27, 2017)



Damage to the dome of the mosque (Dimashq al-Aan; November 27, 2017)



Debris from broken windows inside the mosque (Dimashq al-Aan; November 27, 2017)

SHI 17-0218

Report Date: November 28, 2017

Site Name: al-Rahman Mosque (جامع الرحمن; Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque)

Date of Incident: November 28, 2017

Location: al-Bukamal, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: New photographs show damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 28, 2017 Facebook page al-Bukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad published a photograph of al-Rahman Mosque, reporting that Iraqi and Iranian militias were flying sectarian flags on the mosque's minaret.¹³⁴ In this photograph, and in another published by the Washington Post, the windows of the minaret have been damaged.¹³⁵ The flag in the photograph reads "Ya Hussein," a phrase commonly found on the banners of Shiite militias fighting in Iraq and Syria.¹³⁶

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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216 and SHI 17-0220.**

Pattern: Military activity: occupation/militarization, explosives.

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:

al-Bukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1446745082104825&id=1128081960637807

The Huffington Post:

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/at-your-service-oh-hussain_us_59d18722e4b034ae778d4bd3

¹³⁴ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1446745082104825&id=1128081960637807

¹³⁵ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-moves-toward-open-ended-presence-in-syria-after-islamic-state-is-routed/2017/11/22/1cd36c92-ce13-11e7-a1a3-0d1e45a6de3d_story.html?utm_term=.bdfbdd7b541e

¹³⁶ https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/at-your-service-oh-hussain_us_59d18722e4b034ae778d4bd3

The Washington Post:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-moves-toward-open-ended-presence-in-syria-after-islamic-state-is-routed/2017/11/22/1cd36c92-ce13-11e7-a1a3-0d1e45a6de3d_story.html



A photograph of pro-regime forces in al-Bukamal, showing the damaged minaret (The Washington Post; November 29, 2017)



Damage seen to the minaret (al-Bukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad; November 28, 2017)

SHI 17-0219

Report Date: November 28, 2017

Site Name: Daraa - Roman Theater (درعا; Adraha; Dera`a)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Daraa, Daraa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The Roman theater in Daraa was constructed ca. 200–300 CE using black basalt stone common to the Hauran region of Syria.¹³⁷ Originally consisting of 13 rows of seats, the theater could hold 2000–3000 spectators. Excavation and restoration work on the theater and surrounding area, which included the removal of modern houses, began in the 1980s. Located in the partially excavated area just east of the theater are a Roman-era temple and a Byzantine church dated ca. 6th century.

Site Date: 200–600 CE

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

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that damage to the Roman theater in Daraa has occurred intermittently since 2014. Initial military damage to the site occurred between September 25, 2014 and September 26, 2015 as evidenced by a visible crater from an airstrike and associated rubble in the section of the site just southwest of the theater.

Damage to the site as a result of explosions or airstrikes continued throughout 2017, and can be seen in an image from July 1, 2017. Between July 1, 2017 and October 3, 2017 there is new evidence of bulldozing and leveling along the northern boundary of the site, just east of the theater. During the same time period, a building near this bulldozed area was severely damaged, possibly by an explosion or airstrike. Between October 3, 2017 and November 28, 2017 roofs were destroyed or removed from buildings along the southern edge of the site.

Pattern: Illegal excavation; Development disturbances.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ESyria:

<http://www.esyria.sy/edaraa/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=200903280855032>

Orient News: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jchNv0_N6qg

¹³⁷ <http://www.esyria.sy/edaraa/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=200903280855032>



Initial military damage to Daraa, evidenced by a crater and rubble south of the theater, as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 26, 2015)



Increased military damage from explosions or heavy shelling indicated by red arrows near the theater and partially excavated temple area east of the theater (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 1, 2017)



Damage to the site from bulldozing/leveling and road work, as well as from a possible explosion, indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; October 3, 2017)



Damage to a building south of the theater as indicated by arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 28, 2017)

SHI 17-0220

Report Date: November 29, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير)

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Abbas, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Video footage shows damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 11, 2017 Facebook Account Faraj al-Bukamal reported that unspecified military activity damaged al-Kabir Mosque in the village of Abbas.¹³⁸ No video or photographs were available at the time of publication. However, DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from November 14, 2017 shows no damage to the mosque.

On November 29, 2017 Facebook Account al-Boukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad published video footage of damage to al-Kabir Mosque and the surrounding area.¹³⁹ The source of the damage was not indicated, but is likely to be the result of an airstrike. This damage is reportedly due to a second incident that occurred after November 14, 2017.

Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that the northern and northeastern parts of the mosque were damaged by airstrikes between November 14, 2017 and December 2, 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 17-0196, SHI 17-0199, SHI 17-0201, SHI 17-0205, SHI 17-0211, SHI 17-0214, SHI 17-0216 and SHI 17-0218.**

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:

al-Boukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad:

<https://www.facebook.com/1128081960637807/videos/1447446975367969/>

¹³⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/fjralbokamal/posts/1984260681851833>

¹³⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/1128081960637807/videos/1447446975367969/>

Faraj al-Boukamal:

<https://www.facebook.com/fjralbokamal/posts/1984260681851833>



Damage to the northeast corner of mosque (al-Boukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad/November 29, 2017)



Damage to the northern section of mosque (al-Boukamal al-Mayadin al-Balad/November 29, 2017)

SHI 17-0221

Report Date: November 29, 2017

Site Name: Abd al-Raouf Mosque (مسجد عبد الرؤوف; Bilal Mosque)

Date of Incident: November 29, 2017

Location: Douma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG airstrikes damage mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 29, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG airstrikes damage Abd al-Raouf Mosque in Duma, partially destroying the building and damaging its furniture.¹⁴⁰ No photographs of damage to the site were available at the time of publication. During the reporting period, extensive aerial bombardment and shelling was reported over the area of Douma.¹⁴¹

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0203, SHI 17-0209, and SHI 17-0210.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Reuters:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/russia-seeks-two-day-ceasefire-in-damascus-suburb-dozens-killed-by-air-strikes-idUSKBN1DR2DK>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/29/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-abdul-raouf-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-governorate-november-29/>

¹⁴⁰ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/29/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-abdul-raouf-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-governorate-november-29/>

¹⁴¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/russia-seeks-two-day-ceasefire-in-damascus-suburb-dozens-killed-by-air-strikes-idUSKBN1DR2DK>

The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative

Site Monitors Project

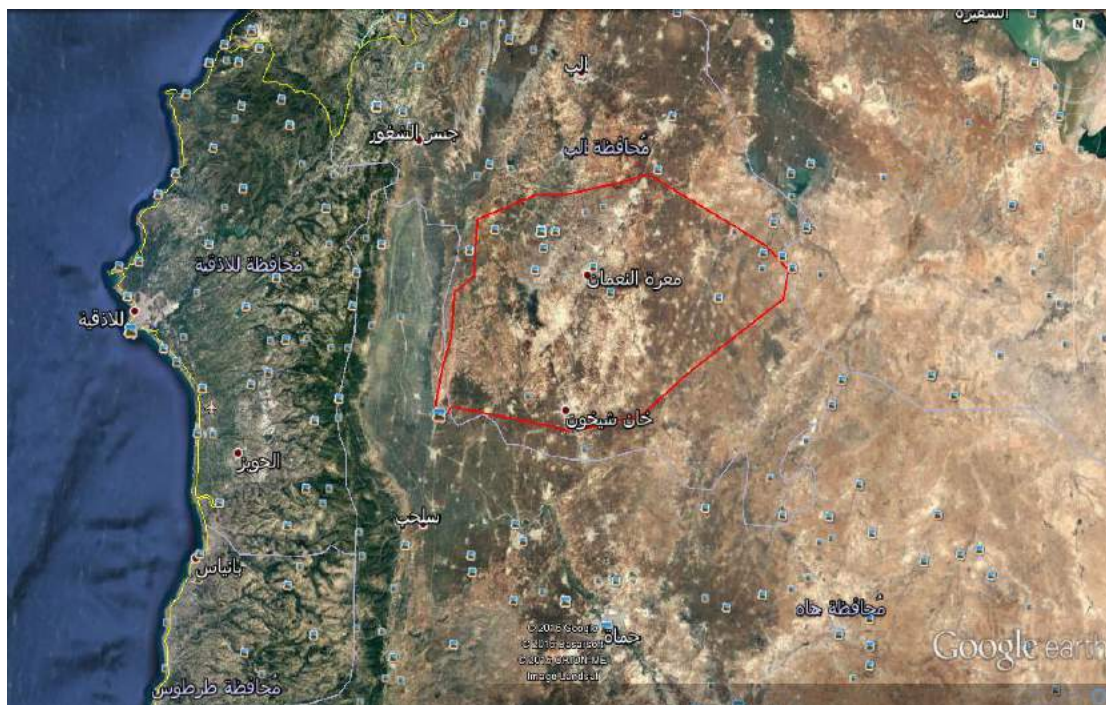
Syrian Heritage Center

9/23/2017



Introduction:

The Syrian Heritage Center's team started documenting archaeological sites and historical buildings according to the center's work plans. The first phase of this work is being conducted in Hama's northern countryside and Idlib's western and southern countryside as shown below:



Sites within the Syrian Heritage Center's work area
 Sites in Ma'arrat Al-Noman:

No.	Administrative district	Registration	Historical site
1	Ma'arra	119/ date 6/22/1989	Al-Ma'arra Castle
2	Ma'arra		Murad Pasha caravansary
3	Ma'arra		As'ad Pasha caravansary
4	Al-Ma'arra Deir Sharqi	20/a/ta/2/15/1976	Omar bin Abdel Aziz tomb
5	Al-Ma'arra - Haas		Haas cemeteries
6	Ma'arra Maar Tamater		Alzir castle
7	Al-Ma'arra Sinjar	220/ta/4/14/1945	Karatin Kabir
8	Al-Ma'arra Sinjar	181/ta/1/26/2000	Little Karatin
9	Ma'arra Kafr Owait	Not registered	Rasha palace
10	Ma'arra Khan Shaikhoun	Not registered	Muqa mosque mosaics





















	Archaeological parks	Villages	Governorate	district	Area
First park	Jabal Al-Zawiya (Al-Bara)	Al-Bara Martahoon valley Majliya Batrasa Bshileh Bayude Dalozah Sergilla Matrahoon valley	Idlib	Al-Bara	





Reported by:

Eng. Abdul Rahman Alyehia (Syrian Heritage Centre)

Site Monitors Project Coordinator

Dr. Amr Al-Azm



The Castle of “Al-Shugoor - Bakas”



Introduction:

The castle of “Al-Shugoor - Bakas”, located 10 km northwest of the city of Jisr Al-Shugoor, 60 km west of Idlib, and 65 km east of Lattakia.

The castle enjoys a strategic location in the governorate of Idlib on the intersection of the key roads tying Lattakia - Aleppo, and Antioch – Apamea, making it one of the major hubs in the area. It was named after the village of Al-Shugoor. Al-Shagr means the empty residence, while Al-Thagr means “the border” or edge. The name “Bakas” means a cup turned upside down surrounded by rocks from which water flows.

Al-Shugoor Castle includes Aramaic inscriptions that probably date to the first occupation there. The early Arabs then took residence in it; hailing from Thamud and Palmyra during the Roman period. Saladin was the first to conquer and liberate the castle from the crusaders.

Due to the castle's significant value, on Saturday 8/20/2017, site monitors from the Syrian Heritage Center conducted a field survey to document its current condition and propose repairs in an immediate intervention. These were their findings:

1. Damage on the southern and eastern sides due to the elements (environmental).
2. Damage from illicit digging on the site.
3. Damage due to sheep being raised on the site.
4. Damage due to neglect over the past 6 years.
5. No Damage due to military activity was noted.





East side



Collapse due to environmental /weathering





Looting of Stones







Collapse due to natural causes



Damage due to weathering effects







A collapse in the south is a result of weathering and human activity









Reported by:
Eng. Abdul Rahman Alyehia (Syrian Heritage Centre)

Site Monitors Project Coordinator
Dr. Amr Al-Azm

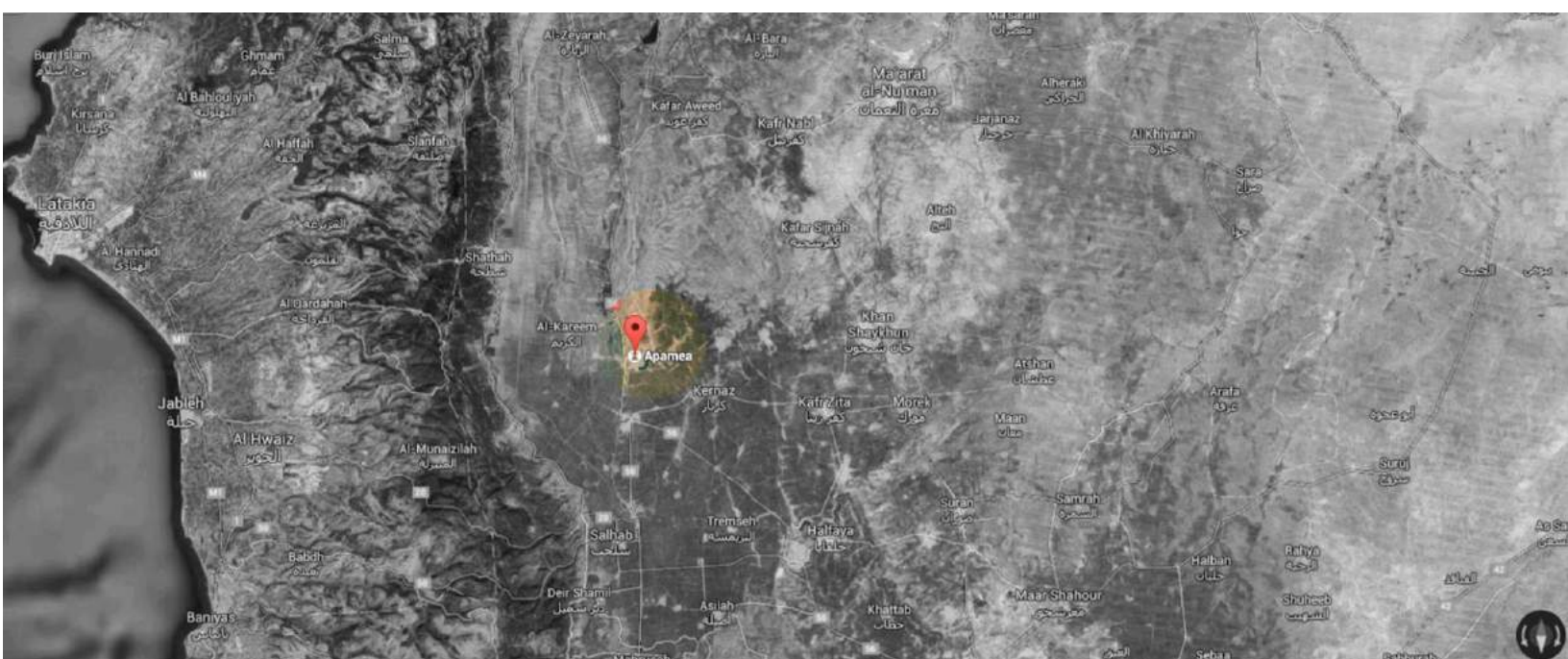


The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative

Site Monitors Project

Condition report for a mosaic floor

in Al-Bara site



* The Syrian Heritage Center received information that there is a Byzantine-era mosaic floor in Al-Bara historical site, located 33 km southwest of Idlib in Jabal Al-Zawiyah, 5 km south of Ehsim, and 20 km southwest of Ariha.

* History: Al-Bara contains buildings that date back to the second century AD. It reached its prime during the fifth and sixth centuries AD. Most of the remaining archaeological structures are from the Byzantine era. The abundance of water at the site was one of the reasons behind its prosperity. It has many reservoirs and a 12 meter deep well, Alwan well, north of Al-Bara, that is still used today. Al-Bara was under the rule of Apamea during the Byzantine era and had significant commercial ties with Antioch.

* Due to the lack of law enforcement, this mosaic floor, carrying images of flora and fauna, is vulnerable to looting and vandalism by antiquity smugglers.



The field investigation conducted by the Syrian Heritage Center's site monitors on 8/8/2017 revealed that the tile is located in a residential room within a palace structure. It contains elements of flora and fauna. The team found that the mosaic floor needs to be moved into the museum of Ma'arrat Al-Noman for the following reasons:

1. Lack of law enforcement due to the conflict in Syria
2. The area is now exposed and unprotected
3. Heavy machinery used in excavation missions nearby

Part of the floor after being exposed:





Mosaic floor location



Location of the exposed part



Location of the mosaic floor within the foundation, south entrance



Destruction near the mosaic floor location





Reported by:
Eng. Abdul Rahman Alyehia (Syrian Heritage Centre)

Site Monitors Project Coordinator
Dr. Amr Al-Azm



The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative
Site Monitors Project
Site Monitoring Report on Apamea Dumpsite and its Removal
10/26/2017



Apamea

Apamea is an ancient Syrian city located 60 Km north of the Hama governorate. It is home to historical structures that date back to the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, as well as Islamic eras.

Due to the war that has been ongoing for 6 years, the lack of a designated dumpsite, and the inability to move waste off site, waste has been accumulating and posing a public health risk as it is close to residential areas. It also impacts the environment and takes away from the beauty and culture of an ancient city that once attracted tourists from around the world to admire and learn about its significance in Syria's history.

A field survey of Apamea by the Syrian Heritage Center's site monitors revealed damage caused by:

- Illicit digging by individual looters.
- Shelling and gunfire by regime forces nearby in Al Madiq Castle (Al Habouseh).
- Vandalism.
- Weathering effects.
- 6 years of neglect.
- Dumpsite on the north side of the site.

To alleviate the negative impact on public health and the environment, efforts are being made to coordinate with the local council to examine the possibility of moving the dumpsite 800m east of Apamea where it would be out of sight from the ancient city. This project shall also engage other ongoing activities in the area to restore the infrastructure and basic facilities, raise cultural awareness on the need to preserve historical sites and invest in them to rebuild cultural life and the economy in the region.

Images of the site with the dumpsite in view below:

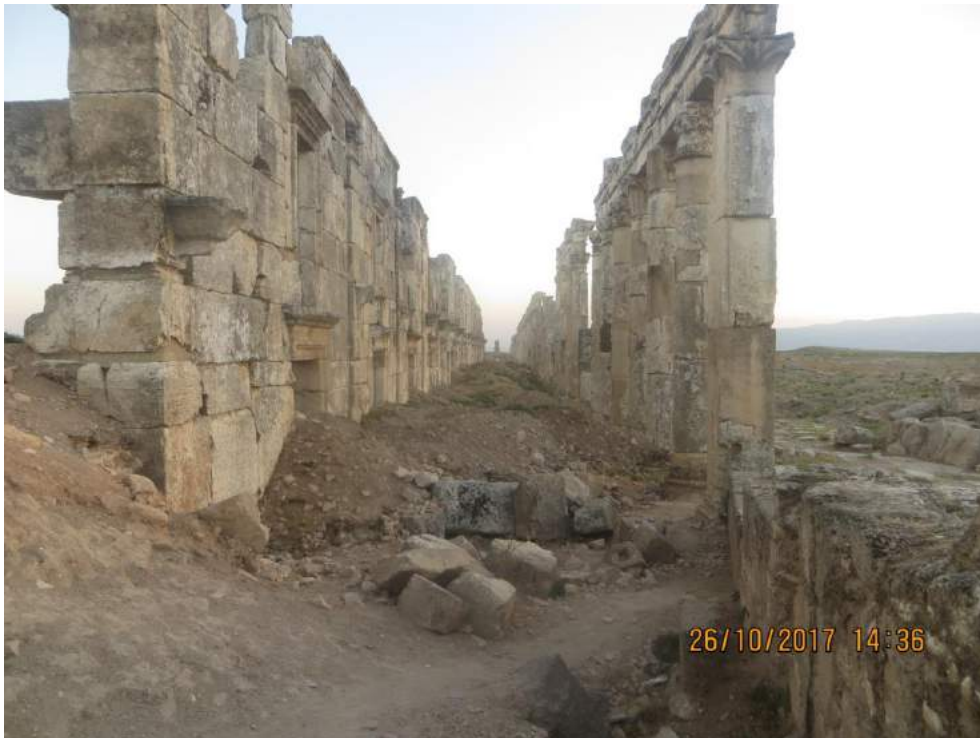








Looting Pits









Moving the Dump from the archaeological site





After Removal











Reported by:
Eng. Abdul Rahman Alyehia (Syrian Heritage Centre)

Site Monitors Project Coordinator
Dr. Amr Al-Azm



Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 17-0078

Report Date: November 19, 2017

Site Name: Mart Barbara Church (كنيسة مر بربارة)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Karamlish, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Mart Barbara Chaldean Catholic Church was built on a mound known as Tel Barbara over the ruins of an Assyrian temple, west of Karamlish.¹⁴² According to Wilmshursts, “The church of Mart Barbara outside the village is said to be the oldest church in the Mosul plain. It was [present]...in 1758, and was rebuilt by the Chaldeans in 1764, after having been abandoned by the village’s traditionalist community.”¹⁴³ It is located on the northern side of the village and is adjacent to a cemetery.

Site Date: 1758 CE, rebuilt 1764

Incident Summary: New photographs show restoration efforts at the church.

Incident Source and Description: On November 14, 2017 the Twitter account, Iraq’s Christians, reported that the Church of Mart Barbara in Karamlish is undergoing repair and restoration to prepare for its reopening on the feast day of Mart Barbara on December 4, 2017.¹⁴⁴ The church was damaged in 2016 by explosives placed by ISIS militants. For more information on previous damage to Mart Barbara Church, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0038 in Weekly Report 117-118** and **IHI 16-0038 UPDATE in Weekly Report 119-120**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other preservation initiatives in Iraq: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0081**.

Pattern: Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor preservation efforts at cultural heritage sites damaged during conflicts in Iraq and Syria.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ATour: <http://www.atour.com/education/20040819c.html>

¹⁴² <http://www.atour.com/education/20040819c.html>

¹⁴³ Wilmshurst 2000: 218.

¹⁴⁴ <https://twitter.com/iraqschristians/status/932355931173806080>

Iraq's Christians:

November 14, 2017: <https://twitter.com/iraqschristians/status/930638518614921223>

November 19, 2017: <https://twitter.com/iraqschristians/status/932355931173806080>

Scholarly:

Wilmshurst, D. (2000) *The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Church of the East, 1318-1913*. Peeters. 218.



A cross is replaced on the dome of Mart Barbara Church (Iraq's Christians; November 14, 2017)



A cross is replaced on the dome of Mart Barbara Church (Iraq's Christians; November 14, 2017)



Restoration of Mart Barbara Church (Iraq's Christians; November 19, 2017)



Restoration of Mart Barbara Church (Iraq's Christians; November 19, 2017)



Restoration of Mart Barbara Church (Iraq's Christians; November 19, 2017)



Restoration of Mart Barbara Church (Iraq's Christians; November 19, 2017)

IHI 17-0079

Report Date: November 28, 2017

Site Name: Sherwana Castle and Museum

Date of Incident: November 12, 2017

Location: Kalar, As Sulaymaniyah Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Sherwana Castle was built in the 1800s by Mohammed Pasha Jaff, a Kurdish leader appointed by the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁵

Site Date: ca. 1866 CE

Incident Summary: An earthquake damaged a historic castle.

Incident Source and Description: On November 14, 2017 Kurdistan 24 reported that Sherwana Castle in the town of Kalar was damaged by an earthquake on November 12, 2017.¹⁴⁶ The earthquake killed over 300 people and injuring more than 7,000 across both Iraq and Iran.¹⁴⁷ A photograph shows the top portion of the castle was severely damaged. The head of the Germiyan Heritage Department stated that 35% of the building suffered damage.¹⁴⁸

Pattern: Natural impacts.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor preservation efforts at Shewana Castle and determine if other cultural heritage sites were damaged by the November 14 earthquake.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Board of Tourism of Kurdistan:

<http://bot.gov.krd/garmian-administration/kalar>

Director-General of Antiquities:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=966523876849155&id=239551286213088

Kurdistan 24:

November 14, 2017: <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/b153d5c0-db3f-47f9-97f7-5044db43fa71>

November 14, 2017: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlSSiH8C_8g

¹⁴⁵ <http://bot.gov.krd/garmian-administration/kalar>

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/b153d5c0-db3f-47f9-97f7-5044db43fa71>

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/b153d5c0-db3f-47f9-97f7-5044db43fa71>

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/14112017>

Rudaw: <http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/14112017>



Video still of damage to top section of castle (Kurdistan24; November 14, 2017)



Antiquities department works to reconstruct damaged section of castle (Director-General of Antiquities; November 30, 2017)



Antiquities department works to reconstruct damaged section of castle (Director-General of Antiquities; November 30, 2017)



Antiquities department works to reconstruct damaged section of castle (Director-General of Antiquities; November 30, 2017)

IHI 17-0080

Report Date: November 28, 2017

Site Name: Inishki Christian Cemetery

Date of Incident: November 20, 2017

Location: Inishki (اينشكي), Dohuk Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Christian cemetery in Assyrian Christian village.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Unknown perpetrators vandalized Inishki Christian Cemetery.

Incident Source and Description: On November 28, 2017 Nahrain Post reported that a Christian cemetery in the village of Inishki was vandalized on November 20, 2017 by unknown perpetrators.¹⁴⁹ Photographs accompanying the report show several stone headstones and grave slabs have been intentionally damaged. The motives of the vandalism are not speculated, but there have been documented incidents of persecution against ethnic and religious minorities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in the past.¹⁵⁰

Pattern: Vandalism.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Inishki Christian Cemetery and cultural heritage sites subjected to vandalism.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

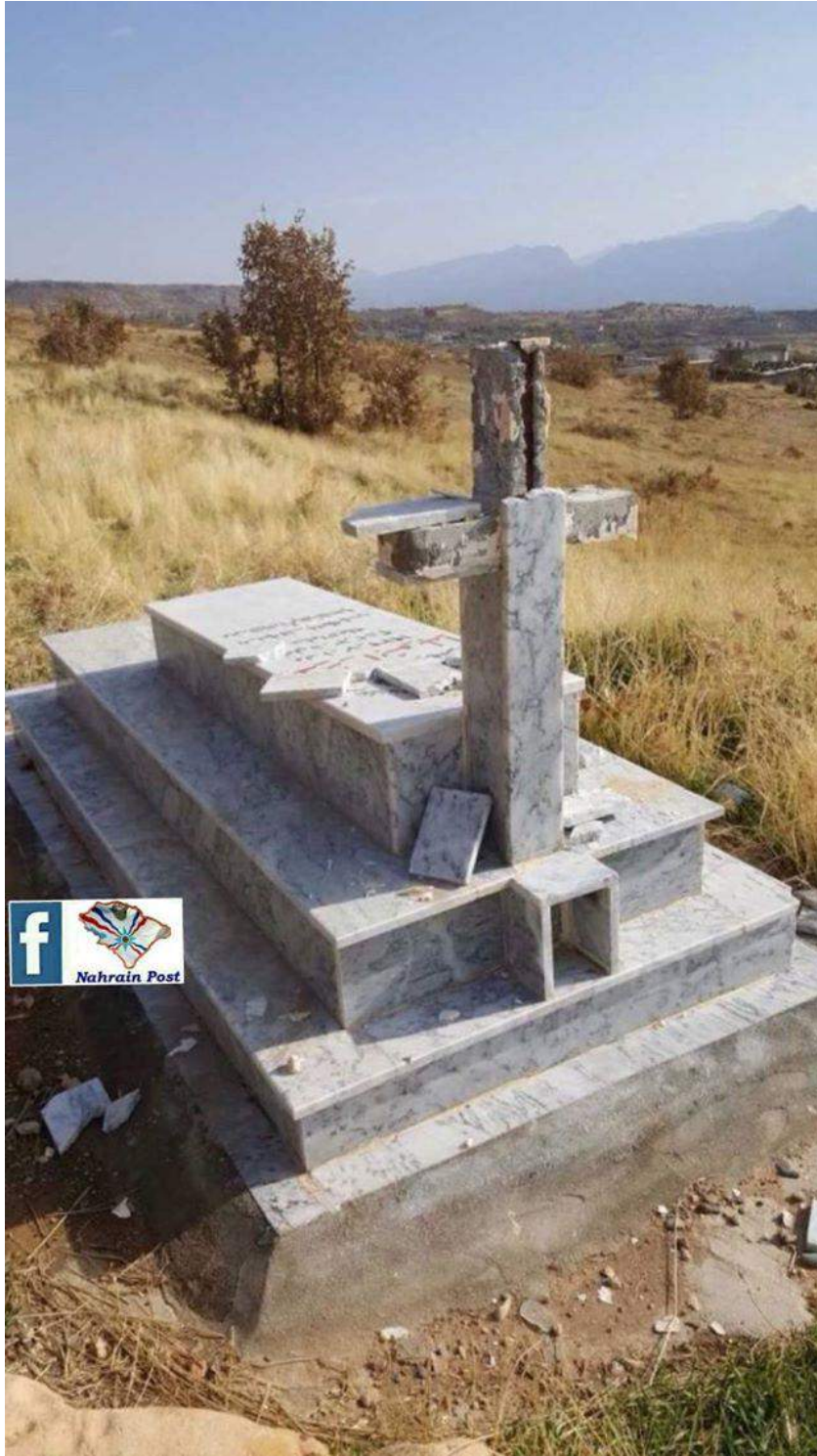
Nahrain Post:

<https://www.facebook.com/NahrainPost/photos/pcb.1193366204140610/1193366110807286/>

Zowaa: https://twitter.com/Zowaa_ADM/status/935970126100402177

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/NahrainPost/photos/pcb.1193366204140610/1193366110807286/>

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.atour.com/media/files/news/assyria/20170925-Assyria-Nineveh-Erasing-Assyrians/20170925-Assyria-Nineveh-Erasing-Assyrians.pdf>; <https://cmes.uchicago.edu/page/cmcs-comments> ("Minorities and the Kurdish Referendum" September 29, 2017); http://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/MRG_Rep_Iraq_ENG_May17_FINAL2.pdf



Damage to graves in Christian cemetery (Nahrain Post; November 28, 2017)



Damage to graves in Christian cemetery (Nahrain Post; November 28, 2017)



Damage to graves in Christian cemetery (Nahrain Post; November 28, 2017)



Damage to graves in Christian cemetery (Nahrain Post; November 28, 2017)

IHI 17-0081

Report Date: November 30, 2017

Site Name: Monastery of Mar Behnam and Mart Sarah

Date of Incident: August 2017 to present

Location: Khidr Ilyas, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: This Syrian Catholic monastery is dedicated to the martyrs Mar Behnam and Mart Sarah, children of the Assyrian King Sennacherib II of Asuristan.¹⁵¹ Mar Behnam was converted to Christianity and was baptized by Mar Mattai (St. Matthew), later bringing his sister Sarah to be cured of leprosy. Following her healing, Mart Sarah and the 40 companions of Mar Behnam were also baptized. Sennacherib had Mar Behnam, Mart Sarah, and the 40 companions killed for their conversion, but was later also baptized and built the monastery where Sarah was healed out of regret for their deaths.¹⁵²

The church on the site was originally founded by the Church of the East in the 4th century CE.¹⁵³ In the 7th century, the monastery became it became part of the Syrian Orthodox. Finally, in the 19th century, the complex became Syrian Catholic Church. Most of the current monastery complex dates to the 12th century.¹⁵⁴

Site Date: The complex originates in the 4th century CE, with renovations in 1164, 1248, and 1295. Modern restorations date to 1901, 1986, and 1990s.

Incident Summary: An NGO is carrying out preservation work at monastery.

Incident Source and Description: On August 14, 2017 the Fraternité in Irak, a French NGO that aims to support Iraqi religious minorities and victims of violence, announced that reconstruction efforts at the Monastery of Mar Behnam and Mart Sarah had begun, following the destruction by ISIS militants in 2015 and the recapture of the area by Iraqi forces on November 20, 2016.¹⁵⁵ The reconstruction is being carried out by local inhabitants of the village of Khidr, many of whom are Sunni Muslims, under the leadership of the NGO, with the support of Bishop Petros Mouché, the Syrian Catholic Bishop of Mosul, and the mayor of Khidr Ilyas. Abdul Salam Simaan, an Iraqi archaeologist, is also assisting with the project, with the goal of rebuilding as much of the site as possible using bricks extracted from the rubble at site or having craftsmen from Qaraqosh make new materials using traditional methods.¹⁵⁶ Work at the site is ongoing as of November 30, 2017. For more information on the destruction of Mar Behnam Monastery, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports IHI 15-0075** in **Weekly Report 33**, **IHI 15-0075 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 41**, and **IHI 16-0047** in **Weekly Report 119-120**.

¹⁵¹ Wolper (2014): 379-92.

¹⁵² <https://hyperallergic.com/216393/another-treasure-lost-in-iraq-the-story-of-mar-behnam-monastery/>

¹⁵³ <https://archnet.org/sites/14989>

¹⁵⁴ Rassam (2009): 81-91.

¹⁵⁵ <http://fraternite-en-irak.org/a-mar-behnam-les-travaux-ont-commence/>; <http://fraternite-en-irak.org/retour-couvent-mar-behnam/>

¹⁵⁶ <http://fraternite-en-irak.org/des-tresors-sauves-des-gravats/>; <http://fraternite-en-irak.org/un-archeologue-chevronne-au-chevet-de-mar-behnam/>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other preservation initiatives in Iraq:
ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0078.

Pattern: Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor preservation efforts at cultural heritage sites damaged during conflicts in Iraq and Syria.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Archnet: <https://archnet.org/sites/14989>

Fraternité in Irak:

September 4, 2017:

<http://fraternite-en-irak.org/restoration-work-has-begun-at-the-mar-behnam-monastery/>

October 2, 2017:

<http://fraternite-en-irak.org/the-reconstruction-of-mar-behnam-is-both-crucial-and-delicate/>

October 12, 2017:

<http://fraternite-en-irak.org/des-tresors-sauves-des-gravats/>

August 21, 2017:

<http://fraternite-en-irak.org/un-archeologue-chevronne-au-chevet-de-mar-behnam/>

November 24, 2016:

<http://fraternite-en-irak.org/retour-couvent-mar-behnam/>

La Croix: https://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Catholicisme/Monde/En-Irak-monastere-Mar-Behnam-recherche-ame-2017-09-30-1200880858?from_univers=lacroix

Scholarly:

Wolper, Ethel Sara (2014) "Khidr and the politics of translation in Mosul: Mar Behnam, St. George and the Khidr Ilyas." In: *Sacred Precincts: The Religious Architecture of Non-muslim Communities Across the Islamic World* (Arts and Archaeology of the Islamic World). Ed. Mohammed Gharipour, 379–392. Leiden: Brill.

Rassam, Suha (2009) "Der Mar Behnam: The Monastery of St. Behnam." In: *The Christian Heritage of Iraq*. Piscataway: Gorgias Press. 81–91.



Workers sort rubble during reconstruction of Mar Behnam Monastery (Fraternité in Irak; October 27, 2017)



Workers sort bricks for use during reconstruction of Mar Behnam Monastery (Fraternité in Irak; October 27, 2017)



Restoration work begins on the niche containing the relics of Mar Behnam Monastery (Fraternité in Irak; October 27, 2017)



Workers sort and clear rubble during reconstruction of Mar Behnam Monastery (Fraternité in Irak; October 27, 2017)



Workers sort and clear rubble during reconstruction of Mar Behnam Monastery (Fraternité in Irak; October 27, 2017)

Incident Reports: Libya

LHI 17-0036

Report Date: November 2, 2017

Site Name: Qasr al-Manar (قصر المنار)

Date of Incident: November 2, 2017

Location: Benghazi, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: An Italian-era palace built to be the seat of the Italian Governors of Libya.¹⁵⁷

Site Date: 1913 CE

Incident Summary: The Libyan Department of Antiquities is reusing a historic building as a museum.

Incident Source and Description: According to the official Facebook page of the Libyan Department of Antiquities, Qasr al-Manar will be the future site of a museum featuring antiquities from Eusperides and Bernice, the ancient cities that lie beneath the modern city of Benghazi.¹⁵⁸ The building appears to have suffered severe damage during the fight to liberate the Old City of Benghazi, and will require a significant restoration effort before it can welcome the public.

As seen in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery, initial damage to Qasr al-Manar occurred between August 1, 2013 and April 13, 2014. There is visible damage to the roof on the western part of the building. There is a significant increase in damage by the next available image from January 16, 2016. There is no further visible damage after that date.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives; Site management.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Wasat: <http://alwasat.ly/ar/news/culture/156202/>

Lana News: <http://www.lananews.ly/ar/?p=94737>

Libyan Antiquities Authority:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2042632852627118&id=1615537332003341

¹⁵⁷ <http://alwasat.ly/ar/news/culture/156202/>

¹⁵⁸ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2042632852627118&id=1615537332003341

Private Facebook



Damaged interior of the Qasr al Manar (Libyan Antiquities Authority; November 2, 2017)



Damaged interior of the Qasr al Manar (Libyan Antiquities Authority; November 2, 2017)



Damaged exterior of Qasr al Manar (November 21, 2017)



Qasr al Manar, shown within red rectangle, prior to any visible damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 4, 2011)



Various instances of damage to the building as a result of continuous warfare, as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 6, 2016)

LHI 17-0037

Report Date: November 3, 2017

Site Name: Berenice

Date of Incident: November 3, 2017

Location: Berenice, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: Eusperides was an ancient Greek colony founded in the 5th century BCE and renamed Berenice 200 years later.¹⁵⁹ The remains of the site are located to the northeast of the Old City of Benghazi. The site later fell to the Romans and prospered until the 5th century CE, when it was attacked by Vandals. The site then dwindled to a small village.

Site Date: 3rd century BCE to 5th century CE

Incident Summary: The Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) discovered a corpse dumped at the archaeological site of Berenice.

Incident Source and Description: A spokesman for Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) Benghazi reported the discovery of a human corpse recently discarded in the archaeological site of Berenice. This site is adjacent to an area where until recently, Islamic extremists continued to battle the forces of the Libyan National Army (LNA). The identity of the corpse remains unknown, and no effort had been made to bury it.

According to Fathi Sahli, the Director of the Benghazi office of DoA, this corpse is one of approximately 100 others that have been buried at the archaeological site. Many are in shallow burials that may have destroyed archaeological material. The presumption is that these are the bodies of militants opposed to the LNA, who were killed during the recent fighting in the nearby neighborhood of Sidi Akribish. While the commander of the LNA special forces, Wanis Bukhamada, declared that this area had been liberated on November 11, 2017 there are reports that fighting continues in Sidi Akribish.¹⁶⁰

Pattern: Modern burials.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the status of Berenice and other archaeological sites reportedly being used as disposal grounds for human remains.

¹⁵⁹<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0006%3Aalphabetic+letter%3DE%3Aentry+group%3D3%3Aentry%3DEusperides>

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/11/11/Ina-finally-takes-benghazis-sidi-akribesh-after-4-month-siege-report/> ; <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/12/02/warfali-said-to-be-involved-in-benghazis-sidi-akribesh-fighting/>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Libya Herald:

November 11, 2017: <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/11/11/Ina-finally-takes-benghazis-sidi-akribesh-after-4-month-siege-report/>

December 2, 2017: <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/12/02/warfali-said-to-be-involved-in-benghazis-sidi-akribesh-fighting/>

Perseus Tufts:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0006%3Aalphabeti+c+letter%3DE%3Aentry+group%3D3%3Aentry%3Deesperides>

Private Facebook Account



Photograph of the body dumped on the site (Private Facebook account; November 3, 2017)



Photograph of the body dumped on the site (Private Facebook account; November 3, 2017)

LHI 17-0038

Report Date: November 3, 2017

Site Name: Qasr al-Birka

Date of Incident: November 3, 2017

Location: Benghazi, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: Qasr al-Birka was built by the Ottoman governor Rashid Pasha II and is one of the most prominent public buildings in southern Benghazi.¹⁶¹

Site Date: 1895 CE

Incident Summary: The Libyan Department of Antiquities has started the first phase of a restoration project on this large historic building.

Incident Source and Description: With the assistance of ICCROM ATHAR and the Prince Claus Fund, the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) has launched the first phase of the restoration of Qasr al-Birka.¹⁶² This extensive palace, which consists of 360 rooms, has suffered extensive damage due to deferred maintenance. DoA hopes to stabilize the roof to prevent additional sections from collapsing, and remove concrete additions that have accelerated the rate of decay for certain parts of the building.

Pattern: Site management: reconstruction.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Libyan Department of Antiquities:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2043172929239777&id=1615537332003341

¹⁶¹ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2043172929239777&id=1615537332003341

¹⁶² *ibid.*



Exterior of Qasr al-Birka (Libyan Department of Antiquities; November 3, 2017)



Exterior of Qasr al-Birka (Libyan Department of Antiquities; November 3, 2017)



Interior of Qasr al-Birka (Libyan Department of Antiquities; November 3, 2017)



Interior of Qasr al-Birka (Libyan Department of Antiquities; November 3, 2017)

LHI 17-0039

Report Date: November 26, 2017

Site Name: Qasr Libya (قصر ليبيا)

Date of Incident: November 26, 2017

Location: Qasr Libya, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: The village of Qasr Libya (ancient Olbia) contains several Byzantine-era ruins, including a church dating to 539 CE.¹⁶³ There is also a site museum built to protect dozens of mosaics recovered from the site.

Site Date: 539 CE

Incident Summary: The Libyan Department of Antiquities has begun a campaign to conserve the mosaics of Qasr Libya.

Incident Source and Description: On November 26, 2017 Lana News reported that the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) has commenced work on the conservation of a mosaic floor at Qasr Libya under the guidance of Dr. Salah al Agab, the former Chairman of DoA.¹⁶⁴ Beyond conservation, the project will also include outreach to the local community regarding the importance of the site and their role in protecting it.¹⁶⁵

Pattern: Site management.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Qasr al-Libya, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to conservation and outreach.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Libyan Department of Antiquities:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2053299944893742&id=1615537332003341

Lana News: <http://www.lananews.ly/ar/?p=99837>

Livius: <http://www.livius.org/articles/place/theodorias-qasr-libya/>

¹⁶³ <http://www.livius.org/articles/place/theodorias-qasr-libya/>

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.lananews.ly/ar/?p=99837>

¹⁶⁵ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2053299944893742&id=1615537332003341



Dr. Salah al Agab inspects one of the mosaic floors in the museum of Qasr Libya (Libyan Department of Antiquities; November 26, 2017)

LHI 17-0040

Report Date: November 28, 2017

Site Name: al-Sheikha Radiya Mosque (جامع الشخة راضية)

Date of Incident: November 27, 2017

Location: Sidi Khalifa, Tripoli, Tripolitania, Libya

Site Description: Located south of the Old City of Tripoli, al-Sheikha Radiya Mosque is one of the oldest Sufi mosques in the area, and has long played a prominent role in the celebration of Mawlid an-Nabi.¹⁶⁶

Site Date: Senussi period (1859-1969 CE)

Incident Summary: Islamic extremists damage a Sufi mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On November 28, 2017 Al Wasat and Qana' Libya reported that the interior of al-Sheikha Radiya Mosque was destroyed by extremists opposed to the celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed, a holiday known as Mawlid an-Nabi.¹⁶⁷ Photographs accompanying the report show severe fire damage to the interior of the mosque, and moderate damage to the exterior.

Libya Herald reports that al-Sheikha Radiya Mosque has long served as the starting point of a Sufi processional on the first Friday following the Mawlid, in which a congregation walks north together from the mosque through the Old City.¹⁶⁸

Pattern: Vandalism.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Sheikha Radiya Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to vandalism and intentional destruction.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Libya Herald:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/11/28/sufi-mosque-attacked-in-tripoli/>

Al Masrawi:

http://www.masrawy.com/news/news_publicaffairs/details/2017/11/28/1199694/-/موقع-ليبى-مجهولون-مسجد-صوفيا-في-طر-ابلس

¹⁶⁶http://www.masrawy.com/news/news_publicaffairs/details/2017/11/28/1199694/-/موقع-ليبى-مجهولون-مسجد-صوفيا-في-طر-ابلس

¹⁶⁷ <https://libyaschannel.com/2017/11/28/مسجد-الشيخة-را-مجهولون-يضر-مون-النار-في-مسجد-الشيخة-را> ; <http://alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/160318/>

¹⁶⁸ <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/11/28/sufi-mosque-attacked-in-tripoli/>

Qana' Libya:

<https://libyaschannel.com/2017/11/28/مجهولون-يضرمون-النار-في-مسجد-الشيخة-را/>

Al Wasat:

<http://alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/160318/>



Fire damage on exterior of al-Sheikha Radiya Mosque (Qana' Libya; November 28, 2017)



Fire damage to the interior of the mosque (Al Wasat; November 28, 2017)

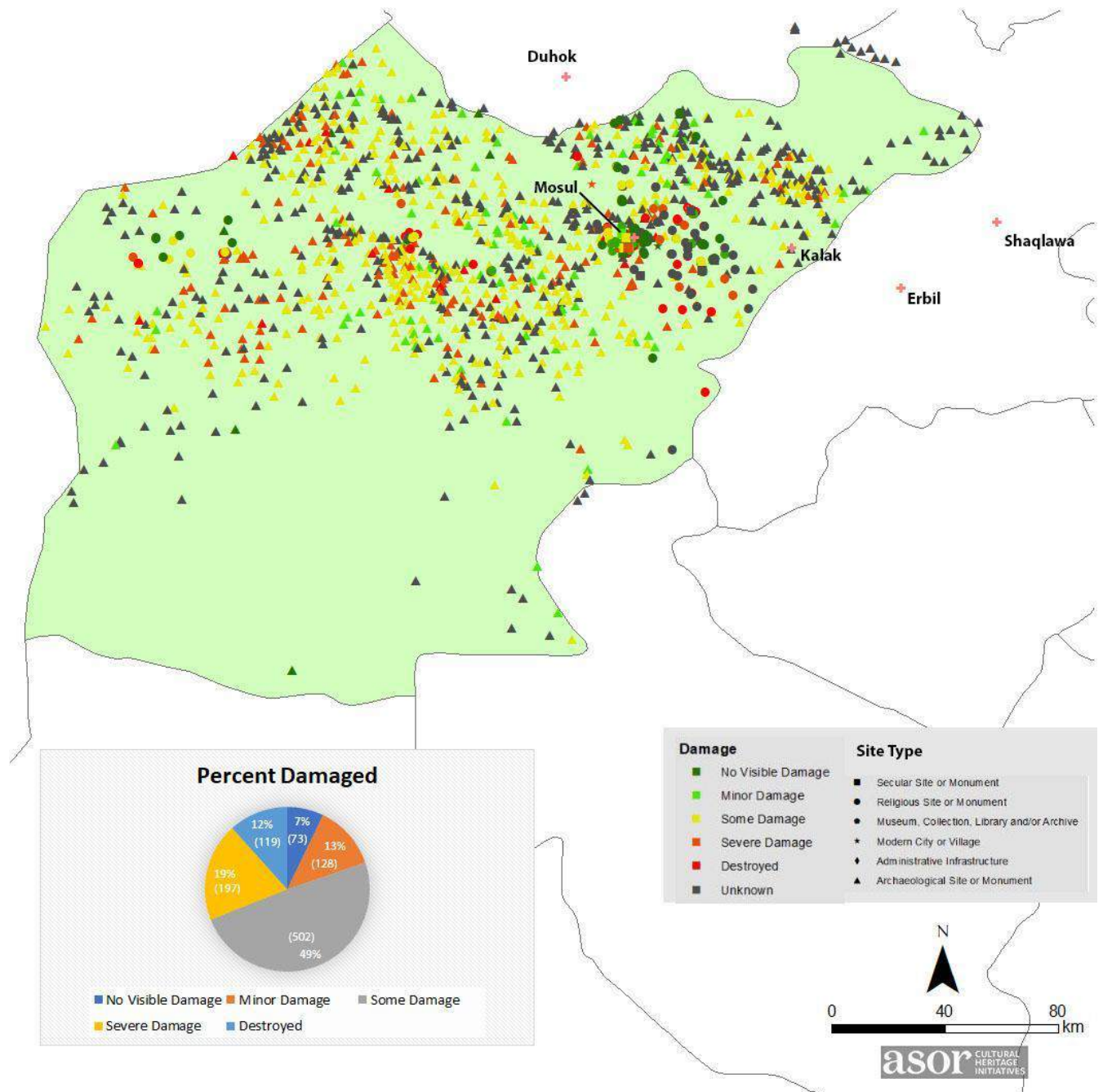


Fire damage to the interior of the mosque (Al Wasat, November 28, 2017)

Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis

Ninawa Governorate in Iraq has been the primary focus of ASOR CHI's ongoing assessment of heritage sites using satellite imagery. The region was chosen because of its previous occupation by ISIS and the recent liberation. While some of the affected cities were well covered in the media and by in-country sources during the conflict, the majority were not and little was known about their current state of preservation. Therefore, these satellite assessments provide a more robust picture of the state of heritage in northern Iraq.

ASOR CHI has catalogued 1,590 heritage locations in Ninawa Governorate. Over 75% of the heritage sites catalogued are Archaeological Sites or Monuments (1,209). The total counts by site type can be found on the map below. Only 19 sites could not be assessed due to unclear geographic coordinates. An additional 552 points have coordinates but could not be located in the modern landscape and are recorded as unknown.

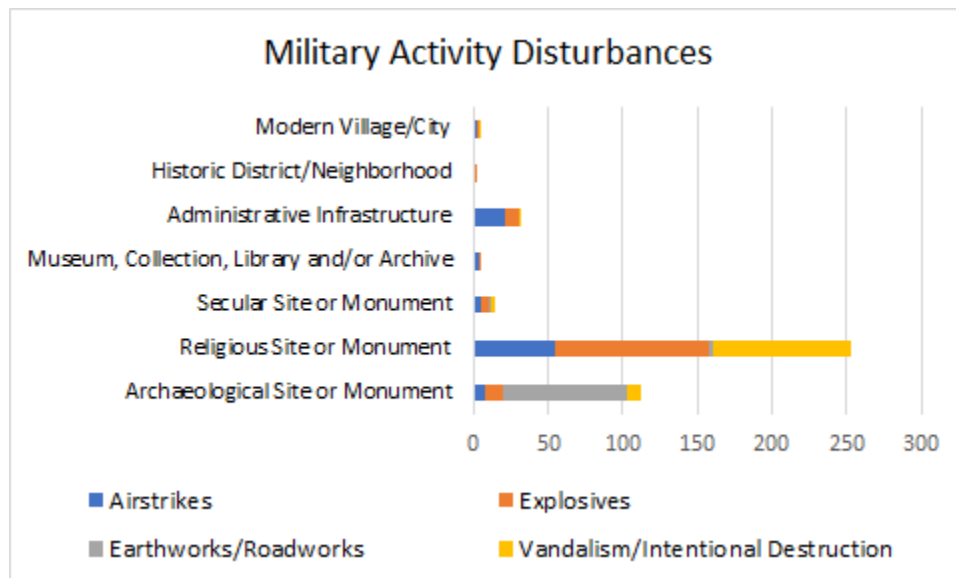


As seen in the above chart, nearly 50% of the locations are in poor condition. This emphasizes the importance of tracking and understanding heritage destruction within Ninawa Governorate. Several impacts have occurred in much greater number than others. The ASOR CHI GeoSpatial Team tracks damage using 6 broad categories: Agricultural Disturbances, Development Disturbances, Human Activity Disturbances, Military Activity Disturbances, Natural Impact Disturbances, and Site Management Disturbances. Less than 2% of the sites (20 total) have been impacted by either Natural Impact Disturbances or Site Management Disturbances and therefore these impacts will not be discussed in the following sections.

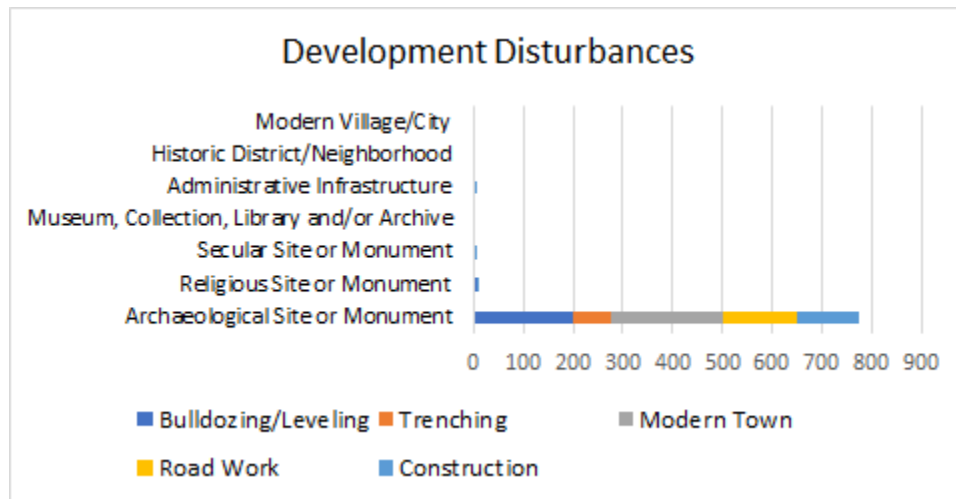
The most significant force affecting archaeological sites within the region has been agricultural plowing. Of the identifiable archaeological sites, approximately 47% have been compromised by plowing. Many of the archaeological mounds analyzed within the province are located within agricultural plains and are either surrounded by plowed fields or plowing has taken place on top of the mound. The second most common disturbance to archaeological sites has been illegal excavation. Illegal excavation has affected 30% of the sites, the majority of which appears to be non-systematic and small-scale. Additionally, 11.5% of archaeological sites are occupied by modern burials. Agricultural and Human Activity Disturbances have not affected any other site type in a significant way.

Religious sites or monuments have been severely affected by military activity, while archaeological sites have been impacted to a much lesser degree. Of the 321 identified religious sites, 32% have been damaged as a result of explosives and 29% have suffered from vandalism/intentional destruction (by combatants). Secular sites or monuments also have suffered greatly as a result of military activity, with 6 of the 16 catalogued sites (37%) damaged by explosions and 5 of 16 (31%) by airstrikes.

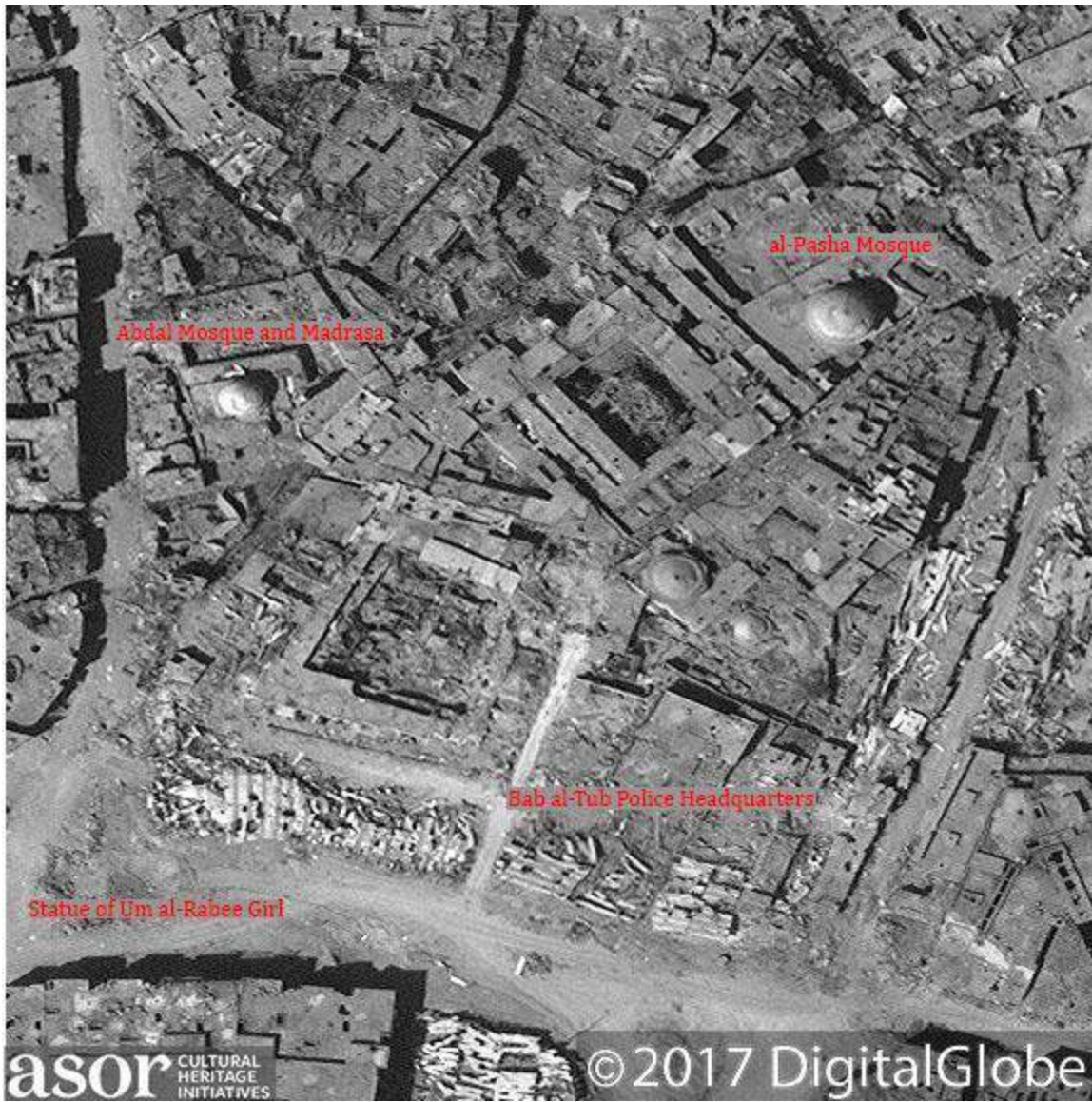
The difference in geographic location, as well as the inherent differences between them, of archaeological sites compared with secular or religious sites explains in part the disparity in types of destruction. The majority of the sites damaged from airstrikes, explosives, or vandalism/intentional destruction are concentrated within larger urban areas at the center of the conflict (such as Mosul) or were populated with minority groups (such as Bashiqa).



Development disturbances have affected archaeological sites more severely than all other site types, as can be seen in the table below. Just over 22% of archaeological sites have been impacted negatively by the existence or encroachment of a modern town. The encroachment of modern towns has damaged more archaeological sites than every other recorded factor except agricultural plowing and illegal excavation.



As a result of the liberation of many of the urban areas within Ninawa Governorate from ISIS occupation, there have been some reconstruction and restoration efforts. Of the 93 religious sites in the province, 17 have reportedly undergone reconstruction efforts (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0069**). In the Old City of Mosul, recently released satellite imagery reveals some reconstruction efforts, which appear to generally include the clean-up of roadways and rubble in certain areas of the Old City. However, no heritage sites from the ASOR CHI inventory have been substantially reconstructed as of November 14, 2017.



Extensive damage to the southeastern part of the Old City of Mosul (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25, 2017)



Clean-up efforts indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 14, 2017)

Syrian Network For Human Rights Videos

Beginning March 23, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) published backdated 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 November 4, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) published a video dated June 18, 2014 showing damage to a mosque in the village of Beshlamun, Idlib Governorate, reportedly the result of a barrel bomb dropped by a SARG helicopter. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-A7A-SG2hM>

SNHR Vital Facilities Report:

On November 10, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) released a vital facilities report for October 2017. According to SNHR, there were 61 attacks against vital civilian facilities. The sites attacked include seven mosques.¹⁶⁹

- On October 4, 2017 SARG warplanes reportedly fired missiles at al-Iman Mosque in al-Sabha, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, causing moderate damage.
- On October 7, 2017 Russian warplanes reportedly fired missiles at Othman ibn Affan Mosque in Buqrus Tahtani, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, destroying the mosque and rendering it out of commission.
- On October 12, 2017 SARG forces reportedly fired mortar shells at Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate, causing damage. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0182**
- On October 15, 2017 SARG forces reportedly fired shells at Omar ibn al-Khattab Mosque in Harbnafseh, Hama Governorate, partially destroying the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0186**
- On October 22, 2017 Russian warplanes reportedly fired missiles at a mosque in the village of Arafa, Hama Governorate, partially destroying the mosque.
- On October 27, 2017 SARG warplanes reportedly fired missiles at al-Salam Mosque in Ghreiba, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, partially destroying the mosque and rendering it out of commission.
- On October 31, 2017 Russian warplanes fired missiles at Omar ibn al-Khattab Mosque in al-Asharah, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, destroying the mosque.

¹⁶⁹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/10/48380/>

Heritage Timeline

November 30, 2017

The Washington Post published an article titled “**UN says 17 World Heritage sites in Arab region are in danger**” (by Edith M. Lederer). Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, warned that 17 of the 82 World Heritage sites in the Arab region are on the World Heritage in Danger List because of conflicts.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-says-17-world-heritage-sites-in-arab-region-are-in-danger/2017/11/30/033bd364-d606-11e7-9ad9-ca0619edfa05_story.html?utm_term=.8d5ba4f10fed

- **Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria's Heritage - 30 November 2017.**”

<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-30-november-2017/>

- *UN News Centre* published a press release titled “**Security Council hears calls for ‘all of UN’ approach to stop destruction, smuggling of cultural heritage.**” The UN Security Council met to discuss global efforts to stop the traffic in and destruction of cultural property, with the head of UNESCO laying out steps to protect cultural heritage.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58196#.WiVbgmQ-fox>

November 29, 2017

Paris Match published an article titled “**Trafic d’antiquités et financement du terrorisme : la Belgique au cœur de tous les soupçons (Antiquities trafficking and terrorist financing: Belgium at the heart of suspicion)**” (by Frédéric Loore). Looted Syrian and Iraqi artifacts are reportedly being sold at Belgian auction houses and art dealerships.

<https://parismatch.be/actualites/societe/94515/trafic-dantiquites-daesh-belgique>

November 28, 2017

Reuters published an article titled “**Famed Libyan ruins rely on locals for support**” (by Aidan Lewis). Local volunteers help guard the ruins at Leptis Magna, where the number of visitors has dropped significantly since the start of the conflict in Libya.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-ruins/famed-libyan-ruins-rely-on-locals-for-support-idUSKBN1DS1UR>

November 27, 2017

Daily Sabah published an article titled “**Baghdad cafe marks 100 years at intellectual hub.**” The history of a 100-year old cafe, described as a “monument of old Baghdad,” is explored.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/life/2017/11/27/baghdad-cafe-marks-100-years-as-intellectual-hub>

- **The Antiquities Coalition** published an article titled “**Italian Mission hosts exhibition at the UN featuring the work of the Institute for Digital Archaeology.**” A discussion of “The Spirit in the Stone: The Indelible Face of Cultural Heritage,” an exhibit on display at the UN headquarters in New York that explores efforts by the UN and partner organizations to promote cultural heritage preservation. <https://theantiquitiescoalition.org/blog-posts/italian-mission-hosts-exhibition-un/>
 - *News Deeply* published an article titled “**Ten Experts to Watch on Reconstruction in Syria**” (by Kim Bode & Mel Plant). The efforts of 10 experts working to reconstruct various aspects of destroyed infrastructure in Syria are highlighted. <https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/community/2017/11/27/ten-experts-to-watch-on-reconstruction-in-syria>
- November 25, 2017
- World Magazine* published an article titled “**Not exactly Indiana Jones**” (by Emily Belz). The recently opened Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. and the fate of Iraqi artifacts confiscated from Hobby Lobby is discussed. https://world.wng.org/2017/11/not_exactly_indiana_jones
- *The National* published an article titled “**‘Pit bull’ lawyer and former marine hunts down world's stolen treasures**” (by Rob Crilly). A discussion of efforts by Assistant Manhattan District Attorney Matthew Bogdanos to recover looted antiquities from museums, auction houses, and the homes of wealthy collectors. <https://www.thenational.ae/world/the-americas/pit-bull-lawyer-and-former-marine-hunts-down-world-s-stolen-treasures-1.678704>
- November 24, 2017
- 3D Printing Industry* published an article titled “**Dubai combats ISIS destruction with 3D printed artefact reconstructions at UN HQ**” (by Rushabh Haria). The Dubai Future Foundation (DFF), in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN and the Institute of Digital Archaeology (IDA) at the University of Oxford, is 3D printing artifacts destroyed by ISIS militants in Syria and Iraq. Some of the foundation’s work will be displayed at the “The Spirit in the Stone,” a digital archaeology exhibition at UN headquarters in New York. <https://3dprintingindustry.com/news/dubai-combats-isis-destruction-3d-printed-artefact-reconstructions-un-hq-125067/>
- November 23, 2017
- Nature Asia* published an article titled “**Iraqi Kurdistan’s archaeological hotspots revived, but vulnerable**” (by Kira Walker). A discussion of the challenges facing archaeologists working in post-referendum Iraqi Kurdistan. www.natureasia.com/en/nmiddleeast/article/10.1038/nmiddleeast.2017.160

November 22, 2017

Al-Monitor published an article titled “**Digital archive preserves creative side of Syrian revolution**” (by Aj Naddaff). A project called “The Creative Memory of the Syrian Revolution” is building an online archive documenting artistic expression during the Syrian conflict, including cartoons, songs, and pictures created by Syrians to express resistance and hope.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/syrians-creative-calls-for-peace-maintained-in-project.html>

•

The Guardian published an article titled “**On the Iraq border archaeological digs are a minefield – in every sense**” (by Mary Shepperson). The author discusses the challenges facing archaeologists at Iraqi archaeological sites like Charax Spasinou, which was fortified during the Iran-Iraq war and remains riddled with mines.

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/nov/22/is-conflict-damage-really-damage-archaeology-iran-iraq-war>

November 21, 2017

DGAM published an article titled “**The restoration works of the staircase at the entrance to Aleppo Castel.**” The DGAM, UNESCO, and the Aga Khan Foundation are working together to restore the staircase leading to the entrance of the Citadel of Aleppo.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2362>

November 19, 2017

TRT World published an article titled “**Rebuilding begins on Mosul's historic old market**” (by Philip Owira). Local residents are rebuilding shops in a market in the Old City of Mosul that was damaged during the occupation of the city by ISIS.

<https://www.trtworld.com/middle-east/rebuilding-begins-on-mosul-s-historic-old-market-12408>

November 18, 2017

The National published an article titled “**UN allowing Assad regime to lead Aleppo reconstruction**” (by Noor Nanji). Two parallel efforts are reportedly taking place to reconstruct Aleppo. One is an international humanitarian project focusing on the needs of civilians from east Aleppo, and the other is a development plan which aims specifically to rebuild the historic Old City. The latter campaign is being led by the Syrian Ministry of Culture, which works closely with UNESCO and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

<https://www.thenational.ae/world/un-allowing-assad-regime-to-lead-aleppo-reconstruction-1.676601>

•

Syria Times published an article titled “**Czech Earmarks \$1,8 mln for Supporting Archeological Sector in Syria.**” Michal Lukeš, Director-General of the Czech National Museum, has announced that 40 million Koruna (\$1.8 million) will be earmarked to assist with archaeological conservation in Syria until 2019.

<http://syriatimes.sy/index.php/archaeology/33580-czech-earmarks-1-8-mln-for-supporting-archeological-sector-in-syria>

- *Al Bawaba* published an article titled “**Louvre Abu Dhabi Displaying Stolen Artifacts, Iraqis Claim.**” The newly opened Louvre in Abu Dhabi has been accused of displaying looted Iraqi antiquities.
<https://www.albawaba.com/loop/original-louvre-abu-dhabi-stolen-iraqi-artifacts-1049458>
- November 17, 2017 *The Guardian* published an article titled “**Remember Baghdad review – brief, gripping history of Iraq's Jews**” (by Peter Bradshaw). A new documentary focuses on members of London’s Iraqi Jewish community who left Iraq in the 1960s after the 6-Day War.
<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/nov/17/remember-baghdad-review-brief-gripping-history-of-iraqs-jews>
- *Al-Monitor* published an article titled **Militias crack down on social, cultural life in Libya**” (by Mat Nashed). Members of the Libyan Special Deterrent Forces (Rada), a militia affiliated with the Ministry of Interior in the UN-backed Government of National Accord, have shut down cultural activities deemed immoral and arrested organizers.
<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/libya-crackdown-comic-books-video-games-arrest-youth-freedom.html>
- November 16, 2017 *Newsweek* published an article titled “**Christian Hobby Lobby Opens Bible Museum After Stealing Middle East History**” (by Cristina Maza). The controversial Museum of the Bible will open on November 17, 2017 in Washington, D.C.
<http://www.newsweek.com/christian-hobby-lobby-bible-museum-stole-713321>
- *The Daily Mail* published an article titled “**Renovations return bustle to part of Aleppo's Old City.**” Several shops in Suq Khan al-Jumruk have reopened following restoration work in the Old City of Aleppo.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-5090121/Renovations-return-bustle-Aleppos-Old-City.html>
- *The Evening Standard* published an article titled “**How London became a hotspot for art theft - the world’s third most profitable criminal enterprise**” (by Kate Wills). A discussion of the trade in black market art and antiquities in London.
<https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/esmagazine/art-theft-is-the-world-s-third-most-profitable-criminal-enterprise-and-london-is-a-hotspot-for-it-a3689686.html>

November 15, 2017

Heritage for Peace published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria's Heritage - 15 November 2017.**”

<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-15-november-2017/>

- **ICCROM** published an article titled “**Emergency evacuation manual now available in Arabic.**” ICCROM and UNESCO’s handbook to save heritage collections in emergencies now available for free download for Arabic readers.
<http://www.iccrom.org/emergency-evacuation-manual-now-available-in-arabic/>
- **DGAM** published an article titled “ توقيع مذكرة تفاهم بين المديرية العامة للآثار والمتاحف ومتحف براغ (The Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Prague Museum).” The Memorandum states that the Czech Republic will provide the necessary expertise to the Syrian DGAM to assist with the restoration of historical sites.
<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2358>
- *Al Masdar News* published an article titled “**Syrian Army recovers ancient artifacts stolen by ISIS in Palmyra**” (by Chris Tomson). SARG forces reportedly discovered a cache of artifacts in eastern Homs Governorate that had been looted by ISIS militants from Palmyra. The artifacts will be returned to the Palmyra Museum.
<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/video-syrian-army-recovers-ancient-artifacts-stolen-isis-palmyra/>
- *Al-Monitor* published an article titled “**Syrian folk dancers stomp their way into Egyptian society**” (by Rasha Mahmoud). *Dabke*, an Arab folk dance native to Syria, has become a popular feature at Egyptian events, largely due to the efforts of a Syrian dancer who fled Damascus in 2012.
<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/syrian-dabke-dancers-bring-their-steps-to-egypt.html#ixzz4zdHS8Awz>

November 14, 2017

Kurdistan 24 published an article titled “**Historical Sherwana Castle in Kurdistan damaged by earthquake**” (by Sangar Ali). The 200-year-old castle of Sherwana in the city of Kalar was partially damaged following a major earthquake on Sunday. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0079**

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/b153d5c0-db3f-47f9-97f7-5044db43fa71>

- *The New York Times* published an article titled “**Palmyra, Plato and Play Doh: Getty Plans New Shows for Renovated Villa**” (by Jori Finkel). A new exhibit at the Getty Villa will feature funerary busts from Palmyra on loan from the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/14/arts/design/getty-villa-antiquities-jeff-koons.html>
- November 13, 2017 *Iraqi News* published an article titled “**Islamic State militant sentenced to death for smashing monuments in Mosul**” (by Nehal Mostafa). The Central Criminal Court in Baghdad has sentenced an ISIS member to death for taking part in several crimes, including destroying and looting monuments in Mosul.
<https://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/islamic-state-militant-sentenced-death-smashing-monuments-mosul/>
- *Al Araby* published an article titled “**Iraq investigating 'stolen artifacts' at the Louvre Abu Dhabi.**” The Iraqi government is investigating reports claiming stolen antiquities from the country are on display at the newly opened Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum.
<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/11/13/iraq-investigating-stolen-artifacts-at-the-louvre-abu-dhabi>
- November 12, 2017 *BBC News* published an article titled “**Colin Thubron returns to Damascus after 50 years**” (by Colin Thubron). The author discusses a recent visit to Damascus, 50 years after the publication of his book *Mirror to Damascus*.
<http://www.bbc.com/news/stories-41946935>
- November 11, 2017 *Al Masdar News* published an article titled “**Palmyra ruins 'stolen and destroyed' by IS – Director of Palmyra Museum**” (by Leith Fadel). Mohammed Al-Asaad, director of the Palmyra Museum, discusses the widespread damage caused at by ISIS militants during their occupation of Palmyra.
<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/palmyra-ruins-stolen-destroyed-director-palmyra-museum/>
- November 10, 2017 *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**What next for UNESCO?**” (by Charlotte Joy). A discussion of the United States and Israel’s recent decision to withdraw from UNESCO.
<https://www.apollo-magazine.com/what-next-for-unesco/>
- SNHR published a report titled “**No less than 61 Incidents of Attack on Vital Civilian Facilities in October 2017.**”
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/11/10/48380/>

- Akhbar Alaan* published an article titled “**140 مواطن سعودي يعيدون كنوزا و قطعاً أثرية (Saudi citizens restore treasures and archaeological artifacts).**” The General Authority for Tourism and National Heritage in Saudi Arabia held a ceremony honoring 140 Saudi citizens who returned artifacts, reported archaeological sites, or aided in preserving cultural heritage.
<https://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/special-reports/2017/11/10/140-مواطن-سعودي-يعيدون-كنوزا-و-قطعاً-أثرية>
 - Le Monde* published an article titled “**Les nouvelles technologies au chevet d’Alep, <<La scintillante>> mutilée (New technologies at the top of Aleppo, ‘the scintillating’ mutilated)**” (by Florence Evin). A meeting on November 3, 2017 at the Carrousel du Louvre in Paris during the Salon international du patrimoine culturel discussed methods of restoring and reconstructing damaged cultural heritage sites in Old Aleppo.
http://www.lemonde.fr/architecture/visuel/2017/11/10/les-nouvelles-technologies-au-chevet-des-tresors-d-alep-la-scintillante-mutilee_5213190_1809550.html
- November 9, 2017
- Rudaw* published an article titled “**Sulaimani museum houses section for ISIS war victims**” (by Sartip Othman). The National Museum of Amna Suraka in Sulaymaniyah has dedicated a section to the Peshmerga victims in the fight against ISIS.
<http://www.rudaw.net/english/culture/09112017>
- November 8, 2017
- Vice News* published an article titled “**Syria in ruins**” (by Jules Gauthier). The author visited Aleppo in August and September 2017 to take photographs of damage to the city before reconstruction efforts began.
<https://news.vice.com/story/syria-between-ruin-and-reconstruction>
- November 7, 2017
- Arab News* published an article titled “**OIC pledges to cooperate with UNESCO for protection of cultural heritage.**” The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) pledged to cooperate with UNESCO in fighting intentional destruction and illegal trafficking of cultural heritage in conflict zones.
<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1189501/saudi-arabia>
- The New York Times* published an article titled “**An Iraqi Town Where Muslims, Jews and Christians Coexist, in Theory**” (by Rod Nordland). In the town of Amadiya in Dohuk Governorate, Muslims, Jews, and Christians were united in their reverence for Hazana, a Jewish figure of unknown antiquity, whose tomb is located in remains of the Knis Navi Yehezqel synagogue.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/07/world/middleeast/iraq-amadiya-tolerance.html>

- *TRT World* published an article titled “**Centre set up in Idlib to protect Syrian heritage sites.**” The Syrian Cultural Heritage Protection Centre has been established in Idlib Governorate in order to document violations to and protect archaeological sites.
<https://www.trtworld.com/mea/centre-set-up-in-idlib-to-protect-syrian-heritage-sites-11977>
- November 6, 2017

• *Arab News* published an article titled “**Traditional carpet weaving in central Iraq unravels.**” Conflict in Iraq has caused the trade for traditional carpets to suffer.
<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1189001/middle-east>
- *The Syria Times* published an article titled “**Guardian of Oriental Heritage**” (by Haifaa Mafalani). Fuad Arabsh, chairman of the “Vocational Society for Oriental Products,” plans to build a “heritage village” in Rif Dimashq Governorate showcasing traditional Syrian handicrafts.
<http://syriatimes.sy/index.php/tourism/33376-guardian-of-oriental-heritage>
- *Business Insider* published an article titled “**Archaeologists and experts say Amazon and eBay need to be proactive about removing suspicious artifacts sold online**” (by Zoë Bernard). Archaeologists and researchers are concerned by amount of illegitimate antiquities that have inundated sites like eBay and Amazon. The sites' methods for regulating the provenance of antiquities places the burden of reporting specific listings on the buyer, which critics argue opens consumers up to risk when buying antiquities online.
<http://www.businessinsider.com/archaeologists-experts-amazon-ebay-need-to-be-proactive-suspicious-listings-2017-11>
- **UNESCO** published a press release titled “**UNESCO and Partners stand against Cultural Cleansing and Violent Extremism.**” UNESCO’s General Conference on November 6, 2017 brought together Ministers from Iraq and Mali, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and international experts in order to strengthen cooperation in response to cultural cleansing and violent extremism.
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1744>
- *Science Daily* published an article titled “**Excavation in Northern Iraq: Sasanian loom discovered.**” Archaeologists from Goethe University discovered a Sasanian-era loom at the site of Gird-î Qalrakh in Sulaymaniyah Governorate.
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/11/171106100257.htm>

- *Foreign Policy* published an article titled “**The Messaging App Fueling Syria’s Insurgency**” (by Adam Rawnsley, Eric Woods, & Christiaan Triebert). Militants in Syria have been trading thousands of weapons in publicly accessible black markets hosted on the messaging app Telegram. According to ASOR CHI’s Michael Danti, there is frequent “overlap in the smuggling and sale of weapons and antiquities.”
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/06/the-messaging-app-fueling-syrias-insurgency-telegram-arms-weapons/>

November 5, 2017

Arab News published an article titled “**OIC calls for urgent action to save remaining Islamic cultural heritage**” (by Rodolfo C. Estimo Jr). The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) recently called on member countries to protect remaining Islamic cultural heritage against loss and neglect during an international conference titled “Islamic Action for the Protection of Cultural Heritage” held in Istanbul on November 1–2, 2017.
<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1189036/saudi-arabia>

- *The Globalist* published an article titled “**Why Culture Matters: Fostering Identity Through Cultural Heritage**” (by Markus Hilgert). Markus Hilgert, the current director of the Vorderasiatisches Museum at the Pergamonmuseum in Berlin, argues that the promotion of cultural heritage helps to foster tolerance.
<https://www.theglobalist.com/culture-identity-reconciliation-war-society/>

- *The UNESCO Courier* published an article titled “**Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi: “I plead guilty”**” (by Anissa Barrak). Jailed Ansar al-Dine leader Ahmad al-Faqi is interviewed regarding his destruction of Sufi tombs in Timbuktu.
<https://en.unesco.org/courier/2017-october-december/ahmad-al-faqi-al-mahdi-i-plead-guilty>

November 4, 2017

The Libya Observer published an article titled “**Khoms takes over antiquity union leadership from Shahhat**” (by Housam Najjair). Khoms Municipality will host the second meeting of the Libyan World Heritage Municipalities. Five municipalities—Shahhat, Khoms, Sabratha, Ghadames, and Ghat—will discuss the challenges facing these cities, their monuments, and ways to preserve them.
<https://www.libyaobserver.ly/inbrief/khoms-takes-over-antiquity-union-leadership-shahhat>

November 3, 2017

Religion News Service published an article titled “**Archaeologists say rebuilding Jonah’s mosque should wait**” (by Jacob Wirtschafter & Gilgamesh Nabeel). Archaeologists with the British Institute for the Study of Iraq want to excavate the remains of an ancient Assyrian palace discovered below the Nebi Yunus Mosque, destroyed by ISIS in 2014. The Islamic Waqf in Mosul argues reconstruction of the mosque should begin immediately.

<http://religionnews.com/2017/11/03/archaeologists-say-rebuilding-jonahs-mosque-should-wait/>

•

The Irish Times published an article titled “**Homs locals aim to open new chapter in battered city’s history**” (by Michael Jansen). The owners of a new English-language bookshop in Homs hope it will encourage Syrians to preserve their country’s built heritage.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/middle-east/homs-locals-aim-to-open-new-chapter-in-battered-city-s-history-1.3278387>

November 2, 2017

Alaan Tv published a report titled “دمار ونهب الآثار والحضارة، وألوية استعادتها (Destruction and looting of monuments and civilization and the priority of their restoration)”. Heritage experts discuss the loss of heritage due to conflict in Iraq and Syria.

<http://www.alaan.tv/programs/news-and-info/jalsahurra/161104/destruction-looting-monuments-civilization>

November 1, 2017

Artnet News published an article titled “**The Vast Majority of Antiquities Sold Online Are Probably Looted or Fake, Report Says**” (by Julia Halperin). New research suggests up to 80 percent of the antiquities for sale online are likely looted or fake.

<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/antiquities-sold-online-fake-1135832>

•

The **2017 Protecting the Past** conference will take place between December 2–4 in Tunis, Tunisia. It is organised by EAMENA in collaboration with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO), Global Heritage Fund (GHF), and the ICCROM-ATHAR Regional Conservation Centre. This year’s conference is titled “**Documentation as a Tool for Heritage Protection.**”

<http://www.protectingthepast.com/PtP/conference-programme-draft/>

•

Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk published an article titled “**Wie syrische Raubkunst in Deutschland verkauft wird (How Syrian looted art is sold in Germany)**” (by Tarek Khello & Christian Werner). An examination of how looted antiquities are brought to Europe from unstable regions in the Middle East.

<https://www.mdr.de/investigativ/syrische-raubkunst-in-deutschland-100.html>

- The Wall Street Journal* published an article titled “**Buyer Beware: Looted Antiquities Flood Online Sites Like Amazon, Facebook**” (by Georgi Kantchev). *The Wall Street Journal* has conducted an investigation into the surge in illicit antiquities bought and sold online, a result of the growth of e-commerce platforms and social networks coupled with industrial scale looting perpetrated by ISIS in Iraq and Syria.
<https://www.wsj.com/amp/articles/the-online-bazaar-for-looted-antiquities-1509466087>
 - DGAM** published an article titled “انهيار في احد البيوت بدمشق القديمة” (**The collapse of a house in old Damascus**).” A historic abandoned property in old Damascus collapsed.
<http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=239&id=2354>
- October 28, 2017
- The Jerusalem Post* published an article titled “**Ancient tomb of Jewish Prophet Nahum ‘in danger’ amid Iraq-Kurdish tensions**” (by Seth Franzman). The tomb of the Prophet Nahum in al-Qosh is in urgent need of restoration.
<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Tomb-of-Jewish-prophet-in-danger-amid-Iraq-Kurdish-tensions-508660>