

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

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August 2017 Monthly Report - Appendices

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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:**
 - Unknown parties stole the furnishings of Beit Kubba, in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0146](#)
- **Daraa Governorate:**
 - New video footage shows extensive damage to al-Omari Mosque in al-Herak, Daraa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0149](#)
 - Airstrikes and looting have damaged ancient ruins in Kafr Nasej in Daraa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0150](#)
- **Deir ez-Zor Governorate:**
 - Satellite imagery reveals an expansion of illegal excavations at Mari, in Deir ez-Zor Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0140](#)
- **Hama Governorate:**
 - Video footage documents the current condition of Qasr ibn Wardan in Ibn Wardan, Hama Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0175 UPDATE](#)
 - A SARG-Russian airstrike destroyed Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque in Hamada al-Omar, Hama Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0148](#)
- **Idlib Governorate:**
 - A local council is conducting conservation projects on al-Shughour Castle in Shughour Qadeem, Idlib Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0147](#)
- **Lattakia Governorate:**
 - Shelling damages an unnamed mosque in al-Salor, Lattakia Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0159](#)
- **Raqqa Governorate:**
 - New footage shows the condition of Qasr al-Banat in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE](#)
 - New DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows severe damage to al-Kabir Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE](#)
 - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows extensive damage to Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141](#)
 - A US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143](#)
 - A US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed al-Thakana Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144](#)
 - A US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed al-Nour Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145](#)
 - An airstrike damaged al-Khamisiyah Village Mosque in Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0151](#)
 - DigitalGlobe imagery shows damage to al-Alo Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152](#)
 - DigitalGlobe imagery shows damage to Circassians Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153](#)
 - A US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed an unnamed mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154](#)
 - An ATPA report revealed the condition of Tell es-Sweyhat in Raqqa Governorate. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0155](#)

- An ATPA report revealed the condition of Tell Munbaqa. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0156**
- New video reveals damage to al-Qadim Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157**
- ISIS militants dug a tunnel in Othman bin Affan Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158**
- **Rif Dimashq Governorate:**
 - A SARG airstrike damaged al-Nour Mosque in Hazeh, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0142**

Iraq

- **Ninawa Governorate:**
 - New video footage shows condition of Mosque of Sheikh Jawad al Sadiq in Tal Afar, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0013 UPDATE**
 - New photographs show damage to interior of al-Najjar Mosque in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0036 UPDATE**
 - New video footage shows damage to the Chaldean Catholic Church of the Virgin Mary in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0050 UPDATE**
 - New video footage shows other occupations at Kanisat al-Sa'a. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0052 UPDATE**
 - New video footage shows recent construction on the site of al-Khidr Mosque in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0066**
 - New video footage shows damage to the al-Abbadi Mosque in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0067**
 - New video footage shows condition of Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0068**
 - Yazidi inhabitants of Bashiqa rebuild 17 destroyed shrines in Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0069**
 - New video footage and photographs show condition of the Eastern Preparatory School in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0070**
 - New video footage shows damage to al-Kabir Mosque in Tal Afar, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0071**
 - DigitalGlobe imagery shows damage to al-Kabir Mosque in al-'Ayadiya, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0072**
 - New video footage shows damage to the Tal Afar Citadel in Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0073**

Libya

- **Cyrenaica:**
 - A hole in the roof of the al-Atiq Mosque in Awjila, Cyrenaica has been repaired. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0007 UPDATE**
 - Excessive plant and tree growth was removed from Ptolmais, in Ptolmeitha, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0017**
 - Large excavation trenches were refilled at Haweh Fteah, in Haweh Fteah, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0018**
 - A survey of archaeological elements in the Old City of al-Marj, Cyrenaica occurred. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0021**
- **Fezzan:**
 - A new site, Garamantean Tombs of Tsawa in Tsawa, Fezzan was documented by the Department of Antiquities (DoA). **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0019**

- **Tripolitania:**

- Security forces prevented a large hoard of coins from Tripoli, Tripolitania from being smuggled out of Libya through Mitiga Airport. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0015**
- Conservation begins on the Villa Silin in al-Khoms, Tripolitania under the auspices of the Department of Antiquities (DoA) staff. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0016**
- Eleven Cyrenaican Statues were recovered in Spain from Tripoli, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0020**

Military and Political Context

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

1. Raqqa Governorate:
 - On August 8, members of the SDF “linked up in Raqqa’s southern district,” encircling the city center, including the Old City. A Kurdish YPG commander reported that it could take four months for the SDF to clear the center of Raqqa from ISIS.²
 - On August 16, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) announced plans to carry out “urgent repairs” to the Tabqa Dam. The site was damaged by fighting and US-led Coalition airstrikes.³
 - On August 23, Amnesty International released a report that raised alarm regarding the high number of civilian casualties as a result of ongoing aerial bombardment of Raqqa. During the reporting period, multiple incidents of high civilian casualties resulting from aerial bombardment were reported.⁴
 - On August 25, ISIS militants recaptured the town of Ghanim al-Ali and several villages in the eastern countryside of Raqqa Governorate from SARG forces.⁵
2. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
 - On August 2–4, 1,000 Syrian opposition fighters from Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) along with 7,000 of their family members and displaced Syrian refugees agreed to withdraw from the Syria-Lebanon border area to Idlib Governorate following an exchange of detained fighters between HTS and Hezbollah.⁶

² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-raqqa-idUSKBN1AQ1C2> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-raqqa-idUSKBN1AH3RF>

³ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-redcross-idUSKCN1AW1VN>

⁴ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/6945/2017/en/> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-un-idUSKCN1B41D7> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-raqqa-idUSKCN1B400F> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41011868> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/raqqa-led-strikes-kill-100-civilians-48-hours-170822073525973.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-raqqa-idUSKBN1AO2AW>

⁵ <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=72792> ; <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2017/08/25/ISIS-counterattack-kills-34-Syria-regime-forces-in-Raqqa.html>

⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40775242> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-lebanon-idUSKBN1AI1AK> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-lebanon-idUSKBN1AJ1MV> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-lebanon-idUSKBN1AH50G> ; <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/156889> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/03/evacuation-convoy-arsal-camps-jroud-arsal-set-idlib-according-hezbollah-hayet-tahrir-al-sham-agreement-august-3/> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-lebanon-idUSKBN1AI1AK> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

- On August 4–10, the Syrian military increased aerial bombardment and shelling on the remaining opposition-held areas of Jobar and Ain Terma in Damascus despite a reported cessation of hostilities in the area. Shelling also struck the districts of Zamalka, Harasta, Kafr Batna in Eastern Ghouta.⁷
 - On August 12–16, Free Syrian Army (FSA)-affiliate Saraya Ahl al-Sham departed from an “enclave in Lebanon” near the border with Syria along with several hundred civilian refugees following a deal with Hezbollah. Opposition forces who refused to evacuate from the eastern Lebanese town of Ruhaybah were allowed to relocate to the town of Aرسال after relinquishing their arms to Lebanese Armed Forces.⁸
 - On August 18–21, Russia and Islamist opposition group Faylaq al-Rahman signed a ceasefire agreement with Russia that will take effect in the Eastern Ghouta Suburbs, including the districts of Jobar and Ain Tarma.⁹
 - On August 18–23, the Lebanese Army began operations to clear ISIS militants from the areas of Ras Baalbek and al-Qaa, as well as in the area of the Western Qalamoun Mountains, along the Syria-Lebanon border.¹⁰
 - On August 24, ISIS requested permission from the Syrian Army and Hezbollah to evacuate from its territory along the Syrian border with Lebanon, with the intention of relocating to Deir ez Zor Governorate.¹¹
 - On August 27, the Lebanese Army, Hezbollah, and pro-regime forces announced a ceasefire with ISIS along the Syria-Lebanon border. Lebanese forces later recovered the remains of Lebanese soldiers held by ISIS since 2014.¹²
 - On August 28, 600 ISIS militants and their families began evacuating the area along the Lebanon-Syria border escorted by the Syrian military. The move was met with criticism from the US-led Coalition and Iraqi government.¹³
3. Homs Governorate:
- On August 3-4, SARG and Syrian opposition forces reached a ceasefire deal in Homs Governorate. According to Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov, the agreement was reached with the “moderate Syrian opposition” and covered an area “encompassing more than 147,000 people.”¹⁴

⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-damascus-idUSKBN1AN1GJ> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-turkey-security-idUSKBN1AN1M7> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta-idUSKBN1AO1UR> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=71631> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-lebanon-idUSKBN1AR13S> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-lebanon-idUSKCN1AU0F6> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/refugees-fighters-lebanon-arsal-head-syria-170814063610382.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

¹⁰ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

¹¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-lebanon-syria-idUSKCN1B417F> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-hezbollah-idUSKCN1B42C2>

¹² <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/27/world/middleeast/isis-ceasefire-syria-lebanon.html>

¹³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-lebanon-syria-idUSKCN1B80PR> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/28/world/middleeast/lebanon-isis-syria.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40812382> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

- On August 13, SARG and pro-regime forces announced the capture the town of al-Sukhna from ISIS.¹⁵
 - On August 13, Russian and Syrian opposition force delegations agreed to draft a new “de-escalation agreement” in Homs Governorate.¹⁶
 - On August 14, SARG and pro-regime forces advanced against ISIS-held positions in Homs Governorate, capturing several villages surrounding the town of al-Koum.¹⁷
 - On August 23, Hezbollah media reported that SARG and pro-regime forces had surrounded an ISIS-enclave located west of the town of al-Sukhna and encompassing around 770 square miles (2000 square kilometers). On August 26, SARG and pro-regime forces captured the area from ISIS.¹⁸
4. Hama Governorate:
- On August 4, Syrian opposition and SARG forces clashed around the village of Maan, 15 miles north of the city of Hama. The fighting was described by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) as the heaviest fighting and shelling to occur in Hama Governorate in months.¹⁹
 - On August 15, Syrian opposition fighters from several Islamist Syrian opposition groups allegedly defected and formed a new group known as Jaish Hama. The group, reported to consist of under 200 fighters, later pledged allegiance to HTS.²⁰
 - On August 16–19, pro-regime forces, backed by Iran and Russia “isolated” a large area of ISIS-held territory near the village of Uqayribat.²¹
5. Suweida Governorate:
- On August 9–10, SARG and pro-regime forces seized all checkpoints and border posts on the Suweida Governorate’s border with Jordan from Syrian opposition forces. The FSA reportedly withdrew over the Syrian border into Jordan.²²
 - On August 15, Syrian opposition group Osoud al-Sharqiya reported that its forces had downed a Syrian military jet near the border with Jordan. The report was later confirmed by Syrian state TV.²³
 - On August 19-20, FSA-affiliate Jais Ahrar al-Asha’ir launched a counterattack against pro-regime forces on the Syria-Jordan border.²⁴
6. Idlib Governorate:
- During the reporting period, concerns continued to be raised as to the rise of al-Qaeda’s presence in Idlib Governorate. According to some estimates, some 2 million

¹⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-sukhna-idUSKBN1AL00Q> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/syrian-army-takes-isil-held-town-al-sukhna-homs-170805232104314.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-town-idUSKBN1AS071> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41035961> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

¹⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

¹⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-homs-idUSKCN1AU1YI> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

¹⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-town-idUSKCN1B41J4>

¹⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKBN1AK109>

²⁰ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

²¹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

²² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-south-idUSKBN1AQ1E2> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

²³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-jet-idUSKCN1AV1IV>

²⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

Syrians now live in Idlib Governorate, many of whom are IDPs recently moved from former opposition-held areas.²⁵

- On August 1–7, Syrian Islamist opposition group Ahrar al-Sham reportedly appointed a new general commander as part of a “major restructuring” following the group’s defeat by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham in Idlib Governorate.²⁶
- On August 12, seven members of the Syrian Civil Defense were killed in targeted gun attack by unknown assailants while sleeping in their office in Idlib.²⁷
- On August 17, an unidentified assailant detonated a suicide vest in a HTS-operated courthouse in the town of Salqin.²⁸

7. Daraa Governorate:

- On July 28–August 5, an estimated 25 “additional groups linked to the Free Syrian Army” (FSA) joined under a new name — National Front to Liberate Syria — in southern Syria.²⁹
- On August 11, ISIS-affiliate Jaish Khalid ibn al-Walid carried out a suicide bombing against a Syrian Islamist opposition group Jaish al-Islam training camp in the town of Naseeb, killing at least 35 of the group’s fighters.³⁰
- On August 17, the US-led Coalition reportedly carried out airstrikes targeting a Jaish Khalid ibn al-Walid courthouse in the town of Shajara, killing the group’s general commander as well as 30 others.³¹

8. Tartus Governorate:

- On July 31, Russian forces conducted a parade in celebration of “Russian Naval Day” in the city of Tartus.³²
- On August 15, an Israeli TV station reported that Iran is building a long-range rocket manufacturing facility near the town of Baniyas.³³

9. Latakia Governorate:

- On August 2, the Syrian regime reportedly disbanded a pro-regime Latakia-based militia known as “Liwa Suqour al-Sahra.” The militia’s commander general will reportedly “return home to Russia,” while fighters from the militia will join other pro-regime militias.³⁴
- On August 19, unidentified assailants detonated a car bomb at a checkpoint in the district of Tishreen in the city of Latakia, killing at least two people and wounding 10 more.³⁵

²⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/13/world/middleeast/idlib-syria-displaced-militants.html> ; <https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2017/08/10/idlib-residents-split-over-support-for-al-qaida-linked-militants>

²⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

²⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/13/world/middleeast/idlib-syria-displaced-militants.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40919300>

²⁸ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

²⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

³⁰ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

³¹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

³² <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

³³ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-iran-idUSKCN1AV2B4> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41074830>

³⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

³⁵ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

10. Aleppo Governorate:

- On August 7, a Syrian opposition group known as the “Special Forces Company of the Abu Amara Brigades” — an opposition group associated with Ahrar al-Sham and HTS — detonated two IEDs at a pro-regime base in the city of Aleppo, killing at least 20 pro-regime fighters. This is the sixth explosives attack carried out by the group in 2017.³⁶
- On August 15, Syrian opposition groups affiliated with the SDF announced the formation of the “Quwwat al-Thuwar” in the area of Afrin Canton to combat what the group called “Turkish occupation” of Aleppo Governorate.³⁷
- On August 19, an opposition group affiliated with HTS detonated an IED targeting an ammunition depot run by the pro-regime Palestinian militia Liwa al-Quds in the Nayrab Refugee Camp located in the city of Aleppo.³⁸

11. Deir ez Zor Governorate:

- On August 4–8, three US and Turkish-backed Syrian opposition groups formed an “interim committee” in order to plan an upcoming offensive against ISIS in Deir ez Zor Governorate.³⁹
- On August 21, the Russian Defense Ministry reported that at least 200 ISIS militants had been killed during Russian airstrikes on a convoy of approximately 20 4x4 vehicles and tanks. The strike reportedly occurred near the city of Deir ez Zor.⁴⁰
- On August 25, an official from the Deir ez Zor Military Council — a group that fights under the SDF — told Reuters that the US-backed group would soon begin an offensive against ISIS in Deir ez Zor. According to the official, fighters from the SDF-Deir ez Zor Military Council had already captured several towns in the governorate.⁴¹
- On August 30, the US-led Coalition carried out airstrikes to halt a convoy of ISIS militants and their families that departed on August 28 from the Syria-Lebanon border. The strikes “cratered a road in east Syria” and struck ISIL vehicles nearby. The Coalition denied direct strikes on the convoy.⁴²

12. Damascus Governorate:

- On August 17, Damascus hosted its first International Trade Fair since the start of the Syrian conflict. The 10-day fair was the 59th of its kind and included hundreds of delegations and private companies reportedly from at least 43 countries.⁴³
- On August 20, mortar shells from an unidentified source struck the entrance of the International Trade Fair fairground (see above), killing at least six civilians.⁴⁴

³⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

³⁷ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

³⁸ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

³⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-july-27-august-9.html>

⁴⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40999226> ; <https://apnews.com/1a386756fdd24d279c9de028262cdf2b>

⁴¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-deiralzor-idUSKCN1B516W> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

⁴² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41095619> ; <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1294971/coalition-strikes-block-highway-used-by-fleeing-terrorists/source/GovDelivery/>

⁴³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

⁴⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/syria-situation-report-august-8-23-2017.html>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Abu Kamal (aka al-Bukamal), Deir ez Zor, Hawl, Raqqa, and Shaddadi.⁴⁵
- During the reporting period, heavy Russian airstrikes were reported in Hama, Homs, Deir ez Zor, and Raqqa Governorates. Sporadic Russian airstrikes were also reported in Daraa and Rif Dimashq Governorates.⁴⁶
- During the reporting period, a UN report revealed that two North Korean shipments to “a Syrian government agency responsible for the country’s chemical weapons program were intercepted” over the past six months.⁴⁷
- On August 3, CNN reported that Russia and the Syrian regime were “attempting to entice” US-backed opposition forces based at the al-Tanf garrison. The “recruitment campaign” has had limited success, with some defections confirmed by US officials.⁴⁸
- On August 3, the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) released a report detailing how al-Qaeda in Syria, along with Russia and Iran, were exploiting the US, Russian, and Jordanian-backed de-escalation zone in southwest Syria. According to ISW, the de-escalation plan does not constrain “Iranian build up in Southern Syria and along the Golan Heights” and allows for “freedom of movement of Russia, Iran, and the Assad regime,” as well as the buildup of Russian and al-Qaeda forces in Southern Syria.⁴⁹
- On August 5, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan restated his country’s intentions to initiate “new cross-border operations” in Syria. Turkey remains strongly opposed to the presence of the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) in northern Syria and has grown increasingly critical of US-led Coalition efforts against ISIS.⁵⁰
- On August 6, former war crimes prosecutor Carla Del Ponte announced her intentions to resign from the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria citing the lack of political will and support from the UN Security Council.⁵¹
- On August 6, Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad dismissed plans by “the Kurdish-led administration in northern Syria” to host local and regional elections, stating that Syria will not be divided.⁵²
- On August 13, a member of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria reported that the commission had gathered enough evidence to convict Syrian President Bashar al-Assad of war crimes.⁵³

⁴⁵ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1264549](#), [1265973](#), [1267583](#), [1269365](#), [1269822](#), [1269550](#), [1271200](#), [1272674](#), [1274022](#), [1275476](#), [1276789](#), [1278418](#), [1276861](#), [1277013](#), [1279704](#), [1281000](#), [1283998](#), [1285071](#), [1286572](#), [1282289](#), [1283763](#), [1283687](#), [1287959](#), [1289632](#), [1291234](#), [1291092](#), [1291435](#), [1293195](#), [1294482](#), [1295925](#), [1297489](#)

⁴⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-july-17.html>

⁴⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-syria-un-idUSKCN1B12G2>

⁴⁸ <http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/03/politics/russia-assad-poach-us-backed-fighters-at-tanf/index.html>

⁴⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/08/iran-and-al-qaeda-exploit-syria.html>

⁵⁰ <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/turkey-reinforces-military-units-syrian-border-49050887> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-turkey-security-idUSKBN1AN1M7> ; <http://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2017/08/07/us-backed-kurdish-fighters-display-heavy-firepower-in-show-of-force-to-turkey>

⁵¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40845771>

⁵² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-kurds-idUSKBN1AM0LM>

⁵³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-investigator-idUSKCN1AT0AY>

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

1. Al Anbar Governorate:
 - On August 8, an estimated 36 Shia militia members from the Sayyed al-Shuhada militia (affiliated with the Popular Mobilization Front [PMF]) were killed in a surprise attack near the Iraqi border with Syria. The circumstances surrounding the attack remain unclear. The PMF accused the US-led Coalition of carrying out targeted airstrikes against their forces, however the US-led Coalition called the accusation inaccurate, stating that no Coalition aircraft were in the area at the time of the attack. ISIS also claimed responsibility for the attack. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi stated that an initial investigation showed that ISIS “carried out a breach using artillery and car bombs.”⁵⁴
 - On August 30, the main border crossing that connects Jordan and Iraq reopened for the first time since 2015.⁵⁵
2. Ninawa Governorate:
 - On August 9, a curfew was imposed in Mosul’s Old City following the resurfacing of several ISIS militants.⁵⁶
 - On August 13, the US Combined Joint Task Force announced the death of two US service members and the injury of five more in combat operations that took place in “northern Iraq.” The details surrounding their deaths were not released.⁵⁷
 - On August 15, an Iraqi military spokesman stated that Iraqi forces had begun carrying out aerial bombardment over ISIS-held Tal Afar as preparation in anticipation of an upcoming ground assault.⁵⁸
 - On August 17, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi admitted that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) had “committed abuses” against civilians during operations to recapture Mosul.⁵⁹
 - On August 20, Iraqi forces began a “multi-pronged assault” to recapture Tal Afar from ISIS.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ <https://twitter.com/TerrorMonitorAR/status/894484156465459201> ; https://twitter.com/iraqi_day/status/894651109024964608 ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40860485> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-usa-idUSKBN1A01J7> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-damascus-idUSKBN1AN1GJ>

⁵⁵ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-jordan-iraq-idUKKCN1B92F1> ; <https://apnews.com/3884fcb36634453f9e9468b1cb2f8a45/Jordan-Iraq-reopen-border-crossing-vital-to-trade>

⁵⁶ <http://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/curfew-imposed-mosuls-old-city-following-militants-appearance/> ; <http://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/police-kill-senior-islamic-state-judge-old-city-mosul/> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUSKBN1AP23N>

⁵⁷ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1276878/oir-officials-2-us-service-members-killed-5-injured-in-northern-iraq/source/GovDelivery/> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/13/world/middleeast/us-troops-killed-in-iraq-in-combat-operations.html>

⁵⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1AV0JF> ; <https://www.voanews.com/a/iraq-shiite-militia-is-fighting/3984787.html> ; <http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/150820173> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40947440>

⁵⁹ <https://www.voanews.com/a/security-forces-abused-civilians-mosul-campaign-iraq-admits/3990268.html>

⁶⁰ <https://www.yahoo.com/news/iraqi-forces-begin-operation-retake-tal-afar-043120158.html> ; <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1283760/iraqi-forces-begin-offensive-to-liberate-tal-afar/source/GovDelivery/> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41035675>

- On August 22, Iraqi forces breached the outer city limits of Tal Afar as fighting continued against ISIS militants. By the end of the day, Iraqi forces had captured three neighborhoods.⁶¹
 - On August 25, Iraqi forces announced that they had “broken through” ISIS defenses and reached the city center of Tal Afar and the old Citadel.⁶²
 - On August 26, ISIS militants retreated from Tal Afar to the town of al-'Ayadiya, located northwest of the city. The following day Iraqi forces recaptured the city of Tal Afar from ISIS.⁶³
 - On August 31, Iraqi forces captured the town of al-'Ayadiya from ISIS, effectively clearing all of Ninawa Governorate from ISIS.⁶⁴
3. Baghdad Governorate:
- On August 28, a car bombing struck a market in Sadr City, killing at least 12 people. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.⁶⁵

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Asad, Bashir, Beiji, Huwayjah, Kirkuk, Kisik, Qaim, Qayyarah, Rawah, Samarra, Tal Afar, and Tuz.⁶⁶
- On August 8, an Iraqi court sentenced 27 men to death for their reported involvement in the “Speicher Massacre.” The massacre occurred when ISIS militants, having overrun the former US-base Camp Speicher, executed up to 1,700 Iraqi soldiers, most of whom were believed to be young Shia recruits who were based at the camp at time of the ISIS invasion.⁶⁷
- On August 15, Saudi local media reported that the Arar border crossing on the Saudi Arabia-Iraq border would reopen for trade for the first time since 1990.⁶⁸
- On August 16, Iraq asked for international assistance to “collect and preserve evidence of crimes” by ISIS. Iraq is working with Britain to draft a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution in order to establish an investigation.⁶⁹

⁶¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-usa-iraq-idUSKCN1B20EC> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41011872> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/mattis-baghdad-iraq-presses-assault-bastion-064641587.html>

⁶² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41054044> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/08/iraqi-forces-completely-surround-isil-tal-afar-170824223732054.html>

⁶³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41061471> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B70DO> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B81VL> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41095613>

⁶⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41095613> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-tal-afar-idUSKCN1BA21P> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B92MB> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41111521>

⁶⁵ <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraq-car-bombing-busy-baghdad-market-kills-49462798>

⁶⁶ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1264549](#), [1265973](#), [1267583](#), [1269365](#), [1269822](#), [1269550](#), [1271200](#), [1272674](#), [1274022](#), [1275476](#), [1276789](#), [1278418](#), [1276861](#), [1277013](#), [1279704](#), [1281000](#), [1283998](#), [1285071](#), [1286572](#), [1282289](#), [1283763](#), [1283687](#), [1287959](#), [1289632](#), [1291234](#), [1291092](#), [1291435](#), [1293195](#), [1294482](#), [1295925](#), [1297489](#)

⁶⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40866081>

⁶⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-iraq-diplomacy-idUSKCN1AV11E>

⁶⁹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-un-idUSKCN1AW2E7>

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

1. Cyrenaica:
 - On August 4, a bombing struck a mosque in Benghazi in what appeared to be a targeted attempt against the tribal leader, and key tribal ally of LNA commander Khalifa Haftar, Saleh al-Atweish. He was unharmed in the attack.⁷⁰
 - On August 7, Reuters reported on “critical shortages” facing residents of Derna as a result of the Libyan National Army (LNA) tightening its “longstanding siege around the city” last week.⁷¹
2. Fezzan:
 - On August 3, an ISIS attack on a checkpoint in the Jufra region killed nine members of the LNA and two civilians.⁷²

Other Key Points:

- On August 2, the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) released a report detailing Russian ties to Khalifa Haftar, the head of the Libyan National Army (LNA). According to the report, evidence has emerged that Russian special forces are currently in Libya in non-combat roles. In response to the report, Russia denied the presence of any Russian military specialists in Libya. LNA leader Khalifa Haftar was due to meet with Russia’s Foreign Minister in Moscow on August 14.⁷³
- On August 3, Khalifa Haftar warned against any “Italian ships approaching Libya’s water without permission.” Italy, with the backing of the UN-backed Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA), is sending ships to the waters off Libya to aid the Libyan coastguard in targeting human traffickers. Haftar has ordered the naval bases in four Libyan cities to block the ships.⁷⁴
- On August 15, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Mahmoud Mustafa Busayf al-Werfalli for war crimes. Al-Werfalli, who is the head of a special forces group affiliated with the LNA, is allegedly responsible for the arbitrary killing of detained persons featured in several videos released online. The Special Forces later rejected the warrant.⁷⁵
- On August 23, Former Prime Minister Ali Zeidan (2012–2014) was released by unknown captors in Libya, who kidnapped Zeidan during a visit to Tripoli.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-idUSKBN1AK1Y3>

⁷¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-derna-idUSKBN1AN1UR> ; <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/08/06/un-says-it-is-concerned-about-lna-siege-of-derna/>

⁷² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-idUSKCN1B31YP>

⁷³ http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russia_in_libya_war_or_peace_7223 ; <http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/08/04/530642/Russia-Dengov-Libya-Haftar-Gaddafi> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-drones-idUSKCN1AU1Z7>

⁷⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40812304>

⁷⁵ <https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=pr1328> ; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/08/16/libya-videos-capture-summary-executions> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-libya-security-benghazi-idUSKCN1AW1TD>

⁷⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-abduction-idUSKCN1B325F>

Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:

- On August 1, a suicide bombing struck a Shia mosque in the Afghan city of Herat, killing at least 29 people and injuring another 64. ISIS later claimed responsibility for the attack.⁷⁷
- On August 7, Iranian state news agency IRNA reported that security forces broke up an ISIS-linked group planning attacks in Iran. According to IRNA, 10 suspected militants were arrested “at the group’s leadership center abroad” and 17 more were arrested inside Iran.⁷⁸
- On August 3–5, militants reportedly affiliated with the Taliban and ISIS, attacked a majority Shia village in northern Afghanistan. On August 7, the Taliban rejected recent reports that their forces had cooperated with ISIS fighters and foreign fighters in a remote Afghani village where clashes killed dozens of police and civilians.⁷⁹
- On August 17, ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack in Barcelona, Spain that killed at least 13 people and wounded 80 more. At least one other attack was later disrupted by Spanish police.⁸⁰
- On August 25, a suicide bomber and gunmen targeted a Shia mosque in Kabul, Afghanistan killing at least 14 civilians and two policemen. No group took immediate responsibility for the attack, however ISIS militants have previously carried out similar attacks.⁸¹

⁷⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-40797016>

⁷⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-security-idUSKBN1AN1T4>

⁷⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-40845361> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-islamic-state-idUSKBN1AN1SB>

⁸⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/17/world/europe/barcelona-catalunya-van.html>

⁸¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-attack-idUSKCN1B511T>

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 16-0175 UPDATE

Report Date: August 1, 2017

Site Name: Qasr ibn Wardan (قصر ابن وردان)

Date of Incident: July 2017

Location: Ibn Wardan, Hama Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Qasr ibn Wardan is a 6th-century CE site that consists of a palace, church, and barracks. It functioned as an administrative and military complex that served the farming communities of the steppe in eastern Hama Governorate.⁸² Though likely built by Syrian architects, the complex incorporated materials and architectural techniques—such as the use of baked brick to build complex arches and domes—that were utilized in contemporary structures in the Byzantine capital of Constantinople.⁸³ Other characteristics have regional parallels, including the use of basalt for the foundations of the structures as well as in the alternating courses of basalt and brick that constituted the upper portions of their walls.

The palace consists of a series of rooms laid around a central courtyard. An inscription dates its construction to 564 CE.⁸⁴ The main entrance to the complex is from the south. Its southern facade is particularly well preserved. A stable was located along the northern side of the courtyard, while a possible school lay along the western side.⁸⁵

The church is square with a central nave and two side aisles.⁸⁶ A dome originally capped the structure. The northern, western, and southern rooms had a second floor—accessed from a stairway in the northwestern corner of the building—that likely served as a gallery reserved for women.⁸⁷ The altar lay at the eastern end of the nave beneath a typical Byzantine hemispherical apse.

The barracks are located to the southeast of the palace. Little remains of the structure above ground, but the layout of its walls is visible in satellite imagery. It appears to have been a rectilinear structure with a tower at each corner.

Site Date: 6th-century CE

Incident Summary: Video footage documents the current condition of Qasr ibn Wardan.

⁸² Butcher 2003: 155

⁸³ Butcher 2003: 156

⁸⁴ Butcher 2003: 155

⁸⁵ Burns 2009: 254

⁸⁶ Burns 2009: 254

⁸⁷ Burns 2009: 254

Incident Source and Description: On July 31, 2017 Agency News posted a video that documented the condition of Qasr ibn Wardan.⁸⁸ The video contained drone footage of the structures as well as a video shot within the ruins. Damage caused by the alleged SARG airstrike is visible on the southern façade of the palace, particularly the southern façade's eastern half. The structures also show evidence of damage caused by general neglect.

An alleged SARG airstrike hit Qasr ibn Wardan on October 15, 2016. For more information on previous damage to Qasr ibn Wardan, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0175** in **Weekly Report 113-114**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Homs Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0148**.

Pattern: Site management: Tourism/visitor activity. Military activity: explosives – airstrikes; Natural impacts.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Agency News

Scholarly:

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

Butcher, Kevin (2003) *Roman Syria and the Near East*. Los Angeles: Getty Publications.

⁸⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pL1KbraefAc>



Video still of the church (left) and palace (right), seen from the southwest (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the church, seen from the east (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the interior of church, seen from the south (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the church (left) and palace (right), seen from the southeast. Note the damage to the southeastern corner of the palace facade (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the palace, seen from the south. Note the damage at the eastern end of the southern facade (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the southern facade of the palace above the entrance. Note the recent damage to the facade in the form of isolated pockmarks (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the second story of the southern facade of the palace. Note the evidence of DGAM conservation activities at the top of the arched windows (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the palace, seen from the east (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the palace, seen from the northeast (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the palace (left) and church (right), seen from the north (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of the interior of the second story of the palace (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of a rubble pile (Agency News; July 31, 2017)



Video still of a rubble pile (Agency News; July 31, 2017)

SHI 17-0111 UPDATE

Report Date: August 9, 2017

Site Name: Qasr al-Banat

Date of Incident: August 6, 2017

Location: Old City, Raqqqa, Raqqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Qasr al-Banat is located in the eastern side of Raqqqa's Old City along the interior face of the al-Rafiqah Wall (CHI 950). The Syrian Directorate-General for Antiquities and Museums excavated and reconstructed portions of the site between 1977 and 1982.⁸⁹ The focus of the building is a central rectangular courtyard with an *iwan* on each side. Additional rooms surround the courtyard on all four sides.

The date and function of Qasr al-Banat are not precisely known. The presence of the four *iwans* around a central courtyard indicates a date between the 11th century CE and the destruction of Raqqqa by the Mongols in 1265 CE.⁹⁰ The size, elaborate ornamentation, and lack of rooms with overtly religious functions suggest that the building functioned as a palace.⁹¹

Site Date: ca. 11th–13th century CE

Incident Summary: New footage shows the condition of Qasr al-Banat.

Incident Source and Description: On August 6, 2017 Raqqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS) posted a photograph of Qasr al-Banat.⁹² Four days later, YPJ Media Center posted a video that shows the same remains in closer detail.⁹³ The photograph and video show that Qasr al-Banat has thus far avoided major damage in the battle for Raqqqa. However, bullet holes are visible on one of the walls. Additionally, some of the walls show evidence of degradation due to lack of maintenance.

RBSS reported in June 2017 that Qasr al-Banat was being used as a burial ground.⁹⁴ The documentation currently available neither confirms nor disproves this report.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157, and ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158.**

⁸⁹ Toueir 1985: 298

⁹⁰ Toueir 1985: 318

⁹¹ Toueir 1985: 319

⁹² <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqqa.SI/photos/a.780113668666553.1073741828.780110825333504/1641816699162908/?type=3>

⁹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0000QmYmw4>

⁹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqqa.SI/posts/1580798531931392>

For more information on previous damage to Qasr al-Banat see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111** in **Weekly Report 145-148**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives; Site management.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS):

August 6, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/photos/a.780113668666553.1073741828.780110825333504/1641816699162908/>

June 12, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1580798531931392>

YPJ Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0000QmYmw4>

Scholarly:

Toueir, Kassem (1985) "Der Qasr al-Banat in ar-Raqqa. Ausgrabung, Rekonstruktion und Wiederaufbau (1977-1982)" *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 85(2), pp. 297-319.



Qasr al-Banat, seen from the east (RBSS; August 6, 2017)



Video still of Qasr al-Banat, seen from the east. Bullet holes are visible on the walls on either side of the doorway farthest to the left (YPJ Media Center; August 10, 2017)



Detail of video still, showing bullet holes on a wall at Qasr al-Banat (YPJ Media Center; August 10, 2017)



Video still of the restored and reconstructed walls of Qasr al-Banat, seen from the east (YPJ Media Center; August 10, 2017)



Video still of the restored and reconstructed walls of Qasr al-Banat, seen from the east (YPJ Media Center; August 10, 2017)



Video still of the restored and reconstructed walls of Qasr al-Banat, seen from the east. Damage is visible in the middle of the image (YPJ Media Center; August 10, 2017)



Video still of the restored and reconstructed walls of Qasr al-Banat, seen from the east (YPJ Media Center; August 10, 2017)

SHI 17-0114 UPDATE

Report Date: August 25, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque

Date of Incident: Between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017

Location: Old City, Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: New DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows severe damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows that the al-Kabir Mosque was severely damaged. The damage—likely due to airstrikes—occurred between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017. Heavy fighting between the SDF and ISIL has been reported in the area surrounding al-Kabir Mosque.⁹⁵ The damage was most likely caused by US-led Coalition airstrikes.

In June 2017, the al-Kabir Mosque was reportedly struck by shelling, causing damage to the mosque's minaret. For more information on previous damage to al-Kabir Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114** in **June 2017 Monthly Report**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158**.

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 cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

RBSS: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1657396987604879>

⁹⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1657396987604879>



Al-Kabir Mosque shown in red box prior to significant damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 13, 2017)



Damage to al-Kabir mosque indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0140**Report Date:** August 1, 2017**Site Name:** Mari (Tell Hariri)**Date of Incident:** Ongoing**Location:** Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The World Heritage Tentative List site of Mari is located on the western bank of the Euphrates River ca. 10 km north of Abu Kamal. French excavators worked at the site off and on from 1933 to the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011.⁹⁶ Occupation at the site is divided into three main phases. Ville I began with the city's founding around 2900 BCE and lasted until its abandonment ca. 2650 BCE.⁹⁷ The city was refounded (Ville II) around 2500 BCE and inhabited until its destruction in the mid-23rd century BCE.⁹⁸ Finally, Ville III extended from the 23rd century BCE to the city's final destruction at the hands of Hammurabi of Babylon in 1760 BCE.⁹⁹ Following this destruction, sporadic occupation occurred at the site from the second millennium BCE to the first millennium CE, but the city never regained its former size.

The city of Mari is important for the extensive insight its remains give into the history, economy, and society of third and second millennium BCE southern Mesopotamia. The French excavators uncovered temples, palaces, and residential sectors as well as many small finds, including statues, inlay, and tablets. In particular, the recovery of over 25,000 tablets from an archive in the palace of Zimri-Lim, a contemporary of Hammurabi, has provided an unparalleled view into the history and culture of the region during the early second millennium BCE.

Site Date: Third millennium–second millennium BCE**Incident Summary:** Satellite imagery reveals an expansion of illegal excavations at Mari.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that illegal excavation at Mari has expanded, particularly on the southern part of the mound. Between April 11, 2015 and January 23, 2017 the surface area affected by illegal excavation increased from approximately 0.1606 km² to 0.2069 km². Additionally, looting pits that previously existed have been expanded. Between January 23, 2017 and May 12, 2017 illegal excavation increased further, covering an area of 0.3127 km². Much of the continued damage during this more recent period consists of a physical expansion of areas which have been illegally excavated, rather than a widening of previously existing pits.

For more information on previous damage to Mari, see [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0044](#) in [Weekly Report 19](#); [SHI 14-0078](#) in [Weekly Report 15](#); [SHI 14-0080](#) in [Weekly Report 15](#); [SHI 14-0098](#) in [Weekly Report 19](#).

Pattern: Illegal excavation.

⁹⁶ Margueron 2004: 11–12

⁹⁷ Margueron 2004: 98

⁹⁸ Margueron 2004: 137

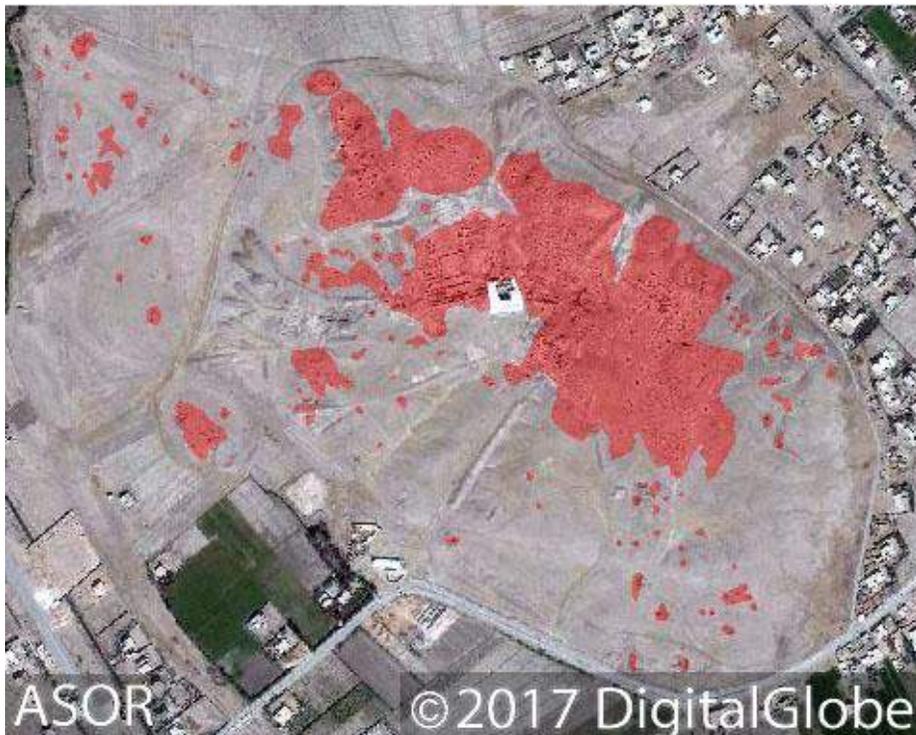
⁹⁹ Margueron 2004: 336

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 illegal excavations. Damage to UNESCO World Heritage Sites goes against the principles of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

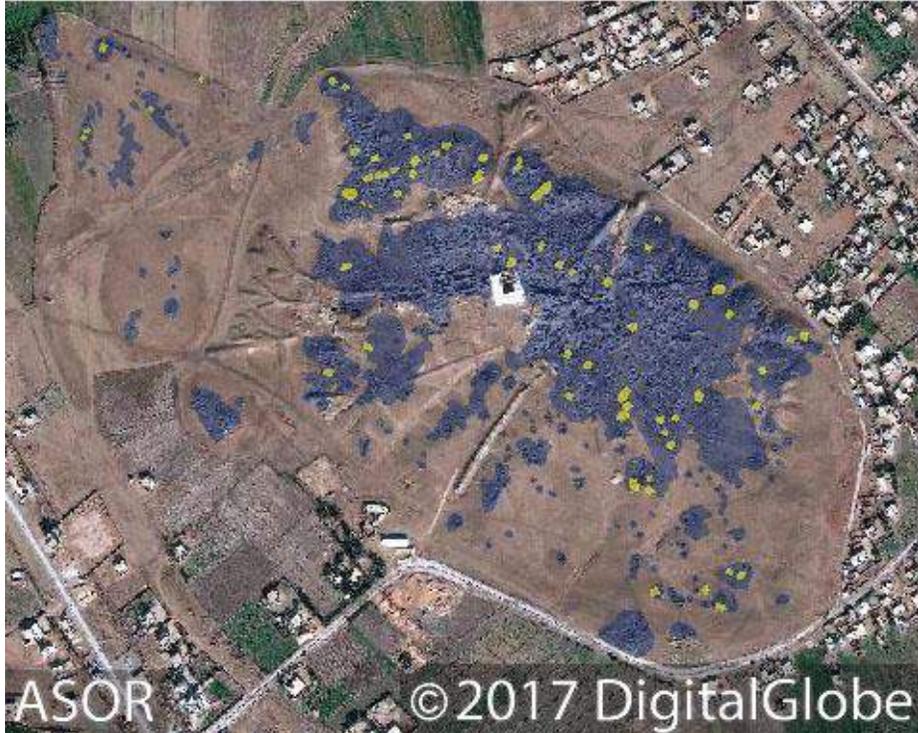
Sources:

Scholarly:

Margueron, Jean-Claude (2004) *Mari. Métropole de l'Euphrate au IIIe au début du IIe millénaire av. J.-C.* Paris: Éditions A. et J. Picard.



The extent of illegal excavation at the site of Mari in April 2015 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; April 11, 2015)



Increased illegal excavation at the site (shown in blue) and widening of previously existing excavation pits (shown in yellow) since April 2015 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 23, 2017)



The area where illegal excavation had occurred at Mari as of May 2017 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; May 12, 2017)

SHI 17-0141

Report Date: August 4, 2017

Site Name: Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque (جامع عبدالرحمن بن عوف)

Date of Incident: Between July 26, 2017 and August 1, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows extensive damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery of the area released on August 1, 2017 shows that the Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque, located north of the children's hospital, has been completely destroyed, likely as the result of an airstrike. The damage occurred between July 26 and August 1, 2017.

On August 4, 2017 Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS) released video footage showing US-led Coalition aerial bombardment occurring near the city's children's hospital.¹⁰⁰ According to the US-led Coalition, the children's hospital was used by ISIS as a command center.¹⁰¹

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157, and ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Brett McGurk, Special Presidential Envoy for Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS:

https://twitter.com/brett_mcgurk/status/901829853401534465

RBSS:

August 4, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/videos/1639664312711480/>

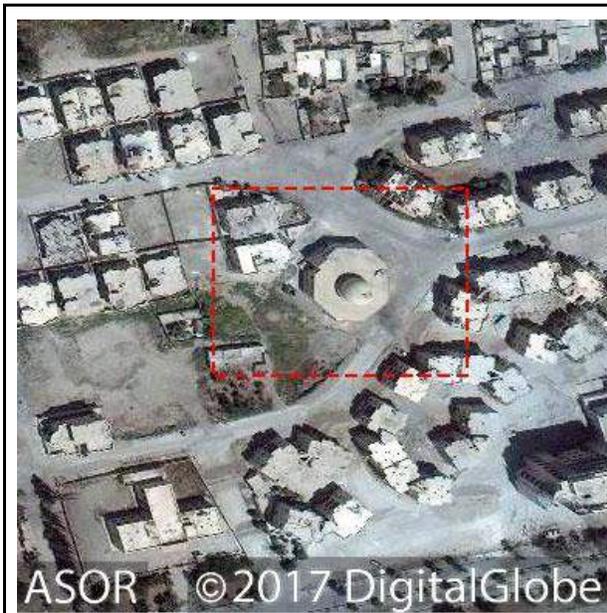
August 20, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1655577064453538>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/videos/1639664312711480/>

¹⁰¹ https://twitter.com/brett_mcgurk/status/901829853401534465

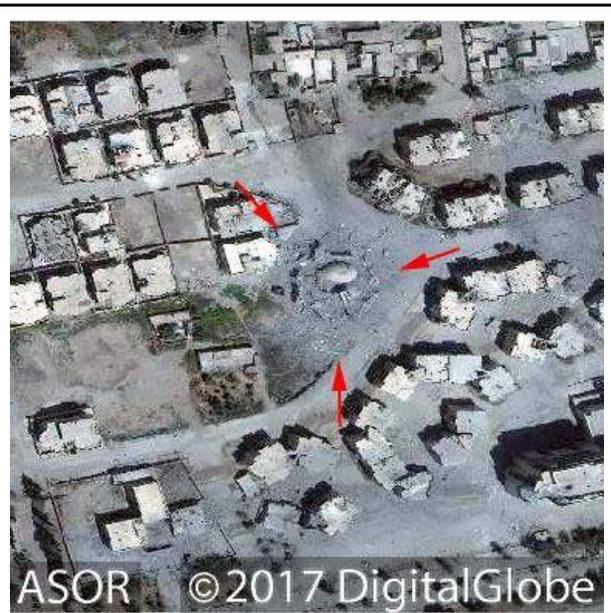


An aerial image of the destroyed mosque (RBSS/Facebook; August 20, 2017)



ASOR ©2017 DigitalGlobe

Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque in Raqqa prior to damage shown within red box (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 26, 2017)



ASOR ©2017 DigitalGlobe

Destruction of the mosque indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 1, 2017)

SHI 17-0142

Report Date: August 8, 2017

Site Name: al-Nour Mosque (مسجد النور)

Date of Incident: August 8, 2017

Location: Hazeh (بلدة حزة), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A SARG airstrike damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 8, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike had severely damaged al-Nour Mosque.¹⁰² Photographs posted by Ghouta Media Center show damage to the main building of mosque as well as the destruction of attached secondary structures.¹⁰³

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Ghouta Media Center: <https://www.facebook.com/GhoutaGMC/posts/225925897935252>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/08/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-nour-mosque-hazza-town-damascus-suburbs-august-8/>

¹⁰² <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/08/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-nour-mosque-hazza-town-damascus-suburbs-august-8/>

¹⁰³ <https://www.facebook.com/GhoutaGMC/posts/225925897935252>



Damage to the main building of al-Nour Mosque (Ghouta Media Center; August 8, 2017)



Damage to a secondary structure attached to al-Nour Mosque (Ghouta Media Center; August 8, 2017)



A crater caused by explosives in the street in front of al-Nour Mosque (Ghouta Media Center; August 8, 2017)



al-Nour Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 3, 2017)

Crater in the street in front of al-Nour Mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 28, 2017)

SHI 17-0143

Report Date: August 10, 2017

Site Name: Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church (كنيسة سيده البشارة) (Sayyida al-Bashara)

Date of Incident: Between July 26, 2017 and August 1, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Greek Catholic Church. The building includes a small non-denominational kindergarten and elementary teaching center for children.¹⁰⁴

Site Date: Unknown, likely modern.

Incident Summary: A US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed a church.

Incident Source and Description: On August 8, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a US-led Coalition airstrike had severely damaged Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church.¹⁰⁵ Other sources subsequently mentioned the church's destruction.¹⁰⁶

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery released on August 1, 2017 shows that Our Lady of Annunciation Greek Catholic Church has been heavily damaged. The damage—likely due to an airstrike—occurred between July 26, 2017 and August 1, 2017.

ISIS was reported to have desecrated the church in September 2013.¹⁰⁷ The organization subsequently used it as an administrative center.¹⁰⁸

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158**.

For more information on previous damage to Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0036** in **Weekly Report 83-84**.

¹⁰⁴ ASOR CHI Source

¹⁰⁵ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/10/international-coalition-forces-shelling-sayda-bshara-church-adnan-al-malki-street-raqqa-city-august-8/>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1651014581576453>; https://twitter.com/Raqqa_SI/status/897599651850924032; <https://damasnow.com/2017/08/17/بعد-أن-دمر-البنّي-التحتية-التحالف-يدم/>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.raqqa-sl.com/?p=331>; <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/syria-islamist-rebels-storm-churches-raqqa-isis-509680>; <http://www.newsweek.com/war-isis-us-bombing-pushes-final-christians-out-raqqa-649202>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.raqqa-sl.com/?p=331>

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church, as well as the condition of other cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Dimashq al-Aan: <https://damasnow.com/2017/08/17/بعد-أن-دمر-البنى-التحتية-التحالف-يدم/>

International Business Times: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/syria-islamist-rebels-storm-churches-raqqa-isis-509680>

Newsweek: <http://www.newsweek.com/war-isis-us-bombing-pushes-final-christians-out-raqqa-649202>

Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS):

August 15, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SL/posts/1651014581576453>

August 15, 2017: https://twitter.com/Raqqa_SL/status/897599651850924032

June 1, 2015: <http://www.raqqa-sl.com/?p=331>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/10/international-coalition-forces-shelling-sayda-bshara-church-adnan-al-malki-street-raqqa-city-august-8/>



The Sayda Bshara Church's location prior to destruction shown within the red box



The church after destruction indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August



Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church at the time of its desecration in 2013 (RBSS; June 1, 2015)



Our Lady of the Annunciation Greek Catholic Church at the time of its desecration in 2013 (RBSS; June 1, 2015)

SHI 17-0144

Report Date: August 11, 2017

Site Name: al-Thakana Mosque (جامع الثكنة)

Date of Incident: Between August 1, 2017 and August 7, 2017

Location: al-Thakana Neighborhood, Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A reported US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 9, 2017 Raqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS) reported that al-Thakana Mosque had been destroyed by a US-led Coalition airstrike several days earlier.¹⁰⁹ The following day, on August 10, 2017 Raqqa Post also announced the complete destruction of the mosque.¹¹⁰

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery of the area released on August 7, 2017 shows that al-Thakana Mosque has been completely destroyed. The damage occurred between August 1, 2017 and August 7, 2017.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157, and ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

RBSS: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1645142625496982>

Raqqa Post: <https://twitter.com/RaqqaPost/status/895583081175928832>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1645142625496982>

¹¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/RaqqaPost/status/895583081175928832>



al-Thakana Mosque prior to damage
(DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 1,
2017)



Destruction of al-Thakana Mosque
(DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 7,
2017)

SHI 17-0145

Report Date: August 11, 2017

Site Name: al-Nour Mosque (Bassel Mosque) (النور مسجد)

Date of Incident: Between July 26, 2017 and August 1, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Shia Mosque

Site Date: 1990s CE

Incident Summary: A suspected US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery released on August 1, 2017 shows that the central dome and building of the al-Nour Mosque has been destroyed. The damage—likely due to an airstrike—occurred between July 26, 2017 and August 1, 2017. The minaret and all remaining infrastructure were destroyed by continued aerial bombardment between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017. The area around al-Nour Mosque has continued to be a focus of US-led Coalition airstrikes in the days following its destruction.¹¹¹

The mosque previously suffered heavy damage from an airstrike on June 10, 2017. For more information on previous damage to al-Nour Mosque see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0046** in **Weekly Report 87-88**; **SHI 16-0056** in **Weekly Report 89-90**; **SHI 17-0104** in **Weekly Report 145-148**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

RBSS: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1644352145576030>

¹¹¹ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1644352145576030>



The mosque's dome still intact after previous airstrike (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 26, 2017)



Destruction of the dome and central building with just the minaret still standing (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 1, 2017)



Destruction of the minaret as indicated by red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0146

Report Date: August 13, 2017

Site Name: Beit Kubba

Date of Incident: Between February 11, 2017 and August 4, 2017

Location: al-Jdaydah Neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Historic home located in the Old City of Aleppo.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Unknown parties stole the architectural installations of a historic home.

Incident Source and Description: On August 5, 2017, an Aleppo resident posted photographs that document the theft of multiple water installations from the courtyard of a historic home.¹¹² These installations consisted of a multi-tiered, tiled fountain in a recess on one side of the courtyard and two features in the courtyard—a waterfall with channel and receptacle, and a second fountain in the middle of a square pond.

Pattern: Theft.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Aleppo Archaeology: <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoarchaeology/posts/1504175626307620>

Personal Facebook Account

¹¹² Personal Facebook Account; <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoarchaeology/posts/1504175626307620>



The courtyard before the theft. The back of the waterfall is visible in the foreground, the square pond is in the middle of the image, and the multi-tiered fountain is in the background (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The courtyard before the theft. The square fountain is in the foreground and the waterfall is in the background (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The multi-tiered fountain before the theft (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The multi-tiered fountain after the theft (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The receptacle at the bottom of the multi-tiered fountain (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The decoration above the multi-tiered fountain (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



Detail photograph of the decoration above the multi-tiered fountain (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The square fountain and the waterfall after the theft (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The square receptacle at the end of the waterfall (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



View of the waterfall channel (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



The spouts at the end of the waterfall channel (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



Damage to the paving in the courtyard (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



Water installation with decoration in relief. The discoloration and cavities below the opening suggest that part of this installation collapsed or was stolen (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)



Decoration on one of the courtyard walls (Personal Facebook Account; August 5, 2017)

SHI 17-0147

Report Date: August 13, 2017

Site Name: al-Shughour Castle (قلعة الشغور) (Bakas بكاس)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Shughour Qadeem, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Al-Shughour Castle—also known as Bakas, its name in Crusader sources—is located six km northwest of Jisr al-Shughour on a narrow ridge above the Nahr al-Abiad, a tributary of the Orontes River.¹¹³ Originally founded by the Byzantines, the castle was expanded by the Crusaders. The narrowness of the ridge resulted in the construction of two distinct fortresses separated by an open space.¹¹⁴

The fortresses were captured from the Crusaders by Saladin in 1188 CE. An earthquake in 1404 CE caused extensive damage. As a result, the fortresses fell into increasing disuse. The visible remains currently consist of partial walls and cisterns.¹¹⁵

Site Date: Byzantine–Mamluk Period

Incident Summary: A local council is conducting conservation projects on al-Shughour Castle.

Incident Source and Description: On August 9, 2017 SMART News Agency posted a video that shows the current state of al-Shughour Castle.¹¹⁶ According to men interviewed in the video, SARG-Russian airstrikes have hit the castle multiple times over the course of the ongoing conflict. The castle has also been a target of looters. A local council has taken it upon themselves to protect the site from further disturbance. As part of this mission, they have conducted a number of conservation projects on different parts of the castle.

Pattern: Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SMART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHP-aActB8I>

¹¹³ Burns 2009: 68

¹¹⁴ Burns 2009: 69

¹¹⁵ Burns 2009: 69

¹¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHP-aActB8I>

Scholarly:

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



Video still of the walls and cisterns of the castle (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of the walls and cisterns of the castle (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of the walls and cisterns of the castle (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of vegetation growing in the walls on either side of an arch (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



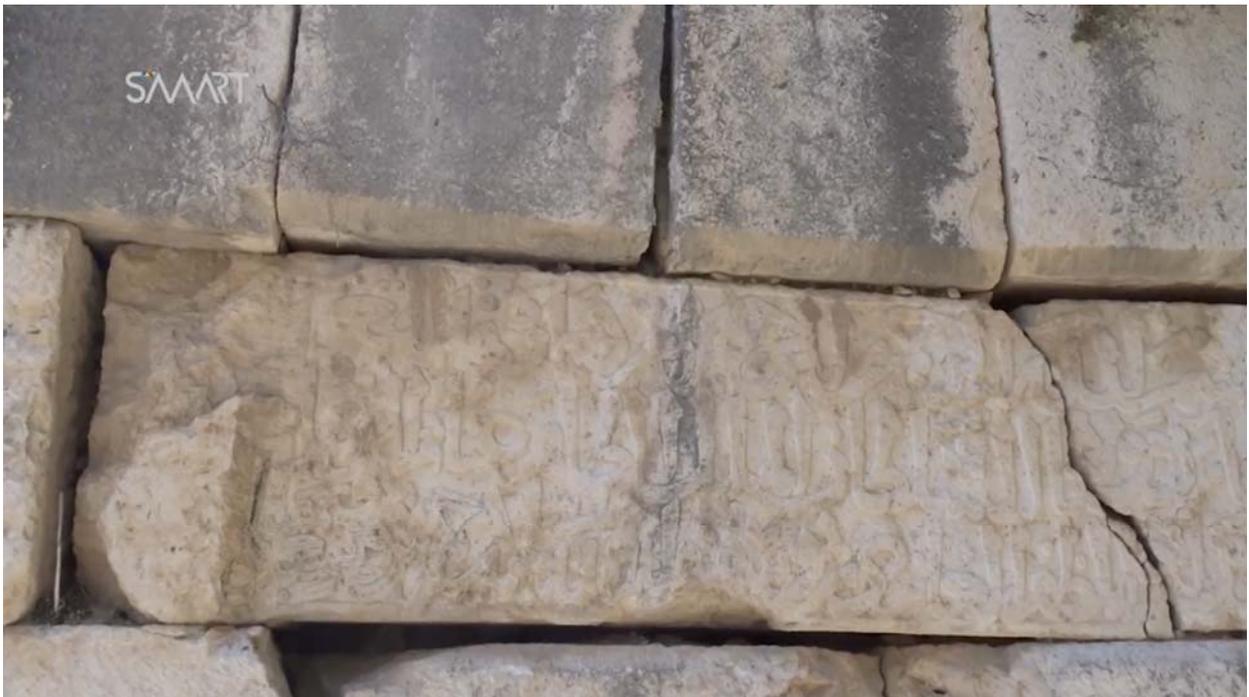
Video still of partially-collapsed walls (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of partially-collapsed walls (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of a window with rubble beyond (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of an Arabic inscription on a piece of stone (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of the castle's interior (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of the castle's interior (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of a fortification trench (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)



Video still of an interior ceiling (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2017)

SHI 17-0148

Report Date: August 14, 2017

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

Date of Incident: August 9, 2017

Location: Hamada al-Omar (قرية حمادة العمر), Hama Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A SARG-Russian airstrike destroyed a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 9, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG-Russian airstrike destroyed Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque.¹¹⁷ No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural sites damaged in Homs Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0175 UPDATE.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/09/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-abu-bakr-al-siddiq-mosque-hammada-omar-village-hama-governorate-august-9/>

¹¹⁷ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/09/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-abu-bakr-al-siddiq-mosque-hammada-omar-village-hama-governorate-august-9/>

SHI 17-0149

Report Date: August 16, 2017

Site Name: al-Omari Mosque (جامع العمري; Old Mosque)

Date of Incident: April 9–August 20, 2012

Location: al-Herak, Daraa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Al-Omari Mosque in al-Herak stands on the site of a Roman temple. The mosque has been renovated several times, most recently in 1912 CE.¹¹⁸

Site Date: Renovated 1912 CE

Incident Summary: New video footage shows extensive damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 16, 2017 Syria Media Organization published a video of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) flag being raised in al-Herak. The video shows extensive damage to al-Omari Mosque.¹¹⁹ As seen in drone footage included in the video, much of the mosque has collapsed.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows that the majority of damage from bombing to the mosque occurred between April 9, 2012 and August 20, 2012. The minaret was damaged sometime between August 20, 2012 and January 5, 2015, as evidenced by the shape of its shadow in the imagery.

Pattern: Military activity - explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ESyria:

http://www.esyria.sy/edaraa/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=20080219_1518014

Syria Media Organization: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2AwVm9UWXg>

¹¹⁸ http://www.esyria.sy/edaraa/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=20080219_1518014

¹¹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2AwVm9UWXg>



Video still of damage to al-Omari Mosque, left (Syria Media Organization; August 16, 2017)



Video still of damage to al-Omari Mosque, left (Syria Media Organization; August 16, 2017)



Video still of damage to al-Omari Mosque (Syria Media Organization; August 16, 2017)



ASOR ©2017 DigitalGlobe

The location of al-Omari Mosque indicated by red box, prior to any damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; April 9, 2012)



ASOR ©2017 DigitalGlobe

Damage to al-Omari Mosque's roof shown by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 20, 2012)



Damage to the minaret as evidenced by the top of the minaret and the shape of its shadow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 5, 2015)

SHI 17-0150

Report Date: August 23, 2017

Site Name: Kafr Nasej (كفر ناسج)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Kafr Nasej, Daraa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Kafr Nasej was the site of a monastery by the late sixth century CE.¹²⁰ Many of its remains are likely associated with the monastery, although the site appears to be unpublished.

Site Date: Roman, Byzantine

Incident Summary: Airstrikes and looting have damaged ancient ruins in Kafr Nasej.

Incident Source and Description: On August 19, 2017 SMART News Agency published a video report on Youtube stating that the village of Kafr Nasej has been subjected to systematic shelling by the SARG forces.¹²¹ This has resulted in the destruction of much of the town's archaeological material, possibly as much as 40%. In addition, the area has been subject to illegal excavation and looting.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike; Illegal excavation; Theft.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SMART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vefptPse5oY>

Scholarly:

Trimingham, J. (1979) *Christianity among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 144.

¹²⁰ Trimingham, 144.

¹²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vefptPse5oY>



Video still showing damage to stone wall (right) (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing damage to stone wall (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing damage to wall decoration (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still of a possible looting pit (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing damage to column (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing fallen and damaged wall stones and columns (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing possible illegal excavation (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing damage to a wall (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing standing arch (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still showing damage to roof (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still of interior of building (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)



Video still of an outer building (SMART News Agency; August 19, 2017)

SHI 17-0151

Report Date: August 23, 2017

Site Name: al-Khamisiyah Village Mosque (مسجد قرية الخميسية)

Date of Incident: August 21, 2017

Location: al-Khamisiyah (الخميسية), Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: An airstrike damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 21, 2017 Raqqa24 reported that SARG or Russian airstrikes partially destroyed a mosque in al-Khamisiyah village.¹²² On August 7, 2017 Hasakah Network reported damage to the vilage mosque due to Russian airstrikes.¹²³ It is unknown if these are the same strike with two different reported dates or two different strikes. The last DigitalGlobe imagery is from March, and as such does not help to narrow down the time frame of the strike or strikes. No photographs or video of the damage are currently available to confirm this report.

For previous damage to the al-Khamisiyah Village Mosque see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report 17-0138** in **July Monthly Report**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Hasaka Network: <https://twitter.com/alhaskaalhadth/status/894494379112620032>

Raqqa 24:

August 21, 2017: <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/899643783364493313> ; <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/899591941750489088>

¹²² <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/899643783364493313> ; <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/899591941750489088>

¹²³ <https://twitter.com/alhaskaalhadth/status/894494379112620032>

SHI 17-0152

Report Date: August 25, 2017

Site Name: al-Alo Mosque (مسجد العلو)

Date of Incident: Between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017

Location: al-Moroor neighborhood, Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: DigitalGlobe imagery shows damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: Recently released DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows severe damage to the al-Alo Mosque from airstrikes that took place between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017. The dome and minaret have collapsed and there are several holes in the roof. The northwest part of the mosque was previously damaged between May 24, 2017 and May 30, 2017. As of this report, al-Alo Mosque is still in ISIS-held territory in Raqqa. No news sources have reported on this destruction and no photographs have been released. The damage was most likely caused by US-led Coalition airstrikes.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157](#), and [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158](#).

For previous damage to al-Alo Mosque, see [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0087](#) in [Weekly Report 141-144](#).

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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



The al-Alo Mosque with some damage indicated by red arrows, but prior to severe damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 13, 2017)



The mosque after severe damage from airstrikes, indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0153

Report Date: August 25, 2017

Site Name: Circassians Mosque (جامع الشركسة)

Date of Incident: Between August 13 and August 25, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: DigitalGlobe imagery shows damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery released on August 25, 2017 shows that the Circassian Mosque was destroyed between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017. No news sources have reported on this destruction and no photographs have been released. The damage was most likely caused by US-led Coalition airstrikes.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157, and ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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



The Circassian Mosque prior to any damage
(DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 13,
2017)



The mosque after destruction from airstrikes
(DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25,
2017)

SHI 17-0154

Report Date: August 25, 2017

Site Name: Unnamed Mosque

Date of Incident: Between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: A US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery released on August 25, 2017 shows that an Unnamed Mosque was destroyed by an airstrike between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017. The eastern part of the mosque was previously damaged by an airstrike that occurred between July 25, 2017 and July 26, 2017. The damage was most likely caused by US-led Coalition airstrikes.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157](#), and [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158](#).

Pattern: Military activity: explosives – airstrike.

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



The unnamed mosque prior to destruction, with previously inflicted damage shown by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 13, 2017)



The mosque after destruction, indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0155**Report Date:** August 26, 2017**Site Name:** Tell es-Sweyhat**Date of Incident:** Unknown**Location:** Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Tell es-Sweyhat consists of a central 5–6 ha high mound and a rectangular low mound that covers an additional 30–40 ha.¹²⁴ Three separate expeditions—led by the University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, and Boston University—worked at the site between 1973 and 2010.¹²⁵ Excavations on the high mound uncovered the remains of a fortified Early Bronze Age (third millennium BCE) town as well as a later Hellenistic–Roman (ca. 300 BCE–400 CE) occupation. Geomagnetic survey and excavation in the outer town exposed residential sectors as well as zones of ceramic production and Early Bronze Age graves.

Site Date: Third millennium BCE; ca. 300 BCE–400 CE**Incident Summary:** An ATPA report revealed the condition of Tell es-Sweyhat.

Incident Source and Description: On August 26, 2017 the Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities (ATPA) for al-Jazira Canton released a report that detailed damage to the site of Tell es-Sweyhat.¹²⁶ Photographs show that most of the excavated areas are in poor condition, largely due to exposure to the elements. Minor looting has occurred in at least one spot on the high mound.

At an unknown time, ISIS cleared the storerooms of the excavation house in the nearby village of Nefileh. ATPA previously documented the presence of some of these materials in piles on the grounds of the military airport in al-Tabqa, located near Raqqa.

The most recently available DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that there has been little disturbance to the site in recent years.

Pattern: Site management: tourism/visitor activity; Theft.

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

Sources:Online Reporting:

The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities, al-Jazira Canton (ATPA): <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/the-archaeological-sites-in-the-middle-euphrates-valley-3/>

¹²⁴ Zettler 1997: 4

¹²⁵ Zettler 1997; Wilkinson 2004; Holland 2006

¹²⁶ <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/the-archaeological-sites-in-the-middle-euphrates-valley-3/>

Scholarly:

Holland, Thomas A. (2006) *Excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat, Volume 2. Archaeology of the Bronze Age, Hellenistic, and Roman Remains at an Ancient Town on the Euphrates River*. OIP 125, vol. 1–2. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Wilkinson, Tony J. (2004) *Excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat, Volume 1. On the Margins of the Euphrates*. OIP 124. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Zettler, Richard L. (1997) *Subsistence and Settlement in a Marginal Environment. Tell es-Sweyhat, 1989–1995 Preliminary Report*. MASCA Research Papers in Science and Archaeology 14. Pennsylvania: MASCA.



Tell es-Sweyhat, seen from the north (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Excavations on the western slope of the high mound, seen from the west (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Excavations on the western slope of the high mound, seen from the north



Excavations on the southern slope of the high mound, seen from the south (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Excavations on the southern slope of the high mound, seen from the north (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Excavations on the eastern slope of the high mound, seen from the west (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



The temple on the top of the high mound, seen from the northeast (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



A looter's pit on the top of the high mound (APTA; August 1, 2017)



Tell es-Sweyhat as seen in the most recently available imagery (DigitalGlobe NextView License; June 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0156

Report Date: August 26, 2017

Site Name: Tell Munbaqa

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Tell Munbaqa, ancient Ekalte, is located 84 km northwest of Raqqa along the eastern bank of the Euphrates River. The Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft explored the site off and on from 1969 to the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. The excavators identified four major occupation periods at the site.¹²⁷ The earliest secure occupation dates back to the second half of the third millennium BCE (Mbq IV), though occupation likely existed there even earlier.¹²⁸ Occupation continued throughout the second millennium BCE (Mbq III-II). At the end of the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1200 BCE) the city was abandoned. Isolated remains from the Roman, Byzantine, Islamic, and more recent periods (Mbq I) point to continued habitation near the site in subsequent millennia.¹²⁹

The German excavations have uncovered large portions of the site. At the height of its size in the second millennium BCE, Ekalte consisted of a fortified inner town with additional occupation outside the walls. Notable finds include two temples situated at the northwestern end of the inner town as well as residential districts and multiple gates through the city's fortification wall.

Site Date: Third millennium BCE–second millennium BCE; First millennium CE

Incident Summary: An ATPA report revealed the condition of Tell Munbaqa.

Incident Source and Description: On August 26, 2017 the Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities (ATPA) for al-Jazira Canton released a report that detailed damage to the site of Tell Munbaqa.¹³⁰ Photographs show that the archaeological remains have suffered light damage, largely due to exposure to the elements. According to the ATPA, looting has occurred in multiple locations inside the excavation trenches.

At an unknown time, ISIS cleared the storerooms of the excavation house. ATPA previously documented the presence of some of these materials in piles on the grounds of the military airport in al-Tabqa, located near Raqqa.

The most recent DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows that there has been little disturbance to Tell Munbaqa in recent years.

Pattern: Site management: tourism/visitor activity; Theft.

¹²⁷ Werner 2008: X

¹²⁸ Machule and Wäfler 1983: 124

¹²⁹ Machule and Wäfler 1983: 124

¹³⁰ <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/the-archaeological-sites-in-the-middle-euphrates-valley-3/>

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities, al-Jazira Canton (ATPA): <http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/the-archaeological-sites-in-the-middle-euphrates-valley-3/>

Scholarly:

Machule, Dittmar and Markus Wäfler (1983) "Tall Munbaqa 1968–1979" *Les annales archeologiques arabes syriennes* 33(1), pp. 123–129.

Werner, Peter (2008) "Einleitung und Hinweise für den Benutzer" in Rainer M. Czichon and Peter Werner (eds.), *Die bronzezeitliche Keramik. Ausgrabungen Tell Munbāqa – Ekalte IV*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. X–XI.



Tell Munbaqa, seen from the east (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Architecture at the southern end of the site, seen from the north (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Architecture at the northwestern end of the site, seen from the east (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Architecture at the southwestern end of the site, seen from the east (ATPA; August 1, 2017)



Tell Munbaqa in the most recently available satellite image
(DigitalGlobe NextView License; June 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0157

Report Date: August 26, 2017

Site Name: al-Qadim Mosque

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: Old City, Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The Abbasid caliph al-Mansur built al-Qadim Mosque in 772 CE.¹³¹ The mosque received extensive renovations during the reign of Nur ad-Din Zangi in 1166 CE.¹³² The destruction of al-Raqqa in 1265 CE ended the mosque's use.¹³³

The mosque consisted of a rectilinear structure with rounded towers on all four sides. A single large courtyard lay inside. Multiple arched colonnades flanked the courtyard on all four sides. The mosque's minaret lay in the northeastern corner of the courtyard and a cistern was located in the northwestern corner.

Much of the mosque has disappeared in the centuries since its destruction. However, the exterior wall of the mosque, the minaret, the cistern, and the northernmost colonnade on the southern side of the courtyard remain largely intact. The Syrian Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums conducted restoration activities on these remains between 1983 and 1987.¹³⁴

Additionally, a small, domed shrine was established in the courtyard of the mosque in 1836 CE.¹³⁵ This was located over the purported grave of Wabisa ibn Ma'bad al-Asadi, a companion of the prophet Muhammad.

Site Date: 772–1265 CE

Incident Summary: New video reveals damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 21, 2017 video footage was published online that showed damage to al-Qadim Mosque.¹³⁶ Heavy fighting and airstrikes occurred in the area around the mosque in the preceding weeks.¹³⁷ Both jambs of the door through the southern wall of the building have been damaged. Gaps in the perimeter fence that surrounds the site are also visible. Additionally, the architecture on the site has suffered from exposure to the elements.

The shrine to Wabisa ibn Ma'bad al-Asadi was removed from the site between late 2013 and October 2014. Rubble is visible in the area north of the colonnade where it was located.

¹³¹ Hagen, al-Hassoun, and Meinecke 2004: 37

¹³² Hagen, al-Hassoun, and Meinecke 2004: 38

¹³³ Heidemann 2003: 51

¹³⁴ Hagen, al-Hassoun, and Meinecke 2004: 26

¹³⁵ Heidemann 2003: 55

¹³⁶ Personal Twitter Account

¹³⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1646906228653955>; <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1653646694646575>; <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/photos/a.831935496817703.1073741829.780110825333504/1654642941213617>; <http://sdf-press.com/en/2017/08/violent-clashes-in-the-neighborhoods-of-raqqa-and-the-killing-of-35-mercenaries-of-the-sis/>

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that there has been significant damage to the area around al-Qadim mosque. Between August 13, 2017 and August 25, 2017 the southeast corner of the protective wall around the mosque was damaged.

For more information on previous damage to al-Qadim Mosque see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0132** in **Weekly Report 59–60** and **SHI 17-0110** in **Weekly Report 145–148**.

Raqqa's Old City contains multiple buildings that are contemporary to the mosque. For more on damage to the al-Rafiqah Wall see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0122** in **Weekly Report 149–152** as well as ASOR CHI's Special Report on the structure.¹³⁸

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0158**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Personal Twitter Account

Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS):

August 11, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1646906228653955>

August 18, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1653646694646575>

August 19, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/photos/a.831935496817703.1073741829.780110825333504/1654642941213617>

SDF Press: <http://sdf-press.com/en/2017/08/violent-clashes-in-the-neighborhoods-of-raqqa-and-the-killing-of-35-mercenaries-of-the-sis/>

Scholarly:

Hagen, Norbert, Mustafa al-Hassoun, and Michael Meinecke (2004) "Die grosse Moschee von ar-Rāfiqa," in *Baudenkmäler und Paläste I*, ed. Verena Daiber and Andrea Becker. Raqqa III. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 25–39.

¹³⁸ <http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/update-damage-to-al-rafiqah-wall-in-raqqas-old-city-by-us-led-coalition-forces/>

Heidemann, Stefan (2003) "Die Geschichte von ar-Raqqa/ar-Rāfiqa – ein Überblick," in *Die islamische Stadt*, ed. Stefan Heidemann and Andrea Becker. Raqqa II. Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 9–56.



The neighborhood around al-Qadim Mosque, seen from the southwest (RBSS; August 19, 2017)



Video still of the mosque, seen from the southwest (Personal Twitter Account/[@AfarinMamosta](#))



Video still of the colonnade and minaret of the mosque, seen from the southwest (Personal Twitter Account)



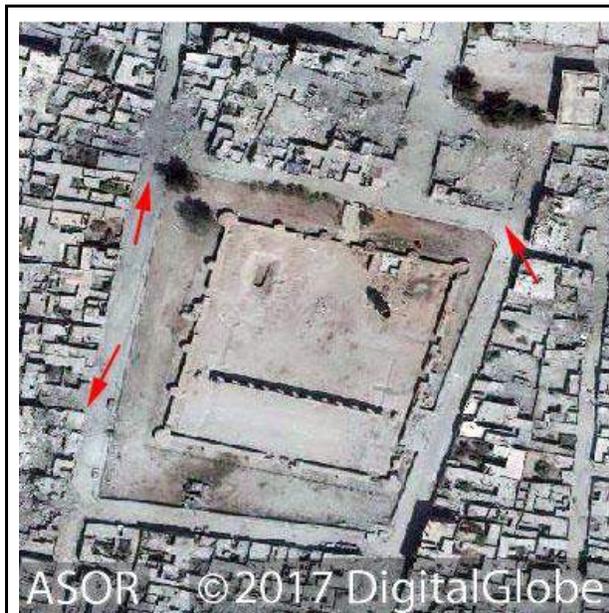
Video still of the entrance through the southern wall of the mosque; note the damage to both jambs of the doorway (Personal Twitter Account)



Video still of the southeastern corner of the mosque (Personal Twitter Account)



Video still of the colonnade and minaret, seen from the southwest (Personal Twitter Account)



Al-Qadim mosque with surrounding damage shown by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 13, 2017)



Damage to southeastern part of barrier wall around al-Qadim mosque indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 25, 2017)

SHI 17-0158

Report Date: August 29, 2017

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

Date of Incident: August 29, 2017

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Circa 1985 CE¹³⁹

Incident Summary: ISIS militants dug a tunnel in a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 29, 2017 the YPG Press Office published a video showing a tunnel ISIS militants reportedly dug in the interior of a mosque in east Raqqa.¹⁴⁰ The tunnel was discovered by members of the YPG-led SDF. The video also shows significant damage to the interior and exterior of the mosque.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Raqqa: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0111 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0114 UPDATE, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0141, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0143, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0144, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0145, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0152, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0153, ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0154, and ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0157.**

For more information on previous damage to this mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report 17-0126** in **Weekly Report 149-152**.

Pattern: Military activity: tunneling; reuse of ancient/historic structure.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

YPG Press Office: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNl1-lAkgKI>

¹³⁹ ASOR CHI Source

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNl1-lAkgKI>



Video still of damaged mosque exterior (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)



Video still of damaged mosque exterior (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)



Video still of damaged mosque exterior (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)



Video still of damaged mosque interior (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)



Video still of damaged mosque interior (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)



Video still of tunnel inside mosque (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)



Video still of tunnel inside mosque (YPG Press Office; August 29, 2017)

SHI 17-0159

Report Date: August 31, 2017

Site Name: Unnamed Mosque

Date of Incident: August 31, 2017

Location: al-Salor (السلور), Latakia Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Shelling damages a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 31, 2017 Step News Agency reported damage in the village of al-Salor as a result of artillery shelling. A photograph accompanying the report shows damage to a mosque and the surrounding area.¹⁴¹

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Step News Agency: <https://www.facebook.com/StepNewsAgency/posts/1066836960118252>

¹⁴¹ <https://www.facebook.com/StepNewsAgency/posts/1066836960118252>



Damage to mosque and surrounding area (Step News Agency; August 31, 2017)



Report Prepared By: Eng. Abdul Rahman Alyehia (Syrian Heritage Centre)
Site Monitors Project Coordinator Dr. Amr Al-Azm
Date: 4/27/2017



“Al-Daraj” Historical Bathhouse is one of the Umayyad era bathhouses still standing in Sarmin

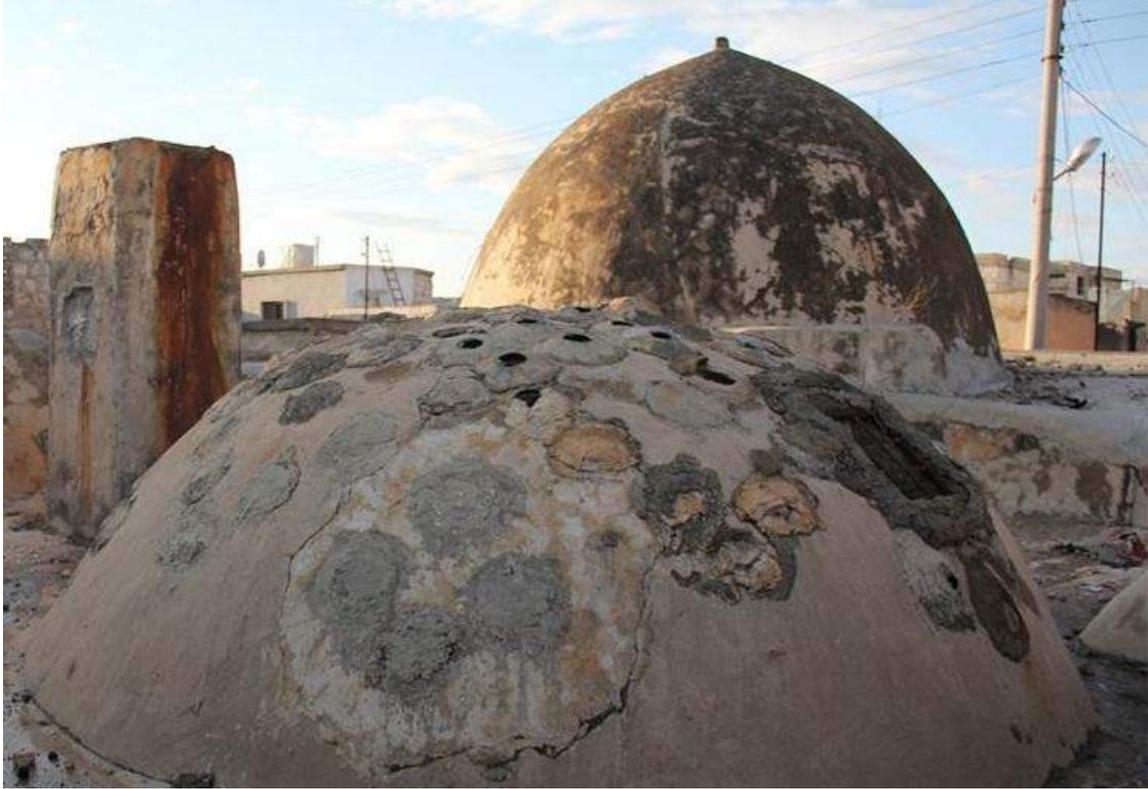
Introduction:



Built in the Umayyad era, Al-Daraj bathhouse is located slightly west of the town center, and has been restored several times beginning in the Ottoman era to the last restoration in 2002. The bathhouse was still functional to this day. Al-Daraj means “the steps”, derived from the long flight of stairs leading up to its entrance.

The bathhouse is divided into three main sections known by their positions within the structure. The “Outer” section is connected to the main entrance with a long flight of stairs, and has a large hall with stone benches on the periphery topped with rugs and cloth. There is also a small underground room connected to the building where a fire roars to heat the premises and the bath water.

On Thursday, 27 April 2017, the bathhouse was struck by Russian air force resulting in severe damage and total destruction of the bathhouse. Syrian Heritage Center’s site monitors visited the site and reported the damage.













Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 15-0013 UPDATE

Report Date: August 31, 2017

Site Name: Mosque of Sheikh Jawad al-Sadiq

Date of Incident: June 26, 2014

Location: Tal Afar, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Shi'a mosque that was previously attacked during Friday prayers by two suicide bombers in 2008, killing four and injuring 17.¹⁴²

Site Date: Unknown, probably modern.

Incident Summary: New video footage shows condition of mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 30, 2017 al-Mosuliya published video footage showing the liberation of Tal Afar. This footage showed the minaret of the Mosque of Sheikh Jawad al Sadiq lying on its side amidst the ruins of the mosque. This mosque was intentionally destroyed by ISIS in 2014. For more information on previous destruction to the Mosque of Sheikh Jawad al-Sadiq see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0013** in **Weekly Report 30**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Tal Afar and 'Ayadiya: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0071**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0072**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0073**.

Pattern: Site management: tourism/visitor activities.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

al-Mosuliya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWHnGI5Xr9o>

Haer Low:

<https://plus.google.com/photos/photo/117932106922669185416/6305019653849542178>

¹⁴² <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7247087.stm>



Minaret of the Mosque of Sheikh Jawad al-Sadiq (Haer Low; July 2016)



Minaret of the Mosque of Sheikh Jawad al-Sadiq (al-Mosuliya; August 30, 2017)



Damaged minaret in 2014 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 19, 2014)



Minaret resting on debris from mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 30, 2017)

IHI 17-0036 UPDATE

Report Date: August 22, 2017

Site Name: al-Najjar Mosque

Date of Incident: Between May 11 and May 20, 2017

Location: al-Rafa'i Neighborhood, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Sunni Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: New photographs show damage to interior of mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 20, 2017 a Facebook user posted photographs showing the inside of the al-Najjar Mosque. The floor is covered in rubble, but the structure is intact. One of the exterior walls has a hole, possibly from an airstrike.

Previous reporting showed damage occurring to the area around the mosque. For more information on previous damage to al-Najjar Mosque, see [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0036](#) in [May 2017 Monthly Report](#).

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other mosques damaged in Mosul: [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0066](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0067](#), and [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0068](#).

Pattern: Site management: Tourism/visitor activity.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Personal Facebook Account



Interior of al-Najjar Mosque (Personal Facebook Account; August 20, 2017)



Interior of al-Najjar Mosque (Personal Facebook Account; August 20, 2017)



Interior of al-Najjar Mosque (Personal Facebook Account; August 20, 2017)



Exterior of al-Najjar Mosque with a hole in an exterior wall (Personal Facebook Account; August 20, 2017)

IHI 17-0050 UPDATE

Report Date: August 9, 2017

Site Name: Chaldean Catholic Church of the Virgin Mary

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Shurta Neighborhood, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Chaldean Catholic Church containing archdiocese.

Site Date: 18th century CE

Incident Summary: New video footage shows damage to the church.

Incident Source and Description: On August 4, 2017 al-Mosuliya posted a video showing the condition of the Church of the Virgin Mary.¹⁴³ Most of the adjacent archdiocese has been destroyed by military activity, but the church is still standing. The dome of the church has been tipped onto its side, possibly as a result of military activity. The front of the church has been heavily damaged by military activity, with two holes apparent in the walls. There is also slight graffiti on the front of the church.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other churches damaged in Mosul: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0052 UPDATE**.

For more information on previous damage to the Church of the Virgin Mary, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0094** in **Weekly Report 55-56** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0050** in **June 2017 Monthly Report**.

Pattern: Site management: Tourism/visitor activity.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

al-Mosuliya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvM1jkXRuKs>

¹⁴³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvM1jkXRuKs>



Video still of the Chaldean Church with the dome on its side (al-Mosuliya; August 4, 2017)



Video still of the front of the Chaldean Church with a large hole in the wall (al-Mosuliya; August 4, 2017)



Video still of the front of the Chaldean Church with graffiti and another large hole in the wall (al-Mosuliya; August 4, 2017)

IHI 17-0052 UPDATE

Report Date: August 23, 2017

Site Name: Kanisat al-Sa'a

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Sa'a Neighborhood, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: The church was constructed by Dominican Friars in the 1870s CE. In the 1880s, the Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III of France donated the Clock Tower.¹⁴⁴ At this time a replica of the Lourdes Grotto with a statue of Our Lady of Miracles was also installed in the church. In 2006, the church was damaged during the Second Gulf War.¹⁴⁵

Site Date: 1873 CE; The clock tower was completed in 1882 CE.

Incident Summary: New video footage shows other occupations at the church.

Incident Source and Description: On August 14, 2017 al-Aan Arabic Television released a video report on the Kanisat al-Sa'a Church.¹⁴⁶ An ISIS fighter, 'Adil Ahmad, was captured by Iraqi forces and stated that the basement of the church was used as a headquarters during the fighting for Mosul. He goes on to state that ISIS used the basement as a training camp for newly enrolled ISIS members prior to the liberation. Signs on the walls of the basement state the church was the location of the Saad al-Ansari Camp, with inscriptions dating back to 2015. Signs also show that the basement was split into sections corresponding to the divisions of the group for training purposes. In the rubble there are signs that children and/or women were kept in the basement at some point as well. The video footage shows possible rigging of explosives in the basement. On August 25, 2017 al-Mosuliya published a report showing the interior of the church, and calling for the reconstruction of Christian heritage in Mosul in order to encourage Christians to move back to Mosul.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other churches damaged in Mosul: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0050 UPDATE**.

For previous reports of damage to Kanisat al-Sa'a, see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report 16-0039 in Weekly Report 117-118** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report 17-0052 in July Monthly Report**.

Pattern: Military activity: reuse of ancient/historic structure.

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

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.la-croix.com/Urbi-et-Orbi/Monde/A-Mossoul-Daech-a-detruit-l-eglise-Notre-Dame-de-l-Heure-2016-04-26-1200756074>

¹⁴⁵ <https://worldcometomyhome.blogspot.com/2014/10/1317-iraq-dominican-clock-church-in.html>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xijz7-vrfHA>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Aan Arabic Television: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xijz7-vrfHA>

al-Mosuliya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GSWFoLQbn0>



Video still of damage to outside of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al Aan Arabic Television; August 14, 2017)



Video still of damage to courtyard of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al Aan Arabic Television; August 14, 2017)



Video still of papers and rubble in basement of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al Aan Arabic Television; August 14, 2017)



Video still of prayer times and schedules in basement of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al Aan Arabic Television; August 14, 2017)



Video still of a child's shoe found in basement of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al Aan Arabic Television; August 14, 2017)



Video still of damage to the courtyard of Kanisat al-Sa'a due to airstrike (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to the courtyard of Kanisat al-Sa'a due to airstrike (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to an entrance of Kanisat al-Sa'a due to military activity (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to interior of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to an altar inside of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of a hole in the floor of Kanisat al-Sa'a with a fragment of an ISIL banner (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to Kanisat al-Sa'a (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to Kanisat al-Sa'a (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to interior of Kanisat al-Sa'a (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to an altar in Kanisat al-Sa'a (al-Mosuliya; August 25, 2017)

IHI 17-0066

Report Date: August 5, 2017

Site Name: al-Khidr Mosque

Date of Incident: February 2015 - March 6, 2016

Location: al-Korneesh Neighborhood, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The al-Khidr Mosque was built in 1133 CE along the Tigris River in Mosul. It was named in honor of the Islamic figure Khidr, a beloved figure in Sufi Islam.¹⁴⁷ The shrine stood on the site of an older mosque. The al-Khidr Mosque is known colloquially as the Vegetables Mosque, al-Mujahidi Mosque, Mosque of Rabd, the Red Mosque, and the Green Mosque. It features ornate plaster and brick decorative architectural features.¹⁴⁸

Site Date: 1133 CE

Incident Summary: New video footage shows recent construction on the site of the mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 5, 2017 al-Mosuliya posted a video showing new construction at the former site of the al-Khidr Mosque.¹⁴⁹ ISIS intentionally destroyed the mosque in February 2015. The area where the mosque once stood was then bulldozed by unknown persons and new construction at the site took place. According to al-Mosuliya, the new construction was a strip mall. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows the construction began between August 29, 2015 and March 6, 2016.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other mosques damaged in Mosul: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0067**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0068**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0036 UPDATE**.

For more information on previous damage to al-Khidr Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0007** in **Weekly Report 30** and **IHI 15-0032** in **Weekly Report 30**.

Pattern: Development disturbances.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Khidr Mosque, as well as the condition of other cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to development impacts.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Gates of Nineveh: <https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/03/17/damage-around-tikrit-destruction-in-mosul/>

al-Mosuliya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHhaB2MI6ls>

¹⁴⁷ <https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/03/17/damage-around-tikrit-destruction-in-mosul/>

¹⁴⁸ <https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/03/17/damage-around-tikrit-destruction-in-mosul/>

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bHhaB2MI6ls>



Video still of the main structure located where the mosque used to stand (al-Mosuliya; August 5, 2017)



Video still of the main structure located where the mosque used to stand (al-Mosuliya; August 5, 2017)



Video still of the main structure located where the mosque used to stand (al-Mosuliya; August 5, 2017)



Video still of a fence surrounding the area where the mosque used to stand (al-Mosuliya; August 5, 2017)



al-Khidr Mosque prior to destruction outlined in red (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 18, 2014)



Cleared debris from site of al-Khidr Mosque, outlined in red (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 29, 2015)



New construction in progress (DigitalGlobe NextView License; April 1, 2016)



Damaged new construction (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 4, 2017)

IHI 17-0067

Report Date: August 9, 2017

Site Name: al-Abbadi Mosque

Date of Incident: Between March 25, 2017 and March 29, 2017

Location: Hayy al-Rifai, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Unknown

Site Date: Unknown

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

Incident Source and Description: On August 6, 2017, al-Mosuliya published a video showing the condition of the al-Abbadi Mosque.¹⁵⁰ The mosque has slight damage to the exterior, with lettering missing from the entrance. Some windows and facing are also damaged, but the dome and minaret are intact. The mosque has a hole in the roof, possibly from an airstrike, leaving rubble in the interior. The main interior of the mosque has been cleaned.

According to DigitalGlobe satellite imagery, the damage to the roof occurred between March 25, 2017 and March 29, 2017.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other mosques damaged in Mosul: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0066**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0068**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0036 UPDATE**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

al-Mosuliya: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_CBN1OJ-RA

¹⁵⁰ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_CBN1OJ-RA



Video still of damage to the entrance of the al-Abbadi Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of the exterior of the al-Abbadi Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of the exterior of the al-Abbadi Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of the dome of the al-Abbadi Mosque as seen through a hole in the roof (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of light damage to the minaret of the al-Abbadi Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of the interior of the al-Abbadi Mosque showing the hole in the roof (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of the interior of the al-Abbadi Mosque showing slight damage to the roof (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



Video still of the interior of the al-Abbadi Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 6, 2017)



The mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 25, 2017)



A rectangular hole is visible in the roof, noted with the black arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 29, 2017)

IHI 17-0068**Report Date:** August 22, 2017**Site Name:** Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque (جامع عبد الرحمن بن عوف)**Date of Incident:** Unknown**Location:** Hayy Nabi Jarjis, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq**Site Description:** Mosque located near the al-Tahira Church and the Souq Sha'aren.**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows condition of mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On August 2, 2017 al-Mosuliya posted a video showing damage to the Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque.¹⁵¹ The exterior of the mosque has been damaged, and the street is full of rubble. The exterior walls of the mosque have been hit by military explosives and graffiti also appears on the walls.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other mosques damaged in Mosul: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0066**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0067**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0036 UPDATE**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque, as well as the condition of other cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:al-Mosuliya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVrxRx-Vvss>

¹⁵¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVrxRx-Vvss>



Video still of damage to the exterior of Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 2, 2017)



Video still of damage to the exterior of Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 2, 2017)



Video still of damage to the exterior of Abdul Rahman bin Auf Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 2, 2017)

IHI 17-0069

Report Date: August 29, 2017

Site Name: Shrine of Malik Miran (ملك الرجال او الامراء)

- Shrine of Sheikh Bakr (مزار شيخو بكر)
- Shrine of Sheikh Kefir (مزار شيخ الخفير)
- Shrine of Sheikh Hassan (مزار شيخ حسن)
- Shrine of Sheikh Shams (مزار شيخ شمس)
- Shrine of Sheikh Sicadin (مزار شيخ سجدين)
- Shrine of Pir Bub (مزار پير بوك)
- Shrine of Sitt Habibi (مزارات ست حبيبي)
- Shrine of Nasr al-Din (مزار ناصر الدين)
- Shrine of Sheikh Mand Pasha (مزار الشيخ مند)
- Shrine of Sheikh Babik (مزار شيخ بابك)
- Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad (مزار شيخ مهمد)
- Shrine of Sitt Hecici (حجيجي مزار ست)
- Shrine of Sheikh Sharif al-Din Muhammad (شرف الدين مهمد مزار شيخ)
- Shrine of Said u Mesud (مزار السيد)
- Unknown Shrine
- Unknown Shrine

Date of Incident: December 30, 2016 – present

Location: Bashiqa-Behzane, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Various Yezidi shrines in the majority Yezidi villages of Bashiqa and Behzane. Each of these 17 shrines is classed as a *mazār* (pl. *mazārāt*), a place of pilgrimage, which may or may not contain the remains of the figure after whom it is named.¹⁵²

Site Date: Shrine of Malik Miran: 1919 CE¹⁵³

- Shrine of Sheikh Bakr: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Kefir: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Hassan-Unknown
- Shrine of Sheikh Shams: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Sicadin: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Pir Bub: 13th-century CE
- Shrine of Sitt Habibi: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Nasr al-Din: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Mand Pasha: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Babik: 19th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Muhammad: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sitt Hecici: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Sheikh Sharif al-Din Muhammad: 14th-century CE
- Shrine of Said u Mesud: 14th-century CE

Incident Summary: Yazidi inhabitants of Bashiqa rebuild 17 destroyed shrines.

¹⁵² Açıkyıldız 221.

¹⁵³ Ibid. 213-216.

Incident Source and Description: On April 12, 2017 Best Free Info published a video of celebrations at the Shrine of Sheikh Babik as the *hilel*, the guilded orb placed atop the shrines, is re-installed.¹⁵⁴ A Youtube video published on April 26, 2017 shows a similar ceremony taking place at the Shrine of Sheikh Mand Pasha.¹⁵⁵ A video published on May 6, 2017 shows celebrations at the re-opening of the Shrine of Sheikh Bakr.¹⁵⁶ On June 9, 2017 *New Sabah* published an article reporting the completion of the reconstruction of the Shrine of Sheikh Hassan by local residents.¹⁵⁷ On August 25, 2017 Facebook user Bahzani Sh posted a video showing ongoing reconstruction efforts at the Shrine of Pir Bub.¹⁵⁸ A video published on August 9, 2017 by NRT Arabic shows ongoing reconstruction efforts at the Shrine of Melek Miran.¹⁵⁹ *Reuters* reports the shrine is expected to be completed in September 2017.¹⁶⁰

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates a further 17 Yezidi shrines in Bashiqa and Behzane have been rebuilt. The reconstruction process began in early January 2017. Several shrine locations were prepared for the new construction between December 30, 2016 and January 13, 2017. All construction is reportedly being carried out by local Yezidi inhabitants of Bashiqa and Behzane, without government funds.¹⁶¹

Pattern: Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reconstruction efforts for cultural heritage sites in Bashiqa and Behzane.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Hurra:

August 9, 2017: <https://www.alhurra.com/a/yazidi-initiatives-to-rebuild-/382999.html>

August 10, 2017: <https://www.alhurra.com/a/iraq-bashiqa-yazidi/383203.html>

Bahzany Sh/Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Bhzany.H/videos/vb.246093938856125/946629068802605/>

Bashiqa Behzani: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhAhyxNUNOI>

Best Free Info: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMlH2lvZ7DA>

Blah Blah/Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWcaLOTRk8A>

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMlH2lvZ7DA>

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWcaLOTRk8A>

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhAhyxNUNOI>

¹⁵⁷ <http://newsabah.com/newspaper/124592> ; <http://www.lalishduhok.com/ezidi/post/149516>

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/Bhzany.H/videos/vb.246093938856125/946629068802605/?type=3&theater>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tq6sLzwzb-k>

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-yazidis-idUSKBN1AP1SC>

¹⁶¹ <https://www.alhurra.com/a/yazidi-initiatives-to-rebuild-/382999.html> ; <https://www.alhurra.com/a/iraq-bashiqa-yazidi/383203.html>

Lalish Media Network: <http://www.lalishduhok.com/ezidi/post/149516>

Malek Miran: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tq6sLzwzb-k>

New Sabah: <http://newsabah.com/newspaper/124592>

Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-yazidis-idUSKBN1AP1SC>

Scholarly:

Açıkyıldız, B. (2015) *The Yazidis: The History of a Community, Culture and Religion*. London: I.B. Tauris.



Yazidi inhabitants of Bashiqa rebuild Shrine of Malik Miran (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Yazidi inhabitants of Bashiqa rebuild Shrine of Malik Miran (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Yazidi inhabitants of Bashiqa rebuild Shrine of Malik Miran (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Yazidi cemetery in Bashiqa with reconstruction of Shrine of Malik Miran in background (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Yazidis pray in Shrine of Malik Miran in the process of being rebuilt (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Interior of rebuilt Shrine of Malik Miran (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Yazidi cemetery in Bashiqa next to Shrine of Malik Miran (Reuters; August 9, 2017)



Shrine of Malik Miran after intentional destruction (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 28, 2014)



Shrine of Malik Miran reconstructed (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 18, 2017)



Reconstruction of Yezidi Shrines in Bashiqa and Bahzani (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 18, 2017)

IHI 17-0070

Report Date: August 30, 2017

Site Name: The Eastern Preparatory School (الاعدادية الشرقية) (Alsharqia High Intermediate School)

Date of Incident: April 2017 to present

Location: Old City, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: A high school near the Mosul Museum constructed in 1908.

Site Date: 1908 CE

Incident Summary: New video footage and photographs show condition of school.

Incident Source and Description: On August 28, 2017 al-Mosuliya posted a video showing damage to the Eastern Preparatory School. The school has sustained severe damage from the fighting in Mosul. Outer buildings are almost completely destroyed, and most of the facade of the school is missing. There is fire damage apparent in the courtyard. The interior rooms of the school have also suffered from fire damage. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows the majority of the damage occurred in April 2017.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

al-Mosuliya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzU2JQVPEkI>

Mosul Eye:

August 30, 2017: <https://www.facebook.com/MosulEye/posts/1354754104646088> ; <https://www.facebook.com/MosulEye/posts/1354670061321159>



Video still of exterior of Eastern Preparatory School (al-Mosuliya; August 28, 2017)



Video still of exterior of Eastern Preparatory School (al-Mosuliya; August 28, 2017)



Damage to courtyard of Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Video still of damage to courtyard of Eastern Preparatory School (al-Mosuliya; August 28, 2017)



Video still of damage to courtyard of Eastern Preparatory School (al-Mosuliya; August 28, 2017)



Video still of damage to courtyard of Eastern Preparatory School (al-Mosuliya; August 28, 2017)



Damage to interior of Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Damage to interior of Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Damage to interior of Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Damage to interior of Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Video still of books found in the rubble of a room (al-Mosuliya; August 28, 2017)



Damage to buildings near the Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Damage to buildings near the Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)



Damage to buildings near the Eastern Preparatory School (Mosul Eye; August 30, 2017)

IHI 17-0071

Report Date: August 30, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (جامع تلعفر الكبير)

Date of Incident: Between August 23, 2017 and August 28, 2017

Location: Tal Afar, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: The largest mosque in Tal Afar.

Site Date: Early 1980s CE¹⁶²

Incident Summary: New video footage shows damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On August 27, 2017 al-Mosuliya and NRT published video footage of the capture of Tal Afar from ISIL.¹⁶³ This footage shows damage to the al-Kabir Mosque. The mosque is still standing, but with severe damage. The minaret has been damaged by military activity, and the dome of the mosque has also sustained damage. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage occurring between August 23, 2017 and August 28, 2017.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Tal Afar and 'Ayadiya: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0072**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0073**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0013 UPDATE**.

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 cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images:

<http://www.gettyimages.com/search/photographer?family=editorial&photographer=ahmad%20al-rubaye&excludenudity=true&sort=newest#license>

Masajed Iraq: <http://www.masajediraq.com/index.php?type=prevmas&idm=2226>

al-Mosuliya:

August 27, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBDvZzi-9Vs>

August 30, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWHnGI5Xr9o>

NRT News: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_uWHYy9D0s

¹⁶² <http://www.masajediraq.com/index.php?type=prevmas&idm=2226>

¹⁶³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBDvZzi-9Vs>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_uWHYy9D0s



The damaged minaret of al-Kabir Mosque is seen in the background (Daily Mail; August 28, 2017)



Smoke billowing across the al-Kabir Mosque (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 25, 2017)



The base of the minaret, and front of al-Kabir Mosque (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images: August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to the sign outside of the al-Kabir Mosque (NRT News; August 27, 2017)



The exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to al-Kabir Mosque (NRT News; August 27, 2017)



The top of the minaret of al-Kabir Mosque (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images: August 25, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 30, 2017)



Video still of Qurans inside the al-Kabir Mosque (al-Mosuliya; August 30, 2017)



al-Kabir Mosque outline in red (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 23, 2017)



Damage to the area around al-Kabir Mosque and to its eastern side, with military vehicles seen nearby (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 28, 2017)

IHI 17-0072

Report Date: August 30, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (الجامع الكبير)

Date of Incident: Between August 28 and August 30, 2017

Location: al-'Ayadiya, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Mosque in al-'Ayadiya

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: DigitalGlobe imagery shows damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: Fierce fighting for the liberation of Tal Afar spread to 'Ayadiya, located 11 km north. ISIS militants fled from Tal Afar into 'Ayadiya, and fierce fighting has led to an increase in the number of airstrikes in the area.¹⁶⁴ DigitalGlobe imagery from August 30, 2017 shows a hole in the roof of al-Kabir Mosque due to military explosives. The damage occurred between August 28 and August 30, 2017. No news reports or photographs have been released concerning this damage.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other cultural heritage sites damaged in Tal Afar and 'Ayadiya: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0071**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0073**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0013 UPDATE**.

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 cultural heritage sites located in regions subject to military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B92MB>

al-Wasat: <https://english.aawsat.com/theaawsat/news-middle-east/isis-resort-al-ayadiya-last-refuge-nineveh>

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B92MB>



al-Kabir Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 28, 2017)



Damage to the roof of al-Kabir Mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 30, 2017)

IHI 17-0073

Report Date: August 30, 2017

Site Name: Tal Afar Citadel

Date of Incident: 2014 to Present

Location: Tal Afar, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Ottoman-era castle, possibly built on earlier Assyrian site.

Site Date: Ottoman Period

Incident Summary: New video footage shows damage to the Citadel.

Incident Source and Description:: On August 27, 2017 al-Mosuliya and NRT published video footage of the capture of Tal Afar from ISIS.¹⁶⁵ On August 26, 2017 Reuters published photographs showing Iraqi forces raising the Iraqi flag on top of the Citadel.¹⁶⁶ A soldier was quoted as saying "We tried to push out the militants without doing too much damage."¹⁶⁷

The Tal Afar Citadel was used as the headquarters of the municipal council and local police after the 2003 US invasion.¹⁶⁸ On December 31, 2014 Xinhuanet reported ISIS militants planted bombs in the northern and western parts of the Tal Afar Citadel, and detonated them.¹⁶⁹ Christopher Jones who writes the Gates of Nineveh Blog confirmed this destruction based on photographs released in early January 2015.¹⁷⁰ It was reported that ISIS was also tunneling into the site to gather antiquities.¹⁷¹ The Citadel was also used as a prison for women, mainly Yazidi and Christian women, waiting to be sold to ISIS militants.¹⁷² Iraqi forces entering the Citadel after recapturing the site from ISIS found chains and other restraints used on prisoners.¹⁷³

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites damaged in Tal Afar and 'Ayadiya: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0071**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0072**, and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0013 UPDATE**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives; intentional destruction.

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBDvZzi-9Vs>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_uWHYy9D0s

¹⁶⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B70D0>

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B70D0>

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B70D0>

¹⁶⁹ http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-12/31/c_133890461.htm;

<http://www.france24.com/en>

</20170828-iraq-fighters-take-victory-selfies-tal-afar-citadel>

¹⁷⁰ <https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/02/10/isis-destroys-several-more-sites-in-mosul-and-tal-afar/>

¹⁷¹ http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-12/31/c_133890461.htm

¹⁷² <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/22919>

¹⁷³ <http://www.france24.com/en/20170828-iraq-fighters-take-victory-selfies-tal-afar-citadel>

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images:

<http://www.gettyimages.com/search/photographer?family=editorial&photographer=ahmad%20al-rubaye&excludenudity=true&sort=newest#license>

al-Akhbar: <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/22919>

The Daily Mail: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-4829860/Iraq-fighters-victory-selfies-Tal-Afar-citadel.html>

France 24:

August 28, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IpKN9C95edU>; <http://www.france24.com/en/20170828-iraq-fighters-take-victory-selfies-tal-afar-citadel>

Gates of Nineveh: <https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/02/10/isis-destroys-several-more-sites-in-mosul-and-tal-afar/>

The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/27/iraqi-forces-retake-most-of-tal-afar-from-islamic-state>

NRT News: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_uWHYy9D0s

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-talafar-idUSKCN1B70D0>

RT: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtOjMknKeL8>

Xinhuanet: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-12/31/c_133890461.htm



The condition of the Citadel (The Guardian; August 27, 2017)



Damage to Tal Afar Citadel (The Daily Mail; August 28, 2017)



Iraqi forces stand atop the Citadel (France 24; August 28, 2017)



Damage to Tal Afar Citadel (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 27, 2017)



Damage to Tal Afar Citadel (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 27, 2017)



Damage to Tal Afar Citadel (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 27, 2017)



Damage to Tal Afar Citadel (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 27, 2017)



Damage to Tal Afar Citadel (Ahmad al-Rubaye/Getty Images; August 27, 2017)



The Citadel before its destruction (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 19, 2014)



The current state of the Citadel with buildings and the fortification wall destroyed (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 28, 2017)

Incident Reports: Libya

LHI 17-0007 UPDATE

Report Date: Aug. 27, 2017

Site Name: al-Atiq Mosque (مسجد العتيق)

Date of Incident: Aug. 27, 2017

Location: Awjila, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: Located in the town of Awjila, roughly 400km south of Benghazi, the Atiq Mosque is made of mud brick. The footprint of the mosque is 19x24 m, and it is topped by a series of 20 distinctive domes. The al-Atiq Mosque in Awjila is thought to be one of the oldest mosques in North Africa, with foundations dating approximately to the arrival of Islam (late 7th/early 8th-century CE). The current building dating to the 12th century.

Site Date: Late 7th/early 8th-century CE; rebuilt ca. 12th-century CE

Incident Summary: A hole in the roof of the mosque has been repaired.

Incident Source and Description: The Awjila cultural office of Amran bin Asbiah reported that repair works to the collapsed dome of the al-Atiq Mosque have been completed. Rather than replacing the dome, workers repaired the hole in the roof with a flat, adobe panel supported by woven palm fronds.

For more information on damage to the mosque, see [ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0007 in July 2017 Monthly Report](#).

Pattern: Site management-reconstruction/clean-up.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Atiq Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to limited budgets and lack of site preservation funds.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Awjila Cultural Office of Amran bin Asbiah:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1901556266775923&id=1464630773801810



Workers complete repairs to the roof of the mosque (Awjila Cultural Office; August 27, 2017)



Completed repair to the roof (Awjila Cultural Office; August 27, 2017)

LHI 17-0015

Report Date: August 7, 2017

Site Name: Coin Hoard

Date of Incident: August 7, 2017

Location: Tripoli, Tripolitania, Libya

Site Description: Hoard consisting of Greek and Roman coins.

Site Date: Greek, Roman

Incident Summary: Security forces prevented a large hoard of coins from being smuggled out of Libya through Mitiga Airport.

Incident Source and Description: The Rada Special Deterrence Forces, part of the Government of National Accord's Interior Ministry, seized a hoard of coins at Mitiga Airport while performing their duty to ensure the ongoing operation and security of the airport.¹⁷⁴ A person holding a Liberian passport was in possession of the hoard at the time of seizure. He is reported to have admitted his intention to sell the coins abroad, as well as the fact that he has smuggled artifacts out of Libya on previous occasions. The hoard appears to include both Greek and Roman coins.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other objects that were found smuggled out of Libya: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0020**.

Pattern: Theft.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of illicit trafficking of antiquities out of Libya, and support Department of Antiquities staff and security forces in this work when possible.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Libya Herald: <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/08/07/rada-seize-smuggler-with-ancient-coins-at-mitiga/>

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/08/07/rada-seize-smuggler-with-ancient-coins-at-mitiga/>



Coins seized by Rada forces at Mitiga Airport in Tripoli (Rada; August 7, 2017)

LHI 17-0016

Report Date: August 9, 2017

Site Name: Villa Silin

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: al-Khoms, Tripolitania, Libya

Site Description: This Roman-era villa is located on the Libyan coast, approximately seven km to the west of the port of the city of al-Khoms.

Site Date: 2nd century CE

Incident Summary: Conservation begins on a villa under the auspices of the Department of Antiquities (DoA) staff.

Incident Source and Description: In the aftermath of the Libyan Revolution, DoA continued works to conserve the mosaics and wall paintings at Villa Silin with the assistance of the Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro in Rome. Declining security conditions since 2014 have prevented the continuation of this project, while conditions at the villa have continued to deteriorate. DoA has decided to move forward with urgent repairs to the roof and mosaics of Silin, using local expertise and technicians to carry out the works, with the financial backing of Italian partners.¹⁷⁵ DoA staff will first protect the mosaics and wall paintings. A local contractor will then remove the existing concrete roof and replace it with a timber frame roof that will be both lighter and easier to repair in the future.

Pattern: Site management - reconstruction/clean-up.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor conditions at the Villa Silin and assist in ongoing site protection efforts by DoA Tripoli when possible.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

DoA Tripoli: <https://www.facebook.com/diwanmasl7at/posts/1401221949946749>

¹⁷⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/diwanmasl7at/posts/1401221949946749>



DoA Tripoli staff inspect conditions of the ceiling of Villa Silin (DoA Tripoli; August 9, 2017)

LHI 17-0017

Report Date: August 10, 2017

Site Name: Ptolmais (Ptolemaitha; طلميثة)

Date of Incident: August 8–9, 2017

Location: Ptolmeitha, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: Ptolmeitha is one of the five cities of the ancient Greek pentapolis of eastern Libya, with remains dating to the Greek, Ptolemaic, and Roman eras.

Site Date: 3rd-century BCE to 7th-century CE

Incident Summary: Excessive plant and tree growth was removed from the ancient city.

Incident Source and Description: DoA staff worked to clear trees from Qasr al-Hakim, Qasr al-Amida, and Villa Munthir at the site of Ptolmeitha.¹⁷⁶ Villa Munthir was the site of excavations conducted by the Polish Archaeological mission from 2001–2011. Biological growth has damaged *in situ* mosaic floors discovered during these excavations. The other two portions of the site exhibited similar problems and were also identified as priorities for intervention. Following the clearing efforts, DoA employees also stabilized and reburied portions of the mosaic floors.

Pattern: Natural impacts.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor conditions at Ptolmeitha and help the DoA where necessary to protect cultural heritage at threat from natural impacts.

Sources:

Abd al-Moneim Jweidah, Director of the Ptolmeitha, Office of DoA

Online Reporting:

Al Wasat: <http://www.alwasat.ly/ar/news/libya/149771/?articleid=149771>

DoA Benghazi:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2006650336225370&id=1615537332003341

¹⁷⁶ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2006650336225370&id=1615537332003341



Example of the in situ mosaic floors protected by DoA staff (DoA Benghazi; August 10, 2017)



Small tree that had taken root in one of the walls of Villa Munthir (DoA Benghazi; August 10, 2017)



Clearing a small tree from Ptolmeitha (DoA Benghazi; August 10, 2017)



Reburying portion of an in situ mosaic (DoA Benghazi; August 10, 2017)

LHI 17-0018

Report Date: August 13, 2017

Site Name: Haweh Fteah

Date of Incident: August 10–13, 2017

Location: Haweh Fteah, Cyrenaica, Libya

Site Description: A massive limestone cave site which contains one of the most important records of early human history in North Africa.

Site Date: Paleolithic/Neolithic

Incident Summary: Large excavation trenches were refilled at the site.

Incident Source and Description: Paul Bennett of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (UK) traveled as a private citizen to Cyrenaica in order to facilitate the protection of Haweh Fteah. A large trench more than 14 m deep had remained open since the last excavation occurred on site in 2014. Bennett, who played a role in the previous excavation of the cave, worked with DoA staff to protect the exposed horizon of the excavation with geotextile and then they reburied the trench.

Pattern: Site management.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of site protection efforts at Haweh Fteah and elsewhere in Libya, and actively contribute to these efforts when possible.

Sources:

Paul Bennett, Director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust

Online Reporting:

DoA Shahat:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1445662195523493&id=1252747658148282



DoA staff prepare to rebury the open trench at Haweh Fteah (DoA Shahat; August 13, 2017)



DoA staff place layer of geotextile to protect the exposed trench during reburial (DoA Shahat; August 13, 2017)



Reburial of the trench begins (DoA Shahat; August 13, 2017)

LHI 17-0019

Report Date: August 14, 2017

Site Name: Garamantean Tombs of Tsawa

Date of Incident: August 14, 2017

Location: Tsawa, Fezzan, Libya

Site Description: Tsawa is an oasis located in the Wadi Atba, approximately 50 km to the northwest of Murzuq. This site consists of a series of 42 round tombs, delineated by stones piled in the sand.

Site Date: Garamantean (500 BCE–700 CE)

Incident Summary: A new site was documented by the Department of Antiquities (DoA).

Incident Source and Description: A local landowner notified DoA staff of the discovery of an archaeological site on his farm. The DoA team described and documented the site, recovering a number of ceramic finds that confirm that the site is Garamantean.

Pattern: Site management.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the work of DoA Fezzan colleagues to protect new archaeological discoveries in Libya, and support them in this effort when possible.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

DoA Benghazi:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2008475439376193&id=1615537332003341

Libyan News Agency: <http://www.lananews.com/ar/?p=77688>



DoA Fezzan staff visit the recently discovered site in Tsawa (DoA Benghazi; August 14, 2017)



One of the 42 circular Garamantean tombs documented by the team (DoA Benghazi; August 14, 2017)

LHI 17-0020

Report Date: August 21, 2017

Site Name: Eleven Cyrenaican Statues

Date of Incident: Aug. 20, 2017

Location: Tripoli, Tripolitania, Libya

Site Description: Eleven stone statues of a distinctly Cyrenaican style intercepted and held by authorities in Spain.

Site Date: Roman

Incident Summary: Eleven Cyrenaican Statues were recovered in Spain.

Incident Source and Description: Mohammed Siala, Foreign Minister of the National Reconciliation Government met with representatives of DoA Tripoli to assist in the repatriation of eleven statues recovered in Spain.¹⁷⁷ These statues are reportedly from Shehat and Sousse, and were uncovered in illegal excavations.¹⁷⁸ Dr. Hafed Walda, scholar of Libyan archaeology, travelled to Spain and verified that the style of the statues links them firmly to Roman Cyrenaica. Moving forward, this group will arrange a meeting with Spanish authorities in Tunis to present a formal request for repatriation.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other objects that were found smuggled out of Libya: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0015.**

Pattern: Theft.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of antiquities illegally removed from Libya and recovered abroad, offering assistance to DoA Tripoli and other Libyan authorities as possible.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Hafed Walda, Research Fellow, King's College London

Akhbar Libya: <http://www.akhbarlibya.net/libya-news/689158.html>

¹⁷⁷ <http://www.akhbarlibya.net/libya-news/689158.html>

¹⁷⁸ <http://www.akhbarlibya.net/libya-news/689158.html>

LHI 17-0021**Report Date:** August 23, 2017**Site Name:** Old City of al-Marj (المرج; Barca)**Date of Incident:** August 16–23, 2017**Location:** al-Marj, Cyrenaica, Libya**Site Description:** The area adjacent to the Old City of al Marj was identified as a survey priority by DoA Benghazi due to its potential association with the ancient Greek and Roman city of Barca.**Site Date:** Greek, Roman**Incident Summary:** A survey of archaeological elements in the Old City occurred.**Incident Source and Description:** As part of an ongoing collaboration with Durham University under the auspices of the British Council, members of the survey department of DoA Benghazi conducted a week-long survey of Old City of al-Marj. Adjacent to the Old City of al-Marj, this zone is subject to the pressure of urban encroachment. At the same time, it contains important archaeological elements thought to be associated with the ancient city of Barca.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that the site is under threat from urbanization and agricultural encroachment.

Pattern: Site management.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor efforts to survey sites in advance of urban encroachment in al-Marj and elsewhere in Libya, and actively contribute to these efforts when possible.**Sources:**Online Reporting:Fouad al Qumadi: <https://www.facebook.com/darkness8081/posts/1639684449399259>Naser al Hrari: <https://www.facebook.com/nhrari17/posts/1464081740313186?pnref=story>Libyan News Agency: <http://www.lananews.com/ar/?p=78951>



One of the archaeological sites documented by the survey team (Fouad al Quamadi/Facebook; August 22, 2017)



DoA Benghazi survey team in the field near the Old City of al-Marj (Fouad al Quamadi/Facebook; August 22, 2017)



Survey team recording surface finds from sites near the Old City of al-Marj (Rabia al Faidi/Facebook, August 22, 2017)



A portion of the site al-Marj, already being absorbed into the urban fabric (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 11, 2015)

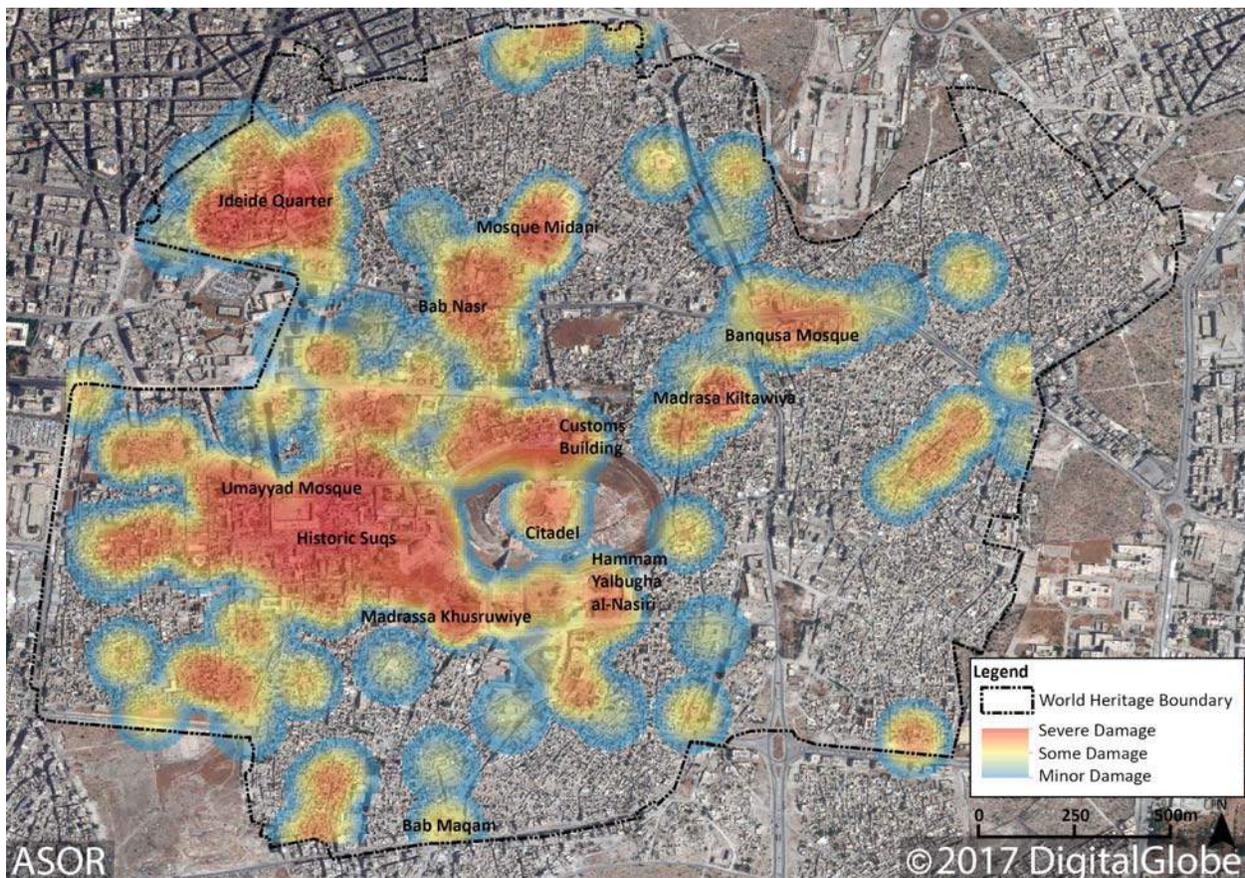


Visible destruction of the site as a result of agricultural plowing (DigitalGlobe NextView License; April 30, 2016)

Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis

Since August 2014, ASOR CHI has reported 241 incidents within the Old City of Aleppo. The leading cause of damage is military activity, namely shelling, heavy artillery, barrel bombs, and airstrikes, with 80% of the incidents involving explosives. The second leading cause of damage is from gunfire or light weaponry. Perpetrators include both the Syrian Government forces and their Russian allies and Syrian Armed Opposition groups, although it is difficult to attribute specific damages to any one group in most cases. With the conflict ended within the city of Aleppo, newer reports since January 2017 have shifted toward the reconstruction efforts of historical sites in the city.

Of those 301 assessed heritage sites, 25% of the heritage sites exhibit severe damage (60-100% damaged), 32% exhibit some damage (10-60%), 15% exhibit minor damage (1-10%), and 28% exhibit no visible damage. These assessments are derived from satellite imagery, which can skew the results based on the type of damage because we cannot see what occurs inside buildings. Thus the damage is likely more severe than some of these numbers suggest. ASOR CHI continues to update condition assessments based on photographic imagery from witnesses on the ground.



The World Heritage site of Aleppo with areas of damage highlighted based on severity (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 16, 2017)



Citadel and Old City of Aleppo before conflict damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; May 12, 2012)



Citadel and Old City of Aleppo after severe conflict damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 16, 2017)

SNHR Vital Facilities Report:

On August 9, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) released a vital facility report for July 2017. According to SNHR, there were 52 attacks against vital civilian facilities. The sites attacked include 12 mosques.¹⁷⁹

- On July 1, 2017 SARG forces fired mortar shells at al-Agha Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, causing moderate damage to the building.
- On July 4, 2017 a SARG or Russian airstrike destroyed Abu Dali Village Mosque in Abu Dali, Hama Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0123 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 5, 2017 a SARG or Russian airstrike destroyed al-Mushayrifah Village Mosque in al-Mushayrifah, Hama Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0124 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 5, 2017 a SARG airstrike damaged Khalid ibn al-Walid Mosque in Marat, Deir ez Zor Governorate. The mosque was rendered out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0125 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 6, 2017 clashes between ISIS militants and SDF resulted in damage to Othman ibn Affan Mosque in Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0126 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 16, 2017 a SARG airstrike damaged al-Eman Mosque in Sabha, Deir ez Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0129 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 17, 2017 SARG forces fired shells near al-Aqoula Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, damaging the mosque's minaret. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0131 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 17, 2017 a US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed al-Rahman Mosque in al-Ghanim al-Ali, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0130 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 24, 2017 a SARG airstrike damaged Sa'ad bin Mo'ath Mosque in al-Shamitiyah, Deir ez Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0133 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 25, 2017 clashes between ISIS militants and SDF and a subsequent US-led Coalition airstrike destroyed al-Mustafa Mosque in Raqqa. The mosque was rendered out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0136 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 28, 2017 a SARG airstrike damaged Othman ibn Affan Mosque in al-Mayadin, Deir ez Zor Governorate. The mosque was rendered out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0137 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**
- On July 31, 2017 a Russian airstrike destroyed al-Rahman Mosque in al-Khamisiyah Foqani, Raqqa Governorate. The mosque was rendered out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0138 in July Monthly Report (149-152).**

¹⁷⁹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/09/45209/>

Heritage Timeline

August 29, 2017

The Guardian published an article titled “**Turkey's 12,000-year-old Hasankeyf settlement faces obliteration**” (by Constanze Letsch). The highly controversial Ilisu dam will raise the level of the Tigris at the ancient town of Hasankeyf by 60 m, submerging 80% of the ancient city and numerous surrounding villages, including more than 300 historical sites that have not been explored.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/29/turkeys-12000-year-old-hasankeyf-citadel-faces-obliteration>

August 24, 2017

Prague Daily Monitor published an article titled “**Czechs help preserve rare ancient arch in Iraq.**” Experts from Czech Technical University have aided Iraqi archaeologists in restoring and preserving the Sasanian-era Arch of Kasra.
<http://praguemonitor.com/2017/08/24/hn-czechs-help-preserve-rare-ancient-arch-iraq>

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The Week published an article titled “**Turkey's neolithic caves: is destruction of heritage ever justified?**” The destruction of cultural heritage sites like Palmyra is discussed in light of the start of construction of Ilisu Dam in Turkey, which will flood the ancient town of Hasankeyf on the Tigris River.
<http://www.theweek.co.uk/87994/turkeys-neolithic-caves-is-destruction-of-heritage-ever-justified>

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Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) published an article titled “**A Look at Some of Syria's Destroyed Heritage.**” SOHR discusses damage to cultural heritage sites in Aleppo, Daraa, Bosra, Palmyra, Krak des Chevaliers, and Homs.
<http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=72747>

August 23, 2017

ArchDaily published an article titled “**Álvaro Siza and Others Imagine Possible Scenarios for a Reconstructed Syria.**” Sketch for Syria, a project initiated by by Marco Ballarin and Jacopo Galli at Università Iuav di Venezia, Venice, has brought together 150 architects from 26 nations in a large-scale effort to "imagine, trace and share possible scenarios" for rebuilding in Syria, following the recent devastation of a significant amount of its architectural heritage.
<http://www.archdaily.com/878217/alvaro-siza-leads-a-rostrum-of-acclaimed-architects-imagining-possible-scenarios-for-reconstructing-syria-iuav-venice-venezia-sketch>

- *Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Turkish foundation helps Syrians recover from devastation of war**” (by Khaled al-Khateb). The Turkiye Diyanet Foundation has restored 66 mosques in opposition-held territory in Aleppo Governorate since April 2017. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/08/syria-operation-euphrates-shield-aleppo-turkey-mosques.html#ixzz4qc681PYM>
- August 21, 2017 **Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria's Heritage - 21 August 2017.**” <http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-21-august-2017/>
- August 20, 2017 *Modern Diplomacy* published an article titled “**Liability for Destruction of Cultural Property in International Criminal Law: Reading the Al Mahdi Reparations Ruling**” (by Abraham Joseph). A discussion of the legal case brought against Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi in the International Criminal Court for his role in the 2012 destruction of mausoleums in Timbuktu, Mali. http://moderndiplomacy.eu/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=2868:liability-for-destruction-of-cultural-property-in-international-criminal-law-reading-the-al-mahdi-reparations-ruling
- *Akhbar Libya* published an article titled “وزير الخارجية يجتمع مع خبراء من مصر (Foreign minister meets with experts from the **Libyan Antiquities Authority**).” Libyan officials met with experts and advisors from the Antiquities and Foreign Affairs Department to discuss the return of ancient Libyan funerary statues recently recovered in Spain after being smuggled out of the country. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0020** <http://www.akhbarlibya.net/libya-news/689158.html>
- August 19, 2017 *Erem News* published an article titled “إطلاق مسح أثري للبحث عن مدينة ليبية سبقته الإغريق (Launch of an archaeological survey to search for a **Libyan city that preceded the Greeks**)” (by Khaled Abu Al-Khair). Libyan archaeologists have launched a survey of the ancient city of Barca, thought to be located outside al-Marj in Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0021** <https://www.eremnews.com/culture/957462? c>
- August 18, 2017 *BBC* published a video report titled “**‘They wanted to impose ignorance’ - Mosul after IS**” (by Yalda Hakim). A video report on Mosul University and the threats facing its professors and students during ISIS rule of the city. <http://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-40977194/they-wanted-to-impose-ignorance-mosul-after-is>

August 17, 2017

The Economist published an article titled “**War in the Arab world has devastated the region’s heritage.**” The destruction of cultural heritage in Aleppo and Mosul caused by all sides in the Syria and Iraq conflicts is discussed. ASOR CHI Principal Investigator and Academic Director Michael Danti is quoted.

<https://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21726750-jihadists-are-not-only-ones-blame-war-arab-world-has-devastated>

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AP News published an article titled “**ICC orders Mali extremist to pay \$3.2 million in reparations**” (by Lorne Cook). Ansar al-Dine member Ahmad al-Faqi al-Mahdi was sentenced to nine years in prison by the International Criminal Court and instructed to pay \$3.2 million in reparations for his role in the destruction of mausoleums in Timbuktu, Mali in 2012.

[https://apnews.com/a826cb5b0bc64d7891ca2dc14f703b2c/ICC-orders-Mali-extremist-to-pay-\\$3.2-million-in-reparations](https://apnews.com/a826cb5b0bc64d7891ca2dc14f703b2c/ICC-orders-Mali-extremist-to-pay-$3.2-million-in-reparations)

August 15, 2017

CNN published an article titled “**Inside Aleppo: Residents return to rebuild Syria's shattered city**” (by Frederik Pleitgen). Efforts at rebuilding Aleppo are discussed.

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/15/middleeast/aleppo-syria-rebuilds/index.html>

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Iraqi News published an article titled “**Citizen returns safekept, priceless manuscripts to Mosul university**” (by Mohamed Mostafa). A citizen of Mosul smuggled 700 books and manuscripts out of Mosul University for safekeeping during ISIS’s occupation of the city.

<http://www.iraqinews.com/features/citizen-returns-safekept-priceless-manuscripts-mosul-university/>

August 14, 2017

LANA News published an article titled “مصلحة الآثار الليبية تعلن اكتشاف مقابر جرمنتية بمنطقة تساوہ بوادي عتبة (Libyan Antiquities Authority announces the discovery of the graves of the Garamantes in the area of Tasawah in Wadi Otba).” Graves belonging to the ancient Garamantes Berber tribe were discovered in the Wadi Otba area.

ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0019

<http://www.lananews.com/ar/?p=77688>

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Al Monitor published an article titled “**Turkey might seek more than mere reconstruction in northern Syria**” (by Metin Gurcan). Turkey is working to rebuild the 772-square-mile Jarablus/ al-Rai/ al-Bab triangle in northern Syria, dedicating funds for post-conflict reconstruction (including of mosques) and humanitarian aid. Some are critical of Turkey’s hold on the region.

<http://al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/08/turkey-syria-what-is-ankara-building-jarablus.html>

- August 11, 2017 **DGAM** published an article titled “**Conclusion of Technical Meeting about Traditional Building Materials in Aleppo.**” As part of the UNESCO-funded Emergency Safeguarding of Syrian Cultural Heritage project, DGAM representatives met with experts to discuss the reconstruction of damaged monuments in Aleppo using traditional Syrian building techniques.
<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2326>
- August 12, 2017 *The Times* published an article titled “**Antiquities experts call for war on Isis looting in Syria and Iraq**” (by Bel Trew). British antiquities experts call for an international body to investigate and repatriate stolen artifacts to counter the looting and sale of antiquities from the Middle East.
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/antiquities-experts-call-for-war-on-isis-looting-3xz5d59lt>
- August 10, 2017 *Al Wasat* published an article titled “مراقبة توكرة تنتهي من إزالة الأشجار المتطفلة بثلاثة مواقع أثرية في طلميثة (The monitoring team finishes removing parasitic trees in three historical sites in Ptolmeita).” The Libyan Antiquities Association removed trees encroaching on the archaeological site of Ptolemais. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0017**
<https://alwasat.ly/ar/mobile/article?articleid=149771>
- August 9, 2017 **Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria's Heritage - 09 August 2017.**”
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-09-august-2017/>
- *BBC* published an article titled “**What’s left of Mosul?**” (Lucy Rodgers, Nassos Stylianou & Daniel Dunford) The catastrophic damage to large areas of Mosul is discussed.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-9d41ef6c-97c9-4953-ba43-284cc62ffdd0>
 - *Reuters* published an article titled “**Long wait for captive Yazidis' return spent rebuilding shrine in Iraq's Bashiqa.**” Yazidi inhabitants of Bashiqa are rebuilding the Malik Miran shrine, destroyed by ISIS militants in 2014. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0069**
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-yazidis-idUSKBN1AP1SC>
 - **DGAM** published a video titled “مناقشة مشروع تحديث منطقة الحماية للموقع الاثري في تدمر (Discussing the project of updating the protection area of the archeological site in Palmyra).”
<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2323>

- SNHR published a post titled **“Syrian- Russian alliance forces shelled Abu Bakr al Siddiq Mosque in Hammada Omar village in Hama governorate on August 9.”** A mosque was destroyed in an airstrike. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0148**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/09/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-abu-bakr-al-siddiq-mosque-hammada-omar-village-hama-governorate-august-9/>
 - SNHR published a report titled **“No less than 52 Incidents of Attack on Vital Civilian Facilities in July 2017.”**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/09/45209/>
- August 8, 2017
- Vice* published a video report titled **“Meet the Israeli Architect Investigating Bombings in Syria.”** An interview with Eyal Weizman, an Israeli architect using cellphone footage, floor plans, and road maps to investigate bombings in various war zones, including Syria. Seidnaya Prison and Omar ibn al-Khattab Mosque in al-Jeineh are discussed.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuOg7ldgnd8>
- *SANA* published an article titled “ مناقشة مشروع تحديث حدود الموقع الأثري في مدينة تدمر (Discussion of the project of modernizing the boundaries of the archaeological site in the city of Palmyra).” The Governor of Homs and the Director-General of Antiquities and Museums discussed a draft study carried out by the DGAM seeking to modernize of the boundaries and protection zone of Palmyra in keeping with current international standards.
<http://www.sana.sy/?p=603591>
 - SNHR published a post titled **“Syrian regime forces shelled al Nour Mosque in Hazza town in Damascus suburbs on August 8.”** Shelling severely damaged a mosque in Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0142**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/08/08/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-nour-mosque-hazza-town-damascus-suburbs-august-8/>
 - *Middle East Confidential* published an article titled **“Libya: Tripoli airport security forces arrest smuggler with 580 antique silver coins”** (by Kanelka Tagba). Libyan authorities at Tripoli Mitiga International Airport seized 580 antique silver pieces dating back to the Roman era from a smuggler attempting to sell the collection abroad. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0015**
<http://me-confidential.com/16725-libya-tripoli-airport-security-forces-arrest-smuggler-with-580-antique-silver-coins.html>

August 7, 2017

Libya Herald published an article titled “**Rada seize smuggler with ancient coins at Mitiga.**” Libyan police seized a hoard of looted Greek and Roman coins at the Mitiga Airport in Tripoli before it could be smuggled out of the country. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0015**

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/08/07/rada-seize-smuggler-with-ancient-coins-at-mitiga/>

- UNESCO published an article titled “الحفظ الوقائي” مشروع اليونسكو تختتم مشروع “خطة الإستجابة لحماية المجموعات المتحفية ومواقع التراث الثقافي المعرضة للخطر” وتطلق “خطة الإستجابة لحماية التراث الثقافي في المناطق المحررة في العراق (UNESCO Concludes ‘Preventive Conservation of Archaeological and Cultural Heritage at Risk’ Project The “Response Plan for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the liberated areas of Iraq”).”
http://www.unesco.org/new/ar/iraq-office/about-this-office/single-view/news/unesco_closed_project_and_launched_the_response_plan_for_th/
- *The Jordan Times* published an article titled “**Syrian refugee children to be trained in heritage conservation in Petra region — PNT.**” Petra National Trust (PNT) has announced a new collaboration with the World Monuments Fund aimed at building a new heritage conservation training programme for Syrian refugees in Jordan. The project, financed with a grant from the British Council’s Cultural Protection Fund, will train Syrian refugees living in Jordan in masonry skills, as well as the study of history, architecture and traditions of the region.
<http://jordantimes.com/news/local/syrian-refugee-children-be-trained-heritage-conservation-petra-region-%E2%80%94-pnt>
- *Al Fanat Media* published an article titled “**Once Reviled, Libyan Archaeologists Take on a New Role**” (by Edward Fox). A new generation of well-trained, passionate archaeologists is emerging in Libya following years of discouragement of archaeological work during the Gaddafi-era.
<https://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2017/08/reviled-libyan-archaeologists-take-new-role/>
- *Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Iraq steps up efforts to restore lost heritage at ancient Nimrud**” (by Wassim Bassem). Iraqi authorities announced last month that UNESCO has started the first stage of the restoration of Nimrud.
<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/08/iraq-nimrud-archaeology-isis-reconstruction.html>

August 6, 2017

The Wall Street Journal published an article titled “**The Men Who Trade ISIS Loot**” (by Benoit Faucon, Georgi Kantchev & Alistair MacDonald). Syrian art traders, recent ISIS defectors who worked in antiquities, and law-enforcement officials in the U.S, France, Switzerland, and Bulgaria are interviewed regarding how the international antiquities smuggling operation works. Michael Danti is quoted.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-men-who-trade-isis-loot-1502017200>

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RT Arabic published a video report titled “**كاهن دومينيكياني ينقذ وثائق تاريخية من براثن داعش (A Dominican priest saves manuscripts from Daesh clutches)**.” The efforts of Father Najeeb Michael to save and preserve priceless Iraqi manuscripts are detailed.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRkr5YOGjBE>

August 5, 2017

Military Times published an article titled “**Culture war: How US forces protect heritage sites while purging ISIS**” (by Katharyn Hanson). Hanson discusses attempts by the US military to mitigate damage to archaeological sites in the fight against ISIS in Raqqa.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2017/08/04/culture-war-how-us-forces-protect-heritage-sites-while-purging-isis/>

August 4, 2017

Libya Herald published an article titled “**Benghazi’s Suq Al-Arab to reopen.**” Plans are underway to reopen a marketplace in Benghazi closed due to fighting.

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/08/05/109794/>

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Reuters published an article titled “**In the ruins of an Iraqi city, memories of Agatha Christie**” (by Isabel Coles). Agatha Christie’s impressions of Nimrud are contrasted with the current state of the archaeological site after it was looted and largely destroyed by ISIS militants occupying the site.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-agathachristie-idUSKBN1AK1GU>

August 3, 2017

Reuters published an article and video titled “**Aleppo’s Old City can be rebuilt, UNESCO official says**” (by Angus McDowall). Mazen Samman, UNESCO’s associate program coordinator in Aleppo, believes the damaged structures in the Old City of Aleppo can be restored, many using their original stones.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-aleppo-antiquities-idUSKBN1AJ1V0>

<http://www.reuters.com/video/2017/08/03/aleppos-old-city-can-be-rebuilt-unesco-s?videoId=372245558&videoChannel=-13668>

- *Financial Times* published an article titled “**Syria: A tale of three cities**” (by Erika Solomon). The author interviews inhabitants of Damascus, Homs, and Aleppo.
<https://www.ft.com/content/6710ab2a-7716-11e7-90c0-90a9d1bc9691>
 - *Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Iraq eager to get back antiquities smuggled to US**” (by Adnan Abu Zeed). The Iraqi government is working to recover thousands of looted Iraqi artifacts smuggled into the US on behalf of Hobby Lobby executives.
<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/en/originals/2017/08/hobby-lobby-iraq-artifacts-us-smugglers.html>
- August 2, 2017
- RT* published an article titled “متحف دمشق الوطني يعيد فتح أبوابه أمام الزوار (The Damascus National Museum Reopens Its Doors to Visitors).” The National Museum of Damascus has reopened following several years of closure due to concern for the artifacts and the safety of museum staff.
<https://arabic.rt.com/middle-east/891835-متحف-دمشق-فتح-/>
- *CNN* published an article titled “**Ancient artifacts seized in Jerusalem in Hobby Lobby antiquities case**” (by Oren Liebermann). Israeli police arrested five antiquities dealers in Jerusalem, seizing gold coins, ancient weapons and more in an international investigation of smuggled Iraqi artifacts.
<http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/01/middleeast/antiquities-arrests-jerusalem/index.html>
- August 1, 2017
- Times of Israel* published an article titled “**Arrest of Jerusalem antiquities dealers opens a smuggling Pandora’s box**” (by Amanda Borschel-Dan). Israel, the only Middle Eastern country that legally allows the sale of antiquities, is often used as a way-station by looters who smuggle artifacts into Israel from neighboring countries in order to give them a veneer of legitimacy.
<http://www.timesofisrael.com/arrest-of-israeli-antiquities-dealers-opens-a-smuggling-pandoras-box/>
- *ASOR* published a blog post titled “**Rescuing Syriac Manuscripts in Iraq**” (by Amir Harrak). The priceless manuscript collection saved by Yousef Sakat, a priest at the Mar Behnam monastery in Iraq, is detailed. Father Sakat hid the monastery’s manuscript collection behind a wall prior to ISIS’s two-year occupation of the area.
<http://asorblog.org/2017/08/01/rescuing-syriac-manuscripts-iraq/>

July 20, 2017

The Antiquities Coalition posted a report titled “**How to Control the Internet Market in Antiquities? The Need for Regulation and Monitoring**” (by Neil Brodie). This brief argues that “despite the clear implications for both cultural preservation and national security, public policy has completely failed to regulate the online antiquities trade. This is particularly true in the United States, which remains the world’s largest art market and a major center for the internet market in antiquities.”

<http://thinktank.theantiquitiescoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Policy-Brief-3-2017-07-20.pdf>