

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

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February 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

- Possible Russian airstrikes damage Shoaib Mosque in Idlib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0236**
- Newly released video footage shows damage to an unknown mosque in Hayyan, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0019**
- Reported Turkish bombardment damaged al-Kabir Mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0020**
- Newly released video footage shows damage to Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque in Andan, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0021**
- Video footage and photographs show damage to al-Saaeda Mosque in Sarj Fara', Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0022**
- Reported Russian and SARG airstrikes damaged the Ibn al-Jarrah Mosque in al-Tadaf, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0023**
- ISIL created fortifications on Tal Bayjan in Tal Bayjan, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0024**
- Possible Russian or SARG airstrikes hit the Deir ez-Zor Cemetery, in Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0025**
- Artillery fire killed mourners in al-Jadida Cemetery in Harasta al-Qantara, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0026**
- Russian airstrikes hit Trajan's Palace in Bosra al-Sham, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0027**
- Newly released photographs show damage to Zamzam Mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0028**
- SARG shelling damaged the Southern Madaya Mosque in Madaya, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0029**
- New footage of Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel and reports of ISIL intentional destruction in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0092 UPDATE**
- Newly released photographs show damage to Sheikh Hassan Shrine in Bahzani, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0046 UPDATE**
- Newly released photographs show damage to a Yezidi Cemetery in Bashiqa and Bahzani, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0046 UPDATE**
- Newly released video footage shows damage to Mar Ephraim Church in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0017**

Military and Political Context

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

1. Idlib Governorate:
 - On February 1, airstrikes of unidentified origin struck the Syrian Red Crescent office in the city of Idlib, wounding several staff members including the local director.²
 - On February 3-4, US airstrikes targeted the headquarters of Salafi-Jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham in town of Sarmin, killing at least 10 fighters. A second strike targeted a car near the town of Batbo that killed Ahrar al-Sham, and former al-Qaeda member, Abu Hani al-Masri.³

² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib-idUSKBN15G4YY>

³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

- On February 7, airstrikes of unknown origin struck the opposition-held city of Idlib, killing at least 26 people, including civilians, and wounding dozens more.⁴
 - On February 9, Pentagon Spokesman Captain Jeff Davis confirmed that US-led Coalition airstrikes had killed 11 members of al-Qaeda in Idlib between February 1-9, 2017.⁵
 - On February 13-14, clashes between Islamist opposition groups Tahrir al-Sham and Jund al-Aqsa killed dozens of fighters on either side across Idlib Governorate.⁶
 - On February 16, the SITE Intelligence Group reported that Islamist opposition forces in Syria had executed over one hundred fighters of opposing groups. In one incident, an “offshoot” of Jund al-Aqsa executed more than 150 members of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and the Tahrir al-Sham alliance, which included members of Islamist, former Al Qaeda branch, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham in the village of Khan Sheikhoun.⁷
2. Raqqa Governorate:
- On February 3, the water supply to the city of Raqqa was restored following an outage caused by a US-led Coalition airstrikes that targeted a bridge. Additional bridges around Raqqa were also hit, bringing the total number of damaged bridges spanning the Euphrates River to four.⁸
 - On February 4, US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) began a “new phase in its campaign” against ISIL in Raqqa. The new phase, so-called ‘Phase Three,’ reportedly includes additional support from US-led Coalition airstrikes and US special forces on the ground in Syria.⁹
 - On February 5, US-led Coalition airstrikes struck the ISIL-held town of Tabqa near the Euphrates Dam. There were no reports of damage to the Euphrates Dam.¹⁰
 - On February 15, the UN warned that ISIL deliberate sabotage and US-led Coalition airstrike damage has jeopardized the Tabqa Dam, leading to a high risk of flooding.
 - On February 17, the Russian Defense Ministry confirmed long-range bomber aircraft had taken off from Russia to target ISIL training camps and a command point near the city of Raqqa.¹¹
 - On February 17, Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis stated that many ISIL administrators and bureaucrats have begun to flee the stronghold city of Raqqa as US-backed forces advance on the city.¹²

⁴ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/intense-raids-kill-dozens-syria-idlib-170207131816939.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38901014> ; <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/air-strikes-hit-syrias-rebel-held-idlib-around-30-dead-residents-monitor-567607527>

⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38915092> ; <http://www.cnn.com/2017/02/08/us/us-kills-al-qaeda-official/index.html> ; <https://www.wsj.com/articles/pentagon-says-syrian-strikes-kill-al-qaeda-fighters-including-longtime-leader-1486595877>

⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38966601> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-jihadists-idUSKBN15S0ZI>

⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-islamists-idUSKBN15V0UM>

⁸ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38852216> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-dam-idUSKBN15K0RQ>

⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-raqqa-idUSKBN15J0CZ> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-dam-idUSKBN15K0RQ>

¹¹ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-idUKKBN15W1LW>

¹² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-raqqa-pentagon-idUSKBN15W24E>

3. Aleppo Governorate:

- On February 4–16, pro-regime forces encircled the ISIL-held city of al-Bab.¹³
- On February 6, SARG forces captured the last ISIL stronghold in Aleppo Governorate after seizing Tal Uwayshiya. The advancement severed key supply routes into the ISIL-held city of al-Bab in Raqqa Governorate.¹⁴
- On February 9, a Russian airstrike struck a building in al-Bab, killing 3 Turkish soldiers. Russian President Vladimir Putin later sent his condolences for what was determined to be a friendly fire incident.¹⁵
- On February 10, Russian forces “intervened” to stop clashes between SARG and Turkish-backed Syrian opposition fighters in a village southwest of the ISIL-city of al-Bab.¹⁶
- On February 14, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim announced that Turkish-backed opposition forces operating as part of “Euphrates Shield” had recaptured the majority of al-Bab from ISIL. However, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) disputed the claim, stating instead that ISIL remained in control.¹⁷
- On February 14, Turkish-backed opposition and SARG forces were reported to have created a security corridor in order to avoid clashes between the two groups during operations to recapture al-Bab from ISIL.¹⁸
- On February 16, Turkish artillery bombardment reportedly killed dozens of civilians in a single day of shelling in the contested town of al-Bab. The Turkish army disputes the number, stating instead that their strikes had only killed “terrorists” in a combination of airstrikes, artillery fire, and clashes.¹⁹
- On February 17, the Turkish military stated that it close to capturing al-Bab from ISIL. The SOHR maintains that ISIL still holds 90 percent of the town.²⁰
- On February 22, the Syrian army and pro-regime militias captured the district of Souq al-Jibs, southwest of Aleppo city, from opposition forces.²¹

4. Homs Governorate:

- During the reporting period, several local sources reported ongoing aerial bombardment over the modern city of Tadmor.²²
- On February 8, SARG forces carried out airstrikes over the opposition-held neighborhood of al-Waer in the city of Homs, killing several people.²³

¹³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38882544>

¹⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38919426> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-albab-kremlin-idUSKBN15P0ZI> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

¹⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKBN15P19B> ; <http://baladi-news.com/en/news/details/15821/>

¹⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKBN15T111>

¹⁸ <https://www.yahoo.com/news/pro-ankara-rebels-syria-regime-agree-security-line-095020546.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-4230228/24-civilians-killed-bombing-Syria-town-monitor.html>

²⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKBN15W0PQ> ; <http://www.news24.com/World/News/24-civilians-killed-in-bombing-on-syria-town-monitor-20170216>

²¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKBN1611A>

²² <http://www.syriaahr.com/en/?p=60525> ; <http://aranews.net/2017/02/us-led-coalition-steps-anti-isis-airstrikes-palmyra/>

²³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-homs-idUSKBN15N1UB>

- On February 14, pro-regime forces backed by Russian airstrikes advanced towards Palmyra and captured the Hayyan Gas Field and the Western Bayat Region, bringing the forces to within twenty miles of the city.²⁴
5. Daraa Governorate:
- On February 12–16, opposition forces including Tahrir al-Sham and the FSA-affiliated Southern Front launched a new offensive against pro-regime forces in the district of al-Manshiyah in the city of Daraa.²⁵
 - On February 14–17, Russian airstrikes targeted areas of Daraa, targeting opposition groups fighting to capture territory from SARG forces.²⁶
 - On February 20, ISIL-linked Syrian opposition groups launched an attack on the Free Syrian Army near the Golan Heights, capturing several villages and the towns of Adwan, Sahem al-Golan, Tel Jamoua, and Tseel.²⁷
6. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
- On February 6–11, Syrian activists reported that Hezbollah had begun negotiations to withdraw from several towns in the Western Qalamoun Mountains that would allow for Syrian refugees living in eastern Lebanon to return.²⁸
 - On February 16–19, SARG forces carried out an aerial bombardment campaign over opposition-held areas around Damascus, including the districts of Barzeh and Qaboun, resulting in civilian casualties. The strikes occurred ahead of new Syrian peace talks scheduled for February 23 in Geneva.²⁹
7. Hama Governorate:
- On February 7–16, alleged pro-ISIL group Liwa al-Aqsa launched several attacks against other opposition groups based in southern Idlib and northern Hama Governorates.³⁰
 - On Thursday 16, a remote-controlled IED blew up a car carrying Russian servicemen, killing four.³¹
8. Deir ez Zor Governorate:
- On February 22, the US-backed SDF reportedly captured 15 villages from ISIL in their largest “incursion” into the governorate.³²

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Abu Kamal, Ayn Isa, Bab, Deir ez Zor, Idlib, Palmyra, Raqqa, Shaddadi, Tamakh, and Tanf.³³

²⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

²⁵ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-deraa-idUSKBN15T2XY>

²⁶ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/russia-targets-rebel-held-areas-syria-deraa-170216185755749.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39024228>

²⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-south-idUSKBN160007>

²⁸ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

²⁹ <https://www.afp.com/en/news/205/syria-army-ramps-shelling-near-capital-ahead-talks> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKBN15Y08A>

³⁰ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/syria-situation-report-february-2-16.html>

³¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/20/world/middleeast/russia-syria-war.html>

³² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39050198>

³³ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1068426](#), [1071334](#), [1071484](#), [1071998](#), [1073329](#), [1075483](#), [1077718](#), [1079766](#), [1080786](#), [1080910](#), [1081162](#), [1082651](#), [1083930](#), [1088282](#), [1085854](#), [1087416](#), [1088215](#), [1098570](#), [1088395](#), [1088557](#), [1090231](#), [1095263](#), [1092025](#), [1094729](#), [1095122](#), [1095150](#), [1096822](#)

- During the reporting period, Russian airstrikes targeted Syrian opposition-held areas in Daraa, Idlib, Hama, and Aleppo Governorates. According to the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), the airstrikes overwhelmingly targeted “critical civilian infrastructure,” and allowed for the advance of ISIL advancement in Daraa governorate. Russian airstrikes also targeted ISIL-held positions in Homs and Deir ez Zor Governorates.³⁴
- On February 7, Amnesty International accused the Syrian regime of executing 13,000 inmates in Sadnaya Military Prison between 2011 and 2015. According to Amnesty, executions continue at the prison located near Damascus.³⁵
- On February 9, Hashem al-Sheikh, leader of the new Islamist opposition group in Syria known as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, promised in a video speech to “liberate” all of Syria and resume military action against SARG forces.³⁶
- On February 10, the SOHR reported that Syrian opposition group Jund al-Aqsa had advanced in Hama and Idlib Governorates, capturing territory and weapons held by the Free Syrian Army. Jund al-Aqsa has previously pledged allegiance to Fateh al-Sham, formerly al-Nusra Front.³⁷
- On February 13, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a report detailing the use of chemical attacks by the Assad regime. According to HRW, between November 17 – December 13, 2016 SARG helicopters carried out at least eight chemical attacks in residential areas.³⁸
- On February 13, the Atlantic Council released a report titled “**Breaking Aleppo**” detailing the extensive aerial bombardment campaign carried out by Russian forces in the city.³⁹
- On February 14, US Central Command confirmed that US forces used depleted uranium weapons in munitions against ISIL in Iraq and Syria, despite vowing not to when operations began.⁴⁰
- On February 15–16, a second round of negotiations between the Syrian regime and the main opposition body ended with the adoption of a document meant to monitor the ceasefire.⁴¹
- On February 16, the United Nations General Assembly created a new body to prepare to prosecute war crimes committed in Syria during the five-year conflict.⁴²

³⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/03/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-january-26.html>

³⁵ <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/syria-13000-secretly-hanged-saydnaya-military-prison-shocking-new-report> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-amnesty-idUSKBN15M00F> ; <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/senior-syrian-cleric-approved-execution-thousands-syrian-prison-1552206366>

³⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-jihadists-idUSKBN1502IV>

³⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels-idUSKBN15P1G7>

³⁸ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/13/syria-coordinated-chemical-attacks-aleppo>

³⁹ <http://www.publications.atlanticcouncil.org/breakingaleppo/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/BreakingAleppo.pdf> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/12/us/politics/russia-syria-aleppo-bombing-campaign-restraint.html>

⁴⁰ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/14/the-united-states-used-depleted-uranium-in-syria/>

⁴¹ <http://astanatimes.com/2017/02/second-round-of-syrian-talks-in-astana-adopt-mechanism-to-monitor-ceasefire/>

⁴² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-warcrimes-idUSKBN15V1QU>

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

1. Ninawa Governorate:

- During the reporting period, ISIL militants killed dozens of west-bank Mosul residents as they attempted to flee to the eastern bank. ISIS militants also carried out several attacks in areas liberated by Iraqi forces, including a shelling attack on five schools that killed three students.⁴³
- On February 1, the US-led Coalition announced that 60 percent of Mosul had been liberated from ISIL control.⁴⁴
- On February 1, local sources in Mosul reported that a US-led Coalition airstrike killed several ISIL militants including ISIS security official Sarhan al-Souri in the neighborhood of Islaah Ziraai.⁴⁵
- On February 13–14, ISIL militants launched dozens of suicide car bomb attacks near Tal Afar as Iraqi forces continued to prepare for a push to recapture the city of Mosul.⁴⁶
- On February 17, Reuters reported that ISIL militants were developing “a network of passageways and tunnels” in the narrow alleyways of Mosul’s west bank in preparation for clashes with Iraqi security forces.⁴⁷
- On February 17, US-led airstrikes struck ISIL command headquarters and propaganda facility located inside the al-Jumhuri medical community complex.⁴⁸
- On February 19, Iraqi forces continued the offensive to recapture the city of Mosul from ISIL and began operations to retake the western bank of the city. Iraqi forces also captured several ISIL-held villages south of the west bank.⁴⁹
- On February 20, Iraqi forces, backed by aerial support, began an offensive to recapture Mosul Airport in the city’s west bank from ISIL militants. Iraqi forces captured the village of Abu Saif, a southern outlying village that overlooks Mosul.⁵⁰
- On February 23, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) recaptured the Mosul Airport after a four hour operation.⁵¹

⁴³ <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/shells-5-schools-mosul-kills-wounds-28-students-teachers/>; <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/attacks-several-areas-mosul-leaves-12-casualties/>; <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/the-times/dozens-of-iraqis-shot-as-they-flee-isis-press-gangs/news-story/5d65986cc9ef2da0f1c5e792877cfa52>; <http://in.reuters.com/article/iraq-mosul-bombing-idINKBN15P1LZ>; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iraq-situation-report-february-11-16.html>

⁴⁴ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1068032/iraqi-forces-liberate-60-percent-of-mosul-from-isil-fighters>

⁴⁵ <http://aranews.net/2017/02/us-airstrike-kills-islamic-states-jihadi-leader-in-mosul/>

⁴⁶ <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraqi-forces-build-mosul-ahead-expected-push-45480262>; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iraq-situation-report-february-11-16.html>

⁴⁷ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUKKBN15W1H7>

⁴⁸ <http://aranews.net/2017/02/isis-headquarters-in-mosul-under-coalition-fire/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUSKBN15Y060>; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39018984>; <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-iraq-mosul-offensive-20170218-story.html>

⁵⁰ <https://www.afp.com/en/news/205/iraq-forces-converge-mosul-airport>; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39024723>; <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/faf43e151a53447a96558f23636b6765/iraqi-forces-launch-push-take-western-mosul>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN15Z0NK>; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39038509>

⁵¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39061811>

2. Baghdad Governorate:

- On February 11, clashes between supporters of Muqtada al-Sadr and Iraqi police in central Baghdad killed at least five demonstrators and two policemen. At least 320 more protestors and seven policemen were reported as being wounded during the clashes as security forces fired rubber-bullets and tear gas. There were also reports of live fire being used by police as demonstrators marched towards the Green Zone. Several rockets struck the Green Zone on Saturday evening, possibly fired by Iranian-backed forces.⁵²
- On February 14, an ISIL suicide car bombing detonated in the area of al-Bayaa in southwestern Baghdad, killing “a number” of people.⁵³
- On February 14, thousands of demonstrators held a “million man” march in Baghdad’s Tahrir Square following the death of protesters on February 11.⁵⁴
- On February 15, a suicide car bombing struck the majority-Shia area of Sadr City, a suburb of Baghdad, killing at least 18 people and wounded over 40 more. ISIL claimed responsibility for the attack.⁵⁵
- On February 16, a car bomb detonated in Baghdad, killing at least 48 people and wounding at least 50 more. ISIL claimed responsibility for the attack.⁵⁶

3. Al Anbar Governorate:

- On February 13, the Iraqi Air Force conducted several strikes in the town of Qaim, killing 13 ISIL commanders and 64 “lower-ranked” ISIL fighters.⁵⁷

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Baghdad, Beiji, Haditha, Huwayjah, Irbil, Kisik, Kirkuk, Mosul, Qaim, Qayyarah, Rawah, Sinjar, Tal Afar, Taji, and Tuz.⁵⁸
- On February 16, HRW released a report accusing Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) fighters of looting and destroying homes of recently captured villages in Ninawa Governorate.⁵⁹

⁵² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-sadr-idUSKBN15S1RM> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/protesters-killed-violence-grips-baghdad-rally-170211140644671.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iranian-proxies-fire-rockets-at-green.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38944744> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iraq-situation-report-february-11-16.html>

⁵³ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iraq-situation-report-february-11-16.html>

⁵⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iraq-situation-report-february-11-16.html>

⁵⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38985349> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/02/iraq-situation-report-february-11-16.html>

⁵⁶ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/deadly-car-bombing-rocks-iraq-baghdad-170216140444542.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38995832> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-blast-idUSKBN15V24I>

⁵⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38961677> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-airstrike-idUSKBN15S1WN> ; <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-uncovered/iraqi-strikes-kill-isis-commanders-fate-leader-al-baghdadi-unknown-n720531>

⁵⁸ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1068426](#), [1071334](#), [1071484](#), [1071998](#), [1073329](#), [1075483](#), [1077718](#), [1079766](#), [1080786](#), [1080910](#), [1081162](#), [1082651](#), [1083930](#), [1088282](#), [1085854](#), [1087416](#), [1088215](#), [1098570](#), [1088395](#), [1088557](#), [1090231](#), [1095263](#), [1092025](#), [1094729](#), [1095122](#), [1095150](#), [1096822](#)

⁵⁹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/16/iraq-looting-destruction-forces-fighting-isis>

Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:

- On February 4–6, Turkish authorities carried out raids in 29 Turkish provinces, arresting almost 750 people suspected of having ties to ISIL.⁶⁰
- On February 16, a suicide bomber detonated his device inside the Sufi shrine dedicated to Shahbaz Qalandar in Sindh Province, Pakistan. The attack, which occurred during a Sufi holiday, killed at least 83 people and wounded more than 200.⁶¹

⁶⁰ <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-turkey-islamic-state-20170206-story.html>

⁶¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38994318> ; <http://www.cnn.com/2017/02/16/asia/pakistan-shrine-bombing/index.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-blast-idUSKBN15V233> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-blast-sufis-idUSKBN15W10P> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-39001703>

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 17-0236

Report Date: February 7, 2017

Site Name: Shoaib Mosque (مسجد شعيب)

Date of Incident: February 7, 2017

Location: Idlib, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Unknown

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Possible Russian airstrikes damage mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 7, 2017 as many as a dozen airstrikes struck several districts of Idlib City. According to reports, at least one airstrike struck Shoaib Mosque.⁶² The origin of the airstrikes remains unknown; however, SARG, Russian, and US-led Coalition warplanes have all carried out airstrikes in Idlib Governorate. Local sources have accused Russian forces of carrying out the airstrikes.⁶³

Shoaib Mosque was damaged by airstrikes on at least three separate occasions in 2016. For more information on previous damage to Shoaib Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0073** in **Weekly Report 95-96**; **SHI 16-0112** in **Weekly Report 103-104**; **SHI 16-0128** in **Weekly Report 105-106**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives-airstrike.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38901014>

Syrian Observatory for Human Rights: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=60468>

⁶² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38901014> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=60468>

⁶³ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/02/07/massacre-due-suspected-russian-forces-shelling-idlib-city-february-7/>

SHI 17-0019

Report Date: June 24, 2017

Site Name: Unknown Hayyan Mosque

Date of Incident: Initial damage between August 2015 and March 2016; second damage incident between July 26 and August 3, 2016

Location: Hayyan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Video footage shows damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 18, 2017 Thiqa Agency posted a video that shows damage to the town of Hayyan, including a mosque located in the northern part of the town.⁶⁴ The mosque is largely destroyed, although the dome has retained its shape. A large hole is visible in the top of the dome.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows that this mosque initially sustained damage between August 2015 and March 2016. A second incident, which resulted in the hole in the dome, occurred between July 26 and August 3, 2016. Damage occurred to other mosques in Hayyan—al-Kabir Mosque and Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque—during this same time period.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other religious sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0020; SHI 17-0021; SHI 17-0022; SHI 17-0023; and SHI 17-0028.**

For more information on previous damage to mosques in Hayyan, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0025** in **Weekly Report 79–80**; **SHI 16-0025** in **Weekly Report 83–84**; **SHI 16-0081** in **Weekly Report 95–96.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Thiqa Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZY8s9izjKVI>

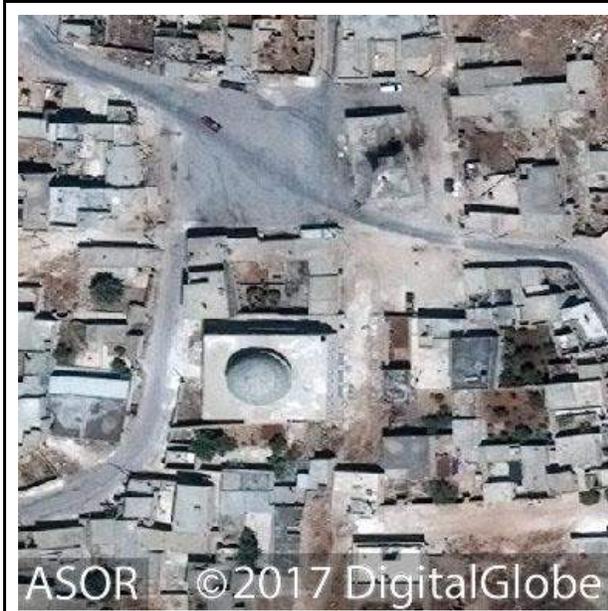
⁶⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZY8s9izjKVI>



Video still of damage to the mosque, seen from the west (Thiqa Agency; February 18, 2017)



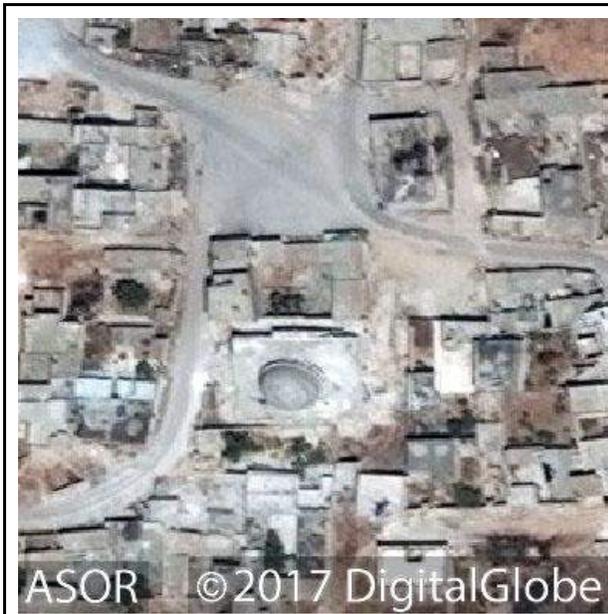
Video still of damage to the mosque from inside the dome (Thiqa Agency; February 18, 2017)



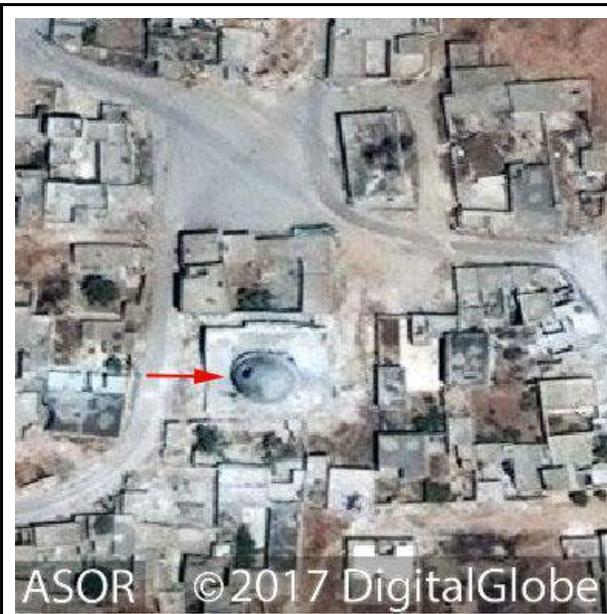
The Unknown Hayyan Mosque prior to any damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 18, 2015)



Red arrows indicating areas of damage to the mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 9, 2016)



The mosque prior to increased damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 26, 2016)



A red arrow indicating new damage to the dome of the mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 3, 2016)

SHI 17-0020

Report Date: February 12, 2017

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير)

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Early 20th Century CE⁶⁵

Incident Summary: Reported Turkish bombardment damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 12, 2017 Amaq News Agency released video footage showing damage to al-Kabir Mosque, reportedly due to Turkish bombardment. The damage primarily concentrates in the courtyard and the southeastern corner of the structure, where there is a hole in the roof.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from February 7, 2017 shows the main structure in fair condition, but with one new hole in a dome on the southern side.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other religious sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0019, SHI 17-0021, SHI 17-0022, SHI 17-0023, and SHI 17-0028.**

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 religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Amaq News Agency

Scholarly:

ArchNet: http://archnet.org/sites/4344/media_contents/36006

⁶⁵ http://archnet.org/sites/4344/media_contents/36006



Video still of damage to the western facade of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the northwest (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of the minaret of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the southwest (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of damage to the inner courtyard of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the west (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of damage to the mihrab and southern wall of the courtyard of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the north (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of damage to the northeastern corner of the courtyard of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the south (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of damage to the southeastern rooms of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the north (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of damage to the southeastern rooms of al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the west (Amaq News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Al-Kabir mosque prior to any damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 8, 2016)



Red arrow indicating location of damage to domes (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 7, 2017)

SHI 17-0021**Report Date:** February 12, 2017**Site Name:** Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (مسجد الحمزة; مسجد حمزة بن عبد المطلب)**Date of Incident:** February 12, 2017 or earlier**Location:** Anadan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Newly released video footage shows damage to a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On February 12, 2017 Qasioun News Agency released aerial video footage of damage caused by aerial bombardment in Anadan.⁶⁶ The date when the damage occurred is unknown.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other religious sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0019, SHI 17-0020, SHI 17-0022, SHI 17-0023, and SHI 17-0028.**

Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque was damaged by aerial bombardment on at least three previous occasions. For more information on previous damage to Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0019 in Weekly Report 79-80; SHI 16-0075 in Weekly Report 95-96; SHI 16-0172 in Weekly Report 119-120.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:Qasioun News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a699WfvpPi4>

⁶⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a699WfvpPi4>



Video still of Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; February 12, 2017)



Video still of Hamza bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; February 12, 2017)

SHI 17-0022

Report Date: February 12, 2017

Site Name: al-Saaeda Mosque (جامع السعادة) (Mosque in Sarj Fara' Village)

Date of Incident: February 10, 2017

Location: Sarj Fara', Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Video footage and photographs show damage to a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 10, 2017 the Syrian Network from Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG artillery shells landed near the mosque in the village of Sarj Fara', causing partial damage to the mosque.⁶⁷ A photograph of the mosque shows the name to be al-Saaeda Mosque. Video footage released by Step News Agency showed significant damage to the mosque and its contents.⁶⁸ Local reporting groups shared photographs of damage to the interior of the mosque.⁶⁹ According to some local reports, the shelling took place during Friday prayers and resulted in at least one casualty.⁷⁰

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other religious sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0019, SHI 17-0020, SHI 17-0021, SHI 17-0023, and SHI 17-0028.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Baladi Network: <https://twitter.com/baladinetwork/status/830042452404867072>

Local Coordination Committee Syria: <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/830038483578286080>

⁶⁷ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/02/11/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-sarj-fare-village-aleppo-governorate-february-10/>

⁶⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrjbRlrdY-w>

⁶⁹ <https://twitter.com/Syriamubasher/status/830039190477869056> ; <https://twitter.com/baladinetwork/status/830042452404867072>

⁷⁰ <https://twitter.com/ShahbaPress/status/830026123232870400> ; https://twitter.com/Step_Agency/status/830010137297420289 ; <https://twitter.com/thiqanewsagency/status/830014301998108672> ; <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/830038483578286080>

Shahba Press: <https://twitter.com/ShahbaPress/status/830026123232870400>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/02/11/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-sari-fare-village-aleppo-governorate-february-10/>

Step News Agency:

https://twitter.com/Step_Agency/status/830010137297420289 ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRjbRlrdY-w>

Syria Mubasher: <https://twitter.com/Syriamubasher/status/830039190477869056>

Thiqa News Agency:

February 10, 2017: <https://twitter.com/thiqanewsagency/status/830014301998108672>

February 18, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZY8s9izjKVI>



Damage to the exterior of the mosque (Baladi Network; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the mosque (Baladi Network; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the interior of the mosque (Baladi Network; February 10, 2017)



Damage seen inside the mosque, including what appears to be a large hole in the wall (Syria Mubasher; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the interior of the mosque, including damage to religious materials (Syria Mubasher; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the exterior of the mosque (Syria Mubasher; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing material damage inside al-Saada Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing material damage inside al-Saada Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing material damage inside al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing material damage inside al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing interior damage to al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing interior damage to al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing interior damage to al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing interior damage to al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing interior damage to al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing damage to al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still of remains of an explosive outside of al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)



Video still showing detail of explosive outside of al-Saaeda Mosque (Step News Agency; February 10, 2017)

SHI 17-0023

Report Date: February 13 2017

Site Name: Ibn al-Jarrah Mosque [Partial Name]

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Tadaf, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported Russian and SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 13, 2017 ISIL-affiliate Amaq News Agency released a video that documented destruction caused by Russian and SARG airstrikes in al-Tadaf. The video shows some damage to a mosque. The name of the mosque is obscured in the video footage, however the name 'ibn al-Jarrah' is visible.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that the northeastern part of the mosque was damaged between the dates February 7, 2017 and February 27, 2017.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other religious sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0019, SHI 17-0020, SHI 17-0021, SHI 17-0022, and SHI 17-0028.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives - airstrikes.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Amaq News Agency



Video still showing damage to ibn al-Jarrah Mosque (Amaq News Agency; February 13, 2017).



Ibn al-Jarrah mosque (location indicated by red arrows) on February 7, 2017 before any damage had occurred to it (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 7, 2017)



Satellite image showing damage to northern part of mosque on February 27, 2017 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 27, 2017)

SHI 17-0024

Report Date: February 14, 2017

Site Name: Tal Bayjan

Date of Incident: Between August 18, 2014 and January 26, 2016

Location: Tal Bayjan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Tal Bayjan is a 15 m-high archaeological mound with a conical shape and a flat top. The site is located at the northeastern end of the town of Tal Bayjan. Settlement at the site dates from the Bronze Age to the Roman Period.⁷¹ It is unclear if occupation at the site was continuous.

Site Date: Bronze Age to Roman Period

Incident Summary: ISIL created fortifications on an archaeological site.

Incident Source and Description: On February 14, 2017 a social media account posted pictures on Liveuamap of SARG forces in front of ISIL fortifications cut into the slope of Tal Bayjan.⁷² The fortifications involve trenches dug around the site as well as up to the top of the mound.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage from military trenching to the site between July 18, 2011 and June 24, 2016. Previous ASOR CHI satellite assessments indicate that damage occurred between August 18, 2014 and January 26, 2016 — confirmed by archived satellite imagery from these dates. Much of the damage is located on the northern portion of the site, although the southern boundary of it is threatened by the advancement of modern development.

Pattern: Military Activity: occupation/militarization; Earthworks.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Tal Bayjan, as well as the condition of other cultural sites located in regions subject to military occupation and the construction of earthworks. The militarization of cultural property goes against the principles of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Liveuamap: <https://isis.liveuamap.com/en/2017/14-february-east-aleppo-cs-tiger-forces---from-inside-bayjan>

⁷¹ Hyslop et al. 1942: 31

⁷² <https://isis.liveuamap.com/en/2017/14-february-east-aleppo-cs-tiger-forces---from-inside-bayjan>

Scholarly:

Hyslop, R. Maxwell, J. Du Plat Taylor, M. V. Seton Williams, and J. D'A. Waechter (1942) "An Archaeological Survey of the Plain of Jabbul, 1939." *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 74(1): 8-40.



SARG soldier in ISIL trench (Liveuamap; February 14, 2017)



ISIL fortifications cut into Tal Bayjan, seen from north (Liveuamap; February 14, 2017)



ISIL fortifications cut into Tal Bayjan, seen from north (Liveuamap; February 14, 2017)



ISIL fortifications seen from the top of Tal Bayjan (Liveuamap; February 14, 2017)



The archaeological site before extensive trenching damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 18, 2011)



Damage to the tell as a result of military trenching (DigitalGlobe NextView License; June 24, 2016)

SHI 17-0025

Report Date: February 15, 2017

Site Name: Deir ez-Zor Cemetery

Date of Incident: February 15, 2017

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

Site Description: Christian (majority Armenian) cemetery located near the Deir ez-Zor military airbase.

Site Date: Unknown, likely modern

Incident Summary: Possible Russian or SARG airstrike hit a cemetery.

Incident Source and Description: On February 15, 2017 media outlet Halab Today TV reported aerial bombardment taking place over the Deir ez-Zor cemetery.⁷³ Clashes have been ongoing in the area around and within the cemetery in Deir ez-Zor as fighting continues between ISIL militants and pro-regime forces.⁷⁴ First person video footage shows explosives, gunfire, and tanks present in the cemetery.⁷⁵ Aerial bombardment by Syrian and Russian forces has also been frequent.⁷⁶

Deir ez-Zor Cemetery has been the site of previous clashes and possible intentional destruction. On January 23, 2017 a Youtube account associated with Amaq News Agency published a video of fighting taking place between pro-regime and ISIL inside a cemetery, likely the same cemetery struck by aerial bombardment on February 15. In May 2016, Al Masdar News shared video stills from an ISIL-affiliated Amaq News Agency report that showed ISIL members inside the cemetery, where they reportedly damaged Christian burial sites.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows the cemetery has been damaged by multiple airstrikes between January and February 2017. In addition to damage from airstrikes, there appears to be military trenching in the cemetery, as evidenced by the satellite imagery. This occurred between January 23, 2017 and February 27, 2017.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives-airstrike, gunfire/light weaponry.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Deir ez-Zor Cemetery as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

⁷³ <https://www.facebook.com/HalabTodayTV/posts/1674983672519064>

⁷⁴ <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/01/16/islamic-state-stage-fierce-attack-syrian-army-enclave/> ;

⁷⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-LXZ_S9sa0 ;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0eH3fmfSmM> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkQKcj2FIMA> ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-LXZ_S9sa0

⁷⁶ <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=59690>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Masdar News:

May 15, 2016: <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/pictures-isis-desecrates-christian-cemetery-deir-ezzor-raid/>

January 21, 2017: <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/syrian-army-turns-tables-isis-deir-ezzor/>

February 9, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0eH3fmfSmM>

Cyprus Mail: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/01/16/islamic-state-stage-fierce-attack-syrian-army-enclave/>

Halab Today TV: <https://www.facebook.com/HalabTodayTV/posts/1674983672519064>

Mirror - Spectator: <http://www.mirrorspectator.com/2016/05/19/isis-desecrates-christian-cemetery-in-deir-ez-zor-raid/>

RT: <https://www.rt.com/news/374565-russian-bombers-syria-isis/>

Ruptly TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIwzVFGtzul>

Russia Insider: <http://russia-insider.com/en/russian-bombers-pound-isis-positions-deir-ez-zor-besieged-syrian-army>

Syrian Observatory for Human Rights:

January 15, 2017: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=59097>

January 23, 2017: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=59690>

January 27, 2017: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=59919>



Video still of Deir ez-Zor Cemetery during clashes (Ruptly; January 20, 2017)



Video still of pro-regime forces present in Deir ez-Zor Cemetery (Ruptly; January 20, 2017)



Video still of Deir ez-Zor Cemetery (Ruptly; January 20, 2017)



Part of Deir ez-Zor cemetery, previously damaged, on January 23, 2017 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 23, 2017)



Red arrows showing trenching in the cemetery on February 27, 2017 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 27, 2017)



Cemetery prior to increased damage from airstrikes on November 3, 2016 (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 3, 2016)



Increased damage from airstrikes on January 28, 2017, indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 28, 2017)



By February 22, 2017, damage from airstrikes had increased significantly (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 22, 2017)

SHI 17-0026

Report Date: February 18, 2017

Site Name: al-Jadida Cemetery (مقبرة الجديدة)

Date of Incident: February 18, 2017

Location: Harasta al-Qantara (حريستا القنطرة), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Cemetery

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Artillery fire killed mourners in a cemetery.

Incident Source and Description: On February 18, 2017, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that artillery fire killed at least 10 people in al-Jadida Cemetery on the outskirts of Harasta.⁷⁷ Step News Agency reported that these people were attending a funeral at the time of the incident.⁷⁸ The extent of the damage to the cemetery is unknown.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from May 3, 2017 does not show any damage to the cemetery.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on these reports via in country sources as well as DigitalGlobe satellite imagery as it becomes available, and is continuing to monitor the condition of al-Jadida Cemetery.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/02/18/massacre-due-syrian-regime-forces-shelling-al-jedayda-cemetery-damascus-city-february-18/>

Step News Agency: <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/132612>

⁷⁷ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/02/18/massacre-due-syrian-regime-forces-shelling-al-jedayda-cemetery-damascus-city-february-18/>

⁷⁸ <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/132612>

SHI 17-0027

Report Date: February 19, 2017

Site Name: Trajan's Palace

Date of Incident: February 17, 2017

Location: Bosra al-Sham, Daraa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The "Palace of Trajan" is a large complex built around a square courtyard with porticoes on the northern, southern, and eastern sides. The complex includes private baths and a large tri-apsidal space and many of its building phases incorporate Roman spolia. Although the building was originally attributed to the Trajanic period, recent excavations have shown that the different stages of construction date from the second half of the 2nd century CE to the 6th century CE. The complex is now identified as a governor's residence or a bishop's residence in association with the central plan church to the east.⁷⁹

Site Date: 2nd c. CE–6th c. CE, Early Byzantine

Incident Summary: Alleged Russian airstrikes hit Trajan's Palace.

Incident Source and Description: On February 18, 2017 the Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities Facebook Page reported that Trajan's Palace had been hit during a Russian airstrike targeting the historic city center on February 17, 2017.⁸⁰ The post included six photos and a paragraph describing damage to the excavation area on the west side of the complex, including a deep bomb-pit and the collapse and destruction of the excavated foundation/early phase walls; damage to stone blocks that had been laid out in front of the palace for later restoration efforts; a crack in the façade of the apse on the west side of the complex; damage to the inner walls of rooms on the level below the apse; and damage to the walls and ceilings of some of the old residential buildings and houses surrounding the site.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives-airstrikes.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Trajan's Palace, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing military activity and airstrikes.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1914207842155706

⁷⁹ Piraud-Fournet 2003.

⁸⁰ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1914207842155706

Scholarly:

Piraud-Fournet, Pauline (2003) "Le 'Palais de Trajan' à Bosra. Présentation et hypothèses d'identification" *Syria*, pp.5-40.

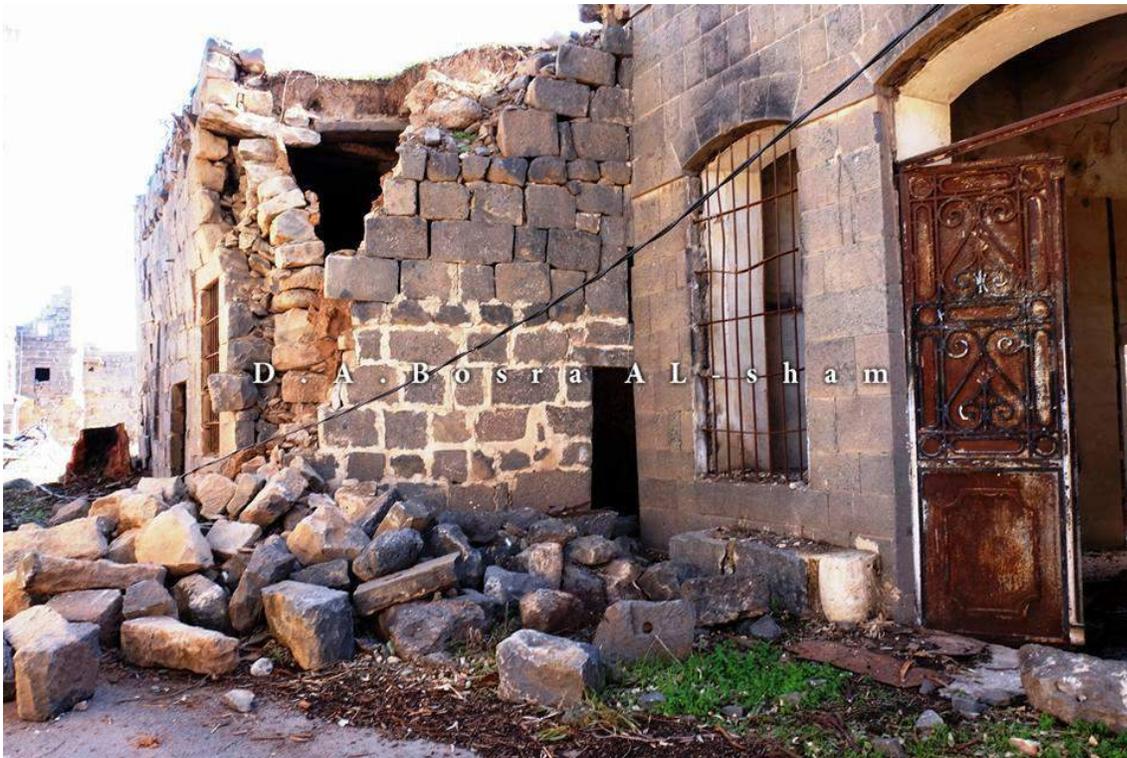
Piraud-Fournet, Pauline (2009) "Les bains du Palais de Trajan à Bosra. : Deuxième mission de fouilles archéologiques et de relevés - Rapport 2008" <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00361516/document>



Trajan's Palace (looking north), damage to excavation area (bomb crater) and standing architecture (crack in façade of apse) (Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities; February 18, 2017)



Trajan's Palace (looking west), damage to excavation area (bomb crater and collapse of early phase/foundation walls) (Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities; February 18, 2017)



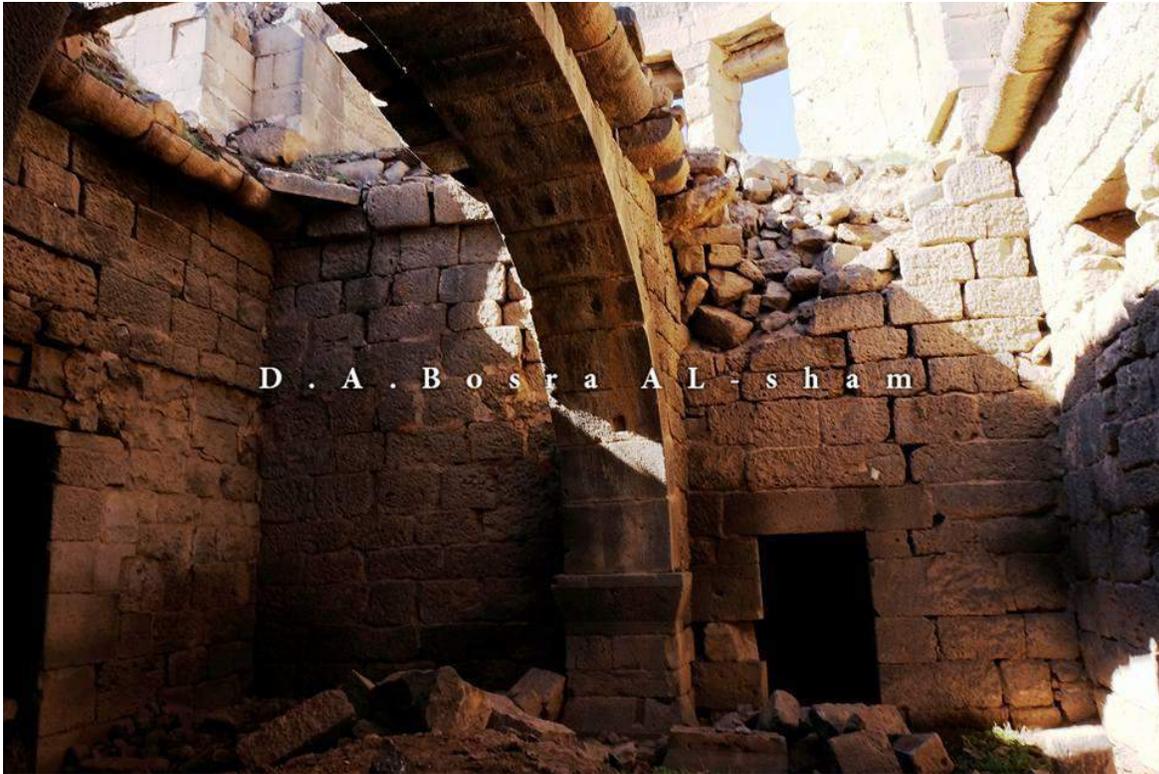
Damage to residential building near Trajan's Palace (Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities; February 18, 2017)



Trajan's Palace (looking north), crack in façade of apse (Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities; February 18, 2017)



Trajan's Palace (looking south), bomb crater and collapse of excavated walls, damage to stone materials set aside for restoration (Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities; February 18, 2017)



Trajan's Palace, damage to interior rooms of level below apse (looking south) (Bosra al-Sham Department of Antiquities; February 18, 2017)

SHI 17-0028

Report Date: February 21 2017

Site Name: Zamzam Mosque (جامع زمزم)

Date of Incident: February 21, 2017

Location: Zamzam Neighborhood, al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Newly released photographs show damage to Zamzam Mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 21, 2017 Twitter account WorldOnAlert posted photographs that show damage to the Zamzam Mosque.⁸¹ Clashes between Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces and ISIL militants were ongoing in the vicinity of the mosque at that time.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms there was an explosion in the street just north of the mosque between February 13, 2017 and February 27, 2017 causing possible damage to the northern facade of the mosque.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other religious sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0019, SHI 17-0020, SHI 17-0021, SHI 17-0022, and SHI 17-0023.**

For more information on previous damage to Zamzam Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0085 in Weekly Report 97-98 and SHI 17-0059 in Weekly Report 137-140.**

Pattern: Military activity: explosives; gunfire/light weaponry.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

World on Alert: <https://twitter.com/worldonalert/status/834032704932950017>

⁸¹ <https://twitter.com/worldonalert/status/834032704932950017>



Zamzam Mosque (World on Alert; February 21, 2017)



Evidence of damage to Zamzam Mosque (World on Alert; February 21, 2017)

SHI 17-0029

Report Date: February 27, 2017

Site Name: Southern Madaya Mosque (مسجد مضايا الجنوبي)

Date of Incident: February 2, 2017

Location: Madaya, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: SARG shelling damaged the Southern Madaya Mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 27, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) posted a video showing rubble on the floor of an interior hallway in the Southern Madaya Mosque.⁸² SNHR attributed this damage to SARG shelling on or around February 2, 2017.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that there was shelling in the area between December 29, 2016 and February 2, 2017, as evidenced by holes in the roofs of many structures within the surrounding area.

On January 12, 2017 SARG shelling damaged the Northern Mosque in Madaya, severely damaging its building and furniture. For more information on damage to the Northern Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0008** in **January 2017 Monthly Report**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeB7a00UisE>

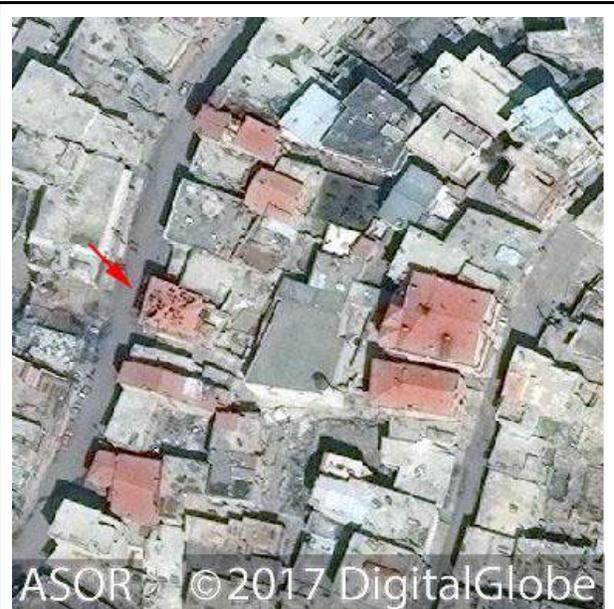
⁸² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeB7a00UisE>



Video still showing rubble in an interior hallway of the Southern Madaya Mosque (SNHR; February 27, 2017)



The location of the Madaya mosque prior to airstrikes shown in red (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 29, 2016)



Damage from airstrikes on a nearby building indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 29, 2017)

Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 15-0092 UPDATE

Report Date: January 22, 2017

Site Name: Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel (Ninewah Oberoi Hotel)

Date of Incident: January 19, 2017

Location: Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: A 5-Star Hotel in Mosul, located on the East Bank near the Tigris River and shaped as a stepped pyramid. The hotel is 11-stories high and has 265 rooms. ISIL reportedly renamed the hotel the “Hotel of the Inheritors (Successors).” In June 2015, ISIL propaganda showed militants celebrating the reopening of the hotel.⁸³ ISIL was the site of parties for the group’s commanders as well as the site of a luxury stay for militants scheduled to carry out suicide bombings.⁸⁴ The hotel also likely played host for high-level ISIL meetings.

Site Date: Built during the 1980s.

Incident Summary: New footage of Owbrawi Hotel and reports of ISIL intentional destruction.

Incident Source and Description: On January 23, 2017 reports surfaced that ISIL militants had blown-up the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel in western Mosul on January 19, 2017.⁸⁵ Witnesses in Mosul reported that the hotel “appeared to be leaning to one side after the explosions.”⁸⁶ The motive behind the explosion is suspected to be to prevent Iraqi armed forces from establishing a base inside the hotel.⁸⁷ Video footage and photographs show that most of the hotel building remains intact, but it is unclear the extent of overall structural damage. Hotel items, including beds from guest rooms, are missing — possibly stolen by ISIL members and sold to support the group.⁸⁸ Iraqi forces recapture the Owbrawi Hotel on January 19, 2017.⁸⁹

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that explosions occurred around the area of the hotel between January 16, 2017 and January 19, 2017. There is visible damage to the entrance of the hotel which occurred between January 13, 2017 and January 16, 2017 as is visible in the satellite imagery.

⁸³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vleBHI82svY>

⁸⁴ <http://www.stripes.com/news/kill-zone-protects-troops-from-terrorists-in-mosul-1.450537> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vleBHI82svY> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-mosul-hotel-idUSKBN15H16Z>

⁸⁵ <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/blows-mosul-hotel-iraq-prepares-attack-western-bank-tigris-404246489> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/01/mosul-iraqi-forces-liberate-east-isil-fighters-170122185024443.html>

⁸⁶ <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/blows-mosul-hotel-iraq-prepares-attack-western-bank-tigris-404246489>

⁸⁷ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/01/mosul-iraqi-forces-liberate-east-isil-fighters-170122185024443.html>

⁸⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-mosul-hotel-idUSKBN15H16Z>

⁸⁹ <http://in.reuters.com/article/mideast-crisis-mosul-idINKBN1531XU>

ISIL militants previously defaced modern stone reliefs at the Owbrawi Hotel in 2015, sharing the footage in their propaganda. For more information on previous damage to the Owbrawi Hotel, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0092** in **Weekly Report 55-56**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives, intentional destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel, as well as the condition of other cultural sites located in regions subject to ongoing military activity and intentional destruction.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/01/mosul-iraqi-forces-liberate-east-isil-fighters-170122185024443.html>

International Business Times: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/after-isis-inside-mosuls-destroyed-university-five-star-hotel-1604459>

al-Mosuliya Satellite Channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epv_raHC9ow

Middle East Monitor: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/blows-mosul-hotel-iraq-prepares-attack-western-bank-tigris-404246489>

Reuters:

January 19, 2017 <http://in.reuters.com/article/mideast-crisis-mosul-idINKBN1531XU>

January 22, 2017: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-hotel-idUSKBN1560HG>

February 2, 2017: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-mosul-hotel-idUSKBN15H16Z>

Stripes: <http://www.stripes.com/news/kill-zone-protects-troops-from-terrorists-in-mosul-1.450537>

The Sun: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2673545/blasted-buildings-and-shattered-streets-of-mosul-laid-bare-as-iraqi-troops-sweep-isis-from-half-of-war-ravaged-city/>



A video still shows the exterior of the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel as it stands today (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows a view of the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel as it stands today (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows damage to the central interior of the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows another view damage to the central interior of the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows damage to the central interior of the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows damage to the upper floors of the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows extensive fire and combat damage to the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows Iraqi Forces at the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel, rubble and trash is visible (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



A video still shows a hotel room inside the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel. The beds were reportedly stolen and sold by ISIL (Reuters; February 2, 2017)



Hotel with some debris visible on the southern side (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 16, 2017)



Arrows indicating areas of damage around the hotel (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 19, 2017)

IHI 16-0046 UPDATE

Report Date: July 17, 2017

Site Name: Sheikh Hassan Shrine (مزار الشيخ حسن)

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: al-Hamdaniya District, Bahzani (بعشيفة وبحزاني), Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Yazidi Shrine

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Photographs show new damage to the shrine complex.

Incident Source and Description: On February 8, 2017 the Bashiqa and Bahzani News Facebook group posted two photographs of damage to the interior of the guard room at the Sheikh Hassan Shrine.⁹⁰ The group reported that this damage was due to ISIL.

The relative date of the destruction of the shrine can be determined from DigitalGlobe satellite imagery. The area in which the shrine was located appears to have been bulldozed between July 7, 2014 and August 21, 2014.

For more information on previous damage to the Sheikh Hassan Shrine, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0046** in **Weekly Report 121-122**.

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Sheikh Hassan Shrine, as well as the condition of other religious sites located in regions subject to military activity and vulnerable to destruction.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Bashiqa and Bahzani News:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=642504922541411

⁹⁰ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=642504922541411



Damage to the interior of the guard room at the Sheikh Hassan Shrine (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Damage to the interior of the guard room at the Sheikh Hassan Shrine (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



The shrines prior to destruction (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 17, 2014)



Intentional destruction of the shrines and the visible debris field (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 21, 2014)

IHI 16-0046 UPDATE

Report Date: February 9, 2017

Site Name: Yezidi Cemetery

Date of Incident: Between August 2014 and November 2016

Location: Bashiqa and Bahzani (بعشيقَة وبحزاني), Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Located in the center of town, near three Yezidi Shrines.

Site Date: Yezidi Cemetery - est. 1261 CE (Yezidi Calendar 6010)

Incident Summary: New photographs show damage to cemetery.

Incident Source and Description: On February 9, 2017 local Facebook group Bashiqa and Bahzani News published photographs showing damage to the Yezidi Cemetery in Bashiqa and Bahzani.⁹¹ An additional photograph uploaded on the same day showed damage to graves, possibly in the same cemetery or in another burial site in the village.⁹²

For more information on previous damage to sites in Bashiqa and Bahzani, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0046** in **Weekly Report 119-120**.

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction, explosives; Vandalism.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Bashiqa and Bahzani News:

February 9, 2017: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=642721995853037&id=374869232638316 ; <https://www.facebook.com/374869232638316/photos/pcb.642686282523275/642686219189948/>

⁹¹ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=642721995853037&id=374869232638316

⁹² <https://www.facebook.com/374869232638316/photos/pcb.642686282523275/642686219189948/>



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves, and possibly the destruction of a larger shrine in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves, and possibly the destruction of a larger shrine in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)



Intentionally damaged graves in Bashiqa and Bahzani (Bashiqa and Bahzani News; February 9, 2017)

IHI 17-0017

Report Date: February 10, 2017

Site Name: Mar Ephraim Church

Date of Incident: Unknown

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

Site Description: Seat of the Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese of Mosul, one of the largest places of worship for Christians in Mosul.⁹³

Site Date: 1988 CE

Incident Summary: Newly released footage shows condition of church.

Incident Source and Description: On February 6, 2017, Mosul Eye posted video footage of damage to Mar Ephraim Church.⁹⁴ The church is heavily damaged. The roof and dome are relatively intact, but the church is missing large portions of walls and the interior is filled with rubble. The damage is reportedly due to mortars striking the church. It is unclear if the church was intentionally destroyed by ISIL or damaged during operations to recapture Mosul.⁹⁵ On February 10, 2017 video footage posted by This Is Christian Iraq showed local Iraqi efforts to tear down an ISIL flag painted over the cross on the front of the church.⁹⁶ On February 19, 2017, the Preemptive Love Coalition posted photographs of the inside of the church showing severe damage.

On October 6, 2016, Mosul Eye posted a video showing the church being hit by an airstrike. It is unknown who is responsible for this strike. ISIL was reportedly using the church as a mosque (Ard al-Khalifa Mosque).

For information on previous damage to Mar Ephraim Church, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0085** in **Weekly Report 45**.

Pattern: Military Activity: explosion.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Mar Gorgis Monastery, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Ishtar TV:

February 19, 2017: <http://www.ishartv.com/viewarticle,72963.html>

⁹³ <http://ishartv.com/viewarticle,51403.html>

⁹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/MosulEyee/videos/1150289448425889/>

⁹⁵ <http://www.preemptivelove.org/a-little-hope-in-a-mosul-church>

⁹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/ThisIsChristianIraq/videos/1815069112074916/>

October 2013: <http://ishtartv.com/viewarticle,51403.html>

This is Christian Iraq:

<https://www.facebook.com/ThisIsChristianIraq/videos/1815069112074916/>

Mosul Eye: <https://www.facebook.com/MosulEyee/videos/1150289448425889/>

Preemptive Love Coalition: http://www.preemptivelove.org/a_little_hope_in_a_mosul_church

Syrian Archbishopric Mosul:

<https://www.facebook.com/SYRIAN.ARCHBISHOPRIC.MOSUL/videos/1578389372175753/>



Damage to church showing where they tried to tear down ISIL flag (Preemptive Love Coalition; February 19, 2017)



Detail shot of ISIL banner painted on top of the cross (Preemptive Love Coalition; February 19, 2017)



Damage to the side of the church showing missing walls (IshtarTV; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the side of the church showing missing walls and severe damage to area of altar (IshtarTV; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the altar area where a possible airstrike hit (IshtarTV; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the interior of the church, showing a partial ISIL flag painted on a column (IshtarTV; February 10, 2017)



Damage to the walls of the church under the dome (IshtarTV; February 19, 2017)



The underside of the dome showing a painting of Jesus (IshtarTV; February 19, 2017)

Heritage Timeline

February 28, 2017

The Telegraph published an article titled “**Previously untouched 600BC palace discovered under shrine demolished by Isil in Mosul**” (by Josie Ensor). Archaeologists documenting the destruction of Nebi Yunus Shrine in Mosul have uncovered a previously unknown palace dating to 600 BCE.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/27/previously-untouched-600bc-palace-discovered-shrine-demolished/>



The New Arab published an article titled “**Priceless Assyrian treasures discovered among Mosul’s mountains of destruction.**” Ancient Assyrian artifacts have been discovered under the destroyed Nebi Yunus Shrine.

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/2/28/priceless-assyrian-treasures-discovered-among-mosuls-mountains-of-destruction>

February 27, 2017

AFP published an article titled “**In Mosul, a long-term battle to repair Iraq’s heritage**” (by Daphné Benoit). In a two-day meeting in Paris, “Iraqi officials and dozens of experts” agreed to coordinate efforts to restore Iraq’s cultural heritage. Many sites in the Nineveh Plains have been severely damaged by ISIL militants, including Nimrud and the Tomb of the Prophet Jonah.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/in-mosul-a-long-term-battle-to-repair-iraqs-heritage/ar-AAnu34k>



ARA News published an article titled “**Islamic State radicals sold Iraqi antiquities on blackmarket to finance terror activities: official.**” The widespread looting of Iraqi archaeological sites was discussed at two-day meeting of the International Coordination Conference on the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage in Liberated Areas of Iraq in Geneva.

<http://aranews.net/2017/02/islamic-state-radicals-sold-iraqi-antiquities-on-blackmarket-to-finance-terror-activities-official/>

February 26, 2017

Public Radio International published an article titled “**The struggle in Mosul to preserve Iraq’s ancient history.**” Challenges to restoration and reconstruction efforts in Mosul are discussed.

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-02-26/struggle-mosul-preserve-iraqs-ancient-history>

February 24, 2017

ONU Italia published an article titled “**Iraq and UNESCO agree on plan of action for cultural heritage**” (by Alessandra Baldini). At a two-day meeting in Paris, UNESCO and Iraq agreed on an action plan to protect Iraqi cultural heritage damaged by ISIL militants.

<http://www.onuitalia.com/2017/02/24/iraq-unesco-agree-plan-action-cultural-heritage/>

- *Travel + Leisure* published an article titled “**How a Beloved World Heritage Site Became a Battlefield. And What’s Next**” (by Jess McHugh). The destruction of monuments at Palmyra and the efforts to reconstruct and restore them is discussed.
<http://www.travelandleisure.com/culture-design/architecture-design/archeological-site-culture-preservation-palmyra-syria-isis>
 - *CBS News* published an article titled “**Iraqis seek funds to restore cultural artifacts recovered from ISIS.**” At a two-day UNESCO conference, Iraqi officials asked for money and expertise to reclaim the cultural heritage that is on the verge of complete destruction.
<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/iraqis-seek-funds-to-rebuild-cultural-artifacts-controlled-by-isis/>
- February 23, 2017
- The Atlantic* published an article titled “**The Monk Who Saves Manuscripts from ISIS.**” Father Columba Stewart, a Benedictine monk, works with local Christian and Muslim communities in Syria and Iraq to preserve ancient Assyrian manuscripts.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/02/the-monk-who-saves-manuscripts-from-isis/517611/>
- *The Penn Current* published an article titled “**The past, present, and future of cultural heritage**” (by Lauren Hertzler). The work of the Penn Museum’s Penn Cultural Heritage Center, which is involved with a number of projects aimed at protecting and preserving cultural heritage around the world (including Iraq and Syria) is discussed.
<https://penncurrent.upenn.edu/features/the-past-present-and-future-of-cultural-heritage>
- February 22, 2017
- DGAM** published an article titled “**Report about the field work of DGAM in old Aleppo.**” The DGAM has begun to systematically document the damage to historic buildings in Old Aleppo.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2221>
- *Los Angeles Times* published an article titled “**Scientists study ways to preserve world heritage sites damaged in armed conflicts**” (by Melissa Healy). The author outlines a new study published in the journal Royal Society Open Science on the impact of small arms fire on stone columns and structures.
<http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-preservation-science-war-20170223-story.html>
- February 21, 2017
- The Guardian* published an article titled “**Answering ‘cultural genocide’: Iraq’s looted treasures to be displayed at Venice Biennale**” (by Hannah Ellis-Petersen). The Iraq Museum of Baghdad will display 40 ancient artifacts at the Venice Biennale, allowing the departure of artifacts from the country for the first time since 1988.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/21/iraq-museum-to-display-40-ancient-artefacts-at-venice-biennale>

- *Harper's Bazaar Arabia* published an article titled "**An Artful Robbery**" (by Yvonne Dewerne). The author reviews "great art thefts" in the Middle East and ongoing efforts to save antiquities. <http://www.harpersbazaararabia.com/art/collectors-and-curators/an-artful-robbery>
 - **DGAM** published an article titled "**3Ds documentation team continues working in the old city of Damascus.**" <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2219>
 - *Newsweek* published an article titled "**Jewish History Is Under Siege In The Middle East and These Volunteers Are Risking Their Lives To Protect It**" (by Emily Feldman). Jason Guberman, the director of the non-profit organization Digital Heritage Mapping, documents damage to Jewish heritage sites in the Middle East and North Africa, including sites in Iraq and Syria. The article includes a description of the Diarna (online) Geographic Museum. <http://www.newsweek.com/2017/03/03/isis-destroying-centuries-jewish-history-middle-east-volunteers-558799.html>
 - Relief Web published an article titled "**UNESCO partners with Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to improve employment opportunities for young Iraqi graduates.**" <http://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/unesco-partners-ministry-higher-education-and-scientific-research-improve-employment>
 - *CTV News* published an article and video report titled "**Iraq archaeologists learn new techniques for restoring artifacts after ISIS.**" The British Museum offers training to Iraqi archaeologists in "high-tech methods to preserve and document their history." One of the program's graduates is now leading an assessment at the ancient site of Nimrud. <http://www.ctvnews.ca/world/iraqi-archeologists-learn-new-techniques-for-restoring-artifacts-after-isis-1.3294229>
 - *ArtNet News* published an article titled "**Iraqi Antiquities Will Share the Limelight with Contemporary Works at Venice Biennale**" (by Lorena Munoz-Alonso). The Iraqi Museum loaned out artifacts to display beside contemporary art at the Venice Biennale Art Festival. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/fifty-iraqi-artifacts-iraqi-pavilion-venice-867308>
- February 20, 2017
- Yahoo News* published an article titled "**British Museum training Iraqi experts to save Mosul heritage**" (by Alice Tidey, AFP News). The British Museum is training Iraqi archaeologists in high-tech preservation and documentation methods of heritage sites. <https://sg.news.yahoo.com/british-museum-training-iraqi-experts-save-mosul-heritage-135857126.html>

- *Ruya Foundation* published an article titled “**Iraq Museum loans ancient and retrieved artefacts for the first time for the Iraq Pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale.**” An exhibit named ‘Archaic’ has been designed to be appear at the May 2017 57th Venice Biennale. The exhibit will contain 40 ancient Iraqi artifacts from the Iraq Museum that span six millennia.
<https://ruyafoundation.org/en/2017/02/venice-announcement-3/>

Press Release:

<https://d28x8h0673zmns.cloudfront.net/2017/02/Iraq-Pavilion-Full-Details-Press-Release-1.pdf>

- *The New York Times* published an article titled “**Looted Iraqi Art, Since Recovered, Will Be Shown at the Venice Biennale**” (by Christopher D. Shea). An Iraq Exhibit at the Venice Biennale titled “Archaic,” will include dozens of artefacts including medical artifacts, toys, statues, and jugs that were looted from the National Museum of Iraq. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/20/arts/design/looted-iraqi-art-since-recovered-will-be-shown-at-the-venice-biennale.html>

February 17, 2017

France 24 published an article titled “**Antique busts ruined in Palmyra will return to Syria.**” Badly damaged Palmyrene artefacts that were restored in Italy will be returned to Syria by the end of February 2017.

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170217-antique-busts-ruined-palmyra-will-return-syria>

- *DGAM* published an article titled “**On the end of February, DGAM will retrieve the two ancient Palmyrian funeral busts after restoration in Rome.**”
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2215>

February 16, 2017

Reuters published an article titled “**Displaced people of Syria’s “beehive” villages dream of return**” (by Angus McDowall). The mud houses of so-called “beehive villages” in Aleppo Governorate have been deserted as fighting rages in the area.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-aleppo-refugees-idUSKBN15VOLY>

- *The Telegraph* published an article titled “**Stone sculptures smashed by Isil in ancient city of Palmyra restored to former glory by Italian experts**” (by Nick Squires). Italian experts have restored two 2nd-century CE funerary busts using lasers and 3D printers to create resin prosthetics.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/16/stone-sculptures-smashed-isil-ancient-city-palmyra-restored/>

- **DGAM published an article titled “In Photos: Damage of Owch_Khan, Souk Al_Nahassein and Zaki-Mosque in old Aleppo.”** The DGAM prepared damage assessments for several historic buildings in Old Aleppo, including Khan Uch Kahn, Suq Khan al-Nahassin, and al-Zaki Mosque.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=2214>

- *Prague Daily Monitor* published an article titled “**Czech experts map 47 damaged sights in Iraqi Mosul.**” Four Czech experts have mapped 47 “architectonic heritage sites” as part of the project “The Threatened Architecture of Mosul” with the intent of aiding future reconstruction efforts.
<http://praguemonitor.com/2017/02/16/czech-experts-map-47-damaged-sights-iraqi-mosul>

- February 15, 2017 **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** hosted a public program titled “**Saving a Syrian Synagogue.**” Efforts to save the Jobar Synagogue in Aleppo are discussed.
<https://www.ushmm.org/online/calendar/eventDetails.php?event=MASYRIASYNG0217>

- *The New York Times* published an article titled “**The Ancient Syrian City ISIS Is Destroying, Preserved Online**” (by Jason Farago). A review on the new online exhibition “The Legacy of Ancient Palmyra” hosted by the Getty Research Institute.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/15/arts/design/palmyra-syria-isis.html>

- February 13, 2017 *Reuters* published an article titled “**In the rubble, Aleppo’s citizens work to save battered heritage**” (by Angus McDowall). Volunteer efforts begin in the Old City of Aleppo, including Khan al-Jumruk, in anticipation of eventual restoration. DGAM director Maamoun Abdulkarim is interviewed.
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-aleppo-heritage-idUSKBN15S1T4>

- Several media outlets reported on Russian intel reports that ISIL militants were planning new destruction at the ancient site of Palmyra.
<http://edition.cnn.com/2017/02/13/middleeast/palmyra-isis-new-destruction-planned/>
<http://tass.com/world/930503>
<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702141050673464-daesh-palmyra-monuments-syrian-army/>



Various media outlets published reports discussing new drone footage of Palmyra obtained by Russia. The footage shows damage to the Tetrapylon and Roman Theater.

<https://www.rt.com/news/377164-palmyra-video-isis-destruction/>

<http://www.ibtimes.com/whats-going-palmyra-new-video-shows-isis-damage-islamic-state-prepares-destroy-2491033>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/russian-drone-footage-show-wide-damage-syrias-palmyra-45454562>

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/russia-reports-damage-palmyra-archaeological-091533973.html>

<http://gulfnews.com/news/mena/syria/russian-drone-footage-show-wide-damage-at-syria-s-palmyra-1.1977801>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-4219082/Russia-reports-new-damage-Palmyra-archaeological-site.html>

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702131050609765-russia-evidence-daesh-palmyra-destruction/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38954078>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-reports-new-damage-to-palmyra-archaeological-site/2017/02/13/7e8199dc-f1cd-11e6-9fb1-2d8f3fc9c0ed_story.html



EAMENA blog published an article titled “**The difficulty of verifying heritage damage reports**” (by Dr. Michael Fradley). The risk of misinformation of damage to sites as a result of open source data is discussed. <http://eamena.arch.ox.ac.uk/the-difficulty-of-verifying-heritage-damage-reports/>

February 12, 2017

Aesthetica published an article titled “**Archaic Resonance.**” The Ruya Foundation announced the lineup of Iraqi artists, both modern and contemporary, who will be featured along with Iraqi artifacts at the upcoming 57th Venice Biennale in May 2017. <http://rite.ly/jpbd>

February 11, 2017

DGAM published an article titled “**A New Year after Years of Tragedy Besetting Cultural Heritage of Syria: 2017.**” The DGAM’s ongoing efforts to restore Syrian cultural heritage sites are discussed. <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2210>

- **Syrian Network for Human Rights** published its January vital facilities report titled “**Despite Ankara Ceasefire Agreement, 79 Vital Civilian Facilities were Attacked in January 2017.**”
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/02/11/32082/>

- February 9, 2017 *Smithsonian* published an article titled “**Why We Need to Fight to Save Mosul’s Cultural Heritage**” (by Katharyn Hanson & Richard Kurin). The Smithsonian calls for for protection and preservation of Mosul’s cultural heritage.
<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/why-we-need-fight-save-mosuls-cultural-heritage-180962091/>

- *La Croix* published an article titled “**Les 100 sacrilèges de Daech en Irak**” (“The 100 sacrileges of Daesh in Iraq”)(by Jérémy André). More than 100 holy sites in northern Iraq have been desecrated by ISIL.
<http://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Monde/Les-100-sacrileges-de-Daech-en-Irak-2017-02-09-1200823669>

- *La Croix* published an article titled “**Comment les yézidis ont tenté de sauver leurs temples**” (“How the Yezidis tried to save their temples”) (by Jérémy André). ISIL destroyed 44 Yezidi temples as they invaded areas of northern Iraq, executing those who stayed behind to defend them.
<http://www.la-croix.com/Religion/Monde/Comment-les-yezidis-ont-tente-de-sauver-leurs-temples-2017-02-09-1200823672>

- **DGAM** published an article titled “**In Photos: Damages of Al-Hulwiah Madrasa, Khan Al-Olabieh, Khan Al-Salahieh and Masbaneit Al-Jabaily in old Aleppo.**” New photographs show damage to several sites in old Aleppo, including Madrasa al-Halawiye, Khan al-Oulabiya, Khan al-Salahiye, and Masbanat al-Zanabili.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2209>

- February 8, 2017 *ANSA* published an article titled “**Italy restoring damaged art from Palmyra.**” An agreement between Italy’s “Incontro di Civiltà” (Meeting of Civilisations) Association” and the DGAM has allowed for restoration work to take place on two Palmyrene busts, damaged by ISIL militants, in Italy.
http://www.ansa.it/english/news/lifestyle/arts/2017/02/07/italy-restoring-damaged-art-from-palmyra_e04bd2c0-a0f4-4d5f-836a-537c83ccc8de.html

- **The Czech Academy of Sciences Gallery of Science and Art** will host an exhibit titled “**Monuments of Mosul in Danger**” from February 8 – March 31, 2017. The exhibit will showcase the first results of a digital collection project on destroyed heritage in the city of Mosul.
<http://martinfryc.eu/vystavy/vernissaz-vystavy-ohrozena-architektura-mesta-mosulu/>

- Press Announcement:
http://www.orient.avcr.cz/miranda2/export/sitesavcr/data.avcr.cz/humansci/orient/akce/aktuality/2017/PR_Mosul_ENG.pdf

- *The Iris* published an article titled “**The New Ruins of Syria**” (by Ross Burns). Archaeologist Ross Burns discusses recent destruction of cultural heritage in Syria and the importance of monitoring and reporting on this damage.
<http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/the-new-ruins-of-syria/>

- **The J. Paul Getty Museum** hosts an online exhibit titled “**The Legacy of Ancient Palmyra.**”
http://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/exhibitions/palmyra/

- February 7, 2017 *Yale News* published an article titled “**Yale-developed software program boosts cultural preservation efforts**” (by William Weir). CHER-Ob is a new initiative based at Yale University that will use current and past research to create a ‘container’ on particular items, including cultural heritage items at risk around the world.
<http://news.yale.edu/2017/02/07/yale-developed-software-program-boosts-cultural-preservation-efforts>

- February 6, 2017 *Harpers Bazaar Arabia* published an article titled “**Iraq Goes Against the Odds With New Museum**” (by Tanika D’Souza). A former palace of Saddam Hussein has been converted to a museum and “artistic space” in Basra, hosting pieces from the “Hellenistic period to the present day.”
<http://www.harpersbazaararabia.com/art/exhibitions/news/iraq-goes-against-the-odds-with-new-museum>

- February 5, 2017 *Iraqi News* published an article titled “**Najaf Police confiscates 35 artifacts hidden inside vehicle**” (by Loaa Adel). The Najaf Police Directorate announced that it had recovered 35 artifacts belonging “to various historic eras” that were found hidden inside a vehicle traveling from al-Muthanna Governorate.
<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/najaf-police-confiscates-35-artifacts-hidden-inside-vehicle/>

- **DGAM** published an article titled **“In Photos: Damages of Al_Adlieh Mosque, Al_Sfahieh Mosque, Al_Shibani Church, Bimarstan Al-Araghoni and Farhat Church in old Aleppo.”** New photographs show damage to several sites in old Aleppo, including al-Adliyah Mosque, al-Saffahiya Mosque, al-Shibani Church, Bimaristan al-Arghuni, and the Maronite Church of St. Elias.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2207>

- February 2, 2017 *International Business Times* published an article titled **“After Isis: Inside Mosul’s destroyed univeristy and five-star hotel”** (by David Sim). New photographs show damage to to the Ninawa Owbrawi Hotel and Mosul University.
<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/after-isis-inside-mosuls-destroyed-university-five-star-hotel-1604459>

- *The Syria Times* published an article titled **“Poitrovsky announces agreement to reconstruct monuments damaged by terrorism in Syria.”** According to the Director of the Russian Hermitage Museum, an agreement is being prepared between the Russian Ministry of Culture, the museum, and “other cultural institutes” to reconstruct monuments damaged by ISIL in Palmyra.
<http://www.syriatimes.sy/index.php/archaeology/28943-piotrovsky-announces-agreement-to-reconstruct-monuments-damaged-by-terrorism-in-syria>

- February 1, 2017 *PBS Newshour* published an article titled **“Damage to Aleppo ‘much bigger’ than expected, U.N. official says”** (by News Desk). Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, recently toured Aleppo and described the damage as “much bigger” than what he had anticipated.
<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/damage-aleppo-much-bigger-expected-u-n-official-says/>

- *The Ismaili* published an article titled **“Syria exhibit tells of rich multicultural history of hope and resilience”** (by Faranaaz Alimohamed and Sahir Dewji). This article reviews the “Syria: A Living History” exhibit currently on display at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto.
<http://www.theismaili.org/heritage-expressions/syria-exhibit-tells-rich-multicultural-history-hope-and-resilience>

- **Archaeological Institute of America** sponsored an event featuring event ASOR CHI Principal Investigator Michael Danti who presented his abstract **“A Momentary Erasure of Millennia: The Cultural Heritage Crises in Syria and Northern Iraq.”**
<https://www.archaeological.org/events/22481>



College of Arts & Sciences Forum sponsored ASOR CHI Co-Investigator and Founder of The Day After Heritage Initiative (TDA) Amr al-Azm discussion titled “**Cultural Heritage in Post-Conflict Stabilization and Reconciliation.**” The talk took place at Ohio University.

<http://www.ohio-forum.com/2017/01/cultural-heritage-post-conflict-stabilization-reconciliation-feb-1/>