

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

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Weekly Report 34 — March 30, 2015

Michael D. Danti, Scott Branting, Cheikhmous Ali, Tate Paulette, Allison Cuneo, Kathryn Franklin, and David Elitzer

Executive Summary

During the reporting period, ASOR CHI Co-director Dr. Scott Branting and the ASOR CHI Geospatial Team and UNITAR-UNOSAT completed initial analyses of high-resolution satellite imagery from early March showing the Northwest Palace at Nimrud (ancient Kalhu) in Iraq. These two independent analyses found evidence for likely intentional destruction at the north end of the Northwest Palace (see image below), presumably by ISIL militants, but this remains to be confirmed.

In the satellite imagery, ASOR CHI and UNITAR-UNOSAT note evidence for damage to the standing architecture of the Northwest Palace and the probable intentional destruction of architectural relief sculpture at the site. Two debris fields visible at the north end of the palace may indicate the removal of sculptures from inside the palace for performative deliberate destruction (presumably for an ISIL video). Tire tracks left by heavy machinery are visible inside the main entrance to the throne room, and the lintel of the entrance leading through the modern curtain wall to the throne room has been destroyed, probably by heavy machinery. There is also concern that there could be additional damage, done by hand, below the shed roof that would not be visible in the satellite imagery.

In Syria, the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra has been exposed to increased risk of combat damage following intense fighting in the area and the capture of Bosra by rebel forces. Rebel forces also captured the city of Idlib. The Islamist/Salafist group Ahrar ash-Sham (Harakat Ahrar ash-Sham al-Islamiyya, HASI) currently controls the Idlib Museum. There are varying/conflicting accounts regarding the security situation at the museum and the facility's current on-site holdings, as well as unverified reports of unspecified parties attempting to enter the facility.

Key Points

- Analyses of Digital Globe satellite imagery by ASOR CHI and UNITAR-UNOSAT reveal probable intentional destruction at the site of Nimrud, Iraq, in the Northwest Palace. (pp. 53–85)
- The Idlib Museum in Syria is increasingly threatened by the recent capture of the city by rebel forces — the museum is currently under the control of the Islamist/Salafist group Ahrar ash-Sham.

¹ This report is based on research conducted by the “Syria Preservation Initiative: Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria.” 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.

- The capture of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra by rebel forces may place this site at heightened risk of destruction. Recent combat in the area has impacted the site. (pp. 13–41)
- The Syrian Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums recently released new information on looting at the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Palmyra. (pp. 42–52)



The Northwest Palace at Nimrud, Iraq, showing probable signs of intentional destruction of the structure and sculptures by ISIL. See ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0067 Update, below. (ASOR CHI; DigitalGlobe image taken in early March 2015)

Heritage Timeline

March 30, 2015

The New York Times published an article titled “**Islamic State Destruction Renews Debate Over Repatriation of Antiquities**” (by Graham Bowley and Tom Mashburg), which summarizes the debate among archaeologists, museum curators, and collectors over antiquities repatriation since the attack on the Mosul Museum. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/31/arts/design/islamic-state-destruction-renews-debate-over-repatriation-of-antiquities.html>

March 28, 2015

During a meeting between UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova and Prime Minister of Iraq Haider Al-Abadi, **UNESCO** launched the **#Unite4Heritage** program, part of a global campaign of “awareness-raising and mobilization of young people to stand up for the safeguarding of heritage threatened by violent extremism and to provide a counter-narrative to sectarian propaganda.” UNESCO is also preparing to launch a new project, “**Preventive Conservation of Iraq’s Museum Collections and Cultural Heritage Sites at Imminent Risk**,” to protect Iraqi museums and antiquities. The Japanese Ambassador to Iraq, Kazuya Nashida, announced that **Japan would pledge a grant of \$1.5 million to preserve antiquities in Iraq** in response to the destruction and looting of artifacts and sites by ISIS.

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/director-general/singleview-dg/news/director_general_meets_with_iraqi_prime_minister/#.VRhIijSsXqM

<http://www.unite4heritage.org/>

<http://www.mta.gov.iq/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=33>

- **APSA** posted a video showing the state of several mosaics, the Roman amphitheater, and other archaeological remains in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra**, in the wake of the recent battle between rebel and regime forces. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7YF-U3Ny_w&feature=youtu.be
- The **DGAM** posted a statement of concern about the events taking place in Idlib and, in particular, about the state of **Idlib Museum**. They called on the local community to take concrete steps to protect the museum and monuments and to provide support for the staff of the Idlib antiquities department. <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1634>
- *BBC News* published an article titled “Syria crisis: **Idlib ‘captured by Islamist groups.**” <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32100644>

March 27, 2015

ICCROM announced its fourth **course on First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis**, to begin March 30, 2015. According to the press release, “[o]ver the next four weeks, 21 professionals from risk-prone areas such as Gaza, Guatemala, Haiti, Philippines, Syria and Ukraine will convene in Amsterdam to participate in the international course on First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis, jointly organized by ICCROM, the Smithsonian Institution, the Netherlands National Commission of UNESCO, and 11 national institutions including the Netherlands Ministries of Culture and Education.”

<http://www.iccrom.org/first-aid-to-cultural-heritage-in-times-of-crisis-2/>

March 26, 2015

La Dépêche published an article titled “En Syrie, des fonctionnaires dévoués sauvent des milliers d’antiquités.” Based on interviews with Maamoun Abdulkarim (Director-General of Antiquities and Museums, Syria), Yaarub al-Abdullah (former Director of Antiquities for Deir ez-Zor), and Ayham al-Fakhry (former Director of Antiquities in Raqqa), the article describes **efforts by the DGAM to protect museum objects from looting and destruction**. According to Abdulkarim, the DGAM has placed **300,000 objects and thousands of manuscripts from 34 different museums in protected locations**. This includes 80,000 objects from the National Museum in Damascus and, for example, 13,000 objects that were evacuated from Deir ez-Zor on August 2, 2014. The same article was published in English by *artdaily.org*, titled “**In Syria, National Museum of Damascus races to save antiquities from looting, damage**” (by Sammy Ketz).

<http://www.ladepêche.fr/article/2015/03/26/2074817-en-syrie-des-fonctionnaires-devoues-sauvent-des-milliers-d-antiquites.html>

<http://artdaily.com/news/77428/In-Syria--National-Museum-of-Damascus-races-to-save-antiquities-from-looting--damage#.VRVniJPF8e6>

- The **DGAM** posted a series of images, taken on March 25, 2015, showing damage in the area surrounding the Roman theater at the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra**, along with a plea for help from local residents in protecting the ancient city and, in particular, the Roman theater, which contains a small museum for classical antiquities. <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1631>
- As reported by the Iraqi Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, **Adel Fahad Alhurcab**, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, **attended a seminar on the current state of preservation in Nineveh Province**. Experts employed by the ministry made presentations on the condition of the Mosul Museum collection and archaeological sites attacked by ISIS. <http://www.mta.gov.iq/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=28>

- *Nature* published an article titled “**Experts struggle to confirm archaeological damage in Iraq: Satellites offer clues to true scope of destruction by terrorist group ISIS**” (by Michael Bawaya). Drawing on interviews with **Jesse Casana** (Co-Director, ASOR CHI; Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Arkansas) and **Elizabeth Stone** (SUNY Stony Brook), the article highlights **the use of satellite imagery to document the destruction of cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq**.
<http://www.nature.com/news/experts-struggle-to-confirm-archaeological-damage-in-iraq-1.17155>
 - The **Antiquities Coalition** and the **Middle East Institute** announced a conference titled “**Culture Under Threat: The Security, Economic and Cultural Impact of Antiquities Theft in the Middle East**.” To be held in Cairo on May 13–14, 2015, under the auspices of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Antiquities, this emergency strategy session will “**focus on regional solutions to the growing destruction, looting, and trafficking of antiquities across the Middle East and the links between antiquities racketeering and terrorist financing**.” Foreign affairs and culture/antiquities ministers from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the UAE, as well as Irina Bokova (Director-General of UNESCO), and leading experts on counterterrorism, terrorist financing, archaeology, and heritage law have all been invited to attend.
<http://theantiquitiescoalition.blogspot.com/2015/03/regional-conference-aims-to-shut-down.html>
 - *Almada Press* published an article announcing the **reopening of the Nasiriyah Museum**, 25 years after it was closed. According to the Minister of Tourism, the reopening is explicitly intended as a response to the targeting of antiquities by Da’esh.
<http://www.almadapress.com/ar/NewsDetails.aspx?NewsID=46119>
- March 25, 2015
- The World Post* published an article titled “**Syria Rebels Capture Ancient Town of Bosra from Regime Forces**” (by Zeina Karam, AP). http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/25/syria-rebels-bosra_n_6938442.html
- *Anadolu Agency* published an article titled “**Daesh 'selling' stolen Iraqi artifacts to Europe buyers**.” According to the article, **Qais Hussein Rashid**, Deputy Minister of Culture, has indicated that the ministry has information about **artifacts stolen from the Mosul Museum that are now being sold in Europe**.
<http://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/483474--daesh-selling-stolen-iraqi-artifacts-to-europe-buyers>

- *The Times Literary Supplement* published an article titled “**Modern war, ancient casualties**” (by **Eleanor Robson**). The article provides a detailed look at the ongoing, **deliberate destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq** and the international response to the crisis. Dr. Robson argues, in particular, that the international community’s first response — once ISIS has been eliminated — should be to provide support for **rebuilding “the academic and community infrastructure of cultural heritage.”** In other words, attention should be focused, first, on helping the Iraqi people and, second, on the sites and artifacts that have been impacted. <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1535646.ece>
- The **DGAM** published a set of photos showing the extent of damage from illicit digging at the **Southeast Necropolis, UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra**. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0058**. <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1629>
- **UNESCO** released a **statement by Director-General Irina Bokova about Bosra**, “[calling] on all parties to act for the protection of Bosra’s unique cultural heritage and [appealing] to all to refrain from any military use or targeting of cultural heritage sites and monuments, in respect of international obligations.” http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/statement_by_director_general_on_bosra_syria/#.VRV5hZPF8e5
- **APSA** posted a video showing combat in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra**. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Ulr1YGzmrI&feature=youtu.be>
- **APSA** posted a video showing the state of the citadel/amphitheater at the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra** after the battle between the Syrian regime and rebel forces. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0057**. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvGKbE4V8rM&feature=youtu.be>
- **APSA** posted a series of images showing the state of archaeological monuments in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra** after the battle between the Syrian regime and rebel forces. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0057**. <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/daraa/bosra-en/1175-bosra-after-battle.html>
- **APSA** posted a video showing the Citadel in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo** from above. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsVOyYgZj2M&feature=youtu.be>

- *The Washington Post* published an article titled “**Florida man admits he was trying to sell guns he thought belonged to Saddam Hussein**” (by Mark Berman). The focus of the article is a case involving the attempted sale of seven guns that were reputedly smuggled out of Iraq and illegally imported into the United States. The article also, however, contextualizes this case within the broader pattern of looting and antiquities trafficking that has plagued Iraq since the invasion in 2003.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2015/03/25/florida-man-admits-he-was-trying-to-sell-guns-he-thought-belonged-to-saddam-hussein/>

March 24, 2015

The **DGAM** reported **severe clashes** since March 21, 2015, in the area surrounding the Citadel (from Straight Street to the Bab al-Hawa, the western entrance to the city) in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra**. According to the report, the Citadel and residential areas were hit by explosive shells that burned the Bosra al-Sham hotel and many houses.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1627>

- **APSA** posted a video showing “bombing with TNT barrels” in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra**.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEnL-4izikA&feature=youtu.be>

- On the Protect Syrian Archaeology Facebook page, **APSA** posted a series of **photos showing archaeological monuments in the city of Raqqa**. The photos were originally **posted by ISIS** on March 22, 2015.
<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1263888127051629.1073741897.324869057620212&type=1>

- *The National Law Review* published an article titled “**ISIS’s Destruction of Antiquities and Ancient Sites**” (by Kevin P. Ray), which analyses the destruction of cultural heritage perpetrated by ISIS within the context of international humanitarian law.
<http://www.natlawreview.com/article/isis-s-destruction-antiquities-and-ancient-sites>

- *RT America* aired an **interview with Stephennie Mulder** (Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture, University of Texas at Austin), titled “Questions Remain, ISIS Video Shows Destruction of Ancient Artifacts”(interview starts at 18:25). The interview includes discussion of the propagandistic nature of the **deliberate destruction events carried out recently by ISIS**, the authenticity of the objects destroyed by ISIS at the Mosul Museum, and the fact that not only ISIS but also a number of other parties involved in the current conflict (e.g. Assad-regime soldiers and the FSA) have been involved in **looting and antiquities trafficking**.
<http://rt.com/bulletin-board/243769-rt-america-march24/>

- The *International Business Times* published an article titled “**Isis Iraq: Bulldozing of Nimrud and Hatra disputed by archaeologists and satellite images**” (Gianluca Mezzofiore). Citing Marc Lebeau (founder of the s h i r í n initiative) and Giovanni Boccardi (UNESCO World Heritage Center), the article highlights the need to cross-check information about destruction events using multiple lines of evidence. <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/isis-iraq-bulldozing-nimrud-hatra-disputed-by-archaeologists-satellite-images-1493361>
- The *Guardian* published an article titled “**Syria’s war-scarred citadel of Aleppo: a history of cities in 50 buildings, day 2**” (by Jonathan Steele). The article provides a historical look at the Aleppo Citadel, ending with a brief discussion of its role in the current crisis. <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/mar/24/syria-war-citadel-aleppo-history-cities-buildings>
- The *World Post* published an article titled “**The Tomb Raiders of Mesopotamia: Fighting ISIL, terrorism financing and saving our cultural heritage**” (by Mark V. Vlastic). According to the article, “[a]ll responsible actors in the antiquities market should agree to a common sourcing, due diligence and sales standard, thus limiting the plunder and sale of blood antiquities. By working together, we can limit the financing going to ISIL, thereby helping save lives and preserve our common cultural heritage. These efforts can help places like Iraq and Syria, in any future national reconciliation and peace building efforts.” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-v-vlastic/the-tomb-raiders-of-mesop_b_6934682.html
- The *Observer* published an article titled “**Bill in Congress Seeks to Rein in Trade by ISIS in Looted Antiquities**” (by Alexandra Peers), which discusses **HR 1493**, aimed to “coordinate U.S. efforts to protect historic sites around the world and to restrict imports of cultural property illegally trafficked from Syria.” <http://observer.com/2015/03/bill-in-congress-seeks-to-reign-in-trade-by-isis-in-looted-antiquities/>
- Reports emerged that a “**5000-year-old stone relief from Ancient Sumer in Mesopotamia ... [is] among the impressive artifacts confiscated recently from treasure hunters and antique traffickers by the police in the northeastern Bulgarian city of Shumen.**” <http://archaeologyinbulgaria.com/2015/03/24/bulgarian-police-seize-ancient-roman-archaeology-artifacts-slab-with-sumerian-motifs-from-treasure-hunters/>

March 23, 2015

The **AAAS Geospatial Technologies Project** released a **statement urging researchers and others to exercise caution in their use of satellite imagery** (and other new technologies) to gather information in the context of volatile political situations (e.g., the current conflict in Iraq) and to consider the ethical implications of disclosing the potentially sensitive information gleaned from these sources to the public.

<http://www.aaas.org/page/satellite-imaging-cultural-sites-conflict-cautionary-note>

March 20, 2015

Deutsche Welle published an article titled **“Italy appeals for UN force to protect heritage sites from Islamic State siege”** (by Natalie Muller). The article highlights Italy’s call for the creation of a UN military unit — “an international rapid response force” — tasked with defending monuments and archaeological sites in conflict zones. <http://www.dw.de/italy-appeals-for-un-force-to-protect-heritage-sites-from-islamic-state-siege/a-18331370>

Military and Political Context

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

1. Hasakah City, al-Hasakah Governorate
 - On March 23, more than 50 civilians as well as fighters were killed by ISIS suicide explosions.²
2. Homs Governorate
 - On March 23, ISIS attacked the regime-controlled Tadmur Airport and attempted to take control of it. Regime forces bombarded Talbisa and clashed with rebel forces in Om Sharshouh and al-Hilalia in Northern Homs.³
3. Idlib Governorate
 - On March 23, airstrikes hit Jebel Zawiya, including Hanotin and Deir Sonbol. SARG helicopters dropped barrel bombs on the Jabhat al-Nusra-occupied sites of al-Khazzanat camp and Taftanaz Airport.⁴
 - Jabhat al-Nusra, HASI and other rebel groups announced a new joint offensive to seize regime-controlled Idlib city, following reports on March 19 that regime forces had deployed reinforcements and erected additional checkpoints in anticipation of an assault. Clashes are ongoing as of March 24.⁵
 - On March 28, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that Ahrar al-Sham, Jund al-Aqsa, and Nusra Front had taken control of the city of Idlib after four days of intense fighting.⁶

² <http://syriahr.com/en/2015/03/54-civilians-including-35-children-killed-by-is-massacre-in-al-hasakah-city/>

³ <http://syriahr.com/en/2015/03/is-attacks-tadmur-military-airport-in-homs/>

⁴ <http://syriahr.com/en/2015/03/18-air-strikes-on-the-zawiya-mount-and-busra-al-sham/>

⁵ J. Cafarella, C. Kozak et al. 2015. Syria Situation Report March 17-24. Institute for the Study of War.

⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32100644>

4. Daraa Governorate

- On March 23, 13 rebel and Islamist fighters were killed in clashes with regime forces in Bosra al-Sham. Barrel bombs were dropped on Tafas, Saida, Ma'raba, and Jamrin.⁷

5. Aleppo Governorate

- On March 23, 13 civilians were killed by shells fired by rebels, which fell on Sa'd Allah al-Jabry, Baron Street, al-Jamilia, and other areas in Aleppo city.⁸

6. Rif Dimashq Governorate

- On March 20, Jabhat al-Nusra and other rebel forces seized positions in the countryside near the regime- and Hezbollah-controlled towns of Asal al-Ward and Felita in the Qalamoun region. In response to increased anti-regime mobilizations in the area, Hezbollah has reportedly deployed reinforcements and ammunition to the border in preparation for an upcoming offensive.⁹

7. Hama Governorate

- Regime military police and elite Syrian Arab Army 4th Armored Division soldiers reportedly clashed in central Hama, for unknown reasons. Military police reinforcements were deployed to arrest 4th Armored division soldiers amid a generally heightened security presence.
- On March 21, in an apparent initial attempt to sever the regime alternate supply route to Aleppo, ISIS attacked the regime-held area of Sheikh Hilal east of Hama city, killing at least 63 soldiers and militiamen. This action followed a double SVBIED attack against a regime air defense base by Jabhat al-Nusra and HASI on the as-Salamiya road on March 19.¹⁰

Other key points:

- As of March 22, Harakat Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiya (HASI) absorbed Suqor al-Sham, merging their leadership structures and forming a "central force" under the name "Suqor al-Sham Battalions."¹¹ Though HASI is not currently affiliated with Jabhat al-Nusra, in the absence of western support for the opposition these groups may partner with JN and other Islamist groups for joint action against the Assad regime.
- The Islamist-leaning Faylaq al-Rahman absorbed the local HASI affiliate in the Eastern Ghouta suburbs of Damascus, citing ongoing pressure that requires increased rebel coordination. This development follows increased rebel concern over the emergence of new ISIS-affiliated brigades in the area, which prompted a ruling by the Eastern Ghouta Unified Command prohibiting the creation of new rebel factions in their area.¹²

⁷ <http://syriahr.com/en/2015/03/18-air-strikes-on-the-zawiya-mount-and-busra-al-sham/>

⁸ <http://syriahr.com/en/2015/03/13-killed-by-shells-on-aleppo-city/>

⁹ J. Cafarella, C. Kozak et al. 2015. Syria Situation Report March 17-24. Institute for the Study of War.

¹⁰ J. Cafarella, C. Kozak et al. 2015. Syria Situation Report March 17-24. Institute for the Study of War.

¹¹ J. Cafarella, C. Kozak et al. 2015. Syria Situation Report March 17-24. Institute for the Study of War.

¹² J. Cafarella, C. Kozak et al. 2015. Syria Situation Report March 17-24. Institute for the Study of War.

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

1. Salah ad-Din Governorate:

- On March 18, just prior to the reporting period, security forces began an intensive artillery bombardment of ISIS positions in central Tikrit. Though villages to the northeast of Tikrit (“towards Tuz Khurmatu”) have been cleared, tribal leaders in the Zarea area stated that ISIS has surrounded the villages in that area north of Tikrit.¹³
- On March 20, ISIS members attacked Dujila village, north of Samarra.
- On 3/24, ISIS members attacked Mazraa village, and were killed by tribal fighters and security forces. “Intense airstrikes” forced ISIS in the area to withdraw.¹⁴
- On 3/25 a security source reported that four ISIS members wearing SVESTs targeted security forces in the Qadisiyah neighborhood north of Tikrit, but were killed by IA, police, and Popular Mobilization forces.
- On 3/25 a security source stated that heavy Peshmerga shelling forced ISIS to abandon headquarters facilities in Bashiqa as well as nearby areas leading to al-Shalalat and al-Nuran, northeast of Mosul.

2. Eastern al-Anbar Governorate:

- On March 19, just prior to the reporting period, the Special Republican Guard supported by coalition air cover conducted “cleaning operations” in neighborhoods in Ramadi, killing 14 ISIS members. ISIS was targeted by coalition airstrikes in western Ramadi, Abu Dhiab Island, and Thar Thar. Airstrikes in the Fallujah area destroyed an ISIS “rocket storage facility” and killed ISIS officials.¹⁵
- On 3/24, ISIS launched three separate attacks east of Ramadi; one using armored bulldozers, one using armored vehicles, and a final attack by four fighters wearing SVESTs. The attacks targeted 1st Division locations; all were reportedly neutralized.¹⁶
- On 3/25, an anonymous security source stated that “violent clashes” were taking place between ISIS and security forces in Saqlawiyah, Thira Dijla, and the cement plant east of Fallujah. Col. Juma Fiza al-Jumili stated that a combined force assisted by coalition air support conducted a security operation in the Sada Abu Shjal area northwest of Fallujah, killing 30 ISIS fighters and destroying a number of vehicles.

3. Western Diyala Governorate:

- On March 18, security forces stated that Samer al-Anbaki, the head of the al-Khalis appeals court, was killed by “unidentified individuals.” An Anbaki tribal leader warned that his tribe’s participation in resistance efforts is contingent on “urgent action” from the government.¹⁷

¹³ S. Adnan, P. Martin and O. al-Dulimi 2015. “Iraq Situation Report March 18-20, 2015.” Institute for the Study of War.

¹⁴ S. Adnan, P. Martin, and O. al-Dulimi 2015. Iraq Situation Report March 24-25. Institute for the Study of War.

¹⁵ S. Adnan, P. Martin and O. al-Dulimi 2015. “Iraq Situation Report March 18-20, 2015.” Institute for the Study of War.

¹⁶ S. Adnan, P. Martin, and O. al-Dulimi 2015. Iraq Situation Report March 24-25. Institute for the Study of War.

¹⁷ S. Adnan, P. Martin and O. al-Dulimi 2015. “Iraq Situation Report March 18-20, 2015.” Institute for the Study of War.

4. Ninawa Governorate:

- On March 24, a security force stated that ISIS had launched a three-pronged attack in Sinjar district west of Mosul.
- On March 25, coalition forces conducted three airstrikes on ISIS positions in the Badush area north of Mosul, killing four ISIS fighters.¹⁸

Other key points:

- On March 25, the New York Times reported that, according to officials, the extension of ISIS's holdout in Tikrit into a fourth week has required Iraqi forces to shift tactics. While their progress has brought them closer to Mosul and the north, the high cost of maintaining the Tikrit offensive has motivated strategists to shift their approach. Officials reported that their next move will be to secure al-Anbar Province in order to neutralize the ISIS presence there before moving to Ninawa. According to the article, some US officials are concerned about the entry of largely Shiite militia (led by Iranian advisers) into the heavily Sunni areas north and west of Tikrit as the offensive continues.¹⁹
- On March 26, the New York Times updated the report on the siege of Tikrit, reporting that two days of American-led airstrikes had already caused massive fallout among coalition forces, with thousands of Shiite militiamen boycotting the mission and some threatening to attack Americans, after an American strike accidentally killed nine Shiite fighters. At the same time, according to American officials, continued action in Tikrit was actually contingent on a withdrawal of the Shiite militias; the departure of the militia groups altogether could, however, seriously complicate the Iraqi counteroffensive. Representatives of the Shiite militia groups criticized American involvement, saying they don't need American help, and blaming American forces for dropping aid to ISIL and accidentally bombing their allies. The Institute for the Study of War (Iraq Situation Report March 24–25 2015) observed that the "militia refusal of air support in contrast to Iraqi government demand for it creates a new dynamic which has not been observed before since August 2014 when the campaign started" and which calls for increased attention to possible changes in the role of Iranian proxy militia in the operation.²⁰

¹⁸ S. Adnan, P. Martin, and O. al-Dulimi 2015. Iraq Situation Report March 24-25. Institute for the Study of War.

¹⁹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/25/world/middleeast/iraq-opts-for-consolidation-over-advance-in-battle-against-isis.html>

²⁰ S. Adnan, P. Martin, and O. al-Dulimi 2015. Iraq Situation Report March 24-25. Institute for the Study of War.

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 15-0057 UPDATE

Report Date: March 26, 2015

Site Name: UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Bosra (SHI #352), specifically the area around and including the Ayyubid Citadel (SHI #354)/Roman Amphitheater (SHI #365) including the Roman Kalybe, Mabrak Mosque (SHI # 361) and Manjak Hammam (SHI #360).

Date of Incident: March 21, 2015

Location: Bosra al-Sham, Daraa Governorate, Syria

Coordinates:

Site Description:

According to Ross Burns,

Bosra, Roman-era city in the Hauran with a virtually intact example of a Roman theatre. After Bosra became the capital of the new Roman province of Arabia in AD 106, the Nabataean town rapidly acquired most of the attributes of a Roman city with a long colonnaded axis and major facilities for the Roman legion stationed on its northern outskirts including baths.

In the Arab period, Bosra became an important centre of Islam and under the Ayyubids formed the outer strongpoint for the defence of Damascus against the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem to the south.²¹

Though the ancient center Bosra contains Roman, Byzantine and Islamic-period standing buildings, the second century Roman amphitheatre dominates the archaeological landscape of the city. The amphitheater was constructed probably under Trajan, and has been integrally preserved. It was successively fortified between the 5th and 13th century AD, with large square towers projecting from blind ramparts, and a defensive ditch.²² These fortifications completely enclose the roman theater, which originally accommodated 15,000 spectators. The amphitheater was restored by the Syrian DGAM shortly after Syrian independence. (See also CHI Incident Report 15-0057 in Weekly Report 33 for further description).

Ross Burns describes the citadel/amphitheatre as follows:

The theatre owes its exceptional state of preservation (from both the ravages of earthquakes and the building programs of later centuries) to its conversion into an Ayyubid fort guarding the southern approaches to Damascus.²³

In plan, the Ayyubid fortifications fit like a jacket around the half-circle of the Roman building, with major towers at the northeast and northwest corners, a central bastion along the diameter (north) and five subsidiary towers around the arc of the semi-circle. The first use of the theatre as a fortification dates back to the Umayyad and Fatimid eras and the first three towers (east and west of the stage and on the southeast rim of the theatre) were constructed under the Seljuk governors, Gumushtakin (1089) and Altuntash (mid 12th century). However, the major work, including the

²¹ <http://monumentsofsyria.com/places/bosra/>

²² <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/22>

²³ Burns, Ross. *The Monument of Syria: A Guide*. London: I. B. Tauris. p. 79

encircling ditch, dates from the Ayyubid response to the Crusader threat after 1200, particularly under Adil (sultan in Damascus 1196–1218) and his son, al-Salih Imad al-Din, who alternated as governor of Bosra and sultan of Damascus between 1218 and 1238. The later work relies less on smaller recycled stone and more on massive blocks up to 4.5 m long, particularly in the central tower of the north face.

The Ayyubid upper ramparts now house, on the upper terrace, a collection of sculptures from the Roman period as well as Roman and Arabic inscriptions. Al-Salih established a palace complex and mosque within the Roman auditorium, remains of which were removed during the reconstruction program. One surviving remnant is the water basin of the palace hammam which has been transferred to the ethnographic (folklore) collection in the southwestern tower.²⁴

Site Date: Roman – Ayyubid

Source of Destruction: On March 22, 2015, APSA posted a YouTube video showing what appears to be a missile strike against a sniper position on the fortification wall of the Citadel on March 22, 2015. No further information was provided.²⁵

On March 24, 2015, APSA posted a video that shows “bombing with TNT barrels” in Bosra.²⁶

On March 25, 2015, the Associated Press reported that Syrian rebels had taken the city of Bosra, which had been a regime stronghold throughout the conflict, from regime forces. According to reports from Daraa, the attack involved participation by 10,000 rebels from various groups, including Jabhat al-Nusra.²⁷ UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova published a statement, “[calling] on all parties to act for the protection of Bosra’s unique cultural heritage and [appealing] to all to refrain from any military use or targeting of cultural heritage sites and monuments, in respect of international obligations.”²⁸ APSA posted a video showing the battle in progress within the Old City.²⁹ APSA also posted a series of images showing the state of archaeological monuments in Bosra following the battle³⁰ and a compilation of video footage taken from around the citadel/amphitheater, showing the condition of the fortifications. The footage shows damage to the upper (restored) fortifications and some bullet damage. Pan shots along the exterior show direct mortar hits to the curtain wall above the moat. Footage of the interior of the amphitheater shows rebel gunmen walking on the stage and in the theater, occasionally firing into the air but also taking cell phone photos of the building.³¹

On March 25, APSA published a series of images showing damages to monuments in Bosra after the battle. While most of these images center on rebels with built heritage as a backdrop, a few show shelling damage to the citadel and nearby buildings, especially the Abu al-Feda Mosque to the east of the Citadel (NOTE: however, DGAM photo records show that primary damage to the Abu al-Feda

²⁴ Burns, Ross. *The Monument of Syria: A Guide*. London: I. B. Tauris. p. 82

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrAjZ8kgTEQ&feature=youtu.be>

²⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEnL-4izikA&feature=youtu.be>

²⁷ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/25/syria-rebels-bosra_n_6938442.html

²⁸ http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/statement_by_director_general_on_bosra_syria/#.VRVM8yldXv4

²⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UIr1YGzmrI&feature=youtu.be>

³⁰ <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/daraa/bosra-en/1175-bosra-after-battle.html>

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvGKbE4V8rM&feature=youtu.be>

Mosque minaret occurred prior to September 24, 2014³²). The images also show bullet damages to the Roman Kalybe, northwest of the citadel.³³

On March 26, 2015, the DGAM posted a set of images showing the citadel area, along with a general plea to the local residents of Bosra to protect the World Heritage Site.³⁴

On March 28, 2015 the DGAM posted a second set of images of minor damage to monuments in the ancient city of Bosra. According to the brief attached report, the main damage incurred by the most recent combat was to the residential areas around the Omari mosque and the Souq, and to the east of the ancient city.³⁵

Pattern: Militarization of strategically located/fortified archaeological sites and built heritage by both sides of the Syrian conflict. Combat damage.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to gather data on the impact of the developing situation on the built landscape of Bosra.

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DGAM March 28: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1633>

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March 28, 2015: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7YF-U3Ny_w&feature=youtu.be

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³² <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1427>

³³ <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/daraa/bosra-en.html>

³⁴ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1631>

³⁵ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1633>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross. *The Monument of Syria: A Guide*. London: I. B. Tauris. pp. 79–82



Bosra, exterior of Citadel/Roman Amphitheater (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



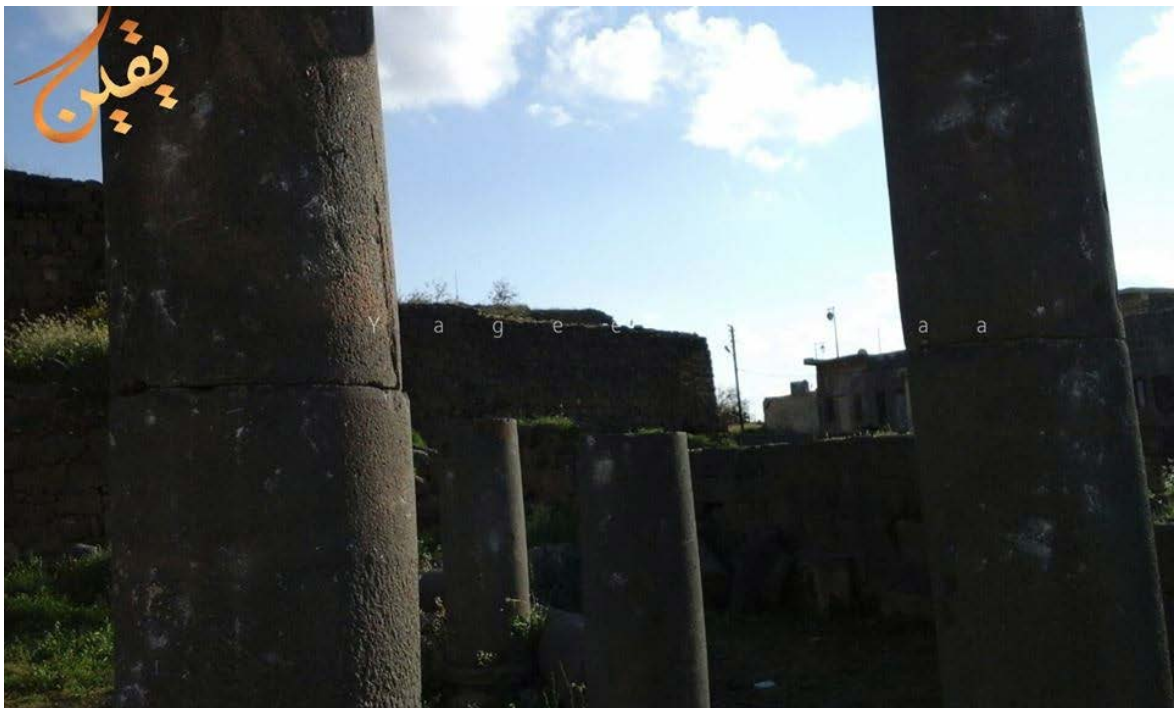
Bosra, interior of Amphitheater (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



Bosra, interior of Amphitheater (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



Bosra, interior of Amphiheater (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



Bosra, bullet damage to Kalybe columns (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



Bosra, bullet damage to Kalybe columns (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



Bosra, Abu al Feda Mosque (APSA; posted March 25, 2015)



Bosra, area surrounding the Roman theater (DGAM; posted March 26, 2015)



Bosra, area surrounding the Roman theater (DGAM; posted March 26, 2015)



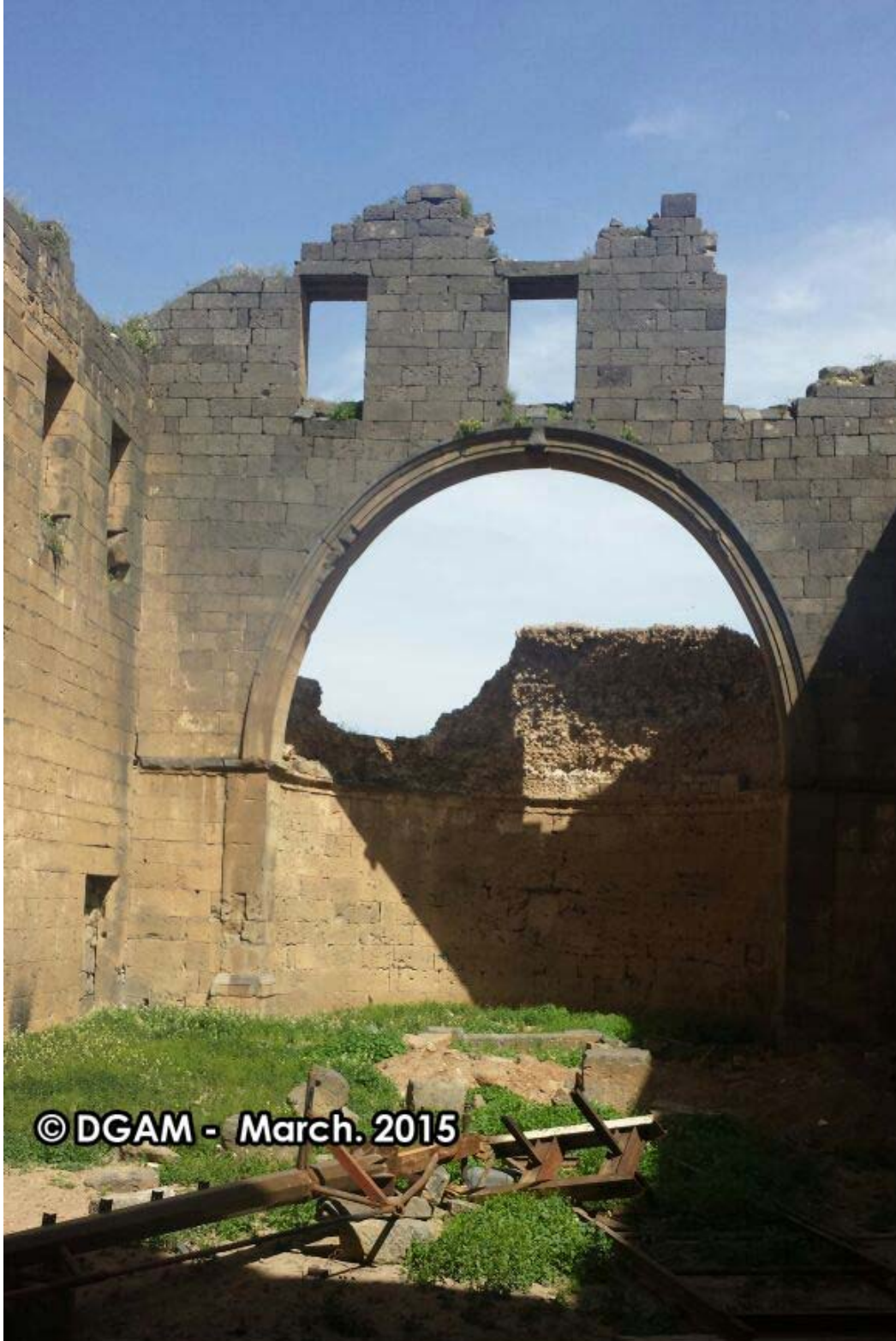
Bosra, area surrounding the Roman theater (DGAM; posted March 26, 2015)



Bosra, area surrounding the Roman theater (DGAM; posted March 26, 2015)



Bosra, area surrounding the Roman theater (DGAM; posted March 26, 2015)



Bosra, Monastery of Monk Bahira (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



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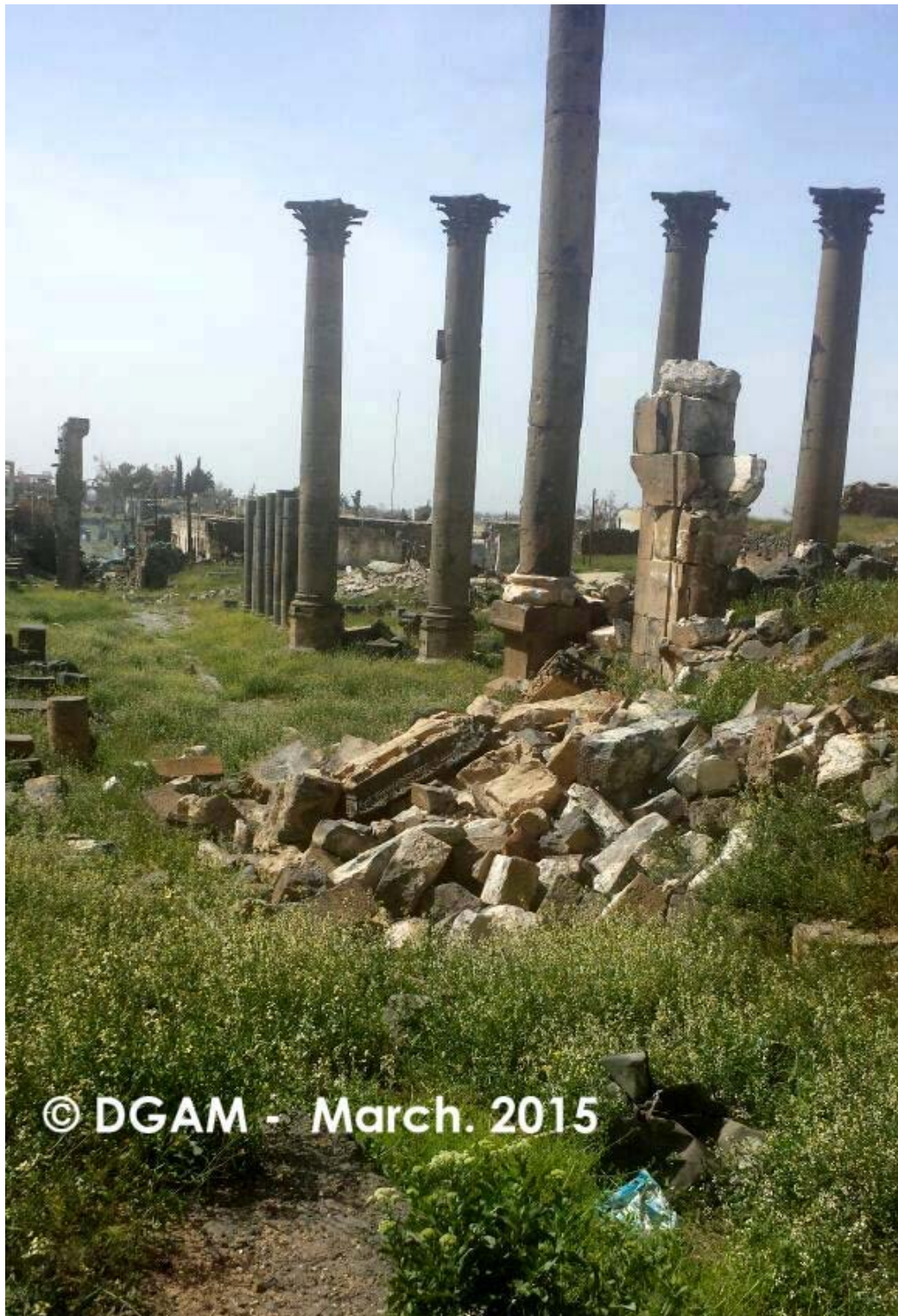
Bosra, Monastery of Monk Bahira (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Monastery of Monk Bahira (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Bab al-Hawa (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Kalybe (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Kalybe (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra cathedral (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Mabrak Mosque (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Manjak Hammam (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Manjak Hammam (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Omari Mosque (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



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Bosra, Omari Mosque (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Omari Mosque (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Omari Mosque (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Roman baths (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, Roman baths (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)



Bosra, street in ancient city (DGAM; posted March 28, 2015)

SHI 15-0058

Report Date: March 25, 2015

Site Name: Southeast Necropolis, UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra (SHI #876)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra, Homs Governorate, Syria

Coordinates:

Site Description:

According to Ross Burns,

[t]he southeast necropolis area lies south of the main oasis. Most noteworthy is the Tomb of Artaban (second half of the first century AD), discovered in 1957 during construction of an oil pipeline under which you descend to gain entry. The main gallery leads off into four side ones and is covered by a cradle vault. Fifty six niches each contained five *loculi*. Also noteworthy is the Tomb of Breiki (early second century AD – 25 m on right), restored by the Antiquities Department following its discovery in 1958. The architectural treatment is on a par with the Yarhai Tomb. The neighboring tom (15 m on right) is the Tomb of Bolha (inscription of AD 88).³⁶

According to Jessica Lee,

[t]he underground tombs in the Palmyra Southeast Necropolis were accidentally uncovered in the 1950s when the Iraq Petroleum Company was laying an oil pipeline; a section of the pipeline still runs across the stairs leading down to the Artaban Tomb, which dates from the second half of the first century AD. The doors of the tomb consist of two massive hinged stone slabs, decorated with griffins. Inside, the cradle-vaulted tomb follows much the same inverted T-shaped plan as the Hypogeum of the Three Brothers, except that there are two additional side galleries half-way down the main gallery. At the far end of the main gallery is a frieze depicting Artaban attended by various figures.

The Taibul Tomb was first excavated in 1994, and restored by a team of Syrian and Japanese archaeologists between 2001 and 2005. The entrance to the tomb consists of a massive single-slab stone door with carved panels and two small griffins. The lintel of the doorway is richly decorated, while above this is a carved satyr's head and an inscription dedicating the tomb, which dates from AD 128, to the two brothers Bwlh and Bwrp. Leading off on either side of the main gallery as you enter are two arched side-chambers with carved portals. In each side-chamber is a sarcophogus topped by a sculpture depicting a family banqueting scene. Both these side-chambers are comparatively simple; according to the inscription above the door they were dedicated in AD 220 and AD 222. Running around the main gallery is a particularly ornate frieze, while carved into the walls are the burial *loculi*, sealed by funerary busts. At the far end is a large frieze illustrating another family banqueting scene, presumably that of Bwlh and Bwrp.³⁷

Site Date: 1st–2nd century AD

³⁶ Burns, Ross. *The Monument of Syria: A Guide*. London: I. B. Tauris. p. 79

³⁷ Lee, J. 2010. *Footprint Syria Handbook*. Footprint Travel Guides.

Source of Destruction: The funerary busts that decorated the loculi of the Artaban and Taibul tombs, as well as other carvings from the tombs, have been heavily looted during the Syrian conflict. The most recent images published by the DGAM on March 25, 2015, show structural damage to the tombs themselves, a result of extensive digging and general neglect.³⁸

Pattern: Since at least mid-2013, the DGAM has reported the recovery of funerary sculptures looted from the Palmyra necropolis, as attempts are made to take them across the border for sale in Lebanon and Turkey or as they are confiscated in the western art market.³⁹ On August 25, 2014, the DGAM reported the confiscation of a funerary bust positively identified as originating from the Taibul Tomb of the southeast necropolis;⁴⁰ however, several confiscations of caches of multiple statues and statue fragments were made earlier in 2014.⁴¹ In November, 2014, the antiquities authority in Palmyra was able to assess the status of the Artaban tomb and reported that looters had removed soil from the tomb, stolen the gate, and stolen 22 funeral busts as well as a carved child's headstone.⁴² Later, on November 22, 2014, the DGAM reported the recovery of the three busts that had decorated a funerary bed relief in the Taibul tomb; photographs of the recovered sculptures were not provided.⁴³

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: Palmyra has been vulnerable since the start of the conflict due to its proximity to the Shaer Oil field. The site has been extensively militarized and has been damaged by both combat and looting. ASOR CHI is monitoring the timeline and processes through which archaeological sites like Palmyra have been militarized and converted into commodities for the market in looted antiquities.

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Scholarly:

³⁸ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1629>

³⁹ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=895>

⁴⁰ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1391>

⁴¹ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1183>;

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1209>

⁴² <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1483>

⁴³ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1511>



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



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Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)



Palmyra, Southeast Necropolis (DGAM; posted March 25, 2015)

Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 15-0067 UPDATE

Report Date: March 6, 2015; updated March 30, 2015

Site Name: Nimrud (ancient Kalhu)

Date of Incident: March 5, 2015

Location: approximately 30 km southeast of Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Coordinates:

Site Description: The Assyrian settlement at Nimrud (also known as Kalhu, Calah, Kalakh) was established by Shalmaneser I (1274/1254 BCE) during the Middle Assyrian Empire. It was later named the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire by Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BCE), superseding Assur. Rulers Ashurnasirpal II, Shalmaneser III, and Tiglath-Pileser III all built royal palaces at Nimrud, and Shalmaneser III built the Great Ziggurat. The site is known for its extensive palace reliefs and colossal figurative sculptures. The city remained the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire until 706 BCE when Sargon II (722-705 BCE) moved the capital to Khorsabad (also known as Dur-Sharrukin). It continued as a major urban center until the end of the Neo-Assyrian Empire sometime between 616 and 605 BCE.

According to the CDLI Wiki:

The site of Nimrud is located on the Tigris River southeast of Mosul in the north of modern day Iraq. Today the city lies some kilometers east of the Tigris, but in antiquity the river flowed along the northwest side of the acropolis. The site was occupied intermittently from the 6th millennium BC to at least the Hellenistic period, but the most significant period of occupation occurred during the Late Assyrian period, when Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BC) built Nimrud as the capital of his empire. The city remained the chief royal residence and administrative capital of the Assyrian empire until the reign of Sargon II (721-705 BC), though Esarhaddon (680-669 BC) later rebuilt much of the citadel.⁴⁴

According to Karen Radner:

Until the reign of Assurnasirpal II, the religious and ideological centre of Assyria, the city of Assur, served also as the king's main residence. Assurnasirpal, however, relocated the entire royal court, moving hundreds of people under the supervision of his palace superintendent Nergal-apil-kumuya to Kalhu after this ancient city had been completely transformed. The old settlement mound, having grown to a substantial height in the course of its five thousand year long occupation, was turned into a citadel that housed only the royal palace and several temples of the most important deities of Assyria, such as Ninurta and Ištar - but not a shrine for Aššur, whose only sanctuary remained in the city of Assur. The citadel was protected by its own fortification walls but occupied only a small part in the south-western corner of the larger city: with a size of about 360 hectares, Assurnasirpal's Kalhu covered twice the area of Assur and was surrounded by a 7.5 km long fortification wall.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Nimrud (Kalhu). CDLI Wiki. http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/doku.php?id=nimrud_kalhu

⁴⁵ Karen Radner. 2012. Kalhu, Tiglath-pileser's royal residence city. *Assyrian empire builders*. University College London. <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sargon/essentials/cities/kalhu/>

Austen Henry Layard first excavated the site in 1845–1847 and 1849–1851. Later investigations were led by Hormuzd Rassam (1853–54, 1877–1879), W. K. Loftus (1854–55), George Smith (1873), the British School of Archaeology in Iraq (Max Mallowan, 1949; David Oates, 1958–1962; Julian Orchard, 1963), Janusz Meuzynski (1974–76), Paolo Fiorina and the Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino (1987–89), John Curtis (1989), and the Directorate of Antiquities of the Republic of Iraq (1956, 1959–60, 1969–78, and 1982–92).

Site Date: 6th–1st millennia BC; capital of the Assyrian empire during the Neo-Assyrian period (9th–8th centuries BC).

Source of Destruction: Alleged ISIL deliberate destruction. On January 25, 2015, photos were posted on Facebook showing what appears to be damage to the Northwest Palace at Nimrud dating to October 11, 2014.⁴⁶ On February 27, 2015, the AFP reported that Nimrud was at risk for destruction in light of recent events at the Mosul Museum (IH15-0034) and the site of Nineveh (IH15-0033).⁴⁷ On March 5, 2015, the Iraqi Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities released a statement confirming that Nimrud was indeed attacked.⁴⁸ Citing this statement, numerous online sources have since claimed that the site was “bulldozed” by ISIL using “heavy vehicles.” No further details about the extent of the damage or photo/video documentation have been provided. A source has, however, reported to ASOR CHI that ISIL began by demolishing the winged bulls at the palace. There have also been suggestions that ISIL looted the site before proceeding with the destruction.

DigitalGlobe Satellite imagery dating to early March reveals that a road has been cut through the modern wall that runs between the two side doors of the Throne Room of the Northwest Palace. The central entrance to the Throne Room was originally located in this area but has since eroded away; this space was then closed off by a modern wall when the palace was restored. Rubble is piled in the outer courtyard outside the Throne Room and appears to be too much material to have been generated from the destruction of the modern wall alone. ASOR CHI speculates that this rubble could include destroyed sculpture from this part of the site.

The imagery also shows that the area in front of relief slabs 12–15, located in the Throne Room, has been heavily disturbed. Prior to the conflict, these decorative relief sculptures were located under a covered section of a protective shed opposite the new gap in the outer wall. They show the king (Assurnasirpal II, 883–859 BC) on either side of a stylized tree, surmounted by a winged disk, with deities processing behind the king on either side. This same subject is depicted on a similar relief sculpture from the Throne Room, currently located in the British Museum (ME 124531). Slabs 12–15 are the best-preserved relief sculptures from the Throne Room. Based on the satellite imagery, however, ASOR CHI experts speculate that these slabs have been demolished, most likely with mechanized equipment, given the heavy disturbance visible on the floor. There does not appear to be any evidence of floor disturbance within the palace beyond the Throne Room, which suggests that mechanized equipment was not brought into these areas. ASOR CHI cautions, however, that there could still potentially be a great deal of damage from hand-held equipment and tools, such as sledgehammers or jackhammers, below the shed roof; this damage would not be visible in the satellite imagery.

⁴⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=pcb.954775044534878;https://www.facebook.com/groups/858813217464395/permalink/954746321204417/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Feb-27/288983-fears-mount-for-iraq-heritage-after-isis-museum-rampage.ashx>

⁴⁸ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1548105098777154&id=1492622900992041

Pattern: Intentional destruction of archaeological sites and objects by ISIL. The attack on Nimrud fell immediately on the heels of the release of a video showing the destruction of objects in the Mosul Museum and at the site of Nineveh.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the situation.

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The Northwest Palace at Nimrud, Iraq, showing probable signs of intentional destruction of the structure and sculptures by ISIL. (ASOR CHI; DigitalGlobe image taken in early March 2015)



The mound of Nimrud on February 26, 2015 (Digital Globe).



View of the Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq (Photo by J. Russell)



Façade of the Throne Room, Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq (Photo by J. Russell)



Façade of the Throne Room, Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq (Photo by J. Russell)



Nimrud in 2009 (Photo by M. Proffit, provided by S.E. Botts)



Façade of the Throne Room, Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq (Photo by J. Russell)



View of the Throne Room, Northwest Palace, showing modern wall (Photo by J. Russell)



View of the Throne Room, Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq (Photo by J. Russell)



Relief slabs 12-15, Throne Room, Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq (Photo by J. Russell)



Nimrud in 2008 (Photo by S.E. Botts)



Nimrud in 2008 (Photo by S.E. Botts)



Nimrud in 2008 (Photo by S.E. Botts)



Nimrud in 2008 (Photo by S.E. Botts)



Nimrud in 2008 (Photo by S.E. Botts)



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Nimrud in 2008 (Photo by S.E. Botts)



Nimrud in 2009 (Photo by M.G. Caslen, provided by S.E. Botts)



Nimrud in 2009 (Photo by M. Proffit, provided by S.E. Botts)



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Alleged damage to the Northwest Palace at Nimrud, dating to October 2014 (Facebook)



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