

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

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Weekly Report 38 — April 27, 2015

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Executive Summary

During the reporting period, reported heritage damage in the south of Syria remained elevated and correlates with increased military activity. Sites in the region of Daraa and Bosra are at high risk of damage and destruction. In the north of Syria, various sources reported the detonation of multiple tunnel bombs and barrel bombs in the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo causing widespread destruction. Few details on these events are available at the time of this report. The use of tunnel bombs and barrel bombs within Aleppo's Old City is well documented, and UN Security Council Resolution 2139 (2014) specifically calls for the end of indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations, specifically singling out the horrific impacts of barrel bombs. Tunnel bombs represent a deliberate — and when filmed and used for propagandistic purposes, frequently performative — destruction of heritage places of questionable military expedience. The use of tunnel bombs by opposition forces in Aleppo, primarily Salafi-Jihadi factions, represents a probable reprisal against regime airstrikes (esp. barrel bombs) in residential areas.

New information was posted online that highlights another source of heritage damage in Syria that has received relatively little attention: the looting of excavation storehouses. The storage facilities of the famous Tell Sabi Abyad expedition were looted and vandalized in Raqqqa Governorate. The excavations at Tell Sabi Abyad have played a crucial role in our understanding of early village life in the ancient Near East during the late Neolithic and Halaf periods — an important developmental period in the emergence of societal complexity leading to the world's earliest civilizations. The site also yielded important Middle Assyrian (Late Bronze Age) remains. Such theft and vandalism of archaeological storage facilities threaten a multitude of scientifically collected datasets across Syria — the end product of years of meticulous archaeological fieldwork.

Multiple sources also posted evidence that strongly suggests that ISIL is granting licenses to loot archaeological sites, specifically in this instance the site of Mari in Deir ez-Zor Governorate. High-resolution satellite imagery of Mari shows that the site has been heavily looted and that the nearby mound of Tell Madquq has been bulldozed (see below). Narrative reports and other reports gathered by ASOR CHI corroborate ISIL's indirect involvement in promoting, facilitating, and taxing looting and antiquities trafficking and sales in the conflict zone.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously passed the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act of 2015 (H.R. 1493), which “will improve coordination of U.S. efforts to protect cultural property, and prevent those artifacts removed since the start of Syria's civil war from being sold or imported into the United States.”

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.

Key Points

- Multiple tunnel bombs and barrel bombs were detonated in the Jdeidah quarter of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo. (pp. 28–29)
- New data on the looting of the Tell Sabi Abyad storehouse in Syria was posted online. (pp. 34–36)
- Evidence of purported ISIL-issued licenses to loot archaeological sites was released by various sources.
- The House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously passed the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act of 2015 (H.R. 1493).
- DGAM and other Syrian heritage groups released multiple reports on heritage damage in the south of Syria — especially looting. (pp. 10–18)

Heritage Timeline

April 27, 2015

Al Jazeera aired a story titled “**Iraqi archaeologists try protecting heritage sites from ISIL.**” Drawing on interviews with Hadi Kata Moussa (resident archaeologist, Babylon) and Hussien Flailh Khalily (Babylon Ruins Director), the story highlights the lack of visitors at Babylon, the need for upkeep, and the threat of destruction by ISIL. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_aAZeEsiVA

- The **Tell Sabi Abyad Project** Facebook page posted a series of images showing evidence for the **looting and vandalism of the project’s storehouse in Raqqa** (Raqqa Governorate, Syria). The images show a breach in the wall of the storehouse and a garbage pile where the carefully labeled boxes and bags of archaeological material kept in the storehouse have been haphazardly dumped. [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0075. https://www.facebook.com/TellSabiAbyadProject/posts/830490747028885](https://www.facebook.com/TellSabiAbyadProject/posts/830490747028885)

April 26, 2015

The Independent published an article titled “**Syria conflict: The illicit art trade that is a major source of income for today's terror groups is nothing new**” (by Isabel Hunter), an undercover exposé on the antiquities trafficking industry that has developed during the current conflict in Syria and northern Iraq. The article includes commentary by **Michael Danti** (Academic Director, ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives), who discusses the logistics of antiquities trafficking and who draws particular attention to the ongoing humanitarian crisis and its connection to cultural property crime. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syria-conflict-the-illicit-art-trade-that-is-a-major-source-of-income-for-todays-terror-groups-is-nothing-new-10204285.html>

- Reports suggest that **multiple tunnel bombs and barrel bombs** were detonated in the Jdeidah quarter of the **UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo**. *ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0073*.
<https://www.facebook.com/dgam.syria/photos/a.570164709682364.1073741828.565705776794924/1016101221755375/?type=1>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdfnqB_gNeQ
 - **Heritage for Peace** published its newsletter *Damage to Syria's Heritage — 26 April 2015*, which includes a statement clarifying the organization's position on information sharing and data verification.
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-26-april-2015/>
 - The American University of Iraq - Sulaimani (AUIS) hosted the 1st Annual Iraqi Cultural Heritage Symposium, titled "**Iraq Cultural Heritage in Crisis: Strategies for the Future.**" The forum brought together scholars, policy makers, government officials, heritage professionals, and journalists to discuss regional cultural heritage issues.
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1563889667192604/>
- April 24, 2015
- The *Winnipeg Free Press* published an article titled "**The cradle crumbles: The West must move to save Mesopotamia**" (by **Tina Greenfield**). The author discusses her personal experience of working as an archaeologist in Iraq and advocates for action to be taken to protect Iraqi cultural heritage.
<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/the-cradle-crumbles-301027881.html>
- The **DGAM** posted a brief report on recent combat-related damage to the **Omari Mosque in Daraa** (Daraa Governorate, Syria).
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1664>
- April 23, 2015
- APSA** posted a report about **claims that ISIL has been granting excavation licenses** to looters at the site of **Mari** (Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria).
<http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/acts-of-plundering/illegal-excavations/1206-al-rikaz-department-of-isis.html>
- **APSA** posted a report on the bombing and **partial destruction of the Abbasid-period city wall** (built 772 CE) in **Raqqa** (Raqqah Governorate, Syria) by ISIL. *ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0072*.
<http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/ar-raqqah/monuments/1203-raqqah-pass.html>

- The **House Foreign Affairs Committee** unanimously passed the **Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act of 2015 (H.R. 1493)**, which “will improve coordination of U.S. efforts to protect cultural property, and prevent those artifacts removed since the start of Syria’s civil war from being sold or imported into the United States.”
<http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/foreign-affairs-committee-passes-measures-address-isis-threat>
 - ICOMOS published a “**Statement on Safeguarding Yemen’s cultural heritage during the on-going armed conflict.**” As hostilities escalate in Yemen, there is concern that the country’s unique and irreplaceable cultural heritage is under increasing threat.
<http://www.icomos.org/en/home/178-english-categories/news/3544-icomos-statement-on-safeguarding-yemen-s-cultural-heritage-during-the-on-going-armed-conflict>
 - Rudaw* published an opinion piece titled “**Stop ISIS and save Iraq’s cultural heritage**” (by **Tobin Hartnell** and **Bilal Wahab**). The authors, both faculty at the American University of Iraq - Sulaimani (AUIS), reveal that **AUIS is opening the Institute of Archaeology and Cultural Heritage to train future archaeologists to protect Iraq’s cultural heritage.**
<http://rudaw.net/NewsDetails.aspx?pageid=122808>
 - A series of images posted to *Dump.to* purportedly shows **ISIL members destroying the graves of “honorable families” in a contemporary cemetery in Hasakah Governorate, Syria.** ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0071.
<https://dump.to/qobur>
- April 22, 2015
- Your Middle East* published an article titled “**How to save Iraq’s vanishing heritage**” (by Nazli Ihsan Adil Tarzi). Reporting on a conference held in London by the Association of Iraqi Academics, the article draws on comments made by **John Curtis** (British Museum), **Lamia Al-Gailani** (SOAS, University of London), and **Farouk al-Rawi** (SOAS, University of London).
http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/culture/how-to-save-iraqs-vanishing-heritage_31633
- The Society for American Archaeology and a series of other professional organizations signed a **letter to Congressmen Ed Royce and Eliot Engel of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs**, expressing “strong support” for the **Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act of 2015 (H.R. 1493)** and urging the Foreign Relations Committee to “rapidly consider and approve” the legislation.
http://saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/GovernmentAffairs/HR1493_LETTER_3.0.pdf

- *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* published an article titled **“Mobilizing For Mosul: Czech Scholars Work To Save Town's Heritage”** (by Coilin O'Connor). The article discusses the work of **Karel Novacek** from the University of West Bohemia and the **Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences** to “compile a comprehensive list of all the damage that has been done that could eventually be used by the Iraqi authorities and the international community as part of a coordinated effort to help preserve and restore what is left of the city's architectural heritage.”
<http://www.rferl.org/content/iraq-mosul-islamic-state-czech-archaeologists/26972365.html>
 - *Gates of Nineveh* published a blog post titled **“What is ISIS’ Media Strategy”** (by Christopher Jones). After reviewing the chronology of ISIL’s recent attacks on ancient sites and considering the motives driving these attacks, the post considers the concern that media coverage and public outrage have encouraged ISIL to undertake further acts of destruction. While acknowledging the complexity of the issue, the author ultimately argues in favor of continued documentation and publication.
<https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/04/22/what-is-isis-media-strategy/>
 - **APSA** posted a YouTube video showing an **interview with the director of the archaeology department in Bosra** (Daraa Governorate, Syria).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AgH_IekNxY&feature=youtu.be
- April 21, 2015
- Agence France-Presse* published an article titled **“Germany, Iraq seek UN action to protect Iraqi cultural sites”** (by AFP). According to the article, “Germany and Iraq asked UN member-states to take action against the destruction by jihadist groups of Iraq's cultural sites, which they said was tantamount to a war crime.”
<https://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/germany-iraq-seek-un-action-protect-iraqi-cultural-190705252.html>
- The **DGAM** published a report on **looting and other damage to tell (mounded) sites in the al-Zahb valley of Daraa Governorate**.
ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0070.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1661>
- April 20, 2015
- Clingendael (Netherlands Institute of International Relations)* published a report titled **“Islamic State Franchising”** (by Rivka Azoulay). The report suggests that ISIL’s strategy for expanding into new areas beyond Iraq and Syria (e.g., the Sinai and Libya) can be understood as a form of franchising.
<http://www.clingendael.nl/publication/islamic-state-franchising>

- The *National Post* published an article titled “**History dies in ISIL’s hands, but curators worry buying artifacts would fund terrorism**” (by Joseph Brea). The article includes commentary by **Clemens Reichel** (Royal Ontario Museum), who argues that “buying artifacts to preserve them in Western galleries is tantamount to funding terrorism.”
<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/world/israel-middle-east/history-dies-in-isils-hands-but-curators-worry-buying-artifacts-would-fund-terrorism>
 - *Al-Fanar Media* published an article titled “**Amid the Destruction of Syrian Antiquities, Some Restoration**” (by Riham Kusa). Drawing on commentary by **Moutaz Alshayeb** (archaeologist), **Cheikhmous Ali** (APSA; Co-investigator, ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives), **Maamoun Abdulkarim** (Director-General of Antiquities and Museums, Syria), and **Rama Daher** (Master’s degree student), the article draws attention to a number of efforts by academics — whether they are sympathetic to the Syrian regime or rebel groups — to restore cultural heritage that has been damaged during the conflict in Syria.
<http://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2015/04/amid-the-destruction-of-syrian-antiquities-some-restoration/>
 - *Clingendael (Netherlands Institute of International Relations)* published a report titled “**Islamic State Franchising**” (by Rivka Azoulay). The report suggests that ISIL’s strategy for expanding into new areas beyond Iraq and Syria (e.g., the Sinai and Libya) can be understood as a form of franchising.
<http://www.clingendael.nl/publication/islamic-state-franchising>
- April 16, 2015
- The Ashmolean Museum posted a YouTube video of a talk by **Paul Collins** (Jaleh Hearn Curator for Ancient Near East, Ashmolean Museum; University of Oxford) titled “**What the World is Losing in Iraq.**” The talk was originally presented on April 2, 2015, prior to the release of videos showing ISIL’s attacks on the sites of Hatra and Nimrud.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnHUI1poCxU>
- April 12, 2015
- ITV News* aired a segment titled “**Video purportedly shows IS destroying ancient city of Nimrud.**” The segment includes a brief interview with **John Curtis** (British Institute for the Study of Iraq).
<http://www.itv.com/news/2015-04-12/video-purportedly-shows-is-destroying-ancient-city-of-nimrud-in-iraq/>
- April 10, 2015
- Levant TV* aired an interview with Joan Porter MacIver (British Institute for the Study of Iraq) and John MacGinnis (British Institute for the Study of Iraq) titled “**Destruction of cultural and religious heritage in Middle East**” on the show *Forbidden Talk*.
<http://levant.tv/shows/forbidden-talk/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paS34JfX6g>

Military and Political Context

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

1. Jisr al-Shughour, Idlib Governorate
 - On April 23, a predominantly hardline Islamist rebel alliance that includes Jabhat al-Nusra (but not ISIL) launched an offensive called the “Battle of Victory” on the strategic town of Jisr al-Shughour, which was the last major town under Syrian government control in Idlib Governorate; on April 25, the alliance seized the town, and Syrian government airstrikes on the town ensued, reportedly killing dozens.²
2. Darkoush, Idlib Governorate
 - On April 26, Syrian government airstrikes on the town of Darkoush, which is just over a mile from the Turkish border, reportedly killed dozens of civilians.³
3. Qalamoun Region, Northwest Rif Dimashq Governorate
 - During the reporting period, clashes took place between ISIL fighters and rebels in the eastern part of the Qalamoun mountain region.⁴
4. Daraa Governorate
 - On April 20, Syrian government troops cut off a major rebel supply line from Jordan by taking control of several villages in Daraa Governorate, and clashes between rebels and Syrian government forces continued in the governorate through the reporting period.⁵
5. Syria-Israel Border
 - On April 26, the Israeli military said that an Israeli airstrike hit a group of men along the border preparing a bomb attack on Israeli soldiers.⁶

² AP, <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/23/world/middleeast/ap-ml-syria.html>; AP, <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/25/world/middleeast/ap-ml-syria.html>; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32461693>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/25/us-syria-crisis-town-idUSKBN0NG09220150425>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/26/us-mideast-crisis-syria-town-idUSKBN0NH09G20150426>; AFP, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/04/26/Syria-warplanes-strike-northwest-city-seized-by-rebels-.html>; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/04/syrian-rebels-capture-jisr-al-shughour/>; J. Cafarella, “Second Idlib Stronghold Falls to Jabhat al-Nusra and Rebel Forces,” <http://iswsyria.blogspot.com/2015/04/second-idlib-stronghold-falls-to-jabhat.html>

³ AP, <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/26/world/middleeast/ap-ml-syria.html>; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/04/heavy-aerial-bombardment-kills-and-wounds-60-in-darkoush/>; AFP, <http://news.yahoo.com/25-dead-syria-regime-strikes-idlib-province-monitor-144252481.html>

⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32418258>; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/04/42-fighters-killed-in-qalamoun/>

⁵ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/04/20/uk-syria-crisis-deraa-idUKKBN0NB1Y620150420>; AP, http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/20/world/middleeast/ap-ml-syria.html?_r=0; AP, <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/21/world/middleeast/ap-ml-syria.html>; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/04/the-islamic-battalions-shell-the-regime-positions-in-daraa/>; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/04/clashes-renew-in-daraa-damascus-and-rif-dimashq/>; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/04/clashes-erupt-in-daraa-while-the-regime-fores-shell-areas-in-rif-dimashq/>.

⁶ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/27/world/middleeast/israeli-military-says-it-killed-armed-men-in-strike-on-golan-heights-frontier.html>; AP, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/26/israel-air-strike-syria-militants>; <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/middle-east-unrest/israel-says-airstrike-foiled-terrorist-attack-syrian-border-n348646>; <https://twitter.com/IDFSpokesperson/status/592411623735894016>.

6. Kobani Area, Aleppo Governorate
 - During the reporting period, several coalition airstrikes hit ISIL positions around Kobani.⁷

Other key points:

- According to documents acquired from Syrian rebels and viewed by the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, Samir Abd Muhammad al-Khelifawi — a former intelligence colonel in Saddam Hussein’s government whose pseudonym was Haji Bakr (killed in January 2014) — meticulously planned the rise of ISIL through its establishment in northern Syria for later expansion into Iraq and by means of thorough intelligence gathering within towns in Syria marked for early ISIL control.⁸
- The fall of Jisr al-Shughour deals a blow to the notion that the Assad government is the ultimate power in the country and that this government will inevitably win the conflict. Not only was Jisr al-Shughour the last major town in Idlib Governorate under Syrian government control, but the town also gives rebels clear access to Latakia Governorate, which has historically been the base of support for the Assad regime.⁹
- Fighting in the neighborhood of the Yarmouk camp has largely subsided, but the humanitarian situation there is still dire.¹⁰

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

1. Ramadi Area, Al Anbar Governorate
 - During the reporting period, Iraqi security forces, supported by several coalition airstrikes, clashed with ISIL fighters in and around Ramadi and have held off the fall of the city to ISIL.¹¹
2. Tharthar Dam, Al Anbar Governorate
 - On April 24, ISIL launched an attack on the Tharthar Dam and a nearby Iraqi military base, resulting in heavy casualties for Iraqi soldiers, including the death of a brigadier general; ISIL reportedly took control of much of the dam.¹²

⁷ http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0814_iraq/Airstrikes6.html

⁸ <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/islamic-state-files-show-structure-of-islamist-terror-group-a-1029274.html>

⁹ http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/assads-regime-at-increasing-risk-amid-a-surge-of-rebel-advances/2015/04/26/c2742e22-ec32-11e4-8050-839e9234b303_story.html; J. Cafarella, “Second Idlib Stronghold Falls to Jabhat al-Nusra and Rebel Forces,” <http://iswsyria.blogspot.com/2015/04/second-idlib-stronghold-falls-to-jabhat.html>

¹⁰ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/04/21/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-un-idUKKBN0NC01Q20150421>.

¹¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/22/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0ND1WQ20150422>;

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32403199>; AP,

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/21/world/middleeast/ap-ml-islamic-state.html>; S. Adnan, P.

Martin, and O. al-Dulimi, “Iraq Situation Report: April 21-22, 2015,”

<http://iswiraq.blogspot.com/2015/04/iraq-situation-report-april-21-22-2015.html>; S. Adnan, P. Martin, and

O. al-Dulimi, “Iraq Situation Report: April 23-24, 2015,” <http://iswiraq.blogspot.com/2015/04/iraq-situation-report-april-23-24-2015.html>;

http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0814_iraq/Airstrikes6.html;

¹² <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-04-25/islamic-state-fighters-kill-general-and-127-soldiers-seize-dam>;

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/25/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKBN0NG0GF20150425>;

<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/naher-osten/terrormiliz-is-nimmt->

3. Turaibil Iraq-Jordan Border Crossing, Al Anbar Governorate
 - On April 25, 3 suicide car bombs claimed by ISIL exploded on the Iraqi side of the Turaibil Iraq-Jordan border crossing, killing at least 4 Iraqi security personnel.¹³
4. Fallujah Area, Al Anbar Governorate
 - During the reporting period, several coalition airstrikes hit ISIL positions around Fallujah.¹⁴
5. Balad Area, Salah ad Din Governorate
 - On April 22, a suicide attack north of Balad targeting Shiite pilgrims returning from Samarra killed 8 and wounded 16.¹⁵
6. Baiji Area, Salah ad Din Governorate
 - During the reporting period, several coalition airstrikes hit ISIL positions around Baiji.¹⁶
7. Baghdad Area
 - During the reporting period, bombs in and around Baghdad killed at least 18 civilians.¹⁷
8. Mosul Area, Ninawa Governorate
 - During the reporting period, several coalition airstrikes hit ISIL positions around Mosul.¹⁸

Other key points:

- During the reporting period, the focus of fighting in Iraq continued to be Al Anbar Governorate. Although the fall of the provincial capital of Ramadi seemed less imminent than it had the previous week thanks to the efforts of Iraqi security forces, Iraqi forces suffered at the hands of ISIL in ISIL's Tharthar Dam offensive.

Key Heritage Recommendations and Actions

- High-resolution satellite imagery of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo is needed to evaluate damage from tunnel bombs and barrel bombs inflicted since December 2014.

staudamm-im-irak-ein-13558970.html; <http://nos.nl/artikel/2032475-is-vermoordt-ruim-honderd-iraakse-militairen.html>

¹³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/25/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-jordan-idUSKBN0NGOGX20150425>; <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/04/25/Car-bombings-target-Iraq-Jordan-border-crossing.html>; <http://www.dw.de/is-suicide-bombers-hit-iraq-jordan-border/a-18408492>

¹⁴ http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0814_iraq/Airstrikes6.html

¹⁵ S. Adnan, P. Martin, and O. al-Dulimi, "Iraq Situation Report: April 21-22, 2015," <http://iswiraq.blogspot.com/2015/04/iraq-situation-report-april-21-22-2015.html>; AP, <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/04/23/world/middleeast/ap-ml-iraq.html>

¹⁶ http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0814_iraq/Airstrikes6.html

¹⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/26/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-violence-idUSKBN0NH0JB20150426>; AP, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/04/26/Car-bombs-kill-at-least-7-civilians-in-Iraq.html>

¹⁸ http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2014/0814_iraq/Airstrikes6.html

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 15-0070

Report Date: April 21, 2015

Site Name: Tell sites in the al-Zahb valley: Khirbet al-Qinah and Khirbet al-Suhb

Date of Incident: Unknown, February–March 2015

Location: Al-Zahb valley, between Daraa and Bosra, Daraa Governorate, Syria. Khirbet al-Qinah is located on the right bank of the valley; Khirbet al-Suhb is located 12–15 km west of Bosra.

Coordinates:

Site Description: Small, multi-phase tell sites in the basaltic foothills rimming the al-Zahb valley

Site Date: Various (Roman–Byzantine?)

Source of Destruction: On April 21, 2015, the DGAM published a set of images and very brief description of recent looting activities at tell sites in the al-Zahb valley, as part of a series of reports on damage to sites in the Daraa countryside (See Incident Reports SHI-15-0067, SHI 15-0065, and SHI 15-0064).

According to the DGAM report, there is ongoing illegal excavation at **Khirbet al-Qinah**, including “dozens of pits” dug at the foot of the tell and revealing ancient building foundations. The report also describes “hundreds of closed pits,” located 100 m north of the tell and densely clustered. The accompanying images show open pits, digging tools, and a nearby cluster of army tents, not mentioned in the report.

According to the report, the site of **Khirbet al-Suhb** is being illegally excavated using heavy machinery. During the course of these excavations, an ancient wall 100 m in length and a well were uncovered. 50 looters pits were counted in the area of the archaeological site.

Pattern: The valleys of Daraa Governorate are rich in archaeological material dating to multiple historical periods; proximity to the Jordanian border makes the archaeological sites in this region particularly vulnerable to looting. This situation has been intensified by the recent and ongoing combat in the region and by the occupation of major cities (such as Bosra) by rebel forces.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is monitoring the effect of shifting combat fronts on looting practices and monitoring capacities within Syria.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1661>

Scholarly:



Khirbet al-Qinah (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Qinah (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Qinah (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Qinah (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Qinah (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Qinah (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



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Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)



Khirbet al-Suhb (DGAM; posted April 21, 2015)

SHI 15-0071

Report Date: April 26, 2015

Site Name: Contemporary cemetery in al-Hasakah Governorate

Date of Incident: unknown; before April 23, 2015

Location: near the Turkish border, Hasakah Governorate, Syria

Coordinates:

Site Description: a rural village cemetery in Hasakah Governorate

Site Date: contemporary (20th century)

Source of Destruction: On April 23, 2015, images were posted to *dump.to* showing the destruction of graves in a contemporary cemetery in Hasakah Governorate. The images show men dismantling graves with small tools, such as hammers and picks, and then handing the tools to a group of assembled (apparently exclusively male) children who participate in knocking down headstones and pulling apart the cinder block boundary walls of graves, some of which look quite recent. Associated text indicates that the images show ISIL members destroying the graves of “honorable families” in Wilayat al-Barakah. The post is “signed off” (i.e., authorized) by the “Office of Science/Higher Knowledge of the ISIL branch, Wilayat al Baraka.” In April 2014, ISIL laid claim to several provinces in Syria including Hasakah Governorate, which was renamed Wilayat al-Barakah or Barakah province.

Pattern: Systematic destruction of sectarian and/or minority mortuary monuments by ISIL in occupied or disputed territories.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is in the process of collecting further data regarding this newly reported incident and other ongoing acts of “cultural cleansing” by ISIL directed at material culture and built heritage.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Dump.to: <https://dump.to/qobur>

Scholarly:



Destruction of graves in Hasakah Governorate, Syria (Dump.to; posted April 23, 2015)



Destruction of graves in Hasakah Governorate, Syria (Dump.to; posted April 23, 2015)



الدراسة الإسلامية

تسوية القبور المشرفة من طرف أهالي القاطع الغربي لولاية البركة

Destruction of graves in Hasakah Governorate, Syria (Dump.to; posted April 23, 2015)



الدراسة الإسلامية

مشاركة الأبناء مع الآباء بتسوية القبور المشرفة

Destruction of graves in Hasakah Governorate, Syria (Dump.to; posted April 23, 2015)



مشاركة الأبناء مع الآباء بتسوية القبور المشرفة
الدراسة الإسلامية

Destruction of graves in Hasakah Governorate, Syria (Dump.to; posted April 23, 2015)



تسوية القبور المشرفة من طرف أهالي القاطع الغربي لولاية البركة
الدراسة الإسلامية

Destruction of graves in Hasakah Governorate, Syria (Dump.to; posted April 23, 2015)

SHI 15-0072

Report Date: April 26, 2015

Site Name: Abbasid city wall of Rafiqa (SHI #950)

Date of Incident: Unknown; reported April 24, 2015

Location: Raqqa city center, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Coordinates:

Site Description:

According to Verena Daiber,

In AH 155 / AD 772 the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur ordered the building of a new garrison town called Rafiqa, meaning 'the companion', next to the city of Raqqa. He commissioned his son and successor, al-Mahdi (r. AH 158–69 / AD 775–85), to oversee its construction. Later additions, such as the outer wall, were carried out under al-Mahdi's son, Harun al-Rashid (r. AH 170–93 / AD 786–809). The place served as a garrison town on the border with the Byzantine Empire to protect Abbasid territories. It was also situated at the crossroads of important caravan routes at the confluence of the River Euphrates with the River Khabur.

The city wall surrounding Rafiqa has a diameter of approximately 1,300 m. Its massive wall-structure is almost 5,000 m long, and encloses a space of 1.47 sq km. The city plan, a closed horse-shoe shape, was influenced by the famously circular layout of the new capital, Baghdad, which was completed only a few years earlier.

The city's perimeter is fortified by multiple defensive layers including a 15.9 m-wide moat, an outer wall, and a massive inner wall based on a stone foundation. The inner wall, made of mud-brick and a layer of fired brick on both sides, is further fortified by 132 round towers arranged nearly equidistantly along its length (about 25 m to 28 m apart). Each tower has a circumference of 15 m to 16 m, and a depth of up to 5.35 m. At their original height, they probably rose to 18 m, and the two corner towers may have risen higher than the rest. The outer wall is lower and less massive than the inner one. It is made of sun-dried bricks and does not have a stone foundation.¹⁹

Site Date: Abbasid and later renovations under the direction of Murhaf al-Khalaf, former Director of Antiquities and Museums in Raqqa Province.

Source of Destruction: On April 23, 2015, APSA reported that sections of the Rafiqa city wall had been demolished by ISIL in order to widen the route for traffic passing through the site.²⁰ According to local sources, Muzaffar Ali street was widened from a single to a double road, opening a passage through the old city walls to allow the passage of multiple cars and trucks "loaded with weapons coming and going from Iraq."

Pattern: As a large, highly visible, and fragile archaeological landmark within a major city center, the wall of Rafiqa has been vulnerable since the start of the conflict and especially since the occupation of Raqqa city by Islamist groups in March 2013. On May 1, 2013, APSA reported that a

¹⁹ Verena Daiber, "City walls of Rafiqa (Raqqa) and the Baghdad Gate" in Discover Islamic Art. Place: Museum With No Frontiers, 2015.

http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database_item.php?id=monument;ISL:sy;Mon01;29;en&cp

²⁰ <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/fr/provinces/rakka/monuments/1204-raqqa-pass-2.html>

section of the city wall had been bombed and subsequently destroyed as local residents picked through the earthen rampart looking for artifacts. The city wall of Rafiqa was also one of several monuments in Raqqa that were photographed by ISIL and published online without comment on March 22, 2015, presumably as a general, vague threat to the built heritage in regions under ISIL control.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is actively gathering all available data on the status of built heritage in Raqqa and other ISIL-occupied areas.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

APSA:

April 23, 2015: <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/fr/provinces/rakka/monuments/1204-raqqa-pass-2.html>

March 24, 2015 (report on ISIL photos of sites in Raqqa):
<http://apsa2011.com/index.php/fr/provinces/rakka/monuments/1167-raqqah-pictures-isis-2.html>

May 1, 2013: <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/fr/provinces/rakka/monuments/340-al-raqqa.html>

Scholarly:

Daiber, Verena, "City walls of Rafiqa (Raqqa) and the Baghdad Gate" in *Discover Islamic Art. Place: Museum With No Frontiers*, 2015.

http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database_item.php?id=monument;ISL;sy;Mon01;29;en&cp

Korn, L., "Das Bagdad-Tor," *Raqqa III, Baudenkmäler und Paläste I* (V. Daiber and A. Becker, eds.), Mainz, 2004, pp. 11–18.

Heidemann, S., "Die Geschichte von ar-Raqqa/ar-Rafiqa – ein überblick," *Raqqa II, Die islamische Stadt* (S. Heidemann and A. Becker, eds), Mainz, 2003.

Hillenbrand, R., "Eastern Islamic Influences in Syria: Raqqa and Qalcat Jacbar in the Later 12th Century" in *The Art of Syria and the Jazira 1100–1250* (ed. J. Raby), Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 1, Oxford, 1985, pp. 21–48.

al-Khalaf, M., "Die cabbasidische Stadtmauer von ar-Raqqa/ar-Rafiqa," *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 2, 1985, pp. 123–31.

Meinecke, M., "al-Rakka," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. VIII, Leiden, 1995, pp. 410–14.



City wall of Rafiq, Raqq, Syria, showing location of the most recent damage to the wall (APSA; posted April 23, 2015)



City wall of Rafiqa (APSA; posted March 22, 2015; originally posted by ISIL)



Eastern gate of the city wall of Rafiqa (APSA; posted March 22, 2015; originally posted by ISIL)



Southeastern gate of the city wall of Rafiqa (APSA; posted March 22, 2015; originally posted by ISIL)

SHI 15-0073

Report Date: April 27, 2015

Site Name: Jdeideh Quarter, UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo

Date of Incident: April 26, 2015

Location: Between al-Telal and al-Khandak Streets, Jdeideh Quarter, UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo

Coordinates:

Site Description: A multi-site area of built heritage, potentially including the Wool Suq and the al-Qasab Gate

Site Date: Mamluk–Ottoman

Source of Destruction: On April 26, 2015, an entity identifying itself as the “Unified Information Office” posted a video to Youtube showing the targeting and then (presumed) destruction of sites located within the Jdeideh Quarter of the ancient city of Aleppo. A still image from the footage was subsequently published by the DGAM on Facebook, along with the information that two tunnel bombs had been detonated by armed groups at al-Qasab Gate and at the Wool Suq. ASOR CHI has not yet confirmed this report.

Pattern: Ongoing militarization of built heritage and subsequent destruction due to combat, bombardment, and tunnel bombings as fronts of battle shift within the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: Data-gathering on the condition of built heritage in the UNESCO World Heritage Site Ancient City of Aleppo continues to be a critical priority.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YdfnqB_gNeQ

DGAM Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/dgam.syria/photos/a.570164709682364.1073741828.565705776794924/1016101221755375/?type=1>

Scholarly:



Jdeideh Quarter, Aleppo, still image from footage of tunnel bombing (DGAM Facebook page; posted April 26, 2015)

SHI 15-0074

Report Date: April 28, 2015

Site Name: Tell el-Madquq

Date of Incident: Unknown; between November 11, 2014, and April 11, 2015

Location: Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

Coordinates:

Site Description: Tell el-Madquq is a conical mound situated about 500 meters west of the main mound of Tell Hariri (Mari). The tell was described in 1926 by W.F. Albright and R.P. Dougherty in a report on survey along the Euphrates published in the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*:

Most interesting to us was the remarkable mound of Tell el-Madquq, which rises abruptly above the plain several hundred metres west of Tell el-Hariri. At first, owing to its extraordinary form and the relative absence of pottery, we took it to be natural, but later it became evident that this is practically impossible since the texture of the mound at the top is too soft...Moreover, both on the summit and down the sides are scattered numerous pieces of burnt brick. It would appear therefore, that Tell el-Madquq is the ruined temple-tower of the old city, though we naturally propose this theory tentatively. The present dimensions of the mound are: height, 15 metres; circumference around base, circa 100 metres. The original height may have been about 20 metres and the diameter of the base (if round, as suggested by the present contours) about 25 metres (Albright and Dougherty 1926:20).²¹

The archaeologists failed to determine the ancient identity of Tell Hariri, despite a primary objective of the expedition being to locate the site of Mari, the center of an ancient Semitic state that flourished between the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. Tell Hariri would be positively identified as Mari only in 1933 (Dalley 2002: 10).

Site Date: Bronze Age (3rd–2nd millennium BC)

Source of Destruction: Using dated DigitalGlobe imagery, ASOR CHI analysts noted evidence for the removal of the top of the mound at Tell el-Madquq, presumably through the use of heavy machinery to level the conical crown of the tell. In an image taken on November 11, 2014, the tell is intact, but, in an image taken on April 11, 2015, the top of the mound has been removed. The most likely motivation for the destruction is the leveling of the mound for military purposes.

Pattern: Militarization of strategic elevated sites at key transit points. Now, as in the Bronze Age, Tell el-Madquq and Tell Hariri (Mari) are located in a strategic location, close to a major contemporary border crossing between Syria and Iraq.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the impact of militarization and illicit excavation on tell sites in Deir ez-Zor Governorate.

²¹ Albright, W.F. and R.P. Dougherty 1926. From Jerusalem to Baghdad Down the Euphrates. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 21 (Feb.). South Hadley, MA.

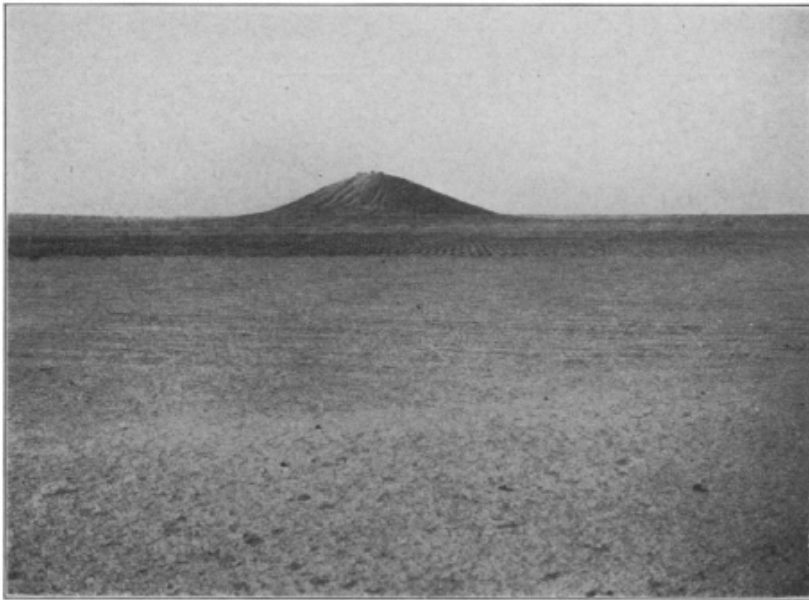
Sources:

Online Reporting:

Scholarly:

Albright, W.F. and R.P. Dougherty 1926. From Jerusalem to Baghdad Down the Euphrates. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 21 (Feb.). South Hadley, MA.

Dalley, S. 2002. *Mari and Karana: Two Old Babylonian Cities*. Gorgias Press.



TELL EL-MADQUQ

Tell el-Madquq (ASOR Bulletin, 1926; photographed by W.F. Albright and R.P. Dougherty)



Tell el-Madquq, conical crown of the mound still intact (ASOR CHI; DigitalGlobe, image dates to November 11, 2014)



Tell el-Madquq and Mari/Tell Hariri (ASOR CHI; DigitalGlobe, image dates to April 11, 2015)



Tell el-Madquq, conical crown of the mound removed and leveled (ASOR CHI; DigitalGlobe, image dates to April 11, 2015)

SHI 15-0075

Report Date: April 27, 2015

Site Name: Tell Sabi Abyad Project storehouse

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Coordinates:

Site Description: Storehouse containing archaeological materials stored on shelves in boxes and bags.

Site Date:

Source of Destruction: On March 12, 2014, an article published by *Live Science* reported that storehouses containing more than twenty years' worth of finds from the site of Tell Sabi Abyad had been ransacked, but it was not possible to gauge the extent and nature of the damage.²²

On April 27, 2015, the Tell Sabi Abyad Project Facebook page posted a series of images showing evidence for the looting and vandalism of the project's storehouse in Raqqa.²³ The images show a breach in the wall of the storehouse and a garbage pile where the carefully labeled boxes and bags of archaeological material kept on shelves in the storehouse have been haphazardly dumped.

Pattern: Looting and vandalism of storehouses maintained by archaeological expeditions.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Live Science: <http://www.livescience.com/44043-archaeological-storehouses-looted-in-syria.html>

Tell Sabi Abyad Project Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/TellSabiAbyadProject/posts/830490747028885>

Scholarly:

²² Megan Gannon, "Archaeological Storehouses Looted in Syria," *Live Science*, March 12, 2014.

<http://www.livescience.com/44043-archaeological-storehouses-looted-in-syria.html>

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/TellSabiAbyadProject/posts/830490747028885>



Tell Sabi Abyad storehouse, garbage pile where boxes and bags of archaeological material kept in the storehouse have been dumped (Tell Sabi Abyad Facebook page; posted April 27, 2015)



Tell Sabi Abyad storehouse, interior (Tell Sabi Abyad Facebook page; posted April 27, 2015)



Tell Sabi Abyad storehouse, exterior, showing breach in storehouse wall (Tell Sabi Abyad Facebook page; posted April 27, 2015)

Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 15-0079 UPDATE

Report Date: April 12, 2015; updated April 27, 2015

Site Name: Nimrud (Northwest Palace and Wall Reliefs)

Date of Incident: April 1–11, 2015

Location: Noomanea, 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.²⁴

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.²⁵

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

²⁴ Nimrud (Kalhu). CDLI Wiki. http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/doku.php?id=nimrud_kalhu

²⁵ 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/>

(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: 13th–7th centuries BCE

Source of Destruction: 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, 2014.²⁶ On February 27, 2015, the AFP reported that Nimrud was at risk for destruction in light of recent events at the Mosul Museum (IHI 15-0034) and the site of Nineveh (IHI 15-0033).²⁷ On March 5, 2015, the Iraqi Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities released a statement confirming that Nimrud was indeed attacked.²⁸ 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 were provided (see IHI15-0067).

On March 7, 2015, reports emerged that ISIL militants were moving construction vehicles and equipment to Nimrud. Militants had, however, been in control of the area around the site since ISIL invaded northern Iraq in June 2014.

On April 11, 2015, ISIL released a video documenting the destruction of the Northwest Palace. The video shows ISIL militants defacing the palace wall reliefs with sledgehammers and then cutting the sculptures apart and demolishing them with mechanical equipment. The video then cuts to ISIL militants building barrel bombs, which are placed alongside the reliefs in the Northwest Palace and detonated. The video includes multiple views of the explosion, as well as the resulting rubble pile. The dialogue in the video includes anti-American rhetoric not featured in previous videos. Accents suggest that the men who appear in the video are from the Gulf region.

Satellite imagery dating to April 1, 2015, shows the palace still intact, but any damage from handheld equipment may not be visible in the imagery. The region around the site is sparsely populated, and it has not yet been possible to confirm the exact date of the demolition. It has, however, been reported that the video was released only days after the demolition. Satellite imagery dating to April 17, 2015, shows the palace in ruins, indicating that the detonation took place sometime between April 1 and April 17, 2015.

Pattern: Intentional, performative destruction of archaeological sites and objects by ISIL.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the situation and will work to understand the timeline of events at Nimrud.

²⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=pcb.954775044534878;>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/858813217464395/permalink/954746321204417/>

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

²⁸ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1548105098777154&id=1492622900992041

Sources:

Online Reporting:

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32273672>

ARCA: <http://art-crime.blogspot.ca/2015/04/what-remains-of-nimruds-northwest.html>

The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/11/isis-video-destruction-ancient-city-militants-iraq-nimrud>

Scholarly (selected):

Mallowan, Max E.L. (1966) *Nimrud and its Remains*. London: Collins.

Oates, Joan and David Oates (2004) *Nimrud: An Assyrian Imperial City Revealed*. London : The British School of Archaeology in Iraq.



DIGITAL GLOBE 2015

Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, image showing the reconstructed palace still intact (DigitalGlobal; image dates to April 1, 2015)



DIGITAL GLOBE 2015

Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, image showing the palace after destruction (DigitalGlobal; image dates to April 17, 2015)



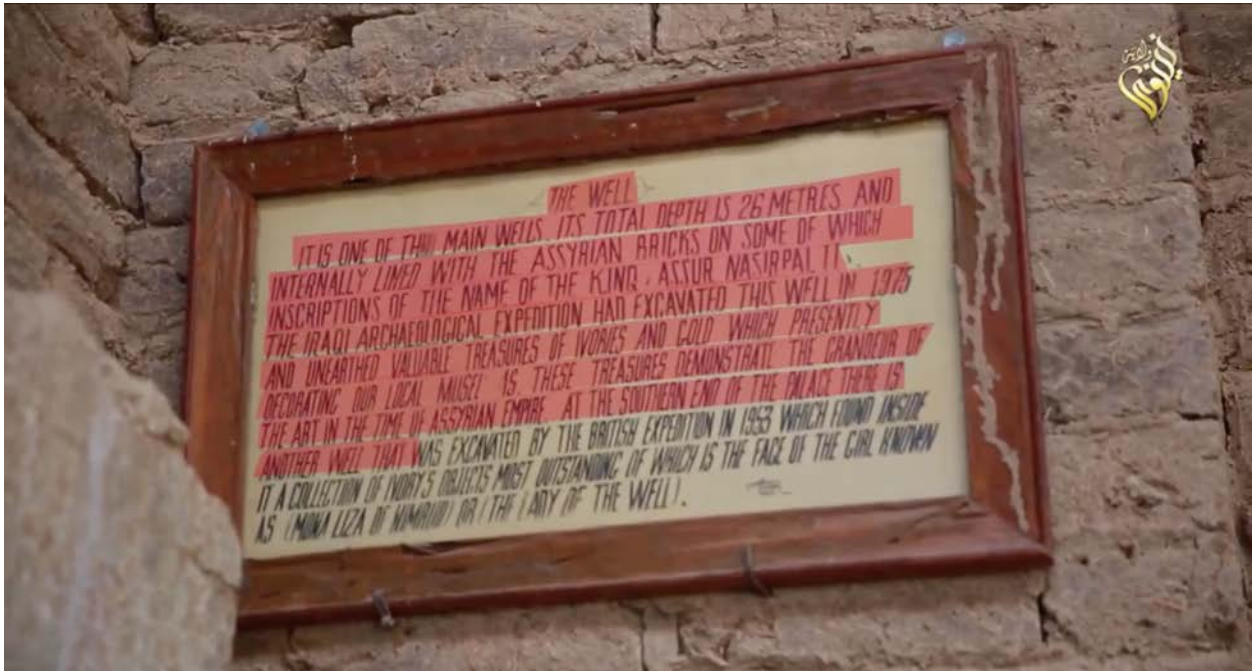
Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant during a monologue (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, map of the archaeological site (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant attacking the site with a sledgehammer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, didactic paneling in English, film edited to highlight the text in red (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, didactic panel being vandalized (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant vandalizing a palace wall relief with a sledgehammer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant vandalizing a palace wall relief with a sledgehammer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant cutting apart a palace wall relief with a rotary saw (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant vandalizing a palace wall relief with a sledgehammer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants dismantling the palace wall reliefs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants dismantling the palace wall reliefs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants dismantling the palace wall reliefs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants dismantling the palace wall reliefs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants vandalizing a palace wall relief with a sledgehammer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants removing the rubble of the wall relief panels with a bulldozer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants removing the rubble of the wall relief panels with a bulldozer (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants further defacing the removed palace wall reliefs with jackhammers (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militant during a monologue (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants filling barrels with explosives (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, ISIL militants setting the fuses of the barrel bombs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, barrel bombs placed next to the palace wall reliefs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, prior to detonation of barrel bombs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, prior to detonation of barrel bombs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, prior to detonation of barrel bombs (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, detonation of the palace (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)



Northwest Palace, Nimrud, Iraq, following detonation (YouTube; screenshot of video posted by ISIL-associated account, showing the demolition of the Northwest Palace)