

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

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Weekly Report 97-98 — June 8 - 21, 2016

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Executive Summary

During the reporting period, DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirmed the total destruction of the Nergal Gate at Nineveh, which had previously been verified through ISIL propaganda photographs released on May 25, 2016. The Nergal Gate contained the most intact pair of colossal *lammasu* (human-headed winged bull sculptures) at the site, which were previously damaged by ISIL militants and featured in a February 2015 propaganda video. This incident is the latest in a disturbing trend: Nineveh's architectural features are being systematically erased by ISIL militants. This campaign began with the detonation of Nebi Yunus in July 2014, and since then the Southwest Palace, in a fragile state of preservation, segments of the city wall, and three monumental gates, all modern reconstructions comprised of ancient building materials and built above original archaeological features, have all been leveled and the debris removed. The generation of performative destruction propaganda by ISIL forces in Iraq, until this point, had been dormant since the demolition of the Abdullah ibn Mubarak Shrine and Mosque in Hit, Al Anbar Governorate in September 2015,² and the most recent performative destructions targeting ancient heritage in Iraq occurred at Hatra³ and Nimrud⁴ in April 2015.⁵ This recent uptick in heritage related propaganda coincides with the looming offensive to retake Mosul and recent ISIL setbacks such as the loss of Fallujah and rapidly deteriorating economic and security situations for ISIL across northern Iraq and Syria.

ISIL has lost its foothold in Fallujah, and accordingly more information on the situation in Al Anbar Governorate has become available. ASOR CHI has learned of multiple acts of sectarian retributory violence in Al Anbar Governorate impacting places of worship. The situation in Fallujah is precarious with the presence of Shia Popular Mobilization Units in a predominantly Sunni city, and these incidents of mosque destruction allegedly by PMUs, which bears a strong similarity to earlier

¹ This report is based on research conducted by the "Cultural Preservation Initiative: Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq." Weekly reports reflect reporting from a variety of sources and may contain unverified material. As such, they should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.

² See **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0101** in **Weekly Report 73-74**.

³ See **IHI 15-0068** in **Weekly Report 31** for initial reports and **IHI 15-0068 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 35** for the propaganda publication.

⁴ See **IHI 15-0067** in **Weekly Report 31** and **IHI 15-0067 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 34** for initial reports and **IHI 15-0079** in **Weekly Report 35** for the propaganda publication.

⁵ The site of Assur (Qal'at Sherqat), damaged by militarization in satellite imagery dated to June 2015, was the most recently damaged ancient site in Iraq but no propaganda of this incident had been generated by ISIL. See initial reports in **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0082** in **Weekly Report 42-43** and satellite imagery confirmation in **IHI 15-0082 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 45**.

incidents in Muqdadiya, Diyala Governorate in January 2016,⁶ could spark increased violence and ultimately erase the significance of these territorial gains against ISIL.

Combat damage to places of worship continues unabated in Syria, with the majority of the damage resulting from aerial bombardment in Aleppo and Idlib Governorates, where SARG and Russian forces have concentrated military efforts. The site of Qalaat Semaan was hit again by airstrikes, and The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative has provided an assessment of the damage.

Finally, DigitalGlobe satellite imagery revealed further looting at the site of Apamea.

Key Points

- Recent DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows the complete destruction of the Nergal Gate at the archaeological site of Nineveh, Ninawa Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE](#)).
- Update on the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh, Ninawa Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0013 UPDATE](#)).
- New information shows two additional mosques were damaged (allegedly by the Popular Mobilization Front) in al-Karmah District, al-Anbar Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0015 UPDATE](#)).
- Members of the Shia Popular Mobilization Front allegedly damaged a mosque in al-Saqlawiyah, al-Anbar Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0018](#)).
- Video footage published by the ISIL-affiliated Amaq News Agency shows recruitment of men by ISIL militants in two mosques in Manbij, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0085](#)).
- Alleged SARG barrel bombs severely damaged al-Mustafa Mosque in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0086](#)).
- SARG and Russian airstrikes allegedly damaged three mosques in the city of Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0087](#)).
- An alleged SARG airstrike damaged al-Masri Mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0088](#)).
- An alleged Russian airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Urum al-Kubra, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0089](#)).
- An alleged SARG airstrike damaged al-Rahman Mosque in Idlib, Idlib Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0090](#)).
- An alleged US-led coalition airstrike allegedly damaged Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque in Tilalyan, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0091](#)).
- Newly published video footage shows damage to Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque in Hraitan, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0092](#)).
- New DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows ongoing illegal excavations at the archaeological site of Apamea, Hama Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0093](#)).
- An alleged SARG airstrikes caused unspecified damage to Qalaat Semaan, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0094](#)). The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative has produced a report on the damage.

⁶ See [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0002](#) in [Weekly Report 75-76](#).

Heritage Timeline

June 21, 2016

The **Department of Antiquities in Latakia** and the Governor of the city of Latakia hosted the ambassadors of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China at the archaeological site of Ugarit.

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1736568979919471&id=1474708139438891

https://www.facebook.com/-اللاذقية آثار دائرة-1474708139438891/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1735418010034568

June 20, 2016

Middle East Eye published an article titled “**Iraqi social media erupts as clerics propose re-naming ancient city of Babylon**” (by Karim El-Bar). A religious organization's suggestion that the city of Babel (Babylon) in Iraq be renamed “Imam Hassan City” sparked a wave of anger across Iraqi social media.

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/iraqi-social-media-storm-after-clerics-propose-changing-name-historical-city-babel-1161197491>

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Russia 24 published a video report titled “**Русские художники прилетели рисовать Пальмиру (Russian artists have arrived to paint Palmyra)**.” Russian artists have come to Palmyra to create paintings of the ruins.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmRl1P7_sow

June 19, 2016

Al Monitor published an article titled “**Centuries-old Kufa mosque still holds religious, political significance**” (by Wassim Bassem). The 7th-century CE Great Mosque of Kufa has served as both a religious and political platform in Iraq since its foundation, especially for Shiites. Parts of the mosque are currently undergoing renovation.

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/06/iraq-kufa-historical-mosque-shiite-political-platform.html>

June 17, 2016

Al Monitor published an article titled “**Will Iraq's wetlands join World Heritage List?**” (by Omar Sattar). The Iraqi government is pressing for the inclusion of Iraq's wetlands and the archaeological sites of Ur, Eridu, and Uruk on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/06/iraq-archeological-sites-unesco-marshlands-world-heritage.html>

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Apollo Magazine published an article titled “**The centre of learning destroyed by ISIS in Iraq**” (by Christopher Jones). The author discusses the significance of the Temple of Nabu at Nimrud, recently destroyed by ISIL militants.

<http://www.apollo-magazine.com/centre-learning-destroyed-isis/>

June 16, 2016

DGAM published an article titled “استكمال أعمال التوثيق ثلاثيا لأبعاد” (The completion of 3-dimensional documentation of the site of Palmyra using modern technologies). The photos provided by the DGAM and ICONEM show the western part of the Palmyra Museum in order to provide accurate documentation of the damage to experts to assist in the restoration phase.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=177&id=1995>

- The **Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine** in Paris held a conference titled “**De Reims à Palmyre: le patrimoine en temps de guerre (From Reims to Palmyra: patrimony in times of war)**.” Speakers include Cheikhmous Ali (APSA), Yves Ubelmann (ICONEM), and Samir Abdulac (ICOMOS).
http://www.citechailot.fr/fr/auditorium/26251-de_reims_a_palmyre.html
- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Suspected Russian forces shelling on Abu Huraira Mosque in Al Fardous neighborhood in Aleppo city in June 15.**” A mosque in Aleppo was “rendered inoperable” by an airstrike. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0087**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/16/suspected-russian-forces-shelling-abu-huraira-mosque-al-fardous-neighborhood-aleppo-city-june-15/>
- *Alghad Press* published an article titled “اليونسكو: الأقمار الصناعية أظهرت تدمير داعش لـ”هيكل نابو” في مدينة النمرود (UNESCO: Satellites appear to show the destruction of the Nabu Temple in the city of Nimrud by Daesh).” UNESCO condemns the destruction of the Temple of Nabu at Nimrud by ISIL militants.
<http://alghadpress.com/ar/news/57773/>

June 15, 2016

Museums Journal published an article titled “**Experts call for list of looted Syria heritage**” (by Eleanor Mills). Participants at the June 2-4, 2016 UNESCO meeting in Berlin called for a comprehensive list of looted objects from Syria to be drawn up.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/15062016-syria-cultural-heritage>

- The **Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** published a report titled “**They Came to Destroy: ISIS Crimes Against the Yazidis.**” This report includes the destruction of Yazidi shrines in Iraq by ISIL militants.
http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/A_HRC_32_CRP.2_en.pdf

- *Al Bawaba* published an article titled “**New technology for ancient history: Using satellite imagery to document Middle Eastern archaeological sites**” (by Saeb Rawashdeh). The Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa (EAMENA) project led by Robert Bewley from the University of Oxford’s School of Archaeology documents archaeological sites and assesses the threats to them in 10 countries.
<http://www.albawaba.com/business/new-tech-ancient-history-using-satellite-imagery-document-middle-eastern-archaeological-sit>

June 14, 2016

Heritage for Peace published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage.**”

<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-14-june-2016/>

- **UNESCO** published an article titled “**UNESCO Director-General addresses the Europe Lecture 2016 on heritage protection as a security issue.**” Irina Bokova argues that the protection of cultural heritage is “a humanitarian imperative and a security issue.”
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1511>

June 13, 2016

The Architect’s Newspaper published an article titled “**‘The Destruction of Memory’ documentary explores the role of architecture in cultural genocide**” (by Jason Sayer). This new documentary examines “the war against culture, and the battle to save it,” and examines cultural heritage destruction at Palmyra, Timbuktu, Bosnia, and elsewhere.

<http://archpaper.com/2016/06/destruction-memory-tale-going-cultural-genocide-face-today/>

- *The Antiques Trade Gazette* published an article titled “**‘Vital changes’ needed to looted art bill as dealers says [SIC] definition of ‘cultural property’ is too vague**” (by Alex Capon). The Antiquities Dealers’ Association (ADA) says the UK Government’s cultural property bill (designed to tackle looting and destruction of cultural heritage in conflict zones) currently going through Parliament needs “vital changes” to be workable and to safeguard “legitimate art market interests.”
<https://www.antiquetradegazette.com/news/2016/vital-changes-needed-to-looted-art-bill-as-dealers-says-definition-of-cultural-property-is-too-vague/>

June 12, 2016

SNHR published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Masri mosque in Ma’art Al Numan city in Idlib governorate June 12.**” A mosque in Ma’arat al-Numan was damaged. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0088.**

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/12/government-forces-targeted-al-masri-mosque-maart-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-june-12/>

- **DGAM** published an article titled “ ندوة علمية بعنوان مدينة تدمر الأثرية بين الواقع والآفاق (Scientific symposium titled Ancient City of Palmyra Reality and Perspectives).” On June 13, 2016 DGAM will hold a symposium on the documentation and rehabilitation of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=177&id=1994>
 - **SNHR** published a report titled “**Attack on 92 Vital Facilities in May 2016.**” Damaged vital facilities in the report include 19 mosques and 1 church, damaged by various parties in the Syrian conflict.
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/09/22838/>
- June 10, 2016
- Apollo Magazine* published an article titled “**Inside the UNESCO conference to save Syria’s heritage**” (by Nausikaa el-Mecky). At the international expert meeting for the emergency safeguarding of Syria’s cultural heritage in Berlin from June 2-4, 2016 government officials, archaeologists, museum staff, architects, and other international and Syrian specialists convened to discuss what could be done to preserve the country’s threatened material history.
<http://www.apollo-magazine.com/inside-the-unesco-conference-to-save-syrias-heritage/>
- *Science* published an article titled “**Speaking out against blood antiquities**” (by Chip Colwell). This article discusses the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act recently passed by the U.S. Congress, and what further steps should be taken to curtail the black market sale of antiquities.
<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/352/6291/1285.1>
- June 9, 2016
- NRT TV* posted an article titled “**Students Start Graffiti Cleanup of Samarra’s Spiral Minaret.**” Archaeology students and staff from the University of Samarra have started a campaign to remove graffiti from the walls of the Great Mosque of Samarra, Qasr al-Khalifa, Qasr al-Ma'shuq, and other monuments in historic Samarra.
<http://www.nrttv.com/EN/Details.aspx?limate=8256>
- *PBS* published an article titled “**The Technology That Will Resurrect ISIS-Destroyed Antiquities**” (by Evan Hadingham). This article discusses the work of ASOR CHI, Rekrei, ICONEM, the Institute for Digital Archaeology, and other efforts to document and restore destroyed and damaged cultural heritage in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. ASOR CHI’s Allison Cuneo and Michael Danti are quoted.
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/next/ancient/digital-preservation-syria/>

- Christian Today* published an article titled “**ISIS’ relentless destruction of ancient heritage sites, and what it means for Iraq’s religious communities**” (by Carey Lodge). Experts argue ISIL’s destruction of archaeological sites is part of the group’s ongoing attempt to cleanse the Middle East of its diverse religious and cultural heritage.
<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/isis.relentless.destruction.of.ancient.heritage.sites.and.what.it.means.for.iraqs.religious.communities/87967.htm>
 - SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Mustafa Mosque in Darraya city in Damascus suburbs in June 8.**” A mosque in Daraya was damaged by fire. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0086.**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/09/government-forces-targeted-al-mustafa-mosque-darraya-city-damascus-suburbs-june-8/>
- June 8, 2016
- Middle East Eye* published an article titled “**Satellite images show ancient Iraq temple destroyed.**” The UN confirmed that satellite images show the destruction of the Temple of Nabu at Nimrud.
<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/satellite-images-show-ancient-iraq-temple-destroyed-152596903>
- June 6, 2016
- Books and Ideas* published an article titled “**Syria: The Strategy of Destruction**” (by Leila Vignal, trans. Kate McNaughton). This article discusses the ongoing, large-scale destruction of civilian homes and facilities throughout Syria.
<http://www.booksandideas.net/Syria-the-Strategy-of-Destruction.html>

Military and Political Context

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

1. Aleppo Governorate:
 - During the reporting period, ongoing SARG airstrikes on Castello Road effectively cut-off opposition-held areas of the city of Aleppo, placing an estimated 350,000 people in those areas under siege.⁷
 - On June 8, ISIL militants suddenly withdrew from the surrounding areas of the opposition-held town of Marea, abandoning at least six towns. Arab and Kurdish forces advanced on the town of Manbij “from three sides” and opposition fighters captured the village of Kafr Kalbin. Opposition forces in Marea are now united “under the leadership of Liwa al-Mutasem,” a group affiliated with the Free Syrian Army (FSA).⁸

⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKCN0YYOPQ>

⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-northwest-idUSKCN0YUOPT> ; <http://www.wsj.com/articles/arab-kurdish-forces-near-islamic-state-held-town-in-syria-1465397193> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-may-28-june-10-2016>

- On June 8, dozens of airstrikes of unknown origin struck the eastern Shaar district of Aleppo city, striking Bayan Hospital and killing at least 15 people. Two other hospitals were struck by airstrikes in opposition-held areas of the city. The Local Coordination Committee in Syria (LCCSY) reported that airstrikes struck the districts of Maadi and Haidariya.⁹
 - On June 9, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) reported that they had reached ISIL's "last main route" in and out of the ISIL-held city of Manbij. Operations to reclaim the city continued throughout the reporting period.¹⁰
 - On June 14, reported Russian and SARG airstrikes struck a residential area in the village of al-Bara, killing 20 people and wounding 40 more.¹¹
 - On June 16, SARG and Hezbollah forces reportedly engaged one another in heavy clashes in two villages in "Aleppo's southern suburbs," leading the Syrian Air Force to carry out three airstrikes over the area against Hezbollah.¹²
2. Damascus Governorate:
- On June 11, ISIL carried out a suicide and car bombing in the Damascus suburb of Sayyida Zeinab, not far from the shrine bearing the same name. The attack killed at least 20 people.¹³
 - On June 14, a local activist reported that SARG airstrikes struck the city of Damascus, wounding several people.¹⁴
3. Idlib Governorate:
- On June 11, airstrikes of unknown origin struck a market in the city of Idlib, killing at least 41 civilians. More unidentified airstrikes struck the town of Ma'arat Al Numan, killing six civilians.¹⁵
 - On June 11-12, Islamist opposition group 'Jaish al-Fatah Operations Room' agreed to a deal with Iran to resume a local ceasefire in the pro-regime towns of Fuah and Kefraya and the opposition-held towns of Zabadani and Madaya.¹⁶
4. Homs Governorate:
- On June 16, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that "unidentified warplanes" targeted the al-Tanf border area between Syria and Iraq, striking a camp belonging to the New Syrian Army and an Iraqi Tribal Army. Russia was later accused by several groups and US officials of carrying out the airstrike, a claim Russia denies.¹⁷

⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36479415> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/09/world/middleeast/aleppo-syria-hospitals-airstrikes.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2016/Jun-09/356096-us-backed-forces-in-syria-reach-last-main-road-into-isis-held-manbij-spokesman.ashx> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/06/isis-official-killed-us-strike-north-syria/>

¹¹ <http://aa.com.tr/en/anadolu-post/syria-28-civilians-killed-55-wounded-in-airstrikes/589758>

¹² <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Controversy-over-military-strategy-reportedly-ignites-fight-between-Assad-forces-and-Hezbollah-456905>

¹³ <http://www.newsweek.com/20-dead-isis-bombing-shiite-shrine-469322>

¹⁴ <http://aa.com.tr/en/anadolu-post/syria-28-civilians-killed-55-wounded-in-airstrikes/589758>

¹⁵ <https://www.yahoo.com/news/raids-syria-market-kill-21-hundreds-flee-bastion-170636802.html> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-10-17-2016>

¹⁶ <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-10-17-2016>

¹⁷ <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2016/06/17/47701> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-10-17-2016> ; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/17/russian-warplanes-bomb-elite-british-backed-syrian-rebels/>

5. Raqqa Governorate:
 - On June 10, pro-regime forces seized the ISIL-held Sfaiyeh Oil Field in the west of Raqqa Governorate.¹⁸
 - On June 20, hundreds of ISIL militants pushed SARG forces from Raqqa Governorate after the forces reached to within 12 miles of the town of Tabqa.¹⁹
 - On June 21, Syrian activists reported that airstrikes on the ISIL-stronghold city of Raqqa of unknown origin killed 18 civilians and wounded dozens more.²⁰
6. Al Hasakah Governorate:
 - On June 19, a suicide bomber disguised as a priest attacked an Assyrian Christian memorial event in the district of al-Wusta in the city of Qamishli, killing three Assyrian ‘Sotor’ police officers. The attack reportedly took place at the entrance of the Syriac Orthodox Church. One police officer stated that the attack was an assassination attempt against the head of the Syriac Orthodox Church, Patriarch Ignatius Aphrem III.²¹
7. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
 - On June 11, SARG airstrikes reportedly dropped barrel bombs over the city of Daraya only hours after a food relief agencies gained access to the town.²²
8. Deir ez Zor Governorate:
 - On June 18, the local activist group Deir Ezzor Is Being Slaughtered Silently reported that Hezbollah had established “a new military faction” comprised of 150 fighters called the Zayn al-Abidin Brigade in the city of Deir ez Zor’s Al-Jura neighborhood.²³

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Abu Kamal, Ayn Isa, Deir ez Zor, Manbij, Mar’a, Shaddadi, and Raqqa.²⁴
- During the reporting period, Russia increased its airstrikes over the governorates of Deir ez Zor and Raqqa. In addition CIA Director John Brennan stated that Russian airstrikes in the first two weeks of June increased so dramatically in Aleppo Governorate that the number of strikes “exceeded the pre-cessation of hostilities totals.”²⁵
- On June 9, a suicide bomber targeted and killed Saleem Bakour, a Syrian army defector and founder of the FSA at a base near the Jordanian-Iraqi border.²⁶
- On June 10, Reuters reported that the Syrian government was releasing some prisoners on the condition that they join the army.²⁷

¹⁸ <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-10-17-2016>

¹⁹ <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/world/2016/06/20/Kerry-Cable-urging-Syria-strikes-very-good-.html> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/isil-recaptures-areas-syrian-forces-raqqa-160621145240936.html>

²⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36595166>

²¹ <http://www.france24.com/en/20160619-syria-several-killed-suicide-bomb-attack-christian-massacre-memorial-qamishli> ; <http://www.aina.org/news/20160619133922.htm> ; <http://www.aina.org/news/20160621203327.htm>

²² <http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/11/middleeast/syria-food-aid-strikes/>

²³ <http://www.dierezzore-bss.com/?p=696> ; <https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/NewsReports/567115-hezbollah-forms-new-deir-ezzor-militia-activists>

²⁴ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [795157](#), [796399](#), [797179](#), [797231](#), [797546](#), [799255](#), [799769](#), [801133](#), [801970](#), [803121](#), [804988](#), [805657](#), [809436](#)

²⁵ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-june-3-17.html>

²⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels-idUSKCN0YV24D>

²⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-prisoners-idUSKCN0YW1T9>

- On June 10, French officials acknowledged that French special forces are assisting “Kurdish-led militias” forces in northern Syria.²⁸
- On June 18, Russian RT news broadcasted footage that appeared to show Russian jets carrying incendiary bombs over Syria. Russia has denied the use of incendiary bombs by its air force. The footage was later censored by RT.²⁹
- On June 21, a car bombing struck near a “makeshift refugee camp” along the Jordan-Syria border, killing six Jordanian personnel. Reports indicate that more than one explosive-laden car were destroyed prior to reaching their target. Following the attack, Jordan declared the entire north and northeastern border with Syria as a military zone and suspended the delivery of humanitarian aid. No group has yet taken responsibility for the attack.³⁰

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

1. Al Anbar Governorate:
 - On June 15, Iraqi Counterterrorism Forces recaptured the ISIL-held villages of Zankura and Albu Risha, north and northwest of the city of Ramadi.³¹
 - On June 17, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared victory in the fight against ISIL in the city of Fallujah, stating that the majority of the city was now under the control of Iraqi security forces.³²
 - On June 21, Colonel Christopher Garver contradicted Iraq’s claim over its forces control of Fallujah, stating that Iraqi forces had only captured a third of Fallujah and not the 80 percent claimed by Iraqi army commanders.³³
2. Baghdad Governorate:
 - On June 8, Iraqi PM Haider al-Abadi dismissed several key officials including the directors of six state-owned banks, the head of Iraqi state media, and Iraq’s intelligence chief.³⁴
 - On June 9, two ISIL suicide bombings struck in and around Baghdad, killing at least 30 people and wounding more than 80. The bombings struck the mainly-Shia district of Jadida and an army checkpoint in the city of Taji, north of Baghdad.³⁵
3. Ninawa Governorate:
 - On June 11, Iraqi military troops captured the village of Haj Ali, east of the town of Qayyarah.³⁶
 - On June 13, US forces used an Apache attack helicopter for the first time in the fight against ISIL as part of a support operation in the efforts to retake the ISIL-held city of Mosul.³⁷

²⁸ <http://www.voanews.com/content/france-deploys-special-forces-as-is-loses-ground/3368969.html>

²⁹ <http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-rt-tv-cluster-bombs-syria/27809812.html> ; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/06/21/dispatches-incendiary-weapons-pose-civilian-threat-syria>

³⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36584885> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/jordan-declares-border-syria-military-zone-160621172026984.html>

³¹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/iraq-situation-report-june-14-20-2016.html>

³² https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/iraqi-forces-make-rapid-advances-in-islamic-state-held-fallujah/2016/06/17/a636b098-5864-4d2d-a3f3-b76461094e43_story.html ; <http://www.wsj.com/articles/iraqi-forces-extend-control-in-fallujah-1466364615>

³³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36591778>

³⁴ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/iraqi-prime-minister-dismisses-key-officials-1465336334>

³⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36489662>

³⁶ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-falluja-idUSKCN0YY0DZ>

- On June 14, the Iraqi military recaptured the ISIL-held village of Nasr, 35 miles south of Mosul. During the battle, an ISIL sniper shot and killed senior Iraqi commander Brigadier Ahmad Badr al-Luhaibi.³⁸
- 4. Salah ad Din Governorate:
 - On June 17, Iraqi security forces launched a new operation to recapture the district of Sharqat in the city of Beiji.³⁹

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Baghdadi, Bashir, Beiji, Fallujah, Habbaniyah, Haditha, Kisik, Mosul, Qayyarah, Ramadi, Rawah, Sinjar, Sultan Abdullah, and Tal Afar.⁴⁰

Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:

- On June 11, US military officials reported that its operations have killed more than 120 ISIL leaders.⁴¹

Syrian Network For Human Rights Videos

Beginning March 23, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) published backdated videos on YouTube of combat damage inflicted on schools, bakeries, hospitals, marketplaces, and other types of infrastructure and civilian sites. ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the SNHR YouTube channel and archive videos that document heritage destruction. The following sites have been documented as damaged in the videos released during the current reporting period:

1. Hamza Mosque, damaged by alleged Russian airstrikes in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate on May 31, 2016. See **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0019** in **Weekly Report in 79-80**.⁴²
2. Amr Abu Obaida Ibn Al Jarah Mosque, damaged by alleged Russian airstrikes in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate on May 30, 2016. See **SHI 16-0075** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.⁴³
3. Khan Murad Basha Museum, allegedly struck by SARG airstrikes on May 9, 2016 in Ma'arat Numan, Idlib Governorate. See **SHI 16-0063** in **Weekly Report 91-92**.⁴⁴
4. Qalaat Semaan, allegedly damaged by SARG airstrikes in Daaret Aza, Aleppo Governorate on May 12, 2016. See **SHI 16-0066** in **Weekly Report 93-94**.⁴⁵
5. Hamza bin Abd al-Muttaleb Mosque, allegedly damaged by SARG airstrikes in Hayan, Aleppo Governorate on May 28, 2016. See **SHI 16-0081** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.⁴⁶

³⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-apache-idUSKCN0YZ25E> ; <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/799035/us-apache-helicopters-join-counter-isil-fight-carter-says>

³⁸ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/iraqs-army-retakes-village-south-of-mosul-3-months-after-launch-of-offensive/2016/06/14/6ae5c6c2-3239-11e6-ab9d-1da2b0f24f93_story.html ; <http://www.rferl.org/content/iraq-commander-killed-islamic-state/27798880.html>

³⁹ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/iraq-situation-report-june-14-20-2016.html>

⁴⁰ See: "US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq". *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [795157](#), [796399](#), [797179](#), [797231](#), [797546](#), [799255](#), [799769](#), [801133](#), [801970](#), [803121](#), [804988](#), [805657](#), [809436](#)

⁴¹ <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-isis-airstrikes-20160607-snap-story.html>

⁴² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHdic4iIFvA>

⁴³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJ6fVA10R-8&>

⁴⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wR501WQzy08>

⁴⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TsNOX4j2ew>

6. Al Bara bin Malek Mosque, allegedly damaged by SARG airstrikes in Hreitan, Aleppo Governorate on May 20, 2016. See **SHI 16-0071** in **Weekly Report 93-93**.⁴⁷
7. Abu Bakr Al Sadeiq Mosque, allegedly damaged by SARG airstrikes in Hreitan, Aleppo Governorate on May 30, 2016 **SHI 16-0082** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.⁴⁸

Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis

See **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0093** within this report for an update on illegal excavations taking place at the ancient site of Apamea in Syria as seen in DigitalGlobe imagery from June 20, 2016.

⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTggNz1P-dw>

⁴⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQmUQOHFiaA>

⁴⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-rXg8huAtY>

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 16-0085

Report Date: June 4, 2016

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque; Unidentified mosque

Date of Incident: June 3-4, 2016; June 18, 2016

Location: al-Kabir Mosque - Manbij, Aleppo Governorate, Syria; Unidentified mosque - al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosques in Aleppo Governorate.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Video footage shows recruitment of men by ISIL in two mosques.

Incident Source and Description: On June 4, 2016 ISIL-affiliated Amaq News Agency published video footage of a recruitment drive by ISIL militants in a mosque in Manbij.⁴⁹ Although the name of the mosque is not explicitly stated in the video, at least one post on social media named the site as al-Kabir Mosque.⁵⁰ In a video released one day prior by Amaq News Agency, a preacher is shown giving a sermon in the presence of dozens of armed men, who possibly have just been recruited.⁵¹

On June 18, 2016 Amaq News Agency released a second video of a recruitment drive in an unidentified mosque in al-Bab.⁵² On June 17, 2016 several social media accounts and local news sources reported that ISIL militants were rounding up hundreds of civilians and transporting them on buses to fight.⁵³

Pattern: Military activity: militarization/occupation.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of militarization and occupation of sites in Aleppo Governorate.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Amaq News Agency:

June 3, 2016: <https://amaqagency.top/2016/06/03/صفوف في القتال على الشبان عشرات مبايعة/>

⁴⁹ <https://amaqagency.top/2016/06/03/صفوف في القتال على الشبان عشرات مبايعة/>

⁵⁰ <https://twitter.com/markito0171/status/738777804372860928>

⁵¹ <https://amaqagency.top/2016/06/03/صفوف في القتال على الشبان عشرات مبايعة/>

⁵² <https://aqagency.de/2016/06/18/الاش حلل بريف الباب مدينة في شبان مبايعة/>

⁵³ <https://twitter.com/todayinsyria/status/743861140145352704> ; <https://twitter.com/24Aleppo/status/743912997303779328>

June 4, 2016: [https://amaqagency.top/2016/06/03/صفوف في القتال على الشبان عشرات مبايعة/](https://amaqagency.top/2016/06/03/صفوف%20في%20القتال%20على%20الشبان%20عشرات%20مبايعة/)
June 16, 2016: [https://aqagency.de/2016/06/18/الش حلب بريف الباب مدينة في شبان مبايعة/](https://aqagency.de/2016/06/18/الش%20حلب%20بريف%20الباب%20مدينة%20في%20شبان%20مبايعة/)

ARA News Network:

<http://aranews.net/2016/06/isis-recruiting-dozens-arabs-fight-sdf-north-syria/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/markito0171/status/738777804372860928>



Video still showing weapons to be dispersed among new recruits in al-Kabir Mosque (Amaq News Agency; June 4, 2016)



Video still of recruits raising their guns inside al-Kabir Mosque (Amaq News Agency; June 4, 2016)



Men chant in front of the mihrab inside al-Kabir Mosque (Twitter; June 3, 2016)



Video still of recruitment inside the unidentified mosque in al-Bab City (Amaq News Agency; June 18, 2016)



Video still of recruitment inside the unidentified mosque in al-Bab City (Amaq News Agency; June 18, 2016)

SHI 16-0086

Report Date: June 8, 2016

Site Name: al-Mustafa Mosque (مسجد المصطفى)

Date of Incident: June 8, 2016

Location: Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Barrel bombing allegedly by SARG forces severely damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 8, 2016 the Local Council of Daraya reported via the group's Facebook page that a SARG helicopter dropped a barrel bomb next to al-Mustafa Mosque in Daraya in the suburbs of Damascus, causing the mosque to catch fire. The bombing occurred during or right after Tarawih prayers for Ramadan, though it is unclear if the mosque was in use when the fire broke out.⁵⁴ On June 9, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) also reported the damage to al-Mustafa Mosque, stating that the barrel bomb that struck near the mosque caused damage to the building and its furniture, and rendered the mosque inoperable.⁵⁵

Al-Mustafa Mosque suffered damage prior to this barrel bombing. SNHR reported on November 24, 2015 that SARG forces had dropped barrel bombs on the mosque the previous day, "damaging it severely and turned it out of service."⁵⁶ On December 6, 2015 SNHR posted a video showing extensive damage to the mosque, including large holes in the mosque's ceiling and roof, broken windows, and a large amount of debris in the mosque's interior.⁵⁷ The description for the video states that the mosque had been struck and severely damaged on at least one prior occasion.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Eyewitness Aleppo: <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=1034483139969418>

⁵⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/daraya.council/posts/509076219286951>

⁵⁵ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/09/government-forces-targeted-al-mustafa-mosque-daraya-city-damascus-suburbs-june-8/>

⁵⁶ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2015/11/24/14890/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5NbCidzcqE>

Local Council of Daraya: <https://www.facebook.com/daraya.council/posts/509076219286951>

SNHR:

June 9, 2016: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/09/government-forces-targeted-al-mustafa-mosque-daraya-city-damascus-suburbs-june-8/>

December 6, 2015: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5NbCidzcqE>

November 24, 2015: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2015/11/24/14890/>



A fire breaks out in al-Mustafa Mosque (SNHR; June 9, 2016)



A fire breaks out in al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Daraya; June 8, 2016)



A fire breaks out in al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Daraya; June 8, 2016)



A fire breaks out in al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Daraya; June 8, 2016)

SHI 16-0087

Report Date: June 12, 2016

Site Name:

- Abdullah bin Masud Mosque (مسجد عبد الله بن مسعود)
- Abu Huraira Mosque (مسجد أبو هريرة)
- Sabareen Mosque (مسجد الصابرين)

Date of Incident: June 11-15, 2016

Location:

- Abdullah bin Masud Mosque - Tariq al-Bab neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- Abu Huraira Mosque - Firdous neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- Sabareen Mosque - Jisr al-Hajj neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosques in the city of Aleppo.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Alleged SARG and Russian airstrikes damaged three mosques in the city of Aleppo.

Incident Source and Description: On June 11, 2016 Radar 2 reported that a Russian airstrike struck and damaged Abdullah bin Masud Mosque in the Tariq al-Bab neighborhood of Aleppo, damaging the mosque and injuring civilians.⁵⁸ On June 15, 2016 Aleppo Today reported that two civilians were killed and seven wounded when an airstrike of unknown origin hit the mosque.⁵⁹ No photographs of either incident were available at the time of publication.

On June 16, 2016 Aleppo Media Center published a video of Civil Defense Forces attempting to extinguish a fire in Sabareen Mosque in the Jisr al-Hajj neighborhood of Aleppo, which caught fire when the nearby Hajj Bridge was allegedly hit by a SARG airstrike.⁶⁰ This mosque has been damaged at least once previously. A video published by News Tube on April 15, 2014 shows damage to the minaret of the Sabareen Mosque, though how and when that damage occurred is unclear.⁶¹

On June 16, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian airstrike damaged Abu Huraira Mosque in the Firdous neighborhood of Aleppo on June 15, 2016, “damaging the mosque and rendering it inoperable.”⁶²

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

⁵⁸ <http://radar2.net/External-155265.html>

⁵⁹ <https://twitter.com/HalabTodayTV/status/743197245877665793?lang=en>

⁶⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QDEr8WFZNo> ; <http://www.qudspress.com/index.php?page=show&id=20268>

⁶¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hl_EP1LM70g

⁶² <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/16/suspected-russian-forces-shelling-abu-huraira-mosque-al-fardous-neighborhood-aleppo-city-june-15/>

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to these mosques, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Aleppo Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QDEr8WFZNo>

Aleppo Today: <https://twitter.com/HalabTodayTV/status/743197245877665793?lang=en>

News Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hl_EP1LM70g

Quds Press: <http://www.qudspress.com/index.php?page=show&id=20268>

Radar 2: <http://radar2.net/External-155265.html>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/16/suspected-russian-forces-shelling-abu-huraira-mosque-al-fardous-neighborhood-aleppo-city-june-15/>



Fire in Sabareen Mosque (Aleppo Media Center; June 16, 2016)



Fire in Sabareen Mosque (Aleppo Media Center; June 16, 2016)



Fire damage in Sabareen Mosque (Aleppo Media Center; June 16, 2016)



Fire in Sabareen Mosque (Aleppo Media Center; June 16, 2016)

SHI 16-0088

Report Date: June 12, 2016

Site Name: al-Masri Mosque (مسجد المصري)

Date of Incident: June 12, 2016

Location: Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: 1936 CE

Incident Summary: An alleged SARG airstrike damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 12, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike damaged al-Masri Mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan, causing unspecified damage to the building.⁶³ Several airstrikes on the same day killed at least seven people in Ma'arat al-Numan.⁶⁴ No photographs of damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication.

This mosque has been damaged at least once previously. An Al Jazeera article from March 2015 included al-Masri Mosque in a list of 13 mosques allegedly bombed by SARG forces. An attendant from the al-Masri Mosque states that neighborhood residents repaired the mosque themselves after this incident, without help or funds from the government or the Ministry of Endowments.⁶⁵

Since the end of the declared ceasefire over Syria, Ma'arat al-Numan has been subject to ongoing aerial bombardment. At least one other mosque in the city has been damaged by airstrikes since May 2016. See **ASOR CHI Incident Report 16-0076** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to al-Masri Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Jazeera:

<http://www.aljazeera.net/news/humanrights/2015/3/11/النعمان معرفة في مسجدا 13 يدمر السوري النظام/>

Egypt 24: <http://24.com.eg/syria-news/1287643.html>

⁶³ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/12/government-forces-targeted-al-masri-mosque-maarat-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-june-12/>

⁶⁴ <http://24.com.eg/syria-news/1287643.html>

⁶⁵ <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/humanrights/2015/3/11/النعمان معرفة في مسجدا 13 يدمر السوري النظام/>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/12/government-forces-targeted-al-masri-mosque-maart-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-june-12/>

SHI 16-0089

Report Date: June 13, 2016

Site Name: al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبير)

Date of Incident: June 13, 2016

Location: Urum al-Kubra, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Alleged Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 13, 2016 All4Syria reported that al-Kabir Mosque in Urum al-Kubra sustained minor damage when a Russian airstrike hit nearby, breaking windows in the mosque, damaging nearby buildings, and injuring worshippers attending morning prayers.⁶⁶ No photographs were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to al-Kabir Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

All4Syria: <http://www.all4syria.info/Archive/320812>

⁶⁶ <http://www.all4syria.info/Archive/320812>

SHI 16-0090

Report Date: June 16, 2016

Site Name: al-Rahman Mosque (مسجد الرحمن)

Date of Incident: June 16, 2016

Location: Idlib, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: An alleged SARG airstrike damaged mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 16, 2016 the Local Coordination Committees of Syria reported on its Facebook page that a SARG airstrike landed on or near al-Rahman Mosque in the city of Idlib just before Tarawih prayers, causing unspecified damage to the mosque and wounding at least five civilians.⁶⁷ No photographs were available at the time of publication.

The city of Idlib has been subject to ongoing aerial bombardment since the end of the declared ceasefire in Syria. ASOR CHI has recorded recent damage to at least seven mosques in the city of Idlib. See **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0062** in **Weekly Report 91-92** and **SHI 16-0073** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to al-Rahman Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Local Coordination Committees of Syria:

<https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1415930325100766>

⁶⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1415930325100766>

SHI 16-0091

Report Date: June 18, 2016

Site Name: Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque (مسجد ابو بكر الصديق)

Date of Incident: June 17, 2016

Location: Tilalyan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Alleged US-led coalition forces destroyed a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 17, 2016 ARA News reported that Syrian Opposition fighters assisted by US-led coalition airstrikes captured the town of Tilalyan from ISIL militants. Coalition forces hit ISIL positions (including Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque) in the town with a number of airstrikes (allegedly killing around 20 ISIL militants), which resulted in the destruction of the mosque.⁶⁸ No details or photographs of the damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives, occupation/militarization.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ARA News: <http://aranews.org/2016/06/مسجد=س/?s=والتحالف، تلالين بلدة تقتحم المعارضة>

⁶⁸ <http://aranews.org/2016/06/مسجد=س/?s=والتحالف، تلالين بلدة تقتحم المعارضة>

SHI 16-0092

Report Date: June 19, 2016

Site Name: Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (مسجد خالد بن الوليد)

Date of Incident: Undetermined

Location: Hraitan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: New video shows material damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 19, 2016 local news source 'Hraitan City' released a video showing material damage to Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque in Hraitan, Aleppo Governorate.⁶⁹ It is unclear if the damage to the mosque was inflicted on the same day as the publication of the video, or if it was the result of earlier damage. The video shows severe damage to the mosque's minaret. The interior of the mosque is filled with broken glass and other debris.

The town of Hraitan has been subjected to ongoing aerial bombardment over the last six weeks. ASOR CHI previously reported on damage to two other mosques in Hraitan, namely al-Bara bin Malek Mosque and Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque. See **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0071** in **Weekly Report 93-94** and **SHI 16-0082** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Khalid Bin al-Walid Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Hraitan City: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZj7ShFxsI0>

⁶⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZj7ShFxsI0>



Video still of damage to the minaret of Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)



Video still of damage to the minaret of Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)



Video still of damage to the minaret of Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)



Video still of damage to the exterior of Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)



Video still of nameplate at Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)



Video still of material damage to Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)



Video still of damage to the interior of Khaled Bin al-Walid Mosque (Hraitan City; June 19, 2016)

SHI 16-0093

Report Date: June 20, 2016

Site Name: Apamea (آفاميا)

Date of Incident: Ongoing since September 3, 2011

Location: Apamea, 55 km north of Hama, Hama Governorate, Syria

Site Description: According to Ross Burns:

“The mound of Qalaat Mudiq (‘fortress of the defile’) lies west of the classical walled city and is still occupied by some of the town’s inhabitants. The mound, an artificial accumulation on a natural rocky outcrop, has indications of settlement going back at least to the Bronze Age. The site was chosen as the location for one of the four cities founded by Seleucus I Nicator at the end of the fourth century BC. Originally named Pharnake, the name was changed to Apameia to honour Seleucus’ Persian wife, Apama [...] In 64 BC, Apamea was taken by the Romans under Pompey and its citadel was razed. Under Roman rule, it was again favoured as a military base. The theatre, baths, temples, and villas, constructed during the town’s peak period of prosperity, the boom years of the second century AD, were perhaps initiated when Trajan ordered the rebuilding of the city after a severe earthquake in 115. The colonnaded main street was completed in its present form under Marcus Aurelius (161–80) and served both as an axis and a market, lined with stalls and shaded arcades.

The old citadel was probably incorporated when the new city’s enclosure walls were extended to the west. It became one of the main centres of Seleucid Syria and a forward military base. Its rich pastures made it a natural breeding centre for the horses of the Seleucid cavalry and it lay astride the kingdom’s main north-south communications, slightly to the rear of the buffer zone with the Ptolemaic lands to the south. By the second century BC, however, it well behind Antioch in economic and political importance. In 64 BC, Apamea was taken by the Romans under Pompey and its citadel was razed. Under Roman rule, it was again favoured as a military base. The theatre, baths, temples and villas, constructed during the town’s period of peak prosperity and boom years of the second century AD, were perhaps initiated when Trajan ordered the rebuilding of the city after a severe earthquake in 115 AD. The colonnaded main street was completed in its present form under Marcus Aurelius (161-80) and served both as an axis and a market, lined with stalls and shaded arcades. In the third century, the city was made the winter base for the elite II Parthica legion.

Apamea remained a centre of considerable importance into the Byzantine period. It was made the capital of Syria Secunda province in the early 5th century and was the seat of a bishop. The Persians sacked and burnt the city in 573 during a troubled century which also saw a succession of major earthquakes. The Persians again held it from 612 to 628 and the Byzantine ‘liberation’ came only a decade before it fell to the Arabs, changing hands without resistance.

The town came under Crusader control (attached to the Principality of Antioch) in 1106 when it was taken by Tancred. In July 1149 it fell to Nur al-Din. In 1157, an earthquake caused major damage. The castle was refortified by the Ayyubids and some remains of this phase are found on the citadel mound. The 16th century mosque and caravanserai indicate the role of the town later played as a staging post on the pilgrimage route from Istanbul to Mecca.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Burns 2010: 60-61

Site Date: ca. 300 BCE - 1300 CE

Incident Summary: Ongoing illegal excavations at Apamea.

Incident Source and Description: A DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from June 20, 2016 shows an increase in looting at Apamea since November 27, 2015. Illegal excavations are ongoing, with new holes being dug and previous looting holes expanded. New pitting is seen west of the *Cardo Maximus*. Expanded looting pits are visible near the ancient market and east of the *Cardo Maximus*. A few of the bastions on the eastern city wall also appear to be damaged. The southwestern area of the ancient site of Apamea also saw a large expansion of both new and old looting pits.

Illegal excavation at Apamea has been ongoing since September 3, 2011. ASOR CHI has previously reported on these illegal excavations in **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0034** in **Weekly Report 7**; **SHI 14-0085** in **Weekly Report 16-17**; **SHI 14-0085** in **Weekly Report 16-17**; **SHI 15-0130** in **Weekly Report 57-58** and **SHI 15-0141** in **Weekly Report 63-64**.

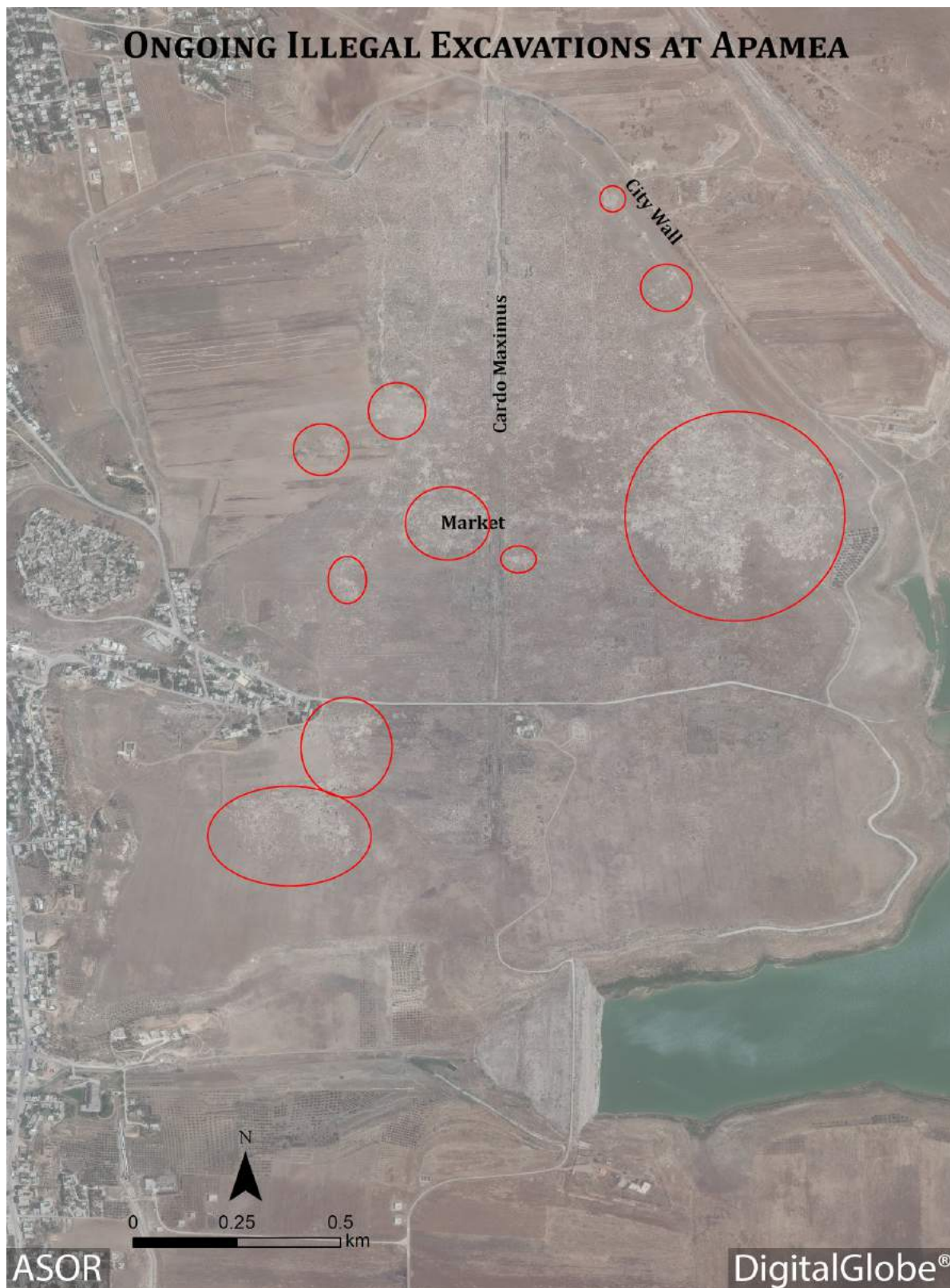
Pattern: Illegal excavation.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI remains concerned about rampant looting at Apamea, and will continue to monitor satellite imagery and reports of illegal excavation at this and other cultural heritage sites in Syria.

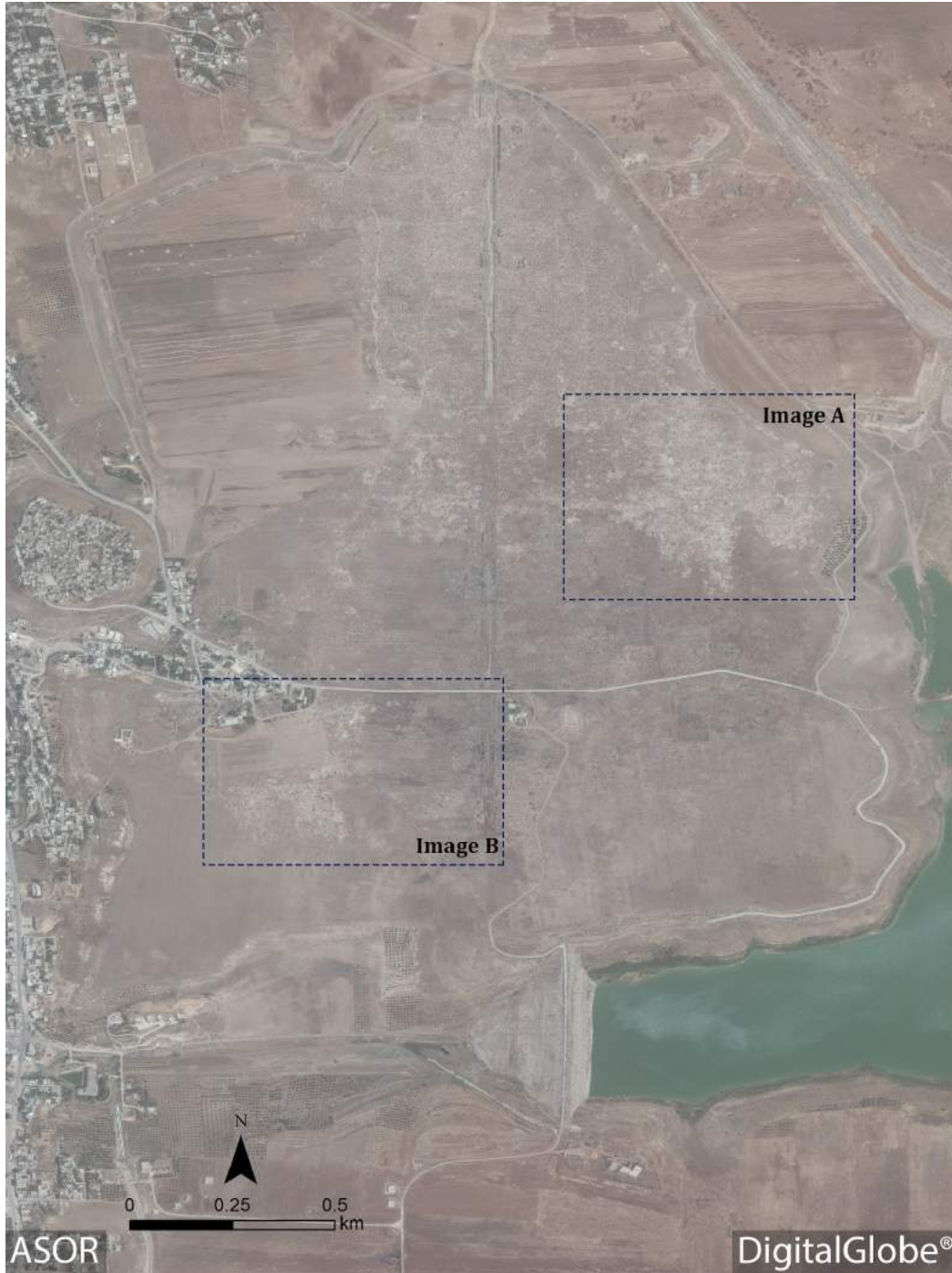
Sources:

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross (2010). *The Monuments of Syria. A Guide*. I.B. Tauris. London.



The red circles highlight areas of expanded or new looting pits since November 27, 2015 (ASOR/DigitalGlobe; June 20, 2016)



Locations of the following images within the larger geography of the site of Apamea. These two areas show the largest expansion of new and old looting pits (DigitalGlobe; June 20, 2016)

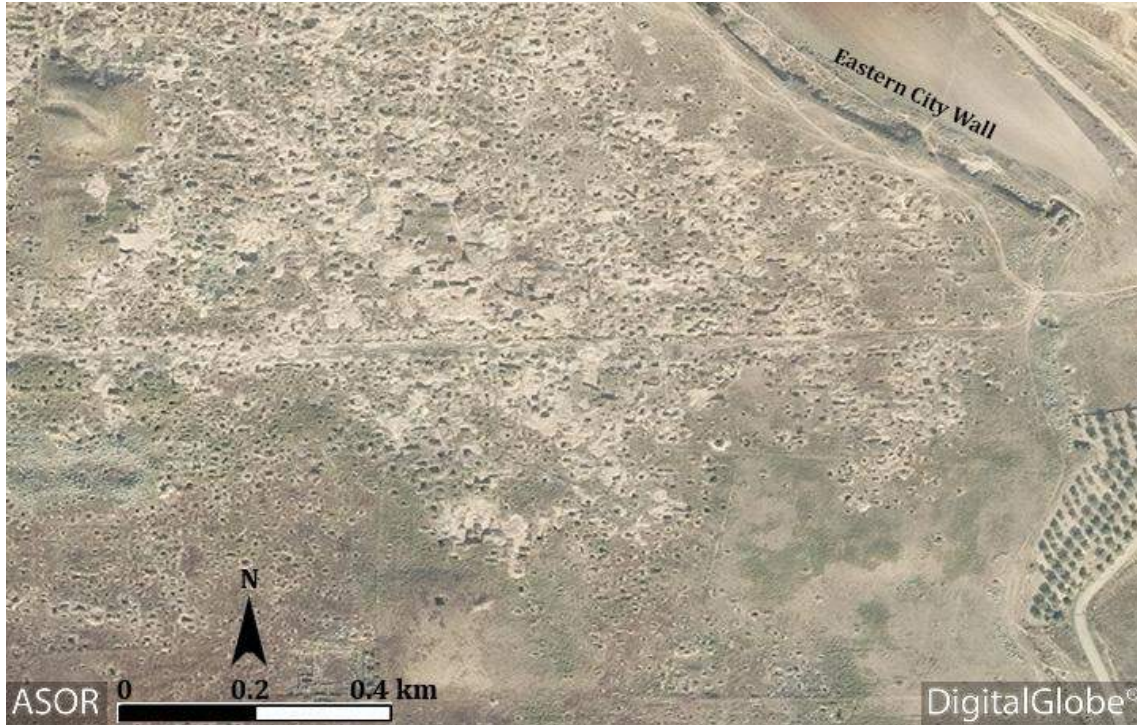


Image A: Visible looting pits within the eastern portion of the site (DigitalGlobe; November 27, 2015)

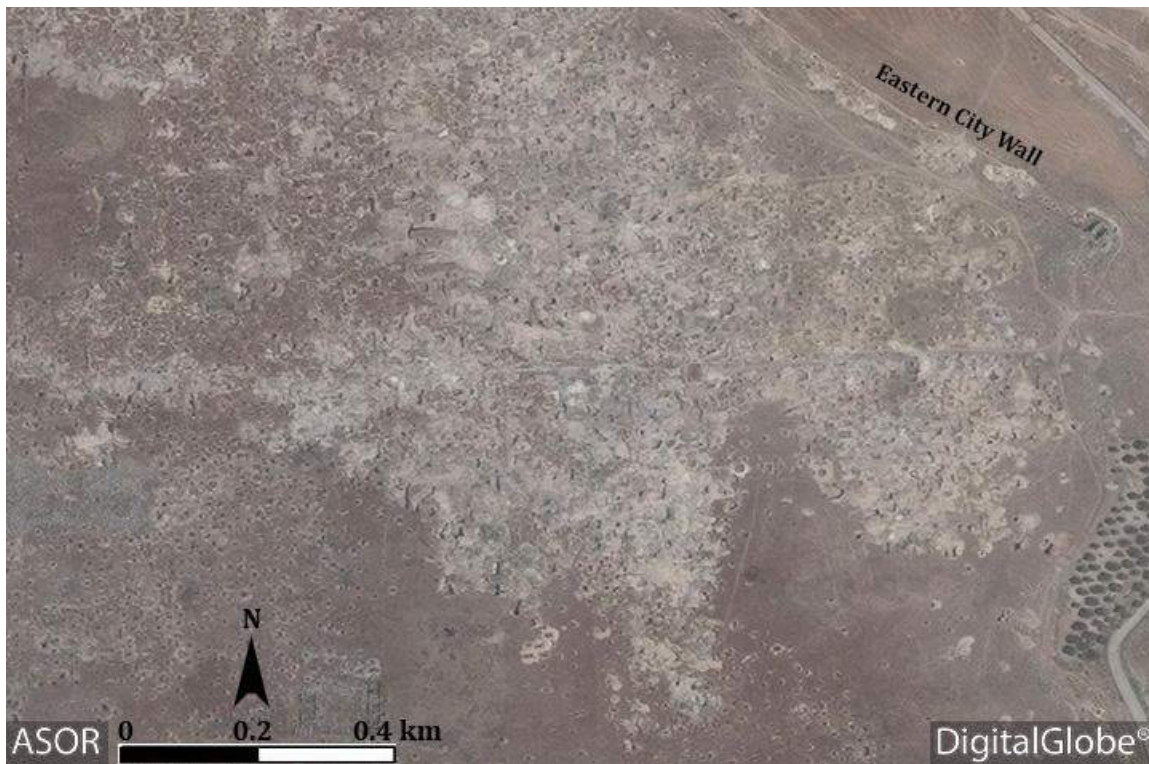


Image A: Expansion of looting pits over areas that had previously been looted within the eastern portion of the site (DigitalGlobe; June 20, 2016)



Image B: Visible looting pits within the southwestern portion of the site (DigitalGlobe; November 27, 2015)

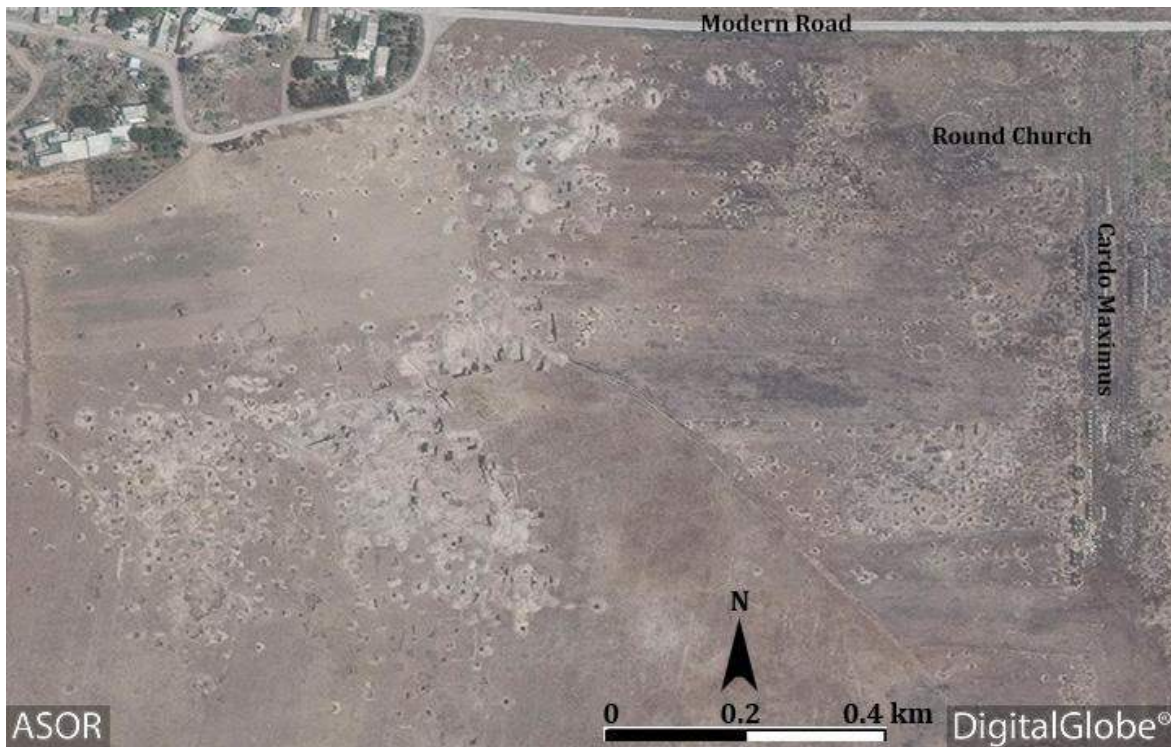


Image B: New and expanded looting pits within the southwestern portion of Apamea (DigitalGlobe; June 20, 2016)

SHI 16-0094

Report Date: June 17, 2016

Site Name: Qalaat Semaan (Deir Semaan; دير سمعان; Telanissos)⁷¹

Date of Incident: June 15-17, 2016

Location: Deir Semaan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The Church of Saint Simeon Stylites (388-459 CE) is one of the oldest surviving Byzantine churches in the Near East. The architectural complex atop the hill consists of a basilica (built ca. 476-492 CE), baptistery, monastery (ca. 490 CE), two hostelrys (ca. 490 CE and later), and a monumental arch. According to Ross Burns:

“Unlike the later cathedrals of medieval Europe, the great church [basilica] was conceived and executed more or less as a single project over a short space of time. The cruciform church comprising four separate basilica buildings was probably constructed shortly after the death of the ascete, St. Simeon....[who] took up residence on a platform atop a column around the remains of which the great building is centered. Construction of the complex began a few years after St. Simeon’s death (probably spanning AD 476 to 491)....[T]he column and the site of [St. Simeon’s] ascetic deeds was commemorated under imperial patronage, thus encouraging the continuation of the cult of St. Simeon through pilgrimage.”⁷²

The site was fortified when the Byzantines retook the area from Arabs in the 10th century. It was retaken and sacked by the Hamdanids in 985 CE and subsequently largely abandoned as a monastic-religious center. In 2011, the site of Deir Semaan (including Qalaat Semaan, the Church of St. Simeon Stylites) was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as one of the “Ancient Villages of Northern Syria.”⁷³

Site Date: Byzantine (5th century CE)

Incident Summary: Alleged SARG airstrikes hit Qalaat Semaan.

Incident Source and Description: On June 15, 2016 the Media Office of Daret Ezza reported that SARG airstrikes hit Qalaat Semaan.⁷⁴ The aerial bombardment reportedly continued into the next day.⁷⁵ On June 17, 2016 the number of strikes apparently increased and warplanes reportedly began dropping cluster bombs.⁷⁶ The Media Office also reported that Qalaat Semaan was hit by Brazzmat missiles fired from a rocket launcher stationed on Tell Sheikh Yusuf at the southernmost

⁷¹ While the names Qalaat Semaan and Deir Semaan are often used in news media interchangeably, Qalaat Semaan technically refers only to the Church of Saint Simeon Stylites complex located on the hill above Deir Semaan, the modern town. Deir Semaan also contains extensive ruins, including several churches, monasteries, and tombs.

⁷² Burns, 2009: 272-273

⁷³ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/>

⁷⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312756995418334>

⁷⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312752972085403>

⁷⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313832051977495>

point of Jebel el-A'la.⁷⁷ The Media Office later posted two nighttime videos allegedly showing the moment Qalaat Semaan was struck by missiles, but no photographs of the site were published.⁷⁸

On May 12, 2016 Qalaat Semaan was allegedly hit by a Russian airstrike, causing extensive damage to the entrance and central courtyard of the Church of Saint Simeon: see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0066** in **Weekly Report 93–94**. Qalaat Semaan and the nearby modern town of Deir Semaan have been damaged throughout the Syrian conflict: see **SHI 14-0028** in **Weekly Report 6**; **SHI 14-0079** in **Weekly Report 15**; **SHI 14-0106** in **Weekly Report 21-22**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI remains concerned about the state of Qalaat Semaan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and will continue to monitor this and other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Media Office of Daret Ezza:

June 15, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312756995418334>

June 16, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312752972085403>

June 17, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313817551978945>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313832051977495>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313826641978036>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/videos/1313877971972903/>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/photos/a.1131974403496595.1073741828.1018380168189353/1313890945304939/>

Scholarly:

Burns, R. 2009. *Monuments of Syria: A guide*. I.B. Tauris.

Hadjar, A. (1991) *The Church of St. Simeon the Stylite and Other Archaeological Sites in the Mountains of Simeon and Halaqa*. trans. P. Amash. Damascus: Sidawi Printing House.

⁷⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313826641978036>

⁷⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/videos/1313877971972903/>; <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/photos/a.1131974403496595.1073741828.1018380168189353/1313890945304939/?type=3&theater>

The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative⁷⁹

Site Monitors Project

Damage Report to the Site of St. Simeon (Thelanisos) June 16, 2016



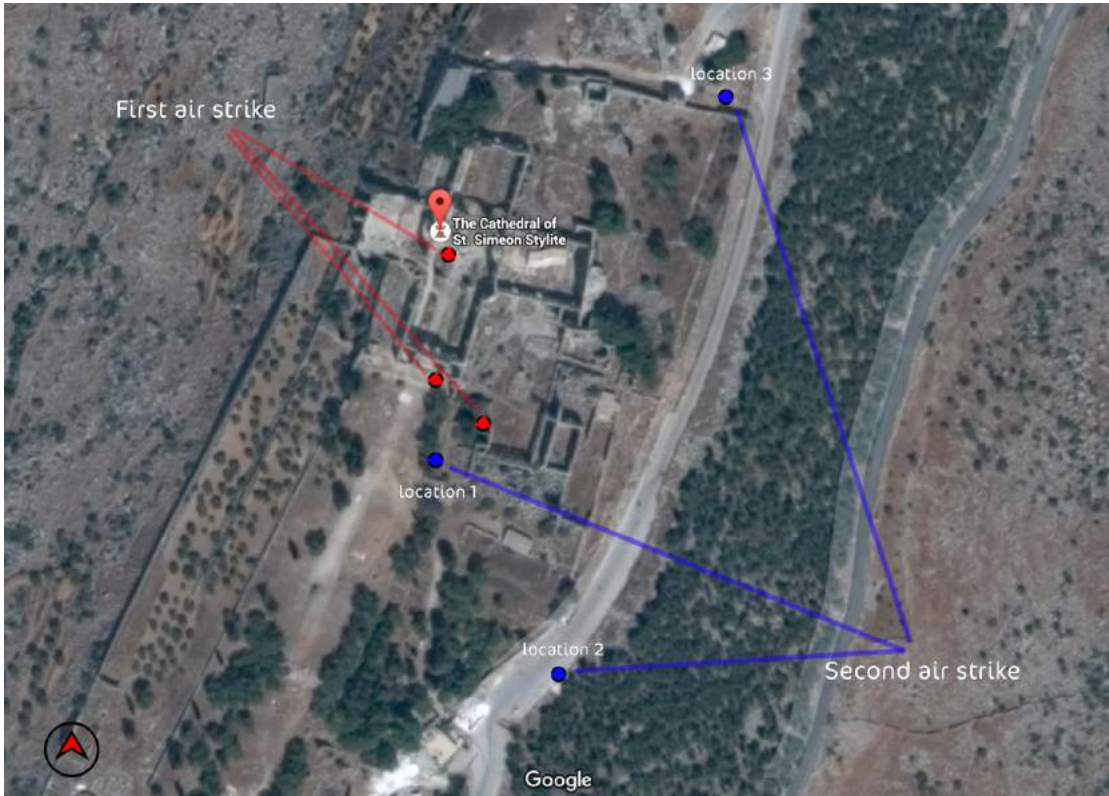
The Church of Saint Simeon was built in the year 490 AD on Mount Simeon. It served as an impregnable fortress during the days of Saladin. St. Simeon is a part of the “Dead Cities” listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

On June 15th, 2016, St. Simeon was targeted by the Russian air force for a second time at 9:00 am, causing damage to the site. The strike consisted of 3 missiles, two hit outside the compound causing superficial damage to the external walls (locations 2 and 3 on the map above). The third hit inside the compound across from the south façade of the church of St. Simeon (Location 1 on the map above). That third missile was a cluster bomb, which spread its load across the site causing widespread damage. Site monitors from the TDA –HPI in cooperation with the Syrian Cultural Heritage Preservation Center documented the damage from the second strike (see Photos below). The first airstrike on the site of St. Simeon occurred on Thursday May 12th, 2016 and caused extensive damage to the site. The TDA-HPI team documented that strike in a separate report.

⁷⁹ This report is based on research conducted by “The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative.” This report reflects analysis from an independent organization. As with the Weekly Reports produced by ASOR CHI, it should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.



General view of church prior to airstrike



Map showing first airstrike in May (Red) and second airstrike in June (Blue)

Damage in Location 1 Across from the South Façade of the Church of St. Simeon



South façade of the Church of St. Simeon (Photo facing northeast)



South façade of the Church of St. Simeon (prior to airstrikes) Photo by Bernard Gangon



Photo facing north



Photo facing north



Extensive damage including collapsed and fragmented stone masonry, photo facing northeast



Photo facing east

Damage in Location 2 at the Southern End of the Site on the Road Outside the Enclosure Wall



Damage to the road





External wall damaged by shrapnel, photo facing southwest



Damage to external wall, photo facing west

Damage in Location 3 at the North East Corner of the Site Outside the Enclosure Wall



Northeast corner, Photo facing south



Damage to northeast outer wall



Northeast outer wall



Site Monitors Project Coordinator
Dr. Amr Al-Azm

Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 16-0010 UPDATE

Report Date: June 20, 2016

Site Name: Nergal Gate (بوابة نركال)

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Ancient City of Nineveh, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: The Nergal Gate, named for the god Nergal, was located on the northern side of Nineveh. The gate was reconstructed by Iraq's Department of Antiquities in the 1950s in order to protect the colossal human-headed winged bull sculptures situated there and to create a site museum.⁸⁰ Dating to the reign of Sennacherib, A.H. Layard, one of the first archaeologists to explore Nineveh, offers this description of the gate:

“It was apparently the remains of a gate leading into this quarter of the city, and part of a building, with fragments of two colossal winged figures, had already been discovered in it. . . Following the rows of limestone slabs, from the south side of the mound, and passing through two halls or chambers, we came at length to the opposite entrance. This gateway, facing the open country, was formed by a pair of majestic human-headed bulls, fourteen feet in length, and still entire, though cracked and injured by fire.”⁸¹

Site Date: 700 - 681 BCE (Assyrian)

Incident Summary: New satellite imagery confirms the destruction of the gate by ISIL.

Incident Source and Description: An updated DigitalGlobe satellite image from June 16, 2016 shows that the entire Nergal Gate has been destroyed and the ground where it stood has been leveled. The debris from the destruction has been removed. These images corroborate previous ASOR CHI reports and available photographs and videos. ASOR CHI previously reported that DigitalGlobe imagery of the Nergal Gate from May 25, 2016 showed the structure had been partially destroyed. The southern side of the gate was visibly damaged with bulldozer tracks around the gate. This image showed the gate in the process of being intentionally destroyed.

ASOR CHI previously reported that ISIL had begun destroying the gates in early April 2016.⁸² See **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010** in **Weekly Report 89-90**, **IHI 16-0010 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 91-92**, **IHI 16-0010 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 93-94**, and **IHI 16-0010 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

Much of the ancient site of Nineveh has been subjected to damage, looting, and intentional destruction by ISIL militants. See **IHI 15-0033** in **Weekly Report 30**, **IHI 15-0095** in **Weekly Report 59-60**, **IHI 15-0097** in **Weekly Report 67-68**, **IHI 15-0097 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 79-80**.

⁸⁰ al-Asil 1956: 3-9

⁸¹ Layard 1853: 120

⁸² <https://www.facebook.com/mosulyoon/posts/973626796066385:0>

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to this and other cultural heritage sites in the city of Mosul and in Ninawa Governorate.

Sources:

Scholarly:

al-Asil, N. (1956) "Recent Archaeological Activity in Iraq." *Sumer* 12: 3-9.

Layard, A.H. (1853) *Discoveries in the Ruins of Babylon and Nineveh*". London: John Murray.



Nergal Gate shown intact but with new bulldozer tracks (DigitalGlobe; May 21, 2016)



Nergal Gate with damage on the southern side indicated by the black arrows. (DigitalGlobe; May 25, 2016)



The Nergal Gate destroyed and the area cleared of debris. (DigitalGlobe; June 16, 2016)



Video still of an earthmover and dump truck at the Nergal Gate (Amaq News Agency; Downloaded June 7, 2016)



Video still of an earthmover and dump truck at the Nergal Gate during the removal of debris (Amaq News Agency; Downloaded June 7, 2016)



An earthmover knocking over a Winged Bull at the Nergal Gate (Amaq News Agency; Downloaded June 7, 2016)



An earthmover knocking over a Winged Bull at the Nergal Gate (Amaq News Agency; Downloaded June 7, 2016)

IHI 16-0013 UPDATE

Report Date: June 13, 2016

Site Name: Nineveh - Southwest Palace of Sennacherib

Date of Incident: Ongoing since April 1, 2016

Location: Nineveh, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: In 705 BCE, the Assyrian king Sennacherib moved his capital from Dur Sharrukin to Nineveh, where he built a palace that he called the “Palace without rival.” The palace was situated on the southwest corner of the mound of Kouyunjik within the walls of ancient Nineveh and consisted of at least 80 rooms, nearly all lined with stone slabs carved with scenes commemorating Sennacherib’s military campaigns and with doors guarded by winged bulls and other protective figures. It was destroyed in 612 BCE and rediscovered and excavated in 1847 by Austin Henry Layard, who discovered several wall reliefs and cuneiform inscriptions describing Sennacherib’s sieges of the cities of Lachish and Jerusalem, events also described in the Old Testament. A number of important cuneiform tablets were also discovered in the palace. These discoveries continue to garner a huge degree of public interest in Sennacherib’s palace and the site of Nineveh.⁸³

In the 1960s, the Iraq Department of Antiquities consolidated the walls and sculptures and roofed the site over as the Sennacherib Palace Site Museum. This consists of four restored rooms in the throne-room suite, which contained at the time around 100 carved reliefs in various states of preservation.⁸⁴ In the 1990s and 2000s, some of these reliefs were looted or partially looted. 10-15 fragments of these reliefs appeared on the art market. No recent publications discuss exactly what still remains in situ. A 1991 publication indicates that at that time, Room I had 17 whole and fragmentary slabs on display in situ, Room IV had 14, and Room V had 51.⁸⁵ By 1996, at least three reliefs from Room I, one from Room IV, and six from Room V were at least partially looted (meaning a section of the relief was removed), as well as several from other rooms in the palace.⁸⁶

Site Date: 700 - 681 BCE (Neo-Assyrian)

Incident Summary: Update of descriptions of photographs of reliefs at the Southwest Palace previously labeled as being the gates of Nineveh.

Incident Source and Description: On June 10, 2016 ASOR CHI was advised that several images published in **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 93-94** and described as “ISIL-related photograph of an Assyrian relief at the ancient site of Nineveh. The relief is presumably associated with the areas of the fortification wall and city gates destroyed by ISIL” in fact show stone stelae from the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib. These photos with updated captions are included below.

⁸³ Russell 1991: 2-5

⁸⁴ <http://archive.archaeology.org/online/features/nineveh/>

⁸⁵ Russell 1991: 47, 50, 52

⁸⁶ <http://archive.archaeology.org/online/features/nineveh/illustrations.html> ;
<http://archive.archaeology.org/online/features/nineveh/captions/plan.html>

The site of Nineveh and the surrounding area has been subject to urban development by ISIL authorities. For further details, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0095** in **Weekly Report 59-60**, **IHI 15-0097** in **Weekly Report 67-68**, and **IHI 15-0097 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 79-80**.

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage and looting at this and other cultural heritage sites in the city of Mosul and in Ninawa Governorate.

Sources:

Scholarly:

al-Asil, N. (1956) "Recent Archaeological Activity in Iraq." *Sumer* 12: 3-9.

Layard, A.H. (1853) *Discoveries in the Ruins of Babylon and Nineveh*. London: John Murray.

Madhloum, T. A. (1966) "Nineveh" *Sumer* 22.

Ibid. (1968) "Nineveh. The 1967-1968 Campaign". *Sumer* 24: 45.

Ibid. (1969). "Excavations at Nineveh. A Preliminary Report (1965-1967)." *Sumer* 23: 76-9.

Madhloum, T. A. & A.M. Mahdi (1976) *Nineveh. Historical Monuments in Iraq I*. Directorate General of Antiquities, Baghdad.

Reade, J. E. (2002) "Ninive (Nineveh)" *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 9 (5-6), 388-433.

Russell, J. M. (1996) "Stolen Stones: The Modern Sack of Nineveh" *Archaeology Magazine*.
<http://archive.archaeology.org/online/features/nineveh/>

Russell, J. M. (1996) *Sennacherib's "Palace Without Rival" at Nineveh*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Russell, J. M. (1999) *The Writing on the Wall: Studies in the Architectural Context of Late Assyrian Palace Inscriptions*. Warsaw: Eisenbrauns.

Scott, L. M. & J. MacGinnis (1990). "Notes on Nineveh" *Iraq* 52: 63-73.

Stronach, D. (1994) "Village to Metropolis: Nineveh and the Beginnings of Urbanism in Northern Mesopotamia," in *Nuove fondazioni nel Vicino Oriente antico: Realtà e ideologia*. ed. S. Mazzoni. Pisa: Giardini. pp. 85-114.

Sulaiman, 'Amer (1971) *Adab al-Rafidain*. 1. 45-9.

el-Wailly, F. (1966) "Forward" *Sumer* 22: a-j.



ISIL-affiliated photograph of an Assyrian relief the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib (Just Paste It; May 15, 2016)



ISIL-affiliated photograph of an Assyrian relief the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib (Just Paste It; May 15, 2016)



ISIL-affiliated photograph of an Assyrian relief the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib (Just Paste It; May 15, 2016)



ISIL-affiliated photograph of an Assyrian relief the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib (Just Paste It; May 15, 2016)



هدم الآثار الشركية في مدينة الموصل

ISIL-affiliated photograph of an Assyrian lamassu located at the western entrance of Room V at the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib. The metal beams from the reconstructed roof can be seen on the ground and around the lamassu. (Just Paste It; May 15, 2016)

IHI 16-0015 UPDATE

Report Date: June 9, 2016

Site Name: al-Sabahat Mosque (جامع الصباحات); al-Rofa Mosque (جامع الروفة)

Date of Incident: Unknown, likely end of May 2016

Location: al-Karma district (Garma; كرمة), al-Anbar Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Sunni Mosques

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: The Popular Mobilization Front allegedly damaged mosques in al-Karma District.

Incident Source and Description: On May 28, 2016 ASOR CHI compiled reports of sectarian violence against an undetermined number of Sunni mosques in al-Karma district.⁸⁷ The violence was reportedly carried out by members of the Shia Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) following their forces recapturing of the area from ISIL. The first two mosques identified by several media outlets were al-Karma al-Kabir Mosque and Ibrahim al-Hassoun Mosque. Further research has now led to the inclusion of two more mosques: al-Sabahat Mosque and al-Rofa Mosque. Both mosques are reported as having been targeted by the PMF and damaged.⁸⁸ No photographs of damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of mosques in al-Karma district, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to potential sectarian violence.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Al Arabiya:

May 28, 2016: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz_LBpQnbM0

May 29, 2016: <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/iraq/2016/05/28/العراق.html>

Al Bayan: <http://www.albayan.ae/one-world/arabs/2016-05-29-1.2649723>

⁸⁷ See **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0015** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

⁸⁸ <http://www.albayan.ae/one-world/arabs/2016-05-29-1.2649723> ; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vz_LBpQnbM0

IHI 16-0018

Report Date: June 9, 2016

Site Name: al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الصقلاوية الكبير)

Date of Incident: Between May 28, 2016 and June 5, 2016

Location: al-Saqlawiyah, Fallujah district, Anbar Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque is a rectangular mosque with a total area of 1500m² and holds 800 worshippers. The mosque is built mainly of bricks and is decorated with Koranic verses.⁸⁹

Site Date: 1967 CE, renovated 2004 CE

Incident Summary: Shia militia allegedly damaged a mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 9, 2016 a local Iraqi journalist uploaded a photograph of al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque, showing extensive damage to its minaret. According to the journalist's post, the damage to the mosque was caused by Shia Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) members in an act of sectarian violence.⁹⁰ Amateur video footage taken by a man in a PMF uniform captures the damage to the mosque.⁹¹ The man present in the video appears to be specifically focusing on the damage to the mosque. On the same day, the Iraqi Spring Media Center shared a photograph via the group's Facebook page allegedly showing the detention of civilians in a mosque in Saqlawiyah,⁹² though it is unclear in which mosque the detainees are being held. The town of Saqlawiyah was captured by the PMF on June 4, 2016.

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows the damage to the minaret occurred between May 28, 2016 and June 5, 2016. Additional damage is also visible on the roof of the mosque next to the minaret.

Pattern: Military activity: intentional destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment. ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of sectarian violence in areas being recaptured by various armed groups in Iraq.

⁸⁹ <http://masajediraq.com/index.php?type=prevmas&idm=2705>

⁹⁰ <https://twitter.com/mastafa2016302/status/740642677558026240>

⁹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiQnV92By64>

⁹² <https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/photos/a.326098917558627.1073741827.325968694238316/583490355152814/>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Iraqi Spring Media Center:

<https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/photos/a.326098917558627.1073741827.325968694238316/583490355152814/>

Masajed Iraq (مواقع مساجد العراق): <http://masajediraq.com/index.php?type=prevmas&idm=2705>

Twitter (Mastafa (الفاضل) ماجد): <https://twitter.com/mastafa2016302/status/740642677558026240>

Youtube (الوافي مساجد): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiQnV92By64>



al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque prior to any damage (Panoramio; February 2008)⁹³

⁹³ <https://ssl.panoramio.com/photo/7605977>



Damage to al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque (Twitter (Mastafa ابن الفلوجه ابن); June 9, 2016)⁹⁴



Video still of damage to al-Saqlawiyah al-Kabir Mosque (Youtube (الوافي سجاد); June 16, 2016)

⁹⁴ <https://twitter.com/mastafa2016302/status/740642677558026240>



Image of mosque prior to damage
(DigitalGlobe; May 28, 2016)



Visible damage to the minaret and roof of the
mosque with debris seen in the street
(DigitalGlobe; June 5, 2016)