

# ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq<sup>1</sup>

NEA-PSHSS-14-001

Weekly Reports 21–22 – January 5, 2015

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## Key Points

•On December 30, 2014 **Jabha Shamiya** militants reportedly detonated one or two **tunnel bombs** in the **Old City of Aleppo** in the vicinity of Sabaa Bahrat Square and possibly the Central Suq to the south, allegedly damaging historic structures according to multiple internet media outlets and social media sites. The exact location(s) and the number of bombs is currently uncertain (see SHI Incident Report SHI 14-107 below). This marks a disturbing new trend in tunnel bombing in Aleppo targeting new areas of the old city in a high profile/highly publicized manner. The newly formed Jabha Shamiya coalition is led by **Abdul-Aziz al-Salama**, commander of Liwa al-Tawahid and general commander of Islamic Front forces in Aleppo Governorate — the latter two groups are connected to multiple, previous tunnel bombings in the area immediately south of the citadel that have destroyed or damaged numerous historic buildings.

•Recent **DGAM** reporting on damage to the famous archaeological site of **Dura Europos** confirms the widespread destruction of the site by **looters** visible in recent satellite imagery as well as the **vandalism** of the excavation headquarters and visitor’s center. This incident highlights the long-term effects the conflict will exert on cultural infrastructure and tourism as well as the deleterious impacts on cultural resources (see SHI Incident Report SHI14-105 below).

•**DGAM** has posted its Q4 2014 **heritage damage report** entitled *Initial Damages Assessment for Syrian Cultural Heritage During the Crisis* detailing damage in 8 of 14 governorates<sup>2</sup> with 196 major occurrences at heritage places with approximately 235 incidents listed by damage type. A summary produced by ASOR CHI is provided here (Table 1). The DGAM report lists damages by governorate and includes Raqqa (2 incidents), Deir ez-Zor (17 incidents), Hassakah (104 incidents), Idlib (9 incidents), Aleppo (39 incidents), Homs (9 incidents), Rif Dimashq (1 incident), Daraa (15 incidents). The exact dates of the reported incidents are generally unknown as are the perpetrators of the cultural property crimes. Two incidents occurred at UNESCO Tentative List Sites and sixteen incidents impacted UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

**Table 1. Causes of heritage damage reported by DGAM Syria for Q4 2014.**

Cause of Damage	Number of Incidents	Damage Type as % of Total Incidents
Illegal Excavations [for antiquities]	76	32.34%
Digging [not suspected for antiquities]	61	25.96%

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> The report excludes Damascus city (*Muḥāfazat Dimashq*), Quneitra, As-Suwayda, Hama, Tartus, and Latakia.

Illegal Construction	38	16.17%
Intentional Destructions of Sufi Heritage Places [by ISIL]	18	7.66%
Different/Other	10	4.26%
“Broken Ancient Stones” [taken from heritage places for building material]	9	3.83%
Combat [not specified as such by DGAM]	6	2.55%
Looting [architectural elements from built heritage]	5	2.13%
Theft from Archaeological Expedition Headquarters	4	1.70%
Quarries	3	1.28%
Bulldozing	2	0.85%
Unspecified	1	0.43%
Vandalism	1	0.43%
[SARG] Airstrike	1	0.43%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

As Table 1 shows, **the main source of reported damage is illegal excavation for antiquities** with other digging on archaeological sites (e.g., military earthworks and trenches) a close second. **We caution that the number of reported incidents for “Illegal Excavations” may be somewhat inflated** (see next bullet point). Illegal construction on archaeological sites and ISIL intentional destructions of heritage places also remain major contributing factors to the damage/destruction of Syria’s cultural patrimony. The DGAM assessment drastically (and knowingly)<sup>3</sup> underreports damage in areas outside SARG/YPG control, such as Raqqa Governorate, which is firmly under ISIL. To be sure, Raqqa Governorate, for example, has definitely experienced archaeological looting during Q4 2014. The DGAM assessment also demonstrates the DGAM is not incorporating damage reports from outside sources and is relying almost entirely on reporting compiled by the DGAM’s provincial antiquities inspectors.

•**DGAM** quarterly and weekly reports may be **over-attributing damage to heritage sites to looting/illegal excavations** in areas outside SARG control (viz. Deir ez-Zor Governorate) when in fact this damage appears to be more indicative of simple neglect during the conflict (e.g., see SHI Incident Report SHI14-104 below). Some caution should be used when consulting DGAM damage attributions in DGAM reporting. **The overall trend for a pronounced rise in illegal excavation for antiquities reflected in the DGAM data for the latter part of 2014 accords well with ASOR CHI preliminary findings for the same period.**

## Heritage Timeline

January 1, 2015

APSA photos showing the state of **Qalat el-Mudiq (Apamea citadel)**.  
[SHI Incident Report SHI 14-108.](http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/hama/sites/1072-qala-at-el-mudiq-cidatelle-2.html)  
<http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/hama/sites/1072-qala-at-el-mudiq-cidatelle-2.html>

<sup>3</sup> The DGAM specifies, “Many [more] sites in Hasakah and Raqqa are expected to be damaged because of the difficult access to the sites.”

- December 31, 2014**      **DGAM** posted its quarterly damage assessment for the period October 1 to December 31, 2014 entitled *Initial Damages Assessment for Syrian Cultural Heritage During the Crisis*.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1564>
- December 31, 2014**      **Business Standard** published a story detailing the Islamic State deliberate destruction of the **Tel Afar** citadel in Nineveh Province, Iraq as well as looting activity there. The story also mentions the IS deliberate destruction of the **Imam Muhsin** and **Sultan Waiys** shrines by IS in Mosul. [http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/is-militants-damage-ancient-citadel-shrines-in-iraq-114123100681\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/is-militants-damage-ancient-citadel-shrines-in-iraq-114123100681_1.html)
- December 30, 2014**      **DGAM** posted a report on the detonation of two tunnel bombs in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo**. **SHI Incident Report SHI 14-107**.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1560>
- **Militants detonated two tunnel bombs** in the **UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo** damaging the **Dar al-Sharia Court** area in the **Sabaa Bahrat** neighborhood and the “**Sweiqqa Market**.”
  - **Islamic State** released *Dabiq* 6. This issue contains no new data on cultural heritage but does discuss the concept of *ghanima* (spoils).
- December 27, 2014**      **DGAM** posted a report on damage and looting at **St. Simeon area**. **SHI Incident Report SHI 14-106**.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1551>
- December 25–29, 2014**      **DGAM** posted four reports on damage and looting at **Dura Europos**. **SHI Incident Report SHI 14-105**.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1550>
- December 22, 2014**      **DGAM** posted a report on damage and looting at **Rahbaa Castle (Qal’at Rahba) in Mayadin**. **SHI Incident Report SHI 14-104**.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1547>

## Military and Political Context

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

- 1) Al-Safira in Aleppo Governorate, where ISIL launched multiple attacks against SARG checkpoints and facilities;
- 2) Clashes between ISIL and YPG/SARG/NDF in the area southeast of Qamishli in Hasakah Governorate linked to ISIL massing forces in northeast Syria as they move out of parts of northern Iraq;

3) ISIL suicide bombings at Furqlus gas plant in Homs Governorate;

4) Continued U.S./Coalition airstrikes;

5) Clashes between IS and Kurdish forces in Kobani.

There are growing indications of tensions between Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIL in Syria as the two organizations compete to absorb smaller extremist groups. The general trend for consolidation is also borne out by the formation of Jabha Shamiya in Aleppo from multiple militant organizations under the leadership of Abdul-Aziz al-Salama, commander of Liwa al-Tawahid and Islamic Front forces in Aleppo Governorate. The latter development may be linked to the destruction of cultural heritage in the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo with the expansion of tunnel bombing into new areas around the Aleppo Citadel to highlight the announcement of the formation of Jabha Shamiya — tunnel bombing is a specialty of Liwa al-Tawahid and Islamic Front. Concern for Aleppo's heritage is increasing as Jabhat al-Nusra, closely tied to Jabha Shamiya and more extreme Salafist jihadist groups, has rejected the UN "freeze plan" for Aleppo forwarded by UN envoy Steffan de Mistura.

There is no update for Iraq this reporting period.

## **Key Heritage Recommendations and Actions**

1) Tunnel bombing continues to wipe out heritage in the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo.

\*ASOR CHI continues to collect data on this highly destructive tactic. One difficulty experienced in tracking this damage is the inexact locational terminology used in identifying tunnel bombing sites in media reports. Until new satellite data is available, the exact location(s) of the most recent detonations and their impacts will be difficult to ascertain.

## Incident Reports

### SHI 14-104

**Report Date:** January 4, 2015

**Site Name:** Qal'at Rahba/ Rahba Castle

**Date of Incident:** Unspecified 2014

**Location:** Deir ez-Zor Governorate, 45 km south of Deir ez-Zor near modern Mayadin on the Euphrates.

**Coordinates:** —

**Site Description:** According to Burns<sup>4</sup>,

This small, almost fairy-tale, castle presents an unreal impression when seen from afar. Constructed eight centuries ago, the fabric of the five-sided donjon has been literally crumbling to pieces ever since. As the stone disintegrates, the dust accumulates around the walls above the ditch.

The first fort was constructed on this spot by Malik Ibn Tauk during the caliphate of al-Mamun (813–33) but was destroyed by an earthquake in 1157. A new castle was built by al-Mujahid Assad al-Din Shirkuh II, an amir of Homs (r 1186–1240) and uncle of Saladin, as part of the the [SIC] latter's grand design for the unification of Syria under a single Muslim ruler (a goal largely realised in 1154). This was part of a program of castle-building, all in the style common to Islamic fortifications, in areas of central Syria controlled by Homs (Qalaat Shmemis, Qalaat Shirkuh). In 1264, the Mamluk ruler, Baybars, appointed an Egyptian as governor. AS the successive Mongol invasions ravaged Syria (1260–1400) the fort's usefulness lapsed in the face of the damage inflicted by the invaders.

**Site Date:** Abbasid to Mamluk

**Source of Destruction:** According to the DGAM, the damage shown in the photo was allegedly caused by looting by an unknown party; however, the photos in the DGAM report appear more indicative of damage caused by neglect and a lack of site conservation. The DGAM recently reported<sup>5</sup> that Rahbaa Castle was subjected to damage due to "Digging + Illegal Excavations." This raises some concerns regarding the reliability of DGAM reporting with regard to the causes of damage. How often is damage due to neglect attributed to looting in areas outside SARG control? SARG's recent report cites "Digging and Illegal Excavations" in 71% of cases for Deir ez-Zor (n=17) in the third quarter of 2014<sup>6</sup>, an area under IS control and in which the DGAM has little ability to verify information from local sources.

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<sup>4</sup> Burns, Ross. 2010. *The Monuments of Syria. A Guide.* (I.B. Tauris), 238.

<sup>5</sup> DGAM 2015. *Initial Damages Assessment for Syrian Cultural Heritage During the Crises. 01/10 to 30/09/2014.* (DGAM Directorate of World Heritage Sites), 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

**Pattern:** Deterioration of standing heritage due to neglect during the conflict.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** Satellite imagery will not likely prove sufficient for further investigating the claims of looting at Qal'at Rahba. IS control prevents remediation efforts over the short-to-medium term. The most recent satellite image is from 9/29/2013. The Mayadin area has been the target of recent U.S./Coalition airstrikes aimed against ISIL (<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123346>).

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM Website: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1547>

Scholarly:

See bibliography in Burns 2010 and SHI bibliography.



Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Deterioration of masonry of Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).





Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Deterioration of masonry at Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).



Deterioration of masonry at Qal'at Rahba/Rahba Castle (DGAM).

## SHI 14-105

**Report Date:** January 4, 2015

**Site Name:** Dura Europos

**Date of Incident:** Unspecified 2014

**Location:** Deir ez-Zor Governorate 7.5 km south of modern Al-Salhiyah on the right (west) bank of the Euphrates.

**Coordinates:** —

**Site Description:** Dura Europos was first settled as a fortress in 303 BC by the Seleucid general Nicanor during the reign of Seleucus I. A fortified, grid-planned Greek city developed near the fortress before the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. The city alternated between the control of the Parthians (113 BC), Romans (115 AD), Parthians (reign of Roman emperor Hadrian), and the Romans (164 AD) after an earthquake devastated much of Syria in 161 AD. Regarding the Roman occupation and the period after the establishment of a Roman colony in 211 AD, Burns writes<sup>7</sup>,

The period of full Roman control saw a remarkable flourishing of religious architecture in pagan, Jewish and Christian styles, with some notable similarities between the three. The town still recognized its Greek cultural origins, and the language of civic life, as in most of Syria, was Greek. Greek influences served as the common thread that joined the syncretist elements in all three religious traditions in a remarkable way, with some addition of Parthian artistic styles.

Dura was a polyglot town by nature of its origins, its location on the frontier between east and west and its trading function. Though the great bulk of east-west trade by-passed Dura, heading directly across the desert to Palmyra from a river crossing further south around Abu Kemal, Dura's merchants played a role in local facilitation and had their own direct interests in trade and shipping as far as the mouth of the Tigris-Euphrates system, the days of unbridled mercantilism, however, ended when the more aggressive Sasanians replaced the Parthians in the east in 224. The Sasanians regarded themselves as the heirs to the Achaemenid realms and sought to press the terms of the 20 BC treaty between Rome and Parthia. Rome built up its Dura garrison (using as its initial core a Palmyrene cohort) and began a substantial building program in the northern quarter to provide home comforts in the form of a theatre, baths, and barracks. The local commander was given the title of Dux Ripae. The Romans spent the last few years leading up to the 256 in a hurried effort to build up the long and vulnerable walls of the city and strengthened its Palmyrene garrison with detachments from the Syrian legions.

Having made several thrusts against Dura in the preceding decades (and indeed as far as Antioch in 238) a major assault in 256 under Shapur I resulted in the fall of Dura and ended the brief and uncertain Pax Romana on the Mid Euphrates. Shapur decided to destroy the town and banish its people rather than make it a Sasanian fortress.

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<sup>7</sup> Burns, Ross. 2010. *The Monuments of Syria. A Guide.* (I.B. Tauris), pp. 149–150.

**Site Date:** (303 BC–256AD) Hellenistic, Parthian, Roman

**Sources of Destruction:** Looting, vandalism. The DGAM posted four reports during the reporting period on damage to the site and the excavation headquarters. The first report of December 25, 2014 shows illegal excavations and vandalism within the Temple of Bel. The second report of December 28, 2014 presents photos showing “the spread of the illegal excavations and vandalism done by (a group of armed thieves of antiquities) to the archaeological mission resident.” The third report of December 29, 2014 provides photos documenting the vandalism and looting of the visitor’s center by “armed gang of antiquities [SIC].” The fourth report of December 30, 2014 consists of before-and-after photos showing “the tremendous scope of the illegal excavations and vandalism in Dura-Europos a Hellenistic city.”

**Pattern:** Looting during the conflict. Widespread, rampant looting in eastern Syria.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI has already designated Dura Europos a high priority of monitoring and remediation efforts.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM Website: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1550>

Scholarly:

Bellinger, Alfred Raymond, Frank Edward Brown, and Charles Bradford Welles. 1977. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*. (Yale University Press).

Downey, Susan B. 1977. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*. Vol. 5. (Yale University Press).

Hopkins, Clark. 1979. *The Discovery of Dura Europos*. (New Haven: Yale University Press).

Kraeling, Carl Hermann. 1956. *Excavations at Dura-Europos...-Final Report: The Synagogue*. Eds. Alfred Raymond Bellinger, and Frank Edward Brown. (Yale University Press).

Perkins, Ann. 1973. *The Art of Dura-Europos*. (Clarendon Press).

Rostovtzeff, Michael I. 1977. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*. Vol. 3. No. 2. (Yale University Press).

\_\_\_\_\_. 1978. *Dura-Europos and its art*. (Ams Press).

Rostovtzeff, Michael Ivanovitch, ed. 1956. *The Excavations at Dura-Europos: pt. 2. The Christian building, by CH Kraeling*. Vol. 5. (Yale University Press).



Wharton, Annabel J. 1995. *Refiguring the Post Classical City: Dura Europos, Jerash, Jerusalem and Ravenna*. (Cambridge University Press).



Dura Europos: Vandalism and illegal excavation in the Temple of Bel area (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism and illegal excavation in the Temple of Bel area (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism and illegal excavation in the Temple of Bel area (DGAM).



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Dura Europos: Vandalism and illegal excavation in the Temple of Bel area (DGAM).



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Dura Europos: Vandalism and illegal excavation in the Temple of Bel area (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism and illegal excavation in the Temple of Bel area (DGAM).

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Dura Europos: Illegal excavation and vandalism of the exc. headquarters (DGAM).



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Dura Europos: Illegal excavations and vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Illegal excavations and vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).





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Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).





Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



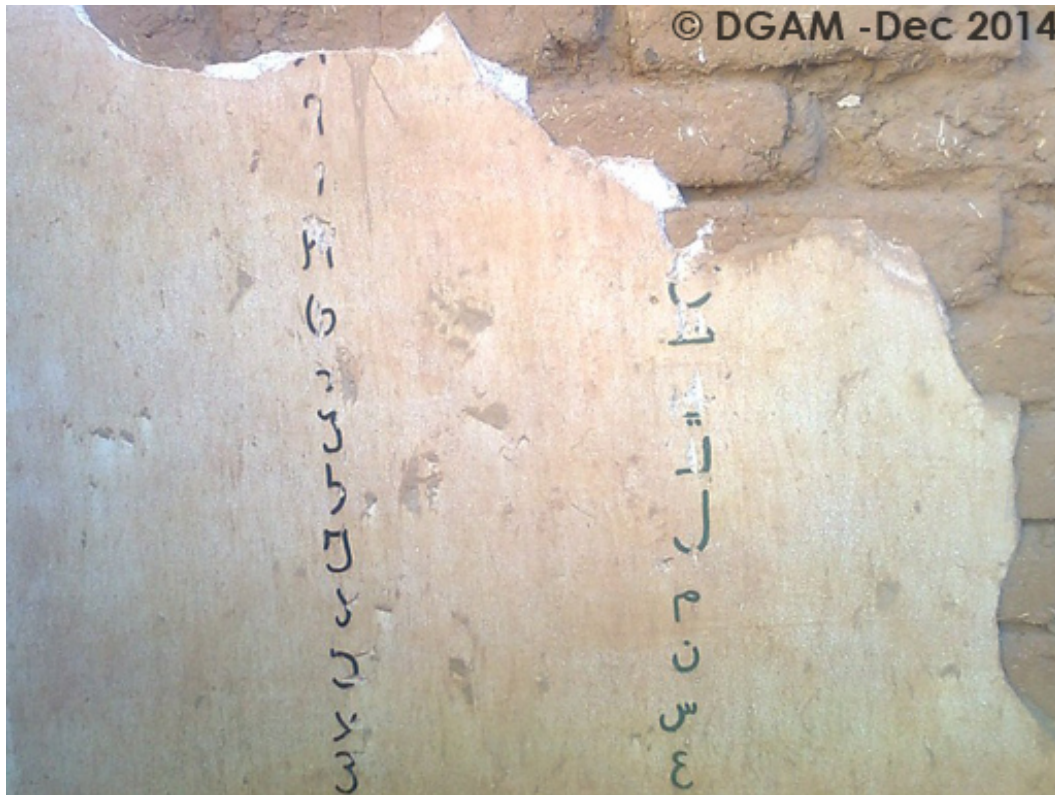
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Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).

© DGAM -Dec 2014



Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Vandalism of the visitor's center (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Before-and-after photos showing the destruction of the site (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Before-and-after photos showing the destruction of the modern facilities (DGAM).



Dura Europos: Before-and-after photos showing the destruction of the site (DGAM).

## SHI 14-106

**Report Date:** January 4, 2015

**Site Name:** St. Simeon/Qala'at Simaan

**Date of Incident:** Unspecified 2014; reported December 27, 2014

**Location:** UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient Cities of Northern Syria — Aleppo Governorate near modern Dar Tazeh

**Coordinates:** —

**Site Description:** The Church of St. Simeon Stylites is the oldest surviving Byzantine church dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. The church was founded on the site where the hermit monk Simon Stylites sat atop a pillar for 37 years. He died September 2, 459 AD.

**Site Date:** Byzantine

**Source of Destruction:** The DGAM forwards a report by Aleppo Antiquities stating,

. . . quarries spread in the mountains overlooking to the archaeological sites such as **Taqia** and **Refadeh**. In addition, a new large quarry-taking place (by using dynamite) in the area near to the NE **convent of St. Simeon**, distorted the archaeological landscape to the UNESCO's World Heritage Park.

The news also report that the armed group occupied **St. Simeon castle** built a brick walls within the castle in order to close all the ancient facades from the West area which known as Tchalenko rooms. They also prevented people from enter or approach the castle.

**Pattern:** Vandalism and illegal construction and resource procurement during the conflict. Militarization of archaeological sites.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** CHI has already designated St. Simeon a high priority for monitoring and remediation efforts.

### Sources:

Online Reporting:

DGAM Website:

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1551>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross. 2010. *Monuments of Syria. A Guide*. (I.B. Tauris), pp. 272–275.

## SHI 14-107

**Report Date:** January 4, 2015

**Site Name:** Sabaa Bahrat Square Area/ Central Suq Area — UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo

**Date of Incident:** December 30, 2014

**Locations:** One or two tunnel bombs reported by various sources as located under the: 1) Dar al-Sharia Court area in the Sabaa Bahrat neighborhood, and 2) the nearby Sweiqā [Suwaiqā] Market northwest of the citadel” — UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo.

**Coordinates:** —

**Site Description:** The tunnel bomb(s) then appear to have hit around the **Sabaa Bahrat Square** (really a traffic circle) — one of the main squares of Aleppo — located at the intersection of Abdel Mounem Riyad St. and Al-Mutanabbi St. northwest of the citadel. Many government buildings, such as the Aleppo Chamber of Industry (described by internet sources as also a courthouse) are located in this area (e.g., other government buildings include the old Municipal Council Building and the National Library). The Aleppo Chamber of Industry and the southeast periphery of Sabaa Bahrat Square near the **Jami’ Al-Dabbaga al ‘Atiqa** show large bomb craters on satellite photos from detonations that occurred sometime between Feb. 2, 2014 and May 5, 2014. The cause of these earlier explosions has not been documented as yet. The other bomb, which is the less reported/certain of the two, allegedly hit the Central *suq* (market) area to the south.

**Site Date:** Although we do not know the exact location(s) of this tunnel bomb episode as yet, the majority of the structures potentially impacted in the Sabaa Bahrat Square area are modern. Nevertheless, there are historic structures scattered throughout the general vicinity such as the **Jami’ Al-Dabbaga al ‘Atiqa** (Gaube and Wirth no. 257), which is located on the southeast side of the Sabaa Bahrat Square. This structure has been dated to the Ayyubid Period by Herzfeld on stylistic grounds. It contains an inscription from 1404 AD. Tabbāa dates the minaret to the early Mamluk period<sup>8</sup>. The mosque itself is largely a reconstruction. If a second tunnel bomb was detonated in the vicinity of the Suwaiqā there is a high likelihood multiple historic structures were impacted.

**Source of Destruction:** One (DGAM reports two) tunnel bomb(s) was detonated by the newly formed Jabha Shamiya. The DGAM reports, “The explosions caused severe damage to the market and the historical buildings in the area leading to the Sejin Street.”

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<sup>8</sup> Tabbāa, Y. *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo*. (Penn State Press), pp. 101–102.



**Pattern:** Use of tunnel bombs by rebel/Islamist forces in Old Aleppo and elsewhere in Syria. This bombing marks a critical divergence from previous patterns in which the area south of the citadel was the focus of such bombings. The expansion of publicized tunnel bombing away from the southern purlieu of the citadel is highly troubling and may signal the expansion of this highly destructive tactic, although the Sabaa Bahrat Square area — a highly strategic location — has experienced large detonations in 2014.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** CHI has already designated the Old City of Aleppo a high priority for monitoring and remediation efforts.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM Website:

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1560>

YouTube video posted by Abu Mustafa on Dec. 30:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9K-nP70LV4&feature=youtu.be>

YouTube video posted by Islamic Front

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNNvhwzIJa8&feature=youtu.be&html5=1>

Scholarly:



The December 30, 2014 tunnel bomb detonation in the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ancient City of Aleppo northwest of the citadel in the area of Sabah Bahrat Square area (DGAM).

## SHI 14-108

**Report Date:** January 4, 2015

**Site Name:** Qa'lat el-Mudiq (Apamea)

**Date of Incident:** Unspecified 2014

**Location:** Hama Governorate

**Coordinates:** —

**Site Description:** According to Burns<sup>9</sup>,

Qalat Mudia, the citadel of Apamea, dates back to well before Seleucid times and played a particularly important role as an Arab point of defence against the Crusades. The Orontes Valley for long served as the interface between the Frankish and Arab worlds, with most sites on the east side of the valley (notably Shaizar and Maarat al-Numan) confronting the Crusader castles on the west (Qalaat Burzey, Qalaat Mehelbeh, Qalaat Abu Qobeis and Maysaf). The remains of the medieval citadel show no trace of the Crusader occupation (1106–49). The indications of the later Arab fortress are largely swallowed by the modern upper village but a tower pokes up above domestic walls. The main gateway of the citadel was on the east side, a typically narrow passage confined by towers (cf. Harim). The rest of the outer walls comprise variegated stonework (some re-used from earlier periods) including Mamluk (13<sup>th</sup> century).

**Site Date:** Seleucid, Byzantine, Islamic

**Source of Destruction:** The Syrian army has repeatedly shelled the town. The APSA photos provide some documentation of the damage but are not accompanied by any description.

**Pattern:** Combat damage

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** —

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

APSA Website: <http://apsa2011.com/index.php/en/provinces/hama/sites/1072-gala-at-el-mudiq-cidatelle-2.html>

Scholarly:

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<sup>9</sup> Burns, Ross. 2010. *The Monuments of Syria*. (I.B. Tauris), pp. 236–237.



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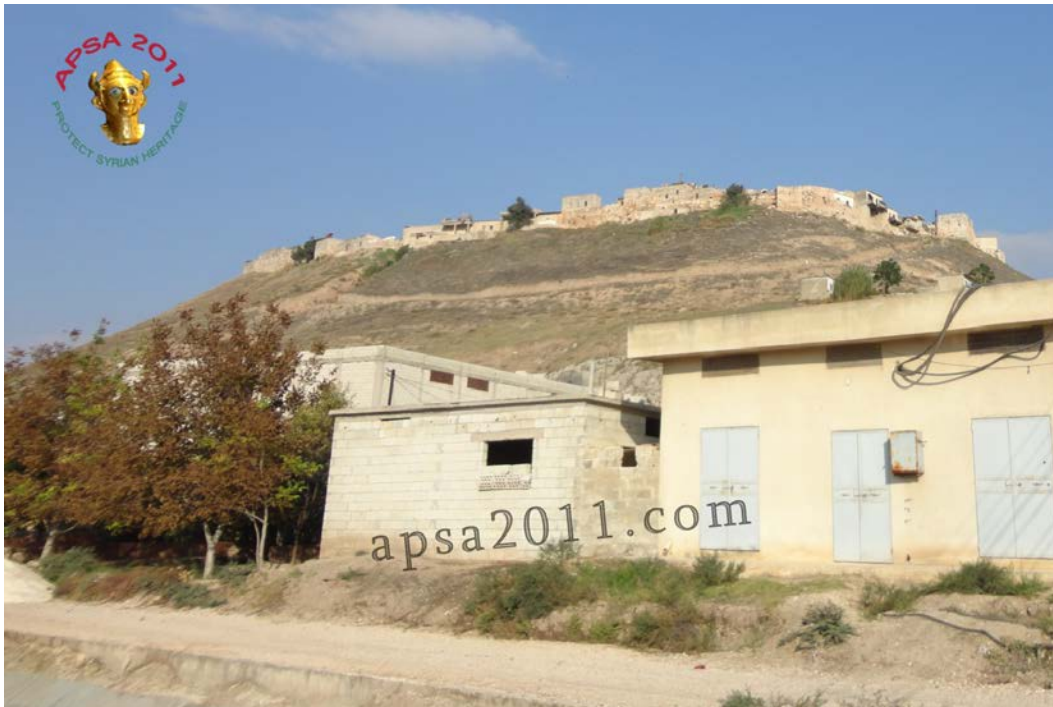
Qala'at al-Mudiq (APSA).



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