

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

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Executive Summary

Airstrikes continued to be the primary source of damage to heritage assets in Syria, and pro-regime forces continued to expand their territorial control in Aleppo backed by Russian airstrikes. In Aleppo Governorate alone two mosques were damaged during Russian bombardment campaigns and two mosques were damaged by SARG campaigns. Recent photographs released by the DGAM and news outlets show the severity of the damage to the Aleppo Citadel since the start of the war, and The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative produced a report on heritage assets in proximity to the Citadel. Bombardment in Hama damaged a mosque, and airstrikes in Homs damaged two mosques and possibly a set of columns near the Roman theater in the archaeological site of Palmyra, although ASOR CHI has not independently verified this at the time of publication. The Raqqa Cultural Center was also severely damaged by airstrikes.

The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative produced two reports on heritage assets at the site of Apamea in Idlib Governorate. These reports document how the archaeological site of Apamea, including the Apamea Theater and the Apamea Museum, has been damaged by illegal digging, looting, neglect, exposure to the elements, and nearby military operations.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights released its January Vital Facilities Report,² which documents damage to civilian and non-military sites caused by conflict belligerents. The report lists five heritage assets, four mosques and one historical site as damaged. These incidents were not published by SNHR on its website or social media platforms, and the report itself does not provide any further information on the incidents. As such, the following incidents have not been independently corroborated and remain unverified:

- Dome of the Rahman Mosque in Darayya, Damascus Governorate allegedly damaged by SARG mortar missile on January 12, 2016.
- Habubi Mosque in Maarat al Numan, Idlib Governorate allegedly damaged by Russian rockets on January 12, 2016.
- Minaret of the Omar bin al Khattab Mosque in Abteen, Aleppo Governorate allegedly destroyed by government militia explosives on January 17, 2016.
- Unnamed mosque in Hazano, Idlib Governorate allegedly damaged by a SARG missile on January 20, 2016.

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 http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/96_centers_in_January_2016_en.pdf

- Qalaat Rahba in Mayadin, Dier ez-Zor Governorate allegedly damaged by four Russian rockets on January 27, 2016.

With regard to Iraq, DigitalGlobe satellite imagery taken during the reporting period shows expanding modern development within the site boundaries of Nineveh and the Nebi Yunus Mosque Complex. Satellite imagery confirmed in-country source reports that ISIL militants are building a road running through the archaeological site of Nineveh; this road is incomplete and remains under construction. Furthermore, the remaining structures within the Nebi Yunus complex continue to be leveled, though the true purpose of this activity remains unknown.

Key Points

- Recent photographs and video of the Aleppo Citadel show the severity of the damage to the area ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0018](#)).
- The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative produced a report on the damage to the Al Adiliah Mosque located southwest of the Aleppo Citadel ([Appended TDA Report](#)).
- Russian airstrikes damage the al-Hamza Mosque in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0019](#)).
- SARG airstrikes damage the Sidiq Mosque in Palmyra, Homs Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0020](#)).
- The Raqqa Cultural Center in Raqqa Governorate hit by airstrikes ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0021](#)).
- Russian bombardment damages the Al-Khayrat Mosque in Aleppo ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0022](#)).
- DGAM shows evidence of damage to Qalaat Saladin in Latakia Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0023](#)).
- SARG airstrikes damage the al-Farooq Mosque in Masqan ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0024](#)) and the Al-Kabir Mosque in Hayyan ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0025](#)) in Aleppo Governorate.
- SARG missiles allegedly damage columns in the Roman theater in Palmyra, Homs Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0026](#)).
- DigitalGlobe imagery shows Nineveh ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097 UPDATE](#)) and the Nebi Yunus Mosque Complex ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0004](#)) in Mosul further damaged by development.
- SARG airstrikes damage the Al-Nasr Mosque in Gharnata, Homs Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0027](#)).
- SARG bombardment damages the Abu Bakr al-Sideiq in Kafr Zaita, Hama Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0028](#)).
- The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative produced two reports on the archaeological site of Apamea, Idlib Governorate ([Appended TDA Report](#)).

Heritage Timeline

February 16, 2016

DGAM published an article titled “بالصور: الأضرار في قلعة صلاح الدين” (“Pictures of the damage at Saladin Citadel in rural Latakia”). A series of recent images show the status of and damage to

Qalaat Salah ed-Din, including fire damage to the visitor’s center, located in an Ayyubid-era mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0023**

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=177&id=1918>

- *TRT World* published a video report titled “**Showcase: Surviving the Ancient City of Palmyra.**” Maamoun Abdulkarim, Director-General of Museums and Antiquities for Syria, discusses the current state of Palmyra and the risks ISIL poses to this and other sites and artifacts in Syria.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MF0tr5KUCE&feature=youtu.be>
- **Vassar College** published a post entitled “**Syrian archaeologist Salam Al Kuntar to discuss the destruction of heritage and its impact on cultural identity, February 16, 2016.**” Al-Kuntar discusses the destruction of heritage in Syria and Iraq and its consequences.
<http://info.vassar.edu/news/2015-2016/160216-refugee-salam-al-kuntar.html>
- *Smithsonian* published an article titled “**The Race to Save Syria’s Archaeological Treasures**” (by James Harkin). The article discusses the current state of, and risks to, cultural heritage in Syria and what is being done to preserve and protect artifacts.
<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/race-save-syrias-archaeological-treasures-180958097/?no-ist>
- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Regime forces shelling targeted Abu Bakr Al Sadeiq Mosque in Kafr Zaita city in Hama governorate in February 16.**” Reports claim that regime helicopters fired several barrel bombs on the mosque, partially damaging it. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0028.**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/16/18539/>

February 15, 2016

DGAM published an article titled “**In photos: Damage to Aleppo’s citadel, 2nd set.**” Seven new photos of the **Aleppo Citadel** and the surrounding area were published. The first set of photos was published on February 1, 2016. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0014.**

<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1903>

- Al Sumaria* published an article titled “الحشد الشعبي يسيطر على آثار وجددها بولاية ”بصرى“ (”Popular Mobilization Units in Iraq seize artifacts from Daesh raid”). Popular Mobilization Units in Salah ed-Din province recovered nine artifacts dating to the Babylonian era in an ISIL-hideout, which they entrusted to the governor of the province. <http://www.alsumaria.tv/news/159768>
- SNHR** published a post titled “**Regime forces targeted Al Nasser Mosque in Garnatta village in Homs governorate in February 15.**” Reports claim that regime warplanes fired a missile that severely damaged the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0027.** <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/15/18504/>
- Qantara.de* published an article titled “**Reconstruction of Aleppo: Others destroy and we rebuild.**” **The Aleppo Project** brings together former residents of Aleppo and experts in Budapest to create a plan for the reconstruction of the city. <https://en.qantara.de/content/reconstruction-of-aleppo-others-destroy-and-we-rebuild>

<http://www.thealeppoproject.com/>
- UN News Centre* published an article titled “**UNESCO and Italy to create task force for cultural heritage conservation in crises.**” UNESCO plans to sign an agreement with Italy to establish a taskforce of experts to focus on the conservation of cultural heritage affected by crises around the world. <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=53232#.Vsl7RHQrLox>

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/italy_creates_a_unesco_emergency_task_force_for_culture/#.Vsl7RXQrLoy

<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/unesco-schafft-kultur-blauhelme-nach-palmyra-kultur-blauhelme-sollen-denkmaeler-schuetzen-1.2866688>

February 14, 2016

Anadolu Agency published an article titled “**Ex-Syria official tells of collusion between Assad, Russia, Daesh**” (by Mohamed Sabry Emam Muhammed). The former attorney-general of Tadmor alleges collusion between SARG, Russian forces, and ISIL that led to the fall of Palmyra. He also claims that looting and trafficking of antiquities was widespread even before the current conflict. <http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/ex-syria-official-tells-of-collusion-between-assad-russia-daesh/521025>

February 11, 2016

ICOMOS will hold a colloquium on March 4, 2016 titled “**Post-Trauma Reconstruction.**” The event “will create an opportunity for exchanges and reflections on contemporary challenges in cultural heritage transmission.” Attendance is limited to registered ICOMOS members.

<http://www.icomos.org/en/what-we-do/image-what-we-do/182-focus/5751-post-trauma-reconstruction-icomos-colloquium-4-march-2017>

http://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Secretariat/2016/Reconstruction_conference/COLLOQUIUM_PROGRAMME_EN_Mise_en_page_04-02.pdf

- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Regime forces shelling targeted Roman theatre in Palmyra city in Homs governorate in February 11.**” Reports indicate that regime warplanes fired missiles near the **Roman Theater** in Palmyra, destroying some columns completely and partially damaging its fence. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0026.**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/11/18246/>

- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Regime forces targeted Bel Temple in Palmyra city in Homs governorate in February 10.**” Reports indicate that regime warplanes fired missiles near the already severely damaged temple, destroying three columns and damaging a fence [?]. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0026.**
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/11/18241/>

February 10, 2016

Heritage for Peace released their bi-weekly “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage**” report.

<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-10-february-2016/>

- *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Cheikhmous Ali: The Syrian archaeologist who doesn’t take sides**” (By Vincent Noce & Victoria Stapley-Brown). This article discusses the work of Cheikhmous Ali, leader of the Association for the Protection of Syrian Archaeology (APSA).
<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/conservation/the-syrian-archaeologist-who-doesn-t-take-sides/>
- **Monuments of Mosul (Ohrožená architektura města Mosulu)** published a list and interactive map of 38 monuments damaged in Mosul based on satellite images dated from August 2015 and before.
<http://monumentsofmosul.com/>

- Multiple news outlets discussed the damage to the **Bandara Synagogue**, which was badly damaged by explosions in 2012 and 2014 and is threatened with further destruction. The Amaliah Organization is working with opposition forces to salvage books and scrolls from the synagogue while access is still possible.
<http://www.jewishpress.com/news/breaking-news/ancient-central-synagogue-of-aleppo-in-danger-of-destruction/2016/02/10/>

<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/news/1.702520>

<http://forward.com/news/breaking-news/333215/historic-aleppo-synagogue-damaged-in-syria-clashes/>
- SNHR** published a post titled “**Regime forces shelling targeted Al Kabir Mosque in Aleppo governorate in February 10.**” Reports indicate that regime warplanes fired on a mosque in Hayan, destroying it almost completely.
ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0025
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/10/18195/>

February 8, 2016

SNHR published a post titled “**Regime forces targeted Al Farooq Mosque in Masqan town in Aleppo governorate in February 8.**” Reports indicate that regime warplanes fired missiles on a mosque in Aleppo governorate, damaging it and destroying its minaret almost completely.
ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0024
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/08/18096/>

February 7, 2016

DGAM posted an article titled “**Field visit to Qalaat Salah el-Din in Rural Latakia by Minister of Culture.**” The Minister of Culture and the Director-General of DGAM visited **Qalaat Salah ed-Din** following the regime establishing control over the region last month. They discovered the UNESCO World Heritage Site was largely unharmed, although its visitor center (located in an Ayyubid-era mosque on the site) had been looted and burned. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0023**
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1906>

- SNHR** published a report titled “**Not Less than 96 Offensive Attacks on Vital Facilities in January 2016, 44 amongst which were committed by Russian Forces.**” This report putative attacks on “vital facilities” (places of worship, hospitals, schools, etc.) damaged by various actors in Syria in January 2016.
http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/96_centers_in_January_2016_en.pdf

- February 6, 2016
- SNHR published a post titled “**Suspected Russian forces targeted Al Khayrat Mosque in Al Sakhoor neighborhood in Aleppo city in February 5.**” Reports allege that Russian warplanes fired missiles near the mosque and caused damage to the building.
ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0022
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/06/18028/>
- Syrian Arab News Agency published an article titled “**Culture Minister Stresses Need to Restore Krak des Chevaliers Castle.**” Culture Minister Issam Khalil stresses the need to restore this UNESCO World Heritage Site in Homs and repair its infrastructure. After inspecting damage to the site, he called for reconstruction of the castle as soon as possible.
<http://sana.sy/en/?p=68677>
- February 5, 2016
- France 24 published a video report titled “**L’archéologie en mode makers.**” (“Making archaeology fashionable”) This report discusses techniques used to create 3D models of archaeological monuments in danger.
<http://www.france24.com/fr/20160205-palmyre-impression3d-iconem-archeologie-unesco-patrimoine-data-algorithme>
- February 4, 2016
- Center for Art Law posted an article titled “**U.S. Museums May Serve As Safe Havens to Protect ISIS-Looted Antiquities from Destruction**” (by Irina Tarsis). The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) issued a number of protocols to safeguard looted artifacts by granting them safe haven in AAMD member museums.
<http://itsartlaw.com/2016/02/04/u-s-museums-may-serve-as-safe-havens-to-protect-isis-looted-antiquities-from-destruction/>
- Apollo Magazine published an article titled “**One museum’s tribute to the murdered Syrian archaeologist, Khaled al-Asaad**” (by Phoebe Segal). The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston paid tribute to al-Asaad’s memory by creating a display in the museum’s Roman Gallery devoted to his career and contributions to archaeology.
<http://www.apollo-magazine.com/one-museums-tribute-to-the-murdered-syrian-archaeologist-khaled-al-asaad/>
- February 3, 2016
- SNHR published a post titled “**Suspected Russian forces shelling on Al Hamza Mosque in Anadan city in Aleppo governorate in February 2.**” Reports indicate that Russian warplanes fired on the mosque, damaging the building and its fence.
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17845/>
- February 1, 2016
- DGAM posted an article titled “**Recent Photos of Damage Around the Citadel of Aleppo.**” DGAM published 10 photos showing the current state of the site and the surrounding area in Aleppo’s Old City. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0018**
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1903>

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 16-0018

Report Date: February 3, 2016

Site Name:

Aleppo Old City (حلب)

- Khusrawiyah Mosque (جامع الخسروية)
- Sultaniyah Mosque/Madrassa (المدرسة السلطانية)
- Khan as-Shouneh (خان الشونة)
- Carlton Citadel Hotel (فندق كادلتون القلعة)
- Grand Serail (سراي حلب الكبير)
- Souq al-Zarb (سوق الزرب)
- Souq Qara Qamash (قده قماش)
- Matbakh al-Ajami (المطبخ الحجري)

Aleppo Citadel (قلعة حلب)

- Temple of Hadad (المعبد حداد)
- al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير)
- Ibrahim Mosque (مسجد ابراهيم)
- Aleppo Citadel Museum (متحف قلعة حلب)
- Mamluk Throne Hall (top floor of Ayyubid Gate-Tower) (قاعة العرش المملوكي)

Date of Incident:

Aleppo Old City

- Khusrawiyah Mosque- July 29, 2014
- Sultaniyah Mosque- July 29, 2014; September 2, 2014; December 7, 2014
- Khan as-Shouneh - July 29, 2014
- Carlton Hotel - May 8, 2014
- Grand Serail - July 29, 2014; September 2, 2014
- Souq al-Zarb - September 2, 2014
- Souq Qara Qamash - September 25, 2012
- Matbakh al-Ajami - pre-May 2015

Aleppo Citadel - various throughout 2014-2015; ongoing

- Temple of Hadad - October 3, 2014; ongoing
- Kabir Mosque - unknown
- Ibrahim Mosque - unknown
- Aleppo Citadel Museum - pre-May 2015
- Mamluk Throne Hall - post-August 2012; ongoing

Location: Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description:

- Khusrawiyah Mosque (جامع الخسروية) - This madrasa and mosque faces the south side of the citadel. It was completed in 1547 CE. According to Ross Burns, “[I]nitiating in 1537 by Khusruv Pasha, governor of Aleppo. Perhaps constructed under the supervision of the famous Turkish architect, Sinan, then at the beginning of his remarkable career this is the first of the Ottoman-style monuments built in Aleppo. Note that the portico, covered by five domes, is wider than the prayer hall. The minaret is distinctly Turkish in style.”³
- Sultaniyah Mosque/Madrassa (المدروسة السلطانية) - This madrasa and mosque (1225 CE) lies immediately south of the citadel’s main entrance. It contains the tomb of Sultan Malik al-Zaher. Gaube and Wirth provide the following dating details, “Von Gazi begonnen und im Jahre 1225 vollendet.” (Translation: “From Gazi started and completed in 1225.”)⁴ According to Ross Burns, “Across the road and a little to the left as you look from the entrance of the citadel lies the Madrasa Sultaniye completed in 1223–1225 by Governor (Sultan) al-Aziz, a son of Sultan al-Zaher Ghazi, the project having begun under his father. The mihrab of the prayer room is particularly commended. To the left lies a modest room which contained the cenotaphs of Sultan al-Zaher Ghazi and his family.”⁵
- Khan as-Shouneh (خان الشونه) - The complex lies immediately southwest of the main entrance to the citadel. The 16th century “khan” (1546 CE) is more properly a *qaisariye* or a gated, covered market with vaulted ceilings along a main nave. The structure was restored in the 1990s, primarily for tourist traffic.⁶
- Carlton Citadel Hotel (فندق كادلتون القلعة) - Formally the State Hospital, the Carlton Hotel building was built in 1890 and called Ghouraba Hospital. It was later converted into a nursing school, and then into the hotel in 2010.⁷
- Grand Serail (سراي حلب الكذبير) - Built in 1936 during the French Mandate, the Serail building was an example of the neo-Saracenic style and was inspired by the Aleppo Citadel. It was the seat of the office of the governor of Aleppo, the City Council, the police headquarters, and the local administration offices.⁸
- Souq al-Zarb (سوق الذرب) - According to the DGAM, Souq al-Zarb was originally known as al-Dharb (coinage) market, where Mamluk coins were struck. More recently, it served as a market for textiles.⁹
- Souq Qara Qamash (قده قرامش) - One of many suqs and khans in the Suq al-Medina, this market specialized in textiles and cloth. Its Turkish name indicates an Ottoman-era date.

³ Burns 2009: 47

⁴ Gaube and Wirth 1984: 382

⁵ Burns 2009: 47

⁶ Gaube and Wirth 1984: 363–4 for a detailed description and additional sources.

⁷ Hadjar 2000: 87

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/damages/eplace.php?placeid=133#>

- Matbakh al-Ajami (المطبخ العجمي) - According to France 24, an image of a dome ringed with rectangular windows that has a large hole belongs to the “Grand Mosque.”¹⁰ A later version of the video omits any name for the mosque pictured.¹¹ It is actually an image of a structure near the base of the Citadel, the Matbakh al-Ajami, also called the Palace of Majd al-Din ibn ad Daya. The palace was home to the Popular Tradition Museum from 1967 to 1975. According to Ross Burns, “The Matbakh al-Ajami [is] a Zengid (12th century) palace which formerly housed a small museum of folklore...The façade was reconstructed when the street was widened in 1950. The rebuilt entrance incorporates a doorway rescued from another palace, of the Ottoman, Othman Pasha. The doorway may be Ottoman or Mamluk but consciously imitates the Ayyubid love for fantastic interlaced decoration. The muqarnas of the north iwan is particularly notable.”¹² According to Yasser Tabbaa, “this was originally an Ayyubid palace that was built in the early 13th century by the notable al-‘Ajami family, making it the only remaining non-royal Ayyubid palace in Syria.”¹³
- Aleppo Citadel (قلعة حلب) - The walled citadel is located on a hill in the center of the city, and includes a large gatehouse and a bridge to the main citadel. The citadel itself contains many notable structures, including the Temple of the Weather God, the Ayyubid Palace, the Great Mosque, the Mosque of Abraham, and a visitor’s center. For a full description, see Ross Burns’ *Monuments of Syria*.¹⁴ The Aleppo Citadel is a large medieval fortress and palace complex at the heart of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Ancient City of Aleppo. The citadel sits atop a large tell dating back to at least the 3rd millennium BCE. The citadel is a key tourist attraction in Syria and has suffered moderate damage since the start of the Syrian conflict. From UNESCO: “The monumental Citadel of Aleppo, rising above the suqs, mosques and madrasas of the old walled city, is testament to Arab military might from the 12th to the 14th centuries. With evidence of past occupation by civilizations dating back to the 10th century B.C., the citadel contains the remains of mosques, palace and bath buildings. The walled city that grew up around the citadel bears evidence of the early Graeco-Roman street layout and contains remnants of 6th century Christian buildings, medieval walls and gates, mosques and madrasas relating to the Ayyubid and Mameluke development of the city, and later mosques and palaces of the Ottoman period. A ring of crenellated walls and towers rise 50m above the city from a steep glacis, encircling a mass of ruins of every period. The nail-heads on the doors themselves are beautifully worked, the lintels have comic or enigmatic carvings on them, and there are fine Kufic inscriptions calling upon the power and the mercy of Allah. The interior of the citadel shows all too clearly how it has been ravaged by enemies (the Mongols invaded it twice) and shattered by earthquakes (that of 1822 was particularly devastating).”¹⁵
- Temple of Hadad (المعبد حداد) - The Temple of the Storm-God Hadad lies near the outdoor theater and the Ibrahim Mosque on the Aleppo Citadel. The temple was discovered by a joint Syrian-German excavation (1996–2009) headed by Kay Kohlmeyer (Berlin University

¹⁰ <http://www.france24.com/en/20160125-video-syria-conflict-aleppo-old-city-destroyed>

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-m3o6i6UcNQ>

¹² Burns 2009: 44

¹³ <http://archnet.org/sites/10559>

¹⁴ Burns 2014

¹⁵ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21>

of Applied Sciences) and is best known for its Neo-Hittite basalt sculptures.¹⁶ The oldest level of the structure dates to the 3rd millennium BCE. The building underwent several restorations throughout the 2nd millennium. The basalt bas-reliefs date to 1100-900 BCE. These depict a number of scenes, including Hadad climbing into his chariot, surrounded by an entourage of gods, mythical creatures, and lions.¹⁷

- Al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكابري) - One of two mosques (see below) on the Citadel of Aleppo, the al-Kabir mosque stands on the site of what was once a Byzantine church dating to the reign of the Emperor Justinian (mid-6th century CE).¹⁸ The church remained until it was converted into a mosque during the Mirdasid dynasty, which ruled Aleppo from 1024 until 1080 CE.¹⁹ The al-Kabir and Ibrahim Mosques were renovated multiple times, including under the Seljuk Zengid ruler Nur ad-Din (ca. mid-12th century CE) and the Ayyubid emir az-Zahir Ghazi (1213 CE).²⁰ The current structure dates almost entirely from 1213 CE.²¹ The mosque has a well-preserved square-shaped Ayyubid minaret that at one point doubled as a military watchtower.²² The mihrab and prayer niche were restored in the 1970s and 1980s.²³ There is a central courtyard and a number of rooms for students.²⁴ Several large blocks used in the mosque's foundations date to the 2nd millennium BCE.²⁵
- Ibrahim Mosque (مسجد ابراهيم) - According to legend, the Ibrahim Mosque is located on top of a rock where the prophet Abraham rested while making sacrifices and milking his sheep.²⁶ The other of the two mosques (see above) on the Citadel of Aleppo, the Ibrahim Mosque stands on the site of what was once a Byzantine church dating to the reign of the Emperor Justinian (mid-6th century CE).²⁷ The churches remained until they were converted into mosques during the Mirdasid dynasty (similarly to the al-Kabir mosque), which ruled Aleppo from 1024 until 1080 CE.²⁸ The al-Kabir and Ibrahim Mosques were renovated multiple times, including under the Seljuk Zengid ruler Nur ad-Din (ca. 1179 CE), the Ayyubid emir az-Zahir Ghazi (ca. 1213 CE), and under the Ottomans (ca. 1873 CE).²⁹ It is the oldest dated building surviving intact on the Citadel.³⁰ Remains of the original Byzantine church are still visible in the foundations of the mosque. It was famous for its carved wooden mihrab, donated by Nur al-Din and lost in 1922 when the French garrison was stationed at the Citadel.³¹

¹⁶ http://archive.archaeology.org/0911/features/syria_aleppo_temple_storm_god_citadel.html

¹⁷ Gonnella 2008: 37-38

¹⁸ Hadjar 2000: 5

¹⁹ Gonnella 2008: 12-13

²⁰ *Ibid.* 14-19

²¹ *Ibid.* 40

²² *Ibid.* 18

²³ *Ibid.* 40

²⁴ Hadjar 2000: 11

²⁵ Gonnella 2008: 40

²⁶ *Ibid.* 38

²⁷ Hadjar 2000: 5

²⁸ Gonnella 2008: 12-13

²⁹ *Ibid.* 14-19; 24

³⁰ *Ibid.* 38

³¹ Hadjar 2000: 15

- Aleppo Citadel Museum (متحف قلعة حلب) - The Aleppo Citadel Museum is an archaeological museum located on the Aleppo Citadel. It occupies the Ibrahim Pasha military barracks building, built in 1834 CE by the Egyptian governor Ibrahim Pasha and restored in the 1850s. The barracks were converted into a museum in 1994. The museum consists of three halls, with artifacts from each stage of occupation of the Citadel, including Hittite, Roman, and Islamic periods.³²
- Mamluk Throne Hall (قاعة العرش المملوكي) - Mamluk governor Jakam Saif ad-Din built the Throne Hall on top of the Citadel's older Ayyubid Bridge Tower (ca. 1190-1212 CE). This addition dates to ca. 1406-1417 CE. The Throne Hall underwent a number of restorations and alterations. It was restored under Sultan Ashraf Qaitbay (ca. 1468-1496 CE). By the early 16th century CE, the Throne Hall's elaborate wooden roof had collapsed. It was replaced by the last Mamluk sultan, Qanswah al-Ghuri (ca. 1501-1516 CE), with a new roof consisting of nine stone cupolas.³³ This roof remained (in an increasingly deteriorated state) until the 1960s, when a new phase of restoration and renovation began on the Citadel. The Throne Hall was partially removed and rebuilt. It was completely recovered with a wooden roof, part of which was taken from the 18th century CE al-'Aidi house in Damascus.³⁴ The original layout and some of the original structure of the Throne Hall remains, but its decoration is almost entirely modern.³⁵

Site Date:

Aleppo Old City

- Khusrawiyah Mosque - 1547 CE
- Sultaniyah Mosque - 1225 CE
- Khan as-Shouneh - 1546 CE
- Carlton Hotel - mid-19th century CE
- Grand Serail - 1933 CE
- Souq al-Zarb - Mamluk
- Souq Qara Qamash - unknown, possibly Ottoman
- Matbakh al-Ajami - 13th century CE

Aleppo Citadel - Early Bronze Age through Ottoman Era

- Temple of Hadad - Early Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (bas reliefs are 14th century BCE)
- Kabir Mosque - mid-11th century CE (renovated or rebuilt ca. 1179 CE and ca. 1213 CE)
- Ibrahim Mosque - mid-11th century CE (renovated or rebuilt ca. 1179 CE, ca. 1213 CE, ca. 1873 CE)
- Aleppo Citadel Museum - 1834 CE (converted to a museum 1994)
- Mamluk Throne Hall - Ayyubid foundation (1190-1212 CE), Mamluk addition ca. 1406 CE, restored ca. 1501, heavily restored 1960s CE

Incident Summary: DGAM and France 24 publish new images of the Citadel of Aleppo and the surrounding area.

³² Gonnella 2008: 42

³³ Gonnella 2008: 21-24

³⁴ Hadjar 2000: 14

³⁵ Gonnella 2008: 30, 49, 50

Incident Source and Description: On January 25, 2016 France 24 published a video and article titled “A rare look inside the old town of Syria’s Aleppo.” It is unclear when this video was taken, but in it regime soldiers occupying the Citadel of Aleppo lead a camera crew through the site and several buildings in the surrounding Old City of Aleppo below the Citadel.³⁶ The video shows various areas on the Citadel, including the Mamluk Throne Room, al-Kabir Mosque, and the bas-reliefs in the Temple of Hadad, as well as the Khusrawiyah Mosque, Sultaniyah Mosque, Khan as-Shouneh, Carlton Hotel, Souq Qara Qamash, Souq al-Zarb, and Matbakh al-Ajami in the surrounding area below. There is no major new damage evident on the Citadel, but the site is littered with debris, including piles of mortar shells, rockets, and sandbags, and is overgrown with vegetation.

It is important to note that while the France 24 video is useful for understanding the current state of certain sites, it also provides incorrect information. The narrator asserts that “the ancient amphitheater is scarred by shelling.” However, the building being shown was built in 1980 and is a theater, not an amphitheater. Furthermore, an image of a destroyed dome belongs to the Matbakh al-Ajami, not to the “grand mosque” as the video states.

On February 1, 2016 DGAM published ten photos of the Citadel and the surrounding area, taken by the photographer Shady Martak sometime between January 25 and 31, 2016. These photos show the current state of the Ibrahim Mosque, al-Kabir Mosque, Citadel Museum, Temple of Hadad (exterior), and the Mamluk Throne Room (interior). The photos also show the current state of the Sultaniyah Mosque, Khan as-Shouneh, Khusrawiyah Mosque, Carlton Citadel Hotel, and Grand Serail (exterior).³⁷

On February 16, 2016 DGAM posted a second set of seven photos providing alternate views of damage to the Citadel and the surrounding area.³⁸ This set of images in particular demonstrates the amount of trash and debris that litters the Citadel.

The damage to all of these sites is summarized below:

- Khusrawiyah Mosque (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-004 in Weekly Report 1** and **SHI 14-0054 in Weekly Report 9**) - Almost complete destruction of the building due to explosion of tunnel bombs placed beneath structure and in the surrounding area on July 29, 2014. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Sultaniyah Mosque (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-004 in Weekly Report 1; SHI 14-0024 in Weekly Report 5; SHI 14-0097 in Weekly Report 18; SHI 14-0097 UPDATE in Weekly Report 19; SHI 15-0084 in Weekly Report 40**) - Complete destruction of the southern half of structure due to a series of tunnel bombs detonated in the area on July 29, September 2, and December 14, 2014. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Khan as-Shouneh (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0004 in Weekly Report 1; SHI 14-0054 in Weekly Report 9; SHI 14-0097 in Weekly Report 18; SHI 15-0148 in Weekly Report 67-68**) - Severe damage to structure due to a series of tunnel bombs

³⁶ <http://www.france24.com/en/20160125-video-syria-conflict-aleppo-old-city-destroyed>

³⁷ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=1902>

³⁸ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1917>

detonated on July 29, 2014, December 7, 2014, and November 8, 2015. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.

- Carlton Hotel (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0085 in Weekly Report 41**) - Severe destruction due to detonation of a bomb on May 8, 2014. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Grand Serail (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0004 in Weekly Report 1; SHI 14-0024 in Weekly Report 5; SHI 15-0085 in Weekly Report 41**) - Severe damage due to detonation of a series of tunnel bombs on July 29, 2014 and September 2, 2014. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Souq al-Zarb (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0085 in Weekly Report 41**); Severe damage to the souq, as well as other structures and merchandise in the Souq al-Madina, due to a fire that began on September 25, 2012. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Souq Qaramash (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0085 in Weekly Report 41**) - Severe damage to this and other structures and merchandise in the Souq al-Madina, due to fire that began on September 25, 2012. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Matbakh al-Ajami (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0044 in Weekly Report 30; SHI 15-0084 in Weekly Report 40**) - Severe damage possibly due to detonation of tunnel bombs or shelling near the site. Ross Burns reported damage to the mosque's dome in August 2014, based on a DGAM report from May 2014.³⁹ More of the dome appears to have collapsed between May 2014 and January 2015 when APSA (cited by Ross Burns) posted another set of photos of the structure.⁴⁰
- Aleppo Citadel (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0035 in Weekly Report 7; SHI 14-0057 in Weekly Report 9; SHI 14-0076 in Weekly Report 14; SHI 15-0085 in Weekly Report 41; SHI 15-0087 in Weekly Report 41; SHI 15-0093 in Weekly Report 42-43; SHI 15-0110 in Weekly Report 49; SHI 15-0148 in Weekly Report 67-68**) - Minimal to moderate ongoing damage since 2012. Shelling damage to outer door of Citadel gateway in 2012. Major impact damage to the southwest towers and curtain walls, as well as widespread bullet damage reported on May 19, 2015. Collapse of portion of Citadel wall due to detonation of tunnel bomb on July 11, 2015. Site has been militarized by SARG since 2012, following a battle for control of the site between regime forces and rebels in August 2012. France 24 video reveals piles of discarded artillery shells littering the site, along with other debris likely due to the continued occupation of the site.
- Temple of Hadad (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0039 in Weekly Report 9; SHI 15-0093 in Weekly Report 42-43**) - An October 2014 report indicates the steel roof protecting the excavation site collapsed, exposing the temple bas-reliefs (located near the eastern wall of the temple cella). France 24 video reveals the collapsed metal roof. The site appears muddy and the mud walls may be disintegrating due to exposure. The temple bas-

³⁹ Burns 2014; <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1263>

⁴⁰ <http://monumentsofsyria.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Syria-damage-list-Feb-2015.pdf>

reliefs are mostly covered with sandbags, although about a 30cm section at the top of each of the four tallest reliefs is exposed. In the video, a soldier removes some of the sandbags. A DGAM photo also shows the collapsed metal roof, as well as overgrown vegetation. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal major new damage.

- al-Kabir Mosque - No specific incidents of damage have been recorded, but DGAM photos show the south wall of mosque has been vandalized with several large lines of red graffiti.
- Ibrahim Mosque (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0093** in **Weekly Report 42-43**) - DGAM photos indicate damage to the dome of the Ibrahim Mosque, a hole possibly caused by shelling. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Aleppo Citadel Museum (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0093** in **Weekly Report 42-43**) - The French language version of the France 24 video provides an additional image of the Citadel Museum, showing severe damage and the collapse of the building's south wall. The damage occurred sometime before June 2, 2015. France 24 and DGAM images do not reveal new damage.
- Mamluk Throne Hall - No specific incidents of damage have previously been recorded. Both France 24 video and DGAM photos show military occupation of the Throne Room, which is now being used as a firing position. The DGAM photo shows severe damage to the room, some perhaps from shelling but most from an effort to fortify the room. The 18th-century CE wooden ceiling remains in place, but the chandelier has shattered and collapsed into the fountain below. The wooden paneling has been removed from the walls and pillars. The windows, some of them stained glass, appear to either have been destroyed or removed. The lower windows have been filled with sandbags.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives; Military activity: gunfire/light weaponry; Military activity: occupation/militarization; Military activity: reuse of ancient/historic structure; Military activity: tunneling; Military activity: intentional destruction; Arson; Vandalism.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is directing critical attention to the condition of all periods of cultural heritage of Aleppo given its significance as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and as a densely populated urban area. ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the historical and ancient heritage of Aleppo as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1903>
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=1902>
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1917>

France 24:

http://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/revolte-en-syrie/document-france-2-syrie-au-coeur-de-la-vieille-ville-d-alep-ravagee-par-la-guerre_1284019.html

<http://www.france24.com/en/20160125-video-syria-conflict-aleppo-old-city-destroyed>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-m3o6i6UcNQ>

Archaeology Magazine:

http://archive.archaeology.org/0911/features/syria_aleppo_temple_storm_god_citadel.html

Monuments of Syria:

<http://monumentsofsyria.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Syria-damage-list-Feb-2015.pdf>

UNESCO: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21>

Scholarly:

Burns, R. (2009) *Monuments of Syria: A Guide* [Revised and Expanded Edition] London; New York: I.B.Tauris.

Gaube, H. & Wirth, E. (1984) *Aleppo: Historische Und Geographische Beitrage Zur Baulichen Gestaltung, Zur Sozialen Organisation Und Zur Wirtschaftlichen Dynamik Einer*. Tubinger Atlas Des Vorderen Orients 58.

Gonnella, J. (2008) *The Citadel of Aleppo: Guidebook*. Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva, Switzerland.

<http://archnet.org/system/publications/contents/5216/original/DPC1953.pdf?1384788868>

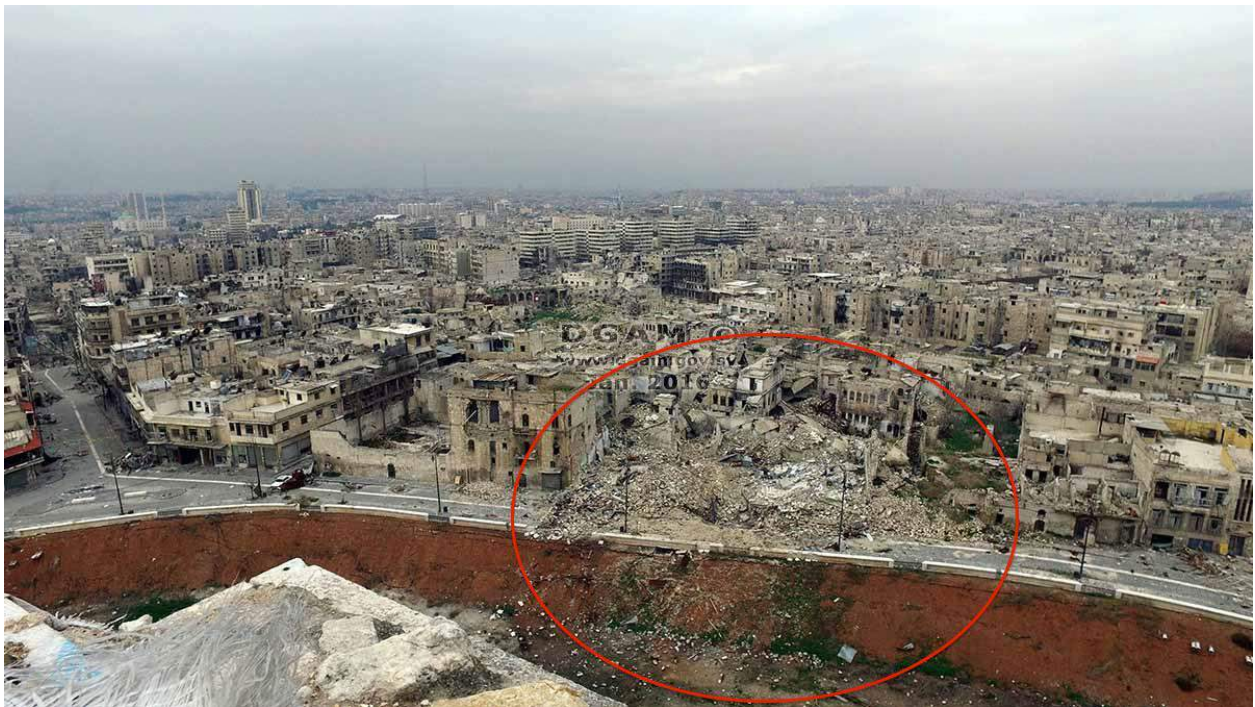
Hadjar, A. & K. al-Jbaili, trans. (2000) *Historical Monuments of Aleppo*. Aleppo: Automobile and Touring Club of Syria.



Satellite imagery showing the following sites: 1. Matbakh al-Ajami; 2. Souq Qara Qamash; 3. Souq al-Zarb; 4. Carlton Citadel Hotel; 5. Khan as-Shouneh; 6. Khusrawiyah Mosque; 7. Sultaniyah Mosque/Madrasa; 8. Grand Serail; 9. Mamluk Throne Hall; 10. Ibrahim Mosque; 11. Temple of Hadad; 12. Aleppo Citadel; 13. al-Kabir Mosque; 14. Aleppo Citadel Museum; (DigitalGlobe; December 11, 2015)



Trash and debris on roof of structure adjacent to theater, damage to dome of Ibrahim Mosque (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Damage to buildings on Hawl al-Qalaa Street (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Severe damage to Sultaniyah Mosque and Khan al-Shouneh (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Damage to dome of Ibrahim Mosque, debris in Ayyubid palace and Temple of Hadad area, severe damage to Citadel Museum, graffiti on al-Kabir Mosque (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Debris in Ayyubid palace and Temple of Hadad area, severe damage to Citadel Museum, graffiti on al-Kabir Mosque (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Removal of wooden panels on walls and pillars, removal or destruction of stained glass windows, damage to chandelier and fountain in Mamluk Throne Hall (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Destruction of Sultaniyah Mosque, Khan al-Shouneh, Khusrawiyah Mosque, Carlton Citadel Hotel (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



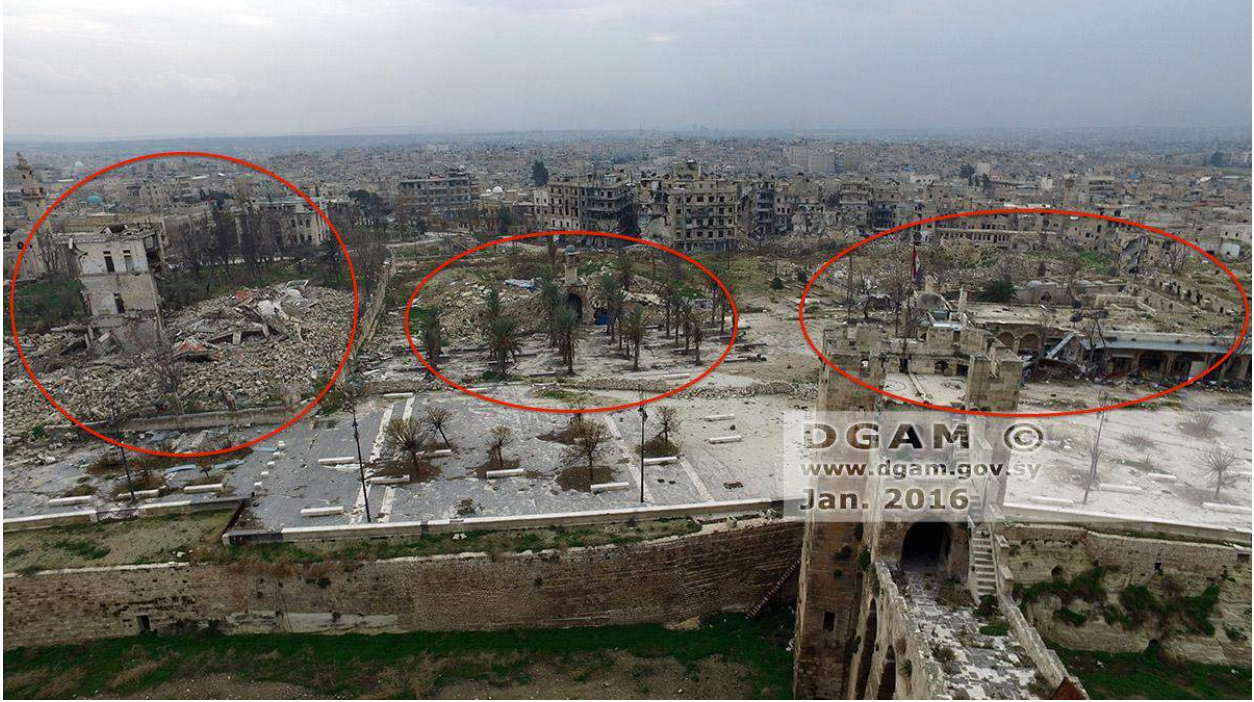
Destruction of Grand Serail, Sultaniyah Mosque, Khan al-Shouneh, Khusrawiyah Mosque (view from Mamluk Throne Hall) (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Destruction of Grand Serail, Sultaniyah Mosque, Khan al-Shouneh, Khusrawiyah Mosque (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



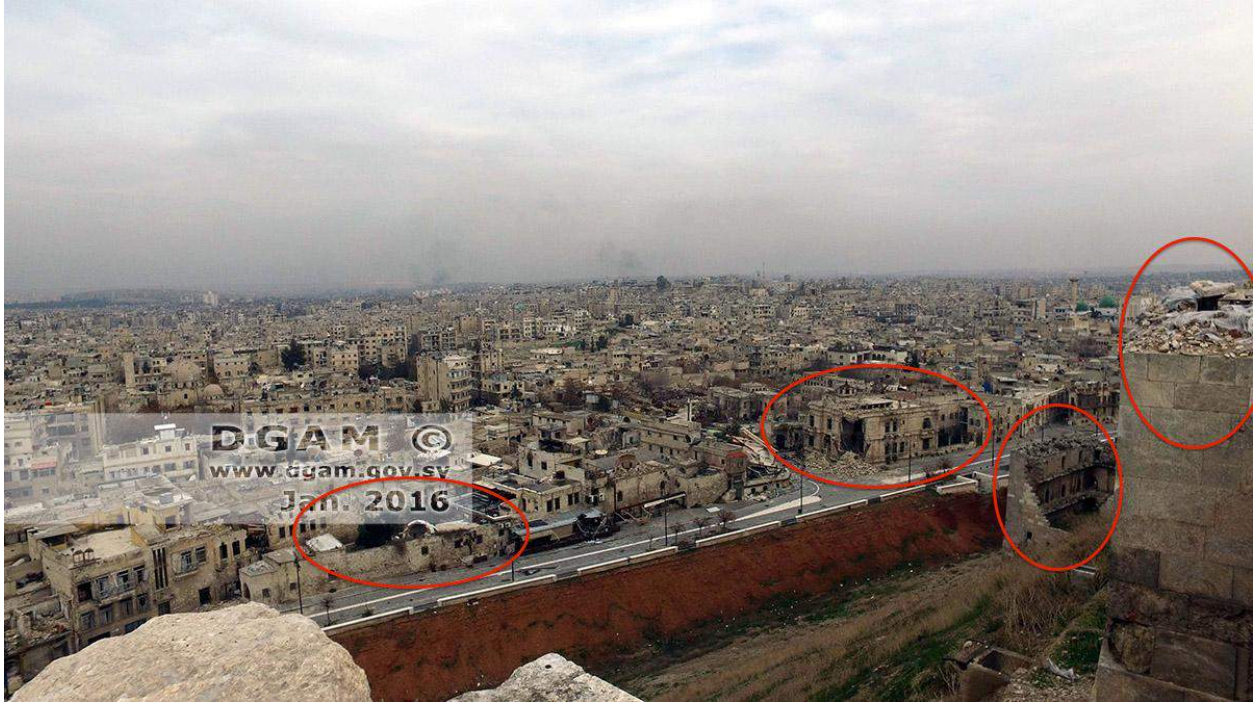
Destruction of Khan al-Shouneh and Khusrawiyah Mosque (DGAM; published February 1, 2016)



Destruction of Grand Serail, Sultaniyah Mosque, Khan al-Shouneh, Khusrawiyah Mosque (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)



Damage to portion of western wall of Citadel (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)



Damage to Immigration Building, northern Citadel bastion, and other structures on Hawl al-Qalaa St. (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)



Image of northern part of Citadel taken from al-Jamaa al-Umawi St. (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)



Destruction of buildings on Hawl al-Qalaa St. (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)

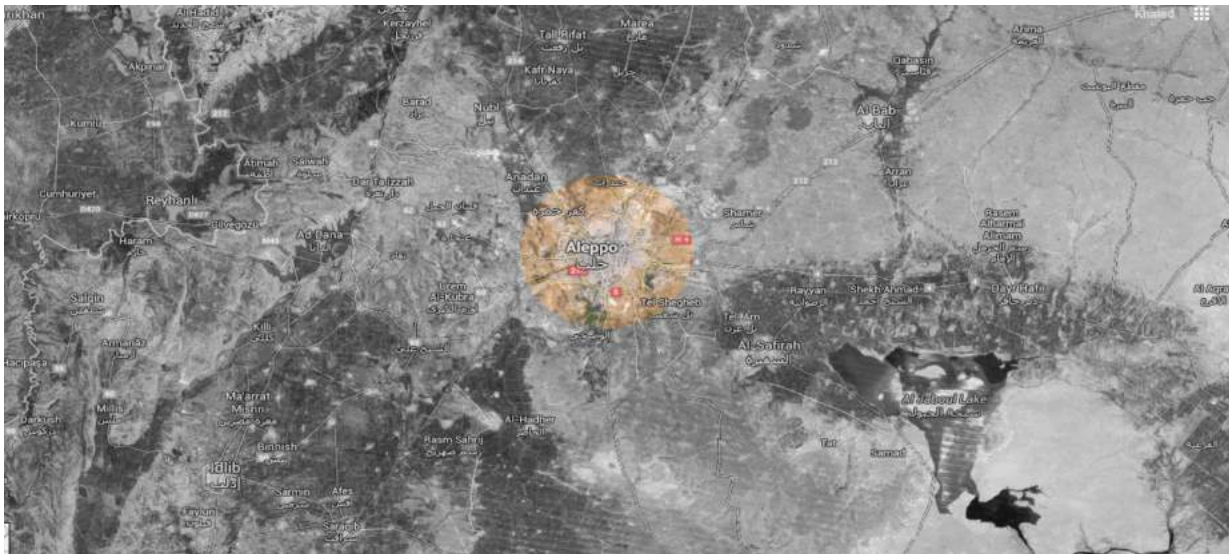


Damage to outer wall of Citadel and destruction of Carlton Citadel Hotel (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)



Shelling damage and debris on citadel bridge (DGAM; published February 15, 2016)

Site Monitors Project:
Al-Adiliah Mosque
January 2016



The al-Adiliah Mosque is located on the southwest side of the Aleppo citadel, in the heart of the old city. It is called al-Adiliah because it was built near the House of Justice (*Al Adiliah House*). The mosque was built between 1555-1557 by Ahmad Pasha during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent and was restored in 1923. The mosque is a typical example of the Ottoman style and has one cylindrical minaret. The building is square in plan with each side being 15.6 meters long. The mosque has a rectangular courtyard with two entrances, one from the east and another from the west, and a water basin for ablution in the middle.

⁴¹ This report is based on research conducted by the “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.



Damage caused by an explosive barrel bomb dropped by Syrian regime







Reported by:

**Site Monitors Project Manager
Dr. Amr Al-Azm**

SHI 16-0019

Report Date: February 3, 2016

Site Name: Al Hamza Mosque (مسجد الحمزة)

Date of Incident: February 2, 2016

Location: Anadan City, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Missile strikes near mosque, damage to building and fence.

Incident Source and Description: On February 2, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that Russian missiles struck near Al Hamza Mosque in Anadan City, causing damage to the building and fence.⁴² No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication. On the same date, missiles also struck a market and physical therapy center in Anadan city, causing damage to both.⁴³

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI has noticed an increase in collateral damage as a result of expanding aerial bombardment campaigns by SARG and Russian forces. As such, ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Aleppo Governorate and other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17845/>

⁴² <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17845/>

⁴³ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17850/> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17853/>

SHI 16-0020

Report Date: February 3, 2016

Site Name: Al Sadeiq Mosque (مسجد السديقي)

Date of Incident: February 2, 2016

Location: Tadmor, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: SARG airstrikes cause partial damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 2, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that SARG missiles “fired on Al Sadeiq Mosque in Palmyra,” causing partial damage.⁴⁴ No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

This region has been subject to Russian bombardment since October 2015 when Russia deployed helicopters and artillery to the SARG front near Palmyra.⁴⁵ Shortly thereafter Russian airstrikes in and around Palmyra were reported.⁴⁶ On October 8, 2016 airstrikes on the Al Furqan mosque in Palmyra city were attributed to both SARG and Russian forces.⁴⁷ These reports were first denied by Russia. However on November 5, 2015 Russia announced a series of attacks targeting ISIL militants in Palmyra. The defense ministry said in an official statement that the strikes “destroyed a large fortified location of ISIS militants,” which included an air-defense gun and a tank. They added that the strikes were targeted strictly at terrorist infrastructure located a considerable distance from Palmyra’s historical architecture.⁴⁸ Russian military personnel and advisers have also been reported as working alongside SARG and other pro-regime forces in efforts to reclaim the territory from ISIL.⁴⁹

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Al Sadeiq Mosque as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

⁴⁴ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17856/>

⁴⁵ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/russia-strikes-palmyra-syria-isis_us_56139b39e4b022a4ce5f50a6

⁴⁶ <https://twitter.com/hadialbahra/status/670701823662141440> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/12/dozens-of-russian-airstrikes-target-tadmur-and-aleppo-countryside/> ; <https://twitter.com/PalmyraPioneer/status/672944564278308864> ; <https://twitter.com/PalmyraRev1/status/672503523259584512>

⁴⁷ <https://twitter.com/PalmyraPioneer/status/674763420126810112>

⁴⁸ <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Nov-05/321811-russia-bombs-palmyra-eastern-syria-military.ashx>

⁴⁹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/russia-strikes-palmyra-syria-isis_us_56139b39e4b022a4ce5f50a6

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/03/17856/>

SHI 16-0021

Report Date: February 4, 2016

Site Name: Raqqa Cultural Center (المركز الثقافي) (Arab Cultural Center of Raqqa)

The Assad Cultural House of Raqqa (دار الأسد الثقافي بالرقوة)

Date of Incident: February 3, 2016

Location: Raqqa, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Before March 2011, the Raqqa Cultural Center included a large library, theater, and possibly historical documents. The library reportedly held 36,000 books and the theater could accommodate up to 560 people. The center also hosted many cultural events, art exhibitions, literary and poetry readings, as well as lectures.⁵⁰

In earlier photographs of the center, Arabic calligraphy over the entrance of the building read “The Assad Cultural House of Raqqa.” In articles discussing the center, this name was abbreviated to the “Raqqa Cultural Center” or the “Arab Cultural Center of Raqqa.”

Site Date: 1960s

Incident Summary: Airstrikes hit Raqqa Cultural Center, building destroyed.

Incident Source and Description: On February 4, 2016 the Syrian activist group Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently reported that the Raqqa Cultural Center had been destroyed in an airstrike. Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently reported via Twitter that the Cultural Center was targeted by 16 airstrikes.⁵¹ In the days prior to and after the destruction of the Raqqa Cultural Center, Russian, SARG, and Coalition warplanes were all reported by local activists as carrying out airstrikes in and around the city of Raqqa.

The Syrian opposition group, Ahrar Al-Sham, took control of the building in March 2013 for use as a headquarters. As a result, SARG warplanes began targeting the building in aerial attacks, destroying much of the center and its collections, including thousands of books.⁵² Video released in March 2013 shows the center burning.⁵³

When ISIL took over the city of Raqqa, they turned the center into a secondary school for girls called “Aisha, the Mother of Believers”.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Raqqa Cultural Center as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

⁵⁰ <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2014/10/raqqa-syria-isis-daily-life>

⁵¹ https://twitter.com/Raqqa_SL/status/695246825540997120

⁵² <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2014/10/raqqa-syria-isis-daily-life>

⁵³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOXIKOuIsmo>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently:

<https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1139148979429685>



Destruction of Raqqa Cultural Center (Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently; February 4, 2016)



Destruction of Raqqa Cultural Center (Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently; February 4, 2016)



Destruction of Raqqa Cultural Center (Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently; February 4, 2016)



Destruction of Raqqa Cultural Center (Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently; February 4, 2016)



Destruction of Raqqa Cultural Center (Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently; February 4, 2016)



Destruction of Raqqa Cultural Center (Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently; February 4, 2016)

SHI 16-0022

Report Date: February 5, 2016

Site Name: Khayrat Mosque (مسجد الخيرات)

Date of Incident: February 5, 2016

Location: Sakhur neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Damage to mosque from suspected Russian missile.

Incident Source and Description: On February 5, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired on Khayrat Mosque in the Sakhur neighborhood of Aleppo, damaging the mosque.⁵⁴ SNHR provided no photos of the damaged mosque, but Aleppo Media Center posted a video to YouTube on February 5, 2016 apparently showing damage to the Sakhur neighborhood in the aftermath of the airstrikes, including a severely damaged mosque. According to Aleppo Media Center, the airstrike killed 10 people as they were leaving a mosque following prayers.⁵⁵ Eye on Homeland posted a video showing extensive damage to the same mosque.⁵⁶ SNHR reported six deaths in the attacks.⁵⁷

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the city of Aleppo as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/06/18028/>

Aleppo Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xC74nb1AyEA>

Eye on Homeland: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ByvFJnwUR4>

⁵⁴ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/06/18028/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xC74nb1AyEA>

⁵⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ByvFJnwUR4>

⁵⁷ <https://twitter.com/snhr/status/695679774585458688>



Damage to Khayrat Mosque and adjacent building (Aleppo Media Center; February 5, 2016)

SHI 16-0023

Report Date: February 7, 2016

Site Name: Qalaat Salah ed-Din (قلعة صلاح الدين)

Date of Incident: February 7, 2016

Location: Al Haffah, Latakia Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Ross Burns writes of Qalaat Salah el-Din (also Saladin, Sahyun, or Saone):

“Sited in an extraordinarily dramatic location, deep in the inner recesses of the Jebal Ansariye, the Castle known to the Crusaders as the Château de Saône is today labelled the Castle of Saladin. The modern name honours the extraordinary achievement of Saladin in taking the castle in 1188, shortly after his great victory at the Battle of Hattin in Palestine over the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The fortifications originated in a Byzantine strongpoint constructed in the tenth century, using a natural ridge artificially isolated by carving a deep ditch into the rock. Around this core, the Crusading family under a local seigneur, Robert de Saône, built the elongated fortifications stretching almost one kilometre down the ridge.”⁵⁸

First occupied under the Hamdanids in the early 10th century CE, construction of a fort on the site first began in the mid-10th century under the Byzantines. Early structures included a large wall across the eastern ridge studded with watchtowers, a citadel, and two chapels. This Byzantine fortification was expanded beginning around 1114 CE under the Crusaders, with the addition of a massive keep, a large tower on the south side of the fortress, a large cistern, and a church adjoined to one of the earlier chapels.⁵⁹

The site remained under Ayyubid control from 1188 until 1272 CE, during which time the Ayyubids improved the site’s defenses and built a large palatial complex. The palace included baths and reception rooms on two levels following the same model of the Ayyubid palace at the Citadel of Aleppo. In 1272 CE, the castle passed to Mamluk control and became a provincial administrative center within the Mamluk empire. Mamluk additions include two hammams and a mosque, as well as a reception tower on the west wall of the main courtyard.⁶⁰

The site was ruled by a succession of Mamluk governors until the early 16th century CE. The site then fell into obscurity, only re-occupied for short periods of time until the mid-20th century when it was opened to the public.⁶¹

Of the Ayyubid-era mosque, damage to which is discussed below, Thierry Grandin writes:

“A rectangular mosque occupies part of the Byzantine rampart. The stonework of the walls, identical to that of the Byzantine defensive walls, shows that the mosque has been restored on different occasions. The northeastern corner of the mosque is flanked by a minaret, a free-standing square

⁵⁸ <http://monumentsofsyria.com/places/qalaat-saladin-%D9%82%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A6%D9%86/>

⁵⁹ Molin, K. (2001) *Unknown Crusader Castles*. London: Continuum. p. 85, 148.

⁶⁰ http://www.discoverislimamicart.org/database_item.php?id=monument;isl;sy;mon01;24;en

⁶¹ Michaudel 2016: 13ff

tower built of re-used stones. The entrance to the minaret, which is over three metres above the threshold of the mosque, is topped by a lintel engraved with an inscription commemorating the name of the Mamluk Sultan Qala'un, and connects to a spiral staircase. The niche between the minaret and the entrance to the mosque suggests a former place of worship, probably Ayyubid. A vaulted room, which re-used a Frankish gallery, was walled during the Islamic period, and became part of the religious complex. This room and the prayer hall now constitute the newly created Visitor Centre."⁶²

According to a map provided by the Aga Khan Trust, this building also contained a museum.⁶³

Site Date: 10th century CE, Ayyubid and Mamluk restoration and additions

Incident Summary: New DGAM images posted of site showing some damage.

Incident Source and Description: On February 7, 2016 DGAM posted a series of images taken from February 5–7, 2016 when the Syrian Minister of Culture, Issam Khalil, and DGAM Director General, Maamoun Abdulkarim, visited Qalaat Salah ed-Din to assess the site. The DGAM reported that this visit was possible because the site was “free[d] from the armed groups last month and peace returned to the area. The DGAM stated that it intends to prepare a report on rehabilitation and repairs at the site, and hopes to reopen the castle to visitors within two months. DGAM also stated that damage at the site was limited to the visitor center, which was burned and its furniture stolen. The images accompanying this article show little of the historical site itself. SARG forces have made territorial gains in Latakia in recent weeks, which would allow for Syrian government officials to make an official public visit the site and put forth plans to reopen it as a tourist destination.

On February 16, 2016 DGAM posted another set of images of Qalaat Salah ed-Din, focusing on damage to the site. Much of the site is overgrown with weeds. Most of these images focus on the damage to the visitor center, which is located within the Ayyubid-era mosque and the adjacent Mamluk-era minaret. Its walls (and those of the restrooms) have been blackened by fire, and debris litters the floor. At least one wall has been vandalized with graffiti.⁶⁴ It is not clear when this fire occurred at the site, but the DGAM assigns blame to “armed groups.” It is likely that the damage and vandalism at the site was caused either by SARG forces or local militias. Al Haffah, the town closest to Qalaat Salah el-Din, was occupied by the FSA for a short time in June 2012, but was quickly retaken by SARG forces, and the area has remained under government control since then.⁶⁵

Pattern: Military activity: occupation/militarization; Military activity: reuse of ancient/historic structure; Arson; Military activity: vandalism.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI remains concerned as to the condition of the Qalaat Salah el-Din in Latakia and will continue to monitor reports for additional updates on the condition of the site.

Sources:

⁶² Grandin 2008: 29

⁶³ *Ibid.* 24

⁶⁴ <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=1918>

⁶⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east18421334> ;

<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/15/world/la-fg-syria-haffah-20120615>

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1906>
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=1918>

Scholarly:

Grandin, T. (2008) *The Castle of Salah ed-Din*. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva, Switzerland.
<http://archnet.org/sites/6413/publications/5215>

Kennedy, H. (1994) *Crusader Castles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Molin, K. (2001) *Unknown Crusader Castles*. London: Continuum.

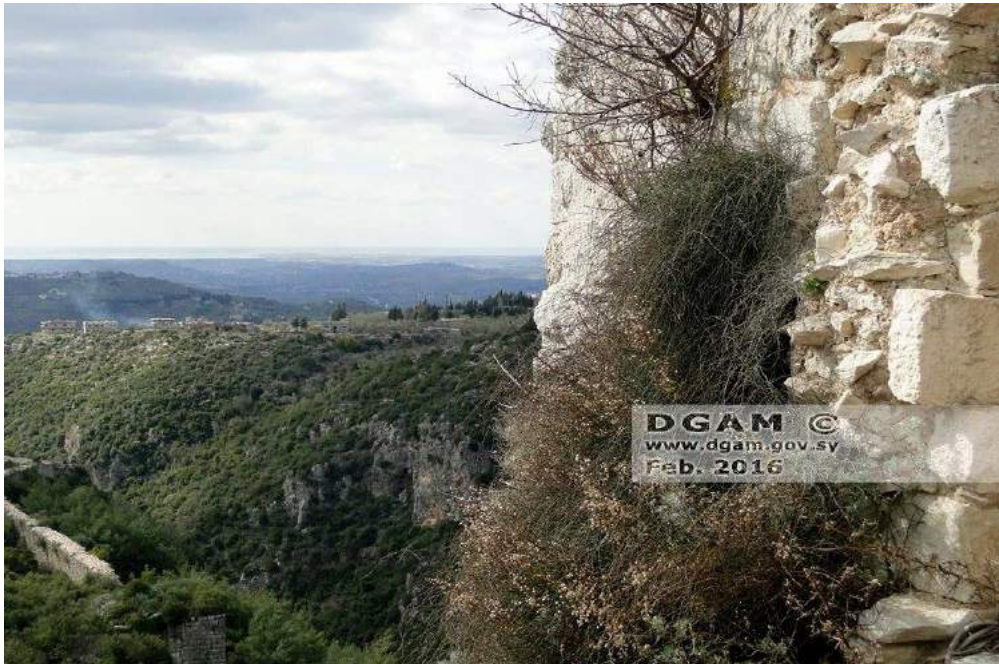
Michaudel, B. (2016) "Qal'at Salah al-Din (Saladin)" in *Discover Islamic Art, Museum With No Frontiers*.
http://www.discoverislamicart.org/database_item.php?id=monument;isl;sy;mon01;24;en



Overgrown vegetation on High Plateau area facing east (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Overgrown vegetation (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Overgrown vegetation (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Overgrown vegetation (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Damage and debris in the visitor center (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Damage, vandalism, and debris in the visitor center (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Damage and debris in the visitor center (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage in visitor center restroom (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage and vandalism in the visitor center bathroom (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage to Ayyubid mosque (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage to Ayyubid mosque (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage to Ayyubid mosque (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage to Ayyubid mosque (DGAM; February 16, 2016)



Fire damage to Ayyubid mosque (DGAM; February 16, 2016)

SHI 16-0024

Report Date: February 8, 2016

Site Name: Al Farooq Mosque (مسجد الفاروق)

Date of Incident: February 8, 2016

Location: Masqan Town, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: SARG shelling damage mosque and minaret.

Incident Source and Description: On February 8, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that SARG warplanes shelled Al Farooq Mosque in the town of Masqan. The shelling damaged the mosque and almost completely destroyed the minaret.⁶⁶ At the time of the attack on this mosque, airstrikes were ongoing in this area of Aleppo as pro-regime forces regained neighboring towns and villages.⁶⁷

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Al Farooq Mosque as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/08/18096/>

⁶⁶ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/08/18096/>

⁶⁷ <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2016/Feb-08/336214-syria-rebels-lose-new-ground-to-kurds-government-activist.ashx> ; <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/syria-troops-make-gains-aleppo-turkish-border-36783781>



Damage to Al Farooq Mosque (SNHR; February 8, 2016)

SHI 16-0025

Report Date: February 10, 2016

Site Name: Al Kabir Mosque (المسجد الكبير)

Date of Incident: February 10, 2016

Location: Town of Hayan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: SARG missiles cause destruction to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 10, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on Al Kabir Mosque in the town of Hayan, causing almost complete destruction to the building.⁶⁸ On the same day, the SNHR reported that SARG warplanes also struck a school in Hayan.⁶⁹

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Al Kabir Mosque as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/10/18195/>

⁶⁸ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/10/18195/>

⁶⁹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/10/18181/>



Destruction to Al Kabir Mosque (SNHR; February 10, 2016)

SHI 16-0026

Report Date: February 11, 2016

Site Name: UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra, including the Temple of Bel, and the Theater

Date of Incident: February 10, 2016; February 11, 2016

Location: Palmyra, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: According to Burns:

“The Temple of Bel (broadly oriented towards the compass points) stands in its enormous compound at the eastern end of the main colonnaded street. The temple is certainly the most important religious building of the first century AD in the Middle East and is one of the few early imperial projects in the region to survive. The complex was built in several stages:

Hellenistic temple (probably built on a Bronze Age site)- only fragments survive
Central shrine or cella dedicated AD 32 but probably under construction since AD 17 or 19
AD 80-120- temenos enlarged, surrounded by double colonnaded portico on north, east, south
Late second century- west portico and propylaeum.

The undertaking of such a project on a truly imperial scale and to a high standard of craftsmanship reflects both the ubiquity of the Hellenistic tradition which inspired its architecture as well as the prosperity of the late Augustine period and the early years of his successor, Tiberius (r AD 14-37), which provided the wherewithal to construct it.”⁷⁰

According to UNESCO:

“First mentioned in the archives of Mari in the 2nd millennium BC, Palmyra was an established caravan oasis when it came under Roman control in the mid-first century AD as part of the Roman province of Syria. It grew steadily in importance as a city on the trade route linking Persia, India and China with the Roman Empire, marking the crossroads of several civilisations in the ancient world. A grand, colonnaded street of 1100 metres' length forms the monumental axis of the city, which together with secondary colonnaded cross streets links the major public monuments including the Temple of Ba'al, Diocletian's Camp, the Agora, Theatre, other temples and urban quarters. Architectural ornament including unique examples of funerary sculpture unites the forms of Greco-roman art with indigenous elements and Persian influences in a strongly original style. Outside the city's walls are remains of a Roman aqueduct and immense necropolises.”⁷¹

Site Date: Temple of Bel: 17–32 CE, enlarged 80–120 CE; Palmyra Theater: Roman

Incident Summary: SARG airstrikes allegedly hit Temple of Bel and Theater in Palmyra.

Incident Source and Description: On February 10, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles near the Temple of Bel, destroying three columns completely and causing partial damage to the fence.⁷² On February 11, 2016 SNHR reported that SARG airstrikes struck the Roman Theater in Palmyra, “destroying columns completely and

⁷⁰ Burns 1999: 210

⁷¹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23>

⁷² <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/11/18241/>

partially damaging its fence.”⁷³ ASOR CHI has not been able to independently verify reports of damage to either the Temple of Bel or the theater in Palmyra and no photographs or satellite imagery were available at the time of publication.

ASOR CHI has been closely following damage to the Temple of Bel in Palmyra as well as the damage to the theater in Palmyra (See **CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0055**; **CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0127**; **CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0096**; **CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0104**).

ASOR has previously covered the extensive damage to Palmyra due to looting,⁷⁴ military occupation,⁷⁵ deliberate destruction,⁷⁶ and destruction due to military bombardment by SARG⁷⁷ and Russian forces on and around the archaeological area. For information on previous coverage of SARG bombardment please refer to the following reports:

- **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0055 in Weekly Report 33**: Militarization of Temple of Bel (**CHI #881**) by SARG, and previous destruction attributed to SARG bombardment in August 2013.
- **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0086 in Weekly Report 41**: Damage to Palmyra Museum, Temple of Bel (**CHI # 881**), and Palmyra Citadel (**CHI # 917**) from mortar shells during battles between SARG forces and ISIL.
- **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0086 Update in Weekly Report 42-43**: SARG bombardment of modern Palmyra and at least one strike on archaeological area (**CHI# 852**), following ISIL capture of Palmyra.
- **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0096 in Weekly Report 45**: SARG bombardment of archaeological area of Palmyra (**CHI # 852**) and adjacent palm fields, causing damage to the north wall of Diocletian’s Camp (**CHI # 864**), the Temple of Baal-Shamin (**CHI # 880**), and the Theater (**CHI #885**).

Airstrikes in the Palmyra area have become particularly frequent since Russian forces began launching airstrikes in Syria on September 30, 2015 in support of SARG forces.

In October 2015 Russia deployed helicopters and artillery to the SARG front near Palmyra.⁷⁸ Shortly thereafter Russian airstrikes in and around Palmyra were reported.⁷⁹ On October 8, 2015 airstrikes

⁷³ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/11/18246/>

⁷⁴ For looting by SARG forces and civilians, see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0023 in Weekly Report 4**; **SHI 14-027 in Weekly Report 6**; **SHI 15-0058 in Weekly Report 34**

⁷⁵ For SARG occupation, see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-019 in Weekly Report 3**; **SHI 14-027 in Weekly Report 6**; **SHI 15-0055 in Weekly Report 33**. For ISIL occupation, see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0058 UPDATE in Weekly Report 34**.

⁷⁶ For deliberate ISIL destruction, see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0101 in Weekly Report 6**; **SHI 15-0127 in Weekly Report 55-56**; **SHI 15-0138 in Weekly Report 61-62**; **SHI 15-0104 in Weekly Report 47-48**; **SHI 15-0142 in Weekly Report 63-64**

⁷⁷ For damage from SARG forces bombardment, see: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0055 in Weekly Report 33**; **SHI 15-0086 in Weekly Report 41**; **SHI 15-0086 Update in Weekly Report 42-43**; **SHI 15-0096 in Weekly Report 45**

⁷⁸ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/russia-strikes-palmyra-syria-isis_us_56139b39e4b022a4ce5f50a6

⁷⁹ <https://twitter.com/hadialbahra/status/670701823662141440> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/12/dozens-of-russian-airstrikes-target-tadmur-and-aleppo-countryside/>; <https://twitter.com/PalmyraPioneer/status/672944564278308864>; <https://twitter.com/PalmyraRev1/status/672503523259584512>

on the Al Furqan mosque in Palmyra city were attributed to both SARG and Russian forces.⁸⁰ These reports were first denied by Russia. However on November 5, 2015 Russia announced a series of attacks targeting ISIL militants in Palmyra. The defense ministry said in an official statement that the strikes “destroyed a large fortified location of ISIS militants,” which included an air-defense gun and a tank. They added that the strikes were targeted strictly at terrorist infrastructure located a considerable distance from Palmyra’s historical architecture.⁸¹ Russian military personnel and advisers have also been reported as working alongside SARG and other pro-regime forces in efforts to reclaim the territory from ISIL.⁸² Russia has also offered, on more than one occasion, to aid Syria in restoring Palmyra in the future.⁸³

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is directing critical attention to the condition of all periods of cultural heritage of Palmyra and the Tadmor area given its significance as UNESCO World Heritage Site and with a vulnerable civilian population.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Palmyra Coordination Committee: <https://www.facebook.com/revo.palmyra3/?fref=nf>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/11/18241/>
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/11/18246/>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross (2009) *The Monuments of Syria: A Guide*. I. B. Tauris; Revised and expanded edition.

UNESCO: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23>

⁸⁰ <https://twitter.com/PalmyraPioneer/status/674763420126810112>

⁸¹ <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Nov-05/321811-russia-bombs-palmyra-eastern-syria-military.ashx>

⁸² http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/russia-strikes-palmyra-syria-isis_us_56139b39e4b022a4ce5f50a6

⁸³ <http://tass.ru/en/society/851691> ; http://rbth.com/multimedia/history/2015/12/16/state-hermitage-gathering-materials-to-help-reconstruct-palmyra_551503

SHI 16-0027

Report Date: February 15, 2016

Site Name: Al-Nasr Mosque (مسجد النصر)

Date of Incident: February 15, 2016

Location: Gharnata Village, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: SARG shelling severely damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On February 15, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that regime warplanes fired a missile on Al-Nasr Mosque, rendering it inoperable.⁸⁴ SNHR also reported at least three people (including two children) died in airstrikes on the village on February 15, 2016.⁸⁵

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Al-Nasr Mosque as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/15/18504/>
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/15/18482/>

⁸⁴ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/15/18504/>

⁸⁵ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/15/18482/>



Damage to al-Nasr Mosque (SNHR; February 15, 2016)

SHI 16-0028

Report Date: February 16, 2016

Site Name: Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque (مسجد أبو بكر الصديقي)

Date of Incident: February 16, 2016

Location: Kafr Zaita City, Hama Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Barrel bombs cause partial damage to building.

Incident Source and Description: On February 16, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that “regime helicopters fired [SIC] several barrel bombs” on the Abu Bakr Al Sadeiq Mosque, causing partial damage to the building.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI has noticed an increase in collateral damage as a result of expanding aerial bombardment campaigns by SARG and Russian forces. As such, ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the Abu Bakr Al Sadeiq Mosque and other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/02/16/18539/>



Damage to Abu Bakr Al Sadeiq Mosque (SNHR; February 16, 2016)



The Day After “Heritage Protection Initiative”⁸⁶ Observer’s Project in Idlib City: A field survey of the historic city of Apamea

August 25th, 2015



The primary causes of damage to the site of Apamea is looting. The looters are often aided by Syrian regime officials based in Al-Habuseh area in Al Madiq Citadel, who help traffic stolen artifacts without fear of any legal consequences. After bribing regime officials, the artifacts are smuggled across the Syrian-Lebanese border. Other causes of damage to the site are mainly from exposure to the elements. There is a dire need for repairs; regime forces stationed nearby render most of the site area too dangerous. The Free Syrian Army has offered to protect some areas so the repairs could be done, but those areas are limited.

⁸⁶ This report is based on research conducted by “The Day After Heritage 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.



Main Colonnade Street in the ancient city of Apamea (*Cardo*)



Main Colonnade Street in the ancient city of Apamea (*Cardo*)



Main Colonnade Street in the ancient city of Apamea (*Cardo*)



Area behind Colonnade Street in the ancient city of Apamea (*Cardo*)



Parts of the building façade along the main street (Cardo) at Apamea





Evidence of Looting



View of the Main Street (Cardo)





Damage from Combat and Exposure to the Elements



Damage from Combat and Exposure to the Elements

Reported by:



Site Monitors project Manager
Dr.Amr Al-Azm

The Day After “Heritage Protection Initiative” Observer’s Project in Idlib City: Site Report of Apamea

September 10th, 2015



A visit to the site of Apamea was conducted on Wednesday September 10th, 2015. The damage noted was mostly attributable to illegal digging activity by looters. Other factors that are exacerbating the damage are continued military operations taking place nearby, neglect and exposure to the elements over the last five years, and regime snipers located in the Al-Habuseh area that overlooks the site. The snipers hinder our ability to document and protect the site. It is, therefore, imperative that a study is conducted on how to protect the historical site from further damage.



Colonnade Street in Apamea



Apamea Museum



Aftermath of illegal excavation



Damage sustained due to regime forces military operations



Weathering effects



Weathering effects



Weathering effects







Reported by:



Site Monitors project Manager
Dr.Amr Al-Azm

Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 15-0097 UPDATE

Report Date: February 12, 2016

Site Name: Nineveh

Date of Incident: Ongoing, summer 2015-Present

Location: Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Nineveh was the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, and the area was settled about 6000 BCE. The mound is located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River inside the city of Mosul. By 3000 BCE it had become an important religious center for the worship of Ishtar, and during the Neo-Assyrian period (900-600 BCE), Nineveh was the capital of the vast empire until it was sacked by a coalition of Babylonians, Medes, Persians, Chaldeans, Scythians, and Cimmerians in 612 BCE. Nineveh was abandoned after this destruction.

Nineveh is made up of two mounds, Kuyunjik and Tell Nebi Yunus. Kuyunjik rises about 20 meters above the surrounding plain of the ancient city. It measures 800 by 500 meters. Its layers contains several Neo-Assyrian palaces and temples, as well as habitation stretching to 6000 BCE. Nebi Yunus is the smaller mound with a palace built by Esarhaddon and a later church and mosque constructed on top. The ruins of Nineveh are surrounded by a massive stone and mudbrick wall dating to about 700 BCE. This city wall was fitted with 15 monumental gateways.

Site Date: 6000 BCE at the earliest occupation levels, with largest architectural expansion beginning 700 BCE, modern habitation also in proximity to the site.

Incident Summary: ISIL has constructed a new road on the southern portion of Nineveh.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery dating to February 12, 2016 provided visual confirmation that roads are being constructed across the archaeological site of Nineveh. Original reports from ASOR CHI in-country sources claimed that ISIL laid the substrate for a road linking the southern bridge (4th bridge across the Tigris) with the Erbil highway. The road runs across the southern portion of Nineveh, cutting the walls on the east and west sides. It is located approximately 150 to 200 meters north of the Ashur Gate. These sources state that ISIL started the project in summer 2105 and that it is nearly finished, but the road does not appear in the August 29, 2015 DigitalGlobe satellite imagery posted in [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0095](#). ISIL leveled the ground and laid a base of small stones and is either preparing to lay asphalt or has completed laying the asphalt.

Additionally, according to multiple in-country sources, ISIL paved the former dirt access road between Mosul University and Kuyunjik. This road, which traverses the northern half of ancient Nineveh, was used by faculty to access the archaeological site. It is unclear when this construction project was initiated or how much it progressed. The sources allege that ISIL is connecting Route 80 with Route 2, headed towards Dohuk. This paved road also does not appear in the most recent satellite imagery. See [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097](#) in [Weekly Report 67-68](#) regarding the recent constructions around Nineveh seen in the DigitalGlobe images dating to August 29, 2015.

Pattern: Development threats/disturbances.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will attempt to gather more information on these new constructions via in country sources and determine if this activity is affecting exposed and subsurface archaeological remains.

Sources:

Scholarly:

Thompson, R. Campbell, and M.E.L. Mallowan (1933) "The British Museum excavations at Nineveh 1931-32" *Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology* Vol. 20, pp. 71-186.

Layard, A. H. (1894) *Nineveh and Its Remains*. London: John Murray.

Madhloom, Tariq (1969) *Excavations at Nineveh: The 1968-69 Campaign*, Sumer 25. Baghdad: State Organization of Antiquities of Iraq. pp. 43-49.



Nineveh with more intensive use of dirt roads in northern area of the site (DigitalGlobe; February 12, 2016)



Nineveh, red lines that indicated possible location of the roads in northern area of the site (DigitalGlobe; August 29, 2015)



Damage from new four-lane road in southern half of Nineveh (DigitalGlobe; February 12, 2016)



Nineveh, area outlined in red that indicated possible location of new road construction in southern half of site (DigitalGlobe; August 29, 2015)

IHI 16-0004

Report Date: February 12, 2016

Site Name: Nebi Yunus Mosque Complex

Date of Incident: Ongoing

Location: Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: The site is located on the mound south of the Neo-Assyrian capital of Nineveh. The mound includes a palace built by King Esarhaddon (681-669 BCE), renovated by Ashurbanipal (669-627 BCE), and destroyed in 621 BCE when Nineveh was attacked. A Nestorian-Assyrian church was later built on the mound and was eventually became associated with the Prophet Jonah. In the late 14th century CE, the site was converted into a mosque and was still considered to be the location of Jonah's tomb, as the prophet is revered in both Christianity and Islam. The mosque was subsequently the subject of a number of restorations, including modern additions. The site was an important pilgrimage destination.

Site Date: Iron Age to modern

Incident Summary: Satellite images reveal damage to the courtyard.

Incident Source and Description: DigitalGlobe satellite imagery dating to February 12, 2016 shows new damage to the southern exterior courtyard wall of the Nebi Yunus complex. Following its intentional destruction in July 2014, much of the debris has been cleared from the site. The new satellite image from February 12, 2016 shows new destruction of the southern exterior courtyard wall. A portion of the wall was destroyed and the materials cleared away, likely using earth-moving equipment, while the rest of the wall remains intact. The available satellite imagery suggests that this damage occurred between August 29, 2015 and February 12, 2016.

ASOR CHI in-country sources suggest that ISIL militants were planning to clear the area for a park or commercial rental properties, which would be a form of revenue for ISIL.

Pattern: Development disturbances.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the remaining structures of the Nebi Yunus Mosque Complex and will work with in-country sources to determine the motivation for this new episode of clearing.



Nebi Yunus intact (DigitalGlobe; November 15, 2013)



Nebi Yunus after the site was raised by explosives (DigitalGlobe; July 30, 2014)



Rubble of Nebi Yunus cleared from site (DigitalGlobe; August 29, 2015)



New damage to the courtyard wall of the Nebi Yunus Complex (DigitalGlobe; February 12, 2016)