

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

NEA-PSHSS-14-001

Weekly Report 55–56 — August 18–September 1, 2015

Michael D. Danti, Cheikhmous Ali, Allison Cuneo, Marina Gabriel, Kyra Kaercher, Katherine Burge, LeeAnn Barnes Gordon, and Erin Van Gessel

## Executive Summary

Throughout the summer of 2015 there was a pronounced increase in the frequency of reported heritage damage, coinciding with multiple episodes of damage in Syria and Iraq occurring within the current two-week reporting period. The magnitude of destruction also increased with several cultural sites completely destroyed. In both Syria and northern Iraq, these increases are linked to ISIL deliberate destructions of heritage places and incidents of vandalism. Within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra, ISIL destroyed the Greco-Roman era Baalshamin Temple (August 23) and the Temple of Bel (August 30). In nearby al-Qariatayn, ISIL destroyed the 5th Century CE monastery of Mar Elian (St. Julian) and abducted 230 Christian residents (August 21). Numerous reports of ISIL destructions of modern cemeteries in Syria also emerged. This follows on the heels of multiple ISIL human atrocities in the Tadmor area, such as the mass execution of prisoners in Palmyra's Roman theatre and the murder of archaeologist Khaled al-Assaad. In-country sources stated that ISIL plans to destroy 'many more sites' at Palmyra and that ISIL has already positioned explosives there. In-country sources assert that ISIL militants are attacking cultural heritage less for ideological reasons and more to gain media coverage. These sources claim to have overheard ISIL commanders comment that attacking the ancient monuments 'makes the whole world' talk about them.

Reported combat damage in Syria remained at elevated levels in Daraa and Hama Governorates. Overall, ISIL's regional campaign of cultural cleansing and the steady destruction of cultural assets through combat damage, looting, vandalism, and neglect continue unabated.

## Key Points

- New information on the damage to the German storehouse at Tell Chuera ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0113 UPDATE](#)).
- In mid-August, ISIL-affiliates attacked Islamic shrines and cemeteries in Hama, al-Hasakah, and ar-Raqqa Governorates ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0117](#), [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0118](#), and [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0119](#)).

---

<sup>1</sup> This report is based on research conducted by the "Cultural Heritage 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.

- On August 18, 2015 the DGAM posted images of possible damage to three sites within the World Heritage Site of Jabal Simeon Park, including Refade, Kirbet al-Rouman, and Qatua (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0122**).
- On August 21, 2015 the Dier Mar Elian Monastery in Homs Governorate was intentionally destroyed by ISIL militants while hundreds of native Christians were abducted (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0123**).
- On August 22, 2015 APSA reports looting at Tell Adeh in Idlib (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0125**).
- On August 23, 2015 the Baalshamin Temple at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra in Syria was intentionally destroyed by ISIL militants (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0124**).
- On August 30, 2015 reports emerged that the Temple of Bel, also at the site of Palmyra, was severely damaged by ISIL militants (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0127**).
- In Mosul, modern replicas of Mesopotamian reliefs located in the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel were defaced by ISIL militants (**ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0092**).
- On August 29, 2015 the Abu Bakr Mosque was attacked and two Christian churches were vandalized by ISIL militants (**ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0093 and ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-009**).
- Turkish customs officials confiscated 3,300 Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman artifacts discovered in a truck at Istanbul's Pendik port.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation is alerting art collectors and dealers to be particularly careful trading Near Eastern antiquities, warning that artifacts plundered by terrorist organizations such as ISIL are entering the marketplace.

## Heritage Timeline

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| September 1, 2015 | <p><b>DGAM</b> published an article titled “<b>Satellite Image confirming the destruction of the Sella of Bel Temple in Palmyra.</b>”<br/> <a href="http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&amp;id=1794">http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&amp;id=1794</a></p>   |
| •                 | <p>Coverage of the ISIL destruction of the <b>Temple of Bel</b> in Palmyra continued.</p> <p><a href="http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/31/middleeast/palmyra-temple-damaged/index.html">http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/31/middleeast/palmyra-temple-damaged/index.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34111092">http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34111092</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/confirms-destruction-famed-palmyra-temple-150831230110476.html">http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/confirms-destruction-famed-palmyra-temple-150831230110476.html</a></p> |

[http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2015/09/01/a-palmyre-le-batiment-principal-du-temple-de-baal-detruit-par-l-ei\\_4741884\\_3210.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2015/09/01/a-palmyre-le-batiment-principal-du-temple-de-baal-detruit-par-l-ei_4741884_3210.html)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/01/satellite-images-reveal-isis-destruction-of-palmyras-temple-of-bel>

<http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/monde/20150901.OBS5049/daecha-bel-et-bien-rase-le-temple-de-bel-la-perle-du-desert.html>

[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/director-general/singleview-dg/news/director-general-irina-bokova-expresses-consternation-at-the-destruction-of-the-temple-of-bel-in-palmyra/#.VeX7P\\_lVhBd](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/director-general/singleview-dg/news/director-general-irina-bokova-expresses-consternation-at-the-destruction-of-the-temple-of-bel-in-palmyra/#.VeX7P_lVhBd)

- *National Geographic* published an article titled “**Here Are the Ancient Sites ISIS Has Damaged and Destroyed**” (by Andrew Curry).  
<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/09/150901-isis-destruction-looting-ancient-sites-iraq-syria-archaeology/#>
  - *The Guardian* published an article titled “**The fate of the temple of Bel is a symbol of the tragedy engulfing Syria**” (by Tom Holland).  
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/sep/01/temple-bel-palmyra-isis-syria>
  - *Al Jazeera* published an article titled “**Archaeology at Risk.**” This article interviews Amr al Azm, George Abungu, Tomas G. Cervera, and Peggy Bruache. <http://stream.aljazeera.com/story/201509012315-0024979>
  - *The Washington Post* published an article titled “**Map: There are 10 world heritage sites in Iraq and Syria. Nine are in danger.**” (by Adam Taylor).  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/01/map-there-are-10-world-heritage-sites-in-iraq-and-syria-nine-are-in-danger/>
  - *Daily Sabah* published an article titled “**More than 3,000 artifacts seized in Istanbul raid.**”  
<http://www.dailysabah.com/nation/2015/09/02/more-than-3000-artifacts-seized-in-istanbul-raid>
- August 31, 2015
- DGAM** published an article titled “**News about exploding parts of Bel Temple in Palmyra.**”  
<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1792>

- Coverage of the damage to the **Temple of Bel** in Palmyra:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34107395>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34103994>

<http://www.lesechos.fr/monde/afrique-moyen-orient/021292030662-syrie-lei-a-detruit-une-partie-du-temple-de-bel-a-palmyre-1149185.php>

[http://www.ara.cat/mon/LEstat-Islamic-parcialment-Bel-Palmira\\_0\\_1422457831.html](http://www.ara.cat/mon/LEstat-Islamic-parcialment-Bel-Palmira_0_1422457831.html)

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-blows-up-temple-of-bel-in-syrias-palmyra-1441014202>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/31/ancient-temple-bel-still-standing-syria-antiquities-chief>
  - DGAM** published an article titled “**Old city of Damascus : Mortar fall on the citadel.**”

<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1790>
  - NPR* aired and posted the interview “**Archaeologist Works To Track The Islamic State's War On Culture**” *NPR's* Robert Siegel interviews ASOR CHI Academic Director Michael Danti on tracking the cultural heritage sites and artifacts in Palmyra, Syria that may soon be lost forever at the hands of ISIL.

<http://www.npr.org/2015/08/31/436377457/archaeologist-works-to-track-the-islamic-states-war-on-culture>
  - World Politics Review* published an article titled “**The Islamic State is Destroying More than Syria's Past in Palmyra**” (by Frederick Deknatel). This article summarizes the damage to Palmyra as well as talks about cultural heritage and Syrian national identity and quotes Amr al-Azm and ASOR CHI Co-Investigator Cheikhmous Ali.

<http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/16578/the-islamic-state-is-destroying-more-than-syrias-past-in-palmyra>
  - Al Hayat* published an article titled “**They assassinated history ... in Palmyra**” (by Nasser Rabat).

<http://alhayat.com/Opinion/Writers/10906062/-في-انهم-يقتالون-التاريخ-في-تدمر>
- August 30, 2015
- The Mirror* published an article titled “**The Syrians defying napalm bombs and sniper fire to build a library**” (by Mairead Dixon).
- <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/syrians-defying-napalm-bombs-sniper-6337265>

- Reports emerged that the **Temple of Bel** in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra **was severely damaged by ISIL militants. ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0127.**  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/isil-blows-part-bel-temple-syria-palmyra-150830195420900.html>  
  
<http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/08/the-islamic-state-destroy-parts-of-the-most-famous-temple-in-palmyra-in-the-countryside-of-homs/>  
  
[http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/30/l-etat-islamique-detruit-un-nouveau-temple-antique-a-palmyre\\_4740830\\_3218.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/30/l-etat-islamique-detruit-un-nouveau-temple-antique-a-palmyre_4740830_3218.html)
- August 29, 2015 Near Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq the **Abu Bakr Mosque was intentionally destroyed and two Christian churches were vandalized by ISIL militants. ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0093 and ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0094.**  
<http://www.moheet.com/2015/08/29/2308965/داعش-يفجر-مسجدا-ويزيل-نقوش-كنيستين-و.html>
- **BBC** published an article titled “**Palmyra: Satellite image of IS destruction**” (by Jonathan Amos).  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-34090536>
- August 28, 2015 *Sky News* published an article titled “**3D Cameras To Stop IS 'Wiping The Slate Clean'.**” <http://news.sky.com/story/1543050/3d-cameras-to-stop-is-wiping-the-slate-clean>
- *Le Monde* published an article titled “**Les belles promesses de la France aux archéologues syriens et irakiens**” (by Florence Evin).  
[http://www.lemonde.fr/architecture/article/2015/08/28/le-louvre-au-chevet-du-patrimoine-irako-syrien\\_4738912\\_1809550.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/architecture/article/2015/08/28/le-louvre-au-chevet-du-patrimoine-irako-syrien_4738912_1809550.html)
- *L'Express* published an article titled “**La destruction de Palmyre par Daech est visible de l'espace**” (by Bruno D. Cot).  
[http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/proche-moyen-orient/la-destruction-de-palmyre-par-daech-est-visible-de-l-espace\\_1710045.html](http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/monde/proche-moyen-orient/la-destruction-de-palmyre-par-daech-est-visible-de-l-espace_1710045.html)
- *CNN* published an article titled “**Indiana Jones with a 3-D camera? Hi-tech fight to save antiquities from ISIS**” (by Mairi Mackay).  
<http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/28/middleeast/3d-mapping-ancient-monuments/>
- *L'Express* published an article titled “**Trafic d'antiquités: l'ombre de Daech sur le marché de l'art**” (by Géraldine Meignan).  
[http://www.lexpress.fr/culture/art/trafic-d-antiquites-l-ombre-de-daech-sur-le-marche-de-l-art\\_1709720.html](http://www.lexpress.fr/culture/art/trafic-d-antiquites-l-ombre-de-daech-sur-le-marche-de-l-art_1709720.html)

August 27, 2015

*Wall Street Journal* published an article titled “**Can the Market Help Preserve Threatened Antiquities**” (by Leila Amineeddoleh). This opinion piece is in response to Gary Vikan’s article August 20, “The Case for Buying Antiquities to Save Them.”

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/can-the-market-help-preserve-threatened-antiquities-1440624398>

- *International Business Times* published an article titled “**Islamic State Temple Destruction: 'Palmyra Represents Everything ISIS Would Like To Destroy'**” (by Michael Kaplan).

<http://www.ibtimes.com/islamic-state-temple-destruction-palmyra-represents-everything-isis-would-destroy-2069761>

August 26, 2015

*Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen* published an article titled “**Über die Bedeutung der Kulturgüter in Palmyra.**”

<http://www.srf.ch/sendungen/kultur-kompakt/ueber-die-bedeutung-der-kulturgueter-in-palmyra>

- *The Diane Rehm Show* published an article titled “**The Islamic State’s Destruction of Antiquities And How it Fits With A Broader Strategy For Power.**” <https://thedianerehmshow.org/shows/2015-08-26/the-islamic-states-destruction-of-antiquities-and-how-it-fits-with-a-broader-strategy-for-power>

- *APSA* published an album of photos titled “**Aleppo: State of the Souk Al-Nahasin.**” <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/aleppo-state-of-the-souk-al-nahasin/>

- *APSA* published an album of photos titled “**Aleppo: State of the Mosque Qaalet al-Sherif.**” <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/aleppo-state-of-the-mosque-qaalet-al-sherif/>

- *Counterpunch* published an article titled “**Heritage Destruction in Syria is a War Crime**” (by Franklin Lamb). <http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/08/26/heritage-destruction-in-syria-is-a-war-crime/>

- *New York Magazine* published an article titled “**ISIS is Destroying Syria’s Ancient History**” (by Jen Kirby). <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2015/08/isis-is-destroying-syrias-ancient-history.html>

- **The Federal Bureau of Investigation** published an article titled “**ISIL and Antiquities Trafficking: The FBI Warns Dealers, Collectors about Terrorist Loot.**” <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2015/august/isil-and-antiquities-trafficking/isil-and-antiquities-trafficking>

- *Oxford Today* published an article titled “**Racing to rescue the Middle East's embattled ancient heritage**” (by Dr. Robert Bewley).  
<http://www.oxfordtoday.ox.ac.uk/features/racing-rescue-middle-east-embattled-ancient-heritage> The Project's Website:  
<http://eamena.arch.ox.ac.uk/>
  - *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Just What is ISIL Looting in Syria?**” (by Dan Duray).  
<http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/conservation/158773/>
- August 25, 2015
- Coverage of the damage to the **Baalshamin Temple** at Palmyra continued. <http://art-crime.blogspot.it/2015/08/further-information-on-dates-of.html>
- <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-in-palmyra-militants-release-first-images-showing-destruction-of-baalshamin-temple-10470803.html>
- <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-islamic-state-syria-ancient-ruins-palmyra-20150824-story.html>
- <http://ilmanifesto.info/palmira-ferita-non-a-caso/>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/25/islamic-state-images-destruction-palmyra-temple-baal-shamin-isis>
- <http://www.france24.com/fr/20150825-syrie-palmyre-ei-exhibe-photos-destruction-temple-baal-patrimoine-unesco>
- *The Conversation* published an article titled “**Against ISIS' Destruction of Heritage, and for Curators as the Cure of Souls**” (by Jose Antonio Gonzalez Zarandona).  
<http://theconversation.com/against-isis-destruction-of-heritage-and-for-curators-as-the-cure-of-souls-46601>
  - *New Scientist* published an article titled “**ISIS Shows off Palmyra Destruction as Museums Race to Save Rest**” (by Aviva Rutkin).  
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn28093-isis-shows-off-palmyra-destruction-as-museums-race-to-save-rest/>
  - *The New York Times* published an article titled “**The Crimes of Palmyra**” (The Editorial Board).  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/26/opinion/the-crimes-of-palmyra.html>

- *CS Monitor* published an article titled “**What Syrian antiquities reveal about Islamic State’s billion-dollar economy**” (by Howard LaFranchi). <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Foreign-Policy/2015/0825/What-Syrian-antiquities-reveal-about-Islamic-State-s-billion-dollar-economy>
  - *The Guardian* published an article titled “**Tolerant and Multicultural, Palmyra Stood for Everything ISIS Hates**” (by Tim Whitmarsh). <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/25/palmyra-tolerant-multicultural-isis-ancient-city-migrants-savagery>
- August 24, 2015
- DGAM** published an article titled “**Palmyra: ISIS blown up Baal-Shamin Temple.**”  
<http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1783>
- Coverage of the damage to the destruction of the **Baalshamin Temple** at Palmyra continued:  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/isil-destroys-ancient-temple-syria-palmyra-unesco-world-heritage-isis-baal-shamin-150823212050325.html>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p030jz02>  
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/23/isis-blows-up-temple-dating-back-to-17ad-in-unesco-listed-syrian-city>  
<http://www.algherbal.com/2015/08/24/2502/>  
<http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/3d281c11a96b4ad082fe88aa0db04305/Article%202015-08-24-ML--Islamic%20State/id-9b68667711f24abea7c9a15e971e2a6d>  
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-islamic-state-syria-ancient-ruins-palmyra-20150824-story.html>
  - *UN News Center* published an article titled “**Syria: UNESCO Chief Condemns Destruction of Palmyra’s Ancient Temple.**”  
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51704#.VdznvIvR-6J>
  - *Le Monde* published an article titled “**Destruction des vestiges de Palmyre : « La sauvagerie de l’EI est totale »**” (by Florence Evin.)  
[http://www.lemonde.fr/architecture/article/2015/08/24/selon-maamoun-abdulkarim-les-joyaux-de-palmyre-sont-en-grand-danger\\_4735367\\_1809550.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/architecture/article/2015/08/24/selon-maamoun-abdulkarim-les-joyaux-de-palmyre-sont-en-grand-danger_4735367_1809550.html)



- *The New York Times* published an article titled “**ISIS Speeds Up Destruction of Antiquities in Syria.**” (by Anne Barnard).  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/world/isis-accelerates-destruction-of-antiquities-in-syria.html>
- *The Japan Times* published an article titled “**Cultural Treasures are also Victims of Conflict**” (by Cesar Chelala).  
[http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/24/commentary/world-commentary/cultural-treasures-also-victims-conflict/#.VdyHv\\_IVhBc](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/08/24/commentary/world-commentary/cultural-treasures-also-victims-conflict/#.VdyHv_IVhBc)
- *Haokets* published an article titled “**Do not leave a single stone: the Daash, Elad and the Destruction of Antiquities**” (by Yonathan Mizrachi).  
<http://www.haokets.org/2015/08/24/-לא-משאירים-אבן-על-אבן-על-דאעש-עמותת-אלע/>

August 23, 2015

The **Baalshamin Temple** at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra **was intentionally destroyed by ISIL militants. ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0124.**

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34036644>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/23/us-mideast-crisis-palmyra-idUSKCN0QS0WC20150823>

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/davidmack/isis-destroys-ancient-syrian-temple-in-palmyra>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/24/world/middleeast/islamic-state-blows-up-ancient-temple-at-syrias-palmyra-ruins.html>

<http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2015/08/23/iraqi-officials-say-23-soldiers-sunni-fighters-killed>

<http://alhadathpcnews.net/new/?p=17260>

<http://news.yahoo.com/blows-temple-syrias-palmyra-antiquities-chief-204713195.html>

<http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/940580/lei-fait-exploser-un-celebre-temple-dans-la-ville-antique-de-palmyre.html>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/24/world/middleeast/islamic-state-blows-up-ancient-temple-at-syrias-palmyra-ruins.html>

[http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/08/150823\\_palmyra\\_syria\\_isis](http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/08/150823_palmyra_syria_isis)

- *Arqueologia Oriente* published an article titled “**El conflicto armado en Siria y su repercusión sobre el Patrimonio Cultural Vol. III: Inventario del Patrimonio Cultural afectado en la provincia de Hasakeh (marzo 2011-marzo 2015)**” (by Anas Al Khabour).  
[http://www.arqueologiaorient.com/publicaciones/ANAS\\_VOL\\_III.pdf](http://www.arqueologiaorient.com/publicaciones/ANAS_VOL_III.pdf)

August 22, 2015

APSA published a photo album titled “**Aleppo: State of the mosque Nour Eddin.**” <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/aleppo-state-of-the-mosque-nour-eddin/>

- APSA published a photo album titled “**Raqqa – Ar Rasafah: Recent photos published by ISIS.**” <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/raqqaf-ar-rasafah-recent-photos-published-by-isis/>
- APSA published a photo album titled “**Idlib – Limestone Massif: illicit excavations at Tell Adeh.**” **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0125.** <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/idlib-limestone-massif-illicit-excavations-at-tell-adeh/>
- *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty* published an article and video titled “**UNESCO Chief Decries Worst Destruction Of Ancient Sites Since WWII.**” <http://www.rferl.org/content/unesco-chief-decries-worst-destruction-ancient-sites-since-wwii/27202586.html>

August 21, 2015

The **Deir Mar Elian Monastery** in Homs Governorate, Syria **was intentionally destroyed by ISIL militants.** **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0123.**

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1777>

<http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/homs-countryside-isis-destroy-5th-century-mar-ellian-monastery/>

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/isis-syria-1-500-old-073858453.html#AzebAmi>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3204584/Bulldozer-civilisation-Shocking-new-images-ISIS-brutes-desecrating-priceless-1-500-year-old-Christian-monastery.html>

<http://assafir.com/Article/5/438859>

<http://www.syriahr.com/2015/08/ال-بعث-نقله-أتباع-الديانة-المسيحية-إلى-ال->

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34016809>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/599816/ISIS-Islamic-State-Mar-Elian-monastery-Homs-Syria-bulldoze-saint>

[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/director\\_general\\_of\\_unesco\\_irina\\_bokova\\_condemns\\_the\\_destruction\\_of\\_the\\_mar\\_elian\\_monastery\\_in\\_syria/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/director_general_of_unesco_irina_bokova_condemns_the_destruction_of_the_mar_elian_monastery_in_syria/)

- *Art Daily* published an article titled “**Islamic State Beheads elderly ex-antiquities chief Khaled al-Assaad in Syria’s Palmyra**” (by Maya Gebeily). <http://artdaily.com/news/80843/Islamic-State-beheads-elderly-ex-antiquities-chief-Khaled-al-Assaad-in-Syria-s-Palmyra#.VdcvOvlVhBd>

August 20, 2015

*National Geographic* published an article titled “**Archaeologist’s Execution Highlights Risks to History’s Guardians**” (by Mark Strauss). <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/08/150820-syria-archaeologist-isis-protecting-artifacts/>

- *The Heritagist* published an article titled “**Black Market Antiquities Buying ‘Rescue Mission’ is not the Answer for Saving Syrian and Iraqi Heritage.**” <http://www.theheritagist.com/2015/08/black-market-antiquities-buying-rescue.html>
- *Hurriyet Daily News* published an article titled “**Two Syrians Detained for Smuggling Ottoman Era Coins.**” <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nID=87248&NewsCatID=509>
- *Zamanalwsl* published an article titled “**Istanbul ... captured Syrian concealing a treasure of ‘Almgideat’.**” [https://www.zamanalwsl.net/news/63533.html?utm\\_campaign=shareaholic&utm\\_medium=facebook&utm\\_source=socialnetwork](https://www.zamanalwsl.net/news/63533.html?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=socialnetwork)
- *Global Post* published an article titled “**To save world heritage sites from destruction, the US should bring back Monuments Men**” (by Ronald Lee Fleming and Anthony Flint). <http://www.globalpost.com/article/6632996/2015/08/20/modern-day-monuments-men-can-help-save-world-heritage-sites-destruction>
- Coverage of the **murder of Khaled al-Assaad**, former Director of Palmyra Antiquities, by **ISIL affiliated militants**:  
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/08/20/the-senseless-murder-of-mr-palmyra-syria-culture-islamic-state-khalid-al-asaad/>  
<http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21661824-jihadists-murder-man-who-tended-palmyras-art-decades-nothing-sacred?fsrc=scn/tw/te/pe/ed/NothingIssacred>  
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/kristinakilgroe/2015/08/20/archaeologists-respond-to-the-murder-of-khaled-al-asaad-at-ancient-palmyra/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33984006>

<http://rozana.fm/ar/node/14357>

August 19, 2015

Coverage of the **murder of Khaled al-Assaad**, former Director of Palmyra Antiquities, **by ISIL affiliated militants**.

[http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2015/08/19/l-ei-a-execute-le-directeur-du-site-antique-de-palmyre-en-syrie\\_4729771\\_3210.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2015/08/19/l-ei-a-execute-le-directeur-du-site-antique-de-palmyre-en-syrie_4729771_3210.html)

<http://pt.euronews.com/2015/08/19/estado-islamico-decapita-antigo-responsavel-de-antiguidades-de-palmira/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33984006>

<http://www.spiegel.de/wissenschaft/mensch/islamischer-staat-enthaupetet-chef-archaeologen-von-palmyra-a-1048770.html>

<http://arkeolojihaber.net/2015/08/19/50-yildir-palmyrada-calisan-arkeolog-halid-esad-isid- tarafindan-katledildi/>

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/18/middleeast/isis-executes-antiquities-expert/index.html>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/08/isis-killed-antiquities-scholar/401798/>

- *CNN* published a video titled “**Friend: Antiquities expert ‘was a brave man’.**” This is an interview with ASOR CHI Senior Cultural Heritage Advisor, Abdalrazzaq Moaz, about his colleague Khaled al-Assaad.  
<http://www.cnn.com/videos/world/2015/08/19/antiquities-expert-beheaded-intv-wrn.cnn>
- *PBS News Hour* published a video titled “**Thousands of priceless relics are being gathered in the capital of Syria.**”  
<https://www.facebook.com/newshour/videos/10153569395328675/>
- *PBS NewsHour* published a video titled “**Destroy, sell, hide: How Islamic State exploits antiquities.**” This is an interview with Amr Al Azm about Palmyra. <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/destroy-sell-hide-islamic-state-exploits-antiquities/>
- *CNN* published an article titled “**Saddest job in the world? The race to save Syria's history from obliteration**” (by Frederik Pleitgen).  
<http://edition.cnn.com/2015/08/19/middleeast/syria-antiquities-damascus/index.html>

- *The Wall Street Journal* published an article titled “**The Case For Buying Antiquities To Save Them**” (by Gary Vikan).  
<http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-case-for-buying-antiquities-to-save-them-1440024491>

August 18, 2015

**DGAM** published an article and pictures titled “**Countryside west of Aleppo: the damage at the site of the Mount Simon.**” The reports show a series of pre-war and current images, stating that three sites within the World Heritage Site of Jabal Simeon Park, including Refade, Kirbet al-Rouman, and Qatua, have sustained damage. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0122.**

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1784>

## Military and Political Context

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

1. Homs Governorate
  - After seizing al-Qaryatayn from the Syrian government about two weeks ago, ISIL bulldozed the ancient Christian monastery of Dier Mar Elian and abducted hundreds of native Christians on Friday, August 21.<sup>2</sup>
  - On August 29, a car bomb exploded in the central city of Homs, killing four civilians and wounding 19 more.<sup>3</sup>
2. Quneitra Governorate
  - On Thursday, August 20, Israel targeted Syrian army posts and facilities in airstrikes carried out around Quneitra. Reports alleged that the offensive destroyed some Syrian Army artillery as well as the transportation directorate and other official buildings. Israel launched the attack in retaliation for four rockets fired from Syrian territory that landed in the Israeli-held part of Golan Heights; Israel stated that Iran orchestrated the initial attack against Israel.<sup>4</sup>
  - On Friday, August 21, Israel launched a second round of airstrikes in Quneitra, striking a vehicle near Al Koum. Syrian media held that the vehicle was full of civilians while Israel and the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that the vehicle carried pro-Syrian government military.<sup>5</sup>
3. Rif Dimashq Governorate
  - On Saturday, August 22, the Syrian government staged air strikes in the rebel-held town of Douma, killing many citizens and wounding even more. The attack follows another from the previous reporting period, which killed over one hundred people and elicited sharp condemnation of the Syrian government.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34016809> ; IBT, <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/isis-syria-1-500-old-073858453.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/267c492bcc649288b8c6a6e62a10e59/syrian-rebels-say-cease-fire-hezbollah-collapses>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/21/world/middleeast/responding-to-rocket-fire-israeli-forces-carry-out-strikes-in-syria.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/22/world/middleeast/israel-syria-airstrikes.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/08/22/20-civilians-dead-in-Syria-regime-bombardment-near-Damascus-.html>

- On August 27, a ceasefire was reached on the border with Lebanon, between the Syrian Army and Hezbollah on one side and the opposing insurgents. The ceasefire was extended for three days in order to move the wounded from Zabadani, Madaya, and the villages of al-Foua and Kefraya.<sup>7</sup>
  - On August 29, the ceasefire reached on August 27 between the Syrian Army and Hezbollah and the opposing insurgents collapsed. According to activists on the ground, fighting resumed with the regime dropping barrel bombs and shelling occurring in the areas that many civilians had fled to seek safety.<sup>8</sup>
4. Damascus Governorate
- On Thursday, August 20, Syrian state TV announced that President Bashar al-Assad replaced two Cabinet ministers. Assad reportedly replaced Kinda Shammat with Rima Qadiri as minister of social affairs and replaced Hassane Safieh with Jamal Chahine as minister of internal trade and consumer protection. The government reshuffle overlaps with rising consumer prices in the country.<sup>9</sup>
5. Aleppo Governorate
- On August 23, the US-led coalition struck ISIL targets in Kobani.<sup>10</sup>
  - On August 24, The New York Times reported that the ISIL may have used chemical weapons in an attack on civilians and rival groups on August 21. The report states that 50 mortar shells were used in the attack against mainly civilian targets, and that half of those shells contained mustard gas. 50 patients were treated in the area hospital for exposure.<sup>11</sup>
  - On August 24, it was reported that ISIL fighters had killed 51 Syrian soldiers at an air base.<sup>12</sup>
  - On August 27, ISIL fighters overtook five villages from Syrian rebel groups, advancing toward the strategic town of Marea which lies near the Turkish border. Syrian activist groups reported a suicide bombing on the surrounding area outside Marea as well as fierce fighting occurring. ISIL forces were also reported as using chemical weapons during these attacks.<sup>13</sup>
  - On September 1, western-backed rebels claimed they killed three foreign ISIL fighters in a secret mission carried out in ISIL-held territory in the northern areas of Aleppo.<sup>14</sup>
6. al-Hasakah Governorate
- On August 23, the US-led coalition conducted 8 airstrikes in Syria that struck near Hasakah, Al Hawl, Ayn Isa, Kobani, and Washiyah.

<sup>7</sup> <http://in.reuters.com/article/2015/08/27/mideast-crisis-syria-ceasefire-idINKCN0QV2DW20150827> ; <http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2015/08/27/hezbollah-syria-rebels-agree-to-cease-fire-in-border-town>

<sup>8</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/267c492bcc649288b8c6a6e62a10e59/syrian-rebels-say-cease-fire-hezbollah-collapses>

<sup>9</sup> AP, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/08/20/Syrian-president-replaces-two-Cabinet-ministers.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/24/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QT1ZN20150824>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/world/middleeast/isis-suspected-of-chemical-attack-in-syria.html> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/islamic-state-accused-of-using-mustard-gas-in-syria-attack/2015/08/25/14df23d0-4b3b-11e5-80c2-106ea7fb80d4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/islamic-state-accused-of-using-mustard-gas-in-syria-attack/2015/08/25/14df23d0-4b3b-11e5-80c2-106ea7fb80d4_story.html)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/24/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKCN0QT20D20150824>

<sup>13</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/8a32deb0c6b24d9ea384b5f6544a29d8/2-iraqi-army-generals-killed-suicide-bombing> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/27/us-mideast-crisis-syria-north-idUSKCN0QW0P220150827>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/01/us-mideast-crisis-rebels-raid-idUSKCN0R14QP20150901>

- On August 27, the US-led coalition conducted 4 airstrikes, including 3 on the town of Al Hawl. The airstrikes destroyed ISIL bunkers and an excavator.<sup>15</sup>
7. Raqqa
- On August 23, the US-led coalition struck ISIL targets in Ayn Isa.<sup>16</sup>
  - During the reporting time, American officials announced that an airstrike in Syria had killed Junaid Hussain, a leading member of the so-called CyberCaliphate. Hussain was also considered to be the “second-most prominent British member” of ISIL.<sup>17</sup>
8. Deir ez-Zor
- On August 27, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes on ISIL targets in Washiyah and Deir ez-Zor.<sup>18</sup>

Other key points:

- On Thursday, August 20, Iran's foreign ministry welcomed a United Nations peace plan to end the Syrian civil war. The plan, announced by the U.N. Security Council on Monday, August 17, includes a peace initiative set to begin in September 2015, the creation of four working groups to address safety and protection, counter-terrorism, political and legal issues, and reconstruction, and also an inclusive transitional governing body. Long-time allies of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government, both Iran and Russia's support of the plan, with Russia as permanent member of the Security Council, is noteworthy.<sup>19</sup>
- During the reporting period, President Bashar al-Assad stated in an interview that he would consider the idea of a coalition force against ISIL. Russia proposed the initiative that would involve regional states joining the Syrian regime in a common fight against ISIL. However, such an alliance does not seem feasible as it would include countries that have directly opposed Assad and funded Syrian rebel groups.<sup>20</sup>
- On August 27, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for the establishment of a new international body of three individuals to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria and articulate what groups are responsible for using such methods of warfare.<sup>21</sup>
- On August 28, the US government expressed its support for a political transition and an end to the violence in Syria without President Bashar al-Assad.<sup>22</sup>
- On Thursday, August 20, Human Rights Watch urged the United Nations to impose an arms embargo on the Syrian government after the Assad regime's deadly airstrikes on Douma. Many civilians were killed in the attack and watch groups are drawing attention to it as a war crime.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/27/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QW2A420150827> ; <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/08/31/uk-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUKKCN0R01SD20150831>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/24/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QT1ZN20150824>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/28/world/middleeast/junaid-hussain-islamic-state-recruiter-killed.html>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/28/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QX24320150828>

<sup>19</sup> AFP, [https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/08/20/Iran-welcomes-U-N-peace-plan-for-](https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/08/20/Iran-welcomes-U-N-peace-plan-for-Syria.html)

<http://www.france24.com/en/20150818-defeating-islamic-state-takes-priority-over-assad-ouster-new-syria-peace-plan-un>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2015/08/25/world/middleeast/25reuters-mideast-crisis-syria.html>

<sup>21</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/48c501920088474080ca92521c01845c/un-calls-panel-identify-syria-chemical-weapons-users>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/28/us-mideast-crisis-usa-idUSKCN0QX1QI20150828>

<sup>23</sup> AFP, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/08/20/HRW-urges-Syria-arms-embargo-after-deadly-regime-strikes.html>

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

### 1. Ninawa Governorate

- During the reporting period, a U.S. National Security Council spokesman announced that Fadel al-Hayali, a senior deputy to Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi within ISIL, was killed in an American-led airstrike near Mosul on Tuesday, August 18. Abu Abdullah, an ISIL media operative, was also killed in the strike.<sup>24</sup>
- During the reporting period, a U.S. National Security Council spokesman announced that Fadel al-Hayali, a senior deputy to Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi within the Islamic State, was killed in an American-led airstrike near Mosul on Tuesday, August 18. Abu Abdullah, an ISIL media operative, was also killed in the strike.<sup>25</sup>
- During the reporting period, The Iraqi Council of Representatives' speaker Salim al-Juburi, "threatened the Minister of Electricity with a vote of no-confidence" if the minister failed to appear before the Council of Representatives on August 29 to answer questions regarding the current power shortages".<sup>26</sup>

### 2. Anbar:

- On August 24, Iraqi Security Forces were able to repel two ISIL attacks on the Albu Hayat area of Haditha and Baghdadi. ISIL continues to attack Haditha, but as of yet has been unable to break through Iraqi Security Forces and area tribal forces' defences.<sup>27</sup>
- On August 24, ISIL fighters continued to attack areas surrounding Ramadi.<sup>28</sup>
- On August 25, the Anbar Operations Command forces launched an attack on ISIL near al-Baghdadi, reportedly forcing ISIL fighters from Jubba.<sup>29</sup>
- During the reporting period, the Department of Defense reported eight airstrikes near Ramadi.<sup>30</sup>
- On August 27, an ISIL suicide bombers killed two Iraqi army generals during ongoing clashes in an area north of Ramadi. The bomber drove an "explosive-laden vehicle" at advancing troops, killing the two Iraqi army generals and three soldiers. Iraqi state television reported that 10 other soldiers were wounded in the attack.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/22/world/middleeast/airstrike-kills-a-deputy-to-isis-leader-us-says.html> ; [http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/21/le-numero-2-de-l-etat-islamique-tue-par-un-drone-en-irak\\_4733022\\_3218.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/21/le-numero-2-de-l-etat-islamique-tue-par-un-drone-en-irak_4733022_3218.html)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/22/world/middleeast/airstrike-kills-a-deputy-to-isis-leader-us-says.html> ; [http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/21/le-numero-2-de-l-etat-islamique-tue-par-un-drone-en-irak\\_4733022\\_3218.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/21/le-numero-2-de-l-etat-islamique-tue-par-un-drone-en-irak_4733022_3218.html)

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high\\_8.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high_8.png)

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%20\\_5.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%20_5.png) ; [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high\\_7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high_7.png)

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%20\\_5.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%20_5.png)

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high\\_8.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high_8.png)

<sup>30</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%20\\_5.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%20_5.png)

<sup>31</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/8a32deb0c6b24d9ea384b5f6544a29d8/2-iraqi-army-generals-killed-suicide-bombing> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/28/world/middleeast/iraq-isis-suicide-attack-ramadi.html>



- On August 29, an improvised explosive device detonated near the Trebil border crossing near Jordan, killing five Iraqi border guards.<sup>32</sup>
  - On August 29, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes on ISIL targets near al-Baghdadi.<sup>33</sup>
  - On August 31, hundreds of protesters protested the killing of a local resident by ISIL members in the district of Rutba. ISIL reportedly responded by arresting 200 locals and executing another 70-100 people. The exact details on this incident remain unclear.<sup>34</sup>
3. Salah ad Din:
- On August 24, the US-led coalition conducted 26 airstrikes against ISIL targets in Iraq and Syria, including 12 near Tuz.<sup>35</sup>
  - During the reporting period, the Department of Defense reported 11 airstrikes near Baiji between August 21-24. The airstrikes struck tactical units, vehicles, and buildings.<sup>36</sup>
  - On August 26, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan launched an offensive in Tuz Khurmato. The Department of Defence reported 19 airstrikes near the area between August 25-26.<sup>37</sup>
  - On August 27, the US-led coalition hit ISIL targets with 21 airstrikes. The airstrikes concentrated on the cities of Baiji and Tuz. The strikes near Baiji destroyed 19 ISIL buildings. The strikes near Tuz destroyed fighting positions and a vehicle. Other strikes targeted ISIL near Falluja, Mosul, Ramadi, Sinjar, and Sultan Abdallah.<sup>38</sup>
  - On August 29, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes on three vehicles, one building, and a tactical unit near Baiji. The airstrikes also struck a tactical unit and an armored vehicle near Tuz.<sup>39</sup>
  - On August 28-30, Iraqi Security Forces, Iraqi Counter Terrorism Services and “Popular Mobilization” forces launched operations in the al-Asri neighborhood in western Baiji. ISIL attacked federal police in the southern towns of Malha, Mazraa, and Hajjaj areas, but were repelled. The Department of Defense reported eight airstrikes near Baiji.<sup>40</sup>
  - On August 28, protests were held against corruption and poor services in southern areas.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>32</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high 7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high%207.png)

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/30/us-mideast-crisis-usa-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QZ00J20150830>

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high 7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high%207.png)

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/25/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QU2C620150825>

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-24%20high%205.png)

[24%20high%20 5.png ; http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/24/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QT1ZN20150824](http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/24/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QT1ZN20150824)

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/26/us-mideast-crisis-usa-idUSKCN0QV21020150826;](http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/26/us-mideast-crisis-usa-idUSKCN0QV21020150826)

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/27/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QW2A420150827;](http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/27/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QW2A420150827)

[http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/08/31/uk-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUKKCN0R01SD20150831;](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/08/31/uk-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUKKCN0R01SD20150831)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/28/us-mideast-crisis-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QX24320150828>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/30/us-mideast-crisis-usa-airstrikes-idUSKCN0QZ00J20150830>

<sup>40</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high 7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high%207.png)

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high 7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high%207.png)

4. Baghdad:
  - On August 28, a car bomb exploded in the southeastern neighborhood of Zafraniya. The explosion occurred in a police station parking lot, while security forces were attempting to dismantle the car bomb. Six police officers were killed and ten others were wounded.<sup>42</sup>
5. Ninawa:
  - During the reporting period, a U.S. National Security Council spokesman announced that Fadel al-Hayali, a senior deputy to Abu-Bakr al-Baghdadi within the Islamic State, was killed in an American-led airstrike near Mosul on Tuesday, August 18. Abu Abdullah, an ISIL media operative, was also killed in the strike.<sup>43</sup>
  - During the reporting period, The Iraqi Council of Representatives', speaker Salim al-Juburi, "threatened the Minister of Electricity with a vote of no-confidence" if the minister failed to appear before the Council of Representatives on August 29 to answer questions regarding the current power shortages".<sup>44</sup>
6. Kirkuk:
  - On August 26, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan launched an attack south of the Daquq district to force out ISIL fighters. The Kirkuk governor declared the operation to be successful.<sup>45</sup>
7. Basra:
  - During the reporting period, "unidentified individuals" handed out pamphlets that threatened to kill the Basra branch chief of the Iraqi Press Freedoms Observatory if he did not stop participating in ongoing protests.<sup>46</sup>
8. Diyala:
  - On August 28, protests were held against corruption and poor services across towns in the region.<sup>47</sup>
9. Southern Provinces:
  - On August 28, protesters demonstrated against corruption and poor services. This is the fourth week such demonstrations have occurred in Baghdad, Karbala, Babil, Najaf, Dhi Qar, Diwaniya, Maysan, Wasit, and Basra.<sup>48</sup>

#### Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, ISIL publicized a list of over 2,000 residents of Mosul that the group had executed since invading the city in June 2014.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high\\_7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high_7.png)

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/22/world/middleeast/airstrike-kills-a-deputy-to-isis-leader-us-says.html> [http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/21/le-numero-2-de-l-etat-islamique-tue-par-un-drone-en-irak\\_4733022\\_3218.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2015/08/21/le-numero-2-de-l-etat-islamique-tue-par-un-drone-en-irak_4733022_3218.html)

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high\\_8.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high_8.png)

<sup>45</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high\\_8.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high_8.png)

<sup>46</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high\\_7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high_7.png)

<sup>47</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high\\_7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high_7.png)

<sup>48</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high\\_7.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-31%20high_7.png)

<sup>49</sup> [http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high\\_8.png](http://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/iraq%20SITREP%202015-8-27%20high_8.png)

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

1. Ankara Governorate
  - On August 24, Turkey agreed to conduct joint military operations with the United States in the fight against ISIL.<sup>50</sup>
  - On August 29, Turkish air jets carried out their first attacks against ISIL targets in northern Syria. Turkish officials did not release the names or areas of their target.<sup>51</sup>
2. Hatay Governorate
  - On August 26, Jamil Raadoun, a Syrian opposition commander, was assassinated in a bombing as he entered his car in the city of Antakya.<sup>52</sup>
3. Kilis Governorate
  - On September 1, a Turkish soldier was killed when he was struck by gunfire originating from ISIL-held territory in northern Syria. Another soldier present during the incident is missing.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/video/world/100000003870818/turkey-announces-anti-isis-operation.html> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/08/25/world/europe/ap-eu-turkey-us-islamic-state.html>

<sup>51</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/5f109f18f0fb4e6db68c9a5e4690fa6f/turkish-jets-join-us-led-coalition-airstrikes-against> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/30/world/europe/turkey-launches-its-first-airstrikes-of-isis-campaign.html>

<sup>52</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/51dcbff7630c4c458839e7caa0ceaf2f/official-syrian-opposition-figure-dies-attack-turkey>

<sup>53</sup> <http://news.yahoo.com/shots-fired-syria-kill-turkish-soldier-191247048.html>

## Incident Reports: Syria

### SHI 15-0113 UPDATE

**Report Date:** July 27th, 2015; August 18, 2015

**Site Name:** Tell Chuera Dig House (Tell Khouira)

**Date of Incident:** July 26th, 2015; August 12, 2015

**Location:** Tell Chuera, Ar-Raqqa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Originally occupied during the 4th millennium BCE, Tell Chuera became a major site in the 3rd millennium during the Early Dynastic Period. It reached its peak around 2350 BCE and was then abandoned for reasons as yet unknown. A small settlement was built on the location by the Assyrians during the 2nd millennium BCE. While the early name for the city is unknown, during Middle Assyrian times it was known as Harbe. The site was first described by Max von Oppenheim in 1913. Excavations began in 1958 by the Free University of Berlin led by Anton Moortgat. Excavations occurred under Ursula Moortgat-Correns in the 1970s, and came under the direction of Winfried Orthmann of the University of Halle until 1998. Excavation was then continued under Jan-Waalke Meyer from the Goethe University Frankfurt.<sup>54</sup>

**Site Date:** Archaeological site dates 4th millennium-2nd millennium BCE; German excavation house dates to 20th century.

**Incident Summary:** The German dig house at Tell Chuera was severely damaged by an unknown source.

**Incident Source and Description:** According to the Directorate of Antiquities and Museums of Syria, the dig house at Tell Chuera was bombed. This site had most recently been excavated by a German team from Goethe University, Frankfurt.<sup>55</sup> The DGAM reports that the local community has moved artifacts from the dig house to safe places since the area was retaken from ISIL, adding that no artifacts were damaged.

**SREO** In-country sources state that this destruction was an explosion of some kind, and the contents of the building were taken and are now gone. The damage is not attributed to an air strike given that locals had never heard jets fly over the area in the past. Additionally, no impact crater or charring and fire typically associated with aerial bombing was present at the site. The ultimate cause of the damage is still unknown.

**Pattern:** Military Activity: Explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to better identify the cause of damage to the Tell Chuera excavation house via in country sources and is continuing to monitor the condition of the site.

---

<sup>54</sup> Winfried Orthmann et al., *Ausgrabungen in Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien I Vorbericht über die Grabungskampagnen 1986 bis 1992*, Saarbrucker Druckerei und Verlag – SDV, 1995.

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1748>

## Sources:

### Online Reporting:

DGAM <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1748>

### Scholarly:

Moortgat, Anton (1960). Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die Grabung 1958, Köln und Opladen, 1960.

Moortgat, Anton (1962) Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die dritte Grabungskampagne 1960, Köln und Opladen.

Moortgat, Anton (1965) Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Bericht über die vierte Grabungskampagne 1963, Köln und Opladen.

Moortgat, Anton (1967) Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die fünfte Grabungskampagne 1964, Köln und Opladen.

Moortgat, Anton and Ursula Moortgat-Correns, Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die sechste Grabungskampagne 1973, Gebrüder Mann Verlag, 1975

Anton Moortgat and Ursula Moortgat-Correns, Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die siebte Grabungskampagne 1974, Gebrüder Mann Verlag, 1976

Moortgat, Anton and Ursula Moortgat-Correns, Ursula (1978) Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die achte Grabungskampagne 1976, Mann.

Orthmann, Winfried et al. (1998) Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien. Vorläufiger Bericht über die neunte und zehnte Grabungskampagne 1982 und 1983, Mann.

Orthmann, Winfried et al., Ausgrabungen in Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien I Vorbericht über die Grabungskampagnen 1986 bis 1992, Saarbrucker Druckerei und Verlag – SDV, 1995

Zick, Michael (2005) *Tell Chuera – Stadtplanung vor 5000 Jahren*. in: *Bild der Wissenschaft*. Leinefelden-Echterdingen 1, pp. 72–76.

Stefan Jakob, Stefan (2009), Die mittelassyrischen Texte aus Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien, Harrassowitz Verlag.

Meyer, Jan-Waalke (2010) Ausgrabungen in Tell Chuera in Nordost-Syrien Band 2: II: Vorbericht zu den Grabungskampagnen 1998 bis 2005, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010,

Orthmann, Winfried (1990) L'architecture religieuse de Tell Chuera, *Akkadica*, vol. 69, pp. 1–18.



Tell Chuera Dig House, after damage (DGAM; July 26, 2015)

**SHI 15-0117**

**Report Date:** August 16, 2015

**Site Name:** Graves outside Hama

**Date of Incident:** approximately August 11, 2015

**Location:** village of Akash, Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Islamic cemetery

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Islamic graves destroyed by ISIL militants in Akash.

**Incident Source and Description:** Photographs of the destruction of graves were shared online via Justpaste.it, an image hosting site, on August 11, 2015. The caption on the images roughly translates to "The demolition of the graves that rise above the ground and bringing it to its level." The exact date of destruction is unknown, but ASOR CHI in-country sources indicate that the incident took place just before the posting of the images online. These same sources also identify the location as the village of Akash.

ISIL militants declared the graves as *shirk*, meaning polytheistic and/or idolatrous, arguing that the graves were too large and ostentatious.

ISIL often posts images of cultural heritage destruction to the website justpaste.it in order to circulate these images to a global audience and solicit international as well as local attention.

**Pattern:** Intentional destruction by ISIL militants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Islamic religious heritage, with particular attention directed to areas occupied by militant jihadi-salafists like ISIL.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Justpaste.it: <http://justpaste.it/mxxr>



هدم القبور المشرفة وتسويتها مع الأرض  
Destruction of graves in Islamic cemetery (Justpaste.it; August 2015)



هدم القبور المشرفة وتسويتها مع الأرض  
Destruction of graves in Islamic cemetery (Justpaste.it; August 2015)



**SHI 15-0118**

**Report Date:** August 19, 2015

**Site Name:** Graves around al-Hasakah

**Date of Incident:** early August, 2015

**Location:** Al-Hasakah Governorate, Syria

**Coordinates:** Unknown

**Site Description:** Islamic cemetery

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Islamic graves destroyed by ISIL militants in an unknown town somewhere in Al-Hasakah.

**Incident Source and Description:** Photographs of the destruction of graves were shared online via Justpaste.it, an image hosting site, on August 7, 2015. The caption on the images roughly translates to "Bringing the graves to the level of the ground and the removal of the signs of Shirk (polytheism)." The page also displays the black ISIL flag, which points to the militant group as the most obvious culprit. The exact date of destruction is unknown.

ISIL militants declared the graves as *shirk*, meaning reflecting polytheistic and/or idolatrous, arguing that the graves were too large and ostentatious. The images with these photos also show villagers being rounded up to attend evening prayer and the confiscation of smuggled tobacco.

ISIL often posts images of cultural heritage destruction to the website justpaste.it in order to circulate these images to a global audience and solicit international as well as local attention.

**Pattern:** Intentional destruction by ISIL militants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Islamic religious heritage, with particular attention directed to areas occupied by militant jihadi-salafists like ISIL.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Justpaste.it: <http://justpaste.it/mvc2>

Isdarat.tv: <https://isdarat.tv/19330>



جانب من عمل رجال الحسبة / تسوية القبور وإزالة مظاهر الشرك

Destruction of graves in al-Hasakah (Justpaste.it; August 7, 2015)



جانب من عمل رجال الحسبة / تسوية القبور وإزالة مظاهر الشرك

Destruction of graves in al-Hasakah (Justpaste.it; August 7, 2015)



جانب من عمل رجال الحسبة / تسوية القبور وإزالة مظاهر الشرك  
Destruction of graves in al-Hasakah (Justpaste.it; August 7, 2015)

**SHI 15-0119**

**Report Date:** August 19, 2015

**Site Name:** Graves in as-Salhabiyah

**Date of Incident:** early to mid-August, 2015

**Location:** Village of as-Salhabiyah, Ar-Raqqa, Syria

**Site Description:** Islamic cemetery

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Islamic graves destroyed by ISIL militants in as-Salhabiyah.

**Incident Source and Description:** Photographs of the destruction of graves were shared online via Justpaste.it, an image hosting site, on August 14, 2015. The caption on the images roughly translates to "The demolition of the graves in as-Salhabiyah." The page also displays the black ISIL flag, which points to the militant group as the most obvious culprit. The exact date of destruction is unknown.

ISIL militants declared the graves as *shirk*, meaning reflecting polytheism and/or idolatry, arguing that the graves were too large and ostentatious. The images with these photos also show the collection and burning of tobacco and water pipes (nargile or hookah) in Al Tabqah, located west of as-Salhabiyah.

ISIL often posts images of cultural heritage destruction to the website justpaste.it in order to circulate these images to a global audience and solicit international as well as local attention.

**Pattern:** Intentional destruction by ISIL militants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Islamic religious heritage, with particular attention directed to areas occupied by militant jihadi-salafists like ISIL.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Justpaste.it: [http://justpaste.it/hes\\_gar](http://justpaste.it/hes_gar)



تسوية القبور المشرفة في قرية السلحبية



Destruction of graves in as-Salhabiyah (Justpaste.it; August 14, 2015)



تسوية القبور المشرفة في قرية السلحبية



Destruction of graves in as-Salhabiyah (Justpaste.it; August 14, 2015)



تسوية القبور المشرفة في قرية السلحبية

Destruction of graves in as-Salhabiyah (Justpaste.it; August 2015)



تسوية القبور المشرفة في قرية السلحبية

Destruction of graves in as-Salhabiyah (Justpaste.it; August 7, 2015)

**SHI 15-0120**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Khan Assad Pasha Al-Azem

**Date of Incident:** August 10, 2015

**Location:** Khan Assad Pasha, Maraat al-Numan, Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Khan Assad Pasha al-Azem is an Ottoman warehouse/market that was constructed between 1738 and 1749. In recent years it has been used as an orphanage<sup>56</sup>. It is located across the street Abu'l 'Ala al-Marri from the Maraat Al-Numan Mosaic Museum (Khan Murad Pasha).<sup>57</sup>

**Site Date:** 1738/1748 through present

**Incident Summary:** The Khan Assad Pasha al-Azem was damaged in clashes and a raid by armed forces.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 10, 2015, the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums published an article on damage to the Khan Assad Pasha.<sup>58</sup> In-country sources (via HRS) report that during a raid by an armed faction the northern and eastern parts of the Khan were damaged. Previous damage to the Khan and Museum are found in **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0041** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0098**. Further documentation of the damage to the site was provided by the The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative.

**Pattern:** Military Activity: Gunfire/Light Weaponry and Explosives

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the situation and gather further information.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1762>

Scholarly:

UNOSAT <http://unosat.web.cern.ch/unosat/unitar/downloads/chs/Marrat.pdf>

---

<sup>56</sup> <http://unosat.web.cern.ch/unosat/unitar/downloads/chs/Marrat.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1762>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1762>



Khan Assad Pasha damaged (DGAM; August 10, 2015)





## Site Monitors Project: Ma'arra

### Damage Report on the Khan Asa'ad Pasha A brief overview of Khan Asa'ad Pasha Al-Azm

#### The Day After Heritage Protection Initiative<sup>59</sup>

Report prepared by Eng. Abdel Rahman Al Yahya  
Site Monitors Project: Director Amr Al-Azm

This khan was built by Asa'ad Pasha Al-Azm in 1753. It comprises of four wings on the lower floor and an upper floor that was used to house big merchants. In the middle of the courtyard is a seasonal musallah (Islamic prayer space), used mostly in the summer. Before the entrances of the four wings are corridors with jambs and pointed arches that surround the open courtyard. The building is located at the southern end of Abi Al'Alaa Street and is across from the Khan of Murad Pasha. Separating the two buildings is a small square.

Inside the Khan in the centre of the courtyard, is a pool of water under a stone arch. This arch was mostly destroyed during the late Ottoman period when the building was used as an army barracks. There are several known endowments belong to this khan, and after the year 1938 it was abandoned by the army and turned into a market for domestic animals with a garden in the center of the khan surrounding the summer prayer space.



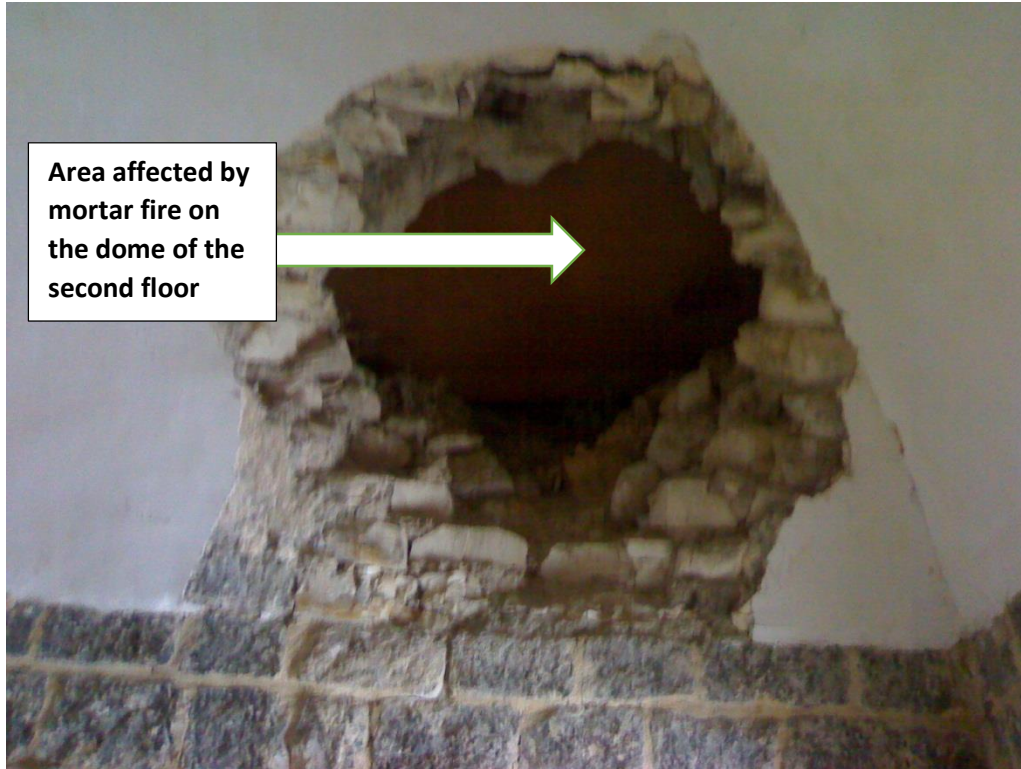
---

<sup>59</sup> 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.

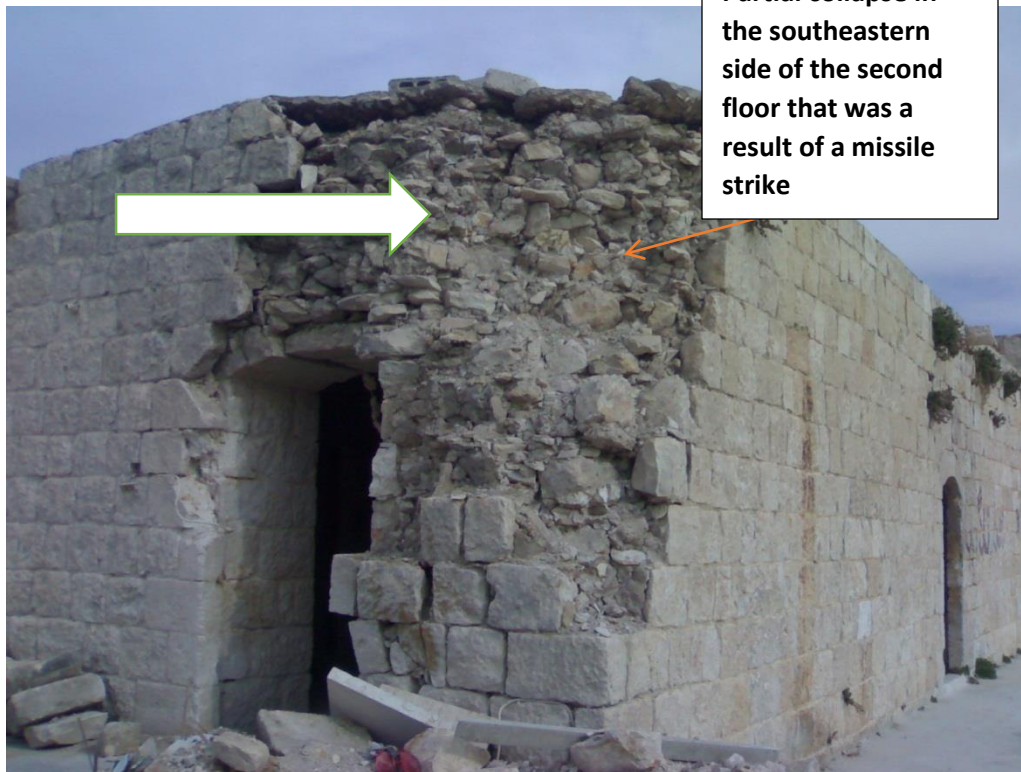
As a result of the military operations by Syrian regime forces in the city of Ma'arra between 27/12/2012 and 27/6/2013, Khan Assa'ad Pacha suffered extensive damage. In that time period, an airstrike by the Syrian regime air force led to the partial destruction of the roof and the arches holding it up as shown in the photos. The room below the damaged roof had been used to house and operate a medical CT scanner.



The Khan was also exposed to mortar fire, which resulted in openings in the roof of the second floor and a partial collapse of some of the walls. This also led to major damages in the public utility rooms located on the first floor roof, as shown in the following photos.



**Area affected by mortar fire on the dome of the second floor**



**Partial collapse in the southeastern side of the second floor that was a result of a missile strike**



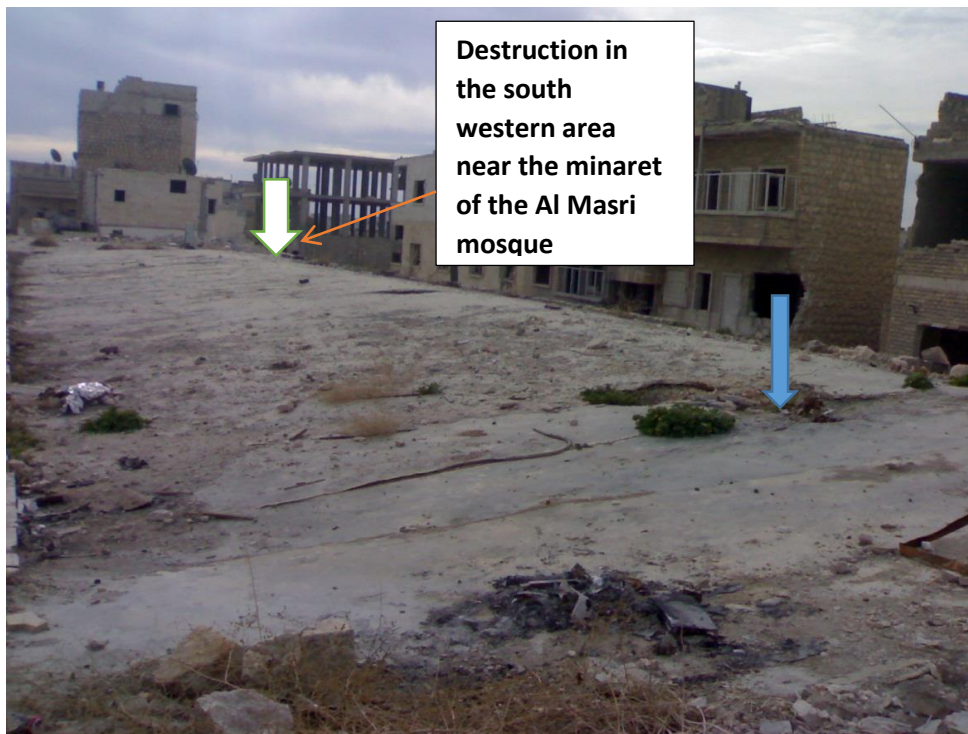
**Partial collapse of the corridor on the eastern side**



**Partial collapse of the corridor on the eastern side**

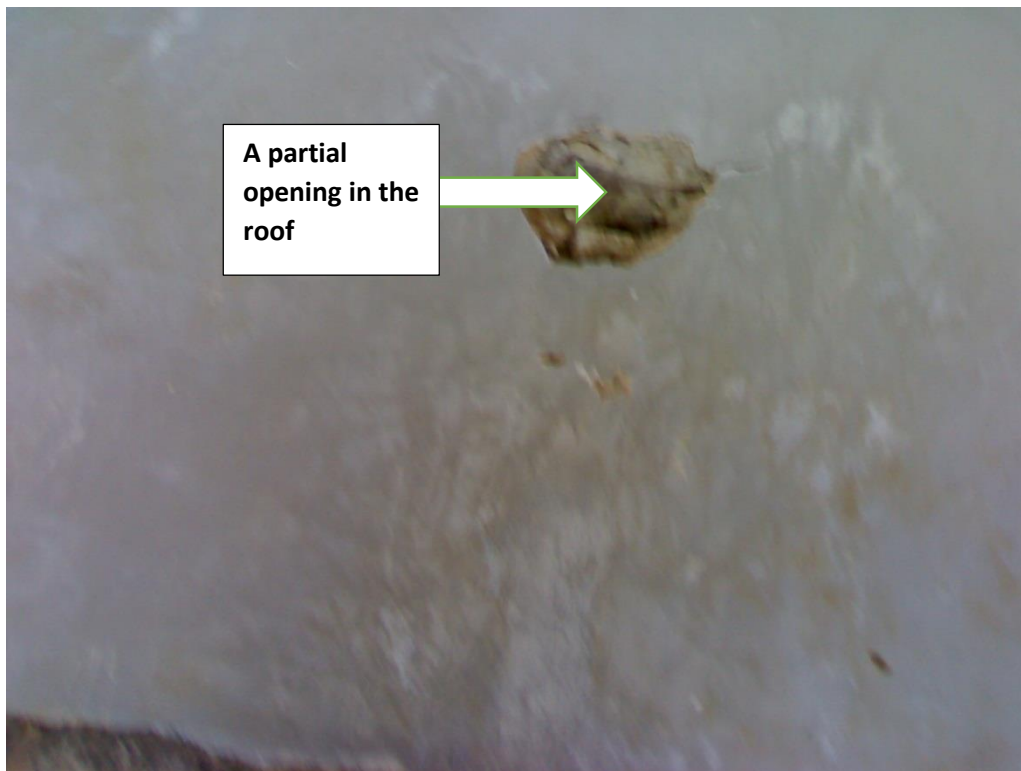
**Rubble resulting from the collapse of the corridor**

The Khan suffered a second air raid by the Syrian regime between 6/27/2013 and 8/1/2013. In that attack, the southwest area of the Khan was hit causing the partial collapse of the southwest walls and also the partial collapse of the minaret of the Masri Mosque whose walls abut that of the Khan (see photos below).

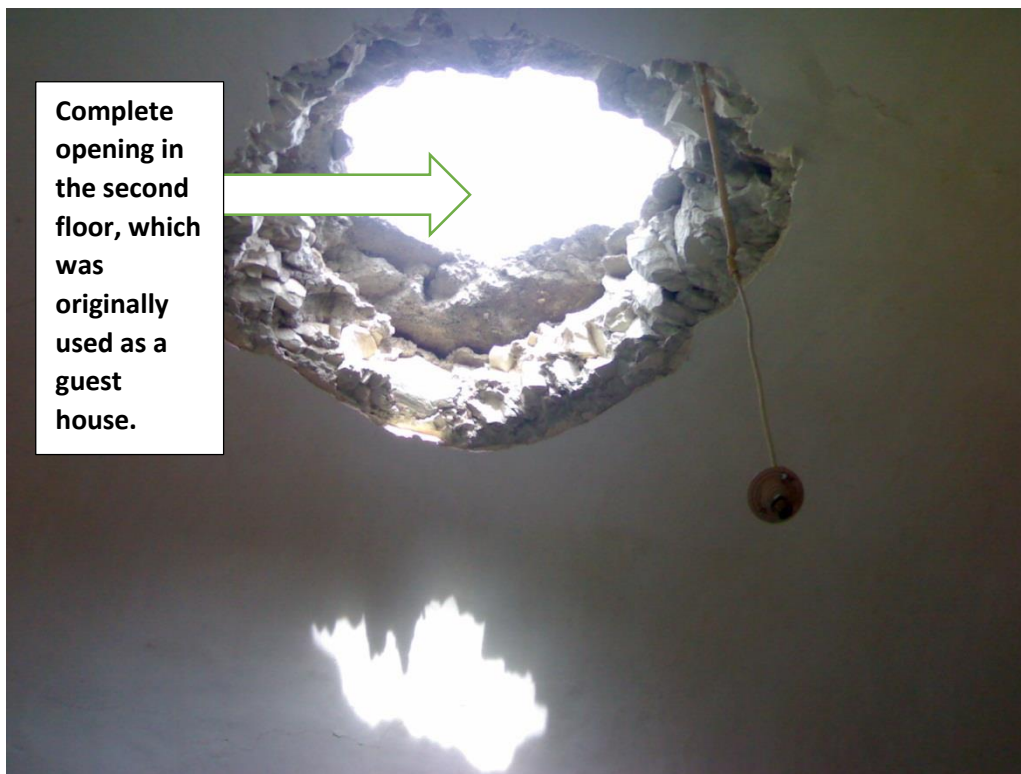




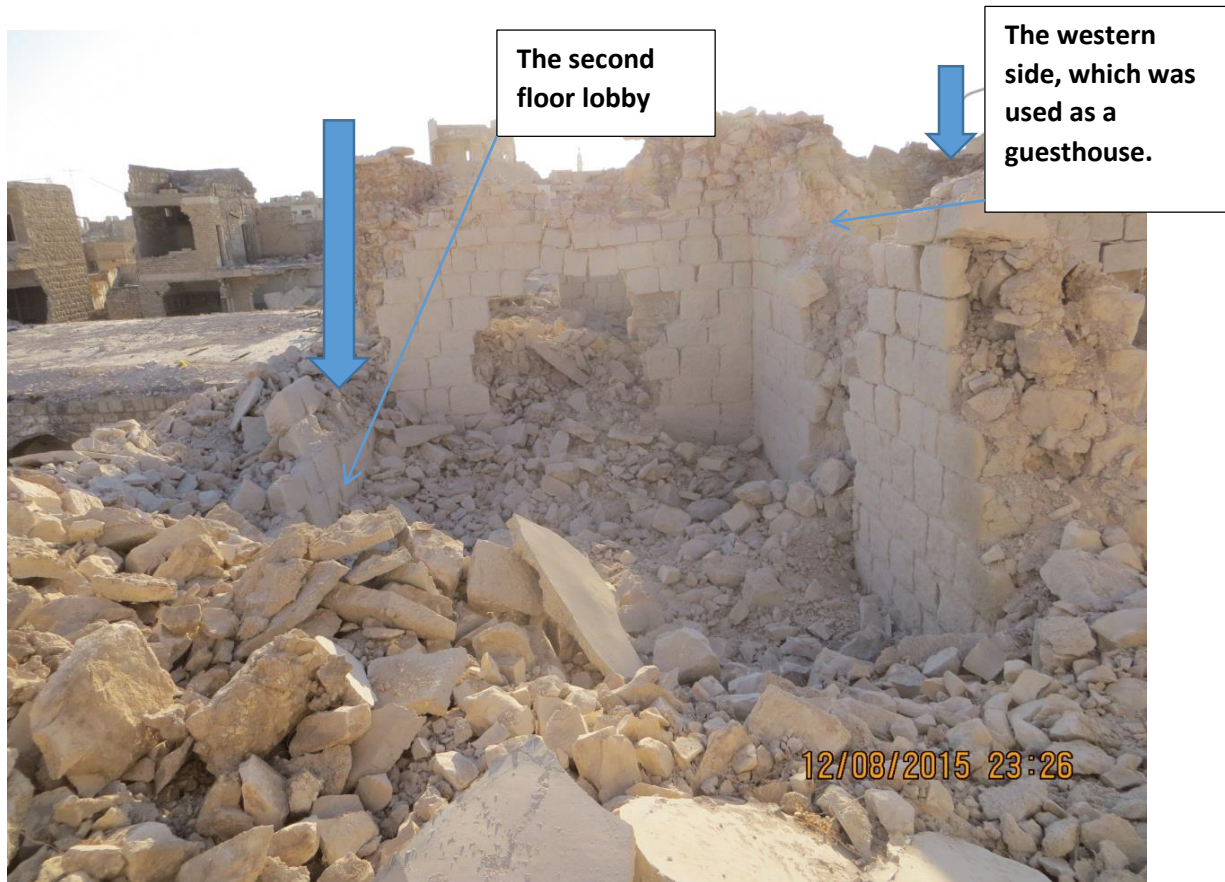
**A partial opening in the roof**



Between 1/1/2014 and 7/8/2015, Khan Assa'ad Pasha suffered indirect damage caused by barrel bombs landing near the building. The damage caused to the walls includes partial collapse, cracks, and openings in the roof of the second floor (see photos below).

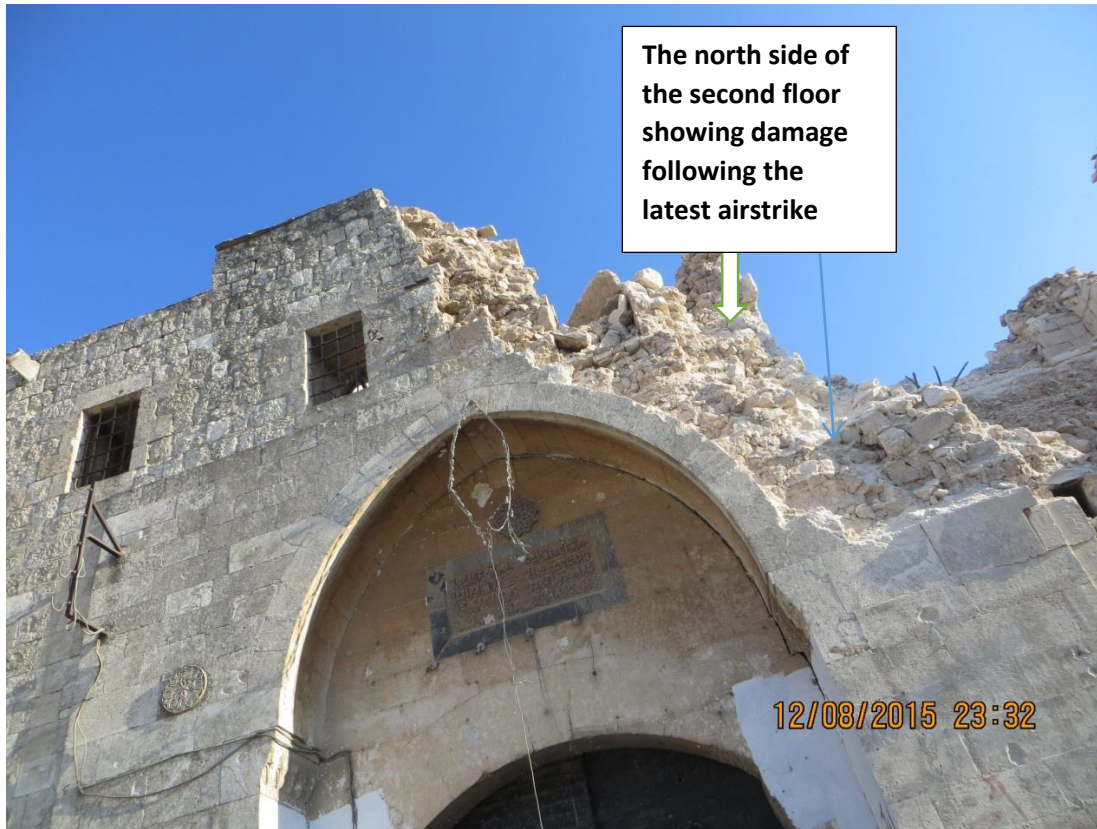


The heaviest and most destructive damage to **Khan** Asa'ad Pasha was caused by the latest airstrike on 7/8/2015. A large section of the second floor (the lobby) and a portion of the rooms in the western side of the building mostly collapsed as a result of this attack. The lobby on the second floor has two restored mosaics on *Aerolam* boards partially buried in the rubble. Both are in need of emergency extraction from the rubble and stabilization/repair (see images below).

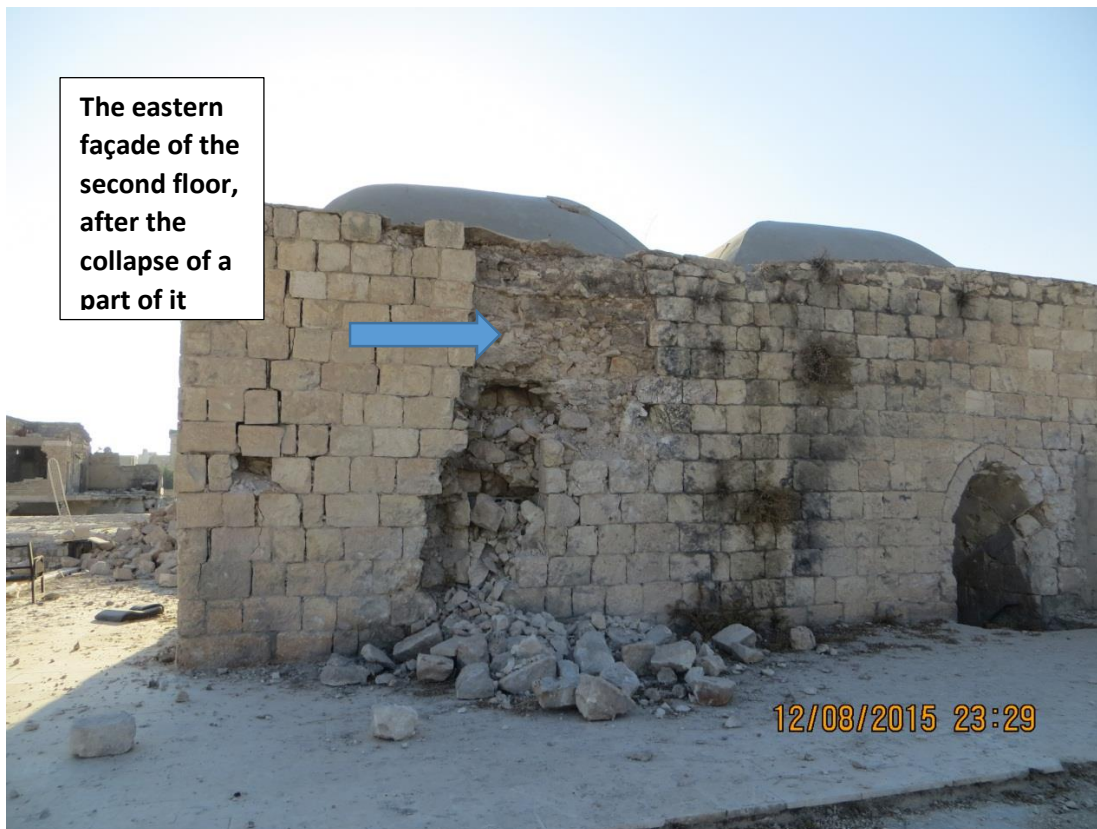








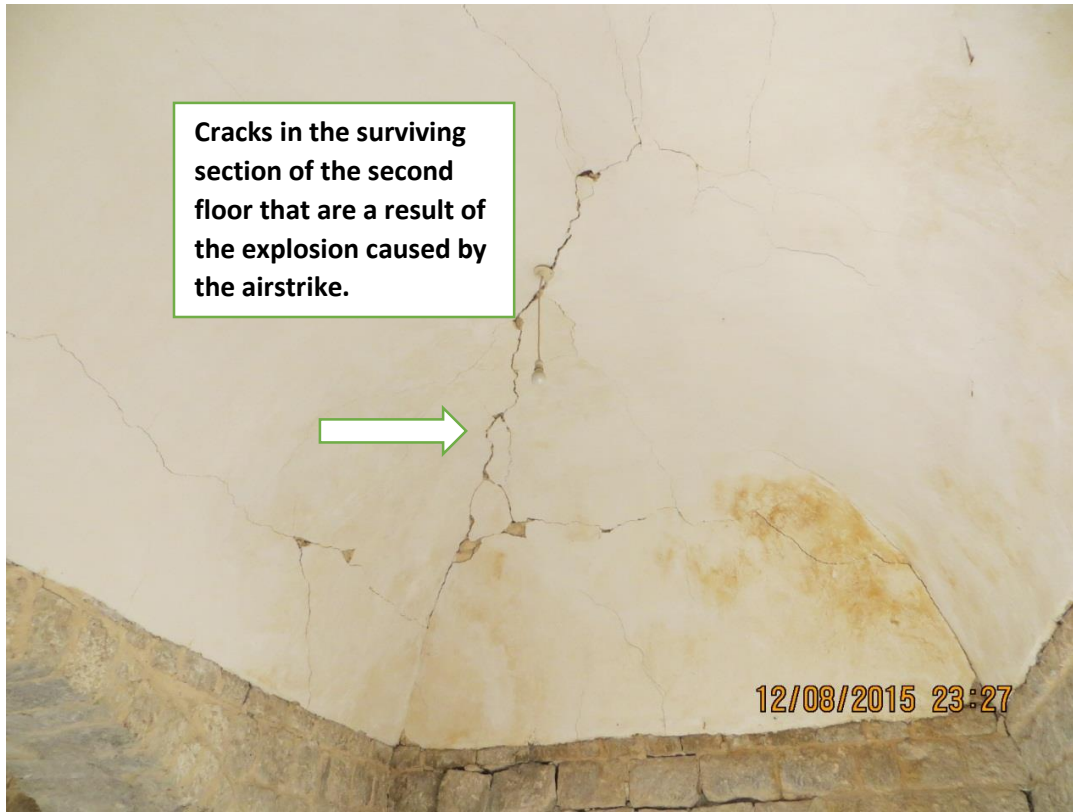
The north side of the second floor showing damage following the latest airstrike



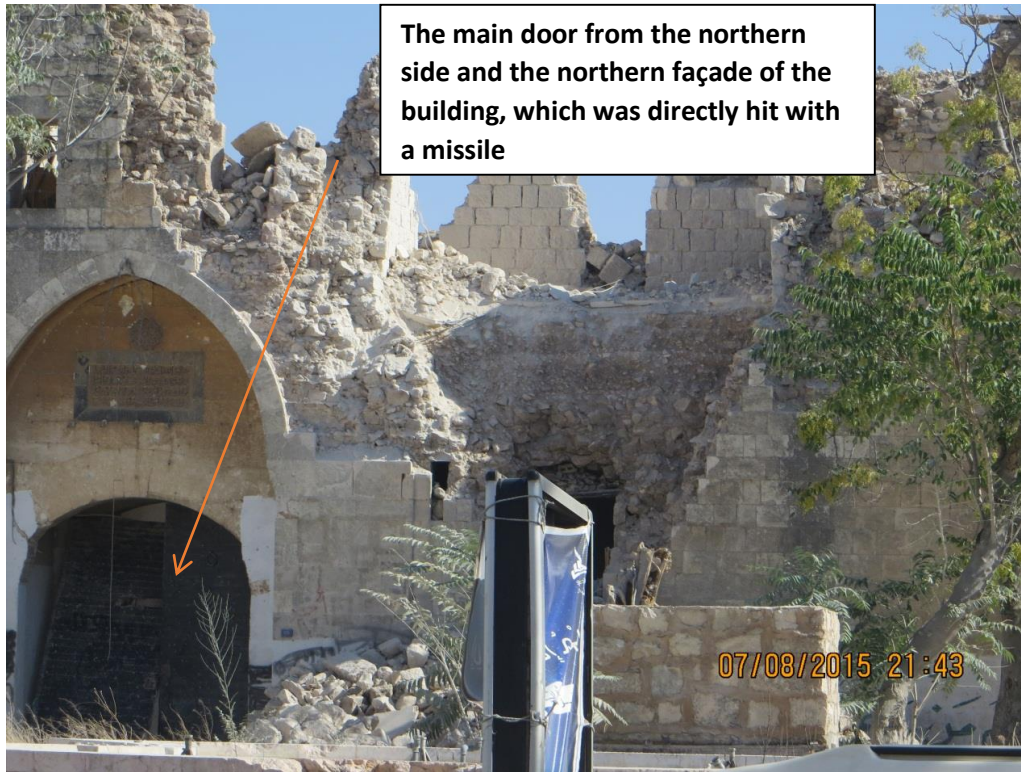
The eastern façade of the second floor, after the collapse of a part of it

A partial collapse in the northern side of the first floor created a large opening in the wall, as shown in the image below.

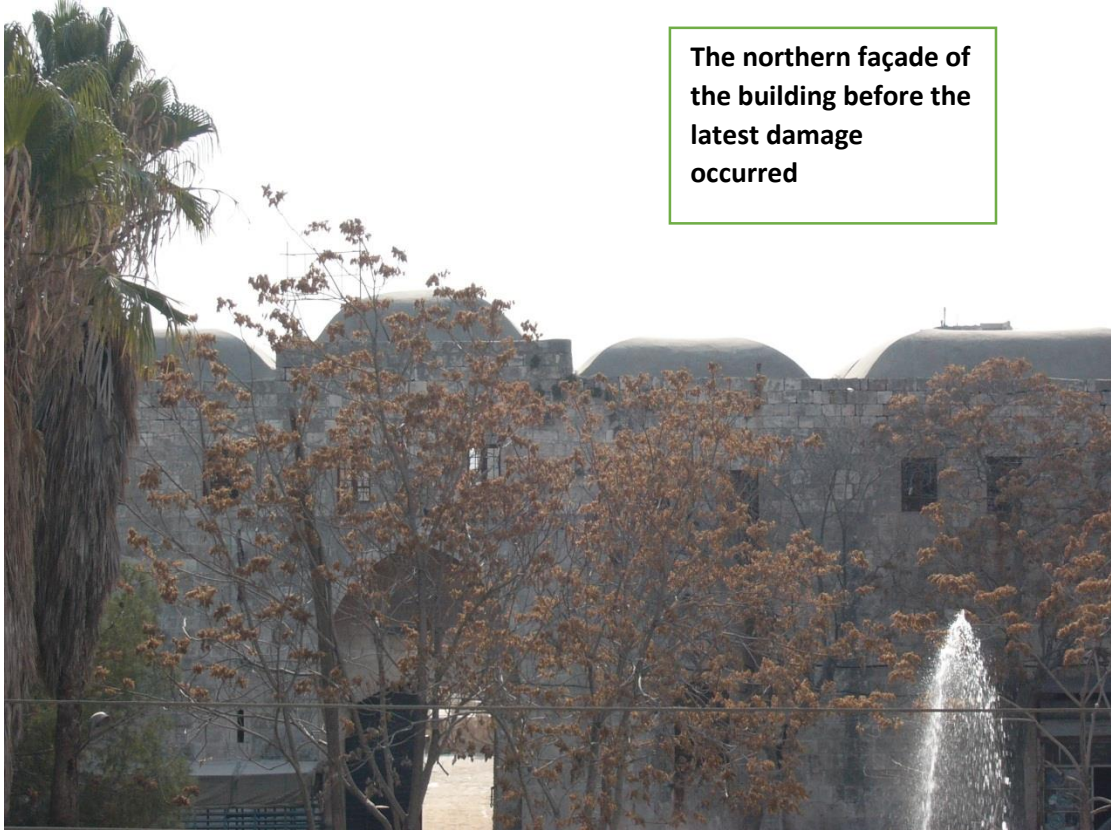




Furthermore the airstrike caused the large gate at the main entrance to the Khan to come off its hinges and become inoperable, It is currently in need of emergency restoration work in order to return it to use (see images below).



**The northern façade of the building before the latest damage occurred**



**SHI 15-0121**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** The Roman Palace and The Roman Bridge in Jamrein Village

**Date of Incident:** August 17, 2015

**Location:** Jamrein Village, Bosra, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Roman Bridge – 164 CE

**Incident Summary:** Slight damage to the Roman Palace and the Roman Bridge at Jamrein Village.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 17, 2015 the Director of Antiquities and Museum published photos taken on July 26, 2015 showing the current state of the Roman Palace and the Roman Bridge at Jamrein Village. Additional damage includes combat damage to the eastern facade of the Roman Palace due to clashes during the month of July as well as minor combat damage to the Roman Bridge.<sup>60</sup>

**Pattern:** Military Activity: Explosives

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to find further information of these reports via in country sources and will continue to monitor the condition of the monuments and sites in the Bossra region.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1770>

---

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1770>



The Eastern Façade of the Roman Palace (DGAM; July 26, 2015)





The Eastern Façade of the Roman Palace (DGAM; July 26, 2015)



The Roman Bridge (DGAM; July 26, 2015)



The Roman Bridge (DGAM; July 26, 2015)



The Roman Bridge (DGAM; July 26, 2015)

**SHI 15-0122**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Jebel Semaan Park, including Refade, Kirbet al-Rouman, and Qatura

**Date of Incident:** mid-August, 2015

**Location:** Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The limestone highlands, or Limestone Massif, of the Aleppo plateau in northwestern Syria are dotted with nearly eight hundred ancient settlements.<sup>61</sup> Jebel Semaan is one of three groups of hills that make up the Limestone Massif. In 2011, eight archaeological parks comprised of groupings of these settlements were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as the Ancient Villages of Northern Syria. Three of these parks are located in the Jebel Semaan, and include the sites of Refade, Kirbet al-Rouman, and Qatura.

**Site Date:** 2nd century CE

**Incident Summary:** DGAM reports damage to Refade, Kirbet al-Rouman, and Qatura in Jebel Simeon Park.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 18, 2015 the DGAM posted photographs dating to July 2015 documenting the condition of the site of Jebel Semaan Park in comparison to photographs taken in 2006 of the same locations. The DGAM asserts that the sites are at risk of combat damage, particularly gunfire, and that construction of illegal buildings by displaced peoples has been documented. The report in Arabic dating to August 18 identifies the site as Mount Simon ( ريف حلب ) (الغربي: الأضرار في موقع جبل سمعان) and the English version dating to August 24 identifies the site as Jabal Simeon Park.

The DGAM reported in 2013 that the site was being intentionally damaged by local inhabitants, who used the site for target practice and also robbed the ancient monuments of building material.<sup>62</sup>

Since 2011, intense fighting has occurred in the region of the Limestone Massif and the nearby cities of Aleppo and Maarat al-Numan. As a result, large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have temporarily taken up residence in the archaeological areas. In addition to combat-related destruction, illegal activities, such as theft, quarrying, vandalism, and new construction have caused significant damage to some cultural properties. In 2013, UNESCO placed the Ancient Villages of Northern Syria on its List of World Heritage In Danger due to severe and sustained damage and threats.

**Pattern:** Military Activity: Gunfire; Re-use of an ancient structure by non-combatants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to find further information of these reports via in country sources and will continue to monitor the condition of the monuments and sites within the Jebel Simeon Park.

---

<sup>61</sup> Burns (2009), pg. 142

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1076>

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM (8/18/2015): <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=239&id=1771>

DGAM (8/24/2015) <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1784>



Qatura, rock-cut tombs (DGAM; July 2015)



Qatura, Rock-cut tombs (DGAM; 2006)



Qatura, Roman funerary statues (DGAM; July 2015)



Qatura, Roman funerary statues (DGAM; 2006)



Qatura, Roman funerary statues (DGAM; July 2015)



Qatura, Roman funerary statues (DGAM; 2006)



Qatura, Roman funerary statues (DGAM; July 2015)



Qatura, Roman funerary statues (DGAM; 2006)



Qatura, Rock cut tomb of Titus Flavius Julianus (DGAM; July 2015)





Qatura, Rock cut tomb of Titus Flavius Julianus (DGAM; 2006)



Qatura, Rock cut tomb of Titus Flavius Julianus (DGAM; July 2015)



Qatura, Rock cut tomb of Titus Flavius Julianus (DGAM; 2006)



Qatura (DGAM; July 2015)



Qatura (DGAM; 2006)



Set al Roum church (DGAM; July 2015)



Set al Roum church (DGAM; 2006)



Refade (DGAM; July 2015)



Refade (DGAM; 2006)



Refade (DGAM; July 2015)



Refade (DGAM; 2006)

**SHI 15-0123**

**Report Date:** August 21, 2015

**Site Name:** Deir Mar Elian; Monastery of St Julian; Mar Elian Monastery

**Date of Incident:** August 21, 2015

**Location:** Al Qariatayn, Homs Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Deir Mar Elian is located in Al-Qariatayn, on the road between Damascus and Palmyra. The road leads to the Islamic palace of Qasr al-Hayr al-Garbi and the Roman Dam of Kherbaqa. The town of Al-Qariatayn formed an important station on the road of the commercial caravans between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean Coast, and was used as a resting point on the Silk Road. The prominent status of the city was established during the Roman period, and continued during the Byzantine period when the city was used as a stopping point for pilgrims. Many churches were built on this road, as was the church of Deir Mar Elian.<sup>63</sup>

Deir Mar Elian was constructed as a Syrian Orthodox Church on the death and subsequent grave site of Saint Elian (Saint Julian).<sup>64</sup> Saint Elian was martyred after refusing to renounce his Christianity at the hands of his father, a Roman officer. His remains rest in a small sarcophagus in the chapel. In the 1920s or 1930s, the monastery was converted to a Catholic Monastery under the French Mandate. When Mar Elian was renovated in 1969, the plaster that lined the walls was removed to reveal murals of Jesus, Mary, and Prophets dating back to the 6th Century CE.<sup>65</sup>

**Site Date:** Constructed in 432 CE

**Incident Summary:** The monastery at Mar Elian was intentionally destroyed by ISIL militants using earth-moving machines.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 21, 2015, DGAM reported the destruction of the 5th century Mar Elian Monastery. The building, restored in 1969, was destroyed by ISIL using bulldozers.<sup>66</sup> ISIL posted pictures and video of the destruction to their twitter account. The group captured Qaryatain, which lies south-west of Palmyra and 85km from Homs, after heavy clashes with regime forces on August 6th, 2015. ISIL abducted 230 Syriac Orthodox and Syriac Catholics as well as the head priest, Jacques Mourad. 48 people have been released and 110 were transferred to Raqqa.<sup>67</sup> It is unknown where the rest are located.

The destruction of Deir Mar Elian follows multiple episodes of destruction to monasteries, churches, and other religious sites in Syria and Iraq.

**Pattern:** Intentional destruction by ISIL militants.

---

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/culture/museum-for-dialogue/item/en/123/door-of-the-church-deir-mar-elian-al-sheikh#sthash.AeHXROIT.dpuf>

<sup>64</sup> Beattie, Andrew; Pepper, Timothy (2001). *The Rough Guide to Syria*. Rough Guides.

<sup>65</sup> Beattie, Andrew; Pepper, Timothy (2001). *The Rough Guide to Syria*. Rough Guides.

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1777>

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/08/after-transporting-the-christians-to-the-city-of-al-raqqa-islamic-state-demolishes-the-monastery-of-saint-elian/>

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to confirm reports via in-country sources and is continuing to monitor the condition of religious cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1777>

APSA: <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/homs-countryside-isis-destroy-5th-century-mar-ellian-monastery/>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34016809>

Daily Mail: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3204584/Bulldozer-civilisation-Shocking-new-images-ISIS-brutes-desecrating-priceless-1-500-year-old-Christian-monastery.html>

Yahoo: <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/isis-syria-1-500-old-073858453.html#AzebAmi>

SOHR: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/08/after-transporting-the-christians-to-the-city-of-al-raqa-islamic-state-demolishes-the-monastery-of-saint-elian/>

Assafir: <http://assafir.com/Article/5/438859>

Express: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/599816/ISIS-Islamic-State-Mar-Elian-monastery-Homs-Syria-bulldoze-saint>

UNESCO: [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/director\\_general\\_of\\_unesco\\_irina\\_bokova\\_condemns\\_the\\_destruction\\_of\\_the\\_mar\\_elian\\_monastery\\_in\\_syria/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/director_general_of_unesco_irina_bokova_condemns_the_destruction_of_the_mar_elian_monastery_in_syria/)

Scholarly:

Beattie, Andrew; Pepper, Timothy (2001). *The Rough Guide to Syria*. Rough Guides.





Dier Mar Elian, after destruction (DGAM; August 21, 2015)



Dier Mar Elian, after destruction (DGAM; August 21, 2015)



Dier Mar Elian, during destruction (DGAM; August 21, 2015)



Dier Mar Elian, after destruction (DGAM; August 21, 2015)



Dier Mar Elian, during destruction (ISIL social media; August 21, 2015)



Dier Mar Elian, during destruction (ISIL Social Media; August 21, 2015)



Dier Mar Elian, during destruction (ISIL Social Media; August 21, 2015)

**SHI 15-0124**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Baalshamin Temple

**Date of Incident:** August 23, 2015

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

**Site Description:** From *Monuments of Syria*:

“The Baalshamin Temple (Lord of the Heavens in the Semitic Pantheon) was restored by a Swiss mission in the 1950s. The First work dates as early as AD 17. Further construction was carried out in the early second century funded by private bequest, but improvements were made in the third century under Odenathus. The small *cella* was constructed in AD 130, immediately after Hadrian’s visit. The *cella* is preceded by a six-columned vestibule, the side walls decorated with Pilasters, all in the Corinthian Order.

Colonnaded courtyards lay either side of the temple. The court to the north is larger and mostly belongs to the earliest phase of construction, except for the west portico which was completed under Odenathus. Whereas the earlier columns were in the classical Corinthian style, the western capitals show an interesting variation. The Corinthian acanthus leaves have been highly stylized and simplified in a distinctly Roman-Egyptian manner. This is one of the few instances of Egyptian influence on the architecture of Roman Syria. This south court is smaller but was also surrounded by a portico. The sole column which remains intact bears an inscription recording the building of the court, commemorated in AD 149.”<sup>68</sup>

**Site Date:** Primarily Hellenistic (Palmyrene), Roman, and Islamic

**Incident Summary:** The Baalshamin Temple was intentionally destroyed by ISIL militants.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 23, 2015 reports surfaced concerning the destruction of the Baalshamin Temple in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra. Shortly after the first reports, other reports cited a SOHR report that said this destruction happened a month ago. This seems to be rectified in more recent articles.

On June 13, 2015, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra including Diocletian’s Camp, the Baalshamin Temple, and the Roman Theatre were bombarded during ISIL’s takeover of the site (See SHI 15-0096). Sometime during July militants had lined the inner and outer walls of the temple with bottles and barrels of explosives<sup>69</sup>. Around 4pm on August 23, 2015, these explosives were detonated.<sup>70</sup> The *cella* was destroyed and columns around it collapsed.<sup>71</sup>

**Pattern:** Intentional Destruction by ISIL militants.

---

<sup>68</sup> Burns (2010) *Monuments of Syria* p. 217.

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-islamic-state-syria-ancient-ruins-palmyra-20150824-story.html>

<sup>70</sup> <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1783>

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34036644>

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will gather more information on the circumstances of the destruction and acquire satellite imagery of the region to develop a timeline of events. An updated incident report will be published as more information, photographs, and satellite imagery become available.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1783>

Al Gherbal: <http://www.algherbal.com/2015/08/24/2502/>

Al Hadath News: <http://alhadathpcnews.net/new/?p=17260>

Al Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/isil-destroys-ancient-temple-syria-palmyra-unesco-world-heritage-isis-baal-shamin-150823212050325.html>

Associated Press:

[http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/3d281c11a96b4ad082fe88aa0db04305/Article\\_2015-08-24-ML--Islamic%20State/id-9b68667711f24abea7c9a15e971e2a6d](http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/3d281c11a96b4ad082fe88aa0db04305/Article_2015-08-24-ML--Islamic%20State/id-9b68667711f24abea7c9a15e971e2a6d)

BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p030jz02>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34036644>

BBC Arabic: [http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/08/150823\\_palmyra\\_syria\\_isis](http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2015/08/150823_palmyra_syria_isis)

Chicago Tribune: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-islamic-state-syria-ancient-ruins-palmyra-20150824-story.html>

Chicago Tribune: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-islamic-state-syria-ancient-ruins-palmyra-20150824-story.html>

The Independent: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-in-palmyra-militants-release-first-images-showing-destruction-of-baalshamin-temple-10470803.html>

The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/23/isis-blows-up-temple-dating-back-to-17ad-in-unesco-listed-syrian-city>

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/23/us-mideast-crisis-palmyra-idUSKCN0QS0WC20150823>

New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/24/world/middleeast/islamic-state-blows-up-ancient-temple-at-syrias-palmyra-ruins.html>

L'Orient le Jour: <http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/940580/lei-fait-exploser-un-celebre-temple-dans-la-ville-antique-de-palmyre.html>

US News and World Report: <http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2015/08/23/iraqi-officials-say-23-soldiers-sunni-fighters-killed>

Art-Crime: <http://art-crime.blogspot.it/2015/08/further-information-on-dates-of.html>

Scholarly:

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



Baalshamin Temple, after Destruction (ASPA; August 23, 2015)



Baalshamin Temple, during Destruction (APSA; August 23, 2015)



Baalshamin Temple, placement of explosives (APSA; August 23, 2015)



Baalshamin Temple, placement of explosives (APSA; August 23, 2015)





Baalshamin Temple, placement of explosives (APSA; August 23, 2015)

**SHI 15-0125**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Tell Adeh; Tell Ade; Teledan)

**Date of Incident:** August 22, 2015

**Location:** Djebel Halakah, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Village on the edge of the N. arm of the Dj. Halakah, overlooking the plain of Sermeda. This site was described by the Princeton Expedition to Syria 1904-1905:

“This had been, in antiquity, a small town; but few remains of it are now visible, for the modern village has taken the cut stone for its own construction. Fortunately, the church was used as a dwelling in early times, and the rooms added to it then have protected and concealed it from later destruction. The plan is interesting, and unusual in Northern Syria. Half a mile to the northeast is Der Tell 'Adeh. on a hill a hundred and fifty feet higher than Tell 'Adeh, and here our camp had established itself. Here are the remains of a convent of unusual design, including a tower and a handsome rock-hewn sarcophagi<sup>72</sup>.”

**Site Date:** 3rd century BCE to 7th century CE

**Incident Summary:** Evidence of alleged looting activity at the site of Tell Adeh published by APSA.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 22, 2015 APSA published a series of photos documenting illegal excavations at the site of Tell Adeh. Photographs show freshly dug pits and stones removed. No dates were provided for the photographs or the activity.

**Pattern:** Looting

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on these reports.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

APSA: <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/idlib-limestone-massif-illicit-excavations-at-tell-adeh/>

Scholarly:

Butler, Howard Crosby (2013). *Syria Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria*. Second edition. London: Forgotten Books, pp. 64-65.

---

<sup>72</sup> Butler 2013 *Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria*.



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)





Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)



Tell Adeh, evidence of alleged looting (APSA; August 22, 2015)

**SHI 15-0126**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Al Bayada Old Houses

**Date of Incident:** August 25, 2015

**Location:** Al Bayada Neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** This neighborhood contains large houses, as well as the Hammam Bayada and the Bayada Suq. ASOR In-country sources (**Rim's Labidi**) show the area to be to the north and east of the Citadel, and bordered by the streets Al Khandak and Jibb Al-Quebeh.

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** On August 25, 2015, old houses in the Al Bayada neighborhood were destroyed by bombing.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 25, 2015, APSA reported that old houses in the Al Bayada neighborhood of Aleppo were destroyed by SARG barrel bombs.

**Pattern:** Military Activity: Barrel bombs

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on these reports and is continuing to monitor the condition of historical cultural heritage in Syria, with particular emphasis on historic Aleppo.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

APSA: <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/aleppo-al-bayada-old-houses-are-destroyed-after-the-bombing-with-a-tnt-barrel-by-the-syrian-army-25082015/>



Al Bayada Old Houses (APSA; August 25, 2015)



Al Bayada Old Houses (APSA; August 25, 2015)



**SHI 15-0127**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Temple of Bel; Temple of Bal

**Date of Incident:** August 30, 2015

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

**Site Description:** Monuments of Syria:

“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.”<sup>73</sup>

**Site Date:** 17–32 CE, enlarged 80–120 CE

**Incident Summary:** ISIL planted explosives in the Temple of Bel, and detonated them, severely damaging the ancient structure.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 30, 2015 the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that ISIL destroyed parts of the Temple of Bel.<sup>74</sup> Al Jazeera reports that 30 tons of explosives were detonated.<sup>75</sup>

On August 31, the Director General of Antiquities and Museums stated that there was a large explosion within the perimeter of the temple, but the basic structure was intact. However, the extent of the damage is unclear as people are not allowed close to the temple.<sup>76</sup>

On September 1, 2015 satellite images were released showing the destruction of the temple. Of the inner cella, only the front gateway remains. The temple colonnades, main entrance, and surrounding wall all seem to still be standing.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> Burns, R. 1999 *Monuments of Syria* p. 210

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/08/the-islamic-state-destroy-parts-of-the-most-famous-temple-in-palmyra-in-the-countryside-of-homs/>

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/isil-blows-part-bel-temple-syria-palmyra-150830195420900.html>

<sup>76</sup> <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1792> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34107395>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/apsa2011/photos/a.324921080948343.76891.324869057620212/1449157798524660/?type=1&fref=nf> ;

**Pattern:** Intentional Destruction by ISIL militants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will gather more information on the circumstances of the destruction and acquire satellite imagery of the region to develop a timeline of events. An updated incident report will be published as more information, photographs, and satellite imagery become available.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM (August 31, 2015) : <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1792>

DGAM (September 1, 2015): <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1794>

APSA:

<https://www.facebook.com/apsa2011/photos/a.324921080948343.76891.324869057620212/1449157798524660/?type=1&fref=nf>

Al Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/08/isil-blows-part-bel-temple-syria-palmyra-150830195420900.html>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34103994>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34107395>

Les Echos: <http://www.lesechos.fr/monde/afrique-moyen-orient/021292030662-syrie-lei-a-detruit-une-partie-du-temple-de-bel-a-palmyre-1149185.php>

The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/01/satellite-images-reveal-isis-destruction-of-palmyras-temple-of-bel>

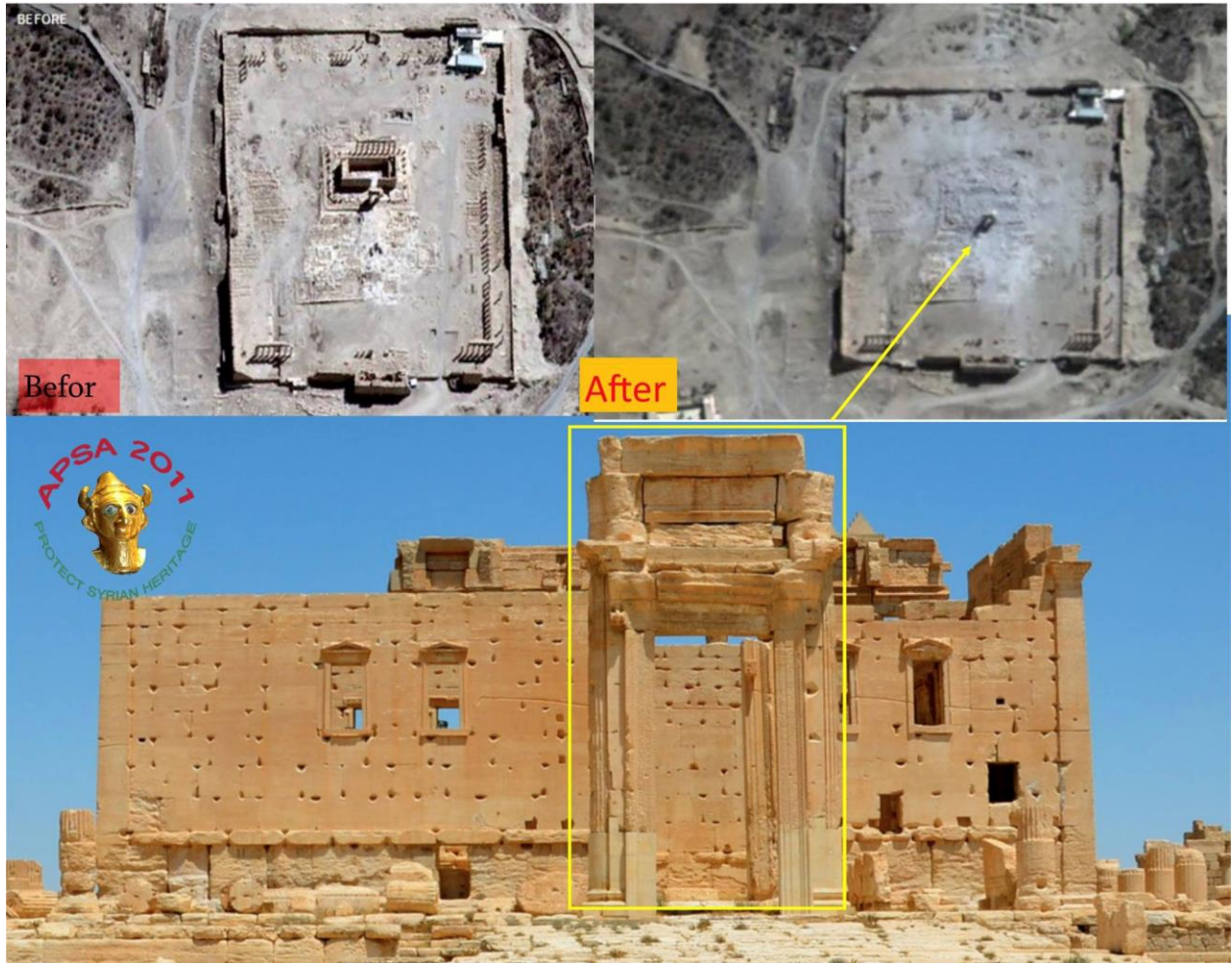
Internacionals: [http://www.ara.cat/mon/LEstat-Islamic-parcialment-Bel-Palmira\\_0\\_1422457831.html](http://www.ara.cat/mon/LEstat-Islamic-parcialment-Bel-Palmira_0_1422457831.html)

SOHR: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/2015/08/the-islamic-state-destroy-parts-of-the-most-famous-temple-in-palmyra-in-the-countryside-of-homs/>

Wall Street Journal: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-blows-up-temple-of-bel-in-syrias-palmyra-1441014202>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross (1999) *Monuments of Syria*. I.B. Taurus & Co. London.



Temple of Bel (APSA; August 31, 2015)

## Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 15-0092

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel in Mosul

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Modern reliefs in a hotel in Mosul

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** ISIL militants deface Assyrian-style relief sculptures in the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel in Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 20, 2015, ISIL posted a series of images showing the destruction of what appear to be Assyrian-style reliefs to the website justpaste.it. A specialist interviewed Mark Altaweel (UCL) told the Daily Star Online that the reliefs destroyed were artistic copies decorating a library in Mosul.<sup>78</sup> ASOR CHI in-country sources have confirmed that the reliefs were indeed modern, but belonged to the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel in Mosul.

ISIL has destroyed many pre-Islamic cultural icons and monuments that it considers to be in conflict with its own ideology. ISIL often posts images of cultural heritage destruction to the website justpaste.it in order to circulate these images to a global audience and solicit international as well as local attention.

**Pattern:** Intentional destruction by ISIL militants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on these reports and will continue to monitor the condition of cultural heritage in Iraq with particular attention directed to areas occupied by militant jihadi-salafists like ISIL.

### Sources:

Online Reporting:

<http://justpaste.it/snt2>

Daily Star: <http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/460484/ISIS-fake-propaganda-destroy-antiquities-Nineveh-Mosul>

---

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/460484/ISIS-fake-propaganda-destroy-antiquities-Nineveh-Mosul>



جانِب من عمل ديوان الحسبة في إزالة المنحوتات الشركية  
Reliefs at the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel, during vandalism (Justpaste.it; August 21, 2015)



جانِب من عمل ديوان الحسبة في إزالة المنحوتات الشركية  
Reliefs at the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel, during vandalism (Justpaste.it; August 21, 2015)



جانب من عمل ديوان الحسبة في إزالة المنحوتات الشركية



Reliefs at the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel, during vandalism (Justpaste.it; August 21, 2015)



جانب من عمل ديوان الحسبة في إزالة المنحوتات الشركية



Reliefs at the Nineveh Owbrawi Hotel, during vandalism (Justpaste.it; August 21, 2015)

**IHI 15-0093**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Abu Bakr Mosque

**Date of Incident:** August 29, 2015

**Location:** Shora, 35 km south of Nineveh, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** On August 29, 2015, ISIL militants bombed a mosque south of Nineveh province and removed historical inscriptions from the front of two churches in central Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 30, 2015 several news outlets reported that ISIL militants bombed the Abu Bakr mosque in Shura District with improvised explosive devices under the pretext of the existence of a tomb inside the mosque. ISIL claims that Islamic shrines associated with tombs propagate idol-worship. The reports added that militants also removed historical inscriptions from the front of the Virgin Mary church and the Chaldean church in the Doctors Street in central Mosul.<sup>79</sup>

**Pattern:** Intentional destruction by ISIL militants.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on these reports and will continue to monitor the condition of cultural heritage in Iraq with particular attention directed to areas occupied by militant jihadi-salafists like ISIL.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Moheet:

<http://www.moheet.com/2015/08/29/2308965/داعش-يفجر-مسجدا-ويزيل-نقوش-كنيستين-و.html>

Iraqi News: <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/isis-blows-mosque-removes-historical-inscriptions-2-churches-mosul/>

---

<sup>79</sup> <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/isis-blows-mosque-removes-historical-inscriptions-2-churches-mosul/>

**IHI 15-0094**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2015

**Site Name:** Church of the Virgin Mary Chaldaeans

**Date of Incident:** August 29, 2015

**Location:** Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Christian churches in central Mosul

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** ISIL militants removed historical inscriptions from the front of possibly two churches in central Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 30, 2015 several news outlets, including Iraqinews.com, militants also removed historical inscriptions from the front of the Virgin Mary church and the Chaldean church on “Doctors Street” in central Mosul.<sup>80</sup> Additionally, the same report stated that ISIL militants booby-trapped the Abu Bakr mosque in Shora district (35 km south of Nineveh) with improvised explosive devices. ISIL has destroyed numerous Christian places of worship and religious monuments in Iraq and Syria.

**Pattern:** Vandalism: removal of historical inscriptions from churches

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information on these reports and will continue to monitor the condition of cultural heritage in Iraq with particular attention directed to areas occupied by militant jihadi-salafists like ISIL

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Moheet:

<http://www.moheet.com/2015/08/29/2308965/داعش-يفجر-مسجدا-ويزيل-نقوش-كنيستين-و.html>

Iraqi News: <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/isis-blows-mosque-removes-historical-inscriptions-2-churches-mosul/>

---

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/isis-blows-mosque-removes-historical-inscriptions-2-churches-mosul/>