



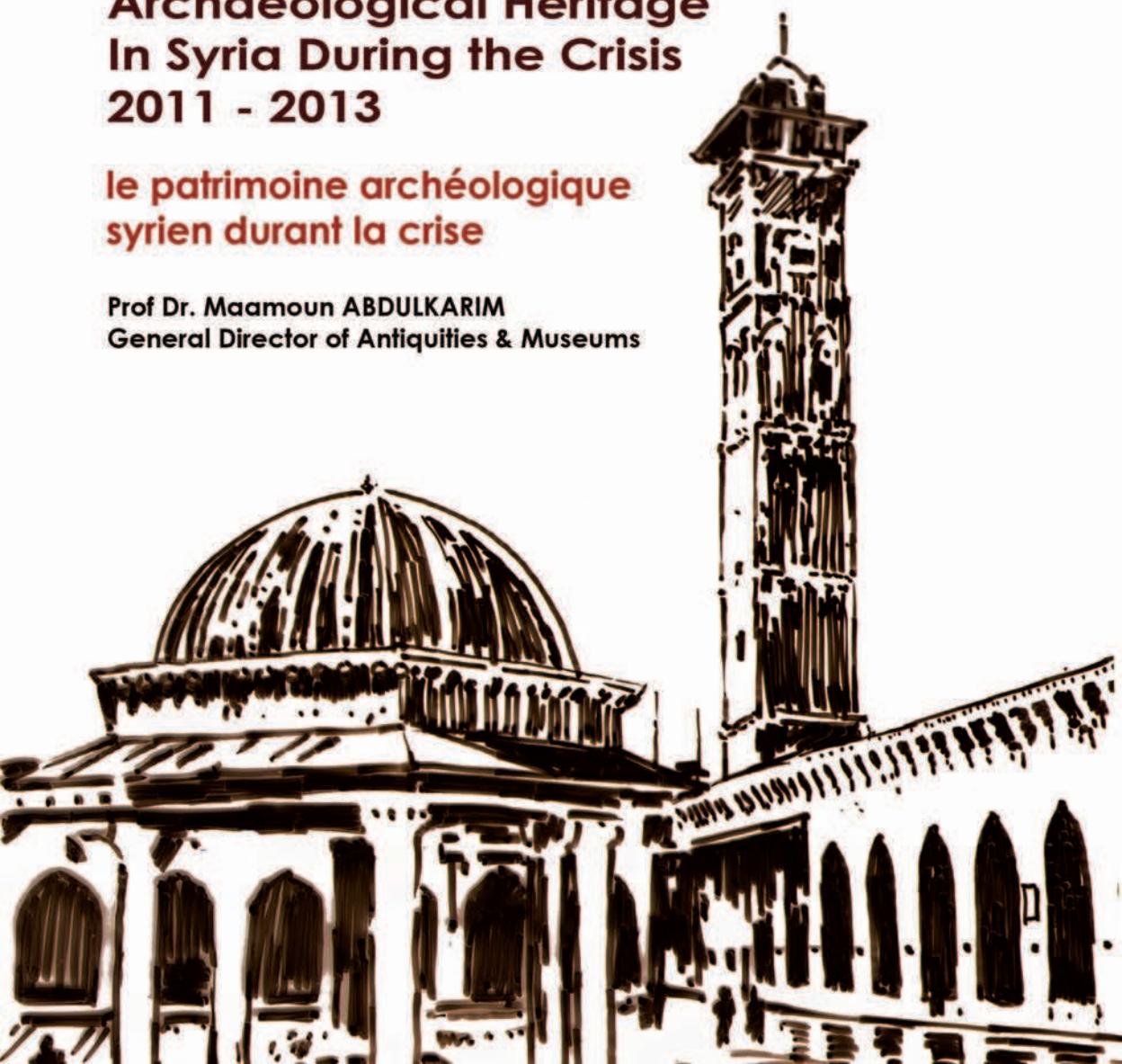
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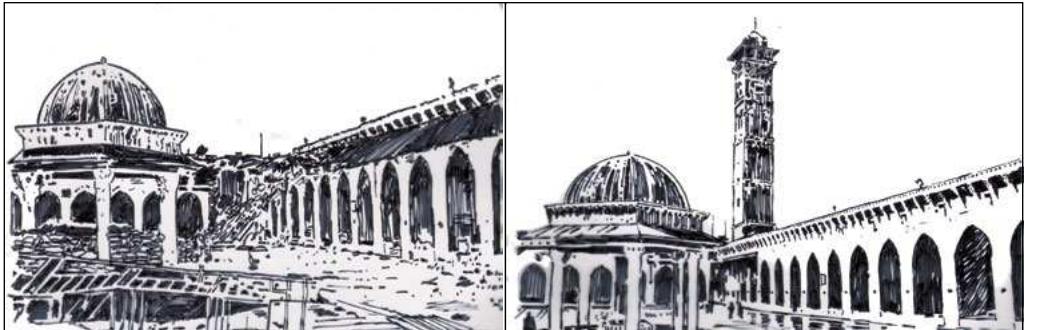
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF ANTIQUITIES & MUSEUMS Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums

Archaeological Heritage In Syria During the Crisis 2011 - 2013

le patrimoine archéologique
syrien durant la crise

Prof Dr. Maamoun ABDULKARIM
General Director of Antiquities & Museums





The Archaeological Heritage in Syria During the Crisis

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General - Director of Antiquities & Museums

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Cover drawings: 'Umayyed Mosque in Aleppo after and before the crisis
Drawing by: Talal Mualla



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the underlaying drawings and documentation throughout this publication derive from two years of didcated efforts by Site Managment Dept. team, working under the direction of:

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Al Mudiq citadel



*Ugarit Statue - Damascus
National Museum*

INTRODUCTION

For almost two years and a half Syria has been witnessing painful events that have negatively affected the details of the lives of all Syrians as well as all sectors including the archaeological sector. For example, a lot of old Syrian cities have been subject to damage and destruction, and some castles and archaeological buildings that are significant, not only in the history of Syria but also in the history of mankind, have been affected, as well

In addition, some archaeological sites have been subject to serious violations and fierce excavations, some of which were carried out in a systematic fashion by armed gangs of antiquities due to the absence of the concerned governmental institutions and the archaeological authorities in some areas. Besides, reports from the departments of antiquities of some governorates warn against the expansion of the destruction zone, especially during the past three months. This destruction affects significant and pivotal sites in the history of Syria and draws attention to a probable perpetual loss of some components of the Syrian archaeological heritage.

In response, the DGAM has been making unremitting efforts to reduce the impact of the current crisis on the antiquities and has succeeded in protecting and securing all Syrian museums together with their holdings in addition to returning some of the stolen artifacts. Moreover, cooperation with members of the local community has led to the protection and safeguarding of numerous archaeological sites.

Thus, in order to pass on the message of the DGAM as regards the current situation of the Syrian archaeological heritage, the documentation of the damage besetting it and the measures taken to safeguard it and reduce and avoid the impact of the current events on it, we have settled on publishing the paper presented by the DGAM at a high-level meeting held at the UNESCO's headquarters in Paris, which was attended by Ms Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General; Mr Lakhdar Brahimi, UN League envoy for Syria; heads of international



Fresco - Damascus National Museum

organizations involved in heritage conservation in the world, namely Mr Stefano De Caro, Director-General of ICCROM, Ms Hanna Pennock, Acting Director-General of ICOM and Mr Philippe Allard, Director-General of ICOMOS, Mr. Samir Abdulac and representatives of the INTERPOL, WCO, EU and UNESCO experts.

With respect to this, the DGAM would like to express its deep gratitude to the local community all over Syria who have shown immediate and overwhelming response and have proved that they enjoy a high level of maturity in dealing with the antiquities, defending and caring for them since these antiquities represent the cultural unity of Syria and its peoples common history.

In addition, the DGAM would like to thank its staff and employees who have been working in conflict zones since the beginning of the crisis, and who have put their lives and their families' lives at risk. As well, the DGAM considers those people to be the unknown soldiers who have defended the antiquities in their areas, and who have been cooperating with the local community and have kept in touch with the central administration in order to provide them with the information which has been the core of each DGAM's report. Those people have spared no effort to reduce the impact of the crisis on our antiquities, the essence of our pride and dignity. To those people, the DGAM owes a lot of respect and gratitude.

The DGAM stresses the fact that it is committed to objectivity, scholarship and precision in documenting the extent of the damage the Syrian archaeological heritage has been subjected to. Also, the DGAM continues to enforce the protection procedures for the Syrian museums whose secure and intact existence is considered a great victory that was achieved as a result of solidarity between Syrians and their belief in their homeland and history.

It is worth mentioning that our people have united in order to defend the history and dignity of our nation. Similarly, we hope today that the end will bring back security and stability to Syria and to its people peace and love which will clear the way for more reconciliation after all the tragedies and destruction they have been through due to the crisis; and will allow Syrians to think their way to a better future for a country that deserves to take first place amongst world nations and to establish a presence befitting the history and civilization of this land, the cradle of humanity.

Prof. Dr. Maamoun ABDULKARIM
General - Director

مدينة حمص القديمة *Homs old city*

1. *Julia Palace*
2. *Khalid Ibn Al-Walid mosque*
3. *Um Al-Zinar Church*
4. *Crac des Cheavaliers*



قصر جوليا



جامع خالد بن الوليد



كنيسة أم الزنار



قلعة الحصن



Damasus - National Museum

Syria has been home to some of the most ancient civilizations on earth, which have left us exceptional objects, important texts and buildings and the remains of villages and cities as a priceless archaeological heritage. Its lands contain some of the richest, most diverse and most numerous archaeological sites in the Middle East.

This extraordinary richness is very sadly at stake today because of the crisis that has raged in the country for more than two years. Archaeological sites in Syria have been and are now suffering from serious damage and gross violations. Old Syrian cities, castles and other buildings have been subjected to damage and destruction. These monuments are significant in the history of Syria but also in the history of human civilization.

*Hama - Apamia*

Following the painful events in the country and the absence in some regions of the government institutions concerned and the archaeological authorities, the dangers that menace the archaeological sites are escalating. Some of these sites are subject to increasing illegal and systematic excavation carried out by armed gangs who are robbing antiquities with the cooperation of hundreds of people hired locally and from neighboring countries, who threaten residents with arms to prevent them from interfering. These groups know what to look for and where to find what they seek. It is a wake-up call to the irreparable damage which is being inflicted upon a number of the most valuable historical sites in the world and which may endanger more.

The DGAM in Syria has been making constant efforts to reduce the impact of the current crisis on Syria's ancient sites and antiquities and has achieved

*General Directory of Antiquities & Museums*

success on several levels thanks to the efforts of its officials in all governorates. One of these achievements is protecting the contents of all museums in Syria and transferring them to safe locations; the most important achievement is the positive result obtained by cooperating with members of the local communities, which has led to the protection of many archaeological sites.

1- THE STATUS QUO

The map shows the archaeological sites across Syria that have been subject to violations. Based on the information available, dozens of the damaged sites are located in the countryside of Aleppo and Idlib in northern Syria and in Deir ez-Zor and Raqqa in the east.

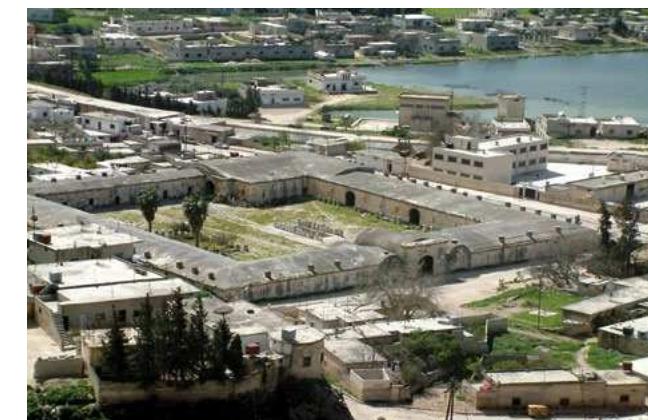
1-1 MUSEUMS:

In general the museums in Syria are in good condition, as the DGAM has been successful in safeguarding their contents except for some rare cases; however, armed conflict has caused physical damage to some museums.

1.1.1 DAMAGE:

Physical damage has affected the architectural structure of some museums, such as the Aleppo Museum and the Deir ez-Zor Museum. For example, some windows and doors were smashed, and some suspended ceilings were damaged due to explosions and mortar shells in areas adjacent to these two museums. In addition, the Hama and Maarrat Nu'man Museums as well as the Museums of Folklore in Homs and Deir ez-Zor suffered physical damage as a result of conflicts. The walls of the Palmyra Museum were damaged after being hit by rockets fired from the neighboring orchards.

Thus, these buildings with cracked and damaged walls are in need of reconstruction and rehabilitation; consequently, the DGAM has taken some emergency measures to provide temporary protection to the museums following the damage that has occurred.

*Hama -Apamia museum*

1.1-2-THEFTS:

- Two artifacts have been stolen, a gilt bronze statue of the Aramaean period from the Hama Museum and a stone marble piece from the Apamea Museum.
- Historical pieces from Aleppo's Museum of Folklore have been stolen, namely glassware, Baghdadi daggers, six spears and some garments.
- 17 pieces of pottery in addition to some clay dolls were stolen from the exhibition hall of Jaabar Castle.



Sculpture looted from Jabaar Museum



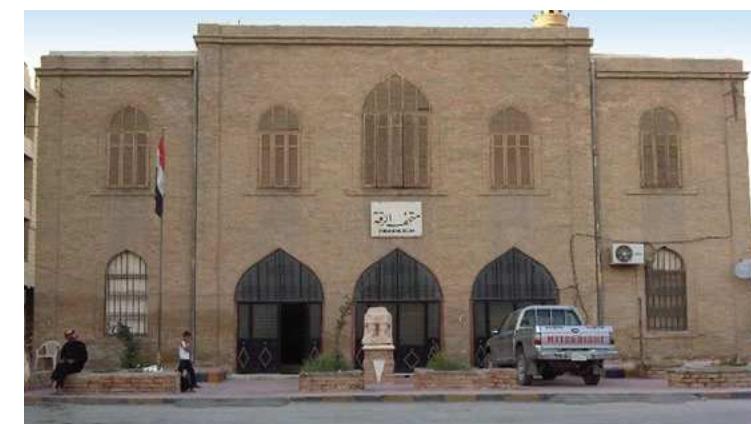
A golden, Aramaic statue dating to the 8th century BC was stolen from Hama museum

- There is unconfirmed information concerning the theft of some of the assets of the Homs Museum, although reports from the Department of Antiquities of Homs did not verify this information. These reports indicated that there was difficulty in assessing the situation precisely; the department confirmed that the situation was not grave.

- Due to the events that occurred in the city of Raqqa and the absence of governmental and cultural institutions, robbers seized six boxes stored in the Raqqa Museum's warehouse which contained archaeological objects. Previously, an armed group moved three boxes containing artifacts which belong to the National Museum to an unknown location under the pretext of protecting them. Efforts made by the officials of the department have not so far been successful in implementing the return of these boxes.

- 30 objects were stolen from Maarrat Al-nouman Museum almost a year ago, after an armed group stormed the building. The objects included small dolls and statues made of clay and mud, broken pottery and amulets. However, all the mosaics in the museum are safe and unscathed.

The DGAM is coordinating with social leaders in Raqqa and Maarrat Nu'man; in addition, employees of both these departments of antiquities are working with volunteers from the local community to implement the return of the archaeological objects, which is considered likely.



Al-Raqqa museum



Der ez Zor - Dura Europos visitor center

1-2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

1-2-1- CLASHES:

Some historical sites have become battlefields due to violent conflicts which caused damage to buildings and castles.



Aleppo's old Al-zahrawi souk

For example, hundreds of antique shops burned down in Aleppo's old souks, the minarets of both the Umayyad Mosque



Some of the damages to the Crac des Chevaliers castle in Homs.

Since the beginning of the violent events, the DGAM has focused on attempting to protect the archaeological heritage of Syria and shield it from danger as much as possible. The DGAM has also attempted to avoid using the archaeological heritage for any political agenda. Accordingly, the DGAM appeals to all parties to respect the inviolability of the archaeological sites, a source of pride for all Syrians, in view of Syria's international commitment to the protection of cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict.



An archaeological church in Daraa



The western façade of the Temple of Bel.



Al-Fadael mosque - Bustan Al-Kaser - Homs

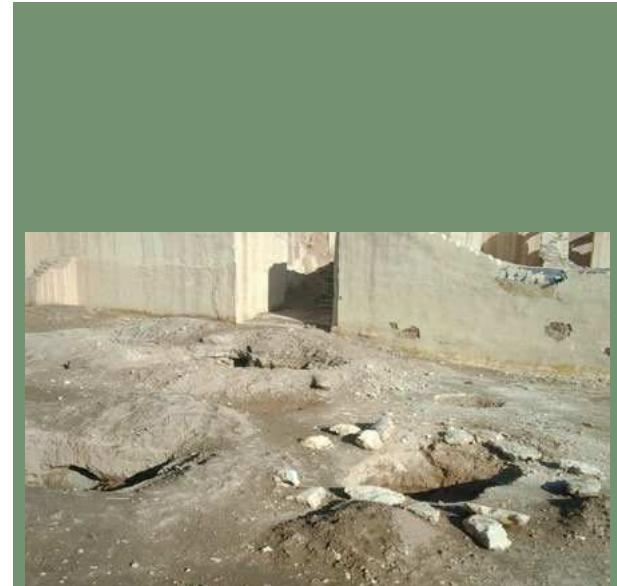
1.2.2 ILLEGAL EXCAVATION:

The danger threatening archaeological sites in Syria is increasing because of the absence of the government institutions concerned and the archaeological authorities in certain areas. Several archaeological sites have been seriously damaged by illegal excavations, some of which were carried out by armed gangs, particularly in areas near borders or where violent conflicts have occurred.

- The sites of Deir ez-Zor, Mari, Dura Europos, Halbia, Buseira, Tell Sheikh Hamad and Tell es-Sin have all been damaged by thieves who excavate for objects which are sold to local and foreign dealers.
- Many violations that have damaged the archaeological levels at Tell al-Bay'ah and other neighboring tell sites at Raqqa have been recorded.



Illegal digging in Dura Europos



Illegal digging in Ebla

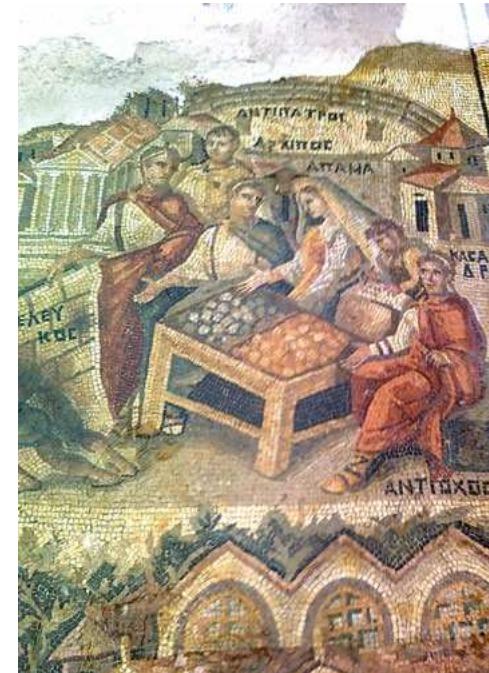


Illegal digging in the church of Bakirha in Wastani Mountain in Idlib

- The site of Ebla has been subject to illegal excavation for some time, causing the destruction of some parts of the site. Efforts made by members of the local community have succeeded in controlling the situation temporarily, but it has been observed that illegal excavation has taken place during the past month.
- Some sites in the Idlib region, within the area of the dead Cities, which are inscribed on the World Heritage List (Gebel al-Aala, Gebel al-Woastani and Gebel Barisha) have been subject to destruction and serious damage, in particular some of the unique churches. Information has been received that illegal excavations are being carried out at these churches by gangs of thieves coming from Turkey. Kafr Oqab, according to our information, is the most damaged site in the region.

- The site of Apamea is considered to be one of the sites most affected as a result of the ongoing pillage at the site, which has occurred in the eastern, northeastern and western sectors of the city. A comparison between two photos taken by satellite, the first taken before the beginning of the crisis in Syria and the second on April 4th, 2012, shows the extent of looting and destruction at the site of Apamea due to illegal excavation.
- Illegal excavation has become very common in the city of Daraa with hundreds of hired men and armed antiquities thieves taking part in excavations inside the al-Omari Mosque and at the archaeological sites along Wadi al-Yarmouk and at Tell al-Ash'ari, which will cause irreparable damage if continued.
- Large areas of Tell Qaramel near Aleppo were destroyed by means of heavy machinery; other sites in this region are permanently damaged.

Reports from the antiquities departments of some governorates warn against the expansion of the destruction zone engineered by organized armed gangs at the sites mentioned above, especially during the past three months. This destruction affects sites that are highly significant in the history of Syria, and demonstrates that tragically, some components of Syria's archaeological heritage are lost forever.



Secret excavations, random digging and illegal operations to steal mosaic paintings in the archeological city of Apamia.



Digs inside al-Omari Mosque in Daraa.

Consequently, on 3rd July 2013, the DGAM called upon international organizations, members and heads of foreign archaeological missions, archaeologists and world intellectuals to act at once and search for efficient mechanisms that ensure that pressure will be put on all parties participating in the destruction of sites and the looting and smuggling of Syria's antiquities, in order to stop these tragic losses. The DGAM also asked UNESCO to put pressure on neighboring countries to reinforce their security measures, to control the borders in order to stop antiquities smugglers, to fight trafficking of archaeological objects and to combat illegal excavation.

Efforts made by the officials of the DGAM in several regions have led to success. Hundreds of archaeological sites have been saved from destruction and excavation, thanks to cooperation by the local communities and the intervention of their leaders. Although in some cases joint efforts have not been successful, these cases are not disastrous; for example, the local community has played a key role in protecting Maarrat Nu'man Museum. In Raqqa, the Department of Antiquities there continues to coordinate with the central administration in Damascus and receive instructions, despite the violent events in the city.

2- MEASURES TAKEN

Following this review of the present situation of the archaeological heritage of Syria, which is subject to constant change, We would like to provide a brief summary concerning the measures that have been taken in order to reduce the risk and the damage as much as possible:

2-1- LOCAL MEASURES:

1. The museums were emptied of their objects, and all artifacts were stored in safe and secure places. In addition, burglar alarms were installed in some museums and fortresses, and the number of guards and patrols was increased.
2. The DGAM has taken a series of steps to involve all Syrians in defending the archaeological and architectural heritage that represents their shared history and common memory. It has launched a national campaign to raise people's awareness of the importance of this heritage and their role in protecting it irrespective of any political or intellectual differences that may divide them today. The campaign is addressed to all 23 million Syrians, without exception, to engage them in safeguarding the ancient heritage of which they are proud.
3. The staff and officials of the DGAM in all governorates are working hard to cooperate with local communities, with mediators and with social, religious and intellectual leaders to protect hundreds of archaeological sites and safeguard them from the repercussions of the current events. Of course, success rates vary from one place to another based on people's support, which makes hope the dominant factor.
4. The DGAM held a workshop on “fighting against illicit trafficking of cultural property: capacity-building and awareness-raising”, on the 12 and 13 May 2013, to address the topic of the smuggling of artifacts, with the participation of representatives of all ministries and authorities involved in the protection of Syrian cultural property, as well as NGOs, members of the local community, researchers, artists and writers within the field.

5. The DGAM has been able to recover more than 4000 archaeological objects during the past year through confiscations carried out by the bodies concerned (the police, the customs, the governorate, the municipalities and other public bodies) in Damascus, Tartus, Palmyra, Homs, Hama, Deir ez-Zor, etc.
6. The DGAM has recorded electronically the contents of all Syrian museums; a team of DGAM experts is working on the recording process and on comparison between the state of Syria's archaeological heritage before the crisis and today. The team is also digitally archiving the DGAM's information on the damage that has taken place, using images and videos shown on the internet, provided by the departments of antiquities in the governorates or sent by members of the local community from the affected areas.
7. The team of experts is currently designing a map of Syria's damaged cultural heritage as a step towards the creation of a digital map based on the Geographic Information System, which will allow specialists to identify their priorities regarding maintenance and restoration operations in the post-crisis period. The process is intended to be carried out according to work plans compatible with international standards that ensure coordination between all governmental bodies within the archaeological field. This will also include the involvement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the process of rehabilitating the archaeological sites and national museums in the future, as well as the enhancement of cooperation with international partners, with the local and foreign authorities concerned and with the foreign archaeological expeditions working on the sites.
8. The DGAM has launched its website both in Arabic and English (www.dgam.gov.sy), which is updated on a daily basis using information and news concerning the damage inflicted on Syria's archaeological heritage during the crisis.

2-2- INTERNATIONAL MEASURES:

1. The DGAM is currently coordinating with INTERPOL and providing reports on what has been lost and what has been found in neighboring countries, or even published, such as photos believed to be of Syrian archaeological objects which thieves have obtained through illegal excavation at remote sites. As a result, cooperation with INTERPOL has been successful in fighting the trafficking of Syrian antiquities. For example, 18 Syrian mosaic panels were confiscated at the Lebanese border, and 73 Syrian artifacts smuggled to Lebanon to be sold by antique dealers were also confiscated.
2. The DGAM is cooperating with international organizations in the exchange of ideas and information. The initial event in this cooperation was a workshop organized by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) followed by an international workshop held in Amman “to address the issue of illicit trafficking,” which was initiated by the UNESCO Amman office with the participation of representatives of archaeological authorities from the neighboring countries and international organizations that proposed a number of recommendations, one of which was completion of the Emergency Red List on Syrian cultural objects.
3. The DGAM has called upon UNESCO to address the damage affecting Syria's archaeological sites and to urge the neighboring countries to prohibit illicit trafficking of Syria's archaeological heritage.
4. The archaeological authorities are still working towards signing the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention and the UNIDROIT Convention.



Direktorate-General of Antiquities and Museums Held a Workshop on (Capacity-Building and Awareness-Raising on the Fight against Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property).

3-REQUIREMENTS

What must be done urgently is the following:

1. Support the efforts of the archaeological authorities towards issuing an international resolution by the UN Security Council that bans illicit trafficking of Syria's cultural property (following the Iraqi example), to address the issues of theft and of smuggling and that of recovering and returning the stolen and smuggled artifacts in the future.
2. Put pressure on neighboring countries to control their borders and close them against thieves and smugglers.
3. The guards of the archaeological sites must be paid for their service over the past two years. The economic sanctions have affected Syria and the archaeological sector negatively and brought communication with foreign missions to a halt; a solution to this problem must be found so that these missions can fulfill their obligations and pay the guards.
4. Provision of satellite images and data is necessary. International organizations and foreign missions can help the DGAM by activating exchange of information and providing the directorate through modern technology with satellite images and data on the archaeological sites that have been damaged. The satellite images of Apamea, taken before and after the beginning of the crisis, are invaluable in showing the extent of the damage and destruction of the site. This information will be of great value for recording the facts, for present and future protection of the sites and for future restoration and rehabilitation.
5. The DGAM calls upon UNESCO and the organizations concerned with preserving world archaeological heritage to consider the safeguarding of Syria's cultural heritage as a top priority in the post-crisis period and to resume the implementation of the resolutions of the Amman workshop.
6. Commitment to the establishment of a fund to save Syria's sites and monuments that are on the World Heritage List in order to enable implementation of the tasks identified in the plan of action over the short term.

The main concern of the DGAM at this stage is to protect Syria's cultural heritage with all its components and to safeguard it as much as possible. It belongs to all Syrians, whatever their views and political orientations. For the DGAM, the battle is about the protection of the history, heritage and memory of a nation.

The DGAM wishes to unify all Syrians concerning their cultural and archaeological heritage, to urge them to take responsibility in the protection of this heritage against theft, damage and obliteration and to create awareness in 23 million Syrians that any attack on their heritage is an attack on their civilization, their national identity and their shared memory. Following this vision, the DGAM has striven to be professional, scientific and effective; its officials have remained united in all governorates, and their efforts have resulted in success in many cases.

I am proud to be the director of this institution, which has managed to mobilize much energy despite the risks; I am also proud of my colleagues, who never hesitate to report for duty every morning to protect the archaeological heritage of their country at a time when such a simple step can be very dangerous. Although the dangers besetting Syria's archaeological heritage are growing beyond our capabilities and limited resources, they cannot defeat our will.

Thus, we call on the international community to provide assistance and support to our efforts; the world must understand that Syria's archaeological heritage is part of the cultural heritage of humanity and that the loss of any of its components is a loss to all mankind. The time has come to take action before it is too late to protect our archaeological sites and objects against a disaster that is painful for all.



Protection of Syria's Cultural Heritage in Times of Armed Conflict: ICOMOS - ICCROM e-learning course for Syrian cultural heritage professionals - January 2013



Aleppo : Mar Elias church

The current events in Syria today incite all of us to do our best together to put an end to the damage being inflicted. In spite of the painful circumstances, we are not going to give up. Our participation today comes from our faith in our ability, as Syrians who love Syria and its great history, to save our culture. We must stop those who steal, sell and buy our antiquities and who destroy our sites. Together with you we can reclaim our heritage and rebuild our damaged monuments.

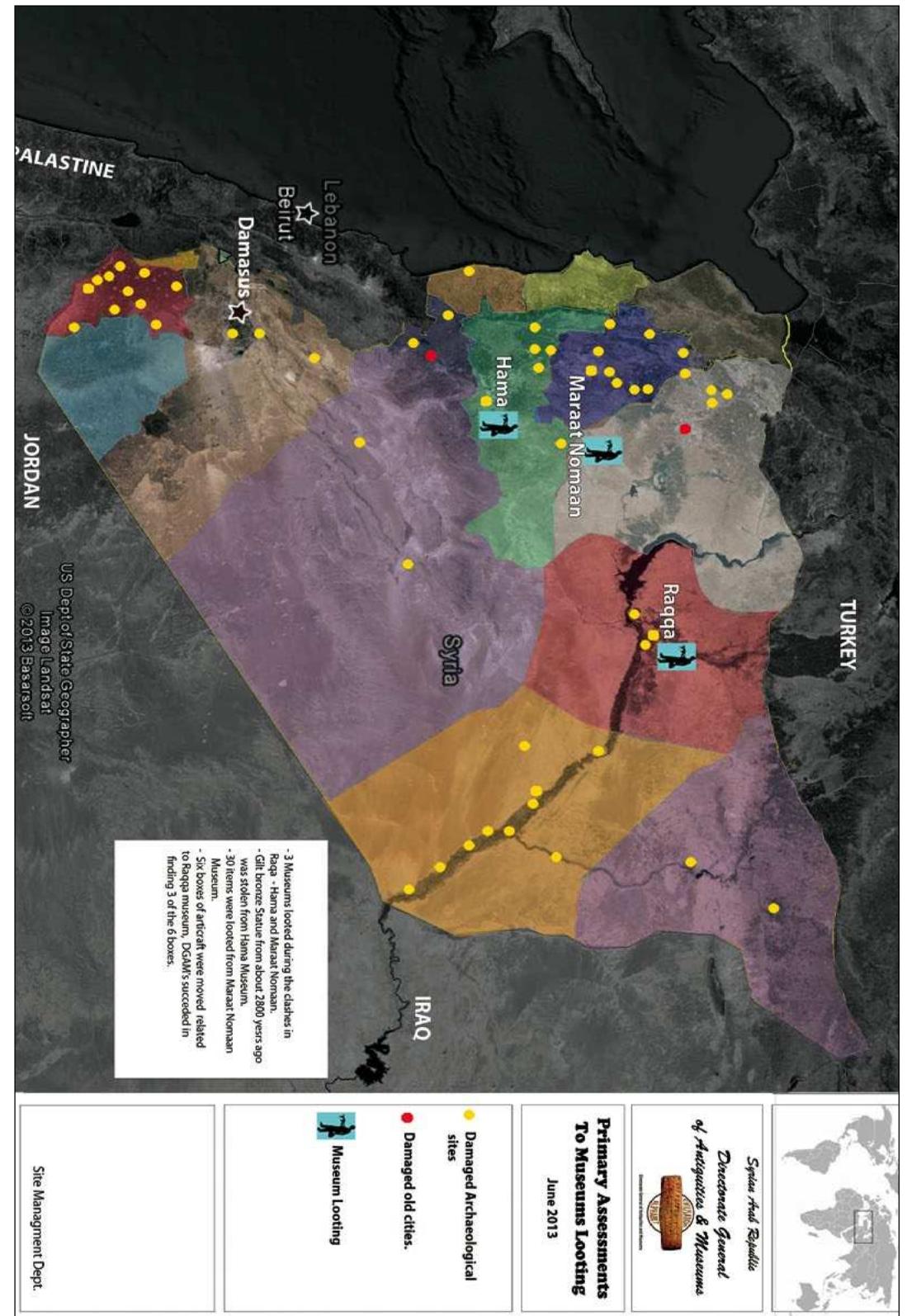
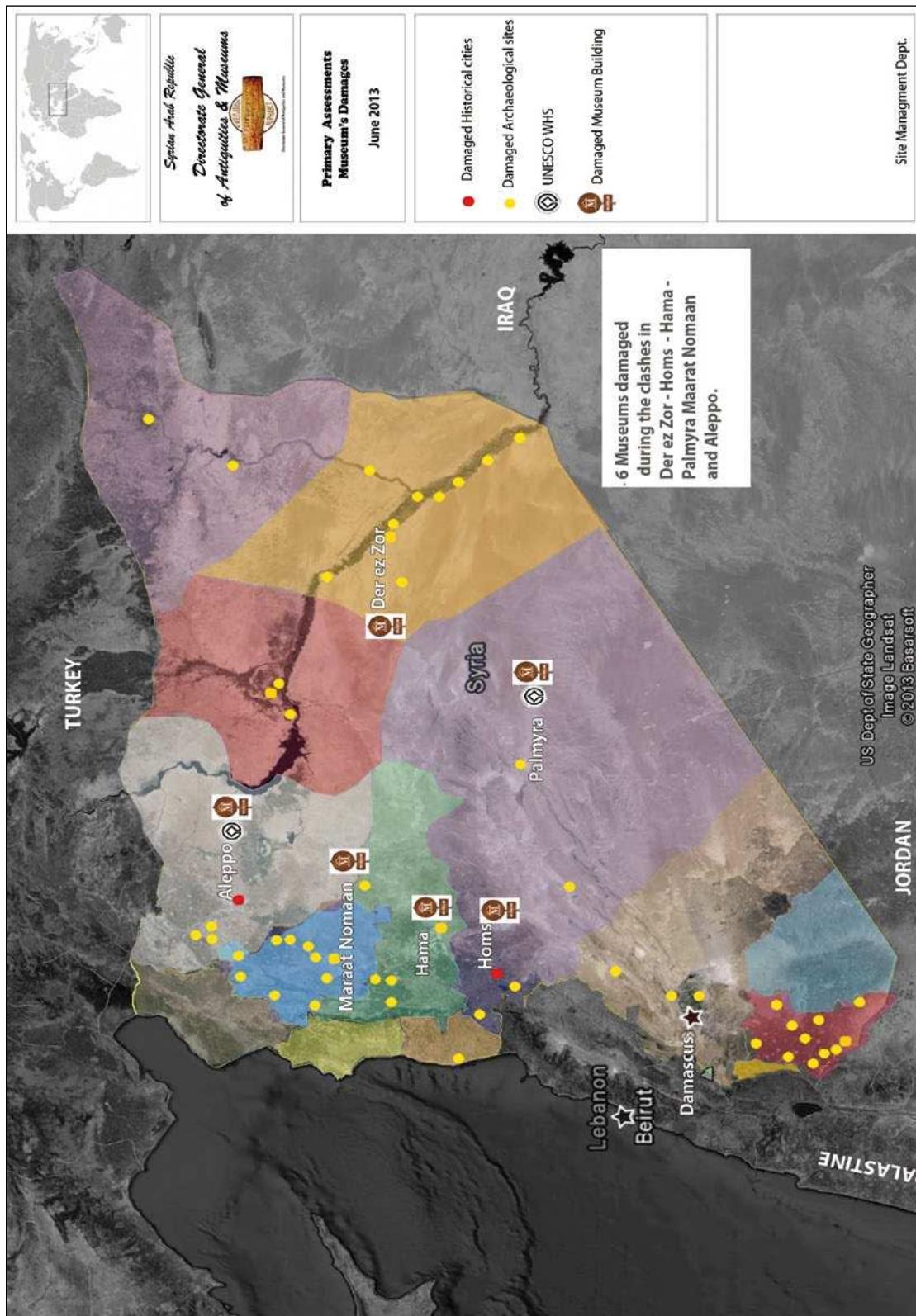
Aleppo old city مدينة حلب القديمة

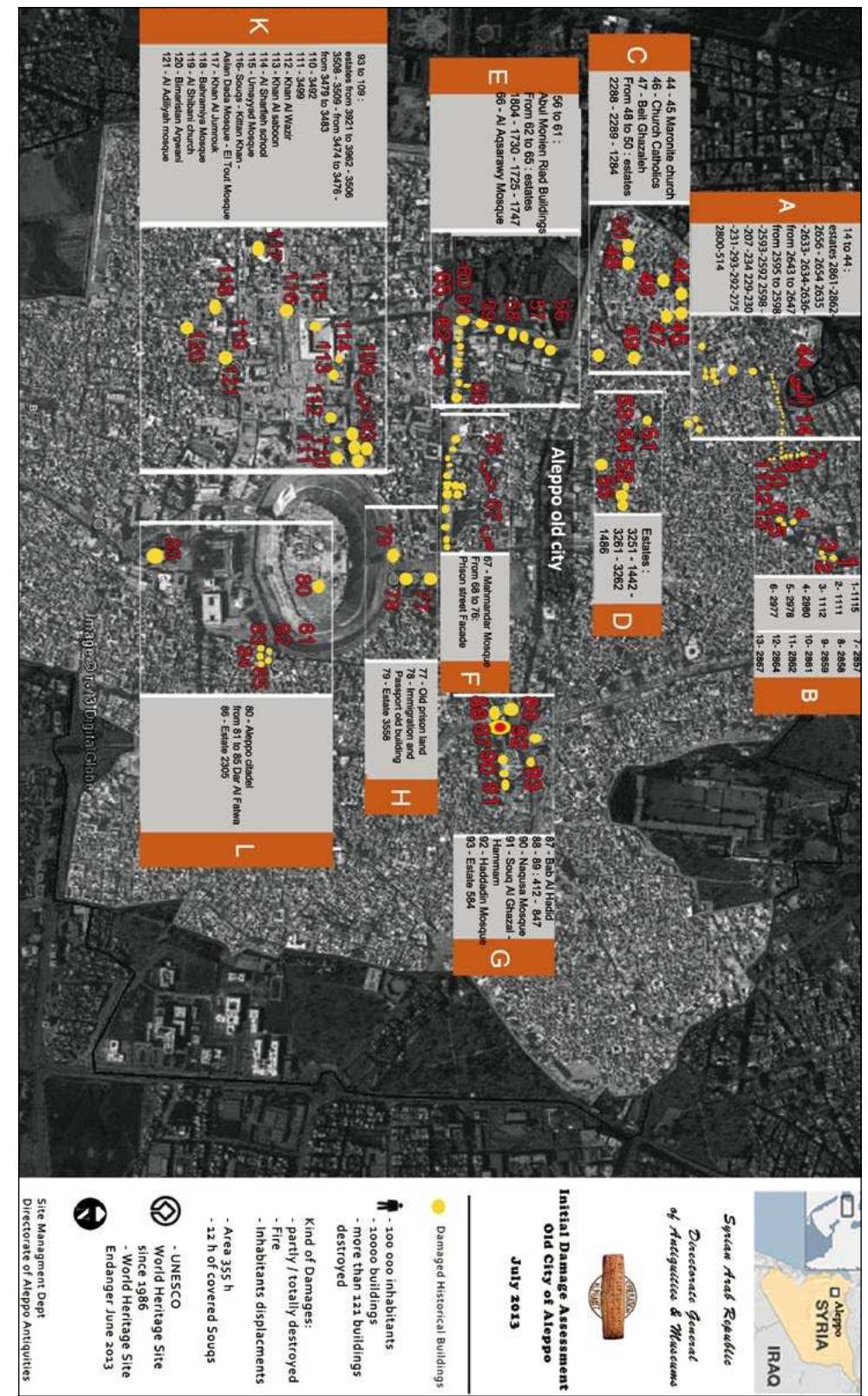
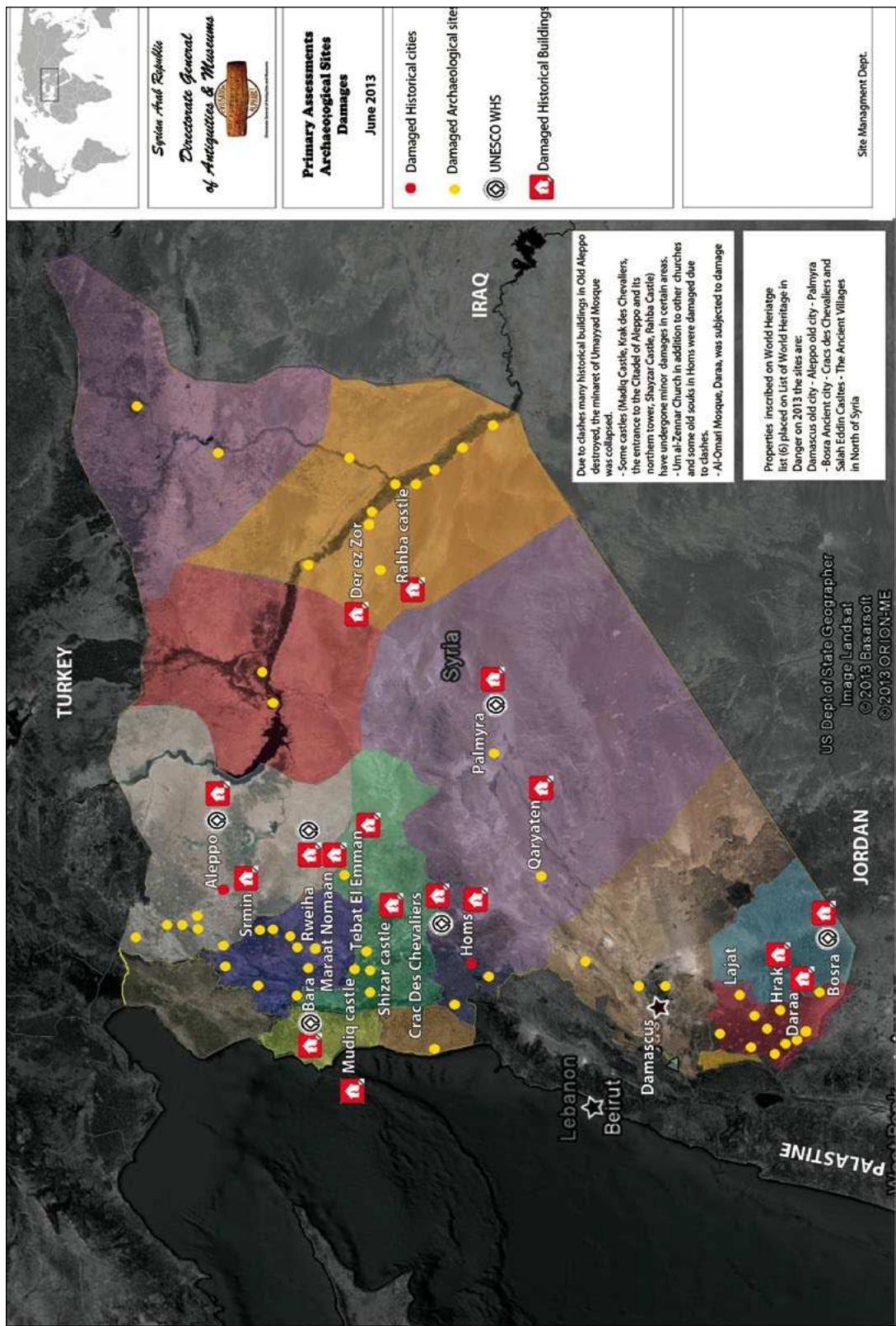
1. Western Gate in Umayyed Mosque
2. Al Adliyeh mosque
3. Aleppo old city - Gallooum Neighborhood
4. Shibani Church

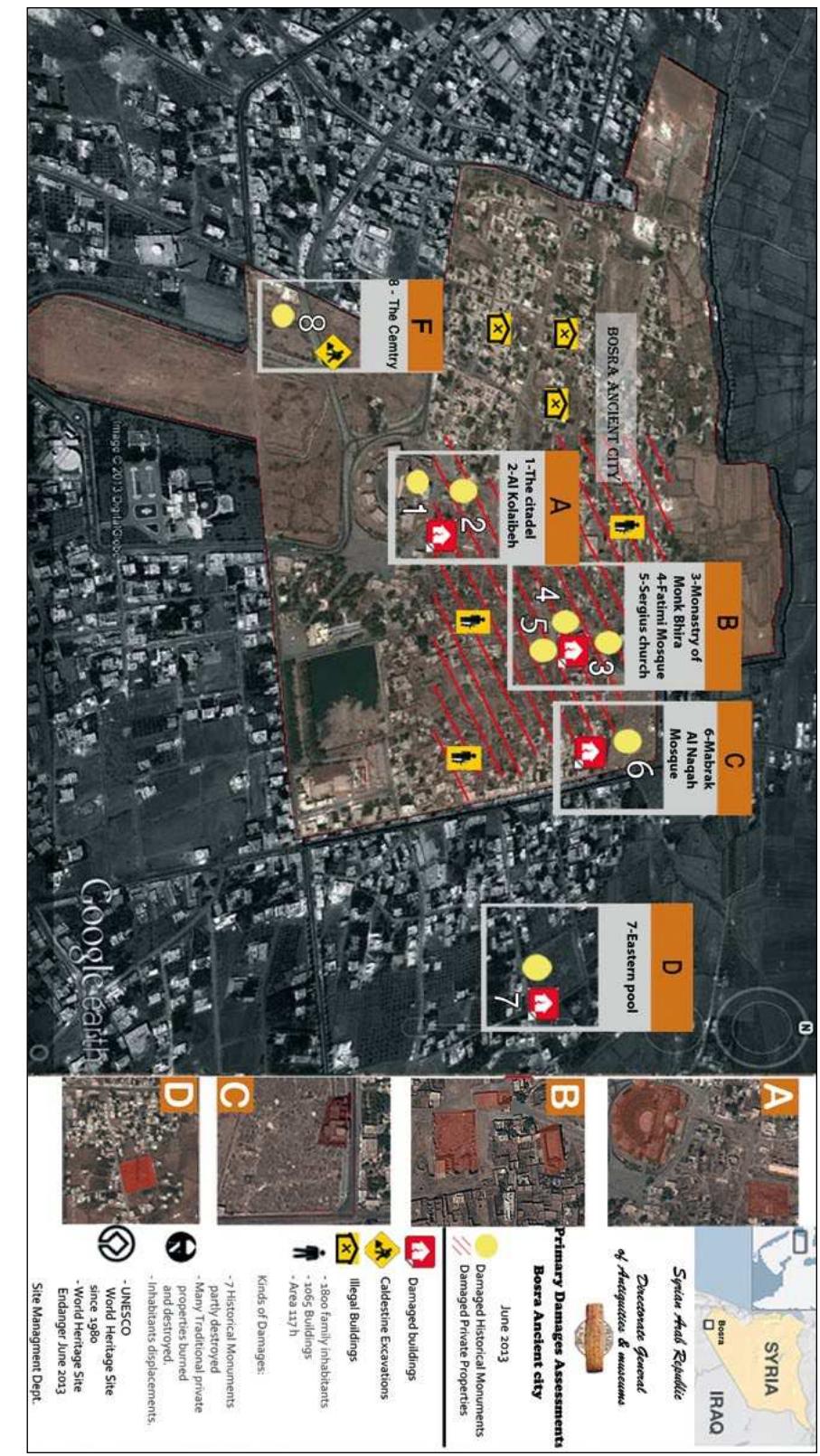
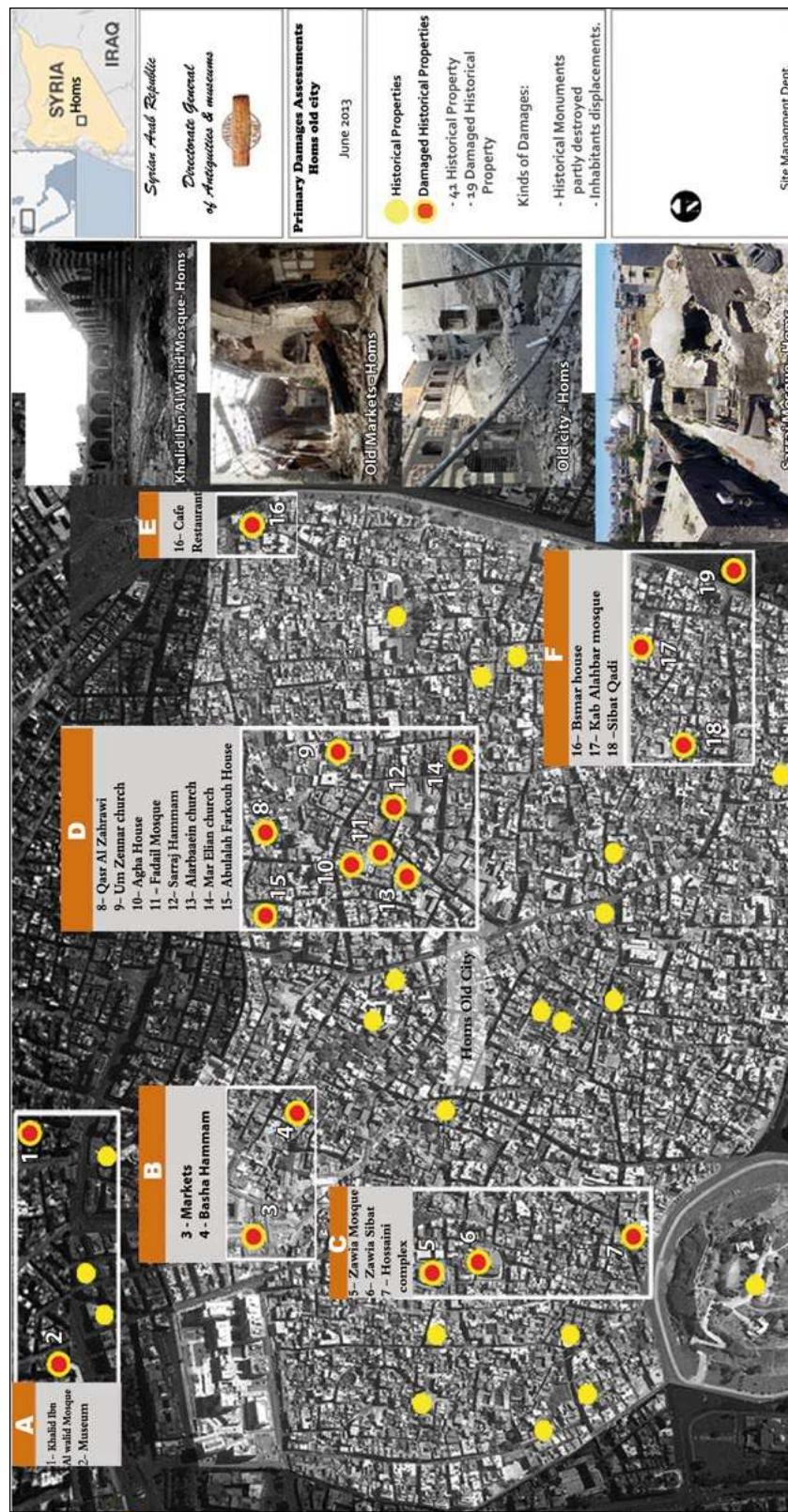


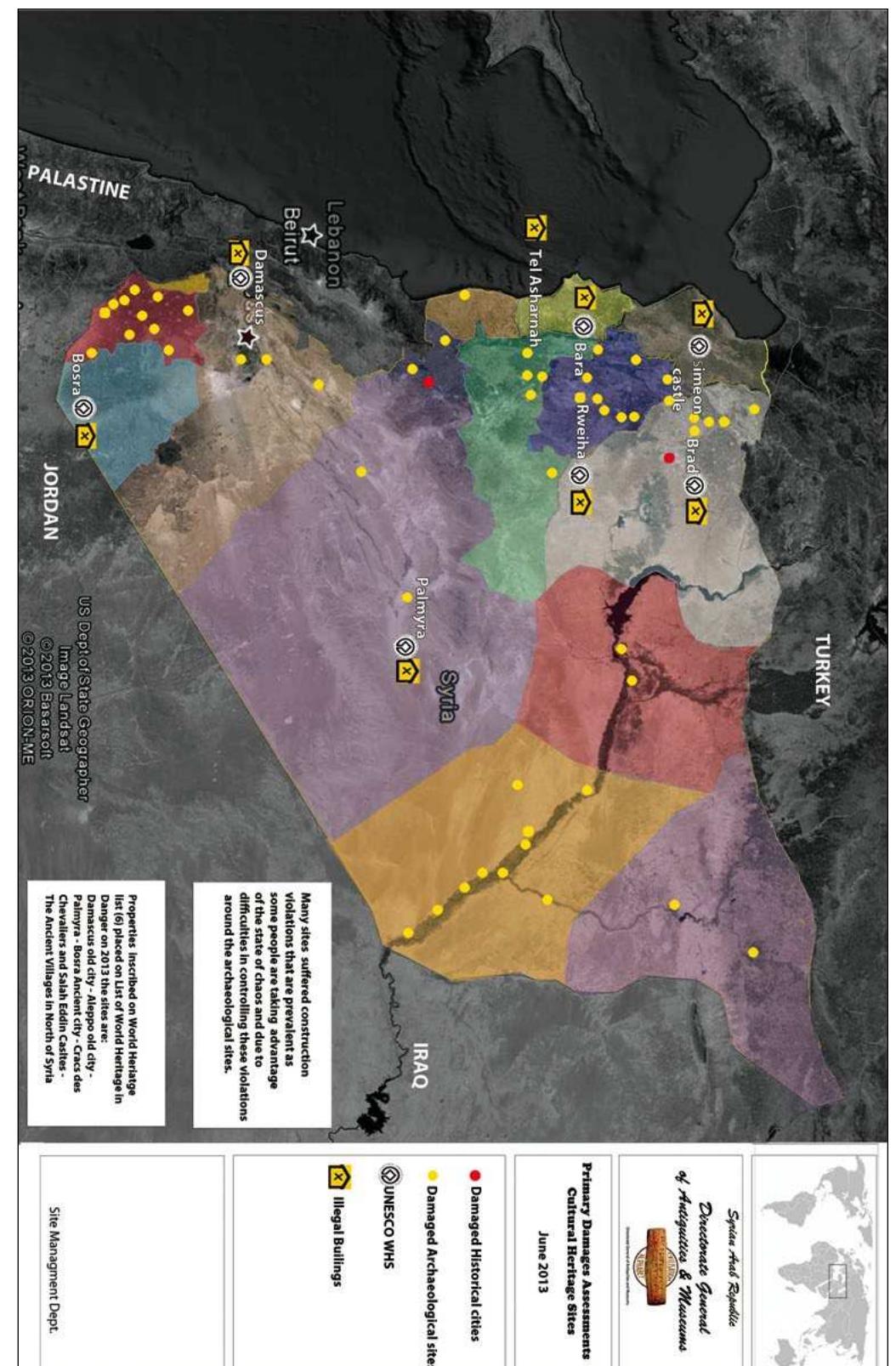
Archaeological Maps

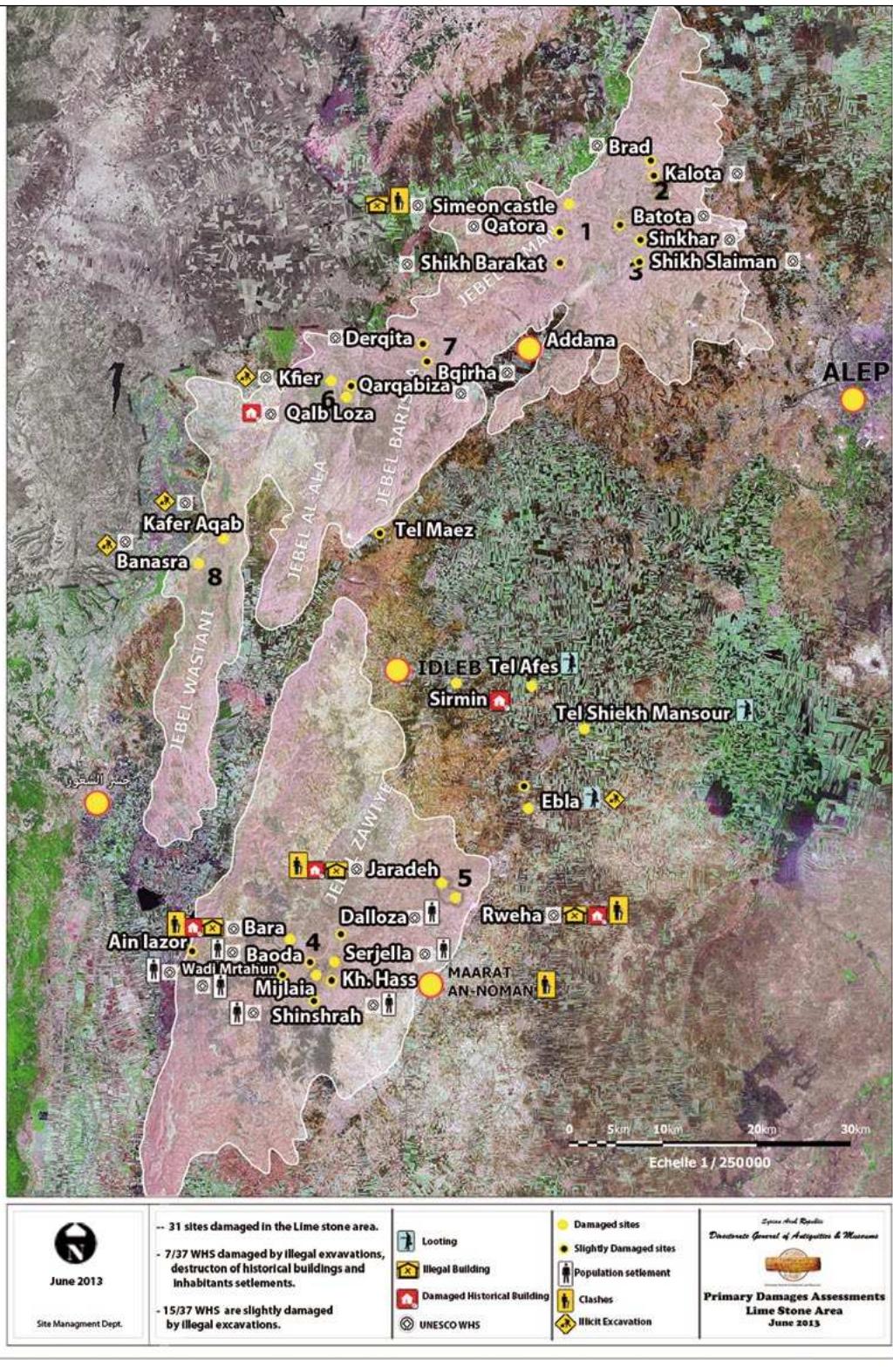
Cartes Archéologiques







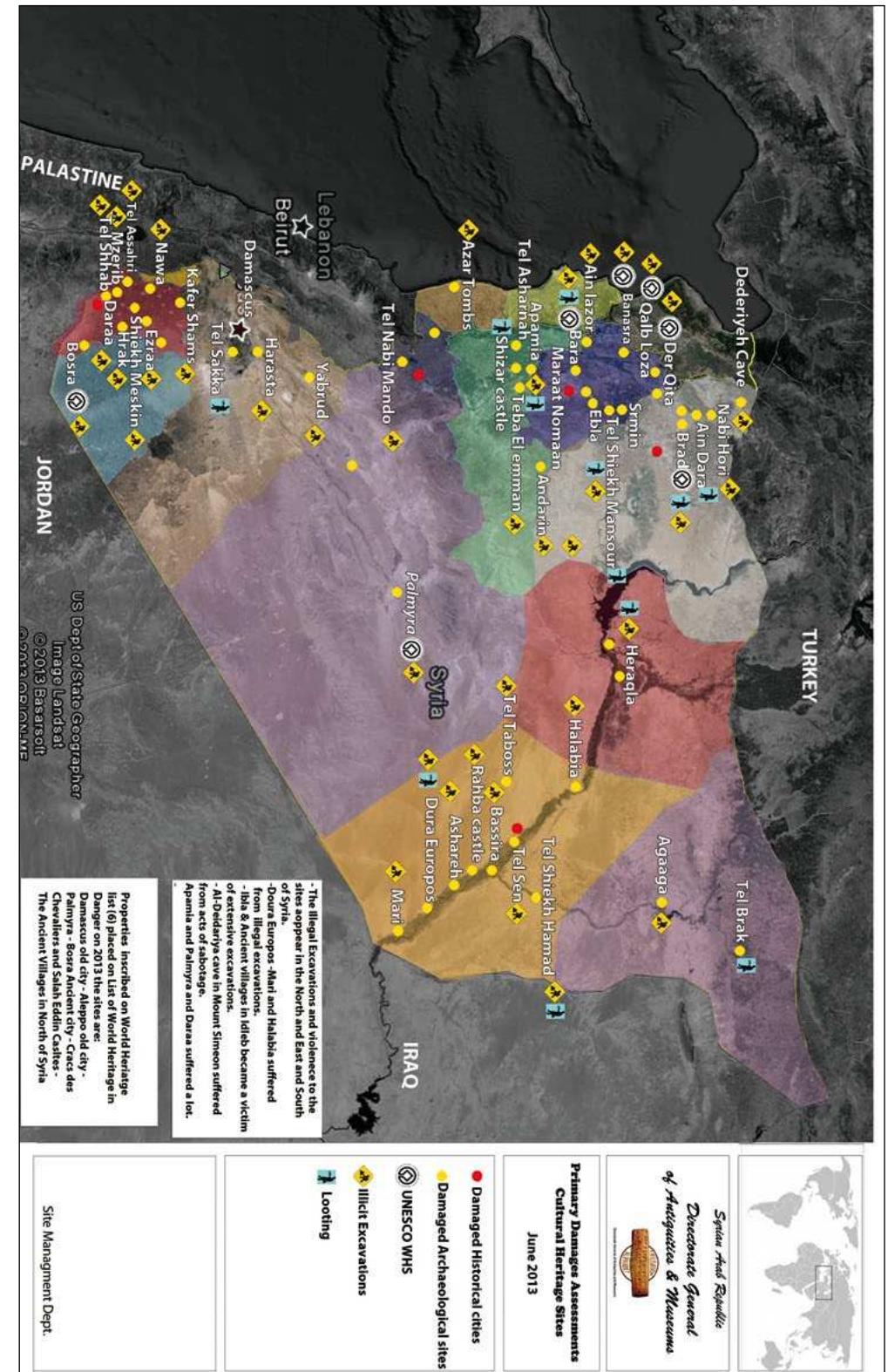


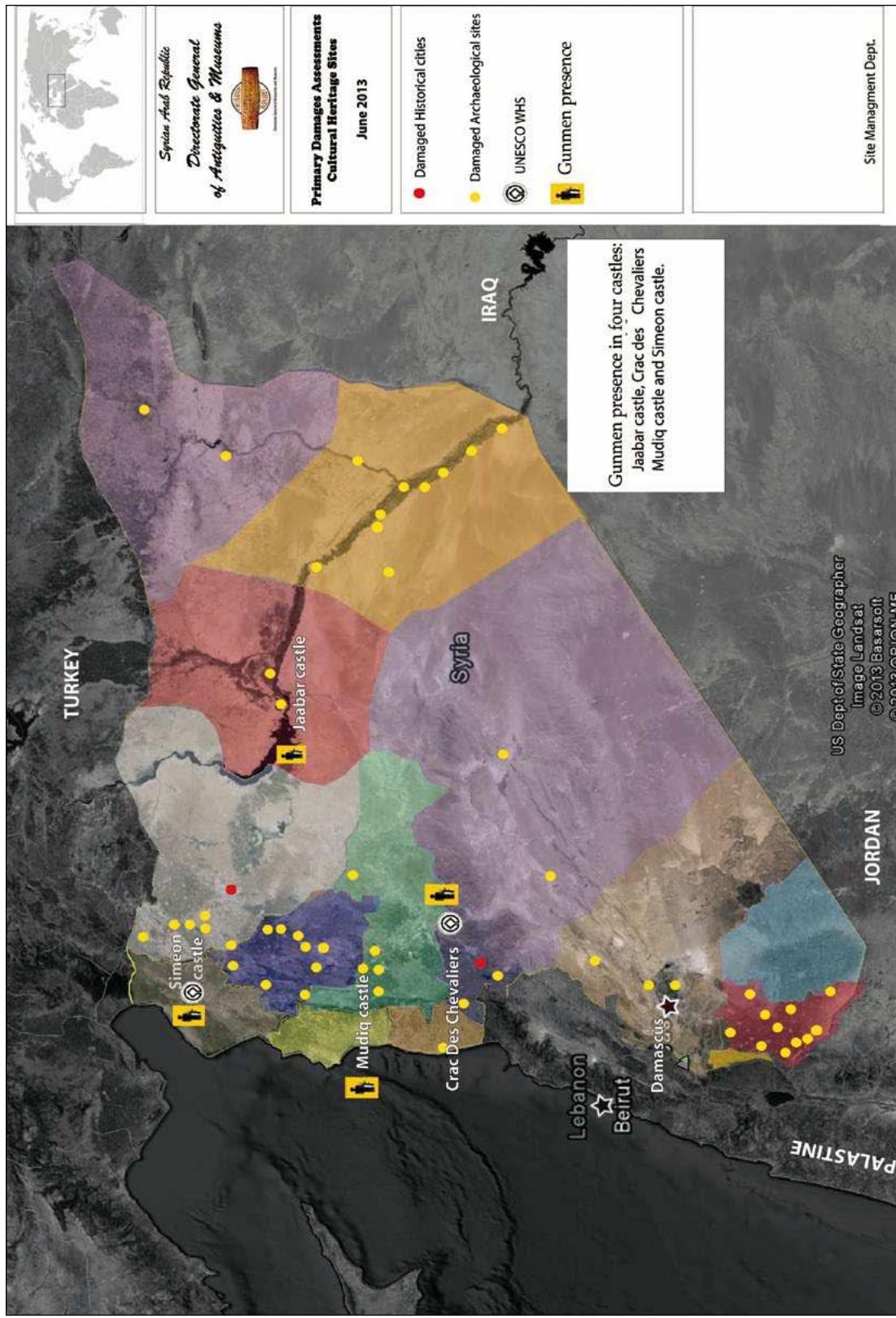


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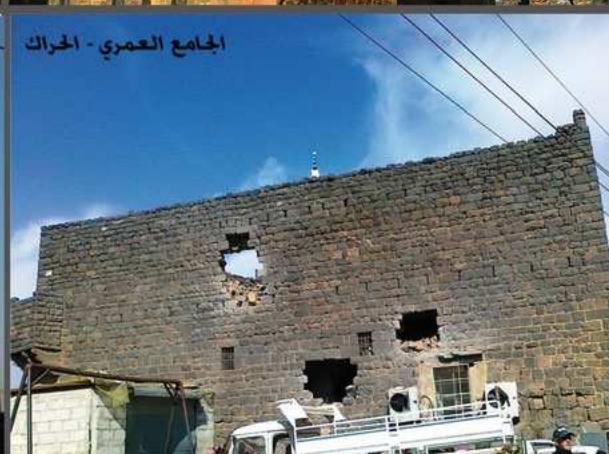
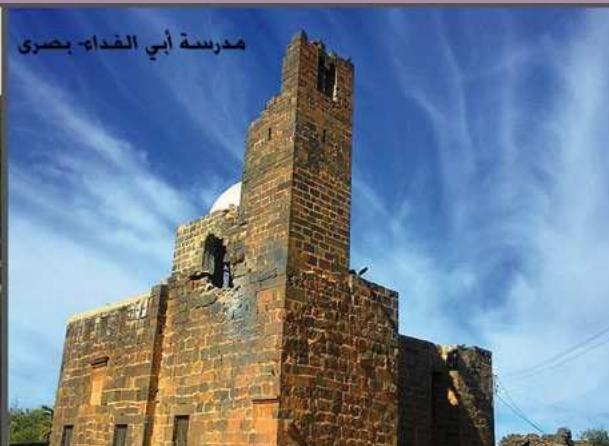
- 31 sites damaged in the Lime stone area.
- 7/37 WHS damaged by illegal excavations, destruction of historical buildings and inhabitants settlements.
- 15/37 WHS are slightly damaged by illegal excavations.





Daraa**درعا**

1. Traditional House in Bosra
2. Abi Al Fida school in Bosra
3. Karak mosque in Daraa
4. Omari mosque in Hrak



le Musée National de Damas

La Syrie couvre un territoire où sont nées et où se sont développées de grandes civilisations, parmi les plus anciennes du monde. Aussi bien les manuscrits anciens que l'archéologie témoignent de la richesse de notre terre. Nos côtes, nos djebels, nos fleuves, nos steppes regorgent de sites archéologiques parmi les plus riches du Proche-Orient.

Aujourd'hui, après plus de deux ans de crise, ces richesses sont en danger. Les destructions ont été nombreuses. Les villes, les tells, les citadelles, les lieux de cultes, les monuments, ont subi des dégradations parfois irréversibles. Ce n'est pas simplement l'histoire de la Syrie que l'on essaye de détruire aujourd'hui, mais une page entière de l'histoire de l'humanité.

Il ne se passe pas un jour sans que nos services n'apprennent l'existence d'exactions. Partout où l'insécurité règne, des nouvelles de destructions ou de pillages nous arrivent. Nos services, tout comme la population syrienne, ne peuvent faire face à des bandes armées parfaitement organisées pénétrant en Syrie impunément.



Le Citadelle de Jaabar

Et pourtant, en dépit des risques, La Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées multiplie les actions dans tous les domaines pour limiter ces crimes. Car ne nous y trompons pas, il s'agit bien de crimes, rien d'autre. Partout où nous pouvons intervenir, directement ou indirectement, nous le faisons, c'est l'ensemble de nos services qui sont mobilisés.



La Direction générale des Antiquités et des Musées

C'est grâce au dévouement des fonctionnaires syriens que la protection et la sécurité d'une partie de notre patrimoine ont pu être mises en œuvre. Parfois dans l'urgence et au prix de leur vie, des fonctionnaires et des bénévoles ont réussi à mettre à l'abri les collections archéologiques de nos musées. De même, grâce, là encore, à des bénévoles et aux administrations locales, des sites archéologiques ont pu être sauvagardés et protégés.

1- LA SITUATION ACTUELLE

1-1 LES MUSÉES:

Pour les musées, la situation générale est relativement bonne, grâce à la sauvegarde des

Sur cette carte sont indiqués les sites archéologiques affectés plus ou moins gravement par les destructions et les pillages sur l'ensemble de la Syrie. Selon les rapports disponibles, les sites concernés se comptent par dizaines, en fait il s'agit de tous les sites connus. Ils se concentrent dans les régions des départements d'Alep et d'Idleb au Nord de la Syrie. Au centre, ils se concentrent à Apamée et dans les départements de Deir-el-Zor, et de Raqqa à l'Est. Enfin dans la région de Daraa au Sud du pays.

collections en des lieux sûrs. Cependant, les musées eux mêmes ont été endommagés par les combats :

1-1-1-LES COMBATS:

Plus particulièrement, cela concerne surtout les musées d'Alep, de Deir-el-Zor, de Hama, de Homs, et de Maarat el Naaman qui ont été pris pour cible durant des combats. Les dégâts des locaux vont du bris des fenêtres, à la chute des plafonds ou encore au soufflement des portes. Dans certains cas plus graves, c'est la structure même des bâtiments qui a été touchée ce qui nécessite une réparation d'urgence. Lorsque cela a été possible, nos services ont assuré ces restaurations.

En dehors des musées, il faut aussi évoquer le cas des remparts historiques de Palmyre qui ont été délibérément pris pour cible par des obus.



Les Dégâts divers constatés dans le Musée archéologique de Mara 'at al-No'man



le Musée d'Apamée

1-1-2- LES PILLAGES :

Accompagnant les combats ou les troubles, des pillages parfois systématiques, ont été perpétrés.



Une Statue en Bronze - Musée d'Hama

- Depuis le début de la crise, les musées syriens ont connus quelques cas de vols de pièces archéologiques. Un premier a eu lieu au Musée de Hama, où une statue en bronze couverte d'or, datée de la période araméenne, a disparu. Un second vol s'est produit au Musée d'Apamée et concerne un objet en marbre.
- Des vols ont également été commis dans le musée ethnographique d'Alep. Cela concerne des récipients en verre, des poignards (Baghdadi), des pointes de flèches et quelques vêtements.
- On a enregistré également, le vol de 17 objets en céramique. Parmi eux se trouvent des figurines en terre, déposées dans une salle d'exposition dans la citadelle de Jaabar.
- En ce qui concerne le musée de Homs, des informations peu claires ont été divulguées sur le vol de collections archéologiques. La direction de l'archéologie de cette ville nous assure qu'il n'y pas eu de réel pillage. Cependant, il faudra attendre un inventaire complet du musée pour apprécier la situation.

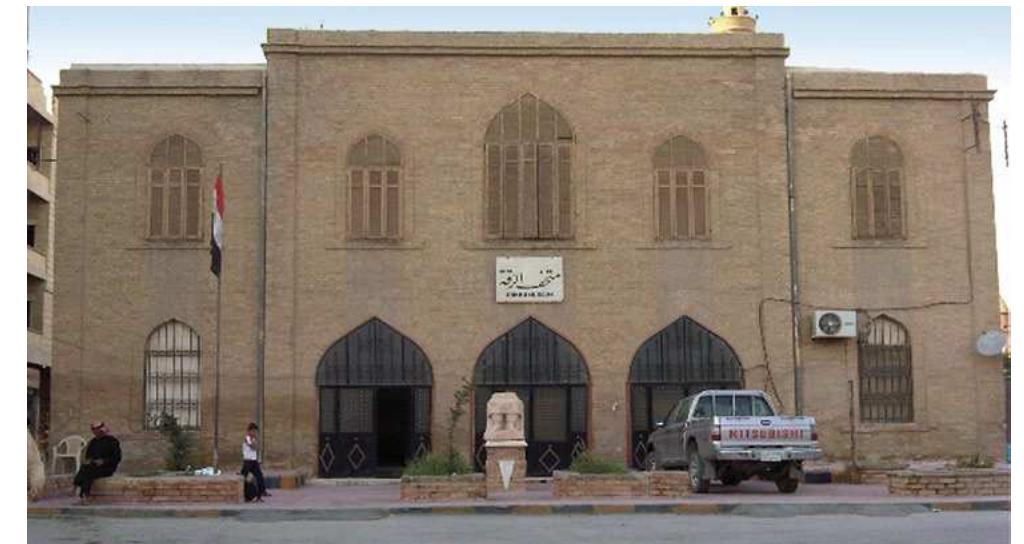


objets en céramique - citadelle de Jaabar

- En raison des événements sécuritaires qu'a connus la ville de Raqqa et l'absence des institutions gouvernementales et culturelles concernées, des malfaiteurs ont mis la main sur six caisses contenant des pièces archéologiques ayant été conservées dans les dépôts de la réserve du musée. De plus, antérieurement à cet incident, trois autres caisses contenant des pièces archéologiques appartenant à ce même musée ont été transportées par des groupes armés, au prétexte d'une meilleure protection. Il est important de signaler ici que les employés du musée ont tenté de dialoguer avec ces groupes pour les récupérer. Malheureusement sans succès.



Le Centre des visiteurs - Dura Europos



Musée de Raqqa

- Par ailleurs, suite à l'intrusion d'un groupe dans le musée de Maaret el Naaman, il y a environ 1 an, 30 pièces archéologiques appartenant au Musée ont été volées. Il s'agit de figurines et de petites statuettes en terre et en céramique, ainsi que des fragments de céramiques et des amulettes. Autrement, toutes les mosaïques qui distinguent ce musée se n'ont pas été touchées et se trouvent actuellement en sécurité.
- J'aimerais signaler ici que la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées tient et garde des contacts étroits avec la société civile et l'administration de villes comme Raqqa et Maaret el Naaman où un réseau de citoyens est en place pour la protection de notre patrimoine.

2- LES SITES ARCHÉOLOGIQUES

2-1 LES COMBATS :

La situation des sites archéologiques et des monuments est encore plus préoccupante. Lorsque ces derniers sont proches des zones de combats, ils deviennent des champs de bataille, voire des cibles.



Alep - Dommages causés à l'ancien souk

C'est le vieux souk d'Alep, daté du XIV^e siècle et classé par l'UNESCO en 1986 qui a été incendié. C'est la destruction des deux minarets de la mosquée des Omeyyades de cette même ville d'Alep, ou encore ceux de la mosquée Al-Omari à Deraa.



Alep - État des lieux de la Grande Mosquée des Omeyyades

Des dégâts importants ont également été causés lors des affrontements à la citadelle du Crac des Chevaliers, à la Citadelle Al-Madik, à l'église Oum el-Zenar et d'autres églises de Homs.



Homs - états des lieux du Crak des Chevaliers

À Palmyre, des atteintes superficielles ont touché plusieurs endroits du mur intérieur de la façade Ouest du temple de Bel. Des éclats d'obus ont également endommagé certaines colonnes du temple.



Homs : états des lieux de l'église Umm al-Zenar (Notre-Dame à la Ceinture)



Palmyre : états des lieux du site archéologique



Deraa : La Mosquée al-Oumeri

Autant de blessures à la mémoire d'un peuple.

- La Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées de Syrie (ministère de la Culture) a eu pour objectif, depuis le début des événements qui se déroulent dans le pays, d'en neutraliser l'impact politique sur le patrimoine archéologique syrien. Le but est de préserver du danger ce patrimoine et d'éviter son exploitation à des fins politiques, qui finiraient par le détruire. La Direction Générale a demandé à tous les acteurs impliqués dans la crise de se tenir à l'écart des sites archéologiques et d'en respecter le caractère sacré. Car le but est de défendre l'histoire du pays et sa mémoire commune. Celui-ci émane de la profonde conviction de l'importance de son héritage archéologique et culturel et de son caractère sacré. C'est la source même de rassemblement et de fierté du peuple syrien voire de sa distinction dans le monde.
- Et en m'adressant à vous aujourd'hui j'ajouterai qu'à chaque destruction, c'est aussi une part de VOTRE histoire qui disparaît.

2-2 LES FOUILLES CLANDESTINES :

J'évoquerai maintenant dans cette liste déjà longue, trop longue, les fouilles clandestines. Là encore, le pire se passe dans les régions qui sont hors du contrôle de nos services et surtout dans les zones frontalières. Des bandes armées extrêmement violentes pillent systématiquement les sites archéologiques. Je ne citerai que les plus connus tant la liste est longue.

- À Deir el Zor, les pilliers ont causé de terribles destructions aux sites archéologiques, notamment à ceux de Mari, de Doura Europos de Halabia de Bousseira, de Tell Cheikh Hamad et de Tell el Sin. Nous savons déjà que la vente des objets archéologiques volés profite à des «marchands» locaux et étrangers.
- À Raqqa, plusieurs sites, dont celui de Tell Al Bey'aa ont subi de nombreux pillages, détruisant ainsi ses couches archéologiques.
- À l'Ouest, c'est le site d'Ebla dont une partie est irrémédiablement détruite. Des actions courageuses des habitants de la région ont tenté de sauver le site et sont parvenues à le préserver quelque temps. Je me permets ici de leur rendre hommage. Les pillages ont cependant repris.

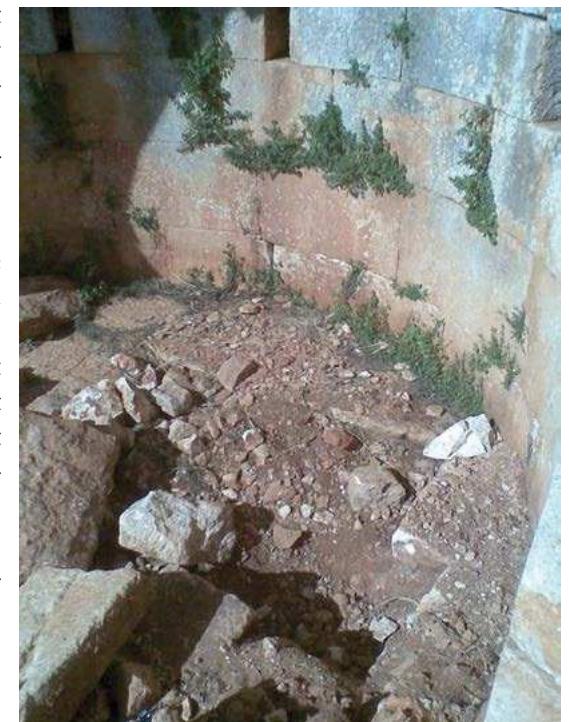


Tell Mardikh - Ebla : Pillages et destructions

- Certains sites des villes mortes situés dans le département d'Idlib, inscrits sur la liste du patrimoine mondial (djebel A'laa, à la djebel Wastani et à celui de Baricha) ont été exposés à des destructions et à des grands dommages, notamment en ce qui concerne les églises renommées qui s'y trouvent. Les informations disponibles indiquent que les fouilles clandestines ciblent les autels des églises. Nos informations indiquent aussi que c'est le site de Kafar Oukab qui a subi le plus de destructions dans la région par des groupes de criminels franchissant la frontière turque.
- Le site d'Apamée, victime de pillages ininterrompus, est celui qui a été le plus été détruit. Les secteurs ravagés se concentrent d'une part dans les zones Est et Nord-Est de la ville, d'autre part dans la zone Ouest. Une comparaison entre deux photos satellites prises avant et après les agressions montre le degré de gravité des destructions.



Djebel Zawia - Bara :Pillage et fouilles clandestines



Djebel A'laa - Qalb Loza église : dégâts au sol de l'église



Deraa: fouilles clandestines à l'intérieur de la mosquée al-Omari

- À Deraa, les sites archéologiques ont été également victimes de fouilles clandestines violentes. Des centaines de personnes à la solde des bandes de pillards armés y participent. Ils opèrent sur les sites de la vallée de Yarmouk, notamment sur le site de Tell Achaari. D'autres actes de pillage et de vandalisme ont porté atteinte à la mosquée Omari de Deraa, où des fouilles clandestines ont été menées à l'intérieur de son enceinte. Ces actes de pillage et de saccage seront irréversibles, s'ils continuent avec cette intensité.
- Même situation à Tell Qaramel dans le département d'Alep, où les pillards opèrent avec des engins mécaniques. Ce n'est même plus de la fouille clandestine, il faudrait inventer un autre mot pour qualifier ces actions, tant les destructions sont importantes et systématiques.
- Selon les rapports réguliers des Directions Archéologiques Départementales, les atteintes portées aux sites mentionnés ci-dessus, particulièrement au cours des trois derniers mois, les menacent d'une perte définitive. Or ce sont des sites fondamentaux dans l'histoire de la Syrie, et de son patrimoine archéologique.



Bosra: Mosquée Mebrek Al-Naqaa

- À la suite de ces constatations, le 3 juillet 2013, la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées a diffusé un appel aux organisations internationales, aux membres et aux chefs de missions archéologiques, aux intellectuels du monde entier, à se mobiliser d'urgence pour rechercher des solutions efficaces, afin de faire pression sur les parties impliquées dans la destruction des sites archéologiques syriens, le pillage et la contrebande, et arrêter cette hémorragie. À intervenir hors de la Syrie aussi, car s'il y a «vols», il y a aussi «achat» de nos antiquités.
- La Direction Générale a demandé à l'UNESCO d'exercer une pression sur les pays voisins pour qu'ils renforcent leurs mesures de sécurité et qu'ils puissent contrôler efficacement leurs frontières face aux contrebandiers. C'est là, l'un des moyens pour stopper les fouilles clandestines et pour que le drame ne se répète pas dans d'autres sites archéologiques.
- La Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées a pu protéger l'unité de son institution archéologique dans plusieurs régions. Son succès est dû, avant tout, à une prise de conscience locale, tant des administrations que des citoyens. Beaucoup de sites archéologiques et de monuments ont dû leur préservation à ces collaborations. Ensemble nous avons réussi à épargner des centaines de sites des destructions et des pillages. Et malgré les cas où les collaborations n'ont pu provoquer l'arrêt des pillages, ces derniers sont moins catastrophiques que ceux que l'on vient d'exposer supra. J'insiste ici sur l'importance du rôle qu'a joué la communauté locale de Maaret el Naaman dans la protection de son musée. De même, et malgré les événements sanglants de la ville de Raqqa, la Direction de l'Archéologie de Raqqa continue à recevoir les préconisations de la Direction Générale de Damas.

3- LES DÉMARCHE ENTREPRISES

Après ce tableau résumé de la situation en Syrie, un tableau qui, vous vous en doutez, évolue chaque jour, je me dois de vous informer très concrètement des mesures prises par nos services.

1. Les salles d'expositions des Musées de Syrie ont été vidées de leurs pièces de collection. Ces dernières ont été déposés dans des lieux sûrs. Des alarmes supplémentaires ont été installées dans certains musées et citadelles. Le nombre des gardiens a été augmenté ainsi que les cycles de surveillance.
2. Ensuite, et c'est là un point fondamental. La Direction Générale a entamé une campagne de sensibilisation à la sauvegarde du patrimoine en vue d'impliquer l'ensemble de la population. Une campagne nationale a eu comme objectif de rappeler aux Syriens leur si précieux héritage. J'insiste sur le fait que la campagne de sensibilisation était apolitique. Chacun devait, quelles que soient ses opinions, se retrouver derrière notre message, « Sauver l'histoire de la Syrie ». Le message a été envoyé au 23 millions de Syriens sans exception (messages audiovisuels et affichages publicitaires). Au-delà de la sauvegarde du patrimoine c'est notre culture commune qui est enjeu, ce qui fait que nous sommes syriens, c'est cela que le message a véhiculé. Qu'est qu'un peuple sans histoire... ?
3. C'est ainsi que les fonctionnaires de la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées ainsi que des bénévoles s'activent et se dévouent à une même cause : ils collaborent avec des communautés locales ou avec leurs dirigeants en faisant abs-



traction des opinions politiques dans le seul but de sauver notre héritage. Il faut être franc, d'une région à une autre, le succès n'est pas toujours là, mais c'est un travail de fond que nous menons.

4. Dans cet esprit, des réunions de concertation sont organisées. La dernière s'est déroulée à la Direction Générale de Damas les 12 et 13 mai 2013, sous le thème de la lutte contre le trafic illégal des propriétés culturelles : en bâtissant des capacités et en consolidant les conceptions et les connaissances. À cette rencontre ont participé des représentants de tous les ministères et de tous les parties concernées par la protection des propriétés culturelles syriennes. La société civile était représentée par de simples citoyens, des intellectuels et des artistes. Des ateliers de réflexions ont eu lieu sur la situation et sur nos devoirs de réactions.
5. Tous les services gouvernementaux sont impliqués dans la lutte contre le pillage - polices, douanes, régions, mairies, et autres Directions générales - c'est plus de 4 000 objets archéologiques qui ont pu être récupérés en 2012, à travers des perquisitions dans les villes de Damas, de Tartous, de Palmyre, de Homs, de Hama, de Deir el Zor...etc..
6. Nos services ont informatisé les inventaires de la majorité des pièces de nos



la Direction générale des Antiquités et des Musées organise un atelier sur (renforcement des capacités et de sensibilisation sur la lutte contre le trafic des biens culturels).



Objet archéologique confisqué à Tartus

musées, les archives des sites archéologiques sont en cours d'informatisation. De même, à ces archives s'ajoutent les informations liées aux atteintes et pillages des sites archéologiques. Celles-ci sont mises à jour par les rapports mensuels des directions de l'archéologie des différents départements. Mais également par tous les témoignages transmis par les gens de la communauté locale des régions touchées. Et également, à travers les différents supports qui existent et qui se diffusent sur internet, notamment les photos et les vidéos.

7. Actuellement, des équipes d'archéologues et d'informaticiens de nos services travaillent à une carte du patrimoine culturel syrien en danger. Cette carte repose sur un Système d'Information géographique (SIG) couplé au logiciel Google-Earth. Elle nous aidera à cibler les priorités d'intervention sur les sites archéologiques. Des interventions qui seront réalisées selon des plans conformes aux mesures internationales. La carte sera donc un outil indispensable dans les opérations futures de restauration et de sauvegarde. Outre l'investissement de nos Services et de nos autres administrations, c'est l'ensemble de la société civile qui sera convié à ces travaux. Des travaux auxquels nous espérons associer des organismes internationaux et l'ensemble des missions archéologiques qui ont dans le passé travaillé sur notre territoire. L'expérience et les bases de données de ces dernières seront primordiales.
8. Enfin, La Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées a mis en ligne un site web disponible en deux langues arabe et anglaise (www..gov.sy). Il contient entre autres un journal d'information avec une mise à jour des destructions qui ont affecté le patrimoine archéologique syrien pendant la crise. Je vous invite à le consulter
9. À l'extérieur, La Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées entreprend des contacts directs avec Interpol International pour combattre le trafic d'objets archéologiques. Nous lui communiquons les références des objets volés et parfois retrouvés dans les pays voisins. De même, cet organisme nous contacte lorsqu'il y des ventes d'objets archéologiques susceptibles de venir de Syrie. Cette collaboration a déjà porté ses fruits, 18 mosaïques ont été saisies à la frontière libanaise. De même, 73 objets archéologiques arrivés clandestinement au Liban ont été récupérés chez des commerçants d'antiquités. Cette importante acquisition n'aurait pas eu lieu sans la coopération fructueuse de la Direction Générale des Antiquités Libanaise et le bureau de l'UNESCO à Beyrouth à qui j'adresse ici mes profondes considérations et remerciements.
10. D'autres collaborations internationales sont aussi en œuvre notamment pour la surveillance et l'échange d'information. La première action a été la création d'un atelier de travail organisé par l'ICOMOS au début de l'année 2013. Puis, suite à l'invitation du bureau de l'UNESCO d'Amman, un nouvel atelier de travail international a été orga-



Protection du patrimoine culturel dans le Damas, ICOMOS-ICCROM cours e-learning pour les professionnels du patrimoine culturel syrien en période de conflit armé

nisé en Jordanie. Celui-ci traite du trafic illégal d'objets. Une rencontre des représentants des autorités archéologiques des pays voisins et des organismes internationaux y a eu lieu. Il en est sorti un nombre de recommandations, notamment la création d'une liste rouge des propriétés culturelles syriennes menacées de danger.

11. En outre, La Direction Générale a communiqué à l'UNESCO les dommages qu'on subi les sites archéologiques syriens, et lui a demandé de tout mettre en œuvre pour que les pays voisins, par où transitent les objets volés, se sentent responsables et interviennent pour mettre fin aux trafics.
12. Dans le même temps, nous poursuivons notre travail dans l'élaboration et la signature du deuxième protocole de la convention de La Haye et de Unidroit.

4- LES NÉCESSITÉS

Ce qu'il nous reste à faire et qui nous préoccupe dans l'immédiat.

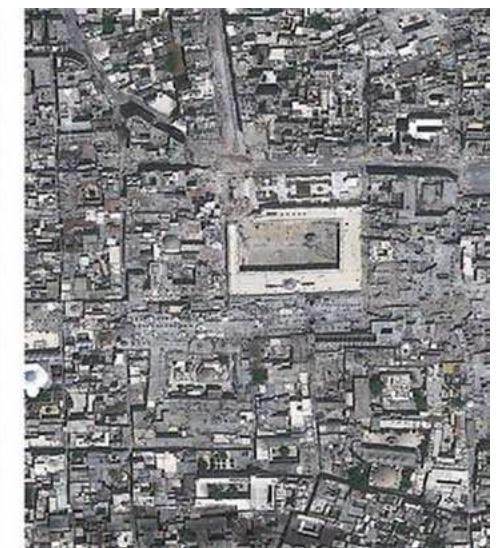
- Aider les tentatives des autorités archéologiques à faire délivrer par le Conseil de Sécurité des Nations Unies une résolution internationale interdisant le trafic illégal des propriétés culturelles syriennes à l'exemple de l'expérience iraquienne. Ce qui contribuerait à la lutte contre le trafic d'antiquité et à l'arrêt des contrebandiers. Cela aiderait considérablement à la récupération des objets volés dans le futur.
- Accentuer la pression sur les pays voisins afin de renforcer les mesures de sécurité à l'encontre des contrebandiers sur les frontières.
- Permettre aux missions archéologiques étrangères qui ont travaillé en Syrie d'accomplir leurs engagements, notamment en ce qui concerne les salaires des gardiens des sites archéologiques cumulés depuis deux ans. L'effort financier est faible, mais soulagerait nos services.
- La mise en commun, et gracieusement, d'informations sur les trafics. Les organismes internationaux et les missions étrangères ont là une carte à jouer. Je pense particulièrement aux photos satellites et à l'exemple de celle du site d'Apamée qui outre son impact médiatique a été importante pour une estimation des pillages. Elles seront également des ressources efficaces dans les opérations futures lors des restaurations et des réaménagements.
- Sur un plus long terme La Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées appelle



Palmyre- Oasis : états des lieux du site archéologique

l'UNESCO et les Organismes concernés par la Protection du Patrimoine Culturel Mondial à mettre à la tête de ses priorités la protection du Patrimoine Culturel Syrien, notamment pour la période d'après la crise. De même, elle appelle à continuer à exécuter les résolutions délivrées suite à la rencontre d'Amman.

- S'engager à créer un fonds d'aide à l'UNESCO, spécifique à la protection des sites du Patrimoine Culturel Syrien inscrit sur la liste du Patrimoine Mondial. Celui-ci permettra d'exécuter les activités définies dans le plan de travail du scénario à court terme.
- Tout ceci n'a qu'un objectif. Un objectif qui est la préoccupation centrale de nos services et qui commande à toutes nos actions : - protéger le Patrimoine Culturel Syrien dans tous ces composants. Un Patrimoine qui appartient à tous les Syriens, indépendamment de leurs opinions politiques. C'est dans cet esprit que nous menons notre lutte.
- Animée de cette volonté, la Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées incite, dans tous ces actes, à unifier le peuple syrien autour de son patrimoine.



Ces images satellites close-up montrent la mosquée des Omeyyades à Alep avant et après l'effondrement du minaret de la mosquée

- Je suis fier d'être à la tête d'une administration qui a su se mobiliser malgré tous les risques encourus. Je suis fier de mes collègues qui n'hésitent pas à se rendre à leur travail chaque matin alors que parfois un simple déplacement est dangereux. C'est dans ces moments graves que la grandeur d'un pays se révèle. Nos moyens sont limités, mais pas notre volonté.
- Nous avons besoin du soutien et de l'aide de la communauté internationale. Il n'est pas seulement ici question d'aider un pays qui en fait la demande, mais d'aider à sauver un patrimoine mondial.
- La communauté internationale, et le monde entier, doivent se souvenir que l'héritage archéologique de la Syrie fait partie du Patrimoine Culturel Mondial. Et que la perte de l'un des composants de ce patrimoine est une perte pour l'humanité entière. Le moment est venu de se mobiliser et d'agir avant qu'il ne soit trop tard, afin de sauver l'archéologie syrienne d'une catastrophe qui nous concerne tous.
- Détruire le patrimoine d'un pays c'est détruire l'esprit de son peuple et de son identité. Aujourd'hui, la Syrie pleure ses enfants et son histoire. Son Patrimoine attend une mobilisation internationale pour sauver une culture qui mérite de vivre et d'être respectée. Une culture sans laquelle le monde serait certainement plus sombre.
- Ce qui se produit sur la terre syrienne appelle à travailler ensemble avec toutes nos forces pour stopper l'hémorragie de son Patrimoine Culturel. Malgré les terribles événements que le pays subit, nous persisterons à travailler. Et notre participation aujourd'hui est le témoignage de notre foi et de nos capacités. Notre devoir à tous est de sauver une culture, c'est à dire de sauver notre âme. Notre devoir est de montrer à ceux qui volent, à ceux qui achètent, à ceux qui détruisent pour effacer de la mémoire, que la Syrie a été une terre de pensée multiple. Cette pensée, nous la préserverons grâce à vous. Notre patrimoine, nous le reconstruirons ensemble, et reconstruirons tout ce qui a été détruit. Nos temples, nos églises tout comme nos mosquées.

Annex -1

An archaeological sites n Syria - Overview

مدينة حمص القديمة

1. Ghassanya school
2. Old Souq
3. Srajj Hammam
4. Bismar House



1. **TELL BRAAK (NAGAR)** was occupied between the sixth and second millennia BCE. Its materials dated from the Late Neolithic Halaf culture have been found there. Nagar as the major point of contact between the cities of the Levant, eastern Anatolia and northern Mesopotamia. Nagar's burned-out temple, destroyed around 2400 BCE (and rediscovered in 1998) was the earliest of its kind north of central Mesopotamia.
2. **TELL BEYDAR (NABADA)** covers about 25 hectares (62 acres). It was first settled during the Early Dynastic period circa 2600 BC. By around 2500 BC a medium sized independent city-state had developed. At that point, it became a provincial capital under the kingdom centered at Nagar, now Tell Braak. After the Jezirah region was conquered by the Akkadians, Nabada became an outpost of that empire.
3. **TELL LILAN** Archaeological discoveries in the Tell Lilan indicate to the historic significance of the site which dates back to the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC. The site is located on one of the important ancient trade routes linking Cappadocia, Ashur and Anatolia principalities. The area was settled for the first time during the middle of the 6th millennium BC and continued until the late 1800's BC.
4. **TELL MOZAN** one of the important sites from the Bronze age. The excavation shows a Mesopotamian civilization from the Bronze Age.
5. **DURA-EUROPOS** was established at the beginning of the Hellenistic period Dura was founded as part of a network of military colonies intended to secure Seleucid control of the Middle Euphrates, probably between 300 and 280 BC. Dura ("the fortress" in Old Semitic) formed a defensive strongpoint on the access route between the two major military centres, Apamea and Seleucia-on-the-Tigris (Southern Iraq).
6. **MARI** during the third millennium BC, great city-states grew up in various places throughout Syrian territory, according to the archaeologists who excavated it; the oldest public building is a palace. Mari became an important center of commerce and trade thanks to its location on the Euphrates River and the old trade route to the east.
7. **HALABYA** is a fort site founded in the Byzantine age. It is surrounded by great walls and two main northern and southern gates in addition to main church and fort citadel and service buildings. At the region to the north of the wall, there is collection of tower cemeteries, which carry high artist characteristics.
8. **ZALABYA** is a fort citadel synchronizing Halabya and belongs to the Byzantine age and carries architectural descriptions that connect with collection of Byzantine architecture on the two banks of the Euphrates. It was established for military aim to protect the borders of the Byzantine Empire and to control on al-Khanooqa venue, and on the commercial river line.
9. **RESAFA** was an important political, religious and economic metropolis. As a military base it formed part of the lines that were built to defend the Byzantine Empire against Persian attack. The most significant were nevertheless the religious

- buildings, which were financed by pilgrimages, for example the major church (basilica), built in AD 559, which belongs to the class of broad – arched basilicas. The Umayyad Hisham, came to live in Resafa, after he had palatial summer residences built there, which in their riches were compared with the palaces of Baghdad.
10. **KARAB SAYYAR** a quadratic (650m x 650m), Early Islamic city ruin with a round ancient settlement mound (tell), which was occupied during the 3rd millennium BC. The mound was used in the Abbasid Period as a Citadel.
 11. **TELL HALULA** the settlement of Tell Halula has been founded during the Pre Pottery Neolithic B period (ca. 8700 years ago). The research carried out at the site has addressed issues of early monumental building; the construction of the first canals for irrigation; evidence of social stratification; emergence of cattle farming, agriculture and pottery.
 12. **ALEPPO OLD CITY** Located at the crossroads of several trade routes from the 2nd millennium B.C., Aleppo was ruled by the Hittites, Assyrians, Arabs, Mongols, Mamelukes and Ottomans. The 13th-century citadel, 12th-century Great Mosque and various 17th-century madrasas, palaces, caravanserais and hammams all form part of the city's cohesive, unique urban fabric. It is considered one of the most important Islamic cities.
 13. **SIMEON CITADEL** built in 490 CE was one of the largest and most important churches in the world in late antiquity. In the 10th century, fortifications were built around it. Pilgrims from afar came here to hear St Simeon the Styliste's preaches and the site became the destination of a mass pilgrimage.
 14. **BRAD** is the largest archaeological site in northern Syria. It conserves vestiges from both the Roman (a bath and a monumental tomb) and the Byzantine periods (ruins of three major churches and a monastery).
 15. **DEDERIYEH CAVE** consists of a large chamber of 15m wide and 10m high at the entrance, and about 60m deep and a maximum width of 40m with a vaulted dome reaching of 10m at the back of the cave. A skeleton of Neanderthal infant was found under the chimney of the cave in 1993.
 16. **SERJELLA** comprises extensive remains of houses, a church, baths, tombs and sarcophagi dating from the Byzantine period. The baths, built in 473 CE, are among the most intact examples found in Syria.
 17. **EBLA** is one of the archaeological sites of the Bronze Age the most extensive Western Syria where excavations conducted since 1965 have helped improve our knowledge of early roots of civilization III urban millennium BC-AD west of the Euphrates and its development until the time of the Amorite kingdoms of the first half of the second millennium. The discovery of the Ebla archive in the years 1974 -76 has opened new perspectives for the study of various Syrian ancient civilizations.

18. **QALB LOZA** the basilica dating back to the 5th century is located in the small village of Qalb Loza (one of the dead cities) meaning 'Heart of the Almond', and is one of the most beautiful basilicas in Syria and is a masterpiece of Syrian Byzantine art.
19. **RUWEIHA** was mainly built in the Roman and Byzantine period. The site comprises two small roman temple tombs and two large churches. The Church of Bissos is one of the largest of the limestone plateau and shows the important technical innovation of the transverse arches spanning the central nave.
20. **APAMEA** the Greek settlement, which extended over the plateau to the East. In 300BC Seleucus I Nicator established a Seleucid colony here and named it Apamea after his wife, the Persian princess Apama. It is one of the importance cities of its unique architecture.
21. **PALMYRA** contains the monumental ruins of a great city that was one of the most important cultural centres of the ancient world. From the 1st to the 3rd century, the art and architecture of Palmyra, standing at the crossroads of several civilizations, married Graeco-Roman techniques with local traditions and Persian influences.
22. **CRAC DES CHEVALIERS** was built by the Hospitaller from 1142 to 1271. With further construction by the Mamluks in the late 13th century, it ranks among the best-preserved examples of the Crusader castles. It represents an outstanding example of the most significant examples illustrating the exchange of influences and documenting the evolution of fortified architecture in the Near East during the time of the Crusades (11th - 13th centuries).
23. **MISHRFIEH (QATNA)** the first finds date to the mid- to late 3rd millennium BC. In the 2nd Millennium BC trade routes developed connecting Mesopotamia with Cyprus, Crete and Egypt. Qatna was then situated near Homs city in the middle of Syria, uncovered parts of the Bronze Age Royal palace was discovered, with three gates and tombs.
24. **AL MARQAB CITADEL** was built in the 11th century, it fell to Roger lord of Antioch during the 12th century, The crusaders fortified the citadel as good as they could and kept it under their control until Sultan Qalaoon of the Mumluks 1285 AD garrisoned the citadel, in the Ottoman period it became a court and a prison.
25. **AMRIT** is the only preserved Phoenician city along the Syria-Lebanon coast from the 1st millennium site. The main Temple (sanctuary) and the tower tombs represent the Phoenician characteristic in architecture that combines Greek, Egyptian and Persian style.
26. **SALAH ED DIN CASTLE:** Represents an outstanding example of the most significant examples illustrating the exchange of influences and documenting the evolution of fortified architecture in the Near East during the time of the Crusades (11th - 13th centuries), both in terms of the quality of construction and the survival of historical stratigraphy. It retains features from its Byzantine beginnings

- in the 10th century, the Frankish transformations in the late 12th century and fortifications added by the Ayyubid dynasty (late 12th to mid-13th century).
27. **UGARIT** was described as the first international port in history. The kingdom occupied an important position as a trade center due to its location as a connecting point between Mesopotamia, Palestine, The most interesting aspect of Ugarit's history was the development of consonant writing, which reduced the Sumerian cuneiform script to the first alphabet with only 30 signs.
 28. **DAMASCUS OLD CITY** Aramaic Kingdom founded in the 1st millennium B.C., Damascus was an important cultural and commercial centre, by virtue of its geographical position at the crossroads of the orient and the occident, between Africa and Asia. The old city of Damascus is considered to be among the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world. The city exhibits outstanding evidence of the civilizations which created it - Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic. In particular, the Umayyad caliphate created Damascus as its capital, setting the scene for the city's ongoing development as a living Muslim, Arab city, upon which each succeeding dynasty has left and continues to leave its mark.
 29. **MALLOULA** is described as a historical town inhabited since 3000 year till nowadays. It has developed and affected by different cultures as Amorite, Aramaean Greece and Roman till the Arabic culture. Maaloula is distinguished by its exceptional natural site mountain where there are a considerable number of caves and rock-shelter of an old and showing continuous occupation since prehistoric times until today, has created in the memory Collective many legends and beliefs. Its Aramaic language, this was the language spoken by Christ is still spoken in the area up until now, characterize it.
 30. **BOSRA** the capital of the Roman province of Arabia, was an important stopover on the ancient caravan route to Mecca. A magnificent 2nd-century Roman theatre, early Christian ruins and several mosques are found within its great walls.
 31. **SHAHBA** was founded by the Emperor Philip the Arab, who built it as a symbolic capital dedicated to his family during his reign between 244 and 249 AD. It is the only Roman city that was built without any influence by Arab or Hellenistic origins.
 32. **QUNEITRA** was established at least as early as Roman and Byzantine times, serving as a stop on the road from Damascus to western Palestine. The modern city was founded in the Ottoman era as a way station on the caravan route to Damascus.
 33. **TELL EL -ASHA'ARI** is situated about 16 k.m. to the north west of Dar'a, and about 5 k.m. north of Mzerib village. Historians propose that it contains the ruins of ancient (Dion) one of the ten cities of the Decapolis from the Classic period. There is also an important level dates to the middle Bronze age. The tombs are situated about 200 m to the south east of the tell, and consist of many tombs (hypogaeum), a large number of the discovered

funeral objects found made of bronze or pottery go back to the end of third millennium B.C. and the first part of the second millennium B.C.

34. **TELL QARAMEL** is situated about 25 k.m. to the north of Aleppo, A settlement which dates to the eighth millennium B.C. , and contains the oldest defensive tower in Syria, there is also religious instructions and circular houses, this tell probably presents the oldest village in north Aleppo region.
35. **TELL BAI'A (TUTUL)** is situated to the north east of Al-Raqqa, about 3 k.m. to the north of the Euphrates, it consists of a central hill surrounded by a wall, the measurements of the tell are 800X700 m. An important level dates to the Byzantine period was found, and the researches told us that the tell contains the ancient city of «Tutul» which has a large potency, and was well known in the cuneiform documents from the third and second millennium B.C., there was also a level dates to the Uruk period.
36. **TELL ES-SIN** is situated on the left bank of the Euphrates, about 10 k.m. south east of Deir ez-Zor. The excavations in the Acropolis has revealed levels from the Classic, Byzantine, Roman and Hellenistic periods, and an important level dates to the Neolithic period. In the Byzantine period the tell has emerged and became a fortified city with its necropolis.