Protecting Our Shared Heritage in Syria— An International Summit to Promote Collaboration

On Friday, December 11, 2015 at 12:30PM there was a free and open to the public symposium at the National Geographic Society Grosvenor Auditorium in Washington, DC. The symposium, Protecting Our Shared Heritage in Syria— An International Summit to Promote Collaboration, featured more than 20 international organizations who met to discuss collaborative solutions to the crisis in Syria.

The following are notes from the meeting, transcribed by myself (Dr Emma Cunliffe) from the talks and slides on You Tube. They should NOT be taken as direct quotes from any of the individuals at the meeting, but are intended to provide a summary of the projects presented for those wishing a reference. Anyone wishing to quote the talks should refer directly to the presentations. In a couple of cases - marked [?] - I did not manage to catch the speaker's words. Mistakes are mine, not the speakers, and as this was done rapidly, I apologise for them.

Full playlist here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7MXPe_eomo&list=PLFeDqOGNupYl8tiW5HWJmjq6s9Z5WuRL

Tess Davis (Antiquities Coalition)

Today looting and trafficking is a global illegal industry funding conflict and crime. Tess Davies is the Executive Director of the Antiquities Coalition (AC), a not-for-profit in Washington. She is a lawyer, but the AC unites a diverse group of professionals: archaeologists to business leaders, former government officials but also experts in heritage, counter-terrorism, security policy and trade. We seek to safeguard CH through advocacy, through outreach, and capacity building, and to this end we are championing law and policy to key decisions makers and the public and private sectors and fostering diplomatic cooperation and international dialogue and we do this through workshops, through emergency meetings, through regional conferences and even global summits, in an attempt to help individuals, to help organisations, and even countries collaborate, strategize and reach consensus in a crisis, and of course in today's world the crisis is currently now in the Middle East and North Africa.
        To that end in May we partnered with the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Middle East Institute and UNESCO to take concrete steps towards shutting down terrorist financing through antiquities looting and trafficking. In Cairo we brought together ten leading nations from the Middle East and North Africa and this resulted in the Cairo Declaration, which was a bold regional strategy against shutting down terrorist financing from antiquities trafficking.
        Building on the success of this event, in September in New York, coinciding with the UN General Assembly meeting, we held a high level summit, again in collaboration with the Middle East Institute, UNESCO and also the Asia Society, which brought together another nine nations, including 4 foreign ministers from Iraq, Egypt Jordan and Australia. This is just a brief example of what we are trying to do, but the hope is that the political will is now there to take steps against this global crisis, because as all of my colleagues today in the room know, ISIS was not the first group to be looting and antiquities trafficking, and they will not be the last. This is going to be a problem that is going to be facing all of us in the months and yeas to come.

Dr Robert (Bob) Bewley (Oxford University, EAMENA)

EAMENA is a team of 10 archaeologists in Oxford and Leicester, funded by the Arcadia Foundation. The archaeologists are specialists in remote sensing, especially photo interpretation, satellite imagery and archaeological survey. The project is finding new sites, and documenting damage in Middle East and North Africa. We have to make the interpretations available to those who need them - those with responsibility for their care, protection and preservation - as well as the general public. So far we've recorded ninety-four thousand sites in 2015 in ten different countries. Project covers 20 countries in all, from Mauritania in the west to Iran in the east. We use ARCHES software developed by GCI and WMF.

We monitor change in the Middle East and North Africa region, which is under huge threat from agricultural intensification, road building, house building, dam projects, as well as looting and conflict. We are monitoring the change using satellite imagery. We also want to monitor change on ground. It's happening day by day so it's even more important to record it. The archaeology is remarkably resilient, e.g. Tell Ubaid, Iraq, <in slide> you can see where Saddam Hussein parked his tanks in case of war with Iran. Fortunately it was not not totally destroyed, so we need to record what's there before it is destroyed.

Lawrence Rothfield (Past for Sale Initiative, University of Chicago)

3-year initiative, funded by Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society.
Interdisciplinary team: archaeologists, art historians, anthropologists, economists, policy makers, and a legal expert
Focus not on the ground but on the market. Understanding looting and trafficking and policy analysis and market design research on illicit trade.
Policy-oriented: focussing on markets and mechanism that regulate / police markets
Policy analysis and policy design (i.e. taxes, transparency requirements, shifting demand)

Looking at 3 questions:
1) How is the illicit market structured: geographically, industrially, socially. Shape of demand, price levels, how do objects accrue value on the chain
2) How do existing laws and regulations affect the market? E.g. project to examine whether seizures affect market.
Slide: Research question:
- How have legal actions against unprovenanced antiquities trafficking affected the price of auctioned antiquities?
Data:
　　　- Christies / Sotheby's sales of Egyptian, Classical and Western Asiatic antiquities from 1996 – 2003 (inc 348 Syrian / Assyrian pieces.
　　　: - Laws invoked and verdicts / punishment in trials
Findings:
- heavy fines or imprisonment alter auction house behaviour
- Criminal penalties are much more effective than civil penalties.
Authors: James Marrone (Economics) and Silvia Beltrametti (Law).
- How can policies be designed to disrupt market and prevent sale and shift demand from looted artefacts to well-provenanced artefacts.?
- How is it possible to better finance heritage protection?
The project is not Syria specific, but its findings and policy critiques / options are highly relevant.

Joe Greene (Harvard University - Manar al-Athar)

Online open-access photos archive of archaeological sites, historical buildings, and mosaics in the Middle East and North Africa for use in teaching, research, publication and heritage conservation. The photographs labelled in English and Arabic. Instructions are in a variety of European languages to broaden its use. Focus is on the area of Islamic rule – Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine from 300BC to present. Images are available in high resolution, in Tiff format for publication or compressed jpg for teaching / powerpoint. There is no need for permission forms. It uses embedded metadata to label and search for images. All metadata is downloaded with the file automatically, and viewable in certain programmes, e.g. Adobe Bridge or Lightroom.
　　　Through Harvard there is access to a network of experts who assess, label, and contextualise imagery provided for the website to give accurate and detailed metadata, and who provide images. Since 2010, after the initial development, almost 20,000 images online, with 100,000 waiting to be processed. Processing tags the image files with appropriate metadata, which is the resource intensive

part, and requires time and money. It has been done through small grants and student labour. Much more to do. Founded before crisis, therefore Manar provides a baseline – not only for Syria, where the threat of destruction is fully realized, but also for other parts of the Middle East and North Africa, where there are now glimmers of future threats.

Jeanne Marie Teutonico (Getty Conservation Institute - GCI)

GCI is one of the four programmes of the J. Paul Getty Trust.
GCI works internationally to advance conservation practice in the visual arts – broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture and sites. GCI seeks to address broad practical and theoretical issues of interest to the wider conservation community, leverage resources through partnerships, and to build capacity for long-term sustainability and long-term impact.

It's hard to fund development and maintenance, and long-term usability of digital inventory data as I.T. evolves. Therefore GCI and WMF invested jointly in creating ARCHES - an open-source, customisable state-of-the-art software to manage inventories of heritage data and places. It is customisable, with an easy-to-use interface, robust geospatial mapping and processing, and standards- and semantic-based data structure to promote data exchange and longevity. There are field-level access control for specific information. Several groups, e.g. ASOR, EAMENA, SHIRIN, UNOSAT, are using it already or considering it. GCI is discussing with ASOR and other groups about how to further enhance it to better store data on damage and condition assessments, and satellite imagery. GCI will provide these enhancements in 2016, and ASOR will use them. They are also working on an ARCHES mobile data collection app to allow for synchronized data collection with a network collection, as well as a range of other features, all of which will be freely available.

Hans-Jacob Schindler (United Nations Security Council Monitoring Team – Targeting the Illicit Trade in Cultural Goods)

He leads expert team that advises UN Security Council Sanctions Committee – UN Sanctions Regime Against Al-Qaida and Associates including ISIS.
They work mainly with member states, and international groups like UNESCO, ICOM, and increasingly with international businesses in order to work effectively.

Sanctions Measures: Assets Freeze
Based on things like Resolution 2161 (2014), e.g. paragraph 1(b)
Freeze without delay the funds and other financial assets or economic resources of these individuals, groups, undertakings and entitles, including funds derived from property owned or controlled directly or indirectly, by them or by persons acting on their behalf or at their direction, and ensure that neither these not any other finds, financial assets or economic resources are made available, directly or indirectly for such persons' benefit, by their nationals or by person within their territory.

Resolution 2199 (2015), paragraph 14
Decides that all Member States shall take appropriate steps to prevent the trade in Iraqi and Syrian cultural property and other items of archaeological, historical, cultural, rare scientific and religious importance illegally removed from Iraq since 6 August 1990 and from Syria since 15 March 2011, including by prohibiting cross border trade in such items, thereby allowing for their eventual safe return to their Iraqi and Syrian people.

➔ Global and total assets freeze on ISIL. No revenue to got to ISIL.

Resolution 2199 (2015), para 30 also:
Requests the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team [...] to conduct an assessment of the impact of these new measures [...] and [...] to incorporate reporting on the impact of these new measures

into their reports [...] in order to track progress on implementation [...] and to help facilitate further adjustments as required.

July 2015 – carried out first impact assessment. In 2016 they are moving to do it quarterly. They are also now looking at the international antiquities trade. At the end of January, they are developing recommendations for how the trade could be better regulated to ensure illicit antiquities from ISIL are not reaching international markets. What do business entities need to effectively implement sanction measures. It aims:
- ➔ To understand how the Market functions:
- ➔ Explore trafficking routes and chokepoints in the supply chain
- ➔ Effective measures/sanctions to support the market in identifying illicit ISIL related antiquities
- ➔ Effective measures to reduce market demand
- ➔ Effective measures to increase KYC and documenting procedures.

Only if these issues are understood can they build effective sanctions

Graham Philip (Uni of Durham, Shirin project)

Shirin stands for Syrian heritage in Danger: an international research initiative and network, and the next formal meeting is in April next year in Vienna (at ICAANE 10).
The Exec Board:
President: Frank Braemer (France), Vice President: Hartmut Kuehne (Germany), Secretary: Andrew Jamieson (Australia), Treasurer: Graham Philip (UK).
What is Shirin:
- Created in 2014 as an initiative from the global community of scholars in the field of archaeology, art and history of the Ancient Near East.
- Brings together many research groups that have worked in Syria prior to 2011. We were aware that in the growing number of bodies attempting to deal with the threat to Syrian, there was almost a shortage of – in terms of relatively limited input from - people that had actually been running and directing field projects in the area, and we thought the contextual knowledge was rather thin in some places.
- Purpose is to support governmental bodies and NGOs in their efforts to preserve and safeguard the heritage of Syria (sites, monuments and museums)
- Seeks to respond to the needs of Syrian colleagues and authorities regardless of their political, religious or ethnic affiliation.

We are aware that a number of bodies working in protection programmes are, by their very nature, obliged to work with certain partners, or forbidden from working with others partners, and Shirin is an association of archaeologists and art historians, and Shirin in that sense is neutral and able to perform an intermediary role

Key Priorities:
To provide archaeological expertise and experience for:
- Producing databases of inventories of museums in Syria – using excavation archives to fill the many gaps in 'in-county' records. In-country expertise invaluable.
- Evaluating the provenance of illicitly excavated or purchased artefacts / artwork on demand, expertise again invaluable.
- Work with partners to create and host a database of sites – an Historic Environment Record, a key tool for post conflict reconstruction. In that sense again, expert knowledge of Shirin partners will be able to contribute detailed context-specific understandings to such damage assessments and Shirin is working initially with the evidence from two larger research projects - the British funded Fragile Crescent Project and the French PaléoSYR project, which includes a large number of sites, including quite a lot of material that is still unpublished and we would like to introduce this to the larger group. The issue is that many of these research projects have outrun their

original research grants that funded the projects, but there is a lot of legacy data that could very usefully be contributed to wider heritage protection projects, and that's an issue that we're currently trying to deal with.

- Use expert knowledge to contribute to Site Damage Assessments

Franziska Bloch (DAI, Syrian Heritage Archive - SyHER, DAI)

The SyHER – collaboration between the DAI and the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin. The two institutes have a lot of data.
Aims:

- Digitising of archaeological and architectural research data on Syria
- Archiving of digital data by using the database DAI Arachne
- Recording of archaeological and historical place names in a gazetteer
- Digitizing and archiving of map collections to Bilad al-Sham.
- Damage assessment
- Observation of the international art and antique market.

The project has been funded since project. By 2014, they were in close contact with the DGAM in Damascus. The aim is to integrate project files into the DGAM's National Cultural heritage register. Archiving of project data uses four components of pre-existing database – iDAI.world, adapted for use:

- iDAI. Objects / Arachne – archiving of texts, photos, plans, drawings.
- iDAI. Gazeteer - archiving of place names
- iDAI. Geoserver – archiving of map collections
- iDAI. Bibliography – catalogue of literature.

Linked together via interfaces to be viewed all at once. Gives optimum information to researchers.
150 000 units of data on various sites in Syria already entered.
Stored on cloud.
Searchable via site name in Gazeteer, and it searches all 4 datasets.
Damage assessment database organised around the concept of digital room datasheets which allows the storage of complex condition assessments that can be exported in different file formats.

Manuel Fiol (UNOSAT)

I'm a satellite imagery analyst at the United Nations operational satellite programme and focal point for cultural heritage sites monitoring. Since 2014 we have been actively monitoring sites in Syria, Iraq, Libya and many others. We have reported damage to sites like Apamea, Palmyra in Syria, [?] in Yemen and Nimrud in Iraq. Late October 2015, we received notification that 'Islamic State' was actively planting bombs in different locations in Palmyra, and many feared they were trying to destroy temples in Palmyra. In 30 October we requested imagery from various vendors and because the US-led and French military were actively bombing in those locations we were denied imagery in those locations, so we turned to one of our partners, Earth Gas, which is a Canadian company, and they provided an image received late on 30 October. [see slide] . Our worst fears were confirmed – Temple of Bel at Palmyra completely destroyed. [Show before/after]. These images are important, as they are the only means we have right now to provide the big picture of what is happening on the ground. Right now we have hundreds of before and after pictures of heritage sites and we're trying to create a catalogue of images and combine this data with the data with ASORs data to have a combined dataset to provide more detailed picture of what is happening to cultural heritage sites.

Michael Danti (Director of ASOR CHI)

Founded in 2014 through a co-operative agreement with the US Department of State. Documenting cultural heritage crisis in the conflict zone using open-source information, satellite imagery and in-country sources to produce weekly reports and special reports. Currently 70 of these reports are available on the ASOR CHI website. We are also conducting site assessments in Syria and we're producing an inventory of sites and a database, which will be loaded into an ARCHES system. ASOR CHI is conducting outreach through lectures, symposia and conferences, and producing social media and of course we have a website where we share our results. We regularly meet with the media and we conduct large numbers of interviews and help develop media stories. ASOR CHI is conducting preservation projects now, and is producing mitigation and preservation projects for the post-conflict period. So essentially we're working in Syria and in Northern Iraq to monitor evaluate and preserve cultural heritage.

Slide: Results of first year – the number of incidents that we documented in Syria and a breakdown of the sources of damage that we documented and as you can see the devastation is staggering.

[(Graph) Damage incidents in Syria from 7/1/14 to 8/31/15. N-711. Total incidents since start of conflict= 1200+

Inventory of sites approaching 7000 in Syria (6, 440). Also producing inventory for Iraq.]

Also investigating looting and illicit trafficking in the conflict zone. Documenting human rights violations involving cultural property crimes as parts of campaigns of cultural cleansing; conducting damage mitigation projects and helping to support Syrian and Iraqi heritage experts.

Need funds and collaborations in all three areas.

This project is aiding in resolving the humanitarian crisis, helping with conflict resolution in peacebuilding, and ultimately promoting global security and supporting counter-terrorism.

Nancy Wilke (USCBS)

The US Committee of the Blue Shield was founded in 2006 as a non-profit, non-governmental organisation designated under the 1954 Hague Convention for Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict as group that should coordinate with the military under the Second Protocol. We like to say that this Committee of the Blue Shield, and all national BS committees, are equivalent to the Red Cross and Red Crescent; equivalent in that they protect culture in the same way the Red Cross and Red Crescent protects humans. Since its founding, we have been engaged in the training of troops about to be deployed to Afghanistan and other parts of the Middle East, and we are sure we will continue to do that as more and more troops are deployed. Today we are most heavily engaged in preparing cultural heritage inventories of sites that should be protected. These sites include libraries, archives, museums, monuments, and archaeological sites, things like that. We prepare these lists and then we turn them over to the Defense Intelligence Agency, who then share them with the Department of Defense so that these places can be entered into the targeting databases as places that should not be targeted and should be protected. We had great success with this in Libya in the NATO campaign: as you may know, no cultural heritage sites were damaged because of a list that we prepared that was shared with NATO and helped to protect those sites. We also have agreed that we will archive these sites so that they will be available in the future and we have signed a contract with tDAR archaeological record to do that, and tDAR will do that, and they will be password protected, and we can say who will access them, and they will migrate this information into any new platform that comes along, so these lists will be available well into the future for the military to access. So we are absolutely determined that the US government - through its military - will protect the archaeology and cultural heritage of not just Syria but other countries worldwide.

Salam Al Kuntar (Penn Uni, Penn CHC, SHOSI Project)

SHOSHI = The Safeguarding the Heritage of Syria and Iraq Project
Large body of collaborative institutions:
- Penn ChC, Uni of Pennsylvania Museum

- Office of the Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture, Smithsonian Institution
- Geospatial Technologies project, AAAS
- U.S. Institute of Peace
- The Day After Association
- Le patrimoine archéologique syrien en danger
  Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage, Erbil
- Disaster Relief Task Force, International Council of Museums
- Egyptian Heritage Rescue Foundation
- Department of Spatial Planning, University of Dohuk

We do training. Have a team of people who work with us in Syria on the ground and other Syrian ex-pat archaeologists in Europe. Do training on emergency on response to disaster caused by the war in Syria and Iraq, in southern Turkey for Syrians, and in Erbil for Iraq.

- Prepare for future risks by offering training, distributing supplies, and assisting in disaster planning
- Reaches heritage professionals in Syrian areas outside of the control of the Assad regime and in Iraq
- Training locations: Gaziantep (2014), Erbil (2015)

Also carry out emergency intervention at sites. Previously did a project with Day After Tomorrow for the modern museum and recently finished emergency intervention at Ebla. These are the most endangered structures - ashlar [?] temple because of looting, documented looting on the ground, and did emergency interventions.

We do public outreach and awareness raising. We do exhibits – we had an exhibit at the Capitol Hill here, posters about the destruction of Syria and Iraq which opened yesterday with our partners at AAAS, and encourage you all to visit. Also going to have exhibit alongside the Reconntre[?] Assyriology Conference which will be held in Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, at which we will show a selection of objects from Syria and Iraq, in addition to updated posters and other information about the recent destruction and our response to the crisis.

Emergency preservation to support heritage professionals and local communities in Syria and Iraq in their implementation of emergency preservation projects

Emergency projects at Ma'aarat Mosaic Museum, Ebla (Tell Mardikh) and Dead Cities.

Samir Abdulac (ICOMOS)

Safeguarding of CH in Syria and Iraq.
<slide> What is ICOMOS?

- a recognised international professional organisation, based in Paris
- Nearly 10,000 professional in 150 countries
- About 110 National Committees
- Individual members from concerned countries, Syria, Iraq, etc.
- Nearly 30 International Scientific Committees, including Risk Preparedness. Lot of experience dealing with disaster situations (natural or manmade)
- Privileged Partnership with UNESCO

Iraq and Yemen also now areas of concern, and working group was endorsed and made official in 2014, although it started more than years before.

Our goals are to address Syrian professionals active in the country, to establish contacts with local technical agencies and universities, and address the professional community (including the international one) and the general public. This means that we have different activities. One is monitoring (obviously), trying to be as near the source of the situation as possible.
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- *Monitoring* the situation
- *Developing information*: statements, meetings, international media interviews, etc

- *Training of Syrian professionals*: Through the internet (170 trainees) or Lebanon with EU-UNESCO Program. (2013 – first people to train Syrian professional, and still ongoing). Next theme: risk preparedness and reconstruction in historic cities.
- *Provision of advisory services* to local authorities
- Defining *Comprehensive Programs and Strategies*, such as with UNESCO and EU.
- Development of a new safeguard activity: 3D scanning with Anqa Project, ICOMOS partnership with CyArk and Yale University. Training jointly with UNESCO in Beirut.
- Building a web platform emergency toolkit: AMAL Project, ICOMOS-ICORP partnership with ARC/WH, Athar/ICCROM and GHF. Intended for local professionals.

Tim Harrison (CRANE)

CRANE is an international research network, comprised of archaeologists, computer scientists and paleo-environmentalists, that seeks to leverage the rapidly expanding knowledge base of the ANE and transform knowledge of civilisations of Ancient World. <slide of participating institutions and funders> CRANE seeks to achieve this objective via
<slide>
- the integration of digital data from multiple archaeological research projects that use different terminologies stemming from different research traditions
- the development of a core cultural and paleo-environmental sequence for the Orontes watershed
- The creation of protocols and analytical tools to facilitate broad access to this information
- The simulation of ancient social practices and related human-environment dynamics based on parameters supplied by empirical data
- The creation of spatially accurate and realistic 3D visualization of reconstructed ancient landscapes and human activity based on empirical data and the output of simulated scenarios, and
- The creation of research opportunities and training in advanced archaeological analysis for students and junior scholars.

CRANE was conceived and initiated as international research collaboration prior to the outbreak of the civil war in Syria, and the research aims and objectives not determined by it. Nevertheless, a wide range of potential stakeholders and users to the projects anticipated research outcomes (especially computational data) were envisioned when project conceived, including government and non-government cultural heritage management agencies and organisations. Such collaborative data sharing and consolidation has already been initiated with a number of projects, including ASOR CHI, and I single this one out where we have already produced more than [400?] fully integrated sites, many of which have been shared directly.

Yorke Rowan (Oriental Institute, Uni of Chicago)

- Since 1922, heritage preservation a core interest of the OI
- <history>
- Train local museum staff, archaeologists – Iraq, Afghanistan
- "Iraq lost heritage" – databases documents looted objects
- OI Partnership with National Museum of Afghanistan in Kabul – 3 year project building bilingual database, and training staff, and plans for management and preservation of the museums collections; started 2012
- The Afghan Heritage Mapping Project – constructing geospatial database covering most of Afghanistan, including an automated Principal Component Analysis algorithm to map looters pits that can be applied elsewhere.

- Chicago Centre for Archaeological Heritage Preservation (CCAHP) hopes to establish more collaborative, pragmatic projects. Goal is to seek partnerships with local organisations, focussing on practical programs for states in transition and build management capacity.
- CCAHP integrates expertise of UoC specialists in remote sensing, IT, archaeology, history, and cultural patrimony to develop practical programs and organisational infrastructures for heritage preservation in states in transition of Middle East and Central Asia.
- Currently funded projects: Afghan Heritage Mapping Project (US Embassy Kabul)
- Planning Grant – Heritage Infrastructure Programme Development in States in Transition of Central Asia

In Syria, intend to found a North American Shirin Committee

OI Project focused in Syria = MANTIS. Stands for Modelling the Antiquities Trade in Iraq and Syria
- Interdisciplinary team from the OI, Dept of Art History and Dept of Economics, (also public policy) with funding form Antiquities Coalition and University of Chicago
- Integrative framework combining three primary forms of data: excavation records, remote sensory images, and market data
- Economic imputation to estimate scope and value of the trade, especially in ISIS controlled areas
- Project Directors: Gill Stein, Fiona-Rose Greenland (email on slide on You-Tube)

Will aid policy makers and law enforcement agencies to diagnose and dismantle insurgent funding streams. Two key goals. 1 - To build a revenue estimate tool that can be applied not only to Syria, but other conflict areas where antiquities generate revenue. 2 – to use statistical inputs to track longer-term patterns of damage to archaeological sites and objects.

Amr al-Azm (Shawnee State Uni, The Day After Project (TDA))

TDA Heritage Protection Initiative (TDA HPI) established to help protect cultural heritage as part of its portfolio of activities. It's a small NGO run entirely by Syrians
TDA HPI provides an institutional framework and support for non-state actors, networks, and activists working on the documentation and preservation of Syrian cultural heritage, primarily in areas outside regime control.
As part of its work, TDA HPI produces regular reports on the state of cultural heritage sites and monuments, including rapid assessment and damage reports due to bombing, looting and other violations.
TDA-HPI established the Site Monitors Project in Spring of 2015, a network of local archaeologists, museum curators, and activists who act as site monitors.
(Between 30-40 people in different parts of Syria working with them. The numbers fluctuate as some leave, or are unable to work any more).
TDA HPI supports the site monitors by providing training and technical expertise through its contacts with professionals and institutions (including previously Penn CHC, and they are currently working with ASOR)
The site monitors work to:
        Document violations and looting of cultural heritage sites in areas outside of regime control. The includes sites controlled by DAISH
        Track the sale and transport of looted antiquities
        Implement small-scale intervention/preservation projects. At least three projects to be started in 2016, in partnership with ASOR.

Plea for support to assist these people on the ground to provide equipment, subsistence payments, training, interventions, e.g. winter-proofing Mara'at al-Num'an museum

Ben Jeffs (World Monuments Fund)

WMF one of largest, old, private not-for-profits working to protect heritage, for more than 50 years, in over 100 countries, delivering 600 projects, with thousands of partners, costing more than 250 million dollars, with millions more leveraged in local economic benefits. Since 2002, worked with colleagues across Iraq and Syria, on multiple sites, investing more than 8.5 million dollars creating digital tools, building local preservation capacity and preserving iconic sites. Conclude by saying we are standing with our colleagues in the field.

Cristina Menegazzi (UNESCO)

UNESCO is intergovernmental organisation, and its cultural sector has 3 main mandates.
1 = statutory one, through implementation of 6 conventions, including the World Heritage Convention and the 1970 Convention against illicit trafficking.
2 = international advocacy,
3 =operational one. As far as Syria is concerned - implementing operations on the ground, UNESCO has the Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage project, which is based in UNESCO Beirut office. Financed by EU with 2, 750 000 Euros and contributions of Flemish and Austrian governments. In partnership with ICOMOS and ICCROM. It's a 3 year project, starting March 2014 – Feb 2017. Main object is to contribute to restoring social cohesion, stability, and sustainable development in Syria through restoration of cultural heritage.
Three main components: 1 – knowledge and documentation; 2 – communication and awareness-raising. 3 = technical assistance and capacity building.
We now have several results: able to tackle territory in Syria [?], organised 7 training activities, and several meetings offering emergency support, mobilised 139 Syrian colleagues to be trained, and were able to provide the Syrian Cultural Heritage Observatory– a publically available platform, with restricted access to more information for those who wish to join.

Elizabeth Lee (CyArk)

Project Anqa for emergency 3D recording of high-risk cultural sites, starting with Syria and Iraq. Premise of the program is that while the destruction has been great, a large number of sites are still accessible but at elevated risk, and accessing those sites is possible through the use of new technologies which will allow us to create a highly accurate record of the sites which can be used in any future restoration and / or ongoing study.
The Project is a joint initiative between three parties (see You-Tube for slide about parties):
       Cyark, a non-profit organisation with mission of accurately archiving and capturing cultural heritage. We lead a group of 3D-capture experts and maintain an archive of the info.
       Joined by ICOMOS, who have a network of some 10,000 professionals around the world who are working to identify sites at risk, and execute the work.
       Yale's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage have joined up and are committed to annotating the data, making the data available for use and open-access. We'll be using a suite of technologies during the project to collect this information, including everything from drones and capturing 3D information with photographs, and 3D laser scanning LiDAR recording, which generates hundreds of thousands of milametrically accurate points a second, which can then be transformed into blueprints of the sites and used for further analysis.
       Pilot project for Project Anqa seeks to digitally preserve a dozen sites in Syria and Iraq, with an open access database of the material, which will be password protected as required. The programme will also result in training of professionals locally, and building capacity within the regions.
       We have talked a lot with people at this event about how we can collaborate with others to share data and about making use of open-data standards, and we encourage anyone who is interested to talk to us about joining.

<Slides>: Project Anqa Premise
- The recent destruction is a great loss. Damaged sites represent a small portion of all the heritage sites susceptible to similar destruction and looting.
- Physically safeguarding these sites is problematic.
- It is possible to proactively document these sites on an emergency basis using new technologies
  - o 3D reality capture technologies make it possible to record monuments and sites accurately at a fraction of the time and cost of conventional surveying. The resulting engineering grade data is used to create dimensioned drawings and rich visualisations of the site, which can aid site restoration and counter trafficking in looted artefacts
  - o Currently executing Pilot Phase of the project which looks to digitally preserve 12 sites in Syria and Iraq.

Technology Used and Deliverables
- Unmanned aerial vehicles, LIDAR (3D laser scanning), Photogrammetry kits
- Open access database of all information collected during the Project Anqa pilot project
- 3D scans, photogrammetric models and photographs with identifying metadata to allow site managers, scholars and future researchers to locate the data of most interest
- A dedicated web-portal for accessing the database and associated data
- A secure archive of all data collected.

Benefits and Opportunities to Collaborate
- Project Anqa will provide tools to aide in site management, or if needed, reconstruction, training to locals, and a comprehensive record of the site.
- The resulting engineering grade data can be used to create dimensional drawings and rich visualisations of the site for further study and analysis
- The resultant data can be shared throughout the community to further other on the ground efforts
- Project Anqa welcomes additional collaboration on the project in regards to specific sites or regions of sites which should be prioritised
- Project Anqa intends to share all training materials developed for use in complementary programs in the region.

Round Up

During the international summit to promote collaboration, Protecting Our Shared Heritage in Syria, we heard from Syrian colleagues. These are their reactions and responses to the day's events

Salaam al Kuntar:
Thanks to all for hosting / funding. Great opportunity for us all to meet here and show our work and learn of other's work. 20 people presented – there is a great will to help and act on the crisis of destruction, Syria in particular and other parts of Middle East. I want to stress the importance that many people touched on - the importance of heritage as a human right, and the destruction of cultural property is a human rights violation that entails the destruction of identity of people in Syria and Iraq, the uprooting of people, and elimination of historical continuity and traditions of heritage that survived for thousands of years. The other thing I want to emphasise is there is a crisis that is unprecedented in this part of the world and probably worldwide since the Second World War. So I would like to stress most often efforts are focussed on post-conflict preparation for some kind of protection, using especially technologies – geospatial analyses, laser scanning and other methods. It is important to extend our efforts to our colleagues on the ground, especially in areas that are not reached via public institutions, like the DGAM, we should also reach out to and respond to colleagues in opposition held areas. I would also encourage everyone here, especially those with links to institutions, especially if you know people in the State Department, for example, where are we in political talks in Syria – a lot going on right now, on southern borders with Turkey, and Jordanian borders. Where are we in talks with the new coalitions in terms of preparedness, especially for Syria and Iraq – are we talking to our respective governments

and military actors? Also, especially for Iraq – first aid is needed. For example, Kirkuk recaptured – where is the preparedness, where is the first aid? Our colleagues from the Daesh controlled area are now refugees and they need this preparedness and the same applies to Syria. I would probably emphasise the need for systematic investigation of illicit trafficking. Not only collecting media information, or satellite images of looting, which are important too – we need systematic investigation.

Samir Abdulac
I have messages I would like to tell you about. The first one is about general public attention – it is very important. Never have the press spoken so much about Syrian cultural heritage. Never before has ICOMOS received so many requests for interviews: it has sky-rocketed. I was interviewed by a radio station in South Africa, journalists in Norway, and many more. The general public has been given a lot of attention about what is going on, and it needs answers and actions from us, from every stakeholder. My second message is about the modernisation [mobilisation?] of the international community of professionals: in ICOMOS we stood for a minute of silence in our General Assembly in Japan in memory of Khalad al-Assad, and other groups and scientific committees had the same reaction. One group had 6 messages sent about him [?]. ICOMOS has been asked how we could create a Khalad al-Assad fund as well, so there is an enormous mobilisation and sense that something has to be done. Same message about this meeting. I have been deeply happy to be witness to its successes because not only major institutions of the US have been invited, government institutions, academic, non-profit organisations, but also foreign guests, including UNESCO, ICOMOS, our German friends as well. This has to be underlined as the effort cannot be restricted to only one country, must be international.
My parents were both archaeologists, I must say I enjoyed enormously the company and the range of activities in cultural heritage is very wide - we all collectively contribute to a very wide definition of what is cultural heritage. Finally when we speak about Syria and Syrians, I must say I am somehow distressed to hear the word Syrians – let me explain. Syrians are not just a collection of individuals – they have been able to produce professionals and produce organisations – academic organisations, scientific organisations, technical organisations – we are no more in the colonial stage, and what has to be underlined as well is that between Syrians - professional Syrians - in the field of cultural heritage, you have far more links than you can suppose, whatever our orientation whenever it comes to safeguarding of cultural heritage. The field has a lot in common and this brings me to the conclusion, that cultural heritage could be a common ground between all Syrians tomorrow in future Syria,

Amr al-Azam:
Thank you Samir. You gave me the perfect introduction for what I would like to say. Since 2011, Syria has been in the grip of a terrible catastrophe and conflict that has resulted in the rupturing of Syrian society across every possible cleavage – horizontal, vertical – the divide that has opened up within society is almost unimaginable in every conceivable way if you stand and see what's happened today, yet despite the huge gulf that has opened up between different groups, I know on both sides there are those dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage, on the regime side who are trying to do this job and on the opposition side going out there doing what none of us are even able to imagine doing, going out doing this kind of work and they are the heroes. They're the guys out there on the ground doing this kind of work every day, and for me, the fact that despite this terrible difference, this huge gulf, that there are still people on both sides that still give value to cultural heritage. And this tells me how important this shared common history is as it's the only glue left that is holding the society together, and that is why it is so vital that we preserve it. And so for me, the efforts by groups like yourselves, organisations who have essentially theoretically have better things to do, and yet you're giving up your time to come here, to listen to us speak, to engage in trying to find ways to help Syria save this cultural heritage and not just for the Syrian people, but also for the rest of the world, because it is a world history as well, and this for me, is very important and very moving and I thank you all for that. To me, you know this conflict will end one day, and Syrians are going to have to find ways to reach across the divide, reach across what essentially they've been fighting for over all these years, and they're going to have to try and find common bridges that they can connect again and by saving this cultural heritage, I think this will act as this bridge, so for me saving Syria's past it also saving its future as well.