



Ministry Of Culture

Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums

STATE PARTY REPORT

Updating Information for the State of Conservation
Of the

Palmyra Archaeological Site (dossier n 23)
(Syrian Arab Republic)

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INTRODUCTION

This Progress Report on the State of Conservation of Palmyra Archaeological site (dossiers n 23) properties is:

- Provides an update to the December 2015 State of Conservation report.
- Prepared in to be present on the previous World Heritage Committee meeting 40e session 2016.

Information Sources

This report represents a collation of available information as of 31 December 2015, and is based on available information and site visits from the DGAM team, taking inconsideration that with ground access in some areas in the site extremely limited for antiquities experts because of the scan for booby-traps and disarming in the site.

Name of World Heritage property: **SITE OF PALMYRA**

Date of inscription on World Heritage List: 1980

CURRENT SITUATION

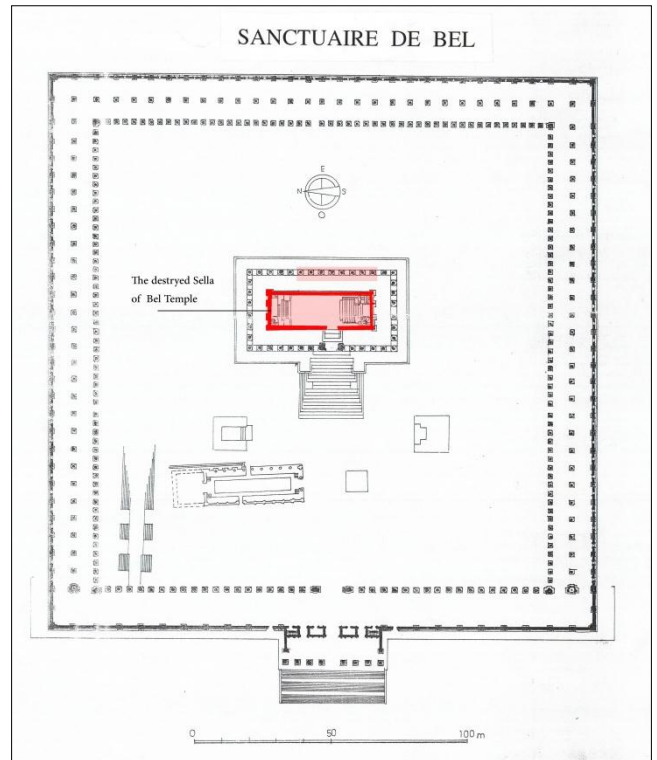
Since the invasion of the terrorist militants of ISIS to the World Heritage city of Palmyra in May 2015, the ancient city of Palmyra has witnessed confirmed destruction of many significant landmarks, in a series of major cultural, scientific, and human losses.

On 27 March 2016 the Syrian armed forces was able to liberate the city after launching series of battles. After restoring the city, experts for DGAM directly planned a field visit for damage assessment:

- The scan for booby-traps and disarming in the site are still going on; therefore, the team could only get to limited areas, i.e. Temple of Bel, Temple of Baalshameen, Triumphal Arch, Colonnade and the Museum. These explanations of the causes of the damage based on this rapid survey during April 2016.
- Much of the ancient city's ruins remain intact, i.e. Tetrapylon, Theater, Agora, Baths, camp of Diocletian, Colonnaded Decumanus, where no major damage is apparent.
- While some treasured monuments have been destroyed the Arch of Triumph, the Sella of both Baalshameen Temple and, Bel Temple, the castle and several tower tombs.
- Our experts indicate that the available architectural elements in those mentioned destructed monuments are in a good condition and sufficient to lead very possible authentic restoration and consolidation works, with no need to clear reconstruction.
- The Valley of the Tombs, the Southwest Necropolis, the Southeast Necropolis, weren't be able to visit by the experts. Though what is not known yet is the extent of the possible destructions and looting of funerary tombs, scattered around the ancient city; which include many decorated tombs.

Temple of Bel:

- The sella (10 x 40 m) completely destroyed the existence stone blocs remaining almost intact.
- Several architectural features, such as the podium, its stairs, and foundations are in good condition.
- The outer rectangular shape large precinct lined by porticos slightly damaged.
- Most of the stones from the collapsed sella still on the site.
- Several columns on the east side of the sella have collapsed since the destruction of the sella.
- Section of modern western wall to the right of the temple's portal has partially collapsed.
- The monumental portal remained standing showed evidence of the onset of damage through the spreading of the temple walls from the inside out.



Plan of Temple of Bel showing the destroyed areas marked in red color



Aerial Footage of Temple of Bel showing the destruction of the sella and the survived monumental portal.



Aerial Footage of Temple of Bel showing the survived of the outer rectangular precinct which lined by porticos



Most of the stones from the collapsed sella still on the site



Close footage of Temple of Bel showing survived monumental portal.



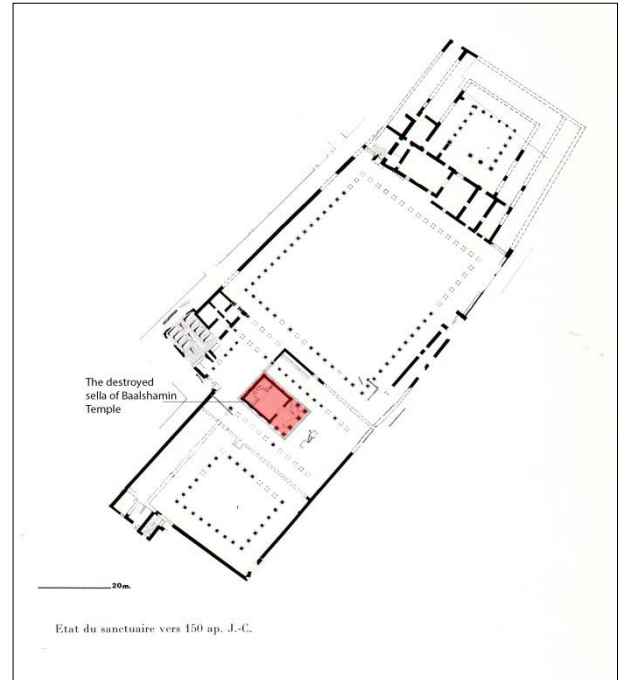
Section of outer modern western wall has partially collapsed.

Temple of Baalshameen:

- The sella (10 x 20 m) completely destroyed.
- Most of the stones from the collapsed sella still on the site.
- With regard to interesting examples of surviving structures, one could not help noticing that the Southern and Northern columns at the courtyards still intact.



Aerial Footage of Temple of Baalshameen showing the destruction of the sella.



Plan of Temple of Baalshameen showing the destroyed sella marked in red color



Most of the stones from the collapsed sella of Temple of Baalshameen still on the site



The Northern columns at the courtyards Temple of Baalshameen still intact.



Ariel Footage showing the Northern & Southern columns at the courtyards Temple of Baalshameen still intact.

The Triumph Arch:

- The large gateway in the center with the flanked smaller opening on either side were destroyed, the arch was destroyed by dropping its middle span, leaving the columns along the sides still standing.
- Most of the stones from the collapsed arch still on the site.
- Reconstructing the arch would not be difficult since many of its stones still survive.



Aerial Footage showing the damage of the Triumph Arch



The columns along the sides of the Triumph Arch still standing

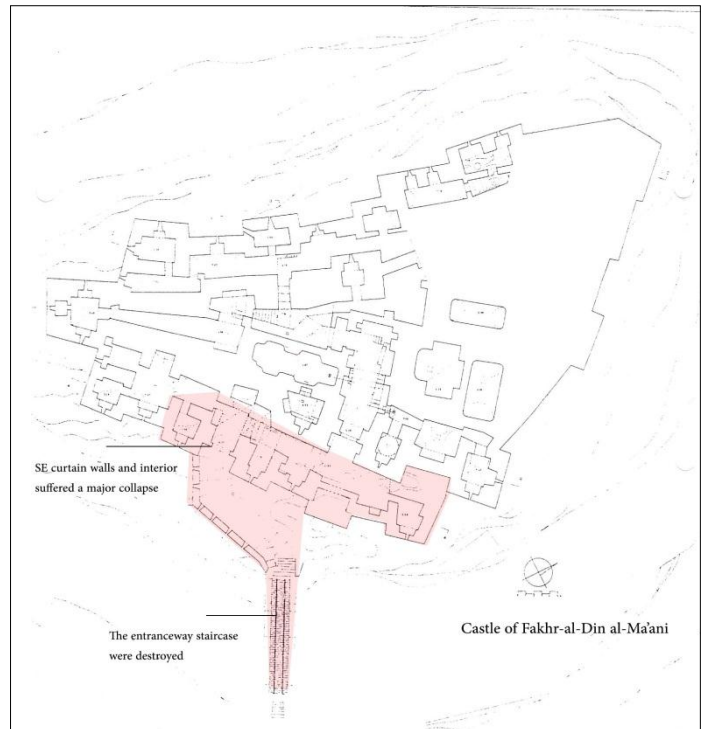


Most of the collapsed stones of the Triumph Arch still on site

Castle of Fakhr-al-Din al-Ma'ani:

Access to the castle was denied to our experts due to the dangerous situation, according to the photos taken from far aside the damage reported as follows:

- The fortress, appears largely intact on the curtain walls and interior.
- The top of the walls have also partially collapsed in several locations at the NE curtain walls.
- The southeastern curtain wall in particular has suffered a major collapse.
- Explosives were detonated at the entrance to the castle, destroying the entranceway staircase.



Plan of castle of Castle of Fakhr-al-Din al-Ma'ani showing the destroyed areas marked in red color



The southeastern curtain wall and the entrance of Castle of Fakhr-al-Din al-Ma'ani has suffered a major collapse



Close footage showing the collapsed of the southeastern curtain wall of Castle of Fakhral-Din al-Ma'ani



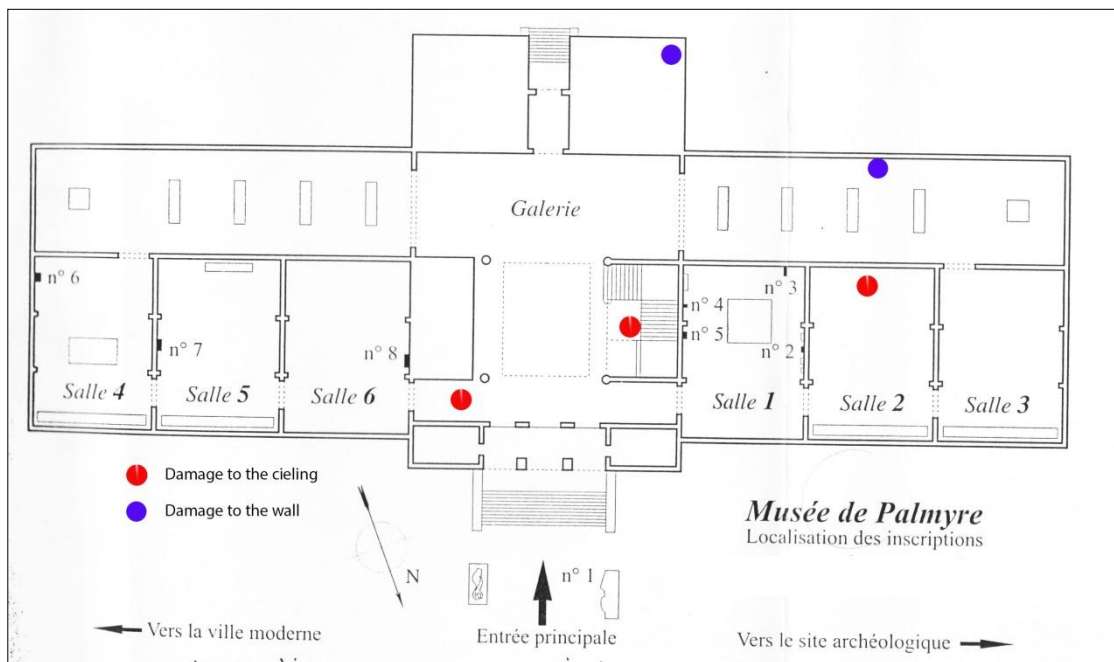
Close footage showing the top of the walls partially collapsed in several locations of Castle of Fakhral-Din al-Ma'ani

Museum (the building):

The museum was almost certainly the target of clashes. The munitions impacts spread debris across the garden grounds and visibly damaged the building. Shock waves from such clashes caused damage to the facades and interiors but may not have degraded the structural integrity.

While some structures certainly require demolition and reconstruction, other structures may be repairable.

- The Damaged - repairable. Minor deformations of non-structural elements and secondary structural members and no permanent deformation in primary structural members, window glass breakage, partial failure of the concrete ceiling and walls.
- The main façade and the background façade show possible slightly damage.
- These structures will need reconstruction after debris is cleared.
- The garden area also experienced slight damage.



Plan of Palmyra museum showing the damaged areas marked in red and blue colors



Destruction of the ceiling at the main entrance hall and damage to Paleolithic exhibit of finds from Jurf al-Ajla in the museum of Palmyra



Destruction of the ceiling at the office room (2) in the museum of Palmyra



Slight damage to stairs and the walls of the main facade in the museum of Palmyra



Slight damage to the background facade in the museum of Palmyra



Destruction at the background gallery in the museum of Palmyra



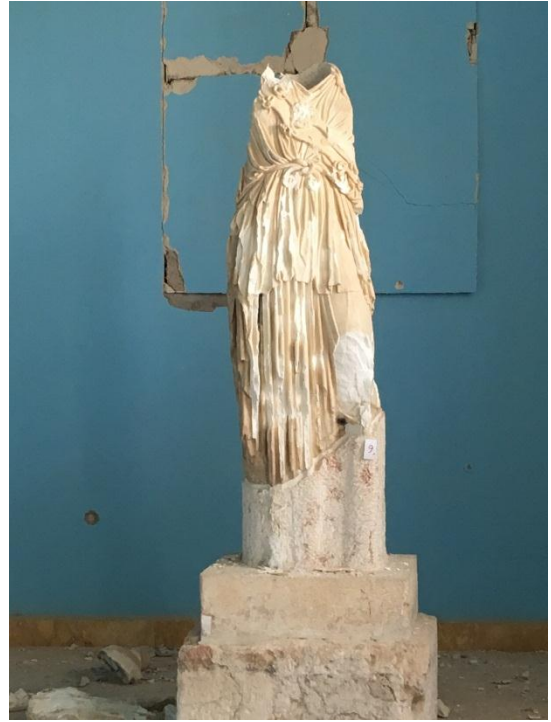
Slight damage in the garden of the museum of Palmyra

Museum (the objects):

- As a result of the explosion, some damage to the museum objects is resulted.
- Several damaged museum artifacts show indications of intentional defacement done by ISIS.
- In the museum's East Gallery which housed its most impressive sculptures, have suffered damage, statues being toppled from their stands and dismembered. A row of five statues of persons in Persian dress were all toppled face forwards, breaking them in several places.
- Many funerary busts have been defaced.
- The Statue of Athena: The head of the statue has been removed as has the right raised arm.
- The Lion of al-Lāt: had been broken at the base and tipped over backwards, with severe damage to the face.
- Most of the 200 objects which were exhibited on the ground floor of the Palmyra museum were destroyed, many of them apparently with hard tools like hammers. Most of the objects can be restored, but they will never look as they did before. In the near future, restoration works will start in the proper lab in DGAM headquarters in Damascus, under supervision of local and international experts.



The museum's East Gallery which housed its most impressive sculptures. The rooms have suffered slight damage, with statues being toppled from their stands and dismembered.



The head of the statue of Athena has been removed as has the right raised arm



Numerous funerary busts were broken



Several damaged museum artifacts show indications of intentional defacement



Picture showing damage to the Lion of al-Lāt



Picture showing artifacts at the basement storages still intact



A banquet relief appears to have sustained recent damage.

MEASURES TAKEN

- A large number of empty mounts on the wall, and all display cases (around 400 unique object) were emptied, hundreds of smaller portable artifacts and hundreds of less importance objects were all removed by the DGAM before Palmyra fell to ISIS.
- After liberating Palmyra the DGAM started immediately cleaning up the rubble in the museum building, removed about some of the remaining sculptures from the fallen ruins and from the building itself with the joint of the polish experts Dr. Bartosz Markowski who already restored Athina Al-lat statue 10 years ago, and Dr. Robert Żukowski, both from the Polish archaeological mission, who worked previously in Palmyra. The members of this mission worked together to gather all fragments of statues, in order to help restore the statues. They are working to collect fragments of broken sculptures from the museum grounds and preparing them for transportation to Damascus in a rescue mission to help salvage most of its contents and to help restore the statues to its potential state.
- As a result of this mission Hundreds of Palmyrene statues and museum objects have been transferred out from Palmyra to Damascus and Homs, in addition to hundreds of exhibits at the museum, i.e. artifacts, transportable statues, storage boxes. Parallel to this the staff is preparing a detailed, spatial inventory of remains museum's objects in order to facilitate future retrieval of lost objects.



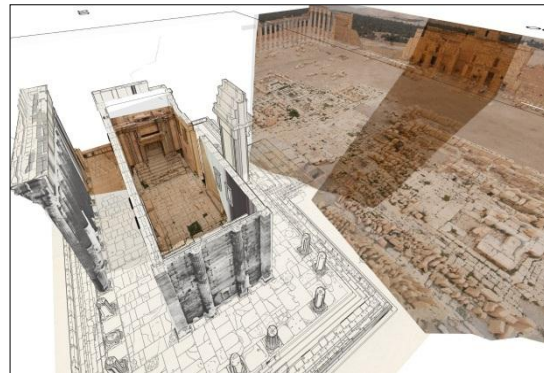
Transforming the museum's objects from Palmyra to Damascus



Cleaning up the rubble in the museum building by the DGAM staff

- Collecting records of Palmyra and its monuments is undertaken in order to prepare a visionary plan for what can be restored, that give the city its cultural role back as one of the icons of world heritage. Some of them are still standing, but have been severely damaged and could collapse. The second phase will therefore be to solidify these monuments and the museum. The actual restoration work will then take place in the third phase with cooperation of the national and international concerned organizations.

- DGAM experts with joint mission between the photographer Mr. Shadi Martak, and Mr. Yves Ubelmann of ICONEM Paris are undertaking specific documentation works using advanced technology, in order to produce the necessary documents for the restorations. This work is done in accordance with international standards that give priority to the site's authenticity. The first phase was for 4 days on April 2016, the team took thousands of pictures, from ground, with drones and with a pole, in the museum and in the site. some results are available on the website of the DGAM and ICONEM :



3D photogrammetry to Temple of Bel as a joint documentation program by DGAM and ICONEM

<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1964>

<http://iconem.com/palmyra/>

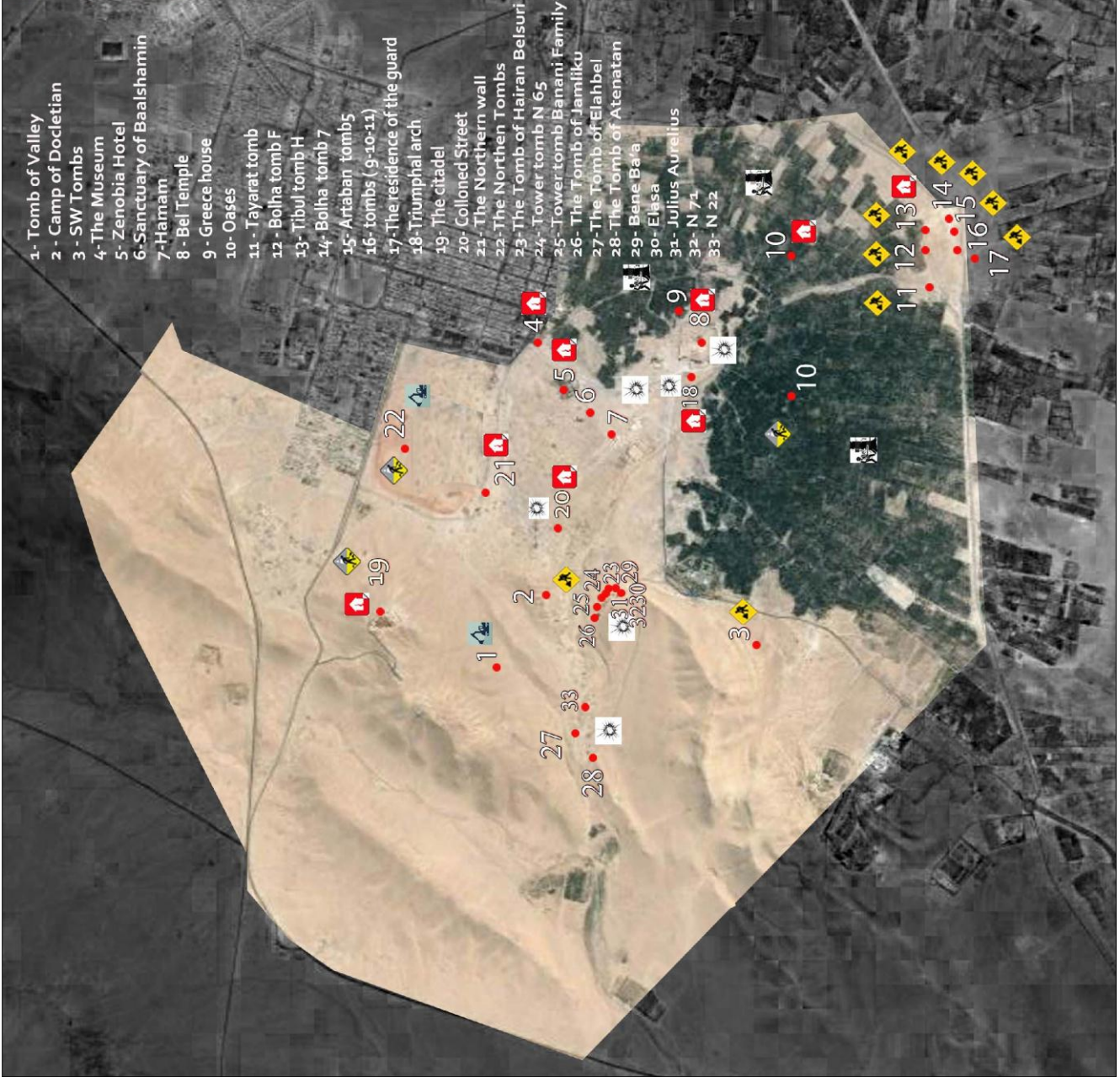


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 Directorate General
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**Initial Damages Assessments
 Palmyra Archaeological Site**

2012-March 2016



- 1- Tomb of Valley
- 2 - Camp of Docletian
- 3 - SW Tombs
- 4- The Museum
- 5- Zenobia Hotel
- 6- Sanctuary of Baalshamin
- 7- Hamam
- 8 - Bel Temple
- 9 - Greece house
- 10- Oases
- 11 - Tayarat tomb
- 12 - Bolha tomb F
- 13- Tibul tomb H
- 14- Bolha tomb 7
- 15- Artaban tomb 5
- 16- tombs (9-10-11)
- 17- The residence of the guard
- 18- Triumphal arch
- 19- The citadel
- 20- Colloned Street
- 21- The Northern wall
- 22- The Northern Tombs
- 23- The Tomb of Hairan Belsuri
- 24- Tower tomb N 65
- 25- Tower tomb Banani Family
- 26- The Tomb of Jamliku
- 27- The Tomb of Elahbel
- 28- The Tomb of Atenatan
- 29- Bene Bata
- 30- Elisa
- 31- Julius Aurelius
- 32- N 74
- 33- N 22

- Damaged Areas
- 🏠 Monnuent damaged by clashes
- 🚧 Calandestine Excavations
- 🏗 Land Levelling
- 🌳 Deforestation
- 🛣 Road Construction
- 💣 Explosion
- Area 113.3 h
- UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1980
- World Heritage Site Endanger June 2013

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