



ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Safeguarding the Heritage of the Near East Initiative¹

S-IZ-100-17-CA021

April 2017 Monthly Report

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¹ This report is based on research conducted by the "Safeguarding the Heritage of the Near East Initiative." Monthly reports reflect reporting from a variety of sources and may contain unverified material. As such, they should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.

Executive Summary

During the April reporting period, anti-

Syria

SARG and Russian aerial bombardment campaigns continued with increasing intensity over opposition-held areas in Syria's Idlib, Hama, and Rif Dimashq Governorates. Satellite imagery of the city of Kafr Zaita, Hama Governorate shows the devastation to the town wrought by aerial bombardment during April, as entire city blocks have been flattened (see [Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis](#) in [Appendix](#) pp. 124–126). ASOR CHI recorded destruction and damage to three mosques and one cemetery in Hama Governorate (see [SHI 17-0073](#), [SHI 17-0074](#), [SHI 17-0075](#) in [Appendix](#) pp. 77–85).

In Syria's Idlib Governorate, aerial bombardment was seemingly intensified following an April 4 chemical weapons attack that killed at least 90 people in th

Other cleanup and reconstruction efforts are underway in al-Bab City, where at least four mosques were heavily damaged by clashes between ISIL and Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces (see [SHI 17-0058](#), [SHI 17-0059](#), [SHI 17-0060](#), in [Appendix](#))

return. Easter masses were celebrated in at least one village, despite the poor conditions of the churches in the area. New information is also arising as to how ISIL used the churches and other