

Epilogue: The Monuments of Syria in 2016

[The Holy Land] is one tourist destination, or actually part of a larger tourist destination that includes at least Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt. There should be no doubt that maintaining archaeological sites and the protection of the Holy Land's cultural heritage can play a vital role in the economic revival of the country and the region as a whole. Economic viability will be one of the most crucial issues facing Palestine, Israel, and indeed the entire region in peacetime, and archaeologists have an important role to play in this regard.¹ [2005]

This book has detailed travellers' experience of and reactions to Greater Syria over the centuries, ending with a short account of how the 1914–18 war and the ensuing mandates affected the country and its monuments. This epilogue offers pointers to information sources on those monuments during the intervening century since the First World War, focussing on the past few years, when fighting and bombing have devastated the modern country of Syria. It attempts no political analysis, no more than any forensic distinction between freedom-fighters and terrorists of various stripes: see the cartoon showing a man holding a kalashnikov labelled as a “terrorist,” and the same man holding a kalashnikov and an American flag as a “moderate terrorist.”

It bears pointing out that, although much has been accomplished,² there is still much detailed archaeological work to be done in Greater Syria: for example, the northern border is militarised, preventing work;³ many sites in Jordan remain to be excavated, and century-old sketch plans corrected and improved.⁴ Lebanon has also been devastated by civil war. As a general rule, it appears that over the past few years monuments outside towns have suffered less than those within them. For example, at Palmyra it was the modern town

1 Pollock & Bernbeck 2005, 73.

2 Weiss 1997, 97: Twenty-seven Syrian archaeological reports are presented here, covering approximately two-thirds of the field research undertaken in 1993–1995 (fig. 1). The reports are listed alphabetically, as many of them summarize research across several distinct time periods.

3 Beaudry 2014, 255.

4 Kennedy 2004, 23; 27: “without excavation, the current interpretations are uncertain at best and the reliance on inscriptions and typology is unwise . . . here has been a simplistic tendency to identify every square structure as a ‘fort’, and every ‘fort’ as Roman.”

(as distinct from the ruins, less harmed) which suffered perhaps 50% damage. But Aleppo's monuments are clustered within or close to its walls, and suffered accordingly.

What follows does not include an update on the other countries I included within Greater Syria, namely Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza, Occupied Palestine or Israel. Inevitably, much of the information below is to be found on the internet, rather than in printed books, which are of fixed date. Naturally, plentiful images of Syrian towns and monuments are also to be found there. The internet offers not only continual updating, but also accounts of varying depth to suit all tastes, as well as a plethora of images, sometimes in distressing before-and-after pairs. Readers should note, however, that only some web pages are regularly updated, and many offer a snapshot marooned in time, for circumstances can sometimes change rapidly. But the amount of information the internet provides, and the quantity of images, is very large. Wikimedia Commons, for example (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page) is a database of over 31 million images, of which there are plenty of Greater Syria; <https://www.facebook.com/> offers large quantities of images, videos and comment; while <http://archnet.org/> offers an "Extensive multimedia library on the built environment of Muslim societies across the world." A few of the websites listed below are recent creations, and some of their assertions express potential, and not yet achievement.

Note that the offerings below are merely samples, and not comprehensive. They do not repeat bibliographical items referenced in the body of the book, and offer only a brief bibliography on Syrian monuments and their research over the past century. Wikipedia, like any encyclopaedia, should be used with caution, but is invaluable for its images and links as well as text.

Syria: Timelines

<http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/resources/heritage-timeline/> from 2014.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Syria

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_the_Syrian_Civil_War

<https://reeseerlich.com/syria-timeline/> Syria 1914 to the present day.

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/syria/sytimeIn.htm>
3000BC to present.

History of Archaeology and Travel in Syria

Since the accounts written by our travellers, over 1300 sites in Syria and Lebanon have been excavated or surveyed.⁵ Some of these fall within the purview of Levantine archaeology where, as Wikipedia relates, they are “marked by a degree of acrimony not shared in other area studies in the field that is often influenced by the complex politics of the region. Classical archaeologists who consider Biblical scriptures to be legitimate historical documents have been attacked by alternative archaeologists who consider the data from excavations as being incompatible with the Biblical historical record.”⁶ Given the attitudes and disagreements around the Bible recounted in Chapter Two, such divisions are not surprising.

<http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/drupal/> “Arachne is the central Object database of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) and the Archaeological Institute of the University of Cologne . . . Arachne is intended to provide archaeologists and Classicists with a free internet research tool for quickly searching hundreds of thousands of records on objects and their attributes.”

<http://www.archive.org> This invaluable site stores large quantities of freely downloadable out-of-copyright materials on a host of subjects. A search for “Syria” (or Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, etc.) will produce over 8,000 hits (texts, images, movies, audio) which can then be ordered (for example) by “date published” (when the most recent additions will be at the top) or “date archived.” The entries are presented discursively, but unchecking the “show details” box will yield just title, date and creator.

<http://gallica.bnf.fr> for a large collection of downloadable out-of-copyright texts and images, fronted by a search engine. The focus is largely but not exclusively French. Why does the United Kingdom, let alone the USA, have nothing similar?

<http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/Englisch/helios/> for the University’s large digital library.

<http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/sammlungen/archaeologie.html> downloadable archaeological literature for our region.

5 Lehmann 2002, 3: “The bibliography encompasses more than 1300 sites [including towns, in Syria and Lebanon]. Following approaches of landscape archaeology, the site concept includes all remains of human activity in the past. However, in most cases, a site in this bibliography is some kind of settlement. Sites listed here have usually been excavated. Although in some cases sites were included which have been only surveyed.”

6 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levantine_archaeology.

- <http://www.crlv.org/> Centre de Recherche sur la Littérature des Voyages.
- <http://www.csc.org.il/> Bibliography on Christianity in Palestine/Eretz-Israel.
This project was launched in the year 2000 on behalf of the Center for the Study of Christianity of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- <http://www.ifao.egnet.net/archives-scientifiques/inventaire> for Western travellers to the East.
- <http://www.ifpoorient.org/node/627> Institut français du Proche-Orient: La mission archéologique française en Syrie du Sud (up to 2011).
- <http://www.mae.u-paris10.fr/arscan/Atlas-et-guides-archeologiques.html> Maison René Ginouvès: archaeological guide-books.
- <http://www.mae.u-paris10.fr/arscan/La-Syrie-du-Sud.html> Maison René Ginouvès: Archéologie du Proche-Orient hellénistique et romain, La Syrie du Sud.
- <http://www.orient-latin.com/> Forteresses d'Orient (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Turkey).
- <http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/revue/syria> for the journal *Syria*, published by IFPO. The top-level site <http://www.persee.fr> offers access to large numbers of scholarly papers on our region.
- Chevalier, Nicole, "L'administration de la recherche archéologique française dans le Moyen-Orient du milieu du XIX^e siècle à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale," thesis, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1993. Chronicles the struggle between Ottoman authorities to protect and keep antiquities, against countries such as France which needed trophies for their museums.
- Chevalier, Nicole, *La recherche archéologique française au Moyen-Orient 1842–1947*, Paris 2002.

Recent Political/Military Developments in the Region, and Their Sources

- Al-Rodhan, Nayef R.F., Herd, Graeme P., & Watanabe, Lisa, *Critical Turning Points in the Middle East, 1915–2015*, London 2011.
- al-Sabouni, Marwa, *The battle for home. The vision of a young architect in Syria*, London 2016. A feisty account of Homs; in Roger Scruton's assessment in his Foreward, "She gives a moving account of traditional Islamic architecture and the way in which its principles have been misunderstood or bowdlerized into architectural clichés. And she boldly criticizes the corruption that has surrendered her city to both materialist vandalism and hate-filled revenge."

- Ammon, Francesca Russello, Bulldozer. *Demolition and Clearance of the Postwar Landscape*, New Haven & London 2016. Not about Syria, but about the “culture of clearance” that Syria will have to confront in any rebuilding phase.
- Barr, James, *A line in the sand. Britain, France, and the struggle for the mastery of the Middle East*, London etc. 2011. “What makes this venomous rivalry between Britain and France so important is that it fuelled today’s Arab–Israeli conflict.”
- Çiçek, M. Talha, *War and State Formation in Syria Cemal Pasha’s governorate during World War I, 1914–17*, London & New York 2014. In the Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern History, which includes several titles pertinent to Syria.
- Corburn, Patrick, *The rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the new Sunni revolution*, London & New York 2015.
- Fisk, Robert, *The great war for civilisation: The conquest of the Middle East*, London 2005.
- Fisk, Robert, *The age of the warrior: selected essays*, New York 2008.
- The Independent, *Syria: Descent into the abyss, 2011–2014. An unforgettable anthology of contemporary reportage*, London 2014.
- Kamrava, Mehran, *The modern Middle East. A political history since the First World War*, 3rd edn Berkeley etc. 2013.
- Lister, Charles R., *The Syrian jihad: Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and the Evolution of an Insurgency*, Oxford 2015: “Where did the jihadists come from in the first place? How did they establish themselves, and what was their role in the revolution? What role did external actors play in facilitating the rise of jihadists and how might US-led and Russian intervention impact their status in Syria?”
- McHugo, John, *Syria: a history of the last hundred years*, New York & London 2015.
- McMeekin, Shaun, *The Ottoman endgame. War, revolution and the making of the modern Middle East, 1908–1923*, New York 2015.
- Shegadeh, Raja, & Johnson, Penny, eds., *Shifting sands. The Unravelling of the Old Order in the Middle East*, London 2015.
- <http://www.counterpunch.org> for robust commentaries on recent events and Western involvement.
- <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot> for a variety of conflicts, including Syria.
- <http://journalisted.com/robert-fisk?allarticles=yes> articles by Robert Fisk about the Middle East, not just Syria.

Websites Detailing Syria's Monuments

<http://digitalarchaeology.org.uk> “The Institute for Digital is a joint venture between Harvard University, the University of Oxford and Dubai’s Museum of the Future that promotes the development and use of digital imaging and 3D printing techniques in archaeology, epigraphy, art history and museum conservation.”

<http://digitalarchaeology.org.uk/media/> 3D images of Syria archaeological treasures go online.

<http://www.europeana.eu/> Over 5,000 results for “Syria,” including over 2,000 images.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=syria> offers over 1,200 results of largely out-of-copyright items, some of which are of albums with dozens of images.

<http://www.manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk/> Multi-media resource for the study of the Middle East.

<http://www.millionimage.org.uk/> “*The documentation of cultural heritage in areas affected by conflict or natural disasters, including through the use of new digital technologies, is a critical step to preserve the memory of our past and mitigate the risk of possible damage or loss of precious cultural assets . . . One of the goals of the Million Image Database Project is to produce life-like 3D virtual models of at risk, damaged, and destroyed architectural archaeological objects.*”

<http://monumentsofsyria.com/> Begun in 2011, the site is a window on Syria’s past, with itineraries, by Ross Burns, from whom two books are also under way – a history of Aleppo and a study of the monuments of Lebanon.

“Ross has accumulated an archive of 80,000 photos and slides of archaeological sites, which he is planning to make available online through the Near Eastern Archaeological Foundation at the University of Sydney. Meanwhile, a foretaste of the archive can be seen at www.monumentsofsyria.com and at the Flickr site www.flickr.com/photos/monsyr/collections/.”

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/sy/> – Syria’s World Heritage sites (Aleppo, Bosra, Damascus, Ancient Villages of Northern Syria, Krac des Chevaliers and Qal’at Salah El-Din, and Palmyra).

<http://wnep.com/2015/08/28/using-3d-cameras-to-save-antiquities-from-isis/> “Can 3-D cameras save antiquities from ISIS? A team of archaeologists has come up with a cheap 3D digital camera that can capture a record of buildings and artifacts – and they are sending thousands into hot spots in the Middle East and beyond.”

<http://www.syriaphotoguide.com/home> “A comprehensive guide to the cultural and historic sites of Syria,” by Daniel Demeter. This offers illustrations

of sites by region, itineraries, maps and notes. Maps and sites are labelled in Arabic and English. Notification of new posts is available via email.

<http://shirin-international.org> “is an initiative from the global community of scholars active in the field of archaeology, art and history of the Ancient Near East. It brings together a significant proportion of those international research groups that were working in Syria prior to 2011, with the purpose of making their expertise available to wider heritage protection efforts. Accordingly, its International Committee includes the directors of a number of long-term international research programmes, and others who share their strong commitment to the effective protection of the heritage of Syria.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_World_Heritage_Sites_in_Jordan (including Petra, Qasr Amra, Madaba and Wadi Rum).

<http://www.smb.museum/museen-und-einrichtungen/museum-fuer-islamische-kunst/sammeln-forschen/forschung-kooperation/erstellung-digitaler-kulturregister-fuer-syrien.html>.

Damaged Sites, Monuments and Museums

<http://www.aaas.org/geotech/culturalheritage> “Ancient History, Modern Destruction: Assessing the current status of Syria’s World Heritage sites using high-resolution satellite imagery.” Executive summary 2014: “five of the six World Heritage sites exhibit significant damage... except for the Ancient City of Damascus.”

<http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/> Association for the Protection of Syrian Archaeology, with useful links at <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/links/>

<http://www.archdaily.com/788316/> The V&A Presents “A World of Fragile Parts” at the Venice Biennale’s Applied Arts Pavilion: “The project will examine threats faced by global heritage sites and how copies can act as an aid in the preservation of cultural artifacts.”

<https://eca.state.gov/cultural-heritage-center/conflict-antiquities> “The pioneering symposium brought together senior State Department officials, national and international law enforcement, museums, auction houses, dealers, and collectors to review international cooperation against the looting and trafficking of antiquities from the conflict in Iraq and Syria.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_heritage_sites_damaged_during_... List of heritage sites damaged during the Syrian Civil War.

<http://icom.museum/resources/red-lists-database/red-list/syria/> Emergency Red List of Syrian Cultural Objects at Risk.

http://iconem.com/fr/heritage_syrien/ Renouveau. La technologie au secours du patrimoine syrien: "Le projet Syrian Heritage a pour but de créer une base de données digitale des monuments syriens, mais également de mettre en place une équipe nationale capable de l'enrichir continuellement. Nous considérons qu'il est de notre devoir commun de préserver la connaissance de l'histoire syrienne."

<http://www.themissingexhibit.com/> Exhibition 2015/16 curated by Erin Thompson & Thalia Vrachopoulos at CUNY: "The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has engaged in a systematic campaign to destroy the past, smashing, bombing, and bulldozing irreplaceable cultural heritage across the region . . . *The Missing: Rebuilding the Past* is the first exhibit to showcase the efforts of artists and scholars to resist ISIS and other forms of destruction of the past through creative and innovative reactions, protests, and reconstructions."

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/safeguarding-syrian-cultural-heritage/> Resolutions, initiatives, workshops, damage assessment.

Photographic Evidence of Destruction in Syria

Readers may wish to consult any of the many collections of photographs from the early 20th century, before reconstruction or restoration projects lay scheming hands on surviving monuments. Djemal Pascha's *Alte Denkmäler aus Syrien, Palästina und Westarabien* (Berlin 1918) offers high-quality photographs, with descriptive text for each monument. Updates on destruction have been regularly posted by European and American newspapers.

<http://www.aaas.org/geotech/culturalheritage-SyrianTWHS-122014.html>.

<https://www.rt.com/news/338187-palmyra-before-after-pictures/> of Palmyra show what ISIS has destroyed.

https://www.facebook.com/Archeologie.syrienne?fref=nf_Le patrimoine archéologique syrien en danger.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/26/syria-heritage-in-ruins...>
The Guardian, 26 January 2014.

Guides/Surveys to Monuments and Regions

Ball, Warwick, *Syria: A historical and architectural guide*, New York 2006.

Burns, Ross, *Damascus: A History*, London 2007.

- Gates, Charles, *Ancient cities. The archaeology of urban life in the ancient Near East and Egypt, Greece and Rome*, 2nd edn. Abingdon 2011.
- Gerster, Georg, & Wartke, Ralf-B., *Flugbilder aus Syrien von der Antike bis zur Moderne*, Mainz 2003. 213 photos, plans and maps.
- Hanson, William S., & Oltean, Ioana A., eds, *Archaeology from historical aerial and satellite Archives*, New York etc 2013.
- Kennedy, David, & Bewley, Robert, *Ancient Jordan from the air*, Council for British Research in the Levant, London 2004. 216 colour photos.
- Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome, *The Holy Land. An Oxford Archaeological Guide from earliest times to 1700*, 5th edn. Oxford etc 2008.
- Stern, Ephraim, & Lewinson-Gilboa, Ayelet, *New encyclopedia of archaeological excavations in the Holy Land*, 4 vols, Jerusalem 1993. Well illustrated site by site, with plans and photos, and with extensive bibliographies for each.
- <http://www.apaame.org/> Aerial Archaeology in Jordan Project, with an archive.
- <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=hdl:1902.1/14011> Corona satellite photos declassified, including "Landscapes of Settlement and Movement in Northeastern Syria,"
- <https://www.flickr.com/photos/apaame/collections/72157644171507048/> Southern Hauran Survey: "The survey was concerned with locating and mapping the traces of all human activity in the region from earliest times up to the end of the Ottoman period (1919). 381 images.
- <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/sytoc.html> US Library of Congress top-level directory, for access to early images.
- <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/syria> for overview of travel information for Syria, with sections on the country's history, major cities, weather, and important sites.
- <http://monummamluk-syrie.org/> "site dédié aux monuments en Syrie médiévale (ou Bilad al-Sham), propose un inventaire des édifices construits durant la période Mamluk, période qui s'étend de 658/1260 à 923/1517, au Proche Orient actuel. Cet inventaire repose sur l'ouvrage de l'archéologue allemand Michael Meinecke, *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Agypten und Syrien (648/1250 bis 923/1517)*, paru en 1992."
- <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3580.htm> U.S. Department of State background notes for an extensive overview of Syria.
- <http://www.syriatourism.org/index.php?newlang=eng> Official Syrian Government tourism site.

Computer Reconstructions

When structures have been blown up, as at Palmyra, simple rebuilding techniques are impossible. Scholars are examining ways of conjuring up (the term is surely appropriate?) destroyed buildings into three-dimensional images by means of existing photographs, from which full-scale reproductions can then be built. Computers are the key to such work, but readers should be aware that “virtual reality” is just that, and not the real world. Thus a computer model of Baalbek might construct an armature from photographs, and then fix the various elements using yet more photographs for colour and texture. The result could be impressive and all dimensions accurate, especially if laser measurement were involved, but the result would be a simulachrum, only a little more realistic than a model of the Eiffel Tower built from Lego or Fischer-Technik. The initial construction might be achieved with a computer graphics programme such as Autocad; but it is the computer which will build the representation of the monument, so the result remains a simulachrum. Note that it is the very technique of computer construction that cannot and never will exactly match reality, not the speed or subtlety of the hardware and software involved in the process. The initial building blocks for such reconstructions are high-quality and comprehensive suites of photographs. Most of the myriad images on the web are individual, and coherent and overlapping sequences are rare, because they must be carefully planned and executed. Do such sequences exist for any of the monuments of Syria?

Several other avenues toward realism in the representation of architecture and its environment are being explored.⁷ One is generating building models. A two-thirds scale version of Palmyra’s Triumphal Arch, built using 3D technology, was recently erected in Trafalgar Square, London, and is intended to travel. But this is *not* realistic, and such reconstructions can never be more than toy-town evocations of the real world, in the manner of Disneyland.

But if building three-dimensionally accurate computer models will perhaps remain illusionary, one alternative is the construction of panoramas from sequences of adjacent views, which today’s digital cameras and computers can easily produce. (see <http://www.360-foto.dk/index.html> for a series of 360-degree zoomable panoramas). But again there is the perennial problem

7 Amoruso, Giuseppe, *Handbook of Research on Visual Computing and Emerging Geometrical Design Tools*, 2 vols Milan 2016. The collection “combines aspects of geometry and representation with emerging tools for CAD, generation, and visualization while addressing the digital heritage of such fields.”

generic to photographs, namely that such setups deal in two-dimensional façades, not really in volumes, because they are necessarily taken from one fixed point, which is the “eye” of the camera/viewer. However, such panoramas are often of very high quality, with the viewer sometimes able to see more (and in greater comfort) than by visiting the site itself. Such panoramas can also be linked together so that, for example, the viewer may take a tour of a site by clicking on a succession of hot points, moving from Room A to Room B to Exterior, and so forth. In this fashion, the computer-viewer can see exactly (no less and no more) what a visitor to the site itself will see.

Conclusion: Warnings about Restoration

An old archaeological conundrum asks whether the prehistoric axe that has had two handles and three new blades really is a prehistoric axe. “Original” and “restored” both seem simple terms, but the sad truth is that monuments get altered over the centuries, and we are unlikely ever to know the original state of most of them. Travellers visiting French cathedrals (or fortress-cities like Carcassonne) equipped with old drawings or early photographs should be startled by what they see, for 19th century “restoration” was more like whimsical “creation” or, if you prefer, arrogant and ignorant destruction. In present-day Germany, one travels far to discover an authentic old house or street, because many were flattened during the Second World War, and then exactly rebuilt (with original inscribed dates!) as if nothing untoward had ever happened to them. And in Athens, just how many tourists know or care that the gleaming Stoa of Attalos dates from 1952–56? Of mosques and churches in Syria that were once temples we might ask a similar question: what has time done to the country’s artefacts? Our travellers have documented changes from temple to church to mosque, dismantled here, rebuilt there. So we must accept that many buildings are patchworks of dates and styles. Greater Syria has suffered earthquakes, fires, bombing, rioting, wars, Lloyd George, the Balfour Declaration, the Sykes-Picot re-mapping (not accepted), and two mandates. Her monuments have been stolen or gifted for European museums, and some have been bombed in Berlin, matching (as it were) the French bombing of Damascus. Recent scholarly attention has underlined the problems in dealing with antiquities in war zones.⁸

8 Kila 2013.

We might predict that any reconstructions at Palmyra will be taken back to their ancient form, an easy case because of the virtual abandonment of the site in Late Antiquity. Krak des Chevaliers can be treated likewise, because it received no alterations after the Crusades. Baalbek has been dealt with a century ago, and all its Muslim fortress and palace elements stripped out to take it back to the original temples. But how will intricate and multi-monument environments such as Aleppo be dealt with? Its monuments accrued and changed over centuries, and restoration to the status quo would be enormously costly and time-consuming.

Much archaeological work over the past century has improved our knowledge of the country's past. Restored and reconstructed monuments (and some World Heritage classifications) have allowed us to see versions of monuments as they stood before the great 19th and 20th century population expansion knocked so many of them down, and nibbled away at others for their building materials. The recent Civil War, with profligate use of heavy artillery and bombing, has trashed much of the country of Syria, and there have been well-publicised attacks on monuments and museums in Iraq as well. Towns have been devastated, and complexes such as the commercial khans of Aleppo substantially destroyed. Will such complexes be rebuilt to their former state? This was not the universal choice after the Second World War, which is why I have included Ammon's *Bulldozer. Demolition and Clearance of the Postwar Landscape* in the bibliography.

We shall never be able to see Greater Syria as it appeared to the travellers whose accounts make up this book, and who so often provided details about what still stood and what was already disappearing one or two centuries before our own day. Furthermore, readers should be aware as hinted above that the very notion of "restoration" has been contentious since the implementation of the notion in earlier 19th century Europe. Restore the building to its original state? How, and on what authority?

Reconstruction is very different from restoration: if a structure has been brought down completely by earthquake, and lies complete but on the ground, just like a collapsed pile of dominoes, then it can easily be re-erected. Archaeologists with heavy lifting equipment and cranes presented with a large proportion of original elements can effect anastylosis, namely re-erecting a monument from its collapsed parts. Sites such as Aphrodisias, Ephesus and Pergamum demonstrate how effective this technique can be.

The ravages of war, then, are much more destructive than earthquakes, which so often toppled buildings and left their elements intact. Bombs flatten into rubble, rather than toppling, and the images of many of the towns of Syria post-war echo those of Berlin or Dresden in 1945. Oppenheimer, the

1899 discoverer of the Aramean Royal Palace at Tell Halaf, “saved” the work by having its sculptures taken to grace the new Tell Halaf Museum in Berlin, until shattered into small pieces by Allied bombing in 1943.⁹

No doubt any repairable buildings in Syria will indeed be repaired, but many structures will need to be completely rebuilt from the ground up. Baedeker’s guidebooks have appeared frequently in the above pages, guiding visitors to all that was worth seeing in Syria; the same publication (in the “Baedeker raids”) famously helped the Second World War bombing raids on Germany, where there are few old town centres left standing – but plenty rebuilt, or rebuilding. The reconstruction of Dresden, for example, is scarcely finished. Perhaps the same will happen in Syria, but such work will take decades to complete. First the infrastructure of the country will need rebuilding, and then refugees welcomed back and temporarily rehoused. Skilled scientists and technicians, Syrian and perhaps also foreign, will need to be identified and trained for the enormous tasks ahead. Next large sections of towns will need to be rebuilt, and that enormous programme funded. Restoring and rebuilding monuments may be considered a priority, because the government may perceive the need to generate tourist revenue, which fluctuates according to perceived threats (cf. Tunisia, Egypt and Turkey). Eventually, alert travellers will no doubt distinguish between the genuinely old and the recently rebuilt, and Syria’s splendour will shine once more.

9 Cf. http://ww2.smb.museum/smb/gerettete-goetter/index.php?node_id=4 for the Pergamon Museum exhibition publication *Tell Halaf. Im Krieg zerstörte Denkmäler und ihre Restaurierung*, Regensburg 2012.