



<b>InsSciDE Work Package 4:</b>	
<b>Heritage: The Past as a Challenge to Build Up a Future?</b>	
<b>Case Study n°4.2</b>	<b>War archaeology and damage assessment</b>
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### Abstract

InsSciDE supports an actual heritage field action in a war-torn context where it is vital that science and diplomacy meet. This war archaeology contributes directly to keeping inter-regional cooperation alive, and affords InsSciDE participants an unparalleled opportunity to grasp the potential of science diplomacy in conflict situations. Three field actions, in Syria and Iraq have been selected, to cover the broad spectrum of the typical actions and cooperation engaged in this type of research, from remote sensing to 3 D modeling of the archaeological sites and the objects.

### Introduction

Heritage has increasingly become a political issue in the last twenty years, with the destruction of monuments, temples and tombs being both the symbol of contemporary sectarianism and the insufficiently heeded prelude to huge turmoil in the Near East and Europe. As we face the current crisis in Syria, Iraq, and throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, archaeology is playing a crucial interface role, revealing the weaknesses of traditional and fragmented European diplomacy, but also showing how conjoint attention to heritage can rebuild both the region and relationships.

Three field actions, under the umbrella of ongoing archaeological undertakings in conflict zones, are reported and analyzed in detail as actual science diplomacy processes. The first study intervention concerns the technologically-supported assessment of war damages suffered by the historic Assyrian capital cities, in particular Khorsabad (8th century B.C.), originally excavated by French (1842–1860) and American (1928–32) archaeologists. A second action addresses the political and heritage management of excavation archives to produce both interactive data and scientific cooperation; our study bears on the Digi Mari project. A third and connected action focuses on the Mari virtual museum; a pilot operation will record a selection of 1000 artifacts in the National Museum of Damascus.

### Actors

The actors involved in InsSciDE case study 4.2 are (co-)directors of archaeological missions in Near Eastern countries, representatives of these countries' antiquities departments (ranging from the ministers of culture and the directors of antiquities departments to local agents and museum staff) as well as representatives of the local authorities and populations (provincial governors, mayors, or police officers and secret service agents). Involved on the European side are archaeologists, and foreign diplomats who, to varying degrees depending on their own national tradition, are working in these countries.



### **Fields and disciplines, interfaces with technology**

The archaeological missions are usually multidisciplinary operations involving a necessary diplomatic cooperation. In the specific case of war archaeology, remote sensing data and aerial photography acquired by drone coverage are specialized technological fields.

### **Networks and communication**

The network is based upon the cooperation of archaeological missions with local authorities, and contract societies operating in the field, especially in difficult zones.

Public communication of the interactive data results typically will be through the internet sites of the missions.

### ***Disciplinary/methodological approach***

The approach is based mainly upon the identification and analysis required for damage assessment upon archaeological sites, and precisely upon tells (artificial mounds) as it has been elaborated mainly after the Iraq war. It implies remote sensing and aerial coverage and if possible field expeditions, destined to establish an archaeological diagnosis and define future strategies of management of the sites.

### ***Essential bibliography***

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