

MOSUL CASE STUDY -BACKGROUND DOSSIER

Post-Conflict Recovery Summer School

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1. OLD MOSUL

1.1 HISTORY

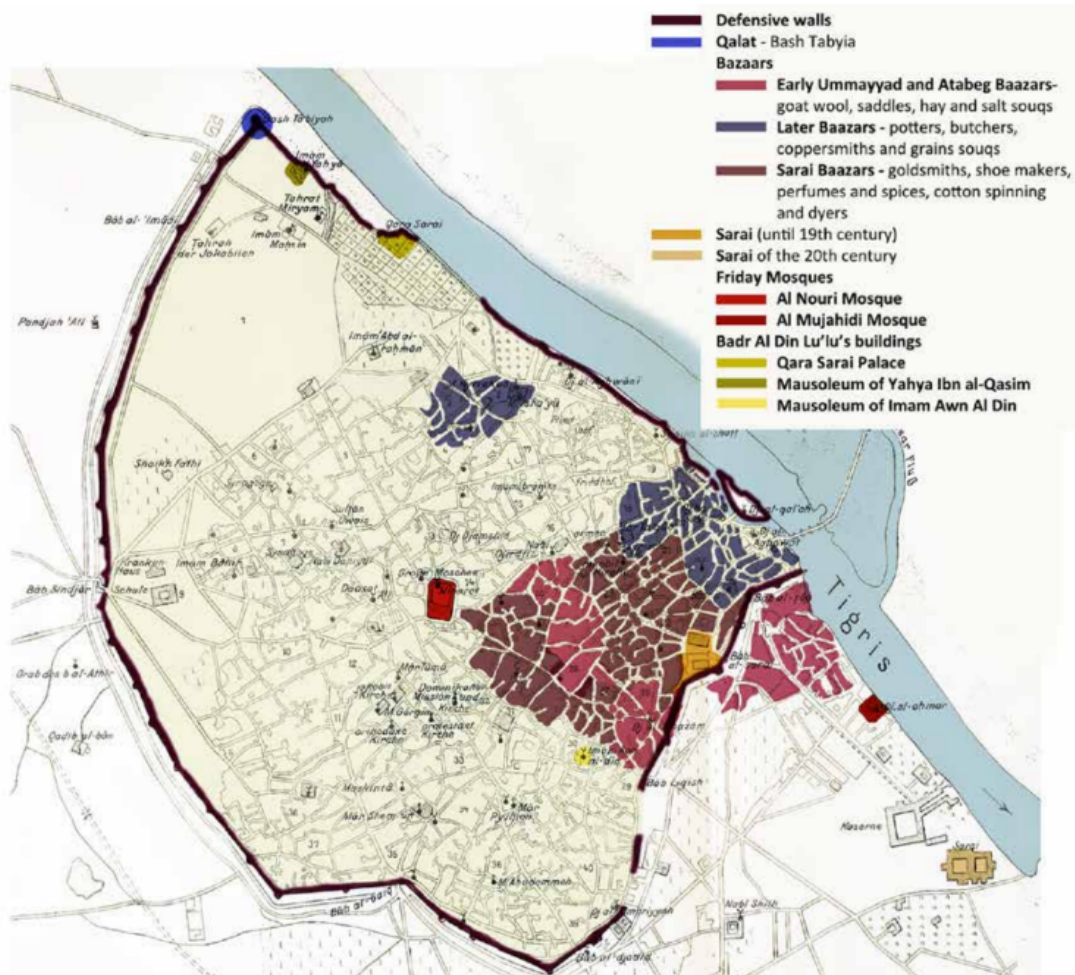
The origins of Mosul are shrouded in mystery, with historical records pointing to its emergence around the 7th / 6th century BC, after the destruction of the ancient Assyrian capital of Nineveh, when a series of settlements appeared on the west side of river Tigris. According to Greek historian Xenophon, who visited the region some 200 years later, a settlement called Mepsila existed on the West side. Some believe that the name of Mosul may have stemmed from this settlement; others believe that its name was given by the Arabic tribes who conquered it, Mosul or Al Mawsil in Arabic meaning the linking point. Yet again, others attribute it to muslin, a cotton fabric highly sought in medieval times, for which Mosul was famous.

The city of Mosul is one of Iraq's oldest cities. Established in the year 1080 B.C. as a small settlement on the right bank (west side) of the Tigris River, opposite to the ancient city of Nineveh on the left bank (east side). Mosul later succeeded old Nineveh (which became part of Mosul's expanding geographic territory) in importance and reached its peak under the Umayyad rule in the 8th century A.D. when it became one of the principal cities of Mesopotamia. Due to its strategic location, it prospered during the Abbassid era as an important **trading centre** across the trade routes connecting India, Persia and the Mediterranean. The city reached the pinnacle of its influence and development under the rule of the Atabegs that ruled for nearly 130 years. Their control was finally broken by the Mongol seizure and plundering of the town in 1261. Even in later periods, Mosul was able to regain its independence to a great extent, especially during the Ottoman period when it was ruled by the al -Jalīlī family for more than a century. Mosul status as a trading center went into decline only after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The city however regained its significance with **the discovery of oil** in the area in the late 1920s. Since then, it has been a nexus for transporting oil to both Turkey and Syria.

Mosul is one of Iraq's richest cities in terms of its cultural heritage. It is famous for its numerous archaeological sites, historical, cultural and religious buildings, monuments and landmarks, the most important of which are: the Ancient City of Nineveh, Nirgal Palace Gate and Kuyunijak Hill, located on the left bank; and Kara Saray Citadel ruins and Bashtabia ancient tower, and the old city of Mosul, located on the right bank. The city has some 486 Islamic monuments and historic mosques as well as 32 ancient churches and six monasteries.

The overall form of the Old City of Mosul seems to have remained unchanged from the 8th until the 19th century AD. Mosul's defensive walls built by Marwan II, "surrounded an approximately 300 ha town in an irregular semi-circular shape, attached to the elevated bank of the Tigris." Some 30 years after the siege of Nadir Shah of 1743, the city was surrounded by thick walls, some of which were still standing – those on its northern front – while others were collapsed or scattered – those on the riverfront and the southern walls. The citadel and city walls fell in disrepair at the beginning of the 20th century, both were in ruins, although swiftly repaired throughout the ottoman rule. The largest open space in the Islamic city is the court (sahn) of the main Friday mosque which serves several quarters. Since its construction in 1170 AD, Al Nouri Mosque was and still is the principal mosque of Mosul. Together with its sahn, The Al

Nouri Mosque is still to this day the largest open space of the Old City. Later, during the Atabeg dynasties, when Mosul grew considerably and expanded beyond the city's walls, a single mosque was unable to perform this task. Thus, Mosul had 3 congregational mosques – the old Umayyad Mosque situated in the east close to Tigris; the Al Nouri Mosque – the main mosque of Mosul, situated at the geographic heart of the city, and the Al-Mujahidi (Al-Khidr) Mosque – situated in the city's south, outside the walls.



Map of Mosul with defensive walls, mosques, bazaars, Sarai, Qalat and Badr Al Din Lu'lu buildings highlighted. © UNESCO Map based on Mosul Map by Ernst Herzfeld 1920

Another feature of the Islamic city is the **bazaar**. The mosque was usually built with the main bazaar surrounding it. The Al Nouri Mosque was located in a less populated area, in the heart of a **large covered market – qaysaria** – with more than 299 shops, according to written sources. The bazaar appears as a result of the establishment of a mosque or vice versa, as seems to be the case with both the Al Nouri (1170 AD) and Al Mujahidi mosques (1180 AD); in fact, the construction of both was most likely commanded by the need for a religious place at the heart of well-established important commercial areas. The construction of Al Mujahidi mosque proves the growing importance of the bazaars and markets situated outside the city's precincts during the Atabeg rule. At the time, Al Muajhidi may have rivalled Al Nouri, but its importance dwindled with the Mongol invasion, when these bazaars were razed,

and the city's commercial trade was reduced to the area south and south east of Al Nouri mosque – coinciding with the Umayyad qaysaria– the 19-century bazaars of goat wool, hay and saddles. The Ottoman Mosul, which had considerably shrunk during the Mongol invasions, expanded once again outside the city's walls towards southwest and southeast. It was probably during Ottoman rule that the bazar around Al Nouri mosque lost its importance and slowly subsided to the streets in the vicinity of the new Sarai neighborhood which became the main qaysaria of the city – the 19-century bazaar of goldsmiths, shoemakers, perfume and spices, cotton spinning, dyers and pack saddles for mules.

Mosul Old City has a diverse architecture. Representative of the city's public architecture are its mosques, shrines and churches, reflecting the artistic styles of the epochs in which they were created. Examples include Mosul's unique riverfront panorama with monumental buildings; and the Ottoman inns and bazaars situated in its south. According to the 2016 UN Habitat profile of the city, Mosul had some 486 Islamic monuments and historic mosques as well as 32 ancient churches and 6 monasteries.



Al nouri Mosque, situation after the intentional destruction, 2019 © UNESCO



FIG. 29



FIG. 30

Left . Remnants of the 13th century palace Qara Sarai (the Black Palace) of Sultan Badruddin Lu'lu, 1933 © hAmerican Geographical Society Library Digital Photo Archive - Asia and Middle East, Frederik G. Clapp Collection,

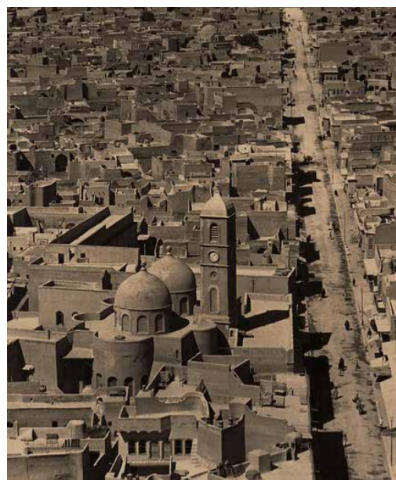
Right: Al-Mujahidi (Al-Khidr) Mosque © Al Janabi Jawad Tariq, 1975

1.1.1. The 20th Century

After World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, between 1918 and 1926, Mosul became part of the British Mandate. It is during this time that Mosul received a water supply system and electricity. This is when the railway and the train station were completed and Mosul Old City's main east-west road, Niniveh Street, a commercial street with many shops and multi-story buildings, was cut through the heart of the historic bazaars. With the creation of Niniveh street, in 1916, a new bridge was erected through Qal'at Island, which was completely levelled and connected to the city¹⁰. Later, the city expanded and the defensive wall was demolished sometimes around 1931. New neighbourhoods appeared inside the Old City in the deserted northern part and outside of it, in its south western and south eastern part. Between 1930s and 50s, Al Shaziani and Al Farooq Streets, became the Old City's north-south artery, and were created by structuring and enlarging existing roads¹². "The opening (or the widening) of these roads didn't affect the morphology of the urban fabric, but certainly created a new system of relation between the Old City, its hinterland and the wider urban area that expanded outside the wall and beyond the river."

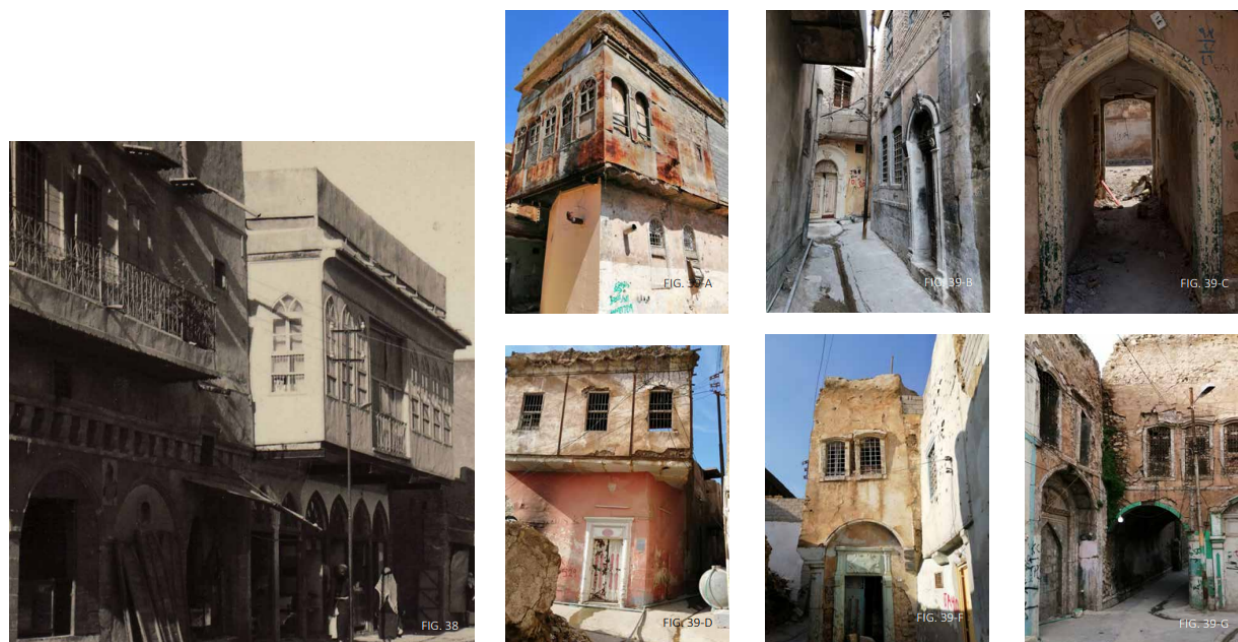
With the establishment of the republic of Iraq and Saddam Hussain's regime, Mosul grew and was further modernized, extending also on the eastern bank of Tigris. The most prominent period in the expansion of the city of Mosul was the period after the '70 s, when many works were undertaken, such as the motorway over the 5th bridge, which links the east bank with the new developments to the west of the Old City, is considered to have been the only major change suffered by the Old City, prior to recent conflict. This motorway runs through the Old City's northern part, severing the Old City from its citadel Bash Tabyia and other 12 and 13-century important Atabeg buildings, such as Saykh Fathi mosque, madrasa Al-Nuriyya and mashad (shrine) al-Imam Yahya ibn al-Qasim.

The last decades saw the construction inside of the Old City of many modern buildings using concrete and other modern materials, while many historical houses were left to decay or destroyed mainly due to the owners' inability to restore them or as an aspiration for modernity. However the hardest blow suffered by the city was under the rule of Daesh (ISIS) who deliberately destroyed some of its most important public buildings. Despite the destruction brought by the conflict and subsequent operations to retake the city in 2016 and 2017, the Old City seems to have preserved its morphology, even if its buildings (represented mostly by 18th and 19th century residential architecture) were heavily damaged.



Niniveh street in Mosul, circa 1933 © Tom Jenkins Bradley

1.1.2. Mosul's residential architecture



House Courtyards, Mosul © UNESCO

Also, representative for Mosul are its meandering streets and courtyard houses, constituting the Old City's residential urban fabric, with constructions dating back mostly to the 18th and 19th century, with projecting jetties, arched passageways (Al Sabat) and decorative gates. The Old City **was a densely built and populated area, without green areas and vegetation except for a few garden-like courtyards in the largest houses.**

The unit of the residential quarter is the house, which looks inwards, having very little or no openings to the exterior at the street level. Some openings may be found above the eye level and in the upper floors of the houses, in the form of traditional Shanasheels – jettied closed balconies – from where the street life can be observed without being seen.

The Moslawi traditional courtyard houses are very diverse. Their planimetric shape, dimensions and cardinal orientation is varied, being the result of the organic transformation of the dwelling itself and of the city. They can have one to several interior courtyards and can be up to 4 levels in height. The average Moslawi houses are, however, quite modest in size – 150 to 200 square meters – having usually one courtyard, and two, sometimes three levels in height. Percy Kemp describes briefly the Moslawi houses. "Houses were low and had no windows on to the street; most were built of burnt mudbrick, while door frames and columns were made of gypsum and of alabaster."

The traditional Moslawi household is very flexible and adaptable in its usage of spaces. Both seasonal and daily movements occur throughout all the spaces. Only some functions are fixed and remain as such throughout the year, such as bathrooms, toilets and sometimes kitchens. All other spaces can swap functionalities. Seasonal movements are mostly vertical; in the winter the family may use the rooms from the first floor of the house due to the low sunrays, while later during the summer, moves to the

ground floor, due to the high sunrays The daily movements are both vertical and horizontal. These movements were natural, traditional adaptations of Moslawi inhabitants to the harsh weather conditions of the region, Mosul's climate being semi- arid, with long and extreme hot summers, relative short autumns and springs and cold, harsh winters. The temperatures vary greatly between seasons, between an average of low temperatures of 2°C in winter and an average high of 43°C in the summer.

The spaces in the Moslawi traditional courtyard house can be divided into usable spaces, transitional spaces and architectural physical elements. Albab – the door or the gate, an architectural element, is usually the only decorated element of the façade at the street level, being an indicator of the importance of the building, of the identity of its residents and their social standing.

- Mejaz – entrance passageway, a transitional space. Sometimes a space separated from the rest of the house simply with a curtain, in other instances it contains seats made in stone. In mansions, the mejaz is made up of a series of additional spaces: a room for the guards, WC, and informal reception room. The main access almost never opens directly in the courtyard, thus the family's life is protected from the intruding eye of the outsider. The reception room(s) are situated close to the main entrance, while the private spaces were set as far back as possible from it. The space following the gate can be another gate, a curtain, a space in itself with a seating area dedicated to visitors, or a corridor in an L shape. In only a few cases the gate opens directly into the courtyard. In such cases, on the other side of the courtyard, there is a less private space, such as the Iwan, Riwaq, and corridors with staircases.
- Sirdab – the basement of the house, a usable space. Often extending under the courtyard, sometimes including skylights. It is used for storing goods and siesta during summer afternoons.
- Rhahra – the semi-basement of the house, a usable space. Situated under the house, 1 or 1.5 meters below it, the rhahra is used mostly for siesta during summer afternoons.
- Takthabosh – A room between the ground floor and first floor where the elderly sit, a usable space. Its floor is usually made in wood and opens towards the courtyard.
- Satah – the accessible roof of the house. It is constructed with high walls often with the height of a regular floor, and is used for sleeping during summer nights.
- Iwan – a vaulted room open on one side, a transitional space as well as an architectural element. This is probably the most distinctive element of the Moslawi traditional courtyard house. This is a space into which the doors and windows of the other rooms open; most commonly bedrooms, but also kitchens and living rooms. It is a place where family sits sometimes, used in the wintertime if it is oriented towards south, or used in the summertime if it is oriented towards north. Iwans are situated on the ground floor of the house and usually their elevations are richly decorated with ornamental niches made in plaster and ornamental window and doorframes made in the famous Mosul alabaster.
- Riwaq – is a loggia or a balcony, a transitional space used for accessing the rooms on the first floor of the house.
- Family rooms – they are accessible through Iwans, and Riwaqs. Due to their flexible adaptations, their interiors are devoid of any furniture. They are however decorated with ornamental niches at higher levels, being used to store bedding and/or household items.
- Shanasheel – the closed balcony over the street, is both an architectural element as well as an efficient ventilation element.

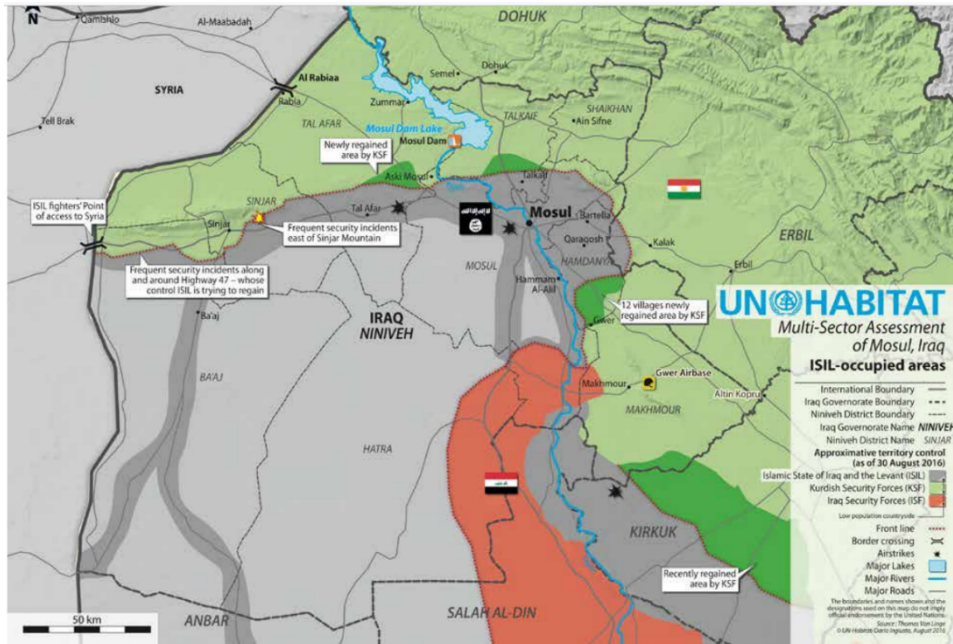
2. OCCUPATION BY ISIS AND DESTRUCTION OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Since the collapse of the former regime, Mosul city and its surrounding areas witnessed growing waves of violence and extremism and, eventually, fell under the control of the ISIS on 10 June 2014. Since then, ISIS employed a systematic strategy to oust religious and ethnic minorities from the city.

- Ideologically motivated attacks on monuments in Mosul did not just start in June 2014 when the town was seized by a Sunni radical group, which later declared itself to be the Islamic State (ISIS, ISIS, Daesh). Members and supporters of older rebel organizations, such as al -Qāida in Iraq or the Army of the Men of the Naqshbandi Order, had already been responsible for targeted bomb attacks a decade earlier, acts which had damaged some of Christian monuments in the town, such as the Syrian Orthodox church of the Virgin Mary (al -Tahra al -Fawqānīya).
- However, the violence against cultural heritage perpetrated by ISIS in 2014–2017 had a far more serious impact. The destruction of historical buildings was planned and systematic, to obliterate the city's history, past civilizations and religious plurality. It was ideologically motivated by selected extremist religious views, originating mainly from the Salafi milieu and massively disseminated by Saudi Arabian religious circles. These views forbid the erection of any constructions above graves so that they do not become objects of worship. ISIS considers all relics that preceded Islam to be polytheist relics, and regards statues and sculptures as idols that must be abolished. ISIS uses the destruction of antiquities as a means to display its strength and power. ISIS is most probably using the destruction of antiquities as a strategy to disguise its real actions, which are the stealing, smuggling, and selling of ancient relics in order to boost the organization's financial resources. The destruction of historical buildings and archaeological sites was extensively publicized and utilized to intimidate Mosul inhabitants, as well as the international community, and in order to eradicate the historical memory of the town.

As of August 2016, more than 135 locations in the city have been destroyed, out of which 86 governmental and 49 residential locations. Factories and infrastructure were seriously affected by both air-strikes and ISIS's sabotage operations. In 2016, around 50-75 per cent of the city's governmental building are destroyed.

- The battle to retake Mosul from ISIS is likely to inflict further damage upon the city's urban fabric. Most alarming is the presence of hazardous areas around the city, which destruction could trigger a major environmental disaster affecting the health and lives of thousands of people.



ISIS occupied areas

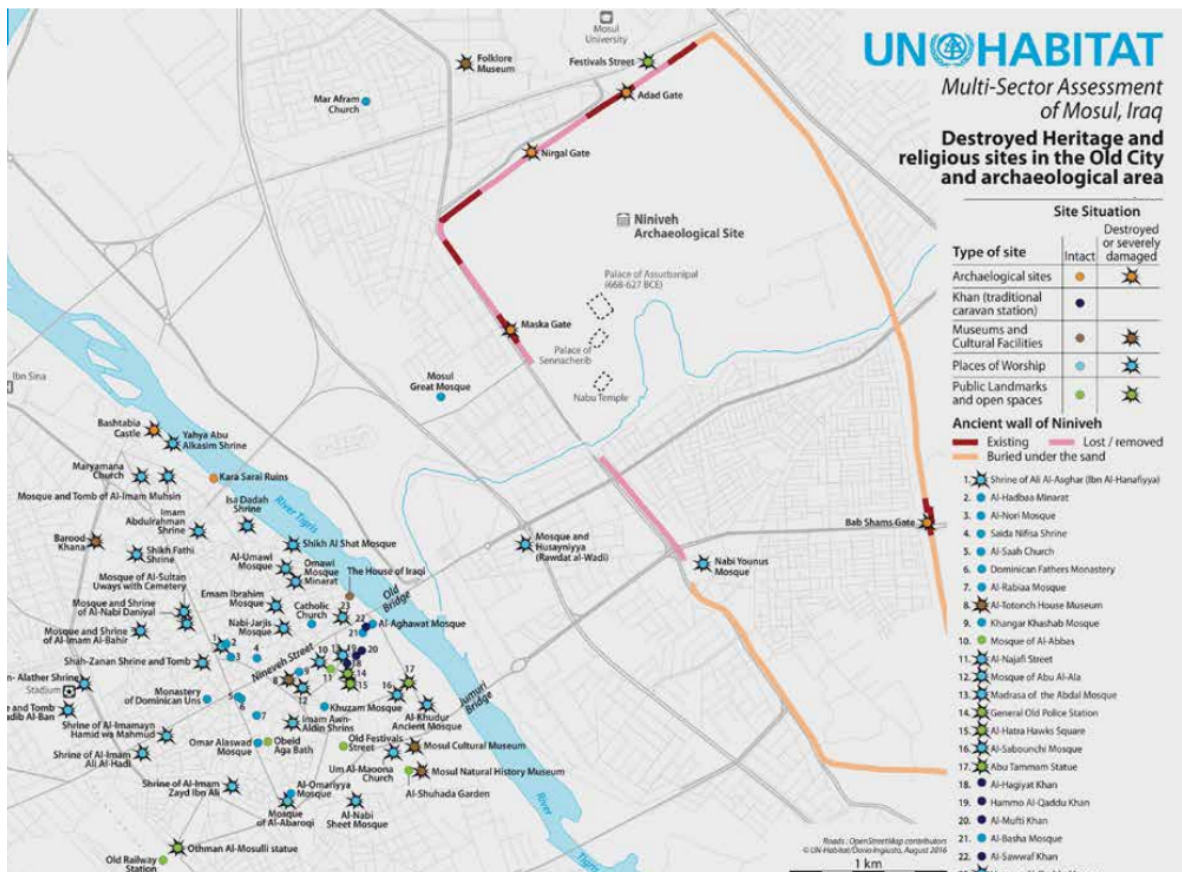
2.1. Destruction of Cultural and Archaeological Sites

ISIS stole, confiscated, and destroyed thousands of rare books and manuscripts from Mosul's Central Library, as well as other smaller libraries. The group's wrath against the city's culture and civilization was also directed towards museums and universities across Mosul. The Assyrian and Akkadian artefacts of the city's museums were either stolen or defaced. ISIS proceeded to destroy the ancient remains of Nineveh, the most important and renowned city in the history of the Assyrian Empire. ISIS also bulldozed the famous gates of the city (Mashki, Nergal, Adad and Al-Shams) and the entirety of the twelve km-long city wall. Outside Mosul city, ISIS almost fully destroyed the Assyrian city of Nimrud (11th century BC) and the city of Khorsabad (9th century BC), and totally destroyed the ancient site of Hadar (2nd century BC) by using heavy equipment and dynamite. In the latter archaeological site, ISIS deliberately targeted its thirteen human-headed winged-bull/lion statues (known as 'Lamassu') that are more than 2,700 years old. Destruction also targeted the ancient remains of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Hatra in the south of Mosul.

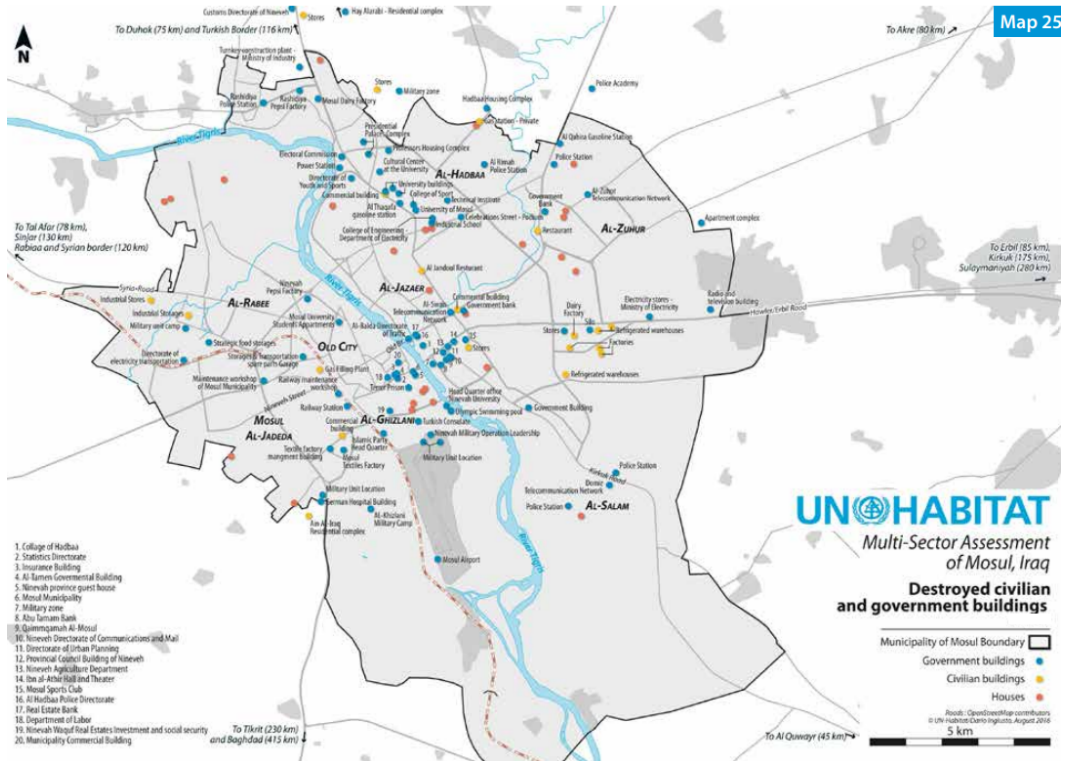
2.2. Destruction of Religious Monuments and Sites

ISIS reduced many significant Islamic religious monuments and sites to rubble. UN-Habitat and the Iraqi Tourism and Antiquities Commission estimate that approximately 37 important Islamic landmarks were devastated by ISIS, partially or totally, inside the city of Mosul. Of these, 17 locations date back to the Atabeg dynasty (from 1127 AD to 1259 AD), four to the Jalairid era, and sixteen to the Ottoman era. The mosques and Islamic religious sites that were totally destroyed or heavily damaged include:

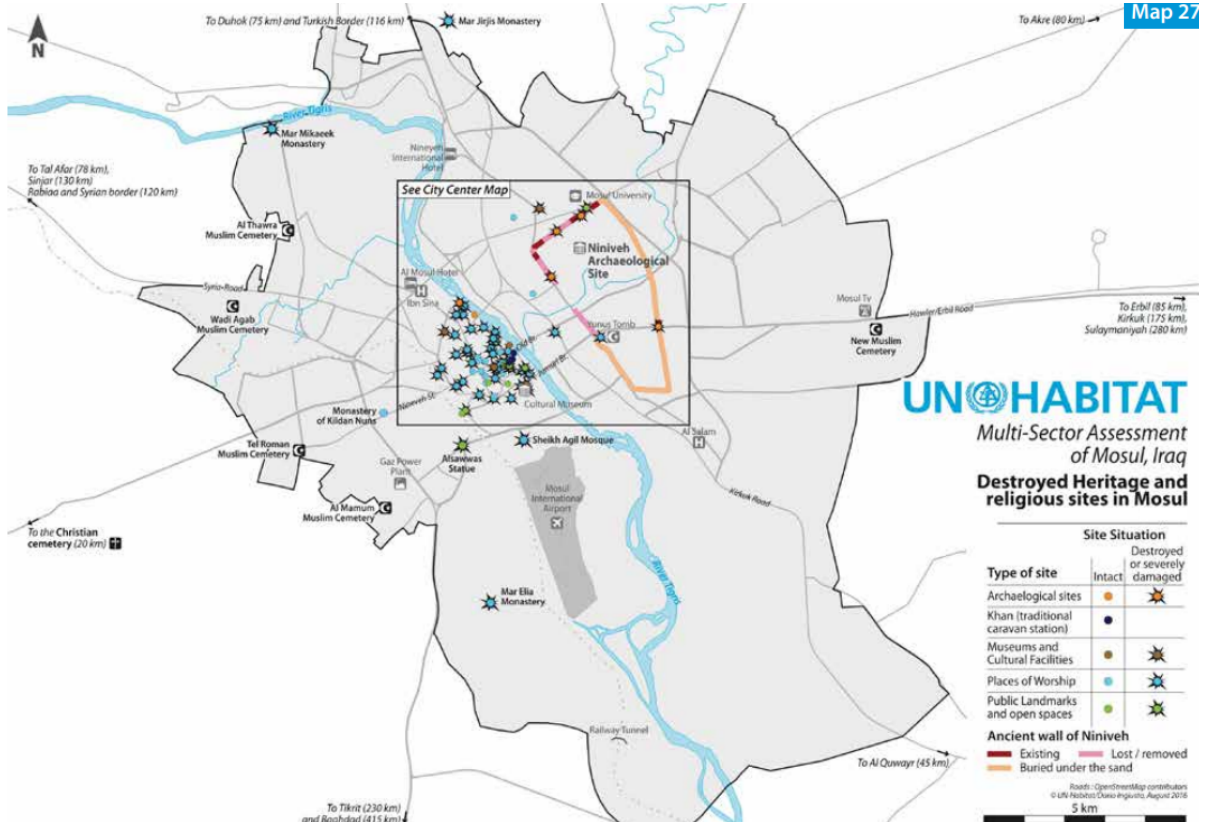
- Al Nabi Yunis (Jonah) Mosque, Iraq's most important mosque, and its adjoining shrine, which is equally revered by Muslims and Christians.
 - Majahda Mosque (1180 AD), the second mosque to be built in Mosul after the Umayyad Mosque, which ISIS turned into a public square.
 - Numerous smaller mosques: Al-Nabi Sheath (Seth) Mosque, Al-Nabi Jirgis Mosque, Al-Khudher Mosque, Sheikh Fathi Mosque, and Imam Aoun Bin Al-Hassan Mosque (1249 AD), in addition to the mosque of Imam Al-Bahir (1240 AD).
 - Several tombs and religious shrines, including the Tomb of Imam Hassan Aoun Al-Din, the Tomb of Ali Ibn Al-Athir (12th century), and the shrine of Imam AlMouhsin (1211 AD).
- ISIS fighters looted, removed or destroyed the icons of the Chaldean Church of the Holy Spirit, the Assyrian Orthodox Diocese Church, Al-Tahirah Church, and around 35 other churches.
- ISIS turned some of the churches into workshops for the manufacturing of car bombs and transformed other churches into guest houses for its fighters, or offices for hisba (moral police), among other things. ISIS also vandalized and destroyed the two oldest monasteries in Mosul: Mar Elia monastery (582 AD), and the Mar Mikhail monastery (built between the 4th and 5th centuries AD) which was turned into a stable for cattle. As for the religious buildings and sites of other minority groups, ISIS completely destroyed all 22 Yazidi shrines in the Bashiqa and Bahzany regions of the district of Mosul; more than 30 Yazidi and Shi'ite sites in the city of Sinjar; ten Shabak shrines in the Nineveh plain; more than fifteen mosques and Shi'ite shrines and several archaeological sites (including the Citadel) in the district of Tal Afar.



Destroyed heritage in Old city and archeological area



Destroyed civilian and government buildings



Destroyed heritage and religious sites in Mosul

There are approximately 15,000 houses in the Old City, with an average of 6,6 people per house. During the pre-crisis the population of the Old City was circa 100,000 inhabitants.

Legend level of damage

- Destroyed - 1,690 buildings
- Severe damage - 3,241 buildings
- Negligible, Minor, Major damage - 9,455 buildings

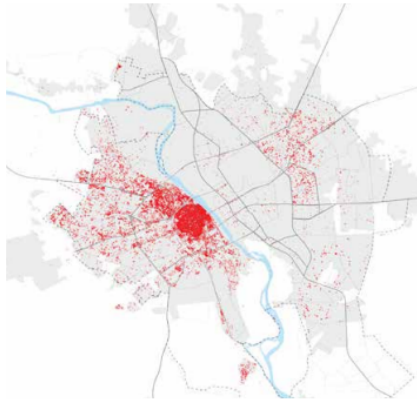


FIGURE 107. Damage assessment of Mosul
Overview of approximately 31,000 damaged residential buildings based

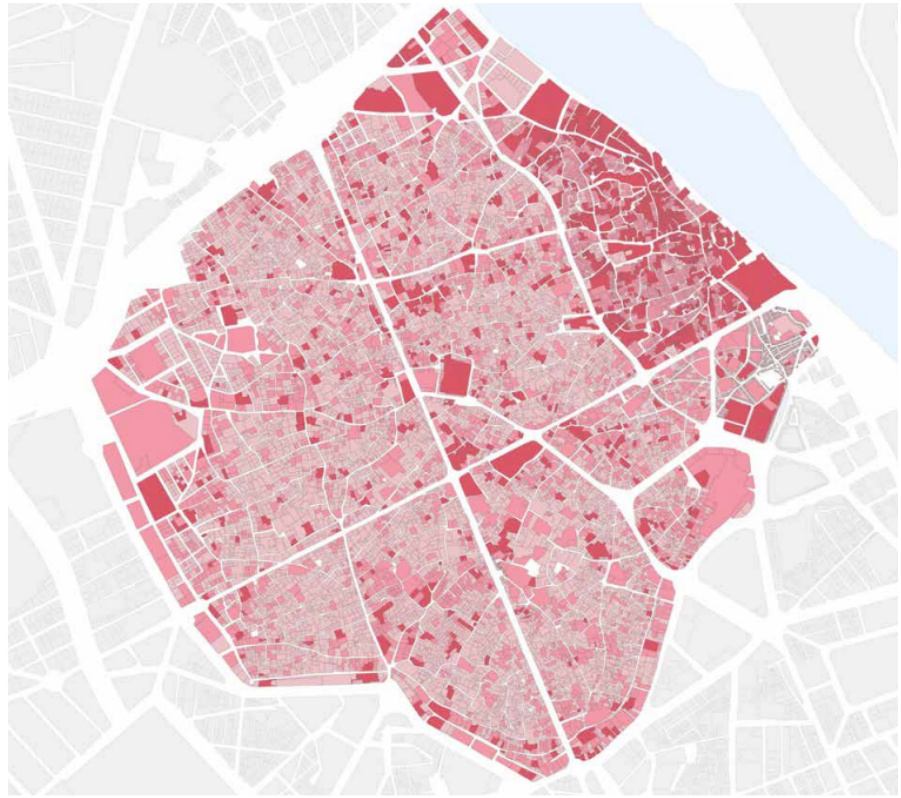


FIGURE 106. Damage assessment of the Old City
(UNOSAT/ UN-Habitat/ UNESCO/ Iconem, 7cm drone imagery 2018)

Al Makawi street

Appears more heavily damaged than the main commercial axes. Satellite imagery suggests that at least 84 properties have been damaged.



Al Nuri mosque street

Almost all properties in this street have been severely damaged or completely destroyed. Reconstruction support should be considered and be combined with any project concerning the Al Nuri Mosque.



Al Farouq - Al Shaziani street

Satellite imagery suggests that approximately 152 commercial properties have been severely damaged. It can be assumed that all properties have suffered at least minor damages to doors, windows and wares.

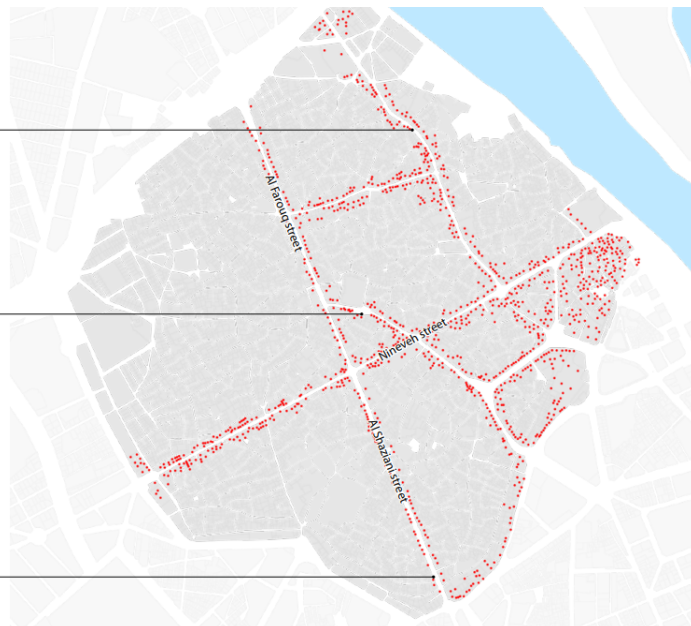


FIGURE 132. Old City commerce
Location and extent of more than 1,200 damaged commercial properties in streets that are

Location and extent of more than 1200 damaged commercial properties in streets



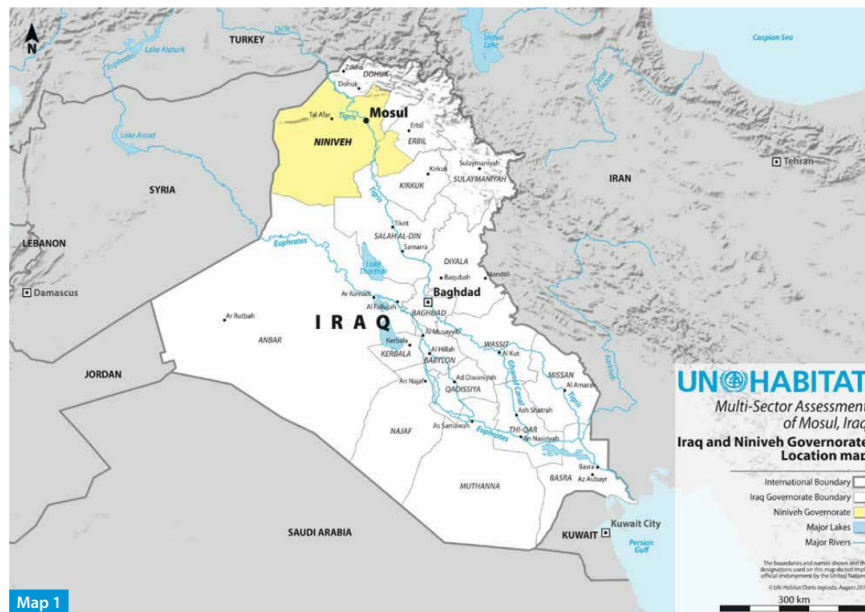
FIGURE 108. Even before the conflict, the Old City, with its dense urban fabric, lacked the space to introduce new facilities
(UNEP/WHO, World Heritage 2016)



FIGURE 91. View on Nineveh Street, one of the main central axis and commercial corridors of the Old City
(UNEP/WHO, World Heritage 2016)

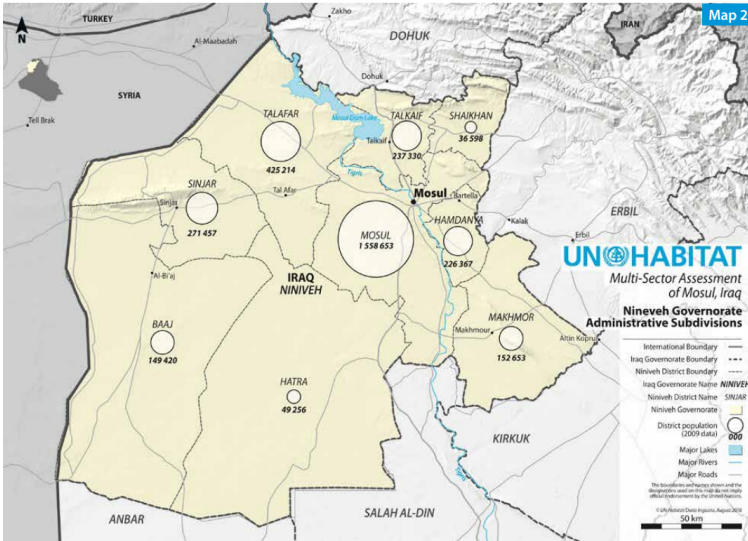
Left: Even before the conflict, the Old city, with its dense urban fabric, lacked the space to introduce new facilities
Right: View on Nineveh Street, one of the main central axis and commercial corridors of the Old city

3. MOSUL –Wider urban context

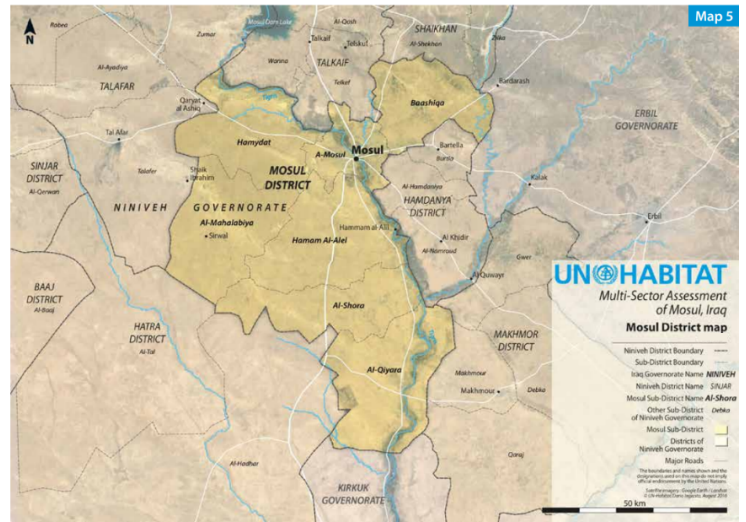


The contemporary city of Mosul is one of Iraq’s principal cities. It is the capital of the northern Iraqi Governorate of Nineveh and Iraq’s second largest city after Baghdad. Mosul District is the most populated of Nineveh’s nine districts. The city is largely perceived to consist of two parts, a right bank

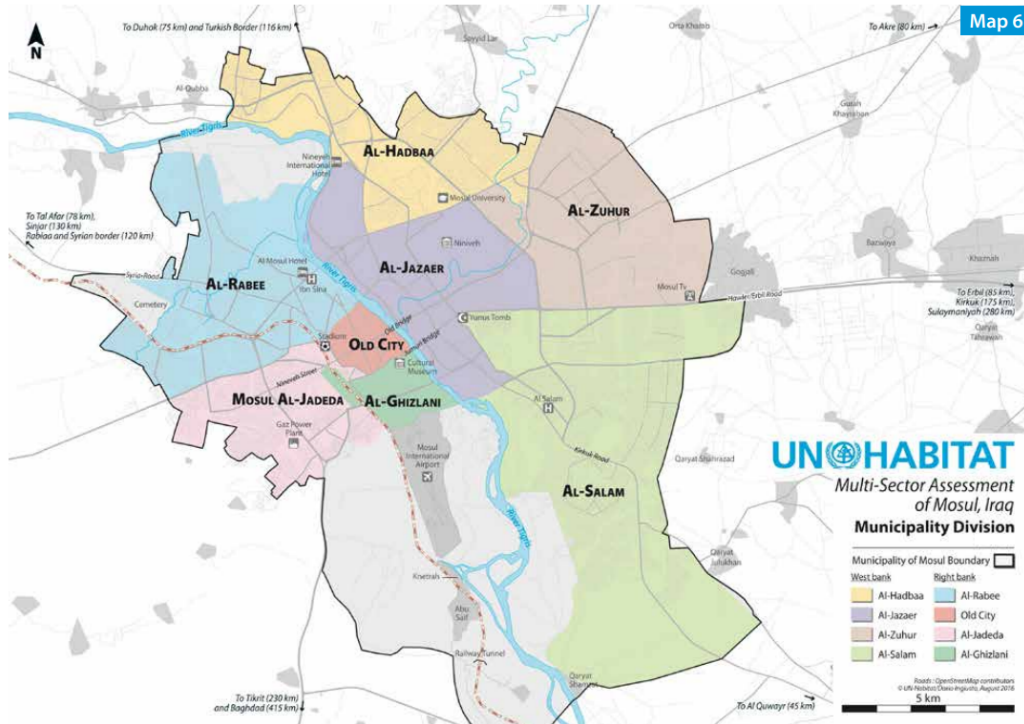
and a left bank, separated by the Tigris River. Generally speaking, the left bank enjoys better security and services and has newer buildings than the right bank.



Nineveh Governorate- Administrative Subdivisions



Mosul District Map



Municipal division

3.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

3.1.1 Population Size and Composition

Mosul city is renowned for its cultural, social, religious, and ethnic diversity. Historically, it had a mixed population of Arabs (mostly Muslim Sunnis); Kurds (mostly Sunnis); Turkoman (both Sunnis and Shi'ites); Shabak (Shi'ites); Assyrians, Arman, Chaldean (Christians); and Yazidis. Demographic information, however, is a sensitive matter in Iraq in view of the country's sectarian and ethnic conflict. Reliable data on population size as well as ethno-religious composition is difficult to obtain. The last official countrywide census was conducted in 1997.

Until the early 1990s around two-thirds of the city's population lived on the right bank. After the Iraq-Kuwait war, however, the urban areas on the left bank gradually grew and attracted more residents; it then significantly expanded after 2003 whereby its population size became comparable to that of the right bank. Accurate statistical data on the city's ethno-religious composition is also lacking. But it is generally believed that the city has always comprised of a majority Arab Sunni population (around 80 per cent of the population if not more), followed by Kurds, Christians, Turkomans, Shabak, and Yazidis.

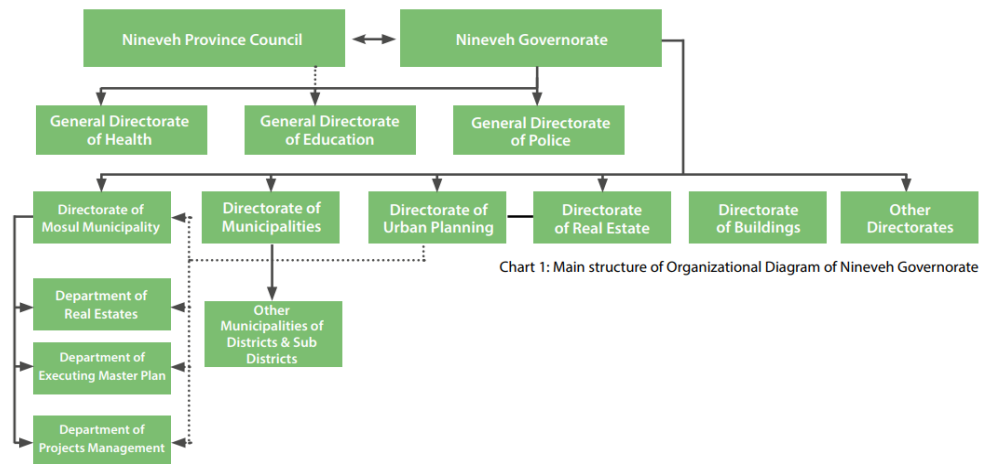
According to the Statistics Department of Nineveh Governorate, the city comprised of 1,137,000 inhabitants in 2009. The number increased to 1,377,000 in 2014 (before ISIS took control of the city).

3.1.2. City Population after ISIS's Occupation

Mosul city witnessed a new wave of mass exodus after ISIS gained control on 10 June 2014. The escalating violence had mainly targeted the city's remaining religious and ethnic minorities (e.g. Christians, Kurds, Turkomans, Shabaks, and Yazidis) who fled as a result. In addition, many of those affiliated with the Iraqi Government and its security services (mostly Arab Sunnis), and others deemed disloyal to ISIS, were forced to leave. The population of predominantly Christian and Yazidi areas around Mosul (Al-Hamdaniyya, Bartilla, Tal Kaif, and Bashika) also fled after ISIS capture. According to a report by IOM (2015), registered IDPs (Internally Displaced persons) from Mosul city amount to approximately 200,000 individuals. The latter report estimates that the number of those who fled the city in the first weeks that followed its fall is approximately 500,000 individuals.

After September 2014, however, ISIS imposed strict control over people's movement out of the city, hence access to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and adjacent areas became restricted. The current number of Mosul's residents is uncertain. Some residents argue that it is much less than what it was before ISIS; however others assume that it has remained more or less the same due to parallel migratory flows towards the city.

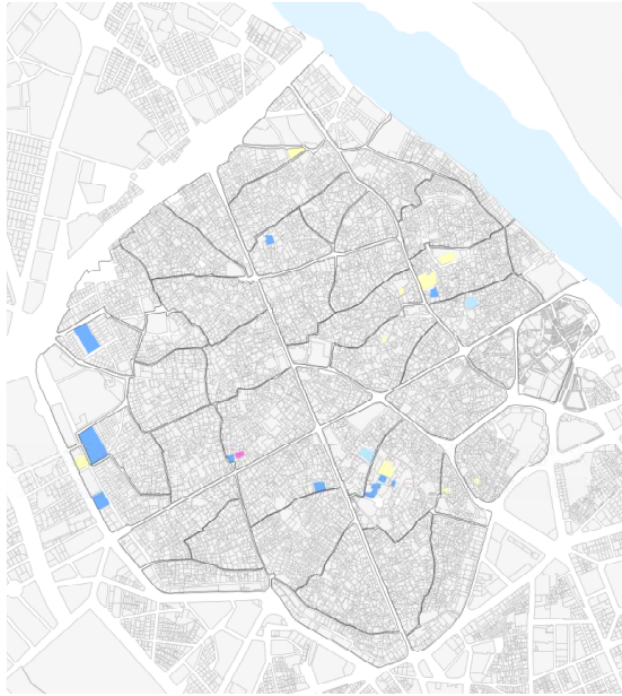
GOVERNORATE STRUCTURE



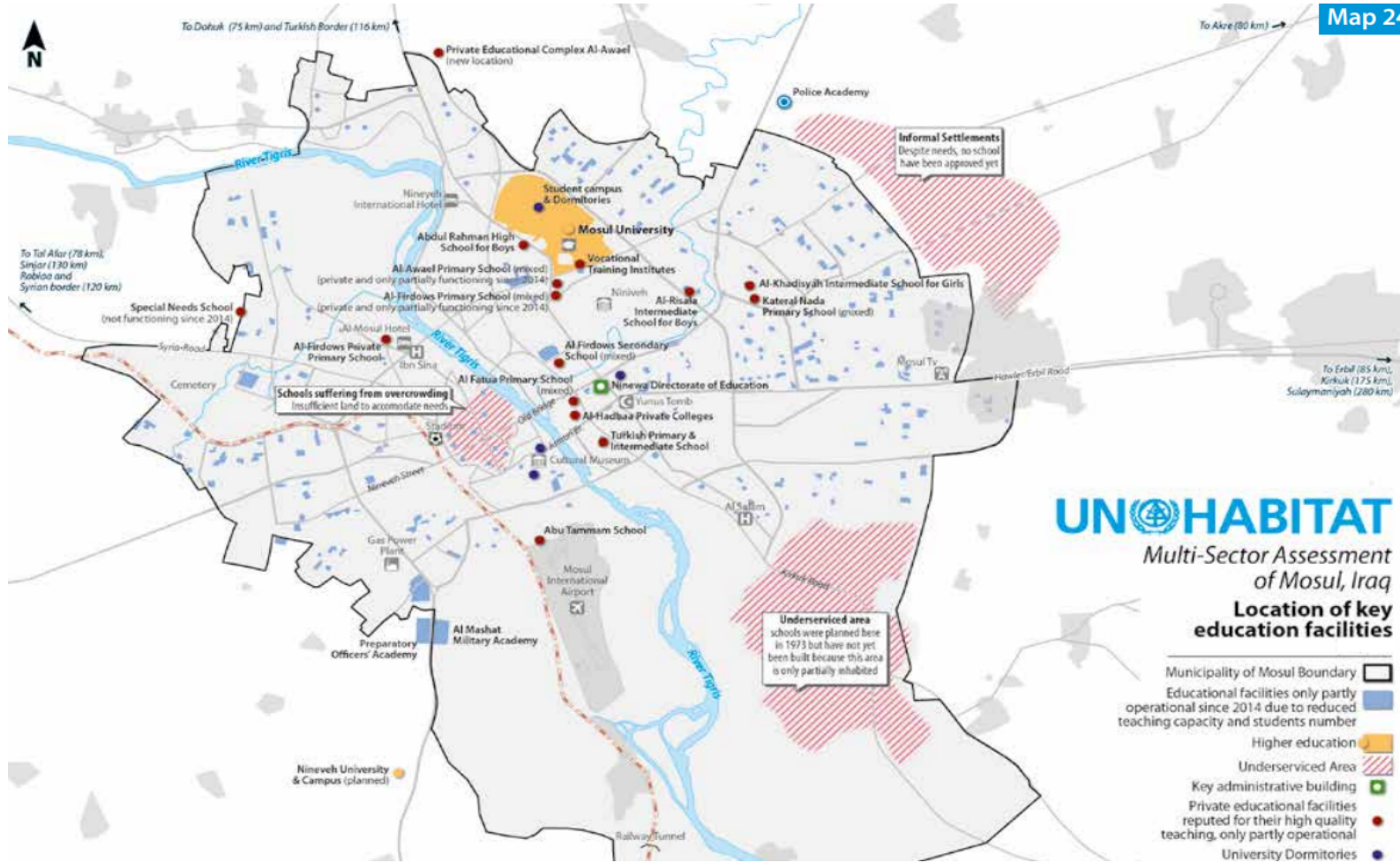
Organization of Nineveh Governorate

3.1. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Most of the schools in East and West Mosul are in the process of being partly recovered, meaning that at least one or two classrooms are functional. For the Old City, there are 9 destroyed and 22 damaged schools. Presently, 6 buildings are being rehabilitated. The educational system was already in crisis before the crisis, with most schools functioning on the basis of 2 to 3 shifts for boys and girls. The system will remain overburdened for the foreseeable future. In several areas of Mosul, residents have insufficient access to educational facilities. In particular sites on the fringes of Mosul as well as the Old City are chronically underserved. Pre-crisis, the average school in the Old City hosted between 360 and 500 students and operated both morning and afternoon shifts.



Education coverage in the Old City

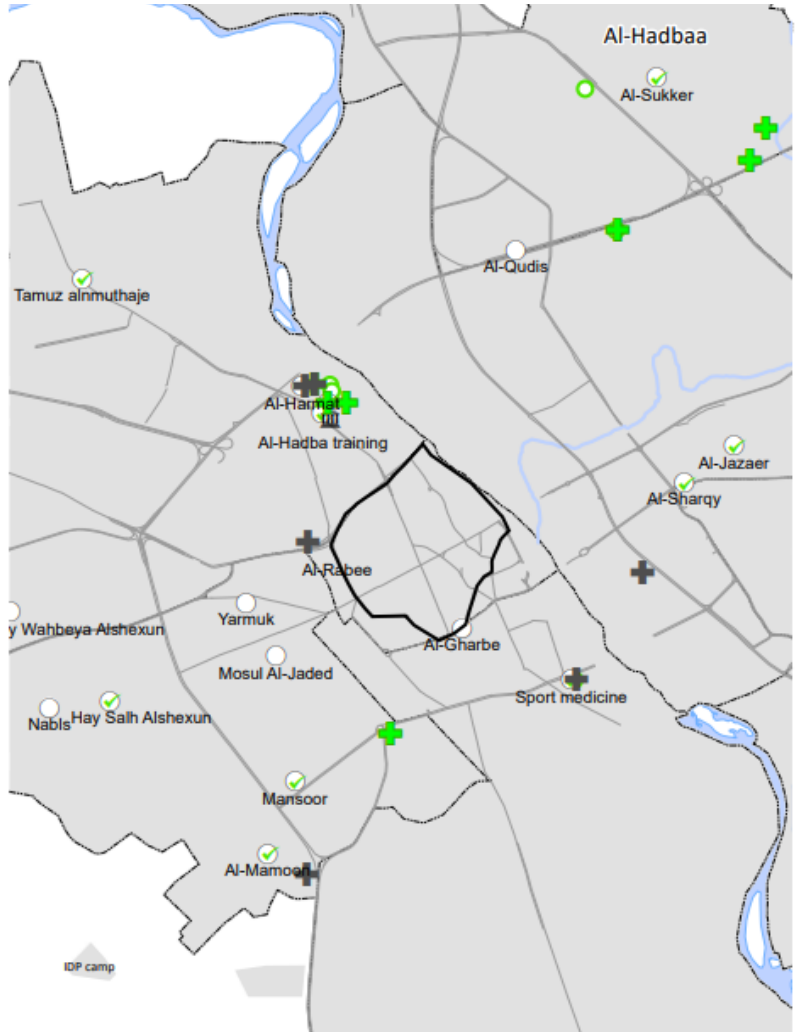


Location of Key education facilities

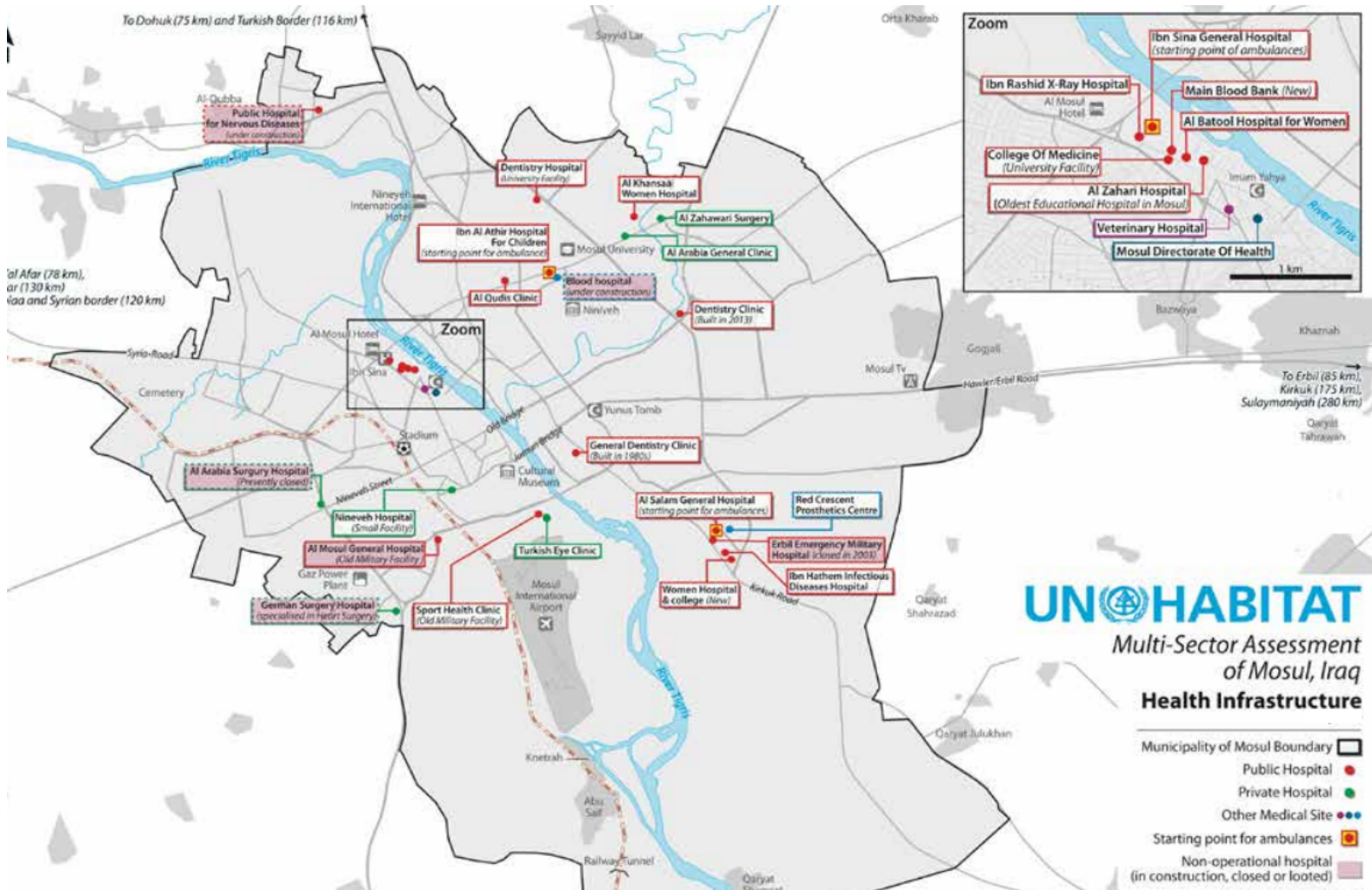
Carefully look at the Old Mosul area, the underserved area, the existing schools suffer from overcrowding . There are several facilities only partly operational since the Daesh occupation in 2014, due to reduced teaching capacity and student number.

3.2. HEALTH FACILITIES

Before the crisis, the basic services infrastructure network did not cover the totality of the population. Several areas were underserved. The Health Directorate reported that 24 health facilities such as primary health centers, health centers and health facilities are in the process of rehabilitation. Many hospitals were under construction before the crisis, but the work had stopped due to the subsequent financial crisis and insecurity.



Health coverage in proximity of the old city



Health Infrastructure in Mosul

Note that Old Mosul lacks healthcare facilities.

4 Prayer House

4.1. Prayer House : General Background

The House of Prayer, an integral part of the Al Saa'a Convent in Old Mosul (the Convent of Our Lady of the Hour), holds significant historical importance as it was originally a part of the first church of the Dominicans in Iraq. The structure is composed of interconnected houses, with the oldest section dating back even before the construction of the Al Saa'a Convent in 1870. Initially serving as ordinary residential houses, these structures were later integrated to form the current House of Prayer.

Throughout its history, the House of Prayer served various functions. It was primarily established to accommodate the Dominican Sisters, Massrat, in Mosul. Over time, its role evolved, encompassing purposes such as an educational institute for training the first female teachers in Iraq, an orphanage, a school, and a venue for religious ceremonies. The Dominican Sisters actively engaged with the community, providing cultural and moral services to families of all religions, with a special focus on children's education and guidance.

The significance of the House of Prayer extends beyond its historical value. It plays a crucial role in religious, educational, and cultural aspects and is recognized as a heritage site by the Nineveh Antiquities and Heritage Inspectorate.

Situated in the old part of Mosul, the Prayer House is located at the intersection between Al-Farouq Street and Nineveh Street, an area known for its multi-use nature, encompassing residential, religious, and commercial activities.

Despite facing challenges, such as damage during the occupation of Mosul and the subsequent relocation of the sisters to the modern part of the city in 2006 due to the terrorist threats by extremist groups, the House of Prayer remains a cherished landmark symbolizing the region's rich cultural and religious heritage. Its legacy is a testament to the enduring contributions of the Dominican community to education, culture, and spirituality in Iraq.

4.2 Prayer House: Architectural Features

The Prayer House, as an integration of several traditional Mosulawi houses, adopts an architectural style reminiscent of typical houses in Mosul. It features a central courtyard, which serves as the heart of the house, offering an open and serene space for family gatherings and social occasions. Local building materials like plaster and stone are used in its construction, ensuring durability and resilience against the region's harsh weather conditions.

The Prayer House itself is a two-story building, consisting of eight rooms, two altars, a courtyard, two gardens, Ewan, and two separate roofs. Built with Mosuli Alabaster, it embodies

the typical building materials found in the region. The basement of the Prayer House is interconnected by stone and gypsum columns, offering environmental advantages due to their insulation properties. The architectural design is distinctive, with each part of the building bearing unique features.

Notable architectural elements include windows on both sides, altars on both sides, Ewan, columns, and engravings. The left side exhibits more accentuation and leans towards a simpler design. Additionally, the columns in the house vary, some being made from old alabaster, concrete, and steel.

4.3. Al-Saa'a Convent – wider plot context

Al-Saa'a Convent, also known as Our Lady of the Hour Church or Église Notre-Dame de l'Heure, stood in the heart of Mosul, Iraq. Constructed by Dominican Fathers in the 1870s, it gained fame for its clock tower, gifted by Empress Eugenia de Montijo, earning it the moniker Clock Church. This church held historical significance due to its bell, a symbol of generosity from Empress Eugenia, and a replica of the Lourdes grotto in its courtyard.

The church's history intertwined with significant events. Following the massacre of Damascus in 1860, Napoleon III dispatched aid to Eastern Christians, leading to the establishment of the Convent of Our Lady of the Hour in Mosul by the Dominicans. This convent served religious, cultural, and social roles, housing a church, seminary, schools, hospital, and more.

Tragedy struck in 2006 when a bombing damaged the church during the Iraq War. The rise of ISIS in 2014 further threatened Mosul's Christian heritage. By 2016, reports emerged that the church, along with its antiquities, fell victim to terrorist destruction. Despite this, the clock tower endured.

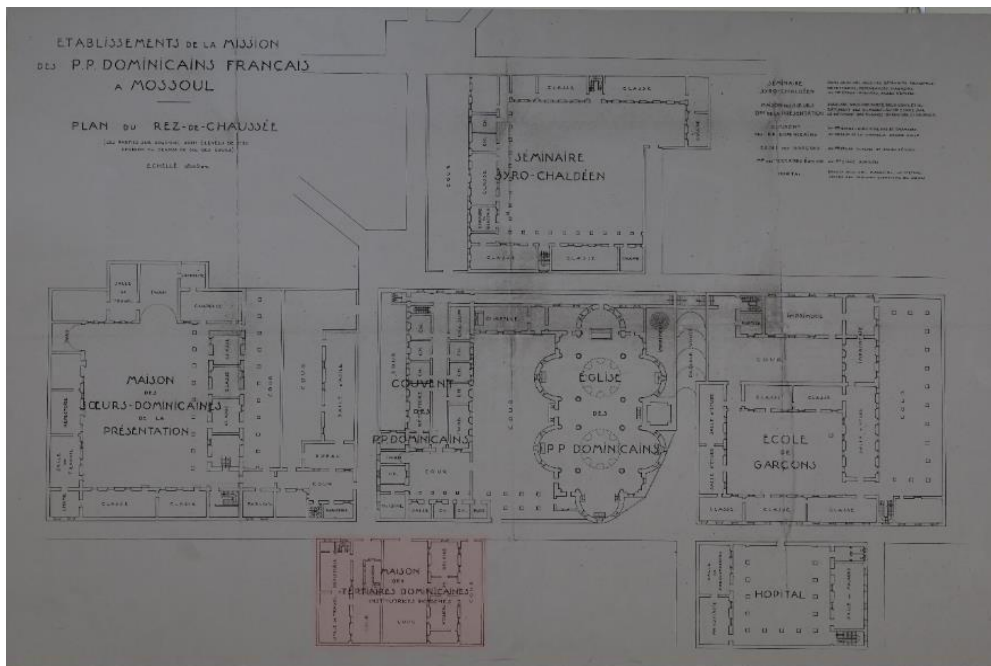
Financed by Empress Eugenia as gratitude for the Dominican Order's efforts during a typhoid outbreak, Al-Saa'a Church carried historical weight. Its resilience through the bombing highlighted its importance. The devastation mirrored ISIS's pattern of obliterating cultural treasures. The legacy of Al-Saa'a Convent lives on, a testament to faith, generosity, and the enduring spirit of heritage.



Image of Al-Saa'a Church and its clock tower © Dominican Order Archive

Pictures, Maps, and Illustrations

- The old map of Al Saa'a Convent and its buildings, encompassing the House of Prayer.



© Dominican Order Archive

- Aerial photos of the House of Prayer.





- Historical photos collected by the participants from Sister Sophie, Dominican Order in Mosul.

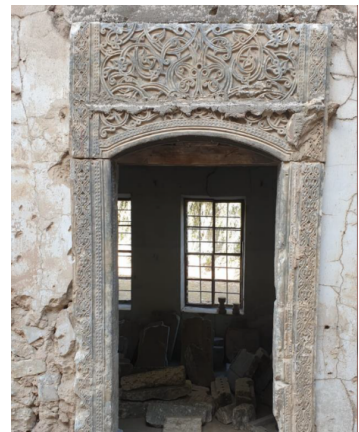


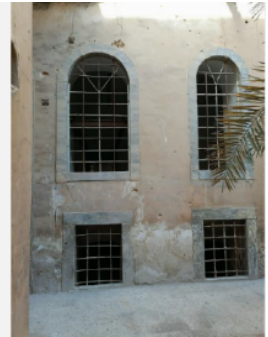


© Sister Sophie

House of Prayer: Architecture features.














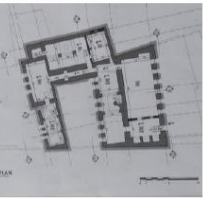

©ICCROM

-Values and Attributes

The Prayer house and the convent has multiple values: Religious, Educational and Cultural (See the table below). Some of the important attributes for the prayer house are: Niche, Altar, Olive tree and palm tree, Alabaster frames and columns, North and south facades, Courtyards.

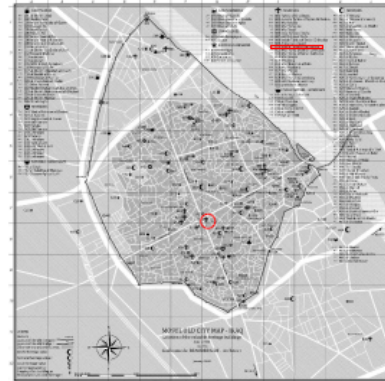
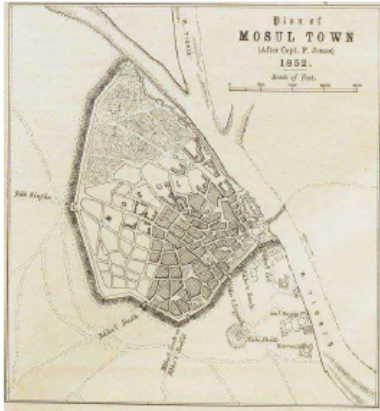
VALUE ASSESSMENT :

	VALUES	ATTRIBUTTES	Authenticity	Integrity	picture
Historic value	Prayer house was the first place in Iraq to train women how to be a teacher and it is considered as 1 st training center for female and a multi- function place belongs to al sa'a church , home for Dominican Masirat came from outside Iraq	Prayer House	low	low	
	The clear difference appear between the shapes , frame , use of protection bars which reflect that the prayer house complex from different houses and re organized to be prayer house	Multi use windows shape & frame in the hole building	Medium	Medium	
Aesthetic value	Carving alabaster in the top of the windows , doors and ewan gave special texture to alabaster as a decorate and gave privacy and importance for this places	Carving in alabaster	High	Medium	
	One of the element that distinguish the mosilian houses with dark color and gray used a lot in the windows entrance columns ,etc. .	Alabaster	High	Medium	

Architecture Value	One of the most important traditional element that distinguish the mosulin houses in the prayer house it is used as a corridor and not in that big size as usual use	Ewan	high	high	
	Open space provide sun light and ventilation for each place that linked with it and social place collect the activates and spent morning time in it	hush	high	high	
	Two types of arches use in prayer house half circle arch in Ewan and arch in the main entrance and 1 st floor ewan which is very popular in mosuli house	Arches	high	high	
	One of the mosulian house element use for storage , animals , keep temperature most the time in winter and summer that made people spent their time in it	Basement	high	high	
Spiritual value	A place for prayer and festivals for the nuns to do their rites in their place not only in Al Sa'a church	Main chapel	High	High	

Scientific value	It is reflect traditional mosulian craft in the past now few people do it	Carving in alabaster	High	Medium	
	It is reflect traditional mosulian craft in the past which overlapping iron without welding	Handrail	High	Medium	
	It is refers to traditional moselin craft which is made protection for windows without weld by knocking .	Steel bars for windows	High	Medium	

-Historical urban development of Old Mosul



1. (1852) Map of old City of Mosul before the two intersecting streets were emerged (Nineveh and Al-Farouq streets)
2. (early 20th century) Beginning of the orthogonal street planning
3. 1944 Beginning of the changes in Mosul
4. (2021) Current state of the old city of Mosul



1. (early 20th century) Prayer House surroundings
2. (1940) Prayer House
3. (2021) Current state of the Prayer House

-Urban fabric



position of the location in the city (the right side)



position of the location in the ancient city (in Al-farooq)

- accessibility from the old bridge (Al-ayser side)
- accessibility via Al-Farooq street
- accessibility via Nineveh street

**RECOVER THE CITY THROUGH A SUPER BLOCK APPROACH
DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN AREA BASED RECOVERY PLAN**

The block by block approach proposed by UN-Habitat and UNESCO allows for activities of local authorities, service providers, humanitarian agencies and development actors to be coordinated around the unit of the "super block" for the Old City. These super blocks are defined by a cluster of regular housing blocks, which are an official legislative entity. The criteria that define the outline of a super block include a limit of maximum housing units, the existing road layout, and alignment to existing legal boundaries. A total of 48 super blocks have been defined, each containing between 150-450 plots, with a maximum of 3,500 inhabitants per block.

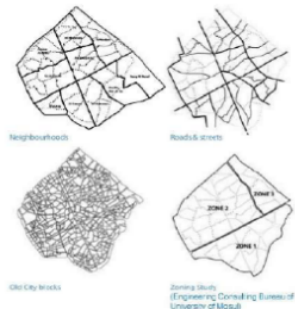


FIGURE 103. "Super block" organization
The primary criteria for the block division include existing neighbourhood boundaries, primary and secondary road networks, housing plots and previous zoning statutes for reconstruction in the Old City (UN-Habitat).



FIGURE 102. "Super block" of the Old City
Detailed image of the Old City as of March 2016 with the defined outline of the 48 super blocks for a community and area based recovery plan (UN-Habitat/UNESCO/Iconem, from drone imagery 2016).



-Important landmarks

Position in relation to major landmarks & facilities in Aimen & Easier side in Mosul



1-Ibn Sina Hospital 2-Mosul Forests 3-Nineveh Hotel
4-University of Mosul 5-Mosul Museum

Position in relation to major landmarks & facilities in Ancient City of Mosul



A-Al-saa Church B-An-nori Mosque C-Ancient City Pazar D-Mar Yohanna School

- Aerial photos of the House of Prayer and its neighborhood.



©Google Earth

-Land use



-Socio economic profile

- The prayer house located in the old city of Mosul which is suffered from massive destruction during liberation war. The religious diversity of the city of Mosul is one of the most prominent features but the last war has led to migrations to other areas and cities subsequently changing the social structure of city. Christian minority displacement led to demographic change; many of them are now living outside the country with no intention to return. The prayer house was used as a court and prison under the control of the terrorist organization, which left bad memories to the community and neighborhood. The site is inaccessible to the people due to security reasons and reconstruction work done by UNESCO.
- The city of Mosul was a commercial center in the region and it has important economic resources such as oil, industry and agriculture, as it was called the bread basket of Iraq. After ISIS took control of the city of Mosul in 2014, the economy collapsed dramatically. Many industrial facilities, such as factories and commercial centers, were destroyed. This led to an increase in the poverty rate and an increase in the unemployment rate. In addition, the bazaars of the Old Mosul were destroyed majorly, such as the Saray market, Al-Samakin market, Al-Attarin market, Al-Sayegh market, and Al-Najafi Street. The old bazaar is considered the largest economic and commercial center of Mosul. Due to the occupation it lost its vital character since a large number of craftsmen and traders moved to the other side of the city. Although some of these markets have been rebuilt by the support of organizations such as the USAID Recovery Program, many others are still closed or have been rented to other people.
- When ISIL seized Mosul, it closed down all schools then reopened them after changing the curriculum in accordance with its own ideology. A number of subjects were omitted (such as national education, and modern history).

Stakeholders

- Public bodies –Nineveh Governate, Mosul Municipality- Urban Planning Department, University of Mosul ; Ministry of Culture and Antiquities; Ministry of Interior Affairs;
- International bodies – UNESCO, ICCROM, UN-Habitat
- Local Community
- Heritage experts
- Local organizations
- Church- Dominican Catholic Church in Francel; (priests ; (Father Olivier), Christian Endowment; Archdiocese of Mosul (Bishop Najib), worshipers- Christian community
- Private sector

1.3.2 Further documentation and references –IMPORTANT FOR GROUP WORK 2 AND 3

- House of Prayer: 3D Photogrammetry Model Clips.
- House of Prayer: Documentation and condition survey