

# The Assyrian Sculptures from the Nergal Gate Museum at Nineveh before the Islamic State's Attack

PAOLO BRUSASCO  
UNIVERSITY OF GENOVA

After the destruction of the treasures of the Mosul Cultural Museum in Iraq shown in the Islamic State (IS) video released on February 26, 2015, scholars focused their discussion on the inventory of the missing items and the question of how many modern copies were present. A few suggested that the video circulating of the devastation was possibly a montage of items originating from different places. Based on a new photographic database provided by Suzanne E. Bott, a U.S. Reconstruction Advisor in Iraq between 2007 and 2010, this paper shows that some of the artifacts featured in the video were photographed in the small Nergal Gate Museum at the archaeological site of Nineveh. This sets up the problem of identifying objects whose provenance is the Nergal Gate Museum instead of the Mosul Museum. An historical and archaeological analysis of items from the Nergal Gate Museum, both originals and copies, is here carried out in order to highlight the cultural importance of this little-known but significant institution which has been lost forever.

## THE NERGAL GATE MUSEUM

The brutal attack on the Mosul Cultural Museum shown in the Islamic State's video of February 26, 2015 targeted one of the most important cultural institutions of Iraq, the second largest museum in the country after the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, and sparked a new wave of cultural cleansing. In the wake of this destruction, Near Eastern archaeologists and scholars have centered their concerns on the inventory of the objects on exhibition in the museum, trying to establish their exact number and the presence of plaster copies which in some instances replaced those precious items evacuated to Baghdad before the Second Gulf War.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it turned out that the vast majority were original pieces, but no one has so far

I wish to thank John Russell for his comments and help in the identification of some important reliefs, Suzanne E. Bott for sharing images from U.S. surveys in the area, Lynda Albertson for providing a copy of the IS video of the destruction of the Mosul Cultural Museum, and Muayad Said Basim Damerji, former Director of the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, for reading and commenting on a draft.

1. For security reasons, according to UNESCO consultant Stuart Gibson, nearly 1500 valuable and portable objects were sent to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad "days before the looting" that occurred during the war (Gibson 2009: 4). However, in retrospect this would seem an inappropriate time to move collections to Baghdad, since the Iraq Museum itself was also looted in mid-April 2003. Although the objects might have been moved in 2002-2003, some months before the war, Abdullah al-Jumaili, an archaeology professor and adviser to the Mosul Museum, told Al Jazeera that the majority of the Mosul Museum's collection was transferred to the Iraq Museum six months before the Islamic State took control of Mosul in early June 2014 (al-Salhy 2015). That part of the collection was still in Mosul as late as 2008 may be confirmed by Suzanne Bott's photographs showing the Mosul Museum's storerooms full of artifacts during her visits to the Mosul Museum in 2008-2010. However, in a personal communication (October 14, 2017), Layla Salih, then a member of the Professional Staff of the Mosul Museum, stressed that "nothing had been transferred to Baghdad since 2003 and I was a member of this committee. What happened was a rehabilitation project for the Mosul Museum managed by the director during that time; all objects were there and you can see through IS video how they discovered the statues that were covered by plastic sheets, and then demolished them."

questioned the provenance of the artifacts shown in the video, assuming that all originated from the Mosul Cultural Museum.<sup>2</sup>

However, if the IS video of February 26, 2015 features items from the Nergal Gate<sup>3</sup> Museum at Nineveh, this would show that already before that date the terrorist group had been tampering with the archaeological site, either destroying or looting it, much earlier than previously thought.<sup>4</sup> However, direct material evidence of site destruction became available only much later, in spring 2016. As suggested by ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI), “[a]n updated DigitalGlobe satellite image from June 16, 2016 shows that the entire Nergal Gate has been destroyed and the ground where it stood has been levelled. The debris from the destruction has been removed.”<sup>5</sup>

Before IS attacks against the site were carried out in early February 2015 and April 2016, like most museums at main archaeological sites built by Iraq’s Department of Antiquities during the 1960s and refurbished in Saddam Hussein’s time, the Nergal Gate Museum was a small two-roomed structure. It was located inside the towered entrance of the reconstructed Nergal Gate, one of the main gateways in the northwest line of fortifications in Sennacherib’s walled city (Fig. 1).<sup>6</sup> Besides serving as a museum, the Gate was also reconstructed to protect the four colossal human-headed winged bull sculptures which guarded the entrances (al-Asil 1956: 3–9).

It is clear that a distinction must be made between the collection of small objects, which was reportedly transferred to the Iraq Museum prior to the 2003 war—John Russell was told they were in a group of metal trunks he saw in the museum basement in 2003—and the sculptures on display shown in the IS video as well as the non-displayed collection of larger objects, which are visible in Bott’s photo of the storeroom.

2. See Robson 2015 and Jones 2015a for initial comments suggesting the destruction of replicas, while more nuanced conclusions are drawn in Danti, Zettler, Ali, Paulette, Moaz, Cuneo, Elitzer, and Breegi 2015: 112: “most of the destroyed originals were from Hatra, while most of the destroyed reproductions were from Assyrian sites.” See Brusasco 2016a; Al-Gailani Werr 2015; the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq 2015: 23; Saba al-Omari (a curator at the Mosul Cultural Museum) in Cruickshank 2015; and Stone in Bawaya 2015, for later correct interpretations that original artifacts had indeed been destroyed.

3. It was called the Nergal Gate Museum after Nergal, the god of the underworld, to which the entranceway was dedicated during the reign of Sennacherib (704–681 BC).

4. For evidence of widespread looting by IS militants, see Brusasco 2016a: 208 n. 21; United States Department of State 2015; and Hardy 2015. Documents released in September 2015 by the U.S. State Department prove that IS systematically profited from pillaged antiquities. Indeed, looting licenses were issued by an Antiquities Department (Diwan) run by IS militants and formerly directed by commander Abu Sayyaf, described as “an expert in this field” (Norimine 2015). Furthermore, a document posted by Iraqi archeologist Layla Salih (through Lamia Al Gailani Werr) to the *IraqCrisis* Mailing List on March 24, 2017 shows direct evidence that IS was systematically looting, in particular the Esarhaddon palace under Tell Nebi Yunus at Nineveh. A month after the liberation of East Mosul, in February 2017, Layla Salih and her Iraqi colleagues documented IS’s use of tunnelling under ruins of the Tomb of the Prophet Jonah in their hunt for artifacts. In some of the tunnels they discovered inscriptions and two carved panels of Assyrian female deities in a unique frontal pose (Enzor 2017a). In January 2017 Iraqi authorities found “many Assyrian artefacts plundered from ancient ruins hidden in an Islamic State leader’s house in Mosul” (Enzor 2017b).

5. Between April and early May 2016, satellite imagery, ground photography, and reliable in-country sources showed that IS carried out massive intentional destruction of Nineveh’s main archaeological features. In addition to the levelling of Sennacherib’s “Palace Without Rival” (SW Palace) and of various sections of the city wall, as well as the looting of many areas, the Mashki and Adad Gates were destroyed, while the Nergal Gate was reportedly bulldozed on April 14, 2016. See Danti et al. 2016a: 80–104; Danti et al. 2016b: 52–56; and Brusasco 2016b for analysis of these actions and images of the destruction of ancient Nineveh. The Islamic State’s Amaq News Agency also released a propaganda video on June 7, 2016 showing the destruction of Nineveh (the Nergal, Mashki, and Adad Gates, as well as some parts of the fortification walls).

6. Sennacherib’s fortification system, a monumental towered wall in mud brick and stone, has a perimeter of 12 km, a width of up to 45 m, and a height of over 10 m. Fifteen main gates allow access to the inner city, but the Nergal Gate is the only gate for which winged-bull colossi are documented. See Reade 2016: 39–93 for a detailed analysis of Nineveh’s gates.

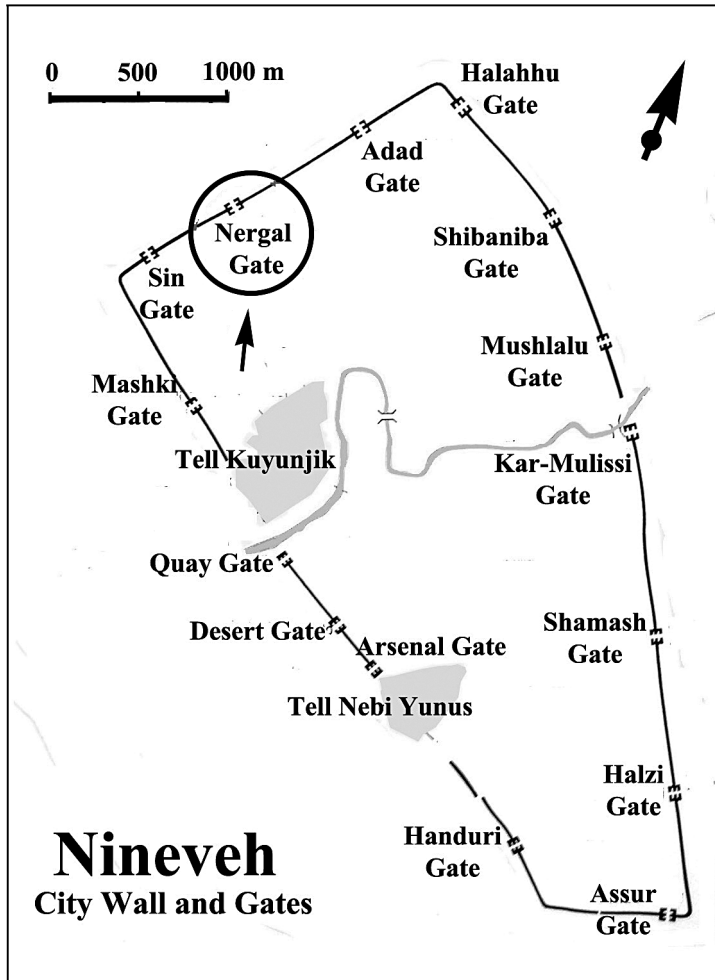


Fig. 1. Plan of Nineveh, showing the fortification wall and the fifteen gates. The Nergal Gate is on the north wall.

The history of the excavations of the Gate is very complex, since it was unearthed piecemeal over a long period of time. As shown by the schematic plan published in a study of the building by Reade (2016: 66, Fig. 17), there were three pairs of winged bulls—exposed by C. J. Rich (c. 1810), by Austen Henry Layard (1849), and by the Iraqi Directorate-General (1941), respectively. Owing to the presence of an outer entry opening onto a large courtyard, the gate is a “trayard” structure. The real gate, with three passages crossing two rooms, opened off the courtyard on the opposite side of the outer entry.

While Rich probably discovered the pair of winged human-headed bulls that flanked the southern passage of the gate, Layard excavated a different new pair of winged bulls and genii with bucket and cone at its north end (Layard 1853a: 120–23).<sup>7</sup> They were “still entire,

7. See Layard’s plan of the Gate (1853a: 120, 122). The passageway is composed of two rectangular chambers (21 × 7 m). The length of the winged bulls reported by Layard is fourteen feet (4.30 m).

though cracked and injured by fire” noted Layard, who further describes these sculptures as “unfinished, none of the details having been put in, and parts being but roughly outlined” (1853a: 120).<sup>8</sup> Despite various depredations subsequent to their excavation,<sup>9</sup> R. Campbell Thompson remarked that “these fine monuments were still in existence in 1905, but have since been destroyed” (in Gadd 1936: 61).<sup>10</sup>

The third pair of winged bulls protecting the outer entry was not uncovered until April 1941, after a heavy rainstorm exposed the bull on its west side. However, while it was well preserved, only the lower half of the bull on the east side was extant. Some confusion arose, and these sculptures were mistakenly taken for the winged bulls Layard had uncovered in 1849 and thought to have been destroyed some time before. On the grounds that no genii were found when the gate was excavated in 1941, J. P. G. Finch disputed Layard’s claim about the recovery of human-headed attendants behind the *lamassu*.<sup>11</sup> Finch’s comparison of the well-preserved *lamassu* on the west side of the outer entry unearthed in the 1941 excavations with the drawing Layard’s artist F. C. Cooper had made of the winged bull on the west side of the entry to the gate proper clarified that the winged bull excavated by Layard in 1849 was not the same colossus as exposed by the Iraqis in 1941.<sup>12</sup> However, this only reinforced his opinion that “Cooper, and with him Layard, had got so far off the track as to be attributing the drawing to the wrong bull” (Finch 1948: 16). Finch was wrong, since we have now established the presence of three pairs of *lamassu*, with evidence for the winged genii that Layard and Cooper reported.

A project of excavation and restoration of the Nergal Gate (or Gate of Nergal of Tarbisu, Gate 10) was carried out by Iraqi archaeologists in the late 1960s, continuing into the 1990s, when Manhal Jabbar dug the so-called trapyard between the external entry and the gate proper. An archaeological park with its small museum was also constructed at the site (Figs. 2–3). Without available publications of their work it is difficult to detail the sequence of the operations carried out at the gate. However, at least two pairs of winged bulls had been incorporated into the restored Nergal Gate featured in the IS video. The two *lamassu* on the outside of the gate, facing the countryside, flank the restored building housing the Nergal Gate Museum, while the two unfinished, heavily cracked winged bulls and genii, facing north, are visible within the passage inside the gate proper, protected by a corrugated metal roof.<sup>13</sup> As for the additional figures flanking the passage leading from the gate into the city, according to Iraqi archaeologists from the University of Mosul, these sculptures were almost completely destroyed, with only the lowest half of the reliefs still standing. They may be tentatively identified with two fragmentary reliefs pictured in Suzanne Bott’s photographs Nineveh & Nebi Yunus 2008 DS 46 and 52, taken during her visit in 2008.

8. Although the four sculptures were unfinished in some parts, those to the left (looking from the outer side of the gate) were more so than those on the right-hand side (Layard 1853a: 121).

9. The left bull colossus of the external side of the gate was uncovered by 1892, according to the report of E. A. Wallis Budge, who says that when the site was visited by the young missionary Oswald Hutton Parry, “its head had been hacked off and taken to mend a local mill” (Budge 1920: 23).

10. Between 1910 and 1914 the Vali of Mosul sold the left winged bull for three shillings and six pence to a purchaser who burned it to extract lime (Wigram 1922: 84).

11. In trying to explain how the bulls he wrongly took for those unearthed by Layard reappeared in 1941, Finch further wrongly assumed that “the right-hand bull remained submerged in the earth in which Layard re-interred it when his excavations were finished, until the rains of 1941 exposed its head” (Finch 1948: 12).

12. F. C. Cooper’s drawing is published in Layard 1853b: Pl. 3.

13. The winged bulls and genii in the passage to the gate can be seen in Suzanne Bott’s photographs Nineveh & Nebi Yunus 2008 DS 40, 41, 44, 47, and 49.



Fig. 2. The Nergal Gate viewed from the outside as it appeared after reconstruction by the Iraqi Directorate-General of Antiquities in the 1960s and before the IS attack. Bott Photographs Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS (4).



Fig. 3. The Nergal Gate viewed from the outside. Bott Photographs Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS (5).

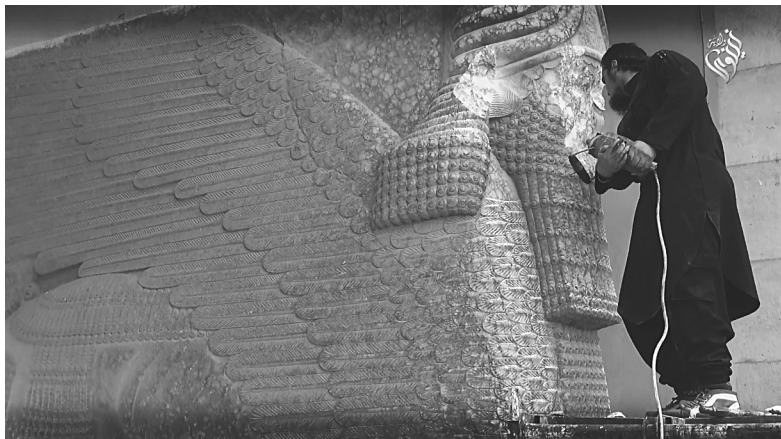


Fig. 4. IS militant attacking the face of the right *lamassu*. IS video.

As shown in the video of February 26, 2015 and in later IS footage from June 2016, all four *lamassu* were attacked by the Islamic State. On the outside, the face of the right *lamassu* was chiseled off with a power saw (Figs. 4–5). Likewise, the two *lamassu* inside the gate, less well preserved than the others, were targeted with sledgehammers and jackhammers. As evidenced in the video of June 7, 2016, they were finally bulldozed and their debris removed by dumptruck (Danti et al. 2016b: 55–56).

The purpose of the present discussion is to determine the contents of the Nergal Gate Museum at the time of the IS attack. Since most items (except the *lamassu*) appear intact in the video, they may have, at least in part, been sold on the illicit antiquities market sometime before the destruction of the *lamassu*. In fact, Qais Hussein Rashid, the head of Iraq’s State Board for Antiquities and Heritage, has suggested that the IS demolition of artifacts in museums and on Assyrian sites could have been “a cover-up for looting operations” (Schemm 2015).<sup>14</sup> Therefore I have tried to create a tentative inventory of the Assyrian sculptures once held in the Nergal Gate Museum. This may be helpful to international institutions such as World Customs and Interpol concerned with the recovery of smuggled cultural property. Given the impossibility of accessing the Nergal Gate Museum’s general catalogue, this preliminary analysis has drawn on several new sources.<sup>15</sup>

#### THE NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC DATABASE

Evidence of the items on display in the Nergal Gate Museum is provided by the photographic database “Nineveh & Nebi Yunis photos 2008,” “Nimrud 2008–10,” and “Nimrud Survey Photos Bott Oct 2008,” posted on March 7, 2015 to the *IraqCrisis* Mailing List by Suzanne E. Bott. It must be stressed that, despite their “Nimrud” label, the latter two databases also contain four images originating from the Nergal Gate Museum.<sup>16</sup> In September

14. See Danti, Branting, Paulette, and Cuneo 2015 and Mühl 2015 on the looting of Nimrud followed by the deliberate destruction of the site to conceal evidence of pillage.

15. It is known that “members of the Islamic State have seized inventory lists of items in the Mosul Cultural Museum and items in other historically important parts of the province” (Niqash 2014).

16. In the file “Nimrud 2008–10,” the photographs “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 82, 83,” and in “Nimrud Survey Photos Bott Oct 2008,” the photographs “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 89, 90” were mislabelled by Bott



Fig. 5. The right *lamassu* before the IS attack, Bott Photograph Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS (13).



Fig. 6. US Marines approaching the Nergal Gate Museum. Bott Photograph Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS (18).

2015 I received additional images from Bott, and these photos make up the data set of the present analysis. In sum, there are sixteen useful images of the Nergal Gate, seven of which show the museum interior with the artifacts on display at the time of the IS attack.<sup>17</sup> Bott's photographs provide reliable evidence of the actual contents on site in 2010,<sup>18</sup> and, as suggested by Bott, "[i]t is unlikely that much had changed since then" (Bott 2015a).

"Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS 4, 5, 13, 18, 19" portray US soldiers walking toward the external entrance of the gate (Fig. 6). Two signs, in Arabic and in English, are affixed to

---

who, in response to my query, wrote: "It is from the Nergal Gate (Bab Nergal) at Nineveh and not from Nimrud" (pers. comm. September 30, 2015).

17. "Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008" DS 4, 5, 13, 18, 19, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 36, and 37. Images 4, 5, 13, 18, and 19 are shots of the gate, while 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 36, and 37 show the interior of the Museum. In addition, the PDF "'Nineveh': 156th Survey & Design. Nineveh Nergal Gate and Sennacherib October 2008" is very useful for reconstructing the museum's plan. To these images must be added the four mislabeled photos reported in n. 16 above, all featuring the museum interiors.

18. The photographs were taken by Suzanne E. Bott, Ms. Diane Siebrandt, former U.S. State Department Cultural Heritage Officer, and Col. Mary Proffit, U.S. Army Reserve. Assessments and topographic surveys of archaeological sites near Mosul, including Nimrud, Hatra, Nineveh, and others, were executed by U.S. Army civil engineers with the support of the U.S. State Department and the Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). The photographs were taken at different times, including during visits by UNESCO representatives, the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Antiquities representative Qais Rashid, museum expert Stuart Gibson, and various journalists. For security reasons, the photographs generally do not show museum staff (Bott 2015a). See also Bott 2015b, for more detailed information on the project carried out by the Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

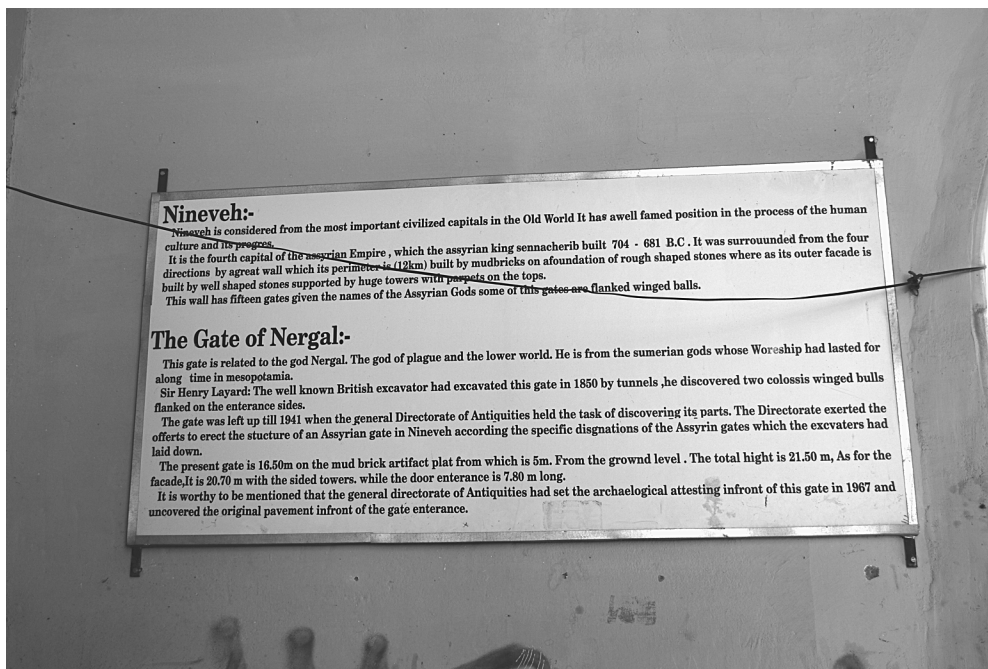


Fig. 7. English signage near the entrance to Room 1. Bott Photograph Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS (19).

the wall inside the entrance beside the doors that lead to the two rooms of the Museum (Figs. 5–7).<sup>19</sup> The signage briefly describes the historical importance of Nineveh and provides the size of the reconstructed gate: “It stands on a brick platform of 5 m from the ground level, the width is 16.50, the total height is 21.50 m, the façade is 20.70 m with the sided towers, while the door entrance is 7.80 m long.”<sup>20</sup>

Bott’s PDF “‘Nineveh’: 156th Survey & Design. Nineveh Nergal Gate and Sennacherib October 2008” reproduces the plan of the Nergal Gate with the museum (Fig. 9). This small exhibition area had a didactic value for tourists and was constructed inside the structure of the gate near the entranceway, namely within the two towers flanking the arched passageway on either side. For the sake of clarity, the rooms composing the museum are here given numbers 1 (east tower) and 2 (west tower) (Fig. 9). The PDF reports their size as  $8.84 \times 4.72$  m ( $42 \text{ m}^2$ ) each. The exhibits included pieces from Nineveh and other nearby Assyrian sites, as well as plaster replicas of architectural features and copies of items of particular value whose originals had been sent to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad or to the Mosul Cultural Museum for

19. The same two doors with rosette decorations are shown in Bott’s photograph “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 90” (see Fig. 12).

20. At Nineveh, restorations of sections of walls and gates were carried out from the years following World War II until recently. Although gates such as the Mashki Gate were rebuilt relatively faithfully to the original remains, a notable exception is the Nergal Gate. Intended to protect the *lamassu* as well as to be a tourist attraction, the latter’s reconstruction is clearly based on architect Félix Thomas’s nineteenth-century representation of a gateway at Khorsabad, which in turn was a partial invention owing to the scanty remains of the original structure (Green 2012: 17–18) (Fig. 8).



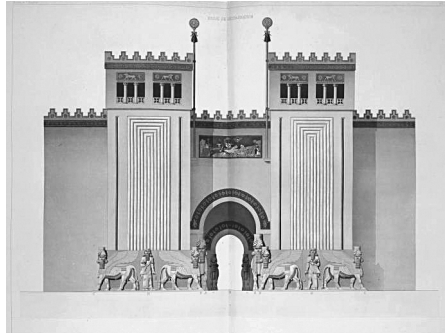


Fig. 8. Restoration by Félix Thomas of the entrance gate to Sargon II's palace at Khorsabad. Place 1867: Pl. 21, Green 2012: 17, Oriental Institute digital image D. 17457.

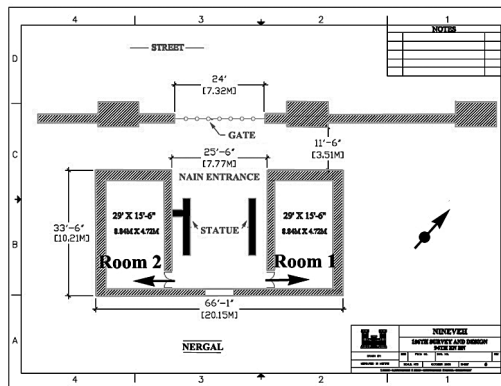


Fig. 9. Plan of the Nergal Gate with the museum. After Bott's PDF *Nineveh: 156th Survey & Design. Nineveh Nergal Gate and Sennacherib* October 2008. Arrows indicating entrances by the author.

safekeeping.<sup>21</sup> These artifacts will be discussed here in order to verify the provenance and the historical significance of each object.

#### THE ASSYRIAN SCULPTURES FROM THE NERGAL GATE MUSEUM, ROOM 1

From 1:13 to 1:33, the IS video (26 February 2015) depicts artifacts displayed in Room 1 of the Museum (Table 1). In addition to my personal recollection of the site, this identification has been ascertained by comparing IS video with Bott's photographic coverage. Where possible, the position of the artifacts reported in Table 1 is mapped onto the museum plan

21. As a supervisor of the Italian excavations at Babylon carried out by the Centro Scavi di Torino (1989), I recollect that, at the Babylon Museum set up in one room within the site of Babylon, there was a large plaster model of the capital city with the South Palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, as well as various items, both original and copies.

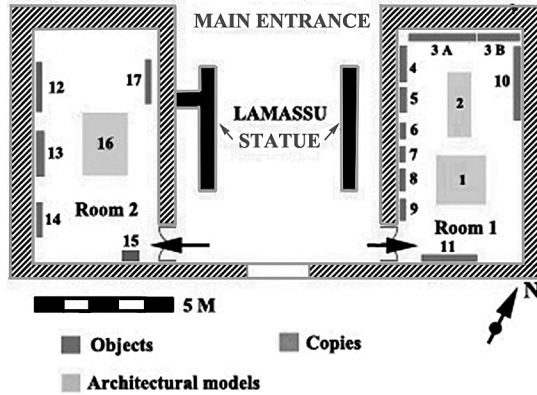


Fig. 10. Location of objects in Rooms 1 and 2 of the Nergal Gate Museum, as listed in Table 1. After Bott PDF Nineveh: 156th Survey & Design. Nineveh Nergal Gate and Sennacherib October 2008.

(Fig. 10). Photographs “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 89, 90” show a general view of Room 1 with the main objects on display (Figs. 11–12). In particular, photograph 90, with a US soldier approaching the exit door with the south wall to his left, suggests that the image refers to Room 1 (inside the east tower).

On entering Room 1 and turning to the left, a visitor would have seen in the middle of the room two successive architectural models: the Sibitti temple of Sargon II at Khorsabad (foreground) and Sennacherib’s aqueduct at Jerwan (Fig. 10, Nos. 1–2). They are both visible at 1:13–1:16 of the IS video and in the foreground of the Nergal Gate Museum image (mislabelled) “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 89” (Fig. 11, Nos. 1–2).

Then, at 1:19–1:23, against the north wall of Room 1, one can see two heavily reconstructed reliefs with tribute-bearers identified by the signage as originating from Khorsabad (Figs. 10–11, Nos. 3A and 3B; Fig. 13).<sup>22</sup> “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 89” shows these reliefs with two U.S. Army officials taking measurements (Fig. 11). Nos. 3A and 3B can be identified with slab 20 and the left half of slab 19, respectively, from the northwest wall of Court VIII from Sargon’s palace at Khorsabad (Figs. 14–16).<sup>23</sup> In particular, slab 20 depicts two foreign subjects, as shown by their non-Assyrian dress, each holding a pair of city models as tribute to the king. The preserved portion of slab 19 portrays a high official motioning to the tribute-bearers to come forward. The figures in both slabs are very badly damaged and heavily restored. They represent formal processions of courtiers and tribute-bearers that occupy the entire height of the panel, cut in the exceptionally high-relief typical of Khorsabad. This parade constitutes a reproduction of an orderly world established by the

22. These panels are also discussed in Jones 2015b. Similar scenes can be found in reliefs from the palace of Sargon II at Khorsabad held in the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago.

23. After Botta’s main excavations in the middle of the nineteenth century (Botta and Flandin, 1849: pls. 29 and 36, slabs 19–20), they were again exposed in the early 1930s by the Khorsabad Expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago as “many fragments of reliefs were lying on the surface and were eventually burned for lime and/or used as chopping blocks in native houses” (Loud 1936: 13). As suggested by John Russell (pers. comm.), “the only slabs from Khorsabad in Iraqi museums come from the Chicago excavations, and slabs 19–20 are the only candidates from those excavations.”

Table 1. List of objects from Rooms 1 and 2 of the Nergal Gate Museum (Nineveh). Only Nos. 4, 5, and 16 do not appear shot in the IS video

Type	Museum Room	Subject	Provenance	Date
<b>1. Model of Sibitti temple</b>	Room 1	Architectural plaster model	Dur-Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad)	Sargon II
<b>2. Model of Jerwan aqueduct</b>	Room 1	Architectural plaster model	Jerwan	Sennacherib
<b>3 A. Relief panel (heavily restored)</b>	Room 1	Two tribute-bearers holding city models	Dur-Sharrukin, Court VIII, Palace (modern Khorsabad)	Sargon II
<b>3 B. Relief panel (heavily restored)</b>	Room 1	High official introducing the tribute-bearers	Dur-Sharrukin Court VIII, Palace (modern Khorsabad)	Sargon II
<b>4. Relief panel (heavily restored) NGM 2</b>	Room 1	Four robed spearmen with shields	South-West Palace, passage to Ishtar Temple, Nineveh	Sennacherib
<b>5. Relief panel (heavily restored) NGM ? (684)</b>	Room 1	Human-bodied genie	Entrance <i>b</i> from Room LXIX into Room LXX of the South-West Palace, Nineveh	Sennacherib
<b>6. Relief panel (heavily restored) NGM ? (683)</b>	Room 1	Human-bodied genie	Entrance <i>b</i> from Room LXIX into Room LXX of the South-West Palace, Nineveh	Sennacherib
<b>7. Relief panel NGM 1</b>	Room 1	Spearman with a round shield	South-West Palace, passage to Ishtar Temple, Nineveh	Sennacherib
<b>8. Relief panel (heavily restored) NGM 4</b>	Room 1	Four spearmen with convex shields	South-West Palace, passage to Ishtar Temple, Nineveh	Sennacherib
<b>9. Relief panel (heavily restored) NGM 5</b>	Room 1	Legs of four archers moving towards left	South-West Palace, passage to Ishtar Temple, Nineveh	Sennacherib
<b>10. Copy of Maltai rock relief</b>	Room 1	King worshipping deities on animals	Maltai	Sennacherib
<b>11. Copy of Sargon II throne base</b>	Room 1	Fortress besieged by Assyrian soldiers	Dur-Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad)	Sargon II
<b>12. Copy of relief BM 124855-124856</b>	Room 2	Dying lion	Nineveh, North Palace, room C	Ashurbanipal
<b>13. Copy of relief BM 115634-118903</b>	Room 2	Siege of an enemy town with wheeled siege engine	Nimrud, Central Palace	Tiglath-pileser III
<b>14. Relief panel (unidentified)</b>	Room 2			
<b>15. Copy of statue IM 60496</b>	Room 2	Statue of Shalmaneser III	Nimrud, probably temple of Ninurta	Shalmaneser III
<b>16. Model of Khorsabad royal palace</b>	Room 2	Architectural model of Khorsabad royal palace	Dur-Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad)	Sargon II
<b>17. Relief panel (Russell photo)</b>	Room 2	Elamite wars: captives in the marshes loaded by Assyrian soldiers onto a boat	North Palace, Room F or Room G	Ashurbanipal

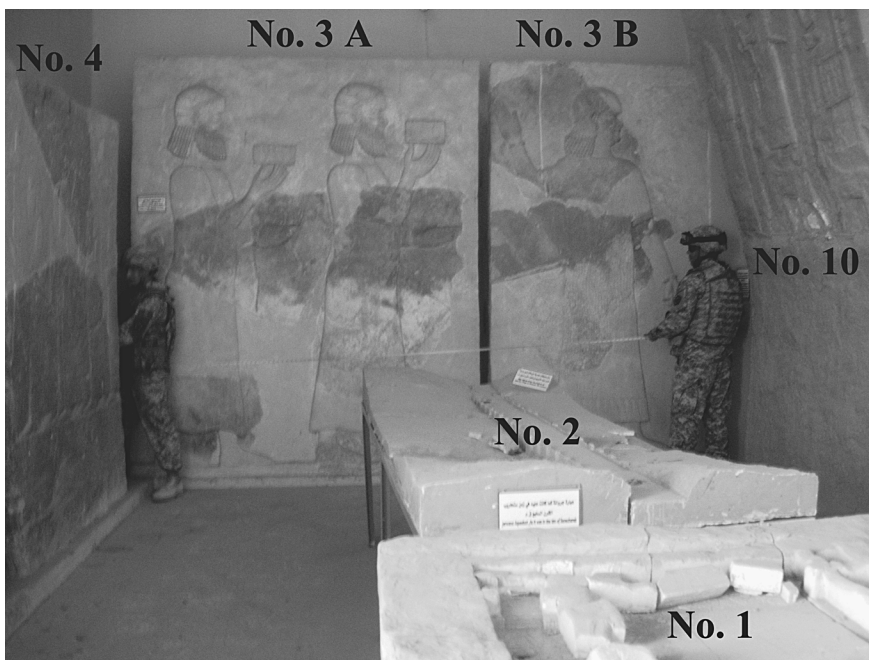


Fig. 11. General view of Room 1 (east tower). Bott Photograph Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008 (89).



Fig. 12. US soldier approaching exit of Room 1: Bott Photograph Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008 (90).



Fig. 13. Room 1, north wall: two reconstructed reliefs with tribute-bearers, (left) slab 20 and (right) the left half of slab 19 from the northwest wall of Court VIII from Sargon's palace at Khorsabad. Bott Photograph Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS (26).

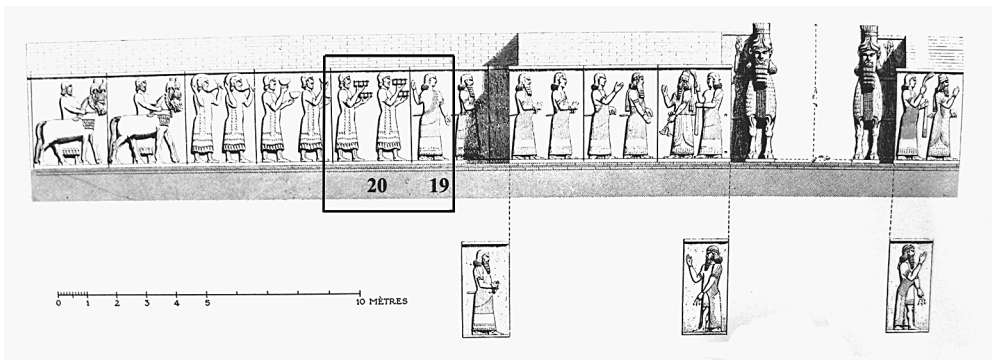


Fig. 14. Slab 20 and the left half of slab 19 from the northwest wall of Court VIII from Sargon's palace at Khorsabad. After Botta 1849: Pls. 29, 36.

king, who in this case received gift-bearers holding models of a fortress. Their turbaned heads and hairstyle may suggest a western origin for these men (Collins 2008: 72).

Two other relief panels appear on the west wall in Bott's photograph "Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 83," but they are not portrayed in the IS video (Fig. 10, Nos. 4 and 5; Fig. 17). My slabs Nos. 4 and 5 are respectively "Nergal Gate Museum no. 2" (661a–b) and "Nergal Gate Museum?" (684) in the catalogue published by Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner (1998:

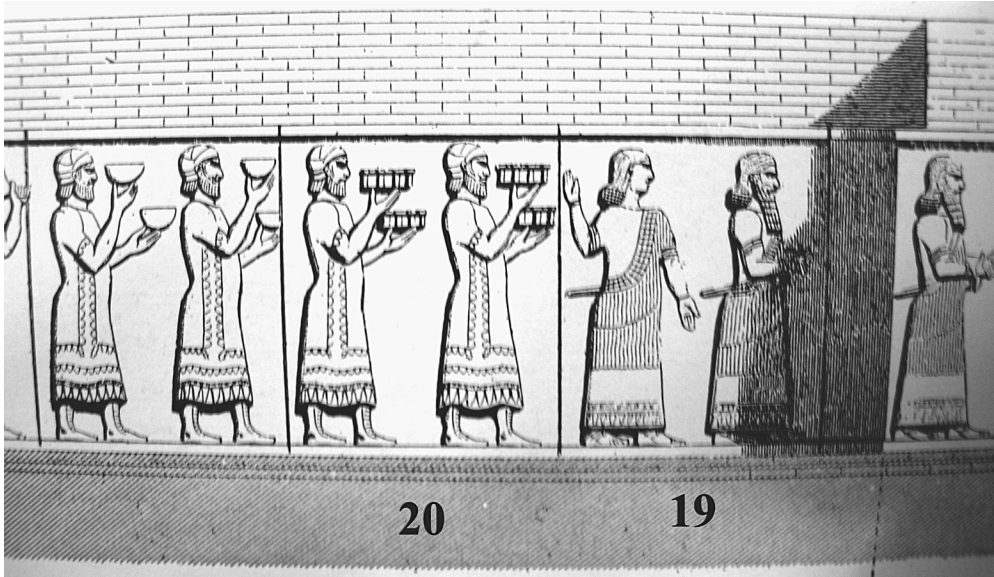


Fig. 15. Two tribute-bearers holding city models and a high official introducing the tribute-bearers. After Botta 1849: Pls. 29, 36.

135 and 138, Pls. 480 and 501, respectively).<sup>24</sup> The original two fragments of NGM 2 have been restored with plaster and depict “a procession of bareheaded, robed Assyrians,” the first with shield and spear followed by two pairs of soldiers holding bows and maces, respectively. Traces of the parasol-bearer on the adjacent slab (660), known only from a drawing by C. D. Hodder, are visible on the left edge. These sculptures were originally excavated in 1853 by Rassam some 65 m to the north of the *bābānu* Court H of Sennacherib’s Southwest Palace, in the 12 m-long passage leading towards the Ishtar Temple. The passage was decorated with two sets of slabs lining both sides of a descending ramp. Large-scale figures form a double procession of courtiers, soldiers, musicians, as well as king Sennacherib and the crown prince, moving to and from the Ishtar Temple. This probably commemorates the parade held on the occasion of the crown prince’s investiture in the *bit redūti* (Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner 1998: 133).

The catalogue includes three additional slabs from the Nergal Gate Museum that belong to this procession, designated by Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner (1998: 147) as “Nergal Gate Museum no. 1,” “Nergal Gate Museum no. 4,” and “Nergal Gate Museum no. 5” (Pls. 482, 486, 484, respectively). John Russell (pers. comm.) suggests that “they should be presumably on the walls of Room 1 or, less likely, Room 2 of the Nergal Gate Museum” (Fig. 10, Nos. 7–9). On NGM 1 (662b) is carved the well-preserved figure of a spearman with a round shield wearing a helmet with a curved crest. NGM 4 (669) has four (possibly Judaeen) spear-men (the two on the sides are fragmentary) carrying large convex shields. NGM 5 (664c) shows a fragmentary scene with the legs of four archers moving towards the left (part of one on the right edge). All these figures in the procession are moving uphill, except in NGM 4,

24. NGM 2 is slab 6 with the catalogue number 661a-b; its provenance is given as “Mosul Museum store or Nergal Gate Museum (no. 2),” but its dimensions are not available; “NGM?” is 684.

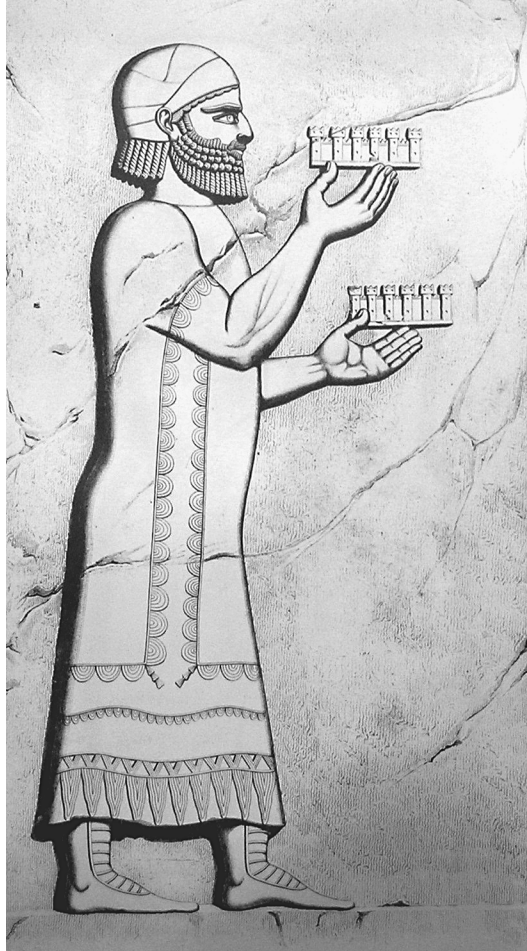


Fig. 16. Detail of tribute-bearer holding city models.  
After Botta 1849: Pls. 29, 36.

whose figures move downhill. As proposed by Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner (1998: 133), the probable sequence of the remaining slabs should follow that proposed by Gadd, “since it accords with Rassam’s statement . . . that the ministers walked before the king.”<sup>25</sup>

As for my No. 5, “Nergal Gate Museum?” (684) is a fragmentary human-bodied genie with eagle’s feet (Fig. 17), a guardian figure probably flanking door c in Room LXIX, which Layard described as “two figures facing south, the second eagle-clawed” (Russell 1995: 84), in the west corner of the inner *bītānu* sector of the South-West Palace, a more private

25. NGM 1 corresponds to catalogue 662b, the left part of slab 7. Its modern location is not clear: “formerly outside the Nergal Gate Museum (no. 1), present location unknown.” NGM 4 is 669, slab C; NGM 5 is 664c, lower part of slab 9 (Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, 1998: 135–36).

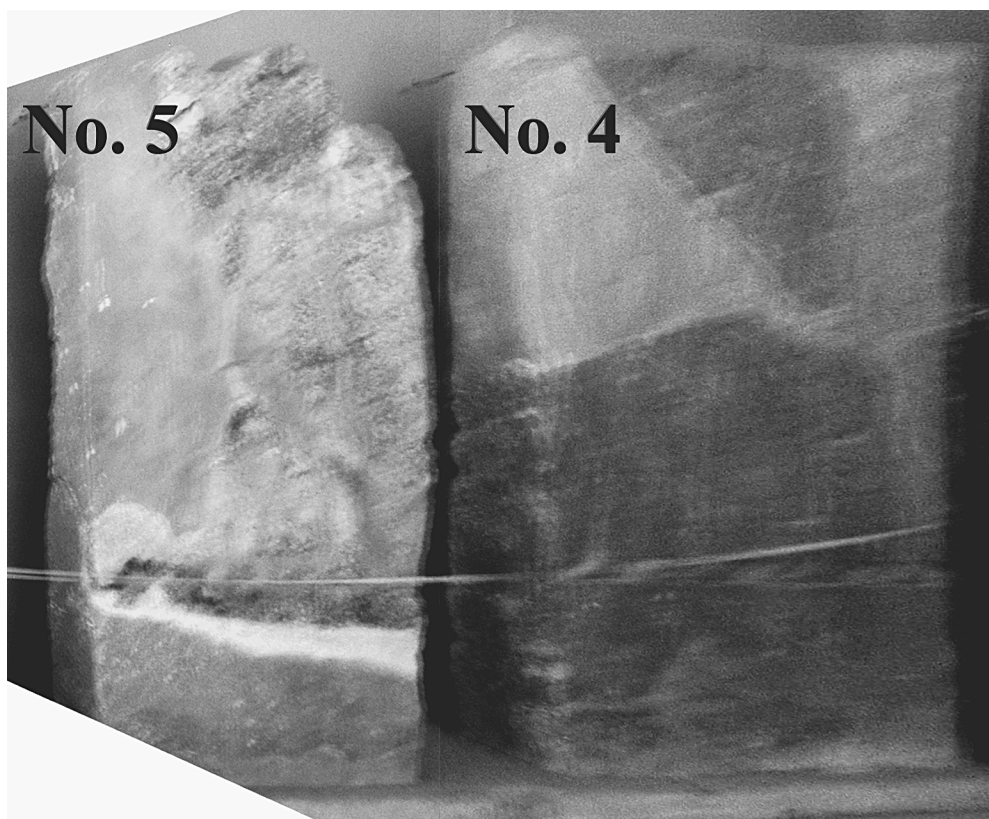


Fig. 17. Room 1, west wall: two fragmentary reliefs. Right, No. 4: NGM 2 (661a-b), robed spearmen with shields from South-West Palace at Nineveh, passage to Ishtar Temple. Left, No. 5: NGM ?" (684), human-bodied genie from South-West Palace, Nineveh (178 × 140 × 24 cm). Bott Photograph Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008 (83).

ceremonial area.<sup>26</sup> The second of these two figures might be the genie described with the additional catalogue number “NGM?” (683) as “Entrance figure. Portion of a bearded god in a head-dress with three pairs of horns, with his arm raised, facing right” (Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner 1998: 138, 147, and Pl. 501).<sup>27</sup> However, as suggested by John Russell, “this slab could well come from a different door than your No. 5.” It may be possible that this slab carved with the additional genie was also in Room 1 (Fig. 10, No. 6) or, less likely, Room 2, of the Nergal Gate Museum.

On the east wall of Room 1 (near the north corner), a cast of the front section of the rock relief from the time of Sennacherib at Maltai in Iraqi Kurdistan can be seen in Bott photograph “Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 89” and Bott photograph “Nineveh & Nebi Yunis

26. However, in Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner 1998: 138, the slab, whose size is 178 × 140 × 24 cm, is said to be “flanking Entrance *b* from Room LXIX into Room LXX (641)”; this is described as “Entrance [*b*, 641] between[?] III [Room LXIX] & GGG [Room LXX] two figures facing N.”

27. “NGM?” (683) is catalogued as “Mosul, formerly outside the Nergal Gate Museum; present location unknown.”



2008 DS 36” (Figs. 10–11, No. 10); it is also shown in the IS video at 1:24–1:26.<sup>28</sup> On the south wall near the entrance doorway of Room 1 there is a plaster cast of the relief of a fortress attacked by Assyrian soldiers using a siege ladder carved on the base of the throne of Sargon II from Khorsabad, whose original is in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad (Figs. 10 and 12, No. 11). This item features in the IS video at 1:27–1:33 and is shown in Bott’s “Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS 32.”<sup>29</sup> However, there is a further duplicate of this panel in the Mosul Cultural Museum, as shown by the Mosul Museum images 2008–2010, “MCM Qais Rashid Visit DS May08 94” (Brusasco 2016a: 211–12, Fig. 4).

#### THE ASSYRIAN SCULPTURES FROM THE NERGAL GATE MUSEUM, ROOM 2

Having now analyzed the objects from Room 1 filmed from 1:13 to 1:33, it is possible to add to the list four other Assyrian pieces—three reliefs and a statue—featuring in the IS video from 1:34 to 1:55.

Following the previous sequence, three reliefs are filmed from 1:34 to 1:43. Their provenance from Room 2 (and not 1) is very likely. Since Room 1 was packed to capacity (see Figs. 10–12), the additional Room 2 inside the west tower of the gate was used to display objects which could not be accommodated in Room 1.

The IS video sequence would suggest that the three reliefs Nos. 12–14 were possibly on display on the west wall of Room 2 (Fig. 10), while the statue No. 15 was on the south wall near the entrance. The architectural model of Sargon II’s royal palace at Khorsabad (No. 16) in the middle of the room is not seen in the video but is shown in Bott’s photograph “Nineveh & Nebi Yunis 2008 DS 37.” The first of the four objects shown in the IS video at 1:34–1:42 is a relief of a dying lion (Fig. 10, No.12), one panel of the famous lion hunt scenes depicted in the North Palace of Ashurbanipal, whose signage indicates “The Dying Lioness, Nineveh, 7th century BC.” This is doubtless a copy of the British Museum stone panel BM 124855-124856, as indicated by the identical pose and pattern of arrows, as well as the clear sign of the slab joint along the lion’s tail. The second overturned lion at upper right does not feature in the cast.<sup>30</sup>

Next to the royal hunt in the middle of the west wall, at 1:43 is a cast of the right half of the stone panel depicting a siege of an enemy town from the Central Palace of Tiglath-pileser III at Nimrud held in the British Museum (BM 115634-118903) (Fig. 10, No. 13). The design is very coarse and is far from reproducing all the details of the original BM relief.<sup>31</sup>

While for a fraction of a second at 1:43 there appears a relief which cannot be identified (Fig. 10, No.14), from 1:44 to 1:55 the IS video shows a smashed statue near the external entrance, which the signage identifies as “The Statue of Sargon. The Assyrian King. 7th century BC” (Fig. 10, No. 15). The presence of a metal external door (of the kind shown

28. See Jones 2015b for reference to my identification and analysis of this rock relief published in February 28, 2015 on the *IraqCrisis* Mailing List of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (Brusasco 2015a-b). Unfortunately, photographs taken in early April 2016 show that this Assyrian relief in Duhok had been vandalized. A spray-painted Kurdish flag spray and graffiti were also discovered in late February 2016 (Danti et al. 2016: 67–70). Additional photographs taken by an ASOR CHI local source on May 19, 2017 show that the spray paint and graffiti have been scrubbed off the reliefs. However, on May 8, 2017 Babylon FM published photographs highlighting the defacement of Sennacherib’s figure on the first panel. On May 23, 2017 (in an email posted to *IraqCrisis*) Lamia Al Galiani Werr stressed this vandalism was due to “someone—not Daesh—who has a grudge against the modern Assyrian Christians” (Danti et al. 2017: 100–106).

29. See also Jones 2015b for discussion of this relief.

30. Jones (2015b) also stresses that “this is clearly a replica taken from the reliefs in the British Museum.”

31. See Jones 2015b for similar conclusions, and Invernizzi 2007: 189 and 268–72, and Collins 2008: 97–127, for descriptions of the original slab.

in Bott's images of the Nergal Gate Museum)<sup>32</sup> shot by the IS cameraman near the broken statue, as well as the signage with the usual frame would point to its provenance from the Nergal Gate Museum.<sup>33</sup> Despite the signage caption,<sup>34</sup> as suggested by John Russell, this is actually a cast of a fragmentary statue of Shalmaneser III from Nimrud in the Iraq Museum (IM 60496). The head is the same as that of that piece published by Læssøe. The pattern of straps on the shoulders and the beard are also very similar, as well as the peculiar shape of the crown. This would be confirmed by the back view of the same sculpture with the schematic and ornamental fringes.<sup>35</sup>

A further piece from Room 2 may be that photographed in 1981 by John Russell, depicting the defeat of Elamites in the marshes (Fig. 10, No. 17). Here captives, after having fled to the marshes, are captured and loaded by Assyrian soldiers onto a boat and moved toward the left in the vessel (Fig. 18). This scene is probably part of the depiction of the Elamite wars in which Ashurbanipal's army invaded Elam in 653 BC to defeat the rebel king Teumman at the battle of Til-Tuba on the Ulai. While the campaign was illustrated in Room XXXIII of the Southwest Palace of his grandfather Sennacherib, the same cycle was later reproduced with minor modifications on the walls of the North Palace. The Nergal Gate Museum piece is likely to have originated from this latter palace, probably from Room F (the "Susiana" room)<sup>36</sup> or Room G,<sup>37</sup> which show similar scenes and have a similar right-to-left direction of prisoners.<sup>38</sup> It is difficult to establish the exact position of this piece in either room, but it would presumably have stood to the right of the published slabs.

#### CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis suggests that attacks by IS on the Nineveh site, particularly against the Nergal Gate Museum and possibly also Sennacherib's fortification wall, were staged at different times and began much earlier than previously thought. Interference on the site—destruction and/or looting—was already underway well before February 26, 2015, the date of the first IS video release.

At the time of the IS attack, in addition to the three architectural models, fifteen objects were on display at the Nergal Gate Museum (Table 1): 33.3% (5 of 15) were plaster copies, while 66.6% (10 of 15) were original items.<sup>39</sup> Although the collection includes five plaster casts, the ten (or nine, if the unidentified panel is a copy) original pieces, though often badly damaged and restored, are of great historical value. The Nergal Gate Museum had an important didactic function for archaeologists and tourists visiting the site. The Museum was attacked together with its human-headed winged bulls (*lamassu*) in early February 2015 and was finally destroyed in Spring 2016, and some of its items were probably smashed. However, it is possible to speculate that, before the vandalism and destruction of sculptures at the site, most of the

32. See Bott's photograph "Nimrud Survey 94 EN Oct2008, 90" (Fig. 12).

33. The Assyrian Gallery of the Mosul Cultural Museum does not open directly onto the outer space, nor are there signs with similar frames (Brusasco 2016a: 210, Figs. 1–2).

34. Unfortunately, incorrect captions are also present in the Mosul Cultural Museum (Brusasco 2016a: 248).

35. See Læssøe 1959: Pl. XL, for the original statue. Another cast of the same image from Nimrud is kept in the garden of the Mosul Cultural Museum (Brusasco 2016a: 242, Figs. 30–31).

36. Barnett shows that "[t]he Susa Hall [now known as Room F] contains above 30 double slabs, or 60 single, and all connected in one series" (1976: 10, 39–41, Pls. XVI–XX).

37. Barnett stresses that "[o]f Room G, which led into the 'Susiana Room' (F), only three slabs remained, showing the deportation of Elamites from a river bank" (1976: 14, Pl. XXII).

38. John Russell rightly points out that "Court J also has a similar scene, but the boats move in the wrong direction" (pers. comm.).

39. If the unidentified relief (in Room 2) is a copy, then the original artifacts are nine, namely 60% (9/15) of the total number of objects.



Fig. 18. Room 2: Elamite wars with captives loaded by Assyrian soldiers onto a boat. Room F or Room G, North Palace of Ashurbanibal at Nineveh. Photograph courtesy John Russell.

items on display, especially the invaluable reliefs from Khorsabad and Nineveh, masterpieces of Assyrian art which had decorated the walls and courtyards of palaces and other ceremonial structures, were looted by IS terrorists and sold on the illicit antiquity market.

A similar pattern seems to emerge from the preliminary study of the liberated Mosul Museum. The analysis and survey of the destroyed sculptures from the Assyrian Gallery of the Mosul Museum show that many Assyrian panels were probably stolen (and not destroyed), since there is little or no debris left at the foot of walls where they had been placed.<sup>40</sup>

40. In a personal communication on March 25, 2017, after a careful inspection of the Mosul Museum, Layla Salih, Head of the Heritage Department, Nineveh Antiquities SBAH, shared my conclusions regarding the theft of most panels from the Assyrian Gallery: “[R]ight, most of objects had been looted, especially reliefs.” See Brusasco 2017 (March 16, 2017) for a preliminary analysis of the destruction of the Assyrian Gallery of the Mosul Museum.

In the Nergal Gate Museum, unlike the winged bull colossi, which would have been difficult to remove, the relief panels were more easily transportable and have an extraordinary market value. In reality, the defacement and destruction of the *lamassu* of the Nergal Gate look more like a cover-up and propagandistic operation to conceal evidence of the systematic looting of the site of Nineveh, which must have taken place in the preceding months. This analysis has demonstrated such an early intervention at the Nergal Gate, while also showing the unique historic value of this small but extremely rich museum.

## REFERENCES

- al-Asil, N. 1956. Recent Archaeological Activity in Iraq. *Sumer* 12: 3–9.
- Al-Gailani Werr, L. 2015. Mosul Museum Inventory. In “Lost Treasures from Iraq.” *IraqCrisis*. A Moderated List, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, posted March 1, 2015. <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/arc/iraqcrisis/2015-03/msg00000.html>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017. Nabi Yonus. In “Lost Treasures from Iraq.” *IraqCrisis*. A Moderated List, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, posted March 24, 2017. <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/arc/iraqcrisis/2017-03/msg00007.html>.
- Al-Salhy, S. 2015. The Full Story behind ISIL’s Takeover of the Mosul Museum. Al Jazeera, March 9, 2015. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/03/full-story-isil-takeover-mosul-museum-150309053022129.html>.
- Barnett, R. D. 1976. *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668-627 BC)*. London: British Museum Publications.
- Barnett, R. D., E. Bleibtreu, and G. Turner. 1998. *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh*. London: British Museum Publications.
- Bawaya, M. 2015. Experts Struggle to Confirm Archaeological Damage in Iraq. *Nature* (March 26). <http://www.nature.com/news/experts-struggle-to-confirm-archaeological-damage-in-iraq-1.17155>.
- Bott, S. E. 2015a. Nineveh & Nebi Yunis photos 2008, Nimrud 2008-10, Nimrud Survey Photos Bott Oct 2008, and Mosul Cultural Museum 2008-10. *IraqCrisis*. A Moderated List, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago of Chicago, posted March 7, 2015. <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/arc/iraqcrisis/2015-03/msg00015.html>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015b. Mapping the Heart of Mesopotamia: A Bittersweet Legacy in the Landscape of War. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 78: 162–68. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.5615/neareastarch.78.3.0162.pdf>.
- Botta, P. E., and E. Flandin. 1849. *Monuments de Ninive, 1: Architecture et sculpture*. Paris: Imprimerie royale.
- Brusasco, P. 2015a. A Relief from the Mosul Museum (1:26 of IS video). *IraqCrisis*. A Moderated List, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, posted February 28, 2015. <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/arc/iraqcrisis/2015-02/msg00022.html>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015b. A Relief from the Mosul Museum (1:26 of the video)—2 images of Maltai. *IraqCrisis*. A Moderated List, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, posted February 28, 2015. <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/arc/iraqcrisis/2015-02/msg00023.html>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016a. The Assyrian Sculptures in the Mosul Cultural Museum: A Preliminary Assessment of What Was on Display before Islamic State’s Attack. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 75: 205–48.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016b and 2017. Yemen, Siria, Iraq. Aggiornamenti sul patrimonio culturale. *Archeologia Viva* (Giunti Editore, Firenze). <http://www.archeologiaviva.it/608/yemen-siria-iraq-aggiornamenti-sul-patrimonio-culturale/>.
- Budge, E. A. W. 1920. *By Nile and Tigris: A Narrative of Journeys in Egypt and Mesopotamia on Behalf of the British Museum between the Years 1886 and 1913*, vol. II. London: John Murray.
- Collins, P. 2008. *Assyrian Palace Sculptures*. London: The British Museum Press.
- Cruikshank, D. 2015. Civilization under Attack. *BBC Four* (30 June 2015). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rB-h8VniWt8>.
- Danti M. D., S. Branting, T. Paulette, and A. Cuneo. 2015. Report on the Destruction of the Northwest Palace at Nimrud. *American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR), Cultural Heritage Initiatives*,

- May 5, 2015: 1-4. [http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ASOR\\_CHI\\_Nimrud\\_Report.pdf](http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ASOR_CHI_Nimrud_Report.pdf).
- \_\_\_\_\_, R. L. Zettler, C. Ali, T. Paulette, A. Moaz, A. Cuneo, D. Elitzer, and D. Breegi. 2015. Weekly Report 30, March 2, 2015. *ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq*: 112–32. [http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ASOR\\_CHI\\_Weekly\\_Report\\_30r.pdf](http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ASOR_CHI_Weekly_Report_30r.pdf).
- \_\_\_\_\_, A. Al-Azm, A. Cuneo, S. Penacho, B. Rohani, M. Gabriel, K. Kaercher, and J. O’Connell. 2016a. Weekly Report 91–92, April 27–May 10, 2016. *ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq*. [http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ASOR\\_CHI\\_Weekly\\_Report\\_91-92r.pdf](http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ASOR_CHI_Weekly_Report_91-92r.pdf).
- \_\_\_\_\_, 2016b. Weekly Report 97–98, June 8–21, 2016. *ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq*. [http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ASOR\\_CHI\\_Weekly\\_Report\\_97-98.pdf](http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ASOR_CHI_Weekly_Report_97-98.pdf).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016c. Weekly Report 89–90, April 13–26, 2016. *ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq*. [http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ASOR\\_CHI\\_Weekly\\_Report\\_89-90r.pdf](http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/ASOR_CHI_Weekly_Report_89-90r.pdf).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017. Monthly Report, April 2017–Appendices. *ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq*. [http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/20170615\\_ASOR\\_CHI\\_May\\_Appendices\\_Final\\_REDACTED.pdf](http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/20170615_ASOR_CHI_May_Appendices_Final_REDACTED.pdf)
- Ensor, J. 2017a. Previously Untouched 600BC Palace Discovered under Shrine Demolished by Isil in Mosul. *The Telegraph*, February 28, 2017. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/27/previously-untouched-600bc-palace-discovered-shrine-demolished/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2017b. “Priceless” Ancient Artefacts Found Hidden in Isil Commander’s House in Mosul. *The Telegraph*, 26 January 2017. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/26/priceless-ancient-artifacts-found-hidden-isil-commanders-house/>.
- Finch, J. P. G. 1948. The Winged Bulls at the Nergal Gate of Nineveh. *Iraq* 10: 9–18.
- Gadd, C. J. 1936. *The Stones of Assyria: The Surviving Remains of Assyrian Sculpture, Their Recovery and Their Original Position*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Gibson, S. 2009. Mission Report. Preliminary Assessment of Mosul Cultural Museum Mosul, Iraq 7–9 April 2009. Unesco. <https://sites.google.com/site/iraqcrisis/assessment-of-museums>
- Green, J. 2012. Introduction. In *Picturing the Past: Imaging and Imagining the Ancient Middle East*, ed. J. Green, E. Teeter, and J. A. Larson. Pp. 13–23. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- Hardy, S. 2015. The “First Material Proof” that Islamic State Is Trafficking Antiquities. *Conflict Antiquities*, July 15, 2015. <https://conflictantiquities.wordpress.com/2015/07/15/syria-iraq-islamic-state-conflict-antiquities-trafficking-forensic-evidence-mosul-museum/>.
- Invernizzi, A. 2007. *Dal Tigri all’Eufrate: Babilonesi e Assiri*. Florence: Le Lettere.
- Jacobsen, Th., and S. Lloyd. 1935. *Sennacherib’s Aqueduct at Jerwan*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Jones, C. 2015a. Most of the destroyed statues seem to be from Hatra. Most of the Assyrian relief sculptures in the museum are replicas. @cwjones89, February 26, 2015. <https://twitter.com/cwjones89/status/5711072106961764353>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2015b. Assessing the Damage at the Mosul Museum, Part 1: The Assyrian Artifacts. *Gate of Nineveh*, February 27, 2015. <https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com/2015/02/27/assessing-the-damage-at-the-mosul-museum-part-1-the-assyrian-artifacts/>
- Læssøe, J. 1959. A Statue of Shalmaneser III from Nimrud. *Iraq* 21: 147–57.
- Layard, A. H. 1853a. *Discoveries among the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, With Travels in Armenia, Kurdistan and the Desert: Being the Result of a Second Expedition Undertaken for the Trustees of the British Museum*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1853b. *A Second Series of the Monuments of Nineveh*. London.
- Loud, G. 1936. *Khorsabad, Part I: Excavations in the Palace and at a City Gate*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

- Malko, H. 2014. Neo-Assyrian Rock Reliefs: Ideology and Landscapes of an Empire. In *Assyria to Iberia at the Dawn of the Classical Age, Exhibition blog. September 22, 2014-January 4, 2015*. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Posted Monday, October 20, 2014. <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2014/assyria-to-iberia/blog>.
- Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq. 2015. The Official Annual Report of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq for the Destruction of Cultural Heritage in the Province of Nineveh, from June 10, 2014–June 10, 2015. (Arabic). Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq. <http://www.tourism.gov.iq/upload/upfile/ar/12.pdf>.
- Mühl, S. 2015. Nimrud under Attack: A Short Analysis of Recent Destructions at Nimrud. PDF Facebook, April 14, 2015. [http://www.academia.edu/11953088/Nimrud\\_under\\_attack.\\_A\\_short\\_analysis\\_of\\_recent\\_destructions\\_at\\_Nimrud](http://www.academia.edu/11953088/Nimrud_under_attack._A_short_analysis_of_recent_destructions_at_Nimrud).
- Niqash. 2014. False Idols: ISIS puts Mosul's Ancient Artifacts and Manuscripts Away for Safekeeping. *Niqash*, June 27, 2014. <http://www.niqash.org/articles/?id=3479>.
- Norimine, H. 2015. Here's What We Know about Daesh's Antiquities Department. *Albawaba*, November 8, 2015. <http://www.albawaba.com/loop/here's-what-we-know-about-daesh's-antiquities-department-765406>.
- Parry, O. H. 1895. *Six Months in a Syrian Monastery. Being the Record of a Visit to the Head Quarters of the Syrian Church in Mesopotamia with Some Account of the Yazidis or Devil Worshippers of Mosul and El Julwah, Their Sacred Book*. London: Horace Cox.
- Place, V. 1867. *Ninive et l'Assyrie*, Tome Troisième, Planches. Paris: Imprimerie Impériale.
- Reade, J. E. 2016. The Gates of Nineveh. *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 22: 39–93.
- Robson, E. 2015. Modern War, Ancient Casualties. *The Times Literary Supplement*, March 25, 2015. <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article1535646.ece>.
- Russell, J. M. 1995. Layard's Descriptions of Rooms in the Southwest Palace at Nineveh. *Iraq* 57: 71–85.
- Schemm, P. 2015. Iraq Says IS Demolishes Ruins to Cover up Looting Operations. Associated Press, May 12, 2015. <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/3d418e50f1af49d084c932d576101113/iraq-says-demolishes-ruins-cover-looting-operations>.
- United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. 2015. *ISIL Leader's Loot*. Published and accessed July 21, 2015. <http://eca.state.gov/cultural-heritage-center/iraq-cultural-heritage-initiative/isil-leaders-loot>.
- Wigram, W. A. 1922. *The Cradle of Mankind: Life in Eastern Kurdistan*. London: A. & C. Black.