

War in Syria affects Roman ruins.

Salem al Kaim (guide): Welcome to Palmyra. Here we are now in the middle of the site. We are going to start the visit of this place by looking at the big arch you see right now, and walking in the colonnaded street to see the theatre

Sander van Hoorn (reporter): Palmyra, world heritage of world class, in the middle of a war zone. Because of its size, this site is very special, however it is also what makes Palmyra vulnerable; everyone can access the site. If, in due course, tourists will start visiting Palmyra again, Salem al Kaim will be able to add a chapter on recent history to his tour.

Salem al Kaim: The knocks in the stones here. See them? All from mortars.

Sander van Hoorn: This is 2000 years old. This one, a piece of a mortar, is 2 years old. And that is how easy it is. The damage here is still quite limited, imagine what goes on in the ancient cities of Homs and Aleppo. And what IS destroys in the Iraqi city of Mosul.

In Palmyra, not the violence of war, but looting and illegal digs are the main problem. The people who do care about their heritage, suffer.

Salem al Kaim: They must keep it protected, because it is heritage of thousands of years. It is not made by someone or somebody, but by civilizations. You have to give it to other generations intact.

Sander van Hoorn: No one knows how much has been stolen. This is what was confiscated from looters, and is safely locked away.