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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

"Puzzling" the past. On the reconstruction project of the Southwest Palace at Nineveh (Mosul, Iraq).

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Abstract

King Sancherib's palace in Nineveh (also known as the Southwest Palace) was one of the most magnificent residences of the Neo-Assyrian period (IX-VII century BC). Its rooms were decorated with reliefs depicting scenes from the history of the empire. The Throne Room wing of the palace was arranged in the 1960s as an open-air museum exhibiting the reconstructed sculptural decorations. Unfortunately, the site was irretrievably destroyed by the so-called Islamic State. The growing awareness of the value of the Assyrian heritage in Iraq and the efforts of researchers led to the launch of a project aimed at reconstructing the Throne Room wing of the palace once again. Rescue excavation started in 2022 has resulted in the collection of more than 10,000 fragments of sculptural decoration, which is now being matched to specific relief panels of the palace rooms. The proposed paper consist of the report on the rescue survey and the beginning of the reconstruction and conservation work carried out within the German archaeological mission of the University of Heidelberg. It will be complemented by reflections on the protection of heritage in Iraq and proposed solutions for the next steps of the restoration process of the site.

Keywords

Nineveh, Assyria, ISIS, reconstruction, conservation

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