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BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR
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The next BISI Newsletter will be published in May 2010. Brief contributions are welcomed on recent research, publications, members news and events. They should be sent to BISI by post or e-mail (preferred) to arrive by 15 April 2010.

The BISI Administrator Joan Porter MacIver edits the Newsletter.

Cover: BISI logo (المعهد البريطاني لدراسة العراق) was drawn by Taha al-Hiti.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

‘To advance research and public education relating to Iraq and the neighbouring countries in anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, language and related disciplines within the arts, humanities and social sciences.’

- BISI supports high-quality research across its academic remit by making grants and providing expert advice and input.
- BISI assists with publications, both print and electronic, for academic and public dissemination of research activities.
- BISI supports and facilitates academic exchange and collaboration between the UK and Iraq through programmes of visiting scholars and academic engagement.
- BISI provides a focus for the UK public and the Iraqi community in Britain to engage with matters concerning Iraq.
- BISI supports public education through organising and supporting lectures, conferences, workshops and study days.
- BISI provides expertise and specialist knowledge to government bodies, journalists and other parties.

IJCIS 2009

The 2009 *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies* (Vol. 3.1 & 3.2) have been published and sent to our subscribers. Volume 3.3 will be sent to BISI subscribers upon receipt from the publishers.

The British Institute for the Study of Iraq is now in its first year of being totally self-funded without a grant-in-aid from the British Academy. The Academy's continuing support for our office and administration, however, remains valuable in conducting our work. We are confident that even with our current limited resources, we are capably fulfilling the objectives of the Institute by fostering research and public engagement on and with Iraq, as well as collaborating closely with colleagues in Iraq through an active visiting scholars programme. The November issue of our newsletter always risks duplicating the information laid out in our Year End Report and Accounts (available on our website <http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq> and sent to all members). It is important for us to include the updates of our activities as the Newsletter remains a means for us to reach out to both members and non-members and to share the news of our work and outreach efforts – both in the UK and in Iraq.

BISI Council continues to focus on the Institute's objectives and have this year drawn up a statement of public benefit for the annual report as required by the Charity Commission, which is repeated on p. 2 of this newsletter. Council is undertaking one major and critical governance initiative with the proposed establishment of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq as a company limited by guarantee (CLG). Members will be asked to approve this action at our 2009 annual general meeting and to wind up the affairs of the current charity. Our activities will not be affected by this action and it is in keeping with the status of all the other schools and institutes supported by BASIS (British Academy-Sponsored Institutes and Societies). We have had the legal advice and assistance of Mr Peter Jacobs of Jacobs Allen Hammond Solicitors with additional assistance from Mrs Elizabeth Irvine, our independent examiner, from VANTIS Group Limited. We have greatly appreciated their help in this important matter and look forward to the support of our members on this proposal.

The publication of *Ivories from Nimrud VI: Ivories from the North West Palace (1845-1992)* by Georgina Herrmann, Stuart Laidlaw with Helena Coffey was a major effort, which is evident from the publication itself, a magnificent achievement by all concerned. The authors and BISI received a great deal of assistance from Frank Hemmings of Henry Ling Limited (The Dorset Press) for which we are all very grateful. Judging from the many accolades sent to us about this important book, we can truly consider it to be a 'flagship' BISI publication. We also wish to thank the trustees of the Charlotte Bonham-Carter Trust for the subvention, which contributed to supporting the high quality production of this book. The publication of *Once there was a place : Settlement Archaeology at Chagar Bazar, 1999-2002* by Augusta McMahon with Carlo Colantoni, Julia Frane and Arkadiusz Soltysiak is expected early in 2010 and there are a number of other publications in the pipeline, including Alastair Northedge & Derek Kennet's *Archaeological Atlas of Samarra* (Samarra Studies II) and *Your Praise is Sweet: a Memorial Volume for Jeremy Black from Students, Colleagues and Friends*, edited by Heather D. Baker, Eleanor Robson, and Gábor Zólyomi.

The efforts of Peter Davies and the BISI Appeal Committee have been significant in raising generous corporate and individual donations. We are also very pleased to announce that Mr Mowafaq H. Mahmood, head of Arab Banking Corporation in Baghdad, has agreed to act as advisor to the Appeal Committee. Peter Davies has known him since 1982, when he worked for the Central Bank of Iraq. Let us hope that his association with BISI also lasts for

a considerable time. G4S Risk Management sponsored the BISI Appeal talk by Patrick Cockburn last May and included a specific donation to fund a BISI Scholar. In consequence G4S is sponsoring the visit of our current BISI Scholar, Mr Munir Essa Al Khazraji (see details below). In addition under the auspices of our Appeal Committee member, Mr Bashir Siman, we have received a second generous donation from HE Sheikh Hamed Ahmed Al Hamed of Abu Dhabi, who sponsored the stimulating BISI Appeal talk by Professor Jim Al-Khalili OBE on "Science and Rationalism in 9th Century Baghdad" at the British Academy in September. Sponsorship of these talks enables us to raise funds to bring our scholars to the UK as each visit costs between £5000 and £8000.

Our next Appeal event held in conjunction with the British Museum's Department of the Middle East will take place on 4 February 2010 at the British Museum with Dr Saad Eskander, Director of the Iraq National Library and Archive, '*INLA at a time of National Crisis: Difficult Choices and Unanticipated Challenges*'. Dr Eskander will also take part in the fifth Birkbeck College & British Institute for the Study of Iraq Mesopotamian Archaeology Study Day on Saturday 6 February 2010 '*Seven Years On: The Iraq National Museum, Iraq National Library and Archive & Cultural Heritage in Iraq*', organised and chaired by Dr Mariana Giovino, Collège de France. His participation at these events is funded by BISI through its Appeal and Development committees. These committees also jointly provided grants to support the printing of the paperback version of Peter Stone and Joanne Farchakh Bajjalý's *The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq*, which was published in June by Boydell and Brewer, when a special book launch was held at the Society of Antiquaries under the auspices of UNESCO UK (see NL 23 p. 28). All our lectures and events are listed on the BISI website and we also list non-BISI events, that may be of interest to our members, including a special outreach event at the University of Glasgow in March 2010 with Dr Fran Reynolds on '*Mesopotamia: Exploring Ancient Iraq*'.

In our last newsletter we reported on the visits of Saba Al-Omari from Mosul at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and the British Museum. She is continuing to stay in touch with BISI and is working on a project to develop educational materials at the Mosul Cultural Museum. Ms Al-Omari and Mr Mustafa Al Hussein, who spent time at L-P : Archaeology under the guidance of Chaz Morse, both returned to Iraq in May and their reports on the BISI visits are on pp. 15-19. Ms Layla Salih Mahmood of the Mosul Museum arrived in June to participate in the British Museum's International Curatorial Programme. She also had the opportunity to work with Dr Eleanor Wilkinson on the Digital Nineveh Archive (DNA) at the end of her UK stay and her report on her experiences is on pp. 19-20. Layla was able to meet Dr Wilkinson and Professor Tony Wilkinson at the start of her UK visit at the BISI Bonham Carter lecture which they gave on 'Archaeology in Iraq: Preservation, Visualisation and Access'. (For further details on the 'DNA' see our newsletter no. 21.)

In November Dr Curtis of the British Museum invited Mr Muzahim Mahmood Al Hussein, the Director of Antiquities in Mosul, for a two-week visit to the UK. BISI was able to arrange a visit to colleagues in Cambridge and to meet Dr Lucilla Burn of the Fitzwilliam Museum. He was particularly thrilled to see the splendid relief of the king pouring a libation with the royal inscription from the Palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud. In addition, Mr

Muzahim attended the informal book launch at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL of the *Ivories from Nimrud VI: Ivories from the North West Palace (1845-1992)*. This was very opportune given that he was the excavator of the Queens' tombs and had provided some of the material for the publication. While he was here he gave a short talk in the Department of the Middle East at the British Museum on the discovery and excavations of a tomb, discovered by the locals of the village of Khaznah, 15 km. east of Nineveh, while they were digging a new grave in the cemetery in 2004.

As mentioned above, Mr Munir Essa Al Khazraji, Engineer, is here with a full programme, organised by Mr Nick Umney, Director of Collection Services at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and Laura Dix to work on the Iraq Museum's inventory project. In addition to spending time at the V & A he will be visiting the British Museum, the National Maritime Museum and the Imperial War Museum. Other visits are being arranged and he is also profiting from one-on-one English language tuition with Mrs Moyra Gardner, our past Appeal volunteer and EFL teacher.

We thank all those who make these programmes possible – without such generosity and collaboration it would not possible to set these visits up. All these visitors travel via Amman to obtain their UK visas and they stay at the Council for British Research in the Levant. BISI wish again to thank Professor Bill Finlayson and Mrs Nadja Qaisi, CBRL Administrator, for making this all possible – it certainly eases the logistical hurdles of the visa process. We also wish to thank the visa section in Amman for the support we have received in bringing our visitors.

Members can read the reports of Jeffery and Jocelyn Orchard on their work in Oman on the 'Hajar Project' in the Wadi Bahla, Oman (see pp. 6-9) and Dr John MacGinnis on his participation in the 2009 season of fieldwork at Tell Masaikh, (pp 9-10). Development Grant reports include: Dr Erica Hunter on the Christianity in Iraq Study Day (pp. 10-11); Yasmin Fedda of REEL Iraq, also partially sponsored by the Appeal and Fund for Iraq (pp. 12-13) and Fran Hazelton on the 'Discover Mesopotamia through Storytelling' (pp 13-14).

BISI welcomes members from all over the world and it is rewarding that almost 40 new individual members have joined in 2009, in addition to a number of new institutional subscribers to the Journal *Iraq*. In order to encourage a wider participation, we have just instigated a world-wide student membership without a journal to reflect our expanding remit. We continue to welcome the input of all our members and we hope you will consider using the BISI newsletter and our website to provide news on research on Iraq.

BISI was a signatory with a number of cultural heritage organisations to a letter conveyed by the UK National Commission for UNESCO to Sir John Chilcot, chair of the Committee of Inquiry into Iraq, to ensure that the problems faced by British forces in safeguarding the cultural heritage in Iraq will be part of the investigation. Things remain uncertain in Iraq and we feel great sadness at the continuing casualties and the double bombings at the end of October aimed at government buildings which claimed many innocent lives.

We look forward to a safe and secure future for Iraq and to the day when the flow of scholars will be in both directions. In the meantime we will continue to welcome many visitors from Iraq to the UK, including Iraqi colleagues sponsored by BISI to the 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East in London next April (www.7icaane.org). Many of our members will be playing an active role at the congress, as well.

Prior to the Congress, we hope to see a number of you at our forthcoming AGM and Dr Karen Radner's talk '*The Neo-Assyrian imperial project: mechanisms of coherence*' in December. (There will be an important presentation at the AGM – we urge you to attend.). Don't forget our special events with Dr Eskander next 4 and 6 February; and our 11 March BISI Lecture with Dr Priya Satia of Stanford University - '*The Defense of Inhumanity: Air Control and the British Idea of Arabia*'. She will also be taking part in the British Academy's sponsored conference '*Rethinking the Middle East? Values, Interests, and Security Concerns in Western Policies toward Iraq and the Wider Region, 1918-2010*' (17-19 March 2010). BISI is sponsoring the attendance of three Iraqi scholars to that conference. As you can see from our active programme we are involved in a range of activities and research in keeping with our widening remit and interests.

Roger Matthews and Joan Porter MacIver

BISI GRANT REPORTS

THE HAJAR PROJECT - THE ANCIENT *AFLĀJ* RESEARCH PROGRAMME IN THE WADI BAHLA, OMAN

The 2009 season of the Hajar Project in the Wadi Bahla, Oman, took place from 1 February to 31 March under the direction of Jeffery and Jocelyn Orchard. Our aims in investigating the earliest oasis settlements in the Hajar region and their "Iron Age" and Islamic successors are: (1) to understand their culture and environment; and (2) to confirm the continuity of the oasis phenomenon – with its reliance on *falaj* technology – from its first appearance in the Hajar region to the present day.

In 2009 we concentrated on three programmes:

- The architectural planning and excavation of the monumental and lesser buildings of the earlier (late 4th – late 3rd millennium BC) and later (mid-3rd – early 2nd millennium BC) Hajar Oasis Towns at the site of Bisya;
- The continued excavation of a *beehive* tomb at the manganese producing site of al-Heshah and of an Umm an-Nar tomb at Bisya;
- The ancient *aflāj* programme described below.

The Ancient Aflāj Programme

Aflāj (sing. *falaj*) are sub-surface to surface irrigation channels which convey groundwater by means of gravity from a mother-well (*umm*) to the settlements and date plantations they serve. Having long championed the thesis that the Hajar Oasis Towns must have been watered by *aflāj*, in 2002 we conducted a review of the Expedition's earlier geophysical surveys within the Hajar Oasis Town at our al-Ghubrat Bahla Site and identified several

strong linear anomalies as the remains of ancient *falaj* channels. Our excavation in 2004 of a ¹⁴C dated 5000 year old *falaj* (*Falaj A*) proved that the earliest oasis towns were indeed irrigated by this technology and this, in turn, has led (in 2005, 2007 and 2008) to the further discovery of equally ancient, and even older, *aflāj* at both al-Ghubrat Bahla and Bisya.

In 2009, a generous and most welcome grant from the British Institute for the Study of Iraq enabled the *aflāj* programme in which our aim was to define and plan the irrigation network of each ancient oasis town. Geophysical survey had served us well up to now but, with much of the soil – particularly at Bisya – lacking magnetic contrast, and faced with having to resolve a number of problems that would be better dealt with by means of excavation, it was our intention to continue tracing the channels by hand in order to determine the major arteries of each *falaj* system and then, in subsequent seasons, to follow this by employing Ground Penetrating Radar to trace each *falaj* network downstream to the date plantations it would have served and each major artery upstream to its source.

The 2009 *falaj* team was splendidly led by Brian Greaves assisted by Katie Keefe, Matthew Lees and Juha-Matti Vuorinen, while the task of planning the channels for addition to the Expedition's site maps was undertaken by architectural planners/surveyors Marc Sidebottom and Clare Goff.

Al-Ghubat Bahla Site

In 2009 we continued to trace *Falaj A* for 156 m upstream from Sounding 10 (excavated in 2005), first, with much difficulty, tracking it across a broad strip of earth and rubble disturbance covering a deep trench dug during the renovation of a modern, still active, *falaj*, and then across the Wadi Dihni (a tributary of the Wadi Bahla) to its northern bank. The fact that on both banks of the Wadi Dihni *Falaj A* is already buried up to 1.0 m beneath the present ground surface, while in the wadi bed it is surprisingly shallow and close to the surface, indicates that the wadi postdates the *Falaj* and, in cutting down to it, has removed its upper fill. On the wadi's northern bank, the fact that *Falaj A* is buried 1.0 m beneath the present ground and is clearly trending away from the Wadi Bahla indicates that, like more recent *aflāj*, it is heading towards a ground-water source situated to the north-east. In our 2010 season, we shall employ Ground Penetrating Radar to follow it to its source.

In 2007, the Expedition had conducted a series of geophysical trials downstream of the 2005 excavations and, after a sequence of negative results, had finally located *Falaj A* some 480 m to the south in an area of circular structures, with a strong linear anomaly (*Falaj B*) approaching from the northwest. To confirm the geophysical findings and determine the meeting point of the two *aflāj*, dowsing, supported by test trenching, was employed to trace *Falaj A* southwards. A small sounding dug at the junction of the two *aflāj* revealed that *Falaj A* was dug into *Falaj B* and in 2009 this important intersection was fully excavated. A thin wall of indurated silt, which separates the two *aflāj* just before they meet, implies that the diggers of *Falaj A* had had no previous knowledge of the already silted-up *Falaj B* and suggests that *Falaj B* must be considerably older in date.

Bisya Area Site

At Bisya, in the 3rd millennium BC housing area at the eastern base of Qarn Qarhat Lahwid, we traced *Falaj I* upstream from our first exploratory 2008 sounding (F1.2) for some 90 m until it disappeared into a tunnel under the remnants of a house platform. We then traced it

downstream from Sounding F1.2 for some 70 m and found that it had a feeder branch (*Falaj 2*) with a feeder of its own (*Falaj 3*). We traced *Falaj 2* upstream for some 40 m until it, too, disappeared beneath the remains of a house platform. In our 2010 season we shall employ a combination of excavation and Ground Penetrating Radar, (1) to continue tracing the *aflāj* and (2) to discover what happens to them underneath the house platforms.

Results

All the results obtained during our 2009 season throw light on the hydrology and technology of the *aflāj* and help to provide an insight into the land usage of the ancient agricultural settlements.

1. The discovery and ongoing investigation of the ancient *falaj* systems has opened the way to exploring the internal landscape of the *Hajar Oasis Towns* and this is already apparent in the fact that, at al-Ghubrat Bahla, *Falaj A* is linking two groups of buildings situated some 500 m apart, while, at Bisya, *Falaj 1* is trending away from Qarn Qarhat Lahwid (crowned by the eastern demarcating monument of the *Hajar Oasis Town*) towards Jabal Suleman ‘Ali (b) (the southern demarcating monument of the *Hajar Oasis Town*) which is situated some 1.30 km to the south. At both sites a network with feeder channels is beginning to emerge and, as we continue to trace the *aflāj* across the landscape, our next step must be to find the distribution channels and determine the area of crops each *falaj* system would have irrigated.
2. Excavation in 2005 and 2007 had revealed *Falaj A* to be part open sky channel spanned by occasional bridges and part tunnel, dug into the indurated silt layer that underlies the surface of the al-Ghubrat Bahla site. Although in 2009 we have concentrated on tracing the *aflāj* rather than on excavating them, occasional soundings have revealed that tunnels, bridges and strengthening braces are all standard features in *falaj* construction and that, for the most part, the channels are 2.70 – 3.0 m deep (no doubt in order to limit evaporation) and never more than 40 – 60 cm wide (in order to confine the water laterally and prevent salinity). Employing Ground Penetrating Radar to trace the channels will, we hope, provide continuous profiles to enable us to measure their hydraulic gradient and flow velocity.
3. A *falaj* would have played a key role in the community, including providing water for a variety of uses, influencing laws affecting both land and society, and inspiring the measurement of time by means of the sun and stars. Several of the features previously excavated in *Falaj A* hint at this role and suggest that there we are in the vicinity of the *shari‘a*; that is, the point at which the water of a *falaj* is first used by its community. At the Bisya site, our observation that the *aflāj* travel beneath some house platforms indicates a form of water extraction that is well-known within the currently inhabited walled town of Bahla, where private access to the *falaj* is available to mosques and certain houses. Finally, whether the pits – one circular – which have been found beside the channels at both sites, play any part in the social role of the *aflāj* is something that must be investigated in our 2010 season.

Jeffery and Jocelyn Orchard
Directors

TELL MASAIKH FIELD SEASON 2009

Thanks to the generous support of the BISI and of an anonymous donor I was able to take part in the 2009 season of fieldwork at Tell Masaikh. The site lies on the Euphrates in south-eastern Syria approximately 60 km south of Der ez-Zor and has been excavated under the direction of Prof. Maria-Grazia Masetti-Rouault since 1997. Two years ago Prof. Masetti-Rouault gave a talk on this work to the BISI, following which she invited me to come and work at the site. This was a welcome opportunity. Tell Masaikh can now be securely identified as Kar-Ashurnasirpal. The identification, while in any case virtually certain due to the size, location and date of the remains, is now assured by the occurrence of the name on a miniature votive stele found at the site. Kar-Ashurnasirpal was founded by Ashurnasirpal as a bulwark on the southwest corner of his empire, its specific location chosen to command the crossing of the Euphrates at that point. The occupation at Tell Masaikh appears to have continued up to the end of the Assyrian empire, at which point the site was abandoned with only sporadic Roman and later Islamic occupation; it is of interest however to note that there is evidence for an Old Babylonian presence prior to this and, dramatically, Halaf period layers underneath those. All of these factors—a major new colonial foundation of Ashurnasirpal on the limit of the empire, built on a site of previous antiquity, occupied till the end of the empire and then abandoned—exactly coincide with the parameters of Ziyaret Tepe (Tushan) to the extent that the two feel like sister sites. As I have been engaged in the excavations at Ziyaret Tepe since their inception in 2000 the chance to work at Tell Masaikh and compare these sites first hand was a great opportunity. As it turned out I was asked to direct excavations in the lower town (nothing new there!). Given free choice with regard to the sitting of the trenches, I chose an area which had a hard and even surface (in contrast to the otherwise puffy and undulating surface of the lower town) and which was also positioned in such a way as to allow investigation of some linear features appearing on the surface nearby as well as to allow the execution of a sounding, in the form of a miniature step trench, to link the stratigraphy with an adjacent part of the site which had been hollowed out by earth moving machinery (perhaps in the 1940's). In the event all three aims were achieved and all three operations yielded evidence for high status housing as indicated by the thickness of the walls (often two and a half bricks thick), the very solid nature of the pavements laid down as sub-floor packing and the presence of a well equipped storeroom crammed with ceramic vessels found smashed in situ. The linear features turned out to be accurate indicators of the presence of underlying walls, the whole complex subsequently very clearly recorded by kite-borne photography (we had also mapped the markings by total station).

The other work on the site, directed by Prof. Masetti-Rouault herself and by Sabrina Salmon, was concentrated in the palace area with the aim of elucidating the phases of the palace, the relationship of the throne room area to the approach from the Euphrates and the configuration of the perimeter walls. The most important find in these operations was the uncovering of a collection of approximately 10 tablets plus fragments in a layer of fill between two phases. In traditional manner, this find occurred at the very end of the season, in the last hours of excavation. The tablets are all slightly larger than a match box in size and administrative in nature. Their condition varies from quite worn to clearly legible.

In summary the 2009 season at Tell Masaikh proved to be productive and informative. The work in the palace was very successful while the understanding of the lower town is beginning to take shape. For me it has been a fantastic experience working on another one of Ashurnasirpal's imperial foundations and I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the BISI and to the anonymous donor who made my participation in this fieldwork possible.

John MacGinnis

CHRISTIANITY IN IRAQ SEMINAR DAY VI

The Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London was the venue for the Christianity in Iraq VI Seminar Day held on Saturday 25th April 2009. The role of Christian education in Iraq was explored in both its historical (Late Antique – Abbasid) and modern contexts. The day was held under the aegis of the Centre for Eastern and Orthodox Christianity, Dept. for the Study of Religions, SOAS where the organiser is Lecturer in Eastern Christianity.

Rev. William Taylor, Chairman of the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association opened the morning session by outlining the society's involvement with Eastern Christian churches represented in Iraq and its sponsorship of a post-graduate student (Mr. Joshua Kassanis) in the Dept. for the Study of Religions who is specifically investigating the impact of Christian Iraqi refugees in Syria. Dr. Frances Reynolds representing The British Institute for the Study of Iraq addressed its interests in Iraq, which span both the historic and modern, as well as drawing attention to the programme of bringing Iraqi scholars to England for training and the current fund-raising campaign. Two scholars, Mr. Mustafa Mehdi Hussein and Miss Saba Al-Omari attended the day.

Prof. Adam Becker (New York University), Christian institutions of learning in Late Antique and Early Islamic Iraq focused on the differences between the classical and Christian institutions of learning. The rivalry between the institutions of Ctesiphon and Nisibis, as depicted in the Chronicle of Seert, which was written in Arabic in the 10th century, was the subject of the talk by Dr. Philip Wood (Oxford and SOAS). Moving to southern Mesopotamia, Dr. Isabel Toral-Niedhoff (Arabistik Seminar, Freie Universitat, Berlin) discussed Religious and secular education in pre-Islamic al-Hira. Multiculturalism in Late Antique Iraq. The final paper by Dr. Dan King (Cardiff University, Wales), 'Without Aristotle there is no understanding of the Scriptures'. The Nature and Purpose of Higher Education in Syriac in Late Antiquity probed the impact of Aristotelian philosophy upon Christian exegesis. Dr. Erica C.D. Hunter chaired the morning sessions.

The afternoon session, chaired by Prof. Adam Becker, investigated aspects of education in Iraq during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. All papers and contributions came from various denominations within the Iraqi community. Dr. Joe Seferta, A Survey of Education in Iraq: from 1970 to the Present: Challenge and Change provided an excellent coverage of the educational system in Iraq following the Ba'athist nationalizing of schools in 1974. Robin Bet Shmuel, The Role of Iraqi Assyrian Schools in Promoting the National Identity

highlighted the Assyrian contribution. Dr. Suha Rassam showed a video of the activities of Iraq Christians in Need, a charity whose programmes include computer lessons and English instruction. Mr. Saad Tokalty, read a paper on behalf of Father Habib al-Naufali, detailing the Chaldaean presence in England. Personal reminiscences came from Miss Reem Zako who recalled her High School days in Mosul; her experiences of religious tolerance between Christian and Muslim students being shared by several other members of the audience. Miss Saba Al-Omari, sponsored by BISI, spoke about the situation in Mosul where the traditional bonds between two great religious traditions have suffered under the present erosion of stability and security in Iraq. The situation of the Mandaeans was described by Dr. Laila Al-Roomi, where the current numbers in Iraq have plummeted to an estimated 3,000 with targeted killings still taking place.

The interest generated by the Seminar Day, which was attended by fifty people, including many Iraqis –Christian, Mandaean and Moslem– was most gratifying. A new book, by Erica C.D. Hunter (editor), *The Christian Heritage of Iraq: collected papers from the Christianity in Iraq I-V Seminar Days* (Gorgias Press: Piscataway, N.J., 2009) was launched on the day and can be purchased.

The grants by The British School of Archaeology in Iraq and The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association have helped considerably to defray the considerable costs involved in organizing this day and made its success possible. The annual Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day is now well-established and the 2010 event, the seventh in the series, is already being planned for April 24th.

Erica C.D. Hunter
Lecturer in Eastern Christianity
Department for the Study of Religion, SOAS

REEL IRAQ

Reel Iraq was held in Edinburgh in May and July 2009. This festival of Iraqi cinema and culture spanned many events and activities from film, music and literature events to several exhibitions, talks, master classes and a symposium. This festival was organized by Reel Festivals, a group of people who believe that working in small-scale, manageable projects we can have larger impact and we work through specialized festivals, dealing with specific areas in conflict in an in-depth manner and using as many different arts and educational forms as possible.



A reading by Hussian Mozany
Photo by Ryan Van Winkle

This year we wanted to organise a festival about Iraq, to spread awareness behind the headlines and to encourage dialogue between the people of Scotland and people of Iraq and within these communities in Scotland. All events, except the cinema screenings and the music concert, were held for free enabling a wide range of audiences to attend and learn about the topics brought out by the festival.

The film programme was diverse, showcasing documentaries and fiction films which were held at the Filmhouse cinema in Edinburgh and several of the film's directors attended for lively Q and A sessions after the screenings.

Farida and the Iraqi Maqam Ensemble performed their Scottish debut which was supported by Edinburgh local Iraqi musician Mohammad Nafea and his Babylon Arabic Band.

'Creativity vs Destruction' was an exhibition that explored the experiences of five internationally respected Iraqi artists from the 1970s up to the present day. The focal point of the exhibition was work from Rashad Selim, Waafa Bilal, Sama Alshaibi, Maysaloun Faraj and Henaa Mal-Allah. There was also several photography exhibitions held, of work by Andrea Bruce and Jamal Penjweney. The Edinburgh central library hosted a photo exhibition of a youth project held by the UNHCR with young Iraq refugees in Syria.

Alongside showcasing current music and film relating to Iraq we also wanted to have a series of lectures exploring various topics from Iraq's rich history. A diverse ranging series of talks were held spanning topics revolving around Iraqi heritage and archaeology. The current situation of Iraqi heritage was presented by Lamia al Gailani Werr. Venetia Porter and Irving Finkel from the British Museum presented talks on the Abbasids ceramics and Babylonian song and dance respectively. Tony Wilkinson spoke about early Iraqi civilisation followed by Noorah al Gailani on the shrines of three Baghdadi sufi mystics. (Editor's Note – all presenters noted on the heritage and archaeology talks are BISI members.)

BISI funding supported our writers and speakers events. The grant was used for transport costs for the writers and speakers to attend and present their works at the festival. Writers Sinan Antoon and Hussain Al Mozany (photo above), arrived in Edinburgh for a series of well-received events that spanned the gamut from academic to celebratory. Sinan and Hussain both participated in Edinburgh University's symposium titled: *Iraq, Resistance, Memory: A Symposium of Cultural and Academic Exchange*. This was followed by an event at a local Edinburgh Library pre-dominantly catering to non-native English speakers. This reading was intimate and well-attended by a broad spectrum of Edinburgh locals. Sinan and Hussain also read at The Golden Hour --- a literary cabaret in Edinburgh's City Centre that caters to a less-literary but no less attentive crowd. There were over 80 audience members. These two writers also participated in a translation workshop meeting two Scottish poets --- Robert Alan Jamieson and Andrew Philip. The workshop was both an artistic and networking success culminating in new translations of Sinan and Hussain's work into broad Scots and Shetlandic. Some of these translations will appear in the special Iraqi issue of The Edinburgh Review. The Iraqi issue of The Edinburgh Review is a unique Reel Iraq partnership and many of the festival's components and participants will be featured in the well-respected literary magazine.

BISI funding enabled these great events and sessions to take place and Reel Festivals is very grateful for the support that BISI gave Reel Iraq this year.

Yasmin Fedda, Ryan Van Winkle and Dan Gorman
www.reelfestivals.org

DISCOVER MESOPOTAMIA THROUGH STORYTELLING: A NEW THREE-YEAR PROJECT IS LAUNCHED

On 2 May 2009 the first of thirty ZIPANG Days Out took place at the start of a new 3-year *Discover Mesopotamia through Storytelling* project organised by the Enheduanna Society, the educational charity founded in 2002, with the late Dr Jeremy Black as its founding patron, to popularise the literature of ancient Iraq through the art of oral storytelling.

ZIPANG Days Out are free for participants and everyone is welcome. They are designed to provide educational entertainment for all levels of knowledge and to facilitate creative interaction between Iraqi and non-Iraqi scholars, storytellers and enthusiasts who share an interest in Mesopotamian mythology. Participants to date have ranged from an excited 8-year-old brought by his family to explore their Babylonian cultural heritage to a professional Sumerologist bravely joining in a group retelling of a Mesopotamian story with no piece of paper or clay tablet in sight.

Anyone wishing to participate in a ZIPANG Day Out can come to the British Museum on the first Saturday of any month (except January and August) at any time between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm to collect a Heritage Trail from the ZIPANG team on the seats near the Information Desk in the Great Court. Participants follow this Heritage Trail at their own pace to find clues to the story of the day in the Mesopotamia collections. Each ZIPANG Day Out focuses on a different Mesopotamian story.

At 3 pm a storytelling workshop begins in the Poetry Café, 22 Betterton Street, Covent Garden. With plenty of active involvement by participants, the story world is imaginatively recreated using props and improvised scenery to set locations as the narrative sequence is outlined. The story is told by one of the experienced ZIPANG storytellers while participants illustrate scenes with gestures and sound effects. Participants then retell the story to each other in groups. The workshop concludes with music from an Iraqi musician.

The *Discover Mesopotamia through Storytelling* project is funded by grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Unity Theatre Trust (UTT) and the British Institute for the Study of Iraq (BISI). “This project,” says Sue Bowers, head of HLF London, “will help Iraqis living in London to engage more fully with the history of their homeland through the collections held at the British Museum and by reviving the ancient storytelling and cuneiform writing traditions. Non-Iraqis will also gain a fascinating insight into Mesopotamia as the birthplace of writing, mathematics and astronomy”.

The aspect of the project specifically sponsored by BISI is a ZIPANG Online Art Gallery. This will exhibit original art-work by artists inspired by the art and mythology of ancient Mesopotamia. The Enheduanna Society is currently inviting submissions for the ZIPANG Online Art Gallery. Details can be found at www.zipang.org.uk/artgallery.htm. The first exhibition is scheduled to go live early in 2010.

Fran Hazelton
ZIPANG Mesopotamian Storyteller
Chairperson, the Enheduanna Society



The Enheduanna Society, in association with the British Institute for the Study of Iraq (BISI), is creating an Online Art Gallery on the Zipang website to exhibit work inspired by Mesopotamian art and mythology.

Submissions are invited from artists wishing to participate in this exciting opportunity to celebrate the influence of ancient Mesopotamia on contemporary artworks. The selection committee will consider two-dimensional static artwork in any medium. There is no charge for making a submission, and artists whose work is selected will be offered a link from the ZIPANG website to their own site.

Full details of how to make submissions can be found on at:
www.zipang.org.uk/artgallery.htm

Zipang requests that you pass on this information to any artists you know who have artwork they might like to submit.

BISI VISITING IRAQI SCHOLARS' REPORTS

AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY TO EXPLORE THE WORLD

I just could not believe myself, (I am now on the Royal Jordanian aboard – flight number 111, 31-March-2009, on my way to fulfil one of my dreams, which is to visit England, and especially the British Museum.)

I swam in the river of the past, all my memories since the first exciting minute of receiving the invitation from the BISI for two-months internship. The first month in the Fitzwilliam Museum, the second at the British Museum to observe, shadow and be involved in the work of the educational departments of both museums, so that I will be qualified to open an educational department in the Cultural Museum of Mosul. With the current circumstances in Iraq and the lack of security, this project will only allow us to open the Museum for school and university students but we hope that we will be able to offer something useful and serve Iraq through the educational practices of the main museum of Nineveh province, the second largest province in Iraq. The Cultural Museum of Mosul could be a centre to spread the antiquities and heritage education to the whole society and inform new generations of the importance of their real, most precious and immortal resources of Mesopotamia which is more important than the oil.



Dr Timothy Potts, Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum with Saba Al Omari, and Mrs Julia Tozer Head of Education at a welcoming 'tea party'. Photo: Joan Porter MacIver

I was met at the airport by Mrs. Joan Porter MacIver and Dr. Lamia Al-Gailani Werr and spent a night in Joan's home. In Joan's house everything is amazing and marvellous, the beautiful design in which you can see the water going under the house, the furniture which reflects their high taste, and above all the high level of humanitarian relationship among the family members that makes you feel the warmth of the loving family. Cambridge, 1st of April 2009, what can I say about Cambridge!? Once upon a time when the famous Agatha Christie was accompanying her husband Max Mallowan on one of his excavation expeditions in one of the most ancient cities of the world, she said:" I fell in love with Ur". Now I will use the same expression and say:" I FELL IN LOVE WITH CAMBRIDGE." It has a special glamour that captures the heart gradually until reaching the extreme degree of passion finding it very difficult to leave. In Cambridge you can smell the scent of education and science everywhere, as if you are in a very large school or university back to the middle ages in the shape of its buildings and to the entire ages in its significance, I adored its streets, its thirty one colleges, the river Cam, the punting and above all the Fitzwilliam Museum. The first thing that makes your mouth open is its magnificent entrance. I liked the unique collections that they have especially the paintings, the seals and the mounting of the show cases. I really liked the department that I worked in and the welcome tea party, which was not only an elevated way of welcome but also a good way for the new comer to know the staff and the museums director. The tea party enabled me to get to know the good personality of the museum's director Dr. Timothy Potts and the other staff members as well. (See Photo p.15.)

Mrs. Julia Tozer prepared a schedule for me allowing me to work with most of the departments. The benefits were greatest in the educational department, and the schedule was so positive. Every day I had a new experience concerning the education sphere. I worked with students from different school levels kindergarten, Primary, Secondary and High schools in addition to the students of special needs. Every member of the staff had a special way in transmitting ideas to the students. Sometimes using clarification tools, like the ' pack bag ' or a clipboard to draw sketches as a first step of a drawing lesson before going to the studio to take lessons in the colouring technique.

The support of the educational department together with the encouragement of Margaret Greeves allowed me to take an advanced step forwards and give the Bite Size presentation (30 minutes) about the Cultural Museum of Mosul and my project in Fitzwilliam Museum. That was at the end of my internship in that unique place. I said farewell to Cambridge, to the educational staff and my beautiful room in the house of the wonderful lady Professor Dr Erica Hunter and her unique husband Mr. John. I want to highlight my experience in her lovely home, what this lady did for me is beyond expression. She was the sister, the teacher and the advisor; she taught me how to accept the reality and cope with the difficulties in my life because I was far from my family and country. She taught me how to be humble and accept any simple work if this will open the locked doors of the future. Every day when we sat for dinner, she and Mr. John used to tell me, a new story about the history of England or the traditions of Australia or negotiating a subject related to the educational aspect, I will never forget her generosity, the nice places that she took me to, the punting on the river Cam and her prayer everyday for Iraq and its people.

I then moved to London with the help of one of my three supporters, Dr Harriet Crawford, to find another world far different from Cambridge, a very large city with many beautiful buildings, monuments, squares, gardens, palaces, galleries, ancient places. I recognized that I had so many places that I could visit not only the famous features of London like Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, the Tower of London, the Tower Bridge, the Big Ben, the National Gallery, Trafalgar square, London Eye,....etc, I decided to spend the bank holiday in exploring my residential area, which was Finsbury Park.

I arrived at the British Museum, the second place of my internship. I am unable to express my feeling when I took the first step inside the British Museum, I could not believe my eyes to be in front of my dream place, and everything was amazing specially the Great Court. My first experience was in the Security department where I got very important information and ideas about security, that I can pass on to my superiors and apply them in Mosul Museum. They gave me a badge that made me part of the BM staff for a one month period and I was very proud of that.

The Learning and Audience dept. was my second step, my schedule for the first week was to work with the Adults Programme. It was very beneficial for me and I developed new ideas about how to teach adults and made so many notes. What was very interesting for me was the 'Spot light' session (a little bit shorter than the Bite Size), the department activities like the Garden and Cosmos. It was thanks to the efforts of Hilary Williams (Art History Education Officer) that I became aware of all the details about the mentioned activities. Through this week I concluded that the volunteers are doing a great job in the museum galleries, I observed two of them, one in the Enlightenment gallery and the other in the Egyptian Gallery.

My second week was with the Community Partnership and I could write one hundred pages about my experience in this department, but I can say briefly that I found it very interesting and important to society. I found out about The Curatorial Project through a meeting with John Orna-Orenstein, and to my surprise discovered that two of my colleagues from Nineveh Inspectorate of Heritage and Antiquities, will be involved in it. Then I met with the very dynamic and active Laura Phillips (Community and Partnership Manager), she gave me my schedule, which was full of social activities, I observed the Textile Workshop with the collaboration of Coram Parents Centre. I loved its significance, which is to teach the migrant women a craft that will help them cope with the new society of England. I have to mention the dynamic role of Tasneem (Coram parents Centre), a lady originally from Bangladesh in organizing these activities.

I experienced the work at Coram Parents Centre, it is a unique humanitarian centre and the staff was very cooperative. They are doing a great job to help the families and especially the refugee women to learn English language and have some general knowledge about the different important aspects in the life like health care. In Iraq we are in sore need of such institutions and it is not difficult to take the first step. During this week I met with Dr John Curtis, he is very famous in the Archaeological offices of Iraq and the object of admiration of most of their staff for his achievements and concern for Iraq and its Antiquities and Heritage.

I had many other useful meetings: at the British Museum in Coins and Medals with Jennifer Adam And with Jonathan Taylor (Curator- Middle East) to learn about king Assurbanipal library project; The Mella Art Project; The Wealth of Africa Project discussion with Lilian Quamina Reddie (education officer). In the rest of my placement in the BM, I worked with

the Schools and Young Audiences Education programmes, it was very successful, my role developed from observation in to participation, so I became more confident as a true staff member. I managed to do all that because of the cooperative team, Katharine Hoar, Carolyn Hotti, Rosie Fuller, Rishard Woff, James Trapp, Chilly, Kate Kelland and above all Nicholas Badcott.

The practical sessions were very important steps to me because through them I will know how to deal with the different age students and how to transmit ideas to them in a very simple way. I was so interested in Excavation in Egyptian session, Art and Belief school session, The China program, Garden and Cosmos, Culture in Contact meetings and Italian Drawings discussion.

I was very happy to help in the Persian choreography show. It was in the Great Court and so amazing that the magic of the oriental musical instrument, the Kanon captured you together with the Persian beauty of the dancer (Sima Madani). I did the filming (the video). The Samsung centre came to the museum and I helped the children to practice and I also helped children with their drawing.

A strange feeling possessed me through the month that I spent in the British Museum as if I went on a journey all over the world; I visited Mesopotamia, the lovely neighboring country of Iraq, Persia through Shah Abbas exhibition, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Somalia, Indonesia, Italy, Greece, Mexico, South America in addition to the medieval England.

I left the British Museum with the tears swimming in my eyes and a smile shimmering in my mouth, the tears of farewell and the smile of the future buildup of friendship between the two countries Iraq and Britain.

After the long and dark night, there must be a bright day
We will meet here in the land of Assyria and we will pray
For our future and friendship, all that I loved to say
With love
Nineveh

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the BISI for giving me this big opportunity. Special thanks to my supporters, Mrs. Joan Porter MacIver, Dr. Lamia Al-Gailani Werr, Dr. Harriet Crawford, Dr. Erica Hunter, Mr. Quais Hussain Rasheed (Director of the SBAH) and Mr. Hikmat Basheer (Cultural Museum of Mosul Director).

I would like to thank Dr. Lamia Al-Gailani again for the dynamic and positive role that she played in the sphere of the Iraqi archaeology and her excessive Patriotism and her generosity with me. Many thanks for Fitzwilliam Museum and its staff and above all Dr. Timothy Potts. I am grateful to the Learning and Audience department of the British Museum especially to Ms. Susan Raikes and Mr. Nicholas Badcott. Thank you also to Dr. Eleanor Coghill (Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Student, University of Cambridge and BISI Council member) for your warmth friendship that made my life in Cambridge more beautiful.

Finally, I have to thank Mrs. Kate Carter (the lady that I stayed with in London, for all her help and generosity.

Saba Omari
The Cultural Museum of Mosul

REPORT OF MUSTAFA HUSSEIN

In the beginning I thank BISI and L-P : Archaeology and Chaz Morse for teaching me many cultures like UK, US, Near East, Korea Peninsula and South America that I did not know about or only a few things.



Mustafa Maroof Hussein, Joan Porter MacIver, BISI Administrator, Dr Harriet Crawford, Chair of the BISI Visiting Scholars Committee and Mr Chaz Morse of L-P Archaeology at its 10th birthday party in April.

The first thing that I did when I arrived UK I met Dr Lamia and she took me home and introduced me to the family that I lived with. I also met Qahtan al Hussein, Director of the Basra Museum, and he gave me information about London and the area I lived in. I met Chaz Morse my teacher and mentor and he began to teach me. First he took me to British Museum and showed me many cultures in different rooms like the culture of Egypt especially the mummies there and explained for me the culture of Britain and culture of America. I began to

observe in the large rooms that what they include especially UK Prehistory was amazing. I then visited the London Museum and I cared about the first room because it was included UK Prehistory. Later I began to study Historical ages about UK too then after about one month we traveled to Wales for the Erddig research project (Editor's note: the aim of the excavation was to assess the level of survival of a Norman motte and bailey with broader landscape survey mapping in various features in the landscape.) We did survey by using GPS and maps and we observed terrace and ridge and furrow and looked among the fields and chose many points in low land and high land and all these technique are new to me. After working for a week there we came back to London and then began to study many thing about prehistory periods about Iraq and Historical ages to modern days and after finished I began to study Prehistory about middle east, Europe, US, Korea and many other lands and Countries and eras like Paleolithic, Neolithic, Mesolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze age, Iron age and others. And I observed the conservation work on the Roman Wall in Chester.

Conclusion

I want to tell The British Institute for study of Iraq and L-P Archaeology that I feel so interested in the UK and I've learned many things here - survey techniques. I would like to thank Dr Lamia al Gailani, Dr Harriet Crawford and Joan Porter MacIver for all their help with a special thanks to Chaz Morse of L-P Archaeology. (www.lparchaeology.com/).

Mustafa Maroof Hussein

REPORT OF LAYLA SALIH MAHMOOD

I would like to take the opportunity to thank All the persons in the **BISI** who help me to visit UK (my life dream) and I thank with gratitude for Dr. Lamia al-Gailani, Mrs. Joan Porter MacIver and, Dr. Harriet Crawford and BISI for granting me this scholarship. **BISI** covered all the costs and everything from Iraq to London and return.

In the UK I undertook two programmes: the First one is **ICTP** (International Curatorial Training Programme) at the British Museum and the Middle East Department and Glasgow museums, I learned many things related to Museums including:

- Conservation of objects by different materials, age and size
- How we use new techniques to conserve objects with laser and freezing techniques
- How to display objects in museums and to protect them from insects
- Photography
- Hands on desk and volunteers' programme
- Adult, young and schools programmes
- Moving and packing objects for travel in the airports
- Exhibition designing
- Many lectures and sessions



Layla Salih Mahmood with colleagues at the Glasgow Museum and with Abdumecit Ariguzel, Graphic Artist, Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul who was also on the ITP photo provided by Claire Messenger

The second programme is *Digital Nineveh Archives project* with Dr. Eleanor Wilkinson and Professor Tony Wilkinson. I spent four days with them and had feedback on matters which related to this project, *BISI* bought to me the devices which I will need it in this work.

Finally, I want to indicate here very important issues about the archaeological and historical cities in Iraq, you know this cities are exposed daily to robbery and destruction, now can you kindly do a new training programme to train the Iraqi Archaeologists who have a good English language ability to manage the sites and protect their in the future.

Thank you so much *BISI* for everything. I hope to meet you again in the future and more cooperation between us.

*Layla M. Salih
Mosul museum, Iraq*

(Editor's Note: The reports of our visiting scholars have been lightly edited for some points of grammar and spelling. As Ms Saba al-Omari's is longer than most, we considered providing highlights of the report and putting the full text on line, but decided that it provides a very eloquent narrative of her time and we have included it in full with minor omissions.)

BOOKS TO MOSUL, IRAQ

We have received a kind donation from Mrs Shelagh Weir of books to be send to the Mosul Museum Library. Many of the books come from the library of the late John Baldry. In addition Dr Harriet Crawford and Rosalind Wade Haddon have recently donated journals and monographs that will also be sent to Mosul. This shipment is being facilitated by the BISI Administrator, who is arranging this via Suzanne E. Bott, PhD, Provincial Reconstruction Team - Ninewa/Mosul, Deputy Section Chief - Public Diplomacy, Cultural Heritage Advisor to whom BISI is very grateful.

BOOK DONATION FOR THE BISI LIBRARY

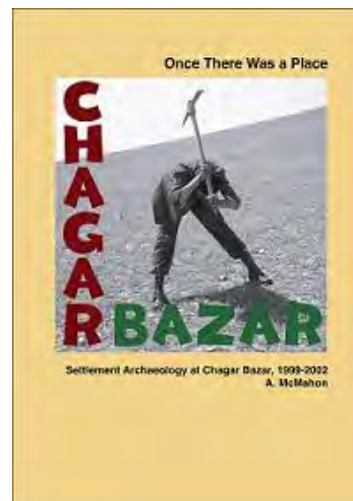
Healey, John F., *Aramaic Inscriptions and Documents of the Roman Period*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-19-925256-5 HB

BISI PUBLICATIONS

Ivories from Nimrud VI: Ivories from the North West Palace (1845-1992) by Georgina Herrmann, Stuart Laidlaw with Helena Coffey (September 2009). £75 Format: 444 pages; 148p prelims & text, 134 pp catalogue & appendices, 138 pp B/W plates & 24 p colour plates. Size 25 x 31 cm ISBN 978-0-903472-26-5 Price: £75

Once there was a place : Settlement Archaeology at Chagar Bazar, 1999-2002 by with **Augusta McMahon** with **Carlo Colantoni, Julia Frane** and **Arkadiusz Soltysiak** 428 pp 88 plates, sewn A4 ISBN 978-0-903472-27-2 Price £25

This volume presents the research of the British team within modern excavations at the northern Mesopotamian site of Chagar Bazar, resumed in 1999 after a 62-year hiatus since excavations of Max Mallowan. It incorporates settlement archaeology approaches and theoretical ideas of “place” in exploring the site and its internal and external landscapes. primary focus is the settlement during the early 2nd millennium BC (Old Babylonian Period, post-Samsi-Addu), final ancient occupation. The authors have taken a contextual approach, integrating aspects of the settlement’s internal variations, including both community and private architecture, together with burial practices and symbolic and functional material culture. While its political importance varied, Chagar Bazar’s persistence of occupation meant that it played a key role within the regional landscape as a meaningful landmark.



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NEW PRICE £25 for **Alastair Northedge’s** *The historical topography of Samarra (Samarra Studies I)* ISBN 978-0-903472-22-7 Price £25 (Previously £40)

BISI Publications are available from **OXBOW Books** <http://www.oxbowbooks.com/>

BISI Members receive 20% off BSAI/BISI publications. There are special discounted prices at OXBOW on some of the older titles.

DIGITAL ARCHIVE

We requested assistance in the last newsletter (NL 23 p. 32) to scan 2 boxes of slides with views of Iraq, taken between World War I and II. **Colin Maitland** has very kindly assisted us with this project by scanning all these slides. We plan to put these slides on our website in due course. Colin can provide professional help with scanning reflective and transparency material for digital output at resolutions suitable for publication and presentation. He can be contacted at oneroofpress@yahoo.co.uk. This project remains a work in progress and the BISI administrator would welcome any volunteers on the website on this archive and other projects.

BISI MEMBERS' NOTICES

Elizabeth Stone reported on the Open Access Digital Library: AMAR: Archive of Mesopotamian Archaeological Site Reports <<http://libmedia.cc.stonybrook.edu/amar/>>

The Archive of Mesopotamian Archaeological Reports (AMAR) collection is under development as part of the Iraq Cultural Heritage Program Grant, funded by International Relief and Development (IRD) in cooperation with the Cultural Affairs Office, US Embassy Baghdad, and the Cultural Heritage Center, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State. The project director, Elizabeth Stone, has directed archaeological excavations in Iraq, has been engaged in advanced training for Iraqi archaeologists and has attempted to document and stem the damage to Iraq's archaeological sites. Dr. Stone is collaborating with the University Libraries at Stony Brook University to make the AMAR collection available online. Before developing this online collection, she contributed more than one hundred digitized volumes to the ETANA website. The aim of the AMAR project is to digitize 500 archaeological site reports describing archaeological excavations both in Iraq and in the immediately surrounding areas (Turkey, Syria, Iran and the Gulf). This will include both out-of-copyright as well as in-copyright and in-print materials. This online collection is intended to provide basic sources of information to our colleagues in Iraq, and also other archaeologists working in the Middle East.

October 2010 is the projected completion date.

Nearly all the content in AMAR has been accessible for some time via the Oriental Institute Electronic Publications Initiative, and ETANA Core Texts. AMAR is nevertheless an important central place for Mesopotamian archaeological reports, and will be the repository for several hundred additional volumes within the next year.

Martin Worthington received the Jonas Greenfield Prize for Younger Semitists 2009 from the American Oriental Society, for his article in the 2007 *Iraq*.

Stephanie Dalley, Senior Research Fellow in Assyriology, Oriental Institute and Somerville College University of Oxford, has recently published her volume: *Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection* (Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology 9) CDL Press 2009.

Farouk Al-Rawi's next two volumes of his BISI-funded work on the Umma texts will appear, as *NATU III* and *NATU IV* in the *Nisaba* series. These publications are the result of an agreement between the British Museum's Department of the Middle East and the Universities of Messina and Rome.

Editor's Note: BISI would be pleased to include news of members' work and publications in future newsletters – please submit by mid-April and mid-October on an annual basis and we will endeavour to include all entries

BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ
GRANTS:
RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND ACADEMIC VISITORS

The Institute promotes, supports, and undertakes research and public education relating to Iraq and neighbouring countries, carrying out work not covered by other BASIS-sponsored institutions. Its coverage includes anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, languages, and related disciplines within the arts, humanities, and social sciences from the earliest times until the present. It has over 700 subscribers to its journal *Iraq* and members may also subscribe to the *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*. Membership with its benefits is open to all with special student rates. For more information about the Institute and its grants see: <http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/>

BISI RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE GRANTS

The Institute invites funding applications twice a year for grants in aid of research and for the organisation of academic conferences. Applications are welcomed to support research or conferences on Iraq and neighbouring countries not covered by other BASIS-sponsored institutions, in any field of the humanities or social sciences, concerned with any time period from prehistory to the present day. Awards will normally fall within a limit of £4000, though more substantial awards may be made.

In addition, the Institute particularly welcomes funding applications for **pilot projects preliminary to larger research projects** to support research on Iraq, in any field of the humanities or social sciences, however, projects related to the theme of *Exile and Return* are particularly welcome. Funding of up to £8000 is available, for **one** pilot project a year. The Institute will also offer assistance to the award-holder in drafting a full research proposal to submit jointly to other funding bodies.

Applicants **must** be residents of the UK or, very exceptionally, other individuals whose academic research closely coincides with that of a BISI sponsored project or excavation. (Please contact BISI in advance of preparing an application to determine if this would be applicable if you are not a UK based researcher.) Two academic references are required. All applications and references must be received by **31 October and 31 January annually**.

BISI DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Grants are available to support development events and projects, such as lectures, study days, and popular publications that relate to Iraq and neighbouring countries and to the areas of interest covered by BISI. A Development Grant application should normally be for an amount up to £500 but more substantial grants may be made. Applicants need to submit an application form and two references to the BISI Administrator. Applicants must be residents of the UK and preference is given to activities taking place in the UK, or in Iraq or a neighbouring country. The deadlines for applications and references are **15 October and 15 April annually**. In special circumstances BISI will consider urgent applications at other times.

BISI VISITING IRAQI FELLOWS & SCHOLARS GRANTS

BISI offers two or three grants each year to be held in the UK by visiting scholars from Iraq in the fields of archaeology, ancient languages, museum and heritage studies, and other disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. The academic focus must relate to the study of Iraq and priority is given to scholars at an early stage of their careers. Applications are due by **31 October** and **30 April annually**.

All grant requirements, conditions, and application forms, as well as membership forms, are available from: BISI Administrator, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, United Kingdom and the BISI website: <http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/> & bisi@britac.ac.uk

2009 & 2010 BISI LECTURES & FUTURE EVENTS

10 December 2009, 6 p.m. - BISI AGM and Lecture - **Dr Karen Radner**, 'The Neo-Assyrian imperial project: mechanisms of coherence' Venue: J.Z. Young Lecture Theatre, Anatomy Building, UCL Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT

4 February 2010, 6 p.m. - BISI Appeal Lecture by **Dr Saad Eskander**, Director of the Iraq National Library and Archives, on 'The looting and the destruction of Iraq's historical records - the use and the abuse of the records of the former regime by Iraqis and non-Iraqis' at the British Museum.

6 February - 'Seven Years On: The Iraq National Museum & Cultural Heritage in Iraq', BISI & Birkbeck Mesopotamian Archaeology 2010 Study Day Organised and chaired by Dr Mariana Giovino, Collège de France

11 March - BISI Lecture **Dr Priya Satia** of Stanford University - 'The Defense of Inhumanity: Air Control and the British Idea of Arabia.'

17 - 19 March - 'Rethinking the Middle East? Values, Interests, and Security Concerns in Western Policies toward Iraq and the Wider Region, 1918-2010' p.24

20 March - BISI and the Department of Adult and Continuing Education (DACE) of the University of Glasgow Day School: 'Mesopotamia: Exploring Ancient Iraq' Lectures by **Dr Frances Reynolds**, University of Oxford.

12 - 16 April - The 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (7ICAANE) London Website: www.7icaane.org

24 April - **Christianity in Iraq VII Seminar Day**

17 June - BISI Bonham Carter Forum and Lecture with **Dr Nadjie S. Al-Ali** (title tbc)

December 2010 (date tbc) BISI AGM and Lecture - **Dr Augusta McMahon** on the Excavations at Tell Brak

Please check the BISI website for updates and full details of events.

International Conference at the British Academy

Rethinking the Middle East? Values, Interests, and Security Concerns in Western Policies toward Iraq and the Wider Region, 1918-2010

British Academy, London 17-19 March 2010

Sponsored by British Academy, British Institute for the Study of Iraq, European Studies Research Institute and Salford University

Twice within the last one hundred years, Western powers have tried to significantly alter the configuration of the Middle Eastern political order. In analyzing the interactions of regional and outside powers, this comparative and interdisciplinary conference will bring together political practitioners and historians, political scientists, and international relations scholars. Keynote lectures will be delivered by Professor Charles Tripp (SOAS) and Erik Goldstein (Boston University, US).

Reflecting the overall conference theme, political scientists and historians will assess the foreign policies of important external powers towards Iraq and the wider regions as well as the constructions and narratives accompanying/justifying specific policies with one particular focus on EU-Middle East relations and US policies. In order to avoid a narrow Western-centred perspective, the conference will also examine the policies of influential domestic Iraqi political actors and other regional powers, whose international role has been affected by the political developments in Iraq.

Plenary sessions will feature not only prominent Iraqi commentators like former national security adviser, Dr Muaffaq al-Rubaie, and Dr Mouyad al-Windawi, formerly with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, but also internationally renowned academic observers like Professor Eric Davis (Rutgers University), Professor Isam al-Khafaji (Amsterdam), and Dr Reidar Visser (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs).

Those interested in attending are kindly advised to register for the conference by contacting Dr Lars Berger (Salford University), l.berger@salford.ac.uk.

BISI is funding the participation of three of the Iraqi scholars, who are involved in the conference. In addition, Dr Priya Satia of the University of Stanford, also a conference participant, has graciously arranged to come earlier to the UK to deliver the BISI 11 March 2010 lecture, '**The Defense of Inhumanity: Air Control and the British Idea of Arabia.**'

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