

**BRITISH SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY
IN IRAQ**

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**BRITISH SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN IRAQ
(GERTRUDE BELL MEMORIAL)**

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The next BSAI Newsletter will be published in May 2007 and brief contributions are welcomed on recent research, publications and events. All contributions should be sent to the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, United Kingdom or via e-mail to: bsai@britac.ac.uk or fax 44+(0)20 7969 5401 to arrive by April 15, 2007.

Joan Porter MacIver edits the BSAI Newsletter.

BSAI RESEARCH GRANTS

The School considers applications for individual research and travel grants twice a year, in spring and autumn, and all applications must be received by 15th April or 15th October in any given year. The School's academic coverage includes archaeology, history, anthropology, geography, language and other related domains from the earliest times until the present. Awards will normally fall within a limit of £1,000, though more substantial awards may be made in exceptional cases.

Grantees will be required to provide a written report of their work, and abstracts from grantee's reports will be published in future issues of the BSAI Newsletter (published May & November). Grantees must provide a statement of accounts with supporting documents/receipts, as soon as possible and in any case within six months of the work for which the grant was awarded being completed.

Applicants must be residents of the UK or Commonwealth citizens and will be informed of the decision of Council concerning their grant application by early July and early January respectively. The BSAI Fieldwork & Research Committee can be contacted via the Secretary.

N.B. Individuals may not apply to the BSAI and the British Academy for the same research projects under current British Academy guidelines.

Application forms are available from the Secretary or on the BSAI Web-site: <http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/>
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Cover Drawings: Sumerian cylinder seal impression and Nimrud ivory drawn by Tessa Rickards. The objects are shown in the catalogue 'Treasures of the Iraq Museum', published by the Directorate General of Antiquities 1976.

It is very sad to have to start this newsletter with the news of the sudden death of Sir Stephen Egerton in September. His death leaves a gap in all our lives and the School will miss his wise advice and his unstinting help in so many areas of its work. He served on Council for an astonishing twenty years and was an especially valuable member over the recent troubled times, briefing us with wisdom and insight on the situation in Iraq. He was briefly a Vice-President of the School during his tenure as Ambassador in Baghdad from 1980-82 and was then re-elected as Vice-President in 1994 in recognition of his invaluable support to the School. He was always ready to help and would chair the annual forum, or our AGM, with characteristic courtesy and just a hint of the iron hand in the velvet glove! He also served on the Development Committee and was tireless on the Appeal Committee. He personally contacted more people than anyone else on the committee, and many gave generously, a tribute to the esteem in which he was held. A memorial service will be held for him at St Martin's in the Field on December 6th at 11am.

The school also lost another good friend recently with the death of Nicholas Wickham-Irving, a close friend of Charlotte Bonham-Carter and a trustee of the Bonham-Carter Trust which has supported the School in so many ways.

Happily there is also good news to report. It is a great pleasure to congratulate Dr John Curtis on the award of an OBE in the Birthday honours in recognition of his services to museums here and overseas. He was one of the first foreign archaeologists to go into Baghdad after the looting of the Museum and has been instrumental in coordinating the international response to the crisis and in assisting our Iraqi colleagues. He is also the author of an important report on the damage to the site of Babylon. We also congratulate Roger Matthews most warmly on being made a professor in recognition of his contribution to the archaeology of Iraq and Anatolia. This is excellent news and it is splendid that there is once again a professor of the archaeology of the ancient Near East in London.

Two very successful Appeal events took place recently. Michael Wood gave a wonderful lecture 'Iraq: the cradle of civilisation' in September at the British Museum, where the large BP Lecture Theatre was filled to capacity and more than £2,500 was raised for the appeal fund from the event. In October John Simpson spoke at the British Academy on the situation in Iraq. After his talk the audience was able to question him at length and to talk less formally to him over an excellent buffet supper. He charmed and informed us all. This event raised an additional £3,500 for the Appeal with the sponsorship of Control Risks. It was hugely generous of these two busy and successful men to give so generously of their time and expertise to support our work and we are deeply grateful to them.

Proceeds from these two events and a very recent generous second donation from the Thriplow Trust have brought the appeal funds raised to over £100,000

We are delighted to have two colleagues from the Museum in Baghdad currently with us as joint British Council - BSAI fellows. One scholar is studying in Scotland and the other is here in London. They each have individually tailored programmes which we hope will enable them to return to Baghdad with new skills and new ideas to pass on to their colleagues. We are enormously grateful to our colleagues who are acting as hosts and mentors to our visitors. Next year we hope to bring three more Iraqi scholars over to this country for a period of two to three months each. We also wish to thank Nadja Qaisi, CBRL Administrator, and the Council for British Research in the Levant office in Amman for its help with travel arrangements for our two scholars. We have also been able to send a powerful digital camera to the museum in Baghdad to help with their publication programme. Our thanks go to Hugh Sykes of the BBC who was able to take the camera with him to Baghdad. We are sure you will agree that the appeal money is being well spent.

As many of you will already know I am standing down as chairman in December so that this is my last editorial. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all and the British Academy and its recently retired Secretary Peter Brown for your support over the last six years and to send my very best wishes to the School and my successor.

Harriet Crawford

Sir Stephen Egerton 1932-2006

Sir Stephen Egerton was born in Indore, India into a family that had served Britain there for five generations. He returned to England at the age of 11 and went to Summer Fields preparatory school in Oxford. He won the top scholarship to Eton where he subsequently won the Newcastle scholarship. After his national service with the King's Royal Rifle Corps, he read Classics at Trinity College Cambridge.

He commenced his distinguished Foreign Service career in 1956, when he was sent to study Arabic at MECAS (Middle East Centre for Arab Studies) at Shemlan in Lebanon. It was at this time that he met and married his wife, Caroline. They shared a full and varied diplomatic life together, commencing their postings in Kuwait. They were in Baghdad from 1963-1967, where he was the last 'Oriental Secretary' a position that had also been held by Gertrude Bell. He was always delighted that he sat in what had been her office surrounded by her library.

He held various postings in New York, London and Tripoli and after three years as Consul General in Rio de Janeiro, he was recalled to be Ambassador in Baghdad (1980-82) at the outset of the Iran/Iraq war. After a spell as FCO under-secretary in charge of the Middle East, Stephen was posted to Saudi Arabia where he helped to maintain the good relations which enabled the

successful negotiation of the Al-Yamamah project, one of the UK's most successful military deals. His career culminated in his posting to Rome as Ambassador from 1989 – 92.

After his retirement he was a consultant to Enterprise Oil and served on the board of many charities including the BSAI, where he provided many years of tireless support.

He was known to be appalled by the war in Iraq and the current state of the region and was a signatory to many public letters with other former FCO colleagues.

There were obituaries in *The Independent*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*.

BSAI GRANT REPORTS

TELL BRAK 2006

The 2006 Tell Brak excavation took place from 25 March to 11 May, 2006. Work focussed on two transitional periods in the site's history, incipient urbanism in the 5th millennium BC (Area TW, near the northern edge of the site) and the final occupation and decline in the mid-2nd millennium BC (Areas HH and HN, along the high northwest ridge).

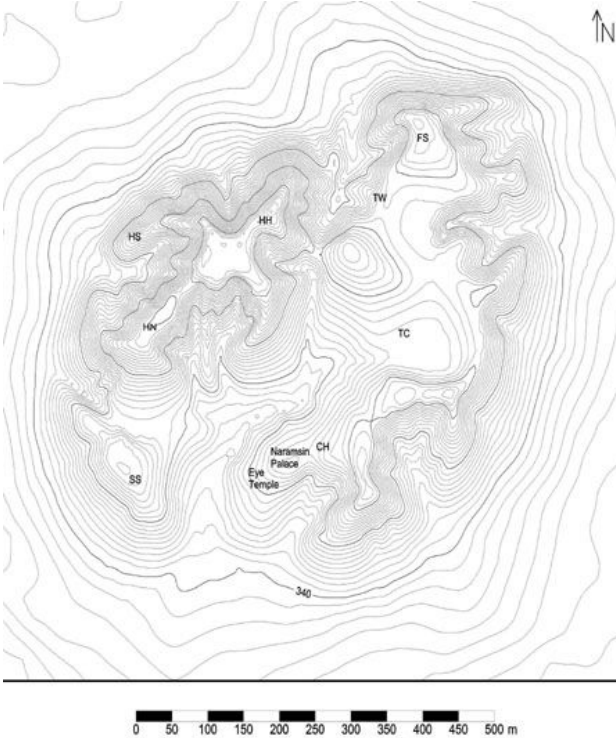


Fig. 1 Topographic plan of Tell Brak

Area TW

The research question here is the nature of early social complexity in the region, and its economic aspects in particular. This area has been a focus of attention for the last several excavation seasons, as it presents an excellent opportunity to explore the key early periods of occupation of Tell Brak, in the 5th-4th millennia BC, when Brak attained urban size and internal organizational complexity. The location of TW, near a likely gate or access route into the city, also allows exploration of one “public face” of the site at this time. During the 2006 season, we continued to uncover more of the “Level 20” buildings first reached in 2004, a group of probable domestic structures belonging to the Late Chalcolithic 2 Period. The plans and relationships of these structures still require more work, but we have a comprehensive ceramic assemblage and large quantities of obsidian tools and spindle whorls. There were also several infant burials in pottery jars associated with this level. These buildings’ successor, in Level 19, was a substantial building of at least four rooms with wide walls, which probably had a manufacturing/industrial function since it presented a collection of tools and several large ovens (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2, Level 19 Building, from East

The deposits in this building contained an interesting assemblage of clay sealings, from doors and a variety of containers (mostly storage jars and some baskets). The most common motifs are twined snakes and lions, the latter usually associated with southern Mesopotamia and the end of the Late Chalcolithic; their presence in northern Mesopotamia and in earlier levels is further evidence of the early social and economic elaboration experienced by this region. Comparanda for many of the motifs are found on contemporary sealings from Tepe Gawra and Degirmentepe, but at least one of the lion motifs (see Fig 3) is unusually clear and sophisticated and, so far, without parallel. Shells and shell (mother of pearl) inlay, large basalt grinding stones still in situ, caches of clay sling bullets and spindle whorls, large flint blades, lumps of

bitumen, and obsidian objects (polished discs, very fine blades) complete the rich assemblage in this structure. This building also contained a unique fluted obsidian and limestone chalice from a bin in the southwest room (see Fig. 4).



Fig. 3 Lion seal from TW



Fig. 4 Obsidian chalice from TW

Several new pottery types have been identified from both Levels 19 and 20, which should prove useful identifiers of the sub-phases of the Late Chalcolithic Period elsewhere on the site and in the survey material. A sounding revealed an earlier LC 2 (or LC-1?) level with a pottery kiln, which we hope to investigate further in the 2007 season. A brief preliminary report on the Area TW findings, plus some discussion of how these fit with the intensive “suburban survey” results, was submitted to *Antiquity* in September.

Area HH

One of our goals in the excavation along the high northwest ridge of the site is to explore the reaction of Brak to the political changes of the 2nd millennium BC: the growth of Shamshi-Addu’s kingdom, its devolution into smaller states, and the subsequent growth and collapse of the Mitanni empire. Texts illuminate a fluctuating political picture, yet the regional archaeological record, while patchy, presents more of a cultural continuum (for instance, Khabur Ware pottery outlasts Shamshi-Adad’s kingdom, occupation at Chagar Bazar—among other sites—is essentially unchanged).

Three trenches were opened in this area, in which we were able to explore the final stages of occupation on the site in the 2nd millennium BC; we ultimately hope to achieve a sequence through the 2nd millennium BC levels and into the controversial terminal 3rd millennium BC “Post-Akkadian” Period occupation. This last is our second goal for this portion of the project: scrutiny of the so-called “Habur hiatus” settlement and climatic disruption after the Akkadian presence. Two trenches, HH E and HH F, were placed near a Mallowan excavation from the 1930s and just west of the Mitanni Palace and Temple; a third trench, HH G, was located some 6 meters lower and to the south, along a sloping ridge between two current erosion gullies. The aim was a combination of vertical sequencing and horizontal exposure.

The final episode of use of this part of the site, in trenches E and F, dates within the Mitanni Period, to judge from provisional pottery analysis conducted during the season. The main occupational phase consisted of at least two substantial multi-room structures, separated from each other by a street or alley running east-west and towards the Palace and Temple. The most interesting aspect of this phase thus far is the probable vaulted room at the northwest corner of the southern building (see Fig. 4). Both buildings had multiple floors, and frequent repairs and re-plasterings had been made to their wall faces. After abandonment and some collapse of the walls, the area was reused by “squatters”, as there were more hardened surfaces, sherd pavings and traces of hearths and pits within the rooms. This squatter phase dates to later within the Mitanni Period. These excavations yielded domestic material culture: beads, animal figurine fragments, model wheels, bronze pins, other metal fragments and basalt grinding stones.



Fig. 5 Vault in HH Trench F

We now have slightly more than 200 square meters exposed in this area, considerable space in which to excavate earlier 2nd millennium BC levels in the future. The regularity and general spaciousness of the final houses is notable, and it will be interesting to see whether this derives from earlier property plots. We will also pay particular attention to access routes and their history.

Trench G, the stratigraphic sounding opened down-slope from trenches E and F, was a smaller operation designed to test the depth of the 2nd millennium BC deposits. A step-trench of 4.5 meters depth here encountered early 2nd millennium BC levels at the top, above a deep layer of slope wash and erosion channels. Below this there was architecture which preliminary analysis of the pottery suggests is Isin-Larsa in date. Unfortunately, due to the severe erosion and limited size of this trench, complete building plans were not achievable, but

several small rooms were exposed. Combined with the information from trench HN A (see below) we have a preliminary idea of the variable but generally rather restricted occupation of the high ridge of the site during the key transition from the late 3rd to early 2nd millennium BC.

Area HN

Excavations in this area had the same goals as those of Area HH; Area HN lies some 150 meters to the west of HH, along the high northern ridge of the site. In two new trenches, B and C, levels of early Mitanni date were uncovered, while a brief sounding in former Trench A reached levels of the mid 3rd millennium BC.

The architecture in Trenches B and C was similar to that excavated in Area HH Trenches E and F, substantial multi-roomed and spacious structures with several floors and repairs. Here also, there were traces of squatter occupation in the half-ruined structures. This area holds great potential for future investigation, as there is space for substantial horizontal exposures here.

A deep sounding was opened in the bottom of Trench A, which had been excavated in 1994-96. The previous excavation had stopped at levels within the Old Babylonian Period, and our goal was to try again to identify the depth of 2nd millennium BC material and to pinpoint the transition from the 3rd millennium. We did reach levels of the mid 3rd millennium, but the “transition” itself seems to be absent in this area of the site; a mid 3rd millennium structure was succeeded by cobbled areas and pits of the early 2nd millennium BC. The area showed no evidence of long standing abandonment or erosion, so it may be that the key transitional layers were removed by later activities.

Scientific Sampling Programme

Our archaeobotanical sampling programme is comprehensive and efficient, with large soil samples for flotation taken both at random from a variety of contexts and in focussed manner from particular floors or features. A faunal analyst has been recording the animal bones (lion and bear are represented among the bones from Area TW, as well as more traditional species). And numerous soil samples for phytolith and thin section analysis have been taken, mostly targeted at specific use areas (courtyards, floors adjacent to ovens, etc.). Most of these samples are still undergoing analysis but should eventually shed light on any changes in diet and in use of space within the site in concert with our key transitions.

We must thank the Directors of the Departments of Antiquities in Damascus (Dr. Bassam Jamous) and in Hasseke (Mr. Abdul-Masih Bagdo) for their support for our work. The 2006 team consisted of a core staff of fifteen, including students from the Universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh and Damascus and staff from the Universities of Cambridge, Pennsylvania, Sheffield and Nottingham. We were also joined for part of the season by Helen McDonald (working on Area TC pottery) and Tim Skudboel (Copenhagen,

working on 4th millennium pottery from earlier soundings). We were visited by the Ambassadors to Syria from the UK and from France (with entourages); colleagues from the University of Aleppo (Dr. Farouk Ismail and a busload of enthusiastic students), the University of Chicago (Dr. Clemens Reichel of the Hamoukar project) and Paris (Dr. Hermann Gasche and family); as well as numerous Syrian and European tourists. All this activity encouraged us to create a “Brak tourist brochure”, with small plans and brief text in English and Arabic.

*Augusta McMahon
Field Director*

Secretary’s Note: This report and accompanying images will appear on the BSAI web-site in colour under Fieldwork.

ABU SALABIKH

Our hope of resuming work at Abu Salabikh, where the School excavated in the 1970’s and 1980’s has had to be abandoned indefinitely, much to our regret.

The School’s grant towards a first field season planned in spring 2005 was channelled instead into preparing the publication of our earlier work at the site. A fifth volume of the excavation report, which would describe the excavation of two well preserved Early Dynastic houses, had been in preparation for some years, and now that there is no prospect of filling gaps in the text by studying stored materials, we are working towards its completion. With the help of the School’s grant, and a generous grant from the Isaac Newton Trust in Cambridge, David Thomas edited and standardized the existing manuscript, which mainly covers the excavation of the houses and the contents of the intramural graves, and was written by Caroline Steele, Sarah Collins and Nicholas Postgate, and is integrated with the detailed micro-morphological descriptions of Wendy Matthews. This makes a 285 page document, but we also need to incorporate the archaeobotanical results from Michael Charles, and an edition of the cuneiform texts by Prof. Manfred Krebern timer, while all authors will need to revise their texts given the passage of time.

Since the project in the field now has to be considered complete, we will also use this opportunity to include a more general study of the housing at Abu Salabikh in the light of recent research on the topic elsewhere. David Thomas has carried out access analysis of the two houses, and this will form part of a general introduction. He also prepared the illustrative material which amounts to 140 pages of plans, drawings and photographs. We plan to finalize the contents of the volumes during the early summer of 2007. That will be Abu Salabikh Excavations, Volume 5.

The sixth volume is already taking shape. This will be a second volume devoted to graves – the pendant to ASE 2. In addition to publishing each grave individually in the catalogue which now amounts to 183 pages, we now plan to

include in this volume a more general study of the funerary practices at the site, using data assembled from all our graves, whether in Volume 2, 5 or 6. David Thomas has already started on this work, but it must await the completion of Volume 5 before it can be continued. Finally, a seventh volume is not so much on the drawing board as a gleam in the eye: this will wrap up all the unpublished excavation areas, and will publish the detailed plans from the surface clearance programme. It will provide the opportunity to summarize the entire project and to study the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the entire site as a settlement.

JN Postgate

CHRISTIANITY IN IRAQ III Seminar Day, 6th May 2006

The Brunei Lecture Theatre at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London was the venue for the *Christianity in Iraq III* Seminar Day on Saturday 6th May 2006 that discussed the encounter between Christianity and Islam; which commenced thirteen hundred years ago and is still on-going. The day was held under the *aegis* of the Dept. for the Study of Religions, SOAS where Dr. Erica C.D. Hunter is Teaching Fellow and Research Associate in Eastern Christianity.

The morning session, chaired by Prof. Gerald Hawting (SOAS), focused on the Abbassid period, where the Caliph's court at Baghdad was the centre of intellectual exchanges between Christian and Muslim *mutakallimun*. The day opened with the paper by Prof. Rifaat Ebied (University of Sydney, Australia) *Peter of Callinicus and Damien of Alexandria: the Tritheist Controversy of the Sixth Century*. This controversy was a pre-cursor to discussions between Islamic and Christian scholars on the nature of the Godhead. The next paper, *Philosophy as a meeting point in Early Abbassid Iraq* by Dr. John Watt (University of Cardiff, Wales) drew attention to the transmission of Greek literature and learning into Arabic via Syriac, and the seminal role assumed by Aristotelian philosophy. This theme was elaborated in the paper by Prof. Sidney Griffith, (Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.), *Patriarch Timothy I and an Aristotelian Philosopher at the Caliph's Court. A Reading of Timothy's Letter 40*.

The academic papers were followed by a session for authors on books dealing with Christianity in the Middle East. Christoph Baumer and Suha Rassam whose works specifically deal with Iraq, gave brief outlines of their books, as did William Taylor and Christine Chaillot. Dr. George Kiraz (Beth Mardutho Institute, USA), *The eBeth Arkhe Project*, provided an update of the fascinating projects of digitizing important manuscript and monograph collections that the Beth Mardutho Institute is presently undertaking. These activities will preserve vital documents that will be of inestimable value to future researchers, which otherwise might be lost, not only due to political instability, but also from a lack of conservation.

After lunch Dr. Erica C.D. Hunter (Cambridge/SOAS) chaired papers that focused on the modern encounter of Islam and Christianity. Prof. Martin Tamcke (University of Göttingen, Germany) discussed *World War I and the Assyrians*, reminding us of the nadir in Moslem-Christian relations which led to the massacre and displacement to Iraq of Christian communities that had traditionally lived in south-east Turkey. The theme of displacement was continued by Dr. Antony O'Mahony (Heythrop College, London) in his paper *The Chaldean Church in modern Iraq: Church-State Relations and Ecumenical Theology*.

Thereafter the chair was passed to Sir Harold Walker who presided over the panel of Iraqi clergy or their representatives who profiled the current situation of their communities in Iraq: The Rev. Habib Jajour (Chaldaean Church), Dr. Basil Assoufi (Syrian Orthodox Church), Mr. Havit Michael (Assyrian Church of the East) and The Rev. Safa'a Habash (Syrian Catholic Church). Much valuable information was imparted, and although all communities are experiencing very grave difficulties currently in Iraq, the hope was expressed that longstanding working relations, founded on centuries of experience, with the Muslim communities might emerge. Closer to home, the Syrian Orthodox representative spoke about the attempts to purchase a redundant Anglican church for the community in London. The participants also wished Father Safa'a Habash a safe return to Iraq where he will take up his new parish.

The day concluded with Dr. Erica C.D. Hunter reading a letter sent by His Grace, Luis Sako, the Chaldaean Bishop of Kirkuk. This epistle exposed the many problems faced by the Christian communities in Iraq and their need to address these.

The interest generated by the Seminar Day, which was attended by almost one hundred people, including Iraqis of Christian, Moslem and Mandaean backgrounds, was most gratifying. Sponsorship by *The British School of Archaeology in Iraq* and *The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association* helped to defray costs and made this day possible. Such was the success that a fourth Seminar Day, focusing on the monastic traditions of Iraq, is being planned for April 28th 2007 under the auspices of 'The Centre for Eastern Christianity' which will be launched in November the aegis of the Dept. for the Study of Religions, SOAS.

Erica C.D. Hunter

NON-BSAI REPORTS

SELLING THE PAST: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE LEGAL AND ILLEGAL TRADE IN ANTIQUITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The trade in antiquities – legal and illegal – is an interdependent network of buyers, sellers, middlemen, launderers, governments, businesses, and countries. This national and international phenomenon is often linked with the trade in arms and/or drugs as antiquities traffickers use similar networks and participants. Recent reports have even indicated a link between terrorist

activities and the trade in antiquities. This interplay of legal and illegal systems is clearly evident in the Middle East where current political boundaries have little bearing on the location of ancient artifacts much coveted by consumers in the market for ancient art.

Since the promulgation of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property [the 1970 UNESCO Convention], the standard contribution to the growing international cultural heritage dialogue has focused on the illicit trade in antiquities and on measures to control or eliminate that trade. Primarily there are three competing positions in the international cultural heritage protection milieu: one typically held among anthropologists, archaeologists, and ethnographers places primary emphasis on the contextual information associated with cultural objects, highlighting the acquisition of information about the human past through relationships and proper scientific documentation. A second discourse generally espoused by archaeologically-rich nations (those providing the artefacts), is preservationist and emphasises the relationship between cultural objects and national identity, culture, and history. The third viewpoint characteristically held by market nations (those buying the artefacts), which supports the unfettered movement of archaeological material throughout the world, de-emphasises nationalism and is critical of what they refer to as retentionism.

If we begin with the basic premise that all three ideologies are legitimate and that each discourse expresses a core interest of a particular group, there seems little hope for reconciling these disparate viewpoints. Each perspective suggests its own solutions to the illicit trade in antiquities, some supported by evidence and some without factual basis. This ongoing debate framed my PhD research. The primary objective of my study was to examine the various markets that antiquities pass through from their original resting place to the eventual purchaser. I am specifically interested in legally sanctioned antiquities markets as a strategy for combating the illicit trade in antiquities. This solution is presented by the third discourse as a remedy that satisfies all parties in the cultural heritage protection debate. However, as with most solutions it is neither straightforward nor does it answer all objections.

My doctoral dissertation, *License to Sell: The Legal Trade of Antiquities in Israel* (University of Cambridge, 2006) addressed the timely questions of whether there is a causal relationship between the looting of sites and the market for antiquities, and whether the legalized trade in antiquities reduces or contributes to the looting of archaeological sites. These questions are acute as the world's archaeological heritage is rapidly disappearing due to looting and the solutions to this problem are the subject of heated debate among museums, private collectors, archaeologists, governments, and policy makers. Using Israel and the PA as a case study, I examined how the legal market developed historically, what effects its legality or illegality had on site destruction and archaeological practice in the region, and how archaeology proceeds under these circumstances. As a case study, Israel is unique because the Antiquities Law of

1978, which created a national ownership law, established a system of licensed antiquities dealers legally permitted to sell antiquities derived from pre-1978 collections or existing inventories. Some contend that this market in Israel stimulates the looting of archaeological sites and the illegal trade of antiquities in the occupied territories, where many archaeological sites are situated. As part of my research I investigated the veracity of these assertions and I arrived at some interesting conclusions.

My PhD fieldwork was comprised of ethnographic inquiry which involved interviews with Israeli and Palestinian archaeologists, tourists, museum professionals, dealers, collectors and government employees and officials. A year in the region allowed the investment of time to cultivate relationships in order to gain more information, greater insight and a “truer response” to the questions I asked. Many of my informants were potentially at risk by talking with me, whether by criticizing the government and losing their job, facing criminal charges for dealing in illicit antiquities, or losing face by purchasing an unprovenanced artifact and not asking for the proper documentation. From the onset this element of risk was understood and was incorporated into the research methodology. All requests for interviews were framed in such a way so as to appeal to the belief that by giving a voice to the various voices in the cultural heritage debate, an equitable protection policy for the cultural property of the region may eventually be achieved.

Most market proponents refute the notion that there is a link between the demand for archaeological material in the market and site destruction; they also argue that a legalized trade is the key to reducing this destruction. An important result of my research is that it exposed the shortcomings of the current Israeli antiquities law and its administration. A study of stakeholder responses to questions concerning the success of the Israeli market led to the conclusion that the current licensed trade in antiquities in Israel has too many illegal elements to be considered a successful legal market; essentially, it is legal in name only.

Continuing to draw upon empirical data and employing an innovative methodology integrating archaeology, ethnography, and archival research, I am currently a Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) Fellow at the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman, Jordan. My post-doctoral program expands this investigation of archaeological site destruction in the Middle East that feeds the voracious appetite of the antiquities trade. From the legal market in Israel, my lens of inquiry has moved to Jordan in order to examine the Jordanian legislative initiative (Provisional Law no. 12 of 1976) proscribing the legal trade in antiquities and the effects of this prohibition on the archaeological landscape.

My doctoral dissertation research corroborates anecdotal reports that some of the material for sale in the legal market in Israel is actually from Jordan, but further research is needed to ascertain the pathway the artifacts take from the ground to the eventual consumer in the Israeli marketplace. Germane to this post-doctoral study is establishing whether or not banning the legally sanctioned trade in antiquities, as Jordan did in 1976, has had any impact on archaeological site

destruction as a result of illicit looting. In both Israel and Jordan, looting continues. The fundamental question to be addressed is: Are there legal initiatives that work to combat looting? And, if not, are there any creative, alternative solutions?

Seeking the answers to one question often leads to additional questions or surprising results that are only tangentially connected to the original research goals, but which may in fact provide some very illuminating information. It is my hope that in attempting to ascertain how archaeological material from Jordan is crossing borders that I might also uncover how archaeological material from Iraq is crossing into Jordan. There have been reports of border interdictions of Iraqi material and currently the Jordanian Department of Antiquities is storing archaeological artifacts from Iraq confiscated at the various borders for safekeeping. In January of 2005 while visiting an antiquities shop in the Old City of Jerusalem, some incantation bowls were prominently displayed in the store window. When I enquired about the archaeological context of the bowls the proprietor asserted that they were from Iraq but he assured me that made their way into his inventory in the 1960s. Is Jordan the transit country through which Iraqi material is making its way to the legal market in Israel or to points farther west—London or New York? In a future newsletter report I hope to present information on the movement of both Iraqi and Jordanian material.

Comparative analyses into the approaches designed to protect the cultural heritage of the nations in this region will allow identification and assessment of the factors that constitute effective deterrents to destruction, looting and illegal traffic in cultural property. The results of this research will encourage a more rational dialogue through examination of the cultural, economic, and psychological factors that contribute to, aid in the formulation of policy and legislative programs, and provide potentially conclusive strategies for combating this global problem.

The basic premise of this overarching research program is that market demand for archaeological material (legally or illegally available) results in archaeological site destruction. Through the comparison of the different types of legal remedies – a complete ban on the trade and a legal market – I intend to provide the necessary data for an analysis of the efficacy of these solutions in archaeological site protection. The empirical data gathered from this post-doctoral research may form the basis for future legislative and policy formation in the region and hopefully, even greater regional cooperation in cultural heritage protection. In the aftermath of the Iraq museum crisis, the indiscriminate looting of archaeological sites in Iraq and heightened global awareness of cultural property protection, research such as my study is at the forefront of establishing concrete protection strategies for the heritage of all mankind.

*Morag M. Kersel, PhD, CAORC Fellow
American Center of Oriental Research, Amman Jordan*

Secretary's Note - Amman contact: The Secretary met Dr Kersel at ACOR in September while visiting her sister, Dr Barbara A Porter, ACOR Director and BSAI member. We discussed her work and felt it would be interesting to share this with BSAI members. The Secretary returned from Amman with the two British Council-BSAI Scholars. We visited the British Council IRAQ Director, Reem Shafiq, and her team. The British Council IRAQ office has provided the funding for this year's scholars.

A TRIP TO KURDISTAN

Following a kind invitation from Dr Muhammad Sadik, the President of the Salahaddin University in Erbil (Hawler), I had an opportunity to stay 12 days in Iraqi Kurdistan from September 26th to October 5th. I was travelling in the company of Professor Adnan Abbas, head of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Oriental Institute, Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań. The aim of our trip was to look for possibilities of cooperation between both universities, mainly because of the planned opening of the Department of Kurdish Studies in Poznań. For me the perspective of travelling to Iraq was highly interesting, because I have never had an opportunity to visit this part of Iraq and I wanted to verify the announcements of relative security of Kurdistan.

Of several possibilities to travel to Erbil, we decided to take a plane from Istanbul. Turkish Tarhan Towers Airlines run this service three times a week using McDonnell MD82 plane. Though the ticket is quite expensive (670 \$ in economy class), the plane was nearly full, mainly with Kurds travelling back home. The plane flew over Turkey and Kurdistan and it took 2 hours 20 minutes to get to Erbil. It landed at an old small airport provided with a single runway and small, single storey pavilion for check-in and passport control (passengers have to walk to it from the plane). The service available includes several flights a day serving mainly various Near Eastern cities: Amman, Damascus, Beirut, Dubai, Teheran and, of course, Baghdad. Once a week there is a direct flight to Stockholm (while I was in Kurdistan an office of Austrian Airlines has been opened in Erbil and one can expect that in the future there will be also a connection to Vienna). A new airport is under construction now and will be opened in 2007, as the Kurdish authorities expect a very rapid increase in the number of flights and passengers.

Ten out of twelve days in Iraqi Kurdistan we spent in Erbil, going out only for two one-day trips: to the east, to Sulaimaniya and north-west, to Dohuk. Most of the time has been filled by official programme. We have met members of the regional government (the Minister of Higher Education and the Minister of Culture), university authorities (the President and vice-presidents, as well as most of the Deans of the Salahaddin University). Consequently, there was very little time for sightseeing or, for instance, meeting with Kurdish archaeologists.

The Institute of Archaeology of the Salahaddin University is led by Mr Ahmed Mirza. It employs 8 teachers and has 182 students but, because of the lack of professors, it runs exclusively B.A. studies in two fields: Islamic archaeology and pre-Islamic archaeology. Advanced courses in the Institute are taught by some professors of archaeology from Mogul and Baghdad, visiting

Erbil for several days a month. The Institute, which has its own building in the College of Arts campus, has a very small library comprising approximately 700 books mainly in Arabic or Kurdish covering a wide range of topics from linguistics and history to art and archaeology. Summing up, the lack of teachers with Ph.D. degree and very small library constitute the main obstacle in developing full course studies in archaeology. The Institute runs its own excavations in order to give its students an opportunity to gain field experience. Since 2003 it is researching a site called Qasr which is located in Ain Kawa the suburbs of Erbil. The site in question is cut by streets of the settlement forming a rectangular tell slightly more than 1 ha in area and up to 4 m high. The top strata are of the 2nd millennium BC, but earlier remains had been cleared in a stratigraphic sounding. The Institute produced substantial reports on the results, however they are not published but Xerox-copied and hardly available. Another field campaign has been planned for September this year, but because of inadequate funding (5 million dinars, instead of 10 million requested) it was suspended. Instead, another possibility for training appeared – in cooperation with Czech mission working in Erbil this September. The Institute plans to reopen old excavations of Behnam Abu al-Soof at Qalinj Agha in the future.

Another archaeological institution in Erbil is the Archaeological Museum which is situated beside the regional office of the State Board of Antiquities. The Archaeological Museum is located in the old museum building. It is open for visitors daily from 9 a.m. till 1 p.m. and, reputedly, quite frequented. Three exposition halls hold mainly artefacts on loan from the Iraqi Museum in Bagdad (judging from IM signatures observable on some of them), and represent archaeological cultures of the entire Iraq. These are mainly pottery pieces, a few bronze and terracotta figurines, but since glass cases are provided with labels in Arabic or Kurdish and English, the labels are in many cases not accurate. Of sculpture, there are gypsum copies of several “Sumerian” statues, but also a few Parthian pieces, which seem genuine. There are also two standing statues of natural height depicting bearded men shown in a very primitive style. They reputedly come from the area of Hasan Bag. According to a museum guide, they represent Urartian culture, but to my untrained eye they looked rather like very provincial Parthian art. Among other interesting items, there is a relief figure of Assyrian king, about 70 cm high, glued together from three fragments. The guide said that it originated from the famous Assyrian site of Khinnis, where two years ago it was torn out of one of relief representations left there by Sanherib. The thieves were noticed by the guards of the site and caught immediately, while damaged relief found shelter in the Erbil museum. The museum holds also the biggest archaeological library in the entire Kurdistan Region, comprised of 5000 books and journals on the subject. The Museum had recently conducted excavations, though they had a salvage character. In 2000 a new toilet was erected on the eastern side of the main building. When the foundation trenches had been dug, it turned out that they cut into archaeological strata. Moreover, the entire low mound located to the east and south of the museum (which partly cut into it) is in fact an archaeological site. The excavations, which followed this accidental discovery, covered the area of more than 200 square meters and unearthed remains of a settlement of the Uruk

period. Artefacts from the dig had been included into the museum collection and some grave-pots are presently exhibited.

The office of the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage for Kurdistan Region is located in a building standing beside the museum offices. In mid-September its long time director, Mr Kanan Mufti, had resigned from the post after 26 years of service (he advanced to the Ministry of Culture as the director of administration department). His former position has been taken by Mr Abdallah Qaradagi, but, due to the busy program, I did not have an opportunity to talk him.

The other museum which I visited was Kurdish Textile Museum on the citadel. It is located in the 19th cent. house in the southern part of Qala'a. Founded by private collector, Mr, it holds a collection of textiles dating mainly to the 20th cent., as well as examples of Kurdish traditional outfit. The roof terrace, on which a tent of one of nomadic Kurdish tribes is set, offers a magnificent view on the Qala'a interior. An "Antique shop" located in the neighbouring house offers for sale a wide range of tapestries and domestic equipment dating mainly to mid 20th century (a real trash in comparison to the quality of wares offered by antiquarian shops in Baghdad prior to 2003 war). The only item of interest is Urartian Topzawa stele standing in the open air in front of the shop. It is much worn on both sides and only few cuneiform characters may be discerned at the moment, mainly in the bottom part of the stele. According to the museum personnel, it will be transferred to the archaeological museum as soon as means of transport will be available.

The main site in Erbil is the Qala'a, a tell more than 30 m high and measuring some 400 m in diameter. The top of the tell is tightly build up with houses, leaving space only for a single wide street running across the top of the tell. High walls of the houses overlooking the slope of the tell, which partly serve as retention walls preventing earth-slides, give the Qala'a its military-like appearance (though no actual defences are preserved). In the southern entrance to the transversal street a gate-like structure had been constructed during the Saddam Hussein era, in his unmistakable "Babylonian" style. It may be only wondered how many meters of archaeological deposits had been disturbed during its construction. The local population had only one reservation about it: the arches are rounded (i.e. Arabic) not pointed (i.e. Kurdish) and there are opinions that rebuilding of the structure is necessary in the close future (in fact, a gate visible in old photographs of the same place had a pointed arch).

Recently, a plan to enhance tourist attractiveness of Qala'a had been conceived. Most of over 500 houses located presently on the plateau of the tell will be removed (only houses older than 200 years will survive, about 80 in number, as well as the mosque and Old Bath). Those will undergo preservation works and will host museums, public institutions as well as gift shops and cafeterias. In emptied areas most likely new structures of "tourist village" will be constructed, though opinions on the kind of buildings to be erected varied (from bungalows to huge modern hotels). The reconstruction programme will be finished by 2016. When the houses are dismantled, a large part of the site will be available for archaeological research. It had already begun: a small group of Czech archaeologists from Plzen University led by Dr Karel Nováček had

carried out first field season in cooperation with the Institute of Archaeology of the Salahaddin University. The season's work included survey on the slopes of the tell, as well as geo-radar survey. A small trial pit has been dug at the top of the tell, but it did not get through the modern strata. The most interesting result of the survey is the presence of Palaeolithic stone tools, what may suggest that people settled in the area of Erbil much earlier than it has been assumed.

The other sites located within the city are two tells already mentioned: Qasr in Ain Kawa suburb and the site located by the museum. Two other small sites located at the outskirts of the city were observed from a moving car and a number of ancient mounds have been seen during both trips, especially on the way to Dohuk (Kur. Duhok). Most of sites show some signs of damage from human activity, but not of the kind so common in the Central and Southern Iraq – traces of illicit excavations were not observed by me and Kurdish archaeologists confirmed that digging for antiquities is extremely rare in the region. Tells located in villages are generally covered with modern buildings.

As for archaeological institutions and attractions outside Erbil, there is the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Suleimaniya (Kur. Suleimani), but I had no time to go either there or to the Archaeological Museum in this city (which is open for visitors.) Another small museum which I did not visit is situated in Dohuk. It keeps a mixed collection of antiquities and folklore. While in Dohuk, I ventured to visit a site of fire temples at Charsteen, which had recently some publicity in the Internet. The site is located on a rocky slope overlooking a narrow gorge blocked by a small barrage only 500 meter above. The site is well kept: there are stairs and paved paths leading up the mountain and information plates scattered over the area. Though there are clear traces of settlement with remnants of houses, large stone-cut chamber whose roof is supported by four pillars (hence the name Charsteen) and remains of stone retaining wall on the slope, there is nothing what, in my opinion, resembles fire altars (this name was given to relatively small, cubic depressions cut into rock in several places). The other site which I visited in Dohuk was Gre Maltaï, but an attempt to locate Maltaï sculptures failed because our host in Dohuk could not find a person able to show us the way to the site.

Life in Kurdistan seems to be as quiet as it was in Iraq before the war. Kurds are convinced of security of the area and the only instances when less secure conditions were mentioned occurred while talking about the area of Kirkuk or territories lying in the vicinity of the border of Kurdish regional authority. I was assured that conducting the field work in the Region, including a regional survey, is possible and that obtaining a permit for such work from archaeological authorities as well as from the Ministry of Interior will be quite easy. In fact, beside the Czech mission aforementioned, there was another mission from Europe doing fieldwork in Kurdistan, namely Italian mission led by Dr Roberto Parapetti from Torino. I had no opportunity to meet them, as they have been working in the remote area of Darbandi-khan, reputedly on a Sassanian site. Both these groups worked on a permit issued by the Regional office of the State Board of Antiquities, which informed about issuing such permit the main office in Baghdad.

There are very few armed men in the streets. Police does not wear weapon at all. The main security force is Pashmarga corps, guarding most of the government buildings and running check points in entrances to cities and at crossroads in the countryside (the checkpoints are very rarely fortified and their guards only exceptionally provided with heavy weapons, helmets or bullet proof vests). T-walls, so common in Baghdad, are present in Erbil only around Kurdish Regional Parliament compound, Sheraton Hotel (being a place where most Americans and people from Western Europe are staying while in Erbil) and a few more points (President's office of the Salahaddin University, office of the main newspaper, city council etc.). The coalition forces (Koreans) are virtually invisible: during twelve days of stay I saw one three-vehicle strong patrol in the streets of Erbil and a group of far-east looking men in plain clothes in the *souk* of Suleimaniya, who could be soldiers on leave. Some companies (hotels or supermarkets) employ private guards armed in Kalashnikov machine-guns, but they do not wear uniforms.

There are problems with electricity and fuel as in the remaining parts of Iraq, but they seem to be less severe. It is hard to judge how often and for how long electricity is not available during the day, because all hotels have back-up in generators, but I have an impression that electricity is switched off for a few hours in the afternoon and in the evening. The queues for gasoline are present, but not very long. There is plenty of fuel on black market, of Syrian, Iranian, Turkish and Iraqi origin; its price depends on the quality and the country of origin, but it is several times higher than at the state fuel stations in general. Shops are ample with food and industrial products, mainly of Turkish or Syrian origin. Supermarkets are extremely trendy – there are two or three in every city and a considerable number is under construction. They attract a lot of visitors who are not necessarily customers – as cafeterias located there often serve soft drinks and ice cream for free, they are much frequented meeting places. Nearly every person has a mobile phone working on pre-paid cards. Making a phone call to other mobile is very easy; the network covers the entire country, thus it is the easiest way to communicate with persons outside the Kurdistan Region. It is very easy to make phone calls abroad, though they are quite expensive. For those who do not have a mobile, there are other possibilities. Hotels usually provide telecommunication services, but there are also telecommunication agencies in the city, which are extremely cheap (a call to Europe is 20 cents per minute, or 65 cents, if one calls a mobile phone number).

Erbil is a city bustling with new construction projects. I had already mentioned constructing of a new airport. New buildings are under construction in every part of the city, but in the outskirts huge colonies of new houses are growing up, some offering simple flats, other fancy apartments. Buying a house tends to be very expensive (renting a house or a flat is very expensive too), because there is a lot of people moving to Erbil not only from other cities in Kurdistan, but from other parts of Iraq as well. Consequently, hotels are quite expensive too (Sheraton is 230 dollars for a single room, average hotels with air conditioned rooms cost 80 dollars).

At the first glimpse Kurdistan is quite similar to other parts of Iraq before the war. One needs Iraqi visa to get in, the same white-and-orange taxis drive on

the busy streets, the currency is Iraqi dinars (but dollars are accepted everywhere), most shops show signs written in Arabic characters and occasionally in English. Yet, the language spoken on the streets is Kurdish (nearly everyone speaks Arabic too, but the knowledge of English is rare); the shop signs and billboards are written in Kurdish, using a slightly modified Arabic alphabet. The newspapers are in Kurdish, as is radio and television. The Kurdish flag is present everywhere: in offices, on the streets, in houses, occasionally even painted on mountain tops, while Iraqi flag is not to be seen at all. The nationalistic feelings are high and it is clear that people enjoy autonomy of their region very much, but politicians do their best to pronounce that Kurdistan is a part of Iraq. Yet, no one knows what will happen in the future. For now, it is a safe place to live in and thousands of Kurds who live outside the Kurdish Region are trying to move permanently to Erbil or any other city in Kurdistan (as well as many Arabs).

Rafał Koliński
BSAI Member

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THE PUBLIC FIGURE: Political Iconography in Medieval Mesopotamia

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The region known as al-Jazirah comprises today much of northern Iraq and south eastern Turkey. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, up to the period of the Mongol invasions, this area of northern Mesopotamia was the setting in its major cities for a flourishing material culture. Situated on the great traditional trade routes between the Middle East and Europe a central component of this culture evolved around the development of public figural imagery. An impetus for this development was the perceived need for political iconography with the coming to power throughout the region of a group of Turkish dynasties where each needed to establish itself and enhance its image, legitimacy and authority. This was particularly reflected in those traditional cynosures of Islamic hegemony: coinage and architecture.

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JOURNAL IRAQ DONATIONS - Wolfson College, Oxford has donated Dr Jeremy Black's full print run of the Journal *IRAQ* to the BSAI and Queen's College, Oxford and Professor Nicholas Postgate have also donated a substantial number of *IRAQ* Journals. Through their generosity, the BSAI has been able to put together two full sets of the Journal for its London office and of the BSAI's library in Iraq. We are very grateful to them all for these donations. We were able to donate some remaining issues from our own set to JSTOR for its digital record.

ELECTRONIC TEXT CORPUS OF SUMERIAN LITERATURE (ETCSL)

Nine years after its launch in 1997, the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL) at the Oriental Institute of the University of Oxford has reached a conclusion. The project was the brainchild of Dr. Jeremy Black, who devoted much energy to it before his untimely death in the spring of 2004. It stands as a testimonial to Jeremy's career-long engagement with Sumerian literature and his aspiration to make this literature accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

The ETCSL has provided transliterations and English translations of nearly 400 Sumerian literary compositions. While we are aware that improvements can continue to be made to the corpus, it now constitutes a wide-ranging record of Sumerian literature written on sources dating to the period from approximately 2100 to 1700 BC. It will remain accessible as an independent website at <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/> and we will continue to make minor revisions to it periodically.

On 1 September 2006, the University of Oxford initiated a new project that intends to set the ETCSL in a wider, long-term historical context. The ETCSL has reconstructed the best-documented phase of Sumerian literature, that is, the works surviving in manuscripts dating to the period from 2100 to 1700 BC. We call this the classical period of Sumerian literature, because of the abundance of preserved manuscripts and because the material from this period provides the most complete corpus of Sumerian literature at any time in its history.

The ETCSL has focused on the classical period of Sumerian literature, because one of its primary intentions was to enable synchronic linguistic analyses. ETCSL makes it possible to create precise, statistically grounded profiles of individual compositions and groups of related compositions. Early next year a book with a set of studies using this approach will appear at Equinox Publishing, London: *Analysing literary Sumerian: corpus-based approaches*, edited by Jarle Ebeling and Graham Cunningham.

The new project is entitled Diachronic Corpus of Sumerian Literature (DCSL). It is well-known that Sumerian literature had a much longer history than its classical period. From the twenty-fourth to the first century BC, people in Babylonia and often in surrounding areas composed new Sumerian literary texts or preserved and modified existing compositions, and after 1800 they regularly added Akkadian translations. With the collection and web-based presentation of this material we hope to make possible historical analyses of the Sumerian language and literature, including diachronic linguistic studies and work on aspects of Mesopotamian intellectual history.

The project has received a pump-priming grant from the John Fell OUP Research Fund, awarded to Professors John Baines and Marc Van De Mieroop. The eight-month long grant will enable us to start work on a catalogue of compositions and to edit and publish an initial body of material online. Marc Van De Mieroop will direct the project; Graham Cunningham and Jarle Ebeling

will be senior editor and technical developer. A preliminary website has been set up for the project: <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/dcs1/>>

In the past the ETCSL has benefited from the co-operation of numerous scholars worldwide who shared manuscripts in electronic form. We invite anyone who wishes to contribute such material to send it to us. We will continue to acknowledge all your contributions. For questions and offers of contributions, contact <marc.vandemieroop@orinst.ox.ac.uk>.

Marc Van De Mieroop

FORTHCOMING BSAI PUBLICATION

Languages of Iraq, ancient and modern

For all five thousand years of its history Iraq has been home to a mixture of languages, spoken and written, and the same is true today. In November 2003, to celebrate the country's rich diversity and long history as a centre of civilization the British School presented a series of talks by experts on each of the major languages of Iraq and their history, and this illustrated volume brings these now to a wider public.

Iraq's languages come from different linguistic families - Semitic, Indo-European, and agglutinative languages like Sumerian, Hurrian and Turkish. Some, although long dead, have a prime place in the history of the Old World: Sumerian, probably the first language to be written and the vehicle of cuneiform scholarship for more than two millennia, and Akkadian, the language of Hammurapi and the Epic of Gilgamesh, and used across the Near East for administration and diplomacy. The history of Aramaic is even longer, stretching back to overlap with Akkadian before 1000 BC. It survives, precariously, in both written and spoken forms, being one of four languages spoken in Iraq today. Of these Arabic as a major world language has often been described, but here we have an account of the vernacular Iraqi Arabic dialects, and the descriptions of Iraqi Kurdish and Turkman are unique, detailed and authoritative.

Contents: Nicholas Postgate (Editor), *Introduction*, Jeremy Black(†), *Sumerian*, Andrew George, *Babylonian and Assyrian: A history of Akkadian*, David Hawkins, *Hurrian*, Alan Millard, *Early Aramaic*, Geoffrey Khan, *Aramaic in the medieval and modern periods*, Eleanor Coghill, *Fieldwork in Neo-Aramaic*, Clive Holes, *Colloquial Iraqi Arabic*, Christine Allison, *Kurdish in Iraq*, Christiane Bulut, *Iraqi Turkman*.

Pp. viii, 187. 32 maps and illustrations. ISBN: 0 903472 21 X (Price tba)

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BSAI LECTURES & FUTURE EVENTS

18 November 2006 – THE ASSYRIANS: ANCIENT SPLENDOUR IN NORTHERN IRAQ - BSAI & Birkbeck College Archaeology Study Day, Malet Street, London. **(SOLD OUT)**

Organised and chaired by **Dr Frances Reynolds**, University of Oxford

- Queens and Treasures: The Nimrud Tombs - **Dr Dominique Collon**, British Museum
- Keep Taking the Tablets: King Ashurbanipal and His Library - **Professor Andrew George**, SOAS, University of London
- Memories of Nimrud: The 1950s Excavations - **Dr Joan Oates**, University of Cambridge
- "The Wolf on the Fold": The Assyrian Military in Images and Texts - **Professor Nicholas Postgate**, University of Cambridge
- Two Stories and a Song from Ashurbanipal's Library
ZIPANG - **Fran Hazelton**, Storyteller, and **Tara Jaff**, Harpist

14 December 2006 – BSAI AGM & Lecture by Prof. M. Van De Mieroop “The Mesopotamians and Their Past” at the British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1. Please confirm your attendance to the BSAI Secretary or by telephone to 020 7969 5274.

27 January 2007 – BSAI & University of Birmingham, The Centre for Lifelong Learning Joint Study Day ‘Writing in the Near East’ at the University of Birmingham. The earliest writing and the first alphabets are found in the near east. Speakers will discuss writing from its origin as pictographs, through the many forms and uses of cuneiform and alphabetic scripts. The impact of recent events in Iraq will also be covered. There will be a display of Arabic illuminated manuscripts, and students will have the opportunity to handle museum objects and write their own cuneiform inscription.

Organised by Dr Jonathan Taylor. Tutors: Sarah Collins, Dr Alasdair Livingstone, Dr Roger Matthews, Professor Alan Millard, Dr Emilie Savage-Smith, Dr Jonathan Taylor, Dr Marc Van De Mieroop, Phil Watson.
Cost: £35 (lunch and refreshments included) Contact: Sandra Ilott, School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham, Weoley Park Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6LL, Tel. 0121 414 5612 s.e.ilott@bham.ac.uk

28 March 2007 – BSAI Lecture by Dr Eleanor Robson - title tbc

14 June 2007 – BSAI Bonham Carter Forum and Lecture with Sherhazade Hassan, musicologist- title tbc

Members of the public are welcome to attend BSAI Lectures.

THE FRONTIERS OF THE OTTOMAN WORLD: FORTIFICATIONS, TRADE, PILGRIMAGE AND SLAVERY

An international, multi-disciplinary workshop to be held on **15 and 16 February 2007** at The British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London

Website: <http://www.biaa.ac.uk/workshop.html>

General information The workshop is funded by the British Academy and organised by the British Academy-sponsored Schools and Institutes that support research on Ottoman history.

Recent or ongoing research supported by several of the schools and institutes has focused on Ottoman frontiers and their fortifications in different parts of the empire and its successor states from the Ukraine to the Sudan. However, hitherto there has been no attempt to consider how the research findings of individual schools and institutes relate to one another. Furthermore, archaeological work has only rarely been related to textual evidence and to the more general historical context.

The Frontiers of the Ottoman World workshop aims to bring together archaeologists, historians and specialists in archival research to assess the nature of the Ottoman Empire's frontiers, with special reference to the roles of fortifications, trade (especially the slave trade) and pilgrimage routes in frontier society. We also aim to examine how garrisons as representatives of the Ottoman state interacted with the local population, and the nature of their relationship with the government in Istanbul, giving us an insight into the dynamics of Ottoman power on a local level and the effectiveness of its governance.

As well as assessing the current state of research, the workshop aims to lay the foundations for a larger, longer-term research initiative that can explore such issues in greater depth.

Participation: The papers and panels for the workshop have now been finalised. However, there are still places available for non-speaking participants. These will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis and for a nominal fee of £7.50 per day. All participants will receive a conference pack, refreshments and lunches. Those attending on Thursday 15 February are welcome to attend the evening reception. To reserve a place, please email Joan Porter MacIver (bsai@britac.ac.uk) indicating which day(s) you wish to attend. Payment should be made by cheque payable to 'BIAA' for the correct amount (£7.50 per day) and sent to: BIAA/Ottoman Frontiers Workshop, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH. Reservations will be confirmed on receipt of payment.

The main conference organizers are Dr Andrew Peacock (University of Cambridge), Chairman of the Management Committee, <acsp2@cam.ac.uk> and Gina Coulthard of the British Institute at Ankara.

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If sending Sterling from abroad, please ensure that the bank charges are paid by you. The School's account is # 40626384 (Sort Code 20-10-53) at **Barclays Bank** PLC, Bloomsbury & Tottenham Court Road Branch, Bloomsbury & Chancery Lane Group, P.O. Box 1345, London W12 8GG, United Kingdom