

# **BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ**

## **NEWSLETTER NO. 21**

**May 2008**



BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ  
(GERTRUDE BELL MEMORIAL)  
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 219948

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The next BISI Newsletter will be published in November 2008. Brief contributions are welcomed on recent research, publications and events. They should be sent to BISI by post or e-mail to arrive by 15 October 2008. BISI Administrator Joan Porter MacIver edits the Newsletter.

Cover: Our new BISI logo with the beautiful calligraphy of our new name in Arabic (المعهد البريطاني لدراسة العراق) was drawn by Taha al-Hiti through the assistance of BISI Council member, Sir Terence Clark KBE. Taha al-Hiti was born in Baghdad in 1971 and began calligraphy at the age of six. He later studied under the master calligrapher Abbas al-Baghdady, who awarded him in 2005 his 'Ijaza' (licence). Meanwhile he graduated in architecture from Baghdad University and, after post-graduate studies in Islamic architecture in Vienna, he moved to London, where he practised as an architect for several years. He is at present senior architect/project manager on major building projects for a British company in Abu Dhabi. He has held exhibitions of his calligraphy in Baghdad, London, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The British Institute for the Study of Iraq is very grateful to Mr al-Hiti for providing us with such a wonderful example of his calligraphy for our logo.

**Volunteer Wanted for BISI Membership.**

If you are interested in helping out the BISI with your time, 1/2 day a week at most on maintaining the membership records and mailings, please contact Joan Porter MacIver, the BISI Administrator at the contact details noted above. Travel expenses can be reimbursed if requested and time commitments can be flexible. The work-load is more intense at certain times of the year when mailings are required and the work will be done at BISI's office space at the British Academy. Computer knowledge is needed, though training can be provided and this could lead to paid part-time employment.

At our AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007 members voted unanimously for a change in our name from the British School of Archaeology in Iraq to the 'British Institute for the Study of Iraq' (المعهد البريطاني لدراسة العراق) and at the same time approved a new set of regulations (available on our website: <http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/governance.htm>). The change of title and formulation of new regulations do not mark an abrupt departure from our historical core work on the heritage of Iraq but rather underline the importance and value of our working in an expanded range of academic disciplines and time periods. We thus aim to provide a more inclusive platform for trans-disciplinary study of Iraq and its neighbouring countries. It was good to have such a large turn-out at the AGM and for my lecture celebrating 75 years of the School/Institute, which showed that a larger venue at UCL was appropriate. Our 2008 AGM will be held at the same venue.

In our December 2007 Council meeting and at the AGM, Dr Dominique Collon stood down after 25 years on Council (with just one year revolving 'off'). I am delighted to report that she has agreed to continue as co-editor of our journal *IRAQ*. BISI/BSAI is extremely grateful to her for her efforts on our behalf and for the dedication that she provided as Chair of our Publications Committee, where she will continue to serve as a co-opted member. Dr Jon Taylor of the Department of the Middle East at The British Museum has valiantly agreed to be Chairman of this committee and will no doubt be consulting Dominique on her vast knowledge about our publication work. Indeed, we are working closely with The British Museum's Department of the Middle East and later in 2008 we will be publishing *New Light on Nimrud – Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference 11<sup>th</sup>- 13<sup>th</sup> March 2002* edited by J.E. Curtis, H. McCall, D. Collon and L. al-Gailani Werr. This publication has 34 contributions from participants of the Nimrud Conference, which was jointly organised by the BSAI and The British Museum and supported by a grant from The British Academy.

In March this year, your Council co-opted Dr Athem Al-Sabti, Honorary Research Fellow at the University of London Observatory, who has a rich network of world-wide contacts within Iraqi and British academe and beyond. We all look forward to working with him on Council. Our March BISI lecturer was Charles Tripp, Professor of Politics with reference to the Middle East at SOAS, perhaps the most appropriate choice possible for a lecture under our new name with his thought provoking talk 'What can Iraq's History Tell Us About Its Future?' We also welcomed a number of new attendees to the British Academy on the evening as our guests. The joint Birkbeck/BISI Study Day *The Sumerians: Iraq's First Civilization* took place in February at Birkbeck College. Its huge success is primarily due to the dedicated efforts of Council member, Dr Fran Reynolds, who was the Study Day's academic organizer, along with the previous two joint study days: *The Babylonians: Life in Ancient Southern Iraq* and *The Assyrians: Ancient Splendour in Northern Iraq*. After organising three joint study days, she has handed over the reins to Mariana Gioviono and Frans van Koppen, who will be the new

organisers and chairs of 'From Babylon to Amarna: Ancient Middle Eastern Interactions in the Days of Akhenaten', which will take place in February 2009. (More details on pg. 22 and on the web-site – sign up early to avoid disappointment as these events are always sold out).

Rory Stewart OBE, author of *Occupational Hazards* & former Deputy Governor of Maysan and Dhi Qar Provinces, gave a fascinating BSAI Appeal Talk on 'My Time Governing in Iraq' last December. We are extremely grateful to him for giving his time during a busy trip to the UK. He is now the Chief Executive of the Turquoise Mountain Foundation in Kabul and his lecture did highlight the very troublesome problem of looted antiquities in Afghanistan, a situation which continues to remain of great concern in Iraq. We raised c. £1,500 on the evening for the Appeal and in total have raised almost £125,000 to date. These appeal funds support our Visiting Iraqi Scholarship programme (six scholars/fellows to date).

Currently we host Dr Abbas Al-Hussainy (Al-Qadassiyah University, Diwaniyah) under our Visiting Fellows Programme. He is working closely with me at UCL supported from a range of sources. An initial grant from the British Universities Iraq Consortium enabled Dr Hussainy to spend time in London along with three other colleagues from Al-Qadassiyah University who joined us in February-March this year for a short visit to participate in meetings with UCL and The British Museum. We also all travelled to Liverpool to attend the annual conference of BANEA (The British Association of Near Eastern Archaeology) and to meet colleagues from all over the world. We are delighted that we have been successful in obtaining a Visiting Fellowship of 3 months' duration for Dr Al-Hussainy jointly funded by the British Academy, the AHRC and the ESRC, which will enable him to work on the publication of his excavations at the important city of Marad in south Iraq. We have jointly prepared an article on 'The Archaeological Heritage of Iraq in Historical Perspective' for publication in the journal *PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY*. Dr Al-Hussainy's stay in London is also being generously supported by the Scholar Rescue Fund and the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust. We are extremely grateful to all the sponsors of our Visiting Fellows Programme.

Through our Fund for Iraq and appeal donations, later in 2008 we are supporting the visit of an Iraqi artist to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park as part of ArtRole's programme (See pp. 22-23) and are co-sponsoring with the Refugees Studies Centre, University of Oxford, a Visiting Research Fellowship for a senior Iraqi anthropologist, who will also work with younger Iraq academics at the centre this autumn. We have arranged for a special intensive English language programme for a Museum Director from Mosul in the summer months, who will be participating in The British Museum's International Curatorial Programme. We are expecting a number of other visitors during 2008-09 and have expanded our Visiting Scholars' scheme. If you know of any appropriate candidates in Iraq who would benefit from a short-term programme and who have a research project they wish to develop,

please do encourage them to apply (details on the grant page of our web-site). English language ability is critical to enable scholars to get the most out of a research project in the UK. If any members wish to be 'mentors' to our Iraqi visitors and invite them to their homes or undertake visits to other parts of the UK, that also would be very welcome. Do contact our administrator, if you wish to volunteer in any aspect of this work. The work on the Appeal will have some new approaches, as I am delighted to announce that Mr Peter Davies, a banker with wide contacts in the business community and with strong ties to the Middle East and Iraq, has agreed to take over as Chairman of our Appeal Committee. Dr Harriet Crawford has taken on the responsibility of chairing our Visiting Scholars Programme with Council members, Dr Eleanor Coghill and Dr Venetia Porter, and co-opted member, Dr Lamia Al Gailani-Werr. As you can see we are using the funds we raise and your donations well and we wish to thank everyone for their generous support.

Last year we underwent a thorough membership review and instigated a number of changes and appreciate your continuing membership and support. The offer of the *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies* as part of our membership package has proved popular. If you are interested in this subscription we have ordered a few extra volumes of 2007 (*IJCIS* Volumes 1.1-1.3) to enable our members to start with the initial year's print run. (Details are available from our administrator.) We have been advised by the publishers that none of the 2008 volumes have been issued yet.

Our moderate membership fee increase will partially support our increasing administrative costs. The British Academy is also continuing to support us on the administrative side, which is very valuable to us in light of our upcoming funding cut from 2009. Council will have to undertake some major discussions for future funding sources and we may have to curtail some of our activities. We will be seeking other sources of funding and we remain determined that we will still continue to be a viable entity. If any members or friends have ideas about possible sources of funding, please do get in touch with me or our Hon. Treasurer, Mr Iain Cheyne.

It was just five years ago that the Iraq Museum in Baghdad was devastated by looting and the news since that time has not been encouraging. It would be good to think that matters are moving in the right direction, but in general it is clear that the situation remains extremely difficult. It is very important that we continue to focus on Iraq's heritage requirements and provide help and advice in any way we can. This summer we are planning on sending a large shipment of books to the Iraq Museum library and have received a very generous legacy of the library of a long standing BSAI member, the American archaeologist Dr T.Y. (Jes) Canby, whose family have arranged for these books to be shipped to BISI. We have been in informal contact with the British military authorities, who have expressed willingness to help us get these books to Iraq. This will be the second large shipment that we have arranged and will include other donations and our own publications.

There are plans to have the BISI website, which we have recently re-designed, become an important source of contacts for any academic work done in the UK and beyond on Iraq, as well as non-academic work. It would be very useful if our members could pass on to us any news or links that they feel might be appropriate. I look forward to working with our members and colleagues world-wide and in the UK to strengthen our widening remit and to continue to develop our strong ties to the heritage sector of Iraq.

*Roger Matthews, Chairman*

## **BISI/BSAI GRANT REPORTS**

### **The Archaeological Achievements of Gertrude Bell**

The remarkable life of Gertrude Bell, an intrepid Englishwoman of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century who ventured into many remote corners of the Ottoman Empire, befriending local bedouin tribes and playing a major role in the political events that shaped the modern Middle East, is now well known through a number of colourful biographies of her life and deeds (Winstone 1978; Wallach 1996; Lukitz 2006; Howell 2006). The Robinson Library of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, which has produced a nearly-completed on-line compilation of Bell's manuscripts and photograph from her archives ([www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk](http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk)), constitutes another valuable source of information about this unique woman and her many activities. In spite of this wealth of information, however, few have attempted to provide significant details on an aspect of Gertrude Bell's life that frequently dictated her travels and continued to be one of the main passions of her eventful life: archaeology. To be sure, Bell's biographers frequently describe some of the ancient sites that Bell reported and photographed during the course of her travels through parts of Lebanon, Syria, Turkey and Iraq, but they fail to ponder the significance of these antiquities and monuments, and the impact that her reports were to have on the future scholarship of Near and Middle Eastern archaeology and history.

My research, which has been funded by an Individual Research Grant by the British Institute for the Study of Iraq (formerly the British School of Archaeology in Iraq), is trying to fill that gap in the investigation of the life of Gertrude Bell by carrying out a detailed survey of her archaeological interests and activities. The bulk of this project has been to list and describe the antiquities that Bell reported and photographed over the course of her travels and to classify them according to their provenance, artefactual/architectural types and their presumed date.

Special focus is being placed on Gertrude Bell's 1909 trip down the Euphrates from Syria into Iraq. During this journey she was particularly interested in the region's archaeology, and took careful notes and photographs of the antiquities that she encountered. In addition to classifying and describing all of the sites and monuments that Bell reported over the course of this trip, I am considering her interpretation of these items and their postulated significance

in the wider historical-cultural context in which they appeared. My research is also endeavouring to describe the extent to which the ancient monuments described by Bell influenced later generations of archaeologists who have been prompted to explore sites and antiquities because of her reports, or have benefited from her descriptions of monuments which have since deteriorated or which no longer exist.

The culmination of Gertrude Bell's 1909 trip to Mesopotamia is her visit to the desert palace of Ukhaidhir, the focus of much of my current investigations. Ukhaidhir is located in the remote desert wastes to the west of the city of Kerbela in southern Iraq and about 120 miles south-west of Baghdad. Since nobody had ever carried out a systematic study of its architecture, date and function, Bell set about the task herself, the end result being a sumptuously illustrated publication on the palace and mosque of Ukhaidhir, which appeared in 1914 (Bell 1914). Ukhaidhir is actually a beautiful example of an early Abbasid palace, dating to the late part of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. In its design and construction, this palace follows a local tradition which derived much of its inspiration from earlier pre-Islamic Near Eastern architectural models, a significant feature perceptively noted by Bell. Interestingly, for some of Bell's conclusions concerning Ukhaidhir one can note the influence of German archaeologists, several of whom were working at Babylon and Assur at the time of Bell's research, and with whom she discussed her findings and plans. Walter Andrae, the director of the German excavations at the site of Assur, was particularly helpful, and his extensive knowledge of the development of architecture in Near Eastern antiquity propelled Bell to trace that castle's origins, not only back to the pre-Islamic Sassanian period, but to even earlier Hittite, Babylonian and Persian traditions.

Another important aspect of my research on Gertrude Bell will entail travel to Syria to locate Bell's reports on archaeological remains, and to document and photograph their current state of preservation and archaeological context. Fortunately, in addition to the research grant from BISI, a Hampton Research Grant from the University of British Columbia will provide funding for photographic equipment, additional travel costs, and a surveyor who will accompany me on my trip. Such an initiative will highlight the impact that modern development, such as intensive agriculture, increased settlement size, and the construction of hydro-electric dams along the Euphrates River, have had on antiquities over the past 100 years in Syria, and to increase awareness as to the plight of these valuable testimonies of past cultures before they disappear altogether. Investigations will be primarily focused on antiquities reported during Bell's trip down the length of the Euphrates River of Syria and not those observed further into Iraq, which will be the subject of a later investigation. This trip is planned for the Spring of 2009, exactly 100 years after Bell made her journey in 1909.

An interesting line of inquiry which has arisen from my current research concerns the strong degree to which Gertrude Bell's archaeological knowledge influenced her political activities, especially those pertaining to her

involvement in the creation and governance of the new state of Iraq. The following paraphrases part of the report which I presented on Gertrude Bell at a special conference entitled, “Do We Understand the Middle East?” hosted by the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies in London on April 18-19<sup>th</sup>, 2008:

Although Gertrude Bell’s political responsibilities entailed writing up Iraq’s new constitution, drawing up its borders, and helping to select its first king, her understanding and interest in Iraq’s eventful past continued to have a hold on her, and indeed, it greatly affected her vision of that country’s future and her role within it. She realized that archaeological knowledge could be utilized in the political arena, for it called attention to the great antiquity of Mesopotamia, and had the effect of empowering its new citizens with the sense that they were the inheritors of a country that was richly steeped in a glorious, and at times, unified past. To that end, Bell’s appointment as Iraq’s honorary Director of Archaeology, and to head the Department of Antiquities in 1922, was entirely appropriate, since no one knew the country’s rich history better than she, and could relate its stories in a way that was both captivating and meaningful to its new citizens. Bell’s new museum would bring together all of the antiquities of Iraq, and present them in a continuous progression through time, giving visitors a feeling of pride from the long and ancient heritage of their past.

We also see Bell using her knowledge of Mesopotamia’s past to empower the new king of Iraq, Faisal. Given that he was the son of King Hussein of the Hejaz, the Hashemite sharif of Mecca, he was an outsider to Iraq, and had only a slight familiarity with the history and archaeology of the country which he had been appointed to rule. Even so, Bell was aware that some of Iraq’s monuments held special significance and could be used to impress upon the king his legitimate claim to the country’s throne. One monument that was particularly appropriate in this regard was the great palace at the site of Ctesiphon. This had served as part of the imperial palatial complex of the Sassanians, who had ruled over Ctesiphon between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, the giant brick vault probably serving as the place of the ruler’s Throne Room. Ctesiphon fell to the Muslims during the Islamic conquest in 637 AD and so it is this victory that Bell felt would hold special meaning to Iraq’s new Arab prince. In August 1921, only a few weeks before his coronation, Bell took Faisal out to the site of Ctesiphon. After a breakfast spread out on fine carpets in the shadow of the palace, she led him into the lofty edifice and recounted its rich history to him. She writes of the account in a letter to her father: “It was wonderfully interesting showing that splendid place to Faisal. He is an inspiring tourist. After we had reconstructed the palace and seen Khosroes sitting in it, I took him into the high windows to the South, when we could see the Tigris, and told him the Arab conquest as Tabari records it, the fording of the river and the rest of the magnificent tale. It was the tale of his own people. You can imagine what it was like reciting it to him. I don’t know which of us was the more thrilled.” (Letter of Gertrude Bell to her father, Hugh Bell, August 6, 1921: <http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk>). So with this visit,



Bell was surely attempting to drive home the message to the future king that he could make Iraq's future as great as its past.

In all, research on Gertrude Bell's archaeological achievements has generated a massive and rich quantity of material, highlighting the incredible breadth of this remarkable woman's knowledge of antiquity and its significance to the modern world. I am looking forward to my continuing research on Bell, and I hope to provide a final report on this subject upon the completion of my 2009 Spring journey down the Syrian Euphrates.

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*Lisa Cooper*

(Editor's note: Dr Cooper, Associate Professor, Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies, University of British Columbia, participated in the BRISMES sponsored conference 'Do We Understand The Middle East' which took place at SOAS London Middle East Institute in April with a paper 'Past and Present Entwined: Gertrude Bell as archaeologist and shaper of modern Mesopotamia'

### Literary texts from Ur

The BISI kindly made a grant from its budget for 2007/8 towards the costs of the publication of my work on the literary texts from the city of Ur, excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley in the years 1923–1934 and published by Cyril Gadd in *Ur Excavations Texts VI* parts 1–2.

The tablets belong mostly to the Old Babylonian period (c.2000–1600 BC) and are of interest as providing Sumerian literature from a tradition distinct from the well-known Nippur tradition. Unfortunately Gadd's work was done when he was older, his eye less sharp and his hand less steady, and as a result continued examination of the tablets suggested that there was considerable room for improvement on Gadd's copies. I have been engaged in a thorough re-examination of these tablets over the past 15 years, and the BSAI made a grant towards an earlier stage of my work.

The final result will be a publication, *Literarische Texte aus Ur: Kollationen und Kommentare zu UET 6/1-2*, in the German series UAVA (Untersuchungen zur Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie), edited by Professor Walther Sallaberger in Munich and to be published by Walter de Gruyter later this year. The book will contain all my collected comments on the more than 400 tablets copied by Gadd, with copies of many shorter passages, and in some cases complete copies of tablets where necessary. The book will serve as a handbook to all those Sumerologists working on the texts from Ur. For those who do not read Sumerian, translations of many of the texts, based on earlier publications of sources from Nippur, Ur and elsewhere, can be conveniently found on the website of Oxford University's *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* edited by the late Dr. Jeremy Black and colleagues <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk>>.

It is a sad fact that the Ur excavation records do not give sufficient detail about the find-spots of the tablets, and Woolley's published accounts of the relevant buildings, their stratigraphy and history, leave many questions unanswered, so that we are unable confidently to resolve the arguments about whether the tablets under discussion were or were not parts of individual libraries or schools, although some obvious groups can be reassembled including the distinctive tablets of the Old Babylonian scribe Damiq-ilishu.

On the other hand throughout my work I tried to pay attention to those physical aspects of tablets, their preparation, handling and recycling, which have so often been ignored by Assyriologists. One recent finding from this exercise may be of more general interest.

Many of the Ur tablets have scratch-marks on the surface, generally dismissed as "damage", and which I myself often thought of as the scribe idly tapping at the surface of the tablet with a long finger-nail (and described in my notes in German as "Fingernagelfeld"). When the time came to complete the publication I looked around for someone who could give a more expert opinion and was directed to Dr Theya Molleson of the Natural History Museum, who had worked with the BM on the human bones from the Ur excavations. She kindly came to look at my scratch-marks, and declared them to be "trace fossils", equivalent to the tracks of animals and insects which geologists find laid down in fossilised mud levels from 100 million years ago. For samples see on the internet the Trace Fossil Image Database of Dr Anthony J. at Emory University, Atlanta. Unfortunately no similar website seems to exist to record all the myriad tracks made by the fauna of today, but I was lucky to be directed onwards to Professor Richard Bromley at the University of Copenhagen. He examined the photographs taken for me by Dr Jon Taylor, and suggested that the scratch-marks were the underground tracks of cicada nymphs (the larvae of the insects which in North America magically reappear from underground every 17 years).

Once we had a name for the tracks we started to find them elsewhere, and Christopher Walker reported finding them all over the Late Babylonian letters he was examining from Sippar. But we remained a little cautious – while there are no doubt numerous varieties of cicada, what does one know about cicadas in southern Iraq? Luckily we hit upon a reference in H.R. Hall's *A Season's Work at Ur* (1930), in which he recounts the difficult time he had during a brief trial excavation at the nearby site of Abu Shahrain (Eridu): "I have heard Shahrain called 'Nowawis' myself; and the name is said to mean 'grasshoppers' and to refer to the numerous cicadas which fill the air with their strident shrilling there and on the desert around in the spring and summer mornings. I have been nearly deafened by them in May." (p. 188). And (p. 225), "I was awakened every day to the continuous shrilling of millions of cicadas in the sage-brush of the surrounding steppe: an incredible noise, thin but penetrating, and ceaseless till the heat began to be felt and even the cicadas took their siesta." Hall might have been surprised to know that the ancestral nymphs of these cicadas had been digging through the tablets at Ur during their nearly 4000 years buried underground, and leaving their mark for the education of present-day archaeologists.

*Marie-Christine Ludwig*

### **Christianity in Iraq V Seminar Day, 5th April, 2008**

The Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre at the *School of Oriental and African Studies* (SOAS) in London was the venue for the *Christianity in Iraq V Seminar Day* held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2008 which discussed the Syriac Bible in Iraq and its historic and modern legacy. The day was held under the aegis of the *Centre of Eastern and Orthodox Christianity* (CEOC), Department for the Study of Religions, SOAS, where Dr. Erica C.D. Hunter is Teaching Fellow and Research Associate in Eastern Christianity.

The Director of SOAS, Prof. Paul Webley, opened the day. Dr. Ted Proferes, Head of the Department for the Study of Religions also spoke about the teaching and research profile of Eastern Christianity. Dr. Eleanor Coghill of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq addressed its interests in Iraq, as well as drawing attention to the programme of bringing Iraqi scholars to England for training and the current fund-raising campaign.

The morning session of papers on the Syriac Bible commenced after a maqam recital by Khyam Allami (Department of Music, SOAS). Dr. George Kiraz (Piscataway, USA), *The Syriac Bible from Ancient Codices to Electronic Verses*, showed the extraordinary advances that have been made in the computer studies of the Peshitta. Prof. Bas Ter Haar Romeny (Leiden), *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, gave an overview of the development of the different Syriac Bible texts. Turning to the international legacy of the Peshitta, Dr. Istvan Perczel (Tübingen-Budapest), *Syriac Bible Manuscripts in India*, discussed the findings of a project that is recording the

collections of Syriac manuscripts in Indian repositories. The final paper of the morning, by Mr. Mark Dickens (SOAS, London), *The Syriac Bible in Central Asia*, demonstrated the extraordinary capacity of the Syriac Bible to be translated into a variety of languages, including Soghdian and Old Turkic. The morning concluded with a brief presentation by Dr. Basil As-Souffi on the current project of the Syrian Orthodox Church to build its own church in London. He also gave shocking news to the audience: the shooting of a Syrian Orthodox priest that day in Baghdad.

The afternoon session commenced after another maqam recital by Khyam Allami. Rev. Khoshaba Georges (Ancient Church of the East) spoke about *The Peshitta Aramaic Bible* and its unique heritage. Dr. Erica Hunter read the paper by Mr. Robin beth Shamuel titled *The Syriac Bible in the Private Assyrian schools in Iraq*. Mr. Beth Shamuel, formerly of Baghdad and now a doctoral student at the University of Leiden, The Netherlands, had hoped to attend the day but could not obtain a visa in time. Another musical recital, this time of Aramaic offertory hymns, was given by Shammas Tony of the Syrian Catholic church preceding the paper by Dr. Joseph Seferta on *The Jesuit Contribution to Christian Education in Iraq*. Mr. Ninos Warda (Assyrian Council of Europe) spoke about the current plight of the Christian communities in his paper, *Assyrians in Iraq: from Liberation to Annihilation*. The final paper, *The Exodus of the Iraqi Christians: Biblical and Spiritual Significance*, by Dr. Shafiq Abouzayd (Oxford), raised the question of martyrdom in the current climate.

The critical condition of the Christians in Iraq was reiterated by Dr. Laila al-Roomi who spoke on behalf of the Mandaean community. The assaults that the Mandaeans experience almost defy belief. Like Dr. as-Souffi, Dr. al-Roomi imparted awful news: a recent rocket attack on a house in Kut that had killed 10 members, including young children, of a Mandaean family. There are now estimated to be under 3,000 Mandaeans in Iraq .

The closing speech was given by The Rev. Canon Antony Ball on behalf of The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association, one of the sponsors of the day. Its support, together with that of The British Institute for the Study of Iraq, make the Christianity in Iraq Seminar Days possible, by defraying the considerable costs involved in its organisation. As in previous years, the day generated much interest and was attended by over eighty people, including many Iraqis.

The annual Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day is now well established and a sixth event is planned for April 2009.

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

## OTHER REPORTS

### Nineveh in A New Era

Since the advent of systematic archaeological investigation in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Nineveh has remained one of the most important repositories of ancient cultural heritage in the world. For much of the first millennium B.C. the city of Nineveh was the epicentre of cultural, economic and political life in the Near East. Moreover, some of the most prominent pioneering archaeologists, such as A.H. Layard, R. Campbell Thompson and Max Mallowan, contributed to the exploration of the site and the rich archaeological past contained within it. Tragically, today the 750 hectare ancient site and its immediate surroundings are being destroyed by the rapid development of the city of Mosul, and the war in Iraq has brought new levels of destruction to the 160 year history of archaeological excavation in this once great imperial capital.

With generous funding of £12,500 from the British Universities Iraq Consortium and support from the British Institute for the Study of Iraq, the Archaeology Department at Durham University has been able to initiate a project seeking to address the professional isolation and loss of resources burdening archaeologists in Iraq, and to help rebuild the capacities of the Higher Education sector in that country. Staff at Durham University have begun a programme of collaboration with Iraqi scholars involving interaction, information sharing, resource building and education. The first component of this collaborative effort was an international workshop held in Durham from 17-20 December 2008, entitled *Nineveh in a New Era*. At this workshop, organised by Tony and Eleanor Wilkinson, over forty archaeologists from Iraq, the United States, Europe and the UK gathered to discuss their work relating to the site of Nineveh, bringing together some of the leading archaeologists directly responsible for our current understanding of this important site. As expected, the organizing topic proved to be a robust platform for discussion and debate, resulting in a lively and productive workshop.

The workshop allowed scholars operating in overlapping fields of research to consolidate past work, share new information, and define goals, needs, and opportunities for future research, collaboration, and publication, on both institutional and individual levels. For a variety of reasons, and despite some considerable effort, many of the Iraqi colleagues invited -- including some currently living outside of Iraq -- were not able to attend, a fact which only emphasizes the continuing need for establishing and maintaining new lines of communication and resource-sharing. Our colleagues from Iraq who did make it were able to attend only after the arduous task of securing necessary permissions and visas, involving long, complex (not to mention potentially dangerous) journeys and dealings with officials in both Baghdad and Amman.

The success of the workshop was in large part due to the attendance of two senior archaeologists who continue work at Nineveh, Dr. Salim Youniss Hussein, Inspector General of Archaeology, Nineveh Province, and Mr. Mozahim Mahmoud Hussein, Director of Archaeological Investigations in Nineveh, both with the Iraq State Board of Antiquities and Heritage. We were also fortunate in that we were joined by Dr. Abbas Al-Hussainy, formerly the Director of the Iraq SBAH, and currently Head of the Department of Archaeology, Diwaniya University, Iraq, who is spending a year as a Visiting Research Fellow at University College London. All three colleagues deserve a great deal of thanks for their interest and their efforts to attend. The workshop also benefited enormously from the contributions of several Iraqi ex-patriots now living in the UK, and we would especially like to Dr. Lamia Al-Gailani Werr, Dr. Farouk Al-Rawi, and Dr. Ghanim Wahida, all of whom brought their unique, invaluable first-hand knowledge of Nineveh to the workshop, in addition to giving shape to the workshop's objectives and providing crucial logistical support and advice before, during and after the workshop.

The *Nineveh in a New Era* programme consisted of three days of presentations, theme-based workshops, and discussion sessions. Given the subject matter and the amount of attention Nineveh can easily generate we anticipated considerable public interest, but our intention was not to draw a massive turn-out. On the contrary, our goal was to create a genuinely *working* event, small enough so that those attending could be active participants in it, and so that meaningful exchange could occur unfettered by a tightly choreographed programme geared toward public consumption. Consequently, invitations to presenters were extended to a small but representative group ranging from independent researchers early in their career to senior retired scholars, all of whom are impacting in some significant way on the archaeology of Nineveh, either through new research or through their unique knowledge of important past work at the site. The entire programme was free and open to the public, and a wide range of interested people attended from the local community, from within the UK, and even from further abroad. In addition to presented papers, educational workshop sessions were led by professionals on topics including: the application of innovative digital technologies; internet-based open access; and Geographical Information Science (GIS) in Nineveh-related projects. The first day's programme was devoted to the presentation of papers by invited scholars on topics relating to Nineveh.

While one objective of the workshop was to bring new visibility to past and present archaeological conditions within Nineveh and its region, equally important was the need to highlight new, related, research projects being conducted by independent scholars throughout the world today. Summaries and images from the workshop will be presented on the website of the University of California at Berkeley Digital Nineveh Archive, currently in production. This project is multi-institutional and multinational, based in Berkeley, California and in Durham. One of the problems archaeologists working on Nineveh-related issues have had is the relative obscurity of the

work of past Iraqi archaeologists, largely due to a shortage of easily available published reports from within Iraq. The UC Berkeley Digital Nineveh Archives Project is aiming to help correct this situation, by providing an internet-based venue for the publication and dissemination of any type of record relating to the site, whether text (tabular or narrative) or image (photo, map or other illustration), within an online searchable archive. The website will be increasingly bilingual (Arabic/English), and is intended to allow archaeologists, especially Iraqis, to be stake-holders in the dissemination of their own work, as new data can be uploaded and edited remotely by contributors. The data will be available to anyone with access to the internet. The Durham workshop, therefore, while being an opportunity for long-separated colleagues to finally make contact, also allowed us to open a path for digital sharing between data-holders, while at the same time generating new research for inclusion on the website. More information on the UC Berkeley DNA Project will be presented in a paper at the upcoming ICAANE conference in Rome, on Friday 9 May.

In the second talk of the workshop, Lamia Al-Gailani Werr addressed the wealth of information generated by Iraqi archaeologists in Nineveh during the 1950s through the 1980s, as published in the journal *Sumer*. Her talk highlighted the great number of diverse projects that were conducted under the auspices of the Iraq State Department of Antiquities and Heritage, the University of Mosul, and the Mosul Museum, and it highlighted the issue of the lack of visibility of some important work in Nineveh. For most of these projects, the reports in *Sumer* represent the only remaining record. The last volume of *Sumer*, volume number 52, edited by Abbas Al-Hussainy, was published in 2002. It was not distributed, and remains in the storehouse of the Iraq museum. Dr. Al-Gailani Werr was involved in the early stages of rebuilding the Iraq Museum beginning in 2003, and her talk emphasized the extreme importance of preserving and disseminating any results from these data-rich Iraqi excavations.

The morning session was rounded out by talks from Joan Oates (who freely admitted being more closely associated with Nimrud in the past, but who was a most welcome interloper nonetheless), and Ghanim Wahida, who began working at Nineveh with Tariq Madhloom in 1965. Sharing some wonderful photographs and anecdotes invoking a few of the archaeologists working at Nineveh from the 1950s onwards, Dr. Oates summarised the pivotal role played by Tariq Madhloom in furthering our understanding of Nineveh and in spearheading efforts to protect the archaeological remains in it, efforts corroborated by Ghanim Wahida in his discussion of his own work in the monumental project excavating the Shamash Gate. In his discussion, Dr. Wahida described the ambitious programme for archaeological work laid out by Madhloom, realized by Iraqi projects under his direction and subsequently by others in Nineveh. His plan, which was initiated in 1965, was three-fold: first, to excavate and restore as many building as possible in the site; second, to stop the encroachment of urban sprawl; and lastly, to build a dig house. As Dr. Ghanim illustrated, all of these objectives were in large part accomplished,

and considering the relatively limited means and resources with which Dr. Madhloom was forced to contend, the quantity of work and the degree of progress achieved during his years of direction is laudable. Complementing the report on the Shamash Gate excavations, Farouk al-Rawi shed an entirely new light on the Iraqi excavations at the Adad Gate, which were conducted under his direction in the mid-1960s. Illustrating his points with images from his personal field notes, Dr. Al-Rawi presented a detailed account of the challenging efforts to not only excavate but to conserve the standing architecture of the gateway and its many extant details, such as the intricately constructed mudbrick arches, numerous human skeletons, and associated artefacts dating from the fall of Nineveh. Dr. Al-Rawi's discussion highlighted again the urgent need to consolidate, preserve and archive any available records of excavations by the Iraqi archaeologists in Nineveh, since these personal records are frequently the sole remaining documentation of significant and valuable data, and as time passes the likelihood of their loss increases inevitably.

The current state of cultural heritage in Iraq was addressed in an informative talk by Abbas Al-Hussainy. Illustrating his discussion with photographs taken recently throughout Iraq, Dr. Al-Hussainy relayed the destruction inflicted over the past few years upon some of the world's most significant monuments of Mesopotamian culture, and the scant work being done to counteract or stabilise the losses. The question of Nineveh's status as a World Heritage site was brought up, and Dr. Al-Hussainy reported that although it has been listed as a potential, no action had been taken to finalise it thus far. In discussion it was suggested that perhaps its status as a World Heritage site is questionable due to the amount of modern building within the ancient walls, and that one solution might be to declare only a relatively undisturbed part of the site – such as Kuyunjik mound – for the classification. Though the SBAH applied in 2000, Nineveh's status as a World Heritage Site remains "tentative".

Salim Youniss Hussein, Inspector General of Archaeology, Nineveh Province, SBAH, enlarged the regional scope of the workshop with his discussion of new results from the North Jazirah Ray survey and excavations of some thirty sites in the region of Nineveh. While heartening to see this important project continuing it was clear that -- particularly in the case of a regional project such as this -- the use of satellite imagery is critical to the progress of Iraqi archaeology, and the Iraqis urgently need the resources to access it as well as the training required to exploit its potentials. Mozahim Mahmoud Hussien, the Director of Archaeological Investigations, Nineveh in the SBAH, reported on the ongoing archaeological progress within the site of Nineveh, concentrating on the efforts to establish policies for protection of antiquities. Citing the many instances in which the SBAH successfully blocked development projects within Nineveh, such as roads, he was also able to describe in detail the conservation policies established by the SBAH and the restrictions in place against further construction, which include specific no-build zones around gateways, walls, and other archaeological features. Mr. Hussien's talk included some fascinating insights on the history and methodologies of some



of the Iraqi excavation and restoration projects in areas such as the Nergal, Mashki, Shamash and Adad gateways. He reports, however, that since 2003 unrestricted building has increased, in part because there is no strong authority in place able to stop it. In terms of recent archaeological work, there was little for Mr. Hussien to report on, since all archaeological investigation and restoration work in the site has come to a complete halt, a result of the combination of dangerous conditions in the field and an utter lack of resources for such work. Archaeologists in Nineveh, as in other parts of Iraq, are continuing to work but, for the most part, they are concentrating on work which can be done within their offices, at least until circumstances improve.

While one objective of the workshop was to bring new visibility to past and present archaeological conditions within Nineveh and its region, equally important was the need to highlight new, related, research projects being conducted by independent scholars throughout the world today. Some fresh and intriguing perspectives on the Assyrians were provided by Julian Reade (*The North Palace at Nineveh*), Mark Altaweel (*Transportation and the Human Ecology of Nineveh's Countryside: A Perspective on the Iron Age*), Davide Nadali (*The Narrative of Time in Sennacherib's South-West Palace*) and John MacGinnis (*Excavations at the Assyrian Site of Ziyaret Tepe in South-eastern Turkey*). The final morning of the workshop was devoted to a roundtable discussion, a very productive session in which were identified some specific directions for future research and collaboration, the likely requirements and problems involved, and some potential ways forward. Most importantly, a consensus was established which included the definition of collective goals, and some general points of agreement as to the nature, scope, and methodology for achieving them.

In sum, there is a strong shared interest in establishing collaborative links between all participants associated with institutions in Iraq, the UK, the US and Europe but there is a special interest in working together on a *personal* level between individuals who can sustain a commitment and move things forward. Many ideas and issues surrounding collaboration were brought up, and the following are some key points from this session:

1) Digitization and archival work:

Discussion centred around the problems of data ownership in within our respective government and institutional frameworks, the urgent need for funding, and the needs for training and equipment in Iraq. As an immediate, small-scale step forward, it was proposed that funds from the BUIC grant be made available to purchase digital equipment to allow some of our colleagues in Mosul, and their students or colleagues, to begin digitizing, preserving and disseminating their large collection of archaeological field records from work in and around Nineveh. This initial effort will be mainly for preservation, and eventually their assets could be included in the UC Berkeley Digital Nineveh Archives and potentially be made available online.

2) Training in digital media, GIS and remote sensing, digital archiving:

Focus was placed on identifying funding opportunities and creating working groups for exploring further these possibilities:

- holding a workshop outside Iraq in, for example, Amman for students and other professionals
- bringing Iraqi students to study in the UK or US
- bringing Iraqi scholars to the UK or US with visiting fellowships
- individual collaborative projects

Several grant programs have already been identified and some workshop participants expressed interest in exploring further the possibilities of applying for funds within the next year.

3) Making a general map and database for Iraq - in particular, southern Iraq lacks substantive *recent* survey records. This should be a priority of any GIS project.

4) Identifying others who have worked in the region and who are interested in becoming part of our collaborative community, and working together singly or jointly on small research projects. It was agreed that any future projects should not aim for sweeping general agendas, but rather should emphasize a very specific (ideally Nineveh-related) agenda.

5) It was agreed that opportunities should be made available to students and/or professionals throughout Iraq, not only in Mosul.

This international event resulted in not only a new collective awareness of the current state of cultural heritage in Nineveh and its region, but also the creation of a community of colleagues who are now intent on continuing efforts to share knowledge, open new pathways to collaboration, and bring new vigour to the archaeology of Nineveh and of Iraq. We are very grateful to the British Council Iraq, the British Universities Iraq Consortium, the United States National Endowment for the Humanities, and to Durham University for enabling this event.

The workshop would not have been possible without the personal assistance, fortitude, and expertise of Nadja Qaisi, Administrator at the Centre for British Archaeology in the Levant (CBRL), who adroitly guided us through many logistical complexities from her post in Amman. We extend a warm note of thanks to her, to CBRL and to its Director, Bill Finlayson, for all their efforts on our behalf. They have ably stepped in to fill the void left by the dissolution of the British School in Baghdad. We would also like to thank Dr. Hassan Al-Mufti, Higher Education Project Manager at the British Council – Iraq, who spent a great deal of time and effort assisting our Iraqi colleagues in Baghdad, and who provided an invaluable link in the communications leading up to the workshop.

***Eleanor Wilkinson, Durham University***  
16 April 2008

## **Declaration on the Iraq Observatory at the first Middle East-African Regional Meeting of the International Astronomical Union, Cairo, April 2008**

The participants of the first MEARIM, comprising representatives from 41 countries of the Middle East and Africa as well as astronomers from other parts of the world, have discussed the situation of the damaged observatory on Mount Korek in Iraqi Kurdistan. This is an ambitious observatory, comprising a 3.5 meter optical telescope, a 1.25 meter telescope, and a 30 meter Radio Telescope for millimeter wavelength. The participants consider that such an observatory would be an important asset for the development of astronomy in the Middle East & Africa Region.

The participants recommend that:

- a) A mission of experts be organized to assess the state of the installations and evaluate the cost of bringing it to working condition, as well as the cost of operating it. This mission could also propose more cost effective and up to date alternatives for the Observatory. The Iraqi National Academy of Science could organize such a team from the International Scientific Community, Iraq and the Middle East to carry out this assessment, with the help of the IAU and other relevant regional and international organizations
- b) It is hoped that the result of this mission is such as to encourage the rebuilding of an Observatory at this site, that means be found, at the Iraqi national level, and/or at the regional level, and/or at the international level, to achieve this aim.
- c) The participants of MEARIM request that the IAU helps monitoring the evaluation of the present state of the Observatory and support the search for means to rebuild it.

*Athem Al Sabti*

## **The Christian Library from Turfan:**

The Arts and Humanities Research Council have provided funding of £650,000 for this project that will last for 3.5 years. Dr. Erica C.D. Hunter, the Principal Investigator (Dept. for the Study of Religions, SOAS) will be joined by Prof. Nicholas Sims-Williams FBA and Prof. Peter Zieme. Mr. Mark Dickens (Clare Hall, Cambridge), currently completing his doctorate, will be Research Assistant. The project will be affiliated with the Dept. for the Study of Religions, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, SOAS.

In the opening decade of the twentieth century, the German Turfan Expedition unearthed a library at the monastery site of Shuipang near Bulayiq that yielded 850 manuscripts written in Syriac, Christian Sogdian and Christian Old Turkic as well as several manuscripts in New Persian. Today these manuscripts are held in the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, the

Staatsbibliothek, Potsdamer Strasse, Berlin and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst at Dahlem, Berlin.

The texts, dating from the early medieval period (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries), encompass many genres: liturgical texts, Bible readings, hymns and psalters, as well as ascetical texts including translations from Evagrius Ponticus, the *Apophthegmata Patrum* and East Syrian writers. The lives of John of Dailam and Serapion, the legend of Bishop Barshabba who brought Christianity from the Sassanid empire to Marv as well as a history of the city of Nisibis uphold the culturo-religious connection between the Turfan community and the East Syrian Church.

The manuscripts will be published as separate language catalogues in the Union Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts in German Collections (Katalogisierung der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland [KOHD]) a national project of the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen (Director, Dr. O. Feistel, Staatsbibliothek, Berlin). In addition, the project will address various issues, including the transmission of texts between different languages (Syriac, Soghdian and Old Turkic), the usage of liturgical and vernacular languages at Turfan and finally, the links that were maintained with the Mesopotamian homeland of the Church of the East whose patriarchate was at Baghdad.

As well as its vigorous publication schedule, the project will also host annual workshops for interested scholars.

*Erica Hunter*

**NON BISI PUBLICATIONS** - New Publication from NABU Booksellers & Publishers: A.Y. AHMAD & J.N. POSTGATE, with a contribution by D. COLLON: *Archives from the Domestic Wing of the North-West Palace at Kalhu/Nimrud* (Edubba 10). 2007. ISBN 978-1-89775-10-0. Pp.xxi+83, Pls.35. Price £25. 55 legal and administrative tablets were discovered in 1989, in Room 57 above Tomb III of the Assyrian queens. 34 of the tablets are published here for the first time. The documents are mostly purchases of slaves or land. They date from 844 to 736 BC.

Order from: NABU Booksellers and Publishers, 147 Valley Drive, London NW9 9NT, UK. <nabu@werr.globalnet.co.uk>

### **BOOK DONATIONS FOR THE BISI/BISI LIBRARY**

*Land Tenure and Social Stratification in Ancient Mesopotamia: Third Millennium Sumer before the Ur III Dynasty* by Eric L.Cripps, BAR S1676, 2007; ISBN: 9781407301136

*Elam – Eine alte Kultur im Iran* by Heday Seyed-Ashraf BOD 2008: ISBN 978-3-8334-7336-4

## **BISI LECTURES & FUTURE EVENTS**

**27 May 2008** at 5 p.m. at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford – Lecture by **Dr Abbas Al-Hussainy (Al Qadassiyah University)**, and **Professor Roger Matthews (UCL)** on ***The Present State of Archaeological Heritage in Iraq*** in the Headley Lecture Theatre, Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street, Oxford OX1 2PH. Enquiries: Department of Antiquities, Ashmolean Museum. E-mail: antiquities@ashmus.ox.ac.uk Tel: +44 (0)1865 78020

**11 June 2008** at 5.30 p.m. Bonham Carter Forum and Lecture by **Professor Elizabeth Stone** on ***The View from Space: Site Looting in Southern Iraq and Prospects for Understanding Mesopotamian Settlement Patterning***. (Please note change in title.) at the British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH. Please check for future updates on this lecture on the BISI website [www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/](http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/)

**19 June 2008** BISI Appeal Talk **William Dalrymple** on ***From the Holy Mountain: A Journey in the Shadow of Byzantium*** jointly with the British Museum's Department of the Middle East at the British Museum Venue: BP Lecture Theatre, The British Museum. For further information, please contact Joan Porter MacIver, BISI Administrator, BISI or telephone 020 7969 5274 or 01440 785 244. An invitation form for tickets is available on the BISI website's Events page. (Tickets £15 & £10 concessions)

**27 - 29 November 2008** - SAS Conference ***Death, Burial, and the Transition to the Afterlife in Arabia and Adjacent Region*** The Society for Arabian Studies' next biennial conferences, entitled "Death, Burial, and the Transition to the Afterlife in Arabia and Adjacent Regions" will be held at the British Museum, London, from November 27th-29th, 2008. A provisional, abstracts, and a conference registration form can be found on the Society's <http://www.societyforarabianstudies.org/>.

This conference is sponsored in part by a BISI Conference Grant.

**11 December 2008 BISI AGM and Lecture by Professor James W. Allan (Lecture title tbc).** Venue: J.Z. Young Lecture Theatre, Anatomy Building, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT

### **BISI & AFFILIATED 2009 EVENTS**

**Saturday 7 February 2009** Joint Birkbeck and British Institute for the Study of Iraq study day is the fourth in the Mesopotamia series – ***From Babylon to Amarna: Ancient Middle Eastern Interactions in the Days of Akhenaten***

**SEE DETAILS FOLLOWING PAGE**

***From Babylon to Amarna: Ancient Middle Eastern Interactions in the Days of Akhenaten - Saturday 7 February 2009***

The 14th century BC was a period of vibrant cultural relations throughout the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean. Exotic goods were widely traded and triggered distinctive international styles, while the Mesopotamian cuneiform writing system was adopted in large parts of the Middle East to write local languages. Babylonian, which was the international language of the age, was also the language of the Amarna letters of Pharaoh Akhenaten. These letters have been the most famous witness of this dynamic time since their discovery in the late 1880s. Important new discoveries in Middle Eastern archaeology now allow us to bring this fascinating international age into sharper focus. This joint Birkbeck and British Institute for the Study of Iraq study day is the fourth in the Mesopotamia series. The Egypt Exploration Society has also joined us as a co-sponsor for the day. Organised and chaired by Mariana Giovino and Frans van Koppen, Birkbeck College, Faculty of Lifelong Learning. Venue: Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London. Speakers to be announced. Enrolment opens at Birkbeck in April 2008. Places are limited so early enrolment is recommended. Enquires about these courses are welcome. Please contact the Archaeology Desk on: FLL Archaeology, Birkbeck College, 26 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DQ; tel: 020 7631 6627; e-mail: [archaeology@fce.bbk.ac.uk](mailto:archaeology@fce.bbk.ac.uk). To order your FLL prospectus which will confirm times, fees, venues and details about how to enrol, please ring 0845 601 0174 or email [info@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:info@bbk.ac.uk). Please make sure you ask for a FLL pre-degree/short course prospectus for 2007/8.

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**ArtRole presents *An insight into current Iraq development of art, culture and education in Kurdistan-Iraq***

A programme of talks by Anne Bean, Richard Wilson, Clare Charnley, Susan Meiselas, Nancy Buchanan and Adalet R. Garmiany

This three-day programme of presentations offers a unique opportunity for audiences to hear the artists recounting their fascinating journey through Kurdistan-Iraq in November 2007, as part of ArtRole's exchange programme with Iraq. The artists will share their impressions and disclose plans for their new projects in the region. The talks will be followed by an open discussion between artists, organisers and audience.

American photographer Susan Meiselas will launch the 2nd edition of her book 'Kurdistan: in the Shadow of History', a compelling and exhaustive photo documentary on this region. The programme at Yorkshire Sculpture Park will be accompanied by a documentary on the artists' journey to Iraq, as well as an experimental music/sound event by Richard Wilson, Anne Bean, Adalet R. Garmiany and UK-based sound artist Chris Gladwin.

## ArtRole SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The events are free and open to the public.

Toynbee Studios, London

Friday 16th May 2008, 7 - 9pm

in association with Artsadmin and the Live Art Development Agency

28 Commercial Street, London E1 6AB.

Due to limited capacity RSVP is essential to [manick@artsadmin.co.uk](mailto:manick@artsadmin.co.uk)

[www.artsadmin.co.uk](http://www.artsadmin.co.uk)

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield

Saturday 17th May 2008, 11am - 4pm

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

West Bretton, Wakefield, WF4 4LG

(Booking: 01924 832631 / [helen.pheby@ysp.co.uk](mailto:helen.pheby@ysp.co.uk))

[www.ysp.co.uk](http://www.ysp.co.uk)

Ferens Gallery, Hull

Sunday 18th May 2008, 1.30 - 3.30pm

The Ferens Gallery

Queen Victoria Square, Hull HU1 3RA

[www.hullcc.gov.uk](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk)

For more information please contact: [info@artrole.org](mailto:info@artrole.org) Tel:+44(0)7745830383

**ArtRole** is a UK – based organisation created in 2004, with the aim of building a cultural bridge between the Middle East and the West and bringing about mutual understanding and public awareness in both regions, through the development of international culture and contemporary art exchanges with the Middle East and the creation of a network of artists, curators and academics from both areas. [www.artrole.org](http://www.artrole.org)

These presentations are in association with Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Live Art Development Agency, Artsadmin and Ferens Gallery and are supported by Arts Council England, the **British Institute for the Study of Iraq** and Hull City Arts Unit.

**FORTHCOMING 2008 BISI PUBLICATION** *New Light on Nimrud – Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference 11th -13<sup>th</sup> March 2002*

Edited by J.E. Curtis, H. McCall, D. Collon and L. al-Gailani Werr

with 34 contributing papers. Pp xviii, 297, 16 plans and colour plates.

Price tbc. This publication will be available in 2008 from OXBOW Books

[www.oxbowbooks.com](http://www.oxbowbooks.com) ISBN 978-0-903472-24-1

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# BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ

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- |   |            |
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\* All full members paying by standing order from a UK bank account receive a £2 annual discount. Paying by standing order is a considerable help to BISI – Thank you.

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### BISI Membership Benefits

- Two BISI Newsletters
- 20% discount on BISI occasional publications
- Invitations to three BISI lectures and receptions in London (without fees)
- Invitations to BISI special events and joint study days as available (fees may apply)
- BISI Annual Report and Accounts
- Full voting rights at the BISI AGM in person or by postal ballot

### How to Become a Member of BISI

Please post a completed Membership Request Form **and** accompanying Membership Payment Form to the Administrator. Our Membership year starts in January and we send renewal notices the previous November. You are very welcome to become a Member at any time during the year and will receive the appropriate journals for that year.

Further information, including discounts for Members resident in Iraq: Mrs JP MacIver, BISI Administrator, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7969 5274  
Email: [bisi@britac.ac.uk](mailto:bisi@britac.ac.uk) Website: [www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq](http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq)

# **BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ**

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- A = Member of the Appeal Committee
- D = Member of Development Committee
- F = Member of Finance Committee
- P = Member of Publications Committee
- R = Member of Fieldwork and Research Committee
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# BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ RESEARCH GRANTS

The Institute promotes, supports and undertakes research on Iraq and neighbouring countries. Its academic coverage includes anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, languages and related disciplines within the arts, humanities, and social sciences from the earliest times until the present.

## **BISI RESEARCH GRANTS – NEXT DEADLINE 31 OCTOBER 2008**

The Institute invites funding applications twice a year for grants in aid of research or for the organisation of academic conferences. All applications and references must be received by 31 October in 2008, and thereafter by **31 January or 31 October** in any given year. Awards will normally fall within a limit of £4000, though more substantial awards may be made.

Applicants must be residents of the UK or, exceptionally, other individuals whose academic research closely coincides with that of the BISI. Two academic references are required. For student applicants one referee must be your academic advisor. (If your advisor is a member of the BISI Fieldwork and Research Committee, a different referee must be selected.) No grants are made to support academic fees and no applicant may receive funding from the British Academy and the BISI for the same research proposal.

Applications are welcomed to support research or conferences on Iraq, neighbouring countries, and the Gulf, in any field of the humanities or social sciences, concerned with any time period from prehistory to the present day. Applicants will be informed of the decision of Council concerning their grant application by early April or early January, depending upon the date of submission.

In addition to individual research grant requests, the Institute particularly welcomes funding applications for pilot projects preliminary to larger research projects on Iraq and neighbouring countries. The Institute can offer assistance in drafting a full research proposal to submit jointly to other funding bodies. For more information about this scheme, please contact the BISI Administrator.

Details of the requirements and conditions of grants, as well as an application form, are available from the BISI Administrator, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, UK e-mail: [bisi@britac.ac.uk](mailto:bisi@britac.ac.uk) or on the BISI website:

**<http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/>**

Tel. + 44 (0) 20 7969 5274 or Fax. + 44 (0) 20 7969 5401

# **BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**

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## **NEXT DEADLINE 15 OCTOBER 2008**

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 will normally be for an amount up to £500, although more substantial grants may be made if merited.

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.

BISI considers applications for Development Grants twice yearly. The deadlines for applications and references are 15 April and 15 October. BISI will let applicants know the decision concerning their application by early July or early January respectively. In special circumstances BISI will consider urgent applications at other times.

For queries, grant conditions, and an application form please see:

BISI Website: **[www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/](http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/)**

or contact:

Mrs Joan Porter MacIver, Administrator

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