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The next BISI Newsletter will be published in the spring 2012. Brief contributions are welcomed on recent research, publications, members' news and events. They should be sent to the BISI by e-mail (bisi@britac.ac.uk) to arrive by 15 April 2012. The BISI Administrator, Joan Porter MacIver, edits the Newsletter with kind assistance from others.

(Photos are taken by the Editor unless otherwise noted.)

Cover: Carved ivory plaque from Nimrud showing a winged sphinx with apron and crown in the Egyptian style. 8th – 7th century BC. Phoenician style

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The last few months have been exciting as activity steadily resumes in Iraq, at least in the north-eastern regions for the time being, including a visit to Sulaimaniyah by the Chairman and Dr Wendy Matthews, both of Reading University (p. 7), a trip by Dr Joan Oates to the Shanidar Caves with a team led by Professor Graeme Barker of Cambridge University (p. 8), and a survey by Dr Karen Radner and Dr Mark Altaweel of UCL in the Shahrizor region (p. 10). The Shahrizor Projects will be presented at a conference, sponsored by BISI and LCANE, at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL on 19 December (p. 31). After an absence on the ground in Iraq for over two decades, we are finally able to return to work there, albeit in restricted parts of the country.

At present Professor Hugh Kennedy and Dr Alison Gascoigne will not be visiting Basra in November as planned, due in part to the FCO's strongly worded advice against non-essential travel to the area (see NL 27 p. 6). They will be attending the "New discoveries, new projects" conference in Erbil organised by the *Institut français du Proche-Orient* (IFPO) and Salahaddin University in collaboration with the State Board of Archaeology and Heritage (31 October-2 November). The 'Old Basra Project' will involve surveying the ancient site and recording the (few) standing monuments and it is hoped that they will be able to start their project in Basra in the foreseeable future, working with Iraqi colleagues. The BISI will continue to look to promote collaborative projects with the Iraqi authorities. In addition to these archaeological projects, the BISI has sponsored research work on contemporary issues. Dr Elaine Crawley reports on her recent BISI sponsored research trip in Kurdistan "Doing Prison Work in the Detainee Prisons of Kurdistan" (p. 15) and Hannes Artens is in Iraq currently working on his research theme "The PKK in Iraqi Kurdistan - The Politics of Sanctuary, Ethnic Alliances, and Inter-ethnic Conflict".

We were contacted in the summer by Dr Beth Kangas, the Executive Director of TAARII (The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq), regarding a proposed conference on "Iraq under the Sanctions: Economic, Political, Social and Cultural Effects". The BISI funded five Iraqis to attend the conference in Amman: Wamidh Omar Nadhmi (University of Baghdad), Asma Jameel Rasheed AbuNader (University of Baghdad), Faris K. Omar Nadhmi (University of Baghdad), Ahmed Ibraihi Ali Al-Alwash (former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq); and Sheer



*TAARII & BISI Conference participants
Hans-C. von Sponeck, Wamidh Omar Nadhmi,
Faris K. Omar Nadhmi, Glen Rangwala &
Bassam Yousif (Indiana State University)*

Zad Ahmad Ameen al-Najjar (Salahaddin University). BISI Council member Dr Glen Rangwala gave a paper on "Sanctions, Smuggling and Strife: The Politics of Iraq's Informal Economy" and has provided a report on the conference (pp. 23-25). The keynote presentations were given by Hans-C. von Sponeck (Former UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq), "Iraq Sanctions and the Accountability of the UN Security Council" and Joy Gordon (Fairfield University), "Behind the Scenes: Inside the 661 Committee and the US Government".

The BISI Administrator was able to take part in the conference and chaired the last afternoon panel session on "Socio-cultural impacts of the sanctions". At the start of the session, Nada Shabout (University of North Texas) asked the audience to have a moment of warm reflection on the passing of the famous Iraqi sculptor, Mohammed Ghani Hikmat, who had just died at the age of 82. (He had created one of Baghdad's most famous sculptures, the crossed-sword arches that became a symbol of the dictatorship.) Professor Nicholas Postgate subsequently recalled that he had been a good friend to the British and other archaeologists in the days when that was possible.

The conference papers led to many lively (and tense) discussions and provided a unique opportunity to talk with Iraqis who had lived and worked through such a difficult time in their country. The conference also proved to be a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with TAARII, as well as all the participants, and we thank the organisers, Professor McGuire Gibson, Dr Beth Kangas and Dr Lucine Taminian, for putting together such an important conference (p 23).

We have maintained a highly active Visiting Scholars Programme. This past summer we had two visitors to London from the College of Archaeology, University of Mosul, Akram Mohammed Yahya and Mohammed Moayyad Mallalah. They spent the month researching the history and architecture of the religious buildings of Mosul and met various scholars, including Professors Hugh Kennedy and Doris Behrens-Abouseif of SOAS, where they were also able to use the library. Their visit was made possible through the generosity of **Tony and Maureen Wheeler**, who provided funding for five BISI scholars during 2010-2011. Akram and Mohammed were the last scholars sponsored by their donation. BISI member Don Gomez, who was finishing off his MA at SOAS, provided very helpful 'on the ground' assistance to our Iraqi visitors (p. 27). Hameed Abid RIBA and his wife were kind enough to provide housing for the month. As the timing of their visit was fairly uncertain this help was invaluable in July. We are also grateful to the American Center of Oriental Research for providing assistance during their one month stay in Amman, where they took intensive English language lessons and had the use of its wonderful library, while

waiting for their UK visas. Harriet Crawford, Chair of the Visiting Scholar's Programme, has written a note about the programme and a plea for more funds (p. 26)!

At the present time Dr Fawziya Al-Maliky, Director of Heritage at the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage is in the UK partially sponsored by the BISI for a one month visit. We have arranged visits with English Heritage through Sarah Buckingham, Head of Heritage Protection Reform, and with the National Trust through Catherine Leonard. Dr Subhi Al-Azzawi is helping with the logistics and ensuring that Dr Fawziya has the opportunity to view a variety of heritage sites. She was a BISI scholar in 2006 and it is good to welcome back Iraqi friends. In the spring Mohammad Kasim Jwad will be in Glasgow on a BISI placement for one month at the Textile Conservation Centre in Glasgow, thanks to the support of Professor Nick Pearce (University of Glasgow, School of Culture and Creative Arts) and Dr Anita Quye, Lecturer in Conservation Science.

Waleed Khalid Ezat Sami Al-Naqshabandi and Aymen Kamil Jawad Jawad of the Iraq National Library and Archives (INLA) have recently arrived to take part in a BISI and British Library sponsored placement in audiovisual archiving at the British Library, as part of the '**Sound of Iraq Project**' ('SOI'). They will also take an English language course during their stay. Khyam Allami is the inspiration behind this project, initiated to rebuild an Iraqi National Sound Archive in Baghdad. He is working in collaboration with the INLA, the British Library Sound Archive, SOAS, The National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, and Dominico Chirico in Rome. (You can follow the SOI project on Twitter with a link on Khyam's website www.khyamallami.com.)

We also made a special grant to cover the costs for the violinist David Juritz (www.davidjuritz.com) to travel to Erbil to provide tuition to the **National Youth Orchestra of Iraq (NYOI)** prior to its performance in Bonn. Karl-Walter Keppler, one of the organisers, tells us that the concert on 1 October conducted by Paul MacAlindin in the *Beethovenhalle* was a tremendous success. "The orchestra played beyond from what you can expect from young musicians who have no regular lessons and can only rehearse once a year. The concert was sold out with an audience of 2100 and the German Bundespräsident Dr. Wulff was present during the whole concert." Sixty-five orchestra members travelled from Iraq to Bonn. The NYOI has been given funding by the Scottish Government to participate in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2012. They will reside and rehearse in Edinburgh for two weeks, leading to a performance in Greyfriars Kirk on 26 August 2012. There will be a brief residency, workshop and performances in London, and we will provide details on our website and in our next newsletter. The orchestra will perform in Iraq when they return after the UK

tour. Their performances comprise Iraqi (both Kurdish and Arab) and Western orchestral music. The players are Kurdish, Arab, Turkoman and Assyrian, and Paul MacAlindin is the conductor and musical director. There is a brief video link to a presentation of their work on the news page at www.bisi.ac.uk.

The next round of Visiting Scholars applications comes in March, and we hope we have sufficient funds to offer at least two to three placements. Any members interested in becoming involved in the programme and helping on logistics, please do let us know.

We started off September with an amazing BISI Appeal talk by Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum, on “Objects of History” with a focus on objects in the British Museum related to Iraq – ancient to modern



Neil MacGregor Director of the British Museum, delivering his BISI Appeal Lecture at the British Academy, September 2011

(see case in point with the photo for a modern view). The Director treated us to his well-known flair for speaking that was so popular on the BBC Radio 4 programme “*A History of the World in 100 Objects*”.

We wish to thank him for his generous support for our Appeal and the Institute’s work. This special evening provided the perfect opportunity to invite as our guests Bayan Abdul Rahman (KRG permanent representative to the UK),

Martha Gibson (Deputy Director of the British Council IRAQ), and Maysoon Damluji RIBA (Iraqi MP and member of the Iraqi Parliament’s Cultural Committee). The British Council IRAQ has been very supportive of the Visiting Scholars Programme and has provided wonderful assistance – we are grateful to Martha Gibson and Brendon McSharry (Director) for this help.

In June Georgina Herrmann delivered the Bonham-Carter lecture on “The Nimrud Ivories, 1845-2011” and provided a stimulating talk on her current research with new evaluations of the various traditions. Her programme of publication continues, and she is at present working on the next volume in the *Ivories from Nimrud* series, *Ivories from Rooms SW11/12 and T10, Fort Shalmaneser*, with Stuart Laidlaw.

Our next lecture takes place on 17 November with Michael Seymour and Alessandra Peruzzetto discussing “Current work at Babylon”. The State

Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) is currently working in collaboration with the World Monuments Fund (WMF) to address a range of issues at the site, most pressingly in the documentation and conservation of mud-brick architecture, but also including establishment of site boundaries, treatment of modern structures and reconstructions, scope for education and training, provision for future research, local economic impact, and site presentation. This lecture will discuss the project, its aims and some of the challenges it faces, and the BISI looks forward to hearing the progress of their work in Iraq and seeing many of our members there.

*Joan Porter MacIver &
Roger Matthews*

TRIP TO SULAIMANIYAH BY ROGER AND WENDY MATTHEWS

During early September 2011 my wife, Dr Wendy Matthews, and I made a one-week visit to Iraq. We flew to Sulaimaniyah and spent the time with colleagues from the Directorate of Antiquities, in particular the Director, Kamal Rasheed, and the Director of the Museum, Hashim Hama. We are extremely grateful to them and their colleagues for making our visit possible and for looking after us so well in all respects. The Museum in Sulaimaniyah is undergoing a steady transformation with support from UNESCO. It is a wonderful spacious building, with first-class collections, and it is functioning as a museum should – receiving hosts of visitors and encouraging and supporting research on its collections.

We were able to visit many of the famous archaeological sites of Sulaimaniyah province, including the caves of Hazar Merd, Zarzi, and Palegawra, as well as the mound of Shimshara and many other sites on the great plains of Shahrizor and Rania. Archaeologists from elsewhere in Europe are already busy surveying and excavating in this region, which has seen little archaeological activity since the major dam construction episodes in the 1950s. In consultation with our colleagues in Sulaimaniyah, we are proposing to excavate two Neolithic sites in the course of 2012, as part of our Central Zagros Archaeological Project (<http://www.czap.org>), as well as to conduct new surveys. We very much hope that the BISI will be joining us in some of these projects as they get underway.

The 10th anniversary of 9/11 saw us visiting the memorial building to the chemical bombing of Halabcha in March 1988, in which 5000 villagers were killed. It was a sombre and moving occasion. But today Halabcha is thriving and, at least in this region, Iraqis are looking to the future with renewed enthusiasm. Sulaimaniyah, as a town and as a province, is thriving and everywhere there is evidence of new construction and development. As with all of Iraq, this region needs all the help and support it can get in order to ensure that its archaeological and historical past is properly and fully investigated and protected. We hope to play a small part in that process in the years ahead.

*Roger Matthews
University of Reading*

McDONALD INSTITUTE (CAMBRIDGE) VISIT TO SHANIDAR CAVE, KURDISTAN

It was through the British Institute for the Study of Iraq that Professor Graeme Barker, Director of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research (University of Cambridge), first learned that the Kurdish government was interested in the possible renewal of excavation at Shanidar Cave, Kurdistan, where Ralph Solecki



Joan Oates with one of Solecki's workmen, along the banks of the Greater Zab Photo: Graeme Barker

had excavated in the 1950s. With the very helpful assistance of Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, the High Representative of the Kurdish Regional Government in London, a visit to the site was arranged early last June (4-6 June 2011).

Shanidar Cave is well-known for its Neanderthal skeletons, in particular one possibly buried with flowers and another, the skeleton of an elderly man who had clearly been physically handicapped over a considerable period, that is, he had been well looked after, either by his family or other members of the group. Certainly

very 'human' behaviour, despite the identification of these skeletons as Neanderthals to be dated perhaps as much as 100,000 years ago. Indeed modern radiocarbon determinations will be among the many new scientific techniques that can be applied to the various levels in the cave, which was excavated in the 1950s before many of these techniques had been developed and when the range of radiocarbon determinations was very limited.

The cave itself is located on the south face of Baradost Mountain, overlooking Shanidar Valley from an elevation of about 822 m. It has some 1,000 sq m of floor space and prehistoric deposits some 14-15 m deep. There is now a path leading from a parking area to the cave itself, a contribution of Kerwan Barzani and local Kurdish volunteers, a very great improvement from Solecki's time, especially when the steep climb from the river level to the cave had to be made daily.

The Greater Zab River, which flows through the valley below the cave, is a tributary of the Tigris, and the very early 'proto-neolithic' settlement, Zawi Chemi Shanidar, was situated at the riverside, below the cave. Regrettably it is now invisible, since it lies beneath a recently planted grove of poplars. This aceramic site, dated not long after 10,000 BC, remains one of the earliest actual settlements so far identified in Kurdistan and is particularly noted for a unique burial. Together with the burial were a stone structure associated with an apparently ritual deposit including skulls of wild goat and the wings of some 17 raptors, largely eagles and vultures – hints perhaps of the symbolism in much later wall paintings at Çatal Höyük (see Rose Solecki 1977).

It is thought that the inhabitants of Zawi Chemi were already keeping sheep, while the earliest occupants of the site made use of many saddle querns and

mullers, suggesting also a considerable dependence on plant foods. Fish bones were rare but this could reflect no more than poor preservation. A comparable proto-neolithic level was also identified in the uppermost deposits at the back of Shanidar cave, where a number of burials were found, perhaps the burial ground of the inhabitants of Zawi Chemi. One of the project's many aims will be to find at least one other Zawi Chemi type site along the Zab.

We were made very welcome in Erbil and are much indebted to Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman and Khasro Ajgaye for all the arrangements and for looking after us so well. Our visit to Shanidar was concluded with a splendid meal with Kerwan Barzani and members of the Barzani tribe in a lovely riverside restaurant not far from Shanidar. The trip, though brief, was a great pleasure for us all.

An application has been made for a permit to work at the cave site with, as Directors, Professor Barker and Dr Ghanim Wahida (a lithics expert and in 1971 re-excavator in of Zarzi Cave, originally excavated by Dorothy Garrod). The other members of the party, Dr Tim Reynolds (Birkbeck College) and Dr Chris Hunt (Belfast) will have particular responsibilities for the organisation of the fieldwork and environmental science programmes, respectively.

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Acknowledgments

We are especially indebted to Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman (KRG High Representative, London), who very kindly and with great patience arranged both our travel arrangements and our agenda in Erbil, and Mr Khasro Ajgaye (KRG Office, London) who looked after us kindly and patiently throughout our time in Kurdistan. We are also extremely grateful to all the officials who made time to see us at very short notice, the Minister of Municipalities and Tourism, Samir Abdullah Mustafa; the Governor of Erbil, Nawzad Hadi Mawlood; the KRG Director of Antiquities, Mala Awat; Haydar Hussen, Erbil Director of Antiquities; the President of Salahaddin University-Hawler, Dr Ahmed Anwar Dezaye; Dr Ahmed Mirza, Head of Department of Archaeology, Salahaddin University-Hawler; and Karwan Barzani, Secretary, Kurdistan-UK Friendship Association. It was also a particular pleasure to meet one of the Tell Brak dig staff, Dr Jessica Johnson, who is the Director of a remarkably well-equipped Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage in Erbil, and who had been the Conservator at Brak in 1991.

Joan Oates

McDonald Institute for Archaeological
Research, University of Cambridge

FIELDWORK, RESEARCH & ACADEMIC CONFERENCE GRANT REPORTS

GEOMORPHOLOGICAL AND PAELOBOTANICAL STUDIES IN THE SHAHRIZOR REGION



Omar Mohammad Ali, guard of Bakr Awa, looks on as the deep sounding is being excavated. The settlement mound of Bakr Awa rises behind a nearby fruit grove while the Iranian Zagros mountains loom in the distance.

Photo: Karen Radner

Between 1 and 15 September 2011 a small team from UCL worked in the province of Sulaymaniyah in the Autonomous Kurdish Region of Iraq. Thanks to BISI's generous and fast financial help, Mark Altaweel (Institute of Archaeology) and Karen Radner (History Department) were joined by geoarchaeologist and palaeobotanist Anke Marsh (Institute of Archaeology). With the efficient and thoughtful assistance of the Sulaymaniyah Board of Antiquities and Heritage, the team visited and sampled various sedimentary exposures in the Shahrizor plain, the region between Sulaymaniyah and Halabja, in order to obtain data for reconstructing the region's history of environmental and climatic change. In addition to sampling soil exposures at wadi cuts, quarries and recently dug wells, key data was taken from a geoarchaeological deep sounding excavated halfway between the sites of Bakr Awa, where a team from Heidelberg has worked since 2010, and Gurga Çiya, where UCL plans to undertake excavations from 2012 onwards.

We are very grateful to the Sulaymaniyah Board of Antiquities and Heritage and especially its director Kamal Rasheed for the opportunity to work in a fascinating but hitherto underexplored archaeological region, one of the key settings of the Neolithic Revolution and since then a culturally rich hub at the crossroads between the Diyala region, the heartland of Assyria and Western Iran. We intend to obtain a more complete understanding of human activities and life, including land use and diet, and environmental change in the Shahrizor region for the prehistoric and historic periods. Our work is part of a collaborative survey project with Simone Mühl of Heidelberg University, who has worked in the Shahrizor plain since 2009 and who joined us this autumn.

Phytolith and sediment analysis

Phytoliths are ancient plant remains, specifically the microscopic pieces of silica which a plant takes up from the soil through its roots and which are then deposited in various intra- and extracellular parts of the plant. After the plant decays, the phytoliths ('plant rocks'), which are like pieces of hard glass, remain. They are deposited in the sediments and survive over very long periods of time. Phytoliths can be taxonomically distinctive and their analysis allows the identification of ancient plants. Phytolith analysis in archaeological contexts can therefore provide key information about ancient environments (including land use, crop choice, wild plant use, deforestation). This type of work has never been conducted in the Shahrizor region.

For the purposes of uncovering phytoliths in sedimentary deposits, we excavated a geoarchaeological deep sounding, measuring 40 m in length and with a depth of nearly 7 m, with the permission of the landowner. The sediment and phytolith results from the deep sounding will complement and contextualise the analysis of samples taken at the excavations at Bakr Awa where the UCL team sampled floors, tannurs and other features, mainly from the late 3rd and early 2nd millennia BC. The sediment samples from the sounding will undergo various analyses at UCL, including analysis of grain size, phosphate content and magnetic susceptibility, which will provide data on the depositional characteristics of the sediments, which in turn will inform us about environmental and climatic conditions.

The deep sounding provides information on the depositional history of the area during much of the Holocene period, which started around 10,000 BC and continues to the present. We collected ceramics, sediments and charcoal with the aim to provide dates for this depositional history and correlate it with the results of archaeological work in Bakr Awa and elsewhere in the region as well as materials from the other soil exposures surveyed. The sections of the deep sounding were photographed, drawn and assessed and thanks to the kind help of Peter Miglus and members of his Heidelberg team of Bakr Awa, we also made a 3D scan with a total station.

While the work at Bakr Awa took up most of our time, we also visited eight sedimentary exposures in different parts of the Shahrizor plain, mostly in agricultural fields near modern roads. We investigated the exposures in order to get a more clear understanding of Holocene depositional history across the region

and, when deemed promising (and safe!), we took samples that will complement the results of the deep sounding and from the Bakr Awa excavations. We documented all exposures using GPS, photographs and, in some cases, section drawings and sedimentary logs. Sedimentary and phytolith samples were taken for three exposures. In one of these, large quantities of ash were found, which should provide good material for dating.

From the initial survey of the deep sounding and exposures, we are beginning to have an understanding of the Shahrizor plain's Holocene evolution. There is a continuous history of wadi cutting and alluviation across the plain. From the sediments uncovered we can tell that during the Holocene this part of the plain was filled in with up to (and possibly more than) 7 m of erosional materials from the mountains surrounding the Shahrizor, indicating the very significant erosion affecting the Zagros range. This provides an important insight into the limitations of archaeological surveys, on the ground and by satellite, in this area and explains, for example, why so far no small Neolithic sites have been observed in the plain: many are likely to have been buried by sedimentation or eroded away through wadi channel cutting.

Preliminary results and future work

Our visits have already enabled us to better understand general environmental trends in the Shahrizor and helped us to get a sense of the depositional history. We have already noticed clear examples of major alluvial episodes and possibly alternating periods of wetter and drier regimes in different areas within the Shahrizor. The sediment and phytolith samples have been brought back to UCL, thanks to the kind permission of the Sulaymaniyah Board of Antiquities and Heritage, and their analysis has now started. We will publish our initial results in an article detailing the overall Heidelberg-UCL work in the Shahrizor region, which we hope to see published in *IRAQ*.

Further reading

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Mark Altaweel and Karen Radner
University College London

OLD BABYLONIAN SATUKKU TEXTS FROM NIPPUR

This research project is concerned with properly publishing an Old Babylonian archive from the city of Nippur. The texts of this archive consist of lists of food offerings (sá-dug₄ = *satukku*) for deities in Nippur and present a unique opportunity to study Old Babylonian temple economy at the religious centre of the Old Babylonian period. The texts mention a temple or shrine of the god Ninurta and are thus thought to be part of the temple administration of that temple. However, this will need to be researched further.

The archive was excavated in the fourth and fifth post-war seasons at Nippur from 1953 to 1956. Further studies will need to be undertaken to understand better the archaeological context within which the archive was found, namely as fill for a Parthian platform on top of the Inanna temple (?).

The archive was divided up between the Oriental Institute in Chicago, the Yale Babylonian Collection in New Haven and the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. However, Chicago has casts of all of the Nippur tablets, including those at Yale and in Iraq.

This archive is highly unusual and interesting for several reasons:

- It is the longest-running archive of the entire Old Babylonian period, spanning a time of ca. 80 years.
- Some year names as well as an otherwise unknown Old Babylonian king (Ikun-pi-Eshtar) are exclusively attested in this archive.
- It is the first time that tabular formatting was used on a larger scale for organizing information on tablets (Robson 2004).
- The texts offer a fascinating insight into ancient religions and offer a good starting point for new research on religious rituals.

Although Sigrist (1984) already studied this archive, the majority of the individual tablets and fragments were never properly published, neither as line drawings nor as transliterations or photographs. Thus it is impossible to verify what is written on each individual tablet or fragment (including year dates and personal names). Moreover, Sigrist's publication has been harshly criticised by some scholars (especially Kraus 1985).

My project to publish the satukku tablets began in 2010 when I received the Mesopotamian Fellowship from the American Schools of Oriental Research. I began by making line drawings of the satukku tablets at the Oriental Institute in Chicago and also updated the catalogue (based on Sigrist 1984: 197-201). In addition, I made high-quality digital photographs of the tablets. Because I was only able to make line drawings of 60 of the 90 tablets in Chicago, I then applied to BISI to fund another short research trip to Chicago in order to complete my work there.

I was in Chicago from 1 July until 11 August 2011. As I finished drawing the 30 tablets at Chicago ahead of schedule, I was able to devote the remainder of my time to further update the catalogue. I went through the Nippur card catalogue systematically to identify any additional fragments that might have been overlooked. Working through the catalogue proved difficult because the museum numbers in the Nippur card catalogue differed significantly from those published in Sigrist (1984) and Beckman (1995), in particular with regard to the 4NT tablets. This problem was solved with the help of Ulla Kasten and Elizabeth Payne at the Yale Babylonian Collection, who informed me that the Chicago catalogue still has the provisional museum numbers for the Nies Babylonian Collection and then provided me with a correct list of the museum numbers.

All in all, I was able to identify an additional 53 fragments that belong to this archive. All of them are tablets that are housed at the Iraq Museum. Together with the possible 50 or so fragments at Yale University, which have neither an

excavation nor a museum number and which were discovered in a box in Albrecht Goetze's *Nachlass* in December of 1974 (Sigrist 1984: 13), this should bring up the number of tablets and fragments belonging to this archive to a total of 481. However, according to Ulla Kasten (personal communication), who recently located this box of fragments again, at least some of them are uninscribed. Thus the number and condition of these additional fragments will have to be verified and inspected.

Additionally I was able to obtain digital copies of field photographs of the 17 satukku tablets that had been photographed in the field, courtesy of MacGuire Gibson. I also photographed casts of satukku, when available.

Further Research:

The next stage of my research project will consist of a visit to the Yale Babylonian Collection, if funding can be obtained. I will need to make line drawings of the Yale tablets that belong to this archive. In addition, it will be important to consult the original field tablet register of the fifth season, written by Goetze, which is kept at Yale University.

Once my research is finished, the tablets will be published in the form of line drawings, photographs, transliterations, and translations in the form of a book. I will offer the book for publication to the Oriental Institute publications office, where it could possibly be included in the Nippur publication series, but this will have to be discussed further with MacGuire Gibson, Walter Farber, and Richard Zettler.

The tablets will also become available on ORACC, the Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus (<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu>), which I am already using to aid my research.

I am extremely grateful to BISI for funding this second leg of my research project, in particular because this trip proved to be extremely successful.

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DOING PRISON WORK IN THE DETAINEE PRISONS OF KURDISTAN

In Kurdistan, prisons for prisoners awaiting a court appearance are under the authority of the Asayish, the security and intelligence agency for the region. Held in a small number of detainee prisons, the majority of these prisoners – most of whom are men – are held under suspicion of terrorist activities, drug smuggling or fraud.

This Report presents the findings from research conducted in detainee prisons in the Kurdistan region of Iraq throughout May and June 2011. Based on private interviews with prison officers (all ranks) and their managers in five detainee prisons, the research focused on two key themes: (i) officers' feelings about their work and their work environment, and (ii) the impacts of prison work on personal and home life. The issue of training was of particular importance



Left to Right: Lieutenant Colonel Abubaker Kadir Karim (Director of Human Rights Department, General Asayish of Sulaimaniyah); Dr. Elaine Crawley; their driver Karzan (son of Lt. Col. Abubaker Kadir Karim)

to all the officers who took part in the research, with the majority expressing concern that they had not undergone a programme of formal training. Most of these officers had, however, received Human Rights training, and as a result were acutely aware of their obligation to defend and protect the human rights of prisoners in their care, and believed that prisoners should be treated with respect. With regard to their own work, some officers were keen to engage more productively with prisoners. With regard to their own work conditions, most officers felt that they were less than satisfactory, in that they were expected to work, relax and sleep in the same room (in one prison for up to five days at a time). However, a strong sense of patriotism and the belief that their work was helping to protect their country led many to put their own needs aside.

Acknowledgements

There are a number of people I would like to thank for their co-operation and assistance in the production of this Research Report. First of all, I would like to thank the British Institute for the Study of Iraq which provided the funding for the study upon which this Report is based. I also wish to thank Judge Qadir, Director of General Security for Kurdistan, who gave his support to the research project and kindly facilitated my visit to Kurdistan to meet prison staff. Special thanks are due

to the prison officers who agreed to talk to me about their experiences of prison work and to my interpreter Mr Aso Kadir.

Methodology

The objective of the study was to highlight the key findings from interviews with prison staff working in five detainee prisons in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. With the help of a Kurdish friend of mine who is currently residing in England, I approached the Director of General Security (Asayish) at the end of 2010 to request research access in order to explore the needs and experiences of prison officers working in Kurdistan.

The research on which this Report is based took place in the period 25 April - 10 May 2011 in five detainee prisons in Kurdistan: Sulaimaniyah, Kani Goma, Raparin, Garmian and Halabja. The research was made possible through the kind cooperation of Judge Qadir, Director of General Security for the region, who granted the author access to the prisons and permitted interviews with prison staff. My interpreter, a Kurdish citizen who now resides in England, played an invaluable role in introducing me to officials and officers working in the Asayish and in explaining to officers the aims of my research. It would have been impossible for me to conduct such a project without Mr Kadir, whom I have known for several years and who could reassure officers – some of whom he knew personally – that I was a person to be trusted with confidential information.

Thirty-seven individuals participated in the research, i.e. 34 prison officers and 3 prison managers. Of this sample, 30 were male and 7 female. The age range of interviewees was 22 – 46 years. The majority of the officers (31) were married and of these, 26 had children while 11 did not. Six of the interviewees were unmarried. In each prison, data were collected through structured interviews with individual members of staff in a private room provided by the prison manager. All those who agreed to participate in the research were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Consequently only the interviewee, the researcher and the interpreter were present when interviews took place. Each interview lasted for approximately 1 ½ hours. The interview schedule comprised 27 questions. The first few questions related to personal details (age, marital status) while subsequent questions asked about the work itself: length of time working in the prison, expectations of the job role, daily activities, working conditions, training, degree of manager support, impacts of the job on personal health and family life and whether officers viewed their work as a job or a career. In all my previous research in prisons, I have supplemented my interview data with *observations* – of buildings, behaviours and of interactions between prison staff themselves. In Kurdistan, my first, and most surprising, observation was that prison staff wore the same uniform – *camouflage fatigues* – as those worn by those working in other branches of the Asayish, i.e. military personnel and the police. Several prison officers voiced their resentment about this: they felt that their uniform should reflect the fact that they were doing a very different job to the police and the military – one that was, in their view, far more stressful and emotionally demanding. There are, of course, many more

observations that I could recount here, but these will be discussed later in a more detailed, refereed paper.

Given time limitations and officers' shifts, it was not possible to interview every officer in every prison. Rather, interviews were conducted with officers available in a particular prison on a specific day. In this respect, the views presented in the section below entitled 'Findings' cannot be described as representative of detainee officers in Kurdistan as whole. It is worth noting, however, that each member of the sample of 37 shared very similar views, particularly with regard to training.

Background to the Research

Prison systems across the world each have their own priorities, problems, histories and prisoner populations. As a result, prisons differ significantly in terms of their working practices, goals, regimes, rules and routines. The author wished to examine the extent to which the political, economic and cultural past of Kurdistan has impacted on prison policy and practice in the region, and ultimately on the role of the prison officer itself. Through structured interviews with prison officers and their managers, the research attempted to identify officers' feelings about (i) their work and their work environment and (ii) the ways in which prison work affected their personal and home lives.

Working with prisoners is a demanding and highly complex task. Prisoners are often the most troubled, vulnerable and damaged members of society; they may be mentally ill, aggressive or suicidal, and as such they present significant emotional, physical and psychological challenges to those who must look after them. The job of a prison officer is therefore inherently stressful (Crawley 2002; 2004; 2011). Indeed, the prison officer's job is considered the most stressful of all occupations (Cooper 1997). Prison officers often work on a rotating shift basis including weekends and holidays. Since many prison facilities have officer shortages, prison officers are often required to work additional shifts. Having to put in extra hours can result in fatigue, burn-out, low life expectancy, high turn-over levels, health problems, low morale, and family-related problems. Prison officers may also get burned out because their work is unpredictable, emotionally demanding and stigmatized (Crawley 2004). Moreover, prison officers' working environments can vary considerably, with some prison facilities being modern, well lit, air-conditioned and ventilated while others are old, overcrowded and noisy.

The Importance of workplace training

The extent to which officers cope with the demands of prison work depends on a number of factors, the most important of these being the extent to which they have been trained. Certainly there is no better protection for officers against the negative effects of prison work, and no better guarantee against the ill-treatment of a person deprived of his/her liberty than a properly trained prison officer (Council of Europe Recommendation 12/97).

Much prison officer work involves *the management of emotion* – in particular anger, distress and fear. It is important that the skills needed to work effectively with prisoners, e.g. using psychological techniques to understand the psychological

effects of incarceration and de-escalating potentially violent situations, should be taught to officers by specialist trainers.

Research Findings

As indicated above, the research questions asked in the detainee prisons of Kurdistan were focused around two key themes – (i) officers' feelings about their work and (ii) the impacts of prison work on personal and home life. The interview schedules were designed to elicit as much information as possible, so, for example, theme 1 (officers' feelings about their work) sought officers' views about the level of managerial support they received, how safe they felt at work, the amount of training they had received, etc., while theme 2 (the impacts of prison work on personal and home life) attempted to assess the extent to which prison work had affected their behaviour outside of work, and how they felt they were perceived by the general public. This Report incorporates a selection of quotations drawn from interviews with officers.

Virtually all of the prison officers interviewed considered the current provision of training to be insufficient for their needs. A significant proportion of those interviewed (24 out of 37) said that they had received no formal period of training at all. Importantly, however, all of the officers we interviewed said they had received Human Rights training (either from the Red Cross or with Human Rights Watch) for which they had received certification.

Of those who *had* received training (almost a third of those interviewed) none had received it until after starting work. The length of time these officers had spent working with prisoners prior to receiving training was between six weeks and one year, and their training had been delivered by an American Training Unit which arrived in Kurdistan in 2005. These officers received a Certificate at the end of the course, along with a 'Correction Pre-Service Training' ID card which they carried with pride.

One of the consequences of the lack of formal training is that many of the officers interviewed felt unsure of their ability to deal with certain situations and with certain types of prisoner behaviour. Moreover, they had seen no indication that senior prison officials had plans to provide a programme of formal training that would give them the skills and competences they felt they needed to carry out their duties in an effective manner. Their concern about not being fully trained is perhaps unsurprising, given that many officers lack the knowledge to carry out quite basic practices and procedures, such as applying handcuffs. As one female officer put it:

"We need all kinds of training. We need to be trained on the proper use of handcuffs for one thing. At the moment, some officers don't know when they're too tight and when they're too slack. And we need training in how to deal, at a psychological level, with prisoners, so that we don't make prisoners more angry or upset."

Similarly:

“No, there was no proper training, not really. I just had a period of induction - which included some Human Rights training - for nearly a month. I suppose they knew I would ask experienced officers for help if I needed it. I would have liked to have more training though. Things like how to deal with violent prisoners; first-aid training; how to deal effectively with difficult prisoners. Basically I’ve learnt on the job.”

The stress of feeling unprepared is also evident in the following quotation:

“No, we’ve had no training. None at all except for the Human Rights course which was very good. [So how did you know what to do when you started work with prisoners?] I shadowed other officers, none of whom had had any training either.” (female officer)

Those officers who had been fortunate enough to have been taught by the American training unit had been impressed by how comprehensive their training programme had been and by the variety of skills they had been taught. Courses on self-defence and control techniques, first aid, Human Rights, the use of psychological intervention with prisoners, and, of course, security issues, were valued particularly highly:

“It was excellent. I feel sorry for the officers here who haven’t had any training, because they have to learn everything as they go along. And that’s not easy when you’re working in a place like this, where security is really important.”

It seems, however, that some elements of the course were rather *less* useful to the officers, and less applicable to the prisons in which they worked. For example, training in the proper use of shields, helmets and visors was of little use since the Prison Department does not have this type of equipment. Similarly, the use of CS sprays, which the Correctional Services of America rely on fairly heavily, was seen by Kurdish officers as a means of last resort, and was rarely – if ever – used.

It is unclear whether or not the *content* of the American training programme and guidance on how to *deliver* it was passed on to any Kurdish prison staff (this is a question to be asked in my next research visit). Such a strategy would, of course, have allowed formal training to continue once the Americans had gone home. It may be that this is what happened, but given that a large proportion of those officers whom we interviewed had not received *any* formal training (apart of course from Human Rights training) then this does not seem to have been the case. I recently requested clarification on this issue; certainly there are officers currently working for the Asayish who would be willing and who were undoubtedly capable of taking on a trainer role.

Another key concern for the officers we interviewed was that their work environment was unsuitable for their needs. This was particularly the case for officers who had to spend sustained periods of time in the prison, i.e. on three-, four- or five-day shifts. The main problems were that officers had to work, eat, relax and (when on overnight duty, sleep) in the same room. Numerous officers said that they found such conditions claustrophobic during the day and difficult to

sleep in at night. All officers said they did not get a proper lunch break, something that seemed to be the case in all of the five prisons.

When we compared our interviews with officers whose shift pattern entailed staying over in the prison for one night with those expected to stay for three, four and even five, we found that the longer officers stayed in the prison without going home, the greater the stresses on family life. By the end of each shift, the level of tiredness and stress they felt was intense. The following quotations from both male and female officers illustrate this extremely well:

“Sometimes I get very angry when I’m at home. This is because of the stressful environment; you’re tired when you get home and I get irritated when the children start making a noise.” (female officer)

“One of the biggest problems is that I can’t go to things that the family go to because of the shifts, things like picnics and family visit. My wife is not happy with my shifts. I have to be here whatever happens, but my wife has asked me if I can change jobs so we can have a normal life.” (male officer)

It is important to note that the Kurds are very family oriented, and that they tend to take every opportunity to visit friends, relatives and family graves. In addition to observing numerous national holidays, in the summer it is common to see large family groups driving up towards the mountains to picnic, talk and to dance. Weekends and summer evenings are, of course, especially popular times for family relationships. Unfortunately, the times when prison officers can engage in these activities are often few and far between – largely because their shifts often entail working evenings and weekends and sleeping over in the prison. As we can see in the quotes below, in Kurdistan, where family get-togethers are so highly valued, shift work has a very detrimental effect:

“These shifts don’t fit with our culture. Often I’ve been invited to picnics and to eat with my family but I’m stuck here so I can’t go. So my wife and kids have to either go without me or stay at home.” (male officer)

For those working five-day shifts, the problem can be particularly pronounced:

“72 hours on and 72 hours off is very difficult for families. When I am at work for three days and nights, my wife and child have to leave our home and go to stay with her family. She is only twenty and we’re new to the area where we live, so she doesn’t know anybody and is all alone. When I came to work in the prisons I wasn’t expecting this.” (male officer)

What is not clear is the extent to which long shifts such as these are really necessary for the smooth running of the prisons, or whether eight- and twelve-hour shifts such as those operating in countries such as the UK could be implemented instead. This is a question that will be discussed with prison managers on my next visit to Kurdistan.

Concluding Comments

My first research visit to Kurdistan was a valuable, intriguing and highly productive experience, and I learned a lot about the perceptions, backgrounds, experiences and needs of the officers who work in Kurdistan's detainee prisons. On returning to England and presenting a report on my findings to Judge Qadir, I requested further access to conduct extended research access to prisons across the region, including access to the sentenced prisoner population. I am delighted that Judge Qadir has agreed, and I look forward to the next phase of my research.

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OPERATIONS IN THE LOWER TOWN OF ZIYARET TEPE

In 2011 we reverted to summer operations, with the field season taking place from mid July to mid September - it was hot! As mentioned in earlier communications, with the completion in 2010 of the two major operations in the west of the lower town (the administrative complex in Operation G and the city gate at Operation Q), we wanted to direct our attention eastwards and explore new areas of the site. This we did. The primary objectives for the season were to continue the survey by resistivity and to investigate two areas in the eastern lower town, one (Operation T) where we suspected there might be an area of low/middle status housing and one (Operation U) where we suspected the existence of some high status residences.

Geophysical survey

To start with the geophysical work. In 2009 the final season of survey by magnetometry had produced preliminary indications that there might be a series of major residences situated right in the far south-eastern corner of the site. However, intriguing as these images were, they were faint and in need of corroboration. Accordingly a main aim of the 2011 season was to further investigate these features and we approached this by a combined plan of resurveying the area using resistivity and following this up with targeted excavation. In the event the results proved excellent.

Operation U

Of course geophysics can only give one part of the picture - it does not provide any information on stratigraphy or of even major rebuildings, let alone of phasing within buildings. It is in any case best to verify the results of remote sensing by test excavations.

Accordingly, in order to ground truth these results and to gain an insight into the stratigraphy of the area we also conducted excavations in Operation U. To our surprise, the first intact remains we came upon were Roman. In fact there turned out to be two Roman phases, an upper one which consisted of the remains of stone wall foundations with only poorly associated surfaces and a lower one built of mud brick, the surfaces of which were better preserved. The bricks measured up to 48 cm square - much larger than the standard Assyrian size, something which may perhaps be attributed to a relative lack of familiarity with the medium. The later phase was built almost directly over the earlier one and with little or no intervening space of time. The material assemblage of both phases was the same - fragments of roof tiles, ceramics including strap handle jars, glass and occasional iron nails. Far fewer tile fragments were found in the lower phase, which may suggest that the roof tile fragments found in the upper phase came from the roof of the lower phase building.

Operation T

The second area of operation this year was Operation T, also in the south-eastern sector of the city. The location was also based on the results of the magnetometry survey, in this case in order to investigate whether the spaces between the emerging street pattern contained blocks of domestic housing. Removal of the topsoil did indeed expose the remains of domestic housing though here too, and again to our surprise, the remains were Roman. Once again there were two levels.

The upper level consisting of imperfectly preserved stone wall foundations and a number of associated pits with a heavy concentration of broken roof tiles. Together with the glass and ceramics this material culture was identical to that recovered in Operation U. The underlying earlier phase was much better preserved, characterised by substantial stone wall foundations together with intact floor levels on which was found an assemblage of pottery including a large terracotta tub, bowls, flasks and a basalt potstand. A piece of particular interest is the sherd from a pilgrim flask with an elaborate incised decoration. The finds also included a

number of objects of iron – a ring, two keys and two iron plaques, perhaps horse fittings.

Recovery of such intact assemblages is key to the process of refining the chronology of material sequences. In this case the importance is all the greater as the discovery of three coins helps us fix this assemblage in absolute time. The coins can be dated to Constantius II (337-340 AD), Arcadius (383-401 AD) and Justinian (527-565 AD). Even bearing in mind the perils of using coins for dating these remains may in all probability be dated from the later fourth through to the mid-sixth century AD. So the investigations in Operation T turned up something unexpected – not Assyrian domestic housing as imagined but domestic architecture from a thousand years later. Knowledge of this part of Turkey under late Roman rule is sparse and these discoveries are genuinely important.

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'IRAQ UNDER SANCTIONS', CONFERENCE 23-25 SEPTEMBER 2011

The comprehensive economic sanctions that were imposed on Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and that remained until 2003 transformed Iraqi economic, social and cultural life. The extent and legacy of that transformation though remains a heavily understudied and, until recently, deeply politicised issue. The three-day conference, jointly sponsored by BISI and The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TAARII) and held in Amman in September, was as an attempt to create a new research agenda on this crucial period of Iraqi modern history. It is now a time when sanctions remain fresh in Iraqis' memories, but also an opportunity in which many commentators, past officials and political activists are willing to rethink the agendas that they endorsed previously. Reflection, and the recognition that much remains unknown about how residents of Iraq lived through sanctions, were significant moods at the conference.

The majority of speakers and participants had lived in Iraq for some or all of the sanctions era, mostly as academics or university students, and were joined by a small number of artists, former government officials, business people, and non-Iraqi scholars. Unlike earlier conferences on sanctions, there was little debate about whether the international policy towards Iraq was necessary or needlessly harmful, and instead a concerted focus upon the effects within Iraq. Discussion ranged over the economic, political, social and cultural effects of sanctions, and the legacy they have left within the country since the invasion. The format of the conference encouraged Iraqi participants to give their personal and professional stories, to illustrate or countermand the general accounts of sanctions offered in the academic papers presented.

Among the many discussions, two major themes emerged. The first was the move away from seeing Iraqi society as destroyed by sanctions, with Iraqis as passive victims of international machinations. Rather than thinking about the sanctions era as a 'black hole' within which time stood still, most speakers looked at

how Iraqi society and intellectual life adapted – often painfully, and with great personal costs – to the new international circumstances. Social institutions were created or reformulated, careers changed or were taken on, and new national or transnational alliances were forged, in order to survive rapidly ascending levels of poverty and a national shortage of basic goods. There was an increase in artistic creativity and cultural production, with innovative strategies for circulating books, staging plays and devising artworks all in evidence.

The second major theme was how sanctions affected groups differently across Iraqi society. Although national demographic data on this topic is generally poor, there are good reasons to believe that some groups faced particular challenges, especially women who had relied upon the state for an income and those heading households, such as widows of the recent wars. By contrast, there was also a group of profiteers within Iraq, including those who organised private ventures to move oil and antiquities across borders. To the extent that their new wealth and power has transferred across into life after 2003, this has resulted in an upheaval in social relations.

There remained lively disagreement about many themes. Did the harsh economic circumstances relate to emergent sectarian tensions, and if so, how? Have the faith campaigns organised within Iraq during the 1990s significantly change young Iraqis' aspirations and worldviews? How and to what extent did the ability of the Iraqi state to exercise power over the population under its rule change during this period – and, relatedly, could expressions of dissent or autonomy from the state be realised through exploiting its straightened circumstances? Does tribalism in Iraq represent a new intrusion of an old social force or the invention under an old nomenclature of a new one? Did the Kurdistan region face similar economic and social problems to the rest of Iraq or end up taking a quite different trajectory? Did Iraqi artists have a responsibility to reflect the suffering of the people, and if so, did they succeed?

One key finding of the conference was the ability of Iraqi researchers to work towards answering these questions. Young Iraqi scholars working in the humanities and social sciences were invited to the conference to present their research, and often given an international audience for the first time. Without exception, the new generation demonstrated the development and value of their research. Despite the difficult circumstances in which they had studied, they had been trained in appropriate methodologies, have managed to conduct detailed research on often politically sensitive themes, and were able to make compelling arguments on the basis of their findings. In discussions at the end of the conference, participants agreed to the short-term goal of producing a book that reinserts the importance of the sanctions era for modern Iraq's history; the more long-term goal, however, is to build strong collaborative relations between scholars inside and outside Iraq, in the knowledge that this will be an exchange of ideas between equals, in intellectual projects to deal with issues of major significance for Iraq's future.

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DEVELOPMENT GRANT REPORT

CHRISTIANITY IN IRAQ VIII SEMINAR DAY, 28 MAY 2011

The Khalili Lecture Theatre at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London was the venue for the *Christianity in Iraq VIII Seminar Day* on Saturday, 28 May 2011. Held under the aegis of the Centre for Eastern and Orthodox Christianity, Department for the Study of Religions, SOAS, the day addressed 'The Christian library from Turfan and the "mother church" in Mesopotamia', focusing on the Syriac-script manuscript discoveries that were made in 1904 and 1907 by the German Turfan Expeditions.

Following an *oud* recital by Khyam Allami, the proceedings were opened by Prof. Paul Webley, the Director of SOAS. Prof. Almut Hintze then welcomed guests on behalf of the Department for the Study of Religions. Sir Harold Walker, representing The Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association, outlined the society's involvement with the various churches of the Middle East, including Iraq. Dr. Lamia al-Gailani of The British Institute for the Study of Iraq drew attention to its diverse interests, highlighting the on-going programme of bringing Iraqi scholars to England for training as well as the current fund-raising campaign.

The morning was devoted to academic papers. Dr. Hunter (SOAS), delivering the first paper, 'Syriac prayer-amulets from Turfan', demonstrated the continuity of specimens that were used by the Christian communities of Kurdistan in the nineteenth century. Prof. Peter Zieme (Berlin), in his paper 'Old Uighur Christian texts between Turfan and Kharakhoto', outlined the scope of Christian Uighur material from various sites and the penetration of Christianity amongst Turkic-speaking communities. Dr. Mark Dickens (SOAS) showed the range of languages into which the Psalter was translated and highlighted bilingualism at Turfan through the Syriac-Sogdian lectionaries in his paper, 'Biblical texts from Turfan: Psalters and Lectionaries'. Sogdian material was also the theme of Prof. Nicholas Sims-Williams (SOAS): 'The contribution of Christian Sogdian texts to Syriac literature' traced the transmission of Syriac texts into Sogdian. Prof. Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst (*Turfanforschung*, Berlin) chaired the papers.

Participants were able to view the accompanying exhibition of Christianity at Turfan and Central Asia that was on display in the foyer of the Khalili Lecture Theatre. Mr. Elias Assad generously loaned the manuscripts and artifacts on display, which ranged from a censer from Herat (dated to the tenth century) to illustrated nineteenth century prayer-amulets from Kurdistan.

The afternoon session chaired by Dr. Sebastian Brock commenced with a sung recital of the Lord's Prayer in Syriac by Father Afram of the Syrian Orthodox Church, before His Grace Mar Awa, Bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East (California) delivered the key-note address. 'From Mosul to Turfan: the *Hūdrā* in the Liturgy of the Assyrian Church of the East' probed the complex transmission history of the *Hūdrā* drawing attention to the unique contribution of the Turfan

material which provides some of the earliest exemplars dating from the ninth and tenth centuries. His Grace's lecture was concluded by a performance of hymns, sung in Syriac, by the female choir of the Church of the East (Ealing, London).

The final part of the seminar day was devoted to discussing situation of the Christians in Iraq. Dr. Suha Rassam gave an illustrated talk about her recent visit to the KRG which provided some positive input; churches are being built and communities are re-establishing themselves, with a seeming freedom of religious expression. However much still needs to be done to stabilise the situation. Madame Christine Chaillot discussed the French Government's provision of medical treatment for the victims of the massacre on 31 October 2010 at the Lady of Salvation Church in Karrada. A statement about the situation of the Mandaean by Dr. Iamd Shiltagh emphasized that the endemic violence in Iraq has had major ramifications on the adherents of this ancient faith.

Prof. Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst (*Turfanforschung*, Berlin) offered concluding remarks that showed how the current research-project into the Syriac manuscripts from Turfan (funded by an AHRC grant) has opened many dimensions

The interest generated by the Seminar Day, which was attended by around one hundred people, including many Iraqis, was most gratifying. The grants by The British Institute for the Study of Iraq and The Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association were extremely helpful in meeting the considerable costs involved in organizing this day and made its success possible. The annual *Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day* is now well-established and the 2012 event, the ninth in the series, is already being planned for Saturday 12 May, when the theme will be East Syrian mysticism.

Erica Hunter
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BISI VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAMME

The editorial describes our very active 2011 Visiting Scholars Programme with four of our own visitors, as well as the sponsorship of five Iraqi participants in the academic conference on sanctions in Amman, detailed in Glen Rangwala's report (p. 23), the joint sponsorship of the two Iraq National Library and Archives staff at the British Library's digital archive as part of the Sound of Iraq Project and our support to David Juretz, violinist, to travel to Erbil to coach the National Youth Orchestra prior to its Bonn performance.

It is important to point out that the success of our scholarship scheme is due very largely to the enormous help which we receive from our members, our volunteers and to the academics and other professionals who mentor our scholars on a pro bono basis. Above all, it is the work undertaken by Joan MacIver who has the complex task of making the arrangements which make these visits possible (see

the letter from Akram and Mohammed on the next page!). Without the help of so many people inside and outside the Institute we could not do it.

The final element in the success of the scholarships is of course the money as about £8,000 is needed for a two month stay. This comes from the money generated by our Appeal and although we have raised about £250,000 in all, it is sad that after our present commitments are fulfilled the fund will be at a very low ebb. Unless more funds are raised in the next few months the scheme will have to be severely curtailed, at least for the time being. If members have any fund raising suggestions, please do let us know. The Appeal Committee remains very active but this is indeed a difficult time to raise funds.

*Harriet Crawford,
Chairman of the BISI Visiting Scholars Committee &
Vice-Chairman of the BISI Appeal*

BISI EXPERIENCE PIECE - VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TO AKRAM YAHYA AND MOHAMMED MALLALAH (JULY 2011)

This past July, I assisted two visiting Iraqi scholars (Mohammed Mallalah and Akram Yahya) while they conducted research on the Islamic architecture of Mosul. I acted as their on-the-ground guide. It was my job to assist them in research as they registered for library access across London and to arrange meetings with academics, architects and scholars. I also served as a kind of cultural ambassador, describing things and phenomena to them as we toured London.

I stumbled into this role by accident. After finishing a book on Gertrude Bell, I did some 'googling' which brought me to the BISI website. As I was in London for a masters programme, I thought it would be interesting to join under the recently introduced student membership category (without a Journal).

While the program that brought Mohammed and Akram to London is designed



Mohammed Mallalah (left) and Akram Yahya (middle) with Don Gomez at the Royal Society, London, July 2011

for their educational benefit, it would be negligent of me to fail to mention how rich and rewarding I found the experience. As a postgraduate student in Near and Middle East Studies at SOAS and a new BISI member, the experience allowed me to learn more about Iraq (and London) – all while practising my Arabic.

While we spent much of our time together flipping through old books looking for maps, the enduring memory I'll hold from the visit are the numerous moments in between. Eating lunch, waiting for a meeting to begin, or walking from one library to the next.

It was in those moments when we just talked and learned more about each other. Between the levels of their English and my Arabic, we were able to communicate everything we needed. Conversations ranged from the mundane to the universal (the agony of the daily commute) to the complex and challenging (the security situation in Iraq and ethnic tensions). As an American, there was little I could do to defend their accusations of the weakness of British tea.

The month spent with Mohammed and Akram made my academic and personal experience in London more special. Going forward, I hope that the BISI will continue to reach out to local students to assist in these sorts of projects.

Don Gomez

[Editor's Note: Don Gomez wrote his MA thesis at SOAS on "*Saddam's Heroes: Iraqi military experiences during the Iran-Iraq War*" and he was able to talk to Akram and Mohammed about their recollections of that era and their families' experiences. His assistance to our visitors and to the BISI was invaluable.]

A MISSIVE TO THE BISI ADMINISTRATOR FROM THE BISI VISITING SCHOLARS FROM MOSUL, JULY 2011

Dear Miss Joan Porter MacIver,

Please let us present our thanks to you Miss Joan MacIver for all your support to us and your help to us to complete our visit to London, thank you very much my sister. Dear Joan, our thanks for your kindness and your help and your support for us. We want to say to you that we were able to get much information from our work, and it was very interesting, and we benefited from your invitation to us to visit many museums and libraries in London and other places. For us and for our city (Mosul) and for our students and our field (Islamic archaeology), we want to thank you because you supported us and we found and researched and discovered many rare maps for Mosul city from past times, even from the 17th century.

Dear Joan, we ask you please, if you need anything from Akram and Mohammed, anything from all the world, we will make it a present for you, Miss Joan, because you are our sister.

Please send our thanks for Dr. Harriet and Dr. Lamia very very much. and Dr. Hameed and Miss Ghada Gaylany and Mr. Don Gomez, and all the workers in the BISI. Please send our thanks for Professor Hugh Kennedy very very much, and Dr. John Curtis, Keeper, Department of the Middle East at the British Museum.

*Dr Akram Mohammed Yahya & Dr Mohammed Moayyad Mallalah,
College of Archaeology, University of Mosul, Mosul, Iraq*

[Editor's note – We expect to include a fuller report on the results of their visit to be included in a future Newsletter. Dr Lamia al-Gailani Werr continues to provide invaluable help with our visitors and Miss Ghada Al-Gaylani has been a wonderful English language teacher and mentor to our recent current and visitors.]

BOOK DONATIONS & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

I.B. Tauris (<http://www.ibtauris.com/>) has donated the following books to the BISI and has provided discounts to members with flyers included in our newsletter mailings.

- ❖ *The Great Caliphs, The Golden Age of the 'Abbasid Empire* by Amira K. Bennison, I.B. Tauris & Co., London 2011
- ❖ *Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq – Political Reform, Modernization and Development in the Nineteenth Century Middle East* by Ebubekir Ceylan, I. B. Tauris & Co, London 2011

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION I.B. Tauris is publishing *Babylon: The History of a Legend and Its Afterlives* by Michael Seymour (HB Price: £56.50) with support from the BISI in 2012.

**BISI MEMBERSHIP NOTICE
EMAIL NOTICES &
EMAIL ADDRESS UPDATE REQUEST**

The BISI sends out email notices to BISI members and friends from time to time regarding events or special news. A number of email addresses on record are no longer valid. If you have not been receiving these notices, and wish to, please send an email to bisi@britac.ac.uk to be added to our distribution list.

Members whose dues are current and who subscribe to the Journal *IRAQ* will receive the 2011 Journal directly from our printers in November or December. We will send out an email notice when the Journal has been dispatched. Volume Five, Number One of the *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies* (2011) has been sent to subscribing members and the future 2011 volumes will be sent upon receipt from the publishers (Intellect Journals).

The BISI membership year commences annually in January.
Thank you for helping us to keep our membership records up to date.

BISI GRANTS: RESEARCH, ACADEMIC CONFERENCES, VISITING IRAQI SCHOLARS & BISI DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The Institute promotes, supports, and undertakes research and public education relating to Iraq and neighbouring countries. Its coverage includes anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, languages, and related disciplines within the arts, humanities, and social sciences from the earliest times until the present. For more information on the Institute and any grant applications, please consult the BISI website (<http://www.bisi.ac.uk>). For all its grants the Institute reserves the right to consider applications outside the deadlines on an exceptional basis.

BISI RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE GRANTS

The Institute invites applications for grants in aid of research and for the organisation of academic conferences and for one annual pilot project. Applications are welcomed to support research or conferences on Iraq and neighbouring countries **not** covered by other British Academy BASIS-sponsored institutions (<http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/orgs.cfm>), in any field of the humanities or social sciences, concerned with any time period from prehistory to the present day. Awards will normally fall within a limit of £4000, though more substantial awards may be made and the Pilot Project award may be up to £8000. The Institute will also offer assistance to a Pilot Project award-holder in drafting a full research proposal to submit jointly to other funding bodies.

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.

Applications and references must be received by **10 January annually**.

BISI VISITING IRAQI FELLOWS & SCHOLARS GRANTS

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

Applications and references must be received by **1 March annually**.

BISI DEVELOPMENT/OUTREACH GRANTS

Grants are available to support development events and projects, such as lectures, study days, and popular publications that relate to Iraq and neighbouring countries and to the areas of interest covered by BISI. A Development Grant application should normally be for an amount up to £500 but more substantial grants may be made. Applicants need to submit an application form to the BISI Administrator and two references are required. 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 (please check for eligibility prior to applying).

Applications and references must be received by **1 September annually**.

BISI 2010-2011 LECTURES & OTHER FUTURE EVENTS

Friday, 11 November 2011 at 6 p.m. — Gulan Promoting Kurdish arts and culture – a celebration of the culture and religion of ‘The Kaka’I, also known as Yaresan or Ahl-e Haqq, The People of Truth’

Venue: St Ethelburga’s Centre for Reconciliation and Peace , 78 Bishopsgate, London EC2N 4AG. Food and refreshments by Della’s kitchen. Admission free. For more details go to www.gulan.org.uk or contact info@gulan.org.uk

Thursday, 17 November 2011 at 6 p.m. — BISI Lecture Michael Seymour & Alessandra Peruzzetto on 'Current work at Babylon'.

Venue: The British Academy, 10-11 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH. Admission is free but please confirm your acceptance to bisi@britac.ac.uk for reservations.

Friday, 2 Dec 2011 , 6.30-7.30 p.m. — Khyam Allami performing Resonance/Dissonance in its entirety with Vasilis Sarikis on percussion.

Venue: **National Portrait Gallery, London.** Free entry.
<http://www.khyamallami.com>

Monday, 19 December, 2011, 2 - 5.30 p.m. — Exploring the Shahrizor Plain – New research in Iraqi Kurdistan. Venue: University College London, Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY, Room 612 (6th floor). (A flyer will be available on the BISI events page). The conference is organised by **Mark Altaweel, Karen Radner and David Wengrow** as part of UCL’s Grand Challenge of Intercultural Interaction (www.soas.ac.uk/nme/ane/lcane).

Tuesday, 10 January 2012, 6 p.m. — ‘Ūd (Middle Eastern Lute) Performance by Khyam Allami for the BISI Appeal at the British Academy – details to be advised.

Thursday, 23 February 2012 — BISI Annual Mallowan Lecture & AGM - Lecture by Dr John Curtis FBA OBE - details to be announced.

Saturday, 12 May 2012 — The Christianity in Iraq IX Seminar Day - details to be announced

Thursday, 14 June 2012 — BISI Bonham Carter Lecture - details to be announced

Sunday, 26 August 2012 — National Youth Orchestra of Iraq (NYOI) performance at Greyfriars Kirk , Edinburgh.

NYOI London performances to be arranged thereafter and details will be posted on the BISI web-site.

For updates and further details on BISI membership and events, please check the

BISI website <http://www.bisi.ac.uk>.

**THE BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ
COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEMBERS & BISI OFFICERS**

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Dr Lamia al Gailani-Werr (VS), Mrs Joan MacIver & Mr Alan Sandall, Appeal Secretary.

BISI Committee Abbreviations: A = Appeal Committee; D = Development Committee;
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* All **full** members paying by standing order from a UK bank account receive a £2 annual discount.

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- 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. If you wish to pay by standing order, either set it up directly with your bank or send in the form to the BISI. 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.

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