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The next BISI Newsletter will be published in the autumn 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 1 October 2012. The BISI Assistant Administrator, Lauren Mulvee, and Joan Porter MacIver, the BISI Administrator, jointly edited this Newsletter with kind assistance from others. (Photos are taken by the Editors unless otherwise noted.)

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CHAIR OF COUNCIL'S REPORT

As the incoming Chair of BISI's Council, it is my first duty and pleasure to thank my predecessor, Professor Roger Matthews, for all the work he did during his term of office, particularly in managing the transition to our widened research remit and self-funded status. We all thank him warmly for ensuring the foundations of the Institute's long-term future and wish him the very best for his future research.



BISI Council thanking Professor Matthews at his last Council meeting.

I am writing this report in the courtyard of the Sulaimaniyah Museum's guest house. I am here in

Kurdistan for a week, in order to raise BISI's profile with potential research partners in Sulaimaniyah and Erbil, as well as to meet and thank the directors of projects which BISI has already supported.¹ I plan to carry out a similar fact-finding mission in Baghdad later in the year, which I will report on in a later Newsletter.

By developing good channels of communication with researchers and cultural heritage workers here in Iraq, and collecting concrete information on their needs and interests, BISI will be better able to attract sponsors and benefactors to support particular projects, and work to build our endowment to a level that will ensure long-term sustainability. We have already begun this work with a meeting with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Iraq at Portcullis House in April, which led to some important contacts and potential leads.

Another important aspect of profile-raising is to improve our communications strategy. I am currently overseeing a complete redesign of BISI's website, while our new Assistant Administrator, Ms Lauren Mulvee, is developing other aspects of this work. Lauren is working alongside Mrs MacIver from our offices in the British Academy and is taking over many of her responsibilities.

In other words this is, I hope, the beginning of an exciting time of growth and development for the Institute, which will enable us to return to supporting a wide range of activities in the UK, Iraq, and beyond.

Eleanor Robson

¹ I am very grateful to my hosts, Mr Kamal Rasheed, Sulaimaniyah Province's Director of Antiquity and Mr Hashim Hama, Director of Sulaimaniyah Museum, as well as to the UCL team whom I am accompanying, led by Dr Mark Altaweel and Professor Karen Radner.

This has been a very active period for the Institute with a full and exciting list of events, grants, outreach efforts and a BISI visiting scholars programme. The highlight in February following our AGM was Professor Roger Matthews *in memoriam*: Rachel Maxwell Hyslop FBA, FSA with his lecture 'For Posterity: Hoards and Hoarding in the Ancient Near East'. The lecture was held in conjunction with the Institute of Archaeology, University College London and with the involvement of Rachel's family. We were very honoured to host such a packed audience of Rachel's friends and family, many eminent scholars and our BISI members. It was a very fitting way of marking the life of a remarkable and very special person and the BISI's former President.

At the 78th AGM that preceded the lecture, members approved the election of Dr John Curtis OBE, FBA as the new BISI President and he fittingly provided the vote of thanks to Roger, while Dr Harriet Crawford, the former BISI Chairman, provided a warm and personal introduction to the evening. On behalf of her family, Rachel's daughter, Hilary Maxwell-Hyslop thanked Roger, BISI, the Institute of Archaeology and the Academy for arranging the evening. At the reception after the lecture we raised a glass in Rachel's memory as we also toasted the memory of Dame Agatha and Sir Max Mallowan, an annual tradition, which reminds BISI members of our historical ties.

At the AGM, Professor Andrew George FBA stepped down from Council and from his role as Editor of the BISI Journal *Iraq*. The BISI Council is very grateful to him for his many years of dedication to the Journal and the wider activities of BISI/BSAI. Dr Jon Taylor, who also has stepped down from his Council role, has taken on the position of Co-editor of *Iraq* with Dr Michael Seymour. At the AGM, members elected to Council: Dr Augusta McMahon, Dr Mark Altaweel, and Mr Edward Chaplin CMG, OBE and re-elected Dr Paul Collins, Dr Harriet Martin and Dr Glen Rangwala. We welcome all our new Council members and look forward to working with them over the coming years.

Last November Michael Seymour and Alessandra Peruzzetto gave a lecture on 'Current Work in Babylon,' detailing the important work that the World Monuments Fund is undertaking with the State Board of Antiquity and Heritage (SBAH) at Babylon. The lecture focused on a range of issues at the site, most pressingly the documentation and conservation of mud-brick architecture but also the 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. The lecture also discussed the project, its aims and some of the challenges faced.



Dr John Curtis OBE, FBA, the new BISI President, delivering the vote of thanks to Professor Matthews at the in memoriam: Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop FBA, FSA

During November we sponsored the visit of Dr Fawziyah Al Maliky, Director of Heritage at the SBAH. She met many heritage professionals and in particular, Sarah Buckingham of English Heritage and Catherine Leonard of the National Trust. The British Council IRAQ office provided crucial assistance in facilitating her UK visa application. Dr Subhi Al-Azzawi provided expert guidance during her visit. The BISI also sponsored from September to January the participation of Waleed Khalid Ezat Sami Al-Naqshabandi and Aymen Kamil Jawad Jawad of the Iraq National Library and Archives (INLA) at a placement at the British Library to work in audiovisual archiving, as part of the 'Sound of Iraq Project' (SOI). Khyam Allami presented this project at a BISI appeal event in January at the British Academy and Waleed and Khalid were able to attend just before they returned to Baghdad. Khyam provided the audience with a presentation about the project, which he is working on in collaboration with the INLA, the British Library Sound Archive, SOAS, The National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, and Dominico Chirico in Rome.

After the presentation, he performed pieces from his originally composed repertoire *Resonance/Dissonance* to a very appreciative audience. This visit could not have been possible without the support of the British Library staff, in particular Will Prentice and Janet Topp Fargion. Russell Gould handled the day to day digital archiving training for the placement. The British Council IRAQ office was again instrumental in helping Waleed and Aymen in getting to London. Unfortunately, as Khyam is currently travelling in Cairo, Beirut and elsewhere for the next few months, we have to wait for the autumn newsletter for the full report on SOI. However, in the meantime, you can follow the project on its official website: www.soundofiraq.org.

The BISI Appeal events continued in April with a lecture by the war and peace artist, Xavier Pick. In 'Ziggurat: Diary of a Modern Day War Artist,' Xavier gave a stimulating account of the time he spent embedded with the American troops in Iraq in 2011 and the difficult journey he undertook to reach the Ziggurat of Ur. His talk was illustrated with his own sketches, drawings and excerpts from his current film project, including some beautiful footage of the Iraqi landscape and people.

This event was very generously sponsored by the Al-Burhan Group and we were delighted to welcome Mr Imad Al-Burhan and his colleagues to the event. In addition to sponsoring the event they are the sponsors of our current scholar, Mohammad Kasim Jwad, of the Iraq Museum's conservation labs. We are very pleased to announce that our BISI al-Burhan Scholar is on a placement at the Centre for Textile Conservation at the University of Glasgow, organised by Dr Anita Quye. Jane Rowlands, Helen Hughes and Noorah Al Gailani have also set up an impressive practical programme for Mohammad at the Glasgow Museums. While he was in London he had a session at the British Museum's organics laboratories organised by Dr Monika Harter. We wish to thank all the British Museum conservators, who gave so generously of their time. He also attended and participated in the BISI presentation by Dr Robson to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Iraq at the invitation of The Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP.

The Institute organised a study day on 'May your city drink water aplenty,' in March in conjunction with the Department of History at SOAS (see pp.16-18). We also co-sponsored 'Iraq's Future after the American Departure' with the Association of Iraqi Academics at UCL. This was a joint panel on Iraqi politics with the BISI Vice-Chairman, Professor Charles Tripp, as a major participant, along with Dr Salam Ali from the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party. Dr Alsabti read the paper of Dr Ibrahim Bahr al-Uloom, former Iraqi Minister of Oil. A very lively and exhausting question time ensued until the group eventually had to leave the lecture hall as it was closing!

We are becoming increasingly active in awarding grants to applicants who are doing on the ground research or outreach activities in Iraq. The current work of Dr Jane Moon (see pp. 7-9) and Professor Hugh Kennedy (see p. 15) reflect this growing activity, and both directors plan to return to Iraq to continue these major fieldwork and survey projects. In addition to supporting research undertaken by applicants, the Institute will be organising a major academic conference in September 2013 entitled 'Gertrude Bell and Iraq - A Life and Legacy,' in conjunction with the British Academy in London (see p. 29). We will be marking the ninetieth anniversary of the founding of the Iraq Museum by Miss Bell and the tenth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. There will no doubt be many other conferences and workshops in the UK in 2013 on Iraq related themes. The BISI is keen to provide links to relevant events and programmes on our website, which is currently being actively re-developed. Members and colleagues should keep us informed of any lectures and programmes, as we are also very pleased to pass on details to our members.

Jack Fairweather is giving the 30th annual BISI Bonham Carter lecture on 14 June on 'A War of Choice: Lessons from Britain's War in Iraq 2003-9', which will no-doubt prompt much discussion on this past decade. We look forward to seeing many of our members in June and welcoming non-members to this event.

Joan Porter MacIver & Lauren Mulvee



The BISI made a donation on behalf of the Institute and our members to Professor Lambert's memorial bench, arranged by Dr. Alasdair Livingstone of the University of Birmingham.

Professor Wilfred G. Lambert FBA (1926 - 2011)

was a pre-eminent historian, archaeologist, specialist in Assyriology, and Professor Emeritus of Assyriology at the University of Birmingham, as well as being a long time BSAI/BISI member.

The memorial bench now stands in the university grounds.

Professor Lambert's Memorial Bench

Photo: Graham Norrie of the University of Birmingham

**FIELDWORK, RESEARCH & ACADEMIC CONFERENCE
GRANT REPORTS**

REPORT ON A VISIT TO IRAQ 12-25 JANUARY 2012

The purpose of a visit to Iraq in January 2012 was to ascertain the feasibility of beginning new excavations in the vicinity of Ur. The members of the party were Dr Robert Killick, a co-director of the proposed project, Mr David Phillips, development adviser, and myself.

We arrived in Baghdad on Friday 13th January, in time to join Friday lunch at the out-of-town residence of Dr Ahmed Chalabi, who provided us throughout the trip with accommodation, and with transport and security. At the lunch we were introduced to, among others, Mr Saleh Al-Mutlaq, Deputy Prime Minister. We then transferred to one of Dr Ahmed's guest-houses in Mansour. On Saturday 14 January we met with the British Ambassador, Michael Aron, explained our plans, and made provisional arrangements to meet again at Ur.

On Sunday 15th January we had a meeting with Mr Qais Hussein, Chairman of SBAH, who received us very warmly, having already heard of our plans from Dr Lamia al-Gailani-Werr and Professor Farouk al-Rawi. During the meeting, Mr Hussein mentioned as a priority rescue excavations in an area of former marshes scheduled for re-flooding in due course. We replied that we would consider a site in that area, if any were suitable for our purposes, but that initially we would like to inspect Tell Malzoom/Ishan Khaiber, near Ur, and possibly sites near the Nasiriya oilfield. He agreed to this and offered to provide every assistance. We were then given a tour of the Museum, although it is not yet open to the public. Halls with Islamic material and Assyrian reliefs were shown to us as ready for re-opening. The rest, we were told, is still in preparation.

On Sunday afternoon we travelled to Nasiriyah, and the next morning drove to Tell Sakheriyah, just outside Ur, where Professor Elizabeth Stone and her Stony Brook team were in the final days of their first season of excavations. Members of her team included Saleem Khalaf and Abdul Amir Hamdani from SBAH who accompanied us on a tour of the sites we had come to inspect.

In correspondence, Professor Stone and Abdul Amir, knowing our interest in the third millennium, had suggested Ishan Khaiber as a possible site. It had been surveyed by Henry Wright in 1965 and is recorded as a single mound (EP 60 in *Heartland of Cities*). However, Abdul Amir informed us that there was another mound as well, lying nearby to the north.² The *Archaeological Atlas of Iraq* also marks two mounds at this location. Our visit confirmed that there are in fact two low mounds, about 700 m apart, separated by a canal, which in fact probably forms part

² In Abdul Amir's own survey of this area, it is the northern mound that has been given the name of Ishan Khaiber. The southern one (EP60) is named Tell Malzoom.

of the same occupational complex. Walking over the southern mound (EP60) confirmed Wright's dating to predominantly Jemdet Nasr, with some Uruk occupation, traces of 'Ubaid, and with Isin-Larsa pottery found on the highest point, where a large building, 80 x 50 m, is visible from the satellite photograph kindly provided by Professor Stone. The northern mound was more enigmatic. There were few sherds and no good diagnostic material, but we would suggest a provisional date of third to early second millennium. There is no evidence of recent disturbance other than the canal cuts. Back at the Ur dig house, where the Stony Brook team generously provided lunch for us and our considerable entourage, Amir was kind enough to give us a copy of the satellite photo of the northern mound, which also shows a large building on the low summit, again at least 80x50 m in size. We were also accompanied on our inspection of the sites by Sheikh Atiya Hashim Saeid of the Al-Ghizi tribe, on whose land the mounds are located. The sheikh used to work as an antiquities guard and is supportive of work in the area. I gave interviews to camera for a US documentary team following the Stony Brook expedition and to a local TV station.

As Tell Khaiber was our first choice of site, and proved to be completely satisfactory for our purposes, we did not visit the sites near the oil-field, which we understand are mostly badly robbed and/or of later dates. Conversation with two of the antiquities inspectors from Nasiriyah also confirmed what we had heard about the marsh sites, viz. that they are mainly of Islamic or Sasanian date. Locally no one seemed to think any reflooding was imminent, and indeed there was very little water in the Euphrates given the time of year. Later in the day we took a walk around Nasiriyah, which seemed to be functioning very normally, and ascertained prices and availability of local supplies. Power cuts seem to be an occupational hazard as much as in Baghdad, however, and generators were everywhere.

On Tuesday we joined Michael Aron for his visit to Ur, including another camera interview, this time for the FCO, and on Wednesday 18th January called in at the Nasiriyah museum, which is awaiting refurbishment before displays can be reconstituted from material currently in Baghdad. We were extremely impressed by the energy and commitment of the staff we encountered.

Back in Baghdad we returned to the museum for a second meeting with the Chairman of SBAH. We reported on our visit and stated that we would like to apply in due course for permission to work on the Khaiber mounds. Mr Qais Hussein welcomed the proposal and offered us every assistance. We then went to



*Dr Jane Moon with Ambassador Michael Aron and an interpreter in front of the Ziggurat at Ur
Photo: Dr Robert Killick*

the Protestant Cemetery at Rasaafa to look at the grave of Gertrude Bell, which has been recently restored by, and is now also maintained by, Tamara Chalabi. We found it in very good shape, and in fact the whole cemetery generally cared for, although weathering has of course affected a lot of the graves.

On Friday 20th January we were again invited to the Chalabi residence for Friday lunch, which this time was more of a family occasion, and enjoyed being shown round the palm groves and gardens. We were particularly taken with a very splendid traditional reed mudhif, which had been commissioned from local experts from Nasiriyah. During lunch, Dr Ahmed stressed that he would continue to support the project and offered to provide housing in Nasiriyah and transport when we return to begin excavations.

The next day we had a rendezvous with Michael Aron at the old British Embassy, to inspect material thought to belong to BISI. There were some oddments, such as the correspondence filing cabinet and its contents, a duplicate copy of the Abu Salabikh catalogue, some contact prints from the West Mound, and some inked section drawings from Tell Mohammed Arab. We enjoyed being able to take photographs from the roof, of the river, and the opposite bank, and even the bridges – something that would have been quite impossible before. Everything having gone so smoothly, and our business effectively concluded, we proceeded in the afternoon, at Dr Ahmed's suggestion, to Erbil, where we spent the night and enjoyed looking round the citadel the following day.

We had wondered very much what security arrangements were needed or customary. While in Baghdad we were accommodated at one of Dr Chalabi's staffed guest-houses in Mansour, very close to the former BSAI premises. We thus felt completely secure, and were free to wander about on foot if we chose, although an attendant always came with us. Journeys by car were in an escorted armoured SUV. Checkpoints and blast barriers in many places are testament to ongoing precautions. We had no business in the Green Zone and did not attempt to enter it. Nasiriyah was altogether much more relaxed: while we were again provided with an escort, we did not get the impression that any danger was perceived or expected. The Stony Brook expedition has no specific security arrangements, and drove back and forth to their site without guards.

Acknowledgements

We would like to record our thanks to: BISI for a grant of £3,000 towards travel for Dr Robert Killick and myself; Dr Ahmed Chalabi for the generous provision of accommodation, security and transport while in Iraq; members of SBAH for receiving us so warmly; Abdul Amir Hamdani, Elizabeth Stone and Henry Wright for sharing their information and knowledge so generously.

*Jane Moon
Co-director of the Ur Archaeology Project*

THE HAJAR PROJECT - THE ANCIENT AFLĀJ RESEARCH PROGRAMME IN THE WADI BAHLA, OMAN, REPORT ON THE 2011 SEASON³

Introduction to the 2011 Season

Due to the illness of Jeffery Orchard earlier in the year, our season of fieldwork was postponed until the late Autumn/Winter (November and December) of 2011. As it happened, this proved to be a period of official holidays – including the Id ul-Adha – when the Ministry was closed. In consequence, the season was a short one, with fieldwork commencing on the 18th November and ending on the 18th December; a period of just over four weeks. During that period, we concentrated on two programmes in our multi-disciplinary Research Project: *The Buildings Conservation Programme* and the *Ancient Aflāj Research Programme*. Our Pottery and Small Finds Recorder also continued her ongoing study of the ceramics recovered from our sites, concentrating, in particular, on pottery from the area immediately adjacent to the southern façade of the Building 3 annexe (the northern demarcating monument of the later *Hajar Oasis Town* on the Bisya Area Site's Sallut Plain).

The Ancient Aflāj Programme

For the third year running, BISI provided a generous grant to enable us to continue our important investigation of the ancient *falaj* channels on our al-Ghubrat Bahla and Bisya Area sites. We are deeply grateful to BISI and, also, to The Institute of Geophysics and Tectonics at the University of Leeds for their supportive loan of a Ground Penetrating Radar Set, and to The Glaciology Group, Swansea University, for so kindly permitting our two geophysicists – Dr Adam Booth and Dr Benedict Reinardy – leave of absence to join our team in Oman.

While the emphasis this year was, once again, on the use of Ground Penetrating Radar, an important part of our programme was manual tracing and this work was ably undertaken by our splendid trio of archaeologists, Karen Deighton, Gwynfor Maurice and Dr Juha-Matti Vuorinen.

The Bisya Area Site – Earlier *Hajar Oasis Town*

The Bisya Area Site's earlier *Hajar Oasis Town* is situated in its northeastern quadrant, on the western bank of the Wadi Bahla, and is demarcated by circular monuments laid out in four-point diamond formation: Jabal Juhelat (north), Qarn Qantarāt Nizwa (west), Qarn Qarhat Lahwid (east) and Jabal Suleman 'Ali (b) (south). The Oasis Town's extensive cemetery of beehive tombs is situated on jabs within the settlement itself, but mainly on the Jabal Bu Rzuz sited on the eastern bank of the Wadi Bahla.

Manually Tracing *Falaj 1* from Qarn Qarhat Lahwid to Jabal Suleman 'Ali (b)

At Bisya, our main task in 2011 was to resume the downstream tracing of *Falaj 1* from the point reached during the 2010 season. Continuous manual tracing was necessary, since the haphazard fashion in which the *falaj* snaked across the

³ A *falaj* (pl. *aflāj*) is a sub-surface to surface irrigation channel which conveys groundwater by means of gravity from a mother-well to the settlement it serves.

landscape - apparently exploiting contemporary natural gullies - did not allow selective sounding in order to save time. Gradually, as we removed the surface layer of mixed sand, silt and gravel to a depth of c. 10 cm, a 145 m stretch of *Falaj 1* was uncovered and defined and several interesting features encountered as work progressed (including apparent tunnels and off-take channels) were marked for future in-depth excavation. Tracking the *falaj* underneath one major graded road proved problematic, but the team eventually succeeded in locating the channel on the far side. In our autumn 2012 season, it will be possible to trace it directly to Jabal Sulemen 'Ali (b) and, for the first time ever, we shall have linked two of the demarcating monuments of a *Hajar Oasis Town* at Bisya.

Below is a geophysical profile of a section of *Falaj 1*, stopping just short of the major graded road mentioned above.

Ground Penetrating Radar Acquisitions over *Falaj 1*, Qarn Qarhat Lahwid Area

Image a.

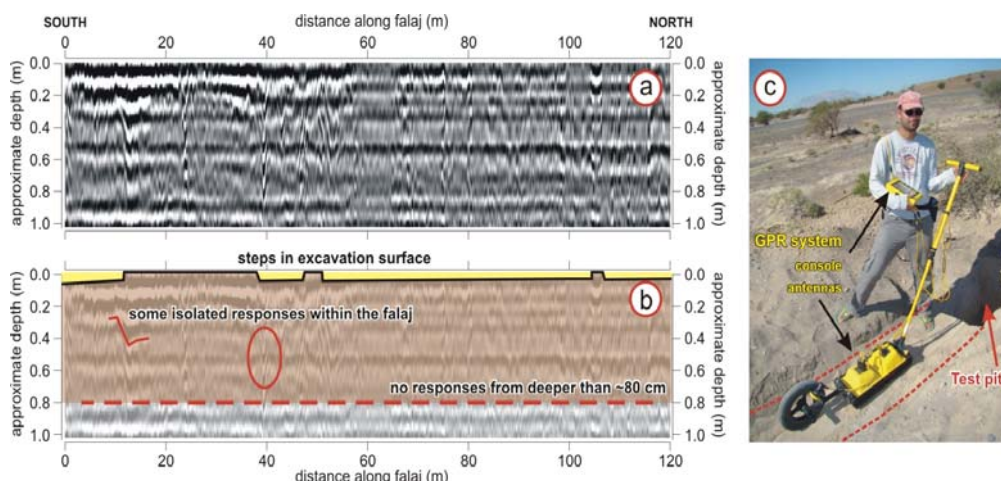
Processed GPR data profile: This profile of *Falaj 1* is 120 m long and shows responses within the top 1 m of the ground surface. The profile terminates close to the site of a trial pit [shown in Image c] which was excavated while attempting to trace the *falaj* across the major graded road that blocked its path.

Image b.

Sketch interpretation. Strong GPR responses at surface correspond to the 10 cm cut edges of *Falaj 1*, as defined by the excavators but, at 10 m and 40 m along its length, there are some isolated features (labelled red) which seemingly originate from within the *falaj*. There are no significant radar returns from a depth greater than 80 cm (dashed line). Hence, the *falaj* is expected to be at least as deep as this. Furthermore, there is no major change in its thickness, suggesting a consistent structure along its whole length.

Image c.

The picture shows the GPR system in use at Qarn Qarhat Lahwid. This is a Sensors&software PulseEKKO PRO. Energy is transmitted and recorded at a pair of antennas and sent for storage at a hand-held console.



GPR Image & Photo courtesy of Dr Adam Booth

The Bisya Area Site – Later Hajar Oasis Town

On present evidence, the *Hajar Oasis Town* situated on the Bisya Area Site's Sallut Plain developed sometime in the mid-3rd millennium BC (no earlier than 2600) when, as a result of salinisation of the soil, the older *Hajar Oasis Town* in the Bisya Area Site's northeastern quadrant was abandoned. Our surveys indicate a typical *Hajar Oasis Town* demarcated by circular monuments laid out in four-point diamond formation: Building 3 (north), Building 6 (west), Building 4 (east) and Building 5 (south). Its extensive cemetery of beehive tombs is situated on the *jabals* to the east and north. Its pottery points to trading contacts with the Indus Valley, Iran and even northern Syria, at a time when so-called Umm an-Nar and Wadi Suq traders were present in the Hajar region.

Ground Penetrating Radar Survey

Since all of these ancient oasis settlements were dependent on *aflāj* for their survival, we are in no doubt that this later *Hajar Oasis Town* was also watered by a *falaj* system and, in our 2011 season, we decided to employ Ground Penetrating Radar to try and detect its primary irrigation channel. Of the test grids laid out and surveyed, only three provided results that seemed positive: one east of Building 3 (trending east-west and yet to be tested), and two (trending north-south) in the area between Building 4 and the *Falaj al-Bisyani* to its west. The Building 4 readings were all tested by soundings but, with one exception, the results were negative. We now think that, to find our *falaj*, we must survey much closer to Building 4.

The single exception was a test pit (Sounding 6) which was excavated in response to a GPR survey reading that indicated a zig-zag trend linear with node points trending north-south (See: *Fig. 2 a & b* on the following page). The sounding, 1.7 x 2.0 m in size, was excavated to a depth of 1.6 m. Six layers were recognised, of which only two – layers 3 and 5 – contained pottery. Layer 5 consisted of the Aeolian loess silt that we call Unit 4, and layer 6 was a very hard compact mid-grey gravel. Dug into Layer 6 was a shallow pit with a 'lip' (Context 7) which was 0.6 m in diameter and 0.35 m deep. It contained the same loess as Layer 5 above it. The pit was half-sectioned in case it went deeper, but it did not. We are assuming that it is one of the nodes revealed in the GPR survey. We protected the sounding with an earth barrier but left it uncovered so that we can examine these features more closely in autumn 2012 to see what they represent.

Figure 2 (a & b)

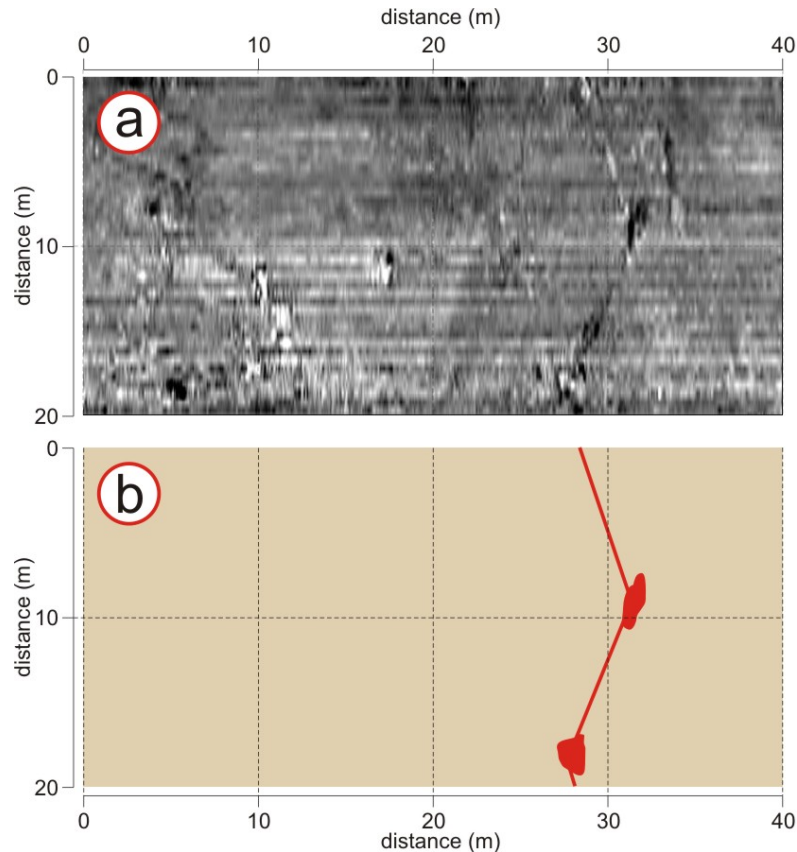
Figure 2 (a&b) on the following page shows one of the potential *falaj* targets in an acquisition grid laid out to the west of Building 4. This is imaged in a Ground Penetrating Radar time slice (i.e., a 'map view,' of the radar acquisition, 40x20 m in dimension). This image comes from a depth of ~ 0.75 m beneath the ground surface, although this may not relate to the upper surface of the feature and could equally show where its presence has created differential settling of overburden layers.

Figure 2-a

Data without interpretation. Notice that linear segments of the anomaly cross almost-circular anomalies (radius ~ 1 m), at which their path is slightly diverted.

Figure 2-b

Data with interpretation. For clarification, the potential *falaj* is highlighted by the red lines, abruptly changing direction at the 'nodes'.



GPR Image courtesy of Dr Adam Booth

The Al-Ghubrat Bahla Site

In 2009 at the al-Ghubrat Bahla Site, we had traced the 5000 year old *Falaj A* across the Wadi Dihni (a tributary of the Wadi Bahla) to its northern bank and had found that here the top of the *falaj* was already buried some 1.0 m beneath the present ground surface. From now on we would have to rely on Ground Penetrating Radar to track the *falaj* further upstream. Our aim was to determine whether, like more recent *aflāj*, *Falaj A* was also trending towards a groundwater source situated north-east of Horat Kid (the Jabal situated at the north-eastern edge of the al-Ghubrat Bahla Site on which part of its cemetery of beehive tombs is located), but initial GPR trials in our 2010 season suggested that it was, in fact, running due north along the base of the western flank of the Jabal.

In 2011, we set out to test the 2010 survey by conducting GPR trials along the western flank of Horat Kid. To do this, we had to work within the extensive enclosure - belonging to Shaykh Abdullah al-Yahyai - which runs along its base

and we are indebted to Mr Ahmed al-Tamimi (Representative of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture) for very kindly arranging for us to borrow the keys. The results of the GPR surveys conducted in this area were negative, but further trials now firmly indicate that *Falaj A* is, in fact, trending eastwards, parallel with the nearby access road and the Wadi Dihni, which strongly suggests a source situated north-east of Horat Kid. We plan to test these findings by means of excavation in autumn 2012.

Conclusions

In order to detect the *aflāj* by means of Ground Penetrating Radar, our surveys exploited two of its structural features. First, a *falaj* should represent a continuous linear anomaly, with a GPR anomaly expected where the *falaj* has cut into the original ground surface. Second, as a *falaj* tunnel is accessed via vertical shafts of 1-2 m diameter, it is possible that GPR could detect the upper surface of these, and hence infer the presence of a deeper *falaj*. Despite this imaging potential, it proved difficult in practice to identify and locate the *aflāj* in GPR images. This is probably because of the minimal physical contrast between the fill of the *aflāj*, the matrix in which they were initially dug, and the deposits by which they have since been buried (as was experienced with earlier magnetometer surveys).

How then do we improve the GPR detection of the *aflāj* on our sites? Adam Booth suggests that the *aflāj* are so subtle because of the absence of water in a desert setting. "Radar responses are heavily affected by water content and in a British survey setting, for example, we may interpret a radar reflection as originating from some transition in sub-surface water content (e.g. the water table). Consequently, they may become more detectable immediately following a rain-storm. The *aflāj* represent conduits for groundwater, and it is possible that groundwater may permeate through them and therefore exaggerate their physical contrast. I appreciate, however, that to exploit this would require the equipment and a survey crew to be (coincidentally!) present on site on the rare occasion of rainfall!"

Adam concludes, "Geophysical surveys are always more successful where observations from two or more survey types are combined. If asked to recommend an alternative geophysical tool, I would suggest surveying with a Geonics EM-31. This system measures the electromagnetic properties of the ground, typically returning an estimate of the ground electrical conductivity (exploiting the fact that clay minerals in the silt of the *falaj* may have higher electrical conductivity than surrounding material). The system is most sensitive to features at a depth of 1-2 m, and will detect the centre of the buried *falaj* rather than its upper surface."

Jeffery and Jocelyn Orchard
Directors of The Hajar Project
Sultanate of Oman

REPORT ON ERBIL CONFERENCE VISIT - INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON IRAQI ARCHAEOLOGY: NEW RESEARCH, NEW PROJECTS

Thanks to financial support from BISI, Dr Alison Gascoigne of the University of Southampton and myself were able to attend the *International Meeting on Iraqi Archaeology : New Research, New Projects*, 31 October to 2 November 2011. The conference was organised by Salahaddin University, Erbil, the Institut Francais du Proche-Orient (IFPO) in cooperation with the State Board of Archaeology and Heritage (SBAH).

The conference was international and attended by scholars from France, Italy, Greece, Japan, USA and the UK (John Curtis, Alison Gascoigne and Hugh Kennedy). There were also Iraqi scholars, from Kurdistan naturally, but also from all over Iraq we were privileged to have Dr. Qais Hussein Rashid, Chairman of SBAH among the participants..

The papers were widely varied both in chronology and geographical focus. The archaeology of Iraqi Kurdistan naturally figured prominently and it is clear that there are many opportunities in the area for international cooperation in both field-work and excavation. In view of events in other parts of the Middle East (Notably Syria) it was good to hear about one province at least where opportunities were improving. It is clear that a new generation of Iraqi scholars are excavating in the south with great enthusiasm and often in difficult circumstances (I was particularly struck by Nasser Al Kaabi's work on Sasanian period churches at Najaf on the very fringes of the expanding airport). It was also clear that many of these archaeologists were working in something of a vacuum, somewhat isolated from international colleagues and international comparanda.

One highlight of the conferences was a guided visit to the famous ancient citadel of Erbil which towers over the modern city. The interior is now virtually uninhabited and many of the houses are crumbling but we were shown how fine mansions from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are now being taken over and restored, in some cases by the French, Italian and Czech cultural institutes.

Dr Gascoigne and I were primarily there to discuss our project on the city of Old Basra (al-Zubayr). We were warmly welcomed and encouraged by Iraqi colleagues, including the Director of SBAH. However the security situation remains very difficult, particularly in the aftermath of the recent bombing of the mosque of Ali in al-Zubayr. At least we can now be sure that' if and when, we can work on the site, we will find able and willing Iraqi colleagues. Until the, we shall just have to keep a watching brief.

Finally I would like, once again, to thank BISI for making this most interesting visit possible.

Hugh Kennedy
SOAS

BISI SPONSORED EVENTS & DEVELOPMENT GRANT REPORTS

BISI STUDY DAY: 'MAY YOUR CITY DRINK WATER APLENTY'*

(From the Sumerian myth of *Enki and Ninhursag*)

After a break of a year, the tradition of an annual BISI study day was revived on the 3rd of March with a fascinating series of talks devoted to the significance of water in shaping the history and culture of ancient, medieval and modern Iraq. Held in the Khalili lecture theatre at the School of African & Oriental Studies and organised in conjunction with the Department of History at SOAS, the speakers ranged over some five thousand years of Iraq's past, present and future. Summaries of the presentations are provided below. The lunch and tea break were enlivened by the presence of Andy Lowings who had brought along his reproductions of the gold lyre and jewellery from the royal tombs at Ur, and Professor Tony Allen brought the day to a close with a wonderful summation of the key themes.

Frans van Koppen: *Water in Mesopotamia: Fertility and Destruction in the "Garden of Eden."*

The agricultural landscape that supported ancient Mesopotamian civilization was not created by natural forces alone but was a product of human labour that harnessed the rivers for their needs. The Tigris and Euphrates reach their peak in spring, when the cereal crops are about to be harvested, but carry far less water in autumn and winter, when water is essential to prepare the soil and irrigate the growing plants. The Mesopotamian farmer therefore had to protect his harvest when the rivers were in spate, and bring water to his field when the rivers were at their lowest. Texts and archaeology shed much light on the dikes, weirs, and irrigation channels that were built to harmonize the fluvial rhythm with the agricultural cycle.

The Babylonians considered the maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure the quintessential task of man, and a chore they had inherited from the gods, who had dug the Tigris and Euphrates but created mankind to bear the burden of keeping the system running. The perennial rivers made agriculture in the land of the Tigris and Euphrates more reliable than rain-fed farming, which goes some way in explaining the achievements of early Mesopotamian civilization, but this extreme dependence on the rivers also came at a price. Excessive irrigation without adequate drainage raised the water table, bringing with it salts that would gradually render the soil useless for most crops. The distribution of water across multiple channels was also prone to periodic changes, which in extreme cases could cut off entire regions from the rivers; this was an important factor behind a severe decline of settlement in Sumer, the southernmost part of Mesopotamia, during the second millennium BC.

For most of ancient Mesopotamian history irrigation was organized at a regional level but in the Neo-Babylonian period (6th century BC) the first steps were taken towards a far more ambitious scheme of irrigation, which would reach its zenith during the Sasanid period (3-7 centuries AD) and encompass the entire alluvial plain.

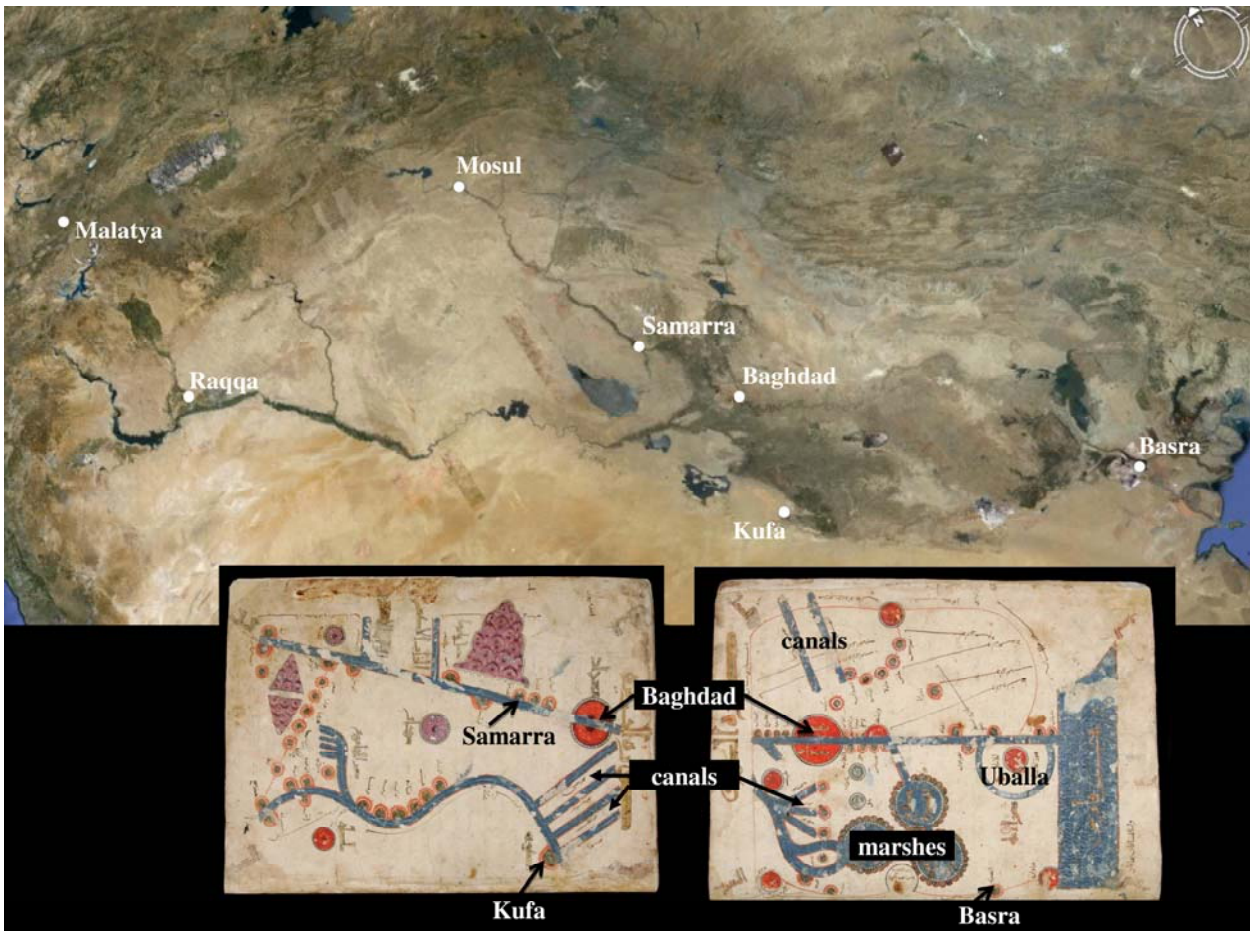


Illustration of the maps of the 10th-century geographer al-Istakhri compared with a modern satellite map.

Paul Collins: *Water and the Divine in Mesopotamian Art*

Images of rivers and fresh water are surprisingly lacking in Mesopotamian art considering the importance they played in daily life. When represented, fresh water is often intimately linked with the gods as it was presumably considered the source of agricultural abundance. This is suggested by the Uruk Vase (ca. 3000 BC) on which wavy lines of water appear as the lowest register, above which are carved domesticated plants and animals and processions of men carrying overflowing vessels. Early third millennium BC images, especially cylinder seals, focus on the mountains to the east of Mesopotamia - although storm clouds, represented by the lion-headed eagle Imdugud, are often associated with them. Images of boats are popular but the water on which they float is rarely a feature.

The first significant representations of streams, rivers and rainfall appear in the Akkadian period (c. 3400-2150 BC) when Ea, god of sweet water and wisdom, can be identified by streams (often with accompanying fish) flowing from his

shoulders. Also at this time, some minor deities hold vessels from which water pours. This is a tradition that appears in Mesopotamian art throughout the second millennium BC and is found in sculpture and paintings from Babylonia to Assyria and Syria. It is, however, during the first millennium BC that we have some of the clearest representations of actual water courses. As the Assyrians expanded their control across the Near East, major rivers such as the Euphrates were depicted on the palace wall reliefs. Here, water is shown either as natural barriers that the king can easily traverse, as highways for the transport of materials, or as methods of waste disposal that carried away dead enemies from the battlefield.

Professor Emilie Savage-Smith FBA, *Water Management and Water Use in Medieval Iraq.*

The Iraq environment is unique, and its distinctive characteristics dictate the water supply, management and use. Medieval geographers thought of the area as divided into two distinct parts, with distinct names. The area west and northwest of Baghdad was called *al-jazīrah* (island, or peninsula) and is a natural desert plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, with an average 108 mm of rain – less than the minimum necessary for rain-fed agriculture. The area from Baghdad south-eastward to the Gulf is the common alluvial flood plain, and medieval geographers called it Iraq.'

The techniques of irrigation and water management through a complex system of canals were inherited by the Muslim conquerors from their Sasanid (Persian) predecessors who had ruled the area for the previous 400 years. The existing systems were greatly extended and new canal works were constructed to feed the needs of the newly-founded Islamic cities of Basra, Kufa, Baghdad, and Samarra. The canals as well as the rivers also provided power to mills, which were undershot water mills. Iraq was famous for its ship-mills (many of which were floating paper mills) as well as stationary mills and (in the south) tidal mills. Illustrations were shown of elaborate water-raising devices, as well as fountains and water-clocks, designed by al-Jazari around 1206.

Professor Adel Sharif: *The Role of Technology in Addressing the World's Challenge in Food, Water and Energy*

As Chair in Water Engineering and Process Innovation at the University of Surrey, Professor Sharif drew on his upbringing in Iraq to explain how he was inspired to tackle the problems of access to fresh water in that country and around the world. Tapping into the seas seems to be one of the only options available to address world water shortages and meet future water demands. Roughly half of the world population lives within 60 kilometres of the coasts. Eight of the 10 largest cities on earth have been built beside the sea. Seas are a reliable and sustainable source of water. New, cheaper, and ecologically sustainable methods of desalination, water treatment, and renewable energy are being developed by Professor Sharif's award winning team. Such work is part of the millennia long tradition of Iraqi scholarship that has fundamentally changed the world.

*Paul Collins
University of Oxford*

ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA TAKING GLASGOW BY STORM

Three years ago, I invited Dr. Frances Reynolds of the University of Oxford up to Scotland to present a day school at the University of Glasgow for adult learners studying with DACE (now: The Centre for Open Studies). She chose a general topic - *Mesopotamia: Exploring Ancient Iraq* - that would introduce Mesopotamian culture to an audience learning about it for the first time. It was a wonderful day, in which students were introduced to the landscape and rich history of ancient Iraq and treated to some of the highlights of its archaeological heritage.

The day school attracted about 50 students, most of whom were unfamiliar with the history and civilisation of ancient Iraq (although bizarrely, some may have unwittingly visited the nearby 'Sumerians Fish and Chip Bar,' on Dumbarton Road!). We were also delighted to have some members of BISI present, who travelled to Glasgow for the occasion. The day culminated in a re-telling of the *Gilgamesh Epic* by Dr. Reynolds, who quite simply held the audience captivated. At the end of the day, I was flooded with requests for more Mesopotamian topics. We've done our best to oblige. This year saw the third in our highly successful day school series run in association with BISI and I'm delighted to say that plans are already underway for the fourth.

Over the years, we've moved from general and broad introductory topics to more specific studies of Mesopotamian history: this year's day school topic was *The Sumerians of Ancient Iraq*. Again, we had about 50 students on the day, many of whom are now familiar faces and have faithfully been attending since the start of the series in 2010. The day began with a survey of early Mesopotamian history and the Sumerians' place in it, moving on to the development of writing and exploring some key texts, before concluding with a study of the fascinating so-called Royal Cemetery at Ur. Seasoned members of BISI who have long been indulging their interest in ancient Iraq will doubtlessly be all-too familiar with the wonders of that site. But from those encountering for the first time the intricate jewellery, the golden treasures from the tombs, as well as the mysteries posed by the identity of their occupants, there were astonished gasps. As a course co-ordinator, there's no better feedback!

At the end of the day, Dr. Reynolds treated us to a re-telling of another famous work of Mesopotamian literature. This year, it was *Inana's Descent into the Underworld* which, with its unexpected dark humour, went down extremely well. Glaswegians can easily identify, I think, with bold lassies with a taste for adventure and no fear of the unknown. And, of course, the value of forward planning is always a useful lesson. Next year's day school on 16th March 2013, will focus on the Babylonians, and I'm certain that the formidable Hammurabi and his fellows will be just as welcome in Glasgow.

This summer, for the first time, The Centre for Open Studies is running a summer programme of events, and Mesopotamia has pride of place within it. Dr. Reynolds will run a 4-day intensive course, *Sumerian for Complete Beginners* from 9th-12th July. We're hoping to glide happily through enough grammar that by the end of the week, we'll be able to read some Sumerian texts in the original. Places are available,

and we'd be delighted to welcome BISI members who would like to attend. Further details can be found at www.glasgow.ac.uk/services/centreforopenstudies.

It's been a pleasure and a privilege to 'borrow,' Dr. Reynolds's expertise over the last few years, since we have no specialist of our own at Glasgow University. I've done my best to sustain interest in between day schools. In September 2011, we ran a well-received course comparing key works of Mesopotamian literature to close correspondents in Egyptian literature, and plans are in place for a course on comparative Egyptian-Mesopotamian art. For the latter, we have some wonderful pieces to inspire our students in museums in both Edinburgh and the Glasgow area. Just recently, a fragment of Assyrian palace relief came to light again in Paisley Museum, which Dr. Reynolds will examine in closer detail this summer. Hopefully, in the future, we will have further communications to make to BISI about Mesopotamia in Scotland. Interest has definitely been sparked - now, it's a matter of fanning the flames.

*Angela McDonald
The Centre for Open Studies
University of Glasgow*

CHRISTIANITY IN IRAQ IX SEMINAR DAY, 5th MAY 2012

The Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London was the venue for the *Christianity in Iraq IX Seminar Day* on Saturday 5th May 2012. Held under the aegis of the Centre for Eastern and Orthodox Christianity, Dept. for the Study of Religions, SOAS, where I am Lecturer in Eastern Christianity, the day addressed the topic of 'Martyrdom in the Iraqi Church: Historic and Modern Perspectives,' exploring the responses of the churches over the centuries.

The morning, as usual, was devoted to academic papers that largely focused on the situation of Christians during the Sasanian Empire. Two speakers came from the USA. Professor Cornelia Horn (St. Louis, Missouri) presented a paper on 'Child Martyrs in Syriac Literature,' analyzing the function and application of the legend of the royal martyrs Sara and Behnam. Professor Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst (Turfanforschung, Berlin) discussed 'Sogdian Versions of the Acts of the Persian Martyrs,' showing the penetration of Syriac martyrologies amongst Turkic-speaking communities along the Silk Route. The recording of acts of persecution by the 10th century writer, Elias of Nisibis was addressed by Professor François de Blois in his paper, 'Elias of Nisibis on the Martyrs of the Church of the East.' In 'Did the Sasanids persecute Christians?' Professor Richard Payne (Mt Holyoke, Massachusetts) proposed that fiscal, rather than religious motives were prime factors in persecution. Professor Samuel N.C. Lieu (Macquarie University, Sydney) chaired the papers.

The afternoon session, chaired by myself, explored martyrdom in its current, contemporary Iraqi context. Dr Mikael Oez (Oxford) linked past and present in his paper 'The Trajectory of Martyrdom in the Syrian Orthodox Church,' graphically

drawing attention to the impact of recent atrocities on the Syrian Orthodox community. This was to be complemented by Mr Nineb Lamassu in his study of 'The Assyrians of Iraq and Literary Manifestations of Post-Saddam Persecution.' Regrettably, he did not deliver his paper. A detailed appraisal of the effects on Christians in Iraq was the subject of the power-point presentation by Dr Suha Rassam, 'The Impact of Martyrdom on Iraqi Christians.' Mrs Zina Allos read this paper since Dr Rassam was attending the First Communion of a niece whose father was martyred in the massacre at Our Lady of Salvation church in Baghdad on 31st October 2010.

The atrocities of the last decade have traumatized the Iraqi Christian communities, leading large numbers to flee either to Syria or to the region of the KRG. The task of helping these large numbers of displaced persons largely falls on the shoulders of diaspora charities. Iraqi Christians in Need (ICIN) provided a very informative account of the various activities in which it is engaged that includes computer training, English language lessons and building apartments at Qara Qoche. Various schemes of assistance were also outlined, including sponsoring a child's education.

Dr Selwa Alsam represented the Mandaean communities whose numbers have been decimated since 2003. Only an estimated 5,000 Mandaeans remain in Iraq from a pre-Gulf War population of 50,000. A video graphically recounted atrocities people had suffered. Dr Alsam also reported on the 1st Mandaean Human Rights Conference that was held at the House of Lords on 26th April.

The interest generated by the Seminar Day, which was attended by around sixty people, including many Iraqis, was most gratifying. Grants by BISI and The Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association, as well as the Faculty of Arts & Humanities (SOAS) have been extremely helpful in meeting the considerable costs involved in organizing this day and made its success possible. The 2013 *Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day* is planned for Saturday 11th May when the theme will be East Syrian mysticism. It will be the tenth such annual day in a series inaugurated in 2004.

Erica C D Hunter
SOAS

THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF IRAQ

The National Youth Orchestra of Iraq is a remarkable project set up by a brave 17-year-old Iraqi, Zuhail Sultan in 2008. Despite the lack of infrastructure in Iraq - all the music tutors fled Iraq during the war - Zuhail decided to create a national orchestra anyway. Recruiting and auditioning musicians each year from across Iraq via Facebook, and sourcing the conductor, Paul MacAlindin, over the internet, the orchestra has gone from strength to strength.

Each year the young Iraqi musicians get together for an annual summer school where they receive their only musical tuition for the year from carefully selected

UK, German and American tutors. This two week summer school is full of learning and activity and culminates in a concert.

In 2011, we expanded our usual two week summer course in the Kurdistan region to make our first visit abroad to Beethovenfest, Bonn. With full support from the German Government, Goethe Institut, British Council and BISI, 45 Kurdish, Arab and Turkomen musicians flew with a fledgling programme, already performed in Erbil, of Beethoven's violin concerto, Haydn 104, and new works commissioned by Deutsche Welle from Baghdad composer Mohammed Amin Ezzat and Sulyemaniyah's Ali Authman, now living in Holland. Throughout the intensive rehearsal phase, massive media attention from Germany and the continent told the story of the young, struggling artists and their message of peace to each other, and the world.

The tutors for Iraq, with support from BISI, came from UK, US and Germany to create a solid technical and musical foundation for the concert in Martyr Saad Palace in Erbil. The Bonn phase, with German tutors, brought polish and finesse that was beyond the players' wildest expectations.

2011 was a huge test, which the orchestra rose to spectacularly. Not only were we genuinely amazed at the daily leaps in quality over the whole of September, but how naturally everyone took to Germany, their new friends and families. Not even performing in front of 2500 Beethoven experts, VIPs and music lovers of Bonn phased them.

Whilst there, the orchestra stayed with German families and merged with 16 string players from the National Youth Orchestra of Germany. There was little time to relax, with a relentless rehearsal schedule, kids' concerts, invitation concert in Berlin and the final public concert in Beethovenhalle, Bonn, in the presence of the Iraqi Ambassador and the German President.

Zana Jalal, from Suleymaniyah, who performed Beethoven's violin concerto in Iraq and Berlin, stepped aside for Arabella Steinbacher in Bonn, an Anne-Sophie Mutter protégé, whose loving and generous approach to the orchestra amplified the security and sensitivity we had spent September creating. Predictably, and deservedly, the audience roared to their feet at the final chord, not only for a multicultural evening of music, but also in recognition of the now widespread story of the youth of Iraq, their potential, hopes, steel determination and readiness to reach out to each other through music.

Behind the scenes, I had been working on this visit since October 2009 with Beethovenfest and the German Friends of the NYOI, whose stunning support enabled us to deliver the intensive care and public successes in Erbil, Berlin and Bonn. Because the orchestra is fundamentally innovative in its approach, and diversity is based on ability rather than quota, NYOI sustainability requires sustained effort, funding and faith that we are doing the right thing. The next step is not only to visit the UK this August, with performances planned in Edinburgh, Glasgow and London, but to guide the players into delivering better quality teaching in Iraq. With British Council support, we are looking at the future of music

making in Iraq, and laying down the foundations of a more structured, internationally connected network.

However, the visit to the UK is in itself an impressive undertaking which began in 2010 with initial approaches to the British Iraqi Friendship Society and the Scottish Government, who had then passed a motion in support of NYOI. When funding became available through their “Cash back to the Community”, plans were laid down to collaborate with Edinburgh Youth Orchestra, Julian Lloyd Webber, Khyam Allami and composers Osama Abdhulrasool, Karzan Mamood and Gordon McPherson. With co-ordination from the FCO and British Council in Iraq and London, and considerable fundraising, the performances in Glasgow, Edinburgh and London will bring the young people and their live message of reconciliation, joy and vision for the future back into the limelight.

To donate support to make this year's ambitious project come to life please visit: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/NYOIraq>.

Paul MacAlindin

EXCERPTS FROM DAVID JURITZ ON THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF IRAQ

In September 2011, I travelled to Erbil in the Kurdistan region of Iraq through a special visiting scholars grant from BISI. The purpose of my trip was to coach members of the National Youth Orchestra of Iraq for an intensive two-week period. After this, the orchestra travelled to Germany for performances in Berlin and the Bonn Beethovenfest.



NYOI players join a local high school in Bonn for a repertoire get-together Photo: Barbara Frommann

The orchestra is now in its third year and has around 70 members between the ages of 13 to 28. The membership is evenly balanced with male and female and Arab and Kurd members equally represented and taking on roles of equal responsibility. While there was wide variation in playing standard, the level of motivation was, on the whole, extremely impressive and, at times, quite moving.

There were some outstanding talents in the orchestra, particularly among the wind and brass players. Most of them had had very few lessons and, in the case of the string players, those who had had regular tuition, apart from a few exceptions, had not been particularly well taught. A few individuals, who lived in areas where fundamentalism was prevalent, even had to keep their practice secret from their neighbours. They clearly relished the chance to play music as and when they liked and, for most of the two weeks, the hotel was a happy cacophony with young Iraqis practising in any and every available corner!

The daily timetable consisted of a group warm-up in the morning followed by sectional rehearsals and then, after lunch, a general rehearsal. After about 5pm tutors gave one to one lessons to students if requested and often carried on with teaching after supper. The students practised relentlessly.

One student pointed out to me, 'In Iraq we are not used to being successful.' He explained that, faced with endemic corruption and inadequate or unreliable institutions, many Iraqis have lost their motivation and their ambitions have been greatly eroded. In an environment where one cannot fully rely on services or goods being properly supplied, the resulting uncertainty has a corrosive effect on attitudes and behaviour; people may become less willing to invest their efforts in a project if they believe it is likely to collapse through no fault of their own. It is telling that the NYOI members feel their orchestra represents an opportunity to break the cycle and, driven by a real passion to make it succeed, the students, administrators and staff of the NYOI are working hard to overcome this challenge.

The NYOI is an incredibly positive example of young people striving for excellence in a chaotic and extremely challenging environment. There is something wonderful in that, in spite of the difficulties they faced, through hard work, cooperation and, on the part of many individuals, heroic determination they were able to produce results that were often outstanding.

*David Juritz
ViolinTutor*

REPORT ON A STRANGE ANIMAL - A FILM BY RICHARD PENDRY

I was really pleased to get a grant from BISI so that my editor could complete work on my documentary film from Iraq, called *A Strange Animal*. After putting in a lot of unpaid hours, my Emmy-award winning editor Jerry Ramsbottom had to temporarily put aside the film to concentrate on paying work. When it came through, the grant from BISI allowed Jerry to finish the project. I was able to send out the completed film into the world.

The result enabled us to have a screening at the prestigious Frontline Club in Paddington - the most high profile forum for people working in the news industry.

Accordingly, I constructed an event, which investigated the innovative methods journalists are using to report from some of the world's most dangerous places.

Just before the screening at the Frontline Club, the Daily Beast/ Newsweek website also published a shorter version of the film which attracted a lot of attention.

A Strange Animal is an unusual, revealing piece of work. It investigates a previously unknown part of newsgathering: the way



*Reporters gathering news in Iraq, Photo:
Richard Pendru*

Iraqi reporters working for international editors 'sub-contract,' their newsgathering because of security concerns. The film raises questions about whether the reporting practices being adopted due to risk are undermining the correspondent as eye-witness.

To make the film, I filmed Neil Arun, an international editor working with reporters in Baghdad and Falluja on a story about whether militia members were preparing for sectarian warfare. Camera operators that I commissioned in Baghdad and Falluja filmed the reporters as they gathered news. As their story unfolded, the contributors revealed how they sub-contract news gathering because of risk to their own lives. One reporter uses what he calls a 'circle of trust,' - colleagues who gather news on his behalf in an area where his life was threatened while working on a previous story.

Sub-contracting newsgathering among locally-hired journalists is a previously unreported phenomenon and a good example of where my experience in this area helps me uncover current working practices among reporters in areas of conflict that are hidden to outsiders.

I worked full time for over 20 years in the television industry, starting with Frontline News Television, a specialist news agency working in areas of conflict, which gave rise to the Frontline Club. At Frontline News, we worked in small, flexible teams with a variety of then-experimental technology, which has since become standard industry equipment.

An article in the peer reviewed journal 'Ethical Space Ethical Space Vol.8 Issue 3/4,' allowed me more space to explore the issues raised in the films by interviewing Iraqi and international reporters.

At the screening, a panel further discussed these matters. The aim was to investigate the various innovative ways international journalists gather news in the North Caucasus, Sri Lanka and Pakistan's Tribal Areas.

The panel members were Amie Ferris-Rotman (Reuters), who until recently oversaw stringers in the North Caucasus - the only independent sources of news in that region; Aamer Ahmed Khan (Head of BBC Urdu Service), who oversees a network of local people in the Tribal Areas in Pakistan who identify victims of US drone strikes; Neil Arun, who appears in my film; and Callum Macrae, who made Sri Lanka's Killing Fields, a film on the last days of the Tamil Tigers that was almost entirely sourced from non-traditional video footage. Callum used powerful documentary narrative techniques to make a film, which made a huge international impact.

The audience included reporters from the BBC, Channel 4's Unreported World, The Independent and others working in print, radio and TV. There were also academics from City University, the LSE, Goldsmiths and Westminster University.

The evening was a success. The film generated a frank debate on the way non-traditional reporters work with international news organisations. This is a very important and dynamic area of modern scholarship. Parts of the debate were revealing. At one point one of the panel members, Amie Ferris-Rotman confessed

that she did not even know the identity of one of her stringers in the North Caucasus, a photographer. Someone in the audience demanded to know how she could be sure that the information we are getting - published under a pseudonym - is accurate.

I would like to acknowledge the support BISI gave me and my collaborators. It gave our project a boost just when it needed one.

(Note: to find the film, google Strange Animal on Vimeo for the long version, or for the short version, google Strange Animal Daily Beast)

*Richard Pendry
University of Kent*

BISI VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAMME

LETTER TO BISI FROM DR FAWZIYA AL-MALIKY, DIRECTOR OF HERITAGE AT THE STATE BOARD OF ANTIQUITIES & HERITAGE IN IRAQ

I would like to express my especial gratitude to BISI, Dr Harriet Crawford, Mrs Joan Porter MacIver, Dr Lamia Al-Gailani Werr and Dr Nicholas Postgate for their invitation and for their kind and patient help during my visit. I wish to thank Sarah Buckingham, Head of Heritage Protection Reform, English Heritage, Catherine Leonard of the National Trust, and the Head of INTO Secretariat for their invaluable information. I am also grateful to Dr Subhi Al-Azzawi and Miss Ghada Al-Gaylani for their keen support throughout my visit.

I would like to thank the British Museum, Dr John Curtis, Dr Jonathan Tubbi, Mrs Joan Porter MacIver and Dr Subhi Al-Azzawi for their kind help in organising my power-point presentation and for assisting the Iraqi ministerial delegations visit. I benefited from presenting my power-point talk at the British Museum.

My placement at BISI was very interesting and varied. I visited British heritage buildings, museums, historical sites and attended various lectures and talks.

I found the English Heritage and National Trust meetings very informative. I only wish that I could have spent longer at each site to examine the various procedures of reconstruction. The English language lessons offered as part of my visit were also very beneficial.

In my opinion BISI has been and continues to play an essential part in contributing to important research studies for Iraqi scholars. I hope that BISI will partake in future excavations and restorations for heritage buildings in Iraq and continue its collaborations with Iraqi scholars.

Dr Fawziya Al-Maliky

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 **31 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 October annually**.

BISI 2012-2013 LECTURES & OTHER FUTURE EVENTS

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

14 JUNE, 6 PM: BISI BONHAM CARTER LECTURE

Jack Fairweather on 'A War of Choice: Lessons from Britain's War in Iraq 2003-09'

Free entry, but please confirm your acceptance to bisi@britac.ac.uk.

Venue: The British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH

28 JUNE, 7 PM: BISI-GULAN EVENT

Father and son, Yona and Ariel Sabar, discuss the history of the Jews of Kurdistan in 'My Father's Paradise' - www.gulan.org.uk

Venue: The Royal Geographical Society, Kensington, London SW7 2AR

9-12 JULY: LANGUAGE COURSE

'Sumerian for Beginners,' with Dr Frances Reynolds at Glasgow University, Centre for Open Studies. Bookings now open:

www.glasgow.ac.uk/services/centreforopenstudies.

AUGUST (DATES TBC): NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF IRAQ

Performances in Edinburgh, Glasgow and London. Please visit: www.nyoiraq.com for further announcements.

22 NOVEMBER: BISI LECTURE

Dr John Curtis OBE, FBA on 'Museums and Archaeology in Iraq: a 10-Year Retrospective'

Venue: The British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH

19 JANUARY 2013: OUDCE & BISI STUDY DAY

'Kingship and the Gods: The Origins of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Iran'

Venue: Oxford University, Department for Continuing Education, Rewley House, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA

28 FEBRUARY 2013, 6 PM: BISI AGM AND LECTURE

Dr John Macginnis on the 'Ziyaret Tepe Archaeological Project'

Venue: The British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH

16 MARCH 2013: BISI-CENTRE FOR OPEN STUDIES STUDY DAY

'Mesopotamia: The Babylonians of Ancient Iraq'

Venue: Glasgow University, Centre for Open Studies.

GERTRUDE BELL CONFERENCE 11-13 SEPTEMBER 2013

CALL FOR PAPERS: GERTRUDE BELL AND IRAQ - A LIFE AND LEGACY

A conference organised by The British Institute for the Study of Iraq (Gertrude Bell Memorial) and the British Academy to be held at the British Academy, London.

The aims of the conference are to re-evaluate the life and legacy of Gertrude Lowthian Bell (1868-1926), the renowned scholar, explorer, writer, archaeologist and British civil servant. It will focus on her role in shaping British policy in the Middle East, especially the establishment of the Iraqi monarchy and state, her interests in Iraq's ancient past (she was instrumental in the foundation of the Iraq Museum in 1923), and reflect on her legacy for modern Iraq and neighbouring regions.

The specific themes and conference sessions will be developed on the basis of the papers that are accepted. The steering committee anticipates mixing academic disciplines during the two day conference and suggestions for session proposals are welcome. BISI will be promoting the participation of Iraqi scholars.

There will be an opening public panel discussion on the first evening, which will take place at the Royal Society.

If you wish to offer a paper, please send a 200-word abstract to bisi@britac.ac.uk before the **15th September 2012** for consideration by the Steering Committee. Abstracts submitted after the deadline may be accepted or rejected at the discretion of the Committee.

Abstracts must include:

- 1) the name and full contact details and affiliation of the contributor
- 2) the title of the proposed paper
- 3) what the proposed paper intends to cover
- 4) an outline of the approach it will take

Individual presentations are limited to 20 minutes with additional time for questions. A publication of the proceedings is anticipated and participants will be asked to submit their papers by 31 December 2013. BISI may be able to provide financial help for participation depending on circumstances.

BISI wishes to acknowledge the major support of the British Academy in jointly sponsoring this conference.

Organising Committee: Professor Charles Tripp (School of Oriental and African Studies), Dr Glen Rangwala (Cambridge University), Dr Paul Collins (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), Dr Lamia al-Gailani Werr (University College London) and Mrs Joan Porter MacIver (BISI)

BISI COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEMBERS & BISI OFFICERS

<i>Patron:</i>	The Rt Hon Lord Lamont of Lerwick
<i>President</i>	Dr John Curtis OBE, FBA
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<i>Chair of Council:</i>	Dr Eleanor Robson (F, A)
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<i>Appeal Committee Chairman</i>	Mr Peter Davies (ex-officio) (A, D, F)
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<i>Co-opted members of the Development Committee:</i>	Dr Lamia al-Gailani Werr (V, GB)
<i>Other BISI Appeal Committee Members:</i>	Dr Harriet Crawford (Vice-Chairman); Mr Alan Sandall (Secretary); Mr Mowafaq Mahmood (Advisor, resident in Iraq); Mr Bashir Siman; Mr Iain D. Cheyne CBE; Mr Simon Eccles-Williams; Dr Lamia al Gailani-Werr; Mrs Joan Porter MacIver Sir David Richmond, KBE, CMG & Sir Terence Clark KBE, CMG, CVO

BISI Committee Abbreviations:

A = Appeal Committee; D = Development Committee; F = Finance Committee;
P = Publications Committee; R = Fieldwork and Research Committee; V= Visiting
Scholars Committee & GB= Gertrude Bell Conference Steering Committee

BISI ON FACEBOOK

You can now also keep up-to-date with events through the **BISI Facebook page** - simply search for The British Institute for the Study of Iraq (Gertrude Bell Memorial) - and feel free to show your support by 'liking' us.

BISI MEMBERSHIP

BISI welcomes new members and membership is open to all. The Institute offers a range of membership types, including student and non-UK memberships, as well as a choice of journals: *IRAQ* (annual) and/or the *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies (IJCIS)* (three issues per year). To find out more about how to join, please visit the website **www.bisi.ac.uk** or email us at **bisi@britac.ac.uk**.

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