

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ

المعهد البريطاني لدراسة العراق

NEWSLETTER NO. 31
Spring 2013



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(GERTRUDE BELL MEMORIAL)

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CHAIR OF COUNCIL'S REPORT



Dr Eleanor Robson with 'Gilgamesh', the professional excavator who found the cuneiform tablets at Tell Khaiber Photo: Ur Region Archaeology Project (URAP)

Looking back over the first year of my role as Chair of Council, it's gratifying and humbling to see how much BISI has achieved. Most noticeable to members are perhaps the significant improvements to our online communications. I am sure you have been enjoying Lauren's monthly email bulletins. Most importantly, though, in December we launched a beautiful redesign of the Institute's website, at www.bisi.ac.uk. It has everything the old one had (though not always in the same place) plus a lot more content and functionality. Most excitingly, you can now book places at BISI events online - reserve seats for free events, buy tickets for costed ones - as well as join the Institute, renew your membership, and make a donation. You can pay securely with PayPal, wherever you are in the world.

We're also starting to use the website to distribute free PDFs of our books. Around ten are already available, including all five volumes in the Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud series, plus several more recent ones for which PDFs were made as part of the production process. We're planning to digitise all of the back-catalogue in due course. From the home page of the website you can now also follow us on **Twitter** (@bisi932) and on Facebook and Academia.edu.

A number of people contributed to making this happen, but I particularly want to thank Helen Taylor and Khalid Almaini of **Cambridge Web Studios** who patiently and painstakingly turned our initially rather inchoate ideas into reality. BISI's excellent administrators Joan Porter MacIver and especially Lauren Mulvee, put huge amounts of time and effort into it throughout the year.

If you're a reader of my **BISI blog** (bisi1932.blogspot.co.uk) you'll know that since my trip to Kurdistan last spring I've been to Iraq twice more, visiting universities and cultural heritage organisations in order to raise awareness of the Institute and to explore opportunities for expanding our in-country collaborative work. My October and April trips were kindly funded in part by the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and UNESCO respectively. I'm very grateful to everyone at the following institutions for their hospitality and support: the British Embassy and British Council Iraq in Baghdad; the Iraq Museum and the Iraqi National Museum and Archives in Baghdad; the holy shrines of Al-Abbas and Al-Hussein and associated museums in Kerbala; the holy shrine of Al-Ali in Najaf and associated Old City cultural heritage restoration project; colleagues from the universities of Al-Qadissiyah (Diwaniyah), Baghdad, Basra, Kufa; and the Ur Regional Archaeology Project (URAP) at Tell Khaiber in Dhi Qar province.

URAP is led by Jane Moon, Robert Killick and Stuart Campbell, with colleagues and students from the Department of Archaeology at Al-Qadissiyah University as well as a UK-based team. BISI is proud to be one of the project's founder donors, along with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Gulfsands Petroleum, and Baron Lorne van Thyssen. It was an honour and a delight to visit their dig for a few days - the first British excavation in non-Kurdish Iraq since the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. I was particularly lucky to arrive just as the team found three cuneiform tablets that needed deciphering, from a large Old Babylonian building that was emerging from just below the surface of the mound. I was thus able to make myself useful by cleaning and deciphering them, though I still have some more work to do from the photos now that I'm home. You can read more about URAP's work at:

urheritage.tumblr.com and www.urarchaeology.org

Back in the UK, the Council and Appeal Committee have begun working with Simon Pennington and Craig Pollard of the More Partnership in order to develop the Institute's strategic plans for the coming few years, along with ways to fund that work. Expect to see much more engagement with Iraq itself, in all aspects of BISI's charitable remit to further research and education in all areas of the arts, humanities and social sciences, from the earliest times until the present.

Meanwhile BISI's usual research, publication and educational activities continue apace. Over the past few months we have awarded six Outreach grants, two Conference grants, six Research grants and a Pilot Project award, and have appointed two new Iraqi Visiting Scholars (who will be taking up their UK scholarships in 2014). Volume 74 of our journal *Iraq* came out in the new year, the first to be produced by the excellent new editorial team of Jon Taylor and Michael Seymour. Since January I have been leading an AHRC-funded research project on the Assyrian city of Nimrud, and the ways in which archaeological knowledge is made, in which BISI is a project partner. You can read more about it at oracc.museum.upenn.edu/nimrud/. In March the Institute was one of the sponsoring partners of a fascinating and important conference entitled *Iraq: Ten Years On* organised by Chatham House (see www.chathamhouse.org/events/view/189361). In her own introduction Lauren mentions many more forthcoming activities. I do hope to see you at one or more of those very soon.

*Dr Eleanor Robson
Chair of Council*

EDITORIAL

The past few months have been an active period for the BISI and there are many more exciting projects on the horizon for 2013.

At the start of the year, we welcomed the last Christie-Mallowan Visiting Scholar, Saber Ahmed Saber, a representative of the Department of Antiquities and Heritage in Sulaimaniah, to London. The purpose of Saber's visit was to work with Dr Mark Altaweel of UCL on publishing archaeological reports of excavations in Sulaimaniah into English. There are many sites that have been excavated in Iraqi Kurdistan which have not been published or properly documented. With these publications, Saber and Dr Altaweel hope to make known the importance of these archaeological finds to the Western world. Saber's account of his trip the UK can be read on p.20.

In February Dr Joan Oates FBA delivered the Annual Mallowan Lecture. The talk was based on her time excavating with the British School of Archaeology in Iraq (BISI's former name) at Nimrud in the 1950s. At that time, Sir Max Mallowan was the Director on the site and Dr Oates recalled her time off, exploring the countryside of Northern Iraq with Sir Max's wife, Dame Agatha Christie. The talk was beautifully illustrated by slides taken during the period. There is an audio recording of this lecture – and all BISI lectures – on the Events Archive page of our website www.bisi.ac.uk. In keeping with our tradition we made a toast to the memory of Sir Max and Dame Agatha at the reception that followed the lecture – a truly fitting time to do so.

At the February Annual General Meeting, we said farewell and a heartfelt thanks to Council members, Dr Athem Alsabti, Professor Emilie Savage-Smith FBA and Professor Nicholas

Postgate FBA, who have each made an invaluable contribution to the Institute during their terms as Council members. BISI members elected Professor Hugh Kennedy (Department of the Languages and Cultures of the Near and Middle East, SOAS), Dr Nelida Fuccaro (Reader in the Modern History of the Middle East, SOAS) and Adam Stone (Cambridge University) to fill the three available places on Council. We are delighted to have them on board.

Long-standing members will be pleased to hear that the next volume of *Ivories from Nimrud* was published at the end of May: *Ivories from Nimrud (1949-1963) VII, 1 & 2 Ivories from Rooms SW11/12 and T10 Fort Shalmaneser* by Georgina Herrmann and Stuart Laidlaw. The book, which was a huge undertaking for the authors, comes in two volumes, totalling over 600 pages and includes 32 stunning colour plates of the ivories. We are extremely grateful to the Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust for their financial support for the publication. We held a book launch to celebrate the arrival of *Ivories from Nimrud VII* on Thursday 30 May at the British Academy. Information on how to purchase the book can be found on p.22

The travel writer and film-maker, Mike Laird will deliver the 31st Bonham Carter Lecture on **Thursday 20 June, 6.00pm** at the British Academy. Mike was recently funded by the BISI to carry out a project to construct a large traditional mudhif with the local community near Chabaish, between Qurnah and Nasiriyah. His lecture will be on 'Mudhifs in the Marshes: Preserving Cultural Identity.'

In the summer we will be busy with the final preparations for our three-day conference on *Gertrude Bell and Iraq — A Life and Legacy*,



Gertrude Bell on Horseback at Kubbet Duris, Lebanon 1900. Copyright: Newcastle University

organised with the British Academy, in association with the Gertrude Bell Archive at Newcastle University, **11-13 September, 2013**. We are very proud to say that this is the first major international conference to explore and examine Bell's extensive work in Iraq. It will bring together scholars from across the world for three days of discussion and debate. There will be an opening panel discussion on **Wednesday 11 September** at the Royal Society on 'Britain and the Occupations of Iraq,' followed by an academic conference over **12-13 September** at the British Academy. Members should register their attendance for the panel discussion and conference separately at www.britac.ac.uk. Both are free to attend and are open to the public. Advance booking is recommended as it is anticipated that the event will be over-subscribed.

The conference will also be the final project of our wonderful London Manager, Joan Porter

MacIver, who will be leaving the Institute in the autumn to focus on her role as Executive Director of the Honor Frost Foundation. She will be leaving after thirteen years with the BISI/BSAI. We are extremely sad to see her go. Along with Joan's departure in September, we also bid farewell to Iain Cheyne in June. He has been our Hon. Treasurer since 2000 and we have all benefited from his dedicated and capable financial stewardship during many turbulent years. He is handing over a financially sound (but stretched) charity to his successor, Peter Davies, whom we welcome as the forthcoming Hon. Treasurer. We all look forward to working with Peter in this vital role.

More information on future events and publications can be read in the enclosed flyers or on the BISI website www.bisi.ac.uk.

Lauren Mulvee
Administrator

OUTREACH GRANT REPORTS

ERBIL: RESEARCH, INTERPRETATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE WORLD'S OLDEST CITY

Organised by Gulan with support from The British Institute for the Study of Iraq



An attendee exploring the exhibition on the history of Erbil Photo: Paul Anvari and Richard Wilding

This event, centred on Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and the work being done to understand the ancient city and the Erbil Citadel, which is distinguished from almost all other archaeological sites in that it appears to be been continuously inhabited throughout its 6,000 to 8,000 years of history.

The speakers were David Michelmores who is a specialist in the management and conservation of heritage sites, and Dr John MacGinnis from the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge.

John MacGinnis, who is researching Erbil in the cuneiform sources and whose book on this work should be published shortly, set the scene by giving an overview of the ancient history of Erbil.

David Michelmores then talked about the major project of conservation currently being undertaken at the Citadel. He showed plans of the area of the Citadel and explained how he personally had mapped each building.

Both talks were expertly illustrated, John with images from the ancient past and David with images predominantly of the work now being done.

Before the talk and afterwards people had a chance to view displays of work celebrating Erbil. H.E. Dr Kawa Shakir, Minister of Culture and Youth, Kurdistan Regional Government, had recently held exhibitions in Kurdistan on the historic architecture of Erbil and on the history of Erbil from 2200BC until independence. The Minister kindly made available about 30 images of historic architecture which were projected in a slide show in the lecture room, and 15 panels illustrating the history of Erbil, which were shown on display boards. We were delighted that Mr Kanan Mufti, Director General of the Ministry of Culture and Youth, was present on the evening representing the Minister.

Mr Mufti's father featured in one of the selection of outstanding historic images of Erbil in the 1940s taken by leading architectural photographer Anthony Kersting who died in 2008, which were also on display. Anthony Kersting's archive was made available on the night by the generosity of the Courtauld Institute of Art's Conway Library.

Further photographs of the evening can be seen at www.gulan.org.uk

Sarah Panizzo
Gulan Trustee

OXFORD POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE IN ASSYRIOLOGY

The Oxford Postgraduate Conference in Assyriology took place on Friday 22 February and Saturday 23 February 2013 at Wolfson College, University of Oxford. An annual event begun in 2012, the conference aims to provide a forum for students at a postgraduate level whose research focuses on ancient Iraq to present their work and meet other young scholars in the field. The conference began with a panel on the Assyrians with three talks given by postgraduate students. Krisztián Simkó (Eötvös Loránd University) gave a talk on an elusive expression that appears in a building inscription of the Neo-Assyrian king Esarhaddon and possible connections to the epic *Lugale*. This was followed by a talk on the symbolism in the imagery of the “sacred tree” in the Neo-Assyrian king Aššurbanipal II’s North-West Palace at Nimrud in a paper given by Romina Della Casa (Catholic University of Argentina). The panel ended with a talk by Yigal Bloch (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) on some apparent omissions from the Old Assyrian eponym list from Kaneš. The second panel of the afternoon focused on Early Writing with the first talk delivered by Laura Hawkins (University of Oxford, Wolfson College) who discussed connections between proto-cuneiform and proto-Elamite sources. This was followed by a paper on approaches to early texts given by Kathryn Kelley (University of Oxford, St. Cross College).

The afternoon closed with an address by the conference’s Keynote speaker, Dr Jacob L. Dahl (University Lecturer in Assyriology, University of Oxford), who gave a thought-provoking talk on early literature. In ‘A Mongoose’s Ear,’ he proposed a re-interpretation of the earliest attested pieces of Sumerian literature that raised questions about interpretation, translation, and genre and offered some new perspectives on questions about what early literature may consist of.

The Saturday portion of the conference opened with a panel on Literature, Mythology and Text with four speakers. The first speaker, Selena Wisnom (University of Oxford, Wolfson College), discussed intertextuality in the Akkadian epic of creation, *Enūma eliš*. Terhi Nurmikko (University of Southampton) then discussed her work on ontological representation in Sumerian literature as part of a project to create online resources for the study of Assyriology. This was followed by a paper by Klaus Wagensonner (University of Oxford, Vienna) who spoke on the divine journey of Ninurta in a hitherto unpublished exemplar of the Sumerian epic *Ninurta and Enki*. Dr Christopher Metcalf (University of Oxford, Balliol College) concluded the panel with a re-interpretation of the Babylonian Dialogue of Pessimism that focused on the final section of this well-known Akkadian composition, which in his analysis should be taken seriously as a work of ancient philosophy.

The second panel on Saturday was on art and archaeology and opened with a paper by Rune Rattenborg (Durham University) on reconstructing social networks on Bronze Age Mesopotamia from a variety of sources and perspectives, including textual sources, satellites, and landscape archaeology. This was followed by a talk on Mitanni households at Tell Brak, a site in modern-day Syria, by Melissa Sharp (University of Cambridge, Darwin College). Charles Draper (University of Oxford, The Queen’s College) then gave a talk that momentarily bridged the gap between ancient Iraq and ancient Egypt on three statues of King Taharqa found at Nineveh. The panel was concluded with a paper by Eva Miller (University of Oxford, Lady Margaret Hall), who discussed violence in

Neo-Assyrian post-battle rituals, and in particular the practice of decapitation, based on cuneiform sources and Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs.

The final panel of the conference, which was on Language, Science, and Society, opened with a talk on contacts between Mesopotamia and South Asia by Sureshkumar Muthukumaran (University College London), who synthesized Akkadian, Old Persian, Aramaic, Greek, Sanskrit, and Pali sources to open up new perspectives on trade and other relations between these two parts of the world in the first millennium BCE. Nadia Ait Said-Ghanem (University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies) then gave a paper on sentence structure in Old Babylonian omen texts and the use of nominal and verbal sentences with reference to categories used in Arabic grammar. Nicholas Reid (University of Oxford, University College) moved from language to society in looking at references to prisoners of war in Ur III administrative documents in order to reconstruct the situation of this class of persons during the period. The final paper was given by me (Moudhy Al-Rashid, University of Oxford, Wolfson College) on wandering about as a topos of depression in Akkadian diagnostic and therapeutic texts, and the extension of the verb for “to wander, roam” to other subjects, including speech and ghosts, in the expression of mental disturbance.

The conference would not have been possible without the generous support of The British Institute for the Study of Iraq, as well as the Lorne Thyssen Research Fund for Ancient World Topics and the Wolfson Academic Committee. In addition to the seventeen speakers from a variety of institutions within and outside of the United Kingdom, the conference was well-attended by undergraduate and postgraduate students whose degrees and research focus on ancient Iraq from the United Kingdom and from other parts of Europe, including Germany and Spain. The audience also included senior academics in the fields of Assyriology and Indo-Iranian studies from the University of Oxford. The conference provided postgraduate students in the field of Assyriology with a unique opportunity to come together to present their research to each other and to senior academics, to discuss topics relating to the study of Iraq in a meaningful forum, and to form lasting connections in the field.

Moudhy Al-Rashid
DPhil Student, University of Oxford (Wolfson College)

REEL IRAQ 2013

Reel Iraq was a huge success, with over 50 events in nine cities around the UK. A total audience of around 6000 people got a chance to engage directly with Iraqi poets, filmmakers, artists, writers and musicians and a number of new collaborations took place. The quality and diversity of the programme attracted large amounts of national and international media, with coverage on BBC Radio 4, BBC World News and BBC Arabic, as well as pieces in the Guardian, Independent and much online content. This gave us potential viewers of over 100m internationally. The two main hubs for the festival were Edinburgh and London. In London Reel Iraq events took place in the Rich Mix, SOAS, Mosaic Rooms and the Arab British Centre. The Rich Mix formed the festival hub, and hosted daily events.

THE INVASION OF IRAQ: TWO PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON ART AND POLITICS 23 MARCH 2013 AT SOAS

Commemorating the key political developments that marked the run-up to the invasion in March 2003, Reel Festivals brought together a group of engaged artists, activists and academics to discuss the Iraq war's impact on global art and politics together with the audience. This event was part-sponsored by BISI. This was a very successful event, over 70 people attended the discussions on a Saturday which saw blizzards in London!

The first panel focused on 'high and low politics in the run up to war' and was composed of panellists: Charles Tripp (renowned historian of Iraq and one of a small number of academics asked for insight by the UK government prior to the war); Loulouwa Rashid (Iraq analyst for the International Crisis Group); Amir Amirani (journalist and documentary maker whose latest film, 'We are Many' looks at the global protests against the 2003 invasion of Iraq); Omar Dewachi (Assistant Professor of medical anthropology and public health at the American University of Beirut); and Saad Jawad (prominent Iraqi political scientist who taught at the University of Baghdad for more than 30 years).



Loulouwa Rashid and Charles Tripp at 'The Invasion of Iraq: Two Panel Discussions on Art and Politics' Photo: Michael Brydon

The second panel of that day looked at 'The impact of the Iraq war on the global imagination' and had the following speakers: Alan Ingram (researching the responses of artists and art institutions in the UK to the war); Hanaa Malallah (well-known Iraqi visual artist); Nadjel Ali (author of Iraqi Women: Untold Stories From 1948 to the Present, co-author of We Are Iraqis: Aesthetics and Politics in a Time of War and a founder of 'Act Together: Women's Action for Iraq'); and Jonathan Atkinson (artist and researcher whose interests lie at the point where urban development, art and design, community and politics meet).

*Daniel Gormon
Reel Iraq*

Reel Iraq will be publishing a video of the panel discussions on their YouTube Channel soon
www.youtube.com/reelfestivals

You can view photos of Reel Iraq at Flickr (all photos by Michael Brydon)
www.flickr.com/photos/michaelbrydonphotography

ACADEMIC GRANT REPORTS

PARTHO-SASANIAN – EARLY ISLAMIC TRADE BETWEEN IRAQ AND SOUTH INDIA

In March 2011, I was generously awarded BISI support for my study of the imported Parthian/Sasanian/early Islamic Iraqi pottery from Pattanam in Kerala, South India.

I travelled to Kerala between 31 August and 11 September 2012 and spent eleven days going through the material from the recent excavation seasons that is now stored at the Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR) at Trivandrum. The visit was delayed by almost a year for practical reasons. This turned out to be an advantage as I was able to include material from the fourth excavation season in my study.



A photograph of the creek at Pattanam which probably served as the harbour in ancient times
Photo: Professor Derek Kennet

The coastal site of Pattanam has been under excavation for the past five years by Professor PJ Cherian of the KCHR. It has yielded the largest assemblage of 1st BC to 2nd AD Roman amphorae from any site in India and one of the largest in the western Indian Ocean outside the Red Sea. It was certainly an important nodal point for antique trade. Indeed some have argued that it may even be the site of Muziris which is mentioned in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*.

The excavations have also revealed a large assemblage of imported Iraqi ‘torpedo jars’ and turquoise glazed table wares and jars (TGP). Although such wares are already known from the region, for example from sites such as Tissamaharama in Sri Lanka, the Pattanam material is now, by some distance, the largest assemblage of such wares from anywhere in South Asia. Its importance lies in allowing us to re-balance our understanding of the relative importance of Roman and Parthian/Sasanian involvement in the Indian Ocean trade of antiquity.

The background to this research is the generally-accepted notion that the arrival of Roman ships in the Indian Ocean after the formal Roman annexation of Egypt in 30 BC was the stimulus that led to an intensification of maritime trade in the region. This interpretation is based partly on historical sources such as the *Periplus* and partly on the discovery – in some cases as long ago as the 1940s – of Roman pottery at Indian sites such as Arikamedu and Nevasa. The danger is that it does not present a balanced view of the historical reality. The lack of historical sources comparable to the *Periplus* dealing with Parthian involvement in trade is one problem. Another is that archaeologists have tended to focus on Roman finds from India whilst Parthian and Sasanian glazed finds have often been ignored or interpreted as intrusive medieval wares (e.g. at sites such as Maheshwar and Nevasa). This is demonstrated by Roberta Tomber’s excellent recent re-identification of many of the Roman amphorae from India as Mesopotamian torpedo jars (*Antiquity* 2007). This has all ended up reinforcing a rather Eurocentric view that inflates the importance of Roman influence over Indian Ocean trade and undermines the Parthian/Sasanian influence. However, the true story is almost certainly more complex and the role of other regional economic powers such as the Parthian and Sasanian empires is now starting to become clearer.

The total number of turquoise glaze pottery (TGP) sherds from Pattanam now stands at 1,729 and the total of torpedo jar sherds at 3,384. Whilst these numbers are still lower than the numbers of Roman pottery sherds at the site, they are not strictly comparable because the Partho-Sasanian material is made up of glazed table wares and transport jars, whilst the Roman material is almost entirely transport jars which have different breakage patterns. By any standards the numbers are impressive and already show a much greater Parthian and Sasanian role than has it has previously been possible to demonstrate.

Whilst in Kerala I was able to inspect and catalogue all of the TGP up to the 2012 season and to inspect most of the torpedo jar sherds to the same point. There is a far greater number of identifiable rim sherds from the more recent excavation campaigns and this will help enormously with establishing a clearer date for the main periods of contact. The drawings, photographs, samples and documentation are now in Durham where they are being studied and analysed. It will certainly be necessary to return to Kerala once the excavations are finished to complete the documentation in preparation for a final publication but enough has already been done to begin working on a joint article with Professor PJ Cherian and Roberta Tomber.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank BISI for its generous support.

Professor Derek Kennet
University of Durham

REPORT ON THE FIELDWORK AT ZIYARET TEPE 2012

The 2012 campaign at Ziyaret Tepe took place from July to September. It turned out to be an exceptionally varied, interesting and productive season. The principal objectives were to continue work in the palace with an eye to elucidating the plan of the northern side (Operation N), to excavate a section of housing next to a street in the lower town (Operation M), to investigate the suspected barracks or storeroom complex inside of the southern city gate (Operation V), to investigate possible graves cut into the pebble mosaic pavement of Courtyard 11 (Operation W) and to continue the survey by resistivity.

Operation N - The Palace

Up on the high mound work concentrated on delineating the limit of the palace and on articulating the walls of the range of rooms on the northeast side of the courtyard. This turned out to produce the best-preserved architecture in the palace to date, the standing walls of a bathroom paved with baked bricks and connected to an elaborate drainage system running underneath a corridor. To the east of the bathroom was a room containing a well giving on to a small internal courtyard. Together these remains give a clear idea of the domestic nature of this part of the palace. A hint of the official function comes from the recovery of three baked clay administrative tokens.

Operation M - To excavate a section of housing next to a street in the lower town

Excavation was undertaken in Operation M with two objectives in mind. The first objective was to fill in a gap in our knowledge of the layout of the town; we have now excavated numerous areas in the western and eastern parts of the lower town so this operation was targeting something more central. The second objective was a continuation of the quest for low status housing after the work last year in Operation T revealed the remains of a late Roman occupation, which, while interesting and important, did not add to the understanding of the Assyrian city. In fact this was not our first visit to Operation M. In the 2004 season we had executed a small trench to 'groundtruth' a feature that turned up in all three methods of geophysics - magnetometry, resistivity and ground penetrating radar - and had the appearance of being a street. That excavation did confirm the existence of a street and also some evidence for architecture aligned with it.

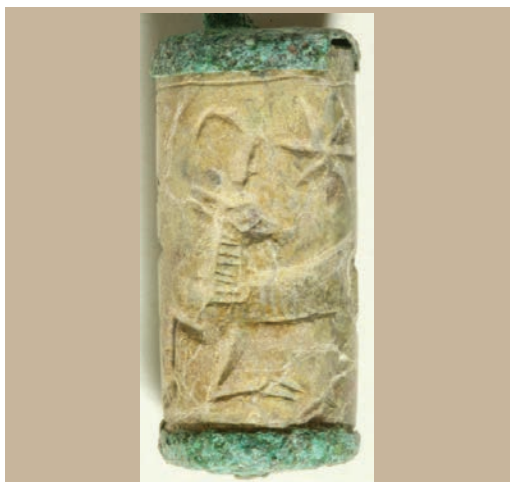
In the event the work in Operation M produced some rather striking results - not low status housing as we had imagined but part of a high status residence with well-built walls up to a metre thick. BISI members may recall that the operation last year in the southeastern corner of the lower town had proven the existence there of a block of high status housing, and that our operation in the southwest had uncovered the complete plan of a substantial residence. It is therefore looking increasingly likely that the whole of the lower town may have been dotted with the mansions of the elite. In the case of Operation M further evidence comes from a grave cut into the floor of the house (an established Assyrian custom). Surprisingly the occupant, a man in his early fifties, was lying face down. His left hand was resting in a dish, which must have contained food - a practice we have already observed in the burials in another operation. The man was adorned with beads, earrings, a pendant, three fibulae, an iron dagger and a tiny bronze

figurine of Bes, an Egyptian deity with a particular responsibility for childbirth. Most unusual though is that he was equipped with two seals, one of which must originally have been hanging from his belt and one of which he must have been holding in his left hand. The first seal, which is made of white steatite and still has its bronze caps in place, depicts a gazelle accompanied by two divine symbols, a star for Ishtar and the crescent of the moon god Sin. The second seal is made of faience and shows an archer shooting a snake (perhaps a mythological motif).

Operation V - To investigate the suspected barracks or storeroom complex inside the southern city gate

With Operation V we initiated the long awaited exploration of the structure visible in the resistivity plot northwest of the gate at Operation Q. Excavation uncovered a 13 m long room paved with cobbles, normally a feature of outside surfaces; the discovery of an iron spearhead and a clay sling bullet hint at a military function. A later occupation is characterised by bread ovens and pits. The ovens were lined with sherds from Assyrian storage vessels, and a number of administrative tokens were found in association, so it may well be that even though the structure uncovered in Operation V is not a storeroom itself, a facility of this nature may have lain close by.

Two soundings were conducted in a grid square to the east of the pavement in order to investigate strong anomalies in the resistivity plot. In both cases the source of the anomaly turned out to be an outside area surfaced with stones.



Cylinder Seal from the Operation M Residence
Photo: Ziyaret Tepe Archaeological Project



Intramural grave in Operation M
Photo: Ziyaret Tepe Archaeological Project



Work in progress in Operation V
Photo: Ziyaret Tepe Archaeological Project

Operation W - To investigate possible graves cut into the pebble mosaic pavement of Courtyard 11

Operation W was aimed at elucidating features of the main administrative complex excavated in earlier seasons as Operation G/R. The first trench targeted Courtyard 11 with its checkerboard mosaic. In four places the pavement had been cut into and then relaid with much larger and rougher stones. The purpose of these areas was not understood, though it was posited that they could be graves, and it was decided to investigate. Removal of the upper stones revealed a layer of hard brown clay approximately 30 cm thick, initially devoid of inclusions but in its lower part containing pebbles and some potsherds. This in turn overlay a substantial cobble surface, which was well laid though not arranged in squares as was the case with the upper courtyard. This was clearly the pavement of a major earlier phase. The work in this trench therefore demonstrated that the features cut into courtyard 11 are not graves. It remains unclear what they are. They may simply be repairs, but this work has produced evidence for a major previous phase of the architecture in this location. This led on to a further investigation. With the realisation that the complex was built on the remains of a substantial earlier level, we decided to carry out further work in Room 10, the larger of the two archive rooms, with the aim of establishing whether the room was constructed directly on top of an earlier administrative suite. The operation got off to an excellent start with the rapid recovery of a cuneiform tablet (a note concerning the dispositions of sheep) and went on to reveal a number of pithoi (large storage jars), demonstrating the protracted use of this space in a magazine capacity.

Geophysical Survey

The geophysical prospection this year was directed to an area in the western lower town where there is a kink in the city wall. Previous survey by magnetometry in this area had already produced indications suggesting a major building in the location and it was decided to resurvey the area using resistivity to see if a more detailed plan could be recovered. This was duly done and the new image, even in its raw form, did indeed reveal a substantially upgraded image. This will now serve as a guide to the siting of excavation trenches next year.

Publications

The major news this year has been the publication in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* of the tablet found in the palace in 2009. This received press coverage worldwide and has gone far to raise public awareness of the work at Ziyaret Tepe. Other specialist reports in progress look at the animal bones remains, the archaeobotanic remains and the characteristics of the glyptic (seal) imagery and techniques found at the site.

Future Plans

In line with other sites in the Ilisu Dam salvage area, we are now entering the final phase of when it will be possible to conduct operations at Ziyaret Tepe. We are accordingly planning a busy schedule of fieldwork. On the high mound the focus will move from the palace to one of two areas where the topography suggests the presence of another substantial structure. The resistivity survey will continue and excavations will be targeted on the building complex on the western city wall. Further round to the east we aim to expand in the area of low status housing built against the city wall. And last but not least, in the Area G/R administrative complex we aim to extend excavation down to the lower phase of the small archive room.

*Dr John MacGinnis
Ziyaret Tepe Archaeological Trust*

TRANSLATION IN TEXTS FROM THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

A workshop on translation and bilingualism was held on 14-16 March 2013 at Wolfson College, Oxford. It was organised by Stephanie Dalley and Christopher Metcalf, and received funding through a conference grant from the British Institute for the study of Iraq.

The aim of the workshop was for each of eleven invited speakers to present a text or part of a text that was extant in two or more different languages, and to provide the relevant text on paper for a handout. From those texts it was hoped to learn how translation was done for different kinds of texts, at different periods, in the ancient Near East, and to what extent bilingual texts could be understood as translations rather than paraphrases or adaptations. Two sources of inspiration for the topic can be distinguished. One was Martin West's 1997 book *The East Face of Helicon*, which collected an array of similarities between Greek and Near Eastern literature but did not investigate how transfers from one language to another might have taken place. The other was the Ronald Syme lecture delivered at Wolfson College in 2011 by Denis Feeney, on the use of Greek literature in Latin. We were fortunate that both scholars were able to join us.

We emphasised to the speakers from the beginning that we had no intention of publishing their papers, despite receiving an offer from a German publisher. Almost all of them expressed their gratitude for this. We made it clear that they could publish on their own at their discretion. We also took care to choose several young scholars currently in the UK. We allowed plenty of time for each speaker, and for discussion. Not everyone was able to stay for the whole time, partly because University terms had not finished in London and Cambridge, and partly because a few people attended one or two specific sessions; but numbers reached a satisfactory maximum of 50, and held up well to the last.

The main proceedings could usefully be published in an extended form, as some interesting insights were gained:

Jonathan Taylor (British Museum)

Hidden voices and twisted tongues: the Mesopotamian lexical list tradition opened the first session with an overview of lexical texts, beginning with the very earliest in which the language behind the signs was still in doubt. He showed the bilingual nature of many of them as the lists developed, mainly in Sumerian and Akkadian, but also including examples of languages such as Egyptian and West Semitic, with Akkadian and other equivalents, mainly dating to the third and second millennia BC. He gave examples of the principles on which the arrangement of words rested, and a variety of complexities, errors, variants, and how development of the Sumerian language and sign forms over long time-spans led to changes. This contribution set the scene for Mesopotamian cuneiform literacy as one thoroughly accustomed to practices of translation throughout its history.

Jana Matuszak (Tübingen)

How to deal with old-fashioned proverbs? Old Babylonian editions of the Early Dynastic Proverb Collection I showed how changes in language over many centuries were reflected in the updating of vocabulary with glosses to aid pronunciation, in grammar, and in orthography, between the Early Dynastic and the Old Babylonian periods when those particular proverbs died out. Some characteristics of Akkadian translation from the very different verbal system of Sumerian were shown, and with nouns in Sumerian allowing for creative change in interpretation when the animate / inanimate categories meant making a choice in Akkadian between masculine and feminine noun forms. In exploring the uses of lexical lists for elucidating rare words, she suggested alternative ways of understanding the relationship: whether lexical lists were derived from such texts, or those texts made use of the lexical lists for their composition.

Mark Weeden (SOAS)

The Gilgamesh fragments from Hattusa: translation, paraphrase or an entirely different composition? used the recent dating of two separate provenances in the Hittite capital for two different groups of fragments to show that one group had closer points of similarity with the Standard Babylonian version of the Akkadian Epic, but was earlier than the other group which had points of similarity with the Old Babylonian versions. The selective use of material in the Hittite stories was down-to-earth, deliberately (?) omitting dream sequences and shortening certain phrases. New bits of text and improved datings cast some doubt on the idea that Sin-leqi-unninni (whose date is uncertain) produced the sole ‘canonical’ version in the late second millennium. The second group of Hittite fragments implies that the Standard Version did not displace older versions. He noted that palaeography did not help to date texts because older forms of script were often copied.

Christopher Metcalf (Oxford)

A trilingual (Sumerian – Akkadian – Hittite) composition on the Storm-god from Hattusa (CTH 314) showed that quite subtle changes were made in the Hittite text, as well as more obvious ones. Some of them appeared to be made with a view to raising the status of the Storm-god in the Hittite pantheon to be the equivalent of Mesopotamian Enlil, as overall top god. He interpreted the changes as showing a deliberate political-religious purpose, rather than the purely scholarly exercises to which other scholars have attributed the variation. Ambiguity and different semantic ranges in some expressions, according to the languages used, may have facilitated creative re-working without losing the prestige of cuneiform antiquity from Mesopotamia.

Marwan Kilani (Oxford)

The Astarte papyrus: an Egyptian version of the confrontation between the Storm-god and the Sea (Ugaritic and Egyptian) presented a very fragmentary, long papyrus, probably from a tomb near the harbour of Memphis where a temple of the West Semitic god Ba'al is known from the 15th century. The Late Egyptian text gives a version of a myth with general similarities to the Ugaritic myth of Ba'al and Yam, and gives the West Semitic name Astarte to the goddess. Despite many lacunae, the name of Astarte, some formulaic expressions known from semitic texts of similar type, verb usage and semitic vocabulary in the Egyptian text indicate that similarities of theme are not coincidental. Of particular interest was the un-Egyptian use of regular line length and poetic structures which have parallels in Ugaritic and Hebrew but not in normal Egyptian poetry. In one instance an Egyptian – Akkadian lexical list threw light on an unusual word. A south Palestinian version of the story might account best for similarities. There was not evidence for any close literal translation from Ugaritic of the kind found, for instance, in legal clauses in Egyptian – Hittite treaties.

Klaus Wagensohn (Oxford)

Lugal-e. Exploiting Ninurta's Deeds: A look at transmission and translation of a Sumerian mythological text showed how a Sumerian myth attested from the Old Babylonian period to the Seleucid had a more flexible tradition in Sumerian than in its line-by-line Akkadian translation. Variation in the Sumerian tablets might be attributed to changes over time in the language, or to the (mis)understanding of early versions. Some rare words could be elucidated from lexical texts, and some mistakes could be attributed to confusion over early forms of cuneiform signs.

Martin Worthington (Cambridge)

Gilgamesh Narratives, Sumerian and Akkadian noted that Sumerian versions of the episode with Huwawa lacked the dream episodes found in the Standard Babylonian Version, and despite small-scale similarities between versions in the two languages, changes were made in major and minor respects; for instance Enkidu's change of status from slave to adopted brother and companion, and in the transfer of a speech from one character to another. When part of the Akkadian Epic of Atrahasis was incorporated into the Standard Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, changes were likewise made, many of them clearly deliberate. A possible allusion to an oral episode (though a text may yet come to light) in a reference to Enkidu meeting Huwawa before he was 'civilised', and some intertextual influences on *Ludlul* had yet been found to establish the existence and range of oral versions. In the discussion doubts were raised whether the Parry-Lord arguments would work on ancient Near Eastern material.

Luigi Prada (Oxford)

Translating an Egyptian Best Seller in Roman Egypt: The Greek version of the Legend of Tefnut (The myth of the Sun's Eye, Egyptian and Greek) told of new material on education in Egyptian temples where Greek language and composition were now known to have been taught, allowing the possibility that translations were made by Egyptian priests rather than Greeks. He showed evidence for an impatient attitude to translating Egyptian, cutting out what was perceived as verbosity, and making subtle changes in wording to take Greek sensibilities into account, though some changes were perhaps errors, or might reflect unknown variant originals such as were likely to have arisen between the second millennium composition and the Roman period, and in the change from hieroglyphs to Egyptian

demotic script and thence to Greek. Pointing out the exceptional number of copies found written in Greek, he suggested a motive for translation might have been fear of losing a precious ancient myth.

Ilya Yakubovich (Marburg)

The Cineköy inscription (Luwian and Phoenician) showed that translation was mainly precise, almost word for word, with indications that Phoenician was the primary text, contrary to recent scholarly opinions. He argued not only from the positioning of the two versions on the stone statue, but also from details of internal evidence such as Phoenician word order followed uncharacteristically by Luwian, and an obvious error "destroyed" instead of "built", presumably as a result of misreading ambiguous Phoenician letters. Each version, however, gave its own names: Ba'al (Lord) in Phoenician was the Storm-god (Tarhunt) in Luwian; Adana in Phoenician was Hiyawa in Luwian.

Wouter Henkelman (Paris)

Recent work on the Elamite version of the Bisitun inscription showed that Old Persian language influenced the Elamite language, even though the Elamite version was written first on the rock. The Elamite text contains calques and awkward expressions that indicate Elamite was translated from Old Persian, but not in a mechanical way, with conscious decisions taken at points of sensitivity. A similar use of subtle changes in wording was detectable when comparing two very similar bilingual inscriptions of Darius at Naqsh-e Rostam and of Xerxes at Persepolis, the 'Daiva' inscription.

Robertus van der Spek (Amsterdam)

Berosus as interpreter of Babylonian History for a Greek audience showed that it is possible to demonstrate, despite our lack of an original or complete text, that Berosus had access to Babylonian chronicles and building inscriptions from the Chaldean rulers and some later texts. Berosus selected certain topics from those cuneiform texts, and translated some characteristic phrases in a recognizable form.

Summary of some general conclusions

Traditions of translation existed in earliest times for cuneiform texts. Likewise a long-standing tradition of updating and rewriting texts existed in Mesopotamia from earliest literacy, and different versions of a particular story could exist at the same time. The concepts of single authorship and canonicity were questionable. Some changes in Mesopotamian cuneiform lexical and literary texts occurred because languages did not remain static over the centuries, so the concept of canonizing a particular version may not have existed, at least until the first millennium and perhaps even then were open to question. Other changes occurred because the forms and uses of

particular cuneiform signs were misunderstood because of the difficulties in understanding much older texts. Perhaps in recognition of such difficulties, ancient palaeography was studied and imitated, a practice that makes it difficult for modern scholars to date some tablets. When translation took place, changes were inevitable because of basic differences in verbal systems, semantic range, and noun classes. Calques, loan words, use of regular line length and metre are all ways in which the direction of translation, from one language to another, can be recognized. Where phonetic writing replaced logograms, it is explicit that the names of places and deities were changed into those appropriate for a new environment. Although word-for-word translation was attempted for legal clauses and for some epics – notably Lugal-e – for many literary texts there was a policy of creative adaptation to suit a new environment and new audiences, evident from subtle changes indicating conscious decisions. In some cases a complex text was shortened, as a result of changing from a complex hieroglyphic or logographic writing system to a quicker, plainer alphabetic one. Practices of translation, adaptation and excerpting spread to the Hittites, and are found in Egypt and Syria, probably also the southern Levant.

*Dr Stephanie M. Dalley
University of Oxford*

VISITING IRAQI SCHOLAR REPORT BY SABER AHMED SABER

I would like to thank BISI for giving me this important opportunity and scholarship to visit the UK to learn more about archaeology research at the Institute of Archaeology at UCL.

The purpose of my visit to the UK was to begin a project to publish my archaeological reports on Kurdistan, the Sulaimaniah area, into English. My supervisor was Dr Mark Altaweel and during my time at the Institute of Archaeology we worked on two reports. I was given honorary membership of the university library, for which I was very grateful. I was able to use many books from the library to compare my archaeology objects, like pottery sherds, and my work became more scientific.

It is my dream to translate my work into the English language because archaeological work in Kurdistan is very new, appearing just after the Saddam Hussain system. In the time of Saddam, archaeological work rarely happened in Kurdistan because Saddam wanted to destroy Kurdish culture and the history of all minorities. English is a very powerful language in the world and a way to share the exciting work happening in my country to a wide audience.

It was not possible to complete the translation of all of my reports into English during the three months of my visit. I will complete the remaining reports by working with Dr Altaweel over email and skype.

My visiting scholarship has enabled me to achieve many things. For example I learned to study in a scientific way, I made contact with many archaeologists, and I improved my English language. I was also able to meet people from different parts of the world and to see past political differences.

I hope that this scholarship will not be my last chance to visit the UK because I feel that there is a great deal that I can learn and take back to the Middle East. I'm working for that one day I can have the chance to study in the UK.

Saber Ahmed Saber

Department of Antiquities and Heritage in Sulaimaniah



Saber hard at work in Dr Altaweel's office
Photo: Saber Ahmed Saber

Thank You from BISI: There are many individuals who we are indebted to for the success of Saber's scholarship. First and foremost, we would like to thank Dr Mark Altaweel for not only supervising the research visit, but for the time and office space he gave to Saber. We must also thank Professor Karen Radner who co-supervised Saber's visit; Professor David Wengrow, who kindly provided accommodation for Saber on his first night; Dr Simone Mühl for assisting with the difficult visa application form; and Dr Lamia al-Gailani Werr and Ingrid Iversen for escorting Saber out of London to the BANE Conference in Cambridge and Reading's Archaeology Department respectively. In addition, we are extremely grateful to the American Center of Oriental Research, and in particular its Director, Dr Barbara Porter, for providing accommodation and a place to study for Saber while he waited for his visa to be processed in Amman.

BISI EVENTS

Thursday 30 May 2013, 6pm: Book Launch

Ivories from Nimrud (1949-1963) VII, 1 & 2 Ivories from Rooms SW11/12 and T10 Fort Shalmaneser by Georgina Herrmann and Stuart Laidlaw

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

Thursday 20 June 2013, 6pm: BISI 31st Bonham Carter Lecture

Mike Laird on 'Mudhifs in the Marshes: Preserving Cultural Identity'

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11-13 September 2013: Gertrude Bell and Iraq: A Life and Legacy Conference

Organised by BISI with The British Academy and in Association with the Gertrude Bell Archive at Newcastle University

Media Partner: BBC History Magazine

Wednesday 11 September 2013, 6.30pm Opening Panel Discussion

Britain and the Occupations of Iraq

Chaired by Professor Sir Adam Roberts, KCMG, FBA, with panellists: Dr Ali A. Allawi, Professor Nadje Al-Ali, Professor Rosemary Hollis and Professor Charles Tripp FBA

Venue: The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG

Thursday 12 – Friday 13 September 2013: Academic Conference

Sessions: Gertrude Bell and the Ottoman Empire; Gertrude Bell and the Making of the Iraqi State; Gertrude Bell - A woman in a man's world; Gertrude Bell and archaeology; & Gertrude Bell and Iraqi Heritage

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

Wednesday 20 November 2013, 6pm: BISI Lecture

Dr John MacGinnis on 'Excavating a provincial capital of the Assyrian Empire: The Ziyaret Tepe Archaeological Project'

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Thursday 27 February 2014, 6pm: BISI Annual Mallowan Lecture and Annual General Meeting

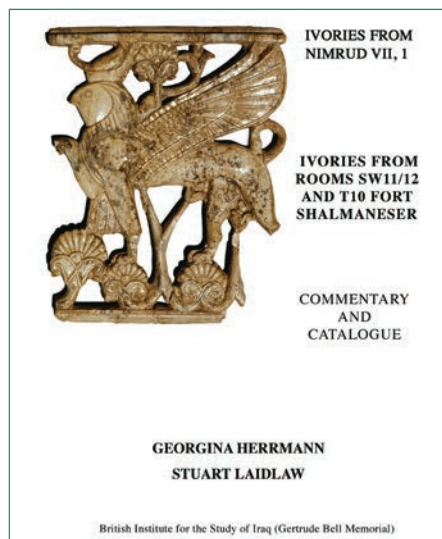
Dr Mariam Rosser Owen and Dr Rosalind Wade Haddon on 'Samarra finds from the Herzfeld Excavation in the Victoria and Albert Museum'

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

BISI PUBLICATIONS

Ivories from Nimrud (1949-1963) VII, 1 & 2 Ivories from Rooms SW11/12 and T10 Fort Shalmaneser by Georgina Herrmann and Stuart Laidlaw

Published by The British Institute for the Study of Iraq (Gertrude Bell Memorial)



With the primary publication completed, it is now possible to look at these remarkable ivories as a whole rather than studying them by provenance, as is discussed in detail in the Commentary. Not surprisingly, it immediately becomes apparent that the majority can be assigned to the Phoenician tradition. There are at least twice as many Phoenician ivories than the other Levantine and Assyrian ivories. They form therefore an incredible archive, recording the lost art of the Phoenicians, long famed as master craftsmen.

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The Ziggurat at Nimrud
Photo: Dr Eleanor Robson

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Shaikh Abd al-Aziz Shrine
Photo: Noorah al-Gailani

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