

ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE (AISC) JANUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER



OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Iraqi Minister of Higher Education's visit to London

* On 23 January 2017, Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended an event held at the Iraqi cultural consulate in London.

The main speaker at this event was the Iraqi Minister of Higher Education, Dr Abdul Razzaq Al-Issa, who was visiting from Iraq. This event was attended by the Iraqi Cultural Advisor, Dr Hassan Al-Allaq, the Iraqi embassy advisor Nazar Al-Bayati, and Iraqi embassy staff.

The discussion focused on three areas: firstly, the challenges facing 90 universities and higher education institutes in Iraq, secondly, thousands of Iraqi students in higher education abroad in Europe and America, sponsored by the Iraqi government and their future in the face of Iraq's difficult financial situation, and thirdly, ways in which UK-based Iraqi academics could contribute to higher education in Iraq, whether by visiting the country or providing educational support whilst continuing to live and work in the UK.

January 2017

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Iraqi Dentist in London: Award of Excellence

* On 14 January 2017, Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended an event held in London.

This event was organised by the Muslim Youth Association (MYA) to recognise the achievement of an Iraqi dentist, Dr Bashar Al-Nahar, who has a clinic in London. He developed a new dental treatment process, to reduce the pain that some patients endure in their dental treatments.

The event was attended by the Iraqi Ambassador to the UK, Dr Saleh Al-Timimi, the Iraqi Cultural Attache, Health Attache, and other staff from the Iraqi embassy in London. Also attending the event were academics, doctors and Iraqi community activists.

It was great to recognise the achievements of Iraqi academics in the prime of their careers, and such recognition should encourage other academics to strive for excellence in their fields. The discussion was also about how to pass this experience and knowledge to medical practitioners in Iraq and the world.

Dr Al-Nahar is pictured on the right, with his award which was presented to him by a high profile dental institution based in London. The other photographs show London's Iraqi community, and Iraqi academics and medical experts, celebrating and recognising his achievements.



مركز الدراسات الإنكلوعراقية
ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE

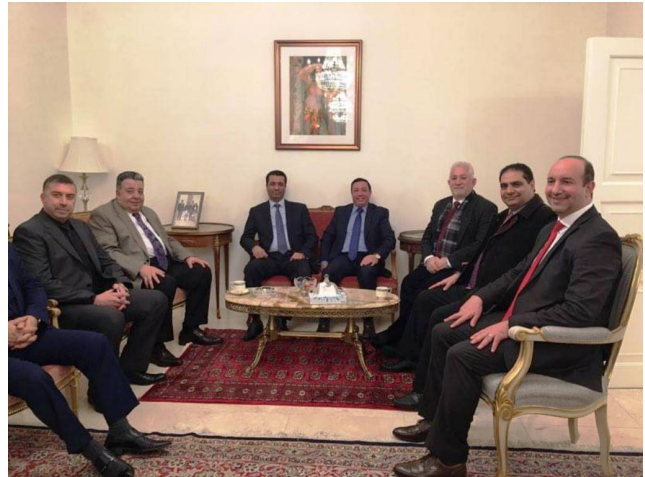
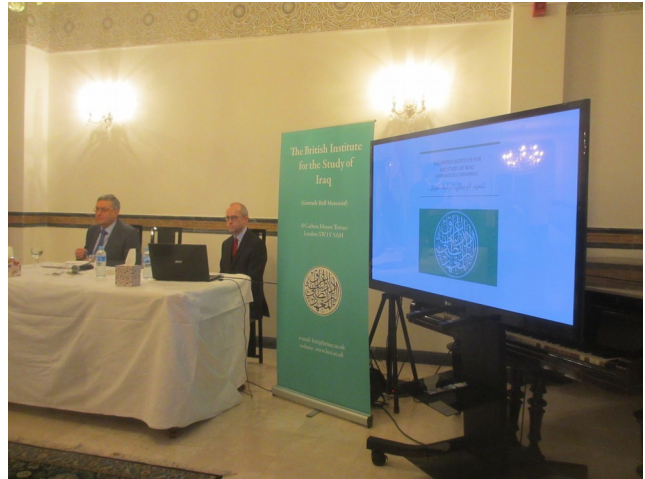
Basra Museum: An Anglo-Iraqi Effort

* On 16 January 2017, Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended an event held at the residence of the Iraqi ambassador to the UK in London, Dr Saleh Al-Timimi.

This event featured a presentation by the British Institute for the Study of Iraq (BISI), which was given by their President, Dr John Curtis, and their Chair, Dr Paul Collins. Their presentation focused on the efforts of Iraqis to re-open the Basra Museum in southern Iraq, in a new building which was previously part of Basra's presidential building complex (palaces) and the efforts of BISI to help re-open the museum in September 2016, with artefacts transferred from the Iraqi national museum in Baghdad. These artefacts occupy one of the museum's five halls, and their plan is to open the other halls in time.

The event was attended by many Iraqi and British academics and the representatives of many Iraqi community and cultural organisations.

The Basra Museum is a great example of positive Anglo-Iraqi relations in action, and as such AISC was happy to be part of this event.



مركز الدراسات الإنكولوجية
ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE

Iraqi Solidarity event, London

* On 28 January 2017, Ihsan Muhsin, Nadeem Al-Abdalla and Ali Al-Mousawi from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended an event for the UK's Iraqi community to show solidarity with the people of Iraq in their struggle against Daesh terrorism, and to show support for the Iraqi military and security forces in their fight to liberate Mosul from Daesh.

This event was held at the Al-Khooae Foundation's hall in London, and was attended by the Iraqi Ambassador to the UK, Dr Saleh Al-Timimi, and many Iraqi political, cultural and social activists in the UK. Speeches were given by the Ambassador, religious and political figures.



Iraqi Kurdish community event

* On 29 January 2017, Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended a Kurdish community event in London.

The event was held to remember the life of the Kurdish freedom fighter, Mama Risha, who passed away in 1985. It focused on a slice of Iraqi modern history and particularly the Kurdish struggles and their issues in modern Iraq.



FROM OUR LIBRARY THIS MONTH

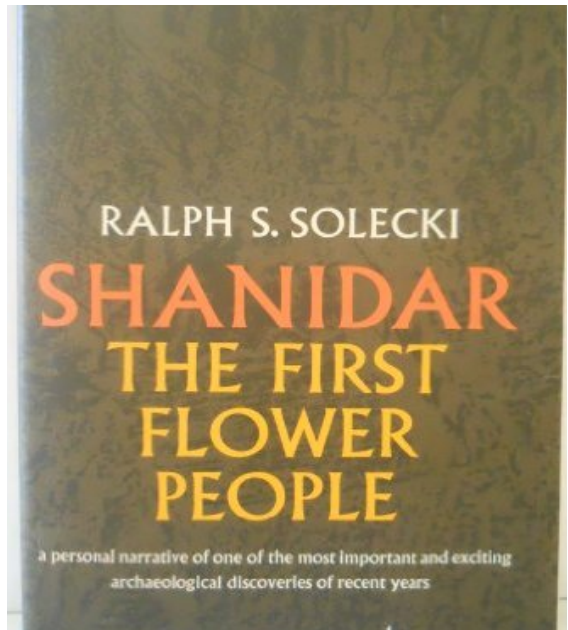
***Shanidar:
The First Flower People
(by Ralph Solecki,
published 1971)***

This book was published by the American anthropologist Professor Ralph Solecki (1917-1988) of Columbia University, who excavated the caves of northern Iraq (Iraqi Kurdistan) between 1951 and 1960. During this time, he found and excavated the Shanidar cave in northern Iraq, which is famed for the fossilised remains of early humans (neanderthals) found there.

Solecki found many fossilised remains of neanderthals, who were buried with their flowers, and this is why he named his book "The First Flower People". These neanderthals had lived in the area around 40,000 years ago, and later researches suggested even earlier than this, long before the birth of civilisation in Mesopotamia and the world.

In 1957, Solecki and his team of anthropologists recovered the fossilised remains of 10 individuals from tens of thousands of years ago. This was considered a grand find in the history of human evolution; Solecki's findings indicated that these early humans may have practised early medicine and ritual burial.

Solecki is pictured here in northern Iraq, with a Kurdish assistant, during his excavations of the area. Also pictured is Shanidar Cave, the place of Solecki's findings.



Lady Ethel Stefana Drower's Books about Iraq

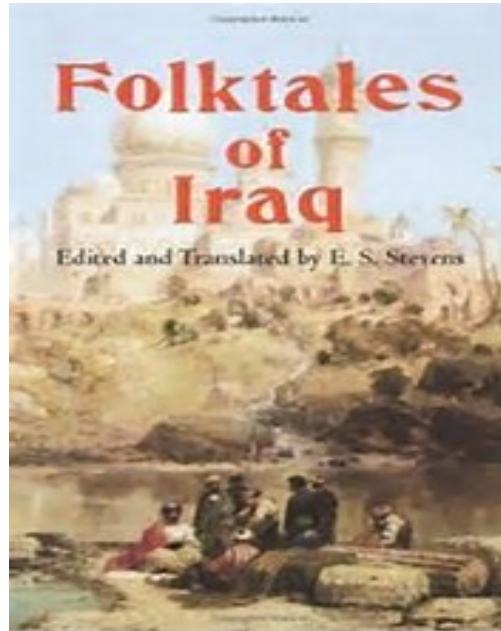
Lady Ethel Stefana Drower (nee Stevens) (1879-1972) was a British cultural anthropologist, well known for her travels in the Middle East and her many books about this part of the world. She spent 25 years living in Iraq, from 1921 to 1946.

Lady Drower's lifelong interest in Iraq and the Middle East began when she accompanied her husband, Sir Edwin Drower, to Iraq in 1921, where he was advisor to the Justice Minister from 1921 to 1946.

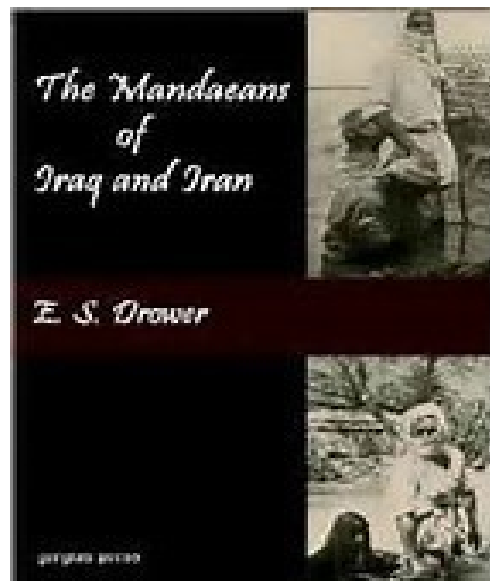
During her 25 years living in Iraq, Lady Drower produced many books. Titles she published during this time included *By Tigris & Euphrates* (1923), *Sophy: A Tale of Baghdad* (1924), *Ishtar* (1927), *Folktales of Iraq* (1931), *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran* (1937) and *Peacock Angel* (1941), about the Yazidi people of Iraq.

Lady Drower was well known for her studies of the religions and beliefs in Iraq and the Middle East. She was considered a specialist on the Mandaean, an ancient religious minority living in Iraq and Iran. Her 1937 publication, *The Mandaean of Iraq & Iran*, gives an insight into their religion, culture and ways of life. She translated their holy book, the *Q'olada*, and collected many Mandaean manuscripts during her lifetime.

In addition, she collected and gathered folk tales of Iraq, which she published in 1931 in a book titled *Folktales of Iraq*.



Lady E S Drower (pictured in her later years) wrote many books about Iraq in her lifetime

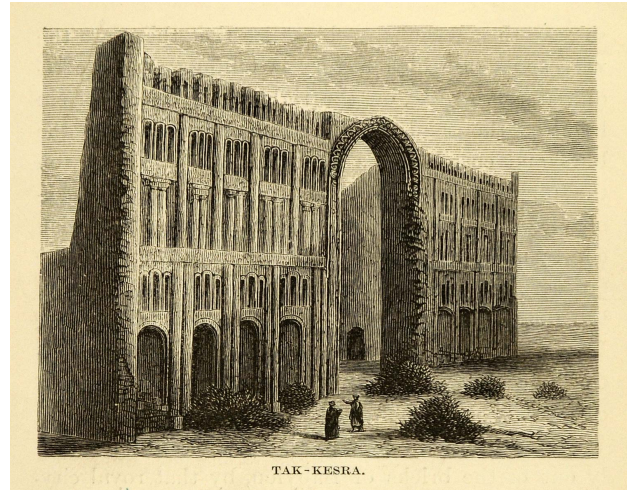


ANGLO-IRAQI IMAGES

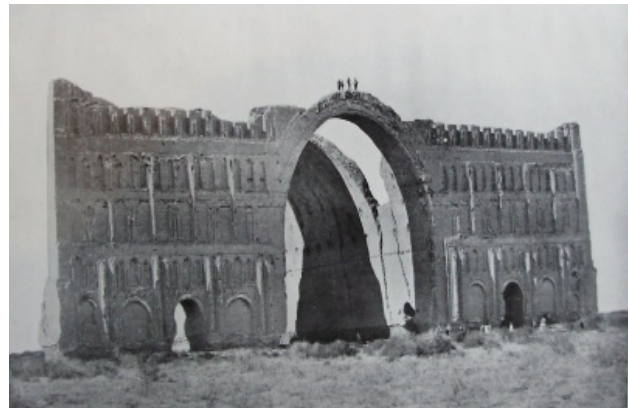
Tag Kisra, Ctesiphon: Photos before and after the collapse of one side of the arch

Ctesiphon was an ancient city which lies near southern Baghdad, and was the capital of Persia during the Parthian and Sasanian empires between the 1st century BC to the 7th century AD. Also, Ctesiphon was known by the name of "Al-Mada'in". The only remaining part of Ctesiphon is the partial remains of the emperor's palace, Tag Kisra, which means "the arch of the palace of the Persian emperor (Kisra)".

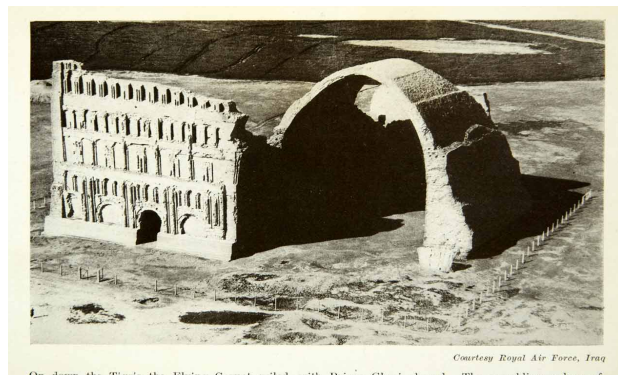
Many adventurers and travellers in Mesopotamia in the 18th and 19th centuries produced paintings, which showed that both sides of the arch were intact. Even some photographs taken in the 1860s confirm that the two sides of the palace were intact, as shown in these photographs. However, in 1909 the right side of the arch had fallen. Many photos taken by the British Army after they entered Baghdad in 1917 show the Tag Kisra with only one side intact. The structure, however, remains the only single-span vault of reinforced brickwork in the world.



1875 painting of Tag Kisra,
before the fall of the right side in the above photo



Tag Kisra – photograph taken in 1864, published in
The Geographical Journal in 1919. This is an
important photo, showing materialistic proof that
there were two sides surrounding the arch



A relatively modern photo, published in 1932 in a
"Flying Carpet Ruins", taken years after the right
side collapsed in the early 1900s

FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about the AISC project, our activities and services, please visit our website at:

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