

ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE (AISC)

DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



December 2016

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OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Letter to UK Prime Minister

* On 19 December 2016, Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team personally delivered a letter to the UK's Prime Minister, Theresa May MP, from members of the UK's Iraqi community.

This followed on from the meeting of Iraqi political, academic, cultural and community representatives which was held at the offices of the Al-Hakim Foundation on 22 November 2016. The letter formed part of the actions to raise awareness of the ongoing operation to liberate Nineveh province, with all the support needed for this to happen.

In this letter, the Iraqi delegation thanked the UK for their support in this military operation, and hope for greater co-operation with the humanitarian efforts and reconstruction which will be needed after liberation from terrorism. The delegation consisted of: Abdul-Ilah Tawfik, Nadeem Al-Abdalla, Ihsan Muhsin, Emanuel Yacoub and Talib Habib.



Nadeem Al-Abdalla at 10 Downing Street



Delegation of Iraqi community members outside
10 Downing Street

Iraqi rally in support of Mosul

* On 11 December 2016, Ihsan, Nadeem and Ali from the AISC team participated in a public rally held in Trafalgar Square. This was organised by the Iraqi community to show solidarity with Iraq and its efforts to liberate Mosul and all of Nineveh province from terrorism.

This rally was an action stemming from the meeting held at the offices of the Al-Hakim Foundation on 22 November 2016; the aim of which was to raise greater public awareness of the current situation in Mosul, whilst at the same time showing the Iraqi community's support and solidarity with the people of Iraq.

Speeches were made by the Iraqi Ambassador to the UK, Dr Saleh Al-Timimi, and by Iraqi community members from a range of ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. Also, Iraqi musicians were present with their national music. The rally was well received and hundreds of Iraqi community members participated. The participants made it clear that all Iraqis, from all walks of life, stand united against the forces of terror that Daesh represents.

This rally achieved its aim of raising greater public awareness of the current situation in Mosul, as Trafalgar Square is a major landmark in the heart of London, close to Parliament and government offices, which attracts thousands of people on a daily basis, who saw and heard the Iraqi community's message clearly. The rally also celebrated Iraqi values and traditions in a positive and optimistic way.



Above: Iraqis gather in Trafalgar Square in support of the Nineveh liberation operation



Above: Ihsan, Nadeem and Ali from the AISC team with Sheikh Abdul Hussein and Ahmed Halfi



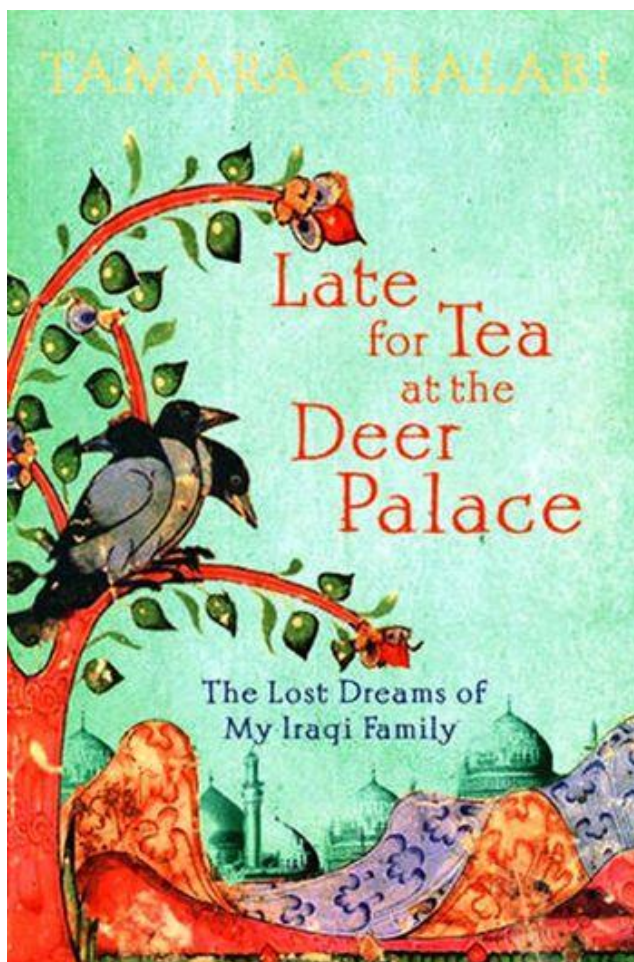
Intellectual legacy of Dr Ahmed Chalabi

* On 20 December 2016, a seminar was held at the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC), focusing on the legacy of the controversial Iraqi politician Dr Ahmed Chalabi.

Of all the Iraqi politicians, Dr Chalabi is one of the most written-about in the English language; he played a key role in Iraqi life for 25 years, from 1990 to 2015. As such, hundreds of articles and books have been written in English about his work, his life and his project for a new Iraq. As part of our Anglo-Iraqi project, AISC are interested to explore some aspects of Dr Chalabi's intellectual legacy and the ways to save and document speeches, articles, books and media, whether written by him or others about his legacy so that lessons can be learned from all of these experiences.

AISC organised this seminar with a small group of academics and politicians who accompanied Dr Chalabi in his career and political journey at various stages in the last 25 years. The seminar included Dr Tahseen Al-Shaikhli, Nabil Al-Musawi, Haider Al-Moussawi, Sayed Zaki Bahr El-Eloom and Nadeem Al-Abdalla who was facilitator of this meeting.

Dr Ahmed Chalabi passed away in November 2015, aged 71. His daughter, Dr Tamara Chalabi who graduated from Harvard University, wrote a book about the Chalabi family (*Late for Tea at the Deer Palace*, published 2010). In her words: "my intention was never to set the record straight, or for this to be considered an academic study." As such, it is not directly about Dr Ahmed Chalabi, but the ups and downs of her family as a whole. The book does, however, show a slice of Iraqi life at various stages in the 20th century.



Seminar for Iraqi media/journalists based in the UK

* On 27 December 2016, a seminar for the Iraqi journalists/media based in the UK was held at AISC's offices, titled "Iraqi Media in the face of international transformation". This seminar was organised by the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC).

The meeting was attended by a number of Iraqi journalists and academics in the field of media. Nadeem opened the meeting by looking at the changes that the world is witnessing, and which the Iraqi media are oblivious to. These include the Brexit vote in the UK which led to the appointment of a new Prime Minister and government, the US election victory of Donald Trump, the rise of the far-right in Europe and Russia's expanding international role. All of this has moved too fast for the Iraqi media, whose processes are struggling to keep up.

The delegates discussed many points, including a new concept for the expression "Iraqi media". They also felt there is a great need for the Iraqi state to create a "media operation room", responsible for sending clear and unified messages to the outside world. It would also be better if this could be done in a range of international languages via the creation of a new high-standard TV channel.

The Iraqi media can only move from a role of analysing daily events, into one where the Iraqi media examines trends and predicts future events based on research, if they are supported by think-tanks, information centres and study centres. Many other points were also discussed, and the delegates asked for more seminars of this nature.



Seminar for Iraqi media/journalists based in the UK



Iraqi Cultural Exhibition at the Imperial College London

* On 4 December 2016, the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team had a stall at the Iraqi Cultural Exhibition (ICE). This was held at Imperial College London, and was organised by Safa Mousawi of the Imperial College's Iraqi society. This was an Iraqi awareness day, with Iraqi tastes and organizers, in the heart of London. Participants included the Iraqi ambassador, Iraqi cultural attaché, cultural and study centres, academics and schools, in addition to creative small businesses, individuals and organisations. The exhibition contained more than 40 stalls and speeches from some participants, given in the college's Great Hall later on that day.

It was a great opportunity to inform people about the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre's work and activities, whether it was the information and research part (to inform about all English language publications written about Iraq) or the community side, which is to attend and organise cultural events and seminars related to the Iraqi-British community in London.

Photos from the Iraqi Cultural Exhibition, organised by the Iraqi Society of Imperial College London

Imperial College Iraqi Society presents...

Iraqi Cultural EXHIBITION

Officially sponsored by the Iraqi Embassy



DOORS OPEN AT 12PM

SUNDAY 4TH DECEMBER

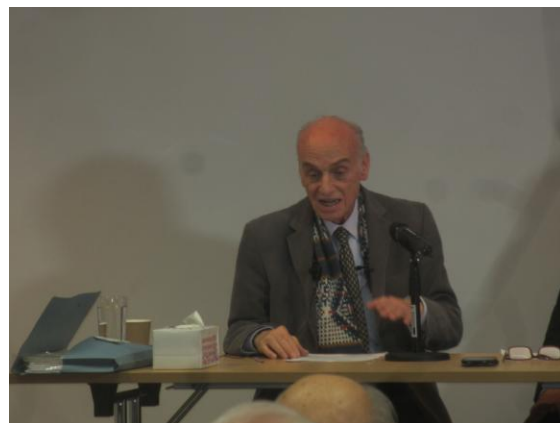
QUEENS' TOWER ROOMS AND GREAT HALL
IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON,
SOUTH KENSINGTON, SW7 2AZ



Salam House Cultural Event

* On 14 December 2016, Ihsan and Nadeem from the AISC team attended a cultural event at Salam House, the offices of the Humanitarian Dialogue Foundation (HDF), in London.

The event featured a talk by Iraqi academic and electrical engineer, Dr Adnan Rajab (pictured), about the power of electromagnetism on the human body.



FROM OUR LIBRARY THIS MONTH

Georges-Marie Haardt takes the Silk Route through Iraq (published October 1931)

This comes from an article published in the National Geographic's October 1931 edition.

The article was written by Maynard Owen Williams (1888-1963) who accompanied a convoy led by Georges-Marie Haardt (1884-1932) on a journey through Iraq via the Silk Route. This journey took place in April 1931, and went through the countries of Syria, Iraq, Persia (Iran) and Afghanistan to reach Kashmir in India. .

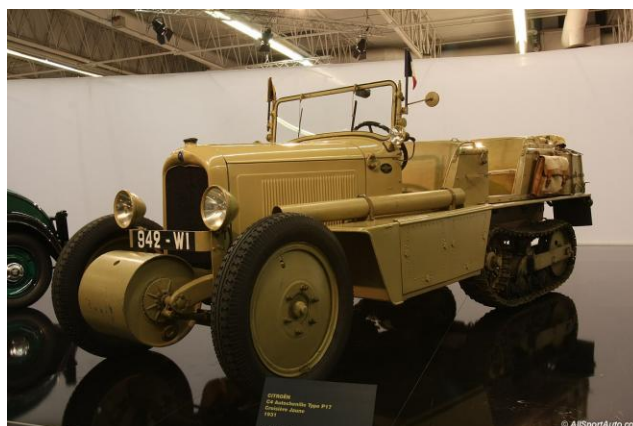
Georges-Marie Haardt was a Belgian/French explorer and also a close friend of Andre Citroen, founder of Citroen Motors. As such, Haardt was General Manager and later Vice-President of Citroen Motors, where he worked for 20 years.

It was no coincidence that Haardt's journey through Iraq via the Silk Route was made in a Citroen truck; in those days, motor vehicles became developed to the extent that Western explorers started to use them in their travels and adventures. Travel by road was the choice of intrepid travellers, who wanted to see all countries, although it took them several days or weeks. However, it required additional arrangements with the local authorities and people to ensure their safety whilst travelling.

Haardt took many photos of the countries he travelled through on his trip, although in this newsletter we have concentrated on the photos he took of Iraq. His route through Iraq covered Rutbah, Ramadi, Baghdad and Khanaqin before his convoy entered Persia (Iran).

Sadly, less than one year after completing this expedition to Kashmir which started in Beirut, Haardt died of flu and pneumonia on another expedition in Hong Kong, in March 1932 aged 47.

Below: Georges-Marie Haardt (right), adventurer and manager of Citroen Motors, in his Silk Route adventure which started in Beirut in a Citroen C4 Autochenille truck, 1931





The expedition near the Euphrates, Ramadi



Haardt leads his convoy with his Citroen C4 truck



Goofahs in Baghdad, at the riverside



Baghdad food market

These photos were taken in Iraq by Maynard Owen Williams, who accompanied Georges-Marie Haardt on his Silk Route expedition via Beirut and Baghdad to Kashmir. They were published in the National Geographic Magazine in October 1931

FURTHER INFORMATION

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

www.angloiraqi.org

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