

ANGLO-IRAQI DIALOGUE FOUNDATION

ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE (AISC)

DECEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER



December 2017

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AISC CULTURAL EVENT

“Iraq and the Arab world through the eyes of four Western female authors”

On 8 December 2017, a cultural event was held at the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC). This event featured a knowledge presentation by the centre’s manager Nadeem Al-Abdalla, who reviews materials related to Anglo-Iraqi studies. Nadeem and the subject of his presentation was introduced to the audience by Adnan Hussain, an Iraqi literary and arts reviewer and journalist.

Nadeem reviewed the work of four British authors who lived and worked in Iraq in the early 20th century; Gertrude Bell (1868-1926), Freya Stark (1893-1993), Ethel Drower (1879-1972) and Agatha Christie (1890-1976). All of these authors published over 60 books on subjects related to Iraq and the region.



Nadeem Al-Abdalla and Adnan Hussain



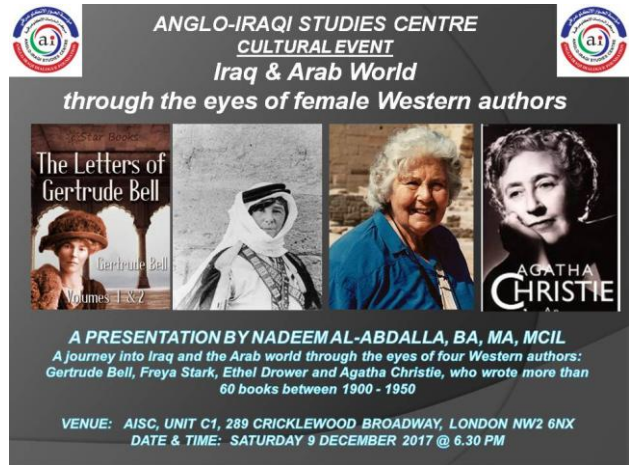
Some of the guests attending AISC’s cultural event, “Iraq and the Arab world through the eyes of four Western female authors”, 8 December 2017

Gertrude Bell (1868-1926) was a British archaeologist, traveller and political officer who played a significant role in Iraq's early years as a new nation-state in the 1920s. She travelled widely in the Middle East, founded the Iraqi Museum in Baghdad and helped to establish the Iraqi National Library. Her experiences in Iraq were published a year after her death in her most well-known book, "The Letters of Gertrude Bell" in 1927. Two films have been made in recent years about her life and time in Iraq; "Queen of the Desert" (2015) and "Letters from Baghdad" (2016).

Freya Stark (1893-1993) was a British traveller and diplomat, who travelled widely in Iraq and the Middle East. Her best-known book about Iraq, "Baghdad Sketches" was published in 1937.

Ethel Drower (1879-1972) was a British cultural anthropologist, well known for her extensive travels in the Middle East. She lived and worked in Iraq between 1921 and 1946. An expert on the religions of Iraq and the Middle East, she wrote books about the Yazidis and Mandaeans of the area. Her other books about Iraq include "Sophy: A Tale of Baghdad" (published 1924) and "Folktales of Iraq" (published 1931).

Agatha Christie (1890-1976) was a well-known British crime author who lived and worked in Iraq. Two of her many crime novels included "Murder in Mesopotamia" (published 1936) and "They Came to Baghdad" (published 1951). She was married to the British archaeologist Max Mallowan (1904-1978).



Cultural event held at AISC's offices

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Royal United Service Institute (RUSI) & Chatham House

The AISC team attended two other events held at the offices of RUSI and Chatham House in London this month.

Nadeem Al-Abdalla attended an event at RUSI's offices on 4 December 2017, titled "Without glory but without disaster: 50 years after the British withdrawal from Aden". This event coincided with the 50th anniversary of the withdrawal of Britain from Yemen, known at that time as South Arabia, on 30 November 1967. It then discussed life in Yemen since that time and up to the present day. Speakers at this event included Professor Clive Jones of Durham University, Dr Andrew Mumford of Nottingham University and two former political officers in Aden and Hadhramaut, John Ducker and Godfrey Meynell.

The second event Nadeem attended was held at Chatham House on 14 December 2017. This event was titled "Do we still trust the internet?" and looked at the challenges the internet poses to international security. The panel included the former Estonian foreign affairs minister Marina Kaljuland, Emily Taylor and Patricia Lewis from Chatham House's International Security Department, and the Vice-Chair of the Internet Society, Sally Wentworth.



RUSI event, London, 4 December 2017
(above and below)



Chatham House event, London, 14 December 2017

Humanitarian Dialogue Foundation (HDF) cultural events

The AISC team attended three cultural events held at the offices of the Humanitarian Dialogue Foundation (HDF), also known as Salam House, in London this month.

On 6 December 2017, Nadeem Al-Abdalla attended an event held to launch the English translation of a novel written by the Iraqi novelist Luay Al-Khatib. This novel, titled "Divine Names" has now been translated into English. Luay Al-Khatib was introduced to the audience by Amir Tahiri, an Iranian journalist and literary reviewer.

On 13 December 2017, Ihsan M Al-Hakim, Nadeem Al-Abdalla and Ali Al-Mousawi attended another event featuring a knowledge presentation by Edwin Shuker from London's Iraqi-Jewish community. This presentation was about diversity and communities in Iraq. His presentation included a film about Iraq's Jewish community and his recent visit to Iraq, showing the home that he left in the early 1970s.

On 20 December 2017, Nadeem attended another cultural event held at Salam House. This event featured a knowledge presentation by the Iraqi architect Noaman Muna, and was titled "Iraqi heritage - where to?" He discussed the challenges of preserving Iraq's cultural heritage in modern Iraqi society.



Luay Al-Khatib, Amir Tahiri and Sadeq Al-Taee



Edwin Shuker talks to the audience at Salam House



Noaman Muna and Sadeq Al-Taee, Salam House

Marking Arabic Language Day in London

Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the AISC team participated in an event held in London, to mark International Arabic Language Day on 18 December 2017. This International Day of Arabic Language was designated by the UN as 18 December each year.

This event was held at the Sharek Centre, an Arabic language school based in central London. Traditional Arabic language, culture, music and cuisine were all celebrated at this event.

A reception was held for guests including Arabic coffee and cuisine. Other activities held at this event included calligraphy sessions, in which non-Arabic participants learned to write their names in Arabic. It also included the screening of the "Mummy" film, produced in Egypt in 1970 by Shadi Abdul Salam. This film is about the mummies found in the tombs of Egypt's Pharaohs, who ruled ancient Egypt for centuries; it focused on an Egyptian tribe and the trade with merchants in ancient Egyptian artefacts. The events in this film took place in 1881.

The most unique feature of this film was its production using classical Arabic language, as colloquial Egyptian Arabic is usually used in Egyptian films.



مركز الدراسات الانكلي عراقي
ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE

Celebration of Arabic language, Sharek Centre, London, 18 December 2017. Reception, calligraphy sessions and an Arabic film.

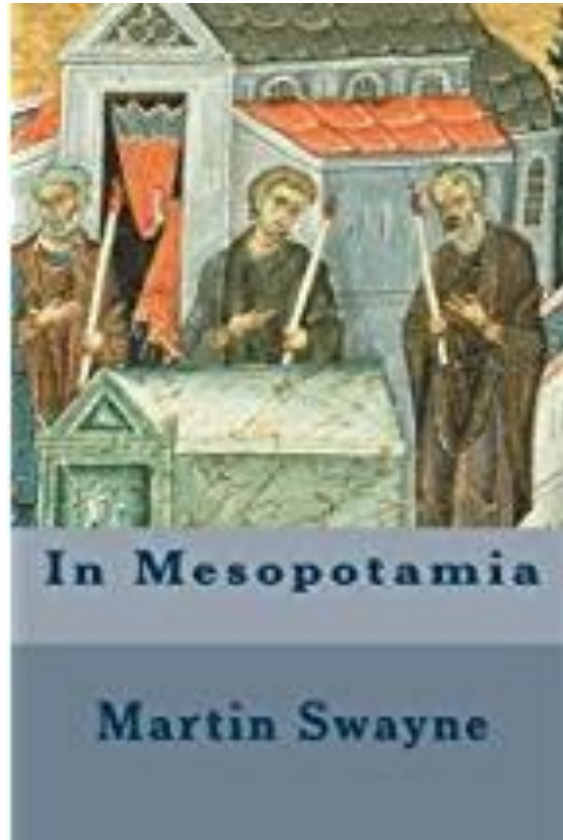
FROM OUR LIBRARY THIS MONTH

"In Mesopotamia" **(by Martin Swayne,** **published 1917)**

This book was published by the Scottish psychiatrist and author Dr Maurice Nicoll (1884-1953), using his pen name of "Martin Swayne", in 1917. Dr Nicoll was a doctor in the British Army's Medical Corps, and this book details his time serving in the British Army's Mesopotamia campaign. It contains impressions and accounts of the British Army's time in Mesopotamia, the climate conditions and the medical conditions they had to overcome. Many paintings depicting scenes of Mesopotamia (Iraq), which he produced himself, are included in this book.

He also published several articles under the pen name "Martin Swayne". The articles which focused on his experiences in Mesopotamia during his military service in the area included "Half a Ton of Dynamite" (published January 1916) and "The Whistling" (published October 1918).

After returning to the UK from his military service in the First World War, he then studied psychiatry. He is best known for his teachings of a theory known in psychology as the "Fourth Way". He published several books on this subject under his real name, and also set up his own psychology study group in 1931 where he gave weekly talks to those attending the study groups.



Dr Maurice Nicoll (1884-1953)



Two paintings by Martin Swayne (Dr Maurice Nicoll) which were included in his book, "In Mesopotamia" published in 1917. Martin Swayne was also an artist who published several paintings of Mesopotamia within this book.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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

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“Enhancing Integration Through Knowledge,
Where East Meets West ”

