

ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE (AISC)

NOVEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



November 2016

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OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

British Academy Event: "Hatra"

* Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended a cultural event held at The British Academy, London, on 16 November 2016. This event was hosted by the British Institute for the Study of Iraq (BISI).

The event, titled "Hatra" (known as "Al-Hadar" in Arabic) featured a talk by Professor Wathiq Ismail Al-Salihi about the ancient Mesopotamian city of Hatra in northern Iraq. This site lies south-west of Mosul, and was recently brutally destroyed by Daesh. The talk was given in memory of Mohammed Ali Mustafa, who is known for his great work excavating Hatra in the 1960s and 1970s.

In ancient times, Hatra was a major Mesopotamian city which dated from the 2nd century BC and continued for hundreds of years. This was an ancient Mesopotamian city-state at the time of the Persian and Roman empires. It had a distinctive Mesopotamian identity, cultural and architectural influence in addition to the Roman era's culture and architecture.



Professor Wathiq Ismail Al-Salihi, Iraqi professor, giving a talk on the Mesopotamian civilization of Hatra at the British Academy/British Institute of the Study of Iraq



Reception for the Iraqi Parliament's Iraqi-British Friendship Group

* Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended a reception held at the residence of the Iraqi ambassador to the UK, His Excellency Dr Saleh Al-Timimi, on 29 November 2016. This reception was held to honour visiting members of the Iraqi-British Friendship Committee of the Iraqi parliament.

The Iraqi delegation was headed by Dr Hanan Al-Fatlawi and included the following Iraqi MPs, and members of the Iraqi Parliamentary Group's Iraqi-British Friendship Committee: Dr Hanan Al Fatlawi, Mr Muthana Amin Rare, Mr Talal Khudair Zubai, Ms Tavkh Ahmed Mirza Mohammed, Mr Saleh Hasnawi, Mr Sadiq Messenger and Mr Abdalgahar Mahdi Mohammed.

Also attending was the British MP for Belfast, Sir Geoffrey Donaldson, who discussed his experiences of dealing with sectarian tensions in Northern Ireland. The Iraqi parliamentary delegation met with the British parliament whilst in London, and a visit for them to Belfast was arranged for them to know about Northern Ireland's experiences of conflict and the ways in which the country moved forward from that point.

The reception was attended by Iraqi and British politicians, academics, ambassadors who had served in Iraq or the UK, and Iraqi community and cultural representatives.



Dr Saleh Al-Timimi, Iraqi Ambassador to the UK; Dr Hanan Al-Fatlawi and Sir Geoffrey Donaldson MP



مركز الدراسات الإنكليز العراقية
ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE

Cultural Event at Salam House; "Healthy Sport as a Lifestyle"

* Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended a cultural event at Salam House (Humanitarian Dialogue Foundation) on 9 November 2016.

This event featured a talk by Dr Wisam Alshekly about "Healthy Sport as a Lifestyle". Dr Alshekly graduated from Tokyo University, Japan, in the field of sports and exercise medicine. He then worked at Tokyo General Hospital. In addition, he has previously worked with several Iraqi and Arab sports clubs, and has worked as a lecturer with several Iraqi, Arab and international universities. He was a lecturer at Baghdad University's Faculty of Physical Education for many years, and also works with the rehabilitation department of the British sports medicine centre, and has also worked with British sports medicine and nutritional bodies.

Dr Alshekly has published many research papers on this subject, and he has supervised many postgraduate researches in this field.

His lecture, education and achievements reflect positive Anglo-Iraqi work in action. As part of AISC's community engagement and research, we participate in cultural and educational events for the Iraqi community. As such, we follow and encourage others' work in the UK's Iraqi community.



مركز الدراسات الإنكليزية
ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE



Dr Wisam Alshekly at Salam House, talking about the benefits of sport and exercise



Meeting in support of Iraq's liberation of Mosul

* This meeting was held at the offices of the Al-Hakim Foundation on 22 November 2016. Ihsan Muhsin and Nadeem Al-Abdalla attended, along with many Iraqi political, community, cultural and academic representatives, and a representative of the Iraqi embassy in London.

The meeting acted as a steering group for the Iraqi community in the UK. It was felt that there needs to be greater public awareness of Iraq's effort to liberate Mosul from Daesh control; this operation started on 17 October 2016.

Participants at this meeting agreed to organise a public rally in central London, to be held in December 2016. The purpose of this rally will be to raise awareness of the current situation in Mosul, and to show the Iraqi community's support and solidarity with Mosul's people and Iraq's armed forces and their allies in their efforts to liberate the city from Daesh.

Also, the participants decided to write a letter to the UK Prime Minister, Theresa May MP, thanking the UK for their support in defeating Daesh in Iraq and asking for more support for the Iraqi armed forces and the humanitarian efforts to support Iraqis fleeing Daesh.

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have fled Daesh terrorists. The letter is to be handed to her office, after all the necessary arrangements of the public rally have been made.

At this meeting, a smaller steering group was established to follow up on the above tasks.



Members of Iraq's political and community groups at the Al-Hakim Foundation offices, London



مركز الدراسات الإنكلو عراقية
ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE



FROM OUR LIBRARY THIS MONTH

"Travels in Mesopotamia"
Published 1827, by
Sir James Silk Buckingham

The above book was published in 1827, and it was written by the British travel writer, diplomat and politician Sir James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855), who visited Mesopotamia in 1825. The full title of his book was "Travels in Mesopotamia; Including a Journey from Aleppo to Baghdad, by the route of Beer, Orfah, Mardik and Mosul". This describes the route he took travelling through Mesopotamia.

The travels of Silk Buckingham, and others, in Mesopotamia in the early 19th century led to the beginning of large-scale excavations of ancient Mesopotamian sites in the 1840s, led by the French diplomat and archaeologist Paul Botta and the British archaeologist, Sir Austen Henry Layard. These excavations continued for over 100 years. Silk Buckingham's travels in Mesopotamia preceded the excavation period; in his book, he talks of the land, culture and people he saw whilst travelling in Mesopotamia.

In those days, travelling to Mesopotamia and neighbouring lands was fraught with danger and travellers such as Silk Buckingham relied on the local tribal leaders for their protection during the time they spent in Mesopotamia. Western travellers were regarded with suspicion by natives, who were often hostile to them.



Above: Sir James Silk Buckingham travelling from Baghdad to Persia (Iran) on horseback dressed as an Arab nobleman, 1825



Above: Mesopotamia in 1825, from a painting in the book "Travels in Mesopotamia" (pub. 1827)

ANGLO-IRAQI MAPS

"Basra Map & Rivers" (by Ernst Herzfeld, published 1906)

The above was the title of a map of Basra and its surrounding area, published in 1906 by the German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld (1879-1948).

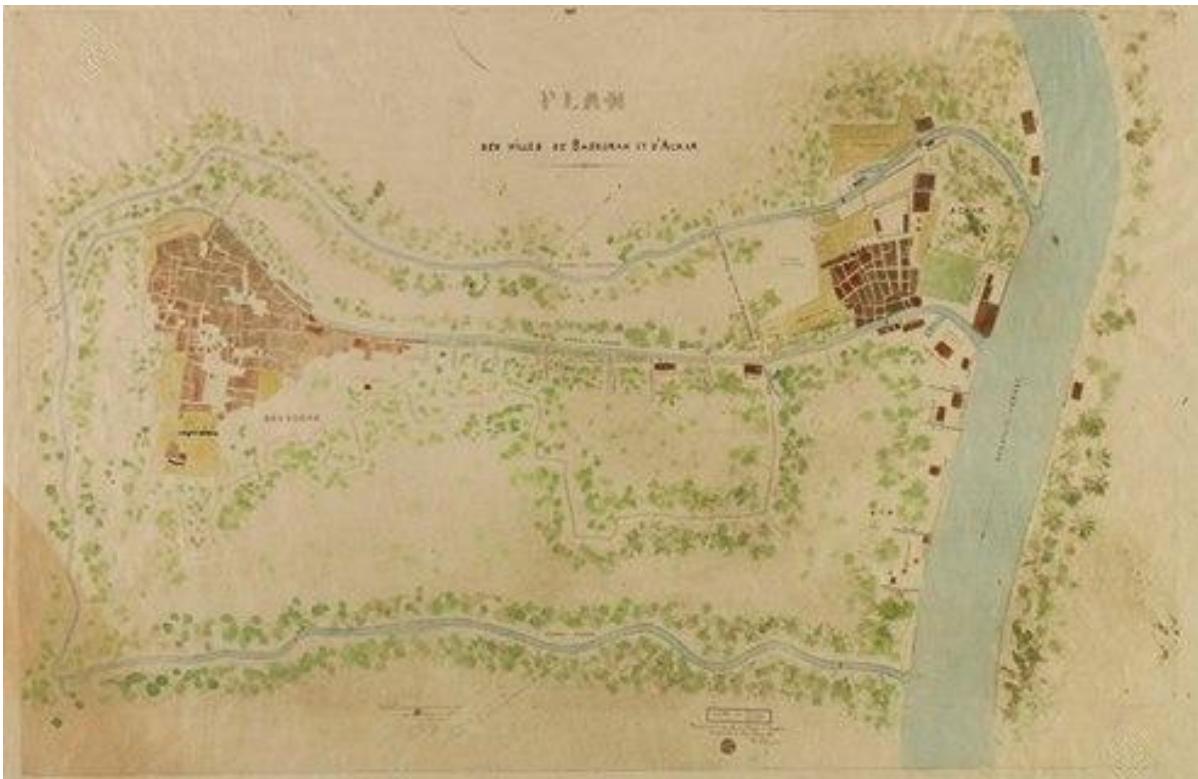
Herzfeld studied Assyriology whilst completing his university studies in Munich and Berlin. After graduating, he became a renowned archaeologist; he worked on the excavations at Assur, in northern Iraq, and travelled widely in Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Persia (Iran) during the early 20th century. He surveyed and documented many ancient excavation sites in Iraq, including Ctesiphon and Baghdad.

He also carried out excavations at Samarra between 1911-1913; these were the first excavations of an Islamic period site carried out by Western archaeologists.

After completing military service in the Great War of 1914-1918, he was appointed Professor of Studies of the Ancient & Modern Near East at Berlin University in 1920.

During his time in Iraq, Herzfeld published this map of Basra, showing its canals which fed life in the city; indeed, Basra is known as the "city of canals" historically and this is depicted in the map produced by Herzfeld during his time in the region.

Map of Basra and its rivers, published by Ernst Herzfeld in 1906



ANGLO-IRAQI POEMS

"Blink & Smile"
(by Joanna Carman,
published 2004)

This poem was published by Joanna Carman, an American citizen whose brother, Staff Sergeant Edward Carman (1976-2004) was deployed to Iraq in 2003. He died in Iraq in 2004, aged 27. During Edward Carman's service in the US Army, he was also deployed to Afghanistan.

In previous newsletters, we have published some war poems of Western soldiers and writers, involved in the Great War's Mesopotamia campaign (1914-1918), as we remember 100 years since the Mesopotamia campaign. We therefore thought that in this edition of our monthly newsletter, we would highlight some of the modern experiences of conflict in Iraq. As such, we have chosen this poem which has been written by an ordinary American citizen, describing the death of her brother in Iraq in a poetic way.

At the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) we believe that, away of political debates about wars and conflicts in Mesopotamia/Iraq, it is important to document the literature written in English about Iraq, whether it has been written in the Great War of 1914-1918 or in the 2003 conflict. We are interested in the human side of conflict and the writings of ordinary people and poets, in addition to academic research and publications written in English about Iraq.

BLINK AND SMILE

By Joanna "Joey" Carman

I'm the one who's not really here;
breathe thick air that pinches the
numb,
squeeze fists to feel my way back
home;
painted lines, dots-per-inches,
pictures I remember taking
with a blink and smile.

Every time I see one, I cry
Part of you stays with me.

Chaos holds on to the past,
prints dusted back into existence;
memory charms - part mine, the
other yours,
spellbound to cross paths again,
cast it upon you: call you brother
with a blink and smile.

When I hold my part, I cry
Keep part of me with you.

Tell me what you know that I
don't;
what space are you trying to save
now?

Are you listening another
frequency?
Can you read these pages,
scraps and pieces of my soldier's
life,
through a blink and smile...

Sit down next to me, and cry
Because only part stays with me?

FURTHER INFORMATION

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

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