

ANGLO-IRAQI DIALOGUE FOUNDATION

ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE (AISC)

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September 2017

What's Inside:

- AISC Visit to Baghdad
- Outreach Activities
- Cultural conference in Tunisia
- From our library
- Anglo-Iraqi images
- Further information

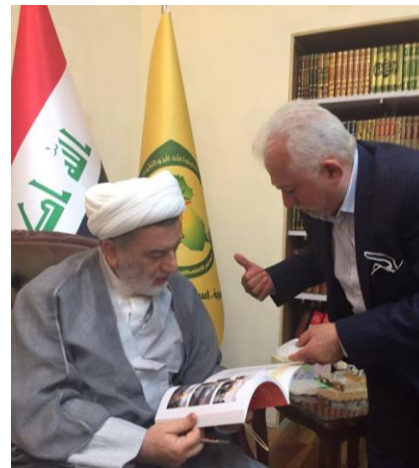
AISC VISIT TO BAGHDAD

During September, Ihsan M Al-Hakim and Ali Al-Mousawi from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team visited Baghdad.

On 15 September, Ihsan and Ali met with the Iraqi politician and scholar Dr Humam Hamoudi. Dr Hamoudi is the deputy leader of the Iraqi parliament, and he is also the General Secretary of Iraq's Islamic Supreme Council.

Ihsan and Ali talked with Dr Hamoudi about the Iraqi community in London and the importance of rational approaches and researches to Iraqi issues. The Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) works to fulfil this role with other centres and organisations in the UK, to act as a positive bridge between Iraq and Britain and to further Iraqis' integration into British social life.

This visit was an opportunity to present the work of AISC to Dr Hamoudi and to present him with some of AISC's publications.



OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Iraqi music concert

On 2 September 2017, Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) team attended a concert for the Iraqi community held at the Tara Copthorne Hotel in London. The event was organised by the Khan Mirjan Family Cultural Club, a cultural organisation which aims to enhance traditional Iraqi culture through music, by introducing folklore and classical Iraqi music to the Iraqi community in London and the UK so that the Iraqi community can retain a vital connection to their cultural roots. This event was attended by a diverse cross-section of the Iraqi community, including the Iraqi Ambassador to the UK, Dr Salih Al-Timimi.



Iraqi theatrical performance: Gilgamesh

On 29 September 2017, Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the AISC team attended a new theatrical performance of "Gilgamesh" held at the Ravenscourt Park Methodist Church in London.

This event was organised by the Iraqi Cultural Cafe and featured the Iraqi actor Mr Saadi Younis Bahri, who resides in France and came to London to stage this performance.

"Gilgamesh" is one of the oldest epic stories in the history of human life and has been translated from cuneiform writing into many languages. After the performance Mr Bahri spoke to the audience about this play and his theatrical work.



Traditional Iraqi entertainment, Gilgamesh play,
Ravenscourt Park Methodist Church

Iraqi Advisory Group session

On 17 September 2017, Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the AISC team attended an advisory group session held in London. This session was organised by the Iraqi Consultative Association for Development & Progress (ICADP). The ICADP gathers Iraqi academics and activists to analyse a range of issues, and also produces research papers which are then submitted to decision-makers and interested parties in Iraq. This represents the voluntary efforts of Iraq's expatriate communities to assist their country's process of recovery.



Cultural Event: Celebration of the City of Mosul

On 27 September 2017, Nadeem Al-Abdalla from the AISC team attended a cultural event at the offices of the Humanitarian Dialogue Foundation (HDF) in London.

This event featured a knowledge presentation on the history and heritage of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city which was liberated from terrorism in July 2017. The presentation was given by Dr Aziz Abdul Nur, who was born in Mosul and now writes about the city's history and heritage, and Dr Ismail Jalili, a medical doctor from Mosul who has lived in the UK for decades and who previously chaired the UK's Iraqi Medical Association. Their presentation included many old photographs of Mosul, past and present, and a look at Mosul as its inhabitants look to the future following the city's liberation from Daesh.



CULTURAL CONFERENCE: SFAX, TUNISIA

Arab International Days Festival for Golden Poems

Nadeem Al-Abdalla, Anglo-Iraqi Studies Centre (AISC) manager, was invited to attend this conference which was held in Sfax, Tunisia, between 21-24 September 2017.

This conference was organised by Tunisia's Golden Poems Association with the support of local dignitaries from the Sfax region.

The opening ceremony for this festival was held at Sfax's Alissa Palace Hall on 21 September 2017. This ceremony included a welcome from Ms Samira Shamtouri, manager of the Golden Poems Association, and fifteen poetry recitals. The opening of the festival was followed by an evening of traditional music and entertainment at the Al-Mahani Palace, a traditional Tunisian palace.

On 22 September 2017, a cultural workshop was held which included presentations by three speakers. This included Nadeem's presentation on the subject of "world literature from Sumerian tablets to the digital era". Later, delegates visited Sfax University's media college and gave recitals to students. In the evening, another traditional musical reception and concert was held for delegates.

The final day, 23 September 2017, included a tour of Sfax, Tunisia's second largest city after Tunis. This included sightseeing in the old town. Later, the closing ceremony for this festival was held.



Nadeem Al-Abdalla pictured with Samira Shamtouri, festival organiser



"World Literature: From Sumerian Tablets to the Digital Era"

On the second day of the festival, a cultural workshop was held on the subject of "poetry and creativity in the digital age". This workshop included presentations from three speakers; Nadeem Al-Abdalla, Dr Idris El-Mourabit from Morocco and Dr Ahlam Moamary from Algeria. It was facilitated by Mr Ahmed Al-Sayegh.

Nadeem's presentation focused on the technology of writing through the ages; for him it was both a personal and historic journey. Nadeem started this journey with the origins of early human writing on clay tablets in ancient Sumeria (Mesopotamia), with many examples of this cuneiform literature. He then moved to writing on Egyptian papyrus scrolls, with examples from ancient Egypt's hieroglyphic literature, and many examples from different parts of the world showing writing on animal skins, including the Magna Carta and the Mappa Mundi, both old English documents written on vellum (calf skin). In the 15th century this gave way to the era of mass printing production using paper (the paper age), and in the 21st century this has now moved into digital publishing online, both on specialist websites and individuals' social media sites.

His presentation then looked at the digital era (2000-present) and its impacts on creative writing, marketing, publishing and the changes that resulted to literary infrastructure, such as the creation of the "books on demand" concept and the concept of electronic books.



مركز الدراسات الانكلو عراقية

ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE



FROM OUR LIBRARY THIS MONTH

***"Memoirs of a Babylonian
Princess"
(published 1844)
By Maria Theresa Asmar
(1804-1870)***

The above book was written by Maria Theresa Asmar (1804-1870), an Assyrian author from Tel Kef in northern Iraq.

Her book, "Memoirs of a Babylonian Princess" consists of two volumes and 720 pages. It describes her travels through Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine and the ways of life at that time. At her time of writing, all of these countries were part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire.

In 1844, both volumes of the above book were translated into English. Asmar's travels took place in the early 19th century; she was well-known in Europe, where she was colloquially described as "Babylon's Princess".

Asmar became known in the West after setting up a school for women in Baghdad, which welcomed Christian missionaries into its fold. However, the Turkish Ottoman government later passed the licence to operate this school to these Christian missionaries due to the connections which existed between the West and the Ottoman Empire.

Feeling betrayed, Asmar took sanctuary with the Arab Bedouins and this book contains great detail about the Bedouins' daily lives.



Above: Maria Theresa Asmar (1804-1870)
Below: "Memoirs of a Babylonian Princess"

MEMOIRS
OF
A BABYLONIAN PRINCESS,

(MARIA THERESA ASMAR,
DAUGHTER OF EMIR ABDALLAH ASMAR,

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,
AND TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

Πόρερον οὐχὶ νησπαρίδιον ἔστιν ἢ βίος ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ γῇ;

Les maux sont le cortège, la vie est une enclume;
L'homme, comme un métal, est sé pour s'y forger.
Heureux, si cette éprouve a pu le corriger.

IN TWO VOLUMES:

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1844.

ANGLO-IRAQI IMAGES

Basra, Falluja and Hit in 1919

These paintings were the work of Harry William Russell, an officer with the British Army who served in Mesopotamia between 1915-1919.

Harry William Russell was a Lieutenant Colonel in the British Army's Medical Corps. He published a diary of the British Army's activities in Mesopotamia, titled:

"Diary of service on the Western Front (with 19th Division) Aug-Dec 1915, and in Mesopotamia, Jan 1916-Oct 1918, and carbon copy of the War Diary of the Officers Hospital, Baghdad, June 1917-Feb 1919. With Christmas cards, menus and other souvenirs, mainly from the Mesopotamia campaign, 1916-1919".

During his time in Mesopotamia in 1919, Russell painted these images of (top to bottom): Basra; Falluja; and lastly, Hit. Falluja and Hit are cities on the River Euphrates, whilst Basra sits on the Shatt Al-Arab which is the confluence of the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates as they flow into southern Iraq.



Basra in 1919. Painting by Harry William Russell



Falluja in 1919. Painting by Harry William Russell



Hit in 1919. Painting by Harry William Russell



FURTHER INFORMATION

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

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مؤسسة الحوار الإنكليو عراقي

مركز الدراسات الإنكليو عراقية

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ANGLO-IRAQI STUDIES CENTRE



“Enhancing Integration Through Knowledge,
Where East Meets West ”



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