



TAARII NEWSLETTER

The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq

ISSUE NO. 7-2

FALL 2012

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TAARII AND THE IRAQI CULTURAL CENTER CO-HOST EVENTS

On December 8 and 9, 2012, TAARII and the Iraqi Cultural Center (ICC) co-hosted a conference and an event on the *Epic of Gilgamesh* in Washington, D.C. On Saturday, December 8, a conference entitled “Modern Techniques and Archaeological Sites in Iraq” was held at the Iraqi Cultural Center in Dupont Circle. The program was devoted to eight reports on modern methods of finding and recording archaeological sites in Iraq and the potential use of these tools to monitor and protect those sites.

TAARII President McGuire Gibson (University of Chicago) presented historical background that highlighted the dramatic potential of the technologies available today. When surface survey began in Iraq in the 1930s, Gibson said, the archaeologists involved had maps and a few aerial photos taken via airplane. In the 1950s, Robert McC. Adams, working with Fuad Safar, created a systematic approach using overlapping aerial photographs and maps to begin locating more than 4,000 sites in southern Iraq. With the release of the CORONA satellite images in the 1980s and the increasing availability of Landsat, GoogleEarth, and other images used in a Geographical Information System (GIS), the sites in Iraq, as in the rest of the world, can be located — even in cases where they are not visible on

the ground — and they can be put into their regional context (figs. 1.1–3).

Mark Altaweel (University College London) summarized initial archaeological and geo-archaeological results achieved in the Shahrizor region within the province of Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan to better illuminate the archaeological landscape. He also highlighted problems faced in

understanding the archaeological record in regions of significant sedimentation. While satellite data have illuminated settlement and other archaeological data within the study region, much of the archaeological record is also obscured due to alleviation, limiting our overall understanding of the archaeological record. Paleo-environmental data have determined that during the Pleistocene era (before ca. 10,000 B.C.), many terraces were prominent in the landscape, which the later tell sites came to occupy. In the Holocene (10,000 B.C. and later), climate and anthropogenic patterns became noticeable in the sedimentary record.

Jason Ur (Harvard University) reviewed two remote sensing datasets for archaeology in the semi-arid north of Iraq. The first set, CORONA imagery, has proven to be highly effective in the Kurdistan Region around Erbil, as well as in adjacent parts of the Syrian *jazira*. The second, multi-spectral imagery from NASA’s ASTER sensor, has also been successful in Syria and should be equally promising in Iraq. By utilizing these remote sensing datasets, Ur said, surveys can be both spatially extensive and methodologically intensive, allowing archaeologists to stay one step ahead of threats to Iraq’s heritage from development.

Using southern Mesopotamia as a case study, Carrie Hritz

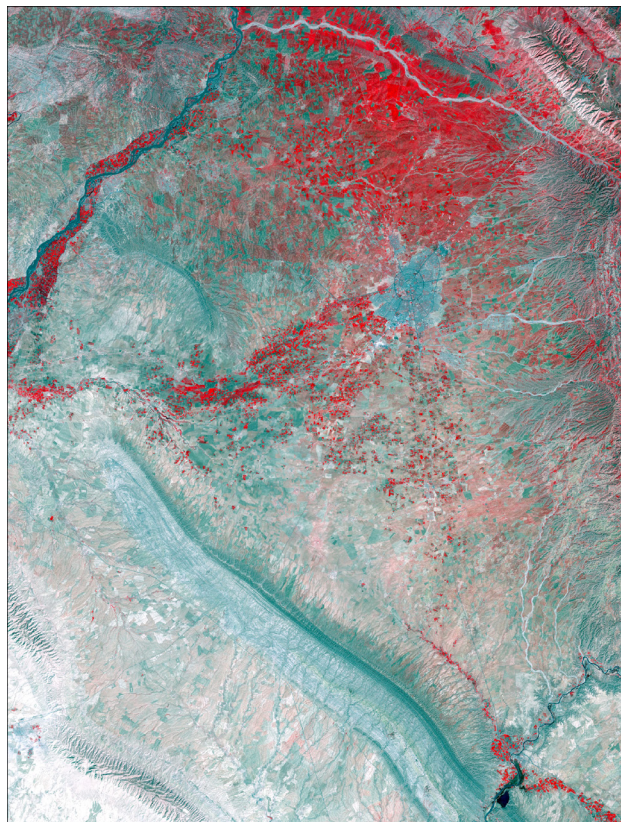
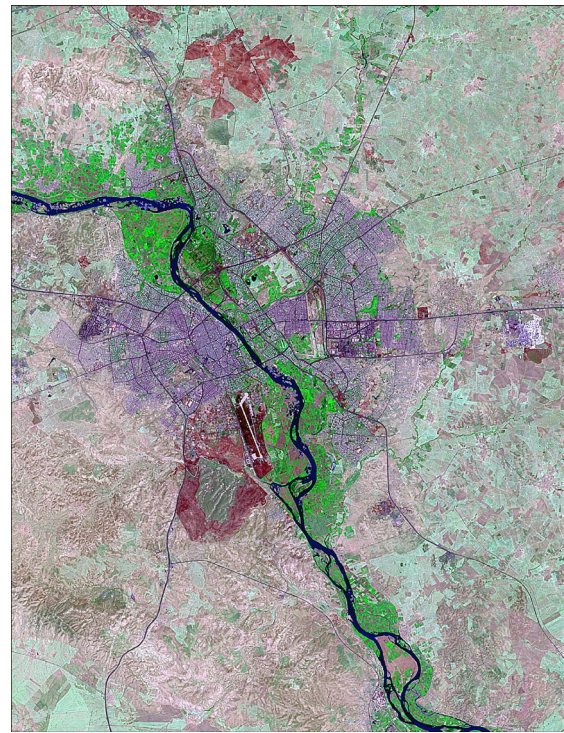


Figure 1.1. This false-color April 2000 Landsat image of the Erbil Plain shows the city and its agricultural hinterland. Red represents vegetation, mostly winter cereal crops, which are abundant in the hills north of the city. The historically rich plain to its south is remarkably uncultivated, the legacy of the 1987 military program of village destruction and depopulation, from which it has never recovered. (Image Credit: Jason Ur)



Figures 1.2–3. (Left) In this February 1967 CORONA satellite photo, the citadel and walls of Nineveh are clearly visible. A small town had grown up around the Nebi Yunus Mosque within the walls. (Right) By the time of the 2001 Landsat image, Mosul had grown across the Tigris River and surrounded Nineveh on all sides. Purple indicates buildings. Sites throughout Iraq are threatened by similar processes. (Image Credits: Jason Ur)

(Pennsylvania State University) addressed, both quantitatively and qualitatively, long-held assumptions concerning the nature and relationship of settlement patterns and river channel systems in antiquity. GIS and image analysis, explained Hritz, can fill gaps in the settlement record and support a revised location for the Tigris River during most of antiquity. Hritz's work proposes a methodology for unweaving and mapping preserved pieces of ancient landscapes, thereby addressing larger issues of human modification of the landscape.

Zaid Ibraheem (Pennsylvania State University) implemented GIS tools and remote sensing methods to make the data included in the *Atlas of the Archaeological Sites in Iraq* accessible in today's electronic world. The method used geo-referenced and high resolution Digital Globe imagery to help identify the true location of the sites recorded in the *Atlas*. Two methods were tested. In the first, comparisons were made between modern features recorded in

both the maps and the satellite imagery, which allowed the identification of nearby archaeological sites. The second method involved geo-referencing the maps published in the *Atlas* based on locations that could be identified on both the maps in the *Atlas* and in the imagery. The ultimate intended result of this project would be a digital atlas of archaeological sites, where information on size and site location can be joined to the information on the periods of occupation published in the *Atlas*.

Abdulmir Hamdani (Stony Brook University) presented the results of a preliminary archaeological survey conducted in two phases between 2003 and 2010 in areas in southern Iraq that were not covered by the early archaeological surveys. The first phase was carried out from 2003–2008 with the aim to identify which sites were in need of protection. This phase of the survey allowed Hamdani to identify 600 sites, but it failed to locate a large number of medium and small, flat sites because they were covered by either

thick vegetation or sand, and located within agricultural field and military outposts. In 2008, Hamdani used satellite images and GIS to add 600 new sites to the original survey. The 1,200 sites identified in this survey range in date from the Neolithic to Islamic times and include sites of all sizes. Although many of the sites were looted, Hamdani explained, in many instances features, including the remains of temples and houses, were visible on the surface. In one instance, a new Ur III site was located far in the Western Desert, in an area that was not thought to have been occupied at that time.

Elizabeth Stone (Stony Brook University) presented three different approaches to the use of the high-resolution imagery available from the Digital Globe Corporation. She began with a quick recap of research already completed and published on the use of this imagery to track patterns of looting at already known archaeological sites. Here the imagery allows us to examine the timing,

intensity, and location of the looting, as well as which periods were selected by the looters. Stone then showed how some of this imagery can reveal details of sub-surface architectural traces, making possible the evaluation of broad settlement patterns that are often quite different from the excavated material since they avoid the biases of archaeologists towards investigating public buildings within large urban sites. Stone ended with a description of an effort that was made to identify all potential sites located within the area around Umma in southern Iraq. The area surveyed includes desert, where sites are often obscured by sand dunes. Even cultivated areas can have fossilized dunes that resemble archaeological sites. Nevertheless, many sites could be identified that were missed in earlier surveys, usually — but not always — because they have since been looted.

Using 1930s archival photography and satellite imagery, Alexandra Witsell (University of Chicago) presented a city plan of the third-millennium B.C. town of Khafajah that sheds light on Mesopotamian urban form and the role political power can play in shaping the built environment around us. By viewing Khafajah and its built form holistically and as an artifact in and of itself, Witsell sees the city



Figure 1.4. Panelists at the “Modern Techniques and Archaeological Sites” conference in Washington, D.C. (Photo Credit: Iraqi Cultural Center)

as a palimpsest of varied economic, social, political, and natural processes evolving together through everyday practice (or praxis) to create the physical form of the community. As an artifact, Witsell explained, the urban form of Khafajah provides physical evidence for the transition between two distinct political regimes, the Early Dynastic and Akkadian periods of the third millennium. Her presentation broached the question: Is it possible to see archaeologically the dichotomy of a “physical” city caught in a “political” or “historical” transition?

Katharyn Hanson (University of Chicago) discussed the extent of the damage caused by urban sprawl and looting. She illustrated the damage caused by urban sprawl through a case study at Nineveh. She then suggested a methodology employing remote sensing for future work at Mesopotamian sites

impacted by urban sprawl. Hanson then discussed ongoing looting in southern Iraq, focusing on the ancient site of Umma, with data from a series of satellite images that document the destruction of this important archaeological site.

The program on Sunday, December 9, held at the Freer Gallery of Art, focused on the Mesopotamian *Epic of Gilgamesh* in ancient and modern contexts. Christopher Woods (University of Chicago) presented the historical context of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Following Woods’ presentation, audience members watched the 30-minute documentary, “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” an episode of the award-winning PBS series by Seftel Productions and the Annenberg Foundation entitled “Invitation to World Literature” (<http://www.learner.org/courses/worldlit/gilgamesh/>).

TAARII thanks Iraqi Cultural Center Director Dr. Mohammad Alturaihi, Public Relations and Media Specialist Jabbar Ghadhban, and the rest of the staff of the Iraqi Cultural Center for their wonderful hospitality. We look forward to cooperating with them again in the near future.



Figure 1.5. The audience listens to presenters at the conference in Washington, D.C. (Photo Credit: Iraqi Cultural Center)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BETH KANGAS

TAARII has been busy with a variety of activities, several of which are reported in this issue of the newsletter.

In June, Lucine Taminian, TAARII's Senior Scholar in Residence in Jordan, and I met in New York City with international colleagues to begin to create a guide for collecting life stories in conflict settings. The Hollings Center for International Dialogue awarded a small grant to Lucine and the director of Columbia University's Columbia Center for Oral History to produce the guide; TAARII administered the grant. (See the article on p. 6)

In the summer, we learned that the amount of this year's Council for American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) and Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) subgrant, the primary source of TAARII's funding, would be reduced by \$50,000. CAORC reported that the reason that the ECA bureau gave them for the amount of the deduction was because TAARII had received larger than average funding in previous years. Unfortunately, we had to reduce the number of U.S. and Iraq fellowships that we are able to award in the upcoming competition.

In August, TAARII applied for Title VI funding from the Department of Education (DOE) for TAARII's future move from Jordan to Iraq. Of the ten awards that the DOE made, no centers in the Near and Middle East received grants, including TAARII.

In October, TAARII cosponsored a lecture at the University of Chicago with Hans von Sponeck and Joy Gordon, the two keynote speakers from TAARII's 2011 conference in Jordan on the Sanctions period in Iraq. (See the article on the following page.)

In November, TAARII hosted a breakfast reception at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) in Chicago. It was nice to have the chance to reach out to our archaeology colleagues.

At the November 2012 TAARII Board meeting, which coincided with the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) annual meeting in Denver, TAARII welcomed the University of Toronto as a new institutional member. We also announced the election of two representatives to the Board from TAARII's Individual Membership. Charles E. Jones is the Head of the Library at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW), a member of the faculty of the Libraries of New York University, and the moderator of the IraqCrisis mailing list (<https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/info/iraqcrisis>). Nada Shabout is an Associate Professor of Art History and the Director of the Contemporary Arab and Muslim Studies Institute (CAMCSI) at the University of North Texas. She is the founder and project director of the Modern ArtIraq Archive (MAIA), which documents and

digitizes modern Iraqi heritage, particularly the collection previously held at the Iraqi Museum of Modern Art. The three-year terms of Jones and Shabout will begin on July 1, 2013.

TAARII hosted an evening

reception at the MESA meeting. Many of the thirty attendees were new to TAARII, an exciting sign of a new generation of Iraqi Studies scholars (see fig. 2.1).

At the beginning of December, TAARII reapplied to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for continuation funding for the Iraqi Oral History Project (IOHP) so that we can begin to train individuals in Iraq to collect life stories. We would very much like the opportunity to shift the IOHP from the diaspora, where the project began with interviews of Iraqis living outside their country, to a trained team of researchers in Iraq collecting and analyzing the diverse narratives of a country that has endured many challenges over the past decades.

In December, TAARII co-hosted with the Iraqi Cultural Center an archaeology conference and Gilgamesh event in Washington, D.C. (See the cover article). TAARII welcomes such opportunities to cooperate with other institutions.

We continue to invite your ideas on activities, resources, and funding sources for TAARII to pursue.



Figure 2.1. Scholars interested in Iraqi Studies attend TAARII's reception at MESA (Photo Credit: Ranj Alaadin)

TAARII-SPONSORED LECTURE: “THE MORAL ISSUE OF THE EFFECT OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS: THE CASE OF IRAQ”

The Sanctions regime imposed on Iraq in 1990 and extended until 2003 arguably did more harm to the Iraqi people than the wars in that span. Two of the most knowledgeable experts on the Iraqi Sanctions appeared in Chicago on October 4, 2012, jointly sponsored by TAARII and the International House Global Voices Program, the Center for Middle East Studies, and the Center for International Studies of the University of Chicago.

Joy Gordon and Hans von Sponeck have both written books on the Sanctions, and were the keynote speakers at TAARII's conference on the subject in Amman, Jordan, more than a year ago. They bring complementary and contrasting perspectives to the subject. Von Sponeck, a thirty-year U.N. diplomat, was in charge of the administration of the Oil for Food Program in Iraq for more than a year

in the late 1990s. His experience is published in his book, *A Different Kind of War*. He was forced out of the position by American and British pressure, just as his predecessor had been. His view of the Sanctions, from inside the U.N. program, convinced him that the manipulation and distortion of this humanitarian assistance harmed not only the Iraqis who were meant to be aided, but also the integrity of the U.N., to which he had dedicated his life.

Joy Gordon, a philosopher, began to write a general book on sanctions, but found so much material in the U.N. archives on the Iraqi case that she concentrated only on that and produced the book *Invisible War*. She was able to gain detailed information on the workings of the Sanctions Committee of the United Nations, citing its secrecy, its lack of transparency, its arbitrary actions,

and delays in giving permission for humanitarian items that were critical for the population of Iraq. The committee operated in a manner that was contrary to the procedures of the U.N., and by doing so, it allowed the U.S. to dominate the committee, determine the kinds of goods that could be sent into Iraq, and determine the duration of the Sanctions. In her presentation, Gordon expanded the scope to a consideration of the moral issues at stake in sanctions on any people.

The Chicago event was the last in a series of joint appearances by the two speakers, who had already appeared at Columbia University (Initiative for Policy Dialogue), Yale University (Center on Middle East Studies), Harvard University (Kennedy School of Government), and Brandeis University (Heller School for Social Policy).

• TAARII'S INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS •

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University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Chicago
Columbia University
Cornell University
Duke University-University of North Carolina
Consortium for Middle East Studies
George Washington University
Georgetown University
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Indiana State University
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New York University
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania Museum
Portland State University
Rutgers University
Smithsonian Institution
State University of New York, Stony Brook
University of Toronto
Williams College

TAARII HELPS PREPARE GUIDE FOR COLLECTING LIFE STORIES IN CONFLICT SETTINGS

In June 2012, TAARII Senior Scholar in Residence Lucine Taminian and Executive Director Beth Kangas joined international colleagues in New York City to begin crafting a guide for collecting life stories in conflict settings. The gathering was funded in part by a small grant that the Hollings Center for International Dialogue awarded Dr. Taminian and Mary Marshall Clark, the director of Columbia University's Columbia Center for Oral History (CCOH), following their participation in the Hollings Center Higher Education Dialogue entitled "The Future of Oral History in the Middle East and Central Asia" held in Istanbul, Turkey, in February 2012 (See the Spring 2012 TAARII Newsletter, Issue 07-01).

The Hollings Center funding enabled Taminian from Jordan and two additional Istanbul Dialogue participants, Ramazan Aras from Turkey and Mohammad Mohaqqueq from Afghanistan, to meet in New

York City during the CCOH summer institute on life story approaches in human rights contexts, in order to begin creating the guide. Additional members of the working group were: Mary Marshall Clark, the CCOH director; Douglas Boyd, the director of the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries; TAARII Executive Director Beth Kangas; Mehmet Kurt, a graduate student from Turkey currently at Yale University; and Claudia P. Gonzalez, a human rights activist from Colombia. A prominent oral historian, Alessandro Portelli, an instructor at the CCOH summer institute, contributed his insights during several of the working group sessions.

Participants in the working group benefitted from the opportunity to share their ideas and experiences and to discover the similarities and differences that exist among the conflict settings



Figure 3.1. Participants listen to the insights of their colleagues during the working group that met at Columbia University's Center for Oral History to craft a guide on collecting life stories in conflict settings. From left to right: Lucine Taminian, Alessandro Portelli, Ramazan Aras, and Mohammed Mohaqqueq (Photo credit: Mehmet Mim Kurt)



Figure 3.2. Participants complete a working session on collecting and curating life stories in conflict settings. From left to right: Mary Marshall Clark, Douglas Boyd, Mohammad Mohaqqueq, Ramazan Aras, Beth Kangas, Mehmet Kurt, Alessandro Portelli, Lucine Taminian, and Claudia P. Gonzalez (Photo credit: Mehmet Mim Kurt)

of Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, Colombia, and the U.S. (with CCOH's projects on 9/11 and Guantanamo Bay), as well as their own individual approaches and perspectives. The working group grappled with issues related to ethics, biases, security, and the interviewer-

interviewee relationship. Discussions uncovered several key questions: (1) **What does oral history allow us to discover about a conflict situation?** (2) Which should be documented: *What* the interviewees remember in order to understand the complexities of the conflict, or *why* they remember certain things in order to understand the meaning of the conflict and its impact on the community? (3) **Who should do the interviews: individuals who are "inside" or "outside" of the conflict, and to what consequence?** (4) Should both the "perpetrators" and "victims" of a conflict be interviewed, and how? (5) **How can an oral history project ensure the safety of the fieldworkers and the narrators in situations of ongoing conflict?** And, (6) What are ways to release results, from opening an archive to releasing audio and video files, in situations where a conflict is still active?

The working group will distribute the guide initially to the Hollings Center for their input, and then to the participants from the Istanbul Dialogue and other leaders in the field of oral history, human rights, and scholars/practitioners. Through the support of the Columbia Center for Oral History, who has funding

from the Atlantic Philanthropies to produce the guide, the working group plans to release the guide in print in 2013. The working group will also create an interactive website for members of a global oral history community to contribute their experiences and lessons on working

in contexts of conflict. The guide and global dialogue that the working group produces will shed light on the uses, consequences, and rewards of oral history across international and cultural boundaries.

TAARII appreciates the opportunity to share findings and learnings

from the seven years of its Iraqi Oral History Project with a larger community and to help craft a forum on the ethical and methodological issues of collecting and curating life stories in environments and populations that have been ravaged by political conflict and violence.

IN MEMORIAM

DR. BEHNAM NASSIR ABU AL-SOOF (1931–2012)

MCGUIRE GIBSON, TAARII PRESIDENT

Dr. Behnam Abu al-Soof died in the autumn at the age of 81 in Amman, Jordan. A giant among Iraqi archaeologists, not only in his knowledge and accomplishments, but also in his character, Behnam was the leading member of the second generation of Iraqi archaeologists, who were trained after the Second World War. As a student, he was taught by and was a team member on excavations by Fuad Safar, Taha Baqir, and others of the first generation who had received degrees abroad in the late 1930s. Like dozens of other Iraqis who were sent to Europe and the U.S. for higher degrees in the 1950s and 1960s, Behnam earned a Ph.D. (from Cambridge University) and returned to Iraq to become a key part of the Antiquities service and of the archaeology department of

the University of Baghdad. He was a mentor to hundreds of younger employees of the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH, previously the Directorate General of Antiquities) and of students at the university. He was, as well, a source of good advice for foreign researchers encountering shifting policies due to changes in government.

As a student, Behnam took part in numerous excavations and surveys by the Antiquities service, including participation in the excavations that accompanied the important survey by Safar and Robert McC. Adams in 1957–58 in the Diyala region. At about the same time, he was a team member under Muhammad Ali Mustafa in a survey and salvage operations in the area south of Baghdad that was to become the Mussayib desalination project.

His doctoral research was involved with the definition of the Uruk/Jamdat Nasr period in the north of Iraq, and his publications on that work remain important.

Probably his most significant excavation work was done at Tell as-Sawwan, a small prehistoric town with

a surrounding wall and distinctive architecture that was located within the gigantic Abbasid city of Samarra. Dozens of graves there yielded extraordinary stone vessels and statues, surprising for their early date in the sixth millennium B.C.

During 1978 and 1979, Behnam was in administrative charge of the salvage operations in the area of the Hamrin Dam, northeast of Baghdad. Here, more than eighty sites were excavated by Iraqi and foreign teams, giving information on an area that was before then almost unknown. After that, he was in charge of the salvage operations for the Eski Mosul Dam, north of Mosul.

Behnam was, at that time, named the Director General of Antiquities for the northern area of Iraq, under a new administrative set-up within the newly established State Board of Antiquities

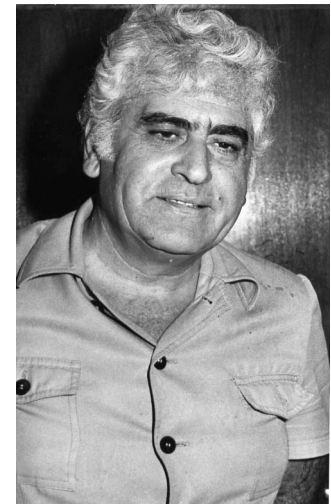


Figure 4.1. Dr. Behnam Abu al-Soof (Photo credit: Salam Taha)

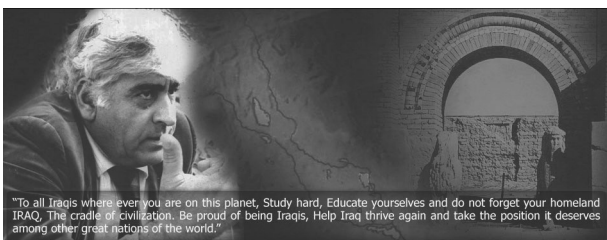


Figure 4.2. Dr. Behnam Abu al-Soof's main image from his website. The text reads: "To all Iraqis where ever you are on this planet, Study hard, Educate yourselves and do not forget your homeland IRAQ, The cradle of civilization. Be proud of being Iraqis, Help Iraq thrive again and take the position it deserves among other great nations of the world."

(Photo credit: <http://www.abualsoof.com/>)

and Heritage. Anyone who visited Nineveh during that time and saw him in his office in an Ottoman-era house on Nebi Yunis came to realize how well he did the job and was reminded of how good he would have been as the head of SBAH. Being a Christian, however, that post was out of reach for him.

In the late 1980s, Behnam was forced to retire, being one of the Ph.D.s who were lost to SBAH during that time. These retirements were due, in part, to reduced budgets for antiquities because of the Iran–Iraq war. The loss of almost all of the remaining Ph.D.s from SBAH during the Sanctions of the 1990s left the organization a shadow of itself.

Behnam then turned increasingly to teaching at the University of Baghdad and other institutions. It was at this time that the university began for the first time to award Ph.D. degrees, and Behnam was part of that process as chief advisor or committee member for several students.

During the 1990s, he was named to the Iraqi Parliament. And he also devoted much time to his role of Secretary of the Alwiya Club, the oldest social club in Baghdad.

After 2003, Behnam thought it wise to take his family to Syria, where, unfortunately, his wife died and was

buried. Later, he returned to Baghdad for a few years, remarried, and relocated to Amman.

Throughout his career, he was a public face for the Antiquities organization and archaeology in general. He was often on Iraqi TV, lecturing, being interviewed, and participating in panels, even in the weeks before his death. During the past couple of years, he published two books in English and prepared a memoir for publication, which is in press. He also had his own website (www.abualsoof.com).

Behnam's contributions have also been recognized by the Iraqi government, which has given one of the main streets in Mosul the name of Dr. Abu al-Soof. Additionally, the main Neolithic Hall in the Iraqi Museum has been named after him, as well as the main hall at the University of Mosul.

His imposing physical presence, at well over six feet and a weight well over 200 pounds, was combined with charm and charisma. He had a great, rich voice that made him identifiable in any crowd. He was always ready



Figure 4.3. Behnam Abu al-Soof (right) in the Hamrin Salvage Project, 1978 (Photo credit: Lamia al-Gailani)

to laugh, to tell a story, and to engage in conversation with anyone, and that person received his undivided attention. Luckily, TAARII's Oral History Project captured him for several interviews, so in the future people will be able to hear him or read about him from his own point of view.

His funeral in Amman was attended by family, friends, colleagues, diplomats, Iraqi parliamentarians, and Iraqi ministry officials, indicating the breadth of respect in which he was held.

We have lost a positive force in Iraqi intellectual life. And anyone who knew him lost a great friend. His wife and family must know that they have our sincere condolences for their loss.

LANGUAGE ANNOUNCEMENT

As readers may be aware, TAARII is committed to producing a bilingual newsletter in English and Arabic. We regret that we are now printing our newsletter in English only. We are seeking funds to resume printing a bilingual newsletter and to include full Arabic translations of English-language newsletters on our website. We appreciate your patience and understanding in the meantime.

TAARII PROGRAM: RESEARCH AFFILIATES IN JORDAN

TAARII invites applications for a Research Affiliate status for U.S. scholars working on Iraq while based in Amman, Jordan. As increasing numbers of American researchers undertake Iraq-related research in Jordan, TAARII aims to support their needs and work and to include them in the broader TAARII community. To apply for Research Affiliate status, please submit a brief project statement, together with a CV, to beth@taarii.org. There is no deadline and scholars can apply for Affiliate status on a short-term or long-term basis.

CONSCIOUSNESS OF STIGMA, PSYCHOLOGICAL DISENGAGEMENT, AND COLLECTIVE SELF-ESTEEM: THE CASE OF IRAQI CHRISTIANS

FARIS NADHMI, BAGHDAD UNIVERSITY AND SALAHADDIN UNIVERSITY-ERBIL¹
& 2012 TAARII IRAQ FELLOW

The bombing of the al-‘Askari Mosque, one of the holiest Shi‘ite sites, in 2006 triggered a wave of sectarian violence throughout Iraq that resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and the displacement — externally and internally — of millions of Iraqis, changing the social fabric of major urban centers. The once religiously mixed neighborhoods turned into sectarian enclaves.

For more than five years, Iraqis of all sects and ethnicities were victims of acts of sectarian violence. Christians of all denominations were assassinated, kidnapped, or forced to leave their neighborhoods. Within a short period of time, the number of Christians in the country dwindled from 1,400,000 in 2003 to only 500,000 today. The majority of displaced Christians fled to safer cities in Iraq, including Kurdistan Iraq, or to neighboring countries, from where they then found their way to the U.S., Europe, or Australia.

The year 2010 was the worst for Christians. During that year, ninety-two Christians were assassinated, 280 were injured, and thousands of them received death threats. This forced more than 1,800 families to flee their homes for the Nineveh Plain, 1,700 students to leave school, and 300 employees to quit their jobs.

The Study

This study I was engaged in, funded by a TAARII research fellowship, aims to research the dynamics of one of the psychological dilemmas facing two Iraqi Christian communities: the Baghdad community and the Kurdistan Iraqi community. It focused on three psychological phenomena: 1) the feeling of stigma among

Iraqi Christians; 2) their tendency of psychological disengagement from the Muslim majority; and 3) their collective self-esteem as a Christian sect.

Stigma consciousness refers to the degree of the pervasiveness of consciousness among the minority of their stigmatized status, whereas psychological disengagement is a defensive strategy that aims at maintaining self-esteem through the psychological withdrawal of the individual or the group from issues or situations in which they face discrimination. Stigmatized or victimized minorities usually tend to separate themselves psychologically from the militant majority to partially protect their collective security. Stigma consciousness and psychological

disengagement raise the issue of changes in the self-image of the stigmatized minority with regard to their social status and value in comparison to that of other groups.

These three social psychological phenomena are studied within the context of a number of demographical variables, the subjects' experience of sectarian violence, and their perceptions of discrimination against the Iraqi Christian minority, the future of Christians in Iraq, and the future of religious tolerance in Iraq.

Christian Communities in Iraq

Before 2003, Christian communities existed all over Iraq, with concentrations in the cities of Baghdad and Basra and the governorates of Nineveh, Erbil, and Dahok. The number of churches in these areas reflects the size of their Christian communities. Baghdad itself has sixty-eight churches, Nineveh has twenty, Dahok has thirteen, Basra has eight, and Erbil has three.

1. Baghdad Christian Community

The Baghdad Christian community is heterogeneous, with the Catholic denominations (Chaldeans, Syriacs, Armenians, and Assyrians) comprising nearly 75%, and the other denominations (Orthodox, Nestorians, and Anglicans) 25%. The Christians of Baghdad lived mainly in five neighborhoods: al-Bataween, al-Ghadeer, Camp Sarah, al-Dura, and New Baghdad. The suicide attack on Our Lady of Salvation Syriac Catholic Cathedral in Baghdad in November 2010, the bloodiest since 2003, left fifty Christians killed, including two priests, and led to a major wave of migration.

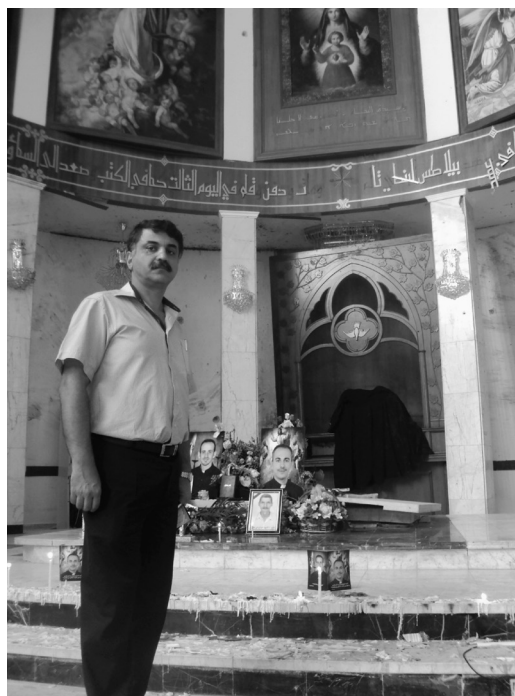


Figure 5.1. Faris Nadhmi standing in Our Lady of Salvation Syriac Catholic Cathedral in Baghdad two days after the deadly 2010 attack. A memorial to the victims, including the two priests killed in the attack, can be seen beside the author. (Photo credit: Faris Nadhmi)

2. The Christian Community of Kurdistan

The settlement of Christians in Kurdistan is concentrated in the city of Ankawa of the Erbil Governorate and the cities of Dahuk and Zakho in the Dahuk Governorate. Since 2003, these cities have become a refuge for thousands of Christian families fleeing their homes in Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul. Compared to the Baghdad Christian community, the Christians of Kurdistan likely feel more secure and enjoy more political power as they are represented in the two governorate councils and in the Kurdish House of Parliament. Yet, Christian migrants, who face the problem of unemployment and social isolation due to the fact that they do not speak Kurdish, seek resettlement somewhere outside Iraq. According to the International Migration Organization, out of 1,350 migrant families, 850 families left Kurdistan to resettle in the U.S., Europe, or Australia.

The Research Community

A group of 396 Christians were selected randomly as follows: 183 from the city of Baghdad and 213 from three cities in Kurdistan: Ankawa, Dahuk, and Zakho. The research groups were interviewed individually in churches, clubs, and Christian educational institutions in the four cities during the period May–August 2012.

As Table 5.1. shows, the Christians included in the Kurdistan sample are a little older, have a higher monthly income, and are less diversified sect-wise than those included in the Baghdad sample. However, both communities experienced some kind of sectarian violence. Sixty-six percent of the Baghdadi Christians and 45% of the Kurdistan Christians reported that a relative or friend had been killed or injured in acts of violence against Christians. In addition, 38% of Baghdadi Christians as compared to

Table 5.1. Personal Data		
Variables	Baghdad Sample	Kurdistan Sample
Average Age	34.28	41.94
Family Average Monthly Income	748.154 ID	1,510.54 ID
Male	59%	56%
Female	41%	44%
Married	67%	46%
Single	30%	50%
Divorced	1%	2%
Widowed	2%	2%
Chaldeans	43.0%	82.0%
Armenians	19.0%	1.5%
Assyrians	17.0%	6.5%
Catholic Syriacs	12.0%	7.5%
Orthodox Syriacs	6.0%	2.5%
Latin Catholics	2.4%	—
Anglicans	0.6%	—

40% of Kurdistan Christians were victims of internal forced displacement (table 5.2).

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of three parts.

1. Personal Data

Age, education, marital status, and income.

2. Questions Regarding Attitudes

These include the desire to emigrate, a family's or friend's experience of sectarian violence, experience of forced displacement, view of the future of Christians in Iraq, and view of the future of religious tolerance in Iraq.

3. Verbal Statements to Measure the Psychological Phenomena

Each statement has five responses: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.

a. Stigma

These include thirty statements such as: I feel most Muslims avoid me when they know I am Christian; When I deal with Muslims, I avoid

revealing my Christian identity in public; I feel Muslims don't trust me because I am Christian; Most Muslims support Christians in hard times; Most Muslims allow their kids to play with Christian kids; I feel the same social intimacy whether I am with Christians or Muslims; I believe that Christians in Iraq have a low status; I feel Christians in Iraq are loved and trusted by Muslims; I lost my rights because I am Christian; I don't feel uncomfortable when I tell others about my religious identity; I am not scared to practice my religion in public; and I feel my life is in danger just because I am Christian.

b. Psychological Disengagement

These include eight statements: The marginal role of Christians in political life doesn't mean that they are incapable; The negative attitudes of radical groups toward Christians don't bother me; I don't care about other sects' views of Christians since they are all biased; Christians, like other sects in Iraq, have their own faults which they should

Table 5.2. Questions Regarding Attitude: Experience

	Baghdad Sample (%)			Kurdistan Sample (%)		
	Yes	No	Hesitant	Yes	No	Hesitant
Desire to emigrate	33.3	38.3	28.4	14.5	55.0	30.5
One of your relatives or friends was injured or killed	66.0	34.0	—	45.0	55.0	—
Have experienced internal displacement	38.0	62.0	—	40.0	60.0	—

acknowledge; I believe Christians are victims of false stereotypes that some radical Islamic groups have; and I avoid reading articles or books that disparage Christians because I think they [the articles and books] have no value.

c. *Collective Self-esteem*

These include four statements. These include: Christians have a good reputation in Iraq; Most Iraqis view Christians as more vulnerable than others; Christians are highly respected by others; and Christians in Iraq are viewed by others as useless.

Preliminary Results

My analysis of the attitude section shows that the desire to emigrate outside Iraq is higher among Christians of Baghdad; it is 33.3% as compared to 14.5% among Christians of Kurdistan. This is correlated with their past experience of sectarian violence more than with their experience of internal displacement. Table 5.3 shows that the Christians of Kurdistan are slightly less pessimistic about the future of religious tolerance in Iraq than the Christians of Baghdad, but are slightly less pessimistic as to the future of Christians in Iraq.

The preliminary analysis of the third section of the questionnaire shows the following results:

- All of the Christians included in the research have low consciousness of stigma

and obvious psychological disengagement and high collective self-esteem. This indicates that the high collective self-esteem and psychological disengagement act as defense mechanisms and help to lessen the feelings of stigma.

- Christians who have experienced forced displacement, have relatives or friends who were killed or injured due to sectarian violence, see the future of Christians in Iraq as gloomy, desire to emigrate permanently, and are pessimistic with regard to the future of religious tolerance in Iraq, showed higher consciousness of stigma than the others.

- Christians who object to emigration and are optimistic about the future of religious tolerance in Iraq have higher psychological disengagement.

- Christians who have experienced forced displacement and want to emigrate have lower collective self-esteem than those who have not.

- The desire to emigrate is correlated with the following variables: experience of violence, a pessimistic outlook toward the future of religious tolerance, and a gloomy perspective as to the future of Iraq.

Conclusion

The comparative psychological study of two Iraqi Christian communities — the Christians of Baghdad who suffered loss, terror, and continuous threat to their lives and churches, and the Christians of Kurdistan who are relatively more secure — reveal some of the psychological impacts of sectarian violence. Though Christian individuals in both Baghdad and Kurdistan suffer from psychological injury due to the physical and psychological violence that they have experienced during the last nine years, the Christians of Baghdad who experienced more violence are more pessimistic about the future of Iraq and are more in favor of the idea of emigration than the Kurdistan Christians who have experienced less violence.

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This article was translated by TAARII Senior Scholar in Residence Lucine Taminian.

Table 5.3. Questions Regarding Attitude: The Future

	Baghdad Sample (%)			Kurdistan Sample (%)		
	Bright	Gloomy	Unknown	Bright	Gloomy	Unknown
The future of religious tolerance in Iraq	12.0	42.0	46.0	18.5	31.5	50.5
The future of Christians in Iraq	10.0	19.0	71.0	8.0	11.0	81.0

BOOK REVIEWS

Noga Efrati. *Women in Iraq: Past Meets Present*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. xx + 256 pp. \$45.00. ISBN 978-0-231-15814-5.

Reviewed by Orit Baskin, University of Chicago

Noga Efrati's intriguing new book investigates how women became second-class citizens in Hashemite Iraq (1921–1958) and how they came to challenge their marginalization. The first part of the book studies the legal and political mechanisms that cemented the discrimination of Iraqi women by focusing in particular on customary and family law. The second half shifts the focus to the actions and writings of Iraqi women, chronicling the contribution of organizations such as *The Women's Union* and *The League for the Defense of Women's Rights*. Efrati convincingly argues that Iraqi women identified the connections between law, tribe, nation, and gender, and challenged the various factors that curtailed the possibility of equality and social justice for Iraqi women. The book is based on extremely impressive archival work that utilized British documents (Foreign Office, Colonial Office, and India Office), records of sessions of the Iraqi parliament, publications of various Iraqi ministries, private papers of activists and officials, about thirty Arabic periodicals, newspapers, and journals from the Hashemite period, memoirs, and secondary literature in Arabic. In many ways, this study represents the first attempt to provide a comprehensive socio-legal history of gendered relations in Hashemite Iraq.

The book is set within the historiographical tradition that began with the pioneering works of Peter Sluglett and has tended to analyze very critically the policies of the British mandate in Iraq. Efrati persuasively shows that the British occupation of Iraq and the British mandate had considerably worsened the status of Iraqi women. During World War I,

the British created a mechanism titled "Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation," through which they hoped to control Iraq's tribal populations. This mechanism allowed tribal leaders and tribesmen to settle disputes according to their "traditional" customs. Tribal women were severely disadvantaged by these regulations: they could not inherit land; they were handed over as compensation in tribal feuds; and their murders, if based on the suspicion of "violating the family honor," went unpunished. Efrati exposes the ambiguous approach of various British officials to these regulations, establishing that although the British recognized the inhumane elements of this legal system, they upheld it because of their allegiances with tribal and conservative leaders. Interestingly, some Iraqis did try to challenge this system or at least reform it. As early as 1923, the Iraqi Minister of Interior, Naji Suwaidi, wanted to revise the tribal regulations, but was thwarted by High Commissioner Dobbes. Others who made similar efforts were Iraqi Prime Minister 'Abd al-Muhsin Sa'dun, the educator Fadhil al-Jamali, the poet Ma'ruf al-Rusafi (who wondered why a modern state retained pre-Islamic laws within its legal system), and later on women such as the celebrated poetess Nazik al-Mala'ika and the physician Naziha Dulaimi. All were ignored by British officials and conservative Iraqi politicians since both groups feared that a change in the status quo would anger tribal and religious leaders. One of the interesting findings in Efrati's research is that opposition to the tribal regulations was articulated by both Sunnis and Shi'is (although the majority of the tribesmen were

Shi'i), and that the split with regards to women's rights was not sectarian in nature but rather related to one's progressive ideas, education, and position towards tribalism, nationalism, and British intervention in Iraqi affairs. Not only tribal law, but also family law, curbed the liberation of Iraqi women. Efrati explains how difficult it was for women to operate in a society where matters of family law were not tried in civil courts. She notes that British colonial officials assumed an air of superiority with regard to Iraqi Muslims and argued that the Quran was misinterpreted by both Sunnis and Shi'is, yet resisted reform in family law at a time when some Iraqis wished to emulate the secularizing efforts of the Kemalist Turkish Republic. Efrati likewise analyzes a few interesting suggestions concerning the reform of family law made by both Sunnis and Shi'is, and the objections raised by scholars within both religious communities to such reforms.

Another important feature of the book is that it gives readers a sense of the vibrant Hashemite public sphere in which female activists, writers, and intellectuals engaged in an ongoing debate about the meaning of being a progressive Iraqi. Efrati mentions that in 1954, the government dismantled 465 societies and clubs and banned several unions; this number reflects a dynamic society where women's organizations, political parties (the National Democratic Party [DNP], *al-Istiqlal*, and the illegal Iraqi Communist Party [ICP], as well as more conservative parties), salons, and societies shaped public discourses. The entrance of women into the political sphere, however, was a far

more complicated matter, since Iraqi women were not given the right to vote. The British were no great help in this domain either. As Efrati writes, British colonial official and anti-suffragist Gertrude Bell saw herself as equal to men, but was convinced that other women were not. Efrati also writes about the anti-suffrage opposition within the Iraqi male political elite, showing, for example, that in the 1930s, male parliament members were shocked by the mere thought that they would be forced to sit with women in parliament. More progressive parties, such as the NDP, ICP, and *al-Istiqlal*, felt that women were unjustly discriminated against and neglected by the state, and called for an expansion of educational opportunities for women. Yet male members in these parties expressed doubts as to the ability of women, under the present conditions, to participate in the democratic game. In other words, the conversation about the “readiness” of women to understand the mechanisms of the political system restrained their efforts to obtain rights. Nonetheless, Efrati also reveals that from very early on, Iraqi women were demanding the right to vote; as early as 1924, Pauline Hassun’s journal *Leila* advocated for the granting of democratic rights to women.

Writing about the activists’ efforts to obtain the right to vote, abolish the tribal legal system, and gain more-liberal personal-status laws, Efrati channels very successfully the voices of Iraqi women. Not only women, but also men lent their support to the goal of empowering women: the classical poets Jamil Sidqi al-Zahawi and Ma’ruf al-Rusafi, the Shi’i *mujtahid* Husain al-Na’ini, the Christian intellectual Rufa’il Butti, and the educators Sati al-Husri and Fadhil al-Jamali all decried the status of women in Hashemite Iraq. Thus, as in her chapter about law, Efrati shows that those sympathetic to the women’s

cause came from sectors internal and external to the government and upheld different religious beliefs. The struggle reached its zenith in the 1940s and the 1950s thanks to the various endeavors of women activists. Their story is told through the activities of two outstanding women, Sabiha al-Sheikh Da’ud and Naziha al-Dulaimi. The events of the early 1940s, especially the meeting of Arab women in the Cairo Women’s Conference (1944), marked a new stage in the demands of women. Efrati describes how Dulaimi, a physician and communist, and a key figure in the Leftist female movement, traveled from Baghdad to Sulimaniya, Karbala, and Kufa where she observed various aspects of women’s lives (this experience parallels that of many of her male colleagues, who became familiar with rural and tribal Iraq as engineers, teachers, and clerks stationed in the provinces). Efrati similarly demonstrates how urban women put together events in the public sphere to promote their agenda, such as organizing the Week of Women’s Rights (in October 1953), during which speeches, especially by Nazik al-Mala’ika, galvanized Iraqi women. In fact, the book illustrates that the female activism of the 1940s and 1950s is the appropriate context for understanding the highly progressive family law and gendered policies that were formulated under the regime of ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim (1958–1963).

The end of Efrati’s book is nothing short of tragic. The epilogue constitutes a sharp critique of certain American policies in Iraq with respect to women, and implicitly criticizes the attempts of historians-turned-apologists to represent such policies as improving women’s lives. Titling the subsections of the chapter “re-tribalization” and “re-subordination,” and relying on the works of Najde al-Ali, Nicola Pratt, and Juan Cole, Efrati confirms that the reliance on tribal and religious leaders

in order to maintain order after 2003 led to the convening of tribal courts, the sanctioning of coercive practices pertaining to women, and the passing of Regulation 137 (December 2003), which stipulated that the handling of matters related to personal law should be based on religious principles. These policies, Efrati argues, are contradictory to the wishes of women activists in the present and those of the “founding mothers” of the struggle for equality and justice in the past.

The book, as I have noted, is a highly significant contribution to the field of Iraqi Studies. However, I would like to add a few dimensions that could have been expanded in this study. While Efrati illustrates that even urban women suffered from the tribalization of gender relations, more attention to the different *kinds* of Iraqi women would have been helpful. Although the victims of the tribal-patriarchal system were often rural women, the women who took up their cause often came from the urban upper and middle classes; many were Baghdadi or active in Baghdadi circles. Within the urban centers of Baghdad and Basra there were great differentiations between different neighborhoods and classes, as far as gender relations were concerned. Iraqi women were for the most part housewives, yet in the 1940s more entered the labor force, working as teachers, clerks, and nurses. Poorer women also worked in factories or in their homes (as seamstresses, for example), and on the margins of society we find the washers, servants, cleaners, as well as singers, dancers, and prostitutes. This socioeconomic diversity gave birth to various gendered representations. With respect to prostitutes, for instance, many female activists bemoaned the existence of this profession, noting that women were forced to work in such a horrid profession because of the impossible conditions in Iraq that did

not allow poor women to find a decent livelihood. Other women, however, attacked prostitutes and dancers as part of campaigns against immorality and for the sanctity of the family. Many women, moreover, did not know how to read and write, and thus the effects of the publications in the women's press went largely unnoticed as far as they were concerned. While the efforts for women's liberation were often anti-sectarian and included Sunnis, Shi'is, Christians, and until 1951, Jews, it is not the case that the religious affiliations of these women were of no import. Someone like Bint al-Huda framed her gendered demands in a much different way than did Naziha Dulaimi. One of the fascinating characteristics of 1940s Iraq is that individuals of the middle classes (whether males or females) were exposed to many sorts of women: the members of one's family, the teachers in girls' schools, the washers and cleaners one saw in houses and in shops, the singers heard on the radio or seen in theater and in clubs, the images of women that decorated commercials for Rozdi Bek or Palmolive soap in the newspapers, the heroines in British, American, Egyptian, and Indian films,

the wives of officials who sometimes spoke publicly (such as Sara al-Jamali, whose activities Efrati mentions), as well as the female characters of the fictional universes created by writers, poets, and poetesses. And these young Iraqis, males and females alike, needed to make sense of all these very conflicting images, and the many women they met, saw, or befriended.

Another significant venue worth exploring is the effects of education on women's lives. Women's activities in their elementary, middle, and high schools, their interactions with their female teachers, the school newspapers in which they wrote, and the politics to which they were exposed in schools and colleges were vital to their socialization and their politicization. Elite women who attended bilingual schools also read English and French publications. The women's families likewise shaped their self-perceptions. Educated middle-class women whose family members were activists (politicians, Ba'thists, communists, and so on) often adopted the politics of their relatives. Similarly, women traveled with their husbands, and thus elite women got a chance to live in more-liberated spaces (such as Istanbul in the late Ottoman

period or New York in the 1940s) or to read journals, novels, and stories from Europe, America, Egypt, Lebanon, and Turkey, which often espoused ideas of gender equality.

Nonetheless, Efrati's book is a remarkable study that deserves much praise, as well as a plea to respect the achievements of Iraqi women. In the early 1920s, Sabiha al-Shekih Da'ud nearly caused a ministerial crisis when she appeared, unveiled and reciting poetry, during a festival called Suq 'Ukaz; she was eight years old at the time. In 1936, she was the first woman to enter law school, the only one among 180 male students. When we read Efrati's book we realize how much has changed in Iraq since that time and how perilous, and tragic, the situation would be if we return to those early days when the desire of a young woman to perform, study, and develop was considered contradictory to ethics and morals.

The next book reviewed in this series on Iraqi women will be *What Kind of Liberation?: Women and the Occupation of Iraq*, by Nadje Al-Ali and Nicola Pratt.

Bassam Yousif. *Human Development in Iraq: 1950–1990*. Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Economies, London and New York: Routledge, 2012. 211 pp. \$125 (hardcover). ISBN 978-0415-78263-0.

Reviewed by Joseph Sassoon, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS), Georgetown University

Bassam Yousif's book is the study of development in Iraq from 1950 to 1990, "viewed through the lens of a human development theory," as the author believes that it is the best method to assess Iraq's development (p. 1). The book is well researched. With the exception of a few references of statistics and economic indicators, the absence of Arabic and, in particular, Iraqi economic sources is somewhat striking. There is no

doubt that in coming to analyze the country's growth through the prism of human development (consumption, income distribution, capital formation, education, housing, health, position of women, and finally, human rights), the lack of reliable statistics in both Arabic and English sources presents a major hindrance. Yet Yousif managed to garner an incredible amount of statistics and tables to prove his arguments. In fact, the reader is sometimes lost

in the avalanche of these statistics to the extent that it becomes difficult to distinguish the forest for the trees. This should not take away from the fact that each chapter is well arranged and clearly outlined, and, in my opinion, the book is an important contribution to the study of Iraq's economy, particularly its human development side.

The first chapter puts Iraq's development in a theoretical context of human development; the second chapter

is a historical chapter presenting the social and economic development of Iraq between 1920 and 1990; the third chapter focuses on economic growth, consumption, income distribution, and capital formation from the 1950s until 1990; the fourth chapter deals with education and the political economy of education; the fifth chapter concentrates on housing, nutrition, and health; chapter six analyzes the position of women and their access to education, public employment, and their relation with the state; and, finally, chapter seven tackles the issue of human rights and political reforms.

The book makes it abundantly clear that the 1970s was a golden decade for Iraq on all fronts of human development. For instance, life expectancy increased from 53 years in 1965–70 to 61.4 in 1975–80, and real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita doubled between 1970 and 1979. By using ample statistics, the author shows the changes that took place in the 1980s during the Iran–Iraq War (by the late 1980s, GDP per capita reversed to the 1975 level), and proves that had the growth of the 1970s continued, Iraq would have achieved substantial development. It would have been beneficial to the reader had the author

managed to continue his work until the fall of Saddam Hussein and the Ba‘th Party so we could have learned better how human development fared in the 1990s. For example, the important aspect of education and the position of women would have been enriched by exploring the drastic changes in the status of women as a result of *hamlat al-‘iman* (the faith campaign) that, at least publically, emphasized the Ba‘th’s commitment to religion and tradition.

In the less statistical chapters, there are many interesting conclusions: the Ba‘th regime did make a serious attempt to diversify the economy, but their efforts were interrupted by the war in the 1980s. Another conclusion is that women in Iraq achieved rapid advancement that was “compatible with the objectives of development and the monopolization of the political space” (p. 127). This progress did not lead, however, to increased freedom of action by women vis-à-vis the state. Yousif argues that while material progress was achieved, by 1990 there was still no real independent voice for women and that was “not the result of a bias against women,” but part of the regime’s attempt to control all aspects of life in Iraq. In his opinion, “the

Ba‘th was remarkably egalitarian” in its dealings with the different sectors of the population, given its emphasis on loyalty to the regime. Yousif concludes that Iraq’s authoritarianism did not promote development and shows how the state delayed the implementation of the literacy campaign, which targeted about 2.2 million illiterates in the age group 15–45 and within which females constituted almost two-thirds, until the regime was sure that it could control the content of the education courses. He also underlines how human rights deteriorated during the Ba‘th era (the best period, relatively speaking, was under ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim in 1958–63), and rightly argues that dictatorship in Iraq not only slowed its progress, but contributed to its stagnation and reversal.

For anyone interested in the different aspects of human development in Iraq or in making comparisons with other Arab and developing countries for the important sectors of education, health, and nutrition, this book will serve as an important tool. Given the Arab revolutions and the emphasis on political reforms, this text will also be of interest to those attempting to analyze the correlation between human rights and human development.

Ida Donges Staudt. *Living in Romantic Baghdad: An American Memoir of Teaching and Travel in Iraq, 1924–1947*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2011. xxiv + 240pp. \$29.95 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-8156-0994-0.

Reviewed by Magnus T. Bernhardsson, Department of History, Williams College

When the American missionary and educator Ida Staudt arrived in Iraq in 1924, she observed that whatever she surveyed in Baghdad “was wondrously different from what I had been accustomed to. It was a world not yet influenced, or just slightly touched by the West ... At once, I knew I would like it and I would happily adjust myself to it.”

Judging from her own memoirs, *Living In Romantic Baghdad*, published by Syracuse University Press and edited by John Joseph, Staudt did more than that during her twenty-three years in Baghdad. Staudt, along with her husband Calvin, established The American School for Boys in Baghdad and embraced the country and its peoples.

Like many such memoirs, *Romantic Baghdad* contains familiar tropes and has all the pros and cons of an autobiography. There is a lot in this book that has been told many times before and does not come as a surprise. This is not a systematic academic overview of the culture and society of early Hashemite Iraq. It is a nostalgic and glorified depiction of the couple’s

time there. It is a sweet book that does not offer much of significance and has major limitations. In its informal style, it chronicles the diversity of Iraq and the city and landscapes which are now largely gone. *Living in Romantic Baghdad* is not as thorough, thoughtful, and nuanced as Elizabeth Fernea's *Guests of the Sheikh*, but could be seen as an interesting counter to it. Staudt's book is primarily about urban life and about an earlier period. It describes a dynamic society that is changing and grappling with modernity. As Staudt reflects in her chapter on Baghdad, during her time there the "Baghdad of yesterday and the Baghdad of today ... were two different cities" (p. 42). Indeed, the concept of change is like a red thread throughout the book. Many of the changes that Staudt observed she felt were not for the better.

The book is organized chronologically and thematically. After describing the couple's first weeks in Iraq and their work at the school, it devotes chapters to daily life, weddings, and holidays. It recounts the various trips they took around the country, such as to the Kurdish areas and the Shi'a holy cities, and has nice accounts of various Baghdadi neighborhoods. It also has chapters on political and economic trends, such as the role of oil and the 1941 coup. It does not offer anything new or

noteworthy on these broader trends, but has some helpful information about some aspects of daily life in Iraq.

The Staudts had been sent to Iraq by United Missions of Mesopotamia to establish a school for boys. When they arrived in Iraq, however, they were told by the Ministry of Education that the newly formed government had no laws for the regulation and supervision of foreign schools, so they could not start their operations. However, what they could do was to enter under an old Ottoman permit that allowed Protestants to operate schools for girls. So the Staudts immediately opened a small school for girls in 1924 and twenty Iraqi girls of different backgrounds enrolled that fall. That school was short lived because within a year, when they received a permit to open up a boys' school, the Staudts closed down the girls' school. The boys' school was located in Sinak. Staudt describes an ecumenical atmosphere in the school with students from all different economic and ethnic backgrounds. She offers us some glimpses of life in the school, but very little of substance.

Because of the book's informal and non-academic style, the best chapters involve descriptions of everyday life, especially her portrayals of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim weddings (Chapter 7) and the visits to various

archaeological or historic sites. The book reveals Staudt's great appreciation of the natural beauty of Iraq and Chapter 13 on "Exploring Scenic Iraq" is a love letter to the Iraqi countryside and its different peoples. She calls Iraq a "shrine of nature" (p. 156) and favorably compares the mountains around Sulaf and Amadiyah to the Swiss Alps. She was also impressed by many Iraqis showing great fondness for King Faysal I and movingly describes his funeral. She states that with his death in 1933, the first chapter of Iraqi history came to a close.

The Staudts had to leave Iraq just after World War II and Ida Staudt wrote these memoirs just before she passed away in 1952. The Staudts undoubtedly did some impressive work with their school and probably had a positive impact on a number of Iraqi boys. This book will be of interest to those who are seeking a nostalgic, non-academic depiction of early Hashemite Iraq. It offers very little by way of new evidence, nor does it present an interesting argument. It is more like a long personal letter that is reflective, but not analytical or critical. But, it does highlight the various dimensions of a changing Iraq and a foreigner's view of its peoples. The book has some interesting observations, but very little that is significant to an academic audience.

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AN EFFORT TO HELP PRESERVE IRAQ'S INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

JIM MILLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SCHOLAR RESCUE FUND,
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION*

The year is 2006. You are an assistant professor of political science at the University of Baghdad. With your twenty years of experience teaching in Iraq's universities and dozens of publications in peer-reviewed journals, you are currently pursuing promotion to a full professorship. Then, just before the academic year breaks for the summer, a list containing the names of 600 Iraqi professors targeted for assassination is posted on the Internet. Your name is one of them.

When security concerns in Iraq reached unprecedented levels, such stories were not uncommon among academics, as the campaign to dismantle Iraq's intellectual heritage raged. As a result, the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF) program began receiving hundreds of requests for assistance from Iraqi professors and researchers describing daily threats to their lives in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, and at many major universities across the country.

Since its founding in 2002, IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund has worked to support persecuted academics around the world by awarding fellowships to scholars suffering censorship, harassment, imprisonment, and threat of elimination — to name a few examples

— in their home countries. However, as the targeting of intellectuals in Iraq rose to crisis levels, the Scholar Rescue Fund needed a new mechanism to respond quickly. The Institute therefore launched the Scholar Rescue Fund Iraq Scholar Rescue Project in 2007 with generous funding from both the private and public sectors, most notably the U.S. Department of State, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Richard Lousbery Foundation. The Scholar Rescue Fund since awarded fellowships to more than 265 Iraqi scholars, allowing them to resume their teaching and research in safety.

The Project's core work is to arrange for and fund temporary academic positions for threatened Iraqi scholars (in any discipline) at hosting institutions in secure locations, providing an academic safe-haven for the fellows to continue their scholarly work. While partnering universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher learning all over the world — including many of TAARII's institutional members — have generously opened their institutions to Scholar Rescue Fund Iraqi scholars, there has been a particular focus on engaging partners in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region. More than sixty institutions within MENA have hosted scholars, allowing many to assume teaching and research positions close to Iraq. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been the Project's leading host country, providing temporary sanctuary to 40% of Scholar Rescue Fund Iraq fellows (the U.S. and U.K. follow).

Scholar Rescue Fund scholars have undertaken groundbreaking research, presented at academic conferences, filed patents, lectured to thousands of students, and published while

undertaking the fellowship. These academics have also contributed to the growth of their host universities by training staff and students, and establishing new departments and research laboratories. One scholar, a specialist in electrical engineering with thirty-five years of post-doctoral research and teaching experience, fled Iraq after receiving repeated death threats and demands for money from militants. The Scholar Rescue Fund was able to arrange a visiting professor position for the scholar at a newly established college of engineering within a private university in Jordan. While there, the scholar assisted faculty members in establishing a program of study. He designed courses on electric circuits and control systems and helped to establish departmental laboratories, including identifying and ordering the necessary equipment. In a country like Jordan, which has just over thirty universities, 130 fully funded year-long placements of qualified faculty members over five years is not insignificant.

As a consequence of the departure of a sizeable portion of Iraq's professoriate due to large-scale targeting, the issue of brain drain understandably arises. Through monitoring and evaluation of program participants, we have found that Iraqi scholars have, indeed, maintained their academic connections to Iraqi students and faculty colleagues through a variety of methods during their fellowships. To enhance these connections on a broader scale, the Scholar Rescue Fund established a distance-learning component called the "Iraq Scholar Lecture Series." The program captures academic lectures by Scholar Rescue Fund Iraqi scholars in the diaspora for distribution and presentation — in DVD format or via live feed — at



Figure 6.1. Scholar Rescue Fund Iraq Scholar Rescue Project fellow at work in a microbiology lab at the University of Insubria, Italy. (Photo credit: IIE SRF)



Figure 6.2. Scholar Rescue Fund Iraq Scholar Rescue Project distance education lecture at al-Anbar University. (Photo credit: IIE SRF)

universities throughout Iraq. To date, over 150 much-needed lectures in fields as diverse as pediatrics, environmental biotechnology, and trauma psychology have been made available to faculty and students at more than twenty Iraqi public and private universities. University presidents and deans alike have remarked on the impact the program has had by exposing students to the country's best academic minds, no matter their geographic location. Pictured in Figure 6.2 is a specialist in English literature giving a lecture on "Arabian Nights in the West" to students at the Women's College of Education of al-Anbar University in western Iraq. Although the scholar is now based in the U.S., this classroom screening reached ninety Iraqi students and faculty colleagues.

As the Iraq Scholar Rescue Project developed, it became clear that security concerns are not the only challenge facing scholars in Iraq. The impact of the years of Sanctions that restricted access to new technologies, pedagogies, and learning tools crucial to higher education in today's world are still acutely felt. To address these challenges, the Scholar Rescue Fund has made a range of additional benefits available to fellowship recipients to help in their adjustment

to the host country and to prepare them for their scholarly work beyond the fellowship term. Generous donors have made it possible to extend additional grants to scholars seeking professional skills training, language training, membership in academic associations, and assistance with publishing costs. Partnerships with local training programs in the scholars' host countries have enhanced these benefits by tailoring trainings to the particular needs of Iraqi scholars.

Experience from the first years of the Project has enabled the Scholar Rescue Fund to understand the tangible needs of Iraqi scholars before, during, and after the fellowship. To help these efforts, in 2009 SRF began organizing tailored training workshops for Iraqi scholars. The first workshops took place in Amman, Jordan, where scholars coming from all over the MENA region convened. The Scholar Rescue Fund partnered with international and local institutions such as the British Council, Columbia University, TAARII, and the New York Institute of Technology-Amman to organize specialized trainings including English language instruction for academic purposes, workshops on CV writing and research proposal writing, and training on the use of technological tools to advance learning. Members of the Royal Family in Jordan have been extremely supportive of these efforts, offering academic venues and addressing workshop participants on

the importance of Iraq's rich tradition of higher education (fig. 6.3).

In 2011, these workshops expanded into a series of training conferences held in Erbil, Iraq. Bringing together participants from Iraqi universities and higher education ministries, Scholar Rescue Fund fellowship recipients, and other international education experts, the conferences cover issues of broad interest to the higher education community. Topics range from education quality assurance and accreditation of universities to building institutional linkages to exploring modern teaching methodologies.

Holding academic events in Iraq is reflective of the changing tides of the Iraq Scholar Rescue Project since its inception. While some scholars continue to face specific threats in various areas of Iraq and seek Scholar Rescue Fund support to find safe academic environments to pursue their work, others are able to return to their country to contribute to a globally engaged higher education community. As of this writing, more than 40% of scholars completing the fellowship have returned to Iraq either to resume their previous academic positions or take up new posts. With changing dynamics in the country, IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund continues to operate a multi-phase program to foster opportunities for preserving and



Figure 6.3. HRH Prince Raad bin Zeid addressing Iraqi scholars at an IIE SRF workshop in Amman, Jordan. (Photo credit: IIE SRF)

revitalizing Iraq's higher education and scientific sectors.

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The Institute of International Education is a world leader in the international exchange of people and ideas. An independent, not-for-profit organization founded in 1919, IIE has a network of 18 offices worldwide and over 1,000 member institutions. IIE designs and implements programs of study and training for students, educators, young professionals and trainees from all sectors with funding from government agencies, foundations, and corporations.

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About the Scholar Rescue Fund

In 2002, IIE launched the Scholar Rescue Fund to provide fellowships for scholars threatened in their home countries. To date, 715 major academic fellowships have been awarded to 488 scholars from 48 countries. These fellowships support temporary academic positions at safe universities and colleges anywhere in the world.

Nearly 300 academic institutions in 40 countries have partnered with the Scholar Rescue Fund by providing safe-haven academic homes for the program's recipients. Scholars contribute to their host universities through teaching, research, lectures and other activities. In return, host universities provide professional guidance and financial and in-kind support. Scholars from any country may qualify. For more information, please visit the website: www.scholarrescuefund.org.

** Special thanks to Celeste Riendeau, IIE SRF Iraq Project Program Officer, for her important contributions to this article.*

THE ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENT OF SAMARRA REVISITED: INITIAL REMARKS AND QUESTIONS

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The architectural ornament of Samarra, a palace-city founded by the caliph al-Mu'tasim in A.D. 836, has played an important role in the historiography of Islamic art since the initial publications of the finds from the site.¹ For many art historians, the abstract styles of carving employed in the city's palaces and private houses evidenced the birth of a new set of aesthetic values that they associated with Islam's prohibition of images (fig. 7.1). Despite its canonical status, however, there are still gaps in our understanding of this material. Since art historical studies have focused largely on establishing stylistic classifications, little attention has been paid to where the fragments housed in museum collections today originally appeared in buildings. Moreover, groups of material that fell outside the stylistic parameters established in the early scholarship were ignored altogether. My dissertation seeks to shed light on the contexts in which the architectural ornament of

Samarra originally appeared and was experienced through a study of the material excavated from the city's main palace, the Dar al-Khilafa.² In its aim to incorporate archaeological and social contexts into the study of Samarra's ornament, my project contributes to a growing body of scholarship that explores the assemblage with new approaches.³

Last summer with a U.S. research fellowship from TAARII, I began my dissertation research by surveying the architectural ornament from Samarra's Dar al-Khilafa excavated by Ernst Herzfeld now housed in London and Berlin, while consulting notes on findspots and archaeological context in the Herzfeld archives housed in Washington, D.C.⁴ The

following is a brief overview of some initial observations and questions raised by this intriguing assemblage.⁵



Figure 7.1. Detail of design from a carved stucco panel excavated from Samarra's Dar al-Khilafa Palace. Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, I. 3507. (Photo credit: Matt Saba)



Figure 7.2. Pieces of carved marble excavated from the Dar al-Khilafa. Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Sam I. 101 and 102. (Photo credit: Matt Saba)

My first remark has to do with the materials used to decorate architectural surfaces throughout the palace. While the carved stucco panels excavated by Herzfeld were among the most important forms of ornament, they have perhaps been emphasized in art historical scholarship at the expense of other media.⁶ A glance at the fragments from the main palace housed in London and Berlin shows that a visitor walking through its rooms would have not only seen carved and painted stucco, but a great deal of carved and painted wood, as well as a range of ceramic and glass tiles in many colors on its walls and floors. Looking across the stylistically and materially diverse assemblage reminds us how much we still have to unravel about the ornament of Samarra.

Marble must have played a particularly important role in this palace's ornament program (fig. 7.2). The array of marble recorded by Herzfeld was impressive, although some of the material he catalogued has since gone missing. Add to this the consideration that much of the marble would have been removed in the medieval period to be reused elsewhere (as is often the case with precious materials), and we can assume the original amount used in the palace to have been substantial. Herzfeld not only found fragments of carved

marble panels, but also unearthed a number of shaped, colorful pieces to be used in either *opus sectile* compositions or as wall paneling. Since this type of ornamentation had no place in Herzfeld's taxonomy of style, they have long gone unmentioned. How the various forms of marble ornament

were employed and to what extent the technique of their installation relates to practices known from sites predating Samarra is an interesting question raised by this observation that I hope to address further in my dissertation.

My second observation has to do with the stylistic and thematic correspondences between different media evident in the assemblage of ornament from the palace. It is known through Herzfeld's publications that the so-called "Beveled Style" (as seen in fig. 7.1) was used to decorate stucco, marble, and wood and was even approximated in two dimensions through paint. On a more general level, different media were worked to achieve similar surface effects. Again, marble provides an interesting example: not only did the palace contain shaped, colorful pieces of marble used as wall and floor cladding, but Herzfeld found ceramic tiles whose stippled decoration recalls the surface of polished stone, cut into shapes that recall marble panels (fig. 7.3). Fragments of wall paintings housed in London and Berlin that may have once depicted marble columns also show similar stippling patterns (fig. 7.4).⁷ Viewing the fragments in person confirmed

the great extent to which applied color and gold leaf were used on wood, perhaps to endow the otherwise matte material with sheen similar to the glass and stone employed in the same spaces. Such visual correspondences suggest a significant level of planning by those who decorated the palace, an idea also supported by Herzfeld's unpublished notes, which describe the placement of morphologically related patterns across series of connected rooms. A question for further research is to what extent the surface claddings in certain sections of the palace were intended to function as a cohesive program.

Finally, surveying the architectural ornament from Samarra housed in several collections has not only raised questions about Abbasid-period building conventions, but also shed light on the history and evolution of our own curatorial practices during the twentieth century. It became quickly apparent that fragments known by Herzfeld to have come from the same archaeological contexts were divided between collections rather than held together. This was evident, for example, in the dispersal of the fragments of



Figure 7.3. Glazed tile with stippling pattern excavated from the Dar al-Khilafa. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, C.620-1922. (Photo credit: Matt Saba)

wall paintings, where pieces that clearly joined were split up so that half of a frieze went to one museum and the other half went elsewhere. Such decisions suggest that the desire to offer snapshots of a large array of styles and material was a priority that outweighed the desire to preserve the context of excavated materials, a value perhaps more common in museum collections today.⁸ The effect of changing methods of preservation and display is of great significance to the manner in which groups of material such as the Samarra assemblage have been interpreted throughout their afterlives in museums.

¹ Important early publications of the ornament of Samarra include Henri Viollet, "Fouilles à Samara en Mésopotamie. Un palais musulman du IX^e siècle," *Mémoires présentés à l'Académie des Inscriptions et des Belles-Lettres* 12 (1911): 685–717; Ernst Herzfeld, *Der Wandschmuck der Bauten von Samarra und seine Ornamentik* (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1923); and Iraq Directorate-General of Antiquities, *Hafriyyāt Sāmarrā' 1936–1939*, 2 vols. (Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-Hukūmah, 1940).

² For a discussion of the plan of this palace,

see Alastair Northedge, *The Historical Topography of Samarra* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 2005), 123–48.

³ See especially the forthcoming proceedings from the Seventh Colloquium of the Ernst-Herzfeld-Gesellschaft in Berlin, titled *Hundert Jahre Grabungen in Samarra*, which will be published in Volume 4 of *Beiträge zur Islamischen Kunst und Archäologie*.

⁴ The Herzfeld archive at the Smithsonian Institution has been digitized and is available online at www.asia.si.edu/research/archivesSamarra.asp.

⁵ In addition to the support of TAARII, a number of people helped to facilitate my research. I would especially like to thank Ladan Akbarnia, Fahmida Suleman and Seth Priestman at the British Museum, Mariam Rosser-Owen at the V&A, and Julia Gonnella, Stefan Weber, Thomas Tunsch and Jens Kröger at the Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin. Alastair Northedge provided photographs and insights on several occasions.

⁶ An issue raised by Julia Gonnella in her forthcoming paper, "The Stucco of



Figure 7.4. Fragment of a wall painting with possible stippling pattern. London, British Museum. OA+.10900. (Photo credit: Trustees of the British Museum)

Samarra: a Reassessment," to appear in the proceedings of the fourth biennial Hamad ibn Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art.

⁷ The wall paintings of Samarra will be treated in depth by Fatma Dahmani in her doctoral dissertation.

⁸ On the history of the dispersal of Samarra material in London especially, see Magnus T. Bernhardsson, *Reclaiming a Plundered Past: Archaeology and Nation Building in Modern Iraq* (Austin: University of Texas, 2005), 73–84.

RESITUATING ISLAMISTS: MUHAMMAD BAQIR AL-SADR AND THE 1958 REVOLUTION

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When conducting research for my recent master's thesis, I was struck by the similarities in tone, thematic content, and goals in the writings of the Iraqi Shi'i intellectual Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and the secular revolutionaries who led or contested the 1958 Revolution in Iraq. Narratives of community, progress, and statehood had clearly "hybridized" between these two groups.¹ However, I struggled to find either secondary material integrating early Iraqi Islamists into the historiography of Iraq or a theoretical framework considering Islamists. Scholars of the modern

Arab Middle East have tended to treat Islamism as a pathology in the region. The emergence and predominance of Islamists' sympathies are seen as a symptom of the failure of secular, modern, hegemonic projects.

My research underscored that Islamist groups should not be considered a pathological phenomenon. Iraqi Islamists emerged and participated in the tumultuous post-colonial decade of the 1950s. Because their prescriptions for society were informed by the needs and concerns of their contemporaries and have become part of both the

secular and religious fabric of the region, distinguishing between the "secular" and "religious" is not useful when considering Islamists. In this article, I highlight the hybrid nature of a particular Islamist in a particular historical context. Just as contemporary observers can trace the impact of leftist, nationalist, pan-Arab and other ideological prescriptions from the transformational years of the revolution to post-2003 Iraq, my research indicates we can find Islamist assumptions forged during the revolution that still deeply influence contemporary Iraqi society.

The 1958 Revolution and the “Intense Struggle for Hegemony”

“The vibrant, pluralistic public spheres”² that had emerged under the Hashemite Monarchy erupted, in the words of General ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim, into the “exploding of the volcanoes of revolution.”³ Qasim’s words remain an apt metaphor: Iraqi society did explode, in both a cultural efflorescence and spasms of internecine violence. The 1958 Revolution, where a military-led coup overthrew the British-installed Hashemite Monarchy, has been viewed as a disappointment. Its great potential ended with displays of extremism, inter-communal violence, a vulgar cult of personality centered on the “sole leader” Qasim, and a subsequent bloody coup in 1963 where Qasim and hundreds of communists and others were killed. Because of these disappointing events, the revolution has been seen as a failure of the moderates. The willingness of reformers to set aside democratic processes in favor of social justice prepared Iraq for future authoritarian governments, the breakdown of civil society, and the rise of “neo-tribalism” in Iraq.

Religious sentiments are almost completely ignored in the historiography of the revolution. In the early histories, religion, and Shi‘ism in particular, exists only as a dangerous well of sectarianism causing political instability. To varying degrees, all agree with Hanna Batatu in asserting that any “Islamic assumptions” that the young radicals may have held, are childish beliefs to be “dissipated.”⁴ Despite the centrality of religious structures to any sort of cultural account, religious actors are still completely missing in recent works, and are often only examined as proof of the failings of the increasingly authoritarian — but modern — state.⁵ These works focus on “hegemonic projects”⁶ or “an intense struggle for cultural hegemony”⁷ led by leftist intellectuals (*muthaqqafīn*)⁸ but ultimately defeated by the pan-Arabists

who were better able to deploy violence and a more coherent “historical memory.” In all cases, scholars view religion as something set apart from the modern projects of the secular state and its secular admirers and detractors. Further clouding understanding is the difficulty scholars have distinguishing between reactionary conservatism and radical, world-shaping ideologies (i.e., intense struggles for hegemony) proffered by Islamists who were quite active in this time frame.

Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and the Revolutionary Milieu of 1958

Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was an Iraqi firmly placed in the radical, revolutionary milieu. His personal background mirrors the poverty, social displacement, and intellectual concerns of his generation.⁹ In my research, I closely read three main texts from the revolution era — *Fadāk fī al-Tārīkh* (*Fadak in History*, 1955), *Falsafatunā* (*Our Philosophy*, 1959), *Iqtisadunā* (*Our Economy*, 1961)¹⁰ — and I compared these to the rhetoric of Qasim’s regime to conclude that intellectuals advancing a hegemonic project in Iraq heavily focused on social justice in order to develop a strong, independent political community. In this article, I briefly look to al-Sadr’s conception of social justice to highlight a particularly compelling node of hybridization between the secular revolutionaries and Islamists.

A powerful demand for social justice grew out of the desire for freedom from colonial domination and the creation of an authentic political community. The popularity of the revolution stemmed in no small part from the promises of relief from poverty and inequality. By hybridizing communist promises for social justice with pan-Arab and Iraqi visions of nationalism, Qasim initiated nationalization of the oil industry, land reform, urban renewal, and jobs programs that would become hallmarks of later regimes, and the basis of the rentier state.

These programs promised freedom from foreign control by offering an indigenous response to social pressures.

Conservative, reactionary religious actors, such as the mainstream ‘ulema, responded negatively to these radical policies. Muhsin al-Hakim, the supreme jurist in Najaf, argued passionately against the communist program and in defense of property rights from nationalization despite his overall political quietism. His was a deeply conservative response that was ignored or rejected by the radical revolutionaries, and helped solidify in the minds of many the basic obscurantism of senior religious leadership.

When compared to the religious leadership in Najaf, al-Sadr’s forceful argument for an Islamist program of social justice shares far more in common with his radical, secular counterparts than his conservative co-religionists. He deviated from his contemporaries, however, in his deep concern for the cost to freedom inherent in the promise of social justice. His first comments on the matter emerge in *Fadāk fī al-Tārīkh*. Using the story of Fatima’s lost inheritance as a barely veiled analogy to contemporary times, al-Sadr claimed that the early riff in the Islamic community was caused by a rapacious aristocracy using “an echo of nationalization, *as we say today*, of her inheritance as a pretext to seize it.”¹¹ The high policies of an unjust “ruling party” were to use nationalization to consolidate their rule and despoil the wealth of potential political rivals such as Ali. Much like Qasim’s ubiquitous distinction between sincere communists, nationalists, Kurds, Muslims, and Christians versus the traitorous quislings in service of the colonizers, al-Sadr used a foreign word, “aristocracy,” to describe a domestic enemy. While al-Sadr was concerned here with protecting property rights, it was out of a concern for what the communist program would mean for freedom in Iraq. His rejection

of nationalization was followed up in later works by a detailed attempt to uncover an Islamic program of social justice that avoids strictures on freedom.

Sensitive to the danger of charges of reactionism that could be as damaging as charges of inauthenticity, al-Sadr departed from his fellow *'ulema* when seeking to find a justification for state infringement on private property. Instead of articulating or defending absolute property rights, as some of the *'ulema* had done, al-Sadr constructed a system based on absolute ownership of the fruits of one's labor (offering a clear nod to communist concerns), while the state retains the ultimate say over the fate of undeveloped properties.¹² In distancing himself from efforts made by some leading members of the *'ulema* to align Islam with capitalism, al-Sadr sought to appeal to those who may find the communist program appealing while highlighting the uniqueness of Islam. In al-Sadr's argument, capitalism unfettered and led by the "lords of modern industry" threatened freedom as much as communist programs of nationalization.¹³

For al-Sadr, the *sharī'ah* (Islamic law), and more importantly, *'ijtihād* (innovative, as opposed to slavish, interpretation of Islamic law), provides an "organic structure" (*al-tarkīb al-'uḍwī*)¹⁴ that emerges from a deep historical and cultural reservoir authentic to his community. This is a very particular use of "Islam." It is not, in this imagining, quietist, other-worldly, or reactionary: "the benefit that lies at the heart of Islam is the method and the notion — that is, the rational method of thinking and the theological notion of the world."¹⁵ Islam in this formulation is a worldview and a rational method that has world-shaping consequences, and reflects the hybrid nature of both al-Sadr's thinking and his message. Knowing he was speaking to an audience who found notions of scientific research (*al-baḥṭh al-'alimī*) potentially more influential than the dry, pedantic scholarship traditionally associated with the "turbaned ones" from Najaf, al-Sadr

offered a rational methodology with deep Islamic roots. Al-Sadr distanced himself both from colonialist ideologies, methods, and patterns of thoughts that he found endemic to the secular contemporaries, as well as the conservative *'ulema* who found themselves losing influence in the new, radical, era.

Conclusion

Scholars have recognized the seminal importance of the 1958 Revolution. Yet, it has been studied, at best, in an uneven manner. As Eric Davis has noted, in their narratives of the revolution, scholars and activists attempt to "influence the type of political community [they] normatively desire in contemporary Iraq." Therefore, observers construct "counterfactual" histories, bemoan the surprising turn to authoritarianism and militarism by the moderates and the left, or simply ignore evidence or arguments that cast their favored faction in a less than positive light.¹⁶ In my attempt to include al-Sadr in discussions of the revolution, I highlight that the internal dynamics of the revolution reshaped popular consciousness, particularly of notions of community, statehood, modernity, and progress. Under the tensions of this popular reimagining of community, Islamists groups emerged alongside and in competition with secular elements. These voices, both religious and secular, offered "conceptual links created between state and civil society" in Iraq¹⁷ that continue to shape the manner in which contemporary Iraqis perceive their position in relationship to one another, and to the state.

¹ I use the term "hybridization" in the sense used by Orit Bashkin in her recent article showing the ways in which leftists and nationalists hybridized their ideologies and rhetoric during the revolution. Orit Bashkin, "Hybrid Nationalisms: Watani and Qawmi Visions in Iraq under 'Abd Al-Karim Qasim, 1958-61," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011).

² Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and*

Culture in Hashemite Iraq (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 267–68.

³ Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'ithists, and Free Officers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 905.

⁴ Batatu, *Old Social Classes*, 662; 1000.

⁵ Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 2nd, new ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 160; 203.

⁶ Davis defines this as hegemony, or ideological prescriptions offered by the elite that become "common sense." Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

⁷ Abdul-Salaam Yousif, "The Struggle for Cultural Hegemony During the Iraqi Revolution," in *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958*, ed. Robert A. Fernea and Wm. Roger Louis (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1991).

⁸ The label "intellectual" (*muthaqqaf*) became a byword for all left-leaning, radical intellectuals. *Ibid.*, 190.

⁹ For the best general biography of al-Sadr, see the introduction to Muḥammad Bāqir Ṣadr, *Lessons in Islamic Jurisprudence*, trans. Roy Mottahedeh (Oxford: Oneworld, 2003).

¹⁰ These works may be found in translation on various Islamists websites. Most are of poor quality. Except when noted, I cite to the Arabic originals. Muḥammad Bāqir Ṣadr, *Fadāk in History*, trans., Abdullah al-Shahin and Abdul-Jabbar Sharara (Tehran: Ansariyan Publications, 1955). *Fadāk fī al-Tārīkh* (Beirut: Dār al-Ta'aruf, 1955), 42. *Our Philosophy*, trans., Shams Constantine Inati (Qum: Ansariyan Publications, 1989). *Falsafatunā*, 2 ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1959). *Iqtisādunā*, 2 ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1961). *Our Economy*, trans., Translation Board of Writing, and Publication WOFIS, second ed., 2 vols., vol. 1-1 (Tehran: World Organization for Islamic Services, 1961).

¹¹ Ṣadr, *Fadāk fī al-Tārīkh*, 99–107. Emphasis added.

¹² Ṣadr, *Iqtisādunā*, 141, 168–78.

¹³ Ṣadr, *Our Philosophy*, 11.

¹⁴ Ṣadr, *Iqtisādunā*, 13.

¹⁵ Ṣadr, *Our Philosophy*, 33.

¹⁶ Davis, *Memories of State*, 112–15. Emphasis added.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 110.

RECORDING HERITAGE DESTRUCTION IN IRAQ

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In October 2012, I began a month-long visit to Iraq to begin developing a database that documents the destruction of heritage in the country over a crucial nine-year period (2003–2009). This database will enable researchers to more fully understand the extent of the destruction and will help the Iraqi government and international community to prioritize the heritage sites in Iraq that most urgently need protection and restoration. The primary purpose of the database, however, is to examine the extent of the relationship between the recorded destruction of heritage sites and spikes of violence, as documented in existing and reliable measures such as the Iraq Body Count database. Over the next three years, with funding from the Australian Research Council's Discovery (DECRA) scheme and supported by the Centre for Citizenship and Globalization at Deakin University, our research team of Australians, Americans, and Iraqis will build the database.

On this first trip to Iraq, I spent two weeks in and around Baghdad and two weeks based out of Erbil in the northern Kurdish Region (KR) to begin assessing the damage at several heritage sites in these areas. A highlight of my time in Iraq was a tour of the Iraq National Museum (INM), which was severely looted immediately after the fall of Baghdad in April 2003. Over three days, hundreds of looters set fires, smashed cabinets, stole documents and equipment, and destroyed much of what they could not remove. Around 15,000 objects were stolen from the galleries and

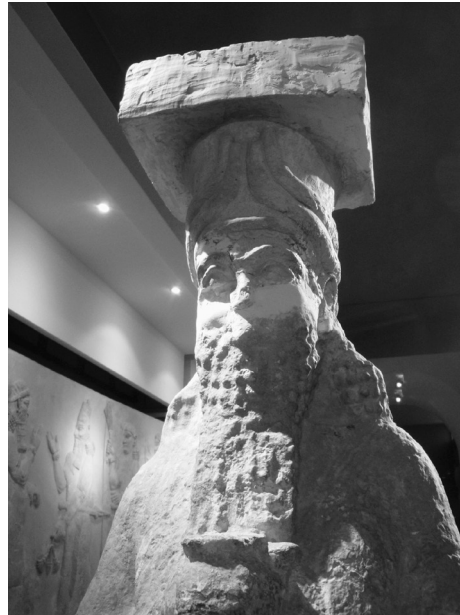


Figure 8.1. Damaged during the bombing of Baghdad in 2003, the statue of the Assyrian god of Wisdom, Ea, has been carefully restored by staff at the Iraq National Museum.

(Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)

stores of the museum, ranging from Sumerian cylinder seals to Hatrean statues. Other statues and relics were damaged during the bombing of Baghdad, including a statue of the Assyrian god of Wisdom, Ea, which fell from its mantle (fig. 8.1).

Following the looting, an amnesty program allowed the return of objects without question or reprimand. Approximately 6,000 objects have been returned to the INM. In addition, the director general of the museum, Dr. Amira Edan, updated me on the restoration of entire wings of the museum and repair of significant objects damaged in the looting, mostly funded by U.S. and Italian sources. For example, the restored statue of Ea currently stands in the Assyrian wing of the museum.

Another highlight was my visit to the ancient Mesopotamian city of Babylon, one of the world's most significant archaeological sites dating back to 3,000 B.C. when it was a small city-state. Senior Iraqi archaeologists told me about the damage that had

been done and the ongoing efforts to protect the site from further destruction. In April 2003, the Coalition turned the ancient city into a military base known as "Camp Alpha." Coalition troops dug trenches through parts of the site. Other parts were leveled to build living quarters, a car park for heavy equipment, and two helipads. The Ishtar Gate and the Procession Street were also damaged. Coalition soldiers also took "souvenirs" from the site, including bricks from the walls and tablets with cuneiform writing on them. The



Figure 8.2. Benjamin Isakhan inspects a cuneiform tablet found lying on the ground at the ancient city of Babylon. The fragile tablet was left exposed to the elements.

(Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)



Figure 8.3. Saddam's throne room at his palace at Babylon. A basketball hoop was set up by coalition forces. The chandeliers and tiles have been heavily looted.
(Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)



Figure 8.4. A detail of the Citadel at Koya showing a small mosque and the citadel walls.
(Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)

"Future of Babylon Project," funded mostly by the U.S., enables the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage to work with the World Monuments Fund on various conservation efforts across the site. However, the site faces neglect and disrepair, and important archaeological relics are left exposed to the elements (fig. 8.2).

I also toured a palace that Saddam Hussein built during the 1990s Sanctions period in Iraq that overlooks the ancient city of Babylon and the Euphrates River. During the coalition occupation of the site, troops set up sleeping quarters in the many rooms of the palace. They erected a basketball hoop in Saddam's former throne room (fig. 8.3). Throughout the palace, graffiti fills the walls. All of the place furniture has been looted; majestic chandeliers have been stripped bare; detailed

wood carvings have been smashed; tiles have been ripped from the walls; light globes and faucets have been removed (fig. 8.5).

In the Kurdish Region in the north of Iraq, I spoke with several people in the field of heritage protection and

preservation, including the General Director of Antiquities for the region, Mr. Mala Awat; the Director of Antiquities for Erbil Province, Mr. Haydar Hussein; and the Director of the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage, Dr. Abdullah Korsheed. From these and other individuals, I learned about efforts to preserve and protect heritage sites, such as archaeological excavations, the preservation of manuscripts and artifacts, and the development of new museums.

Jessie Johnson, the Academic Director of the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage, took me to Koya to see the Ottoman-era citadel, which is being well protected by local authorities (fig. 8.4). These authorities have created a small museum on site (fig. 8.6). They have also purchased

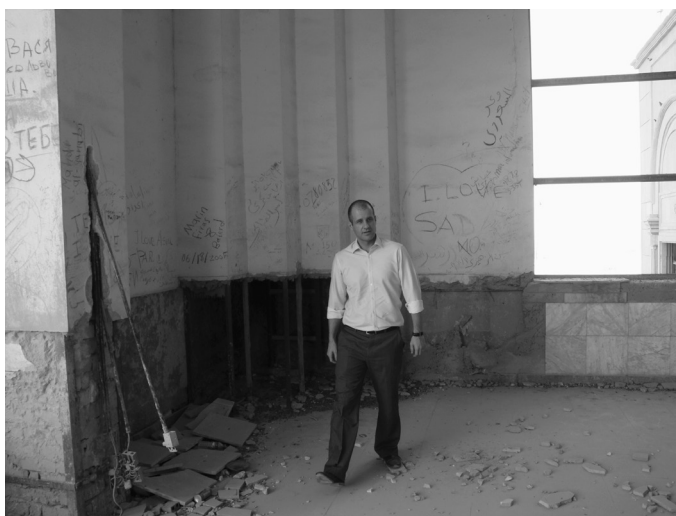


Figure 8.5. Benjamin Isakhan walks past some of the damage done to one of the rooms at Saddam's palace at Babylon. Graffiti adorns the wall, marble tiles have been removed, and electrical sockets have been stolen.
(Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)

several historical buildings in the small city in order to protect and restore them (fig. 8.7).

In Erbil, I met with David Micheltore, who is coordinating an enormous joint project between the KRG and UNESCO to restore the Erbil Citadel. In the 1980s, Saddam Hussein rebuilt the main gate to the citadel, colloquially known as “Saddam’s Gate.” Part of the current joint project is to restore the gate to its original condition, with a narrower entrance and a pointed arch (fig. 8.8).

Despite the many positive projects, heritage sites in the Kurdish region suffer from a variety of serious problems. Perhaps the greatest threat is rapid development. The locals optimistically call Erbil “the next Dubai.” Hotels and shopping malls are shooting up everywhere. The development is having an enormous impact on heritage sites. One clear



Figure 8.6. A small museum that is being developed inside the Citadel at Koya. (Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)

example is the ancient Assyrian aqueduct at Khinnis, which once carried water all the way to Nineveh some 80 kilometres away. The site hosts several large reliefs, including those of King Sennacherib and deities such as Ashur and Enlil (fig. 8.9). The site is also notable for cuneiform writing, Sassanid-era reliefs, and mausoleums built by early Christians. A sculpture of a Lamassu (a human-headed winged-bull) has fallen from the cliff into the water below. In addition, a modern restaurant is currently being built in the heart of the site, along with a new car park, with the aim of turning the site into a popular picnic and family area. Additionally problematic is the new private residence that has been built above the site (to the north), which will be accessed by a new road right in front of the main relief. These developments have occurred without consideration of their impact on the ancient site or of maintaining its integrity.

The cultural heritage of Iraq has suffered many different types of damage since 2003: looting, graffiti and arson attacks, neglect and disrepair, poor management and haphazard restoration, the effects of military operations and using sites as military bases, and ill-conceived development. The extent of the damage has not been adequately recorded. While there are some success stories, such as the restoration work being done at the Iraq National Museum or across the Kurdish Region, much of the country’s heritage is in urgent need of preservation, protection, excavation, and careful restoration.

We welcome your input on the project as we continue to develop a database to record the destruction of heritage sites in Iraq since 2003.



Figure 8.7. A beautifully ornate Ottoman-era house that is suffering from severe degradation and neglect. This is one of many such sites in Koya that have been bought by local authorities in the hope of preserving and restoring them. (Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)

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Figure 8.8. (Above) A view of “Saddam’s Gate” at the Erbil Citadel with a statue of Ibn al-Mustawfi (1169–1239) who wrote the four-volume *History of Erbil*. The joint UNESCO and KRG plan is to remove this gate and replace it with a replica of the original. (Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)

Figure 8.9. (Below) Benjamin Isakhan at the major relief of King Sennacherib at Khinnis. (Photo credit: Benjamin Isakhan)



TAARII

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