

**Iraqi Libraries and Archives in Peril:
Survival in a time of Invasion, Chaos, and Civil Conflict, A Report**

by Jeff Spurr

*Dedicated to Dr. Saad Eskander and his colleagues
at the Iraq National Library and Archive*

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[For those not committed to reading about the details of Iraqi libraries and archives, and efforts to rehabilitate them (the primary purpose of this report), but nevertheless interested in the present situation in Iraq, I would like to recommend the Introduction, the section on Invasion and Looting, the story of the Iraq National Library and Archive, and the discussion of Security.] Final revision 14 July 2007.

Introduction

*The purpose of this report is to provide an accurate assessment of the status of Iraqi academic libraries and principal archives in the post-Saddam, post-invasion, post-looting period. It is an update of **Indispensable yet Vulnerable: The Library in Dangerous Times. A Report on the Status of Iraqi Academic Libraries, and a Survey of Efforts to Assist Them, with Historical Introduction**, posted to the IraqCrisis/Middle East Librarians Association website in July 2005.X1 It borrows some of the text and some of its structure from the latter, which has been thoroughly emended, adapted and augmented to bring it up-to-date without requiring constant reference to the original to make sense. Missing is the essay on the vulnerability of libraries, and some long footnotes. This report, like its predecessor, is not a comprehensive, on-the-ground survey, pieces of which have been accomplished by others. Those field reports that provide some of the evidence for the libraries' condition are referenced in the text. It also describes the work, and, where possible, the perspectives of the primary actors concerned with these institutions and their rehabilitation, whether Iraqi or non-Iraqi. It describes and attempts to assess the various initiatives, planned, underway, stalled, or stopped, that have been designed to actively assist in the rebuilding process, and looks at that process in more global terms, addressing those circumstances that have served to undermine reconstruction. In so doing, the report highlights the lack of care and effectiveness on the part of international bodies (e.g., IFLA, UNESCO), and US governmental entities in publicizing, coordinating, funding, and instrumentalizing aspects of that rehabilitation, and the consequences of the deteriorating security situation for these institutions, those staffing them, and their reconstruction.*

Few of the salient international actors have risen to the occasion at a time of desperate need. It is both remarkable and scandalous that the US government and its relevant organs have failed to act in a more provident, sustained, sensitive, and committed way to achieve the redevelopment of Iraqi academic libraries and related institutions—and higher education generally—a goal which should have been a primary feature of the American project in Iraq, but has manifestly not been, as evidenced by the cancellation of the USAID-HEAD programs among many other acts of omission and commission. That this did not have to be the case is reflected in the original plans of John Agresto, any number of proposed projects, and the elementary logic of planning and redevelopment.

As if in league with this American failure, the various Iraqi governing entities have been mired in turf battles, corruption and ideological struggle. For every committed government functionary there appear to have been many others willing to foil or diminish her efforts. The extreme state of insecurity, and the consequent haemorrhaging of educated and competent individuals out of the country bodes ill for the future of the institutions under discussion, and Iraq as a viable polity. Nevertheless, the manner in which the Iraq National Library and Archive has grown and improved in every aspect of its functioning since the catastrophe of 2003; positive developments in Iraqi Kurdistan; the remarkable success of specific projects such as the IVSL (Iraqi Virtual Science Library)—one of the few situations where the US government has supported committed

and imaginative individuals to achieve effective goals—the work of WHO to support medical libraries at all institutional levels; and the training programs for Iraqi academic librarians demonstrate that different priorities and sensible leadership on all sides could achieve great things.

A reading of history suggests the role that libraries have played as a barometer for the status of civilization, revealing that a flourishing and developing society has always been one that privileged libraries, despite destructive and totalitarian episodes. Perhaps because of their importance, such critical cultural institutions have been especially vulnerable when power has been exercised arbitrarily, or when those seeking it have resorted to violent means to achieve their ends, or when the normal controls imposed by authority have been overthrown. This condition applies as well to contemporary Iraq as anywhere. That Iraq's principal libraries and archives are in such a desperate state is a critical symptom of the profound crisis facing this nation and its people. One cause of this plight is the horrifying phenomenon of looting subsequent to the 2003 invasion, to which Iraqi libraries owe much of their present condition, and which receives a close look in this report.

Historical Review

Mesopotamia, the land of the two rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, and the site of present-day Iraq, is one of the sources of cultural traditions that linger till today. The flood of Noah finds its first description in the third millennium text, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which is the first great work of world literature that has been passed down to us. Although many libraries certainly preceded it, the largest early library to survive essentially intact was that established by the Assyrian King Ashurbanipal (r. 668-627 BCE) at Nineveh,**X2** whence comes the longest extant text of the Gilgamesh story. The number of tablets actually found in the library is debated, given some mixing of texts from other places in the site, but it held between 10,000 and 26,000, which were carefully laid out in a series of rooms and organized by subject matter: history, government, religion, poetry, astronomy, the reports of spies, and so on. That library survived due to the destruction of the palace by invaders, a fate more readily borne by clay than the organic matter used in other literary traditions.

Some 1400 years later, in 762 CE, the Caliph al-Mansur of the recently ascendant 'Abbasid Dynasty, rulers of the central Islamic empire, founded his new capital city at Baghdad. In 832, his great grandson, al-Ma'mun, established the Bayt al-Hikma, the "House of Wisdom".**X3** This institution became a repository for work that had been

underway for some decades, certainly since the time of al-Ma'mun's father, the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, namely, the translation of the critical Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Syriac, Persian, and Sanskrit texts of philosophy and science into Arabic. The Bayt al-Hikma thus became the greatest library and academy of the age, a successor to the Library in Alexandria, the classical world's greatest repository of knowledge, which had suffered destruction and dispersal in stages over several centuries. An observatory was built adjacent to it, and the House of Wisdom became a magnet for brilliant scholars, irrespective of faith, from the length and breadth of the lands now dominated by Islam.

Although the medieval Bayt al-Hikma became embroiled in intense cultural contestation fueled by religious reaction—mirrored in contemporary trends both here in the United States with the rise of creationism and opposition to stem-cell research, and in the recent history of Afghanistan with the temporary triumph of the Taliban—a tradition of research and inquiry was established which resulted in the advancement of such fields as astronomy, optics, physics and mathematics, among others, including the work of al-Khwarizmi, the father of algebra (named after his book, *Kitab al-Jabr*). Much of this learning, both inherited and newly developed, was ultimately transmitted to Europe, mired in the Dark Ages when the House of Wisdom was founded, principally through Spain and Sicily.

This long and fruitful episode in cultural history came to a close with the sack of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258 CE, which, though not as absolute as the destruction of some cities further east, led to the dumping of the contents of its great libraries, unequalled elsewhere, into the Tigris. Hence the legend developed that the river ran black from the ink of the countless texts lost in this manner, while the streets ran red with the blood of the city's slaughtered inhabitants. These vivid images provide a link to a basic fact: human life is of the greatest importance, but human lives bereft of the culture that confers meaning and excellence on them are incalculably diminished, and libraries are primary repositories for that culture. Furthermore, those who are inclined to kill peoples often target their libraries as well. What the recent history of Iraq tells us is that negligence can be just as dangerous to culture as the work of those barbarians bent upon

destruction, and such negligence may be so fateful as to be criminal in its character and consequences.

Invasion, dereliction, and looting

“Something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers are probably...a figure that would be required. It takes significant ground force presence to maintain a safe and secure environment to ensure that people are fed, that water is distributed, all the normal responsibilities that go along with administering a situation like this.” **X4**

—General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the US Army, 25 February 2003, to Senate Armed Services Committee,

“There has been a good deal of comment—some of it quite outlandish—about what our postwar requirements might be in Iraq.”**X5**

—Paul D. Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense, 28 February 2003, to House Budget Committee,

"Freedom's untidy, and free people are free to commit crimes and make mistakes and do bad things."**X6**

—Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defense, 11 April 2003

On 7 April 2003, American forces entered Baghdad on a “thunder run” of tanks and Bradley armored fighting vehicles that moved from the already-secured airport directly to the area of Saddam Hussein’s palaces in the Presidential Zone of central Baghdad, soon to be taken over by the conquering Americans, specifically the CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority), and dubbed the “Green Zone”. By 9 April, the “new order” was declared to be complete, the Iraqi government toppled, the same day that Saddam’s statue was laid low with the assistance of a tractor moved in by US soldiers. By the next day, pervasive looting was underway. The Washington Post’s Rajiv Chandrasekaran (author of *Imperial Life in the Emerald City*) **X7** was a witness, and has stated (in interview on National Public Radio), that looters were first hesitant, “testing the waters”, but that when no one got in their way, indeed, looked on impassively, their efforts began in earnest. By

this means was virtually every government, cultural, and educational institution, and many business and industrial establishments eviscerated. An inauspicious beginning.

Most infamous was the looting of the Iraq Museum, while American soldiers “guarded” an intersection a couple blocks away. However, the almost exclusive focus on that institution by the international media effectively eclipsed the fact that Iraqi universities, their libraries, the National Library and Archive, and other such institutions were not spared this horribly thorough process, in Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq outside Iraqi Kurdistan.

The degree of looting has been a source of wonderment for many, and it is worth addressing. What the Americans had done is to topple a totalitarian state, and fail to take the elementary step of imposing a necessary order in the ensuing vacuum of authority. This negligence seems almost willful, and certainly reflected the level of fantasy involved at high levels within the Bush administration, which had derided the sound advice famously given by General Shinseki, and others as well, but ignored, to the effect that the number of soldiers necessary to secure peace would be far in excess of those necessary to defeat the Iraqi armed forces.

In a totalitarian state, the state is everything, and the individual nothing. The term “citizen” does not apply, for no individual has the right to the independent thought and action implied by that term. Furthermore, the state and its agents have impunity, whereas the individual has no means of redress. An inverted morality is in play, and the most ruthless members of the population, willing to carry out the worst acts of tyranny, are those who are most rewarded, while humane values are denigrated. Iraqi individuals only had restricted avenues through which to express a sense of solidarity: the family and tribe, and religion, although the latter would be undertaken privately and within limits imposed by the largely secular state, which zealously clung to all of the appurtenances of power. **X8**

Kanan Makiya, through the work undertaken by The Iraq Memory Foundation, of which he is a co-founder, has described the remarkable dossiers kept on all of Saddam Hussein's subjects, a cradle-to-grave account of their lives in a conversation with Harvard's Committee on Iraqi Libraries. The documents uncovered further revealed that those who turned their fellow citizens in often were rewarded, sometimes with the dwellings of those dispossessed by arrest. Thus decades had passed in a topsy-turvy world where civil society not only did not exist, but was anathematized, and where notions of the commonweal were defined solely in terms of the demands of the person in power, that person having been Saddam Hussein for twenty-five years. Consequently, only those receiving the direct rewards of the system, often at its most depraved, were deeply invested in it, and often for material gain shorn of any morality. This is not meant to suggest that there were not hundreds of thousands of normal people, wishing to make careers for themselves, who became party members as the only viable means to get ahead in their professions, attempting a normal existence in abnormal circumstances.

What happens when such a system is overthrown? Utter chaos. Of course, most of the population, long trained in keeping its head down, would lie low. Many, whose personal morality remained intact, would desire or seek order. But those who were young and impetuous, or were utterly corrupted by the system, or who had suffered intense privation due to the system of sanctions to which Iraq had been subjected since the Gulf War, or who were already members of criminal gangs, had an opportunity to exploit the vacuum of authority, and did. Moreover, Saddam Hussein had, infamously, opened his prisons as the invasion commenced, releasing many political prisoners, but also tens of thousands of criminals liable to take part in the looting that ensued. *Après moi, le déluge*. Also, Saddam Hussein had employed the primary cultural institutions, most conspicuously the Iraq (National) Museum, as instruments of state propaganda and display, the Iraq Museum having been closed to the public for nearly twenty years, only opened for state visitors. Thus these institutions were not fully identified as part of the common patrimony by many Iraqis, making them simply another set of rich targets among many. Furthermore, other individuals, under the cover of the chaos, could undertake the deliberate destruction of records that might now prove damning, and members of the

regime, knowing that their time in power was up, would be motivated to take away as much as they could. For these reasons, an almost unparalleled sacking of a whole country ensued (south of Iraqi Kurdistan, which remained firmly under the control of the Peshmerga, the organized Kurdish armed forces).

Did the occupiers set a counter-example? Of course not. “Shock and Awe”, which commenced on 19 March 2003, had targeted many of the same ministries and other government buildings—as if they wouldn’t be required in the governance of the country the Americans were about to take over—that were prime targets of the looters, in part because for some they must have been symbols of the hated government, although for others they would have simply been well-appointed buildings ready for the picking. The disregard inherent in those initial acts of aggression could provide a ready message to those paying attention: we do not respect the infrastructure of the regime, and so you may as well do the same, whatever the long-term consequences. Indeed, William Van Wagenen, upon discovering that “three government-run shopping malls and two markets had been destroyed”^{X9} investigated. A result of his research was the discovery of the source for the Bush regime’s assault strategy: a 1996 National Defense University policy report, *Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance*. ^{X10} Quoting from the report, Van Wagenen states “Through Shock and Awe... it is hoped ‘to convey the unmistakable message that unconditional compliance is the only available recourse. It will imply more than the direct application of force. . . This could include means of communication, transportation, food production, water supply, and other aspects of infrastructure’. The violence unleashed must be ‘all encompassing’ in ‘scope’, using ‘force against force and supporting capability’”

Not only did American soldiers not interfere, but video broadcast on CNN caught some of them “taking souvenirs” (as described by the reporter) from one of Saddam’s palaces at the very time that others were being looted by Iraqis. Thus the same message was conveyed on the ground: we do not care enough to see that your administrative, educational, and cultural institutions are protected; after all, “free people are free to commit crimes” are they not? The contempt for real Iraqis and their real lives is

poisonously evident in Rumsfeld's infamous words, and he more than anyone had been calling the shots concerning the invasion and future governance—or lack of it.

Should anyone have been surprised? Of course not; Shinseki was perfectly correct. And recent history provides a multitude of examples of spontaneous looting when authority is in abeyance for whatever reason, and in situations far less primed for chaos than that in Iraq, where a complete liminal moment had been created by the utter disappearance of the structure of government and all of its agents. Two examples should suffice. On October 7, 1969, Montreal policemen went on strike. Interethnic resentments were rife, and there was discontent over job opportunities, particularly among young francophone Québécois, but no one was prepared for the result: Montréal's Night of Terror. From the CBC report of 8 October, "Montreal is in a state of shock. A police officer is dead and 108 people have been arrested following 16 hours of chaos during which police and firefighters refused to work."**X11** The downtown core was looted, banks, shops, restaurants, hotels, and a limousine service all targeted by rioters, generally described as students and separatists at the time. The police went back to work 16 hours later, after the military had been called in.

Better known in the United States are the effects of The Blackout that beset all five boroughs of New York City on the evening of July 13, 1977. The result was widespread looting and arson in 31 neighborhoods, with 1,616 stores damaged, 1,037 fires responded to, including 14 multiple-alarm fires, and 3, 776 people arrested. The damage was estimated in excess of \$300,000,000. **X12** The city was afflicted with a heat wave and a financial crisis at the time to exacerbate matters. Still, all it took was the loss of control over normal process attendant upon the lights going out to precipitate a shocking display of civil disorder, just as the absence of the police for a few hours had caused large numbers of Montrealers to take full advantage of their opportunities. Gary T. Marx has described these as "issueless riots"**X13**, the point being that, although there may be underlying social and economic issues, these are spontaneous, non-ideological events.

Thus one does not have to ascribe inherent depravity to the Iraqis, as has the right-wing pundit, Daniel Pipes,**X14** to account for the behavior of some of them, particularly given that it would take a fraction of one percent of 25,000,000 to vacuum those institutions clean. Whether Saddam loyalists engaging in a cover up, criminal gangs, or opportunists, they all had in common a lack of concern for the commonweal and an interest in exploiting the chaos. Some of this is the direct consequence of life under a tyrannical regime. However, none of it would have happened without the negligence of the invading forces, whose leaders paid no attention to local precedent: In 1991, the rebellion in Southern Iraq encouraged by George H.W. Bush had precipitated a lapse of the characteristic social control imposed by Saddam's regime. This provided an opening for large-scale looting by some, including of several provincial museums, while others were engaged in the revolt. More importantly, extensive reportage described widespread looting in Basrah when encircled by British troops, days before Baghdad was taken. *New York Times* reporter Dexter Filkins has described a scene in the Iraqi Border town of Safwan on the very first day of the invasion. There, among many telling experiences, he witnessed the looting of the town's elementary school while an ad hoc gathering of local people failed to intervene as a great train of American tanks and troop carriers flowed past. This was one of several signs to him of a "traumatized, broken, and atomized society."**X15**

With the events of 1991 in mind, a number of archaeologists and other scholars of the Middle East warned the Defense Department of the necessity of securing culturally important museums, monuments and archaeological sites.**X16** Furthermore, Hague Conventions address the issue of responsibility for cultural heritage. Both ICOM (International Council of Museums), and ICBS (International Committee of the Blue Shield), and other organizations had warned in advance of the consequences of war. On 14 April 2003, referencing an earlier statement of 25 February, ICOM specifically declared, "In the 'Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict', drawn up in The Hague, 14 May 1954, and entered in force 7 August 1956, Paragraph I. 'General provisions regarding protection', Article 4. 'Respect for cultural property' section 3 reads: 'The High Contracting Parties further undertake to

prohibit, prevent and, if necessary, put a stop to any form of theft, pillage or misappropriation of, and any acts of vandalism directed against, cultural property. They shall refrain from requisitioning movable cultural property situated in the territory of another High Contracting Party.’ ICOM-CC will hold all so-called Coalition Force Partners accountable for looting and damage to cultural property in Iraq.”**X17**

Although the United States and the United Kingdom are among the rare non-signatories to this and related conventions concerning cultural property, Iraq is a signatory and, as the British authority, Patrick Boylan, has pointed out, in comments to the ICOM discussion list, “the Convention applies to the territory, (the ‘lex situs’ rule under both international and national law) and arguably therefore to everyone within the territory and all actions by them regardless of their nationality.” He goes on to state that the US State and Defense Departments recommended ratification in 1996, and the UK declared its intention to do so in 1999. Furthermore, Boylan notes, “The publicly stated policy of both the USA and the UK is to comply with the principles of the Hague Convention even though neither country is yet formally a party to it.” **X18**

In a similar vein, The International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS) made a declaration on 7 March stating, among other things that, in the event of war in Iraq, “The ICBS believes that access to authentic cultural heritage is a basic human right. Damage to, and destruction of, cultural heritage represents an impoverishment, not only of the cultural life of the community directly concerned, but of humanity as a whole. This belief is expressed in several international conventions. Iraq is universally recognized to be especially rich in cultural heritage. The area is often described as the ‘cradle of civilisation’. The loss of parts of that heritage would certainly represent a loss to all the peoples of the world.... In the aftermath of any war in Iraq, the ICBS calls upon all governments in a position to act to provide the necessary resources, human and financial, to assess the damage caused by the conflict to cultural heritage and to implement plans for the necessary repairs and restoration. In the case of looting of cultural property, detailed plans by trained experts should be prepared for the repatriation or restitution of

the property concerned, with the involvement of Iraqi scholars and heritage professionals.”**X19**

Their warnings went unheeded. The well-known fact that American troops were deployed to protect the Ministry of Oil demonstrates that museums, libraries, other ministries and institutions could have been similarly protected.

Reports on conditions of Iraqi libraries & other cultural institutions post-invasion

Due to the fog of war, and unfamiliarity with the country and its institutions, the reportage concerning devastation to critical cultural institutions, including libraries and archives, was nearly as confused and inaccurate as that concerning the Iraq Museum, which received the lion’s share of media attention.**X20** A clearer view of the situation was soon provided by several reports, which commenced the process of assessing the damage to and status of Iraqi cultural and educational institutions, including libraries and archives between June and November 2003, a window of opportunity before the Sunni insurgency, radical Shi’ite anti-Americanism, and inter-communal violence made such work nearly impossible, at least by outsiders. While varying in sponsorship, access, focus, scope, specificity, and quality, these reports did provide a depressing picture of the dismal state of the libraries and archives, and how much was yet to be learned about their condition and the status of their holdings in specific terms, particularly outside of the principal cities of Baghdad, Basrah, and Mosul. These reports may be accessed at the Middle East Librarians Association website in the section dedicated to the MELA Committee on Iraqi Libraries.**X21** Of those available, four are the most interesting:

1. Nabil al-Tikriti, *Iraq Manuscript Collections, Archives & Libraries Situation Report 8 June 2003* **X22**
2. Jean-Marie Arnoult, *Assessment of Iraqi Cultural Heritage: Libraries & Archives, June 27-July 6, 2003* (By UNESCO contract) **X23**
3. Keith Watenpugh, et al, *Opening the Doors: Intellectual Life and Academic Conditions in Post-War Baghdad, A Report of the Iraqi Observatory, 15 July 2003.*

the title page of which depicts the statue of Saddam Hussein, cast down in front of the partially-burned National Library **X24**

4. Mary Jane Deeb, et al, *Library of Congress and the U.S. Department of State Mission to Baghdad. Report on the National Library and the House of Manuscripts, October 27-November 3, 2003* **X25**

Alongside these are, among others, two more specific reports:

The Iraqi Jewish Archive Preservation Report of 2 October 2003, **X26** and Zain Al-Naqshbandi's *Report on the Central Awqaf Library and Report of the Central Library of Baghdad University/Al-Waziriya*, **X27** dated 28 June 2004, the first part evidently being his version of a report by the principals of the al-Awqaf Library.

Nabil al-Tikriti, who got there first, was at the time a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago (now an assistant professor of history at the University of Mary Washington). He acted on his own initiative, and produced a very competent survey of the situation in Baghdad, including some secondary institutions and minor collections, with more cursory reports for institutions elsewhere. His primary focus was major archival collections. His second paragraph was devoted to recommendations: "restoration of physical premises, replacement of plundered equipment, reconstitution of respective collections, comprehensive inventory and cataloguing of all MSS collections as they stand today, replacement of published works and non-original document copies lost in the looting, comprehensive microfilming and data storage of all MSS, to guard against future losses, immediate and ongoing collection of contemporary Iraqi publications..." These were entirely to the point, needing only to be augmented by intensive conservation of threatened materials, advanced staff training, and a plan or plans for augmenting academic libraries, all of which, even when intact, were severely dated, and their holdings diminished through overuse.

The report of the Library of Congress team, chronologically the last of the four, was compiled by the participants, Dr. Mary-Jane Deeb, then Arab World Area Specialist, Michael Albin, Chief of Anglo-American Acquisitions, and Alan Haley, Senior

Conservation Specialist. It was more detailed and included an extensive narrative, citing some of the important agents concerned with libraries at that time: Mr. Wishyar K. Mohammad, Advisor on libraries for the CPA; Dr. Faiza Adeeb Abdul-Wahid Al-Bayati (referred to as Faiza Adeeb), then Director-General designate for the Iraq National Library and Archive (INLA), but subsequently general advisor to the Baghdad University libraries' and acting Director-General of the INLA, Kamil Jawad. These figures, along with Dr. John Russell, then Senior Advisor for Culture for the CPA, facilitated special access. However, their investigations only addressed the National Library and Archives and the ex-Saddam House of Manuscripts, with specific recommendations. Having seen the fate of the special collections and archival materials removed from the INLA to the Board of Tourism, but flooded there (see further discussion below), their numerous recommendations included special attention to conservation.

The investigation by Jean-Marie Arnoult, Inspecteur-Générale at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, was sponsored by UNESCO, although his visit was postponed due to American interference. Arnoult's report was more expansive in its coverage than that of the LC, and commences with a series of recommendations, some so detailed as to be tied to the immediate circumstances obtaining at the time, and no longer with any relevance. His general assessments were direct: "Because of over a decade of considerable budgetary restrictions and the embargo that blindly reduced the opportunities of acquisition, [and because of the looting,] Iraqi libraries are doubly wrecked."

Although it describes physical conditions and losses as it proceeds, as its title suggests, *Opening the Doors* had other intentions, largely due to the character of the investigators, an international group of academic historians of the Middle East, Keith Watenpugh, Edouard Méténier, Jens Hanssen, and Hala Fattah, the latter an Iraqi scholar based in Amman. Those aims were "A description of the current material and organizational condition of Iraq's intellectual and academic community; An assessment of the prevailing conditions of Iraqi cultural and intellectual life; [and] A characterization of the ongoing relationships between the Iraqi academic and intellectual community and the occupation

forces/structures of governance.”**X28** Consequently, it is the only report that is expressly critical of the Occupation. Alongside reliable information on several important institutions, it is the first source to characterize the state of intellectual life, broadly conceived, including nascent developments in the immediate post-invasion period, and to give a sense of the universities as sites of contestation by the various social, religious and political forces unleashed by the overthrow of the Saddam regime. The authors’ numerous recommendations, included “The modernization and restocking of university library holdings [as the]...highest priority along side the reconstitution of institutions such as the National Museum or the National Library and Archives. Unfettered access to the tools of information technology [and the internet]”, and a “centralized international organization” of academic librarians to work with Iraqi counterparts “to coordinate major acquisitions and to handle donations.”**X29**

A summation of sorts for international attitudes and good intentions is provided by UNESCO’s International Coordination Committee (ICC) for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Iraq, which had its 2nd Plenary Session in Paris, on 22-23 June 2005, two years after the reports cited above. Its 4th recommendation was to “Assist the Ministry of Culture of Iraq to implement the recommendations of the ICC Sub-committee for Libraries and Archives”**X30** Of course this very recommendation fails to take into account the fact that while the National Library and Archive may be under the the Ministry of Culture, all university libraries fall under the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

The ICC’s general pronouncement declared the responsibilities for UNESCO to be: “to assist the Ministry of Culture to prepare a training course for archivists and librarians on the basis of the needs identified by the ICC sub-committee during its first meeting with the assistance of ICA [International Council on Archives] and IFLA [International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions]”, and “to provide to the National Library in Baghdad UNESCO’s publications in the field of cultural heritage, social sciences and education.”

The Sub-Committee for Libraries and Archives itself produced a remarkably comprehensive list of activities that should be undertaken to rehabilitate the Iraq National Library, academic libraries, and public libraries. It was as thorough as one produced for war-ravaged Bosnian libraries nine years before that was never acted upon. Despite the many recommendations, it is worth noting that UNESCO's International Coordination Committee has, in fact, promised very little, and its intention to promote training for librarians is already being accomplished by others. In this regard, it is symptomatic that the links on UNESCO'S *Crisis in Iraq* webpage for "Projects Awaiting Financial Support", "Ongoing Projects", and "Projects Completed" lead nowhere.X31

Status of Iraqi Institutions:

The Iraq National Library and Archive (Dar al-Kutub wa al-Watha'iq)

"What makes a Kurd or a Sunni or a Shia have something in common is a national library," he said. "It is where the national identity of a country begins."

—Dr. Saad EskanderX32

In "The Tale of Iraq's 'Cemetery of Books'",X33, the keynote speech for the Internet Librarian International 2004 conference held in London, 10-12 October 2004, Dr. Saad Eskander, Director-General of the Iraq National Library and Archive (INLA) since December 2003, outlined the circumstances of his institution, commencing with the statement, "In Saddam Hussein's Iraq, the National Library and Archive...was an abandoned cemetery, void of progressive culture and critical thinking." His essay describes the deplorable level of functioning within the institution under the Saddam regime at some length, but, in his second paragraph, this clear-sighted and articulate gentleman states, "I also hope I can give you an honest and frank explanation of what took place in Baghdad in mid-April 2003, when most cultural institutions were looted and burnt. It was a national disaster beyond imagination." Indeed, the looting and burning of the Iraq National Library and Archive, as a premier instance of this phenomenon, was a terrible event by any definition, and its story exemplifies the afflictions incurred by Iraqi

institutions at the time of the Occupation. Its story also reveals the extent to which subsequent expectations of assistance have largely been disappointed, and the challenges faced and price paid under dire circumstances to sustain effective functioning.

A man interviewed in the remarkable documentary film, *About Baghdad*, **X34** created by a collaborative of Iraqis and non-Iraqis, says, “I kept crying when they burned the National Library. ...Wasn’t that my country that they burned?” There was much to cry about; still, the news was not entirely gloomy. Although the structure of the library had been severely damaged and initially deemed a dead loss, it was eventually determined to be restorable. The initial story was, as usual, inaccurate. It was that provident actions of staff members, who moved to apparent safety a large mass of archival materials, and of a Shi’ite cleric (al-Sayyid Abdul Mun‘im al-Musawi), who removed as much as 40% of the book collections and some archival documents to the Haqq Mosque for safekeeping, had insured that substantial portions of the book and archival collections were spared; furthermore, that representatives of the Shi’ite cleric had welded shut a large steel fire door at the entrance to one wing, so that all of the collections behind it remained safe. American forces had occupied Baghdad on April 8th, a first fire had been lit during the initial wave of looting on the 11th, and, it was reported, the much more destructive fire had been set on the 14th, with the cleric acting between the two events.

Dr. Eskander, confirmed that as much as 60% of the Ottoman- and royal Hashemite-era documents were lost, as well as the bulk of Ba’ath-era documents, whose presence is likely to have been the motive for the arson. In “The Tale of Iraq’s ‘Cemetery of Books’”, he stated, “The Republican Archive was of a great value politically as well as historically. Apart from covering the history of the Ba'ath Party since it seized power in 1963, this archive contained the transcripts of all court-martials (sic) set up by the Ba'ath regime for the trial of its opponents.”

Approximately 25% of the book collections were looted or burned, according to Dr. Eskander, but they were already in a sorry state of management,**X35** and lacking in any recent publications from abroad. He also provided a more accurate chronology of events

and description of actions taken. According to him^{X36} the “looters and saboteurs” entered the building on the 10th-11th and again on the 12th-13th. The large, steel fire door was already closed before any looting, and the looters did not attempt to open it, the book stacks behind it remaining intact. The head of the library’s financial department and the cleric brought a blacksmith who welded the door shut only after the acts of despoliation had occurred. Furthermore, none of the books were removed by Abdul Mun‘im for safekeeping until after the looting and burning had ended, and represented closer to 5% of the total collections than 40%. Although a laudable effort at preserving Iraq’s patrimony, this act itself resulted in further damage given the way the books were handled and stored. These materials were eventually returned to the custody of the National Library after some negotiation.

The fate that befell the removed archival documents (including important rare books), which had been placed for safe-keeping in the basement of the General Board of Tourism, inspired several conjectures in the reports initially addressing it. These important materials were soaked when, according to Dr. Eskander, the basement was deliberately flooded after looting by those committing the crime, who broke water pipes to achieve their end of obscuring what had been stolen. The soaked documents were moved thence in early autumn of 2003 to a space above ground level, where the Library of Congress mission saw them in November exhibiting “extensive and active mold growth.”^{X37} As first reported, some weeks thereafter they were finally placed in four large freezers at the Officer’s Club where they awaited conservation.^{X38} The truth of the matter was otherwise, according to a Dutchman, Major Drs. René Teijgeler,^{X39} himself a highly experienced conservation scientist, who became the Senior Consultant for Culture attached to the Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office at the American Embassy in Baghdad (succeeding others who had worked in a similar capacity directly for the CPA. He informed me that these units were in fact coolers (at 0 to +8 degrees C), not freezers, so their contents had never been frozen and thus continued to deteriorate, albeit more slowly.^{X40} Teijgeler did receive the OK for a deep-freezing unit in a truck, to which they were moved, at the same time being transferred from the original metal trunks to archival boxes imported from the US. The truck was then moved to a heavily-

protected, purpose-built shed next to the INLA, where the archival materials remained until the end of 2005, when they were moved into the INLA, the drying completed, and conservation begun.**X41**

Dr. Eskander noted **X42** that he hoped to be able to send some Iraqi conservators to the Library of Congress in spring 2005 for a specialized course on deep freezing, freeze drying and defreezing, and subsequent treatment protocols to preserve the archival materials. Of course, horrendous American visa hassles have afflicted any Iraqi attempting to visit the US no matter what his or her bona fides. Baghdad is one of the very largest US embassies, yet it maintained no consular service until July 2005. Any Iraqi wishing to visit the US before that date had to make two death-defying visits to Amman, and wait in long lines in order to get a visa, and, even with all that, the process might drag on so long as to obviate the purpose of the trip, as happened with two delegations of senior Iraqi Academics, in April 2004 and March 2005 (the latter finally realized in July 2005). In each case only one of a dozen or more individuals made it to Harvard. So the result has often been months of delay or no access at all. This is one of countless ways in which US policies and actions alienate Iraqis, by their insensitivity and failure to show genuine commitment to Iraqi needs. Unfortunately, the alternative, American conservation experts coming to Baghdad, was obviated by the security situation. The continuing visa problems finally caused Eskander to cancel the visit of Iraqi conservators to Washington. It fell to the local government of Florence (Italy) to underwrite the costs of the Florence National Library providing advanced training to three Iraqi book conservators in lieu of the Library of Congress. It also supported the design and development of a website for the INLA.**X43**

Tejjgeler reported**X44** that five National Library conservation staff members had received a two-month basic conservation course offered by the Czech Republic along with colleagues from the Iraq Museum as early as 2004 (including the three who went to Italy for further training in 2005). The Czech Republic underwrote the installation of a complete conservation lab at the INLA, and Czech conservators actually came to Erbil in Iraqi Kurdistan in 2006 to provide further conservation training, while four staff members

trained in Italy, and another group are to receive training in Prague and Litomysl, run by staff from the University of Pardubice, in 2007, and René Teijgeler will provide specialized courses in Erbil in summer 2007.X45

Teijgeler noted that the Italians representing the NGO Un ponte per (UPP)X46 were interested in an automated cataloguing system for the National Library, although this option, plus proposals by OCLC (the Online Computer Library Center, see below) indicate the need for coordination of automation wherever possible so that potential integration across institutions is kept in mind. The National Library had been offered prospects for further funding from European sources, but Teijgeler was short of staff to write up project proposals. Teijgeler's office was underfunded as well as understaffed, without supplies of ready cash that could be used to acquire something as simple as bookshelves for the many institutions in need of them. Teijgeler left his job in Baghdad toward the end of February 2005. He would not be replaced, a further sign of American unwillingness to take responsibility for culture, cultural institutions, and the consequences of American and allied actions jeopardizing them.

After some drama and uncertainty over a replacement site for the National Library and Archive (it first being allocated the Officers' Club, later arrogated by the Ministry of Justice for court buildings, with the Ministry of Defense reportedly interested as well), it was determined that the original site could, after all, be successfully renovated. Due to generous Italian assistance, through UPP in particular, rehabilitative work proceeded with the collections of the National Library. Much of the necessary work simply involved vacuuming, sorting and cataloguing. Dr. Eskander reportedX47 that the first two phases of renovation—repairing the structural damage to the building and supplying it with electricity, water, elevator service, etc.—were complete as of March 2005. Eskander also informed Arthur Smith, OCLC's exceptionally dedicated Director for the Middle East, that his staff had been replacing missing catalogue cards since the beginning of 2004, and automating the whole system. As of July 2005, the National Library had six computers with internet access, nary a one of which was available to the public. The same situation applies in February 2007, with profound implications for what can be achieved without

more funds. From a count of zero after the looting, the total number of computers in the INLA comes to 140, located in every department of the institution (Cataloguing, Bibliography, Periodicals, Acquisition and Exchange, Personnel, Finance, Planning and Audit, as well as the two main reading rooms). The first four computers, replacing those few that had been owned by the INLA before the invasion, were purchased by Dr. Eskander against the orders of the then Minister of Culture, who thought the Americans should be supplying them. The next group of 16 computers was paid for by the regional government of Lombardy. Several small funds donated to UNESCO to benefit the INLA, plus a Japanese gift of \$78,000.00 provided via the same means, were finally allocated to purchase the rest of the computers now present, completely without American help.**X48**

The third phase of renovation—an air-conditioning system, furniture, computer installations, etc.—remains underway as of February 2007. By July 2006, Dr. Eskander could report**X49** that all departments were functioning, and that library and archive reading rooms received scholars and students every day they were open. The INLA also had two new labs: a well-stocked microfilm lab, and a restoration lab stocked with traditional and modern equipment. The new furnishings were the best available on the local market, and the institution had its own water purification system.

In “Cemetery of Books”, Eskander was generally critical of the Americans for their lack of cooperation, follow-up, and concrete support, but applies similar criticism to IFLA, CPA and UNESCO, among others. On the other hand, he gave credit where it was due, including to JumpStart, “...an Irish-American organization. It was the first NGO which came to our rescue. It funded and supervised the project of cleaning our building from all debris and rubble.”

In the same address, he also reported, “The British Library has completed the first stage of reproducing archival materials and rare publications related to Iraq. We hope the British government will deliver its promise to finance this important project...” These materials comprise the records of the India Office for 1915-1921, funded by the British

Embassy in Baghdad. A further 49% of the records of the Colonial Office at the UK National Archives, representing the years 1921-1934, have been copied and sent, the remaining work needing funding. This British assistance was prompted by the efforts of Mr. Joan van Albada, Secretary General of the International Council of Archives (ICA),**X50** who contacted numerous national archives on behalf of the Iraq National Library and Archive.

More recently (June 2005), the Italians re-committed themselves to support of the National Library, including training of librarians and assistance in underwriting the costs of hiring new librarians. Remarkable in this regard is that the regional government of Lombardy (Italy) paid the wages of 30 librarians (via Un ponte per), and are committed, in principle, to continuing this support, begun in 2004, through 2008. This demonstrates the ways in which regional as well as national governments could support critical employment requirements at numerous Iraqi institutions during this difficult, transitional period via the agency of appropriate NGOs.

Dr. Eskander has reported that the National Library has succeeded in publishing the National Bibliography for the period 1996-2006, plus two specialized bibliographies, one for women, the other for MA and PhD theses. At one point, he heard that IFLA had dedicated \$35,000 to this purpose, when the work was largely complete. He has appealed to them to permit the use of this sum to purchase a printing press to make the INLA self-sufficient in the publishing of annual reports, journals and successive installments of the National Bibliography; however, bad blood between him and the French (Jean-Marie Arnoult and the Bibliothèque Nationale), led to lobbying within IFLA, and no follow-through.**X51** It provides another instance of the oft-remarked intersection of personalities and circumstances, where Dr. Eskander's plain-spoken ways have made him friends among the Italians and British, enemies among the French, and mixed relations with the Americans. Faced as he is with an institution and a country on the brink, he might be forgiven for a want of tact now and then.

In a communication to Arthur Smith of OCLC, Dr. Eskander pointed to the dearth of reference works and social science materials (in both English and Arabic) in the library's collections. Indeed, collection development is a critical unmet need, and its effective achievement will require funding, assistance, time, and enhanced security, all in abundance.

In the "Cemetery of Books", Dr. Eskander described his progressive and innovative plans for reorganizing and modernizing his institution, providing for greater accountability and communication among its staff. Among other measures that he cited, are:

"I removed all corrupt and lazy elements from positions of responsibility, while promoting a number of qualified young female staff to higher positions. I also focused my attention on lifting the morale of male and female staff alike. The culture of taking orders was dominant. Staff members were unable to and sometimes afraid of taking initiative. I have encouraged them to be proactive and creative. The new culture has begun gradually but steadily to take root in the internal life of NLA.

"I reorganized the structure of the National Library and Archive as the first step in the long process of modernizing our institution. I radically changed the mechanisms of decision making and implementation by democratizing them. Now, librarians and archivists elect their own representatives who will participate at the meetings of the council of managers, where decisions are made. These representatives can monitor all activities within NLA and meet the DG anytime they want."

However, after the election of a new government in December 2005, following the ratification of the new constitution, the division of cabinet seats amongst the victorious parties saw the Ministry of Culture become one of the ministries to be headed by a member of Muqtada al-Sadr's party.**X52** It has been clear for some time that many of the ministries are primarily seen as sites of patronage and corrupt practices, depending to some extent upon which party is in charge, an often sorry display of ideology and venality. Whatever his problems with the new minister, it was the previous one, Mr. Nori Al-Rawi, a Sunni and professed pan-Arabist, and his cronies who were completely out of sympathy with what Dr. Eskander was trying to achieve, circumstances that forced him to engage in frequent rear-guard actions to stay in place and achieve his ends.**X53** His situation somewhat parallels the case of Dr. Donny George, President of the State Board

of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) in Iraq, who resigned his post and fled the country in August 2006, complaining of intense interference at the Iraq Museum from a similar cast of characters in the al-Sadr movement who are running the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.**X54** Corruption goes hand-in-hand with excessive politicization, so, as Dr. Eskander states, “I have been forced to put my ideas into action behind the back of those who are above me. Without resorting to unconventional methods and tactics, it would have been impossible for to reconstruct the INLA. No minister or any influential person encouraged me or assisted me to breathe life into [it].”**X55** Dr. Eskander’s candor and commitment to transparency reminds one of the remark by Louis Brandeis, great US Supreme Court justice (1916-1939), “Publicity is justly commended as a remedy for social and industrial diseases. Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.”**X56**

Using various sources of support, Dr. Eskander was able to increase the size of his staff from 95 to 230, exclusive of 30 armed guards whom he has also hired, the latter a clear index of the security problems. With this significant new hiring, Eskander stated, in “Cemetery of Books”, “I am relying on the new blood to modernize my institution and introduce a new culture based on transparency, taking initiatives, accepting responsibilities and constructive criticism.” By the end of 2006, the staff of the INLA had grown to a remarkable 425, excluding 39 guards. According to Eskander, of these 160 do library work, while 100 do archive work. Seven heads of departments, the majority of the deputy heads, and the person responsible for internet connection are women. The remaining people “work as technicians, administrators, receptionists, cleaners, gardeners, drivers...and so on.” These include eight conservators and seven bookbinders, and people to run the nursery, opened at the beginning of 2006. The INLA staff includes 28 professional librarians and 12 archivists (i.e., degree holders), and they hold regular in-house courses in librarianship and archival work for those in need of training. One of many reasons for the growth in staff has been the reintegration of some competent staff members with Ba’ath Party connections who were cashiered in 2003.**X57**

Given the already-discussed dispersal of documents during the chaos of invasion, and the damage to the archival materials already held at the INLA, it is good to note that the

Monarchical and Presidential Collections, largely comprising a great mass of books and other gifts to the Iraqi heads of state between 1921 and 2003, were successfully retrieved by Dr. Eskander and a friend from a garage in the former presidential palace complex in the Green Zone. He vividly describes the escapade in his online diary.X58

Two themes have been featured prominently in Dr. Eskander's diary in recent months (since the penultimate draft of this report was submitted to relevant lists). These reveal the degree to which he is a master of purposeful policy: plans related to the condition and prospects for the Archives, and the closely related continuing trouble with the Ministry of Culture, and his plans to remedy it. Regarding the Archives, one entry describes an important group of stolen documents that have fetched up in Amman. The price demanded for their return: \$50,000.00. The resources of the INLA could not possibly accommodate this, and no one in the government proved willing to respond seriously to the question, a reflection of the low level of concern for such critical records of Iraq's past, but unsurprising in officials appointed for their ideological credentials.X58A This issue was placed in perspective by an entry just two days later containing the information that the total budget of the Library for new acquisitions in the year 2007 is a mere \$7,000.00, even less than in 2006.X58B Under these conditions, \$50,000.00 might as well be a million dollars.

Despite the setbacks of the looting and the fires, Dr. Eskander has ambitions for a revived national archive. This requires fundamental changes in the archives legislation, presently dating from 1983, that makes their duty clear to all civil servants, that makes the Archives the repository for documents from the Saddam regime's civilian and security institutions, and that ensure the return of Iraqi documents and records seized by the invading forces in 2003 as part of a vain search for so-called weapons of mass destruction. All such documents and records would be constitutionally defined as "invaluable parts of Iraq's national culture heritage."X58C This rule would necessarily be applied to the other caches of Iraqi documents which ended up in the hands of many private parties in the chaos following the invasion, and demonstrates Dr. Eskander's vision as fully national, unbound by the parochial views that blinker most Iraqi

politicians, who are saddled, however willingly, with a political system determined from the beginning by the CPA to be based on sectarian and ethnic values and concerns. What barely worked in Lebanon in the best of times is demonstrably failing in Iraq.

Two important, practical elements of Dr. Eskander's plans are the Archive Storage Project, to result in a new, five-story facility,^{X58D} and the Library of Pioneers. Clearly, the former building is a critical addition if Dr. Eskander's ambitions for consolidating national archival materials at one institution are to bear fruit. The bidding process for the latter has been successfully realized.^{X58E} It was already in the planning stages under the Saddam regime, as a place for the libraries of scholars and literary figures who had accepted Ba'athist ideology. A corrupt system had been in place whereby the old regime would purchase these collections (sometimes only their lesser part), and reward the person with unmerited payments, leaving the INLA with largely useless collections. Eskander's plan is that the INLA would welcome the libraries of published works donated by prominent figures, but only as donations, with those not necessary for the INLA's collections being dispersed to regional libraries. The new Library of Pioneers will collect the "works, private papers, photos and letters (i.e. primary sources)...of outstanding Iraqis [who have] played a significant cultural and scientific part in the development of modern Iraq in different fields..."^{X58F} Dr. Eskander's vision of the new Library of Pioneers is based on his belief "that the religiously and ethnically fragmented Iraq needs such a library, a library that can play a role in shaping a new modern historical memory and national cultural identity for all Iraqis, regardless of their ethnic and religious background,"^{X58G} although these sentiments apply equally well to the guiding principle of the Archives.

In a discussion of the equipment present and need in the Archive, including four brand-new readers that had been sent by the Czech government, which vies with the Italians for the lead in responsible and effective action vis-à-vis the INLA, Dr. Eskander mentions the need for cabinets for the remaining maps and photos, stating the shocking fact that "The INLA lost 98% of maps and photos and all [of] their cabinets in mid-April 2003"^{X58H} This brings to the mind of a photo archivist the equally sad and regrettable

fact that the deliberate destruction of the National and University Library of Bosnia-Herzegovina in August 1992 had resulted in the complete destruction of by far the most important collection of historical photographs of that country.

Dr. Eskander believes that an institution as important as the Iraq National Library and Archive should not be subject to the whims of the Minister of Culture, hack of whichever party he may be, and has been lobbying for legislation to achieve autonomy. At several points, he complains of the micromanagement on the part of the Minister, who has control over all hires (and thus delays the formal appointment of worthy staff members and tries to foist his cronies on the institution), and any purchase valued at over \$1,500.00. This results in constant interference and interminable delays.X58I In regard to this fraught relationship, Eskander says, “I am a strong advocate of decentralization and liberalization of decision-making and implementation...He [the Minister of Culture] wants people to be led, whereas I want people to lead...The Minister wanted to appoint people according to their political orientation and religious background, while I sought to appoint people according to their qualifications, experience, and age.”X58J

As a sure sign of the dereliction of the Ministry of Culture, and the necessity to achieve independence for the INLA, Dr. Eskander cites the results of a survey for the year 2006 that revealed this Ministry to be one of two that had failed to spend more than 1% (one percent) of funds allocated from the national budget for special projects, in this instance of a cultural character that could have benefited the INLA.X58K

After somewhat rocky beginnings in his relations with the Library of Congress, Dr. Eskander has announced the signing of a memorandum of cooperation between LC and the INLA in the World Digital Library Project.X59 This effort is an extension of the American Memory Project,X60 which presently contains 10,000,000 records, and is dedicated to supporting the scanning of important and unique textual, visual and sound documents so that they may be made freely available on the internet. As Eskendar says, “I am pinning my hopes on this project to scan a huge portion of our collections of invaluable historical newspapers and journals, before we lose them forever.”X61

Security

The continuing decline in the state of security in Baghdad and much of Iraq was exemplified by the vicissitudes of the INLA. In 2004, René Teijgeler commented on the fact that the parlous state of affairs could scarcely be exaggerated, stating, “I have not been to the National Library in three weeks; it is simply too dangerous to go out in the Red Zone [from the Green Zone, which contained, among other things, first the CPA and then the American Embassy in one of Saddam’s palace complexes]. Besides, me going over there will also put the people at the library in danger. The [head] librarian has again been threatened with death.”**X62** The recent decision by Dr. Eskander to place his diary online, starting with his November 2006 entry, on the British Library website has offered interested parties a vivid idea of the harrowing realities of daily life in Baghdad, including a direct attack on his own car, and of keeping his institution running.**X63** In early March 2006, he had been the first to inform me that his country was in a state of civil war. In response to a question concerning how he managed to get his large staff to come to work everyday, he said that a full 30%—more recently a third—of his total budget went to transporting his staff to and from work. In this process, three of his drivers had been killed. More recently, the transport contractors bidding for the new contract had all doubled the sum demanded, one finally going down to a 45% increase, which would have required every member of the staff to contribute, but which was backed out of. Dr. Eskander and the INLA’s transport committee have agreed “not to bow to the blackmail of the greedy contractors,”**X64** but the institution’s capacity to function remains highly vulnerable on this score. The most recent news is that, with the support of his staff, and with the willingness of some of them to act as volunteer drivers, Dr. Eskander has resolved to acquire a small fleet of eleven minibuses to do the job of staff transport. However, this will use up 50% of his budget for 2007, with more to be acquired in 2008. The reliability and freedom from extortion makes the investment worthwhile.**X64A**

While having commented that his staff was often loath to bring their troubles to his attention, Dr. Eskander posted the statistics for all of 2006 for the known impact of the

violence on his staff, including 4 assassinations, 66 unlawful deaths of relatives, 2 kidnappings, 6 kidnappings of relatives, 58 death threats, and 51 forced displacements. In January, violence around Haifa St., running directly in front of the INLA, and also in the neighborhood behind it, which included direct attacks on the INLA itself, caused him to reluctantly shut the institution for about a week. It has been open and shut since, leading Eskander to come up with a system whereby every staff member works only four days a week to minimize the danger for each. In just a month, some of the aforementioned statistics have been added to. Furthermore, eleven members of Dr. Eskander's staff have recently applied for early retirement, the insecurity around the INLA, and the terrifying commute being the primary reason. He fears more will follow their lead.X64B

After all of the fighting in the vicinity of the INLA, the building incurred major damage when a rocket took out a long section of its fence, more than 100 windows were blown in, furniture destroyed, a generator and other features damaged.X64C The damaged fence posed a major security risk, and the loss of a generator and other damage a gross inconvenience. The hassles of getting approvals for repairs from the laggardly Ministry of Culture compounded this situation as in all problems requiring significant expenditure of funds.

The breakdown of the INLA's link to the Internet and its capacity to maintain its official Web site also illustrates the consequences of the prevailing lack of security. The contract for Internet service was with the Ministry of Communication, and direct service was to be provided by the local Bab al-Mudham Communications office. However, the largely Shi'ite staff was under constant threat from Sunni extremists, three of them had been assassinated, and they simply refused to come the short way to the INLA.X64D Consequently, the INLA had no Internet service, and Dr. Eskander was forced to use internet cafés to answer his own e-mail messages. The solution was to employ a new satellite internet system, made possible by the donation by the ever-helpful Italians of a complete system, including the dish and the receiver, greatly reducing installation costs.X64E This involved shifting the account to the Directorate of Electronic Systems

of the Ministry of Industry, which agreed to charge the INLA \$8,000.00 annually for the service.X64F

The diary continues to provide an ongoing account of the vicissitudes of life for its staff and their families, whether at work, on the way to work or back, or at home. The second attack on the Shi'ite al-Askari Shrine in Samarra, which resulted in the loss of its minarets, prompted Dr. Eskander to immediately close the INLA and permit his staff to return home as quickly as possible to ride out the ripples and waves of tit-for-tat violence that have become a prominent feature of life in Iraq. The inevitable curfew was imposed, prompting Eskander to observe, "The streets were totally empty when I left home to see a friend who lived just down the road. Baghdad seemed an abandoned and forgotten city. But, at least there was no sound of car bombs and shelling."X64G

Saad Eskander's diary and other personal communications have created a picture of the INLA as a community of caring individuals, fostered in every way by the indefatigable efforts of its leader, and reminding us all that, given a chance, Iraqis of all confessional and ethnic backgrounds would live cooperatively together but for a small minority of fanatics and opportunists, and the harsh circumstances that have unleashed them on their fellow countrymen.

The violence has consequences far beyond the INLA, undermining initiative and the capacity for redeveloping Iraqi institutions and the economy, and causing the flight of many of the most competent members of society for safer havens in Amman, Damascus, and elsewhere. The inter-communal violence demonstrates that even those who don't have personal enemies have categorical enemies. Thus, no one is safe. Furthermore, there is a continuum between criminal gangs and insurgents and Shi'ite militias, any and all of whom may use kidnapping for ransom, further debilitating the Iraqi middle and upper middle classes, whose knowledge and skills are critical to the future of Iraq. That at least 2,000,000 Iraqis have fled the country, and approximately 1,500,000 are internally displaced, represents a horrendous loss of human capital when it is most needed.

The plight of Iraqi academic libraries is in large part conditioned by the status of the universities, where the security situation and everything dependent upon it has progressively worsened with time, despite efforts at rehabilitation. At the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting in Boston in November 2006, one special session was titled “Hazardous Conditions: Academic Freedom and Academic Life in Iraq”.**X65** The participants were three senior Iraqi academics, Taher al-Bakaa, presently at Suffolk University, Abdul Sattar Jawad, at Duke University, and Saad Jawad, still at Baghdad University. Their testimony provided an unending tale of gloom. According to them, approximately 300 faculty members have been assassinated, whether for their explicit roles as university professors or as victims of the growing inter-communal violence, or as a by-product of kidnapping, while 4,000 of them have fled the country, a further indication of a devastating brain drain.**X66** Concerning the 300 assassinated academics, not a single assailant has been charged let alone convicted, which one participant grimly compared to the upending of Sadr City by US soldiers in the search for one kidnapped Iraqi-American soldier.**X67** This represents an unimaginable impact on the capacity for Iraqi universities to function and for university students to learn. Indeed, all reports indicate that approximately one third of enrolled students attend classes, although it can be worse. The Iraq Students and Youth League discovered that only 6 percent of student and professors attended the University of Baghdad in early December 2006.**X68** Saad Jawad mentioned that the teaching of 125 specialties at the University of Baghdad had simply ceased, and that much teaching was now being undertaken by individuals holding only MA degrees. Anything corrosive of the viability of Iraqi universities has a direct impact on forward movement in the redevelopment and sustainability of their libraries. The same circumstances that drive professors away, drive librarians away, and discourage development by undermining demand.

The fate of al-Mutanabi Street, the site of Baghdad’s book publishing, printing, and book market, and many cafes that served as the center for the country’s informal intellectual life, provides a coda for this discussion of security matters. As the situation worsened, and after a couple prior bomb attacks, the vital scene there during the 2003 efflorescence

had subsided. Nevertheless, business continued behind shutters. Dr. Eskander has written, “The INLA purchases about 95% of new publications from al-Mutanabi St.” However, a huge car bomb attack ended all that on 5 March 2007. From the upper story of the INLA, Dr. Eskander could see, “Tens of thousands of papers [...] flying high, as if the sky was raining books, tears and blood. The view was surreal. Some of the papers were burning in the sky. Many burning pieces of paper fell on the INLA’s building.” His commentary on the official response: “Our political leaders are the best when it comes to the ‘extremely difficult’ task of issuing condemnation statements, while the annihilation of our culture and intellectual class goes on before their very eyes everyday.” His summation: “This day will be always remembered as the day when books were assassinated by the forces of darkness, hatred and fanaticism.”**X69**

More generally, a ruthless minority in any society (in this instance, the vanguard groups in the inter-communal conflict), can destroy neighborliness, a sense of the commonweal, and create poisonous prejudice where it was either quiescent or absent. Saddam is gone, but equally ruthless, power-besotted, and greedy forces are in play, and the violence unleashed does not respect persons or institutions, any of whom will offend some party or parties in this conflict simply by their identity or nature.

Status of other principal independent institutions in Baghdad

The **Maktabat al-Awqaf**, or **Central al-Awqaf Library**, supervised by the Ministry of Religious Endowments, fared badly. As described by Zain al-Naqshbandi (coming after the other reports cited above, which described the devastation more impressionistically), “This is the oldest turathi (heritage) and cultural institution in Iraq. Its collection consists of waqfiyyas (endowment documents) of important personages and contains 6,500 mss in all fields of knowledge. The library also had a collection of 45,000 printed books, of which 6,000 were books in the Ottoman script...”**X70** 5,000 of the manuscripts, including an important collection of Korans, were saved by the staff; otherwise, everything else including all of the institution’s furnishings were either systematically looted or burnt. Al-Naqshbandi plaintively stated that “no party or humanitarian

organization” had come to its assistance as of his report’s date, June 2004. It has apparently been refurbished.

The **Bayt al-Hikma**, a modern institution named after the medieval House of Wisdom established by al-Ma’mun in 832, was installed as recently as 1995 in one of the rare remaining ‘Abbasid structures, commonly known as the ‘Abbasid Palace’ although probably a madrasa, with a modern annex. Quoting *Opening the Doors*, “this Bayt al-Hikma functioned as a research center, with lecture facilities, publications, a library and a museum.”**X71** As a favored institution of the regime in its last years, it was even more directly subject to political distortions than other principal institutions. Given this circumstance, the authors of *Opening the Doors* comment on the surprising fact that the Bayt al-Hikma was the very first cultural institution to receive a grant for rehabilitation from the CPA. It had been badly looted from lecture hall to library, and partially torched as well. Again, it has apparently been refurbished, although local newspapers have indicated that it may move temporarily to Najaf.**X72**

The best news was that the collections of the **Dar Al-Makhtutat Al-'Iraqiyya**, or **Iraqi House of Manuscripts**, formerly the Dar Saddam lil-Makhtutat, the Saddam House of Manuscripts, whose holdings comprised as many as 50,000 manuscripts collected from all over Iraq, were saved.**X73** Their loss would have been the equivalent for Iraq and its cultural heritage that the destruction of the Oriental Institute’s collections was to Bosnia but at nearly ten times the number. These collections had all been stored in metal trunks in a bunker with air-conditioning, which, mercifully, had not been flooded or looted. Dr. Eskandar has proposed that these collections become part of the Iraq National Archive, and be housed in a building near the INLA; however, the House of Manuscripts is presently under the aegis of the State Board of Antiquities, which is subordinate to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and would have to be transferred to that of the Ministry of Culture for this to be effected. Sectarian rivalries between the two ministries complicate matters. Dr. Eskandar remains concerned about the safety and condition of this extraordinary collection due to the fact that the manuscripts have never been moved out of their place of hiding since the invasion. For their preservation, he believes they

should be placed on the premises of the INLA while ultimate custodianship is worked out.X74

Iraqi Jewish Archive

One of the purposes of sending my report to the Iraq Crisis list and other interested parties before posting it on the Web was to elicit responses in areas where my investigations had been stymied to one degree or another. This was truer of the status of the Iraqi Jewish Archive than of any other topic. Due to the press it has received, and the degree of potential controversy, this collection of documents deserves attention here. *The Iraqi Jewish Archive Preservation Report*X74A describes a complex accumulation of manuscripts and documents either related to Judaism or the Jewish community in Iraq, discovered in early May 2003. The following review of the situation also relies upon the very recent *Iraqi Jewish Archive Status Report 25 May 2007*.X74B

This agglomeration of materials had been sequestered in the basement of the Mukhabarat, the State Security Services, and had been subjected to flooding, the direct result of a “Shock and Awe” strike that broke water pipes, leaving the Judaica lying in three feet of water, according to an article, “Saddam’s Secret Jewish Archives”, in *Moment Magazine*.X74C This article also described the way in which Harold Rhode, a member of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld’s staff present in Iraq directly after the invasion, appealed to Ahmed Chalabi for emergency funds to drain the water. Funds privately provided by Chalabi, and by Harvey Krueger, a Lehman Brothers investment banker, achieved the desired result.X74D Thus a seat-of-the-pants operation involving individual and private initiative at a time of tremendous flux—and in the absence of normal rules and protocols—precipitated the effort to save these materials.

The initial and follow-up reports by the US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), include a description of the preservation efforts taken subsequent to the initial examination of the documents in Iraq by Doris Hamburg, Director of Preservation Programs for NARA, and Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, Chief of NARA’s Document Conservation Laboratory, on 20-23 June 2003. After the sodden

Judaica were removed from the basement, exposure to the environment, including being left in the hot sun, led to serious problems with mold, compounding the negative consequences of soaking. A freezer was subsequently found for them in Iraq, but the conservation specialists determined that the threatened materials required vacuum freeze-drying prior to conservation, and it was proposed that the documents be flown to the NARA Southwest Regional facility near Fort Worth, Texas for that purpose. To achieve this end, an agreement was reached between the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH) and the Coalition Provisional Authority. According to Dr. Donny George, “at that early time in 2003, since there was no Iraqi institution in action, even the Ministry of Culture, it was only the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage that was functioning, so the CPA contacted the SBAH, and asked for permission to take the archive to the States for stabilization and conservation. At that time the chairman of the SBAH, Dr. Jaber Khalil Ibrahim, approved for the archives to leave the country ‘Iraq’ for that purpose for two years, starting on August 17, 2003.”**X74F** A formal agreement was made, in turn, between the CPA and NARA.**X74G** From that point forward, these archival materials have been officially under the control of NARA.**X74H** Dr. George also stated that, at a later date, when it became clear that two years was not going to suffice to achieve the hoped-for results, a meeting was held between Doris Hamburg, Drs. René Teijgeler, first and last Senior Consultant for Culture in the US embassy in Baghdad after the demise of the CPA, and Dr. George in Berlin to discuss the possibility of an Iraqi delegation formally visiting Washington to discuss the future work, the eventual repatriation of the archive to Iraq, and reformulate the agreement. He also indicated that this has not taken place, thus far.**X74I** However, the *Status Report*, indicates that the CPA designated the Ministry of Culture as the partner to the understanding in June 2004, and that communication between the ministry and representatives of the US Department of State and Embassy have continued as the project has proceeded.**X74J** A somewhat different perspective on this question was provided by Drs. Teijgeler, who reported that the expiration of the original agreement led to an Iraqi demand for the repatriation of the materials under various internal pressures and inspired by inaccurate press accounts. The upshot of this was an anticipated new understanding to be signed in 2006 “to continue the preservation activities in the USA in full co-operation

with Iraqi conservators and to ensure the safe return of the archive to Iraq (personal communication with the director of the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, Berlin, November 2005).”**X74K** Given the state of flux in the very character of the governance of Iraq during this period, it is no surprise that a clear view is difficult to come by. Still, it appears that an official understanding is in place, and that it permits continued efforts at conservation with the acquiescence of the Iraqi authorities concerned with the matter.

Since their arrival in the US, the Judiaca have remained in the National Archives building in Texas. When agreeing to the transfer from Iraq, NARA committed itself to cover overhead costs for administrative functions, lab use, storage and utilities as an in-kind contribution to the project, while the US Military provided the courier and transport for the collection to come to the United States.**X74L** As is stated in the *Status Report*, “However, because this [the Iraqi Jewish Archive] is not a U.S. government collection, NARA funds [could not] be used for [the preservation and cataloguing functions of] this project. Accordingly, funding [needed to] be provided by private donors or other government agencies with authority to do so.”**X74M**

Contacts between NARA and the Center for Jewish History, based in New York, eventuated in the latter receiving a grant for \$100,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). A conservator and conservation assistant were hired by the Center for Jewish History to work under NARA supervision to make a basic conservation assessment of each item or group of materials, as the first part of Phase II (Phase I having resulted in the freeze drying). This entailed removing each item from the metal trunks in which they had been transported, giving each an identification number, vacuuming each to remove the first surface layer of dirt and mold, and taking several digital photographs of each (including title page and covers for books), and rehousing each item in an archivally sound manner. This work was preliminary to using the photographs to achieve either bibliographic or subject identification of each item. **X74N**

Virtually all of the cataloguing work remains to be done, and much of it will require the attention of language experts. This, in turn, is preliminary to the full conservation of the

archive's materials, and will also serve to establish priorities in work. So far as I understand the situation, the millions of dollars necessary to achieve full intellectual control and complete conservation have yet to be secured.**X75** Controversy over the status of the archive cannot have made fund-raising easy.

The fate of the Jewish community of Iraq, dating continuously from the time of the Babylonian Captivity of 586 BC, and flourishing for much of it into the 20th century, is surely the most tragic of all the Jewish communities of the Middle East, resulting from the consequences of one of the scourges of modernity, nationalism, in concert with its Jewish equivalent, Zionism. This fate is schematically but tellingly described online by Mitchell Bard.**X76** The first pogrom came in 1941 after an anti-British, pro-fascist coup (the enemy of my enemy...), which was subsequently suppressed by British forces. The establishment of the State of Israel sealed the fate of this large and vibrant community, although its consequences were played out over nearly the next twenty years.

Even with the uncertainty regarding ultimate funding, the Iraqi Jewish Archive provides a special case, with which much else that has been done and not done in Iraq could be and has been compared.**X77** Efforts via e-mails and phone calls by the author to Robert Sink, Chief Archivist at the Center for Jewish History, and the overseer of this project from their end, and who had been reasonably responsive during the writing of my 2005 report, to find out exactly how things stood from his point of view and that of his institution proved unavailing. Many of the questions I had for Mr. Sink were finally answered by the *Status Report*, kindly provided by Doris Hamburg. However, I could not help but wonder whether his silence expressed a proprietary attachment that may have developed at the Center for Jewish History, although another possibility is an unwillingness to discuss difficulties with fundraising (easily imagined: “Yes if they are staying in New York or going to Israel; forget it if they are returning to Iraq”). There are certainly those who find it difficult to accept that these Jewish materials, interred for decades by a feared and loathed secret police, and representing the legacy of a people destroyed by hatred born of an essentializing ideology—similar to the way the lives of equally innocent Palestinians have been blighted by another exclusivist ideology—should return whence

they came. However, they remain part of the Iraqi patrimony as well, and it is even more important that these signs of the complete cultural heritage of the land of the two rivers remain as a testament to the richness of its past, for the Iraqi people as a whole and their culture have been victims of the grim political process that singled out the Jewish community for particular attention. A commitment was made that may not be abrogated, and digital documentation should ultimately create a permanent record that will stay in the US when the original materials have been returned, when circumstances permit.

At one point, the commitment was to return these materials to the Iraq National Museum when they were catalogued, conserved, and digitally documented. It is worth noting that, according to Teijgeler, some 360 other Jewish manuscripts survived the looting of the Iraq Museum, safe behind doors welded shut.^{X78} Nevertheless, a case can be made that the Iraq National Library and Archives is the proper place for these materials. It is presided over by Dr. Saad Eskander, who has made a major case for the National Archives to be just that, the resting place for all important documents of Iraqi governance and heritage, a place, furthermore, committed to preservation and access, given the means to achieve these goals. Dr. Donny George, who, himself, was once director of the Iraq Museum, has declared, "I personally believe that the National Library and Archives should be involved in all this, because the archives should go back to them and not to the Iraq Museum, because the Iraq Museum holds material, according to the Iraqi Law of Antiquities, that is two hundred years and older, and all that archive is not that old; it is archive of about one hundred years and should be kept with the Iraqi archives, and they have their own law for the archives too."^{X78A}

University Libraries

The situation at university libraries varies enormously between institutions, and from library to library within universities as well. As has already been pointed out, even surviving Iraqi library collections are woefully out of date, with often limited collections, and overused books falling apart. The newest universities had barely begun building libraries when they were looted. The effects of the looting ranged dramatically. The University of Baghdad features two campuses, each with a main library. One, the Bab al-

Muazzam Campus' Waziriyya Central Library was badly looted and set on fire, although most of its collections were saved, while the Central Library of the al-Jadiriya Campus only lost window glass, doors, and computers.**X79** According to Arnoult, the central library of the University of Mosul "was vandalised and looted (furniture, equipment and books), but not burnt...A strong and energetic reaction of religious authorities of the city (appeals in the mosques condemning theft and requiring restitution of stolen books) gave good results."**X80** Somewhere between 10 and 30 percent of the library's books were lost. Even in places where the book collections were largely left undisturbed, all of the furnishings were typically stripped.

Nearly the whole principal library of the University of Basrah was incinerated—along with other university and municipal libraries. It, like the case of the INLA, provides a vivid instance of the disaster resulting from the wave of looting. A report, "University Life in Basrah Today",**X81** tells this grim story. Penned by Hamid K. Ahmed, who had studied and taught there during the 1970s and 1980s but in recent years has been a professor at Halton College in the UK, it included the following assessment: "I found out that the school was in desperate need of everything. The whole internal system of operation - electricity, water, communication, air conditioning, etc. - was gone. Equipment and furniture had been looted. People had set fire to most of the buildings including the libraries in different colleges and departments of the school. The remaining books, journals and research materials were decades out of date." This was an institution that had only partially been rehabilitated from the devastation caused by the Iran-Iraq war, when Basrah University was situated perilously close to the front lines.

Various reports have provided detailed lists of lost equipment and furnishings for a few university libraries. For example, that for Al-Mustansiriyah University Library in Baghdad covers 21 categories of items, ranging from 27 computers to 60 fluorescent bulbs.**X82** These simple numbers provide an inkling of the state of loss of these institutions, which circumstances had rendered utterly dependent upon outside help to remedy their plight. And such numbers, stark and compelling as they are, leave out the sense of loss felt by those who staffed or used such institutions. Also interviewed in

About Baghdad, a woman laments the destruction of the library at the Academy of Arts, “I lost my brother and came to the library to study and forget.”**X83**

Dr. Faiza Adeeb Abdul-Wahid Al-Bayati, Technical Advisor to the University of Baghdad’s libraries and research centers, has described the situation of what was the oldest and most important university in Iraq, with 86,000 students and 24 colleges, 5 institutes, 9 centers, and 4 offices (a list daunting in itself). She also created a report itemizing 23 categories of infrastructural and furnishing needs for most of these entities.**X84**

Dr. Al-Bayati also reported that the sum of 80,000,000 Iraqi dinars (ca. \$62,500 at rates current in 2005) allocated from the university’s budget has resulted in the reconstruction of the Central Library of the Al-Waziriya campus, then nearly complete.**X85** Given the enormous need, the contributions from outside Iraq have been disappointing, according to Dr. Al-Bayati, with small but useful donations from the Goethe Institute. One important contribution, through British publishers Blackwell’s and Thompson Gale and the British Council, has been free access to data in British academic databases, which she has described as particularly helpful to university researchers (and which is cited below in reference to the Iraqi Virtual Science Library).

It is universally acknowledged that adequate computational capacity is critical to the functioning of any serious academic institution in an era when virtually all text creation and communication is computer based, as is access to the internet in an era of instant communication and of abundant web resources—even if some critical ones are only available by subscription. As Anwar Diab, General Manager of eLink Associates and resident of Massachusetts, has explained, with the fiber optic network severely damaged, and still unrepaired since the war, the only alternate means of access to the internet is via satellite, which is relatively expensive. He stated that the main campus of the University of Baghdad at Jadiriya alone two-three MB of dedicated (not shared) bandwidth is required. The cost for this campus alone is \$15,000 per month. “In two-three years, it is expected that the new fiber optics network will become functional and then there will be

no need for Satellite Internet and the cost of bandwidth will become nominal.” He continued, “In addition, there are only a couple computer centers/cafés in the campus, but these are operating as independent units, each with its own crude satellite access, using a shared bandwidth... The university lacks even the simplest technology-based integration between the administration, faculty and students. They don’t even have their own e-mail system.”**X86** Compounding these other deficits, it is shocking to discover that the absence of a steady supply of electricity, which infamously bedevils the Iraqi population as a whole, also applies to Iraq’s universities, even including the University of Baghdad where some computer centers only have access for two or three hours per day, in the absence of generators, which are expensive to purchase and to sustain. Neither the country nor its universities can function effectively as long as they are subjected to such disastrous power deficiencies. It is a source of the greatest concern that the situation has scarcely changed since Mr. Diab’s report, originally cited in this author’s report, *Indispensable yet Vulnerable*, of 2005.**X87**

Assistance required and efforts considered or achieved to assist Iraqi libraries

The story of assistance to Iraqi academic libraries is as much one of plans thwarted and hopes dashed as goals achieved. Some of these projects and initiatives have involved the restoration and development of library infrastructure, some have focused on collections development, some have been virtual, involving websites and online resources, while others have focused on training. Those efforts at assistance that appear to have been most successful at achieving manifest results are those addressing the training of Iraqi academic librarians, and those achieving access to online resources, although the latter are predicated at infrastructure development, and must consequently be measured in terms of degrees of access from within Iraq. The more ambitious the assistance scheme, the less likely that it has come to fruition, for reasons which have practically nothing to do with the virtue of the projects involved, and very much to do with the failure of the US government to effectively support Iraqi higher education in all of its modalities, and the lack of other sources of funding of a scale sufficient to the tasks at hand. John Agresto was higher education czar under the CPA. He asked for \$1.2 billion to make Iraqi universities viable centers of learning; he received \$9 million. He asked USAID (U.S.

Agency for International Development) for 130,000 classroom desks, and received 8,000.X88 Libraries would have been indirect beneficiaries of such an initiative, but specific applications to USAID, other US granting agencies, and private foundations have been thwarted to one degree or another. Besides the UNESCO meetings already cited, numerous international convocations have occurred under various auspices, all intended to call attention to and shed light on the plight of Iraqi libraries and archives, or educational institutions generally, and to make specific recommendations regarding their rehabilitation, usually with very little to show for them in constructive terms. X89

Due to the looting, Iraqi academic libraries became virtually an infrastructural *tabula rasa*. Considerable but highly uneven headway has been made in the refurnishing and development of these institutions, but it is striking how often the work done has been funded by the Iraqi government itself, out of necessity. Consequently, there are limits, such as the INLA's inability to increase its internet access in two years. While they were still in Baghdad, I had emphasized to the representatives of the CPA responsible for education and culture that this was the moment to design interconnected automated systems to link the principal Iraqi academic libraries and foster cooperative cataloguing and other online functions, which would provide direct benefits to limited staffs and to users by obviating duplicated effort, expediting access, and increasing awareness of holdings throughout the country. Similarly, John Agresto's proposal for Iraqi universities prescribed funding for "a nationwide electronic library network".X90 Sadly, the rapidly degrading situation, the niggardly provision of funds, and locally-oriented efforts to achieve any sort of functionality have militated against this kind of global thinking and acting. Highly efficient and responsive functionaries, such as Wishyar Muhammed and René Teijgeler, each in his way dedicated to a synoptic and non-parochial view, were the last to hold their respective positions, there being no functional equivalent on the Iraqi side.

Dr. Eskander was not encouraging regarding development of a LAN (local area network) for all Iraqi academic libraries as well. Arthur Smith of OCLC had proposed such a design employing the DYNIX system, but Eskander considered it unworkable, because

(1) although they deemed it less than perfect, almost all academic and major institutional libraries in Iraq use WINISIS, (2) the expense was beyond their reach, and (3) they do not wish to cease their automation work while a completely new one is installed.**X91** However, Arthur Smith indicated**X92** that WINISIS and DYNIX can interchange data, and that the Iraqis could continue to work in WINISIS while DYNIX was being implemented, and even after. This would indeed require considerable expense, and this is the sort of circumstance where UNESCO or the US government could be particularly helpful if they were genuinely committed to Iraq's future.

Dr. Eskander was also not sanguine about cooperation amongst the many Iraqi universities and institutions such as his own, saying that the hierarchical-mindedness instilled under Saddam remains in place, and that lateral, cooperative action is nearly impossible. This view was independently confirmed by a visitor to Harvard, Dr. Anis al-Rawi, Dean of Baghdad University's Science College for Women. In spring 2005, he said that competition not cooperation is the order of the day for Iraqi universities. This is likely to remain the case in the absence of a person of vision at the ministerial level supported by adequate funding to answer the most pressing needs of all universities, and create a comprehensive plan for all institutions of higher education.

The efforts of OCLC also provide a bright prospect in this context: insofar as Iraqi libraries have or develop the technical capacity and proceed to employ WorldCat, a comprehensive view of Iraqi holdings becomes progressively available. As of this writing, it has just begun at specific sites and massive assistance will be needed to realize this potential on an Iraq-wide basis. In support of cataloguing of Arabic language materials in particular, Arthur Smith of OCLC states, "It would be exceptionally beneficial if the 'Arabic collection libraries' from American University in Cairo, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, etc.—as well as the major libraries outside the Middle East—were to 'register' (set their holdings and/or contribute their records) to WorldCat. This would do three things right away that would be very important for the Iraqi libraries: (1) give the Iraqi libraries a richer source of copy cataloging; (2) let Iraqi libraries see who has what; and (3) provide a benchmark for their own collection development,"**X93** by

which means relative strengths and critical needs could be assessed on a comparative basis.

Coordination of Assistance

Insofar as possible, coordination and control should have been the bywords to govern all outside assistance to Iraqi academic libraries, including the efforts to rebuild collections—although an agency with more global concerns would also have been welcome.

Unfortunately, there has been no internal or external agency to achieve the compelling aims of avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort while enhancing the possibilities of cooperative assistance, of making sure that the Iraqi recipients receive publications and other sorts of support of value to them, of maximizing efficiency and breadth of distribution of assistance, and of mitigating the burdens on the recipients. In the case of libraries, I had hoped that IFLA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, would act as a clearinghouse for aid proposals, or, at the very least, establish a monitored web page where needs and initiatives could be posted and commented upon. IFLA's webpage is now three years out-of-date, demonstrating its lack of engagement.^{X94} This is disappointing, and no other entity—certainly no organ of the government of the United States, or of the U.N., such as UNESCO—has filled the void on its own initiative.

Upon his return from Iraq, René Teijgeler tried to find support for a website representing an effort entitled the Iraq Coordination Program, a web-based project that he would monitor himself in order to serve this critical coordinating function. Regrettably, displays of interest by the Royal Dutch Library and the ECPA (European Commission on Preservation and Access) did not turn into actual funding, nor did hopes for funding from NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities).^{X95}

The only compensation for the absence of a truly engaged and coordinating site has come from two sources: (1) The MELA (Middle East Librarians Association) webpage at the IraqCrisis website hosted by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, and managed by Charles Jones, who has posted many useful reports, descriptions of efforts at

assistance that are already underway, and other information, particularly concerning Iraqi archival collections, as noted earlier. (2) The Iraq Libraries Network, hosted by the Bielefeld University Library.**X96** Text on this site emphasizes that the work, although collaborative, has been carried out principally by Iraqi librarians, specifically Dr. Faiza Al-Bayati of the University of Baghdad and Dr. Abdul-Karim Kadhim from Al-Nahrain University. Regrettably, it offers more promise than attainment due to the usual circumstances that so afflict all Iraqis professionals; its latest update is 3 April 2006. It is particularly useful for its page on “Digital Library: E-journal and Database Access”, which does provide entrée to the principal e-resources that have been made available to Iraqi librarians and academics, such as the IVSL (Iraqi Virtual Science Library), and HINARI (Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative), of which more below.

The University of Chicago site also has important bibliographic information concerning pre-war holdings in libraries, archives and museums compiled by members of the MELA committee, and a guide to Iraqi institutional ownership stamps. Thousands of looted library books showed up openly on the Baghdad book market and, one may assume, places abroad, many with their identifying marks still present. This guide is to assist in returning these books to their rightful owners. Books have been returned, although not by this means, so far. When the library of the Engineering Faculty at the University of Technology was looted, the professors advertised in the community and managed to get approximately 40% of the lost materials returned, some gratis, some repurchased.**X97**

Assistance Projects

USAID-HEAD Initiatives

USAID-HEAD (Higher Education and Development Program) for Iraq sponsored five reasonably large-scale efforts to assist specified disciplines and Iraqi universities.**X98**

The five projects were:

(1) Public Health and Sanitation: undertaken by Jackson State University and the Mississippi Consortium for International Development in partnership with the Universities of Mosul and Dohuk, and the Nursing Institute at Dohuk.**X99**

(2) Strengthening Agricultural, Academic, Research, and Extension Programs: Agriculture Higher Education And Development (AHEAD), undertaken by The University of Hawaii's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Mosul's College of Agriculture and Forestry, and the University of Dohuk.**X100**

(3) Legal Education System Reform: an ambitious effort entitled "Raising the Bar: Legal Education Reform in Iraq"**X101** undertaken by The Human Rights Institute of DePaul University College of Law in conjunction with the International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences at Siracusa, Italy, working with the University of Baghdad, the University of Basrah and the University of Sulaimaniya (the latter in Iraqi Kurdistan)

(4): Archeology, Assyriology, and Environmental Health: Stony Brook University, in a consortium with Columbia University, Boston University and Oxford University, engaged in modernizing curricula and research programs in environmental health, and in archaeology and Assyriology in partnership with Baghdad University, Al-Mustansiriyya University in Baghdad, and the Universities of Mosul and Basrah.**X102**

(5) Institutional, Academic, and Leadership Strengthening: the Al-Sharaka Program for Higher Education in Iraq,**X103** supported by a consortium of institutions led by the University of Oklahoma and including Oklahoma State University, Cameron University, Langston University, and the University of Pittsburgh, working with the University of Technology in Baghdad, Salahaddin University in Irbil, Iraqi Kurdistan, Al-Anbar University, located in Ramadi, the University of Basrah, and the very new and underdeveloped University of Babylon at Hilla.

The story of the USAID-HEAD programs exemplifies what has been dangerously wrong-headed about the priorities of the US government regarding its ostensible interest in the rebuilding of Iraq. All five projects, originally budgeted at the paltry total sum of \$20.7 million, involved consortia of multiple institutions, a huge amount of effort, and were constituted for three years on an annually renewable basis, which seemed absurd from the outset, giving the difficulties of getting the work underway. As their first year came to an end, they were left wondering whether they would be renewed. Months after they should have heard, they finally learned that they were not. A couple limped along for a few

months employing unexpended funds. Al-Sharaka, for example, let go all American-based paid staff in order to use remaining funds from the first year to keep their Baghdad-based staff of 13 at work.^{X104} These projects, if not stillborn, were left unfinished, the participants thwarted, the Iraqi recipients and partners left high and dry. Either some bean counter, or other form of clueless apparatchik in the upper reaches of the Department of State simply cut this item from the budget. It was not USAID's doing, but the agency was evidently powerless—or without the will—to change it. Particularly given the scandalous manner in which billions were squandered by the CPA, according to many reports, any carefully conceived and reasonably well-functioning project should have been supported with minimal red tape throughout its proposed period of operation. Given the extent of need, three years should have been considered a minimum. This is entirely symptomatic of the US government's neglect of Iraqi higher education, despite the manifest fact that for Iraq to have a future, it must have viable universities, and effective libraries provide the very foundation for successful university education and research.

Of the five projects, three appeared most salient to question of the development of libraries:

Raising the Bar

For Raising the Bar, the stated objective of the project was “to support democratic progress and economic recovery in Iraq through the support of legal educational reconstruction and reform.”^{X105} Kimberli A. Morris was the library and educational technology specialist from DePaul University who worked in Iraq on the legal education reform project. This intrepid librarian lived on her own in Baghdad outside the Green Zone, which made her a rare figure among Americans working there, although she eventually had to move to Sulaimaniya, a much safer venue. According to the DePaul website, “Her work has focused on implementing new technologies in a legal research environment and training patron groups to make efficient use of available information.”^{X106} One of the project's intentions was to correct the consequences of damage and neglect to the law libraries at the three target institutions. To this end, Ms. Morris was involved not only with advanced technological issues but also finding and

procuring new book stacks. She posted her observations to a web-blog that provided an intimate account of her life and work in Iraq, which, sadly, turned out to be an instance of web ephemera, no longer available, its unique details and perspective apparently lost.

Stony Brook-Archaeology initiative

E. Christian Filstrup, Director of Libraries at Stony Brook University, was the author of the most extensive preliminary report dedicated to any of these projects, based on initial site visits.^{X107} He reported that 3,000 archaeology titles were acquired for the Universities of Baghdad and Mosul, and that OCLC (of which more below), had catalogued 2,000 of these in WorldCat. They were shipped from a US air force base to Baghdad. Courtesy of this project, the Archeology Library at the University of Baghdad was wired, and provided an Internet connection and computer workstations. An agreement with JSTOR,^{X108} the Scholarly Journal Archive, which provides online access to a multitude of academic journals, permitted access specifically to archaeology journals. In fact, this HEAD project provided the subvention that permitted several other archaeology journals to be added to the JSTOR file (but see IVSL below for more information about JSTOR). Stony Brook also paid RLG (Research Library Group) for a three-year subscription to Anthropology Plus for the University of Baghdad and University of Mosul libraries, and has contacted the Al-Sharaka Program to provide access to EBSCO resources. However, these temporarily-funded subscriptions, web-access provisions, and all others like them will have run out, and are not likely to have been renewed from other sources under the present circumstances.

Prof. Elizabeth C. Stone, an archaeologist at Stony Brook, arranged for an improved Internet connection for ACOR (American Center of Oriental Research), located in Amman, Jordan, where a series of training events for Iraqi professionals have subsequently been held (including one group of HEAD-related librarians augmented by librarians from the National Library and Iraq Museum, in Spring 2005). Iraqi archaeology faculty and graduate students, the first group to be trained in Amman, during the summer of 2004, had full access to both Anthropology Plus and JSTOR, affording them valuable experience in using Internet resources. This project's intention to digitize

principal archaeology texts and site reports was allocated to year two. The funding was never received. Dr. Stone has reported that they independently came up with funds to support the digitization of 170 volumes to be added to the ETANA (Electronic Tools and Ancient Near Eastern Archives) website.**X109**

Al-Sharaka Program for Higher Education in Iraq

The Al-Sharaka Program was described as broadly engaged in institutional, academic and leadership strengthening, although these are features of the other projects as well. Al-Sharaka had a variety of goals tailored to particular needs at each of its Iraqi partner institutions, ranging from GIS and remote sensing training, a cell biology lab, a field assessment lab, and training for assessing the nutritional status of children, a small ruminant science lab, and supporting archaeology and cultural tourism programs.

According to its promotional material, Al-Sharaka had “two objectives: providing sufficient educational infrastructure and strengthening university administration and leadership.”**X110** Prof. Thomas Owens, the Project Director for Al-Sharaka, described their work in some detail.**X111** A most exciting achievement of this project was to elicit the commitment of EBSCO Publishing to making 8,000-9,000 full text journals, reference works, country reports and other information resources available online to all Iraqi non-profit educational institutions (universities, schools and libraries), for three years at the relatively modest sum of \$25,000 per annum, paid for by the project.**X112** EBSCO complements JSTOR, which is smaller, more purely academic and a non-profit organization. It is a tribute to EBSCO that they were so ready to commit to this magnitude of assistance; however, the usual question applies: will this be sustained? For this opportunity to have maximum utility for Iraqi students and academics—and this applies to any other significant internet resource—copious, ready and fully-funded internet access must be available over time, or the Iraqis will be in the predicament of Coleridge’s Ancient Mariner, with “water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink.” Furthermore, all Iraqi universities and other academic institutions need the hardware installations to support this access by more than the most elite of their members; not just

faculty in the departments and institutes, and not just staff in the libraries, but everyone, including students at all levels.

The Al-Sharaka program planned the installation of an operating computer lab/internet center with a dedicated satellite bandwidth at its five partner institutions, one at a time, starting at the University of Technology. Adopting an ingenious approach, which has been sorely needed in development work of all sorts in Iraq, but scarcely ever emulated, namely, Al-Sharaka hired eight Iraqis to manage their Baghdad office, plus one representative from each of the partner universities to act in coordination with them. They acquired computer components on the local market, and then hired other Iraqis to construct the systems they needed in this and other computer labs. So long as quality control is maintained, it is ideal for such projects to employ Iraqis as many Iraqis as possible, taking advantage of their skills, developing new ones, and providing desperately-needed income. As of June 2005, internet centers had also been installed at Salahaddin University and the universities of Babylon and Basrah. The situation at Al-Anbar University in Ramadi had deteriorated to such an extent that, with agreement from USAID, Karbala University received the fifth internet center before the project was shut down in September 2005. **X113**

AHEAD/KAHEAD

It is a welcome fact that one of the five USAID-HEAD projects survived in a new guise beyond the limits of the State Department's emulation of Scrooge in yanking their funding after one year. This was AHEAD, Agricultural Higher Education and Development, based at the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) of the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Their final report **X114** describes their accomplishments in some detail. The report shows that the one important achievement for library development consisted in acquiring The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (TEEAL) **X115** for their partners at the universities of Mosul and Dohuk. This CD-ROM offers the complete contents of 140 journals covering the years 1993-2004, plus the 2005 update. AHEAD was able to access other funding to provide the same for the colleges of Agriculture at the University of Sulaimaniya (aka U. of Sulaimani), and

the University of Salahaddin. When they were able to procure LAN TEEAL, a less expensive Local Area Network version, they were able to extend the benefits to the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Mosul, and colleges of agriculture at the universities of Baghdad, Basrah, Diyala, Koya, and Tikrit. As their report states, “We estimate that more than 5,000 students, faculty and staff are directly benefiting from these comprehensive library enhancements. When these numbers are expanded to include farmers/land users who have access to the information within the system through researchers, extension workers and advisors, it is estimated that 2 million Iraqi citizens will ultimately benefit from this activity”**X116**

The success of their work resulted in the University of Hawaii team being, in effect, reborn as the Hawaii-Kurdistan Partnership for Revitalizing Agricultural Higher Education and Development (KAHEAD).**X117** With Dr. Samir El-Swaify as director and Dr. Ekhlass Jarjees as manager, this new effort is funded by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and is working in cooperation with the regional Ministry of Agriculture. However, the Hawaii team’s ambitions are not limited to Kurdistan. They have developed a proposal that would be called the Hawaii-Iraq Partnership for Revitalizing National Agricultural Higher Education and Development (NAHEAD), plans for which are presently pending consideration by new donors, and somewhat contingent upon the troubled situation in Baghdad.

In the meantime, one consequence of the Hawaii-Iraq partnership’s success was cooperation with the Sabre Foundation of Cambridge, which resulted in the recent delivery of 12,900 books and CD-ROMs to the University of Mosul, largely but not exclusively medical books and other textbooks, including the 2-volume 2004 *Miller’s Anesthesia*, at 3,200 pages.**X118** Funds for this shipment came from the University of Mosul, and from other sources through the efforts of Michael K. Masterson, who also worked directly with the university to determine their requirements. At the time, Masterson was serving at the U.S. Regional Embassy in Mosul.**X119** The contents of the shipment were provided gratis to the Sabre Foundation by Houghton Mifflin, John Wiley, Lippincott, McGraw Hill, Sinauer, W.W. Norton, Williams & Wilkins, and the World

Bank. The shipment went to northern Iraq via Turkey,**X120** and was facilitated by Drs. El-Swaify and Jarjees due to AHEAD's earlier commitment to Mosul. Two similar shipments containing books beneficial to many disciplines are being planned for universities in Iraqi Kurdistan, employ the Sabre Foundation's services, and are paid for by the Kurdistan Regional Government. The facilitation of these shipments is not a direct KAHEAD activity (i.e., not paid for out of the KAHEAD budget), but rather involves leveraging efforts in connection with it.**X121** The first shipment will comprise materials for 3 universities (Salahaddin, Sulaimani and Koya), and a number of institutes run by the Foundation for Technical Education (in Erbil, Shaqlawa and Sulaimaniya), while the second shipment is planned for Dohuk University. Books and CD-ROMs selected for these shipments cover medicine, surgery, pharmacology and veterinary science; economics; business law; forest management; environmental science; and many aspects of engineering, including water and septic systems.**X122**

The principal conclusion to derive from this development is that Iraqi initiative—and Iraqi funding in the absence of outside support—when combined with American or other foreign commitments can lead to positive results, but can happen most effectively under circumstances where conflict is at a minimum, and people of good will can engage in productive activities without fear of death.

WHO Initiative

The WHO (World Health Organization) announced that it intended to undertake the comprehensive rehabilitation of Iraqi medical libraries, led by Dr. Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, Regional Advisor, Health Information Management, Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO). According to Dr. Al-Shorbaji, WHO has actually been involved in supporting medical libraries in Iraq for the last eight years as part of a general commitment to rehabilitate health care and medical education in Iraq. He led a survey through which initially identified seventeen health sciences libraries in Iraq, that were destined to receive attention. Their plan had to take into account all of the losses due to war and looting, which undid some of their earlier work. Entitled “Rehabilitation Plan for Health Sciences Libraries in Iraq”,**X123** it is comprehensive in its aims, comprising

collection development, detailed information infrastructure development, training of staff, and the following “specific objectives:

1. To assess needs and identify areas for urgent and immediate rehabilitation in health sciences libraries in Iraq;
2. To rehabilitate medical library buildings and sites including the physical space, shelves, furniture, power supply, air-conditioning, storage areas and networking infrastructure;
3. To rebuild the health sciences library collections including books, journals, and databases;
4. To provide medical textbooks for students of health and medical sciences;
5. To train medical librarians and information workers on library techniques and information technology;
6. To introduce computer-based library systems for managing collections and services;
7. To introduce Internet and web access services to medical colleges.”

Since that prospective stage, WHO in the guise of EMRO, its East Mediterranean Regional Office, **X124** has accomplished a great deal to advance access to medical knowledge in Iraq, while perhaps not as actively engaged in the rehabilitation of physical infrastructure described in item 2 above, which may have been undertaken by other entities, although reportage indicates that the need remains great here. Dr. Al-Shorbaji has produced a detailed report describing that work. **X125** The summary that follows and any quotations come directly from this report. Work accomplished that he cites includes:

1. Blue Trunk Library (BTL) **X126** units, basic sets comprising 150 primary texts, given to 50 remote health care centers and rural hospitals.
2. Medical books given to libraries of 40 medical colleges and nursing institutes (total cost US\$1,184,548), and an international appeal for donations of medical books, which resulted in another 100,000+ copies being donated, with EMRO channels employed to ship and distribute them.
3. CD-ROM databases provided to 12 medical college libraries
4. Staff development and training for medical libraries
5. 20,569 copies of EMRO publications and 3,572 copies of the *East Mediterranean Health Journal* to medical libraries
6. Commitment to provide access to HINARI (Health Internet Access Research Initiative) **X127** for medical libraries in Iraq, which is treated as a Phase One country

(service provided free). HINARI provides online access to “over 3500 health sciences journals in addition to environmental health journals and veterinary and agricultural journals” for 170 Iraqi libraries, colleges, and health institutions, which “host the vast majority of the healthcare professionals in the country.” 85 medical librarians and information officers were trained as trainers in HINARI in a total of four workshops. Use of this wonderful resource is predicated on adequate online access.

7. EMRO further established a *Directory of Medical Libraries in the Region*,**X128** to facilitate networking and collaboration among 53 Iraqi libraries and others in its region; a *Directory of Health Professions Education in the Region*,**X129** including 38 Iraqi institutions; a Regional *Index Medicus* for the Eastern Mediterranean, (IMEMR)**X130** “to index and abstract health science journals published in the Region... [including] 30 journals indexed from Iraq which have contributed 2212 articles to the database;” and a regional inter-library loan system**X131** to which five Iraqi medical libraries have signed on so far, and have become active members.

Dr. Al-Shorbaji and his WHO colleagues—and WHO as an institution—have demonstrated exemplary dedication to achieving positive results under trying circumstances, which also place the greatest possible demands on the local health care systems, making this assistance all the more critical.

UNESCO

Although UNESCO expressed its intentions to assist Iraqi libraries early on, it hasn't ever publicly announced specific plans of action or concrete results, so far as I can determine. However, Dr. Beriwan M. Khailany, until very recently Deputy Minister for Scientific Affairs at the Ministry of Higher Education,**X132** indicated on a visit (June 2006) to Harvard that the first Lady of Qatar had pledged \$15,000,000 at a UNESCO-sponsored round table to a UNESCO fund dedicated to Iraqi Higher Education.**X133** Much of that money was intended for purchasing university-level textbooks, some to infrastructure restoration and development, in many cases the reconstruction or renovation of buildings, including libraries. The ministry planned 279 specific projects of this sort, employing any and all available funds, of which 10 had been completed and another 152 were in

some sense underway as of summer 2006. We can only hope that UNESCO's promises will be followed up with concrete action beyond the facilitation of the expenditure of other people's money, although the Bosnian case does not leave one sanguine of any positive results.

Training for academic librarians

The USAID-HEAD programs typically included training as a basic feature. However, a couple of initiatives focused specifically on the profession of librarianship. It, like other professions in Iraq, had suffered terribly from the neglect and isolation resulting from the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War and subsequent international sanctions, and the deadening consequences of tyranny, including the Saddam Hussein diktat of 1978 that instruction at Iraqi universities, previously in English for many subjects, should thenceforth be undertaken exclusively in Arabic. The older generation of Iraqi librarians were well trained, but had lost ground through isolation. The younger generation never did get the chance to receive advanced training in Europe or the US, and had little idea of what they have missed, from all accounts. Many who could moved abroad; many who couldn't lost touch with developments in their discipline at a critical time of technological development. Consequently, much needed to be done to bring up-to-date skills and standards to Iraqi academic librarians and instructors of librarianship.

Of those efforts dedicated to training librarians, two deserve particular attention, by OCLC and Simmons-Harvard. OCLC took responsibility for the initial training in Amman. The first such event, involving USAID-HEAD-related librarians sponsored by DePaul University, took place in May 2005, during which 12 librarians from the universities of Sulaimaniya, Baghdad and Basrah, came to ACOR (The American Center for Oriental Research) for intensive technical training in the latest standards and practices for cataloging in an automated library environment. The majority of the time was spent applying the standards studied (AACR2, subject headings, Dewey) to MARC format using OCLC's Connexion software. The Horizon software was used in the final day and a half of training, using the DYNIX automated system. Coordinated by Arthur Smith, this instruction was undertaken completely in Arabic by two librarians from AUC (American

University in Cairo), and one each from Zayed University in Dubai, and The University of Pennsylvania, plus a representative of DYNIX from Riyadh. It proved successful, leading to two further sessions in Amman, a cataloguing workshop (23 November-1 December 2005), for twelve participants from National Library, National Museum, Mosul University and University of Baghdad, sponsored by Stony Brook University and OCLC with funding from the US State Department; and an advanced cataloguing workshop (18-25 December 2005), mainly bringing back participants from the May sessions.**X134**

Harvard's Committee on Iraqi Libraries proposed an initiative for training librarians in late 2003, with the Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Science of Boston taking the lead, aimed at professional development for selected Iraqi librarians. The first two phases of this initiative were funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), as part of its program "Recovering Iraq's past to preserve and document Iraq's cultural heritage." The first phase consisted of intensive meetings in Amman in June 2004 between American and Iraqi librarians with a view to establishing expectations and priorities for the training to come.**X135** The initial, intensive training sessions of the second phase took place in July 2005, with a total of 40 Iraqi librarians taking a series of courses at ACOR in Amman in back-to-back two-week periods. Led by Dean Michele Cloonan of Simmons GSLIS, these sessions were somewhat complementary to the OCLC sessions, involving different trainers teaching in English with Arabic translation in a lecture format, and covering a wider range of issues in librarianship: "Collection Development, Electronic Publishing, Preservation, Preservation of Digital Assets, Curriculum Development, Organization of Knowledge [cataloguing], Digital Libraries, Reference, Automation, and Management".**X136** Due to the presence of a library school there, a significant number of those participating were from Al-Mustansiriyah University.**X137** Varnet and Cloonan discuss some of the challenges faced during this first double session, including the logistics of getting everyone to Amman on time, the arrival of family members, the intense, "American model" of teaching, and the challenges of translation during instruction, all the more important

given that the Iraqi librarians were often unfamiliar with developments over the previous twenty-five years, and terminological intelligibility had to be addressed.**X138**

The Simmons-Harvard advisory committee was pleased with the Amman results, but resolved that they should select the following year's (2006) participants from submitted applications in order to broaden the range of participants and eliminate those too near to retirement, and that families would not be permitted to come along, housing being provided by the university. 33 participants were chosen and were able to attend. This second year of the second phase was also funded by NEH. It's primary goals were: 1) "[To] offer assistance in reestablishing and expanding professional library and archival education in Iraq by updating the knowledge of library educators who are training the librarians of the future, and 2) "[To} help Iraqi library professionals and archivists to have opportunities to continue to update their professional knowledge and skills,"**X139** goals which in fact apply to the whole initiative. A decision was made that each applicant would have to choose one of four offered courses in order to gain in-depth experience, namely: 1) Automation and Digital Libraries, 2) Preservation and Archives, 3) Cataloging and Classification, and, 4) Collection Development and Reference. A new site was chosen: the United Arab Emirate University in Al-Ain, with site visits to Dubai and Abu Dhabi. According to Michele Cloonan, in the prospectus for the new session, "The facilities at UAEU (a university) will offer greater resources for the students than could ACOR (a research center). UAEU also is positioned to allow us to take field trips to libraries and archives in nearby Dubai and Abu Dhabi, offering the Iraqis an opportunity to work alongside their Arab colleagues. Collaboration is crucial for the successful rebuilding of Iraq's libraries, and this project will be an important next step in that process."**X140**

The Al-Ain sessions were considered a great success, in part because there were fewer distractions, and due to the benefits of expanded resource. Dr. Saad Eskander has reported that much that was learned in the Simmons-Harvard training has been translated into both informal and organized instruction for other staff within the INLA.**X141** The Simmons-Harvard plan ultimately envisioned a final phase of year-long fellowships to

Simmons linked to internships at Harvard's libraries for 6-7 Iraqi librarians a year over several years. Finding adequate funding for this much more expensive process will be the principal challenge. Given no immediate likelihood of landing a large grant to cover that many per year, two highly qualified candidates have been chosen to study at Simmons GSLIS, and funding is being sought for them at the time of writing.

Book donation

A problem that has vexed many people and organizations of goodwill in the US and elsewhere has been how to make small book and journal donations, and see that they are properly organized, packed, inventoried, labeled, and addressed. Ad hoc use of the APO (Army Post Office) system was feasible for such purposes only in a couple of instances. Announced donations have been limited, such as the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) presentation of 34 boxes (perhaps 800 volumes) of academic books and journals to the Iraqi Natural History Museum on June 12, 2004, donated by various American universities.**X142** One determined California librarian, Topsy Smalley, was able to elicit cooperation from a series of CPA administrators and army officers to send packages of books to specific recipients in Iraq, but this was a one-off, unrepeatable precisely because it was based upon personal relationships and agreements rather than established institutional procedures, not to mention extraordinary individual effort.**X143**

Use of direct mail rather government channels or shipping containers has scarcely been an option. An International Postal Service Center was instituted in May 2004 at Baghdad Airport to handle incoming and outgoing international mail, and on 21 August 2004 the US Postal Service resumed mailings to Iraq. Thus, in principle, anyone can mail books directly to Iraq from the US although delivery was, according to an article in *USA Today*, agonizingly slow. As of fall 2004, Iraq had all of 208 mail carriers for its 168,754 square miles of territory, while New York City has 10,000 mail carriers to serve its 320 square miles. More recent information is unavailable, but trends have not been positive.

The issue of effective and even-handed delivery mechanisms is primary to any worthwhile effort to rebuild the book collections of Iraqi libraries. For larger donations,

similar coordination is critical, and appropriate warehousing and distribution arrangements are needed of the sort insisted upon by the Sabre Foundation of Cambridge,**X144** with which the author's Bosnia Library Project worked,**X145** and with which Harvard's Committee on Iraqi Libraries hoped to collaborate. Sabre typically relies on a partner NGO in the recipient country to play this role. Saddam Hussein's totalitarian regime did not tolerate the kind of independent initiative that permits civil society to thrive and NGOs to develop. However, an appropriate Baghdad-based and registered NGO exists which could act as partner/recipient of book shipments and could engage in other development work, circumstances permitting. It is the completely Iraqi-run Baghdad office of the Al-Sharaka Program, operated by a talented, highly educated, and English-speaking staff. Al-Sharaka Baghdad achieved autonomous status as a fully-accredited, Iraq-based NGO in 2005, and remains able to proffer assistance to other initiatives requiring an effective Iraq-based partner, although the radical decline in security since then means that all work is more challenging.**X146**

The most widely publicized book donation to Iraqi universities provides an example of how not to proceed. Starting in 2003, the British Council accepted book donations from English universities, the total of which, from various sources, had risen to 23 tons by April 2004. The bulk of these were reportedly boxed and delivered en masse via Amman to the University of Technology in Baghdad, with a smaller amount delivered to Basrah. Although this demonstrates an admirable capacity to ship very large quantities of donations, news from informal sources has been that tons of books from this donation languished for months in a warehouse in Baghdad and that, for a long time, no one had figured out a way to distribute them. All my efforts to learn more, including direct inquiries sent to the University of Technology, elicited no further information, until I heard from Dr. Faiza Al-Bayati that they had been distributed to university libraries in Baghdad, while commenting on how limited assistance from abroad had been up to that time (April 2005).**X147** Unfortunately, I never did receive a critical assessment of the donations, a description of the protocols used for this distribution, or a list of the recipients and what they received, so we remain in the dark concerning the quality, appropriateness, and efficacy of distribution of these materials. Donations, particularly

huge ones, should always be thoroughly organized, feature effective intellectual control over contents, and be sent with arrangements made in advance and agreements specifying recipients. Even if they contain useful material, they may languish, sometimes forever, without advance planning. Even when this is not their fate, they place undue burdens on their intended beneficiaries.

In this light, it is always worth emphasizing that any proposed donation must be critically examined with the best interests of the recipient in mind, not the convenience of the donor. The sins of the typical book drive are the donation of last year's potboilers (popular novels) and self help books, outdated reference works, stray copies or badly broken runs of journals, good books in bad shape, titles on hopelessly obscure subjects irrelevant to the concerns of the recipients, and other errors in judgment of the well intentioned but thoughtless. The staff of the Al-Sharaka Program originally conceived of a book donation effort entitled Books Beyond Borders. They initially sent out an appeal so broadly stated as to set off alarm bells. It prompted me to prepare a statement for the IraqCrisis list concerning satisfactory protocols for book donation, copied directly to Al-Sharaka.**X148** Whether they heeded my concerns directly or not, Tom Owens did tell me that Al-Sharaka had to discard 60% of the donations received, having established rigorous criteria for vetting them only after the appeal was broadcast. A total of 8,000-9,000 books, organized by topic and destined to specific institutions in Iraq, eventually arrived at their Baghdad Office, and were distributed by Spring 2005. In response to chronic problems on this front, BAI (Book Aid International) has established best practice guidelines**X149** that are generally congruent with those this author has promoted although addressing a wider array of possible book donation efforts. They have recently been officially approved by CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, formerly the Library Association), according to Julie Robinson, CILIP's International Officer.**X150**

One once-promising US-based book donation program presently facing an uncertain future is Books for Baghdad.**X151** It was founded by Dr. Safaa Al-Hamdani of Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama, and its express focus from the

beginning was English language, college-level textbooks for the University of Baghdad, of which Al-Hamdani is a graduate. Whatever concerns this author had over the initial exclusive focus on college textbooks, and uncertain grasp of quality control, its efforts seemed more hopeful than not, particularly with a very committed practical manager in Robin Marcato. With the support of IRD (International Relief and Development),^{X152} which covered costs of shipment, Books for Baghdad was able to send 11,000 textbooks in 2005, and a further 21,000 in 2006, plus computers and educational supplies. However, disagreements over the future development of this effort led to the withdrawal of funding by IRD at the end of 2006, save for one final shipment of 12,000 books to Al-Mustansiriyah University loaded to be sent on 21 June 2007, so the future of Books for Baghdad is unclear, but not promising. For a brief while, it appeared that Ms. Marcato would be founding an independent organization. However, before this could be realized, IRD invited her to join their organization as a full-time staff member, which she did in mid-May, but not before delivering 5,000 books to IRD for delivery to Mosul, which materials will be shipped along with smaller donations, one from Memorial University in Canada, and medical equipment supplied by International Medical Equipment Collaborative (IMEC), a sub contractor for IRD, which will actually undertake the shipping. Marcato is hoping to work in cooperation with Dr. A. Hadi Al-Khalili, Cultural Attaché of the Iraqi Embassy in Washington, DC, on future donations, so the prospects still exist for the delivery of book donations from a wide variety of sources to Iraq.^{X153}

One multi-recipient donation reveals that one-time efforts accompanied by the financial wherewithal and the appropriate connections can be successful, albeit under special circumstances. This is the one undertaken by The Library of America,^{X153A} which has been producing excellent editions of American literature, broadly conceived, for many years. As with their wonderful donation of sets of their publications to four Bosnian libraries at the time of the author's Bosnia Library Project, LofA secures various combinations of individuals and foundations to support any given gift of this sort, in the Iraq instance a relatively modest \$500.00 for each set since a New York-based foundation covered the bulk of the cost of each donation. The LofA staff received assistance from the US State Department in the identification of recipient institutions (essentially, all

Iraqi universities), shipping, and delivery, which occurred via the US Embassy in Jordan in the spring of 2005, thence forwarded to their several destinations as circumstances permitted. **X153B** As a reward for its virtue, the LofA was not forced to seek its own, independent means of delivery, a circumstance unavailable to most potential donors.

In contrast to the many sins of omission and commission that blight the record of past book donation projects, the Stony Brook-Archaeology program developed a productive relationship with OCLC, **X154** which, among other services, maintains WorldCat, **X155** an online union catalogue cooperatively maintained by 9,031 major libraries and containing 81,000,000 bibliographic records. OCLC, through Arthur Smith, offered to provide the same service for Iraq that they had already provided to the Bosnia Library Project for gifts to Bosnian libraries (bibliographic records for donated titles), but with significant enhancements: submission of lists of ISBN numbers would result in bibliographic records for all titles in a specific donation. For most donations 99% of the titles would have pre-existing cataloging records in WorldCat. This means that if each book were matched with its record before shipment, the cataloging record including a card and an electronic record could accompany the book. From this record a spine label could also be created and attached in advance of shipment. OCLC accomplished this for the Stony Brook-led initiative and it would work very well for relatively large donations to specific institutions.

A further benefit to this intermediate step is that electronic catalogues for each recipient Iraqi library would be created as the books were cataloged. This means that when a library was ready to build its own electronic catalogue, the records could simply be downloaded to their local system. In the meantime, WorldCat would act as an active, temporary catalogue where each recipient library and its users could access their own holdings so long as it had effective internet access. Reportedly, librarians at the University of Mosul are already employing WorldCat for cataloguing new books. **X156** Present indications are that, despite the promise of this OCLC plan, local automation systems, and continuing obstacles to effective internet access have stymied its development so far.

Finally, despite its many vicissitudes and present challenges, the Iraq National Library and Archive is committed to dispersing its duplicate copies (beyond three to be retained) to appropriate institutions, which will be a benefit to the latter while freeing up stack and storage space in the former.**X157**

Collection and resource development: The Harvard/Sabre initiative

However beneficial, the book donation projects mentioned earlier had been catch-as-catch-can affairs lacking in system. The USAID-HEAD programs were intensive efforts focusing on specific institutions and fields. Harvard's second initiative was an effort to complement the latter undertakings by adding some breadth. It is impossible for any one institution or effort to address the needs of Iraqi academic libraries across all disciplines. This work will take years to accomplish. We at Harvard decided to take a topical approach: to solicit from academics in the appropriate disciplines a core bibliography of currently available titles, reference works and, where particularly important, journals for topics we considered critical to contemporary Iraqi society. These essential libraries would be offered to all Iraqi universities and the Iraq National Library and Archive, envisioned as the bases for further collection development. The initiative would also address library infrastructure, as required. This effort in its fully-realized form, entitled *Strengthening Iraqi Libraries*,**X158** is now led by the Sabre Foundation of Cambridge. The first topical collection to be developed is entitled "Establishing Democracy" and comprises a core bibliography of about 300 works on democracy and politics, starting with Plato, and that especially focuses on issues of democratic development and stability.**X159** As committee head, Sidney Verba, Director of the Harvard University Library and professor of political science, put it in the initial presentation of this bibliography, "The collection is not meant to be prescriptive. These books will offer no clearly marked route nor do they offer any particular model of democratic development. Rather, as any good library collection, they present the best learning, including the disputes within the field of inquiry. Democracy can take many forms and involves hard choices. These volumes would illuminate those choices with many examples of the ways in which other nations have dealt with them."

The second general topic to be developed focuses on the “Ecology of Water”. Its core bibliography covers the three related sub-categories of wetlands ecology, riparian ecology, and landscape ecology, plus bibliographies on water resource management and conflict resolution across international boundaries. Issues related to water have been critical throughout Iraq's past, and will remain so in the future. Turkey’s Ilisu project **X160** to dam the Tigris upriver from Iraq, for instance, has profound implications for water management within Iraq. If all of the planned agricultural development projects in Turkey were to be realized, the Tigris would dry up altogether downstream. Attention is also being paid to the environmental consequences of Saddam Hussein’s politically-driven decision to destroy the wetlands in the Shatt al-Arab (in order to eradicate the subsistence system of the Marsh Arabs and eliminate marsh-based resistance). **X161** The bibliographic lists for “Ecology of Water” were prepared by Iraq-born Professor Jala Makhzoumi, now at the American University in Beirut, and her professional colleagues from several countries, augmented subsequently by Prof. Jay R. Lund of the University of California at Davis.

A third topic, “Foundations for Undergraduate Instruction in Science and Engineering”, was developed by colleagues at MIT, led by Anna Gold, Head, Engineering and Science Libraries. This is designed to provide the texts for the whole of MIT’s undergraduate science and engineering curriculum. A fourth topic is planned, “Librarianship and Library Management”, prepared by colleagues at Simmons GSLIS, with other potential topics, including economics envisioned. Prof. Mazin Tamar-Agha of the University of Baghdad, one of a group of visiting Iraqi academic dignitaries at Harvard in July 2005, has promoted earth sciences as a specific topic.

A very important opportunity ancillary to “Foundations for Undergraduate Instruction...” is provided by the remarkable OpenCourseWare (OCW) system developed in recent years at MIT, **X162** whence come the lists of titles for “Foundations.” Although undergoing continuous development, this extraordinary resource provides a wealth of material on all undergraduate courses at MIT, approximately 1100 in number, including

vast amounts of materials on course design, including course syllabi, lecture notes, readings, assignments, exams, and other materials developed by MIT faculty for their courses. Extensive textual materials that are out of copyright are included. What the topical collection provides is the very texts that cannot be placed on the OpenCourseWare site due to issues of copyright. The science and engineering texts thus complement this resource. This is all the more significant in the light of Dean Al-Rawi's testimony to Harvard's committee in which he described the state of libraries and access to textbooks at the University of Baghdad as scarcely out of the 1930s, and the resources for the humanities and social sciences—including information on Iraq's own heritage—as even worse. Al-Rawi described professors of computer science teaching without aid of any textbooks at all, reducing instruction to a form of advanced apprenticeship. With the provision of adequate access to the web and proper awareness of its possibilities, OCW may be employed to positive purpose by all Iraqi professors and students.

In June 2005, Anwar Diab acquired a server destined for the University of Baghdad, containing a complete copy of the MIT OpenCourseWare (OCW) web site. The server at the University of Baghdad would have functioned as a local mirror site and would have allowed students and faculty in Iraq to access OCW resources without the need for Internet access. The plan was for Diab and MIT OCW to work with the University of Baghdad to have the mirror site periodically updated. Regrettably, as of March 2007, the server still sits in Boston, no means for transporting it having yet been found.

A final feature of this phase of the initiative was to be the development of a collection of basic reference resources. Such reference works are essential for all academic endeavors, yet Iraqi university libraries either lack these materials altogether or only hold outdated versions. While many of the most critical resources will be those found anywhere in the world, considerations of culture, language, and academic priorities suggest that the holdings we provide will most usefully reflect those at the best modern academic libraries within the Arab world. Thus such a collection would contain extensive materials in Arabic as well as English. Contemporary reference resources, even more than the topical collections described above, come in a variety of formats and delivery mechanisms.

We expected to employ OCLC's WorldCat cataloguing function for all of these topical collections and make them available to every Iraqi university library.

Strengthening Iraqi Libraries was conceived with another critical supporting feature, namely assisting in infrastructural rehabilitation at recipient Iraqi academic libraries, including the establishment of computer labs/internet centers not already accomplished by the HEAD projects, or to augment them if the local situation demanded it. Also available would be an offer of a generator for each recipient to insure adequate, continuous access to electricity, a chronic problem at all Iraqi institutions, as noted above. The funding would be employed in its fullest where the need proved to be greatest. Recipient institutions that escaped looting or that had been effectively refurbished would not receive any more funding for this purpose than needed. The Al-Sharaka organization in Baghdad, as an autonomous NGO, was contracted to perform all of the preliminary needs assessments, as well as all other in-country intermediary, delivery and oversight work.

The final commitment was to the Iraq National Library and Archive, which would receive access to several thousand books per year from such sources as the Harvard University and Yale University presses via the Sabre Foundation, in addition to all of the topical collections.

Unfortunately, the fate that befell the USAID-HEAD projects midway through their work has thwarted attempts to find funding for this Sabre/Harvard initiative. Despite a long record of assistance from USAID, a personal meeting with then-director Andrew Natsios, and a compelling case, no aid was forthcoming, and USAID has largely turned its back on higher education development for Iraq. No other governmental granting agency or private foundation has been found that was interested in the fate of Iraqi higher education, let alone this project. Consequently, *Strengthening Iraqi Libraries* is in limbo at the time of writing, although there is the slightest hint of a silver lining. A small measure of accomplishment was achieved when the Sabre Foundation received funding

from the United States Institute for Peace (USIP)^{X163} to send three of the eleven sections of “Establishing Democracy” to Iraqi universities, namely “Constitutional Design”, “Multi-ethnic, Multi-religious Countries”, and “Truth and Reconciliation Processes”. These were provided with automated cataloguing information and labels by OCLC, and sent via Turkey, to be distributed by Al-Sharaka Baghdad.

Finally, it is worth reiterating that internet access is critical. It is expensive and best accomplished in a coordinated fashion with reliable sources of funding sustained until the Iraqi economy has revived sufficiently for the Iraqi government to take over the responsibility. Several resources were made really or potentially available to Iraqi universities and institutes given proper hardware, funding and contracts as a function of some of the early efforts. Al-Sharaka’s initial coup with EBSCO has already been described, as well as AHEAD’s fully-realized arrangements regarding TEEAL. In a trial effort, JSTOR agreed to give two years of access to its resources to the University of Basrah, whose libraries were particularly devastated. As it happens, JSTOR was one of the online providers of periodical literature accessible to designated parties on the Iraq Libraries Network-University of Bielefeld website, and, more importantly, is also featured via the Iraqi Virtual Science Library (see below).

Iraqi Virtual Science Library (IVSL)

A very promising effort has emerged out of the US government, entitled the Iraqi Virtual Science Library.^{X164} The formal State Department statement reads,

“The Iraqi Virtual Science Library (IVSL), launched on May 3, 2006, is a digital portal that provides Iraqi universities and research institutes with access to an outstanding collection of millions of full text articles from over 17,000 premier scientific and engineering journals and their archives, in addition to technical content and educational resources. Its goal is to help rebuild the educational and scientific infrastructure in Iraq.

Recognizing the need to rebuild the science and engineering infrastructure in Iraq, a group of American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) fellows began the IVSL project in 2004. The IVSL is now an interagency collaboration with members from the U.S. Departments of State and Defense. The project is funded by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the U.S. State Department, and the Civilian Research and Development Foundation [CRDF], the generous donations of publishing companies and

professional societies, and partnerships with the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, other departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, Sun Microsystems, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Useful Utilities, and Vitalect Technologies.”

The IVSL is being implemented in coordination with the Iraqi Government, with the ultimate goal of transitioning the pilot program into a long-term project sponsored and supported entirely by Iraq. Associated computer software, information technology (IT) training, and some hardware will be provided to Iraqi partners in order to facilitate this transition.”**X165**

According to Susan Cumberledge, a professor of biochemistry at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, one of creators of the IVSL and in 2005 an AAAS Fellow at the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, US Department of Defense, this initiative was undertaken in response to the clear need of faculty and students at Iraqi universities for access to the extraordinary electronic resources now available online, particularly in the sciences (to which it is largely limited). As she and her colleagues have put it, “The digital revolution has improved both the quality of scholarship and the number of individuals with access to research materials. Developing countries can readily incorporate this technology; in doing so, they have a significant impact on higher education and research on a national scale. The funds needed to create and maintain a Web portal are a small fraction of the money required to build and maintain bricks-and-mortar libraries.”**X166** Through conversations with Al-Sharaka (with its EBSCO arrangement), professional societies such as the ACS (American Chemical Society), and publishers such as Springer Verlag and Blackwell, which had already made commitments to other initiatives, this effort moved ineluctably toward the concept realized: a unified point of access or portal for select Iraqi institutions of higher education and government ministries.**X167**

A model for this initiative was provided by HINARI (the Health Internet Access Research Initiative) of WHO (see above), which “provides free or very low cost online access to the major journals in biomedical and related social sciences to local, non-profit institutions in developing countries.”

Funded with a total to date of approximately \$500,000 in U.S. government funds and \$50,000 from the CRDF, the pilot targets seven of the most prominent universities: the University of Baghdad, Al-Nahrain University, Al-Mustansiriyah University, and the University of Technology (all four of them in Baghdad), the University of Basrah, the University of Mosul, and the University of Sulaimaniya.**X168** Also benefiting is the Iraqi Interim Center for Science and Industry (IICSI), a program supported by the U.S. Dept. of State to provide scientists and engineers from Iraq's former programs in biological, chemical, and nuclear warfare with civilian work opportunities.**X169** These institutions are, largely, those already receiving the most attention. but also, according to Kamran Naim, who has acted as a consultant to IVSL, contain 80% of Iraq's students.**X170** The logistics of organizing this project effectively, and the funding limits demanded that those institutions best prepared to exploit the portal's possibilities be chosen initially. According to Dr. Cumberlandge, the publishers potentially providing access to their resources are concerned that there be effective controls over who has access. Maximum access to these resources by all appropriate parties (faculty, staff, students) throughout these institutions is a clear desideratum.

The model for gaining highly favorable subscription rates from providers was provided by the developing HEC - National Digital Library,**X171** a project of the Pakistan Higher Education Commission in cooperation with the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, whose project manager is Kamran Naim, who had made an excellent case for this sort of assistance to developing nations.**X172** Sun Microsystems Inc was responsible for providing "technical guidance on development and website organization, [and] training on system administration and computer programming."**X173**

Another service of this initiative is to publicize free resources already available on the web. An excellent example is Pubmed, sponsored by the NIH (National Institutes of Health). As stated on its website, PubMed,**X174** a service of the National Library of Medicine, includes over 15 million citations for biomedical articles back to the 1950's. These citations are from MEDLINE and additional life science journals. PubMed includes links to many sites providing full text articles and other related resources.

MIT's OpenCourseWare, discussed previously, is another such resource, also linked via IVSL.

A further web-based service of inestimable benefit to any developing country with extensive agriculture and land use concerns is AGORA (Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture),**X175** sponsored by FAO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. AGORA was unveiled on 14 October 2003, and it is one of the many online resources available to the Iraqi Virtual Science Library. Indeed, there is not enough praise for the extraordinary resources available through this portal. As planned and declared on the IVSL website, the focus of the portal is on engineering, computer science, life sciences, and the physical sciences. Nevertheless, it also provides an access point for Project Gutenberg,**X176** which features a very wide variety of classic literature out of copyright. Also, the journals from Springer Verlag evidently include those in the humanities, behavioral and social sciences, as expressed in their statement on the IVSL site, "Providing access to Springer's online information in science, technology, medicine, the humanities, behavioral and social sciences is an essential step forward to empowering Iraq with the tools it will need to meet upcoming challenges and Springer is honored to be one of the founding members of this philanthropic initiative."**X177** Furthermore, JSTOR, whose initial commitment to Iraq was limited to the University of Basrah for two years, and to the Stony Brook/Archaeology program of USAID/HEAD, was brought into the IVSL by the efforts of Kamran Naim, according to Dr. Cindi Mentz, Director, Middle East and North Africa Programs, CRDF.**X178** This remarkable addition provides access to JSTOR's very broad resources in numerous disciplines outside the sciences. Furthermore, JSTOR has provided country-wide access to its resources beyond the core group served by IVSL.**X179** Many of Blackwell's journals are available through HINARI and AGORA, but EBSCO has withdrawn its commitment to the IVSL.**X180** It is to be hoped that this is the exception to the rule.

The Iraqi Virtual Science Library's initial funding was predicted to provide access to the targeted institutions for two years. As with other such online sources of critical intellectual materials, a greater commitment is not only desirable but necessary. Seeing

the remarkable achievements of this effort, the Iraqi government should not be required to undertake its support, as was initially envisioned, until it is certain that they can maintain the portal. This is especially true because the contracts with the sundry resource providers presuppose an incremental rise in the annual fees, typically by 2-5% increments, eventually to reach real-world levels (although with discounts commencing at 87% to 100%, and averaging 98%). JSTOR was particularly generous about limiting these increases, and Springer offered IVSL access to 150 journals absolutely free through 2010. These journal sources typically enhance their offerings incrementally year by year as well.**X181**

The expected total cost for publication licenses in 2008 is about \$200,000. In fall 2006, there was some likelihood that US State Department funds totaling \$1.2-1.5 million would be transferred to the IVSL to support a more ambitious program extending the IVSL to all Iraqi universities, providing training, the development of university library partnerships, and the placement of e-learning and research publication tools on the portal. However, those funds expired before the bureaucratic process was complete. At present, there is hope that a comparable amount will still be made available.**X182**

Cindi Mentz of CRDF, Dhanurjay (DJ) A. S. Patil, now of eBay, James Simon of Sun Systems, and Kamran Naim are endeavoring to maximize IVSL's utility and sustainability. A current effort involves the transfer the portal from a Defense Department to the CRDF server, a far more neutral platform free of national security issues. According to Ms. Mentz, another is the upcoming donation of eight servers from Sun Microsystems and donate them to the participating universities and the IICSI, where they would become mirror sites for the IVSL website. The rationale for this strategy is that internet access remains an issue. Although fiber optic cables are being reestablished,**X183** bandwidths allocated to a university may be routed directly to the president's office, or otherwise not made available to the widest local audience. Moreover the cost of access to the internet must be borne locally, and access is often slow.**X184** Kamran Naim indicates that only one of these servers will be necessary to run IVSL for the whole of Iraq. "The real value of these servers will come in hosting

educational materials on institutional networks where they will be able to provide high speed internal access to educational resources made available on these servers. MIT Open Courseware is...one example of this form of educational resource.”**X185** Anwar Diab’s plans will be realized in the context of this vastly more ambitious and sophisticated enterprise.

If the augmented funding were to become available, a companion effort would be to establish the Iraq Research and Education Portal, to provide e-learning tools (presupposing computer access), publishing tools, and placing Iraqi research journals and PhD theses online. This would require access to supplemental funds.**X186** The primary agents are committed to providing training for Iraqi academics, students, and others with access to IVSL (for which each party must provide proper identification before receiving a unique password), in order to maximize the efficacy of the resource. The good news is that, since June-July 2006 when the IVSL became active, 124,000 articles have been downloaded, which is considered a great success by the parties involved at so early a stage in the process, and with so many students and faculty staying away from their universities. Despite the gross disruptions of normal access and functioning at Iraqi universities, Kamran Naim noted that the Web of Science bibliographic database,**X187** covering 8,700 research journals, experienced a jump in one year from 80 to 160 Iraqi authored or co-authored articles represented.**X188** Naim hopes that the IVSL will ultimately expand to all public universities by the time that the Ministry of Higher Education makes a commitment to sustain it for the *longue durée*. One negative consequence of the public underwriting of the IVSL is that it will likely never be available—at least at no cost—to private institutions of higher education in Iraq.

One further virtue of IVSL is that it can work for all registered user who have access to the internet anywhere in Iraq, not simply at the institutions to which they are attached, by means of their passwords and the EZ Proxy system utilized by the IVSL.**X189** This benefit is diminished by the severe limits on internet access throughout Iraq. However much time it takes for the Iraqis to fully support IVSL the ratio of potential benefit to cost is so high that it should be one of the primary commitments of the US government.

Conclusions

The prevailing political situation in Iraq, perilous and uncertain as it is, has made concerted and effective efforts at reconstruction ever more difficult, and one cannot but be concerned over what has been lost in terms of human contacts, developing understanding, and effective process with each political transition, and as talented and committed Iraqis have been forced to flee the country, leaving aside the question of what would happen were the incipient civil war to become a general one. Furthermore, the universities have become the playgrounds for every interest group and ideology, although there have been some reports that many students have lately grown disenchanted with the allure of ideologies as they contemplate the results. The sectarian and grudge murders continue, as do the kidnappings, whether motivated by the need to raise funds for the insurgency, criminal greed, or both. As things stand, there will soon be more Iraqi academics abroad as refugees than teaching in their universities and working in their institutes.

Despite this highly fraught situation, any viable Iraqi state of the future will be reliant upon a thriving and effective system of higher education. Well-stocked, well-functioning libraries with adequate internet access will be its very foundation. Any effort that makes a clear contribution to this end is to be welcomed. I hope that the US government will repent its foolish and destructive ways, and recognize that full commitment and completed projects—not half measures or none at all—are what is required. The dismal track record is in stark contrast to the exhortation by John Agresto, penned shortly after his arrival to work for the CPA, quoted here in part: “It is not hyperbole to say that we have very few years to complete and very few months to begin the rebuilding of higher education in Iraq. The excellent faculty leaders who were trained in Europe and the United States in the fifties, sixties, and early seventies are at or near the end of their careers. Those who will follow in leadership have never been exposed to world-class research or international higher education. Without immediate, as well as in-depth, exposure to the contemporary scholarly world and the technology to participate in it, the

needed experience to rebuild a quality teaching and research infrastructure for the coming generations will be lost.”X190

The USAID-HEAD programs may have had their day, however short, but projects like *Strengthening Iraqi Libraries* remain in limbo, not yet stillborn. The US government should acknowledge its primary if not exclusive share of the responsibility for the dreadful condition of most Iraqi institutions of higher education and archives due to its heedless failure to preserve order after the invasion, and its equally deplorable failure to quickly reestablish order upon seeing the consequences of its fateful neglect of elementary planning. Furthermore, the primary international actors should recognize that coordinated efforts are more effective than those undertaken piecemeal, and that some means should be developed to realize this in cooperation with willing Iraqi counterparts. In its virtual terms, The Iraqi Virtual Science Library has achieved this. It is admirable that some of the parties involved in assistance, real or proposed, have communicated amongst themselves. Nevertheless, a higher order of coordination, insofar as it can avoid excessive bureaucratization, is highly desirable, as is a future where the countless Iraqis of talent and goodwill are free to research, teach, run libraries, and learn.

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Boylan added (personal e-mail communication 6 June 2005), “The United Kingdom has announced that it has started the process of Ratification of the original 1954 Hague Convention and Accession to both Protocols (1954 & 1999), though it may be 2006 before Parliamentary time can be found for the necessary legislation. [Furthermore], the *lex situs* question also extends to the applicability of Iraqi national cultural heritage law - arguably throughout, and certainly since the formal end of military occupation with the transfer of sovereignty back to the Iraqi Administration at the end of June 2004.”

The British Government has since issued a paper in September 2005, *Consultation Paper on the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols*, signed by David Lammy MP, Minister of Culture, which addresses at length the issues concerned in ratification. Its foreword commences with the following statement, “This Consultation Paper represents an important step towards the UK’s ratification of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (the Hague Convention) and its two Protocols. I believe that the UK’s declared intention to ratify the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols is an important signal of the priority we attach to the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, both nationally and internationally.” (p. 1), online at: www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C234A6B1-3178-4350-8C72-C354F24D1CF9/0/HagueConvention.pdf

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X32 Raghavan, Sudarsan, “An Archive of Despair: Saad Eskander Works To Protect Iraq Library From Bombs and Mold”, p. C01, Washington Post Foreign Service, 7 April 2007, online at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/06/AR2007040602196.html?referrer=emailarticle>

X33 Eskander, Saad Bashir, “The Tale of Iraq’s Cemetery of books”, *Information Today*, 12(21), December 2004 (edited version of Saad Eskander's keynote speech at the Internet Librarian International 2004 conference held in London, Oct. 10—12, 2004) online at: <http://www.infotoday.com/it/dec04/eskander.shtml>

X34 Antoon, Sinan, et al, *About Baghdad*, InCounter Productions, 2004, Cooperative: Sinan Antoon, Nadya Sbaiti, Bassam Haddad, Dirar Hakeem, Rania Masri, Maya Mikdashi, Nadya Sbaiti, Suzy Salamy, Sherene Seikaly, Adam Shapiro see: <http://www.aboutbaghdad.com/misc/ICPTeam.htm>

X35 See photo of piles of books awaiting cataloguing at an institution in dire need of recent publications, last photograph in series, by MacQuire Gibson, at: <http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/LibraryPix/LibraryPix.htm>

X36 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communications, especially 23 July 2005

X37 Deeb, Mary Jane, et al, op. cit., part C

X38 Russell, John, e-mail communication to Ann Russell, Executive Director, Northeast Document Conservation Center, Andover, MA, 4 December 2003, forwarded to author, 4 March 2004

X39 Teijgeler, René also spells his surname Teygeler

X40 Teijgeler, René, personal e-mail communication, 19 November 2004

X41 Teijgeler, René, personal e-mail communication 23 February 2007, containing an extensive review of the issue of the flooded archives. In a general situation as fraught and complicated as Iraq in the midst of disaster, it is no surprise to discover conflicting points of view on many issues in more specific situations. In writing this article, I have tried to resolve them to my satisfaction when possible. In various e-mail communications, René Teijgeler and Saad Eskander have presented views somewhat at variance to each other over whether the freezer truck could be sustained. From Eskander's point of view, most fully expressed in an e-mail to Teijgeler (18 October 2005) the acute problems with electricity, the one-year supply of fuel for the generator, the difficulty with getting a competent attendant, etc., all played their roles in his decision to remove the materials from the freezer. Teijgeler considered the problems surmountable, and had found further funding for fuel.

Recent comments by Dr. John Russell and Drs. René Teijgeler regarding my digest of what I have learned concerning this vexed question, reflect the intentions, expectations, and knowledge sets of principal actors, and the limitations presented by the situation. What is clear is that good intentions were shared by all, but that an archaeologist and a paper conservator (not to mention the administrator of a library and archive), will have different definitions of what "freezing" really means, and that the objective conditions in which these individuals and the staff of the INLA have had to work play havoc even with the best of efforts. Comments by John Russell are followed by a response from René Teijgeler.

Russell, John, personal e-mail communication, 19 April 2007, "I noticed one passage for which I'd like to offer an alternative version. What Rene says about the coolers in the Officers' Club not being freezers may or may not be true. The Iraqi refrigeration

contractor who fixed them told us what each one was for (meat, fish, pastry, dairy, etc) and what temperature range each was capable of, all below zero. At the time I had them repaired ...and Wishyar [K. Mohammed] supervised the transfer of the documents ..., all four were maintaining a constant temperature of at least 5 to 10 degrees below zero C. This is not as cold as one would wish, but all the documents were solidly frozen, at least initially...

“That was in late fall [2003], however, and the contractor warned us that when summer came, someone would need to monitor the compressors, and perhaps install a ventilation fan or air conditioning in the compressor room, which had less-than-ideal air circulation. As far as I know, the library staff continued to monitor the freezers throughout the winter and spring. This was easy to do, as each one was equipped with a thermometer outside that displayed the temperature inside. Unfortunately, in late spring we lost the Officers' Club to the Ministry of Justice, and I don't know how effectively Saad [Eskander] was able to monitor the freezers after that. And of course, the freezers need electricity to operate, and that was variable.

“Since Rene didn't arrive until the beginning of August [2004], he can't say that the documents were never frozen, as he wasn't there at the time. It's certainly true that by then, the freezer truck was a better alternative, but that was also difficult to maintain. In the end, I think the documents eventually dried out in the freezers, but I haven't seen a report on their current condition.”

Tejjgeler, René, personal e-mail communication, 11 May 2007, “On the coolers/freezers:

- it is technically speaking not a freezer because those can freeze at a lower Temperature - thus coolers it is. Besides these cooling cells are normal near a kitchen.
- in order to DEEPPFREEZE wet paper-based materials you need at least to go to 22 C
- nevertheless, the decision of John was good as he did not have many alternatives but it was COOLING and not DEEPPFREEZING.
- when I arrived the coolers were around 0 C some of them even + 5 C.

“Besides, storing the archives in metal boxes, which is normal in Iraq, is a very bad idea as the metal will react with the paper and even more so when wet. Next the archives were moldy; you could see it and smell it. Last but not least, the coolers did not work properly as the flow of electricity was not constant, meaning that both T and RH were fluctuating. In fact this is the worst that can happen to your paper collections.

- Thus we needed to act immediately; the rest you know.
- True the library staff did monitor the coolers, but they were mainly guards thus not much monitoring in the sense of conservation. Besides they did not know much.
- John is right that I cannot say the archives were never frozen. When I arrived the main part was thawed out or partly solid.”

X42 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communication, 14 November 2004

X43 Iraqi National Library and Archive, website:

<http://www.iraqnl.org/wpeng/>

X44 Teijgeler, René, personal e-mail communication, 30 November 2004, which included further discussion of the status of the soaked and mold-ridden archival materials

X45 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communications, 20 and 21 February 2007; Teijgeler, René, personal e-mail communication, 26 February 2007, where he also states that the Dutch Blue Shield is providing 2,500 euros-worth of materials requested by Dr. Eskander, mentioned by Eskander himself in:

Eskander. Saad Bashir, “Diary of Saad Eskander, Director of the Iraq National Library and Archive”, entry for 6 March 2007, British Library website:

<http://www.bl.uk/iraqdiary.html>

X46 Un ponte per, website: <http://www.unponteper.it/english/>

X47 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communication, 22 March 2005

X48 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communication, 18 March 2007; computer situation also addressed in: Lourdes Garcia-Navarro, "Iraq's Cultural Curators defy Sectarian Unrest", National Public Radio, Morning Edition, 16 March 2007, online at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=8951668>

X49 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communication 25 July 2006

X50 for the International Council on Archives (ICA),
see: <http://www.ica.org/>

X51 Eskander, Saad Bashir & René Teijgeler, personal e-mail communications, 2006 & 2007

X52 “Muqtada al-Sadr”, Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muqtada_al-Sadr

X53 Eskander, Saad Bashir various personal e-mail communications, 2006, & 19 February 2007, plus latest information from: Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 27 February 2007

X54 Harris, Lucian, “Iraq’s top cultural official resigns”, The Art Newspaper, 26 August 2006
online at: <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/article01.asp?id=407>

X55 Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 4 March 2007; supplemented by descriptions of problems with appointments in the same entry, and with publications in entries for 1 March 2007

X56 “Louis Brandeis”, *Wikipedia*, Selected Quotations
at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Brandeis#Selected_quotations

X57 Eskander, Saad Bashir personal e-mail communication, 11 February 2007; supplemented with information on female staff from: Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 1 March 2007

X58 Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 1 March 2007

X58A Ibid, entry for 1 April 2007

X58B Ibid, entry for 3 April 2007

X58C Ibid, entry for 4 April 2007

X58D Ibid, entry of 16 May 2007

X58E Ibid, entry 11 June 2007

X58F Eskander, Saad Bashir, private e-mail communication 20 June 2007

X58G Ibid

X58H Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 11 April 2007

X58I Ibid, particularly entry for 3 April 2007, also 5 April, 15 April, and 17 May

X58J Ibid, entry for 15 April

X58K Ibid, entry for 24 May

X59 Price, Gary, “World Digital Library Project Announced, Backed By Library Of Congress & Google,” SearchEngineWatch.com., 22 November 2005, at:

<http://searchenginewatch.com/showPage.html?page=3565881>

X60 For American Memory Project, Library of Congress,

see: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

X61 Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 7 March 2007

X62 Teijgeler, René personal e-mail communication, 14 November 2004

X63 Eskander, Saad Bashir, “Diary of Saad Eskander, Director of the Iraq National Library and Archive”, British Library website
<http://www.bl.uk/iraqdiary.html>

X64 Ibid, entry for Friday, 22 February, 2007

X64A Ibid, entry for 24 May 2007

X64B Ibid, entry for 10 June 2007

X64C Ibid, entry for 22 April 2007

X64D Ibid, entry from 9 May 2007

X64E Ibid, entry for 20 May 2007

X64F Ibid, entry for 6 June 2007

X64G Ibid, entry for 13 June 2007

X65 Middle East Studies Association, Annual Meetings, 2006, Boston
<http://www.mesa.arizona.edu/annual/06mtg/session3.htm>

X66 For numerous articles detailing the plight of Iraqi academics, see Stop the Assassination of Iraqi academics A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and CEOSI at: <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/Academics.htm> and particularly its resources webpage:
<http://www.brusselstribunal.org/AcademicsResources.htm>

One of my Iraqi correspondents put it thus in an e-mail message dated 14 February 2007 (slightly edited by me):

“The constant deterioration of the security status in Iraq, generally & in Baghdad particularly, has cast its shadow on the H.Ed. sector among other sectors. Consequently, Iraqi universities & technical institutes are in desperate conditions in terms of basic security, protection, stability, and that of course extends to resources both human and physical. An academic would express the need of almost everything, if asked to specify the H.Ed. needs, but he definitely would emphasize on security...The lack of security was & still is the only reason behind faculty kidnapping, killing & consequently fleeing of most of what's left abroad. When or if this major impediment is seriously taken care of, then things might follow, e.g., academic cooperation, curricula updating, research, exchange, etc.”

X67 “Uncle of abducted U.S. soldier says video not enough” (and other articles cached at this webblog)

<http://noburqua.blogspot.com/search/label/missing%20soldier>

X68 Youssef, Nancy A, “Mandatory university attendance in unstable Iraq angers many” McClatchy Newspapers, 20 December 2006

online at: <http://www.realcities.com/mld/kwashington/16284442.htm>

X69 All quotes in paragraph from: Eskander, Saad Beshir, “Diary of...”, op. cit., entry for 5 March 2007

X70 Al-Naqshbandi, Zain, op. cit., p. 1

X71 Watenpaugh, Keith et al, op. cit., p. 11

X72 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communication, 19 February 2007

X73 see Al-Trikiti, Nabil, op. cit., & Arnoult, Jean-Marie, op. cit., p. 6 for the most thorough description of this institution and the status of its holdings

X74A for this report, see end note 26

X74B *Iraqi Jewish Archive Status Report 25 May 2007* (no authorship indicated). Thanks to Doris Hamburg for providing a copy of this report.

X74C H.S., “Saddam’s Secret Jewish Archives, *Moment Magazine*, 13 October 2003, see Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) website at:
http://www.defenddemocracy.org/research_topics/research_topics_show.htm?doc_id=195495

X74D *ibid*

X74E *ibid*

X74F George. Donny, personal e-mail communication, 20 May 2007, slightly edited by JBS

X74G *Iraqi Jewish Archive Status Report 25 May 2007*, op cit, p. 1

X74H Hamburg, Doris, personal communication, 24 May 2007

X74I George, Donny, op cit

X74J *Iraqi Jewish Archive Status Report 25 May 2007*, op cit, p. 2

X74K Teijgeler, René, “Preserving cultural heritage in times of conflict”, G.E. Gorman and Sydney J. Shep, eds. *Preservation management for libraries, archives and museums*, Chapter 9, pp. 133-165, London: Facet Publishing, 2006 [precise page unclear; under subtitle “Safe haven”, and sub-subtitle “Iraq”.]
at: <http://www.culture-and-development.info/issues/conflict.htm>

X74L *The Iraqi Jewish Archive Preservation Report*, op cit

X74M *Iraqi Jewish Archive Status Report 25 May 2007*, op cit, p. 1

X74N *ibid*, p. 2

X75 Abramson, Larry, “Funds Lacking to Restore Jewish Archives”, *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio, 9 May 2005

online at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4645146>

X76 Bard, Mitchell, “The Jews of Iraq”, *Jewish Virtual Library*,

see: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/anti-semitism/iraqijews.html>

X77 For a highly tendentious reading of the fate of Iraqi libraries and other cultural institutions by Dr. Tareq Y. Ismael, and a comparison of the treatment of the Iraqi Jewish Archive and the archival materials removed from the Iraq National Library and Archive, that were subsequently flooded, by Dr. Nabil Al-Tikriti, see *Voices of the Middle East and North Africa*, KPFA FM 94.1, 27 June 2007 at:

<http://www.kpfa.org/archives/index.php?arch=20962>

In his posting to the IraqCrisis list (June 28 2007), Dr. Al-Tikriti adds the following note:

“As I present this radio interview to the list, I should just like to clarify that I do not begrudge the treatment (sic) offered to what I called the "Iraqi Jewish Cache" in the interview. I only wished to say that the state of the art treatment given to that collection was not commensurate with the treatment given to the "Ottoman-Hashemite" archives [i.e., those from the INLA] found in 2003.”, for which see:

<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/pipermail/iraqcrisis/2007-June/001811.html>

The simple answer is that the archival materials removed from the INLA were far more extensive than the Iraqi Jewish Archive, that no safe and well-endowed venue for their treatment existed, that they did not have such well-connected advocates, and that they were left subject to the prevailing chaotic situation, and the incompetence and misplaced funding priorities of the CPA, however well-meaning and personally competent some of its representatives may have been.

X78 Teijgeler, René, personal e-mail communication 1 January 2006.

I have subsequently learned that these 360 manuscripts are all or virtually all Torah scrolls, each of which represents a now vanished immediate community of the faithful, Chwat, Ezra, The Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, Jewish National and Hebrew University Library, personal e-mail communication, 15 July 2006

X78A George, Donny, op cit

X79 Watenpaugh, Keith, et al, op. cit., p. 9 provide a rather stark contrast, while Wishyar Muhammed, in his report to Dr. Farouk Darweesh of the Ministry of Higher Education of

8 August 2003, “The Central Library of the University of Baghdad”, provides more details, and a less dire picture. (copy sent to the author along with similar reports on the Al-Mustansiriyah University Library, and the University of Technology Central Library).

X80 Arnoult, Jean-Marie, op. cit., p. 12

X81 Ahmed, Hamid K. “The Poor Condition and High Hopes of University Life in Basrah today”, 20 October 2003

online at: <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~mariposa/hamid1.htm>

X82 Muhammed, Wishyar. “A report on the present condition and urgent requirements of the Al-Mustansiriyah University Library following my second visit to the Library”, Report presented to Dr. Farouk Darweesh of the Ministry of Higher Education attendant upon visit on 3 July 2003

X83 Antoon, Sinan, et al, op. cit.

X84 Al-Bayati, Faiza Adeeb Abdul-Wahid, “College Institution (sic) and Centers of Baghdad University”, sent to author along with extended commentary, April 1 2005 (Dr. Al-Bayati has caused some confusion by variously calling herself Faiza Adeeb Abdul-Wahid Al-Bayati—her complete name—Faiza Adeeb, Faiza Abdul-Wahid, Faiza Adeeb Al-Bayati, and Faiza Al-Bayati. She prefers the latter construction).

X85 ibid

X86 Diab, Anwar, personal e-mail communication 21 July 2005

X87 Spurr, Jeff, *Indispensable yet Vulnerable*, op. cit.

X88 Chandrasekaran, Rajiv, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2007, p. 5; specific cost figure from p. 167

X89 Besides the UNESCO meetings already cited, all manner of international meetings have occurred under various auspices, all intended to call attention to and shed light on the plight of Iraqi libraries and archives, and educational institutions generally, usually with very little to show for them in constructive terms. They include:

1. IFLA: Kagan, Alfred, *Report on the IFLA (The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) Meeting*, written for the Social Responsibilities Round Table and forwarded to the Council of the ALA, 4 September 2003
online at: <https://listhost.uchicago.edu/pipermail/iraqcrisis/2003-September/000356.html>
2. MELCOM: The European Association of Middle East Librarians, Press release,
online at: <https://listhost.uchicago.edu/pipermail/iraqcrisis/2003-May/000163.html>
3. International Conference on Higher Education in Iraq, at the University of Westminster, 15-17 September 2005
online at: <http://www.wmin.ac.uk/iraq%2Dhe/>

With “Conclusions and Recommendations”, under “II Higher Education Policy and Strategies”, Its recommendation #4: “The urgent need for up-to-date information in higher education demands that immediate steps be taken to radically rethink the present rather out-dated and long neglected university library systems,” with seven specific points, recommending centralized planning and procurement.

X90 Chandrasekaran, Rajiv, op. cit., p. 167

X91 Eskander, Saad Bashir, personal e-mail communication, 14 February 2005

X92 Smith, Arthur, personal phone conversation, February 2005

X93 Smith, Arthur, personal e-mail conversation 24 November 2004

X94 “Aid for Iraq 2003-2004”, Iflanet, at:
<http://www.ifla.org/VI/4/admin/iraq-aid.htm>

X95 Teiggeler, René personal e-mail communications, 11 May 2006 & 27 February 2007

X96 Iraq Libraries Network, hosted by the Bielefeld University Library, and “A collaborative Project carried out by Iraqi Librarians. Supported by Bielefeld University Library, University of Applied Sciences Cologne, Goethe-Institut and University and Regional Library Saxony-Anhalt

at: <http://iraklib.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.html>”

also, Al-Bayati, Faiza Adeeb, personal e-mail communications, 12 October 2005 & 16 December 2005

X97 Tawfiq, Saad Shakir, Prof. of engineering, University of Technology, personal communication at Harvard, May 2004

X98 *Promoting Higher Education in Iraq: USAID’s HEAD Program* (USAID publication) provides details of the announced goals for all five projects, and online at: www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/iraq_head_overview_0604.pdf

The USAID website, “Assistance for Iraq” detailing all awards to Iraq, is filled with suggestive information. It is located online at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/activities.html>

It is worth noting that a USAID grant, Agriculture Reconstruction and Development for Iraq (ARDI), to a commercial entity, Development Alternatives, Inc. of Bethesda, Maryland on October 21, 2003, running from 15 October 2003 to 30 September 2006, received funding totaling \$71,934,921. Although an effort of laudable intent if uncertain accomplishment, the fact that it was continued, and the five relatively-inexpensive HEAD grants were cancelled suggests warped priorities on the part of the Dept. of State/USAID.

X99 Hughes, Gail D., Ally Mack, and Kathie Stromile Golden, “Public health education: A report from Mosul and a plan for change”, *BMC Public Health*, 2005; 5:29.

Published online 31 March 2005

<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?artid=1087850>

X100 “CTAHR Awarded \$3.7 Million Grant to Help Strengthen and Rehabilitate Agricultural Programs at Iraqi Universities”, *UH News*, 27 October 2003

online at: <http://www.hawaii.edu/cgi-bin/uhnews?20031027164301>

USAID: Iraq Reconstruction and Humanitarian Relief Weekly Update #42 (FY 2005), p. 7 of pdf version:

“Three boxes of learning materials arrived recently for distribution at two Colleges of Agriculture and Forestry at northern Iraqi universities. The learning materials include books on agriculture, a CD set on environmental quality development, a biotechnology resource kit and other research tools. The materials were provided by the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawaii as part of the HEAD program.

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/EGUA-6FHQTU?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=irq>

Relatively preliminary; however, as an indication of what may come from initial collaborations, see: Moreno, Loren, UH, “Iraqis join forces in education”, Honolulu Advertiser, 18 July 2006

online at: <http://landofcanaan.blogspot.com/2006/07/honolulu-news-carries-story-on-trip-to.html>

X101 for “Raising the Bar: Legal Education Reform in Iraq”, International Human Rights Law Institute website

see: http://www.law.depaul.edu/institutes_centers/ihrli/programs/rule_education.asp

X102 E. Christian Filstrup, *The USAID-Iraq HEAD—Stony Brook University Program in Archaeology and Environmental Health. Libraries Assessment: Baghdad Visit 17-22 December, 2003*

http://www.StonyBrook.edu/usaidhead/04_01A.htm

X103 for Al-Sharaka Program

see: <http://www.cameron.edu/~abbasj/alsharaka/aboutus.html>

X104 Owens, Thomas, personal telephone communication. It is worth noting that the USAID website cited above (end note 79) claims that Al-Sharaka and all the other

USAID-HEAD grants received funding for two years (9/30/03-9/30/05), whereas Owens insists that they only received funding for one year, and that his project was only extended for several months due to the careful husbanding of unexpended funds. It is also interesting that still another USAID website addressing aid to Iraq claims that all five HEAD projects received their total allotted funds, in the case of Al-Sharaka, \$4,009,904, if that is what the term “obligated to date signifies”, for which see:

<http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/contracts/>

X105 “Raising the Bar: Legal Education Reform in Iraq”, op. cit., second paragraph

X106 Kimberli A. Morris, J.D., M.L.S., International Human Rights Institute, Faculty and Institute staff,

at: http://www.law.depaul.edu/institutes_centers/ihrli/about/morris_k.asp

X107 E. Christian Filstrup, op. cit.

X108 JSTOR — The Scholarly Journal Archive

<http://www.jstor.org/>

X109 Stone, Elizabeth, personal e-mail communication 26 February 2007

For ETANA, Electronic Tools and Ancient Near Eastern Archives, see its website:

<http://www.etana.org/>

X110 *Promoting Higher Education in Iraq*, op. cit, p. 3

X111 Owens, Thomas, personal telephone communication, 11 November 2004, plus others in April/May 2005

X112 “Comprehensive Research Databases from EBSCO Available Nation-wide in Iraq”, Al-Sharaka Program for Higher Education in Iraq,

at: http://www.cameron.edu/~abbasj/alsharaka/visitors/press_040415_ebsco2.html

(further information via personal telephone communication from Thomas Owens)

see also: Michael Rogers, "EBSCO Databases Aid Iraq Rebuild", *Library Journal.com*, 15 May 2004

online at: <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA415372.html>

and:

"EBSCO Teams with Al Sharaka to Provide Databases for Iraqi Universities", *EBSCO Information Services News Releases*, 8 April 2004

online at: <http://www.ebsco.com/home/whatsnew/sharaka.asp>

X113 Personal e-mail communication, 26 February 2007 of Al-Sharaka Baghdad member, name withheld for his safety

X114 El-Swaify, Samir and Ekhlass Jarjees, *Partnerships of the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and Iraqi Universities for Revitalizing Agricultural Higher Education and development in Iraq*, unpublished document, updated to include new developments, received from Dr. Jarjees

X115 The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library (TEEAL),
see: <http://www.teeal.org/>

X116 El-Swaify & Jarjees, op. cit., p. 4

X117 *ibid*, p. 5

X118 Vitvitsky, Tania, Executive-Director of the Sabre Foundation, personal e-mail communications, 17 & 26 March 2007

X119 Jarjees, Ekhlass, personal e-mail communication, 30 March 2007

X120 Vitvitsky, Tania, op. cit.

X121 Jarjees, Ekhlass, personal e-mail communication, 29 March 2007

X122 Vitvitsky, Tania, personal e-mail communication, 6 April 2007

X123 Unfortunately, the report on the CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) in 2005 is no longer available. The Central Library of the University of Baghdad, Jadiriya campus, has been designated an official depository library for all WHO publications. See:
http://www.who.int/bookorders/anglais/libraries_dep1.jsp?codpay=IRQ&libpay=IRAQ&typbib=K05

X124 for EMRO, see; <http://www.emro.who.int/index.asp>

X125 Al-Shorbaji, Najeeb, *WHO/EMRO support to health sciences libraries in Iraq*, received as attachment, 4 April 2007

X126 for information on the WHO's Blue Trunk Libraries, see: <http://www.emro.who.int/TrunkLibrary.htm>

X127 for HINARI, see: <http://www.healthinternetwork.org/>

X128 <http://www.emro.who.int/Medical/MedicalLibraries.htm>

X129 <http://www.emro.who.int/hped/>

X130 <http://www.emro.who.int/imemr/>

X131 <http://www.emro.who.int/HIS/DocumentDelivery.htm>

X132 The author has recently learned that Dr. Khailany is coming to the University of Oklahoma as a "scholar at risk". Given her stalwart character, indefatigable manner, and

persistent efforts to promote the welfare of Iraqi higher education, this development is a disturbing sign of deteriorating conditions in Baghdad.

X133 “Rebuilding Iraq’s Universities”, UNESCOPRESS,

at: <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php->

[URL_ID=16576&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=16576&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

X134 Kopycki, William, J., personal e-mail communication, 26 November 2006: Specifically, in the November sessions “training concerned modern automated cataloging techniques including basic AACR2 rules (Arabic translation), MARC record creation using OCLC Connexion software; Subject analysis using Arabic Subject heading thesaurus (Sha'ban Khalifah) and Dewey classification using WebDewey and al-'Aidi's Arabic modification of DDC. Special sessions included demonstration of Horizon cataloging software led by two representatives from Arabian Advanced Systems, the regional distributor for Horizon. Each institution was given copies of the Arabic AACR2, Arabic Subject Headings, and DDC + OCLC Connexion software and accounts to use.”

X135 Varnet, Harvey and Michèle V. Cloonan, “Educating Iraqi librarians and library and information science educators: Risks and rewards”, *C&RL News*, February 2006, pp. 97-88

X136 Cloonan, Michèle, NEH Narrative: *Training Iraqi Librarians* [Phase 2, Part 1, draft]

X137 Iraqi librarians participating in Amman included: 15 from al-Mustansiriyah University, 7 from the University of Basrah, 7 from the Technical Institute, Baghdad, 6 from the Iraq National Library and Archive, 5 from the University of Mosul, 5 from the Foundation of Technical Education, Baghdad, and one from the Baghdad Documentation Center, University of Baghdad. According to Varnet & Cloonan (op. cit., p. 88), 34 of the 40 were professors of library and information science.

For list of instructors see Spurr, Jeff, op. cit., endnote 27

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/indispensable.html>

For “Letters from Abroad: Amman, Jordan”, subjective accounts of the teaching/learning process and time at ACOR from some of the participants, see:

<http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/publications/jordan/index.shtml>

For a more detailed description of training of Iraqi librarians by one of the participants, see: Johnson, Ian M., op. cit.

X138 Varnet & Cloonan, op. cit., p. 89

X139 Cloonan, Michèle V., *Final Report. Grant # PI-50024-06. "Training Iraqi Librarians and Educators by Faculty from Simmons College, UCLA, and Harvard University"*, 15 March 2007. This report lists faculty, students, and courses taken, and provides an interesting digest of the student evaluations, and some of their blog entries, among other things.

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