



# **BANEA 2024 GLASGOW**

**Archaeological and heritage practice  
in Southwest Asia: towards equitable futures**

## Programme at-a-glance

<b>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January</b>			
	Seminar Room 1	Theatre	Seminar Room 2
11:00-12:00 Session 1		<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan Introduction</i>	
Break			
12:15-14:45 Session 2	<i>Big Dig Energy: Field Practices in the Middle East</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 1</i>	<i>Digital Archaeologies</i>
Break			
15:00-17:00 Session 3	<i>Big Dig Energy beyond West Asia: Comparing Notes with sister fields</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 2</i>	
17:25 – 18:30 Theatre	Welcome and Introduction		
17:30-18:30 Theatre	KEYNOTE: Rozhen Kamal Mohammed-Amin: Cultural Heritage in Iraq: From Monumentalization to Adaptation		
18:30-19:30 Lobby	Reception		
19:30 Stravaigin	BANEА Dinner		

<b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January</b>			
	Seminar Room 1	Theatre	Seminar Room 2
08:30-10:30 Session 1	<i>Whose Heritage is it? 1 (workshop)</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 3</i>	<i>Achaemenid Environments 1 (workshop)</i>
Break			
10:45-12:45 Session 2	<i>Whose Heritage is it? 2 (workshop)</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 4</i>	<i>Achaemenid Environments 2 (workshop)</i>
Lunch			
13:30-15:30 Session 3	<i>Archaeological Fairness 1</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 5</i>	<i>Achaemenid Environments 3 (workshop)</i>
Break			
15:45-17:45 Session 4	<i>Archaeological Fairness 2</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 6</i>	<i>Foodways</i>
19:30 Òran Mór	BANEА Party		

<b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January</b>			
	Seminar Room 1	Theatre	Seminar Room 2
09:00-11:00 Session 1	<i>Landscape Archaeology 1</i>	<i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 7</i>	<i>Social Worlds</i>
Break			
11:15-13:15 Session 2	<i>Landscape Archaeology 2</i>	<i>Recent Fieldwork</i>	
Lunch			
14:00-15:00 Theatre	BANEА Annual General Meeting		

## Full Programme

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January – Sir Charles Wilson Building, 3 Kelvin Way, G12 8NN

	Room 1	Theatre	Room 2
<p><b>Session 1</b></p> <p><b>11:00-12:00</b></p>		<p><b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan Introduction</b></p> <p>Chair: Claudia Glatz</p> <p>11:00-11:05 Claudia Glatz. <i>Introduction</i></p> <p>11:05-11:20 Kaifi Mustafa Ali. <i>Ancient cites and main challenges: An overview of the activities of the General Directorate of Antiquities and Heritage of KRG</i></p> <p>11:25-11:40 Erfan Otman Ahmad. <i>Manuscripts come to life.</i></p> <p>11:45-12:00 Hussein Gharib. <i>The importance of archaeological sites in Slemani from the Stone Age to the Islamic period</i></p>	
<b>12:00-12:15 Coffee</b>			
<p><b>Session 2</b></p> <p><b>12:15-14:45</b></p>	<p><b>Big Dig Energy: Field Practices in the Middle East (workshop)</b></p> <p>Organiser: Yağmur Heffron</p> <p>12:15-12:30 Yağmur Heffron <i>Big Dig Energy: Introduction</i></p> <p>12:30-12:45 Sophie V Moore <i>The Parable of the Caravan Mom</i></p> <p>12:45-13:00 Nancy Highcock <i>Parenting in the Field: Structural Solutions to a Very Personal Problem</i></p> <p>13:00-13:15 H��l��ne Maloigne <i>Queering the Field</i></p>	<p><b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 1</b></p> <p>Chair: Roger Matthews</p> <p>12:15-12:45 Alaa Dhialdeen <i>Museums of the holy shrine's endowments in Iraq: places to serve the local community</i></p> <p>12:45-13:15 Alaa Al-Amiri (<b>CANCELLED</b>) <i>Documenting the modern history of the Iraqi Marsh Arabs in the light of the oral history</i></p> <p>13:15-13:45 Kozad Ahmad <i>State Policy and Cultural Heritage in Iraqi Kurdistan under the Ba'ath Rule</i></p>	<p><b>Digital Archaeologies</b></p> <p>Chair: Francesca Chelazzi</p> <p>12:15-12:45 Aikumis Raissova <i>Photogrammetry in Bioarchaeology: Revolutionising Research and Public Engagement in the study of human remains in Kazakhstan (Central Asia)</i></p> <p>12:45-13:15 Xos�� L. Hermoso-Bux��n (<b>CANCELLED</b>) <i>Space Syntax, Universal Empires and the Ancient Near Eastern Palace: A Long-Term Comparative Cross-Cultural Approach</i></p> <p>13:15-13:45 Yashaswini Jayadevaiah <i>Digital Visuals and Visualisation in the Archaeological Knowledge Practice: A Case of ��ringaverapura</i></p>

	<p>13:15-13:30 Beril Özbaş <i>Exploring the Leaky Pipeline: Lived Experiences of Female Archaeologists in Türkiye</i></p> <p>13:30-13:45 Müge Durusu-Tanrıöver <i>Intersectional Perspectives on Gender and Archaeological Fieldwork in Türkiye</i></p> <p>13:45-14:00 Ofelia Tychon <i>Implicit Gender Bias: Beyond Archaeology</i></p> <p>14:00-14:45 Roundtable discussion</p>	<p>13:45-14:15 Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi <i>Landscape narratives and a place-based on story telling: Preliminary report of first season of fieldwork in Kurdistan, Iraq</i></p>	<p>13:45-14:15 Claire Padovani <i>KilnDataBase Project: Data Sharing to Create Knowledge on Ancient Pottery Firing Technologies</i></p> <p>14:15-14:45 Émilie Pagé-Perron <i>Is the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative FAIR?</i></p>
<b>14:45-15:00 Coffee</b>			
<p><b>Session 3</b> <b>15:00-17:00</b></p>	<p><b>Big Dig Energy beyond West Asia: Comparing Notes with sister fields (workshop)</b></p> <p>Organiser: Yağmur Heffron</p> <p>15:00-15:10 Yağmur Heffron <i>Introduction to Session II</i></p> <p>15:10-15:25 Aikumis Raissova <i>Gendered practices and internalised patriarchy in archaeological fieldwork in Central Asia: the parallel challenges faced by women archaeologists in Central Asia and West Asia</i></p> <p>15:25-15:40 Afifa Khan <i>Introducing South Asia: Women in Fieldwork (SAWIF)</i></p> <p>15:40-16:00 Heba Hashmi <i>Case Study: Lessons Learned</i></p> <p>16:00-16:20 Mou Sarmah <i>The White Paper and Future Actions</i></p> <p>16:20-17:00 Roundtable discussion</p>	<p><b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 2</b></p> <p>Chair: Susan Pollock</p> <p>15:00-15:30 Eleni Asouti, Douglas Baird, Ceren Kabukcu <i>Exploring new frontiers in the Palaeolithic of the NW Zagros: first results of excavations at Ashkawta Rash Cave (Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan)</i></p> <p>15:30-16:00 Nawshirwan Aziz Mohammed, Simone Mühl, and Zana Abdulkarim Qadir <i>Exploring the Cultural Significance of Non-Programmatic Petroglyphs in Northeastern Mesopotamia</i></p> <p>16:00-16:30 Roger Matthews, Wendy Matthews, Amy Richardson, Kamal Rauf Aziz, Sami Hama Rashid, Giulia Ragazzon, Joaquim de Pablo, Ingrid Iversen, Hannah Caroe, and Gwendoline Maurer <i>The Neolithic Transition in the Iraqi Zagros: Current Investigations at Zawi Chemi Razan and Bestansur, Sulaimani Province</i></p> <p>16:30-17:00 Stuart Cambell <i>Material change: The Later Neolithic of Northwestern Iraq</i></p>	
<b>17:25 Introduction to the conference – Neil Erskine</b>			
<b>17:30-18:30 Keynote. Cultural Heritage in Iraq: From Monumentalization to Adaptation – Rozhen Kamal Mohammed-Amin</b>			
<b>18:30-19:30 Reception</b>			
<b>19:30 Dinner – Stravaigin. 28 Gibson Street. Glasgow. G12 8NX</b>			

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January – Sir Charles Wilson Building, 3 Kelvin Way, G12 8NN**

	Room 1	Theatre	Room 2
<b>Session 1</b>	<b><i>Whose Heritage is it? 1 (workshop)</i></b>	<b><i>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 3</i></b>	<b><i>Achaemenid Environments 1 (workshop)</i></b>
<b>08:30-10:30</b>	<p>Organiser: Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi</p> <p>08:30-08:40 Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi Greetings and introduction</p> <p>08:40-08:55 Lanah Haddad <i>Tackling the Challenges of Heritage Ownership and Its Complexity: A View from Iraq and the Kurdistan Region</i></p> <p>08:55-09:10 Muntadher Aloda <i>Lack Of Community Engagement In International Projects: Ur As A Case Study</i></p> <p>09:10-09:25 Allison Mickel <i>They Eat Too Much Mansaf to Care about the Stones: Nationalism, Regionalism, and Community Archaeology in Jordan</i></p> <p>09:25-09:40 Michael Campeggi, Valentina Oselini, Claire Padovani, Luca Peyronel, Mohammed Lashkri <i>Rewinding Traditions: An Ethnoarchaeological Enquiry on Ceramic Manufacturing in the Erbil Plain, Iraqi Kurdistan</i></p> <p>09:40-09:55 Nicolò Marchetti, Gabriele Giacosa, Licia Proserpio <i>Rebuilding a Connection: Community Engagement Activities at Nineveh, Mosul</i></p> <p>09:55-10:10 Kristen Hopper, Bijan Rouhani, Nichole Sheldrick <i>Reflecting On Participation, Practice, And Progress In Digital Cultural Heritage Projects: A Critical Look At The EAMENA-CPF Training Programme</i></p> <p>10:10-10:30 Q&amp;A</p>	<p>Chair: Reinhard Bernbeck</p> <p>08:30-09:00 Jaafar Jotheri <i>What archaeology and heritage do we have in the Iraqi western desert?</i></p> <p>09:00-09:30 Emily Hammer <i>Spatial Ethnoarchaeology of Change in Mobile Pastoralist and Marsh-Dwelling Communities</i></p> <p>09:30-10:00 Malath Feadha <i>Some unknown landscape features in Southern Mesopotamia</i></p> <p>10:00-10:30 Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey (presented by Jason Ur) <i>The Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey: A Decade of Research Collaboration</i></p>	<p>Organisers: Cathie Draycott, Benjamin Irvine, Max D. Price</p> <p>08:30-08:50 Cathie Draycott <i>Introduction</i></p> <p>08:50-09:15 Abazar Shobairi <i>Hydraulic landscape of the Achaemenid Heartland.</i></p> <p>09:15-09:40 Aqeel Sfayyih Nashoo <i>Settlement patterns and agriculture of Achaemenid around Tell al Wilaya, Iraq</i></p> <p>09:40-10:05 Yilmaz Selim Erdal and Nefize Ezgi Altınışık <i>Bone evidence of the Achaemenid invasion and collapse of Kerkenes and Sardis</i></p> <p>10:05-10:30 Ahmed Ali Jawad <i>The Archive of Shamash-Zer-Ibni and his Family from the Late Achaemenid Period</i></p>
<b>10:30-10:45 Coffee</b>			

<p><b>Session 2</b></p> <p><b>10:45-12:45</b></p>	<p><b>Whose Heritage is it? 2 (workshop)</b></p> <p><i>Organiser: Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi</i></p> <p>10:50-11:05 Jaafar Jotheri</p> <p><i>To What Extent Do The Local Archaeologists Have The Right Of Coauthorship?</i></p> <p>11:05-11:20 Ana Silkatcheva <i>Breaking Ground, Breaking (Language) Barriers: ‘Colloquial Arabic for Archaeologists’ as a Decolonial Initiative</i></p> <p>11:20-11:35 Yağmur Heffron <i>Staying In The Conversation: Archaeologists Learning Field Languages As A Baseline For Engaged Field Practice</i></p> <p>11:35-11:45 Break</p> <p>11:45-12:45 Roundtable discussion</p>	<p><b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 4</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Jason Ur</i></p> <p>10:45-11:15 Stefan Smith, Jaafar Jotheri, and Ella Egberts <i>Remote Sensing the Western Iraqi Desert: A Survey of Satellite Imagery in Preparation for Fieldwork</i></p> <p>11:15-11:45 Luca Peyronel, Agnese Vacca, Valentina Oselini, and Michael Campeggi <i>From the rise of urbanization to the advent of the empires in the Erbil Plain. Recent results from the excavations at Helawa and Aliawa</i></p> <p>11:45-12:15 Luca Volpi <i>New Evidences from the Chalcolithic Period in Southern Mesopotamia and in the Lagash Region: The Contribution of the ‘Ubaid Mound’ at Tell Zurghul/Nigin</i></p> <p>12:15-12:45 Sirwan Regional Project (presented by Claudia Glatz) <i>The Late Chalcolithic on the Sirwan/Upper Diyala: Recent Work at Shakhi Kora</i></p>	<p><b>Achaemenid Environments 2 (workshop)</b></p> <p><i>Organisers: Cathie Draycott, Benjamin Irvine, Max D. Price</i></p> <p>10:45-11:10 Lorenzo Castellano and Mac Marston. <i>Agriculture in Achaemenid and Early Hellenistic central Anatolia: a view from Niğde-Kınık Höyük and Gordion</i></p> <p>11:10-11:35 Canan Çakırlar and Salima Ikram <i>Modelling the environmental impact of Persian presence in Cilicia: Zooarchaeological evidence from Kinet Höyük (Classical Issos), mid 6th century BCE to 333 BCE</i></p> <p>11:35-12:00 Michele Massa <i>Extraction landscapes and the Achaemenid imperial footprint in the Konya Plain (central Türkiye)</i></p> <p>12:00-12:25 Shmuel Clark and Shai Gordin <i>20 Acres Of Prime Canal-Front: Using Gazetteer-Supported Text Analysis To Begin Mapping Cadastral Texts In Achaemenid Uruk</i></p>
<p><b>12:45-13:30 Lunch</b></p>			
<p><b>Session 3</b></p> <p><b>13:30-15:30</b></p>	<p><b>Archaeological Fairness 1</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Neil Erskine</i></p> <p>13:30-14:00 Murat Akar, Hélène Maloigne, Tara Ingman, Müge Bulu, Onur Hasan Kirman <i>Building a Resilient Heritage at Tell Atchana, Alalakh (Hatay, Türkiye). Post-Earthquake Response at the Bronze Age Capital City of the Kingdom of Mukish</i></p> <p>14:00-14:30 Nour A. Munawar <i>Post-Conflict reconstruction, forced migration &amp; community engagement: The case of Aleppo – Syria</i></p> <p>14:30-15:00 Christoph Bachhuber and Aris Anagnostopoulos <i>The digital, the virtual, and the remote: plural ontologies of archaeological heritage in western Asia</i></p>	<p><b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 5</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Emily Hammer</i></p> <p>13:30-14:00 Susan Pollock and Reinhard Bernbeck <i>From the Neolithic to the 20th Century: Fieldwork at Gird-i Begum in the Shahrizor Plain</i></p> <p>14:00-14:30 Licia Romano <i>Material Practices Across Millennia: Comparative Insights from Abu Tbeirah and Marshland Communities.</i></p> <p>14:30-15:00 Steve Renette <i>Tracing the Origins of Lullubum: A Preliminary Synthesis of Five Seasons of Excavations at Kani Shaie</i></p>	<p><b>Achaemenid Environments 3 (workshop)</b></p> <p><i>Organisers: Cathie Draycott, Benjamin Irvine, Max D. Price</i></p> <p>13:30-13:55 Nimrod Marom, Sierra Harding, Shyama Vermeersch, Gunnar Lehmann, and Stephanie Eisenmann <i>Persian period zooarchaeology in southern Phoenicia, with a focus on Tel Keisan.</i></p> <p>13:55-14:20 Louise Bertini. <i>Zooarchaeological samples from Naukratis in the Persian Period.</i></p> <p>14:20-15:30 Roundtable discussion. Agenda setting</p>

	15:00-15:30 Adrian Evans, Karina Croucher, Owen Greene, Andrew Wilson <i>Archaeology and Heritage for wellbeing and cohesion: BReaThe – Building Resilience Through Heritage</i>	15:00-15:30 Carolyné Douché and Michael Charles <i>Food production and consumption during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium in iraqi Kurdistan, results from archaeobotanical data</i>	
<b>15:30-15:45 Coffee</b>			
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Archaeological Fairness 2</b>	<b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 6</b>	<b>Foodways</b>
<b>15:45-17:45</b>	<p>Chair: Christoph Bachhuber</p> <p>15:45-16:15 Heidi J. Miller. Reactions to Kathleen Kenyon's <i>Excavation of Neolithic Jericho; Exploring the 'Fashioning of Archaeological Knowledge' through a Decolonialized Lens</i></p> <p>16:15-16:45 Neil Erskine <i>Social class and 'ANE Archaeology' in UK Higher Education: historical trajectories and barriers to accessibility</i></p> <p>16:45-17:15 Ian Carr <i>Rebuilding the Hanging Gardens of Babylon: Popular Historical Fiction as an Anticolonial Tool for Addressing the Marginalisation of Iraq's Ancient History</i></p> <p>17:15-17:45 Kyle Olson <i>Exploring an alternative intellectual genealogy of "Regional Archaeology" and its implications</i></p>	<p>Chair: Claudia Glatz</p> <p>15:45-16:15 Aqeel Al-Khrayfawee <i>Al-Hira area in Iraq: Tracking the changes in the landscape from the Sasanian to the modern state of Iraq</i></p> <p>16:15-16:45 Michael Lewis <i>Regionalised trajectories at the Zagros Fringe. The Early Bronze Age pottery sequence from Kani Shaie</i></p> <p>16:45-17:15 Daniel Calderbank and Claudia Glatz <i>Complex Spatial and Temporal Dynamics in the Lower Sirwan Region: Middle Bronze Age Pottery Assemblages from Tepe Kalan and Kani Masi</i></p> <p>17:15-17:45 Michael Brown <i>Recent results from fieldwork at the mountain fortress of Rabana-Merquly</i></p>	<p>Chair: Ceren Kabukcu</p> <p>15:45-16:15 Dimitris Papageorgiou <i>Reconstructing food preparation practices in Northern Levant and Cilicia during the LBA-EIA transition.</i></p> <p>16:15-16:45 Giacomo Casucci and Valentina Orsi <i>One Day in a Late Bronze Age Kitchen: Exploring Everyday Life in Central Anatolia through Fires, Plates and Pots.</i></p> <p>16:45-17:15 Jessica Pearson et al <i>Food sharing at the transition to farming and the emergence of village life: A 7000-year view of diet from the Epi-Palaeolithic to Neolithic in Turkey from stable carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis.</i></p> <p>17:15-17:45 Synnøve Heimvik <i>Complex Human/Animal relationships on the Periphery of the Kassite State: Zooarchaeological Insights from LBA Kani Masi, Iraqi Kurdistan</i></p>
<b>19:30 BANEA Party – Òran Mór. 730 Great Western Road. Glasgow. G12 8QX</b>			

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January – Sir Charles Wilson Building. 3 Kelvin Way. G12 8NN**

	Room 1	Theatre	Room 2
<p>Session 1</p> <p>0900-1100</p>	<p><b>Landscape Archaeology 1</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Michael Given</i></p> <p>09:00-09:30 Israel Hinojosa-Balino and Dan Lawrence <i>Resilience and perseverance: Urban persistence and sustainability over the ages from the Nile Delta to the Fertile Crescent</i></p> <p>09:30-10:00 Francesca Chelazzi, Dan Lawrence, Lynn Welton, Emily Hammer, Michelle de Gruchy, Jane Gaastra <i>Modelling land use in Southwestern Asia: an archaeological approach</i></p> <p>10:00-10:30 Joseph Meadows, Katleen Deckers, Simone Riehl, Valentina Tumolo, Israel Hinojosa-Baliño, Dan Lawrence <i>Old roots, new insights: Phytogeographic modelling of olive and grape distributions in the Levant over the Holocene</i></p> <p>10:30-11:00 Maurits W. Ertsen, Dengxiao Lang, Reginald Cushing, Olga Lyashevskaya, Stephanie Rost, and Ronald R.P. van Nooyen <i>Come on MESS around. Developing a long-term Modelling approach to study Emerging Societal Systems in ancient southern Mesopotamia</i></p>	<p><b>Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 7</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Daniel Calderbank</i></p> <p>09:00-09:30 Mary Shepperson <i>Introducing the Sebittu Project (Erbil Governorate). Aims, objectives and pilot season results</i></p> <p>09:30-10:00 Michael D. Danti <i>Recent Results of Excavations at the Mashqi Gate of Nineveh (2021–23) in Support of Reconstruction Efforts</i></p> <p>10:00-10:30 Gabriele Giacosa. <i>Adapting to relentless encroachment: new insights on the archaeological sequence and preservation of the Lower Town of ancient Nineveh</i></p> <p>10:30-11:00 Nolwenn Guedeau (Bonn University) <i>The Ottoman Material Culture of Tell Derabun</i></p>	<p><b>Social Worlds</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Karina Croucher</i></p> <p>09:00-09:30 Andreas Ladas and Dimitris Papageorgiou <i>A landscape aspect of human interaction: the role of coastal sanctuaries in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean during the LBA</i></p> <p>09:30-10:00 Joshua Britton <i>Mistakes and Misunderstandings: Linguistic confusion in the Old Assyrian archives</i></p> <p>10:00-10:30 Julian Hirsch <i>Religion, Politics, and Change at Early Bronze Age Megiddo</i></p> <p>10:30-11:00 Jo-Hannah Plug and Karina Croucher <i>Between Life and Death: Continuing Bonds at Late Neolithic Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria</i></p>
<b>11:00-11:15 Coffee</b>			
<p>Session 2</p> <p>1115-1315</p>	<p><b>Landscape Archaeology 2</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Dan Lawrence</i></p> <p>11:15-11:45 Michael Fradley <i>Connectivity and monumentality in northern Arabia: a remote sensing perspective on the arid margins of the Near East</i></p> <p>11:45-12:15 Michael Given <i>Wind and river: interpretive flows and blended subjects in historical Cyprus</i></p>	<p><b>Recent Fieldwork</b></p> <p><i>Chair: Nancy Highcock</i></p> <p>11:15-11:45 Kamal Badreshany, Graham Philip, Michel de-Vreeze <i>New Insights into Early Bronze Age Urbanism on the Lebanese Coast: Excavations at Tell Koubba 2019-22</i></p> <p>11:45-12:15 Jennie Bradbury and Stephen McPhillips <i>Networks, Materials and People: Connecting Coastline to Mountain</i></p>	



	<p>12:15-12:45 Sayantani Neogi, Francesc Conesa and Hector Orengo <i>Scopes of working in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley Using a Combined Remote Sensing and Geoaerchaeological Approach</i></p> <p>12:45-13:15 Matthew J. Jacobson <i>When climate change didn't cause collapse: can we learn from the persistence of past societies?</i></p>	<p>12:15-12:45 Salahaddin Ebrahimipour <i>Rocks Speak: Unravelling the Hidden Aspects of Rabat</i></p> <p>12:45-13:15 John MacGinnis &amp; Bülent Genç <i>A newly discovered Assyrian rock relief in the Tur Abdin</i></p>	
<b>13:15-14:00 Lunch</b>			
<b>13:15-14:00 BANEA Steering Committee Meeting (SC Members only)</b>			
<b>14:00-15:00 BANEA Annual General Meeting (Theatre)</b>			

## **Achaemenid Environments 1 (workshop)**

*Organisers: Cathie Draycott (Durham University), Benjamin Irvine (BIAA), Max D. Price (Durham University)*

**08:30-08:50 Cathie Draycott (Durham University)**

### **Introduction**

**08:50-09:15 Abazar Shobairi (National Hellenic Research Foundation)**

### **Hydraulic landscape of the Achaemenid Heartland**

In the present paper, we will focus on the hydraulic and landscape features in the heartland of the Achaemenid Persian Empire (ca. 550-330 BC). The majority of the Achaemenid hydraulic structures are located in the two main river basins, those of the Kur and Sivand Rivers, located in southwestern Iran, in the Pasargadae and Persepolis plains respectively. This contribution will examine the pertinent archaeological evidence (such as the remains of dams, weirs, and canals), which illustrate the sophistication of Achaemenid irrigation technology and networks, and will also consider its impact on the surrounding landscape. Three main important regions can be distinguished. The first is the northern part of the Pasargadae plain, consisting of the Bulaghi Valley and Sivand River basin. The second area is located in the Persepolis plain, in Marvdasht connecting to the Persepolis and the Naqsh-e Rostam areas. The Dorūdzan plain (Kur River basin) is the last region. Water resource management is an important factor in the maintenance and distribution of hydraulic landscape and a regional organization is vital for the system's proper and smooth function. The Achaemenids may have contributed to the development of regional organization of irrigation and hydraulic constructions in the land between the Kur and Sivand Rivers

**09:15-09:40 Aqeel Sfayyih Nashoo (State Board of Antiquities and Heritage)**

### **Settlement patterns and agriculture of Achaemenid around Tell al Wilaya, Iraq**

Through this study, we aim to focus on the Achaemenid period in the Mesopotamia by the modern archaeological survey techniques to determine spatial distributions. Achaemenid sites in Mesopotamia have not been extensively studied, the remains of the Achaemenid era in this region were studied, including written texts, pottery, and other cultural items. However, a comprehensive study of sites dating back to this era through landscape archaeology has not been previously conducted. By conducting this study, we seek to achieve the following.

1. We are concentrating on the study of the Achaemenid sites in Mesopotamia by conducting a survey of the region and establishing the spatial distributions of sites from this era with surveys conducted by researchers in neighbouring regions, to put a clear picture of the distribution of Achaemenid sites around main cities in the southern of Mesopotamia and the surrounding countryside.
2. We are also focusing to examining the settlement patterns of Achaemenid sites, determining whether they exhibit agricultural or pastoral patterns, and studying the BANE 2024 workshop: Achaemenid Environments Page 8 of 9 sizes of archaeological sites, particularly emphasizing

temporary settlements in rural areas it gives us an idea about the prevailing economic system of that era.

3. It is possible to reconstruct the courses of ancient rivers from the Achaemenid era by correlating archaeological sites from that time with textual records that describe the river channels during the Achaemenid era.

**09:40-10:05 Yılmaz Selim Erdal and Nefize Ezgi Altınışık (Hacettepe University)**

#### **Bone evidence of the Achaemenid invasion and collapse of Kerkenes and Sardis**

Anatolia has long been a melting pot of cultures and populations, shaped by millennia of human mobility and interactions. From the Neolithic onwards, the movement of people between the Zagros Mountains and Anatolia has played a pivotal role in the region's history. The influence of South Caucasian-Zagros populations, often referred to as the "eastern influence", has steadily made its way westward, particularly into Anatolia. However, our understanding of these historical migrations has been hindered by the limited information available regarding human remains. This study seeks to address these knowledge gaps by examining archaeogenomic studies conducted in Anatolia and its surrounding areas, shedding light on how the genetic affinity influenced by the East has grown within Anatolia. The primary focus is on aDNA studies, which provide insights into the genetic makeup of the region's past inhabitants. By analyzing these genetic data, we aim to unravel the intricate tapestry of human migrations and interactions that have shaped Anatolia over time. Furthermore, this research delves into the dramatic events that unfolded in 547 BC when Cyrus of Persia led an expedition into Anatolia, causing the destruction of cities such as Kerkenes and Sardis.

Bioarchaeological evidence from these cities reveals the grim consequences of these Achaemenid attacks. At least two individuals from Kerkenes and three individuals from Sardis victimized in the violence of this historic invasion. By integrating these diverse sources of information, we aim to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the region's rich and diverse past, as well as to the broader field of archaeogenomic research both within Anatolia and beyond.

**10:05-10:30 Ahmed Ali Jawad (State Board of Antiquities and Heritage)**

#### **The Archive of Shamash-Zer-Ibni and his Family from the Late Achaemenid Period**

The archive in our possession belongs to the Shamash-Zer-Ibni family from the city of Shater (Šāṭer) in Mesopotamia during the late Achaemenid period, specifically from the reigns of Artaxerxes I and Darius II. The archive texts document the economic activities practiced by three successive generations of the family, starting with Shamsh-Zer-Ibni, followed by his son Aki-milki-Ilu'a, and his grandson Nkhistu. Most of the archive's texts pertain to economic transactions, primarily loan contracts and title deeds for fields, with a few texts of varying content. The majority of these archive texts were recorded in the city of Shater, whose location is still unknown, because the tablets came from illegal excavations. Consequently, establishing a direct archaeological context for the archive is difficult. However, maybe that Shater was located somewhere between the cities of Nippur and Uruk, within the Bit-Amukanu region, on the left bank of the river Nar-Sharri. With the aid of newly acquired information, we can endeavor to some extent to pinpoint the location of the city of Shater, facilitating a connection between the texts data and the landscape of the area.

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## **Achaemenid Environments 2 (workshop)**

*Organisers: Cathie Draycott (Durham University), Benjamin Irvine (BIAA), Max D. Price (Durham University)*

**10:45-11:10 Lorenzo Castellano (New York University) and Mac Marston (Boston University)**

### **Agriculture in Achaemenid and Early Hellenistic central Anatolia: a view from Niğde-Kınık Höyük and Gordion**

In this paper we present the results of archaeobotanical research conducted at the Achaemenid and Early Hellenistic levels of Niğde-Kınık Höyük, a multiperiod site located in southern Cappadocia, south-central Anatolia. We compare the dataset from Kınık Höyük to coeval evidence from Gordion and contextualize it within the broader central Anatolian context. Compared to Gordion, the archaeobotanical record from Kınık Höyük emerges as clearly distinct. Agriculture at Kınık Höyük is based on the cultivation of bread wheat, 2-row hulled barley, grape, and other fruit crops—including Russian olive and walnut. Wheat is more abundant than barley, which is in stark contrast to Gordion. The evidence of viticulture from Kınık Höyük, moreover, is currently unique in the central Anatolian archaeobotanical dataset, considering the abundant and ubiquitous attestation of grape seeds and pedicels, and grapevine charcoal. The site was thus involved in large-scale viticulture. Given the intensity of archaeobotanical research conducted at Gordion and Kınık Höyük, we argue that the important differences in the archaeobotanical assemblages recorded at the two sites reflect distinct agricultural systems during the Achaemenid period. This consideration suggests the presence in central Anatolia of well-defined specializations in agropastoral economies within the Achaemenid polity.

**11:10-11:35 Canan Çakırlar (University of Groningen) and Salima Ikram (American University in Cairo)**

### **Modelling the environmental impact of Persian presence in Cilicia: Zooarchaeological evidence from Kinet Höyük (Classical Issos), mid 6th century BCE to 333 BCE**

Cilicia served as a venture point for Persian military and naval expeditions from the mid-sixth century BCE until the campaign of Alexander the Great in 333 BCE. Located half-way between Al-Mina and Tarsus, Kinet Höyük was a harbor town and a fortified local centre during this period. Bilkent University excavations conducted by M.-H. and C. Gates yielded substantial bioarchaeological assemblages dating to the Persian Period in Cilicia, associated with the architectural remains of the local occupational periods 5, 4 and 3B. This paper BANE 2024 workshop: Achaemenid Environments Page 4 of 9 describes the zooarchaeological assemblages from Persian deposits at Kinet, with reference to the stratigraphic challenges involved in identifying them at this long-lived, densely-settled site. Kinet witnessed the military, economic, and demographic presence of a succession of territorial organizations before and after the Persians, the question we are interested here is how Persian militarism and extractionism differed or was similar from its predecessors and successors, and how local people and the environment responded to Persian influence.

**11:35-12:00 Michele Massa (Bilkent University)**

### **Extraction landscapes and the Achaemenid imperial footprint in the Konya Plain (central Türkiye)**

The Konya Plain (central Türkiye) is a semi-arid endorheic basin dominated by the Çarşamba River delta, and is mostly famous for its early Neolithic excavations at Pınarbaşı, Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük. However, recent archaeological surveys have now highlighted how this region not only

played a central role in fostering early experimentations with sedentism and agriculture but was also pivotal for sustaining the growth of the first urban centres in central Anatolia and as a strategic granary for later imperial formations. This paper will highlight how, through detailed analysis of historical satellite imagery, high-resolution Digital Surface Models, UAV-based 3D modelling and ground-truthing archaeological fieldwork, the Konya Regional Archaeological Survey Project (KRASP) was able to disentangle the diachronic palimpsest of land use and water management in the region. It will in particular highlight a radical change in settlement location choices and layouts, a more regular occupation in the landscape, the growth of irrigation systems and the occupation of the steppe by sedentary groups around the mid-1 st millennium BCE. We interpret this process as a major shift in the organization of agropastoral landscapes and the socio-economic structure of local farming communities within the context of the first imperial power in Anatolia.

**12:00-12:25 Shmuel Clark (Ariel University) and Shai Gordin (Ariel University)**

### **20 Acres Of Prime Canal-Front: Using Gazetteer-Supported Text Analysis To Begin Mapping Cadastral Texts In Achaemenid Uruk**

Cadastral texts have a long history of being successfully used to better understand real estate transactions and agriculture in Mesopotamia, but are often used in a proposographical context, to understand interactions among the landowning elite, or as an example of a text genre found in various archives. BANE 2024 workshop: Achaemenid Environments Page 5 of 9 The publication of a new gazetteer of Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Uruk allows these texts to be more specifically analyzed with an eye towards an understanding of the specific real-estate plots they detail. The MAPA gazetteer draws directly on specific texts to assemble a network of place-names. This gazetteer allows the identification of these cadastral texts through their unique connective signature, and their placement in a specific geographical context. We propose a novel workflow for the discussion of micro-landscape geography in the Achaemenid period, an analysis of cadastral texts with the support of a gazetteer. This process, a proof-of-concept for which is presented using Uruk-focused cadastral texts dated to the Achaemenid period, and supported by the MAPA gazetteer, is a process which can be easily expanded to Achaemenid Mesopotamia at large.

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### **Achaemenid Environments 3 (workshop)**

*Organisers: Cathie Draycott (Durham University), Benjamin Irvine (BIAA), Max D. Price (Durham University)*

**13:30-13:55 Nimrod Marom<sup>1</sup>, Sierra Harding<sup>1</sup>, Shyama Vermeersch<sup>2</sup>, Gunnar Lehmann<sup>3</sup>, Stephanie Eisenmann<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Haifa, <sup>2</sup>University of Oxford, <sup>3</sup>Ben Gurion University of the Negev, <sup>4</sup>Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

### **Persian period zooarchaeology in southern Phoenicia, with a focus on Tel Keisan**

The Persian Period (539-332 BCE) in the Galilee witnessed relative prosperity. As part of the Satrapy of Abar Nahara, the region benefited from Phoenician international trade, a monetary economy, and the stabilizing presence of imperial armies as a forward base against frequent Egyptian revolts. These changes could potentially be reflected in contemporary archeofaunal assemblages, especially stock improvement through management practices or oversea introduction. However, the bioarchaeological record of southern Phoenicia in the Persian period is fragmentary: relatively few faunal assemblages have been analyzed, and the available data are scattered across different reports,

some of which are "gray literature." In this paper, we take first steps in synthesizing the available archaeozoological literature for this study region in order to provide a basic frame of reference for faunal transformations in the Persian period. We then focus on the recently-excavated animal bone remains from Tell Keisan to discuss questions of breed introduction and improvement using BANEA 2024 workshop: Achaemenid Environments Page 7 of 9 biometric and geometric morphometric analyses. Our results suggest a mosaic of conservative practices and incipient changes related to livestock keeping and improvement.

**13:55-14:20 Louise Bertini (American Research Center in Egypt)**

### **Zooarchaeological samples from Naukratis in the Persian Period**

This presentation will discuss the faunal remains from the British Museum's 2016-2019 excavation season at Greek settlement of Naukratis, Egypt. While the site's occupational history is from the Saite- Late Ptolemaic periods, the majority of the archaeological, and thus faunal material date to the Persian period (c. 550-325 BC), coming from riverfront contexts and the sanctuaries of the Hellenion and Dioskouroi. While this is not a particularly large assemblage, it is a very well preserved one which can provide insights into the site's economy and also possible ritual practices.

**14:20-15:30 Roundtable discussion. Agenda setting**

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## **Archaeological Fairness 1**

*Chair: Neil Erskine (University of Glasgow)*

**13:30-14:00 Murat Akar<sup>1</sup>, Helene Maloigne<sup>2</sup>, Tara Ingman<sup>3</sup>, Müge Bulu<sup>3</sup>, Onur Hasan Kirman<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Antakya Mustafa Kemal University, <sup>2</sup>University of Greenwich, <sup>3</sup>Koç University

### **Building a Resilient Heritage at Tell Atchana, Alalakh (Hatay, Türkiye). Post-Earthquake Response at the Bronze Age Capital City of the Kingdom of Mukish**

Hatay, and particularly Antioch (today's Antakya), was lost to the devastating Kahramanmaraş and Hatay earthquakes nine months ago. Their impacts are still being felt on a drastic level, and many of the city's historic monuments are now lost forever. Tell Atchana, a Bronze Age site – although it survived total destruction – was severely damaged. As a response to this natural disaster, a multi-pronged heritage initiative at Tell Atchana started in May 2023 to preserve the mud brick monuments from further decay and destruction. The effects of the recent earthquakes now necessitate a long-term response plan for creating resilient heritage in an environment drastically impacted by a natural disaster.

Thus, this talk would like to present our concerns and methodological approach on building resilient heritage at a legacy site explored by colonial era archaeological field practices and left to decay through environmental and anthropogenic stress. We also would like to bring forward the discussion on the contradictory concepts of digging up the past and preserving the past as they form a duality, are subjective and formed by individual or organizational agendas.

**14:00-14:30 Nour A. Munawar (Doha Institute for Graduate Studies)**

### **Post-Conflict reconstruction, forced migration & community engagement: The case of Aleppo – Syria**

The war in Syria, and the rise of non-state radical actors placed a spotlight on the scale and intensity of destruction of cultural heritage sites in Syria. The Ancient City of Aleppo, a World Heritage Site was

particularly hard hit by the conflict and when the city was re-unified in late 2016, several national and international organisations started to plan its postwar reconstruction. However, despite the fact that the war in Syria is now approaching its end, the prospects of finding a sustainable route for heritage reconstruction in Aleppo are far from good. This article sets out to critique the top-down governmental approach to the reconstruction of Syria's cultural heritage. By drawing upon empirical data collected from a survey conducted with people from Syria and Iraq, this article argues that if cultural heritage assets are to provide a unifying force for reconciliation, reintegration of displaced people, and future social cohesion then such an approach should be opposed and replaced by a bottom-up participatory approach, which gives voice to and builds consensus among all members of Syrian society.

**14:30-15:00 Christoph Bachhuber (University of Oxford) and Aris Anagnostopoulos (University of Kent)**

### **The digital, the virtual, and the remote: plural ontologies of archaeological heritage in western Asia**

We examine digital archaeological recording methodologies and modes of visualisation to address several issues related to the colonial modality of archaeology in western Asia. Our primary concern is with the increasingly remote position of digital archaeology in relation to the people who inhabit archaeological landscapes, most obviously manifested in the proliferation and popularity of remote sensing methodologies, but characteristic of all digital archaeology. The remote position simultaneously excludes local people from the process of archaeological recording, and potentially marginalises the same people as an object of this process. By approaching digital technologies and modes of visualisation as part of the ontological politics of archaeological heritage preservation in particular, we distinguish one digital reality which turns archaeological landscapes into calculable and governable risks, from the worlds of those people who inhabit the same landscapes where risks are imperceptible or irrelevant, but exacerbated by the lived, human experience of the landscape. Emerging political concerns over surveillance and data suppression have implications for a new era of data colonialism in the archaeology of western Asia. The critique lays a foundation for a radical rethinking and revisualisation of a digital heritage landscape, beginning with the implementation of participatory digital recording methodologies, and culminating in the creation of digital-virtual heritage worlds that approximate the experiences of those people who inhabit archaeological landscapes. We ask: 1) to what extent can these proposed methodologies ameliorate ethical concerns related to the colonial modality of archaeology in western Asia, and 2) to what extent can they lead to positive local social action around local issues of local and natural heritage

**15:00-15:30 Adrian Evans, Karina Croucher, Owen Greene, Andrew Wilson (University of Bradford)**

### **Archaeology and Heritage for wellbeing and cohesion: BReaTHe – Building Resilience Through Heritage**

An interdisciplinary collaboration between archaeology/heritage and peace studies/international development, with partner organisations Mercy Corps, Jordan Heritage and South Azraq Women's Association, has used archaeology and heritage for cohesion and wellbeing among displaced and host communities. Focusing on Azraq town and camp in North Jordan, the project codesigned Cultural Heritage Festivals with community members. During the festivals, Virtual Reality (VR) creations of heritage sites were used to prompt discussion and share stories, along with a celebration of intangible heritage, such as music, dance, food and craft. The VR sites included threatened and destroyed heritage sites (using webscraped technology). VR sites were selected with community

members and included places of 'everyday heritage' such as mosques and souks. The events had a remarkable impact on participants, who shared memories and stories, and crucially, built new relationships, supporting resilience across groups and between host and displaced communities. This paper discusses the project and lessons learned, how it addressed Social Development Goals (particularly goal 3), as well as discussing next steps for the innovative use of heritage and technology in this way.

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## **Archaeological Fairness 2**

*Chair: Christoph Bachhuber*

**15:45-16:15 Heidi J. Miller (Middlesex Community College)**

### **Reactions to Kathleen Kenyon's Excavation of Neolithic Jericho; Exploring the 'Fashioning of Archaeological Knowledge' through a Decolonialized Lens**

Colonialism hides within archaeological interpretations, rooted in unvoiced assumptions behind the ancient history we create. In this presentation, Kathleen Kenyon's excavations of Neolithic Jericho will be discussed, specifically, why she labeled this period as a *civilization*, a term fervently objected to by Childe, Woolley and Braidwood. I contend that colonial attitudes about the unilinear evolutionary track of culture, and where this track took place, colored what was seen as valid evidence. As Guha has observed, "...the fashioning of archaeological knowledge...[relies upon] the contingent nature of the 'hard facts'", and as for Jericho, an ideology rooted in archaeology's colonial origin, limited what data from the site was accepted as legitimate.

Kenyon was a paradox; her excavations were lauded, yet she practiced on the edge of academia, and in the case of Neolithic Jericho, her data was not accepted. She directly challenged the 'conventional wisdom' of where and when social complexity took root, and thus her work at Jericho was belittled and ignored. Was this due to her gender, her professional position, or perhaps to the fact that the data she recorded confronted colonial attitudes about the Neolithic? In order for archaeology to be equitable and fair, for all places, peoples and cultures (past and present), we need to illuminate the assumptions embedded within previous research, to call them out and to challenge the ideology which denigrates the ancient past of non-Western cultures, as well as explore what is legitimate data within knowledge creation. Thus we ensure that our discipline is moving forward, beyond its colonial roots and narrow pathways.

**16:15-16:45 Neil Erskine (University of Glasgow)**

### **Social class and 'ANE Archaeology' in UK Higher Education: historical trajectories and barriers to accessibility**

Recent literature has seen considerable attention given to the historical legacies of the archaeology of Southwest Asia, how they frame and inform archaeological practice today, and to strategies designed to address and/or mitigate them. Most of this literature rightly foregrounds how international teams and institutions interact with local colleagues or the narratives about the past constructed within inequitable and colonial contexts.

Less attention has been directed towards how these legacies have shaped popular perceptions of the discipline in the global north, or how those perceptions inform engagement with the discipline amongst different demographics.



This paper presents the results of a recent survey of undergraduate archaeology students in UK Higher Education institutions, tackling their perceptions of Southwest Asian archaeology and how these perceptions led to their pursuing or avoiding courses focussed on the region. The results, which place particular stress on the field's classist and elitist connotations, are then situated within the historical development of the discipline in UK universities.

By highlighting how classist legacies shape demographics interacting with Southwest Asian archaeology, the results highlight deficiencies in public engagement, barriers to student recruitment and retention, and how these in turn limit the ability of the discipline to properly address its historical inheritances that continue to frame fieldwork and international collaboration.

**16:45-17:15 Ian Carr (University of Exeter)**

**Rebuilding the Hanging Gardens of Babylon: Popular Historical Fiction as an Anticolonial Tool for Addressing the Marginalisation of Iraq's Ancient History**

"Writing is the mother of eloquence and the father of artists"

The ancient history of Iraq, and the wider West Asia region, suffers from what archaeologist, Davide Nadali, calls a visibility problem. In the popular imagination, in the media, in university departments, Eurocentrism dominates US-European perceptions of the ancient world, a legacy of imperial and colonial ideologies. My PhD research is examining if, and how, the genre historical fiction novel can be a credible and effective communication tool for mitigating the marginalisation of ancient Iraq in the US-European popular consciousness. I am using a combination of critical research and creative practice, which includes the writing of a novel set in the final years of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

In this paper, I will explore how I have approached some of the problems of 'writing ancient Iraq'. Such as a potential readership whose pre-knowledge of the ancient world will be predominantly skewed to the Greco-Roman world. A novelist writing in ancient Rome can assume in their readership a basic understanding of Roman culture, the physical environment, and things as simple as the comprehension of Latin names, things absent for the writer attempting to create a credible simulation of ancient Iraq. I will also examine how my approach fits within the wider decolonial/anti-colonial process, and how I am approaching issues related to cultural appropriation, the dangers of reinforcing negative stereotypes when representing Western Asia in fiction, and the often-uneasy relationship between fiction, history and archaeology.

**17:15-17:45 Kyle Olson (Washington University in St Louis)**

**Exploring an alternative intellectual genealogy of "Regional Archaeology" and its implications.**

The conventional story of the emergence of regional archaeology traces its origins back to the dialectical resolution of contradictions internal to the intellectual environment of Americanist anthropological archaeology. On some level this is true, but only insofar as it elides the socio-political context and material conditions of the foundational studies that established this now common-place scale of analysis and body of method and theory within the field. At several crucial junctures during the mid-20th century, archaeology encountered and was forever changed by its engagements with regional-scale river-basin development projects. Looking solely at the Tennessee Valley Authority archaeology programs, among the results of these entanglements can be counted the Southeastern synthesis, the emergence of salvage archaeology, and the professionalization of the discipline, to name just a few. Taking a global perspective, however, reveals just how much the emergence of the regional paradigm in archaeology directly depended upon the sponsorship of fieldwork by American development agencies and consultants who spread river-basin development throughout the world

during the early Cold War. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the career of Robert McCormick Adams, who in the mid-1950s was hired by the government of Iraq to provide a utilitarian answer as to why ancient states had been more successful at irrigating the desert margins than modern ones, and then was subsequently hired by the Development and Resources Corporation (DRC) to conduct similar research on behalf of the government of Iran in 1960-61. In this paper, I will introduce the lesser-known relationship between Adams and the DRC and how his landmark publications from the 1960s—and subsequently all research following from these studies—were shaped by the encounter in the field between Adams and this American private development contractor. The relationship between Adams and his DRC counterpart Leo Anderson had both synergies (e.g., expanding the range of data consulted by archaeologists and extending the spatial scope of archaeological studies) and dissonances (e.g., over the extent to which archaeological knowledge was useful in development planning). This encounter, with all of its accordances and antinomies, reveals the necessity of considering the intellectual history of archaeology in the social and political context in which trailblazing fieldwork was conducted. More importantly, this history raises some fundamental questions about methods and theory in landscape archaeology specifically, and about broader ethical considerations in fieldwork and the re-use of legacy data.

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## **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan Introduction**

*Chair: Claudia Glatz (University of Glasgow)*

**11:00-11:05 Claudia Glatz (University of Glasgow)**

### **Introduction**

**11:05-11:20 Kaifi Mustafa Ali (General Director of Antiquities of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq)**

**Ancient sites and main challenges: An overview of the activities of the General Directorate of Antiquities and Heritage of KRG**

**11:25-11:40 Hussein Gharib (Director of the Slemani Antiquities Directorate)**

**The importance of archaeological sites in Slemani from the Stone Age to the Islamic period**

**11:40-12:00 Erfan Otman Ahmad (Director Kurdish Heritage Museum)**

**Manuscripts come to life**

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## **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 1**

*Chair: Roger Matthews (University of Reading)*

**12:15-12:45 Alaa Dhialdeen (Imam Hussein Holy Shrine Endowment)**

**Museums of the holy shrine's endowments in Iraq: places to serve the local community**

There are tens of holy shrine endowments across Iraq, attracting hundreds of thousands and sometimes millions of visitors and pilgrims annually. Most visitors are Iraqi citizens, and around 20% are internationals. After 2003, The Religious Establishment in Iraq started building new museums

associated with these holy shrines. These museums began serving several needs of the local community and created many jobs in heritage sectors. Initially, small buildings or rooms were designated to present some artefacts and other unique tokens of the shrine's history. By then, the building had become more significant as it received more visitors. The visitors are diverse in terms of ages, genders, backgrounds, nationalities, level of education, and seniority. This paper will discuss how these museums are developing and have become educational and knowledge-sharing centres. I will give several examples and explain plans to expand their function and relationship with the other museums and heritage institutions in Iraq and the world.

**12:45-13:15 Alaa Al-Amiri (University of Al-Mustansiriyah)**

### **Documenting the modern history of the Iraqi Marsh Arabs in the light of the oral history**

The region of the Marsh Arab in southern Iraq faced several tragic events during the modern history of Iraq. The marshes were a refuge for Saddam's opposition movements, and then vast areas of the marshes were a battlefield of the Iraq/Iran war that lasted eight years. As a result, many people of the marsh Arabs abandoned their lives in the marshes and moved to another area in the same marshes. However, the people were later forced to leave the marshes and move to other cities and towns due to the draining of the marshes by Saddam. As the people of the marshes have witnessed these harsh events, these events have not been adequately documented by any Iraqi scholars or institutions. Yes, the Iraqi mainstream media had barely reported these events during that time; of course, they were partial and biased. The truth behind most of these events was kept within the people of the marshes themselves. This paper will discuss how we have used oral history tools and methods to extract so many hidden, untold and factual stories about how the people of the marsh Arab have been killed, humiliated, and discriminated against in cold blood and silence. We will present several case studies that our team has documented and how they differed from what the mainstream media have reported.

**13:15-13:45 Kozad Ahmad (University of Slemani)**

### **State Policy and Cultural Heritage in Iraqi Kurdistan under the Ba'ath Rule**

The Ba'ath party, a pan-Arab party that ruled Iraq for some three decades, believed not only in the unification of all Arabs in one national state, but also that all the lands that were once under Arab rule to be part of the Arab territories to be included in that national state. This was a dilemma for the non-Arabs living in countries ruled by this party, namely Iraq and Syria. It is obvious that the implementation of such an ideology in the country has been affected all aspects of life, one of these was the cultural heritage policies. Iraqi Kurdistan was in the focus and suffered from the Ba'ath ideology. First it was counted as part of the Arab homeland and its inhabitants as guests that have benefited from the hospitality of the Arab lords. Its cultural heritage was part of the heritage of "Iraq" the state that was an "Arab country" according to the constitution. Anything was discovered was counted as a heritage by the Ancient Iraqis who were considered Ancient Arabs in the Iraqi archaeological literature, and, if it was clearly non-Mesopotamian, was concealed and considered among the remnants of "foreigners," "invaders" and "intruders."

This short paper intends to study this state policy in some detail.

**13:45-14:15 Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi (University of Glasgow)**

### **Landscape narratives and a place-based on story telling: Preliminary report of first season of fieldwork in Kurdistan, Iraq**

There is a deep disconnect between how archaeologists traditionally investigate historic landscapes in Southwest Asia and the lived experiences of local communities, who dwell in and modify the landscapes around them. Although archaeologists increasingly emphasize public engagement, communities' perceptions of archaeological landscapes are often poorly studied. Moreover, local communities rarely have access to the knowledge produced by archaeological projects and are rarely involved directly in its production. This separation has pushed the local knowledge, narratives and their needs and concerns to the margins. My research addresses this disconnect between local knowledge and archaeological practice, aiming to make the latter more relevant to local concerns, and to empower local communities to actively shape landscape discourse. Taking the Sirwan River valley in the Kurdistan Region of northeast Iraq as the case study and drawing on the archaeological and community work of the Sirwan Regional Project, I will present a pilot methodology toolkit for the discourse around landscape and heritage as well as the results of a first season of fieldwork.

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## **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 2**

*Chair: Susan Pollock (Freie Universität Berlin)*

**15:00-15:30 Eleni Asouti, Douglas Baird, Ceren Kabukcu (University of Liverpool)**

### **Exploring new frontiers in the Palaeolithic of the NW Zagros: first results of excavations at Ashkawta Rash Cave (Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan)**

Our previous work at Palegawra Cave in the Slemani region of Iraqi Kurdistan produced the first reliable radiometric evidence for the dating of the NW Zagros Epipalaeolithic from the LGM to the end of the Lateglacial (c. 19,600-13,000 cal BP) and the first archaeobotanical evidence for Palaeolithic plant exploitation in the Zagros. New excavations started in 2023 at the neighbouring Ashkawta Rash Cave have revealed a lithic industry similar to that of Palegawra, as well as exceptional charred plant preservation for a site of this period and geographical location. This presentation outlines the initial results of our first season of fieldwork at Ashkawta Rash, focusing on the emergent similarities and differences with the Palegawra assemblage, and their implications for exploring the diversity of late Palaeolithic cave use and associated subsistence patterns in the NW Zagros.

**15:30-16:00 Nawshirwan Aziz Mohammed<sup>1</sup>, Simone Mühl<sup>2</sup>, and Zana Abdulkarim Qadir<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Slemani Antiquities Directorate, <sup>2</sup> German Archaeological Institute, Orient Department (Berlin)

### **Exploring the Cultural Significance of Non-Programmatic Petroglyphs in Northeastern Mesopotamia**

The project "Hunari Sar Berd", which means "rock image" in Sorany (southern Kurdish), seeks to explore the cultural importance of petroglyphs in areas influenced by agriculture, animal husbandry, and hunting throughout history. Unlike any other iconographic category, petroglyphs are traditionally associated with mobility and seasonal or non-sedentary lifestyles. However, petroglyphs represent an important medium of communication among groups with differing lifestyles and modes of subsistence.

This project introduces a new direction in petroglyph research, shifting the emphasis from the interpretation and cataloging of individual elements towards a quantitative and relational study of these visual motifs, their connection to local topography as well as other sources of archaeological and historical information. This is achieved by the employment of a network analysis approach that allows us to delve into the semantic aspects of these images. Moreover, collaborative efforts with the

African Archaeology Archive Cologne (University of Cologne) will adapt the local description methodology, considering the variety of data sources involved and aims at an open access database development for rock images in iDAI.field. In its first year, the project has already collected a wealth of data through the study of published petroglyphs in the region. Additional data was acquired through a survey. Initial findings reveal a remarkable diversity of motifs that cannot be solely explained by their origins in different time periods or regional peculiarities.

Additionally, the project seeks to explore not only the interpretations of the petroglyphs within past agriculturally-oriented communities but also aims to understand the contemporary population's perspective on the visible imagery. Interviews provide insights into the cultural context and contemporary narratives. Simultaneously, it will address existing myths and concerns, particularly those associated with vandalism and treasure hunting.

The exploration of non-programmatic petroglyphs is an opportunity to gain a more comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the interaction between communities and their environment in societies, where agriculture-oriented and (semi-)nomadic groups interacted frequently. Integrating this new dimension promises to enrich our insights into the cultural and social complexity of Mesopotamia's peripheries, potentially shedding light on social aspects within Mesopotamia itself, in both iconographic and textual subjects.

**16:00-16:30 Roger Matthews<sup>1</sup>, Wendy Matthews<sup>1</sup>, Amy Richardson<sup>1</sup>, Kamal Rauf Aziz<sup>2</sup>, Sami Hama Rashid<sup>2</sup>, Giulia Ragazzon<sup>1</sup>, Joaquim de Pablo<sup>1</sup>, Ingrid Iversen<sup>1</sup>, Hannah Caroe<sup>1</sup>, and Gwendoline Maurer<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Reading; <sup>2</sup>Slemani Antiquities Directorate

### **The Neolithic Transition in the Iraqi Zagros: Current Investigations at Zawi Chemi Razan and Bestansur, Sulaimani Province**

In this paper the CZAP team will present the latest results from recent excavations at two key sites in Sulaimai province, Iraqi Kurdistan, that span the Neolithic transition of the Early Holocene. At Zawi Chemi Razan, near Zarzi Cave, we have been excavating a settlement site with sunken architecture and evidence for seasonal exploitation of a rich range of resources from this fertile river valley. The site dates to the 10<sup>th</sup> millennium cal BC. At Bestansur on the Shahrizor plain we have been excavating substantial buildings of mudbrick, one of which contains the remains of c. 100 human individuals from a complex mix of primary and secondary depositions. This building dates to c. 7650 BC. We will summarise the results within the remit of the ERC-funded MENTICA project (Middle East Neolithic Transition: Integrated Community Approaches).

**16:30-17:00 Stuart Cambell (University of Manchester)**

### **Material change: The Later Neolithic of Northwestern Iraq**

With some exceptions, approaches to the Later Neolithic of northern Mesopotamia (c. 6,500-5,500 cal. BCE) remain dominated by traditional frameworks that stress chronological and typological development, with different categories of material siloed and isolated. At the same time the plains of northwestern Iraq, the region that really shaped these traditional approaches, has become rather neglected, as new work has largely concentrated in Kurdistan. Both sets of bias have masked a period of dynamic and sometimes radical change. This paper attempts to rethink the way that traditional data from the region has been evaluated and draws on fresh analyses of legacy artefacts and data. In particular, it seeks to build an explicitly interpretational and integrated approach to understanding

how engagement between people and their material worlds developed, and how that can help reframe the way in which social change occurred.

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### **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 3**

*Chair: Reinhard Bernbeck (Freie Universität Berlin)*

**08:30-09:00 Jaafar Jotheri (University of Al-Qadisiyah)**

#### **What archaeology and heritage do we have in the Iraqi western desert?**

More than half of Iraq's area is desert, as it covers the country's western half; however, its archaeology and heritage weren't desirable enough to let the local and international teams study it. In contrast, the other half of Iraq, such as the floodplain of Tigris and Euphrates, the northern and eastern highlands were/are, of course, more attractive.

Since the early last century, very few attempts have been made to highlight the potential of the Iraqi Western Desert for discovering Palaeolithic sites and preserving Pleistocene landscapes in Iraq. Similar things happened with the Sasanian and Islamic archaeology and the desert heritage there.

However, this paper will discuss the new findings of a recent remote sensing and field survey of some parts of the Iraqi western desert. A wide range of prehistoric sites (Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods) have been recorded. Buildings and mounds belonging to the Sasanian and Islamic periods have been mapped. Ancient irrigation systems, roads, trenches, and water springs have been reported, which might be dated back to even Pre-Sasanian periods. While conducting the fieldwork, we noticed how rich and unique is the intangible heritage of the Arab Bedouins and nomadic people.

I recommend multidisciplinary specialities of local and international to work together to discover this part of Iraq's natural and cultural heritage.

**09:00-09:30 Emily Hammer (University of Pennsylvania)**

#### **Spatial Ethnoarchaeology of Change in Mobile Pastoralist and Marsh-Dwelling Communities**

Archaeologists face significant challenges in identifying the material remains and environmental impact of certain types of rural communities of the past, especially those of mobile pastoralists and marsh dwellers. They thus rely on ethnographic analogy to fill the gaps in our understanding of these communities. However, the available ethnographies and ethnoarchaeological studies of these communities often do not contain information relevant for important archaeological questions and only provide a snapshot of a narrow time frame. This talk is about how spatial ethnoarchaeology can help us overcome these limitations. Newly available sets of high-resolution archival aerial and satellite imagery covering several decades make it possible to see variability and seasonal change in "traditional" communities over longer time scales and larger spatial scales than those covered by conventional ethnographies. Their temporal and spatial coverage and their resolution shift what is possible in the integration of anthropology and remote sensing. To illustrate the method, I present two case studies in which I have used images spanning the late 1950s to mid-1980s to reconstruct the changing demography, social organization, mobility, and seasonal activities of mobile pastoralist camping groups in southeastern Turkey and of Marsh Arab villages in southern Iraq. The analysis allows for the reconstruction over decades of several different temporally-specific patterns and processes of seasonal settlement and movement that were poorly documented or invisible in earlier ethnographic accounts. The details provided through time-series mapping using historical images not only enhance earlier ethnographic interpretations, but also impact how archaeologists might employ

ethnographic analogues in their interpretations of archaeological remains of historical Middle Eastern campsites and ancient Mesopotamian cities.

**09:30-10:00 Malath Feadha (University of Al-Qadisiyah)**

**Some unknown landscape features in Southern Mesopotamia**

The landscape of the Mesopotamian floodplain is mainly structured by channel processes, including the formation of levees, meanders, scrollbars, oxbow lakes, crevasse splays, distributary channels, inter-distributary bays, and marshes. Moreover, several human-made features also form and shape this landscape, such as canals, roads, trenches, farms, and settlement sites ranging in size from villages to cities. However, while viewing different satellite images, especially CORONA and modern high-resolution images, we encountered many unclear surface features regarding its origin. They differ from the landscape archaeology feature mentioned above, and whether they were naturally or anthropogenically created is unclear. We reviewed all related previous publications about the landscape archaeology of southern Mesopotamia, and it seems that these features have not been identified or mentioned before. These features vary in size, elevation, shape, location, age and colour. Some are near ancient cities and irrigation systems, while others are in marshes and rivers. This paper will discuss how we identified them and how some are possibly connected to ancient human and natural activities. Obviously, the more understanding of surface features around archaeological sites, the more knowledge about human and natural developments in the past.

**10:00-10:30 Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey (presented by Jason Ur, Harvard University)**

**The Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey: A Decade of Research Collaboration**

Since 2012 the Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey (EPAS) has been surveying the alluvial plain and foothills around Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. This presentation will summarize our goals, methods, and results. It will also describe how they have evolved in our decade of work, from a focus on academic research driven by the non-Erbil team, to one that balances research with the heritage and training issues that most concern our Erbil-based team members. It will also describe how evolving geospatial technologies (e.g., mobile GIS, cloud based computing, inexpensive and easy-to-use UAV hardware and software) have enabled near-total “data decolonization.” The end result has not only been a more equitable research project, but more basically, better archaeological scholarship.

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**Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 4**

*Chair: Jason Ur (Harvard University)*

**10:45-11:15 Stefan Lorenz Smith (University of Helsinki), Jaafar Jotheri (University of Al-Qadisiyah), Ella Egberts (University of Leicester)**

**Remote Sensing the Western Iraqi Desert: A Survey of Satellite Imagery in Preparation for Fieldwork**

Archaeological investigation of the arid regions of the Near East has long been lagging behind research into the more well-known fertile areas such as river valleys and the Mediterranean coast. In recent years, however, this situation has shifted, and numerous projects have begun to examine the Eastern Jordanian Desert, the Negev, Sinai, and more recently north-western Saudi Arabia. One region that has however remained largely unexplored is the vast Western Desert of Southern Iraq, which stretches over 700 km between the latitudes of Beirut and Aqaba, encompassing an area of

around 188,000 km<sup>2</sup>. A new project led by the authors of this paper is now studying this area for the first time as an integrated, holistically-oriented archaeological investigation, comprising an intensive satellite survey of potential structures and subsequent “ground-truthing” fieldwork. Though the latter is still forthcoming in March 2024, analysing such a vast region using remote sensing is a significant challenge in itself. The project employs a stratified random sampling approach to narrow down the areas to be analysed in detail, allowing a broad cross-section of landscape areas to be included within the scope of this project. This process has so far identified numerous structures that correspond to well-documented types in Jordan, including single and groups of enclosures, cairns, pendants, and water-catchment enclosures. This paper will present these preliminary results in the context of the survey methodology and the fieldwork to come.

**11:15-11:45 Luca Peyronel, Agnese Vacca, Valentina Oselini, and Michael Campeggi (University of Milan)**

**From the rise of urbanization to the advent of the empires in the Erbil Plain. Recent results from the excavations at Helawa and Aliawa**

The paper presents the recent results of the excavations carried out at the sites of Helawa and Aliawa located in the south-western Erbil Plain and investigated since 2016 by the Italian Archaeological Expedition in the Erbil Plain (MAIPE) of the University of Milan. The paper will review the uninterrupted 6th-4th mill. BC occupation at Helawa (Halaf, Ubaid and Late Chalcolithic 1-3), where a serrated sequence of super-imposed buildings and installations were discovered along the southern steep slope of the mound. This sequence is shedding light on the regional development of socio-economic complexity and its impact in the organization of the settlement through time. On the other hand, the excavations in the south-eastern part of the mound of Aliawa brought to light several architectural phases spanning from the beginning of the 3rd millennium BC to the Parthian period. The Early Bronze Age is documented by an Early Ninevite 5 granary with thick layers of burnt grain associated with sealings, and by a large industrial area for pottery manufacture characterized by more than forty kilns organized on mud-brick platforms dating to the Akkadian period. The paper will also present the evidence of the 2nd millennium BC at both sites, as well as the later historical occupation at Aliawa, including a large fortified complex dating to the Seleucid period.

**11:45-12:15 Luca Volpi (Sapienza University of Rome)**

**New Evidences from the Chalcolithic Period in Southern Mesopotamia and in the Lagash Region: The Contribution of the ‘Ubaid Mound’ at Tell Zurghul/Nigin**

The Italian Archaeological Expedition at Tell Zurghul/Nigin (MAIN) has been conducting an excavation project at the site since 2015. Despite being well-known from cuneiform sources of the 3rd Millennium BCE, the excavations in progress in the lower mound of Tell Zurghul (Mound B) are revealing a sequence of building architectures dated to the late ‘Ubaid’ period (Ubaid 4).

In fact, 2015–2023 expeditions have revealed a sequence of three architectural phases on the top, as well as a series of earlier structures investigated in a ‘Step Trench’ to the north of the mound.

The paper centres on the presentation of the most recent results of the investigations in this prehistoric mound, with a focus on the architectural sequence and the pottery materials, in order to contextualise the findings in the panorama of the Lagash Region and the Southern Mesopotamia and to expand the knowledge of ‘Ubaid’ settlement at Tell Zurghul.

**12:15-12:45 Sirwan Regional Project (presented by Claudia Glatz, University of Glasgow)**



## **The Late Chalcolithic on the Sirwan/Upper Diyala: Recent Work at Shakhi Kora**

Shakhi Kora is the largest and most long-lived Late Chalcolithic site recorded to date along the Sirwan/Upper Diyala River. Investigations by the Sirwan Regional Project at the site and in its surrounding landscapes have over the past four years produced an increasingly detailed picture of the Late Chalcolithic community at Shakhi Kora, its cultural development, food habits, social fabric, and wider hinterland. In this paper, we present an overview of the results of ongoing excavations, regional survey, and organic residue analysis, and discuss how our findings articulate with current debates on early urbanism and social complexity.

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## **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 5**

*Chair: Emily Hammer (University of Pennsylvania)*

### **13:30-14:00 Susan Pollock and Reinhard Bernbeck (Freie Universität Berlin)**

#### **From the Neolithic to the 20th Century: Fieldwork at Gird-i Begum in the Shahrizor Plain**

After a hiatus of nearly a decade, fieldwork was resumed at Gird-i Begum in 2022 by a team from the Freie Universität Berlin in cooperation with the Directorate of Slemani Antiquities & Heritage and Slemani University. The 5 ha-site with its small, steep Upper and elongated Lower Mound was occupied from the Late Neolithic through the Chalcolithic periods and, possibly with a break of several centuries, into the Early Bronze Age of the early 3rd mill. BCE. Sporadic later remains date to a Sasanian or Early Islamic use of the site, while modern vestiges attest to the mound's role in war and other conflicts in the late 20th century.

The longer-term goals of the renewed project are to investigate forms of mobility practiced by the inhabitants of Gird-i Begum and changes in them over time, whether as a response to crises or as routine in daily life. Diversification of resources and networks of a community are also powerful means to cope with potential crises. In our presentation, we will summarize the work conducted in the first two seasons of our project in light of these longer-term goals.

### **14:00-14:30 Licia Romano (Sapienza University of Rome)**

#### **Material Practices Across Millennia: Comparative Insights from Abu Tbeirah and Marshland Communities**

This paper explores some parallels between the archaeological site of Abu Tbeirah, dating back to the 3rd millennium BC, and contemporary Marsh Arab communities. It focuses on shared material culture practices, including mat weaving, pottery production, and the construction of mudbrick architecture. Within the framework of the PRIN 2022 Project "Slow Sumer," the presentation delves into practices that bridge the archaeological record and modern ethnographic observations.

Specifically, the themes of repair, reuse, and recycling at Abu Tbeirah and among the Ma'dan will be examined, with a focus on abundant materials like pottery, lithics, bitumen, and reeds. The juxtaposition of these practices across millennia and cultural contexts will contribute to a better understanding of part of Sumer economy.

### **14:30-15:00 Steve Renette (University of Cambridge)**

#### **Tracing the Origins of Lullubum: A Preliminary Synthesis of Five Seasons of Excavations at Kani Shaie**

The Lullubi enter Mesopotamian history as mountain antagonists of the Akkadian and Ur III kings. Their depiction in early Mesopotamian imagery and literature as mountainous barbarians has shaped modern discourse on ancient Zagros mountain peoples. The Kani Shaie Archaeological Project, active in the Bazyan Valley of Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan, investigates a long-lived settlement located within the presumed land of Lullubum with a particular focus on the third millennium BCE. This paper presents a preliminary synthesis of fieldwork results at Kani Shaie, which force a reconsideration of dominant narratives of the Early Bronze Age in the Zagros and Trans-Tigridian region. While Kani Shaie is categorized as a small archaeological site with a maximum extent of three hectares, the settlement's material remains reveal degrees of interconnectedness and organizational complexity that exceeds a presumed rural character. Such small-scale complexity reveals a form of social organization that is adaptive to the mountainous environment and resistant to entrenched hierarchies of long-term settlements that are characteristic of Mesopotamia.

**15:00-15:30 Carolyné Douché and Michael Charles (University of Oxford)**

### **Food production and consumption during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium in Iraqi Kurdistan, results from archaeobotanical data**

New archaeological projects carried out in northern Iraq progressively allow us to fill the gap between Anatolia and southern Iraq and to understand settlement patterns and culture material in this region. In parallel, the systematic collection of samples for archaeobotany aims at reconstructing the plant economy of the sites, including rural and urban settlements in Mesopotamia.

Archaeobotanical studies carried out on Bronze Age sites also allow us to investigate regional differences and evolution, either due to climate changes especially related to the so called '4.2ka event', or as the result of 'human strategy' such as political decision.

The present paper aims at presenting the archaeobotanical results from the Early-Middle Bronze Age sites of Gird-i Lashkir, Kunara and Logardan, located in Iraqi Kurdistan. As on most Mesopotamian sites, results indicate the importance of cereals, especially wheat and barley, but also suggest some differences. Data will be compared to those obtained on contemporaneous sites in adjacent areas and to other disciplines to investigate site and regional specificities in agricultural production and consumption.

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## **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 6**

*Chair: Claudia Glatz (University of Glasgow)*

**15:45-16:15 Aqeel Al-Kharyfawee (The Public Committee for Protecting Iraqi Heritage)**

### **Al-Hira area in Iraq: Tracking the changes in the landscape from the Sasanian to the modern state of Iraq**

The Al-Hira area's geographic and political location significantly impacted the developing human settlements during the last two thousand years. On one side, it is on the edge of the evergreen, marshy, well-irrigated Euphrates floodplain filled with civilised cities and towns. On the other side, it is located on the rim of the vast and accessible Arabian desert filled with nomadic Arabs. This critical location enabled its people to take advantage of the political conflicts during all the historical periods. In this paper, we conducted a fieldwork survey and reviewed relevant historical texts and maps related to the Al-Hira area. We mapped many archaeological sites from different periods of occupation, including churches, mosques, fortresses and irrigation systems. As a result, we produced several maps showing the changes in distribution, size, demography, economy and resilience of the

settlements during the Sasanian, Islamic, Ottoman and modern Iraq occupations. The chance of co-existence of multi-religious backgrounds, diversity and sustainable resources and economy of Al-Hira area kept the area one of the most thrived areas in southern Iraq for some two thousand years. We can clearly see the flourishing during all the mentioned periods as a result of sustainable agriculture, irrigation, manufacturing and, most importantly, religious centres.

**16:15-16:45 Michael Lewis (University of Coimbra)**

**Regionalised trajectories at the Zagros Fringe. The Early Bronze Age pottery sequence from Kani Shaie**

Excavations of Early Bronze Age strata from Kani Shaie, Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan have revealed one of the most extensive stratigraphic sequences for understanding the Early Bronze Age (c.2900 – 2600 BCE) in the region. Several distinctive, highly decorative pottery traditions are documented from the site, alongside highly localised, utilitarian vessel types. This unique ceramic assemblage highlights Kani Shaie as an important local centre in the landscape, connecting the highland communities of the Zagros with those of northern and central Mesopotamia.

This presentation will showcase the Early Bronze Age ceramic sequence from Kani Shaie along with an initial overview and some preliminary observations regarding the manufacturing process of the ceramic assemblage therein.

**16:45-17:15 Daniel Calderbank and Claudia Glatz (University of Glasgow)**

**Complex Spatial and Temporal Dynamics in the Lower Sirwan Region: Middle Bronze Age Pottery Assemblages from Tepe Kalan and Kani Masi**

Sirwan Regional Project (SRP) excavations have been undertaken at selected sites in the Lower Sirwan/Upper Diyala to reconstruct patterns of spatial and temporal settlement development. This talk will focus on two of these sites - Tepe Kalan (SRP 18) and Kani Masi (SRP 94) - located just 14km apart on different sides of the Sirwan river, and occupied concurrently during the Middle Bronze Age I period (ca. 2000-1850 BCE). This was a lively period of socio-political negotiation across the region and the respective pottery assemblages from these sites show significant differences, particularly in those vessels used for eating and drinking. In this paper, we will examine these pots as materialisations of diverse cultural practices in this contested zone, while also raising methodological questions as to how archaeologists align practices of typology building with dynamic historical processes and the potential for alternative temporalities.

**17:15-17:45 Michael Brown (Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg)**

**Recent results from fieldwork at the mountain fortress of Rabana-Merquly**

Rabana-Merquly was a major regional centre in the Zagros Mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan primarily occupied during the second to first centuries BC. Twin rock reliefs at the entrances to Rabana-Merquly indicate that the fortress was probably associated with the ruling dynasty of Adiabene, a vassal kingdom under Parthian (or Arsacid) dominion. Aside from its primary defensive role, evidenced by an extensive network of perimeter walls and towers, the settlement also served a variety of other diplomatic, economic and religious functions in relation to its hinterland. At the base of an ephemeral waterfall in the Rabana valley is a large intramural structure incorporating an altar that is tentatively interpreted as a sanctuary, plausibly dedicated to the ancient Persian water-goddess Anahita. A probable garrison stationed at Merquly, indicated by barracks, likely played a role

in regulating interactions with semi-nomadic highland pastoralists along the eastern frontier of Adiabene.

## **Archaeology of Iraq and Kurdistan 7**

*Chair: Daniel Calderbank (University of Glasgow)*

### **09:00-09:30 Mary Shepperson (University of Liverpool)**

#### **Introducing the Sebittu Project (Erbil Governorate). Aims, objectives and pilot season results**

The Sebittu Project aims to understand the agrarian economy of the Neo-Assyrian empire during its period of expansion, when agriculture and settlement on the Erbil plain intensified through multiple small rural communities. Research on this period has previously focused on larger urban sites near the top of the settlement hierarchy, leaving smaller sites, and the rural economy which they represent, virtually unknown. The Sebittu Project will target a cluster of seven small sites dated via surface material to the Middle Iron Age (900-600 BCE), combining surface survey and excavation with a variety of material and environmental analyses, to build a picture of imperial occupation of the landscape and its interaction with the environment.

This paper presents the results of the initial pilot season conducted in August and September 2023, during which systematic surface collection was completed at two of the seven sites, followed by limited test excavations aimed at obtaining dateable material and environmental and cultural samples. The Sebittu Project is directed by Dr Tim Matney and is based at the University of Akron. The target sites were identified with the help of Dr Jason Ur and the Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey (EPAS).

### **09:30-10:00 Michael D. Danti (University of Pennsylvania)**

#### **Recent Results of Excavations at the Mashqi Gate of Nineveh (2021–23) in Support of Reconstruction Efforts**

The University of Pennsylvania's Iraq Heritage Stabilization Program, founded in 2018, engages in community-based cultural heritage preservation and protection initiatives, especially projects aimed at facilitating post-conflict recovery. In 2021–23, IHSP began a series of archaeological excavations and cultural heritage restoration projects at Nineveh and Nimrud in partnership with the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH). Both sites were severely impacted by deliberate attacks and looting carried out by the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) and require significant preservation projects.

This presentation reports on the results of excavations in previously unexplored parts of the Mashqi Gate at Nineveh, first excavated and restored by Iraqi archaeologists in the 1960s and 70s under the direction of Tariq Madhloom. The new findings include reliefs of Sennacherib, probably showing events of his third campaign, which were reused at a later date in a side chamber of the gate. These excavations form part of a restoration effort following the ISIS destruction of the building.

Work at Nimrud is focused on elucidating the poorly understood Adad-nerari III palace, also known as the Upper Chambers, located immediately south of the Northwest Palace, and the Ishtar Temple and Ninurta Temple in an area looted by ISIS. Parts of all three monumental structures were first excavated by Austen Henry Layard in the mid-19th century but remained poorly understood until much was clarified by Iraqi excavations directed by Muzahim Hussein. Building on this work, the new series of excavations have already contributed greatly to our understanding of the architecture,

urban form, and structure of the imperial capital of the 9th–8th centuries BC. Of particular importance, the team has located the gateway linking the Ishtar and Ninurta Temples. The door leaves of at least one gate were decorated with embossed bronze bands, much like those known from Balawat, and the gate chamber contains many inscriptions and a stele depicting an Assyrian king and deities associated with the temple complex.

**10:00-10:30 Gabriele Giacosa (University of Bologna)**

**Adapting to relentless encroachment: new insights on the archaeological sequence and preservation of the Lower Town of ancient Nineveh**

Since the start of modern archaeological exploration of Nineveh in 1842, its focus has been directed toward the two mounds of Tell Kuyunjik and Tell Nabī Yūnus. In the second half of the 20th century, limited evidence, mainly coming from salvage operations by the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH), provided hints on the occupation of the site around the mounds and enclosed by the 12 km-long city walls built at the beginning of the 7th century BCE.

The Iraqi-Italian Archaeological Expedition at Nineveh East, operating since 2019 under the direction of Nicolò Marchetti of the University of Bologna, has investigated several parts of the Lower Town. In particular this paper will address in detail the results from Area F, located in the central part of the ancient site where the encroachment of modern Mosul has been and still is most severe: although confined to a single campaign in 2019, investigations provided information on the historical occupation of the Lower Town, notably during the Iron Age/Neo-Assyrian period (late 8th-7th century) as in the centuries following the fall of Nineveh in 612 BCE.

The significance of these renewed investigations within the Lower Town of Nineveh directly addresses both the common understanding on the occupation of an Iron Age capital in northern Mesopotamia and how it experienced change after the demise of its imperial status, besides measuring how modern, expanding human occupation poses grave threats to the survival of heritage.

**10:30-11:00 Nolwenn Guedeau (Bonn University)**

**The Ottoman Material Culture of Tell Derabun**

The present-day Iraqi Kurdistan region had a special position in the Ottoman Empire. They enjoyed administrative autonomy and the region was for a long time the battleground for the border between the empire and the Persian Qadjar dynasty. Thus we are in a hybrid and eclectic region. To understand questions of identity in this context, we will use material culture, and particularly clay smoking pipes. Pipes are a quantitatively very important type of object on every Ottoman sites. Their use coincides with the appearance of tobacco in the early 17th century, its consumption rapidly reaching all strata of the population (men, women, children, rich, poor). Pipes were produced in the large urban centres, such as Damascus, Cairo, or in the imperial workshops of Istanbul. However, each village had its own production for regional consumption. The aim of this paper will be to see how Kurdistan, and its multiple influences, is an interesting case study for understanding Ottoman imperialist economy over local communities.

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**Big Dig Energy in the Archaeology of West Asia (workshop)**

*Organiser: Yağmur Heffron (UCL)*

**12.15-12.30 Yağmur Heffron (UCL)**

## **Big Dig Energy: Introduction**

### **12.30-12.45 Sophie V Moore, Newcastle University**

#### **The Parable of the Caravan Mom**

Who is the Caravan Mom? She doesn't have to be a woman, although in my experience she always has been. I have learnt from Caravan Mom, I have been Caravan Mom willingly and I have found the role of Caravan Mom thrust upon me.

On every excavation with young people in attendance (and here I consider the majority of University undergraduates to be young) Caravan Mom appears, whether or not the temporary accommodation is actually a Caravan. Caravan Mom teaches you how to cut up an onion; how to sew on a button; that leaving your dirty, sweaty underwear in the middle of the shared caravan floor is just not acceptable. She tells you if your top is too tight for the context, she's overbearing about sunscreen, and will cut your hair if you ask. She looks at the rash which you're secretly very worried about and decides whether it's the right time to go to the hospital.

This paper will look at gendered dynamics of care in excavation contexts, and open a discussion about best practices in the field for structuring and acknowledging this work.

### **12.45-13.00 Nancy Highcock (British Museum)**

#### **Parenting in the Field: Structural Solutions to a Very Personal Problem**

The difficulties that parents face in conducting archaeological fieldwork are well-known and often discussed. Despite recent strides in identifying the impracticalities and incompatibilities of extended periods of fieldwork with parenting responsibilities, the solutions are often ad-hoc and expensive and the burden to find these solutions placed on individuals. This presentation will focus on structural problem-solving: how can institutions and grant-funding bodies build new models of fieldwork, compatible with parenting, from the ground up? Through a survey of current institutional structures and those developed in other sectors, this presentation will forward potential avenues for field archaeologists who are unable or unwilling to divorce their professional and personal lives.

### **13.00-13.15 Hélène Maloigne (University of Greenwich)**

#### **Queering the Field**

In this contribution I would like to offer a reflection on working as a queer archaeologist and historian of archaeology and what both fields can gain from a turn towards the queer. Queer Theories offer a range of modes of being and practice that are be useful for thinking about our communities and our place within them.

Concepts such as the '**chosen**' or '**logical**' family (as a counter to the biological family) can help us understand what roles we take on at an excavation and how we relate to one another. Thinking about our project as a family can help resolve conflicts, both personal and professional, that inevitably arise within archaeological communities. Extending the idea of family to embrace all members of the team (not just the academics among us) can also help efforts to improve inclusivity, diversity and acknowledge the importance of non-academic staff for excavation projects.

Thinking about our scholarly personae as archaeologists through the lens of (gender) **performativity** can again help us become more aware of how we are perceived by other members of the team, the public and wider academia. What image do we – personally and as a profession and a discipline – want to project? Who is our audience? And how do we change our persona depending on our audience (at conferences, in the field, in the classroom, with our non-archaeological family and friends, etc.)?

We are more than 'just' archaeologists. Our **intersectional** identities (student, lecturer, queer, straight, trans, cisgender, able-bodied, (im)migrant, 'Middle Eastern', 'Western'...) all play together and determine how we act and react, with whom we interact and when. Being mindful that not all aspects of other people's identity are immediately visible can change the way we speak to and about each other, bringing more respect and awareness for our diverse experiences. Adopting different viewpoints can also help us see the past and our interpretation of it in a new light.

Using these concepts in exploring the **history of archaeology** can moreover help us understand how the harmful structures and practices grown out of colonialism, racism and gender-based discrimination are perpetuated in the field today – often unconsciously – and how we can break them down to build a more equitable and diverse future for the field.

### **13.15-13.30 Beril Özbaş (Collegium Civitas)**

#### **Exploring the Leaky Pipeline: Lived Experiences of Female Archaeologists in Türkiye [remote]**

Despite initial equality in numbers in educational attainment, there is a large gender disparity in leadership roles and academic careers within Turkish archaeology in favor of male professionals. This study aims to analyze the lived experiences of female archaeologists in Turkey regarding gender disparities, harassment, and mobbing in both archaeological fieldwork and academia, in addition to looking at how organizational factors and coping mechanisms affect the career trajectories of female archaeologists in Turkey.

This paper will utilize qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews with a sample group of women who have studied archaeology at the undergraduate or graduate level but did not move on to be subsequently employed in academic positions. In their depth and breadth, it is these interviews that will furnish complex understandings of the large-scale problems faced by female archaeologists in Turkey such as gendered field dynamics; inadequate mentorship; and harassment/mobbing issues.

These narratives explore the reasons behind "the leaky pipeline," a phenomenon where trained women wishing to work in the profession but are unable to advance. These women's experiences are analyzed to examine academic career paths as well as the cultural, social, emotional, and professional barriers that prevent many women from leading projects or pursuing academic careers at every level.

According to the women's narrated experiences, possible structural changes that are necessary for this transformation in archaeology will be discussed. These changes could include developing organizational cultures where everyone feels included and supported, creating policies that address harassment and discrimination, and creating strong mentoring programs across levels of career development.

### **13.30-13.45 Müge Durusu-Tanrıöver (Temple University)**

#### **Intersectional Perspectives on Gender and Archaeological Fieldwork in Türkiye [remote]**

The last two decades saw fundamental changes in the administration and execution of archaeological fieldwork in Türkiye, including an increase in the overall number of projects mainly driven by a rise in those led by Turkish archaeologists while foreign expeditions have been declining. Within this shifting landscape, however, the gender imbalance of project leadership has stayed the same: female archaeologists hold between 23-32% of the overall permits issued each year, while male archaeologists have traditionally held somewhere between 66-77% of permits.

In this paper I will look at the processes of fieldwork directorship in Türkiye from the perspective of gender and intersectionality. My first aim is to question the processes with which permit holders get to occupy their posts. I will then explore the multiple layers (such as gender, training, nationality, language skills, care responsibilities) that intersect to work to the advantage or disadvantage of different groups. I will conclude by arguing that the continuous patterns in project leadership continue to reproduce certain kinds of archaeological practices and research questions to the detriment of others, producing larger larger repercussions for our discipline beyond the confines of active fieldwork.

### **13.45-14.00 Ophelia Tychon (UCL)**

#### **Implicit Gender Bias: Beyond Archaeology**

The term 'implicit bias' has entered the popular vernacular over the past 20 years. In fact, many of us have either heard of, or personally gone through a form on 'anti-bias' training. In my talk, I will discuss the latest scientific view on the nature of implicit bias and whether training aimed at increasing awareness thereof is effective. I will also discuss the current research on other methods being used to tackle gender bias, implicit or otherwise, irrespective of the industry and geographic setting. I will ultimately aim to consider whether these methods may be useful in archaeology (in or away from the field).

The audience is invited to complete a pre-workshop survey: Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT) by following the here: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>. If you have the time and feel comfortable, please take the **Gender – Career** IAT. It should take you about 10-15 minutes. Of course, feel free to take the other ones if you like as well.

### **14.00-14.45 Roundtable Discussion**

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#### **Big Dig Energy beyond West Asia: Comparing Notes with Sister Fields (workshop)**

*Organiser: Yağmur Heffron (UCL)*

### **15.00-15.10 Yağmur Heffron (UCL)**

#### **Introduction to Session II**

### **15.10-15.25 Aiya Raissova (Durham University)**

#### **Gendered Practices and Internalised Patriarchy in Archaeological Fieldwork in Central Asia: Parallel Challenges Faced by Women archaeologists in Central Asia and West Asia**

This abstract explores gendered practices and internalised patriarchy in archaeological fieldwork, with a specific focus on Central Asia. Drawing from personal experiences as a female bioarchaeologist from Kazakhstan, the aim of this abstract is to highlight the parallel challenges faced by women archaeologists in Central Asia and West Asia, including gender bias, discrimination, and harassment rooted in patriarchal norms. The urgent need to recognize and address these issues,



which are often overlooked or normalised, is emphasised. The abstract underscores that patriarchal structures in archaeological fieldwork are a global concern, not limited to specific regions. By bringing the perspective of Central Asia into the discourse, it aims to foster a broader understanding and dialogue.

The paper also discusses the [Steppe Sisters Network](#), an international networking group connecting women and underrepresented groups in academia conducting research in Central Asia and neighbouring regions. The network promotes cross-cultural exchange, professional advancement, challenges patriarchal norms, advocates for gender equality, and fosters inclusivity in the field. As a steering committee member myself of Steppe Sisters, I would like to share the experience, barriers to collaborating, as well as successful practices and future perspectives. Presenting this paper contributes to the discussion of the challenges faced by female archaeologists in the field and academia. Comparing practices in Central Asia and West Asia highlights the global nature of patriarchal structures in archaeological fieldwork.

The paper concludes by emphasising the importance of collaborative efforts and shared learning across regions to combat gendered practices and internalised patriarchy in archaeology.

#### **15.25-15.40 Afifa Khan (University of Cambridge)**

##### **Introducing South Asia: Women in Fieldwork (SAWIF)**

The Mapping Archaeological Heritage in South Asia (MAHSA) project at the University of Cambridge includes a team of women from many different countries and disciplines, career stages and ambitions. The combination of a shared project goal and a highly collaborative working environment led to regular discussions about our experiences during fieldwork. Whether family restrictions and responsibilities, lack of supportive networks and mentors, or the entrenched cultural norms in the discipline and in the fieldwork locations themselves, we found that there was much common ground in our experiences of the multiple barriers and considerations for women working in the field.

From this, we created a university-wide research network that would focus on the experiences of women in fieldwork, especially of South Asian women, which was open to all to attend. Over the course of the academic year, we have been discussing these major issues and exploring themes and existing research on the topics we covered. One of the key network aims is to work towards finding possible resolutions to issues whilst simultaneously creating a supportive network of interdisciplinary researchers supporting women, ALL WOMEN, in the field.

#### **15.40-16.00 Heba Hashmi (Maritime Archaeology and Heritage Institute (MAHI), Pakistan)**

##### **Case Study: Lessons Learned [remote]**

One of our convenors/past speakers to talk on their experiences in field work. They'll be covering issues surrounding identity and positionality in the field, the difficulties they faced and how they wish to tackle them in the future.

#### **16.00-16.20 Mou Sarmah**

##### **The White Paper and Future Actions**

One of the outcomes of the series of talks and meetings held by SAWIF in 2022-23, was a joint effort by convenors and members of the group to create a 'white paper' of recommendations on hiring practices at the university. This paper is tailored to the hiring and supporting of South Asian and minority women in disciplines in which fieldwork is a major component, beyond archaeology, and

covers topics such as job advertisements, interview panels, and post-hiring support. The true test of these recommendations has been in the recent recruiting and hiring at the MAHSA project, however, this is only one example. As we finalise the details of the paper itself, we would welcome second opinions and further recommendations.

## **16.20-17.00 Roundtable Discussion**

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### **Digital Archaeologies**

*Chair: Francesca Chelazzi (Durham University)*

#### **12:15-12:45 Aikumis Raissova (Durham University)**

##### **Photogrammetry in Bioarchaeology: Revolutionising Research and Public Engagement in the study of human remains in Kazakhstan (Central Asia)**

Bioarchaeological research faces considerable challenges, including limited specialists, underdeveloped inventory systems, and ethical concerns over handling human remains. Based on the pilot study conducted on the osteological materials from Kazakhstan (Central Asia), this study proposes photogrammetry as a solution, generating high-quality 3D models of human remains, reducing risk to physical collections, and fostering local and international collaborations.

Photogrammetry also offers significant educational benefits, particularly considering that not many universities have access to osteological materials in Kazakhstan. The digital models of human remains can serve as teaching tools, enhancing student engagement and appreciation for osteocollections. As the pilot study has shown, despite the implementation of photogrammetry in bioarchaeology presenting some limitations and requiring specialised software, as well as careful consideration of data storage issues and methodological precision to ensure the accuracy of the models, the potential of photogrammetry to democratise bioarchaeology by enabling web-based public engagement is significant.

The research aims with the integration of osteological analyses, archaeological contextual information, and exploration of ancient historical accounts to deepen the understanding of ancient populations in Kazakhstan (Central Asia). The use of photogrammetry techniques increases the accessibility of osteological collections for research and encourages public engagement. In summary, photogrammetry could transform bioarchaeological studies in Kazakhstan, bridging academia and the public, and promoting a more inclusive and ethically conscious approach to studying human remains.

#### **12:45-13:15 Xosé L. Hermoso-Buxán (UCL)**

##### **Space Syntax, Universal Empires and the Ancient Near Eastern Palace: A Long-Term Comparative Cross-Cultural Approach**

From the eighth century BCE, with the emergence of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, a new form of political and social organisation characterised by increasing political cohesion and long-lived empires became dominant in the Ancient Near East (ANE). This resulted in greater interaction and commonality between distant regions, which had as an effect, among others, the spread of common languages, universal religions and governments and the hybridisation of material culture. This trend towards convergence has been described by Altaweel and Squitieri (2018) as the result of a phenomenon known as 'universalism' which, in contrast to globalisation, considers large-scale

movement of population over a sustained period of time to be the main driver and a pre-requisite for change.

Palaces, being a form of material culture present in the ANE since at least the Early Bronze Age, are a good proxy to test the applicability of these theories and to track the impact of these changes on the deeper levels of how societies view and organise their world, namely, the configuration of space, ideology and governance. Thus, using Space Syntax Analysis (Hillier and Hanson 1984) as a methodological tool, this paper will present the results of my doctoral research, focused on the analysis of over two hundred palatial buildings from five different regions: the Levant, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, the South Caucasus and Iran and the East. Concurrently, in this presentation I shall provide new data as to the characterisation of palaces, beyond traditional art historical and morphological approaches to the analysis of architecture.

**13:15-13:45 Yashaswini Jayadevaiah (Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur)**

### **Digital Visuals and Visualisation in the Archaeological Knowledge Practice: A Case of Śrīngaverapura**

In this paper, the author presents and discusses the visuals and visualisations that were produced and used in her practice-based research involving the archaeological site of Śrīngaverapura, India. In the concurrent investigations concerning the site of Śrīngaverapura and its Brick tank, the study used multiple methods and technologies (a set of four non-invasive technologies). Many visuals and visualisations were used in the research for documentation, data collection, analysis, and presentation. By focusing on the acts and actions these visuals and visualisations have enabled in producing archaeological knowledge, the author counters the traditional understanding of these visuals and visualisations as mere representations of the site, its remains, or even the past. According to the author, the technologies generate digital composites by focusing on physical composite material and spatial characteristics such as built matters - material density, material surface, distance and measurement, shape, space, and the unbuilt matter material nature. The accessed, documented, modelled, and simulated material components, scale, and space are not directly grasped by humans with their physiological abilities and capabilities. These digital composites are linked to their physical counterparts and would not exist without the physical entities. Even after that, these digital entities cannot be referred to as copies or simply digital copies. They are not just copies but digital counterparts of physical entities that act more than the physical entities. Even to the point of cloning the space.

**13:45-14:15 Claire Padovani (Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University)**

### **KilnDataBase Project: Data Sharing to Create Knowledge on Ancient Pottery Firing Technologies**

This paper considers how a digital data base can work as the anchoring point of a community of research. Nowadays, a considerable amount of data is produced by archaeologists. However, the publication process is long and the delay is even longer for the information to be accessible to the public and the Southwestern Asia communities. One of the main challenges of the archaeology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not to collect the data but to manage it efficiently and make it accessible to a large audience, in order to create equitable knowledge. If open science is of prevailing interest today, it is difficult to use it efficiently. Indeed, archaeological data are scattered in publications, archives and personal computers. Therefore, the KDB project aims to propose new solutions. It is an open and

collaborative database built on Heurist, to fill the many documentary gaps of the kiln's history in Southwestern Asia. For each firing structure, a full description, plans, photos and information about the pottery production site are available in the form of a website. Therefore, the base helps archaeologists to identify firing structures and constitute an open base of knowledge with "raw" data and bibliographical references allowing anyone to use the data for their own research and to learn about ancient firing technology. Moreover, the database is flexible and built to be extend to other chronological periods in order to compare different innovations and evolution processes of the firing technologies.

**14:15-14:45 Émilie Pagé-Perron (University of Oxford)**

### **Is the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative FAIR?**

In this talk, I will offer a self-critique of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI) in the state it is now after twenty-five years of service and a recent full refurbishment of the underlying infrastructure and public-facing interface through the National Endowment for the Humanities funded project "CDLI Framework Update" and subsequent development up to this day. I will start by looking at the Five Star Open Access criteria since this is the benchmark which was used when the new CDLI framework was being planned in 2016. Additionally, I will evaluate the same but looking at the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable). Aside from looking at the plus value of using the FAIR principles compared to the Five Star Open Access criteria in evaluating a digital project, the goal of this exercise will be to first recognise the efforts and realisations in terms of access to information related to artifacts inscribed with the cuneiform script at CDLI, especially over the past five years, but mostly, to identify and outline the main shortcomings of the CDLI in this domain, proposing remedy actions, and prioritizing them based on perceived needs of CDLI's audiences, including prospective ones.

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## **Foodways**

*Chair: Ceren Kabukcu (University of Liverpool)*

**15:45-16:15 Dimitris Papageorgiou (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)**

### **Reconstructing food preparation practices in Northern Levant and Cilicia during the LBA-EIA transition.**

In many regions of the eastern Mediterranean, different cooking practices have been identified during the 12<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century BC, distinguished between the well-established local traditions and the newly appeared foreign (Aegean) influences. The new types of hearths and cooking pots that appeared in the Eastern Mediterranean during the so-called 'crisis years' have been considered an imported cultural tradition related to cooking practices transferred by the migrant populations. Domestic firing installations related to cooking practices have not attracted much scholarly attention in the LBA-EIA period's northern Levant and Cilicia settlements. No specific study focused on these constructions' typological, technological, and functional characteristics has appeared till today, nor have they been correlated to other cooking implements, to reconstruct the practices performed and interpret their significance. This paper aims for a first account of domestic firing installations during the LBA and EIA in the northern Levant and Cilicia. Based on this account the basic characteristics and types of firing installations during this period will be delineated. This study aims to reconstruct cooking preparation practices and identify distinct cultural cooking traditions in the abovementioned areas. This overview of the current state of data was based on the review of all the published data from the excavated sites of the northern Levant of the LBA and EIA. A categorisation of them based

on their structural characteristics was first carried out. A co-examination with cooking pots, used during the same period, accounting for their structural characteristics, was also, attempted. Even if most of the publications did not provide detailed documentation of these installations, all the catalogued specimens will be presented based on their description and available photographs and plans. Local traditions of firing installations, like ovens, fire pits, and horseshoe-shaped hearths seem to predominate in the area during the LBA, while some possible 'foreign' tradition hearths were identified. Even if local cooking traditions continue to be used during EIA, there are indications of cooking practices influenced by 'foreign traditions'.

**16:15-16:45 Giacomo Casucci (University of Pavia) and Valentina Orsi (University of Siena and Koç University)**

**One Day in a Late Bronze Age Kitchen: Exploring Everyday Life in Central Anatolia through Fires, Plates and Pots.**

Food is an essential part of life, and aspects such as sourcing, processing, and consumption shape and permeate modern societies as much as those of the past. Although often considered 'simple' and therefore 'negligible', ordinary objects such as cooking utensils and installations can provide essential insights into the everyday lives of past communities and thus into numerous aspects of past societies. Focusing on cooking pots, plates, and fire installations, this paper explores daily food preparation, cooking practices, and cuisine on the Central Anatolian Plateau during the Late Bronze Age. During this period the area was the core of the Hittite Empire and the archaeological and historical literature has long focused on the evidence for central administration, rituality, and major political events. However, very little is known about everyday life.

A practice theory approach, complemented by archaeometric analysis, residue analysis, and experimental archaeology, will be used to understand how and why the cooking apparatus was made as it was, and what the foodways can tell us about the people who made them.

**16:45-17:15 Jessica Pearson (University of Liverpool) et al**

**Food sharing at the transition to farming and the emergence of village life: A 7000-year view of diet from the Epi-Palaeolithic to Neolithic in Turkey from stable carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis**

Between 15,000 and 10,000 years ago in southwest Asia human populations shifted from a mobile, hunter-gatherer lifestyle to a more sedentary farming one to form the world's earliest villages. The first villages were small likely housing a few hundred people at most, but within a few thousand years large farming mega-sites had emerged that potentially housed 1000s of people. Increasing sedentism and the gradual replacing of wild foods with managed or domesticated food transformed human society. We present new stable carbon and nitrogen isotope evidence of human diet from the sites of Pınarbaşı, Boncuklu and Çatalhöyük spanning this transition from the Epipalaeolithic to the Neolithic and the emergence of large urban centres (around the 14<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> millennia cal BC). We consider the extent to which the transition to agriculture and more sedentary life impacted food ways particularly whether the later Neolithic represents a departure or continuation of practices from the preceding millennia and how wild and domestic resources were used to reinforce social behaviours.

**17:15-17:45 Synnøve Heimvik (University of Edinburgh)**

**Complex Human/Animal relationships on the Periphery of the Kassite State: Zooarchaeological Insights from LBA Kani Masi, Iraqi Kurdistan**

Animals are living beings with the ability to act back and shape the world around them. This dynamic relationship underpinned many of the socio-political systems which structured the Kassite world view. During the Late Bronze Age (1550-1150 BCE), the Kassite Dynasty, a group of uncertain origins, rose to power, exerting wide-reaching political control that united the Mesopotamian heartland and seemingly stretched into peripheral regions too, across the waterways of the Gulf and, significantly, up the Diyala River towards the Zagros foothills. We know little, however, about the inner workings of the Kassite world and the everyday social and economic activities that structured their lives, particularly in these zones at the edges of state territory.

The Sirwan Regional Project (SRP) has conducted surveys and excavations in the Northern Diyala Regions producing results which has shed light on this enigmatic time-period. Excavations at one of these sites, Khani Masi, has recovered a significant assemblage of faunal material associated with the Kassite period. Robust quantitative and scientific approaches to this faunal material, contextualised in relation to textual, iconographic, and ethnographic evidence, provides a unique means for assessing the patterns of everyday life in this marginal community. Of particular interest are the new perspectives this material provides on cooking and consumption, pastoral activity, seasonality, and ritual practice, all of which were deeply embedded within Kassite socio-political and cultural worlds.

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**Landscape Archaeology 1**

Chair: Michael Given (University of Glasgow)

**09:00-09:30 Israel Hinojosa-Baliño and Dan Lawrence (Durham University)**

**Resilience and perseverance: Urban persistence and sustainability over the ages from the Nile Delta to the Fertile Crescent.**

Persistence can be defined in archaeology as the extent to which a settlement can be suitable for habitation in time and it is used consequently as an inhabited place generation after generation. Persistence, however, is also a subjective phenomenon in the sense that an abandoned settlement can persist in the memory of the inhabitants in the surrounding area and used as a cemetery, as an important landmark or even as a historic landscape. In every case, nonetheless, studying persistence is a difficult endeavour regardless of the theoretical approach you use to explain it (*e.g.* as the “territorialisation, deterritorialization and reterritorialization” of a site, or as “itineraries” of a settlement object). In the CLaSS project, we have been exploring persistence as the total period during which a site was occupied; by measuring persistence in a variety of sizes and scales we can start to identify the circumstances which enhance persistence.

In this paper, we use a dataset from the Fertile Crescent that we already published where we found that settlements with the highest levels of persistence were not associated with high agricultural productivity regions, and we compare it against a dataset based on the publicly available Egyptian Exploration Society database of archaeological sites from the Nile Delta, a region that historically has been associated to high agricultural productivity.

**09:30-10:00 Francesca Chelazzi<sup>1</sup>, Dan Lawrence<sup>1</sup>, Lynn Welton<sup>2</sup>, Emily Hammer<sup>3</sup>, Michelle de Gruchy<sup>4</sup>, Jane Gaastra<sup>1</sup>.**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Archaeology, Durham University (UK), <sup>2</sup>University of Toronto, <sup>3</sup>University of Pennsylvania<sup>4</sup> United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT)

### **Modelling land use in Southwestern Asia: an archaeological approach.**

As part of our participation in the PAGES LandCover6k working group, we propose a new approach for modelling land use in Southwestern Asia that is designed by archaeologists for archaeologists for the first time. Unlike previous global reconstructions, which often assume past population densities based on contemporary data, our model infers past demography based on archaeological evidence and modelling techniques, and allocates land use based on existing paleoenvironmental and bioarchaeological data.

Drawing upon three ecological concepts, our approach resulted in two distinct but complementary land use maps, modelling respectively the distribution of Fundamental and Actualized Land Use. We tested our model for the mid-Holocene (6kya) time frame.

The high resolution of our model is of great utility for archaeologists but can also be easily upsampled for climate modelling. Archaeologists, in particular, can use our Fundamental Land Use model to draw comparisons with archaeobotanical and archaeological datasets at the site level, determining how much variation in local landscape capacity influenced past agricultural and animal production practices.

We also compare our Actualized Land Use model to the KK10 and Hyde 3.2, demonstrating that our method allows for more systematic identification of spatio-temporal shifts in the exploitation of different land use zones, including key areas and periods of continuity or discontinuity.

**10:00-10:30 Joseph Meadows<sup>1</sup> (Durham University), Katleen Deckers<sup>2</sup>, Simone Riehl<sup>2</sup>, Valentina Tumolo<sup>1</sup>, Israel Hinojosa-Baliño<sup>1</sup>, Dan Lawrence<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Durham University, <sup>2</sup>University of Tübingen

### **Old roots, new insights: Phytogeographic modelling of olive and grape distributions in the Levant over the Holocene.**

This paper presents a new model of potential distributions of wild Levantine *O. europaea* and *V. vinifera* L. across the Holocene (10000BP to 1000 BP) based on GIS modeling of parameters including elevation, soil, slope, and hindcast rainfall developed by Hewett et al 2022. We compare the resulting distributions with archaeobotanical remains (seeds and charcoal) to make statements about processes of domestication and the nature of trade and exchange in olive and grape products. The newly generated wild distributions challenge previous understandings and assumptions regarding access and exploitation of olive and grape in the Levant and shed new light onto one of the many ways in which paleoclimatic change may have shaped the human landscape. This paper measures the model's utility and reliability and explores the array of new directions and questions posed. For instance, wild grape are seen further south in the Levant than previously thought, and the Chalcolithic sees a significant decline in wild olive in northern Mesopotamia. Further research based on these findings will explore the relationship between wild fruit accessibility and the presence of infrastructure and irrigation, as well as the impact of potential wild distributions on settlement persistence and landscape intensification.

**10:30-11:00 Maurits W. Ertzen<sup>1</sup>, Dengxiao Lang<sup>1</sup>, Reginald Cushing<sup>2</sup>, Olga Lyashevskaya<sup>2</sup>, Stephanie Rost<sup>3</sup>, and Ronald R.P. van Nooyen<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Delft University of Technology, <sup>2</sup>eScience Center, <sup>3</sup>City University of New York

## **Come on MESS around. Developing a long-term Modelling approach to study Emerging Societal Systems in ancient southern Mesopotamia**

Early Southern Mesopotamia is well-known for its complex history of expansion of (irrigated) farming in relation to urban developments and changing landscapes. Gradually developing water systems were fundamental to the development of Mesopotamian society. Recent scholarship suggests that these urban-based societies developed within an emerging network of irrigated areas increasing in size and number, with transport connections to move surplus yields being exploited. One way to develop further understanding of this history is applying different modelling techniques. Within the Water Resources group at Delft University of Technology, an agent-based model was developed to explore the development processes that could have taken place in Mesopotamian societies. The model builds on the dynamics of irrigated sub-areas (farmlands) and irrigation systems in relation to decision-making processes, both on sub-areas (especially irrigating crops) and along canals (especially sharing water). Allowing responses to water scarcity or to high yields is built into the decision-making processes, including options to move irrigated sub-areas, expand the system, or start a new system. The model already shows fascinating results in its generation of various patterns of yields and expansion of irrigated subareas and system. These results shows how human decision-making determines the level of influence of and benefits for sub-areas and the overall irrigation system, including degrees of inequality in yields among sub-areas. The model offers a base for further study, by incorporating additional agents into the irrigation system and expanding the spatial-temporal scales of the irrigated landscape, to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the evolutionary dynamics of irrigation systems in Southern Mesopotamia. In March 2023, we have started a two-year project with the Water Resources group and the Dutch eScience Center to realize such modelling expansion. Based on the available ABM in NetLogo, this project studies conditions for longerterm growth of irrigated landscapes – with longer-term defined as millennia. The purpose of the expanded digital approach is to produce long-term runs as (ensembles of) likely outcomes in terms of increasing/decreasing irrigated areas with associated yields and transport options related to water availability and water distribution between/decisions by model users to expand and/or move. Given the many choices available to model agents, using calibration data to check model is unfeasible, but we can decide which outcomes are feasible in terms of physical boundaries – including keeping model agents alive. The presentation will report on the MESS challenges and progress achieved in 2023.

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## **Landscape Archaeology 2**

*Chair: Dan Lawrence*

**11:15-11:45 Michael Fradley (University of Oxford)**

### **Connectivity and monumentality in northern Arabia: a remote sensing perspective on the arid margins of the Near East**

Remote sensing applications have had a significant impact on archaeological mapping in Southwest Asia. This paper presents preliminary result from the work of Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa project in systematically mapping the arid margins of northern Arabia. Focusing on Neolithic and Bronze Age monument types across the desert regions of Jordan, northern Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Syria, it will present preliminary models of prehistoric connections and occupation across these marginal landscapes.



**11:45-12:15 Michael Given (University of Glasgow)**

**Wind and river: interpretive flows and blended subjects in historical Cyprus**

Rivers and winds cannot be pinned down. As they flow, they diverge and braid, they twist together again and mix, now dying away, now flooding over an edge. In spite of their tangible materiality, they are indeterminate and interpenetrating. And so are human practices and narratives in the landscape. In the late Medieval period in Cyprus, the flows of major rivers such as the Karkotis and the Kouris were dammed, abstracted and harvested through a complex network of weirs, canals, mills and irrigation channels. Attempts to control the indeterminacy of flow foundered in a morass of litigation and violence, particularly among the monoculture sugar plantations of the Knights Hospitaller and the Cornaro family. Similarly, the winds of the south and south-west coast of Cyprus generated a constantly changing topography. In the Roman period ad hoc markets could respond to this better than centralised port cities such as Kourion, which was confined by the prevailing winds to what amounted to the bottom of a gravity well. This paper will discuss and enact the indeterminacy of flow.

**12:15-12:45 Sayantani Neogi, Francesc Conesa and Hector Orengo (Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology)**

**Scopes of working in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley Using a Combined Remote Sensing and Geoarchaeological Approach**

This paper presents the scopes of the project *SIGNATURE* working in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon. This ongoing *Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions* project intends to combine big Earth Observation data, machine learning and geoarchaeological signatures of anthropogenic soils in high-performance computational workflows to push forward our capabilities to identify, characterise and protect endangered cultural soils in this post-conflict region. The Bekaa Valley, with its fertile alluvial plains within the Litani and Orontes rivers, has been an attractive land to the populations through millennia. The settlers benefited from the valley orography, the alternate of pasture and agricultural lands and the availability of water sources. As an aftermath of the Lebanese Civil War and the instability resulting from military conflicts, the traditional agronomic landscapes of the Bekaa Valley were severely transformed. This paper shows initial ideas about how the Bekaa Valley now offers an optimal scenario to investigate endangered cultural soils through accurate detection, mapping, and prediction of the location of vulnerable archaeological sites and landforms. Integration of remote sensing techniques starting with the recompilation of legacy data in the form such reports, databases, grey literature, as well as geospatial legacy data such as CORONA and HEXAGON imagery can be promising for further such research in the region.

**12:45-13:15 Matthew J. Jacobson (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)**

**When climate change didn't cause collapse: can we learn from the persistence of past societies?**

Narratives of "mega-droughts" causing "societal collapse" are often thrown around in both academic and popular literature on the archaeology of SW Asia. These perspectives are very contentious and, even if the evidence does suggest negative impacts from climate change in particular periods, there are often nearby communities or settlements experiencing no impacts. Similarly, climate change of the same or greater magnitude can be identified in the same palaeoclimate records with seemingly no resultant societal impacts. In this talk, I will focus on the communities/settlements that persisted (or even thrived) despite adverse climate conditions. I will examine their characteristics, and the features of the climate change itself, to identify what was different in these examples. Further, I will

discuss what can be learnt from archaeological case studies and directions for future research if we are to fully unlock this potential.

## **Recent Fieldwork**

*Chair: Nancy Highcock (British Museum)*

**11:15-11:45 Kamal Badreshany, Graham Philip, Michel de-Vreeze**

### **New Insights into Early Bronze Age Urbanism on the Lebanese Coast: Excavations at Tell Koubba 2019-22**

The site of Tell Koubba is located on the Lebanese Coast ca. 2 km north of the present-day town of Batroun. Remains dating from the Neolithic through to the Middle Bronze Age have been uncovered at the site. A complete Early Bronze Age II-III sequence has been excavated shedding new light on the development of social complexity and the first walled settlement landscape during this period in the Levant. A unique large ritual enclosure formed by a massive stone wall has been the focus of excavation for 5 seasons. The enclosure was filled with midden-type deposits that produced a substantial ceramic repertory and abundant faunal and botanical remains. Later, the enclosure was re-proposed and included a processing and storage facility for olive oil. Unusually for Lebanon, an off-tell 'lower settlement' was discovered at the site and first excavated in 2022, revealing a substantial rectilinear stone structure. Here we will present the new and unique evidence furnished by Koubba and utilise it to rethink the distinctive nature of the small-scale complex societies that appeared along the Lebanese littoral in the early 3rd millennium BCE, contextualising within the wider framework of Levantine and Near Eastern urbanism

**11:45-12:15 Jennie Bradbury (Bryn Mawr) and Stephen McPhillips (CNRS)**

### **Networks, Materials and People: Connecting Coastline to Mountain**

Over the past decade Lebanon has seen a major growth in regional survey archaeology. Rich in cultural heritage from the Palaeolithic to the twentieth century, projects have been initiated in many parts of the country, particularly in some of the most heavily developed areas along the coastal plains. Work is also expanding beyond the coastline, in the foothill and higher mountain regions of Mount Lebanon, with researchers recognizing the important interconnections linking these different environments and the material (and immaterial) flows that existed between them. Drawing upon research from three recent survey projects in Lebanon, in coastal, foothill, and mountainous zones, this paper will explore the diverse organizational networks and infrastructural forms that intra- and inter-connected these different geographies over time. Considering case studies from the Bronze Age through to the mid twentieth century, we will highlight the dynamic and shifting nature of these interconnections, their material traces, as well as their temporal and spatial variations. Touching upon some of the different methods and perspectives used to document and interpret these features, we will also consider the extent to which these networks and interconnections were shaped or impacted by larger regional or supra regional entities. Finally, the paper will consider the benefits of bringing such diverse regions and environments into closer conversation and the importance of adopting a diachronic perspective in order to better understand interactions and interconnections within and across the landscapes of ancient Lebanon.

**12:15-12:45 Salahaddin Ebrahimipour (Eötvös Loránd University)**

### **Rocks Speak: Unravelling the Hidden Aspects of Rabat.**

Investigating the archaeological discoveries of the Zagros region during the Iron Age illustrates various cultural and political entities. Particularly, the upper parts of the Zagros, from the southern shore of Lake Urmia to Lake Zaribar, are often associated with Mannean culture. Our historical knowledge concerning the Mannea and other regional polities primarily relies on Assyrian textual sources alongside the archaeological explorations in the past few decades. Among the investigated handful of the Mannean sites, Rabat II has offered a considerable amount of fascinating archaeological findings. This site is located on the eastern bank of the Little Zab River, fifteen kilometres northeast of Sardasht. The discovery of glazed bricks and pebbled surfaces early on tempted the archaeologists to pursue the site as a temple. Although this assumption might have been partially aligned with the material for a ritual space, it appears the site's inherent character based on its geographical context might have been neglected in the broader scope of analysis. The author has recently inspected the site as part of a field survey and has noticed some disregarded aspects of Rabat. This paper is an attempt to assess the hidden aspects of Rabat as a complex in the bigger picture. Hence, the contextual, physical, and cultural dimensions of the site are once more defined, and proper functionality is suggested.

**12:45-13:15 John MacGinnis (University of Cambridge) and Bülent Genç (Mardin Artuklu University)**

#### **A newly discovered Assyrian rock relief in the Tur Abdin**

This contribution deals with the Assyrian rock relief recently discovered on the edge of the village of Yağmur (Evrihan) in the western part of the Tur Abdin in southeastern Turkey. The preserved remains include an image of an Assyrian king, divine symbols and traces of three panels of cuneiform inscription. Both the image and the panel preserving the most coherent section of legible text can be dated to the time of Tiglath-pileser I. The sequences which can be deciphered relate to the king's penetration into the northwest undertaken in the course of his third campaign against the Nairi lands. The results are discussed against the background of our understanding of the Assyrian expansion in this sector, together with a review of the settlement patterns and political geography of the Tur Abdin as presented in Assyrian sources.

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## **Social Worlds**

*Chair: Karina Croucher*

**09:00-09:30 Andreas Ladas and Dimitris Papageorgiou (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)**

#### **A landscape aspect of human interaction: the role of coastal sanctuaries in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean during the LBA**

Different theories have been employed in an effort to reconstruct human contacts in antiquity. Network theory has been employed in many studies in order to determine dynamics displayed in human interactions. However, little attention has been devoted to the role of landscape features, both natural and human-shaped, in these contacts. The present study aims to demonstrate the socio-political and economic significance of built structures as part of the landscape during a period of intense contact between different components of the Mediterranean basin. These landscape features may have affected in various ways contact between people in the Eastern Mediterranean and Aegean coastal regions during the LBA. Putting forward the concept of entanglement and accounting for all available evidence (archaeological and written sources), coastal sanctuaries were considered active agents in networks composed of many miscellaneous actors, including human and

non-human agents. The erection of these massive buildings in coastal areas by human actors (individuals or groups) was used to symbolize power and wealth and pursue certain social, political, and economic goals. Simultaneously, these buildings functioned as artificial markers that claimed and ensured control overland and along sea and land routes. However, coastal sanctuaries affected people's contacts in ways further beyond human pursuits, acting as transmitters and producers of multiple meanings to different people encountering them. The erection of coastal sanctuaries contributed to the development of the entangled networks of the era.

**09:30-10:00 Joshua Britton (UCL)**

### **Mistakes and Misunderstandings: Linguistic confusion in the Old Assyrian archives**

The Assyrian occupation at Kültepe-Kaneš in central Anatolia during the Middle Bronze Age is attested by over 23,000 cuneiform texts excavated from private archives. These texts document the business activities and personal lives of Assyrian merchants living abroad as well as their interactions with the local Anatolian population of Kaneš. In recent years, scholarship on this period of Anatolian history has begun to focus on the nature of the cultural interactions between the Assyrian merchants and the indigenous Anatolian population with which they conducted business, lived side-by-side and – in some instances – entered into marriages. The material evidence has been noted for its lack of foreign – specifically Assyrian – elements, while the textual record attests interactions between the two groups. The use of writing amongst Anatolians has largely been discussed in reference to the errors committed by those writing in a foreign language using an unfamiliar script. Such errors include the misspelling of personal names and the grammatical gender in suffixes among others. This paper argues that regarding these so-called 'mistakes' as a purely linguistic phenomenon is unsatisfactory. Rather, a nuanced appreciation of these textual features allows us to consider the cultural and personal misunderstandings that lay behind the writing of these texts. Such an analysis aims to move beyond simplistic assumptions about ethnicity and culture and towards an appreciation of the ways in which intercultural contact is experienced at the level of the individual. As well as contributing to our understanding of the Assyrian presence in central Anatolia, this paper challenges the usefulness of terms such as 'native' and 'foreign' when discussing the history and archaeology of ancient cultures.

**10:00-10:30 Julian Hirsch (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)**

### **Religion, Politics, and Change at Early Bronze Age Megiddo**

Throughout the Early Bronze Age, Megiddo was a center of ritual practice with excavations at the site revealing incised stone pavements, successive temples, open-courtyard areas, and a large, elevated platform. While Early Bronze Age ritual practice was recognized in several successive strata, the character of Megiddo's ritual spaces fluctuated significantly throughout the period. In different phases, the space devoted to ritual practice grew, shrank, featured periods of abandonment, and was shared with residential and palatial buildings. Though many studies have examined stratigraphy, architecture, and finds, less attention has been devoted to understanding the changing social and political dimensions of cult practice at Megiddo. In this presentation, I trace changes to Megiddo's sacred area throughout the Early Bronze Age. I argue that in the later Early Bronze Age I, Megiddo's successive temples attest to an increasingly restrictive cult characterized by increasingly limited access to the site's cultic spaces. By comparison, the absence of a recognized temple throughout much of EB III, when a large palatial structure dominated the site, suggests that through much of the period, sacral power was largely subordinate to secular authority. Lastly, I argue that the abandonment of this palace and the establishment of several large temples at the end of EB III

demonstrate the collapse of this secular authority and the reassertion of sacred power. This pattern suggests that whereas palace and temple were largely complementary institutions in Egypt and Mesopotamia, in the southern Levantine Early Bronze Age, these institutions may have competed with one another for social, political, and economic power.

**10:30-11:00 Jo-Hannah Plug (University of Liverpool) and Karina Croucher (University of Bradford)**

**Between Life and Death: Continuing Bonds at Late Neolithic Tell Sabi Abyad, Syria**

This paper highlights the significant discovery of burial grounds at Tell Sabi Abyad and the diverse range of mortuary behaviours observed at this key Late Neolithic site. While traditional approaches to the treatment of the dead often focus on social status, we propose a fresh perspective by examining the agency of the bereaved and the impact of their emotional needs on mortuary rituals. Drawing from an extensive dataset of over 300 burials, the paper centres on a subset of burials from Tell Sabi Abyad I and III, dating back to the 7th and early 6th millennium BCE. In contrast to the typical interments, these burials reveal extended interaction with the deceased, involving bodily manipulation and close spatial proximity to the living.

This paper delves into new interpretations of this evidence, shedding light on the emotional relationships between the living and the dead. It explores possible motivations behind maintaining a tangible connection with the deceased and examines whether such practices offer insights into experiences of grief and bereavement - dimensions often overlooked in archaeological analysis. By incorporating emotion, sensory experiences, and mourning into the interpretation of mortuary evidence, this paper aims to enrich our understanding of mortuary practices' significance in southwest Asia's prehistoric context.

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**Whose Heritage is it? 1 (workshop)**

*Organiser: Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi (University of Glasgow)*

**08:30-08:40 Yasaman Nabati Mazloumi (University of Glasgow)**

**Greetings and introduction**

**08:40-08:55 Lanah Haddad (Regional Director of TARI in Erbil, Iraq)**

**Tackling the Challenges of Heritage Ownership and Its Complexity: A View from Iraq and the Kurdistan Region.**

How can one claim heritage when there is a disconnection from it and limited knowledge? Before discussing to whom heritage belongs, we need to understand that there is an imbalance of power in claiming heritage on several levels.

In the case of Iraq, the country was a pioneer in decolonizing its heritage on legal bases and asserting ownership, this path was abruptly halted by the international embargo imposed on the country in the 1990s. Up until then, the Iraqi government had made significant investments in the preservation of famous heritage sites and established numerous museums across the country with the goal of decentralizing the museum system. These efforts laid the foundation for organizing field trips for schools and integrating the country's heritage into the education system and knowledge production.

These substantial investments and strategies were crucial in connecting the local community with its heritage, fostering interaction, and cultivating a sense of connection and ownership.

However, over four decades of continuous conflicts and destabilization have eroded these foundations, leaving the Iraqi community proud of its heritage but lacking a fundamental connection to it. This paper will discuss both the challenges and initiatives aimed at addressing these problems. Sharing experiences of bottom-up initiatives for building bridges and increasing knowledge within communities about heritage like production of physical games related to heritage and culture as well establishing public tours to heritage sites. Most importantly, it will advocate for changing the status quo of international heritage work in Iraq to improve the situation in a sustainable manner.

**08:55-09:10 Muntadher Aloda (State Board of Antiquities and Heritage of Dhi Qar Governorate, Iraq)**

#### **Lack Of Community Engagement In International Projects: Ur As A Case Study.**

Ur is one of Iraq's world's heritage sites and one of the few to attract earlier international excavations and projects. With the beginning of the Western excavations and discovery missions in Iraq in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Ur was one of their principal destinations. The international projects have continued their work at Ur during most political situations in Iraq; they started during the Ottoman period, the British mandate, the independent Kingdom of Iraq, the Republic of Iraq, and even after 2003. However, these international teams failed to conduct any community engagement during these long periods. They held the ideology of colonization during all that time. No Arabic publication or dissemination about Ur, no seminars or workshops for the local people of Ur, no plans for developing the site to attract tourists, no involvement of the local Iraqi archaeologist etc. The lack of this community engagement has resulted in a lack of knowledge about Ur among Iraqi archaeologists and local communities. In this paper, I will take Ur as an example of colonization and then talk about how the Iraqi heritage authority, known as the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH), works on different levels to develop and enhance how international teams implement their excavations in Iraq and how important to engage the Iraqi archaeologists and local communities.

**09:10-09:25 Allison Mickel (Lehigh University)**

#### **They Eat Too Much Mansaf to Care about the Stones: Nationalism, Regionalism, and Community Archaeology in Jordan.**

Many discussions about decolonizing archaeology in postcolonial contexts emphasize the need for greater national sovereignty and stewardship over cultural heritage and patrimony. Repatriation processes, for instance, and UNESCO best practices tend to center the nation-state as key decision-maker for site and collection management. But a nation-state is hardly homogeneous, containing its own internal diversity and inequalities. This multiscalar tension within it must be considered when asking the question, "Whose Heritage is it?"

Cultural heritage in Jordan operates within a context of profound patriotism, deep regionalism, and fervent familial loyalty. Archaeological sites like Petra can function concurrently as a symbol of the unified nation as a whole and also a site of ardent contestation between, for instance, Bedouins and fellahin. Debates about conservation, access, and economic benefit from archaeological sites and assemblages often draw out divisions between North and South, or between urban and rural communities.

It is in this context that two Jordanian startup companies, Sela and Hand by Hand, work to build local capacity in archaeological management. In order to do so, they navigate not only the colonial legacy of foreign-dominated archaeology in the Near East, but also sometimes competing national and regional interests in cultural heritage management. Here, I present some of the means by which these companies work to support strong archaeological governance at the national level while also protecting local, provincial interests in archaeological sites and artifacts. I argue that pursuing both of these ends simultaneously, flexibly, and creatively, has made these companies most successful in pursuing their goal of community-led archaeology in Jordan.

**09:25-09:40 Michael Campeggi<sup>1</sup>, Valentina Oselini<sup>1</sup>, Claire Padovani<sup>1</sup>, Luca Peyronel<sup>1</sup>, Mohammed Lashkri<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Milan, <sup>2</sup>Director of Archaeological Affairs in the General Directorate of Antiquities and Heritage, Kurdistan, Iraq

### **Rewinding Traditions: An Ethnoarchaeological Enquiry on Ceramic Manufacturing in the Erbil Plain, Iraqi Kurdistan**

Since Prehistory, the south-western Erbil Plain has been an important area of ceramic manufacturing. The discovery by the Italian Archaeological Expedition in the Erbil Plain (MAIPE) of production facilities dating back to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> millennia BC at the sites of Helawa and Aliawa, together with the wide availability of clay sources in the landscape and the presence of nearby modern brick factories and pottery ateliers, indeed testifies to the persistence of this tradition.

The aim of this paper is to reflect on the results of the first pilot season of MAIPE's ethnoarchaeological project, carried out in the framework of a series of public archaeology initiatives which are being implemented together with the Directorate of Antiquities and the Erbil Civilization Museum. During the fieldwork, the team aimed at documenting contemporary practices of brick and pottery making through a bottom-up approach. Thanks to the interaction with local actors (potters, brick workers) who are active in the neighboring area, we explore the artisans' knowledge and their perception of the archaeological landscape in relation to ancient traditions, co-establishing a narrative which sees cooperation and intangible heritage as pivotal to the reconstruction of the history of this area.

**09:40-09:55 Nicolò Marchetti, Gabriele Giacosa, Licia Proserpio (University of Bologna)**

### **Rebuilding a Connection: Community Engagement Activities at Nineveh, Mosul.**

The historic city of Nineveh, located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River in northern Iraq, represents a key site for the study of ancient Mesopotamia and southwestern Asia at large. However, its preservation is constantly under threat: the political instability experienced by the region in the last decades (culminated in the 2014-2017 occupation by the Islamic State) entailed somewhat poorly-coordinated actions by national and international institutions and widespread damages to the ancient site. Moreover, the urban expansion of the modern city of Mosul (with its Nebi Yunus sector) has greatly affected the archaeological area, with a constant encroachment of buildings and infrastructures over it. Against this backdrop, in 2021, the KALAM project, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and coordinated by the University of Bologna, has carried out an anthropological preliminary study involving the local communities living near and on the archaeological site of Nineveh. Our study aimed at collecting the communities' perceptions and narratives, and discussing current issues and possible future solutions for the preservation and enhancement of Nineveh

according to its original keepers. The paper presents the qualitative data collected shedding light on the complex relation between the tangible heritage of Nineveh and its living communities.

**09:55-10:10 Kristen Hopper<sup>1</sup>, Bijan Rouhani<sup>2</sup>, and Nichole Sheldrick<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Durham University, <sup>2</sup>Oxford University, <sup>3</sup>University of Leicester

### **Reflecting On Participation, Practice, And Progress In Digital Cultural Heritage Projects: A Critical Look At The EAMENA-CPF Training Programme**

Since 2016, the Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa (EAMENA) Project has been involved in delivering training in methodologies for recording and monitoring endangered cultural heritage sites to national heritage agencies and civil society groups across the Middle East and North Africa. With this paper, we want to reflect on the design and delivery, successes, challenges, and shortcomings of the project from the perspectives of the training teams and those of our local collaborators. We will touch on topics such as the drivers of 'development' and 'impact' funding, systemic barriers (including social, political, financial, and technical) to the use and sustainable implementation of digital approaches to cultural heritage research and management in MENA and digital colonialism, community participation and inclusion, data access vs. community rights, and project sustainability. Ultimately, we want to provide a critical review of a long-running capacity-building project in SW Asia and beyond and consider how we can better shape future projects.

**10:10-10:30 Q&A**

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### **Whose Heritage is it? 2 (workshop)**

**10:50-11:05 Jaafar Jotheri (University of Al-Qadisiyah)**

#### **To What Extent Do The Local Archaeologists Have The Right Of Coauthorship?**

This paper will discuss why the local archaeologists feel they have been left behind and ignored by their international counterparts regarding coauthorship. I interviewed several local and international archaeologists and debated the reasons and consequences of the lack of involvement of the locals in publications.

It is evident, especially for international archaeologists, that publications are vital at individual and institutional levels. They (I mean here, international archaeologists with colonized ideology) knew very well about how publications increase researchers' visibility and credibility and promote career opportunities. They keep reminding each other that the more often you write in prestigious journals, the more credibility you have. They know that publication may also bring more funding for the institute as it brings attention to scholars and their institutions. However, they do not see the same case with the local archaeologists and institutions.

Many local archaeologists knew that coauthorship is not an automatic right and cannot be gifted; however, in many cases, they were working hard and made themselves eligible for it, and that is why they still believe that internationals are deliberately and discriminately prevented the locals from their right to coauthorship.

Local and international archaeologists may have followed the related rules and regulations of copywriting in their countries, allowing the international to publish without local involvement. However, the international should look at the morality side of teamwork and discuss coauthorship



with the locals before starting the work, agree in writing and modify the agreement through the project stages.

**11:05-11:20 Ana Silkatcheva (University of Oxford)**

**Breaking Ground, Breaking (Language) Barriers: 'Colloquial Arabic for Archaeologists' as a Decolonial Initiative**

Amongst discussion of the decolonial efforts required in archaeological practice in Southwest Asia, the capacity of visiting archaeologists to use local languages has only recently, and still only informally, emerged as a topic. Yet choices in language use – and specifically, choices against the use of certain languages – are fundamental to continuing colonial practice and the perpetuation of power imbalances.

In the Arabic-speaking countries of Southwest Asia, visiting archaeologists still overwhelmingly lack skill and proficiency in Arabic. On one hand, this unfairly places the burden of communication on the professional archaeologists of the host countries. But even more significantly, it also short-changes local archaeological labourers on a basic, human level. These individuals, both the most crucial to the progress of archaeological projects and the least able to communicate in foreign languages, are most affected by their interactions with foreign archaeologists. The rudimentary 'Dig Arabic' shared by visiting archaeologists is limited to greetings, instructions, and exclamations: expressions without expectation of meaningful response. Through this one-sided, top-down communicative strategy, local staff of archaeological projects are prevented from fully expressing their own needs and personalities or meeting their desires to be understood on a human level. And with foreign archaeologists as de facto 'cultural ambassadors' (whether this role is desired or not), the communication barrier hinders cross-cultural understanding on both sides.

Negative individual and collective attitudes towards language learning, certainly in the English-speaking world, are only partly to blame for this status quo. More significantly, the nature of Arabic as a diglossic language has led to socio-cultural circumstances that complicate language acquisition. Arabic exists broadly in two divergent varieties: elevated Modern Standard Arabic for rare formal contexts and the colloquial dialects of everyday life. Despite the use of the latter as the medium of daily communication, pedagogical practice exclusively favours the former. As a result, resources for learning colloquial Arabic are exceedingly scarce, thwarting an easy solution to the problem even if archaeological training were to begin to include the acquisition of local languages.

How then to conceptualise a remedy for this complex situation? In 2014 the author created a professional development course, 'Colloquial Arabic for Archaeologists', for the Centre for Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia at the University of Sydney. It was taught there in 2014, 2016 and 2018, and at the University of Oxford in 2023. Designed to empower archaeologists to move away from a colonialist dictation of orders and instructions, the course aims to build capacity towards meaningful two-way communication. Eschewing simple lists of phrases and vocabulary items, its approach emphasises grammar and sentence formation as well as understanding of the cultural context. This paper presents 'Colloquial Arabic for Archaeologists' as an example of a language-based tool of decolonisation and considers its challenges and prospects for future wider implementation.

**11:20-11:35 Yağmur Heffron (UCL)**

**Staying In The Conversation: Archaeologists Learning Field Languages As A Baseline For Engaged Field Practice**

In this paper I will offer a series of brief observations on how foregrounding field language acquisition can be a powerful means of establishing genuine and long-lasting engagement between foreign archaeological teams and local communities.

Taking an ethnobiographical approach to illustrate broader patterns, I will draw from my own experiences of closing the language gap for others as a native Turkish speaker on primarily Anglophone projects in Türkiye over the past 20 years. The key questions I will raise for discussion revolve around distributing the responsibility of language-learning more equally among international teams, paying special attention to formal strategies on the part of institutions, grant awarding bodies, as well as grant holders to incorporate field language acquisition as a fundamental skill for conducting long-term fieldwork in a host country.

**11:35-11:45 Break**

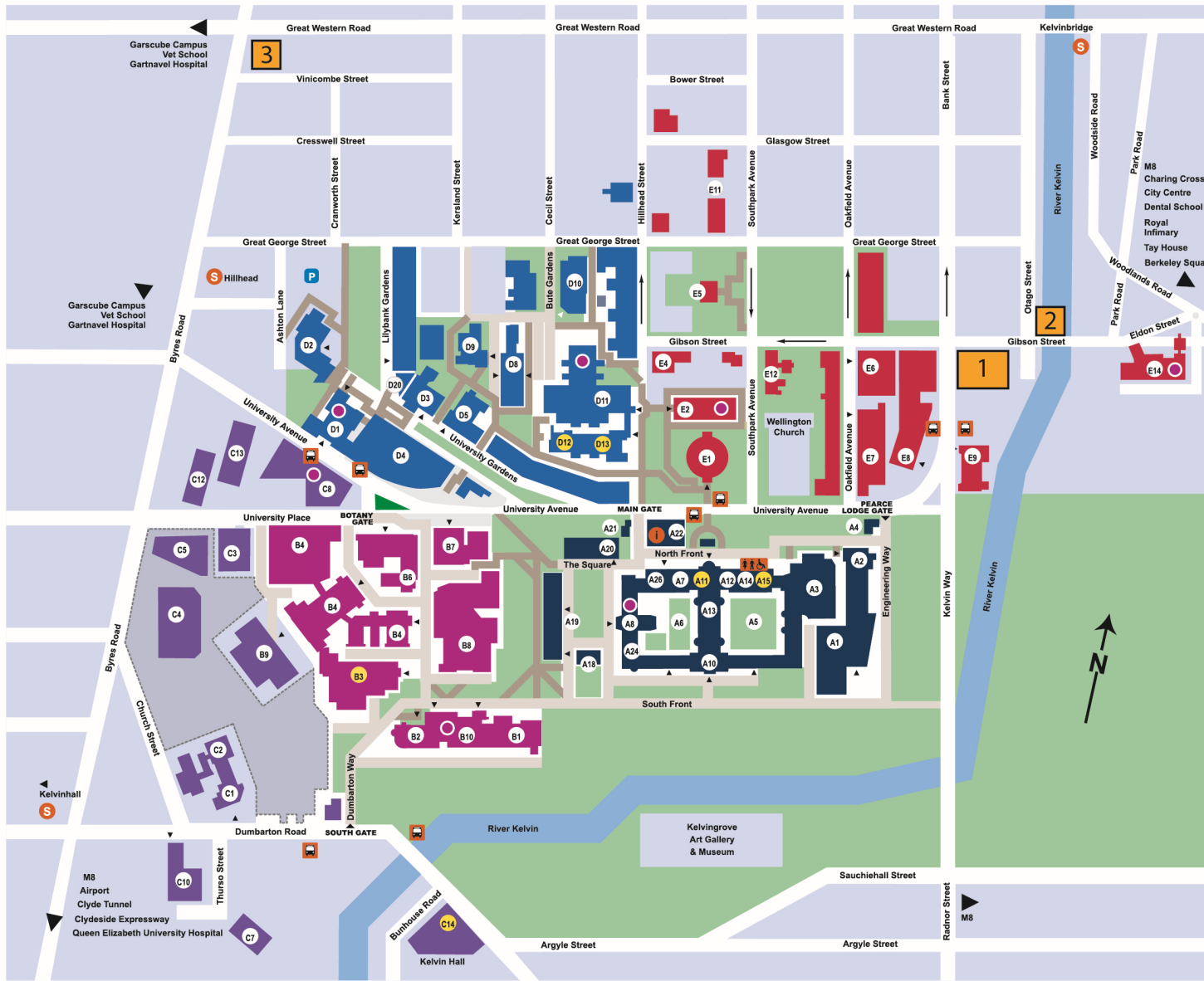
**11:45-12:45 Roundtable discussion**

## **Getting here:**

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The University of Glasgow is well-served by public transport. The closest subway station to the conference and dinner venues is Kelvinbridge. The closest to the party venue is Hillhead. Extensive travel information is available at [University of Glasgow - Travel to Gilmorehill Campus](#)

There is limited free car parking around campus, indicated on the map overleaf. However, there is pay and display parking along all side streets. Please note, Blue Badge holders do not need to find designated spaces in Scotland and can park anywhere not otherwise restricted. Full details at [Using your Blue Badge - mygov.scot](#)



- Welcome Point
  - Hunterian Museum
  - Hunterian Art Gallery
  - The Hunterian at Kelvin Hall
  - The Mackintosh House
  - Zoology Museum
  - University Gift Shop
  - Catering Facilities
  - Footpaths
  - Bus Stop
  - Subway
  - Car Parking
  - One Way Traffic
  - Toilets
  - Under development
- 
- 1** Conference Venue  
Sir Charles Wilson Building
  - 2** Dinner Venue  
Stravaigin
  - 3** Party Venue  
Òran Mór

