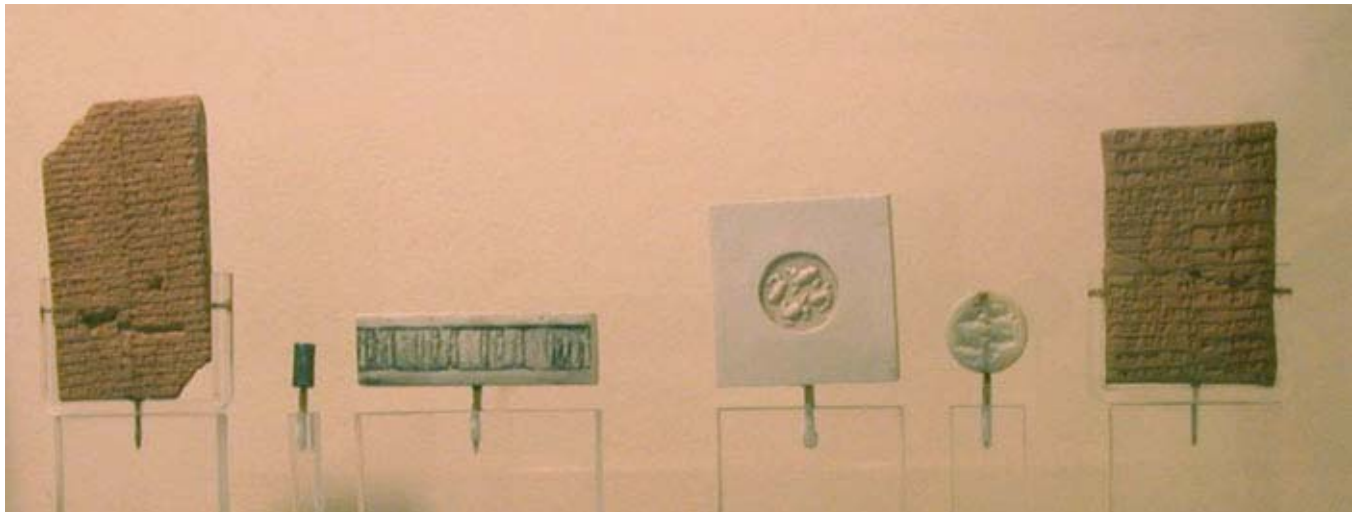


A Meeting of Minds, Science and Human Experience – Part III

The Effects of War on the Advancement of Education, Science and Humanity The Revitalization of Higher Education in Iraq

Our Common Responsibility



© Photo: UNESCO

Relics from Iraq, dating from 3000 to 1700 B.C.E. Clay tablets (2036-1985 B.C.E.), hematite cylinder-seal (circa 1700 B.C.E.) and flat stone seal (3000 B.C.E.) Donation made by Iraq on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of UNESCO in 1971.

The Education system in Iraq, prior to 1991, was one of the best in the region, with over 100 percent Gross Enrolment rate for primary schooling and high levels of literacy, both of women and men. The Higher Education, especially the scientific-technological institutions, were of international standard, staffed by high quality personnel.

UNESCO Fact Sheet, 28 March 2003

“All wars, with their turmoil, maiming and killing, wantonly destroy the soul and disfigure the memory of what constitutes a people’s very identity, in other words its culture. In Iraq, as a result of thirteen years of sanctions and the chaos that followed the recent armed conflict, eight thousand years of human history now hang in the balance.”

Mounir Bouchenaki, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO 2004

Whoever is directly responsible for the dangers facing Iraq's institutions of learning and its educators, the situation seriously threatens the emergence of a secular, moral and democratic leadership from within Iraq. If such a society is to emerge from beneath the scars caused by years of sanctions, from the rubble left by a remorseless and mendaciously justified war, intellectuals are the best and, in my opinion, the only chance of enabling Iraq to realise its human capabilities.

Andrew N. Rubin, Ph.D., Prof., Dept. of English, Georgetown University (October 2004)



"I firmly condemn the campaign of violence waged in Iraq against academics and intellectuals. The right to education is a basic human right and the persecution of the custodians of knowledge and skills is an unacceptable attack against a whole society. Iraq has a long tradition in learning and academic excellence in the Middle East. By targeting those who hold the keys to Iraq's reconstruction and development, the perpetrators of this violence are jeopardizing the future of Iraq and of democracy."

Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO (April 2006)

**Prof. Dr. Isam Kadhem Al Rawi (1 July 1949 – 30 October 2006)
– Geologist, Environmentalist and Peacemaker –**



Dr. Al Rawi was professor of geology and environmental science, Earth Science Dept., Baghdad University, Iraq. He was gunned down by contracted assassins in front of his home while on his way to teach.

A distinguished international academic, he also lectured on religious affairs, history, and religious extremism. In the 1980s, the US and Britain backed Iraq's dictator Saddam Hussein in the war against Iran, supplying him with weapons, money, satellite intelligence, and even chemical & bio-weapon precursors. United States military advisors supported Iraqi forces and helped select targets for Iraqi air and missile attacks. In 1985, opposing Prof. Al Rawi was arrested and interrogated for insubordinate activities and treason the government of Iraq and sentenced to death.

The intervention of international Islamic scholars prompted Prof. Al Rawi's commutation of the death sentence and release from prison in 1987. Refusing to leave his country and its people, he continued teaching for several years at the University of Saladin in Irbi, bridging differences between Arabs and Kurds. Following the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the US/UK led international coalition of 38 countries he joined the Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq, and founded the Association of University Lecturers of Iraq (AUL) with colleagues and students. They shouldered the responsibility for upholding the academic community's human rights for autonomy, freedom of thought and expression, and resistance against a war of aggression for corporate and private gain.

(The US/UK led international coalition of 38 countries are parties and signatories to the United Nations Charter, of which Article II, Section 4, states, "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. ..." Iraq had not attacked the United States, Great Britain, or any of the other countries. The war against Iraq is in clear violation of international law, including the laws enshrined in the U.S. Constitution).

They resisted the international occupation with the same intellectual determination they used to oppose their own dictatorial government. They tried to uphold the dignity and courage of the Iraqi people working for decades to establish their own democracy for an independent Iraq, from within Iraq.

Professor Al Rawi refused to leave his country, his colleagues and students, in order to help protect not only the historical but also the environmental integrity of Iraq; to honour, defend, and safeguard Mesopotamia's cultural, intellectual and scientific heritage – its inestimable contributions to world civilization and the development of science over 8000 years. He witnessed the vast destruction of Iraq's museums, universities, schools, libraries and hundreds of thousands of irreplaceable documents, and the exodus of Iraqi academics.

He witnessed the threats, violence, kidnappings and imprisonment waged against tens of thousands of Iraqi intellectuals, academics, artists, writers and journalists; the guardians of Iraq's indigenous world knowledge-base.

He bore witness to the systematic liquidation of that knowledge-base; the contracted, horrific assassinations of university presidents and deans; hundreds of leading professors of biology, chemistry, engineering, geology, and medicine [an estimated 2000 physicians alone have been murdered since the 2003 occupation]; teachers, journalists, and even students. Prof. Al Rawi tried to keep a record of his colleagues who were murdered and was still able to forward a partial listing to The BRusseß Tribunal.

<http://www.brusselstribunal.org/academicsList.htm> ♦ <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/JournalistKilled.htm>

They were colleagues and friends advancing science, knowledge-building and information for the common good of humankind.



Professor Al Rawi and his colleagues strengthened the voices of conscience, in Iraq and internationally. We shall honour and remember them as defenders of humanity, as pillars of moral courage and dignity for the people of Iraq – and for us all.



Muslims, Islam, and Iraq

Prof. Alan Godlas, Ph.D., Professor, University of Georgia

<http://www.uga.edu/islam/iraq.html>



UNESCO and Education in Iraq Fact Sheet (28 March 2003)

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11216&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

***Opening the Doors: Intellectual Life and Academic Conditions in Post-War Baghdad* (15 July 2003)**

Hala Fattah, Ph.D., Jens Hanssen, D.Phil., Prof. Edouard Méténier, Keith D. Watenpaugh, Ph.D.

www.ifla.org/VI/4/admin/iraq2107.pdf.



Education in Transition - Needs and Challenges (2004 - 424 pages)

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<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001386/138665e.pdf>



UNESCO in Action Education Precarious Future for Iraqi Universities The New Courier (May 2005)

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**A UN Study Reveals that 80 percent of Iraqs Educational Institutes
Have Been Ruined by the War (8 May 2005)**

http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39622&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html



**Call for World Aid to Repair Iraq's Devastated Universities (May/June 2005)
United Nations University**

http://update.unu.edu/archive/issue37_16.htm



**Round Table on the Revitalization of Higher Education in Iraq
Contact List of Participants (22-23 February 2005)**

http://.unesco.org/education/admin/file_download.php/Iraq_Participants.pdf?URL_ID=39824&filename=1170325163Iraq_Participants.pdf&filetype=application%2Fpdf&filesize=559931&name=Iraq_Participants.pdf&location=user-S/



**85 Percent of Iraq's Higher Learning Institutions Burnt. Looted, Wrecked;
Professors Slain UNU Calls for World Help to Repair System (1 May 2005)**

Dr. Jairam Reddy, United Nations University, International Leadership Institute
http://www.unu.edu/hq/rector_office/press2005/mre10-05.doc



The Destruction of Iraq's Educational System Under US Occupation (11 May 2005)

Ghali Hassan, Science and Mathematics Education Centre, Curtin University, Australia
Contributing Editor, Centre for Research on Globalization, Canada
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/HAS505B.html>



**Iraq Higher Education in Tatters, Says Report (25 May 2005)
Science and Development Network**

<http://www.scidev.net/content/news/eng/iraqi-higher-education-in-tatters-says-report.cfm>



**The Current Status and Future Prospects for the Transformation
and Reconstruction of the Higher Education System in Iraq**

www.unu.edu/news/ili/Iraq.doc

International University Network for Iraq

http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39422&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html



**Dismissals and Assassinations of Iraqi Intellectuals,
Professors, Lecturers, Teachers (October 2004)**

Andrew N. Rubin, Ph.D., Prof., Dept. of English, Georgetown University
<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/711/op63.htm>

**“Tortured, shot, ambushed, victims are found dumped outside morgues.
What is happening to Iraq's intellectuals is chilling” (10 March 2006)**

The Times Higher Education Supplement

http://www.iraqis.org.uk/Contents/Articles/603_Iraqi_academics_arbuthnot.htm



Urgent Appeal to Save Iraq's Academics

<http://www.brusselstribunal.org/Academics.htm>



UNESCO Director-General condemns campaign of violence against Iraqi academics (5 April 2006)

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=32531&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html



Informed Comment

Thoughts on the Middle East, History, Religion

Juan Cole, Ph.D., Professor of History, Michigan University

<http://www.juancole.com>



Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

This is a legal instrument which recognizes, for the first time,

Cultural Diversity as a “Common Heritage of Humanity”

and considers its safeguarding to be a concrete and ethical imperative,

inseparable from respect for human dignity. 2 November 2001

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<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>



Cultural Diversity

Common Heritage – Plural Identities

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Published 2002

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127161e.pdf>



This Canadian International Youth Letter (CIYL) is part of a new series with an emphasis on science and human affairs.

The series incorporates cultural and youth studies as well as research-based information on the science of human behaviour, including the effects of war, destructiveness and violence on youth development, global mental health and the environment. Under the theme ‘**Exploring New Ways of Knowing – A Meeting of Minds, Science and Human Experience**’ it is part of the new project of the **International Youth Network for the Advancement of the Sciences, Humanities and Global Bioethics (IYNet)**

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As an NGO member of Forum UNESCO and the UNEP, PAEP takes initiatives, working with and for youth to promote and advance the universal values and principles of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNEP; to respect cultural diversity as the common heritage of humanity; to foster a new transdisciplinary educational, scientific, environmental and inter-cultural dialogue towards a universal code of ethics for the benefit of present and future generations; to build awareness and to strengthen international cooperation in the protection of the world's natural, cultural, intellectual and scientific heritage.

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