



Middle East Studies and the Department of History at the University of Maryland and
The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TAARII)
present a

Panel Discussion on
**Protecting Iraqi Cultural Heritage in Times of War:
Past and Present Challenges**

Thursday, December 11, 2014

University of Maryland, College Park
0106 Francis Scott Key Hall
4:30-6:30 pm

Since 1990, the museums, archives, and libraries of Iraq have suffered from destruction and looting during years of war, economic sanctions, invasion, occupation, and sectarian fighting. Panelists with experience working in Iraq or with Iraqi collections in the United States discuss challenges facing Iraq's cultural heritage and efforts to protect it.

PANELISTS:

Mary-Jane Deeb is Chief of the African and Middle Eastern Division at the Library of Congress. In 2003, she led a Library of Congress mission to Baghdad to assist with the recovery and preservation of some of the National Library of Iraq's endangered materials and publications. She is a frequent media commentator, and has appeared on the Lehrer News Hour, John McLaughlin's One on One, CNN, ABC World News and CBS Evening News.

McGuire Gibson, Professor of Mesopotamian Archaeology at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, has been engaged in field research in Iraq since 1964. In 2003, he was a member of a UNESCO archaeological fact-finding mission in Iraq and a member of a National Geographic team sent to assess damage to archaeological sites. He has continued to work actively to keep the destruction of Iraq's heritage before the public eye.

Abdulmir Hamdani, the director of the office of antiquities and heritage in Iraq's Dhi Qar province from 2003 to 2010, surveyed most of southern Iraq, adding 1,200 new archaeological sites to the Iraq's inventory. Hamdani participated in protecting Iraq's cultural heritage in the south, during and after the war of 2003, returning almost 30,000 stolen artifacts to the Iraqi National Museum. He is currently a PhD candidate at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Dina Herbert is the librarian for the Iraqi Jewish Archive project at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, DC. Dina has a BA in Ancient Studies from Columbia University and both a BA and a MA in Hebrew Bible and Ancient Semitic Languages from the Jewish Theological Seminary. She received her MLS from the University of Maryland.

Jessica S. Johnson is Head of Conservation for the Museum Conservation Institute of the Smithsonian Institution. Prior to joining the MCI she was the Academic Director for the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage in Erbil, Iraq, where she worked from its inception in 2009 until September 2014 and continues her involvement in an advisory capacity.