

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

Charles E. Jones

Circumstances prevented a number of delegates, including **Charles E. Jones**, from attending the organizational meeting of *The First International Conference on the Ancient Cultural Relations Between Iran and West Asia* in Teheran in June 2002, but the organization of the conference proceeded. At the time of writing, all are awaiting visas and tickets and fully expecting to attend the conference in Teheran in August 2003. In November, Jones chaired a second annual session at the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) meeting in Toronto. This annual session, jointly sponsored by the SBL's office of Research and Development, seeks to provide a forum for the presentation of imaginative projects integrating technology in the development of tools for the study of the ancient Near East. The session showcased (among other things) a presentation of the electronically published version of the Chicago Hittite Dictionary (eCHD) by Sandra Schloen. These sessions have been very successful and will continue in November 2003 at the annual meeting in Atlanta. Jones has been appointed to the editorial board of ARTA: Achaemenid Researches on Texts and Archaeology [<http://www.achemenet.com/ressources/enligne/arta/arta.htm>]. He has several articles in preparation for publication in collaboration with Matthew Stolper and Wouter Henkelman. An article written with Matthew W. Stolper, "Hallock, Richard T.," appeared in the spring in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.

Work continues — very slowly — on the Persepolis Fortification Tablets projects. The Persepolis component of the XSTAR project, thanks to Gene Gragg and Sandra Schloen, is nearly ready for a semi-public presentation. This electronic form of publication promises to be an extraordinarily powerful research environment — and the technical and editorial issues involved present very interesting challenges.

The war in Iraq has been the overwhelming event of the past year for many of us. As a central place for communications on the ancient world, the Oriental Institute has been particularly burdened by the crisis. The volume of e-mail handled by Jones, for instance, more than tripled from the normal flow of amount three hundred e-mails per day, to between a thousand and fifteen-hundred e-mails per day in April and May. Jones has been closely involved in the development of the Institute's response to the cultural property crisis in Iraq. His participation focuses around three activities:

(1) Development of a Preliminary bibliography of books documenting the contents of the Iraq Museum, the National Library and Archives, and the Manuscript collection of the Ministry of Religious Endowments — all in Baghdad — as well as of Other Damaged or Destroyed Collections in Baghdad or Elsewhere in Iraq including Mosul, Basrah, Suleimaniyeh, etc. This bibliography is published online as a part of the Institute's Iraq Museum Database Project: [http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/iraq_bibliography.html]. The version online at time of writing is the 25th — including 220 titles — and indexes more than twelve-thousand Iraq Museum numbers.

(2) Organizer and moderator of IraqCrisis: A moderated list for communicating substantive information on cultural property damaged, destroyed, or lost from libraries and museums in Iraq during and after the war in April 2003, and on the worldwide response to the crisis [<https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/iraqcrisis>].

(3) Member of the Middle East Librarians Association Committee on Iraqi Libraries [<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/mela/melairaq.html>]. The MELA Executive Board convened the Committee on Iraqi Libraries to coordinate the organization's response to the damage and destruction suffered by libraries in Iraq during and after the war in March and April 2003. The committee is envisioned to be a small task force of MELA members who have firsthand knowledge of, experience, or strong interest in matters related to libraries in Iraq, and who will be able

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to field questions, play the role of contact, and suggest ways to assist in rebuilding efforts. The web presence of the committee is an important clearinghouse for data relating to the destroyed and damaged libraries of Iraq. At the time of writing it appears that the situation in Iraq will remain as a major focus of Jones's attention for the foreseeable future.
