

McGuire Gibson

McGuire Gibson was in Baghdad twice during the past academic year. In September, he attended an Iraqi Education Fair, in which forty U.S. universities were speaking to 2,000 or more students with Iraqi government fellowships in hand. Most of the students were in engineering, sciences, or medicine, but there were a few who wanted to pursue doctorates in Humanities, including archaeology and cuneiform studies. Given the general decline in English language training over the past decade, it is difficult for these students to meet the high admissions requirements for our university, but it is important that we have a role in the training of the new generation of archaeologists and ancient language specialists in Iraq. At the Royal Ontario Museum in October, he appeared in a discussion with Matthew Bogdanos on *The Looting of the Iraq Museum: Ten Years After*. This program was an adjunct to a special exhibition of Mesopotamian artifacts from the British Museum, including whole walls of relief slabs from the palaces of Nineveh. In January, he participated in the annual meeting of the British Association for Near Eastern Archaeology (BANE), in which he gave the keynote address about Tony Wilkinson, whose great work in laying out the ancient landscape of the Near East was being honored by a full day of presentations, which will appear as a book later in the year. In March, he was once more in Baghdad, asked to come to negotiate on the possible establishment of The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TAARII), which he, as president of TAARII, had proposed to the Minister of Education in earlier visits. The hoped-for agreement was postponed by the flurry of activity related to the Iraqi elections, but it is anticipated that the facility will be approved at a future date. As of July 1, Gibson is no longer the president of TAARII, having come to the end of his term. He will still be the Chicago delegate to the board of TAARII, as he also will continue to be for the American Institute for Yemeni Studies.
