Military Occupation of Heritage Sites:
Orientalism, Archaeology and the Iraq War

By
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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University
8 December 2016
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Acknowledgments

I must begin this very long list of acknowledgments by first and foremost expressing my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Associate Professor Benjamin Isakhan, at Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia. Without his guidance, support, wisdom, and inspiration, this thesis would not have been possible. Since our first meeting in October 2012 in the Karradat Marriam neighbourhood of Baghdad, Iraq, he has been instrumental in ensuring that I have reached this final goal. His unwavering faith in me and this research project throughout the years have truly humbled me. His leadership was instrumental in my completion, and he has garnered my deepest respect and admiration for his constant professionalism, kindness and expertise about cultural heritage matters in conflict zones.

I also greatly benefited from the worldwide experience of Professor Fethi Mansouri, who was one of my associate supervisors. His insights into my topic, and his advice on how to look at it from different perspectives, also assisted in directing me towards my final conclusion. I am also grateful to my other associate supervisor, Professor Andrea Whitcomb, who was always generous with her time and advice. She challenged me to further investigate alternate avenues as part of my research. Thank you both for your sound judgment and instruction during each meeting.

Other Deakin University academic staff also contributed their thoughts and input into my thesis, of which I am very appreciative. Thank you to Professor Tim Winter for providing additional guidance and insight into cultural heritage matters as they relate to conflict zones. To Emeritus Professor William Logan and his interest in my topic and sharing his great knowledge in cultural heritage issues. I also wish to extend a warmest thank you to both Dr Amelia Johns, and Dr Victoria Stead. They both generously offered their time to read different early drafts of my chapters. They provided me with useful feedback that I was able to incorporate into the final product.

I must not forget all the wonderful support staff in the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation. A special thank you goes to Cayla Edwards, whose patience and well-rounded knowledge helped me on numerous occasions. I would also like to thank Sarah Buckler, Robyn Fickerski, and Margaret McKay, for their continued support with all things administrative throughout the years. Also, while I may not be able to name each individual on the Deakin Information Technology staff who assisted me with computer problems, I wish to thank you for your professionalism and timely troubleshooting expertise.

I would not have been able to undertake this incredible journey without the tremendous generosity from the Deakin University Research Scholarship I received. The scholarship was part of Professor Isakhan’s Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) grant, Measuring the
Destruction of Heritage and Spikes of Violence in Iraq project. It was an honour and a privilege to be able to be one of the participants in this much needed study. Much thanks goes to Professor Peter Stone at Newcastle University in the UK, who initially made me aware of this wonderful opportunity.

My gratitude also extends to several instrumental people in Iraq who assisted me with logistical planning. I would like to recognise David Michelmore for organizing accommodation and transportation for me while in Erbil, and answering my numerous inquiries about best practices while in-country. Next, my deepest gratitude is offered to Haney Edo, who so generously signed on to work with me as an English/Arabic/Kurdish translator, and serve as an interpreter during all meetings and interviews. Special thanks goes to Jessica Johnson, who assisted me with arranging office space at The Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage, and ensuring that students and staff were aware of my visit. My gratitude also extends to Joshua Lively and Jihad Hammash, for translating the first drafts of the waivers and documents intended for the Iraqi interviewees. All these individuals freely gave their time and professional consideration to this research project, which is deeply appreciated.

I must offer the warmest of thanks to all of the Iraq war veterans, civilian personnel, and the Iraqi cultural heritage specialists who agreed to be interviewed. Each and every one of you was generous with your time. I learned so much from each of you, and I thank you for sharing your personal, and often emotional, stories with me. I also appreciate those of you who took the extra step and informed your colleagues about my research, which allowed me to gather the number of interviews that I needed.

A heartfelt thank you goes to my wonderful fellow PhD candidates. First from Greenwood Park, especially Paulette, who was kind enough to welcome me into her family and show me around Melbourne when I arrived in Australia without family or close friends. Also to Wael, who was always a rational sounding board when things became stressful, you are wise beyond your years my friend. To Karen and Caroline, who inspired me to follow their lead of maintaining a positive attitude through the daunting academic load we carried. To the group at Building F, particularly Brandi, Anne, David, and June, thank you for providing the continued group support and establishing the DUPhD Society. To Melathi, who was crucial in helping me stay the course though the last year of writing, your friendship will forever be cherished.

To my Game of Thrones crew, Tim, Lorena and Terry. Having an outlet to ponder the fate of Jon Snow helped get me through crucial months of heavy writing. Equally, a thank you goes out to the fantastic group at the gym, Cam, Ben, Tomy, Brad, Belinda, and Jordan. But especially to Sarah and Rob, who both encouraged me to keep going, often pushing me beyond what I thought I was capable of accomplishing, thank you for instilling your drive for success into me.
For all my new friends in Australia who joined me in one way or another during this journey. Particularly Nicola, Lorinda, Brooke, Kate, and Verena. Also to my pre-established Australian friend and former workmate Carl. Your professional advice over the years was incredibly helpful, and the visits to Brisbane were a much needed escape. Thank you all for making me feel most welcome in your homeland, even if it is an adopted country for some of you. Also to Angela and Kerry, without whose coffee every morning I would not have made it through each day.

I must also thank all the wonderful people I had the privilege of working with at the US Embassy in Baghdad. My time there was the crucial step needed to propel me towards embarking on this journey. I was privileged to meet people from across the globe, many of whom I have stayed in touch with and who have encouraged me as I wrote my thesis. There are far too many to name individually, but a special thank you goes out to Caryn, Steve, Rob, Rebekah, Armand, Noel, Nicole, Frank, Rich, and Brian. Equal appreciation is sent to colleagues at the Cultural Heritage Centre in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, especially Maria, John, Martin, and Andrew.

I have the deepest amount of respect and appreciation for my former Iraqi colleagues, whom I worked closely with over the years, and who I have endeavoured to stay in touch with since arriving in Melbourne. While many of them would not wish to have their names listed, I must extend heartfelt thanks to Areej, Faeza, Abdulamir, Amira, Fatimah, and Qais. Your devotion to cultural heritage matters and unwavering bravery in the face of adversity is a testament to a work ethic most others could only strive to achieve.

Likewise for all my friends from back home in Colorado. There are so many whose words of encouragement have helped me through each year. A special thank you must be extended to Dawn and her clan, Tina, Greg, Donovan, Chris, Bryan, Kris, Holly, and Lindsey. I wish I could list you all, but each of you knows that you are in my heart even though I have been on the other side of the world for many years now.

My greatest appreciation and admiration goes to my parents, Günter and Lillian Siebrandt. You always encouraged me to blaze my own path and to never give up. Even when I moved to conflict zones and caused you worry and anxiety, you stood by my decision to live my life as I wanted. Thank you for your support, and never loosing trust in me. To my sister and brother, Helen and Brian, and their families, who also championed my determination ‘to do something different’ and making sure we all stayed in contact across the miles. I could not ask for better siblings.

Lastly, I must recognise Smokey Hill High School in Aurora, Colorado. I was lucky enough to enrol in history classes throughout my formative years in education. Although as time has passed, I can no longer remember the name of
the teacher I wish to thank. Yet this nameless academic gave me one of the
greatest gifts that I can recall. He introduced me to a book called, The Descent of
Inanna, which tells the story of the Mesopotamian goddess of love and war.
Reading about Inanna’s incredible adventures sparked my interest in that ancient
world. At the time, it was unthinkable that I would have been privileged enough
to visit the very places she spoke of, such as Ur, Uruk, and Eridu, to name just a
few. But as I walked in her footsteps, through those ancient ruins in the vast
deserts of Iraq, I still remember that book. Further to that, to later have the great
honour of conducting research about the lands she described, was at the time
beyond my wildest imaginations, but now a firm reality.

I hope that this thesis meets the expectations of the many people whom I have
interviewed, deliberated with, worked with, and whose counsel I truly benefited
from over the years. From Australia, to Europe, Iraq, and the United States of
America, my heartfelt appreciation is sent across the globe.

Inanna said,
I, the Queen of Heaven, shall visit the God of Wisdom.
I shall go to the Abzu, the sacred place in Eridu.
I shall honour Enki, the god of Wisdom, in Eridu.
I shall utter a prayer to Enki at the deep sweet waters.
- Inanna and the God of Wisdom
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Abstract

The main objective of this PhD thesis is to examine and analyse if Western factions have managed archaeological sites in Iraq in an Orientalist manner over the course of time. From the nineteenth century, European and American archaeologists have explored Mesopotamian ruins seeking verification of Biblical and Classical stories that are associated with the roots of Western civilization. For more than a century, scholars collected and analysed artefacts without local consultation, and what emerged was a narrative that was controlled and dominated by the West. Colonial occupation of Iraq before and after World War One allowed for continued Western influence and oversight of Iraqi sites. Yet by the time foreigners finally relinquished control over to the Iraqis, and participated in a more balanced academic relationship, the country was embroiled in domestic and international conflict and imposed sanctions. Archaeological sites and the Iraqi cultural heritage community suffered as a result, with the added issue of almost full disengagement with their international peers.

When coalition military forces entered Iraq in March 2003, the only plan set in place appeared to be winning a war, with minimal consideration given to other operations. The failure to have an established strategy led to the occupation of the archaeological sites of Ur, Babylon and Kish, which revisited the earlier notions of colonial control over land and peoples. These three sites are represented as case studies in this thesis in order to explore notions of Orientalism, specifically issues of power and control. This thesis aims to determine if the history of colonialism influenced the epistemology of the coalition military forces who occupied archaeological sites, and thus shaped their interactions with the local heritage community. Through the use of semi-structured interviews with coalition war veterans and Iraqi cultural heritage personnel, this thesis strives to answer the question: ‘Was the construction of coalition military bases on Iraqi archaeological sites driven by Orientalist biases during the Iraq War?’
List of Acronyms

Below is a list of acronyms used in this thesis:

AAA: American Anthropological Association
AIA: Archaeological Institute of America
AQI: Al-Qaeda in Iraq
ASOR: American Schools of Oriental Research
CAC: Common Access Card
CCHAG: Combatant Command Cultural Heritage Action Group
CERP: Commander Emergency Response Program
CIMIC: Civil Military Cooperation
CHAMP: Cultural Heritage by Archaeology and Military Panel
CPA: Coalition Provisional Authority
DFACT: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DoD: United States Department of Defence
DoS: United States Department of State
ECA: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
EIC: East India Trading Company
FACT: Foreign Affairs Counter Threat
FOB: Forward Operating Base
FRAGO: Fragmentary Order
HTS: Human Terrain System
ICPD: Iraq Cultural Property Destruction Database
ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
KRAB: Kirkuk Regional Air Base
MRAP: Mine Resistant Ambush Protected
MFAA: Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives
MND: Multinational Division
MOC: Iraqi Ministry of Culture
MSR: Main Supply Route
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MWR:</td>
<td>Morale, Welfare and Recreation</td>
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<td>NARA:</td>
<td>National Archives and Records Administration</td>
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<td>NATO:</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORCHID:</td>
<td>Overseas Regional Cultural Heritage Integrated Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLS:</td>
<td>Plain Language Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRT:</td>
<td>Provincial Reconstruction Team</td>
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<td>PSYOP:</td>
<td>Psychological Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROTC:</td>
<td>Reserve Officers Training Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBAH:</td>
<td>Iraqi State Board of Antiquities &amp; Heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRADOC:</td>
<td>Training and Doctrine Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK:</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN:</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO:</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>US:</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID:</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USCBS:</td>
<td>United States Committee of the Blue Shield</td>
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<td>USCENTCOM:</td>
<td>United States Central Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>WMF:</td>
<td>World Monuments Fund</td>
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<td>WWI:</td>
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<td>WWII:</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Aims of the Research
The aim of this thesis is to explore the relationship dynamics that existed between members of the US and Coalition military forces (henceforth referred to as the coalition or coalition forces), Iraqi cultural heritage professionals, and archaeological sites, during the 2003 Iraq War. Interest in this topic began with the start of the conflict, as I watched General Vincent Brooks on television news channels each morning, where he delivered daily press briefings to the media. As he reported on the war efforts, additional information soon began circulating that coalition forces destroyed the ancient city of Babylon, one of the more well-known archaeological sites located in Iraq, by constructing an army base on top of the ruins. Yet, accounts of damages were vague, and the story was overshadowed by the other atrocities taking place throughout the country. However, as the war progressed, 10 other sites were also reportedly used for military purposes, with each having suffered varying degrees of damage (Bahrani 2003b; McDonald 2003; Stone 2003; Wright et al. 2003).

The reasons behind the military occupation of ruins and the effects such actions had on the local archaeological community were not topics covered by the networks who provided the majority of the war reports, namely Fox News, CNN and MSNBC. At the time, it seemed inappropriate to give airtime to stories about inanimate objects being damaged when so many human lives were being lost on a daily basis. However, the manner in which the Western coalition behaved towards another country’s cultural property was troubling. They exhibited the actions of occupiers, and as Mathew Thurlow has stated ‘In the past, the looting and destruction of cultural property has been the signal of conquest and the death of empires’ (Thurlow 2005, p. 86). This was most evident when troops were strongly criticised for failing to protect the Iraq Museum from looters, to which Donald Rumsfeld, the US Secretary of Defence infamously responded ‘stuff happens’ (Rumsfeld in Loughlin 2003).

How did such an indifferent attitude translate to the Iraqis? Did the troops who were on the ground feel the same way? Were the army bases located on Babylon and the other sites viewed in a similarly dismissive fashion? How did living on those sites reflect on the troops, and did it impact their relations with the local population? It was not possible to address these questions immediately, but in 2013, a qualitative study was initiated to further explore the issues surrounding the occupation of archaeological ruins, and how it affected cross-cultural relationships, which are laid out in this thesis. However, it is first necessary to provide the background that demonstrates how this body of work developed.
How the Research Evolved
Starting in January 2005, I was afforded the opportunity to work in Iraq, mainly due to my background as an archaeologist and police evidence custodian. Initially the work was with a team of specialists who were excavating the mass graves from Saddam Hussein’s Al-Anfal Campaign. Then in November 2006, I moved to the US Embassy in Baghdad, where I served as their cultural heritage representative and liaison until January 2013. In addition to creating, implementing, and managing cultural heritage programs, I was also charged with cultivating professional working relationships between the Americans and Iraqis who worked in those fields. During my 8 years in-country, I visited 17 of the 18 provinces, which included numerous archaeological sites, and interacted directly with members of the coalition and Iraqi cultural heritage specialists. Because I was required to travel with a security contingent while performing my duties, which were mainly US military units; I was able to witness interactions between the soldiers and Iraqis.

The fact that the country was occupied by a foreign military power could not be overlooked, which contributed to a fluid and often-volatile environment. While hostilities existed from the belligerents on both sides, as the dynamics of the conflict changed over the course of the war, the synergy between the American soldiers and non-combatant Iraqis became more amicable. While this was especially evident in the camaraderie displayed with the Iraqi Army units, it was also seen when the soldiers engaged with the local population. There were many hands raised in friendly greeting as the US convoys passed through towns, which were returned with equal enthusiasm as witnessed in Figures 1.1 and 1.2. This is not illustrated to exonerate the coalition’s presence, which was a result of an invasion, rather to highlight that attempts were made at rapport building.

Figure 1.1: Children waving to a passing US military convoy.
Endeavours at forming positive and productive relations came to fruition in late 2007, when a Lieutenant Colonel with a Cavalry Division expressed interest in assisting staff at the Iraq Museum with refurbishments of the building as part of a civic engagement project. A meeting took place between the officers in the division and the museum caretakers, which signalled that the military was willing to participate in communal relations as it related to cultural heritage practices. This point was made all the more relevant to me when I was in the hallway of the Republican Palace in Baghdad with the Colonel, and General Brooks, the man who had delivered all those early morning news briefings years ago, was walking towards us in the opposite direction. The General stopped to speak with us, and when he was advised about the proposed museum project, he praised the idea and welcomed the opportunity for soldiers to be involved in a community oriented project based around cultural heritage.

It was then that I realised that while a war still ensued around us, it was unlike any other that had taken place before. A civilian archaeologist, working with an army officer and speaking with one of the most important military leaders in the coalition about a museum project, demonstrated to me that while obvious mistakes were made in the past, positive engagements with the Iraqi cultural heritage community were possible. This opinion was further solidified when I first set foot on Babylon and expected to see the desolation that had been widely reported. As I surveyed the area, I could see points of damage, but not the narrative of wholesale destruction that had been presented to the public. Using the site for a military camp was unforgivable, with some of the greatest damage inflicted on the unexcavated areas of the site, such as trenches that were dug for plumbing and electrical cabling as seen in Figure 1.3. Yet an unbiased account of what had transpired was not widely circulated and attested to the fact that the
ancient city was still intact, not razed to the ground as seen in Figure 1.4. If reports about the physical space were inaccurate, I wondered what other information was poorly documented or missing altogether.

Figure 1.3: Trenches dug by members of the coalition are visible throughout unexcavated areas of Babylon.

Figure 1.4: The ruins of the Principle Palace in front of the reconstructed walls of the Southern Palace.

With the exception of the example of the museum meeting, I did not know if cooperation existed between the Americans and the Iraqis at the archaeological
sites. Yet what followed was five years of attempted projects and collaborations, which resulted in both failures and successes. The most challenging moments came from some civilian and military personnel who commonly voiced the opinion that working with the Iraqis was ‘too hard’ and ‘not the right time’. This resulted in individuals trying to implement projects without Iraqi consultation. For example, one team of American archaeologists proposed a site-visit in order to create a survey map of Babylon. However, they only accounted for their organization’s participation; they did not include the local specialists, nor ask for approval from the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH), the government entity in charge of antiquities.

On another occasion, an American contractor was in the process of traveling to the ruins of Kish to catalogue pottery sherds that had reportedly been found on the site. However, she did not coordinate her intentions with the SBAH and therefore did not have their permission to embark on any kind of project. One more example that stands out clearly was when several cultural heritage experts, who were all from Western countries, expressed their desire to remove the wall reliefs from Nineveh for shipment to a conservation centre in the US. This was being discussed without Iraqi representation. As a result, a large percentage of my time was spent trying to intercept such poorly conceived plans that were attempted by members of the coalition, on both the civilian or military sides, as well as non-affiliated academics. It often appeared that the perspective of some Westerners was that they had freedom to act upon their own authority and implement projects without local consent, mainly due to the chaos caused by the war. My job was to steer them towards being inclusive of the Iraqis. Yet, I did not realise at the time that I was essentially attempting to prevent Orientalist biases. That is what Edward Said described as ‘a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 3).

While the majority of the projects were proposed with good intentions, and could have been beneficial to the sites, the exclusion of the Iraqis was problematic. In addition, there were also noted incidents of people seeking to capitalise on the war-time story to tell their friends and colleagues back home; in essence, the quintessential ‘bragging rights’ about their adventures in Iraq. One glaring example of this was when the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) hired a tourism consultant to advise them on the potential of helping the local government refurbish Babylon into a more attractive holiday destination. The consultant’s published report concluded that working with the Iraqis was too difficult, and cited one of the lessons learned as ‘Robert’s Rules to Herding Cats: Iraqi discussions often times explode into heated and time-consuming tangents. Iraqis have big ideas yet limited experience in execution’ (Heather 2010, p. 36). The last page of the document displayed a collage of photographs from what is known as the *Hash House Harriers*, a social event revolving around alcohol. The images show personnel consuming drinks, with one that could be construed as simulating an erotic interlude. The
unprofessionalism, in addition to the insensitivity towards the local cultural norms, was just one of the concerns that signalled that both civilian and military personnel were being deployed to Iraq without being properly educated in understanding cross-cultural relationships at heritage sites.

Another less extreme example was a US based organization that offered museum curatorial classes to SBAH personnel at their DC based institution. These initially included instruction in the most effective ways to engage with museum volunteers. However, this is not a standard of practice in Iraq as all museum personnel must be a government employee, therefore volunteerism is not practiced. Fortunately, once the organization was informed about this, they willingly replaced it with a collections conservation class, which the Iraqis fully embraced. The unfamiliarity with the local cultural practices was another indication that staff from Western institutions were generally unaware of the realities in Iraq, as programs were based on an American audience. On the other hand, it also demonstrated that collaboration was finally welcomed on all sides.

In addition to the engagements proposed by US civilian institutions, the military troops serving in Iraq were also receptive to embracing new concepts. I witnessed this often when they served as my security contingent as I met with SBAH specialists at archaeological sites. The soldiers showed a willingness to initiate conversations with the Iraqis, and were interested in learning about the history of the ruins. The war environment had changed over the years, and actions of the past that may have been previously viewed as suspicious slowly began to produce positive results. However, I was only privy to a small percentage of interactions. It would be naïve to believe that every contact was constructive, and there were still issues with the coalition taking the lead on Iraqi projects, in addition to the continued occupation. However, the changes in attitudes were encouraging.

Some examples of this were seen when members of the military assisted with funding several missions in support of cultural heritage venues. These were done through either the military’s Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) or the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), which were civil-military units based in the provinces. Both were tasked with assisting the local administrations with capacity building in the realms of governance, security, and reconstruction. They were however surrounded by their own controversies including complaints of inadequate pre-deployment training for personnel, implications of running clandestine psychological operations (PSYOP), and having undue influence on the local population (Duggan 2012; Martins 2005; Perito 2007).

Despite some concerns, several cultural heritage projects were initiated and completed. These included contracting with local companies who subsequently worked with SBAH staff to refurbish the aforementioned Iraq Museum, as well as provide upgrades to the museums at Babylon and Agar Quf, a Kassite Era site dated to the fourteenth century BC, located just outside the city limits of Baghdad. When executed correctly, the assistance resulted in opportunities for military
personnel to coordinate with the Iraqis. For example, dialogue between the Agar Quf curator and a US army unit began because of their willingness to reach out as part of a CERP initiative, as demonstrated in Figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5: American soldiers discuss museum refurbishments with the Agar Quf curator.

Other archaeological sites such as Ur, Al Ukhaidir Fort, Nimrud, Uruk, Kish, and the ruins of the late sixth century Saint Elijah’s Monastery, also benefited from the CERP and PRT programs. Needed improvements were made to the tourist infrastructures at each of those sites when soldiers recognised the importance of partnering with the local cultural heritage experts. However, the percentage of Iraqi participation in the decision-making processes to all of the projects is unknown. While positive cross-cultural engagements were an indication of improvement in the relations, the fact remained that military bases were erected on and near archaeological sites, some of which remained occupied until the complete withdrawal of US forces in 2011.

While both positive and negative examples of cooperation existed, I could only base those opinions on personal observations. I had worked closely with members of the coalition and the Iraqi cultural heritage community, but I did not know how they perceived the occupation of sites nor their attitudes towards cross-cultural contacts. Therefore, I wanted to explore not just the story about the extent of
damages at Babylon and other sites, but how such actions affected relationships. Because thousands of troops had been deployed to Iraq for more than 9 years, there were untold accounts of interactions with the local population, from both sides. I intended to determine if any of them had been documented, and if so, in what manner. Being able to understand other points of view was important in order to avoid any of my own biases. In order to fully explore this topic, the next course of action was to conduct a study that incorporated the viewpoints of those individuals, and analyse the results in a doctoral thesis.

How the Research was Conducted
This thesis has been organized to assist the reader with first understanding the historical relationships between Western factions, Iraqi archaeological ruins and the local communities, which is explained in Chapter 2. Archival research was conducted as part of this thesis, highlighting the manner in which Western archaeologists had dominated the ancient sites, the local workforce and the knowledge that the excavations produced, which was driven by an Orientalist discourse. This was demonstrated through examples of how the sites were often viewed as Western property, mainly due to their Biblical context. Because of this, mass quantities of artefacts were shipped to museums and private institutions located across Europe and America which generated greater interest in the region.

In addition, the history of war in Mesopotamia, which included foreign military occupation, also highlighted how issues of power and control were prevalent across the country, from World War I (WWI) through World War II (WWII), and into the 2003 invasion. Therefore, Orientalism was embraced as the best theory in which to conduct this study. In addition, the Orientalist ideologies which underpinned the coalition occupation of cultural heritage sites were discussed by Benjamin Isakhan and Zanib Bahrani (Bahrani 2006a, 2010; Isakhan 2008, 2015b). However, the relationship between coalition forces and local heritage professionals – and the extent to which they reveal the Orientalist framework of the broader war – had not been fully explored.

A review of current literature related to the Iraq war and its effect on archaeological sites is discussed in Chapter 3. The looting that decimated many of the sites as soon as the war started tended to be a popular subject with scholars and practitioners alike. While discussions also focused on military bases that were constructed on ancient ruins such as Babylon, opinion was divided on whether or not coalition presence provided protection from would-be looters, or subjected the ruins to further damages. In the early years of the war, it was difficult for any non-coalition personnel to gain entry onto the sites that were established as military camps, therefore information about their condition is minimal. Other topics covered within the literature review include debate on adherence to international and Iraqi cultural heritage laws, as well as pre-deployment training for coalition personnel.
Even though a few primary accounts from soldiers exist, the majority did not include in-depth discussions in regards to relations with the Iraqis. This resulted in limited available data about an element of the war that needed to be addressed. Having personally witnessed interactions, I knew there were many untold stories from the serving troops and the local population, yet they were not represented in the available literature. Examining the extent to which these relationships had been conducted in an Orientalist fashion had not been undertaken, especially in a systematic approach, which proved to be the research gap.

The Research Question
The manner in which the research was conducted is outlined in Chapter 4. The methodological approach was based on collecting the viewpoints of Iraq war veterans and civilian personnel, and Iraqi cultural heritage specialists. Individual interviews were conducted utilizing a series of prearranged open-ended questions, in a semi-structured setting. An emphasis was placed on assuring the participants that their information would remain entirely confidential. This allowed them to express themselves freely and objectively, as I was seeking honest and uninhibited opinions. Because I had approached military personnel on the coalition side, and government personnel on the Iraqi side, it was necessary to have safeguards in place to assure them that their stories would be handled with the utmost care.

Unquestionably, this is a sensitive topic for both the Iraqis and members of the coalition, and when the research was proposed it was unknown how many individuals would be prepared to participate. Asking anyone who has witnessed the horrors of warfare to discuss their experiences must be conducted with the utmost delicacy. In addition, military personnel can be seen as notoriously unapproachable by academics, yet I had a privileged advantage since I had built rapport with many of the men and women in the armed forces. They were therefore willing to participate in the research. Similarly, the Iraqis have been viewed as being cautious in their interactions with Westerners after years of conflict and sanctions. Yet because I had successful past working relations with many of them, they were also willing to engage in the research. My experience and pool of contacts therefore enabled me to gain insights that may have been unobtainable by others. I found that people from both groups wanted to tell their stories and were glad to have someone document their encounters. However, the current conflict in Iraq negatively affected my ability to speak with Iraqis, therefore their sample size is low. Although the final number of participants did not reach the anticipated sum, each interview was a valuable addition to a topic that had not been previously recorded.

The conversations were recorded, transcribed and analysed with the key topics in mind: (1) assessing relationships between coalition personnel and Iraqi cultural heritage specialists; (2) gauging the impact of military installations on and near archaeological sites; (3) exploring personal perceptions towards sites and the
population; and (4) understanding pre-deployment training requirements within the military doctrine. These assisted in answering the research question: ‘Was the construction of coalition military bases on Iraqi archaeological sites driven by Orientalist biases during the Iraq War?’

The Case Studies

Although there are more than 12,500 documented archaeological sites in Iraq, the data collected from archival research and the interviews determined that focus would be on only three of those: Ur, Babylon, and Kish, each located in the southern region of the country as seen in Figure 1.6. These sites therefore serve as the case studies presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Each chapter begins with a brief historical overview of the ancient site, and lists some of the legendary figures and significant features associated with each one. The explorers and archaeologists who excavated the sites are discussed next, using primary accounts of their observations and interactions with the local population. This sets an understanding of the background to the Western-Eastern relations as they existed between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The manner in which WWI and WWII affected each site is also considered, which includes memoirs from British troops who served in Mesopotamia. Although foreign visitors to the country were rare starting in the 1980s, the few publications that discuss Iraq are also mentioned in the chapters, some of which provided information about the conflicts between then and the 1991 Gulf War.

The discussions then centre on the 2003 war in Iraq, which includes information about the physical damages recorded at each site. However, the main emphasis is on relating the experiences of the coalition forces who were interviewed for the thesis. It was more important to convey human thoughts and ideas about the places than it was to repeat the list of damages that have already been widely published about the sites. Therefore, participants are quoted throughout each case study, with the dialogue written verbatim. As such, some of the language could be considered abrasive. It was necessary to keep their exact wording in order to fully understand the attitudes of troops who served in Iraq. Although the interactions related to the three sites remained the focus throughout the thesis, personnel who visited other ruins are also incorporated within the case studies.

The interview participants provided details about their personal experiences, which included their viewpoints on using archaeological sites as military camps, the cross-cultural interactions they had with Iraqis, especially archaeologists, cultural heritage projects they participated in, and the pre-deployment training they received from the military. Civilians who worked with the coalition are also included, as well as the few Iraqis who granted interviews. Each chapter incorporates the above information and determines if notions of Orientalism were manifested during the war. The last chapter delivers the final discussion and conclusion, which answers the research question, provides recommendations to military planners on what they can do differently, why it matters, and avenues for
future research. An emphasis is placed on the need to provide more robust cultural heritage awareness training by including an understanding of the correlation between Orientalism and archaeological sites.

![Map of Iraq with Babylon, Kish and Ur outlined in red](Image credit Dabrowska 2002, p. 122).

**Figure 1.6**

Why the Research is Important

Given the current security challenges in the Middle East, conflict in this region is likely to continue into the foreseeable future. Therefore, highlighting the need to form positive relations in such an environment is necessary and highly relevant. Proactive interactions with non-combatants can result in diminished misunderstandings and present opportunities for cooperation. However, if a
foreign military does not recognise why this is essential then they will not embrace it, and as a result, will not be fully prepared for all inevitable possibilities. This was demonstrated in Iraq with the occupation of heritage sites. Raising awareness about the ramifications of placing a base on places such as Babylon had been addressed, but a comprehensive study about the human toll had not.

Understanding how and why relations were or were not formed is a crucial contribution to avoiding the mistakes of the 2003 war in the future. Benefits from this awareness would first and foremost affect how militaries engage with populations in the foreign counties where they are deployed. While the training doctrine has in many cases incorporated instruction on adhering to laws that serve to protect cultural property, the focus tends to revolve around avoiding physical damages to sites. While this awareness is important in maintaining the scientific and historical integrity of any such place, understanding the human factor is often missing.

In addition, other government and non-government organizations that engage in foreign cultural heritage projects could also gain a more robust awareness of how and when their actions are a benefit to themselves, rather than to the local population. Having a set of established protocols that ensure robust and proactive cooperation presents opportunities to build on reciprocal relationships. While nobody should be under the illusion that a conflict environment is likely to generate close friendships, having cultural understanding is one important step towards better engagement with non-combatants, and ultimately winning the hearts and the minds of the people. The final discussion chapter therefore sets out some ambitious recommendations concerning lessons learned from the mistakes of the past, and the ways in which foreign forces can work with local heritage experts to protect and preserve a given country’s most sacred and most valuable heritage sites.
Chapter 2: Iraqi Archaeological Sites and Orientalism

Introduction

This chapter explores the ideologies that have been displayed by Westerners towards Eastern cultures following Edward Said’s concepts of Orientalism (Said 2003 [1978]). More specifically, it focuses on issues of control and power over archaeological sites in Mesopotamia during times of war and peace. The first section examines published accounts written by explorers and scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their interactions with ancient ruins and the local populations. It looks at the manner in which the Orient was presented to Western audiences, which influenced notions of superiority and entitlement to the lands via Biblical connections.

The published works from archaeologists and British troops who operated in Iraq before, during, and after the colonial occupation are discussed in order to provide the context necessary to understand the long history of Western domination in the region. Of great significance was the exclusion of Iraqis in decision-making processes during archaeological excavations. While they were employed as labourers, they were not afforded a voice to determine the fate of sites or antiquities. Rather, vast quantities of material were shipped to European and American institutions, and the Iraqis were portrayed as ignorant savages who needed the West to properly guide them.

The years of domestic and international wars, as well as the imposed sanctions, are briefly outlined to understand that just as the Iraqis had slowly gained an authoritative voice in archaeological matters, they were hampered by conflict and isolation. The last section of this chapter provides a brief look at the 2003 war in Iraq, and how archaeological sites were occupied by coalition troops. This once again highlighted the power and control of Western powers over the country and the ruins, which revisited the past British occupation.

Orientalism

Said’s Orientalism was chosen as the conceptual framework for this thesis in order to examine discourses of power and control exerted by the West in its efforts to subjugate and control the East (Said 2003 [1978], p. 40). More specifically, this thesis will apply what Said referred to as the four ‘principle dogmas of Orientalism’ which he articulated as: (1) the perceived differences between the superior West and the inferior East; (2) the Western interpretation of the Orient is preferable to the realities of the East; (3) the Orient is unable to define itself and must therefore rely on the ‘objective’ West to do it for them; and (4) that the East is something to be feared and controlled by the West (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300-1).

This research project demonstrates how these same four ‘principle dogmas’ were brought to bear on the history and people of Iraq by both the nineteenth and early twentieth century Western scholars, bureaucrats and archaeologists living in Mesopotamia, and coalition forces who invaded the country in 2003. Both of
these groups expressed viewpoints and demonstrated through actions and deeds specific attitudes towards archaeological sites in the region and local cultural heritage caretakers that were similar to the criticisms Said voiced about ‘the West dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 3).

Said’s theory provided the most appropriate framework through which to analyse and interpret the empirical data that was collected and to determine if Orientalist biases motivated coalition troops to occupy archaeological sites. This conceptual framework also illuminated the nature and texture of the misunderstandings and misconceptions between past and present scholars, diplomats and soldiers, and the archaeological sites and local communities they came into contact with. Said’s work allowed for a systematic investigation into the relationships that existed between these diverse groups, uncovering the complex array of ideologies that underpinned the ways in which the one group (Westerners) interacted and constructed the other (Iraqis).

In addition, Said’s framework was determined to be the appropriate approach for this thesis because Orientalism ‘proposes intellectual ways for handling the methodological problems that history has brought forward’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 110). Within this context, examining how the Western archaeologists of the past were viewed as the champions of the ancient ruins was similar to attitudes of modern soldiers who also saw themselves as the savours of the past. As Patrick Porter has argued in Military Orientalism: Eastern War Through Western Eyes, American soldiers were deployed to Iraq with misguided notions of being the heroic warriors who would overcome the treachery and evil tactics of the Eastern armies who do not fight fair. Specifically, troops were trained and instructed to ‘see the classic ethnography of the proud and violent Arab’ and the only way to deal with them was with equal measures of violence because ‘all they understand is force’ (Porter 2009 p. 57).

While Porter’s work examines relations and misconceptions between combatants, his insights are relevant in that the Western fighting forces tended to view all non-Westerners similarly, that they were all predisposed to war and required subjugation (Porter 2009 p. 31). The thoughts and perceptions of the interview participants were therefore examined by Said’s ‘principle dogmas of Orientalism’, specifically the fourth, which states that the Orient is to be ‘controlled by pacification, research and development, or outright occupation’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 301).

It is important to note that concepts of ethnocentrism could have also been relevant to this study. According to William Graham Sumner, who is considered to have coined the term in 1906, ethnocentrism is the view in which ‘one’s own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it. Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt on the outsider’ (Sumner 1906, p. 13). Additionally, Robert LeVine stated ‘In current usage, it means culturally biased judgment, i.e., applying the frame of reference provided
by one’s culture to an object, action, person, or group of a different culture’ (LeVine 2015 p. 166). Orientalism was used because the research topic is specifically about Western military personnel who have been deployed to the Middle East, and the notions of Orientalism proved to be the best fit. However, it is also imperative that ethnocentrism be considered as a valid concept of study for further global deployments outside the Middle East.

In order to appreciate the breadth of this study, it is necessary to understand the background of European and American interest in Mesopotamian ruins. Western travellers had visited the region for centuries, with the majority of interest from the seventeenth century stemming from the efforts to find evidence to support the existence of the various civilizations found in the Bible. This was when the discipline of archaeology was still in its infancy. It was a decidedly Western endeavour that was carried out by antiquarians, private collectors, and scholars (Renfrew 2006). The term ‘Orientalist’ initially described those individuals who studied the Orient, those who dedicated themselves to ‘the study of languages, literature, religions, thought, arts and social life of the East in order to make them available to the West, even in order to protect them from occidental cultural arrogance in the age of imperialism’ (MacKenzie 1995, p. xii).

These individuals generally did not aim to belittle Eastern cultures (Lockman 2010). Yet much of their work was situated within a problematic set of received wisdoms about the region and the backward nature of the people. Their work therefore extended into misunderstandings and misrepresentations in the West. Apart from the significance of its connection to the Orient via Biblical heritage, contemporary Europeans felt affinity with the era of Classical Greece and Rome, which were perceived to hold similar ideologies such as the Western values of freedom, law, rationality, science, progress, intellectual curiosity, and political equality (Lockman 2010, p. 58).

This fundamental belief can be traced back to the advent of European colonization in the fifteenth century and the quest to find the beginnings of ‘their’ ancestor’s achievements, which defined what it was to be civilized (Blaut 1993; Ferguson 2012). However, many of the values identified as Western-inspired such as legislation, science and industry, in actuality originated in ancient Mesopotamian cultures (Bertman 2003; Isakhan 2012; Roux 1992). Despite evidence of civilizations in the Eastern world initiating such practices, scholars tended to credit cultural advancements to a Greco-Roman ancestry, which was perceived to support the thesis that the ‘West’ had a unique proclivity for social, intellectual and political advancement.

The Occidental viewpoint of past and present cultures in the East were manipulated to demonstrate notions of superiority, mainly through oral histories, art, and literature. According to Said, Western interpretations were largely shaped by scholars and artists who often depicted the East via romanticised versions of reality (Said 2003 [1978], p. 154). For example, Verdi’s opera Aida was set in Egypt but the narrative included scenes of European imperial domination over the East (Said 1993). Other examples include Jean-Léon Gérôme’s paintings, which
depict scenes of Eastern harems, and literary texts such as William Beckford’s *Vathek* and Sir Richard Burton’s translated work of *One Thousand and One Nights*, all of which provide a rich imagery of despotic Oriental rulers who subjugate women. All these subjects were characterizations of the exotic and extravagant Eastern culture that conveyed a message of depravity and immorality that were accepted in Europe as authentic representations. Thus, a popular understanding of the East was of an exotic and unfamiliar land and culture that was immersed in an archaic lifestyle (Little 2002; Lockman 2010; MacKenzie 1995).

In addition to these artistic interpretations, Western cultures were largely familiar with Biblical representations of the Eastern world. For example, Rembrandt painted scenes such as Daniel interpreting the ‘writing on the wall’ in the telling of the tale of the last Babylonian king in Belshazzar’s *Feast*. Other artwork from individuals such as William Blake, Benjamin West and John Martin represented scenes with theological themes. Artists such as Martin contributed to illustrating backdrops for theatrical performances that depicted scenes such as the Israeli *Exodus* from Egypt (MacKenzie 1995, p. 192). However, the stories, which took place in the East, were painted from a Western perspective, such as incorporating European architecture into the paintings (Bernhardsson 2005; MacKenzie 1995). One relevant example is Magnus Bernhardsson’s discussion of a streetscape depicting the ancient city of Babylon, which closely resembled the city of London (Bernhardsson 2005, p. 28). Conventional understanding of the East was of distant cultures that were only familiar due to the association with Biblical tales that provided strong connections for Westerners.

**Western Archaeologists in Mesopotamia**

Western interest in the ancient cultures that occupied the region known as Mesopotamia dates back to explorers such as Benjamin of Tudela in the twelfth century, and Pietro della Valle four centuries later. These travellers collected artefacts from the ruins of Ur, Babylon, and other sites. They returned to the West with objects that were inscribed with unfamiliar markings and images, which generated scholarly interest in their origins. Travel to Baghdad and its surrounding provinces increased. By the seventeenth century, British institutions such as the *East India Company* (EIC) who dominated trade in the region were fully entrenched in Mesopotamia. As commerce flourished well into the early nineteenth century there was a noticeable presence of merchants, tradesmen, diplomats, and amateur archaeologists throughout Mesopotamia (Clark 2008; Hess 1965; Matthews 2003).

The artefacts and ancient ruins that were unearthed by travellers and explorers were on display in private and national collections in Europe and America. This incited further public and academic interest, often from individuals with a background in theology. Thus, archaeologists began to fully explore the East seeking verification of Biblical and Classical stories that were associated with the roots of Western civilization in Mesopotamia (Bernhardsson 2005; Goode 2007; Matthews 2003; Ooghe 2007). Some of the first archaeologists to enter Mesopotamia were motivated by the possibility of locating empirical evidence
that would verify the names of people and cities in the Bible. As Benjamin Porter stated ‘Near Eastern archaeology often played a role in European and North American imperial and colonialist enterprises in the region, in part due to Western fascination with the land of the Bible’ (Porter 2010, p. 51). While these notions are fully explored in the following chapters, a few examples need to be highlighted here.

Artefacts from ancient cities named in Biblical texts, such as Nineveh, Ur, Babylon, and Khorsabad, were heralded as proof that the Bible was an accurate depiction of the past. Because the Scriptural stories about these places were closely aligned with the ideologies of the majority of the Western world, the sites were considered the domain of archaeologists and researchers (Fenollós 2011; George 2005; Vlaardingerbroek 2004; Woolley 1930). The idea that the West ‘owned’ the history of the East can be seen in the excavation at Nineveh. Austin Henry Layard’s research concluded that a direct line of ascension could be established from the ancient Assyrians to modern Nestorians, thus establishing its Christian roots, which he linked to the cultures in Great Britain. His views were so popular that he was considered a national hero for proving the Bible was factual. This was evident when his book, *Nineveh and Its Remains*, became a best seller in 1849 (Guralnick 2002; Malley 1996, 2004). In addition, collections from these sites were showcased in museums in a competitive attempt to attract the highest visitation numbers, as noted by British Egyptologist Joseph Bonomi:

> Our friends the French are proud of the sculptures obtained by Paul Botta, and now in the Louvre; but we may fairly and successfully challenge comparison with them, by pointing to the British Museum. No one can visit that establishment without feeling the importance and interest of our Assyrian acquisitions. The winged bulls and lions, which now grace the halls of our British Museum attract the notice of visitors, and by their size, their antiquity and their strange story, induce those who might otherwise pass on to other objects, to stop and inquire for the companion antiques, which once seen, cannot easily be forgotten. (Bonomi 1857, p. 250).

Large-scale excavations across the region also unearthed substantial quantities of cuneiform tablets that were shipped to the West. The British Museum acquired 20,000 tablets from Nineveh between 1846 and 1856, and a total of 31,000 tablets excavated from the ancient city of Nippur were transported to the University of Pennsylvania between 1889 and 1900 (Gadd 1953; Malley 2004; Ousterhout 2010). Archaeologists capitalised on linking the histories associated with the tablets to their modern world in order to legitimize their work. The Nineveh tablets were translated into the now well-known *Epic of Gilgamesh*, a series of ancient stories analogous to those found in the Old Testament. Biblical scholars and journalists took this opportunity to justify Western-led archaeological expeditions into Mesopotamia (Bernhardsson 2005).

By the time WWI was underway, Western-led excavations had taken place across Iraq for more than a century including major digs at Babylon, Nineveh, and Uruk, during which time the majority of artefacts were sent to the West (Fagan 1979; Leick 2002; Matthews 2003). C.H. Richardson’s 1915 article, *The Abuse of*
Biblical Archaeology, provided one of the first critiques of archaeologists working in Mesopotamia who were trying to prove that the Bible was a historical accounting of past events. Although the term ‘Orientalism’ was not used in his work, the fact that he acknowledged the manipulation of information used to validate Western ideology should be noted. Richardson wrote that ‘archaeological facts have been so garbled that they have been made to prove what they want to prove as true’ (Richardson 1915, p. 100). This included changing the names and dates of reigns of Mesopotamian kings in order to prove Biblical stories as factual (Richardson 1915). Almost 50 years later, and 10 years before Edward Said’s Orientalism, J.J. Finkelstein addressed the issue more fully, and cautioned scholars against thinking that ideas about the past were universally held. He said:

In our approach towards any aspect of non-Western civilization we commonly expose ourselves to the hazard of applying Western categories to phenomena completely alien to us. In large measure this is unavoidable, and even necessary; we must convert these phenomena, or translate them, as it were, into our own conceptual language if we are to gain any understanding of them. But we must always be aware of the fact that we are doing so. (Finkelstein 1963, p. 461).

Finkelstein was describing an ideology that was later branded as ‘Orientalism’ by Said. In Finkelstein’s later work, The West and the Bible, he examined the long history of interaction between Biblical scholarship and the study of Mesopotamia, stating:

The truth remains that even the most disinterested or impartial investigations in this area have been adversely affected by a limitation of perspective common alike not just to biblical scholars and Assyriologists, but to their audiences as well; all of them are, ultimately, Westerners addressing other Westerners. (Finkelstein 1974, p. 592).

However, it was not just the interpretation of the ruins that were approached in a decidedly Eurocentric manner. One of the other significant problems with these early excavations and the wholesale removal of artefacts was that they were conducted without local consultation. While the region was under Ottoman rule, antiquities laws, which should have kept artefacts in the country were either ignored or circumvented by archaeologists. This resulted in foreign museums amassing their vast Mesopotamian collections (Bohrer 1998; Goode 2007; Ousterhout 2010). As noted by James Goode ‘Western archaeologists rarely incorporated local people into the story of a site, taking them for granted as foremen, labourers, cooks and domestics’ (Goode 2007, p. 5).

Iraqi archaeologists during the time were a rarity; the only documented Assyriologist was Hormuzd Rassam, a Chaldean Christian who initially worked with Layard at Nineveh and Nimrud. He also travelled to Babylon as well as other sites throughout Mesopotamia in the nineteenth century. However, he was the exception, and in addition, he spent much of his time in England under the sponsorship of Layard, eventually became a British citizen and was employed by the British Museum (Lloyd 1955, Rassam 1897, Reade 1993). Non-Westernized Iraqis continued to serve in the capacity of labourers, and while it is unknown if
the archaeologists had thought to provide other sponsorships for the Iraqis who worked for them, it would have been a progressive and proactive endeavour. Rather, their travel logs and journals are filled with what we can now see as Orientalist rhetoric.

An excerpt taken from the diary of William Loftus read ‘The tract of country between the important cities of Baghdad and Basra is thinly inhabited by a rude and almost savage race of nomad Arabs, who are continually at war with each other and with the Turkish authorities’ (Loftus 1856, p. 131). Another remarked that not much could be seen from his steamer ship on the Tigris River except for an occasional ‘villainously dirty Arab leading a gaping camel or a dirty pink tumble-down native shack and their shiftless population’ (Hall 1930b, p. 11). A scholar with the University of Pennsylvania who explored the region commented on the condition of unexcavated ruins. He said that ‘Ignorant peasants draw their primitive ploughs over the ruined palaces of Nineveh and Khorsabad’ (Hilprecht 1903, p. 4). He further stated that he had ‘visited the filthy reed huts of the fickle and unreliable Arefj tribes’ (Hilprecht 1903, p. 140). More famously, in his reflections on the Arab Revolt, T.E. Lawrence stated ‘Arabs can be swung on an idea as on a cord; for the unpledged allegiance of their minds made them obedient servants’ (Lawrence 1926, p. 41). These types of comments and descriptions about the ancient ruins and the local inhabitants were published well into the mid-twentieth century.

Western Control

Foreigners retained their hold on the wealth of cultural material and knowledge gained through their control of the East. This was an Orientalist approach in which Westerners saw it as their job to ‘piece together the unruly and non-history of the Orient into an orderly chronology’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 151). This type of attitude was prevalent from individuals such as Percy Cox, a British military officer who served in Mesopotamia during and after WWI and became High Commissioner of Iraq under the British Mandate. Although Cox did not leave behind a diary or personal letters, his words have been preserved in telegrams and military correspondences. He wished to establish a permanent British presence in the region, and stated:

We have nothing to fear from the population of Baghdad and there is good reason to hope that once we are in control over Baghdad and the river and telegraph to Basra, the tribes of the Euphrates valley will accept our regime automatically. (Cox in Townsend 2010, p. 74).

Other expressions of similar ideologies were the attitudes of some British subjects, such as world traveller, archaeologist, and British stateswoman Gertrude Bell. During the early years of WWI she was optimistic about the newly formed country of Iraq and its placement under British administration, writing ‘We shall, I trust, make it a centre of Arab civilization and prosperity’ (Bell in Burgoyne 1961, p. 56). She admonished the Ottoman Empire for failing to recognise tribal jurisdictions, but without recognising the irony of the British who also divided the region to their own beneficial uses (Bell 1917; Simon & Tejirian 2005). In 1938,
civil engineer George Buchanan, wrote ‘It was taken for granted that Mesopotamia would become a British possession, or, at the least, a British Protectorate. There did not seem to be any alternative; it was what we had always done in days gone by’ (Buchanan 1938, p. 261). Cox echoed such thoughts and viewpoints in a telegram that read:

Here in Iraq there is no sign of the slightest ambition of the kind among the people, who expect and seem to be quite ready to accept our administration. It is highly inexpedient and unnecessary to put into the heads of the backward people of the country what seems to us the visionary and premature notions of the creation of an Arab state, notions which will only tend to make endless difficulties for Great Britain. (Cox in Townsend 2010, p. 40).

By presenting the occupation as a great benefit to the Iraqi people, one of Bell and Cox’s contemporaries wrote:

I seriously recommend that now, before anything is altered, an accurate illustrated description of the place to be published in English, French, and Arabic so that they may not forget the pit from whence they were dug, so that future tar-bushed elastic-sided booted patriots may not claim for themselves before all the world, the exclusive credit for cleanliness, health, water, electricity and hundredfold budget. Let the motto of Mesopotamia be Non Nobis, Domine or Lest We Forget. (Storrs 1937, p. 234).

The attitudes expressed by some of the British subjects, specifically members of the military, followed the accepted norms of how other cultures were viewed during times of war. Colonel CE Callwell’s book, Small Wars, outlined tactics to employ before, during and after skirmishes and battles in Africa, South and Central Asia, and Oceania. He regularly referred to the local populations as savages, uncivilized, or semi-civilized races. For example, he noted that ‘All Orientals have an inborn love of trickery and deception, the Red Indians have won an evil notoriety by their duplicity and craftiness’ (Callwell 1906 p. 227). While it is unknown if British subjects were influenced by Callwell’s work, his views were often expressed by soldiers and government officials, as demonstrated above.

While Iraqi perspectives were rarely published, a compilation of childhood memoirs gathered over a period of several years provided the insights of a young Iraqi male who recalled the events of the war as:

The fall of Baghdad into the hands of the British was a great catastrophe for me, for I thought the world of Islam was overcome and that at last we had fallen as victim into the hands of a non-Muslim power. I used to watch the march of the British troops into Kadhimai with tears flowing down my cheeks. (Jamali 2002, p. 14).

WWI was also responsible for the legacy of close partnerships between British troops and the men and women who excavated the ancient sites (Malley 2004; Richter 2008). Oriental scholars were valued for their intimate knowledge of Arab
cultures, lands and language, as well as their access to regional maps and their ability to move freely about the country. They were therefore utilized as intelligence advisors and covert operatives by the government. Bell, Charles Leonard Woolley, and T.E. Lawrence all worked as spies under the tutelage of D.G. Hogarth, an expert in Near Eastern archaeology and a Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (Richter 2008). While these individuals may have assisted their country with the best of intentions, espionage activities perpetrated by archaeologists have ever since raised questions about proper stewardship and professionalism. This in turn has set a precedent of mistrust and suspicion from Iraqis towards Western interests in archaeological sites in their country (Mourad 2007; Richter 2008).

The type of behaviour displayed by these early scholars was what George Nicholas & Julie Hollowell called the ‘scientific colonialism’ of monopolizing information while driven by an Orientalist viewpoint (Nicholas & Hollowell 2010, p. 60). The Western perspective of the East was based on misconceived ideologies of European rights to the past, which were carried out via unsanctioned excavations, imperialistic rule and espionage in order to further their control over the region. According to Said, individuals such as those described above were ‘posted to the Orient as agents of the empire’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 224). Said’s argument that Western domination has been promoted by notions of superiority over the East is also relevant to describing the actions of these individuals. Specifically when he stated that both imperialism and colonialism ‘are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination’ (Said 1993, p. 9).

Although excavations were halted during the war, artefacts were still shipped out of the country to the British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum, either as war trophies or for so-called safekeeping. These actions were reportedly conducted with the assistance of British military units who served in Mesopotamia (Bernhardsson 2005, p. 75-9). However, not all artefacts left the country. While based at Samarra in 1917, British troops found artefacts that had been packed for shipment, but were left behind by German excavators. As was reported by Commander Hogarth, the boxes were collected from Samarra and sent south for shipment across the ocean, and intended for museums in Great Britain. However, the cargo was seized and embargoed once it reached Basra, which he described as the ‘greatest pity’ (Hogarth et al. 1920, p. 124). However, he also noted that:

When we occupied Samarra in 1917, General Cobbe mounted a guard as soon as he knew there was anything of archaeological interest, but before we arrived the Turks, presumably at the orders of the Germans, had thrown much of the excavated material into a cellar and set the place on fire. (Hogarth et al. 1920, p. 124).

After WWI British government and military forces were firmly entrenched in Iraq. They attempted to convince the local population that they were in Iraq to help and support the Arabs, but in reality, British interest lay in securing oil
reserves for the Royal Navy and a land route towards India (Rothwell 1970). The British labelled themselves liberators, as noted in the Maude Declaration. On 11 March 1917, after ‘The Fall of Baghdad’ Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Maude issued a proclamation to the people of Baghdad, which read:

Our military operations have as their object the defeat of the enemy, and the driving of him from these territories. In order to complete this task, I am charged with absolute and supreme control of all regions in which British troops operate; but our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies, but as liberators. (Maude 1917).

Iraq remained under direct British control until the 1920 Iraqi Revolt. Great Britain fought to maintain authority over the country, and created a monarchy headed by Faisal I bin Hussein bin Ali al-Hashimi. Bell and Lawrence were instrumental in his placement as King of Iraq, and ensured that they maintained control over his actions (Simon & Tejirian 2005; Townsend 2010). Bell served in the position of Honorary Director of Antiquities, and established the Iraq Antiquities Law No. 40 of 1926. The new edicts required that half of all artefacts collected during excavations had to stay in-country, while the other half belonged to the foreign excavators (Bernhardsson 2005; Lukitz 2008; Wallach 2005). While the laws did safeguard sites and objects, Bell’s unprecedented control and oversight of the excavated material placed decisions about Iraqi sites under the authority of a British subject.

However, one of the changes made by the Iraqi government in 1920 was to gain administrative control of their country, including matters related to antiquities. The slow process of ratifying the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty began in 1922 and was completed in 1932 (Bernhardsson 2005; Simon & Tejirian 2005). Bell was upset that she was required to consult with an Iraqi Antiquities Minister on the removal of artefacts from the country when she saw only herself as having that right (Lukitz 2008, p. 188). However, Bell did champion Iraqi causes. As Max Mallowan noted in her obituary, she played ‘a leading role in the foundation of the Iraq Museum and in drafting the Antiquities Law, wisely conceived at that time, and especially generous if we consider that no Iraqi expertise was then available’ (Mallowan 1976, p. 82).

**Diminished Western Control**

Although Western archaeologists continued to serve in an advisory capacity, in 1934 Syrian scholar Abu-Khaldum Sati’ al-Husri, was appointed Director of the Iraqi Department of Antiquities, the first non-Westerner to hold the post. He was a pan-Arabist who stressed the need for a shared history, and in 1936 changed the standing antiquities laws originally established by Bell. In al-Husri’s new law, foreign excavators were no longer permitted to export half of their finds, rather severe restrictions were imposed, which mandated that all artefacts remain in Iraq (Abdi 2008; Magee 2012). While the new law was still in draft form, it incited concern from archaeologists. Woolley, the director of large-scale operations at Ur since 1922 stated that ‘The attitude of the Iraqi government appeared at one time calculated to make archaeological work in the country impossible, and did seriously delay its start’ (Woolley 1934a, p. 355). Mallowan, who was excavating
in Northern Iraq at the time, was advised that he would not be allowed to transport artefacts to London. George Hill, the director at the British Museum, protested this decision and stated that the manner in which the Iraqis behaved towards foreign archaeologists would be regarded as ‘a test of whether Iraq is really a modern and progressive state’ (Hill in Goode 2007, p. 204). Despite Western protests, the laws were enacted, at which time R. Campbell Thompson, the British military captain who surveyed southern Mesopotamia, wrote:

These new laws, so different from their generous predecessors, were not only ungrateful to the memory of Miss Gertrude Bell, who was the prime mover in everything relating to the national collections in Iraq, but also unscientific in their claims on any fresh discoveries. (Thompson 1937, p. 723).

The ‘generous predecessors’ Thompson referred to were subjects of the British Empire, whose domination over Mesopotamian archaeology was acutely entrenched until the new law was enacted. Bernhardsson posed that a common misconception among the Western archaeologists was believing that the local population did not identify with the pre-Islamic sites, as they were jahiliya, referring to the state of ignorance in pre-Islamic Arabia (Bernhardsson 2005, p. 30). The view that the East was unaware of its own history and the West was uniquely qualified to fill the void was quintessentially Eurocentric, and followed Said’s third ‘principle dogma of Orientalism’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300). Thompson’s comment followed the Orientalist pattern of the West’s perception of saving the East and controlling the production of knowledge. Due to the restrictions several foreign organizations moved their work to Syria, which was still under French Mandate, while others were able to adjust to the new guidelines (Malley 2004; Mourad 2007; Said 2003 [1978]).

British archaeologist Seton Lloyd, the last Western advisor assigned to the Iraqi Ministry, accepted the change and noted that Westerners would ‘for the first time be able to benefit from the collaboration of their locally-born colleagues’ (Lloyd 1955, p. 238). Under orders from al-Husri, excavations were to expand beyond Mesopotamian ruins and embrace the early Islamic periods. He ordered that emphasis was to be placed on ‘those aspects of Islamic archaeology which in the past have understandably received less attention from Western scholars’ (Sati’ al-Husri in Goode 2007, p. 224). As a result, the first excavations conducted under Iraqi leadership took place in the Wasit Governorate, at the ruins of an a city attributed to the Umayyad Dynasty, one of the Arab Caliphates established after the death of Muhammed (Lloyd 1955, p. 236).

In addition to some Western archaeologist’s disgruntlement over the new laws, others expressed concern over the loss of overall governmental control. In her book Beyond Euphrates, Freya Stark reflected on her travels between 1928 and 1933, and noted that she was concerned about Iraq’s newly gained independence because:

We cannot risk a bad government in Iraq, interfering with several vital interests of ours - oil, and the Indian route and such - if we could keep
these safe, it seems to me that the Iraqis might enjoy their bad governing if they wish without doing us any harm. (Stark 1951, p. 125).

Placing importance on European interests continued the Western manipulation of Eastern educational, business, political, and military matters. As Said asserted ‘The Orientalist sees himself as accomplishing the union of Orient and Occident, but mainly by reasserting the technological, political, and cultural supremacy of the West’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 246). Iraq was not a fully sovereign country at that time, as Great Britain remained as mandatory power with military bases still located in Basra, Mosul and at Habbaniya in the Anbar Province (Jasse 1991; Silverfarb & Khadduri 1986; Sluglett 1976).

In the lead-up to WWII, large-scale foreign excavations across Iraq were terminated, yet the Iraqi Department of Antiquities remained active (Delougaz 1938; Gibson 1972a; Longrigg 1953). In addition, several Western archaeologists such as Max Freiherr von Oppenheim and Nelson Glueck remained in the region and served as advisors to the Allies and the Axis powers (Richter 2008). This continued the legacy of Western knowledge acquired via archaeological expeditions in order to support the espionage activities of the greatest colonial powers at the time. The looting and destruction of cultural property during the war prompted US President Franklin D. Roosevelt to establish the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas. This led to the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) program, which was strongly supported by General Dwight D. Eisenhower. He issued an allied general order that forbade the looting and destruction of cultural sites, as well as a placing a ban on occupying cultural property for military purposes (Merryman 1986; Nicholas 1995).

Woolley was also once again involved with the military, and served as an advisor in the MFAA program. His role’s focus was to protect monuments from unnecessary damage or misuse (Nicholas 1995; Spirydowicz 2010). However, military forces on all sides occupied historic buildings and private residences. As one Iraqi woman recalled when Allied forces appropriated all the houses in the Karradat Marriam neighbourhood in Baghdad ‘Our house was one they took, and they didn’t give it back until the end of 1947. They paid rent, but didn’t ask whether people wanted them there or not, they just took the houses’ (Bezirgan 2002, p. 95). The MFAA program and the commission were both brought to a close in 1946, but work continued under the United States Department of State (DoS) (Edsel 2009; NARA 2007).

British presence in the country began to decline after the war, and more importantly, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1948 was signed. This resulted in British military troops completely withdrawing from Iraq, with the last base in Habbaniya vacated on 2 May 1955 (Jasse 1991, p. 140). At that time the Iraqis were also more fully in control of their antiquities. Since 1944 Iraqi politician Naji al-Asil served as the antiquities director, and launched the journal *Sumer*, which published articles in Arabic and English highlighting the work of Iraqi
archaeologists (Abdi 2008). However, while Iraqi scholars were in the lead of excavations, overall operations continued to be influenced by Western powers. Mallowan’s report on the 1952 season at Nimrud credited the contributions of Iraqi archaeologists, but acknowledged that several Western organizations funded the excavations including the University of Oxford, Cambridge University, and the British-owned Iraq Petroleum Company (Mallowan 1953). Sustaining Western control over the sites continued what Said described as the hermeneutical relationship that had existed between the Orientalist and Orient, where the Western expert served as decision-maker (Said 2003 [1978], p. 222).

**Western Travellers**

Western travellers also explored the region throughout the mid to late 1900s, and often provided archetypal Orientalist descriptions of their visits. Freya Stark for example reflecting on her visit to the Iraq Museum by remarking ‘I was surprised to see quite a number of Arabs in turbans and flowing abiyah’s, and women with infants wandering around the museum’ (Stark 1951, p. 95). Although her travels took place years prior, her book was published in 1951, which demonstrated the continued attitude of a Westerner’s view of the East. Expressing surprise at realising that Iraqis would appreciate antiquities highlighted what Said labelled as ‘latent Orientalism’ which is represented via unconscious Orientalist thoughts and behaviours (Said 2003 [1978], p. 206). However, other travellers recognised the hazards of holding onto idealised notions of the East. In 1953 two British expatriates who lived in Baghdad described the city as hot, dusty and muddy, and the locals unwelcoming. They said ‘The Englishman who arrives in Baghdad, as it were a political virgin, finds to his shock that Iraq is not a romantic Arabian land, and that T.E. Lawrence is not a popular idol but rather regarded coldly as a British spy’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 72). They further noted that the Iraqis ‘are well aware of their cultural heritage and proud of it, but they are more interested in their present political problems, their love affairs, their friends, and all the rather leisurely activities that make up their social lives’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 90).

Political relations between Iraq and Western nations took a decidedly negative turn due to unrest in the country, which started with the 1958 Iraqi Revolution, followed closely by the crumbling of the Baghdad Pact (Ashton 1993; Polk 2005; Yaphe 2006). However, visitors continued to travel to the region expecting to see the exotic and romanticized version of the East. British travellers ‘approached Baghdad with images of Caliphs and genii’s filling their thoughts’ (Canton 2011, p. 133). A 1977 photographic essay which showcased images of traditional versus modern Baghdad elicited surprise from the artist because ‘modern Iraq is nothing like the tales from the Arabian Nights stories, the buses, Mercedes Benz taxis, Japanese trucks, and the colourful domes of the mosques that rise next to modern buildings’ (Nakamura 1978, p. 44). Another visitor in 1978 who expected to immerse himself in the idealised East was disappointed to find that ‘Baghdad is not a city of stately majesty, it is a water colour, not an oil painting’ (Young in Canton 2011, p. 133).
Notwithstanding the disappointment, Westerners continued to visit and work in the country. While postcolonial archaeology had yet to be fully embraced during that time, research and infrastructure was under local control throughout the region (Altekamp 2009; Meskell 1998; Porter 2010). International teams of archaeologists from Western universities and museums worked conjointly with the Iraqi Antiquities Department, whose staff managed the operations (Abdi 2008; Ball & Black 1987; Killick & Roaf 1983; Postgate 1972). Iraqi control of archaeological sites was a complete inversion from earlier Western domination. While international organizations continued to conduct joint research projects, the majority was ‘done by the Iraqi State Organization for Antiquities and Heritage either on its own or in co-operation with foreign expeditions’ (Killick & Roaf 1983, p. 199). However, some scholars voiced their frustrations over this. The renowned Assyriologist, Thorkild Jacobsen, wrote in the Forward to Heartland of the Cities of ‘the wearisome, constant difficulties of obtaining permission to work owing to shifting political orientations and military considerations’ (Jacobsen in Adams 1981, p. xiii).

Archaeological work continued during the Iran-Iraq War, when excavations and reconstructions at archaeological sites were funded by the Ba’athist Regime (Abdi 2008; Anderson & Stansfield 2004; Isakhan 2011). However, the political issues generated by the war caused concern for Western scholars who were uncertain as to their longevity in Iraq. In a critique of archaeological surveys conducted over the war years, Charles Redman stated that future work would only be possible if they ‘fully engaged with the local scholars’ (Redman 1982, p. 382). Such a comment made at a time when foreign archaeologists should have been working conjointly with the Iraqis, was testament to Said’s notion that Orientalism did not end with decolonisation (Said 1993, p. 282). Further, Edmond Burke correctly noted that ‘nineteenth century colonial powers shaped the atmosphere of Orientalism in the Middle East for future encounters’ (Burke 1998, p. 504).

Iraqi scholars did not forget the issue of the past colonial domination. As the war continued foreign travellers were restricted from moving freely about the country, yet two National Geographic journalists were able to visit the Iraq Museum. They met with Antiquities Chief, Dr Muayyad Damerji, who expressed concern over the large number of reproductions in the museum. Damerji said ‘Our treasures were delivered to Europe, but we are trying to bring them back’ (Muayyad Damerji in Ellis & McCurry 1985, p. 92). During this time, artefacts were no longer transported to foreign institutions, and archaeological work mainly focused on rescue or salvage digs (Wilkinson & Matthews 1989). Westerners did however continue to produce scholarly work, mainly related to research on Mesopotamian artefacts already in museums such as the Ashmolean at Oxford, and the Horniman in London (Koshurnikov & Yoffee 1986; Møller 1986). By 1990 the presence of foreign excavations in Iraq had slowly declined due to political tensions and the start of the Gulf War (McDonald & Simpson 1999; Nashef 1992).
The Iraq Wars and Beyond

After a pause in Western-led conflict in the region, the 1991 Gulf War once more created a setting to test the epistemological notions of an invading force towards Iraq’s heritage sites. While troops did not occupy archaeological ruins, military action reportedly caused damage to several sites. For example, artillery fire damaged the façade of the ziggurat at Ur, and the ruins of Hatra, Samarra, Nimrud and the Ctesiphon Arch were reported to have suffered fissure damages due to nearby combat operations (Forsyth 2004; Miller 2005; Schipper 2005; Stone & Zimansky 1992; Zettler 1991). The United Nations (UN) Sanctions against Iraq that followed negatively affected the economy, and the healthcare and educational systems. The imposed embargoes on trade created an inability to effectively manage infrastructure requirements for a large population (Alnasrawi 2001; von Sponeck 2006). As noted by Abbas Alnasrawi ‘The centrepiece of the sanctions system was UNSC Resolution 661. This resolution, and the subsequent sanctions resolutions, created a set of conditions which virtually cut Iraq off from the world economy’ (Alnasrawi 2001, p. 208).

The manner in which the cultural heritage community operated was changed as well. They were unable to attend international conferences, access current research forums for conservation methods, or engage in cross-cultural exchanges (Forsyth 2004; Wilke 2008). In addition, incidents of site looting drastically rose due to reduced security caused by lack of funds to pay guards at archaeological sites (Forsyth 2004, p. 80). This demonstrated that although the Occidents, or representatives of the West, were not physically in Iraq, their authoritative influence negatively affected the population and ancient ruins. The war revisited the Orientalist biases of power and control, which according to Said was ‘ultimately an imperial war against the Iraqi people, an effort to break and kill them as part of an effort to break and kill Saddam Hussein’ (Said 1993, p. 301).

As a result, archaeological sites began to deteriorate due to the Iraqis inability to stop environmental erosion, or properly apply conservation measures to the ruins. In addition, all American sponsored excavations ceased to operate in the country and only a few European universities continued sporadic digs. Consequently, communication and professional cooperation between Iraqi and international organizations were fragmented and eventually fully terminated (Forsyth 2004; McDonald & Simpson 1999; Russell 2001). However, the absence of Western institutions could have been viewed as advantageous in that Iraqi sites were no longer represented by a predominantly Orientalist voice, as Iraqi academics were more widely published than they had been in the past (Ahmad & Grayson 1999; Al-'Adami 1997; Al-Mutawalli 1999; Al-Salihi 1998). Despite the lack of disparate group interactions, Western heritage experts retained interest in the region and weighed in on the protection of sites during the build up to the 2003 Iraq war. The president of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA), appealed to all governments to avoid damaging cultural heritage sites, and to
respect and observe the terms of the 1954 Hague Convention (Rose 2002; Wilkie 2003).

Prior to the invasion, numerous pre-conflict meetings were organized by US Government personnel in order to forecast the potential consequences of invading Iraq. The DoS formed several working groups to produce a document called the *Future of Iraq Project*. Experts were tasked with analysing and providing suggestions of how to plan for post-conflict situations after the projected removal of Saddam Hussein’s regime, and produce their findings in a comprehensive report (Davis 2014; Miller 2005; Rathmell 2005). The project included numerous topic-specific sections, including a working group dedicated to providing recommendations of how to preserve and protect cultural heritage sites. While cultural heritage preservation seemed to be a concern the DoS was addressing, that specific working group was removed from the project. This was one of the first indications that attention to cultural heritage preservation and protection was seriously undervalued by head governmental personnel.

A reason was not cited for removing the group, the document simply listed cultural heritage as a ‘working group that did not meet’ (DoS 2005, p. 35). Colonel Jeffery Clark, writing for the US Army War College, provided one possible explanation for the neglect in utilizing the document, which was the rivalry that developed between DoS and United States Department of Defense (DoD) personnel. The main perpetrator, and the man holding the highest level of office within the DoD, was US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld who advised lead personnel not to ‘waste their time reading the report’ (Clark 2005, p. 7).

When coalition military forces entered Iraq on 20 March 2003, their only plan appeared to be winning a war with minimal consideration given to post-conflict operations (Allawi 2007; Ballard 2010; Keegan 2005). One of the areas that was inadequately deliberated was deciding where to house troops. By April 2003, coalition military bases and outposts were constructed on and near several archaeological sites, including Babylon, Kish, Ur, Hatra and Samarra, as well as other sites in the Dhi Qar, Kirkuk and Ninewa Provinces (Isakhan 2015b; Siebrandt 2015; Stone & Bajjaly 2008).

In addition to the appropriation of archaeologically sensitive areas, the Karradat Marriam neighbourhood in Baghdad, which British troops had occupied during WWII, housed structures that were spared destruction during the Shock and Awe campaign. Several Western Embassies, including the American Embassy, were established within the palaces and former Saddam Hussein housing complexes (Chandrasekaran 2010; Isakhan 2011, 2013). As discussed by Isakhan, this could have been a sign that the US planned to use them as bases of power and control (Isakhan 2013, p. 232). The occupied area was renamed the *Green Zone*, encircled by concrete security walls, and housed coalition military and civilian personnel, mainly in Saddam’s seized palaces. As one army major described ‘it
was almost like being at Walt Disney’s version of *Arabian Nights*’ (Bachar in Ricks 2006, p. 206). The general who commanded the coalition land forces who marched into Baghdad stated that he had orders to secure presidential palaces and look for weapons of mass destruction, but was not provided with specific orders to safeguard cultural, educational, or health care facilities (McKiernan in Lawler 2003a, p. 582).

The occupation of cultural property by a foreign power has potential to create suspicions of wilful damages in order to destroy the ‘other’ culture (Van der Auwera 2010). Because of the history of Orientalism in Iraq, the occupation of historic sites sent a message of oppression, which hindered the coalition’s ability to form positive relationships with the local community. The Vice Minister for Tourism and Antiquities of Iraq described the importance and sense of pride shared by Iraqis in relation to the country’s ruins. He said that Iraqis consider themselves descendants of the ancient Mesopotamian cultures, which started to take place in the 1920s when Iraq was ‘born in the aftermath of cultural, political and social degradation, during a period of successive foreign occupations’ (Rasheed 2015, p. 5). Further, Bahrani said the occupation of sites was ‘a display of force that uses the sign of history and its control as a statement of victory’ (Bahrani 2006a, p. 244).

After the start of the 2003 Iraq war, Said reflected ‘Twenty-five years after Orientalism was published, questions remain about whether modern imperialism ever ended or whether it has continued in the Orient since Napoleon’s entry into Egypt two centuries ago’ (Said 2004, p. 873). Said noted the attitude of ‘other’ during the invasion, stating that ‘Without a well-organized sense that these people over there were not like us and didn’t appreciate our values, the very core of traditional Orientalist dogma, there would have been no war’ (Said 2004, p. 872). Isakhan reflected on Said’s Orientalism in relation to the war and stated that ‘the unquestioned tendency to view the people of the Orient as deficient and inferior others served the colonial agenda in continuing to dominate and control sections of the East’ (Isakhan 2008, p. 1). Further, he pointed out that the Bush Administration was misguided in their understanding of the Muslim World, and were driven by notions of Orientalism (Isakhan 2008). Overall, the invasion and occupation followed a history of US and United Kingdom (UK) intervention in Iraq for economic, political and military purposes.

Just as General Maude declared that the British did not intend to occupy Iraq after WWI, a similar statement was made to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 11 February 2003. Marc Grossman, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, proclaimed ‘We will demonstrate to the Iraqi people and the world that the United States wants to liberate Iraq, not to occupy Iraq or control Iraqis or their economic resources’ (Grossman in Allawi 2007, p. 96). However, the opposite happened. Iraq was occupied, and remained so for almost a decade. Despite the occupation, Iraqi archaeologists were not opposed to partnering with the coalition powers in the early days of the war. According to Andrew Lawler:
Iraqi officials say the door is open to mutually beneficial cooperation. Muayyad Damerji, former State Board chief and now a Ministry of Culture adviser, urged archaeologists gathered last month in London [July 2003] to reopen their Baghdad institutes and hinted that they might be able to resume excavations as early as next spring. Donny George, research director, added that he hopes a streamlined bureaucracy will make it easier for outside scientists to gain the necessary approvals. (Lawler 2003b, p. 585).

While it was important not to revisit the ideologies of the past and reimpose Western domination on Iraqi sites, it was also imperative to establish positive cross-cultural networks. A report compiled at the Strategic Studies Institute at the US Army War College clearly outlined the four phases of warfare. Phases I-III were: (I) deterrence and engagement; (II) seize the initiative; and (III) decisive operations, all relate to combat operations. The final Phase IV relates to post-conflict operations, which the institute stressed needed to be planned ‘well before Phase III’ but in reality it was not (Fallows 2006, p. 88). Michael O’Hanlon criticizes the same lack of planning for Phase IV, and added that another issue that was not taken into consideration was the history of western colonialism in the region, and how an occupation of the country would be perceived by the locals (O’Hanlon 2004, p. 88).

Attempts at mutual understanding were often pre-emptively damaged when military personnel were provided with material that promoted antiquated dogmas about the Arab culture. According to Laura Nader, in 2004 US Marines were given a book titled The Arab Mind written by Raphael Patai, an Israeli anthropologist who presented Arabs as not having the ability to reason, who were sexual deviants, cowardly, indecisive, lazy and conflict-prone (Nader 2012, p. 38). Within the higher levels of the US government, the Bush Administration was guided by the works of Orientalists Bernard Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington, whose publications have perpetuated and legitimated the view of Muslims as barbaric, violent, and despotic (Isakhan 2008, p. 5). General knowledge about Iraq and Iraqis was taken from a colonial discourse, which produced an ‘artificial model’ of the country that the coalition administration continued to use during the course of the occupation (Al-Musawi 2006, p. 24).

Part of that misinformed model led to the occupation of archaeological sites, which added to the historical imperialistic narrative that was witnessed by Iraqis over the course of several wars. British troops had occupied the ruins of Samarra during WWI, and 86 years later during the Iraq war, US army snipers used the same site for military purposes (Corn 2005). Historically, a military is a fighting force, not a peace keeping force. Therefore, one of the difficulties for the coalition was to act in a manner in which they were not trained. Military norms seek to separate soldiers from their adversaries, so the idea to start harmonious relations was not immediately visited (Keegan 2004; Porter 2009; Rubinstein 2010).
However, key coalition personnel did eventually realize that constructive contact with the local community was mutually beneficial during any exchange. This was especially true in relation to stopping violence in the Anbar Province, which had been the setting of intense fighting and high numbers of casualties since the start of the war. Even though positive cross-cultural relationships were not formed pre-conflict, one successful campaign later in the war was the Sons of Iraq Program, which officially started in mid-2007 and was roughly modelled after the Iraqi movement called the Anbar Awakening. The program was a counterinsurgency tactic devised to rid al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) from the province through cooperation between coalition forces and the local Sunni population. Although previously fighting against each other, the coalition troops and Sunni leaders worked together as part of the Sons of Iraq Program to combat the common enemy of AQI (Al-Jabouri & Jensen 2010; Kagan 2007; Wilbanks & Karsh 2010).

The success of the program demonstrated that cross-cultural relationships, while tenuous, were feasible during war. The main reason for the success of the Sons of Iraq Program was that it was Iraqi initiated, with responsibilities shared equally between the Iraqis and the coalition forces. However, this same type of engagement with Iraqis responsible for archaeological sites was not in practice, nor was it considered even though troops were living on the sites.

**Sense of Place and Cultural Rights**

One of the other consequences of the war was the loss of cultural identity and sense of place, or place attachment, for the Iraqi heritage specialists. Bahrani said that the destruction of monuments and historical archives erases the historical landscape and thus, the memory of the people who identified with the landscape. Further, she admonished the greater academic community for maintaining their silence on the subject (Bahrani 2010, p. 68). Isakhan also discussed the loss of national identity and historical memory. He provided examples that the widespread escalation of ethno-sectarian violence as a result of the war was closely aligned with the destruction of heritage sites such as the Al Askari Mosque in Samarra and Ba’ath Party monuments located throughout Iraq, which damaged people’s memories and social cohesion (Isakhan 2011, 2013).

Early publications in the study of human geography have long associated the importance of human experiences and cognitive connections to physical locations, which evoke emotions of how a place is valued and processed for its past, present and future (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff 1983; Tuan 1979). Even with a globalised world of shared ideologies and views, sense of place and place attachment remain relevant in the twenty-first century (Lewicka 2011; Relph 2008; Vanclay 2008). Sense of place is lasting in the human psyche. According to Frank Vanclay ‘place’ is a ‘space’ that is connected to meanings that are invested in a location, rather than attached to the physicality of the place (Vanclay 2008, p. 3).
Similarly, place attachment is a bond between people and a specific place, influenced by emotions, incorporating concepts of sense of place, and ideological beliefs and behaviours in its discourse (Rollero & De Piccoli 2010). A sense of place has numerous influencing factors depending on individual or group experiences. These can include political, social, spiritual, and cultural memories allied with any specific setting or event. According to Robert Bevan ‘To lose all that is familiar, the destruction of one’s environment, can mean a disorientating exile from the memories they have invoked’ (Bevan 2006, p. 13). In the case of Iraq, sense of place and place attachment for Iraqi heritage specialists was violated when coalition troops occupied archaeological sites, damaging the memories of the people and the places.

Closely aligned to this are cultural rights which do not have an official definition yet can be considered diplomatic means of communication and respect between, and for cultures, in order to promote interaction, cooperation, and conversation (Shaheed 2011; Ziegler 2007). However, human rights are recognised under international bills, and with them, cultural rights (Eide 2001). As the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights preamble reads:

Recognising that, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights, as well as his civil and political rights. (UN 1966).

According to William Logan, heritage is ‘fundamental to cultural identity; it is those things that underpin our identity as communities, national, regional, local, even family’ (Logan 2007, p. 35). Because of the risks involved with travel, Iraqi cultural heritage specialists were unable to assess and record site conditions, or attempt to engage in any type of preservation or conservative measures. Iraqis were also directly barred from accessing some sites due to coalition occupation. Since they were unable to connect with and enjoy their sites, their sense of place and place attachment were interrupted, which was a violation of their cultural rights. Farida Shaheed investigated the degree to which the right to access and enjoy one’s own heritage is a part of international human rights. She concluded that a violation towards cultural property was a violation towards the cultural rights of humans (Shaheed 2011). However, this concept could not be explored due to the lack of Iraqi interviews, which is discussed in Chapter 4.

The sites most impacted by the occupation were Ur, Babylon, and Kish, which are comprehensively discussed and analysed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Because the research question examines if the construction of military bases on historic sites was driven by Orientalist biases, the history of Orientalism perpetrated by nineteenth and twentieth century Western archaeologists and British military personnel and diplomats is also reviewed.
Discussion

While cross-cultural contact can often be a positive result of a globalised world, Mesopotamian archaeology has a long interconnected history with an Orientalist ideology. Notions of superiority that were viewed as legitimate appropriations of the past were cultural norms for more than 200 years. This was seen in the strong Biblical narrative that led explorers and scholars to interpret data gathered from ancient cities in decidedly Western accountings. They encouraged an abiding belief system that the West was the preeminent and most civilized of nations, and the inventors of society’s greatest achievements in science, governance and industry. Therefore, the messages that were often projected to the world about the ancient Eastern cultures were decidedly Eurocentric.

However, controlling the knowledge analysed from the ruins was only one of the results of Westerners coming into contact with what was then referred to as the Orient. The early scholars and explorers also projected an unflattering and primitive image of the local communities, who were thought to be unable to administer or analyse the sites themselves. Artefacts therefore had to be sent to Western museums, where they could be managed properly. Except for a few minority voices who highlighted this error in judgment, very few saw it as a negative result of the excavations. From the time archaeologists began their work when the region was Ottoman Iraq, they were not required to consult with local authorities. When the British obtained governorship after WWI, their power became stronger, and after the 1920 Iraqi Revolt, their influence remained. This continued the structure of Orientalism that Said described as ‘a body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 6)

When Iraqis eventually administered their own lands and cultural heritage sites, the foreign excavators expressed their anger and disbelief at the change in power. Yet by the 1970s attitudes changed and cooperative projects began to take place. Unfortunately, the long series of conflicts, starting with the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, through to the Gulf War and subsequent UN Sanctions, devastated the country, the population, and international cooperation at archaeology sites. Minimal cross-cultural interaction occurred during this time, which resulted in isolation and only remote contact.

Coalition personnel were deployed to Iraq in 2003 with some of the similar ideologies promoted by the early Orientalists. Some also saw themselves as the protagonists who would rescue the ruins. They arrived in Iraq with a limited understanding of the country or the culture, and were often guided by the Orientalist dogma that had been demonstrated by the men and women from the proceeding century. While some cross-cultural interactions resulted in amicable relations such as those demonstrated with the tribes in the Anbar Province, similar endeavours were not attempted with the heritage experts. The housing of troops on archaeological sites revisited the colonial occupation and served to continue the Western domination of the country.
Conclusion

This chapter has argued that an Orientalist ideology has been associated with Iraqi archaeological sites since at least the nineteenth century, with Biblical interest as one of the main driving factors. The power and control over the region has been demonstrated by examining the published records of Western explorers, scholars and military personnel who lived in and visited the country through the twentieth century. In addition, the manner in which the East was portrayed by many of these individuals established that they promoted visions of an uncivilized people and land who were in need of Western administration. This was compounded by the evidence that decisions about archaeological ruins were dominated by the foreigners, which resulted in the large-scale removal of artefacts that were transported to museums in Europe and America. During this time, the local population was employed as labourers, but were not involved with any decisions related to the excavated material.

The long-term control of Mesopotamia and her antiquities during times of war and peace exhibited an Orientalist pattern of the West’s perception of saving the East and controlling the production of knowledge. While Iraqis eventually attained governorship over their country and archaeological ruins, foreigners continued to work in and visit the country. However, their often conveyed sense of resentment and disappointment that they were no longer the decision-makers, demonstrated that Orientalism did not end with decolonisation. This was also evident during the course of war and sanctions, which created a forced environment of isolation and division.

By the time the 2003 Iraq war began, the military troops who made up the coalition forces deployed into a country they were unfamiliar with were guided by Orientalist assumptions. Their misinformed model led to the occupation of archaeological sites and the idioms about being liberators rather than occupiers that was voiced in WWI, were repeated in 2003. This demonstrated that little had been learned from the past legacy of war. The information contained in this chapter has therefore provided the useful background necessary to understand the history of interest in Mesopotamian archaeological sites, and the associated issues of power and control.
Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction
The primary aim of this thesis is to determine if the construction of military bases on archaeological sites was driven by Orientalist biases during the 2003 war in Iraq. This chapter therefore examines the literature related to the war, and issues of protecting cultural heritage venues to determine if the matter has been addressed. Numerous topics were covered by Iraqi and Western authors, which are explained in the following sections. The looting of the Iraq Museum and archaeological sites were the primary focus of many publications, with some authors providing conflicting opinions on whether military presence should be praised or criticised. In addition, the damages inflicted on ancient ruins was also a common topic discussed by academics, practitioners and members of the coalition. Several authors acknowledged that the occupation of sites conveyed a message of power and control, especially when Iraqi archaeologists were barred from entry. However, the extent to which this was couched within the Orientalist motivations of the colonial past did not incorporate into broader discussions.

Similarly, authors expressed personal and professional opinions about whether foreign troops conformed to the legalities and obligations associated with international and domestic cultural heritage laws, including debate about what constituted binding responsibilities. They also broached the matter of cultural heritage awareness training for deploying troops, as well as establishing relations with the local heritage community. Several of these topics were discussed by personnel who served in Iraq during the war, and who were able to offer personal experiences. Additionally, information was provided on the steps military factions have taken in order to learn from their mistakes and seek and embrace more positive guidance. The material presented in this chapter has provided invaluable information about the consequences of the war, and how archaeological sites were affected. However, what this review found was the largest gap in the existing literature is dialogue that associates all these issues with notions of Orientalism.

Antiquities Looting
Topics related to cultural heritage and the Iraq war have gained worldwide recognition due to the scholars and practitioners who have raised the issue since the invasion. However, the tragic events associated with the looting of museums and archaeological sites generated the majority of attention. Some edited books were dedicated to the issue, such as Catastrophe!: The Looting and Destruction of Iraq’s Past, which highlighted the pillage of sites as one of the most significant problems antiquities faced during the war (Emberling & Hanson 2008). Coalition troops were heavily criticised for failing to stop the locals who broke into and looted the Iraq Museum, as well as leaving archaeological sites unguarded and vulnerable to thieves. John Russell, who served as an advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in 2003/4, stated that such actions were viewed by
Iraqis as a sinister motive in order to control Iraq and destroy Iraqi identity (Russell 2008, p. 42).

Other works such as Antiquities Under Siege: Cultural Heritage Protection after the Iraq War, was a forum for discussion on a variety of topics, but also mainly focused on the plight of plundered sites and museums (Rothfield 2008). For example, Matthew Bogdanos related his personal experiences in relation to the events that led to the failure of US troops to protect the museum from looters, which he stated was ‘inexcusable’ (Bogdanos 2008, p. 39). Other authors called for better coordination between military factions and the cultural heritage sector in order to mitigate damages and the loss of antiquities due to conflict and post-conflict events (Burnham & Urice 2008). Concern over the fate of museum collections and unexcavated antiquities was also voiced by Benjamin Foster who proposed that ‘The cultural and historical consequences of the American invasion of Iraq will long outlast the political and economic ones’ (Foster 2003, p. 309).

Other scholars such as Larry Rothfield were relieved that several sites, including Ur and Babylon, were ‘under US military protection’ during the early days of the war (Rothfield 2009, p. 128). This opinion was shared by others, such as Łukasz Olędzki, a Polish archaeologist who was embedded with troops at Babylon. While he admitted that establishing a base on the ruins was a mistake, he also said that ‘the site was saved from generalised looting and devastation’ (Olędzki 2008, p. 250). Additionally, a team assembled by the National Geographic Society who conducted assessments in May 2003, also credited the presence of US Marines at Babylon from deterring would-be looters. The report stated that ‘the presence of coalition troops on major sites is necessary in the short term to deter further looting’ (Wright et al. 2003, p. 4). While Matthew Thurlow criticised the occupation of Babylon, he also warned that it would be susceptible to looters once coalition forces vacated the property (Thurlow 2005, p. 181). Both the praise and criticism of troops stationed on archaeological ruins sent conflicting messages of concern from the cultural heritage community.

**Damages due to Military Operations**

Despite the inconsistent narrative, most scholars agreed that the occupation caused physical harm. Although Joris Kila mainly focused on policy issues and the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the war, he reported that ‘Babylon suffered from damage caused by heavy vehicles and the storage of containers. The most famous example involved military personnel who indiscriminately loaded huge bags with soil and used them as defensive enforcements for the camp’ (Kila 2008, p. 183). Elizabeth Stone provided a similar report, and added that bulldozers flattened large areas of the site in order to make parking lots. She stated that such actions ‘will remain one of the stains on the occupation of Iraq’ (Stone 2008a, p. 78). Eleanor Robson wrote that ‘Key ancient cities such as Babylon and Ur have been irreversibly degraded through misguided military occupation’ (Robson 2006, p. 416).
In addition, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) commissioned six separate scholars to provide detailed assessments and photographic documentation in their Report on Babylon: Current Condition. Damages from the military installation included ‘the use of heavy equipment which compacted the soil and may have destroyed antiquities below the surface’ (ICC 2009, p. 16). Vandalism was also noted in the report in the form of ‘smashed bricks on nine of the bodies of the animals adorning Ishtar Gate’ (ICC 2009, p. 19).

Two Iraqi authors, Mariam Moussa and Abdulamir Hamdani, added to the body of growing literature, and systematically listed how Babylon and Ur were casualties of direct and indirect military actions (Al Hamdani 2008a; Moussa 2008). Independently, John Curtis further berated that ‘military activities have damaged iconic sites such as Babylon and Ur’ (Curtis 2008, p. 210). According to a former SBAH Chairman ‘Under the eye of occupation forces, significant damage was inflicted to sites converted to military encampments, including Babylon, Kish, Ur and Samarra’ (Al-Hussainy 2010, p. 87). In 2008, a team composed of Western and Iraqi experts concluded that the ruins of at least three ancient cities, Lahm, Ubaid, and Ur, were subjected to coalition activity, specifically the construction of defensive positions (Curtis et al. 2008, p. 230). Furthermore, US Kirkuk Regional Air Base (KRAB) was constructed on an unexcavated 3,000 year old site. Radar equipment and fencing was erected on one of the mounds where the ancient city once stood, which resulted in ‘artefacts spilling out of the hillside’ (Pinckney 2010, p. 119).

Benjamin Isakhan discussed the destruction of cultural heritage throughout Iraq, and argued that ‘the disregard for the key archaeological sites of ancient Mesopotamia, as well as classical Islamic mosques, reveal the US-led coalition’s disregard and disdain for the entire spectrum of Iraq’s cultural heritage’ (Isakhan 2015b, p. 272). His Iraq Cultural Property Destruction (ICPD) database was developed in order to track different levels of damage to heritage venues across Iraq, including their value and significance to humanity (Isakhan 2015a, p. 17). Isakhan explained the difficulties he and his team encountered in attempting to gain accurate first-hand information due to limits of accessibility into the country. Data was gathered for analysis via existing literature, media reports, interviews, and field reports. Isakhan acknowledged that an:

> Important limitation of the research method that ought to be addressed is that of Eurocentrism. The author is sensitive to the fact that the typologies and scales utilised and adapted throughout this study have all been developed within a European or Western context and that this may lead to claims of Orientalism. (Isakhan 2015a, p. 15).

Nevertheless, it was important to document site damages. As Gaetano Palumbo summarized fairly succinctly:
The use of historic and archaeological sites as military bases is an inexplicable action that has provoked international censure against the coalition forces; in the best case, it is seen as insensitive towards other nations cultural heritage, and in the most extreme interpretations, it is seen as intentional destruction. (Palumbo 2005, p. 228).

The Occupation of Archaeological Sites

However, the ability to assess site conditions proved challenging due to the volatile and dangerous security environment prevalent across the entire country. In addition, the inability of non-coalition personnel to enter venues that were established as military installations created further difficulties. Restrictions were implemented by coalition forces as a result of an incident in December 2004 when an Iraqi male gained access into a military dining facility in Mosul, and detonated a suicide bomb that resulted in numerous deaths (IntelCenter 2008, p. 234). Shortly thereafter, strict procedures for base admission were enacted, which included the need to possess US government credentials, specifically a Common Access Card (CAC), which allowed entry (The White House 2004). This meant that all the sites that were converted into bases were off-limits to Iraqi archaeologists, and all but three of the actual on-the-ground assessments mentioned above were completed by personnel who were employed, at some level, by the coalition. These factors conformed to suspicions that historic sites were purposefully seized in order to exhibit the military’s supremacy and control. It also ultimately contributed to the further deterioration of ruins.

Laurie Rush discussed the US base stationed near Ur, and the decision to include the ancient site within the fenced perimeter. While she voiced the same argument as many others before her, that looters were unable to access the ruins due to the existence of the soldiers, she also acknowledged that Iraqis were faced with the same injunctions (Rush 2013). In the example of Babylon, the presence of the coalition ‘prevented the SBAH from maintaining their normal procedures of monitoring and repair’ (ICC 2009, p. 20). The site manager noted that ‘The use of the city as a military camp was a major affront towards this world-renowned archaeological site’ (Moussa 2008, p. 144). Yet she also specified that ‘we were unable to assess the full level of damage because of the commandeering of the site by coalition forces’ (Moussa 2008, p. 150). Similar disapproval was directed at coalition forces from the Ur manager, who argued that the presence of coalition troops within the archaeological footprint not only caused physical damages, but also sent a message of indifference about the cultural and educational importance of the site (Al Hamdani 2008a, p. 155).

Bahrani, who worked with the coalition during the first year of the war, unsuccessfully lobbied for the removal of the base from Babylon. She proposed that it was deliberately chosen because it was ‘the legendary city associated with decadence, despotism, and evil in the Biblical Christian tradition’ (Bahrani 2006a, p. 241). She was of the opinion that officials at the Pentagon were behind the strategic placement of bases because ‘the idea that there was no pre-planning or high-level military decision-making in choosing these ancient sites as major camp
installations is difficult to believe’ (Bahrani 2010, p. 70). Similarly, Peter Stone deliberated whether or not military bases were constructed on ruins as a purposeful attempt to antagonise the local population (Stone 2012, p. 276). However, these matters are difficult to verify, especially when first-hand accounts of the decision-making processes that went into base placements are lacking in the published record, which this thesis discusses. Olszki’s recollection differed from Bahrani’s. He briefly discussed cooperative efforts that were made towards working with Iraqi antiquities authorities, outlining ‘since December 2003, all construction projects on Babylon were in coordination with Iraqi heritage staff’ (Olszki 2008, p. 255). However, the Iraqis were still not allowed onto the ruins without a coalition escort.

The embedded Polish team further noted that the occupation was seen by some as ‘the rhetoric of colonialism, which treated the monuments as the property of humanity, or more specifically and sinisterly, as the property of European civilisation’ (Olszki 2008, p. 256). Separately, Tamima Orra Mourad equated the overall occupation of Iraq as one of the three periods of colonisation in Mesopotamia, the first two being the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate. Mourad stated that Westerners had occupied the region in order to ‘interfere, infiltrate or invade the Near East at different times’ (Mourad 2007, p. 155). She further stated that the ‘US benevolent empire has established military bases across the globe, not to dispatch them into conflict, but to intimidate the rest of the world’ (Mourad 2007, p. 163). The manner in which archaeological sites were appropriated and managed was reminiscent of the colonial occupation that was discussed in Chapter 2. Although four decades had passed since Westerners controlled the fate of ancient ruins, the 2003 war revisited the same ideologies.

International and Domestic Cultural Heritage Laws
Armed conflict and official guidance on cultural property protection have a history in the US dating back to the 1863 Lieber Code, which ‘was the first formal set of rules laid down by a state as to how both its own armies and that of its enemies should be treated’ (Forrest 2007, p. 184). Yet perhaps the most well know law resulted from the atrocities committed during WWII, the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Drazewska 2015). Patty Gerstenblith provided pragmatic details about the Convention, and the legal responsibilities as it related to the US military occupation of foreign lands (Gerstenblith 2008, 2009, 2010). For example, she stated that although it had not been ratified at the time the Iraq war started ‘the policy of the United States was to view as binding those provisions of the Hague Convention that the United States regarded as part of customary international law’ (Gerstenblith 2010, p. 11). Gerstenblith highlighted the fact that military bases were built on or near archaeological sites, and drew reference to the ambiguity of the Convention, which calls for refraining from causing damage to cultural property except in cases of ‘military necessity’ a term however, yet to be universally defined (Gerstenblith 2010, p. 9).
Craig Forrest also discussed the debate associated with military necessity, but more specifically, the exception that allows a state party to act in a hostile manner against cultural property if it has been made into a military objective. He said such a caveat ‘acts to legitimize destructive actions and to privilege military considerations at the cost of humanitarian values’ (Forrest 2007, p. 219). Thurlow also discussed the issue as it pertained to sites and museums:

The Second Protocol creates a strong presumption against the destruction of cultural property during armed conflicts by forbidding its destruction unless an attacking party establishes: (1) that the cultural property has been transformed into a military objective; and (2) there is no feasible alternative with similar military advantages. Aggressor nations must take all practicable precautions to prevent the destruction, and even incidental damage to cultural sites. (Thurlow 2005, p. 164).

In the lead up to the war, other Western scholars such as Peter Stone engaged with UK forces, who as part of the coalition, were responsible for adhering to the terms in Article 6 of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which reads in part:

Whilst fully respecting the sovereignty of the States on whose territory the cultural and natural heritage mentioned in Articles 1 and 2 is situated, and without prejudice to property right provided by national legislation, the States Parties to this Convention recognise that such heritage constitutes a world heritage for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to co-operate. (UNESCO 1972).

Stone said he and his colleagues ‘stressed the vulnerability of sites and museums immediately post-conflict, and stressed the coalition’s responsibilities under international conventions’ (Stone 2008b, p. 76). He later recalled of his exchange with the military that ‘there was clear acceptance amongst those with whom I was dealing directly that things could have been managed better and that they wanted to get it right next time’ (Stone 2008b, p. 80). Marion Forsyth also discussed the failure of international laws to protect cultural heritage during the war. She proposed that ‘The current established customary and codified international laws of war are not sufficient to protect cultural property in times of armed conflict’ (Forsyth 2004, p. 97).

In Cultural Heritage Issues: The Legacy of Conquest, Colonization, and Commerce, Sabine von Schorlemer focused on military responsibilities towards the issues of preventing looting during war. However, she also recognised that the international laws were adhered to because sites were not targeted during the war, and that there did not appear to be ‘extensive collateral damage to cultural property’ (von Schorlemer 2009, p. 141). Yet within the same publication, Lyndel Prott observed that despite the laws ‘the rules to respect cultural property were not followed in the case of Babylon’ (Prott 2009, p. 260). Similarly, Amy Miller admonished troops for their failure to stop the looting of museums and sites, which she stated breached Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and its
laws of occupation (Miller 2005, p. 71). In his discussion on the practical execution of polices, Christopher Hoh suggested:

Failing to protect cultural heritage can create a cognitive dissonance, undermining the strategic communication goals of the military. A case in point is the recent building in Iraq of coalition military bases on the sites of ancient Babylon and Ur. This action needlessly fuelled resentment and suspicion among the local population and beyond. (Hoh 2008, p. 198).

Hoh continued to voice that ‘it does no good to profess respect for a country’s people and then appear powerless to protect the things they hold dear’ (Hoh 2008, p. 198). Although he was referencing the looting of the Iraq Museum, the same opinion could be applied to the occupation of archaeological sites. In addition, The National Historic Preservation Act, Section 402 requires that ‘federal undertakings outside of the United States take into account adverse effects on sites inscribed on the World Heritage List or on the foreign nation’s equivalent of the National Register for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating adverse effects’ (NHPA 1980).

Iraqi antiquities laws which also call for the protection of movable and immovable cultural property have been in place since Gertrude Bell’s 1924 regulations, which have since been revised to the most current 2002 amendment. Article 15 lists actions which are forbidden on and near archaeological sites, which include ‘trespassing, farming, erecting residential or any other kinds of buildings, or engaging in any operations that would result in changing the features on heritage sites’ (MOC 2002).

Although the laws prohibit the occupation of archaeological ruins, according to Elizabeth Varner, because all military bases were considered American territory at the time of the occupation ‘the U.S. military will not apply Iraqi laws to US personnel under US jurisdiction’ (Varner 2011, p. 14). Irrespective of this issue, Mary Ellen O’Connell warned that ‘there is a moderate possibility that the United States and its coalition partners may one day pay actual damages or provide in-kind reparations for failing to protect Iraqi cultural property’ (O’Connell 2004, p. 355).

Overall, the extent of published information has proven useful for understanding the legalities of cultural heritage protection during times of conflict. For example, at the start of war:

Both the United States and Great Britain have signed the Convention, but neither country has ratified it. The Hague Convention's provisions apply in any armed conflict where two or more of the hostile countries are members of the Convention. Thus, as a technical matter, the Hague Convention did not govern the March 2003 US and British invasion of Iraq. (Forsyth 2004, p. 88).

Nevertheless, by the time it was ratified by the US in 2009 and the Articles should have been followed, three sites in Iraq, Ur, the previously mentioned ruins in Kirkuk, and a site in Mosul were still under coalition control. While the troops
released Ur back to the Iraqis in 2009, the two other sites remained occupied until the complete withdrawal of US forces in December 2011. Therefore, the excuse of non-ratification was no longer valid after 2008. However, there is no mention of this in the published record. J. Holmes Armstead succinctly depicted the scenario when he stated ‘Given the low priority assigned to cultural property protection, it should come as no surprise that adequate measures to protect the numerous and diverse sites were not undertaken’ (Armstead 2008, p. 118).

Cultural Heritage Awareness Training

Soldiers were sent to Iraq with little to no training in cultural heritage awareness, which has been discussed by numerous authors. Some of the most useful accounts were presented by personnel who were deployed during different stages of the war. Sergeant Darrell Pinckney, who had an archaeological degree, related his experience of serving at the KRAB where pottery and artefacts were found throughout the base. He stated that US Army General Order 1A was adhered to by personnel. The order prohibits ‘removing, possessing, selling, defacing or destroying archaeological artefacts or national treasures’ (USCENTCOM 2000).

Yet, he noted that neither protocols nor recommendations existed that could have provided useful advice on how to treat the artefacts and the site. Pinckney said there was a need to have ‘specific cultural resource management guidance for personnel’ (Pinckney 2010, p. 125). Likewise, Lieutenant Colonel Kila, also with a background in cultural heritage, served in the southern provinces. He noted how military operations caused varying degrees of damage, including using archaeologically rich soil to fill sandbags, the detonation of munitions near delicate ruins, and ground pollution caused by leaking military equipment and vehicles (Kila 2013, p. 37). He realised ‘it has become clear that there are not enough individuals who have knowledge of both cultural heritage and military operational planning’ (Kila 2013, p. 46).

However, in addition to Pinckney and Kila, another example of the duel familiarity did exist. A platoon leader who was educated in historic preservation practices as part of his civilian career discussed how assistance was rendered to Iraqi staff at the site of Agar Quf near Baghdad. Funding was provided to implement infrastructure improvements at the ruins, which was a popular tourist attraction pre-2003. Although the soldiers involved in the project had not received heritage awareness training, they were cognisant of the importance to remain in the background and provide support to the Iraqis. They recalled that the military newspaper, Stars and Stripes, published a story about the assistance the team provided. Their commander, Captain David Uthlaut, was quoted as stating ‘we think it should be an Iraqi process to lead the project’ (Uthlaut in Roberts & Roberts 2013, p. 184). This demonstrated the awareness to fully involve the local heritage community was practiced. On the other hand, Cheryl White and Thomas Livoti described a site visit to the ruins of Nippur in January 2009. They noted that White:
Surveyed the ancient Sumerian site of Nippur with assigned military personnel. The survey was endorsed by the Lieutenant Commander because it was a line of effort passed down from US Army Corps Command level in Baghdad. The objective was to determine the potential for Nippur to be a tourist venue and contribute to the development of cultural industries. (White & Livoti 2013, p. 206).

White and Livoti made no mention of Iraqi involvement or consultation, nor if engagement was attempted. While the survey was part of a larger counterinsurgency operation aimed at tracking artefact looting activity, it was curious that they stressed that protection efforts should be coordinated with the local stakeholders, yet they did not follow that practice themselves (White & Livoti 2013, p. 210).

Soldiers were left to their own devices for the first few years of the war. The need to train troops was recognised by an Army Reservist who had a background in art conservation. Corine Wegener was in Baghdad in May 2003, and witnessed the damages at the Iraq Museum. She was surprised at the lack of mobilisation from international heritage organisations that could have sent experts to assist troops with conservation efforts. While the dangerous environment caused by the conflict was one factor that deterred on-the-ground assistance, the other was the absence of coordination between the DoD and cultural heritage institutions, which had not been in practice since the MFAA program was dissolved after WWII. Wegener’s first-hand experience led her to implement training guidelines for US Army Civil Affairs personnel, of whom the majority tend to be Army Reservists. While reservists are part-time civilian employees in times of peace, they are deployed with active troops during conflict situations. Within the Civil Affairs branch, many of the personnel have specialised skills, mainly in the humanitarian and engineering fields, which Wegener was able to incorporate into her program (Wegener 2008, 2010).

She also created the US Committee of the Blue Shield (USCBS), which became functional in 2006. Their mission is to ‘help coordinate a worldwide emergency response to cultural property threatened by armed conflict, particularly in those areas in which US forces are deployed’ (Wegener 2008, p. 171). According to Wegener, between 2006 and 2010, the ‘USCBS has trained more than 1000 deploying Civil Affairs personnel’ (Wegener 2010, p. 39). While the program was praised, it was also noted that in 2010 less than 4 per cent of the total number of reservists in the force possessed cultural heritage expertise (Ahern 2010, p. 59). This indicates that further focus should be on attempting to educate more personnel about heritage issues. In mid-2015, the Institute for Military Governance expressed interest in re-establishing a program similar to MFAA. They advertised for uniformed officers to serve as heritage specialists, yet results from the announcement have yet to be reported (CHAMP 2016).

Other responses to the need for awareness training included briefing recruits and officers as part of their readiness packages. Laurie Rush described how in 2004 ‘a group of military archaeologists realised that they would need to design and institute heritage awareness for deploying personnel’ (Rush 2010a, p. 86). They
determined an effective means of doing that was through the distribution of decks of playing cards specifically designed to convey their message, which began to circulate in 2006. Prior to deployment, soldiers were given the cards which depicted images of archaeological sites and antiquities, with accompanying messages that encouraged engagement with the local population; warned against collecting artefacts; cautioned against digging on sites; and emphasised how cultural heritage protection was of worldwide importance (Zeidler & Rush 2010, p. 77).

Rush and James Zeidler described a specific incident in which they were effective in raising awareness within the ranks. They stated that coalition personnel had been visiting archaeological sites without local permission, and when they obtained the cards, the information they contained created awareness that their actions were potentially detrimental to the ruins (Zeidler & Rush 2010, p. 82). Similarly, Brian Rose discussed his involvement in the general cultural heritage awareness training he provided to military personnel through the AIA Troops Lecture Program. He explained:

In every briefing I have given, the enlisted soldiers and officers have been riveted to the material being presented, and the other archaeologists who have given the briefings have received emails and letters from soldiers stationed in Iraq, who ask additional questions about the presentation, or describe their attempts to safeguard mud-brick structures inadvertently uncovered during construction, or chronicle their attempts to hinder looting. (Rose 2007, p. 148).

The AIA partnership with the US Armed Forces manifested into the AIA-Military Group, which became the Cultural Heritage by Archaeology and Military Panel (CHAMP). They are ‘an interest group composed of archaeologists, anthropologists, scientists, interested lay people and military personnel from around the world’ who provide training for deploying military personnel (CHAMP 2016). This is another example of a successful partnership between individuals interested in promoting the need to raise consciousness about cultural heritage issues within military ranks.

Since the US ratified the Hague Convention in 2009, published accounts of the importance of cultural heritage training in military programs have been noted by Zeidler, Paul Green and John Valanis. Zeidler emphasised the need to continue incorporating training on both the strategic and tactical levels. He discussed several in-progress programs that promote heritage awareness, including: general training via lectures; cultural heritage resource web portals; mock training exercises; added heritage awareness training at the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC); a Field Commanders Guidebook; an Illustrated Archaeology Checklist; no-strike lists; as well as the need to produce and distribute more cultural awareness playing cards (Zeidler 2013, p. 78). He spoke of the necessity to have:

A military force where all members have at the very least a minimal understanding that they may encounter cultural property and heritage
features in the landscape when operating at the global level; and that this awareness would translate into reporting features and issues up the chain of command. (Zeidler 2013, p. 85).

The programs Zeidler listed are part of the operational guidelines that he and Rush established in 2009 for military commanders. They include training tools and support services which serve as part of their Combatant Command Cultural Heritage Action Group (CCHAG). The information is easily accessible on-line, which also provides links to policies, laws, as well as professional organisations that can be contacted with questions about cultural heritage matters (CCHAG 2014).

Another innovative initiative is Paul Green’s military funded Overseas Regional Cultural Heritage Integrated Data (ORCHID) program, which is a database that identifies cultural property. It is designed to aid DoD personnel when they are planning for munitions strikes during wartime exercises, thus avoiding sensitive areas. Green stated that ‘as we began this project, one of our concerns was appreciating how peoples around the world identify, value, and prioritize their own heritage resources, and how these perspectives could be addressed in DoD planning’ (Green 2013, p. 270). His team conducted a worldwide literature review and comparative analysis that listed sites by country. Green was careful to point out that data collection was headed by Western subject matter experts, and that local values may differ from their own. However, the program conveyed the overall message of heritage protection, and was successfully utilized in strategic planning workshops in 2011, which were attended by military advance planners, and personnel engaged in base construction and maintenance, as well as combat field operations (Green 2013, p. 274).

John Valanis, who also served as a member of the coalition during the war, elaborated on new cultural heritage awareness training being incorporated into the ROTC curriculum, which trains and commissions US military officers. Cadets are tested on their leadership abilities, which includes scenarios that gage their attentiveness towards cultural property protection during battle drills. According to Valanis, modules incorporate matters such as how they would feel if places in America, for example the Gettysburg Battlefield or the Alamo, were destroyed by a foreign military, and how such places are comparable in importance to the Shi’a shrines in Karbala (Valanis 2013, p. 100). During the training courses, they are also given examples of poorly executed protection measures, such as the infamous looting of the Iraq Museum, and are required to discuss what could have been done differently within the constraints of combat (Valanis 2013, p. 102). Because the program was only recently added, results will not be seen until after 2016. However, its implementation demonstrated that DoD was finally becoming proactive in educating their command personnel in heritage matters.

On the British side, Stone developed a system in order to positively guide military understanding about the importance of cultural heritage protection and its relation to the local population. Stone’s program called for the full engagement of specialists with military personnel. He explained the approach as a series of four tiers:
Tier 1: Long-term awareness training that is built into routine training for all troops, which covers generic cultural property protection issues such as its value to the community and how to recognise historic properties; Tier 2: Immediate pre-deployment training including awareness about the specific region where troops are deploying to and what sites they are likely to encounter; Tier 3: During conflict, when personnel put their training to use ensuring that sites are protected and laws are followed; and Tier 4: Post-conflict, with an emphasis on stabilization and offers of emergency aid, repair and conservation, as well as working with the local experts within the country. (Stone 2013, p. 173-4).

He cautioned that the tiers could be blurred and were not purely linear in practice, such as the potential for overlap between tiers three and four. However, the significant contribution of this framework was to strongly advocate for the necessity of local involvement. Stone stated that ‘A fundamental axiom of tier four is the return of responsibility for cultural property to local authorities at the earliest opportunity’ (Stone 2013, p. 174). Stone’s approach was fully embraced by the military authorities and led to the establishment of the British Army’s Cultural Property Protection Working Group in 2014 (Purbrick 2016). Such endeavours demonstrated forward thinking by the armed forces.

Relations between Members of the Coalition Forces and Iraqi Heritage Professionals

Yet another area that lacked full engagement during the war, and which has been argued within the professional community, were the issues related to cross-cultural relationships between the troops and Iraqis. Due to the lack of training, most soldiers relied on ad hoc solutions in order to work with the local heritage experts. For example, Pinckney, who was previously discussed, related two different scenarios of contact between military personnel and the local heritage specialists after pottery and small artefacts were found on the KRAB. In one instance, when pottery was unearthed during the course of a fence installation project in 2003, the operation was halted on the recommendation of local elders in order to avoid causing further damage to the artefacts (Pinckney 2010, p. 119). While Pinckney related that military command adhered to the requests of the locals in order to protect cultural heritage resources, he did not discuss further details of any relationship dynamics that did or did not exist between the two groups. However, while contact was evident in the early years of the war, according to Pinckney, by 2008 the local community was unwilling to work with the American’s due to the potential of placing themselves in danger if insurgents knew they were working with the soldiers. As pottery was still being found on the base, military personnel attempted to contact the local archaeologists for advice on avoidance and mitigation during construction projects, but the locals were unwilling to visit the base (Pinckney 2010, p. 125).

Other examples of contact were attempted further south. In February 2008, members of the British Armed Forces who were based in Basra began working with personnel from the Iraqi Ministry of State for Antiquities and Heritage, and specialists from the British Museum, in order to develop a program called
Operation Heritage. The program was divided into two distinct projects, one was designed to assess the conditions of archaeological sites in order to implement programs that would assist in conservation efforts, and the other project was designed to refurbish one of Saddam Hussein’s palaces into a new museum (Clarke 2010; White-Spunner 2011). Hugo Clarke recognised ‘It is imperative that projects such as Operation Heritage are indigenously led and advice must be sought at every juncture, the British Museum and the British Army are purely supporting elements’ (Clarke 2010, p. 144). Barney White-Spunner also worked on the projects, and emphasised that the museum refurbishment was ‘an Iraqi-owned project from the outset’ (White-Spunner 2011, p. 84).

White-Spunner highlighted the history of cooperative efforts between academia and military personnel, and provided examples of Western archaeologists in Mesopotamia such as T.E. Lawrence, Leonard Woolley and Gertrude Bell, during WWI (White-Spunner 2011, p. 80). As discussed in the previous chapter, these role models were also the individuals who worked as British intelligence agents, which he acknowledged. However, he praised their roles for the invaluable advice they were able to give to troops, rather than their association with imperialistic notions. Tobias Richter noted ‘the archaeology-espionage conundrum is deeply rooted in the Eurocentric perception and appropriation of the Orient by western scholars, and is directly connected to the colonialist and imperialist undertones of the West’s engagement with it’ (Richter 2008, p. 213).

While the British programs were honourable in their concept, neither author discussed the history of the British Mandate in Iraq, nor if that had any effect on their relations with the Iraqis during the planning phases of the projects. While neither project was implemented prior to, or immediately after the withdrawal of British troops from Iraq, in September 2016 one hall of the museum was opened in the converted Saddam palace (Robson 2016). At the writing of this thesis, results based analysis from either project is absent from the published record.

Yet published accounts of such cooperative interactions are rare, and the coalition was criticized for being exclusive. McGuire Gibson outlined how:

> It became clear that the central offices in Baghdad, up through June 2004, had little or no information on or control over antiquities matters in the provinces because they had too few vehicles and no means of communication. Individuals in the Occupation Authority were making decisions about sites without consulting with the State Board and it appears that they even ignored the American advisors in the Ministry of Culture who were installed to give advice on antiquities. (Gibson 2004, p. 119).

The advisors whom Gibson referred to were sent to Iraq through the DoS, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) division. Their role was to serve as liaisons between the Iraqis and the coalition forces. Between September 2003 and March 2005, a total of three different individuals held the position, including the previously mentioned Russell and Bahrani, as well as René Teijgeler (Siebrandt
Within his role as advisor between June 2004 and March 2005, Teijgeler explained:

In order to reduce the risk of ethnocentrism, I discussed all issues concerning cultural heritage with the appropriate staff of the museum, library, archives, antiquities board, or the Ministry of Culture. I referred heritage related requests, mostly from army units outside of Baghdad, to the local antiquities authority. It was my standard policy to leave all final decisions to the proper Iraqi authority. (Teijgeler 2011, p. 104).

Christopher Hoh, a Foreign Service Officer with the DoS, mirrored this sentiment when he emphasised that local inclusion was a necessity because:

Even with the best information in the world, there is no substitute for a good network of reliable experts. Particularly needed are names of the key in-country specialists, who know the history of the objects, sites, and cultures in question and are familiar with existing measures for preservation and protection. (Hoh 2008, p. 203).

However, the presence of Western archaeologists working with military units caused debate. The cultural heritage community was divided over whether partnering with military forces was ethically appropriate. After his time working with the coalition, Teijgeler voiced the opinion that archaeologists should only cooperate with the military after a peace mission was approved by an accepted international body such as the United Nations (Teijgeler 2011, p. 99). Rush, who advocated for the partnership, realised that ‘unfortunately aggressive military actions take place whether archaeologists participate or not, and it is also critical to consider the importance of cultural preservation for the local inhabitants of an area in conflict’ (Rush 2011, p. 142). Curtis stated that he would not provide information pre-conflict, but would assist post-conflict because:

The pre-conflict situation is, in fact, governed by political considerations over which the army has no more control than archaeologists, but in the post-conflict situation, when the damage has occurred, both the army and archaeologists have an obligation to rebuild the infrastructure, including cultural heritage. Working with the army post-conflict is, therefore, a pragmatic solution. (Curtis 2011, p. 196).

He further said that during times of war ‘working with the military enabled archaeologists to engage at archaeological sites in a way that, because of the security situation, would otherwise have been completely impossible’ (Curtis 2011, p. 198). Yet Jon Price questioned the ethical, moral and legal ramifications, and whether the engagements were for personal gain rather than beneficial to the local community (Price 2011, p. 201). Yanis Hamilikas was one of the strongest voices against involvement with the military. He criticized archaeologists who were willing to offer ‘professional, technical, and cultural advice and expertise on the next nation to be occupied, accepting uncritically and as a-matter-of-fact that that would be the course of events from now on’ (Hamilakis 2009, p. 50). He discussed other ethical concerns, such as:
How legitimate is it for archaeologists from the invading nations to be collaborating with the military of their own countries, especially since some of these countries (as in the case of the UK), have a long history of colonial rule and domination, and of colonial archaeology, in the countries that they illegally invaded? Why was there almost no discussion on the potential links between these old colonial ties and the current campaigns, and on the nationalist anxieties to stake claims in the post-invasion Iraq? (Hamilakis 2009, p. 52).

Similarly, historian Conrad Crane and Middle East specialist W. Andrew Terrill submitted a US Army War College report in 2003 in which they noted ‘Despite a relatively short experience with French and British occupation, the Arab world today is extraordinarily sensitive to the question of Western domination and has painful memories of imperialism’ (Crane & Terrill 2003, p. 19). However, Nancy Wilkie pointed out that ‘the lack of communication between agencies created gaps in oversight that opened the door to chaos at both the Iraq Museum and archaeological sites throughout Iraq’ (Wilke 2008, p. 237).

At the higher levels of military planning, Lieutenant General David Petraeus listed the need for being culturally aware as one of his fourteen ‘observations from soldiering in Iraq’ (Petraeus 2006, p. 3). Petraeus recognised the need to positively engage with the local populations because ‘people, in general, are more likely to cooperate if those who have power over them respect the culture that gives them a sense of identity and self-worth’ (Petraeus 2006, p. 8). Top-down recognition of the benefits of engaging with the local population was seen as well-intended, yet poorly executed. In order to achieve engagement, the suggested solution was a program called the Human Terrain System (HTS), which entailed the use of counterinsurgency tactics. The HTS was designed to embed social scientists with coalition units to serve as cultural advisors (McFate 2005b).

At its official start in 2007, the program was overwhelmingly poorly received by the anthropological community. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) released a report in 2009 citing among other issues, that anthropologists would not be able to follow AAA’s code of ethics if engaged in such an endeavour (Albro et al. 2009, p. 42). It was also chastised by some military personnel who gave reasons such as resentment of allowing civilian involvement in military operations (Connable 2009). Others criticised it because it operated as an espionage program, which was seen as contrary to generating positive relations with the local community (González 2008).

It was also rebuked due to its tendency to be misleading, specifically ‘it reduces complex humanity to economic, ethnic, and tribal landscapes’ (Porter 2009 p. 194). Porter’s argument continued that ‘good cultural insight requires greater self-awareness about how and why we analyse the enemy’ (Porter 2009 p. 195). Something the HTS did not address. Former HTS employees also expressed concerns over the deficiencies they perceived were embedded in the program. During the 2007 AAA annual conference, Zenia Helbig advised the audience that ‘The program is desperate to hire anyone or anything that remotely falls into the category of academic, social science, regional expert, or PhD’ (Helbig 2007).
Montgomery McFate, who assisted in the development of the HTS, argued that despite the colonial narrative historically attached to intelligence gathering efforts, that if anthropologists did not engage with the program, then military personnel would gather information inappropriately, which would result in misunderstanding cultural norms (McFate 2005a). Other military officers praised the usefulness of the program because ‘many, if not most, of the challenges we face in Iraq and Afghanistan have resulted from our failure early on to understand the cultures in which coalition forces were working’ (Kipp et al. 2006, p. 11). While utilizing Western social scientists years after the war started may have seemed advantageous at the time, the failure to involve the local community meant it did not achieve its desired results of cross-cultural relationships. Although the program officially ended in 2014, vestiges of it continue to run as part of the United States Army’s Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), albeit under the new title of Global Cultural Knowledge Network (Brook 2016). Such efforts are evident that military factions are willing to engage with locals, yet their execution requires further guidance.

Discussion
This chapter has demonstrated that matters related to the protection of cultural heritage during the Iraq war were widely published. Yet a significant lacuna in the existing literature is that it did not frame coalition occupation and subsequent damages of archaeological sites as part of the broader issue of Orientalism. The majority of discussions tended to focus on and around the looting of the Iraq Museum and archaeological sites. Coalition troops were castigated for failing to provide protection in the early years of the war, with authors citing their inactions as violating international laws modelled to protect heritage sites during armed conflict. However, several others also praised their presence at places such as Babylon and Ur because they were protected from local looting gangs. The arguments did not include discussion on the negative impact of how such actions could have been construed as a colonial inspired re-occupation of the country. Instead, authors focused on how the soldiers were obliged to stop the looting and protect the property. Yet the laws they cited were the same laws that clearly defined how it was illegal to build, alter, and live on a historic site, yet only a few authors incorporated this into their discussions.

Because non-coalition personnel encountered difficulties when trying to gain access onto venues that were established as US bases, there was minimal understanding of the true ground situation, and this is reflected in the available literature. Despite the restrictions, several scholars documented physical damages, mainly at Babylon and Ur, which provided vital information linked to how the occupation impacted the scientific integrity of both sites. In addition, while a few authors likened the occupation to the actions of a powerful empire intent on gaining full control of the country, the majority did not fully engage in dialogue related to how the mere presence of a foreign military sent a message of revisiting the colonial past of WWI.
However, the troops were not aware of this because they were deployed without receiving cultural heritage awareness training or guidance, which was widely discussed as one of the major mistakes of the war. Yet the extraordinary efforts that reservists and civilians put forth to rectify this error demonstrated that military factions were open and willing to support new training initiatives. Lectures and courses concentrated on how to protect venues and avoid causing damages to ruins. The overall published material on training practices has demonstrated increased awareness for cultural heritage protection matters since 2006, but site occupation as it pertains to notions of Orientalism is not one of the main topics, yet it is vital that it is fully addressed.

Despite the absence of training, military personnel contributed to the body of written material via several informative narratives credited to their first-hand experiences of positive engagement with Iraqi heritage specialists. However, some of their publications demonstrated that while they were willing to behave responsibly towards the ruins and local community, their execution required guidance. Many of their stories echoed what Edward Said described as ‘the privileged role of culture in the modern imperial experience, and little notice taken of the fact that the extraordinary global reach of classical nineteenth and early twentieth century European imperialism still casts a considerable shadow over our own times’ (Said 1993, p. 5).

In addition, a large portion of work focused on issues related to whether Western heritage specialists should work with the military, which became a contentious topic. However the arguments were on how it would affect the practitioners morally and ethically, not the projected impact on the Iraqis. The controversial HTS generated the greatest hostility, yet none of the individuals who opposed the program cited the overtly Orientalist ideology attached to it. One of the key elements left out of the program was the lack of local engagement. It was designed, implemented and carried-out by Westerners, which reverted back to the Orientalist manner in which Iraqis and their sites were treated in the past, or as Said called it ‘the imperial-cycle’ (Said 1993, p. 19). Although written just prior to the Iraq war, Douglas Little’s opinion is relevant in that US and Middle East relations were problematic because of American Orientalism, specifically ‘a tendency to underestimate the people of the region and to overestimate Americas ability to make a bad situation better’ (Little 2002, p. 314).

This chapter has highlighted that authors have defined and discussed many of the mistakes that were made in relation to cultural heritage issues and the Iraq war. Yet what is notably absent from the literature is in-depth dialogue examining the relationship dynamics between members of the coalition and Iraqi cultural heritage professionals. In addition, while a few soldiers have provided first-person accounts of their experiences, a comprehensive study has not been completed. The glaring gap in published information highlights an absence of suggested theoretical and methodological approaches of partnering coalition forces with local cultural heritage experts in order to protect cultural heritage sites, which this thesis has set out to rectify.
Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the existing literature in existence on the topic of the Iraq War and its impact on archaeological sites, and the manner in which it has been addressed. Scholars and practitioners tended to focus on site damages that were a result of looting, with some giving voice to the construction of military bases on places such as Babylon and Ur. Of the authors who have covered site occupation, their discussions broached the issues of Orientalism, but did not fully address them. The same problem was found with authors who discussed international and domestic laws as they pertain to heritage venues. While the issue of cultural heritage awareness training, and relations with the local community were broadly covered, they too lacked comprehensive dialogue of revisiting past colonial biases.

However, it must be remembered that topics related to cultural heritage and the war are vast and robust, and no single author is expected to have elaborated on every problem. The contributions of all the scholars and practitioners listed in this literature review have built the foundation from which this thesis further expands. This review is therefore evidence of the need to ‘fill-in’ the missing information, namely discussions on site occupation and how it pertains to notions of Orientalism. This chapter has elaborated on material currently in publication, but more importantly, it has provided the evidence of a research gap due to the limited literature available, and endeavours to add further guidance for military personnel and their engagements with local heritage sites and caretakers.
Chapter 4: Methodological Approach

Introduction
This chapter outlines the manner in which research was undertaken in order to fill the gap in knowledge about Orientalist ideologies and the occupation of archaeological sites during the Iraq War. The methodology incorporated collecting primary accounts of contact between members of the coalition who deployed to Iraq and Iraqi cultural heritage professionals. The most effective method of information gathering proved to be one-on-one semi-structured interviews, utilizing open-ended questions. Individuals relayed their personal experiences and opinions, which were analysed and integrated into three separate case studies. In addition, archival textual material was also included which portrayed the actions of nineteenth and early twentieth century Westerners towards sites and the local population. The following sections outline how the research was conceived, implemented and executed.

Statement of Problem
The main objective of this study was to examine and analyse the manner in which archaeological sites were managed by Westerners, first by archaeologists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and later by the 2003 coalition forces; that is exploring if the treatment of the sites dictated relationship patterns between the Western factions and the Iraqi cultural heritage communities. As fully discussed in the previous chapter, since 2003, numerous publications have focused on the war, many of which included debates in regards to military troops occupying archaeological sites. While physical damages to ruins and artefacts were commonly discussed, notions of Orientalism were not fully deliberated. Furthermore, only a few primary narratives from personnel who were based on sites such as Babylon and Ur exist. As a result, the on-the-ground situation and the repercussions from the displays of power and control have not been entirely covered. Unless this is understood and changed, the same mistakes that were made during the war in Iraq will be repeated in the next global conflict. It is therefore imperative that military planners take into consideration all the consequences associated with occupying another country’s cultural heritage sites, including those associated with Orientalism. The only manner in which this can be achieved is by ensuring that soldiers are equipped with proper knowledge before their deployments through training sessions that include lessons on avoiding revisiting the colonial past. This thesis strives to document why this was not done, and how to fix it, by answering the question: ‘Was the construction of coalition military bases on Iraqi archaeological sites driven by Orientalist biases during the Iraq War?’
Research Design

According to C.R. Kothari ‘research is an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge’ (Kothari 2004, p. 1). Because opinions about the many issues related to the war were already established, this thesis was able to build on those concepts. Qualitative research was employed, and although the methods associated with it can vary, the general aim is directed at understanding the social world through the collection and analysis of data (Kothari 2004; Ormston et al. 2013). The common characteristics of qualitative research seek to answer questions through a set of pre-established processes in order to gather and produce information that is not predetermined, and is applicable to research beyond the initial study, as outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Common characteristics of qualitative research

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<tr>
<th>Common Characteristics of Qualitative Research (Ormston et al. 2013, p. 4)</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Aims and objectives that are directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about the sense they make of their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories.</td>
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<td>• The use of non-standardised, adaptable methods of data generation that are sensitive to the social context of the study and can be adapted for each participant or case to allow the exploration of emergent issues.</td>
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<td>• Data that are detailed, rich and complex.</td>
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<td>• Analysis that retains complexity and nuance and respects the uniqueness of each participant or case as well as recurrent, cross-cutting themes.</td>
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<td>• Openness to emergent categories and theories at the analysis and interpretation stage.</td>
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<td>• Outputs that include detailed descriptions of the phenomena being researched, grounded in the perspectives and accounts of participants.</td>
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<td>• A reflexive approach, where the role and perspective of the researcher in the research process is acknowledged.</td>
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The question this thesis has set out to answer fits within the parameters of the above listed characteristics. It attempts to understand human experiences and behaviours through personal perspectives, which are related to the key topics outlined in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Key topics of the thesis

<table>
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<th>Key Topics</th>
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<td>• Assessing relationships between coalition personnel and Iraqi cultural heritage specialists.</td>
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<td>• Evaluating the impact of coalition military installations on and near archaeological sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exploring perceptions towards archaeological sites used as military installations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understanding cultural heritage training in the coalition military doctrine.</td>
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One approach to collecting this type of information is through conducting interviews. The methodological approach chosen for this study was ‘emotionalism’ which is concerned with understanding a ‘lived experience where emotions are treated as central to that experience’ (Silverman 2001, p. 90). Interviews prove useful as a qualitative method because participants are allowed to reveal personal thoughts, values, prejudices, views, feelings and perspectives about a specific topic. As Roger Gomm explained:

One-to-one qualitative interviews are usually conducted with the aim of producing a picture of the interviewee as a person with their own way of understanding the world, although usually as having a way of understanding which can be taken as characteristic of people of the same category or in the same social circumstances. (Gomm 2004, p. 176).

Research Sampling
The initial goal was to conduct a total of 40 interviews, 20 with coalition forces personnel and 20 with Iraqi cultural heritage specialists. This sampling was constructed to be an acceptable cross-section of individuals from these two communities. The main goal was to speak with coalition personnel who lived on, or visited an archaeological site during his/her deployment. However individuals who served in Iraq but did not frequent any ruins were also interviewed. The main goal of the interviews with the Iraqi heritage specialists was to speak with individuals who interacted with members of the coalition on or around archaeological sites. Individuals associated with these social units were chosen because their experiences and opinions have a direct bearing on the study, potentially providing invaluable first-hand information not previously recorded.

Three types of sampling were used to locate and engage with potential interview subjects. They were: (1) judgemental or purposive sampling, which aims to contact individuals who are most likely to have information required for the research; (2) expert sampling, in which individuals are experts in their fields; and (3) snowball sampling, in which participants identify other people in their organizations who may also be willing to partake in the study (Kumar 2014, p. 244). Individuals were identified from a mixture of these sources. They were drawn from a pool of known contacts of active and retired military and civilian personnel for coalition members, and active and retired cultural heritage specialists for the Iraqi participants. In addition, professionals associated with military and cultural heritage organizations and institutions were also targeted. Lastly, considerable shared communication networks exist within both the communities, where potential participants were able to relay information about the project to their colleagues. Each person was invited to attend a one-on-one interview either via Skype, telephone, or in-person, depending on his/her location and preference. If the participant was unable to communicate in English, the use of a translator was offered.

Invitations were emailed to a total of 71 individuals, which included members of the coalition and Iraqi cultural heritage personnel. Each email included details of
the study, which was fully explained in a Plain Language Statement (PLS) and accompanying consent form. The PLS comprised of information about the researcher, the research topic, how data would be gathered, and the proposed use of the results. It also described the expected involvement of the participants, as well as their rights and responsibilities in the process during the project. Several weeks prior to each interview, each potential participant was provided with a letter of introduction, a PLS, and a consent form, which was signed, with the understanding that his/her identity and personal details would remain confidential.

Two statements were created in order to directly address each particular group. The version supplied to members of the coalition asked them to reflect on their interactions with Iraqi cultural heritage specialists (Appendix I), while the Iraqis were requested to reflect on their interactions with members of the US and coalition military forces (Appendix II). The statement intended for the Iraqis was translated into Arabic (Appendix III) and was slated for translation into Kurdish by an individual who was to be hired upon arrival in Iraq. The consent form was also sent to the potential coalition participants (Appendix IV) with an Arabic version sent to the Iraqis (Appendix V).

**Interview Participants**

While interviews can range in format from structured to unstructured, this study utilized semi-structured techniques with open-ended questions, which proved to be the most effective means to collect primary data. The questions prompted in-depth discussions between the interviewee and interviewer, which were useful for ‘digging deeper into a situation, phenomenon, issue or problem’ (Kumar 2014, p. 177). This type of communication was necessary in order to understand how members of the coalition and Iraqi heritage specialists interacted with each other within the context of archaeological sites, and what those interactions meant to each individual.

A total of 33 interviews were conducted, 26 were coalition military personnel, and 4 were civilians who worked with the coalition. Of the nations represented by the coalition, 28 were Americans and 2 were Dutch. A total of 3 Iraqis participated, 2 cultural heritage specialists, and 1 individual who served as a heritage consultant during the war (Table 4.3).
A detailed socioeconomic-demographic of each participant’s nationality, gender, affiliation, the years each one spent in Iraq, and archaeological sites visited, are all presented in Appendix VI. In order to comply with the confidentiality clause, when interviewees are cited within the text of each chapter, they are referred to as the interview number next to his or her name as they appear in the appendix.

**Coalition Participants**

Members of the coalition were located living in several countries but mainly in the US, and chose to hold the interviews through video Skype and phone calls. The calls were made from a secure office at Deakin University’s Burwood campus in Melbourne, Australia. Each session was audio recorded after consent was given by the participant, both in writing and verbally. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes.

**Iraqi Participants**

Two Iraqi cultural heritage specialists were located in the US and agreed to phone calls, which were also conducted from the secure Melbourne office. One Iraqi was located in Iraq and was not able to participate via phone or Skype, but did send his answers via email. The low figure for Iraqi participation is explained in detail in the *Problems Encountered*, section below.

**Interview Questions**

The interviews were designed to focus on examining interactions that occurred between individuals from the two groups in response to coalition occupation of archaeological sites. The questions served as a template for starting each interview in order to stimulate dialogue, while still ensuring the key topics were covered. However, during the process a strict set of guidelines was followed to avoid ‘restrictive, leading, and loaded questions’ (Wellington & Szczerbinski 2007, p. 86). In addition, full attention was given to factors such as recognising
that each interviewee possessed his/her own opinion and recalled experiences differently. These variables were taken into consideration, which followed the notion that individual sentiments should not be considered indicative of the entire population (Gomm 2004; Krauss 2005; Wellington & Szczerbinski 2007).

Participants were asked a series of questions specific to their social group. The semi-structured nature of the interviews consisted of asking each participant open-ended questions relevant to his or her social group. For example, members of the coalition were invited to reflect on their knowledge about Iraq before they deployed, and to describe their interactions with archaeological sites and the local population. The Iraqis were similarly asked to describe their interactions with the troops. The full list of questions is presented in Appendix VII. Organizing and asking the questions in such a manner allowed each participant to provide as long or as short an answer as he or she wished, as each individual reflected on personal experiences. The majority of the questions prompted further ad hoc questions not listed in the appendix, but remained relevant to the research topics.

Problems Encountered and Limitations
It was culturally important to conduct the Iraqi interviews face-to-face in their country. However, since the 2003 Iraq war, Baghdad has been listed as a ‘Do Not Travel’ destination on the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) travel advice website. Therefore, it was not possible to conduct the research in the capital. Yet, the city of Erbil, located in Iraqi Kurdistan, was listed as ‘Reconsider Your Need to Travel’ due to the less challenging security environment. Field research was therefore arranged to take place at the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage, which is located at the base of the Erbil Citadel. Cultural heritage professionals from across Iraq participate in conservation and preservation courses at the institute throughout the year. The venue therefore offered the best opportunity to interview a large number of individuals. Contact was made with the director, who agreed to provide secure office space within the institute where the interviews could be conducted in private.

Deakin University officials approved the fieldwork, which was scheduled for the months of August and September 2014. The largest group of interview participants scheduled were the enrolled students and instructors working at the institute. In addition, the social networks of both the pupils and educators was anticipated to generate more interviews via snowball sampling. In addition to the office space allotted by the director, an interpreter/translator was arranged to assist with Arabic or Kurdish speaking participants.

While all the proper logistical arrangements were finalized, one week prior to departure the university permission to travel to Iraq was withdrawn. This was due to a change in the DFAT travel warnings, which as of 11 August 2014 listed Iraqi Kurdistan as a ‘Do Not Travel’ location. This change was in response to US military forces conducting targeted airstrikes against militant factions, specifically the so-called Islamic State, or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), who at the time were moving towards the city of Erbil. As a result, it was not possible to
conduct interviews in Iraq. The threat of the ISIS advancement into Erbil also forced the closure of the institute, and the Iraqis scheduled to participate in the study fled to different locations throughout Iraq and other countries. Repeated attempts were made for several months to contact Iraqi participants, requesting interviews via video Skype or phone calls. Due to the fluid and unstable situation in the country as a result of the conflict, the requests were either declined or remained unanswered.

In addition, communication with Iraqi expatriate communities in both Australia and America were also pursued in an attempt to locate Iraqis who had contact with American or coalition soldiers during the war. These attempts also resulted in negative outcomes. As a result, only 3 Iraqis granted interviews. Because of these unforeseen circumstances, Iraqi involvement in this study is poorly represented. In addition, the 3 participants were sympathetic to the US, which resulted in similar viewpoints when more diverse opinions were initially anticipated. The original intent of the interviews was to also ask the Iraqi participants about their emotional connections to the archaeological sites, both pre and post 2003. Their reactions were expected to measure their sense of place and attachment to the sites. However, this could not be accomplished, and is a limitation in this study.

In order to reach the overall sample of 40 participants, additional interviews with members of the coalition were collected over the course of several months. However, the goal was not reached and time constraints did not allow for pursuing additional participants. While a higher response rate was anticipated, from both the initial outreach and the additional interview requests, the final participants were able to provide useful personal accounts. Yet the reader should be cognisant that the study is based mainly on interviews with members of the coalition, and of those, the majority are American. Because of these circumstances there is a strong Western voice present, instead of dual perspectives that were initially anticipated. Yet, this also enabled the study to concentrate solely on attitudes as they were viewed through Western ideologies, which has not been previously accomplished, and is therefore a relevant focus of this study.

Data Analysis

The interviews were transcribed, coded and manually analysed following examples from similar studies in the field (Flick 2015; Gomm 2004; Kumar 2014; Wellington & Szczubinski 2007). While keeping the key topics in mind, themes began to emerge during the analysis process. Kumar listed three strategies for compiling information: (1) examine verbatim responses and integrate them into the text of the report to either support or contradict the argument; (2) assign a code to each theme and count how frequently each has occurred; or (3) combine both methods to communicate the findings (Kumar 2014, p. 298). Both methods were used during the analysis of the transcriptions, which produced subgroups of themes that were labelled as follows:
• Personal engagements
• Cooperative networks
• Cultural differences
• Knowledge of Iraq
• Occupation of archaeological sites
• Perception towards archaeological sites
• Viewpoints towards Iraqis or members of the coalition
• Pre-deployment training (coalition only)

These subgroups generated a thematic analysis, which as described by Gomm, looks for themes that are present in the whole set of interviews and creates a framework of these making comparisons and contrasts between the different respondents (Gomm 2004, p. 189). Answers to the interview questions were coded following the examples of the above-cited authors. They were examined for similarities and differences, and categorized into the above listed themes. The coding was determined using a mixture of both *a priori* and *a posteriori* groupings, which is, according to Wellington & Szcerbinski ‘the most common and useful approach to analysis’ (Wellington & Szcerbinski 2007, p. 106). This generated a set of data relevant to the key topics listed above in Table 4.2, which included extracting direct quotes from the transcriptions that were compatible with the established subgroups.

Because recognising attitudes of Orientalism was the main focus of the research, particular attention concentrated on understanding the epistemology that may have influenced how coalition troops viewed archaeological sites and their Iraqi caretakers. This followed the concept about the nature of perceiving what people ‘know or think they know.’ According to Robert Audi, this is accomplished through perceptions or other sources of knowledge, not just a belief but rather a justification of a belief (Audi 2011, p. 307). Further, according to Catherine Dawson, there are different types of epistemologies. In the case of this study it was determined to be social epistemology, which ‘concerns itself with knowledge and beliefs within a particular social and historical context’ (Dawson 2013, p. 25).

**Textual Research**

Textual research was also conducted in order to include the history of Western exploration in the region. According to Alan McKee, textual research methods are employed to interpret texts ‘to try and obtain a sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them’ (McKee 2003, p. 1). This was achieved by examining diaries, travel journals, and excavation reports published by explorers and archaeologists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their first-person accounts of interactions with the local population and ancient ruins provided what Gomm listed as ‘evidence of the ways in which individuals or groups interpret the world’ (Gomm 2004, p. 246). He further stated that the word ‘discourse’ may be
substituted for ‘perspective’ or ‘world-view’ and that analysis is used to gain insight into the minds of the writer (Gomm 2004, p. 246). Because this study seeks to understand if colonial archaeologist’s manifested Orientalist ideologies on the sites, this archival research was vital for inclusion.

Case Studies
The information collected from the two types of research provided strong narratives of a number of real life events, which were best expressed in case studies. This method was chosen to represent the data-set because case studies ‘offer a detailed examination of a particular event that commonly includes interviews, documents and records’ (Wellington & Szcerbinski 2007, p. 100). Further, they provide descriptions and attach explanations related to human actions by looking at specific social phenomenon (Swanborn 2010, p. 13). They can therefore assist in answering questions about interactions related to behaviors and the ways in which complications and obstacles are addressed (Swanborn 2010; Wellington & Szcerbinski 2007).

More specifically, they can ‘use purposive, judgmental or information-oriented sampling techniques’ (Kumar 2014, p. 155). According to Peter Swanborn, it is necessary to explore one or more cases in order to clarify social relations, perceptions, opinions, attitudes and behavior of individuals and groups (Swanborn 2010, p. 41). During the course of the interviews, all participants, including military and civilian personnel, revealed which sites they had visited, or lived on. The highest number of trips occurred at Ur, which was followed by Babylon, Kish, Uruk and others sites located in both southern and northern Iraq, as demonstrated in Table 4.4 which lists sites by highest to lowest visitor numbers. Two sites are undocumented in the archaeological record, and therefore do not have registered names. Ruins that were visited by personnel in Kirkuk and Najaf are simply listed with the name of the city where they are located.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Number of Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ur</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babylon</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kish</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borsippa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eridu</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghamin</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatra</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larsa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uba'id</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agar Quf</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkuk (undocumented site)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Najaf (undocumented site)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimrud</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samarra</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the inclusion of civilian personnel was an important part of the data collection, because the concentration was mainly on members of the armed forces, a separate chart was composed. The second chart demonstrated that Ur and Babylon were only separated by one less visitor, followed by Kish with the next highest number of visitors, which is seen in Table 4.5. It was therefore determined that case studies could be derived from the sites with the highest number of visitors.

Table 4.5: Sites visited by coalition military personnel only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Number of Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ur</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babylon</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kish</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatra</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agar Quf</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borsippa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkuk (undocumented site)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimrud</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samarra</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following Swanborn’s criteria, and the information generated from the interviews, the three sites chosen were Ur, Babylon and Kish, all located in southern Iraq (Figure 1.6). Because of the number of experiences at each place, they fit the design of selecting examples that ‘can provide you with as much information as possible to understand the case in its totality’ (Kumar 2014, p. 155).

However, it is important to understand that while this form of research can provide insightful information, care must be taken to recognise that weaknesses also exist. For instance ‘one individual’s reality of a remembered event may differ drastically from that of another person’s and the interviewer must be aware of this’ (Krauss 2005, p. 760). In addition ‘case studies can also be construed as too generalized, therefore the researcher must strive to be objective and examine and analyse them based on empirical data’ (Swanborn 2010, p. 137). Yet they also allow for an intrinsic and unique examination of issues that can develop into a greater understanding of a situation or event. As defined by Flick, case studies are useful for illustrating ‘a basically comparative study in order to highlight links between the different issues’ (Flick 2015, p. 193). These cautions were recognised, and objectivity remained foremost in mind in order to present results that were impartial and without conjecture.

Significance of the Research
The research undertaken for this thesis is unique in both design and execution. Published accounts of first-hand contact between members of the coalition forces and Iraqi cultural heritage professionals are rare. The objective of this study is to assess and determine the effect of the occupation on the Iraqi cultural heritage
community. Because Iraq has been a difficult place for non-Iraqis to visit for more than thirty years, this thesis provides empirical insight and information not obtainable elsewhere. The personal experiences of the individuals who were interviewed were able to provide invaluable primary information about cross-cultural contact that has not been previously recorded. This study also afforded participants the opportunity to reflect and discuss past events, and the emotional responses that were generated from those events, in a non-threatening environment.

A project such as this has not been previously attempted, so it is innovative in its scope. The proposed outcome is the creation of a list of recommendations that can provide a model of best practice for implementing conflict planning structures for Western militaries who come into contact with archaeological sites in foreign lands. In addition to providing guidance to governmental agencies, it is also expected to assist in future research endeavours for academic projects, as well as international public and private organizations who have a vested interest in cultural heritage matters during times of war and peace. As further global conflicts loom, Western contact with Eastern cultures and their heritage sites is inevitable, and should be a concern for governmental and civilian agencies.

**Ethical Considerations**

This research project required a high-risk ethics consent, which was granted by Deakin University’s Human Research Ethics Committee after meeting their criteria. As part of the approval, the Ethics Committee was guaranteed that every participant in the study was ensured that his/her contribution in the research was entirely voluntary and confidential, and that he/she would be allowed to decline to continue with the interview process at any time. These steps were closely followed before and during each interview. They were not started until the participant gave his/her permission to do so. Each individual was reassured that his/her identity would remain strictly confidential and would not be shared or made available to other researchers or institutions. In addition, participant names are non-identifiable to other researchers, the public, or revealed in any capacity within the thesis. Rather, they are solely identified by codes in the form of their interview numbers, as highlighted above, and as listed in Appendix VI.

Because of the feasibility of the subject matter generating strong emotional reactions from the participants, each subject was assured that he/she could stop the interview at any time for a short period, or end it altogether. Conversations were audio recorded only; visual imagery was not used. As outlined by the Ethics Committee, all audio recordings of the interviews, and subsequent electronic transcriptions, have been stored on a Deakin University password protected desktop computer. Back-up copies are stored on a secure external hard drive, which has been warehoused in a locked cabinet in the PhD office at Deakin University. The password protected computer is backed up by the university on a daily basis, and all the data is available electronically if any physical copies are damaged. In addition, the committee was notified that the PhD candidate worked
in Iraq between 2005 and 2013, and had professional contact with some of the participants during that time. However, all relationships were maintained at professional levels before, during, and after the interviews, and any future contact or projects were guaranteed to be completely separate from this research.

Conclusion
This chapter has explained the methodology that was implemented in order to cover the key topics in regards to coalition site occupation. The sampling method resulted in an adequate number of Western interviews, but due to the advancement of ISIS into Iraq, the local population is poorly represented. The manner in which interviews were conducted, that is the use of open-ended questions, allowed for each individual to confidentially discuss his or her experiences and opinions during the in-depth interview process. The information from the analysed transcriptions was combined with archival textual material, which resulted in case studies that fully discuss three archaeological sites that were used as military bases during the war in Iraq.
Chapter 5: The Occupation of Ur

Introduction
This chapter focuses on examining Western control of the archaeological site of Ur. A brief history of the city is first provided, followed by a section that looks at early twentieth century primary accounts collected from journalists, military personnel and diplomats. The site’s theological relevance, excavations, and British military occupation pre and post WWI are reviewed. However, the manner in which the site and the local population were referenced in published material is the main concentration. Archival research revealed that negative depictions of Arabs were prevalent across several disciplines, and the ruins of Ur were endangered during several armed conflicts. Comments about these topics are presented as brief background information in order to understand the occupation throughout the 2003 war in Iraq.

The key question of this thesis, which aims to determine if the occupation of ancient sites was driven by Orientalist biases, was investigated. The information necessary to provide answers to this query was gathered from coalition personnel who visited, or were near Ur. They openly discussed the interactions they had with the regional specialists, their visits to the site, as well as the pre-deployment training they received. The analysed interviews highlighted that religious dogma was strongly associated with Ur, while notions of maintaining control over it were expressed as unavoidable circumstances due to the war. The most common factor was the nominal education provided to the troops in relation to cultural heritage issues. The interpretations of cultural differences, the use of the site, and cross-cultural contacts are all discussed to determine if there was a demonstration of ownership, power and control as it relates to Orientalist tendencies.

A Brief History of Ur
The ancient city of Ur, also known as modern Tell el-Mukayyar, is located in the Dhi Qar Province of southern Iraq, approximately 300 km southeast of Baghdad and 20 km southwest of the city of Nasiriya. According to the analysis of archaeological remains, the ancient site hosted several diverse cultures for almost 4,000 years. Excavated pottery date its early occupation to the Ubaid Period, when some of the first farming communities settled in the Euphrates River region approximately 8,000 years ago. The city was a major ceremonial and commercial centre between the Early and Third Dynastic Periods. During this time, elaborate burials took place, and the monumental Ziggurat of Ur Nammu, a pyramidal-shaped terraced mud-brick tower, was constructed (Woolley 1928b, 1929, 1930). King Ur Nammu, builder of the ziggurat, was also the first king to inscribe law codes on clay tablets, which were created some 300 years before the better known Babylonian Code of Hammurabi (Diamond 1957; Lloyd 1960; Wiseman 1962).

Ur was ruled by a diverse series of kings and conquerors over the years, including the Akkadian King, Sargon the Great, who sacked the city between the
Early Dynastic Periods, and who was succeeded by Kassite and Babylonian invaders. The city suffered varying degrees of damages and destruction during times of conquest, but also periods of rebuilding and refurbishments during the reigns of different kings. The last major reconstructions took place in the sixth century BC under the direction of Nabonidus, the last Babylonian king (Haywood 2005; Leick 2002; Roux 1992). Habitation ceased by about 500 BC due to the migration of the Euphrates several kilometres south of the ancient city, which left the population without its main water supply. Desert sands consumed the abandoned metropolis, which laid buried for more than 2,000 years until Western explorers began mapping and unearthing the site in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Hall 1930b; Leick 2002; Roux 1992).

Explorers and Excavators
As discussed in Chapter 2, modern Western explorers often approached ancient sites with the intent to locate archaeological evidence in order to connect names of individuals and cities with books in the Old Testament. Ur was one of those sites, as it was thought to be the homeland of the patriarchal figure of Abraham (Fenollós 2011; Matthews 2003). Eighteenth century cartographers suggested the ruins were Biblical Ur, but it was not until the British Vice Consul, J.E. Taylor, began work in 1853 and discovered inscribed foundation-cylinders, that it was identified as Ur of the Chaldees (Hall 1930b; Loftus 1857; Taylor 1855; Woolley 1950). The initial excavations only lasted one season, when much of the ziggurat was exposed. They were not resumed until after WWI, when, as British archaeologist and military captain H.R. Hall stated ‘by the fortune of war, Mesopotamia fell into British hands’ (Hall 1930b, p. vii). He was referring to the post-war division of the Ottoman Empire provinces or vilayets, into Allied-controlled Arab States, which placed the newly formed Iraq under British control (Silverfarb & Khadduri 1986; Simon & Tejirian 2005).

One of the results of British authority over Iraq was that numerous ancient ruins were easily accessible by Western scholars. One of those was Assyriologist turned soldier, Captain R. Campbell Thompson. He served in the British Civil Service Commission, the entity that regulated archaeological site management throughout the country. Thompson was under the orders of the War Office, on behalf of the British Museum, to excavate the region in 1918 (Thompson 1920, p. 101). He did not note the presence of British troops at Ur, but stated that they were ‘within the protected area of Nasiriya’ (Thompson 1920, p. 102). Thompson’s reports focused on object descriptions rather than personal interactions. However, he did state that a soldier was assigned as his personal guard during the course of his excavations (Thompson 1920, p. 102). H.R. Hall was Thompson’s successor. He conducted excavations for three months in 1919, during which time he exposed more of the ziggurat, as well as the surrounding temenos, or the official province of the city (Hall 1930a).
Hall employed local tribal members and Turkish prisoners of war to serve as excavators, and when he described his workforce, it was to compare them with animals. He described ‘Arabs always reminded me of birds, the Turks of some heavy rodent’ (Hall 1930b, p. 131). Similar metaphors were not given to the British military forces who were his assigned security guards. Instead, in a report compiled for the British Museum, he expounded that ‘The arrival of an archaeologist who required a guard for himself and his workmen was a new complication, but it was met with goodwill, and Ur soon became a regular outpost of the garrison’ (Hall 1930b, p. 73). This marked the beginning of a long continuation of occupation by both foreign and domestic troops. Hall did not disclose if the ruins were damaged by the garrison, or their exact location on the site. He did however mention that officers regularly took inscribed bricks from the site, possibly due to their Biblical lure (Hall 1930b, p. 106).

More than two years after Hall’s departure, Charles Leonard Woolley resumed excavations in 1922. This was once again on behalf of the British Museum, who had by this time partnered with the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Penn Museum) in the US. Woolley supervised the excavations for twelve consecutive seasons (Woolley 1950). All matters related to the archaeological remains uncovered at the site were mandated by British authorities for the duration of the work, and managed by a succession of Western heritage specialists (Bernhardtsson 2005). While Woolley’s endeavours were largely scientific, he did connect the site to the Biblical figure of Abraham, most notably when he labelled one of his grid maps The City of Ur in the Time of Abraham 2100-1990 BC (Woolley 1930, p. XXXIII). In addition to the theological narrative, he also referenced the discovery of foundation-cylinders that identified the site as Ur of the Chaldees, and attributed a series of Old Babylonian housing foundations to the authentic home of Abraham (Woolley 1950; Woolley & Mallowan 1976).

However, not all scholars were convinced of Ur’s link to the Genesis narrative. Hall stated that ‘there is nothing from Ur that can be brought into any kind of definite relationship with the Abrahamic saga’ (Hall 1930b, p. 103). Stronger doubt has also been voiced by more contemporary scholars such as Molly Meinhardt, Alan Millard, H.W.F. Saggs, and Hershel Shanks (Meinhardt 2000; Millard 2001; Saggs 1960; Shanks 2000). One of the main arguments against confirming its Biblical status are suggestions that Abraham’s homeland was located in either Turkey or Syria (Shanks 2000, p. 67). However, Woolley did not only concentrate on a religious discourse during his excavations. He consistently referenced King Ur Nammu and the king’s ziggurat, the structure that has remained as the most prominent feature on the site (Woolley 1925, 1939, 1950). However, it is interesting to note that a Judeo-Christian Biblical figure, rather than a Sumerian king, has remained strongly associated with the site, as evidenced by interviews conducted for this thesis and which are discussed later in this chapter.
Although Thompson and Hall had stated that British troops were stationed near Ur during the war, Woolley did not describe any remnants of their base, or if they were present during the course of his excavations. In an article written for *National Geographic Magazine*, he recalled an incident that occurred during his first season when the camp was robbed by locals, after which a tribal sheik provided him with guards (Woolley 1928a, p. 221). This is an indication that the military was no longer stationed at Ur, and certainly not guarding Woolley or his team. It can therefore be surmised that they departed the Dhi Qar Province in the early days of British troop withdrawal, in either 1920 or 1921. The British Government however still maintained three air force bases in Iraq during that time. One in Basra, another in Mosul, and one located in the Anbar Province (Anderson & Stansfield 2004; Silverfarb & Khadduri 1986). Woolley noted that Royal Air Force pilots from the Basra base rendered assistance by photographing Ur from the air on at least one occasion, as seen in Figure 5.1 (British Museum 1926; Woolley 1930).

![Figure 5.1: Aerial view of the ruins of Ur in 1926 (Photo credit: British Museum 1926, p. 82).](image)
Yet, Woolley did not expound on any interactions that may have taken place between the military personnel and his team, but he spoke often of his workmen. He employed hundreds of local tribesmen as manual labourers, who cleared dirt from areas such as the Royal Cemeteries, as seen in Figure 5.2.

![Figure 5.2: Local men clearing dirt from the ancient cemetery](Photo credit: Woolley 1934b, p. Plate 7).

He said of them:

> These Mesopotamian Arabs, whose reputation does not as a rule stand very high, are industrious, show keenness for the work and an intelligent interest in its results, and have developed an *esprit de corps* which assures honesty as well as keenness. I could scarcely wish for a better gang. (Woolley 1925, p. 348).

He did not explain why their reputations were not of high standards, nor did he provide further descriptions. However, in another report written almost a decade later, he provided a less affable account of the workmen. Woolley wrote:

> It would be absurd to ask for a scientific interest in the work from men so ignorant as the Arabs of southern Iraq; they have no historic background, not even a tradition that goes back for more than two or three generations, and neither names nor dates can mean much to them. (Woolley 1934b, p. 9).

British Political Officer Stephen Longrigg held a comparable view. He stated ‘Archaeological excavations, Iraq’s greatest claim to learned interest at the time,
was to Iraqis an ignored or suspect mystery’ (Longrigg 1953, p. 21). In a similar view voiced about local understanding of art, T.E. Lawrence was quoted as saying ‘They are a limited narrow-minded people whose inert intellects lie incuriously fallow. Their imaginations are keen but not creative. There is so little Arab art today in Asia that they can nearly be said to have no art’ (Lawrence in Townshend 2010, p. 50). These attitudes were consistent with viewpoints of British military personnel who served during the war. According to Longrigg, troops were repelled by the ‘low standards of life, and as they judged it, low types of humanity who confronted them’ and it was only diplomats who were afforded opportunities to meet ‘the respectable citizens’ (Longrigg 1953, p. 81). Soldiers often referred to the Arabs as “Budoos” or a “subhuman sort of Caliban” which were negative terms marking them as antagonists to the British protagonists (Hammond 2009, p. 97).

Derision and unfavourable portrayals of the Iraqis persisted well after the war. British officers and government officials thought that ‘The urban population was not only morally and intellectually defective, it was also sub-standard physically’ (Dodge 2003, p. 71). A retired army colonel reflected on the construction of a railway line connecting Basra to Nasiriya. He recalled that the military wanted to hire locals for the work, but ‘The local Arabs were not keen on any sort of manual labour. Even if the pay for it was acceptable, their Mediterranean preference for lying in the sun made them unsatisfactory’ (Barker 1967, p. 314). While Longrigg further weighed in that ‘The country passed from the nineteenth century little less wild and ignorant, as unfitted for self-government, and not less corrupt, than it had entered the sixteenth century’ (Longrigg 1925, p. 321).

However, not all British subjects held the same opinions. Gertrude Bell frequently expressed an affinity with the Iraqis. She reminded government officials of ‘The amazing quickness of the Arab in adopting himself to new conditions and profiting by unexpected opportunities must never be forgotten’ (Bell 1917, p. 9). In a letter written to her father in February 1918 in regards to the locals working with the British, she stated ‘We have a few really first-class Arab officials, just as we have found a few really first-class sheikhs’ (Bell & Bell 1927, p. 362). She regularly wrote about her affection for Iraq and the local population, as well as the manner in which British officials oftentimes overstated their significance to the country. She stated ‘I often wonder whether I am right to stay here. One is so much inclined to exaggerate one’s own importance and if I went, no doubt the Arab kingdom would wag along, however much I may think it wouldn’t!’ (Bell in Burgoyne 1961, p. 249).

Bell remained loyal to her own government, yet during her tenure as Director of Antiquities she also recognised the value of ensuring that some of the most important artefacts remained in Iraq. For example, Max Mallowan recounted a story in which she travelled to Ur to appraise the excavated objects and divide them for distribution between the museums in Iraq, Great Britain and America. A
dispute ensued between Bell and Woolley on the fate of a stone statuette of a goddess. Woolley requested it be relinquished to him but she insisted that it belonged in Iraq. Bell eventually won the argument and took the object to Baghdad, much to the chagrin of Woolley (Mallowan 1960). Bell recalled the incident in a letter written to her father ‘In my capacity as Director of Antiquities I’m an Iraqi official and bound by the terms on which we gave the permit for excavation’ (Bell & Bell 1927, p. 554). All the antiquities were subsequently divided between the British Museum, the Penn Museum, and the Baghdad Antiquities Museum (now the Iraq Museum), which adhered to the antiquities law at the time (Woolley 1939; Zettler et al. 1998).

Woolley’s excavations concluded in 1934 and provided invaluable information about the ancient cultures that occupied the site. A few examples of his contributions include: conducting the first large-scale scientific excavation in Mesopotamia; determining when the pottery wheel came into use by diagnosing handmade versus wheel-made pottery; revealing previously unknown funeral practices of ancient civilizations, such as mass sacrifices; discovering objects indicating trade with people in the Indus Valley; revealing the use of modern architecture in the fourth millennium BC; and perhaps most importantly, discovering the Ubaid Period, a previously unknown civilization which predated the Ancient Egyptians by at least 1,000 years (Leick 2002; Woolley 1925, 1934a, 1934b).

Visitors to Ur
At the close of Woolley’s last season, the site remained in the care of the local tribes and Western visitation is not documented. It was not until 1938 that Ur was once again visited by another Westerner. That was British journalist Henry Morton, who wrote that ‘my first feeling when I looked at the Ziggurat of Ur was one of genuine pleasure’ (Morton 1938, p. 93). He strongly identified with the Biblical stories, and thought highly of the inhabitants of ancient Ur. He reflected:

We now think of Abraham as the citizen of a culture, highly civilised community; he left it to become a sheep farmer and to wander about the world, as deliberately as a man today might leave London for Australia or New Zealand. (Morton 1938, p. 92).

Yet, he viewed the modern inhabitants less favourably. Morton described a moment during his visit when he ‘heard whispering on the other side of a wall’ and saw two Iraqi site guards. He said of them ‘superstition runs in their blood, I think they must often feel unprotected as they prowl the ruins’ (Morton 1938, p. 96). Further, he recalled a picnic with local Iraqis and British officials at the ruins, noting:

It was odd to think they were of the same race, or even the same century. In all these countries which have been administered by European mandates, I sometimes wonder whether this class will succeed in educating its peasantry, or whether someday the intelligentsia will go
under and the people relapse into their natural chaos. (Morton 1938, p. 101).

WWII halted the potential for additional excavations or visits, and Longrigg noted that British troops ‘met slight opposition at Ur’ in late-May/early-June 1941 (Longrigg 1953, p. 298). This indicated that the ruins were once again used by the military to some extent, yet he did not provide further details. References to Ur were absent from the public record until the mid-1950s, when the region was explored by two British journalists who published an account of their visit to the site. Just as travellers had before them, they reflected on the theological relevance of the ruins:

What we can find in Ur is a city which existed at the time of the Bible said it did, and from this city it is very possible that the first monotheist set-out with the semi-nomadic Hebrews on their trek towards the Mediterranean. (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 136).

Upon describing the ziggurat, they wrote ‘Abraham must have worshipped at this shrine’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 138). While these travellers did not provide negative assessments of the Iraqi population, they recalled meeting a German visitor who stated ‘I hate the Arabs, they are dirty, and of course, being Semites, incapable of creativity’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 96). Published stories that reflected both a sense of wonder for the ruins of Mesopotamia, while simultaneously portraying the Iraqis as antagonists, was common. According to Longrigg:

The world at large finds the Middle East a region of backwardness, picturesque perhaps but, as regards the mass of the inhabitants, socially retarded as well as poverty-stricken. The prevailing image is that of the Arab as a scrappy, nightgown wearing, camel riding nomad. These pictures correspond very little to the facts of Middle Eastern life. (Longrigg 1970, p. 213).

He continued to detail how the conquests and catastrophes that started in the later Middle Ages, including the Mongol invasion, contributed to the country’s decline, which tended to be the window in which the general public viewed the region (Longrigg 1970, p. 214). Yet such commentary was made during a period of time when major restorations on the ziggurat and surrounding temple were undertaken by the Iraqi Antiquities and Heritage Authority (Al Hamdani 2008a; Al Hamdani 2009; Muhsen 2009). In addition, cultural activities such as the Spring Festival of Ur, which honoured the achievements of King Ur Nammu, also took place at the ruins (Baram 1983, p. 430). These accomplishments demonstrated that the image of the ‘backward’ Arab was misguided, as they were heavily engaged with maintaining the site, and involved with the cultural arts.

However, other events had more negative repercussions. In 1971, while conservation projects were in-progress, the Iraqi Air Force constructed an air strip and accompanying military installation less than a kilometre from the ziggurat.
Ten years later, an Iraqi army unit was encamped approximately 1500 meters northeast of the ziggurat, which was within the archaeological boundaries of Ur. The army camp remained at the site for 22 years (Al Hamdani 2008a).

While the Iraqi military base at Ur was constructed under Saddam Hussein’s regime, it is unknown why it was placed so near the ruins. It is possible that Hussein’s push to align the ancient Mesopotamian past with the 1970s ideology of connecting to the Iraqi pre-Islamic history was at fault. This was during a time when ‘the Arab-Islamic civilization and Arabism at large were regarded as the last incarnation of the new-old Iraqi people’ (Baram 1983 p. 438). That is, occupying the lands of the ancients in some way legitimized Hussein’s agenda. This followed the idea that modern Iraqis were the ‘cultural heirs and the biological descendants of the ancient peoples of Mesopotamia’ (Baram 1994 p. 304). On the other hand, it could have also been an act of passive protection, by placing troops on the site it was less likely to become a target during times of war.

However, due to the presence of the Iraqi Armed Forces, Ur did become a target during the 1991 First Gulf War. US fighter jets strafed the military positions, as well as two Iraqi fighter jets that were parked next to the ziggurat. The action resulted in bullet damage to the southern side of the structure. In addition, several bombs were dropped near the Iraqi Army camp during the campaign, which created large craters within the archaeological footprint of the site (Forsyth 2004; Nashef 1992; Schipper 2005). Just a few years later in 1998, Ur was once again bombed during the four-day campaign known as Operation Desert Fox. This was when US and UK forces targeted research installations, supply depots, and military bases across Iraq when Saddam Hussein failed to comply with the UN Security Council Resolutions on disarmament (Condron 1999; von Sponeck 2006). The explosives did not directly damage the ziggurat or standing ruins, however it is unknown how the unexcavated areas were impacted (Al Hamdani 2009; Muhsen 2009).

Because of the conflicts, foreign travel to and within the country was rare. However, the region was depicted in cinema, art and literature, and was therefore familiar to a Western audience. Stories and images of the Middle East and its inhabitants often promoted the derogatory stereotype of a lazy, untrustworthy Arab as the miscreant, or the dark and swarthy terrorist intent on harming the pristine Western world (Said 1993; Semmerling 2014; Shaheen 2009). Jack Shaheen’s research on the topic discovered that from the earliest silent movies to the year 2000, Hollywood projected Arabs as villains in more than 1,000 feature films (Shaheen 2009, p. 53). These types of negative images were digested by a population who already viewed the region with antipathy, prompted by concerns related to the on-going Arab-Israeli Conflict, and the 1973 Oil Crisis in the US (Little 2002; Said 2003 [1978]; Semmerling 2014; Yaphe 2006).

In addition, news coverage portrayed the East as bringing about ‘the destruction of the democratic order of the Western world’ (Said 1997, p. 55). In addition,
media outlets portrayed Saddam Hussein as a ‘powerful, conceited, megalomaniac suffering a penchant for religious fervour and tendency towards violence and barbarity, just like past kings and leaders in the region’ (Isakhan 2010, p. 18). The public was encouraged to see the ‘barbaric savage with the white man’s rifle fighting against the noble aims of the United States and Britain’ (Seymour 2004, p. 357). The 2003 war was approached in similar fashion, and troops were deployed to Iraq with these types of preconceived ideologies entrenched within their cultural norms.

The 2003 Iraq War and Ur
Coalition forces seized the existing Iraqi base near Ur in April 2003, established operations, and named it Camp Adder/Ali Air Base, which eventually became known as Tallil Air Base. A fence and checkpoints were erected around the perimeter, which incorporated the ruins as well as a single paved road that extended from the ziggurat, along the border of Woolley’s excavations, and into the military installation. This allowed anyone on the base access to Ur, and because it became part of Tallil Air Base, people outside the fence line were denied entry unless they were in possession of a US government issued identification card.

In order to accommodate a 5,000 plus person workforce, the living area was expanded, which entailed the construction of temporary and permanent buildings, water and sanitation facilities, as well as additional roads, all of which encroached onto the ruins (Al Hamdani 2008a; Curtis 2009b; Siebrandt 2009). Compared to the photo taken in 1926, the modern structures are less than a kilometre away from the ruins, as seen in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: The ruins dominated by the Ziggurat of Ur Nammu, less than a kilometre north of Tallil Air Base, which is visible on the horizon.
These actions were in violation of Article 4.1 of the 1954 Hague Convention, which calls for the respect of cultural property. It states:

> The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect cultural property situated within their own territory as well as within the territory of other High Contracting Parties by refraining from any use of the property and its immediate surroundings or of the appliances in use for its protection for purposes which are likely to expose it to destruction or damage in the event of armed conflict; and by refraining from any act of hostility, directed against such property. (UNESCO 1954).

In addition, Article 15 in the *Iraq Antiquities and Heritage Law* was also disregarded. It prohibits trespassing, building, altering, polluting, damaging, or otherwise harming an archaeological site (MOC 2002). Because Ur was listed on the Iraqi register, the occupation also violated Section 402 of the US National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA 1980). However, as discussed in Chapter 3, coalition compliance was not required once the site became US property (Varner 2011). Yet, beyond the cultural heritage laws, military personnel did not consult nor contact any Iraqi heritage specialists upon their arrival. Local archaeologists admonished the occupation that degraded the educational and scientific value of the site, but just as significant, they were indignant that the troops were in fact trespassing (Al Hamdani 2008a, p. 154). However, because interactions between members of the coalition and the Iraqis were minimal, the troops did not understand how their actions were viewed. As noted by one of the interview participants who visited Ur in 2010:

> I didn’t have a problem with the ruins being part of the base. It was probably a good thing since it kept some would be looters out of there. I think all in all it was better that the US installation was there. I thought it was a positive thing, and I believe the base had already been established by the time we got there. (Interview 23).

A US Air Force pilot who flew on missions from the air base during a 2008 deployment stated:

> I don’t know what went into the decisions to put the base there and do the expansion. It seemed to me there was a fair amount of distance between the base and the ziggurat. Now I don’t know really where the lands start and end. But I do know on the other side of the base, we could not have gotten any closer to Nasiriya than we did, because that’s where the threats were coming from. (Interview 29).

This echoed a statement made by Interviewee 30, who commented on the inclusion of Ur within the fence line as ‘I would assume it had something to do with force protection’ (Interview 30). Interviewee 22 added ‘People making those decisions, it wasn’t high on their priority list to address base placement on ancient ruins’ (Interview 22). While Interviewee 20 explained:

> Military necessity is one thing, but it’s hard to justify military necessity for a major FOB [Forward Operating Base] or a major base on a site. If we
want a more culturally savvy military, we just need a staff advisor at the battalion level who can tell the commander what an archaeological site looks like and say ‘hey maybe you shouldn’t go there,’ but that probably won’t ever happen. (Interview 20).

Another service member who was based at Tallil in 2005 stated:

We should have people check out locations for historical sites before setting up a tent if we can, just in case we discover something that professionals should study. I think we owe it to them. I think it’s part of nation building, but I don’t know if we were doing that in Iraq. (Interview 26).

Both subjects were however referring to Western professionals, as was Interviewee 30 who revealed that there were no cultural heritage or subject matter experts available to assist with the decision-making processes about where operations would be set-up. He thought that ‘a system should have been in place in order to consider the historical significance of the site’ (Interview 30). Article 9.2 in the Second Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict states that any work executed on cultural property must be conducted in close cooperation with the national authorities of the occupied territory (UNESCO 1999). This was not done at Ur, even though there appeared to be awareness that their presence had potential to cause harm. Per Interviewee 1 ‘The commanders in the field, the lieutenant colonels and colonels, they are only interested in doing something as a career move, they want high visibility missions, and protecting cultural heritage is not in that category’ (Interview 1).

Cross-Cultural Interactions

Issues related to physical damages at Ur were a concern for the interview participants. They all understood how the occupation was detrimental to the scientific integrity of the site, however, the effect it had on the local population was addressed less frequently. During the course of the interviews, only two interviewees discussed the issue of the Iraqis not being able to readily gain access to the site. Both were sympathetic to the issue, but they also pointed out that it was an unfortunate result of the war. Interviewee 23 stated:

I can feel the Iraqis frustration to not be able to go where they want to go, especially to something like Ur, it being a national treasure. But, it’s the situation, there’s a war going on and you have to maintain a certain level of security. (Interview 23).

In addition, reservations about interacting with the Iraqis were voiced by some of the study participants. According to Interviewee 6:

I don’t want to say I bought into the stereotype that all Muslims were terrorists, but because of the unfamiliarity with their culture and being in a war-like environment, it caused a little bit of angst. There was a fear factor
there, you never knew who was going to be a suicide bomber. (Interview 6).

Interviewee 3 had a similar reflection. He recalled that ‘I was very on-guard and not trusting of Iraqis, Arabs in general, Muslims I guess. I always wanted to know where my weapon was, so I was on the offense all the time’ (Interview 3).

Interviewee 27 elaborated on his experience:

When I was with the marines we worked with the Iraqi police, we went on patrol with them sometimes but they didn’t want to go out on patrol, they just wanted to stay in the station because they would get paid either way. By American standards we would say they are very lazy. But by Iraqi standards that’s just their life. They didn’t want to go on patrol or go to training classes, and when it was time to fight, their attitude was, ‘Allah will give me the guidance, Allah will guide my bullets, and whatever is going to happen is in Allah’s hands.’ That’s the kind of mentality they have. There’s no training, and your rank is determined by your status in the community and how much money your family has. The colonels and generals, once you pick up that high rank, it belongs to your family, so when a general dies, his cousin takes over even if he doesn’t have any military experience. It’s all messed up over there. We would have to be there for a lifetime to unscrew it. (Interview 27).

Another soldier recalled ‘in 2003 we were trying to figure things out, there was a lot of suspicion on our part, like who the good guy was and who the bad guy was’ (Interview 25). The conflict environment was also flagged as troublesome, as remembered by a member of the coalition who served in 2010. He said:

What I found difficult was being on-guard one hundred fifty per cent of the time every day. When we were at an Iraqi building during a meeting, it was always in the back of my mind that we could get blown up by a rocket or a suicide bomber. I was always checking my surroundings. (Interview 21).

Interview 30 described his experiences during his tour of duty as:

Trying to engage with Iraqis was difficult at best. We had human intelligence teams in the area to determine who was legitimate and who was not, but it was challenging. We had to make some gross assumptions on who to trust and who not to trust. (Interview 30).

The types of mistrust expressed by the interviewees was manifested in the restrictions placed on Iraqis wishing to gain entry to cultural heritage sites. One of the Iraqi archaeologists in the Dhi Qar Province recalled his attempts to connect with the troops in 2003, pointing out:

We heard the US Marines were living at the Nasiriya Museum. I went to check the museum, but the marine at the door wouldn’t let me in. I tried to tell him I worked there but he didn’t understand me, he was scared. (Interview 16).
In 2007 John Curtis and Abbas al-Husseini, then director of the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, attempted to gain access to Ur in order to conduct a damage assessment. Curtis said of that encounter:

> The site is incorporated within the perimeter fence surrounding Tallil Airbase, so all access to the site is controlled by US forces. When Dr al-Husseini arrived at the main gate, after having driven down especially from Baghdad, he refused to be searched and was therefore denied access. His entirely reasonable argument was that, as Director of Antiquities, he had responsibility for all archaeological sites in Iraq and should have unrestricted access to them. The stand-off lasted several hours, but Dr al-Husseini’s protests were to no avail and he was unable to enter the site. (Curtis 2009b, p. 4).

Because neither Curtis nor al-Husseini were in possession of an approved US Government identification card, they were required to submit to a search of their vehicle and person, directives that adhered to base protocols (The White House 2004). Technically this complied with Article 15 of the 1954 Convention, which mandates that local cultural heritage experts be allowed to carry out their duties on property that has fallen into the opposing Party’s hands, as far as it is consistent with the interests of security (UNESCO 1954). Yet ‘the interests of security’ is not defined and is therefore open to individual interpretation.

**Site Visits**

The restrictions imposed on the Iraqis did not however apply to coalition personnel who regularly visited the ruins (Al Hamdani 2008a; Rush 2010a). For example, Interviewee 23 recalled:

> One of my agents had been in Iraq at the beginning of the war and he told me he was with the Air Force Special Police, and they had actually camped out on top of the ziggurat one night as they were doing patrols. So they had a bit of a free rein there. I suppose people are likely to pick up stuff and put it in their pocket and walk away, but I think it was still good to have some sort of policing action by the US military. (Interview 23).

Similarly, in an article written for the journal *Archaeology*, a soldier reflected on his visit in May 2008. He wrote ‘At most tourist sites, you have to wait in line, purchase a ticket, and see things under the supervision of custodians and docents. But in Ur we were free to wander and enjoy a few rare moments of peace’ (Taylor 2011, p. 48). A British officer remembered his 2007 visit:

> I was reminded of the Biblical story where Abraham took his son to the summit of a mountain to sacrifice him to God. The sensation of being in touch with history, and more importantly a part of history which is so woven into Western culture, was all-pervasive. (Knight 2013, p. 36).

Such self-guided visits were problematic, but reportedly infrequent. This was mainly attributed to the presence of the site curator, Dnaife Muhsen. While entry restrictions were maintained for all Iraqis who lived outside of the site, Muhsen
and his family were exempted from the regulation. Muhsen’s grandfather was a member of Woolley’s excavation crew, and since the 1920s, the family had been living in a series of houses and outbuildings located next to the ziggurat. The structures were incorporated within the 2003 military fence line, and despite the occupation of the site, Muhsen welcomed visitors from the base and provided tours for coalition personnel.

During each visit, he gave a descriptive history of the ancient city, but more importantly, promoted cross-cultural awareness on a scale unfamiliar to most soldiers. Coalition troops reported minimal daily interactions with Iraqis, either due to limitations from leaving the base, or contact being restricted to patrol based activities. As stated by Interviewee 27 ‘A lot of Iraqis were afraid, even if they did like us, they were afraid to show it because someone could accuse them of being sympathizers or something, so they were very standoffish’ (Interview 27).

An Iraqi who worked directly with coalition forces voiced a similar opinion. She said ‘Many of the Iraqis had hatred and anger in their eyes towards us, but mainly towards me for working with the Americans’ (Interview 18).

In spite of the risks involved with interacting with the military, Muhsen provided daily and sometimes multiple tours a day as seen in Figure 5.4. He bridged a wide gap of cross-cultural misunderstanding by serving as a positive contact for the troops. The visits were arranged through the military’s support service unit, or the Moral, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) program, which regularly advertised the availability for 30 personnel to tour the site with the base chaplains, who served as ad hoc liaisons between Muhsen and the visitors (Shiloh 2009). The interactions were all remembered as favourable, such as Interviewee 3 who observed ‘I could tell the caretaker definitely cared about what he was doing’ (Interview 3).

Figure 5.4: Dnife Muhsen guided tours and discussed the history of Ur for US military troops.
A service member who toured the site in 2008 recalled:

He was really making his livelihood from American troops being there, we would give him a bit of cash after the tours. But he really wanted to impress on us the importance of the place and he was the only one doing this and the importance to world history and that they were able to maintain the site as best as they could. He told us a little bit about Saddam Hussein in the First Gulf War having parked jets near the ziggurat so that the US wouldn’t attack it. I would say the interactions were positive because he was happy to host us and tell us the stories about the site, and he seemed thankful that we wouldn’t attack the historical sites. (Interview 29).

While Interviewee 23 reflected:

It was like you were looking at it through a movie, you can’t believe you’re there where so many people through the thousands of years had been. On the flipside, it was pretty disappointing that it wasn’t taken care of, it would be nice if experts were allowed to go there and do some scientific, investigative studies of the area. (Interview 23).

Interviewee 22 worked at Tallil Air Base, but was unable to visit the site:

I didn’t get to Ur, but it was surreal to see the ziggurat outside our office window. When I got there, they were doing tours through the MWR. I was interested in it but I was brand new to the unit so I couldn’t immediately take time off to take a tour. But within a month or two of me getting there the Iraqi Ministry made a decision that the soldiers couldn’t come over there for tours, you needed a particular reason to go. So I missed out on that opportunity. For the troops that did get to go, I liked the idea that people had the opportunity to have a connection to the ancient history of the place, just like at any ancient site, but I will admit it made me nervous, wondering how well it was managed. (Interview 22).

The soldiers quoted above were referring to Western experts, rather than locals, as their understanding of site preservation was based on an American viewpoint. This Occidental focus was also evident in their initial knowledge of the ancient cultures associated with Ur. All were familiar with Abraham’s connection to the site, yet none of them had previously heard of the Sumerian King, Ur Nammu. For example, Interviewee 32 recalled ‘I only knew about Iraq in a basic way, that it was one of the great civilizations of the past. I remember studying about Mesopotamia and I read the Bible at the time of my deployment, which mentions Iraq’ (Interview 32). Interviewee 6 said:

I was raised as a Southern Baptist, and Abraham’s a big Biblical figure for us. I’m not a Bible thumper and don’t know it backwards and forwards, but I knew Ur had some significance to Christian culture. I guess Abraham is significant in the Muslim culture too, I don’t think I knew that at the time. (Interview 6).

Another soldier who toured the site with Muhsen in 2005 recalled:
If I remember right, the foundation of Abraham’s father’s house was original but the walls had been rebuilt under Saddam’s Regime. There was a place you could access the top of the walls, so we walked along the rebuilt walls of Abraham’s father’s house. The curator was courteous the whole time. I loved that site and that visit, I liked the curator from the very beginning, and he was more than willing to answer all my questions. I come from a Christian background so to put eyes on something you read about in the Bible, wow. I just want to say what a feeling of joy I had while at Ur, it was a better memory than any combat mission I did. (Interview 31).

Interviewee 20 also discussed the tour he was given of the site, which highlighted its Biblical connections. He explained:

They lead us to the place where there’s an old house, and we were told, ‘This is Abraham’s house! We know it, this is it! And everyone was like oh yeah!’ That was because the military has a very strong Christian culture running through it, so most of the people wanted to see that, the ziggurat was great, but ‘let’s see Abraham’s house!’ A lot of them had brought a Bible that they put on a bookshelf that was in the house and took pictures of it. (Interview 20).

Irrespective of the accuracies or inaccuracies of Ur’s association with the Biblical narrative, the theological interpretations promoted by Woolley persisted in the imagination of visitors. Although the tours were instilled with the opportunity to see ‘Abraham’s house’, the interactions with Muhsen played an important role in providing troops with an alternate perspective about the site. Interviewee 6 equated his visit to well-known monuments in the US. He acknowledged ‘For the Iraqis, I would think it would be like our Washington Monument or our Capital building, where everyone has to see that before they die and how they want to preserve those things’ (Interview 6). Interviewee 20 related a story Muhsen had told him about Saddam Hussein trying to appropriate the past by referring to himself as Nebuchadnezzar. The soldier was surprised at the anger Muhsen expressed towards Hussein for what he said was soiling Iraq’s history. He felt informed, admitting ‘I didn’t know people felt that way about their archaeological sites’ (Interview 20).

The situation created a quagmire. The visits afforded opportunities for positive interactions between the troops and Muhsen, but an Iraqi cultural heritage site was under the control of an occupying power. Thousands of coalition personnel toured the ruins, yet the local population was not afforded the same rights. Instead, they had to watch the soldiers walk freely across an archaeological site in their own county while they were denied access unless given permission by the occupiers (Al Hamdani 2008b; Bahrani 2003b; Rush 2013). Yet, the service members who were interviewed did not further discuss how their presence hindered the Iraqis from fully engaging with the site.
Pre-Deployment Training

The attitudes of the interview participants were often a reflection of the pre-deployment training they were provided. While they were given instructions on how to recognise cultural differences, and were briefed on basic Arabic word usage, cultural heritage awareness was not part of their curriculum. One of the Iraqi archaeologists observed that, ‘The difficult thing, particularly at Ur in the beginning of the war, was that most soldiers knew nothing about the place where they were sent’ (Interview 19). Interviewee 28, who was deployed on three separate missions recalled:

The first time there was no cultural awareness training. The second time I flew in under the radar so no training then either. The third time it was about Iraqi customs, the history of Iraq, the different mixture of Kurds, Sunni, Shia, the history between them. They gave us a crash course in Islam, the belief system that it has, they gave us a class on the family structure and how it’s different than that in the USA or really the Western world, the respect they have for elders, also naming conventions and that kind of stuff. (Interview 28).

The lack of cultural heritage immersion was voiced by a member of the coalition who visited Ur in 2010. He said ‘Our training was cultural interaction, behavioural, what to say, don’t show them the bottom of your shoe, stuff like that, but nothing on history or heritage’ (Interview 23). Interviewee 27 was more candid. He recalled:

We had briefings about the area and the culture, customs and courtesies and how to address people. I applied it, little things like shake their hand, ask about their family, kiss their ass because that’s the way it works in Iraq, I kiss your ass, you kiss mine and then we are ready to work together. I was able to get into a lot of venues because I did that, shake a hand and be nice, but a lot of other guys in my unit were too hard-headed to do that. A lot of Americans saw all Muslims as bad guys. (Interview 27).

Interviewee 23 also reflected on the training he received, saying:

We went through the DoS training, a 2-week course that was pretty down and dirty. We learned basic Arabic phrases but didn’t dwell too far back into the history of Iraq. We hit the more current things in Iraq. The instructor was good, he had spent a lot of time in the Middle East and spoke Arabic. He tried to convey some of the dos and don’ts and the cultural personality of the Iraqis. He did a pretty good job plus he had a gentleman from Basra who had migrated to the US and he came in and talked to us about the Iraq he grew up in. (Interview 23).

Interviewee 25, who served two tours of duty in Iraq, relayed a similar experience stating:

There wasn’t any training before the 2003 deployment, but we got some in 2004. We had professors from Vanderbilt University who came to talk to
us, plus there’s a large Kurdish population in Nashville, so we had some cultural training from them. So I guess there was an attempt. For our second deployment, we knew that we needed to know things we didn’t know the first time. (Interview 25).

Interviewee 6 was only given tactical training. He explained ‘When you get off the plane in those countries, they give you a quick cultural what to do, what not to do, but nowhere near what’s appropriate. You pick up a lot of that as you go’ (Interview 6). Interviewee 26 had a similar experience. He remembered ‘We just went there and did our jobs. I guess it’s just implied we don’t go into religious or historic sites. If I had seen something historical in my area I would have ordered my soldiers to leave it alone’ (Interview 26). Interviewee 31, who was in Iraq during the early years of the war summed up his experience:

I never felt properly trained to operate in the country of Iraq in the capacity I was asked to operate. I knew next to nothing. The first thing I was told was to grow my moustache out because Iraqis respect men with facial hair. They did a poor job of preparing us to go into another country we were occupying and to get along with people. They trained us well for a full-scale conflict. But we were in a low-intensity conflict where you had to build relations with people. (Interview 31).

Another member of the coalition stated:

I did the State Department FACT [Foreign Affairs Counter Threat] training. One week was classroom work and the second was driving skills and stuff like that. The first week they did have limited cultural stuff. It wasn’t until I got there that I realized the whole rich history Iraq offers. I’m doing a degree right now and majoring in history because I’m really interested in history. So for me getting over there to Iraq, well I appreciated all the old cultural sites. But I don’t think the Iraqis appreciated them. They were more focused on survival, taking care of their family before taking care of a thousand year old site. (Interview 15).

One of the American archaeologists who was eventually able to provide training to deploying troops recalled that he was only allowed short allotments of time to cover a topic that required in-depth explanation, noting:

In the beginning, it was hard to get much time assigned for the cultural heritage pre-deployment training. I remember at Fort Bliss, where the army trains, most of them were going to Iraq. There were times when I was only given between 20 and 30 minutes to do all of the training and it wasn’t enough time. (Interview 5).

Another American trainer also commented on the limited amount of time she was given to provide instruction, recalling:

Sometimes we would only get an hour to train, but sometimes we’d get a whole day, we took whatever DoD gave us. If we trained at a base we would usually get half a day, but if we trained at the Smithsonian we would get a whole day. We did that for the Marine Corps Civil-Military
Operations School based at Quantico, they came to the museum for a whole day. (Interview 13).

Cooperative Projects
Despite the advancements in preparation made in the later years of the war, cultural heritage awareness training was not afforded to all the troops who were based at Ur, including Interviewee 30 and his team. Yet, in May 2008, they were able to engage in a project at the request of Muhsen. It entailed constructing an archway over the entrance road leading into Ur, as seen in Figure 5.5. Interviewee 30 and his team were not directly involved in the project. Instead, they funded local contractors to implement the project as part of the DoDs CERP project. This was the US military initiative administered in Iraq and Afghanistan in order for military personnel to positively engage with local communities through sourcing projects that would benefit the population (Martins 2005). According to Interviewee 30:

The idea was a low-hanging fruit of opportunity for the local folks to come out to us, also a way to give back to the community to an area that was clearly of significant and historic value. We didn’t have a historian directly attached to us, but what I do know is that there were a number of reach-back capabilities that our brigade civil operations team was able to reach back to, so they could fully understand the importance of the ziggurat and the Abraham excavations. So we were fairly well informed and very aware of what we could and could not do in that area. I think this is tied in with the PRT, they all came to the conclusion to highlight the significance of the site that defines the region and to bring tourism back. It was low-cost and the benefit from the local goodwill to just having the peace of mind, we were able to do something good to bring back a source of pride to the local community. The trigger was supposed to be the archway went up and the next thing was that we would start seeing tourism on the rise. (Interview 30).

Figure 5.5: Modern archway over the roadway leading into the archaeological site of Ur.
Yet unrestricted access to Ur was not available to Iraqis until mid-2009, a year after the completion of the project. Therefore it is not known how it was beneficial to the Iraqis at the time. Interviewee 30 did not know why the restrictions to site access were in place for so long, and as he was deployed home shortly after the completion of the project, he was unable to provide further details. Additionally, he could not elaborate on the connections the civil affairs team made when he mentioned the ‘reach-back’ as he was not part of that team nor did he know the personnel who were. While the intention of the project was admirable, and was at the request of an Iraqi heritage expert, the site remained under the control of coalition forces, and the restrictions continued for Iraqi visitation.

However, 6 years after Ur was occupied, command staff at the base announced that the fence would be moved, and the road leading to the site would be relinquished to Iraqi control. Prior to the transfer, in April 2009 a joint American-Iraqi inspection team conducted a site survey in order to document conditions and propose potential projects. American participants included DoS and DoD personnel who had skillsets derived from cultural heritage and environmental backgrounds, while the Iraqi delegation was composed of Muhsen and SBAH archaeologists, as seen in Figure 5.6. Overall, the site was found to be suffering from deterioration, erosion, and neglect. Conservation efforts initiated by Woolley and continued by the Iraq Antiquities Authority in the 1980s contributed to collapsed walls and floors. Additionally, the 1991 UN Sanctions prohibited the importation of materials and shared knowledge that would have contributed to conserving the ruins (Alnasrawi 2001; von Sponeck 2006; Wilke 2008). Lastly, the thousands of coalition visitors from Tallil Air Base further accelerated deterioration due to high volumes of pedestrian traffic on the ruins, which caused impact damage.
The survey was completed while Ur was still under coalition control, and with the exception of Muhsen, all the Iraqis were required to submit to a search at the checkpoint each day. Irrespective of that, one of the archaeologists who was part of the team reflected on his participation thus:

The survey was very important to us, we went over the site piece by piece to look for damages. Taking photos, describing the site, and that was the first time an intensive survey of Ur was done to evaluate the features and the site. It was very important and useful for future work at the site. Whenever I need information for my work I go back to the report and use that info. For me it was important to work as a team. It was the first step to give the city back to the SBAH. I still remember those many days we spent together. The cultural bridge was important. We forgot the political issues, the military issues, we put them behind us and we worked together for scientific issues. That was a great way to bridge the gap, to use cultural issues to connect the scientific, humanitarian and cultural issues. We put everything aside and worked as a team. We didn’t ask each other what our ideas or thoughts were, we just worked as a scientific team. Ur was more important than religion, or political issues, or anything like that. I believe we worked very well together, and we appreciated each other, and the resulting report shows that. (Interview 16).

One of the other Iraqi archaeologists said ‘The soldiers came to Iraq to fight, not guard archaeological sites, but when they realized the importance of Ur, they cooperated with us to move the fence line’ (Interview 19). By the time of the turn-over on 23 April 2009, the US military had erected guard towers and living trailers for Iraqi forces who were hired by SBAH to maintain 24-hour protection. Further, as a result of recommendations noted in the survey, CERP funding was
used to construct wooden sidewalks and shade shelters along the most travelled tourist paths, as seen in Figure 5.7. According to Interviewee 16, this resulted in increased local visitation (Interview 16).

All coalition personnel withdrew from Tallil Air Base in mid-December 2011, at which time the Iraqi Air Force took over, renamed it Imam Ali Air Base, and assumed full control of the area. By 2013, after almost 8 decades of scientific inactivity, Iraqi archaeologists once again commenced excavations at Ur. Although the Iraqis were back in charge, the Western legacy on the site remained. Interviewee 16 stated that the team began to re-examine the area surrounding the ziggurat and tombs. He said:

The archaeologists are digging at the royal tombs right now looking for small artefacts like cylinder seals, because that’s not what Woolley was looking when he was digging there, so he probably missed things. He wanted to find the gold from the tombs, but that was normal at that time. (Interview 16).

In July 2016, Ur was inscribed on the UNESCO world heritage list as part of, The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities, under the new category of mixed natural and cultural sites. Ur’s universal value was cited as ‘The remains offer a complete testimony to the growth and achievements of southern Mesopotamia urban centres and society’s, and to their outstanding contributions to the history of the Near East and mankind as a whole’ (The Republic of Iraq 2014, p. 8). The inclusion into the list further demonstrates the significance of the site to both the Iraqi cultural heritage community, as well as the world stage.
Discussion

It would be impossible and misguided to completely erase the past Western interaction and influence on the site of Ur. As just one example, Woolley’s excavations at Ur and his subsequent contributions to knowledge greatly advanced the understanding of ancient Mesopotamian cultures. However, many of the initial accomplishments of the early twentieth century archaeologists also ensured that the history analogous with the ruins was driven by a strong Biblical association. This created a sense of entitlement to the Europeans who were the decision-makers about the use of the ruins and the distribution of its excavated artefacts. Without local input, the fate of the site was solely within the purview of British and American institutions. As discussed in Chapter 2, such relationships can be seen to adhere to Said’s second ‘principle dogma’ of Orientalism that ‘abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a classical Oriental civilization, are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300).

Although the soldiers who were deployed to Iraq starting in 2003 were not specifically familiar with the published accounts of the early excavations, the majority of them identified with the stories of Abraham. This translated into feelings of connection to the site. While this affinity was not necessarily a negative reaction, it did highlight the fact that theological relevance took precedence over the Sumerian characters. This notion was further solidified when the army chaplains served as de facto authorities for interactions between Muhsen and the troops. However, the tours were Iraqi led, which included explanations of the extensive history of Ur. Yet the lasting impression from the troops was that they had walked in the footsteps of the Patriarchal Age, with minimal consideration given to the Sumerian kings.

In addition, foreign military involvement followed a pattern of imperialism that started with the WWI garrison that had been based on the ruins. Because of its strategic placement in antiquity, the site was an attractive location in modern warfare. This was further demonstrated when the Iraqi armed forces also chose it to house both air and ground troops. While it should be remembered that the 2003 Tallil Air Base was established on an existing Iraqi installation, this did not fully exonerate the coalition’s use of the ruins. The air strip, numerous buildings, and location offered an attractive and strategic setting; it was therefore occupation out of convenience. The erection of the fence around the site was justified because it afforded protection from looters. While this was accurate, the fence also barred Iraqi archaeologists and the general population from entry, which hindered attempts for positive engagements. The coalition effectively walled themselves in from the surrounding province, sending a message of power and control. One of the factors involved in this decision that must be considered was the war environment itself. It created mistrust, despite the fact that the greater population were not combatants. The situation was further complicated due to the historical cross-cultural contact with British and American personnel based mainly on hostilities and past colonial occupation.
International and local cultural heritage laws were disregarded when the installation was constructed near an archaeological site. However, the individuals responsible for making those decisions were not interviewed, so their reasons for doing so cannot be stated unconditionally. For members of the coalition who lived on or visited the site, Orientalist assumptions prevented them from realising the occupation was perceived negatively. This included some of their suggestions for Western experts to help mitigate damages. Such attitudes were similar to how the site was managed in the early twentieth century, with the monopoly of pronouncements about the site being made by an occupying power. Both situations echoed Said’s observation of the long history of Occidental cultures feeling they have an ‘executive responsibility towards the coloured races’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 226). Coalition management of the site replicated the imperial cycle of the past.

This was further manifested through the projects delegated for the site. These were implemented as a means to positively engage with the local population, and were admirable in their intent. Yet, due to the restrictions placed on the Iraqis entering the base, the projects were directed and controlled by coalition personnel. However, the engagement that did occur demonstrated that cross-cultural cooperation was feasible, which was an encouraging development.

This was also noted in the manner in which the coalition personnel spoke about the Iraqis they had contact with. While many offered praise of Muhsen and his deep knowledge and guided tours of Ur, other interactions were remembered less fondly. Although none of the interviewees had read the accounts penned by the British authorities during the Mandate in the early 1900s, many of their opinions were shaped by similar tropes and stereotypes of the lazy and ignorant Arab. Coalition troops did not talk negatively about the Iraqis and their culture maliciously, but rather due to unfamiliarity and poor understanding of heritage issues due to a lack of appropriate pre-deployment training. Said’s first ‘principle dogm’ is applicable to these attitudes that the West is ‘rational, developed, humane, and superior, and the Orient is aberrant, underdeveloped, and inferior’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300).

Training the troops was the responsibility of the DoD, who unwittingly accentuated the stereotype when cultural training was presented by Westerners and expats who had been out of the country for decades, and therefore unable to accurately prepare the soldiers for interactions. Additionally, because personnel were not afforded training in how to recognise and avoid Orientalist ideologies, they did not question their own actions. Unfortunately, too few soldiers benefited from the training that was offered, which manifested in unfamiliarity with how the Iraqis felt about Ur. This aligns with Said’s argument of unconscious or ‘latent Orientalism’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 206).

Foreign government authority over the site, whether civilian or military, resulted in uneven decision-making where the Iraqi input was initially absent. As the occupation of Ur continued, awareness increased, but much of it was self-motivated by individuals, rather than due to widespread military sponsored
training programs. Overall, concepts of ownership, control, power and knowledge were displayed from 2003 until 2011, which followed Said’s assertion that Orientalism has ‘staked its existence on its internal, repetitious consistency of power over the Orient that has been able to survive wars and the downfall of empires’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 222). However, this case study has also demonstrated that the willingness of military personnel to proactively pursue valuable cross-cultural engagements marks a vital step in helping to mitigate past colonial mistakes.

Because cooperation did take place, there was potential to have lessened or changed the coalition’s impact on the ruins. For example: find an alternative location for a large military encampment yet still guard Ur as a statement of their desire to protect cultural heritage sites; utilize Tallil but ensure that base expansions were directed away from the site, rather than towards it; allow Iraqi visitation to demonstrate good will and establish positive rapport with the local population; provide a safe and protected location for joint international excavations and conservation projects to take place.

Conclusion
This chapter has illustrated that Western control of Ur started with early twentieth century explorers and archaeologists, and their sponsoring institutions who controlled the information that was distributed about the site. The strongest message conveyed about the ruins was its connections to Biblical stories, which endured over several decades. Many of the individuals who excavated and visited the site presented prejudiced and unflattering descriptions of the local populations they employed or encountered during their journeys. While interactions between the Iraqi population and foreign visitors began to decline after WWII, the few published accounts demonstrated that negative attitudes and stereotypes had continued. Many of the problematic assumptions which underpinned earlier interactions were evident after the coalition forces invaded Iraq in 2003.

The interviews also demonstrated that the troops were not appropriately prepared to deal with issues related to the seizure of an archaeological site, nor how to interact with the Iraqis responsible for its care. While projects were implemented, they were conducted under Western authority, which revisited the colonial past. However, their interactions with the site curator exhibited behaviour that the troops held the capacity to positively engage with the local population. Yet, among the many mitigating factors were the challenges that were created by attempting to operate in a conflict environment, greatly hindering efforts at positive cross-cultural contact with non-combatants.

The final analysis indicates that there is an urgent need for pre-deployment training that addresses these issues. This is not only true for Iraq but for anytime a foreign military is engaged in another country - such as the on-going conflicts in Afghanistan, Syria or Yemen. In order for troops to function effectively when they come into contact with cultural heritage sites, they require more robust awareness training. Curriculum should incorporate examples of how their actions towards sites are perceived by the local populations. Educational material
intended for military personnel, including coursework, presentations, and lectures, need to include information on Orientalism and the importance of avoiding the notions associated with it. This would complement information currently distributed to soldiers, and provide a comprehensive learning experience that has great potential to manifest into practical scenarios.
Chapter 6: The Occupation of Babylon

Introduction
This chapter examines Western control of the archaeological ruins of Babylon from the late nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. After providing a brief history of the city, the first section includes narratives extracted from archival material published by the explorers and archaeologists who worked on the site. Babylon, just like Ur, initially attracted attention due to its Scriptural connections, yet the scholars who conducted the largest excavations were more interested in exploring the grandeur of the ancient city and taking the spoils to Europe. The land and local inhabitants were often described in defamatory terms both pre and post WWI, and the ruins themselves were occupied and altered by Western military factions during that time. This background information explores the Orientalist narrative in which Europeans and Americans continued to describe the site and local community, up to the 2003 occupation of Iraq.

The goal of this thesis, which aims to determine if Orientalist biases drove the occupation of archaeological sites, is explored through the analysis of the primary accounts taken from interviews with Westerners who were on or near the ruins between 2003 and 2011. Their feelings about the site, the people, and the training they received in preparation for deployment revealed an overall sense of providing protection. However, their understanding of the situation was understood through their own perspectives, without considering the Iraqi viewpoint. Contact between base personnel and the heritage specialists was recalled as minimal, to entirely absent, while pre-deployment training was remembered as inadequate in preparing the troops to deal with cultural heritage matters. The full range of these topics are discussed in this chapter in order to determine if the coalition was blind to the issues of Orientalism before and during the occupation of the historic site of Babylon.

A Brief History of Babylon
The ancient city of Babylon is located approximately 88 kilometres south of Baghdad. The site was initially inhabited during Mesopotamia’s Prehistoric Era, but was not a dominant entity in the region until the Amorite King Hammurabi established it as his capital in the eighteenth century BC (Bertman 2003; Leick 2002; Roux 1992). The city gained political importance under his rule, and was the largest commercial centre in the region. One of Hammurabi’s long-lasting contributions to civilization were his 200 law codes, which were inscribed on a 2.5 metre tall basalt stone stelae, and subsequently influenced modern Western law. His successors however, were unable to maintain power, and the city fell into decline following the end of Hammurabi’s rule (Finkel 1988; Harper 1904; Urch 1929). For almost a millennium, Babylon was subjected to a series of Hittite, Kassite and Assyrian conquerors who destroyed and rebuilt the city. However, it retained its religious importance, specifically as the site for the Akītu or New Year’s Festival, an annual springtime ceremony held in order to establish
harmony between the gods and nature. It entailed the local population participating in several days of prayers and rituals, and culminated with a processional parade through the city in honour of the main Babylonian god Marduk (Pallis 1926; Sommer 2000; Van De Mieroop 2003).

The city again rose to great importance when it became the capital of the Neo-Babylonian, or Chaldean, Empire. Nebuchadnezzar II, the second Chaldean King who is renowned for enslaving the Jewish population of Jerusalem after he besieged that city, ruled from 605 BC until 562 BC. At the time, it was the largest city in the world. His municipality included the mythical Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Ishtar Gate, and the Ziggurat of Etemenanki, a Sumerian word that can be roughly translated as 'The Foundation Platform of Heaven and the Underworld,’ which was later associated with the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel (Fenollós 2011; George 2005; Leick 2002; Rich 1811). The Persian king Cyrus the Great conquered Mesopotamia in 539 BC, seized the city and set the Jewish population free, an event that ended Babylonian rule. The Persians retained control until Alexander the Great captured it in 331 BC (Bertman 2003; Hanson 2007; Mallowan 1972).

Alexander restored large portions of the city and ordered the construction of an amphitheatre, but died only eight years later in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II. After his death, Babylon remained the capital, yet slowly fell into decline under different Hellenistic and Persian rulers and was abandoned sometime after the first century AD. However, the slightly altered but long standing tradition of the Akitu Festival, which honoured the cosmic gods and factual kings who reinstated order after periods of chaos, continued well into the Seleucid Period (Leick 2002; Luckenbill 1914; Sommer 2000). The modern city of Hillah is located approximately twelve kilometres north of the ruins, and while the ancient city was covered by the desert sands after its abandonment, the local population have always referred to it as Babel, or Babilani meaning ‘gate of the gods’ in the ancient Babylonian language (Moussa 2008; Rennell 1800).

Explorers and Excavators

The local name for the ruins, coupled with descriptions in the Book of Genesis about a city and its towers also referred to as ‘Babel, or ‘Belus,’ were one of the forces that drove Westerners to search for Babylon and connect it with the story of God’s punishment to humankind (Hiebert 2007; Kramer 1963; Seymour 2014). As noted by H.R. Hall ‘Of all regions of the earth, probably the Near East has had, and will have, the greatest interest for us Europeans, for from it sprang our civilization and our religion’ (Hall 1932, p. vii). Also inspired by the writings of Herodotus, Diodorus and Strabo, the search for the true location of the ancient city was conducted in the twelfth century. Yet is was not until the seventeenth century that it was accurately identified from inscribed bricks that were later transported to Europe, which subsequently generated further scholarly interest (Fenollós 2011; Kramer 1963; Leick 2002).
Major James Rennell, a British Naval officer and geographer, utilized the classical writers in order to find what he asserted were the ‘hanging gardens near the river’ (Rennell 1800, p. 355). Throughout his description of the ruins, Rennell failed to mention local interpretations of the site, but said:

Should the antiquities of Babylon become an object of curiosity amongst the learned, there is little doubt that they might be abundantly gratified. The delineation and description of the site and remains would prove one of the most curious pieces of antiquity that has been exhibited in these times. (Rennell 1800, p. 388).

Babylon did become an object of curiosity, yet scholars who aspired to see the glories of the past were disappointed. Claudius James Rich, a British diplomat and collector of antiquities, described the ruins much as he saw all of Mesopotamia, writing ‘I found the whole face of the country covered with vestiges of buildings, in some places consisting of brick walls surprisingly fresh, in others, merely a vast succession of mounds of rubbish’ (Rich 1818a, p. 2). The main purpose of Rich’s visit was to collect artefacts for the British Museum, which he excavated from Babylon, but also acquired through sale and trade from the local community. In his second memoir, Rich recalled that ‘Hillah is the general depot for antiques found throughout this country, the most interesting are the Sassanian and Babylonian’ (Rich 1818b, p. 47). Thus vast quantities of artefacts arrived in London and were placed on display in the museum, or in Rich’s private collection (Gadd 1953; Harper 1896).

Robert Mignan, who travelled from Basra to Babylon in 1827, had similar views about the region. He described ‘All around seems convulsed and fallen, nature appears to languish and to inform the traveller how wretched is the state of the people’ (Mignan 1829, p. 13). Yet of Babylon he recalled the former majesty of the ruins when he stated ‘By one means or another, Babylon became so great and famous a city as to give name to a very large empire, and it is called in scripture, great Babylon and the glory of kingdoms’ (Mignan 1829, p. 131). In 1849 William Loftus, a British geologist, briefly noted his visit, but elaborated that ‘the ruins have been so frequently described that it is unnecessary to dwell on this portion of our journey’ (Loftus 1856, p. 131). Yet his journal included information about rising tensions in the region between the locals and the Ottoman troops. He was assigned a contingent of Turkish soldiers due to ‘the rude and almost savage race of nomad Arabs who are continually at war with each other and the Turkish authorities’ (Loftus 1856, p. 131).

One year later, Austen Henry Layard, better known for his work at Nimrud and Nineveh, dug test pits at Babylon for approximately one month. He was one of the rare exceptions of the men who worked in the region at that time who expressed an understanding of the importance of connecting with the locals. He recalled ‘My first care on arriving in Hillah was to establish friendly relations with the principle inhabitants of the town, as well as with the Turkish officer in
command of the small garrison that guarded its mud fort’ (Layard 1882, p. 271). He was also one of the few early excavators to mention the Islamic traditions at the site. He described the water-well located within the ruins where ‘Within it, suspended by the heels until the Day of Judgment, are the two fallen angels, Harut and Marut, and the Arabs relate endless tales of the evil spirits which haunt the place’ (Layard 1882, p. 286). Yet as he travelled further south into the marshlands, his opinion more closely matched those of previous explorers when he wrote that ‘The south of Mesopotamia abounds in extensive and important ruins, of which little is known. The country around them is inhabited by Arabs notorious for their lawlessness, and scarcely more intelligent or human than the buffaloes which they tend’ (Layard 1882, p. 307).

The main Babylon excavations were conducted between 1899 and 1917 by the German Oriental Society, which were led by Robert Koldewey (Fagan 1979; Leick 2002). In the preface of *Excavations at Babylon*, Koldewey discussed his initial visit to the site when he spotted fragments of enamelled brick reliefs, which he took to Berlin for consultation with the Director General of the Royal Museums. That meeting resulted in the decision to excavate ‘the capital of the world empire of Babylonia’ (Koldewey 1914, p. vi). He did not note if he consulted with the local population before or during his excavations, but it is unlikely, and there is no record on file. There was however reference to adhering to procedures imposed by the ruling Ottoman Empire. For instance, the Ishtar Gate was ‘shipped to Berlin under a special export license that Koldewey had obtained from the Ottoman authorities’ (Magee 2012, p. 74).

Koldewey’s team concentrated on unearthing the city centre or *temenos*, which dated to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, and included the main palace and its alleged hanging gardens, Ishtar Gate, the city walls, and Processional Way, which was the parade thoroughfare for the *Akītu* Festival. While Koldewey utilized Herodotus’s descriptions of the city as a rough blueprint during excavations, he cast doubt on the validity of the classical stories. While Koldewey provided detailed lists on physical features and artefacts, he did not offer narratives on personal interactions or insights into the local population. He hired locals to dig the site and often included them in his photographs, such as the men digging around Ishtar Gate in Figure 6.1. Yet unlike Leonard Woolley who, as was discussed in the previous chapter, reflected on personal feelings, Koldewey’s pragmatic style did not include private thoughts.
He also refrained from making strong Biblical connections to the site or excavated material. When he referred to a large stone lion, now known as ‘The Lion of Babylon’ he did not commit to its significance. Rather he noted ‘Some see in it Daniel in the lion’s den, and others, Babylonia above a defeated Egypt’ (Koldewey 1914, p. 161). The longest reference he made to the topic was when he wrote about the area where the ziggurat had once stood:

The colossal mass of the tower, which the Jews of the Old Testament regarded as the essence of human presumption, amidst the proud palaces of the priests, the spacious treasuries, the innumerable lodgings for strangers, the whole must have conveyed an overwhelming sense of greatness, power, and wealth, such as could rarely have been found elsewhere in the great Babylonian Kingdom. (Koldewey 1914, p. 196).

Excavations continued as WWI encroached on Mesopotamia. At the time, Mark Sykes, one of the creators of the infamous Sykes-Picot Agreement, travelled through the region with different Arab tribes, whom he described as ‘a more rapacious, greedy, ill-mannered set of brutes it would be hard to find’ (Sykes 1915, p. 441). This attitude towards the locals became more prevalent as the war continued. By 1917 British government personnel made statements such as ‘It is worthy of note that one might as well try and control or placate a pack of jackals or hyenas as any Arab tribe’ (Buchanan 1938, p. 22).

Koldewey was forced to hurriedly abandon his work in 1917 due to the advancement of British military forces into the province. Artefacts were either stored in the archaeological dig houses, or crated for future transport to Germany. The objects included hundreds of cuneiform tablets, statues and pieces of the Ishtar Gate (Hall 1930b; Lloyd 1955). When Bell stopped at Babylon to assess the
remaining collection, she expressed her sadness at the departure of Koldeway, stating:

It’s no good trying to think of him as an alien enemy and my heart ached when I stood in the empty dusty little room where Fattuh used to put up my camp furniture and the Germans and I held eager conversations over plans of Babylon. What a dreadful world of broken friendships we have created between us. (Bell & Bell 1927, p. 359).

However, she did not mention the Iraqis, and her statement made it clear that Westerners controlled all decisions about the ruins. This practice continued when British troops converted one of the dig houses into military barracks. Captain Hall, who was mentioned in the previous Ur chapter, stated that their presence ensured the security of the site and prevented thefts (Hall 1930b, p. 29). This attitude was to remain the same well into 2003, which is discussed later in this chapter. Hall also described the British commander’s interest in the site:

General Costello, who had taken great interest in the place, had tried to make it attractive to visitors by grading roads up to it and beyond it, marking out paths, and labelling the chief portions of the site such as the Ishtar Gate with their names. He also had placed two British soldier-guards on duty to keep it in order, as I have said, and had written and printed a small guide to Babylon, with the help of Captain R. Campbell Thompson. This I found generally used by visitors, and I hope still is. (Hall 1930b, p. 33).

Hall’s observations provided evidence that Babylon was occupied, controlled, and altered by British troops. He did not acknowledge any Iraqi input for the tourist guide he mentioned, nor did he indicate his targeted audience, but it was assuredly Western. When he departed Babylon in late 1918, the military was still residing on the site, and the dig houses were bricked closed with the artefacts still intact. Bell conducted an inventory in 1923 but resealed the rooms, and it was not until 1926 when she and a German archaeologist by the name of Dr Walter Andrea, reopened the rooms to find nothing had been stolen. Bell and Andrea proceeded to divide the artefacts for delivery to the museums in Baghdad and Berlin (Hall 1930b, p. 52). Neither Hall nor other sources published information about when the British troops vacated Babylon, yet similar to the situation at Ur, it is likely they would have left by 1921 or 1922 as Bell did not mention their presence in her later diary entries.

In the years following the end of the war, the attitudes of British subjects did not vastly improve towards the country, as noted by one army engineer ‘So far as one can judge, a hundred years may pass and the greater part of Mesopotamia, or Iraq as it is now called, will remain the dreary wilderness that it was when the British first marched through the country’ (Buchanan 1938, p. 252). Others however were appreciative that the Iraqi government, who were finally in control of sites ‘had the wisdom to recognise that the antiquities of Mesopotamia are practically
unlimited and the sharing of artefacts between the digger and the Iraq Museum is best for all parties’ (Thompson & Hutchinson 1929, p. 103). However, that statement was in response to foreign museums still being allowed to take half of excavated material to their home countries. Despite the removal of extensive portions of the Ishtar Gate and thousands of other artefacts, Koldewey’s work contributed greatly to the science of archaeology. He developed modern scientific techniques for excavating mud brick remains, and his large-scale excavations allowed scholars to analyse the archaeological sequences of Babylon from the recent Parthian deposits, down to the remains of Nebuchadnezzar II sixth century BC city (Leick 2002; Roux 1992).

Visitors to Babylon
While excavations did not immediately resume after the war, a few Westerners published accounts of their visits. During Henry Morton’s 1938 Ur trip, which was discussed in the previous chapter, he also stopped at Babylon. He noted:

> While I stood on the summit of the ruins, an Arab approached and told me that he had worked there with Professor Koldewey. His name was Umran Hamed, the guide of Babylon. He was a good fellow and he had absorbed a quantity of accurate information from the German archaeologists. We walked about the ruins and he pointed out many things which I should have missed without him. (Morton 1938, p. 175).

Morton did not provide further details about his encounter with Hamed, he only stated that he was shown the hall where ‘according to the Book of Daniel, Belshazzar saw the writing on the wall’ (Morton 1938, p. 177). The reference to its Biblical significance was also pointed out by others. Two 1950s British travellers wanted to see ‘the opulent city that was in both the Old and New Testaments as a symbol of human pride, carnality and sin’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 141). Instead they said ‘one’s impression is of a bombed, battered city, left to scorpions and jackals’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 143). They discussed the Iraqi education system and how it suffered after two world wars, but was recovering. They commented that ‘the Iraqi workmen, the descendants of the Babylonian artisans, are as capable as any one of the learning industrial techniques, provided they are trained properly’ (Stewart & Haylock 1956, p. 246).

It was also during this time that the Iraqi Directorate General of Antiquities performed restoration work on the exposed ruins, re-established excavations with teams from Italy and Germany, and constructed a site museum and half-scale model of the Ishtar Gate at the entryway (Orchard 1962, 1963). Furthermore, the long dormant *Akitu* Festival was revitalized in order to ‘show the importance of Iraq to the world, both as an original source of world culture and as a contemporary cultural centre’ (Schipper 2005, p. 261). In addition to the festival, Alexander’s amphitheatre was reconstructed and hosted plays such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, which ‘included more than 60 actors and actresses, staged in front of an audience of two thousand spectators, most of them inhabitants of the district’
This was in stark contrast to Middle East experts such as Milton Viorst, whom Said criticized for representing the region as ‘uncomfortable with intellectual challenge’ (Said 1997, p. xxv).

As the Iran-Iraq War began in 1980, refurbishments continued under direct orders from the Ba’athist Government. Upon the reconstruction of the Southern Palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, Saddam Hussein insisted that every brick be emblazoned with the inscription ‘To King Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Saddam Hussein’ (Isakhan 2011, p. 262). This encouraged a juxtaposition for the world to view the country as being led by a long continuation of evil Eastern despots (Bahrani 1998; Meskell 1998). Hussein’s rebuilding of Babylon was seen as arrogant and decadent, and a man who ‘rendered ordinary Iraqis virtually invisible, undermining their cultural worth’ (Seymour 2004, p. 358). While an Iraqi military base was not constructed at Babylon as it was at Ur, Hussein’s government officials established themselves on the ruins.

In addition to rebuilding the ancient city, several modern buildings were constructed on the site. These included hotel rooms, meeting halls, and a large palace placed on an artificial mound on the western half of the ruins, built so that Hussein could overlook the restored city (ICC 2009). This aligned with his need to form personal connections to the ancient past. Of Babylon he said ‘from here Nebuchadnezzar set forth and arrested the elements that tried to degrade the land of the Arabs and brought them chained to Babylon’ (Hussein in Baram 1994 p. 311). Just as the kings of the past used it as a place of power and control, Hussein followed in similar fashion.

Because of the war and the ensuing international 1991 conflict, Western visitation was absent. Babylon was not targeted during the First Gulf War as Ur had been, and heritage specialists who travelled to Iraq afterwards found it abandoned but undamaged. Western archaeologists Elizabeth Stone and Paul Zimansky said of it ‘We paid a brief visit to the ruins of ancient Babylon, the most popular attraction in the country for both Iraqis and foreigners, and found no one there. No archaeologist, native or foreign, is excavating in Iraq today’ (Stone & Zimansky 1992, p. 24). While the UN Sanctions deterred further foreign travel, the image of Babylon’s Biblical relevance persisted. This was evident from media coverage that ensured that it was valued for its strong ties to Western interests that culminated in ‘our culture’s rise to the pinnacle of modern civilization’ (Pollock & Lutz 1994, p. 272). While sanctions continued, a Western archaeologist was able to visit the site in 1999. Friedrich Schipper conducted assessments, and said of the infamous Tower of Babel:

Today, visitors to Babylon will be disappointed, as nothing is left of that city's monument, except a big marshy pit in the ground. As far as we know, it was Alexander the Great who demolished this tower in order to re-erect it, newer and mightier, but he died before the job was finished. (Schipper 2005, p. 259).
By March 2003, during the coalition’s advancement into Iraq, the site had been subjected to years of occupation, worship, destruction, and repair. Half the site had been reconstructed, and half remained as ruins, as visible in Figure 6.2. The history of occupation was continued when it was used as one of the largest military bases during the early years of the Iraq war.

Figure 6.2: Reconstructed walls visible behind the ruins of Babylon.

The 2003 Iraq War and Babylon

The First Marine Expeditionary Force arrived at Babylon in April 2003 and occupied the Ba’athist Era palace that overlooked the ruins. Soon after, Navy Seabees attached to the unit engineered dirt berms, concrete barriers, gabion fortification barriers filled with soil, metal fencing, and check points around the ruins. This secured the area, and Camp Babylon, more commonly known as Camp Alpha, was constructed on the south side the refurbished palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, as seen in Figure 6.3 (ICC 2009; The International Audit Commission 2004). By September 2003, Camp Alpha had been designated as the command post for the Multinational Division (MND) Central-South forces. It was headed by a Polish command staff, which served as the main communication centre for military decisions related to all provinces located between the Babil and Wasit governorates (Bahrani 2006a; ICC 2009).

The structures that had been in place since the 1980s were utilized as offices by the division, but in order to accommodate the 3,000 military and civilian personnel who were deployed to the camp, major construction works were commissioned. These included digging and levelling unexcavated areas of the site for parking lots, helicopter landing pads, and the erection of living trailers. In addition, the sandbags and fortification barriers that served as a perimeter fence were filled with archaeologically sensitive soil (ICC 2009; Moussa 2006, 2008).
Just as the WWI officers had ordered alterations to the city 86 years earlier, once again a foreign military command modified the site for their own use.

Figure 6.3: The reconstructed palace in the left side of image, with Camp Alpha within the red triangle, as it looked in 2005 (Photo Credit: John Russell, US Department of State).

According to Zanib Bahrani, coalition forces did not engage with Iraqi archaeologists prior to, or during the occupation, and disregarded written requests from the Iraqi site director who asked that the military cease construction and vacate the site. She further stated that she was unable to find evidence to corroborate the military’s claim that marines were deployed to Babylon in order to protect it from looters (Bahrani 2006a, 2008).

Laurie Rush recalled that ‘as the invasion of Iraq unfolded, US Marines were assigned to protect the ancient city of Babylon from looting’ (Rush 2012, p. 363). However this is contradictory to what a marine, who was based at Babylon in April 2003, relayed. He revealed that he and his unit allowed the looting to go forward unchallenged because they were not given orders to stop it. More specifically he said:

We saw men looting the Babylon Museum as we were sitting in the courtyard. The looters walked past us and we looked at each other, and they looked kind of scared, but there were no orders to stop the looters so we didn’t. They realized that we would not stop them, so they left with all the stuff they looted. It was mostly office stuff, computers and chairs and stuff, but they came back several times because they knew we wouldn’t arrest them. Unless we had specific orders to stop and arrest them, we weren’t going to do anything. (Interview 33).
However, stories of cooperation were noted in an Associated Press article that discussed how the marines who occupied the ruins intended to refurbish the small site museum for the Iraqis. The article quoted Commander Emilio Marrero, who stated ‘On my first day here, I caught many people. A few looters were arrested, and US authorities pushed everybody outside the gate so that we could preserve the city’ (Marrero in Mroue 2003). The article’s author further noted that ‘Babylon has since been closed to the public, but the Marines hope to reopen the site within two months’ (Mroue 2003).

While troops were not observed nor reported to have been looting artefacts, the narrative that they were assigned to Babylon in order to secure it from looters did not appear to be their primary directive, rather, it was a secondary result of the occupation. This was further voiced by Interviewee 33 who said Babylon was not important because ‘it was just a bunch of old rocks’ (Interview 33). The decision to construct a military base on Babylon was summarized by Middle East Expert John Curtis as thus:

> In the early days after the war, a military presence at Babylon served a valuable purpose in that it prevented the site from being looted. But it is regrettable that a military camp of this size should then have been established on one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. (Curtis 2005, p. 8).

Similarly, Interviewee 24 stated ‘Even though the base was a negative, the population benefited from the security of the military being there’ (Interview 24). A marine captain who possessed a university degree in archaeology at the time of his deployment also related his experience at Babylon in April 2003:

> I was at Babylon when we occupied it. When we got to Al Hillah my platoon sergeant told me we were going to Babylon. I’m pro military and all, but what we the coalition did at Babylon, was for military convenience, not military necessity. Military necessity would be to engage forces or protect civilians, but everything we did when we went to Babylon was for military convenience. I recognised that when we got there and wondered why we were doing that. I couldn’t believe what was going on. They were bulldozing, filling up sand bags, I saw pot shards in them I walked over to some engineers and said ‘hey didn’t we do a survey?’ And they said ’we don’t have to do that here.’ Back then people didn’t know enough, guys were taking pieces of brick. The leadership were a bunch of jackasses, except for the chief of staff, he told the guys he wasn’t worried about them looting things, he warned the leadership that the people were going to rebel against the regime because they saw archaeology as one of the tools that Saddam used to repress people. He told them that but no one listened to him. I talked to someone who was with the operation cell of the group, and I asked him what we were doing at Babylon and he asked me why I cared and I said because I had a background in archaeology and he said, ‘take your pith helmet off and put your Kevlar back on and get back to fucking work captain,’ he wasn’t going to listen to me. After that we put down a helicopter landing pad, a bunch of vehicles went up Processional Way and cracked the bricks. At
Babylon there was no military necessity for being there. It was done out of arrogance and stupidity. (Interview 11).

The removal of bricks is reminiscent of the inscribed bricks at Ur that were taken by British troops in WWI, as was discussed by Hall in the previous chapter (Hall 1930b, p. 106). This demonstrated a continued disregard by military forces for the value of preserving the scientific integrity of archaeological sites. One of the coalition soldiers said that ‘building the base was misguided, but that’s not something the military does, I mean being aware of cultural heritage, there is no common mission for it, and it’s not even a part of planning considerations’ (Interview 25). Interviewee 20 also noted it was erroneous to put the base on Babylon, saying ‘in general it’s not good, we don’t need to do that, especially in the case of Babylon, good lord how did that happen’ (Interview 20). Another soldier stated that the site was chosen because if offered a strategic defensive position. He elaborated:

Like Alexander the Great was there because it had great over-launch, so were we there for the same reason. Also, when you are driving around looking for a good place for a base, it’s better to find a fixed building than have to set up tents, and there were all those concrete buildings at Babylon. (Interview 32).

Due to the existing infrastructure, Babylon was an attractive location. Further, one of the civilian interviewees speculated that it was occupied because of the lack of understanding the value of ancient ruins:

We don’t have any archaeological sites in the US, we have a serpent mound in Ohio that you can walk all over. So I think it was disrespectful to be on Babylon, but being respectful to ancient ruins is not part of our cultural understanding, because we don’t have those kinds of sites. If you find an arrowhead you pick it up and put it in your pocket, it’s not that big a deal. But I think it comes back to the Iraqis, after years of oppression, even if military forces were not being respectful of archaeological sites, I doubt the Iraqis would have cared themselves because they didn’t care, and they couldn’t afford to care. (Interview 17).

This was similar to the opinion voiced by Interviewee 7 who said:

The place was surrounded by busts of Saddam and that fake palace on top of the hill that was Saddam’s. I think that was the lens the Shia security forces we worked with were generally looking at it through, rather than a historic site. It was hard for them to take it at face value in some respects. When they would show us things most of the focus was on ‘this is what Saddam did here and Saddam built this here’ but it was all anti-Saddam. (Interview 7).

However, the construction of a Western military base on Babylon did cause distress and anger within the international cultural heritage community. The site director acknowledged that ‘The use of the city as a military camp was a major
affront towards the world-renowned archaeological site’ (Moussa 2008, p. 144).
An Iraqi archaeologist who spoke about the occupation said:

> Well it bothered me, it bothered everyone that they were on a heritage site. Babylon was already damaged by Saddam, he built on top of it, making excavations difficult. But having troops on any archaeological site is unacceptable, regardless if it’s a reconstructed site like Babylon, or any other site. (Interview 16).

Bahrani further admonished:

> The occupation of Babylon was a deliberate symbolic expression of power over Mesopotamia. The occupation of sites and the images of military force at the ancient ruins can be described as an aesthetic of occupation, a display of force that uses the sign of history and its control as a statement of victory. (Bahrani 2006a, p. 244).

Because of the prominence and general familiarity of a place like Babylon, its occupation drew greater attention from the media and was highlighted in the news more than Ur and Kish, the other case study that is discussed in the following chapter. Constructing a military base on a site that historically represents notions of power and control could easily be misinterpreted as a deliberate and antagonising act. This narrative was further enhanced because unlike Ur, where the Iraqi caretaker was based at the ruins, at Babylon, only Westerners were making decisions about the site.

**Site Visits**

The coalition occupation and control designated Babylon off-limits to everyone except coalition personnel who possessed a US government issued identification card. Neither the Iraqi archaeologists, nor the site director, were able to freely access the site (Bahrani 2003b, 2006a). As reported on 30 September 2004 in *The Iraq War & Archaeology* project, only five SBAH staff were allotted entry permits (Deblauwe 2003). Soldiers were allowed unlimited entry, while the Iraqi caretakers were restricted in their movements (Koliński 2004). One of the troops who was based on the ruins said that he never met an Iraqi. He said ‘Someone pointed out to me someone who was supposed to be the Iraqi archaeologist, but I never met any of those guys. We went on a tour but a public affairs guy gave the tour’ (Interview 11). Another coalition officer remembered ‘The Iraqis didn’t have a say in what happened to the site’ (Interview 2).

When the base was placed under command of the Polish forces, they embedded three archaeologists from their Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) centre with the troops. The archaeologists were assigned to Babylon from May 2004 until November 2004, with orders to document, intervene and protect it and other sites located within the MND Central-South area of responsibility. They reported to the command staff, but also provided information to UNESCO (The International Audit Commission 2004).
One of the coalition officers who was temporarily based on Babylon explained:

The Polish archaeologists were there on special request from the Polish Commander. Their primary function was to make sure that as little as possible harm was done to the site. To do that operation they had contact with Iraqi archaeologists, especially those that worked on the Babylon site. They helped those archaeologists to restart their operations. A lot of equipment was stolen during the unrest after the invasion, so they provided new computers and set up contacts with international archaeologists. (Interview 24).

The Polish archaeologists consulted with the Iraqis, and were credited with stopping the expansion of a helicopter landing zone in November 2003 which was at the request of the Iraqi site director (Koliński 2004). However according to Bahrani, they did not always adhere to the site director’s request that the work stop:

These officers can be well intentioned, but they themselves were at time responsible for damage to Babylon, because they felt that they could make decisions on construction projects despite the Antiquities and Heritage Law, or requests from the SBAH representative that they do not work at the site. (Bahrani 2006a, p. 244).

Including the Polish archaeologists in the framework of base personnel was an honourable attempt to preserve the integrity of Babylon. One coalition officer recalled that:

During the winter of 2003 the former Polish Division Heads had ordered a large amount of grit to harden the muddy surface of the lodging area, so they brought in 1500 cubic meters of grit and put it down. It was all driven into the unexcavated area of the site. In preparation to that operation we had contact with the Iraqi office of archaeology in Baghdad. My commander was very sensitive to the issue of cultural protection so with everything that happened in the camp, for instance if there was a need to reinforce the barrier, there was always an archaeologist present to make sure there was no damage done to the surface. That was sometimes a conflict with the Polish protection commander because he wanted to dig holes and the archaeologists made sure that they couldn’t. But in general, the commander was cooperative in not further destroying the site. (Interview 24).

However, Iraqi presence and input were non-existent throughout the construction operations. Polish command staff eventually restricted troop access to the site through the issuance of an order that allowed visits only if accompanied by an Iraqi guide. However the order was not strictly followed, and it was not until December 2003 that visits were closely regulated (Koliński 2004). For example, according to Interviewee 2, in 2008 ‘The military was holding reenlistment ceremonies on the ruins without the site director’s permission, which caused problems’ (Interview 2). This suggested that unsanctioned visits continued to occur. As was discussed in the previous Ur chapter, the occupation of Babylon was also in violation of international and domestic laws. US Army Regulation
200-4 section (f) states that ‘Commanders outside the United States will comply with (1) Substantive cultural resources requirements of general applicability included in host nation law and regulation’ (DoD 1998, p. i). Additionally, similar to Ur, because Babylon was also on the Iraqi archaeological register, it was protected under Section 402 of the US National Historic Preservation Act, which calls for avoidance or mitigation of damages to foreign heritage sites (NHPA 1980). This indicated that the construction was in violation of Iraq antiquities laws that prohibited building on or within a kilometre of an archaeological site. However, as was previously discussed in the literature review, because the site was considered US territory once a base was built on it, Iraqi laws did not necessarily apply (Varner 2011).

Cross-Cultural Interactions
Some coalition personnel understood the problems associated with their presence, and recognised the importance of the ruins. One of the interviewees expressed his understanding by noting ‘Babylon is important to Iraqis for many reasons, for tourism, but also as a symbol of their greatness and their history’ (Interview 2). However, during the initial months of war, other personnel said it was not foremost on their minds. Interviewee 26 who was deployed at the start of Shock and Awe Campaign and stayed until 2004 said that ‘At the time I didn’t even think about coalition forces occupying an archaeological site. I was indifferent to it. I was more interested in not dying and my soldiers not dying’ (Interview 26). Yet the majority of coalition personnel did not have direct contact with Iraqi archaeologists in order to understand their point of view, such as Interviewee 8 who recalled ‘I never met an Iraqi archaeologist or anyone in the SBAH’ (Interview 8).

In fact, contact with residents throughout the province was minimal. Despite this, the soldiers recalled their interactions with different demographics of the population. Interviewee 29 outlined how:

I didn’t have any interactions with Iraqis but my colleagues did. They mentioned interacting with the local people and it generally seemed positive. They understood that the American’s were there to help and not hurt. It seems later on that the interactions were more guarded. There were Iraqis working on the bases, in the laundry and the kitchens, but my interactions with them were just business. People seemed friendly, but there wasn’t a lot of interaction beyond the daily course of business, dropping off laundry, ordering food, stuff like that. (Interview 29).

Interviewee 17 held similar experiences with Iraqis who worked on the various bases located throughout the country. She believed ‘they were already predisposed to be supportive of the United States, and their circle of friends were the same’ (Interview 17). Interviewee 32, who served in 2004 recalled a specific event:

Most of my interactions with Iraqis were very brief and not personal. We were doing engineering assessments in the south but often there was
nobody around so I didn’t have any contact. The contacts I did have with the Iraqis were cautious but friendly. Everyone stayed back, they just watched us until one brave person, usually a younger person, would come up to us and try to speak with us in broken English. They figured out that we weren’t going to be hostile towards them, so that drew bigger crowds so people would come around and watch what we were doing. One time we had a crowd of about 50 and there were just 6 of us. That did make me nervous since I didn’t want to do anything stupid to set off the crowd, so I was very careful not to be aggressive. (Interview 32).

Interviewee 10 reflected on his work with the Iraqi Army, stating:

It was like working with any other ally, very interesting because the officers and NCOs were real professional, but some of the soldiers would do stupid things that would almost get them killed, such as handling live bombs. I would get angry at them for doing that. (Interview 10).

A soldier who served as a translation specialist observed positive interactions. He noted that on several occasions ‘A lot of guys would be sitting around, smoking, trying to chat using a bit of English and Arabic on both sides, that was very heartening to see’ (Interview 22). Coalition civilians who travelled with the military also recalled amicable relations, including Interviewee 17:

I would say sixty per cent of the time our convoy was rerouted, and it often took us through markets. I would see kids following us and waving, even though we were disrupting their market day and there’s a gunner in the turret who has a gun, but he’s waving so everyone’s waving back. (Interview 17).

Interview 30 recalled that most interactions were based on military strategies. He explained:

We engaged with leaders who had never been engaged before. There were towns where nobody had ever seen a US uniform. People were initially afraid of us, but soon as we started engaging with them and listening to their concerns, the quicker we were able to get a small scale CERP or PRT type project going. Those little projects turned into trust, and that trust turned into intelligence gathering and understanding how the little rat-lines from Iran were filtering money and materials into the country to build roadside bombs. So our ability to target the bad guys was incredibly more significant towards the end of our 14-month tour than it was at the beginning. We used it as an enabling tool. (Interview 30).

Interviewee 6 also discussed his perceptions about his contact with the Iraqis. He remembered:

The relationships were cordial. During the first couple of months I think there was hesitation on both sides, we were uncomfortable with each other, uncomfortable with the culture, trying to figure each other out. I clearly had no idea what they’d been through, cultural sensitivities of their culture, but they didn’t know a lot about our culture either. (Interview 6).
Pre-Deployment Training

Unfamiliarity with cultural differences and local heritage matters, in conjunction with minimal contact with Iraqis, specifically archaeologists, was due in part to the lack of pre-deployment training, which had not begun until 2006 after the military base had moved off the site. A few of the participants in this study were aware of historical Babylon from either its affiliation with the Tower of Babel, or Alexander the Great. Yet, collectively the knowledge was limited. A commissioned officer who served in 2004 stated:

> Cultural heritage protection in general is not a real concern to the operational commander, unless he expects to be confronted with negative media attention related to the effect the operation has on cultural heritage sites. This of course is contrary to The Hague Convention and treaties, but in general only the higher levels of command are aware of the content of these conventions. Commanders therefore only make a special effort to protect when they are aware that a military attack on a site has a direct impact on the acceptance of his troops by the local population, or on the perception of public opinion in their home nations or the world. (Interview 24).

Another coalition member recalled ‘We were given a stack of books to read and told of the basic niceties of what to do and what not to do, but you really had to learn when you got there’ (Interview 3). Interviewee 7 said that his unit received training in cultural interactions. He elaborated:

> Our training was don’t show your feet or talk to women, we were also told about the tribal system, and history and religion. Regarding sites, we were told don’t go in a mosque, just that basic religious site training, but nothing in terms of archaeological or historic sites. (Interview 7).

Interviewee 31, who deployed in 2005, said of his training:

> We received approximately 5 minutes’ worth of information on cultural heritage issues. All we were told was that heritage sites were off limits to us because of damages that occurred before we ever got out there. I specifically remember the instructor mentioning the Hanging Gardens of Babylon and that we couldn’t go see those, but he had seen them and said they were really cool. (Interview 31).

A commissioned officer who served two tours in Iraq, the first during the invasion, and the second within the Babil Province in 2007, explained:

> In my view, there is no structured way to safeguard those cultural treasures in any battle space, whether it’s Iraq or somewhere in Africa or somewhere else, there is no process in place. There was absolutely no guidance given to us about that. Never have we talked about that in training, or the lead up to rolling across the border. You would have thought by 2007 when I came back the second time someone would recognise that we were on top of a lot of really rich cultural history and we need to make sure that in addition to what we are doing in terms of the provision of security to the population, we are doing for the security of
those sites as well. There was never any discussion about that, never any systems put in place. (Interview 12).

The failure to understand the significance of the regional archaeological sites was not an isolated phenomenon. Cultural misunderstandings also presented themselves via other means. Interviewee 25 discussed some of the difficulties he encountered while on routine patrols:

We had people come up to us and tell us they were Christian, or Sunni, or Shia, which meant absolutely nothing to us. We didn’t understand that religion was such a significant part of their lives. For Americans, we just don’t talk about religion that much, it would be intrusive. (Interview 25).

This sentiment was echoed by Interviewee 17 who argued:

There were no Americans in Iraq for thirty years so we didn’t know how to behave. We were just given books, but that doesn’t work because we didn’t understand the culture. We could have been told about how they view truth, lies and fiction and that would have made our jobs easier. But nobody ever said that to me. We relied on the local population for community engagement and we never did that before. (Interview 17).

An Iraqi archaeologist stated that:

Despite the fact that many American archaeologists had contacted the American military in charge before the war of 2003 about the importance of archaeological sites, it become obvious that the coalition forces had no clear plan how to deal with cultural heritage, which led to disastrous consequences for the Iraq Museum, Ur, and Babylon. (Interview 19).

Similar criticism was expressed by others, such as Interviewee 13 who said there was a lapse in training material available for the troops. She noted ‘The Special Warfare Centre and School had not published a new guide to Arts, Monuments and Archives since 1989’ (Interview 13). One of the civilians who provided training for the troops expressed his view that training deficiencies were not solely a DoD issue, but rather more cross-disciplinary, stating:

In retrospect, archaeological institutions were asleep at the wheel for far too long. We should have started doing cultural heritage training at the start of the First Gulf War, if not before, and we didn’t. During the times when there were regular bombings in Iraq in the 1990s, during the period of the no-fly zone, we should have been much more directly involved in cultural heritage protection and offering our services to the Department of Defense to do training sessions. Even after the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha’s, we should have had a stronger voice. All the archaeological organizations should have tried to speak in unison, with a common voice, which we did not do. (Interview 5).

The insufficiencies in troop training led to some well-intended but misunderstood efforts. Interviewee 8, who served near the Parthian site of Hatra in 2006 said:
My commander was a real go-getter and had plans with some Special Forces guys to guard Hatra, get some archaeologists on the site and actually do some work. I wasn’t sure exactly what he was going to do, but I thought we could help with cultural tourism and revitalize the site. But some Western archaeologists who were in the press said we were doing something devilishly wrong and threatened us with violating Geneva Convention stuff. Our commander had a vision, but when we were threatened, he instead took his money and built a road someplace. But you have places like Hatra and Nimrud, centres of pride and identity, people cared about them, and it would not be controversial to try and put money into those places. (Interview 8).

Misunderstandings such as described by Interviewee 8 could have been alleviated had proper cultural heritage awareness training been offered to all deploying personnel.

Cooperative Projects

Yet, not everyone met with opposition. Two months after the occupation of Babylon, Marines and Seabees were credited with assisting the museum director to repair the damaged site museum (Sweet 2003). In addition, after repeated requests from Iraqi officials to vacate the site, on 1 June 2004, the US Army issued an operations fragmentary order, referred to as FRAGO 096, which imposed a halt to the construction on Babylon (DoD & DoS 2003). Shortly thereafter, coalition forces prepared to depart, and an International Audit Commission report was drafted by the Polish archaeologists embedded at Camp Alpha. They conducted a survey of the site, and provided digital images and descriptions of the areas that were damaged by the occupation (The International Audit Commission 2004). The report listed several Iraqi names as participants, members of the military as attendees, as well as an international expert from the British Museum as part of the Commission. Yet it is unclear what role each of these individuals performed during the survey, as the report did not provide a description or outline about responsibilities or personal interactions.

After nearly two years of occupation, coalition forces vacated Babylon on 22 December 2004, and Iraqis were once again in control of their site (Bahrani 2006a; Moussa 2008). After their departure, contact was maintained between the Iraqis and the Babil PRT, which was located approximately 3 kilometres south of the ruins, and included a contingent of US soldiers. CERP projects provided repairs to the 1960s half-scale model of the Ishtar Gate, as seen in Figure 6.4, and the visitor courtyard, as well as additional refurbishments to the site museum.
From 2004, until the complete withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq, coalition visits to the site continued, albeit with Iraqi consultation and consent. The tours included the water-well that Layard had previously identified as the location of the Day of Judgment for the angels Harut and Marut, as seen in Figure 6.5. These tours not only provided an Iraqi controlled means for troops to see the sites, but also exposed them to an Islamic history they might not have been previously aware of.
Interactions between the troops and the Iraqi tour guides were amicable, but interviewees did not relate strong personal connections to them, as the soldiers did with the Ur caretaker. The soldiers expressed their appreciation for the visits, such as ‘I heard about Babylon in Sunday School, and in movies, so being there, I could imagine what happened with the Persians, Romans, and the Greeks, I was awe of the place’ (Interview 3). Similarly, Interviewee 12 related:

I grew up reading Greek mythology, and Babylon was important to my understanding of that history, like Alexander the Great. I must have read every book about Alexander the Great before deploying so I knew about Babylon and the East-West conflict back in 320 BC. I was naturally drawn to that part of the world, that site and how it related to history. (Interview 12).

Although the concept of Orientalism was not voiced by the interviewees in this case study, they did acknowledge an understanding of the negative repercussions the coalition occupation had on Babylon and the Iraqi archaeologists. However, some of the higher ranking officers seemed to be unaware or dismissive of the issue. This was evident when Colonel John Coleman, the former chief of staff for the Marine Division that originally established themselves at Babylon, infamously said in regards to a request for an apology from the head of the SBAH ‘if it makes him feel good, we can certainly give him one’ (Coleman in Stone & Bajjaly 2008, p. 11).

Yet many soldiers were willing to positively engage and assist with programs at the site. By the end of the occupation, the Iraqi heritage specialists began to partner with international subject matter experts through UNESCO, the DoS, and the World Monuments Fund (WMF) Future of Babylon Project, which was designed to develop and implement a site management plan for the ruins (WMF 2015). Between 2007 and 2011, coalition forces provided logistical support for those teams on numerous occasions (Curtis 2009a; Russell 2010). In the course of the projects, soldiers had the opportunity to engage with the local specialists, such as American and UN personnel speaking with an Iraqi archaeologist within the walls of the Ishtar Gate, as seen in Figure 6.6. As of 2015, the WMF project was still in-progress and nearing its end goal of providing the documentation needed to list Babylon on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a cultural landscape and archaeological city.
Figure 6.6: Coalition troops interact with an Iraqi archaeologist between the walls of the Ishtar Gate.

Discussion

While the discovery of Babylon’s rich archaeological past was unmistakably driven by Western experts, initially fuelled by a search for the Tower of Babel, it would be a mistake to fully criticize the contributions of early explorers and archaeologists. Specifically, Koldewey’s methods of mud brick excavation ensured minimal damage was done to the scientific integrity of Nebuchadnezzar’s ancient city. In addition, he provided comprehensive empirical evidence to trace the history of the many occupying cultures, just as Woolley had done for Ur. But, similar to Ur, decisions about the site were made without local contribution. In fact, many of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers often referred to the low intellect and savagery of the local population. There was little regard for positively engaging with the locals, as these men were on explicit missions to collect antiquities for their home museums. Degrading the Arabs and their lifestyle can be understood by what Said explained as old Orientalism, that is, ‘rarely were Orientalists interested in anything except proving the validity of their own musty truths’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 52).

From the 1920s through the 1950s, Western attitudes did not improve. The region was regarded in the romanticised Occidental version perpetrated by characterisations of the East by the West (Said 1992; Lockman 2010). The East continued to be viewed as backwards and culturally deficient well into the late twentieth century. Past perceptions of the country and its people, coupled with Saddam Hussein’s Regime, created an Iraq that was to be feared and hated, which was the atmosphere the troops deployed into. These attitudes matched Said’s first and fourth ‘principle dogmas’ of Orientalism, the perception of the superior West and the inferior East, and that the Orient is something to be feared and controlled.
The history of utilizing the archaeological site as a military base in WWI was revisited in 2003, which demonstrated that little had changed or been learned. Similar to the case at Ur, the location of Babylon offered tactical advantages to for armies, whether ancient or modern. When the US and its coalition partners occupied the site in 2003, they knowingly or unknowingly paralleled many of the actions of the British some eight decades earlier.

A common theme among the interviewees was their recognition of how constructing a military base on Babylon was objectionable because it damaged the historical and scientific integrity of the site. Additionally, several participants acknowledged that preventing the Iraqi archaeologist’s free access to the site created not only physical boundaries but also hindered abilities to build trust and affiliations. While positive engagements were achieved during some projects such as site refurbishments, these occurred after the military vacated the ruins. During the occupation, the presence of the Polish archaeologists who made decisions on behalf of the Iraqis, while very well intended, in reality revisited the issues of power and control that Western factions had on the site pre-WWI. Despite this, the concept of an Orientalist ideology concerning Western dominance over Babylon was not voiced.

In addition, members of the coalition perceived that the Iraqis did not care about the site, as other matters were foremost of concern. This followed a pattern of the West failing to understand Eastern cultures, and tending to interpret the feelings of the locals. Specifically, it is in accord with Said’s third ‘principle dogma’ of the Orient being unable to define itself, and must therefore rely on the West to do it for them (Said 2003 [1978], p. 301). Therefore, the importance of the ruins to the Iraqis was not fully understood by the soldiers. The need to establish relations was recognised by some of the coalition soldiers, yet acting on it was hindered by a lack of proper preparation by the higher echelon. Having culturally aware troops in their units was supported by some commanders, but shunned by others. This is an indication that the importance and implementation of such training has failed to reach staff who are the decision-makers.

The soldiers saw their presence at Babylon as providing security, not as an affront to the Iraqis. Yet they viewed the site through their own ideological lens, and failed to appreciate that there could be an alternative Iraqi viewpoint. This was not maliciously intended, rather it was an indication of the failure to properly prepare them to understand the local culture. Babylon was a seat of power in the past, and because the soldiers were on it, there was great potential for the Iraqis to see not just occupiers but conquerors who wanted to wield power and control over them and their country. Many of the interviewees mentioned Alexander the Great, who was a Westerner whose accomplishments included conquering Eastern worlds. While the soldiers did not directly liken their presence to his, it was interesting to note how so many of them were admirers. Such connections could have been highlighted as an Orientalist narrative during the course of training programs. However, because this type of dialogue was not offered during their...
pre-deployment preparations, they did not have the proper guidelines to address or recognise it.

In addition, the interviewees reported limited interactions with Iraqis in a general sense, and non-existent with archaeologists. This was mainly due to the fact that many of them served in combat units, and those who were restricted to the base maintained non-personal relations. In addition, it should be noted that the Iraqis who worked *en masse* on the military bases were reminiscent of the hundreds of labourers Koldewey and other Western scholars had employed to participate in the original excavations. The coalition barricaded themselves into Babylon, away from the population, which created physical and psychological barriers. While the caretaker at Ur actively interacted with the troops, at Babylon, only the Polish archaeologists had contact with the Iraqis during the occupation. Overall this was a demonstration of power and control, two of the driving narratives of Orientalism. It can therefore be surmised that the occupation followed the past colonial monopoly on the site, but it was not recognised as an issue at the time of occupation.

In addition, the secondary effects in regards to the occupation resulted in the loss of respect with potential coalition partners in the Arab World. According to Rush, planning meetings were being organized for the 2009 Bright Star War Games in Egypt. Yet when she and her colleagues approached Egyptian military officials about training heritage and archaeology as part of the joint ‘games’ the response was that ‘the people responsible for the destruction of Babylon should not be teaching anyone about heritage preservation’ (Rush 2010b p. 103). She further stated that one of the lessons learned was ‘Damage to the ancient ruins of Babylon and looting of the Iraq National Museum during the US invasion of Iraq left a negative impression around the world, possibly greater than we [the US military] appreciate’ (Rush 2010b p. 104).

Additionally, similar to the discussion about Ur in the previous chapter, a more robust awareness of the military impact on the ruins could have been recognized and prevented. For example: not using Babylon as a base but rather providing local caretakers with the resources to protect it; set-up temporary quarters that do not require major construction projects that cause ground damages; establish a secure environment that would allow for local visitation and international excavation and conservation projects.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has highlighted how the ruins of Babylon were under Western control initially for the purposes of scientific excavations, and during WWI for use as a military outpost. The attitudes of academics tended towards describing the site with Biblical references, the countryside as desolate, and the population as unlearned. These opinions were interjected with discussions and decisions about the site based on what was beneficial to foreign museums or the British war effort. By the time the Iraqis were in control of the site, they were able to revisit
ancient traditions and demonstrate their artistic talents for an international audience. However, the wars that began with the Ba’athist Party eventually halted all foreign visitation, and perpetrated the traditional notion of yet another despotic Mesopotamian ruler, which was the image many soldiers had in mind when they were deployed during the 2003 conflict.

The occupation resulted in damages to archaeologically sensitive areas, and prevented Iraqis from gaining access to the site. While the security measures prevented looting activity, it was not the prime directive for the base placement but rather a secondary result. As was seen in the case of Ur, troops who deployed to Babylon were not adequately trained to positively engage in cultural heritage matters. However, criticism should not be aimed at the soldiers but on the establishment that sent them to Iraq. Individuals that were willing to work with the heritage personnel were met with resistance on several levels. They also tended to see the site through an ideological Western viewpoint, because they were not provided with guidelines to behave otherwise.

Yet one of the most notable issues was the widespread lack of contact with the local population. The absence of relationships meant that cross-cultural understanding was non-existent. Babylon was seized by a foreign military power who then proceeded to wall themselves in and the Iraqis out. This created a notion of imperialistic control over the ancient past, and the present situation. The final analysis of this case study indicates a need for the DoD to fully recognise and understand Orientalism, and work with willing institutions to properly train troops in how to avoid it during future conflicts.
Chapter 7: The Occupation of Kish

Introduction
This chapter examines Western control of the archaeological site of Kish, from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. After a brief history of the site, the first section is devoted to providing narratives from the primary accounts of European and American explorers and archaeologists who visited the ruins of the ancient city. Unlike Ur and Babylon, which figure prominently in Scripture, Kish was not renowned, but rather located as a result of an extended exploration of Babylon. However, similar to the other sites, it too was managed in a decidedly Western-centric fashion. The land and the people were described in less than flattering terms in the archival records, and were not credited for their contributions and discoveries. The commentary is presented as background information in order to understand the Orientalist connotations associated with the site.

The objective of this thesis, which aims to determine if Orientalist biases drove the occupation of archaeological sites during the 2003 Iraq war, are fully discussed in the following sections. The data necessary to answer this question was gathered from military and civilian personnel who visited or were near Kish. While none of the participants were familiar with the site prior to deployment, several understood its importance to the historical and scientific record. However, that same awareness did not transfer to appreciating how the locals viewed the site. As was examined and determined in the other case studies, coalition personnel were not adequately prepared to positively engage in cultural heritage issues, and were reliant on self-motivated efforts. These issues are analysed in this chapter in order to determine if an Orientalist bias was associated with the occupation of Kish during the course of the war.

A Brief History of Kish
Kish, one of the first city-states in history, lies in ruins approximately 13 kilometres east of Babylon. The city was at its zenith during the Early Third Millennium BC, when several temples and palaces were constructed on the site. In addition, twin ziggurats, known as Hursagkalama (modern-day tell Ingharra) and Uhaimir were also erected, and dominated the flat desert landscape, of which the remains still stand today (Field 1929; Langdon 1924). Just as Ur and Babylon had experienced shifts in cultural powers, Kish too was subjected to periods of destruction and rebuilding during the rule of the Early Dynastic kings. The rise of Sargon the Great (2334 - 2279 BC) founder of the Akkadian Empire, ended the Dynastic Period. His seat of power was established as Kish, where he ruled over almost the whole of Mesopotamia. Although his capital was moved to the still unidentified city of Akkad, Kish was maintained as an agricultural centre, and retained supremacy over the region for 180 years (Langdon 1924; Mears 2002; Roux 1992). The population experienced a dark period after the fall of the
Akkadian Empire, and thereafter was ruled by the Dynastic Kings of Ur. It was eventually absorbed into the Chaldean Kingdom (Langdon 1924; Roux 1992).

Large-scale city works took place throughout the city with the induction of each new king, including reconstructions of the Pre-Sargonic temples and the ziggurats. Under the reign of Babylon’s Nebuchadnezzar II, a defensive wall was constructed, which extended 25 kilometres from Kish, northwest to the Euphrates River (Field 1929; Langdon 1924). Records for the city and its population are minimal after this time, yet Persian and Macedonian armies were known to have passed through the region in the course of their campaigns, and the city was occupied until at least the end of the Sasanian Empire. The city was abandoned sometime after AD 1000, and desert sands buried its remnants. However, Arab tribes lived in the general vicinity of the ruins from that point until the arrival of Western explorers in the nineteenth century (Field 1935; Moorey 1976).

Explorers and Excavators

While the ancient Mesopotamian cities discussed in the previous two chapters both had strong Biblical significance, Ur with its associated Abrahamic legend, and Babylon and its Tower, the circumstances for Kish were different. The ancient city came to the attention of Western archaeologists as a consequence of Claudius James Rich’s 1811 visit to Babylon, when locals informed him about the ruins (Rich 1839). Rich initially believed the ruins were part of the eastern boundary walls of Babylon, a belief which was based on Herodotus’s writings (Langdon 1924). By the time J.S. Buckingham, a British author and traveller, examined the ruins in 1816 and cast doubt on the accuracy of Herodotus’ accounts, the ruins were determined to be a separate city from Babylon (Buckingham 1827). Similar to his contemporaries who have been discussed in the previous chapters, Buckingham also kept a diary of his experiences. He described the mud brick remains he collected for later analysis, and cited that the ruins were a popular destination for British diplomats and military personnel who served in the region (Buckingham 1827, p. 454).

While Buckingham did not specifically denigrate the locals in his publications, some of his language was decisively Orientalist. For instance, during his travels, he discussed the Battle of Gaugamela, in which ancient sources estimated that Darrius III had amassed an army of a million men to fight Alexander the Great in modern-day northern Iraq. Buckingham reflected that the high calculation could be accurate because of ‘the living cloud of Barbarians that have spread themselves in different ages over the Western world’ (Buckingham 1827, p. 316). Similarly, Robert Mignan who first travelled to Babylon in 1827 visited Kish. He continued the rhetoric voiced by his peers when he discussed the overall atmosphere of the country as ‘scarcely ever in a state of tranquillity from the spirit of rebellion and tyranny innate in the heart of all Muslims’ (Mignan 1829, p. 82).
Another British traveller who visited the site encountered different communities during his journeys. He described a visit to an Arab camp south of the city of Hilla as:

In all my experience with Turkomen, Kurds or wandering tribes, I had seen no such wild-looking savages. Their lank black hair hung around their black visages, and the only points of relief in the wild countenance which loured from under their strange headdresses were the dark piercing eyes and the white teeth. Notwithstanding all their wild and fierce appearance, there was in their actions and demeanour a sort of native politeness, the more remarkable from the contrast, proceeding, no doubt, from the same indomitable spirit of independence which breaths in and produces a similar effect in the North American Indians. (Fraser 1840a, p. 341).

When he reached Kish he noted ‘there is so little to attract attention in this mound except a certain white powder which is found in layers between the bricks’ (Fraser 1840b, p. 36). However, the site did generate interest from other Western scholars when the names of the Kings Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar II were identified on inscribed bricks found within the ruins (Field 1929; Langdon 1924).

The first excavations were conducted in 1912 under the direction of French archaeologist Abbé Henri de Genouillac, who recovered over 1,400 tablets dated to the Amorite Period. They were distributed to the Istanbul Archaeology Museum and the Louvre Museum in Paris; none remained in Mesopotamia (Field 1929; Moorey 1964). WWI halted excavations, and it was not until 1923 that they were resumed (Field 1929; Langdon 1924). The decision to recommence excavations was not based on the need to prove a Biblical discourse, which was the case at both Ur and Babylon as discussed in the previous chapters. Rather, it was the Western appetite to explore the past. According to archaeologist Henry Field ‘In the spring of 1922, Mr. Herbert Weld expressed a desire to excavate some ancient Babylonian site, and he chose the ruins of Kish as offering the most important site’ (Field 1929, p. 4).

Weld, a British philanthropist and archaeologist, had visited Mesopotamia in 1921 and purchased a number of inscribed tablets, cylinder seals, bricks and foundation cones that originated from several different sites. One of the clay prisms in the collection contained a list of Sumerian and Akkadian kings, which was similar to a cuneiform tablet housed at the University of Pennsylvania Museum. These two objects, along with other Mesopotamian tablets, eventually became known as the Sumerian King List, which named Kish as the first antediluvian city, thus forming connections to the Genesis flood narrative (Langdon 1923a, 1923b).

Chicago’s Field Museum of Natural History and the University of Oxford in the UK, formed the ‘Field-Oxford Expedition to Kish’ in order to search for additional artefacts. The joint team excavated seventeen mounds, which
uncovered material that dated from the Proto-Literate Period, to the Sasanian Empire (Field 1929; Langdon 1924; Moorey 1964). Initially Langdon was not impressed with the site, believing ‘A thorough investigation of this area is not attractive on account of the dishevelled condition of the surface, full of the pits of Arab diggers and distorted with hummocks thrown up by various adventurers’ (Langdon 1924, p. 33). His observation indicated that the site was subjected to previous unscientific exploration. However, he did begin work on the site, and analysis on artefacts that were unearthed during ten seasons of work proved the historical relevance of the ancient city. These included evidence of horse domestication 1,500 years earlier than previously recorded, and the discovery of a library with some of the earliest known writing implements (Field 1929; Langdon 1924; Moorey 1964; Ross 1930).

Similar to the excavations at Ur and Babylon, the Western archaeologists who worked at Kish also employed individuals from the local community. Henry Field described the methodological approach used to excavate the site, noting ‘There are two distinct divisions of labour among the workers, the gangs or “jokhas” who remove the earth with baskets, and the jokhas who work with light railway trucks’ (Field 1929, p. 25). He explained further that ‘It is the duty of the pick-men to send one of the basket-boys to one of the Europeans the moment that he finds an object, so that the scientist can do the more skilled work of removing the surrounding earth’ (Field 1929, p. 27).

Recognising the Iraqis during the course of the excavations did extend further than acknowledging their contributions as manual labourers. Mackay described his workmen in one passage as:

Two gangs of natives were set to work on the mound to determine as quickly as possible what lay within it. In the course of the first day a burial was completely cleared. It contained pottery of an entirely new type, and more men were at once put to work to make a more extended investigation. (MacKay 1929, p. 75).

He did not name the Iraqis who discovered material that was considered important to analysing the history of the site, rather he identified them in terms of general categories of workers. Iraqis were regularly featured posing next to ruins in site photographs, yet they were unnamed. An image of a mud brick temple on tell Ingharra is simply titled Sanctuary of the Neo-Babylonian Temple and Two Workmen, as seen in Figure 7.1.
While all the cultural layers were of interest to the excavators, the objective was to discover evidence of the world’s earliest civilization. Concentration was therefore focused on the stratum that indicated a flood had destroyed the city in antiquity, which was believed to parallel Noah’s Deluge (Field 1929; Langdon 1923b). Excavated material was shipped to the UK and US in an attempt to verify these assumptions, and to generate further scholarly interest. Ernest Mackay’s 1925 report was prefaced by Langdon who stated ‘I know the gratitude with which the scholars and the public of Europe and America at large have read of the remarkable discoveries at Kish’ (Langdon in MacKay 1925, p. 8).

Previous to the work at Kish, in 1872 Assyriologist George Smith conducted analysis on a collection of cuneiform tablets that were originally excavated in Nineveh and housed at the British Museum. He discovered a poem that relayed the story of King Gilgamesh and a boat he constructed to survive a flood foretold by the gods. Similarities between the Mesopotamian poem Smith uncovered, and the Genesis story were such that he asserted ‘The details given in the inscriptions describing the Flood leave no doubt that both the Bible and the Babylonian story describe the same event, and the Flood becomes the starting point for the modern world in both histories’ (Smith 1876, p. 307).

Using Smith’s findings, Leonard Woolley attempted to connect the Kish stratum with the Noah account. However, he instead located evidence of multiple flood events that dated over a range of several different time periods, which negated suggestions of only one historic deluge (Woolley 1930, 1953). Scholarly consensus was that the flood narratives were most likely a composition of poems.
and stories that were shared and borrowed between and across cultures, as there was no physical evidence to substantiate one specific deluge (Dundes 1988; Lambert 1965; Mallowan 1964; Ross 1930; Watelin & Langdon 1934). While the site lost some of its Biblical appeal after this, excavations continued, and as was evident at Ur and Babylon, Iraqis were not factored into the decision-making processes during excavations. For instance, during one of her regular visits, Gertrude Bell questioned the expedition’s decision to send only one scholar to Kish, writing:

They’ve sent out a man called Mackay; but a one-man party can’t possibly conduct the excavation of so important a site with success. I’ve made a protest to the Joint Archaeological Committee at home and meantime have insisted on his taking on an English foreman. (Bell in Burgoyne 1961, p. 311).

Bell’s insistence on a British national rather than an Arab indicated that she felt that only a Westerner possessed the skills necessary to complete the job. Further, at the end of each season, the artefacts were divided between the Field Museum in Chicago, the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. The conditions of the excavation were controlled by the Western entities, and according to Stephen Langdon:

The Trustees of the Field Museum of Natural History, through its Director Mr D.C. Davies, agreed to supply one half of our funds with the understanding that they are to receive the greater portion of the anthropological material, in return for which Oxford University obtains the largest portion of the inscriptions. (Langdon 1924, p. 55).

Iraqi percentages were however not mentioned. In addition, as Field outlined ‘The specimens are chosen alternately by the Director of Antiquities for Iraq and the Field Director of the expedition. When this division is finished, the objects for the Iraq Museum are packed in wooden cases and sent to Baghdad’ (Field 1929, p. 31). The director was a Westerner, and the position of the Iraqi Antiquities Director was held by Bell until 1926, and by another British national, Mr R.S. Cooke, after her. Field stated ‘In all the divisions, Miss Bell and Mr Cooke showed the utmost fairness and cooperation, and it was always a pleasure to have them visit the site of the excavations’ (Field 1929, p. 31).

As was noted in the two previous chapters, Bell was conscious of the importance of ensuring that artefacts remained in Iraq. Max Mallowan recalled that ‘All Iraqis have reason to be grateful for her custodianship. In the division at Kish with Langdon she insisted on retaining the Kish pictographic tablet, still a world-famous and unique example of the beginnings of writing’ (Mallowan 1976, p. 83).

This was a common theme among the archaeologists, who saw their contributions as helpful to the Iraqis. As written by Field:

King Feisal told me during a short interview last July that he welcomed the work of excavations within his territory. The British, who act as advisers to King Feisal and his Parliament, have always been most
courteous, and have definitely furthered the cause of scientific work, not only in Mesopotamia, but throughout the world. (Field 1929, p. 31).

In a March 1924 letter written to her father, Bell discussed how the Kish material was divided. She wrote ‘We worked from 1.30 to 10.30 with brief intervals for tea and dinner, choosing and packing, till I felt absolutely broken with fatigue’ (Bell & Bell 1927, p. 557). There was not however, any mention of Iraqi participation. Bell advocated for the Iraqis, yet she held strongly to her notions of Western control over the country. For example, she recalled an occasion when a visiting scholar accompanied her to observe the partitioning of the excavated material:

> The American professor expressed himself as much impressed by the fairness of the division. He comes from Yale and I rather hope that Yale, urged by him, may ask for a permit to dig at Warka. It’s a big mound which I could only entrust to a big, rich institution. (Bell in Burgoyne 1961, p. 386).

Bell was the authoritative voice on archaeological issues due to the British Mandate, which allowed the West to manage and control the sites to their specifications. At that time, the Iraqis did not have a voice in antiquities matters. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, changes in the 1936 Iraq Antiquities Law mandated that all excavated material was to remain in Iraq (Abdi 2008; Bernhardsson 2005). At the close of the 1933 excavation season, when the new antiquities regulations were proposed, Langdon expressed dissatisfaction when he decided not to return to Kish the following year. He prefaced volume four of his Kish book series with the passage:

> Owing to the unfavourable attitude of the Department of Antiquities of the Government of Iraq in regard to the division of archaeological objects and other threatening regulations, which would harass the work of an excavator. In the hope that these proposed regulations might be withdrawn next season, we decided to discontinue for one season. (Langdon in Watelin & Langdon 1934, p. 1).

R. Campbell Thompson agreed, stating that:

> Indeed, it may be said that these laws have cost Iraq thousands of pounds, both in loss in wages and other expenses in excavating, and in the decreased interest of the tourist, who prefers to see diggings actually in progress rather than formless and uninteresting mounds. (Thompson 1937, p. 724).

This followed the narrative that the Iraqis were unable to make informative decisions about the site. Seton Lloyd, the last Western advisor to the Iraqi Antiquities Department, reflected that the Ottoman Empire had greatly hindered the Iraqis ability to appreciate and value the ruins because ‘six centuries of oppression had left them backward and ignorant’ (Lloyd 1955, p. 212). He believed that Western archaeologists were the saviours of antiquities and ‘could hardly be blamed for preferring to see them installed in a museum within reach of an epigraphist, rather than rotting in a mound where a chance rainstorm might leave them at the mercy of Arab gypsum-hunters’ (Lloyd 1955, p. 212). Despite
the objections of Iraqi interference and calls for Western management, the laws were resolute, and the Field-Oxford Expedition never recommenced. Field returned to Kish in 1934 and met with the locals. He described the occasion as ‘I was greeted with wild cheers; they thought the excavations were to be reopened. Dismay followed as I explained we had come to abandon the Kish camp’ (Field in Gibson 1972b, p. ix). He arranged for shipment of the excavated material, which included ancient human remains, to the US.

The human skeletal remains were recovered from the tomb excavations. Physical anthropologists from the US and UK compared the ancient cranial measurements with the contemporary tribal members who lived near Kish. This was done in order to determine racial classifications across space and time, which were then compared to European subjects (Field 1935; Watelin & Langdon 1934). While this system is no longer a valid scholarly practice, early twentieth century anthropologists employed it as part of their ‘framework of global historical development envisioned in European narratives of a unilineal progress of civilization that naturally culminated in modern Europe’ (Bahrami 2006b, p. 50). The narrative about both the ruins and the people who inhabited the ancient city continued to impress Occidental domination on the achievements and progress of the Mesopotamian past.

While both Ur and Babylon were reconstructed to different degrees by the Iraqi Antiquities Department between the 1960s and 1980s, Kish was not. Some of the temples were shored with modern bricks, but the ruins remained largely original. Furthermore, while the Biblical appeal of the above mentioned sites attracted foreign visitors, accounts of travellers to Kish are absent from the published record. An American team from the University of Chicago, Oriental Institute, completed a reconnaissance survey for one season in 1966, which was ‘carried out with the fullest cooperation of the Iraq Directorate General of Antiquities, Mr. Ghanim Wahida’ (Gibson 1972b, p. xi). Additionally, Western archaeologists visited Baghdad in the 1970s in order to study the Kish artefacts stored at the Iraq Museum, but they did not make note of personal encounters with Iraqis (Gibson 1972a; Moorey 1970a, 1970b, 1975).

The ruins remained untouched until 1988, when a team from Kokushikan University in Tokyo conducted excavations for three months with the SBAH (Clayden 1992; Wilkinson & Matthews 1989). Archaeologists did not return in the following years, and while the site was not targeted during the First Gulf War, the conflict and subsequent UN Sanctions impeded further work. In November 2000, the Tokyo team was able to excavate for a short three-week period, but were unable to return after that (Matsumoto & Oguchi 2002). Excavations did not resume and the site remained undisturbed until the 2003 war in Iraq.

The 2003 Iraq War and Kish
In a similar manner in which Ur and Babylon were seized by coalition forces in April 2003 and used as operating bases, Kish was also overtaken by military personnel. US soldiers were tasked with erecting and maintaining a radio-telecommunications post for the southern region of the country. The ruins of Kish
were selected as the most advantageous location to establish the post, and a Company of US soldiers built a base on the site. While it was not turned into as large a FOB as Tallil Air Base or Camp Alpha, up to 200 personnel worked and lived on the ruins of Kish. The main structure was a radio relay tower that was constructed on top of tell Ingharra, the ruins of one of the original twin ziggurats, as seen in Figure 7.2. Living trailers were positioned along the edges and base of the mound, and a defensive barrier comprised of concrete walls, sand bags and concertina wire was erected as a perimeter (McDonald 2003; Siebrandt 2010).

Figure 7.2: A radio relay station and defensive barriers on the remains of the ancient city of Kish.

As previously discussed, once a site was occupied, non-coalition personnel were prohibited entry due to US imposed regulations (The White House 2004). The restrictions remained for the duration of the occupation, actions that were in violation of international and domestic cultural heritage laws, yet were ambiguous, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Gerstenblith 2010; Varner 2011). Entry attempts were made in June 2003 by Iraqi and American archaeologists who noted that ‘a new fence of barbed wire surrounded the mound, and the UNESCO expert team was not allowed to enter’ (Bouchenaki 2003, p. 4). The site was never visited by any cultural heritage specialists for the duration of the US forces occupation, and the military personnel were reportedly unaware of its archaeological significance. Similar to the opinions expressed by interview subjects discussed in the Ur and Babylon chapters, coalition members also felt that military presence on Kish deterred looters. Interviewee 21 said that ‘soldiers should feel proud of their attempts to provide protection for the ruins and artefacts’ (Interview 21). He elaborated that ‘nobody’s touching or moving that stuff due to the fact that you are there’ (Interview 21).
The same UNESCO team who attempted entry to the site stated that the military presence was a serious problem, and ‘the army units were not informed on the nature and complexity of the cultural landscape where they were working’ (Bouchenaki 2003, p. 4). Similarly, while presenting at the International Congress of Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology conference in 2003, Elizabeth Stone noted that the soldiers living on Kish were unaware that they were based on an archaeological site (Stone 2003). However, a coalition member who saw the site in 2010 observed that, ‘Pottery was popping out of the ground everywhere, you wouldn’t have to dig too much to find something, and anyone could take what they found’ (Interview 3). Notwithstanding the argument that the Americans were unfamiliar with recognising an archaeological ruin, expertise in the discipline was not required in order to identify that they were on top of a human-made structure, as seen in Figure 7.3.

![Figure 7.3: Soldiers standing next to the ruins of an Early Dynastic Temple at Kish.](image)

While the previous chapters discussed ‘site visits’ by coalition personnel, Kish did not attract the same attention, and other than being occupied, it was not toured by the troops. It did however remain under US military control until April 2005. It was then yielded to an Iraqi Army unit who moved onto the site and continued to operate the equipment at the radio station, keeping the site closed to non-military personnel. Although none of the interviewees in this case study were based on the ruins while it was a US installation, several were involved with the Iraqi unit who were. Interviewee 12 offered speculation as to why the site was initially chosen for an outpost. He believed it was ‘because the ruins offered a high vantage point in an otherwise flat landscape’ (Interview 12). One of the commanders concurred, and after conducting his own Internet search about the site, explained:
If you look at the history of why the ancient city was there, if I remember correctly, historically a river ran close by it and shifted after thousands of years in between the founding of the city and now, and what made it militarily important was it gave you a great view from the heights. It was a hill city then along the river, and now on top of the ruins, it still had great visibility of the main highway in southern Iraq called MSR Tampa so I think it was selected for that reason, you could control the road with the visibility of that site. (Interview 7).

Regardless of their reasoning, according to one of the former Chairmen of the SBAH, the occupation of Kish and other sites demonstrated to Iraqis that the coalition forces displayed a ‘profound indifference to Iraq’s cultural legacy if not outright complicity in the cultural wasting of the Iraqi nation’ (Al-Hussainy 2010, p. 84). As one of the Iraqi’s interviewed for this study said ‘At the beginning in 2003 the impression the Iraqis had of the US military, well it was hard to see them on our land’ (Interview 18). Another Iraqi interviewee stated ‘It is a sad truth that cultural heritage is often the victim of war. So deploying heavy armoured vehicles to an archaeological site would of course have a negative impact’ (Interview 19). Bahrani also illustrated that archaeological sites have served as agents of memory for the Iraqi population, and when the sites were damaged, those memories were damaged as well, a concept that the military did not recognise (Bahrani 2003a, p. 14).

Cross-Cultural Understanding
A civilian who worked with the coalition reflected on understanding connections between the sites and the people, stating:

Sometimes people from the West just don’t think the Iraqi caretakers share and have sophisticated history and knowledge of the places which are also their homes. The site is their home. These are their ancient lands and the strength of the attachment to the land is really impressive. (Interview 4).

Interviewee 24 voiced a slightly different sentiment when he reflected on what he witnessed during his tour in 2004:

In perspective it should be noted that the cultural awareness of the local population in Iraq in general was limited to areas or buildings of their religious interest. Only the better educated Iraqis had an actual understanding of the historic importance of their region in world history and therefore cared for its remains. The local population was only interested in protecting the sites if it helped to ward off intruders to their tribal region, and when they received financial support from the coalition to be active in its protection. (Interview 24).

While Interviewee 24 related his personal experiences, his comments could be construed as what has been seen as ‘Westerners incorrectly perceiving that modern Iraqis have no connection to the ancients since the seventh century’ (Bahrani 1998, p. 162). Additionally, as Isakhan has examined ‘symbols, monuments and artefacts play a central role in Iraqi identity’ (Isakhan 2015b, p. 275).
Yet when discussing damaged archaeological sites, a coalition member who served in Baghdad in 2003 said:

It’s not the intent of the army to destroy things that are important to somebody else. For example, we would avoid destruction for self-preservation reasons, such as if something is important to the local guy, and we destroy it, they will be mad at us and bad things will happen around our camp where we are living, which we don’t want. (Interview 32).

Another coalition member also understood this and agreed that ‘It’s very important to protect all the sites because they are important to the history of the whole world. The sites have shared memories for all of mankind, but there can be different interpretations of that’ (Interview 1). One Iraqi participant who grew up in Baghdad shared her experiences with archaeological sites. She noted that educational institutions only provided ancient history courses for students in humanities courses, and because she was enrolled in the sciences, she did not receive formal schooling about Iraq’s history. She added:

I think in middle or elementary school I went to Agar Quf, we were very close to it, it was a fieldtrip. We also had a family trip to Samarra, and Babylon. I can’t remember if I went to the museum. Not every school takes their students to archaeological sites or the museums, some schools do, but not as much as they should appreciate the treasures in our country. But for sites like Babylon, it’s not easy to get permission to take students that far because of the safety of the bus, plus they need to collect money from the families and the families didn’t have extra money. Plus the sites were not well maintained so there weren’t good places for students to buy food or water. So we only went to places close by. (Interview 18).

However, even though interviewee 18 and other Iraqis may not have visited many sites, their attachment to the ‘place’ was still relevant, as according to geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, ‘connections to a place can be conceptual, a physical presence is not necessary to validate strong bonds to a place’ (Tuan 1979, p. 388). That is, even if an individual has never visited a specific place in his or her homeland, the concept of belonging can be embedded in memory (Vanclay 2008, p. 9). Some of the interviewees recognised this and sympathised with the Iraqis. However, channelling concern for the local community was reliant on the coalition command staff. Due to the war, their focus was most often on security issues, rather than cultural heritage sites and how the local community was affected by their occupation.

Cross-Cultural Interactions
Engagement on heritage issues were mainly a result of commanders seeking approaches to more effectively fight the war. One of the outcomes of this tactic was positive contact with the Iraqi Security Forces and the tribal sheiks in the area. Interviewee 12 elaborated further:
You can’t serve trust, you have to build trust, which means you have to put an investment into that relationship. It’s counter-cultural to what the military does because the mindset is, unless you are part of the organization you aren’t to be trusted. So the Iraqi police or army or tribes or sheikhs can’t be trusted because everyone has their own agenda. Yes, that is true but we aren’t going to gain their trust unless we shed our insecurities and develop a trust with them. That was the biggest and most difficult task for me up front, to teach my subordinates to have that trust. I would use the analogy of telling them to imagine they were at their grandma’s house and a bunch of men came into the house and started yelling at them. Have we actually won them over whether we are right or wrong? No we haven’t. So we need to change the focus of how we interacted with these people and sometimes let them be in charge. In many cases we shifted the focus so that they were in charge and we were just there to support them. Over time what happened is that we started to get information from them that was much faster than our own organic way. I was getting cell phone calls from Hilla Swat or the sheik’s telling me ‘hey this is what’s going on, this is what’s going to happen,’ and I would never had got that info if we hadn’t built that level of trust. To me it was genuine, they are people, they love their families, so to me it was a no-brainer, we had to make an investment in these relationships, and they all bore fruit. (Interview 12).

Other members of the coalition revealed similar experiences, such as Interviewee 9 who mainly served in the Anbar Province. He said that he did not have any problems trying to interact with the Iraqis ‘except for the language barrier, but we had a translator, and even with that, I never sensed hesitation or unwillingness from anyone to communicate with us, anyway, most of their complaints were about their own government’ (Interview 9). Other soldiers did not have translators and reported:

We didn’t have any interpreters, so I tried using German, which worked sometimes since some Iraqis had been to Eastern Germany. We also had guys try Spanish, or different languages in addition to using hand signals. Sometimes there was no understanding and that was very difficult, not having any way to talk to people. (Interview 25).

Another non-heritage interaction was recalled by interviewee 27:

When I was in the marines, my second night on patrol we caught the second most wanted guy in Iraq. It was a big deal to the Iraqis. We just turned him over to the Iraqis, I think that was a big achievement. (Interview 27).

Several of the soldiers found that the younger demographic of the population were more willing to interact with them. While on routine patrols, Interviewee 8 recalled ‘My best contacts there were 8 or 9 year old kids who had no problem telling me what they had seen’ (Interview 8). Interviewee 10, who worked in Baghdad between 2008 and 2009, said he did not have many interactions with the community ‘except for some of the schools, we met the teachers and students, but really just to say hello’ (Interview 10). He remembered that:
There was a captain who was in charge of the task force I was in who did most of the interaction with the Iraqis. I think in some ways maybe the culture was that the Iraqis only wanted to talk to the person in charge a lot of times. It wasn’t anything personal, they just viewed me as the second in command so they didn’t talk to me directly. (Interview 10).

An Iraqi interviewee who was originally from Baghdad said that many of the interactions were approached with caution because:

During the Saddam Regime there was a lot of anti-American propaganda, that’s why most Iraqis were very careful in their interactions with Americans, because they were going by what they had been told for 30 years and they didn’t have any other exposure to say what they were told was not accurate. (Interview 18).

Interviewee 28, who was deployed to Iraq for three separate tours between 2002 and 2009 recalled interactions with the local community as a combat officer:

I was an armoured battalion officer and I’d meet quite frequently with Iraqis that were giving us intelligence information or who were our detainees and were either sheiks of tribes, also police officers and the Iraqi civil defence core. The ones that provided us info, they were in their late teens to early 20s. At first they were hesitant to talk to us, but eventually as they saw we treated them with respect they talked to us often. They usually had some kind of motive for giving us information, sometimes they would give us info about a rival tribe so it could have been some kind of tribal conflict. Initially, not knowing then what we know now, we would take that info at face value sometimes. We probably did some raids we should not have since our information was inaccurate. A lot of times they would try to paint the other tribe’s leader as corrupt, we eventually caught onto this, understanding who had power and influence in a region and who didn’t. I also think some Iraqis interacted with us just to get the money. We gave a lot of money to one individual and he became a powerful person in his area and we realized later that was a mistake. (Interview 28).

A civilian contractor similarly questioned some of the interactions:

I think a lot of positive relationships we had with the Iraqis were not as genuine as we liked to think they were. I think the positive interactions had a lot more to do with them getting what they wanted. I would show up at meetings and they would ask for money and stuff, but when I asked to see the equipment we had already gave them earlier in the month, well it was at somebody’s son’s house. (Interview 17).

Interviewee 11 discussed how the lack of interface with the Iraqis isolated the troops. He elaborated by noting that:

We didn’t really engage with the community. One of the guys on my team said, ‘You know this is the first war where we aren’t bringing home wives.’ In the Korean War, guys were bringing home Korean wives, in WWII, German wives, even in the Civil War, Yankees were bringing
home Southern Belles, it even happened in Vietnam, but not Iraq. There were some high level Iraqi women that married Westerners, but not many. My point, is, when you engage with the community, despite religious and cultural differences, you break down those boundaries, and that didn’t happen in Iraq. So we weren’t engaging. We were so closed-off from that population, we stayed in our sterile environments. (Interview 11).

Interview 25 also recalled problems:

We, the US military, never did a Needs Assessment in Iraq. We never assessed what they needed. We as Americans would visit these little towns once or twice a month, we would go in with our 10-tonne trucks with our guns bristling, disturb people, shake down houses, yell at people, tell them to get out of the way, and then leave. Imagine if you’re a teenager in that situation, you have no food, you have no prospects for a job, and these guys come in and disturb your village, pretty regularly, you’re going to be an angry young man. I don’t know what we thought we were doing by acting that way. (Interview 25).

However, Interviewee 18 thought the dynamics changed as the conflict progressed, observing:

When I interpreted at meetings, I think the intentions were better understood in the later years. Things became more flexible and more productive after meetings. At the beginning everyone was careful and later when each side began understanding more from each other, it became easier for both sides to understand the view of the other and how the other side was thinking. (Interview 18).

Cooperative Projects

As relationships remained precarious, the violence of the war escalated during the troop surge of 2007 (Kagan 2009). During that operation, in November 2007, the Iraqi Army unit that had been based on the ruins of Kish was removed. A US Cavalry Regiment was tasked with assisting in their relocation to an area closer to the city limits of Al-Madatiyah. As planning meetings for the move progressed, Interviewee 7 stated that neither the Americans nor the Iraqis involved in the discussions were aware that the radio station was located on an archaeological site. He was informed about the issue during a joint meeting, recalling:

I think it was an American or an Iraqi on the military side who mentioned it, I don’t remember. They made reference to a concern that the governor might get blamed if there was any damage to the site. That’s when we first realized that there was more going on than simply moving an Iraqi Army Company who didn’t have the logistics or equipment to make the move themselves. They were very anxious to move as quickly as possible, but much faster than we were prepared to do it because of our lengthy logistics planning. When the information about it being an archaeological site came to light, that slowed down the process to allow us to find out more. (Interview 7).
Further, when he first arrived at Kish he observed:

When we got there, there was significant damage to the site already, the unit that was living there was literally living on top of the site. There was an area that was fenced off, but it was being used to deposit garbage. It had also been apparent after searching records, that it has been occupied prior to the Iraqi Army by US units very early on in the war. This had been a military occupation for about 4 years at that point. (Interview 7).

Because the regiment did not have a specialist within their ranks, they sought advice and assistance from the Cultural Affairs Office at the US Embassy in Baghdad, who employed a cultural heritage management officer. According to Interviewee 7, he ‘had heard that an archaeologist was working there’ (Interview 7). Arrangements were made for embassy staff to visit the site and offer guidance to the troops before the move took place. Prior to this, the SBAH General Director was contacted for both permission to visit the site, and to request the presence of an Iraqi archaeologist. However, the security situation at the time rendered it impossible for any of the SBAH staff to join the team, and an assessment was completed without their direct involvement.

The assessment noted that the US and Iraqi military occupation caused visible damage to the mound of Ingharra, as well as the surrounding archaeologically sensitive areas. Years of pedestrian traffic and the use of heavy military vehicles, as well as the weight of trailers and caravans located on the north side of an Early Dynastic Temple impacted excavated and unexcavated portions of the site. In addition, fighting holes and tents positioned on the highest point of the original ziggurat, and a trash pit located in the area originally identified by Henry Field as a library, contaminated the integrity of the site. Further, the majority of mud brick structures showed signs of deterioration due to environmental erosion and conservation neglect. While the assessment was conducted with full consultation and permission from the SBAH, it was a Western led and implemented project. However, the soldiers participated as a learning experience, as seen in Figure 7.4, and ‘understood the danger that the ruins were in from the modern human habitation’ (Siebrandt 2010, p. 130).

The removal of the radio station was completed without causing additional negative impact to the ruins, and on 14 November 2007 military occupation ceased, and control and maintenance of the site was transferred to the Iraqi Ministry of Culture (Siebrandt 2010, 2015). A separate project was headed by civilian and military personnel from PRT Babil, who provided funding for the removal of debris from the site. According to a military officer who was involved in the project:

We did a project at Kish, an Iraqi-American employee at the PRT ran it. After an Iraqi military unit moved off the site, it was full of trash. We used military funding to hire a local contractor to clean it up. We asked permission from the Babylon site director who said it was okay. But we
didn’t understand the politics involved, and the site director really wasn’t authorized to approve the project, so that caused problems. It was hard for the director to say no to us, especially because the Iraqi-American at the PRT used to be her teacher when he lived in Iraq, so she felt that she had to say yes to anything he asked. The problem was that the contractor showed up with rakes and shovels, which caused panic in the archaeologists. The Iraqi archaeologists and contractors didn’t talk to each other, so that also caused problems. The site was cleaned but it wasn’t a smoothly run project. The Iraqis didn’t understand their span on control, they left it up to us, so that also caused problems. (Interview 2).

Figure 7.4: A US soldier in discussion with a cultural heritage specialist on top of the remains of a temple wall at Kish.

Similar to the assessment, the PRT project was also Western controlled. While Iraqis were involved on the periphery of each one, neither demonstrated on-site primary interactions. The ruins were cleared of the modern debris that had been left by the military, but they showed the impact of the occupation, as demonstrated in the aerial view in Figure 7.5. However, a supplemental visit by DoD and DoS personnel in 2010 finally resulted in one-on-one engagements with the local community. Tribal members met with the Americans at the site to discuss protection and conservation efforts, as seen in Figure 7.6. While the projects were Western dominated, the regiment’s initial foresight to contact heritage experts displayed an awareness that was absent during the first few years of the war.
Figure 7.5: Aerial view of Kish after it was cleared of military debris (Photo credit: Marion Carter, US Army).

Figure 7.6: Local tribal members engage with DoS and DoD personnel at Kish (Photo Credit: Frank Valli, Department of Homeland Security).
Pre-Deployment Training

While the project engagements were positive developments, the failure of military staff to recognise that the base was on an ancient site for over 4 years was indicative of a lack of training in cultural heritage awareness. Although the training discussed in previous chapters was operating in 2007, the interviewees for this study stated that they had not received any instruction, and it was not a factor in their decision to seek assistance with the move. Rather, the regiment’s commander was looking for different methods to gather intelligence in order to understand how the insurgency operated. He anticipated he would be able to achieve that by connecting with the local population, explaining:

I challenged my staff to look at the problem of the insurgent activity in the area on multiple levels, not just the traditional military level, because I thought we were missing the point. I thought the people were doing what they were doing based on a threat perspective based on the history of the region. (Interview 12).

Leading by example was cited as one of the ways in which the soldiers interacted with archaeological sites and the surrounding communities. Interviewee 28 elaborated:

How soldiers view their leader matters, if they have respect they will emulate what you do. So you are taught that you don’t treat an Iraqi with vicious intentions, or they bring havoc on your area. You don’t want to have a cultural incident because that doesn’t benefit anybody. (Interview 28).

Interviewee 8 pointed out that ‘The US army will do whatever it is told. It doesn’t matter if they think it’s important or not, they get orders from the commanders, and do what they are told’ (Interview 8). Reflecting on his contact with Kish and other sites, Interviewee 12 further acknowledged that his team was not fully prepared to deal with cultural heritage issues:

I would like to emphasize how important it was to have, I call it a layer, a layer of analysis, and I think every military operational plan missed this, the importance of understanding the cultural and historical significance of different places. Why didn’t we build that into our planning? We have no appreciation for it. We always look at things through our own perspective. Even just in the USA, if we went to Kentucky and someone was not familiar with Kentucky, we would screw it up because we don’t understand Kentucky. For the military, it’s not in their doctrine to understand cultural differences, we don’t train for it. The only military organization that does that is Special Forces, but they aren’t big enough, they are only a division. (Interview 12).

Interviewee 31 had a similar view on failures in training when he said:

The people with the command and the money won’t listen to folks who talk about culture and heritage because it’s not part of our society. If you look around the states, well in places and pockets we value our culture, but
you look at the cultural clash that happens just here in the USA, say between the south and the north, or westerners and mid-westerners, we still don’t get along. We also don’t value our own cultural history. (Interview 31).

Interviewee 25 expressed another opinion on cultural heritage awareness and military personnel:

Soldiers are most interested in getting into air conditioning and getting on their video games or the computer to talk to their families, not damaging a site or taking anything. It’s the double-edged sword, if they had known about being on an ancient site, there may have been soldiers looting. Because if they know about something and it’s interesting, then it could become something they might covet. So there’s some strength in people not always knowing the value of something they are guarding. When you start subscribing the value of it, you start giving people ideas they might want it. But they could also destroy it because they don’t know about it. So there are two extremes, destruction through ignorance, and security through ignorance. (Interview 25).

Interviewee 1 recalled that military lawyers provided deploying troops with an overview of the importance of adhering to the mandates in the 1954 Hague Convention, but they ‘give maybe 20 minutes of training, but the troops don’t know how to implement it or what it means in practice’ (Interview 1). A civilian trainer who provided instruction for some of the deploying troops explaining ‘We provided an introduction for non-specialists who wanted to do the right thing, and who wanted to provide good support to their commanders’ (Interview 14). He further stated:

We had fairly simple points about what you should do and should not do, and a bit of historical background. We also discussed how to handle the media, commanders and the public perception, as well as the value of building trust with the people in Iraq. (Interview 14).

Another trainer added:

It was our experience that the soldiers who had deployed already were the ones who got it immediately. That in-country experience had taught them that there was incredible value in terms of being able to identify and respect other people’s sacred places and heritage. (Interview 4).

Yet, soldiers should have been provided with proper training before any of their deployments. Further, while the projects assisted them with engagements related to cultural heritage issues, cross-cultural interactions were still lacking. Some positive measures have been enacted since 2010 in order to rectify these deficiencies, specifically the ROTC cadet training discussed in Chapter 1, which includes cultural heritage awareness in the curriculum for the emerging officers (Valanis 2013). Yet, more still needs to be done. As of the writing of this thesis, Kish remains free of military occupation, but excavations have not resumed at the site. However, a two-year conservation project for excavated material housed at
the Field Museum in Chicago was executed in 2009, and completed in 2010. Iraqi conservators from the SBAH travelled to the US and worked in collaboration with their American counterparts on artefacts excavated from Kish by the early twentieth century archaeologists (Kott 2011). The project was successful in forming cooperative scholarly ties, although it was built on a collection that was removed from Iraq by those early Orientalists.

**Discussion**

Similar to the excavators at Ur and Babylon, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century archaeologists who worked at Kish made significant contributions to their discipline by advancing knowledge about one of the first established cities in the world. Yet their narrative was directed by a Western voice, without Iraqi input. While it is tempting to find fault with the Orientalist manner in which early scholars operated, it was the unfortunate cultural norm at the time. That is, studying the East was viewed as an intellectual pursuit of understanding the past – even if this was informed by the ideology of Western superiority that pervaded at the time (Lockman 2010, p. 69).

These attitudes were especially compounded by the fact that the majority of the material was shipped to the US for analysis. Scholars saw themselves as the saviours of the site and artefacts that would otherwise be left vulnerable if the uninformed local population was allowed to decide their fate. These were quintessentially Orientalist attitudes, as the scholars viewed themselves as the ‘hero rescuing the Orient from the obscurity, alienation, and strangeness which he had himself properly distinguished’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 121). They controlled and shaped the knowledge and presented it to a Western audience, which gave them progressively more acclaim as the experts in the field. The absence of an Iraqi voice was not considered a detriment to their research, which followed Said’s second and third notions of Orientalist dogmas detailed in Chapter 2. That occidental interpretations of the Orient take precedence over the realities, and because they are unable to define themselves, the East requires the West to do it for them (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300)

In addition, published records often referred to the Iraqis as savages and barbarians, and only acknowledged them for their skills as manual labourers. This was despite the fact that the Western archaeologists stated that the workmen often unearthed unique artefacts that contributed to an in-depth and scholarly understanding of past cultures. They were therefore seen as acceptable ‘diggers,’ but not capable of providing input about the past they unearthed for the foreigners. Even less commendation was bestowed on the local population when the antiquities laws changed and Iraqis were finally in a decision-making role. Once their control was taken away, the message from foreign scholars was one of anger and disappointment that the site could not be properly managed by the Iraqis, and they no longer wished to be contributing participants. This again displayed attitudes of the Occidental dogma of individuals who saw ‘the West as
rational, developed, humane, and superior, and the Orient as aberrant, underdeveloped, and inferior’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300). Although scientific work continued on artefacts originally excavated from the site, Western excavations never resumed after 1933, and publications waned.

While Ur and Babylon were occupied by British forces during WWI, Kish was not, nor did it ever reach the same levels of high-esteem to match either site. However, the imperial cycle of Western control was revisited when coalition forces constructed an outpost on the ruins in 2003. Troops were not familiar with Kish unless they were involved in one of the above listed projects. While this may be an explanation for why it was determined that none of the soldiers initially recognised that it was an ancient city, it is difficult to lend credence to this notion due to the pottery and standing ruins that were clearly visible and identifiable throughout the site.

Yet, it must also be remembered that a war was in progress during the course of the occupation of Kish, and the soldiers believed the strategic location rendered the site attractive for an outpost. While it is not known if other areas were considered before Kish was chosen, Iraqis were not consulted for their input. As was discussed in the other case studies, the occupation of Kish was in violation of international and domestic cultural heritage laws. It is important however to acknowledge that none of the participants in this research had malicious intentions towards the site, or the local population. In fact, the alertness of the soldiers involved with the 2007 outpost relocation should be commended for contacting DoS experts once they knew they would be working on an ancient site.

However, this case study does establish that personnel were deployed unprepared to effectively interact with the landscape and the people, and were forced to be reactive rather than proactive. The interview participants acknowledged that they lacked cultural heritage awareness training, and were not properly schooled in how to engage with the community. In addition, they recounted that commanders expressed different attitudes towards protecting Kish and other sites, and did not demonstrate a pattern of inclusive consistency. This seemed to be a result of whether or not an individual was attracted to the discipline of history on a personal level. This was problematic, because regardless of individual interests, all of the command staff should have been following the same guidelines. Yet those were not available in the early years of the war, an issue that reverts back once again to the failures of the US government and their allies to properly train personnel in cultural heritage matters before they were deployed to Iraq.

The presence of the soldiers on the site rendered it off limits to non-military personnel, which included Iraqi archaeologists and the local community. As previously noted in the discussion of Ur and Babylon, in addition to barring access to the ruins, the soldiers sequestered themselves within the walls they built. Therefore, they had minimal contact with the population, and did not gain an
understanding of what Kish, or any other site, meant to the locals. They could only offer speculations that were erroneously based on Western perspectives.

Coalition personnel were not ignorant of the need to form positive relations with the locals, but they were not given the sufficient resources or opportunities to do it. As several of the interview subjects discussed, even in their home country there are failures to communicate across state and cultural lines. If that was difficult, trying to do so in an unfamiliar environment proved even more challenging. Because of the lack of contact, coalition personnel could not fully understand how the Iraqis felt about their ancient sites. Speculations were made, with many voicing an opinion that the Iraqis did not care, yet these were Western projections of how they thought the local population felt, not a true representation of ideologies held by the Iraqis.

While the projects that removed military occupation and cleaned the site were important and well-intended, the site assessment conducted prior to the military vacating the ruins did not include on-the-ground Iraqi participation, and the site clean-up was managed from a Western perspective and without archaeological expertise. Both projects therefore continued to send a message of power and control over the site. The interviewees for this study sincerely believed they had rendered valuable assistance, which was true. But this type of rapport is an example of the Orientalism where issues of control and uneven relationships experienced between cultures promoted divisions (Said 1985, p. 100). In addition, the emphasis on cooperation in order to gather intelligence information was reminiscent of the legacy of the Western spy network and archaeological sites that was discussed in Chapter 2.

Overall, the site was valued by the archaeologists in the twentieth century for its historic significance, and by the soldiers in the twenty-first century for tactical usefulness. In neither case was the local population consulted or included in decisions related to the fate of ruins. Although separated by a span of 70 years, both are examples of relationships based on the power and domination of the West over the East (Said 2003 [1978], p. 5). Although not done with conscious intent, the construction of a military base on Kish revisited this Orientalist past. As was discussed in the two previous case studies, alternatives to placing a military encampment on the ruins could have been explored. For example: instead of building on top of Kish, erect temporary and removable guard towers of a similar height outside the archaeological footprint of the site; offer site protection to allow local visitors as well as joint international excavations and conservation projects.

Conclusion
This chapter has provided evidence of Western control over the ruins of the ancient city of Kish, when antiquarians initially mistook it for the eastern suburbs of Babylon. While they were unable to empirically connect the site with Biblical
text, as was done at the other sites, scholars collected and transported vast quantities of artefacts to European and American museums for interpretation and analysis. One of the driving factors was connecting the past cultures with a European ancestry, which in-turn legitimised modern Western interest. In addition, the manner in which the local population was described followed the Orientalist rhetoric that was prevalent in academia throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unfortunately, accomplishments at the site after the 1930s were minimal as the ancient city did not generate widespread attention from scholars or the general public, and it remained largely undisturbed.

Previous Western control over Kish was revisited with the advent of the 2003 war. Damages to the ruins due to the presence of a military base were substantial. They were caused by both the occupation, and the inability of Iraqi archaeologists to access the site and maintain and conserve the crumbling structures. There was a perception by some members of the coalition that the Iraqis did not fully appreciate the ancient history of their country. While it may not have been directly displayed by the local population, there was a sense of their belonging to the geographic space.

While some command staff were fully engaged in attempting to create positive cross-cultural relations, as a whole, troops felt that was not a priority within the military hierarchy. A need therefore exists to rectify the gaps in cultural heritage awareness training within all levels of the establishment, but especially in the higher ranks. Military troops are required to adhere to their commander, and if he or she sets an example of respect and cooperation, it will be followed. Educating emerging officers during their formative years in the Reserve Officers Training Corps Academy has been a welcome step, yet more emphasis needs to be on avoiding the Orientalist behaviour of the distance, and not so distant past.
Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction
This thesis has utilized the theoretical framework articulated by Edward Said in his work on Orientalism. It examined the ways in which Westerners interacted with Iraqi archaeological sites and the local cultural heritage community. Background information was provided by exploring the published records from nineteenth and early twentieth century European and American scholars who visited and worked in the region. Their journals, travel logs and excavation reports narrated how they related to the ruins of Ur, Babylon, and Kish, as well as the local population. The three case studies highlighted that the remains of those ancient cities were manipulated for Western purposes, and valued for their connections to Biblical stories that linked them to an Anglo-Saxon past.

The local heritage professionals and the broader Iraqi population were rarely consulted and, more to the point, were generally viewed through an Orientalist lens as immoral, ill-mannered, and intellectually defective. Via the original empirical insights gleaned from 26 interviews with coalition forces and 4 civilians who worked for them, this thesis goes on to demonstrate how this Orientalist legacy shaped the viewpoints of those who visited or were based at the military bases built at Ur, Babylon, and Kish following the 2003 intervention. A temporal and ideological connection can therefore be drawn between successive Western engagements with these sites. Control of the sites exerted by the early archaeologists was repeated in the Iraq war when coalition troops constructed military bases on them and all but ignored the local heritage professionals.

The views and attitudes voiced by the troops were recorded and analysed, with some of the participants echoing ideologies that were prevalent almost a century earlier. While they all appreciated the associated ancient histories, familiarity was mainly from a theological understanding, and many saw themselves as providing protection for ancient ruins. Drawing upon the research findings documented throughout this thesis, this final chapter concludes with a discussion of the overall findings in relation to the research question: ‘Was the construction of coalition military bases on Iraqi archaeological sites driven by Orientalist biases during the Iraq War?’ This chapter also outlines recommended actions for militaries involved in present and future conflicts. It argues that a key lesson of the Iraq war of 2003 concerns the failures of foreign forces to be sensitive to local cultural heritage and the need to work with native heritage professionals towards the protection of sites.

Evaluating Said’s Principle Dogmas of Orientalism
As outlined in Chapter 2, this thesis has sought to examine the extent to which the interactions between foreign coalition forces and Iraqi heritage professionals can be measured and analysed according to Said’s four ‘principle dogmas’ of
Orientalism. The first is ‘the absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, and superior, and the Orient which is aberrant, undeveloped, and inferior’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300). The second is ‘that abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a classical Oriental civilization, are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 300). Said’s third dogma is ‘the Orient is eternal, uniform, and incapable of defining itself; therefore it is assumed that a highly generalized and systematic vocabulary for describing the Orient from a Western standpoint is inevitable and even scientifically objective’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 301). His last dogma is ‘the Orient is at bottom something either to be feared (the Yellow Peril, the Mongol hordes, the brown dominions) or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, or outright occupation whenever possible)’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. 301).

The first dogma was demonstrated within the publications of the early archaeologists and adventurers, as well as the Iraq war veterans. For example, the common narrative of the uneducated and untrustworthy Muslims who inhabited an unattractive wilderness, was voiced by European explorers (Buchanan 1938; Mignan 1829; Morton 1938). Travelling between Basra and Babylon in 1829, Robert Mignan reflected on his observations about the ‘tyranny innate in the heart of all Muslims’ (Mignan 1829, p. 82). More than a century later, British journalist Henry Morton questioned the intellectual competencies of what he described as the ‘peasantry’ when he wrote ‘I wonder whether someday the intelligentsia will go under and the people will relapse into their natural chaos’ (Morton 1938, p. 101).

Similar views were held by several coalition forces who interacted with the Iraqi heritage professionals. For example, Interviewee 27 stated ‘we would have to be there a lifetime to unscrew the place’ (Interview 27). Other coalition members such as Interviewees 3 and 6 emphasised cultural differences between themselves and the Iraqi population, questioning their motives, viewing them as untrustworthy, and feeling uncomfortable in their presence. These attitudes projected the Western sense of supremacy highlighted by Said. However, throughout the interviews, a counter-narrative emerged. Despite the conflict situation, several of the interviewees engaged in cooperative projects. One example is the archway at Ur discussed by Interviewee 30. It was enacted through a request from the site curator, which demonstrated that the Iraqi voice was represented at the ruins, and he was viewed as an equal.

The second dogma noted by Said was that the Western interpretation of the Orient is privileged over its complex realities. Woolley’s excavations at Ur, Koldewey’s Babylon digs and to a lesser extent, Field and Langdon’s work at Kish, were all influenced by theological stories, and constructed in their subsequent publications through that lens. During the excavations, the local population was employed as labourers, but they were not consulted regarding their opinions about the ancient sites (Field 1929; Koldewey 1914; Woolley 1950). This was highlighted when
Woolley described his excavations at the Royal Tombs of Ur, which revealed ancient Mesopotamian burial practices that were unknown at the time. When speaking about his local workforce, he said ‘It would be absurd to ask for scientific interest from men so ignorant as the Arabs of southern Iraq’ (Woolley 1934b, p. 9).

During the 2003 war, troops who visited Ur and Babylon, such as Interviewees 23, 32 and 6, expressed feeling connections to those sites based on Biblical perspectives. They were not however familiar with the Pre-Dynastic or Islamic histories. Interviewee 6 was able to appreciate his tour at the ruins of Ur for its Abrahamic legacy, admitting ‘I guess Abraham is significant in the Muslim culture too, I don’t think I knew that at the time’ (Interview 6). Similarly, Interviewee 32 said all he knew about Iraq was that ‘it was one of the great civilizations of the past’ which he read about in the Bible just prior to his deployment (Interview 32).

A few of the interview participants developed an understanding that the Iraqis were unable to devote emotional energy or time towards caring for the ruins, because as Interviewee 17 stated ‘they had more pressing matters to attend to’ (Interview 17). However, this was her conjecture, not a direct Iraqi viewpoint. The ancient ruins in Iraq were unearthed, examined, analysed, and epitomised by a Western voice. This legacy continued within the psyche of some of the members of the coalition who deployed to Iraq.

Said’s third ‘principle dogma’ of Orientalism is that the Orient lacks the ontological and epistemological capacities to define itself and must therefore rely on the West to construct seemingly objective methods for interpreting it. This rhetoric was demonstrated by archaeologists such as Woolley, who questioned the scientific intellect of the local population, as well as Field and Bell, who believed it was their essential duty to make decisions about excavated artefacts for the Iraqis (Bell & Bell 1927; Field 1929; Woolley 1930). For example, Field would only allow the Iraqis to serve as ‘pick-men and basket-boys’ while decisions about excavated artefacts were made by the Western scholars (Field 1929, p. 27).

While Bell discussed the intensive appraisals that were required to divide the Kish artefacts for distribution between the museums, the decisions were made by her and her Western staff without Iraqi consultation (Bell & Bell 1927, p. 557). Even if there was little to zero interest from the local community, the sites were on their lands, and therefore they should have been consulted for their local opinion.

This attitude was revisited in 2003 when the Polish archaeologists embedded at Babylon were in control of the ruins, rather than the Iraqi site curator (Interviewee 24). The notions of Western archaeologists being the saviours of Iraq’s past was also discussed by Interviewee 8, who recalled that a military commander was attempting to engage with American experts in order to conduct work at Hatra. He said, his ‘commander was a real go-getter and had plans with some Special Forces guys to guard Hatra, get some archaeologists on the site and actually do
some work’ (Interviewee 8). However, the plans did not include local contribution, and it was poorly received by the international cultural heritage community. While their intentions were not malevolent, they were misguided and demonstrated that the West was once again making decisions for Iraqi archaeological sites.

However, there are positive moments that reflect a more consultative and cooperative relationship between coalition forces and local heritage experts. One example occurred at Ur, which was utilized as a military base and therefore under Western control for six years. However, when command staff understood the significance of the ruins to the local heritage community, arrangements were made to release it to Iraqi authorities. The joint American-Iraqi survey that was then conducted provides a positive example of collaboration. It was conducted with the full cooperation and support of coalition military personnel. As one of the Iraqi archaeologists recalled ‘that was a great way to bridge the gap, we put everything aside and worked as a team’ (Interview 16).

Since then, USCENTCOM has made a positive and much needed addition to the Environmental Regulations 200-2, which addresses base management practices. Chapter 6 was added to provide guidance on how to mitigate damages to historic sites, including cooperation with the local custodians (USCENTCOM 2009). In addition, DoD Directive 3000.10 provides further requirements for personnel engaged in planning for base operations outside the US. Policy 3(h) instructs personnel to minimize adverse impact on local populations and cultural resources (DoD 2013). Furthermore, a 2016 US military manual addresses best practices in order to minimize damages to cultural property during different phases of conflict. This much-needed publication was put together with input and collaboration between UNESCO, NATO and the United States Committee of the Blue Shield, and provides guidelines and regulations on protecting cultural property during different phases of conflict.

While the majority of the language focuses on preventing physical damages, it also includes sections that call on cooperation and dialogue with the local population. For example, chapter III reads in part ‘military forces deployed in an unfamiliar cultural environment should be encouraged to visit or otherwise communicate with local communities so as to gain an appreciation of their culture, including of their cultural heritage’ (O’Keefe et al 2016 p. 18). Further, chapter IV states that the ‘prevention of misappropriation and vandalism of cultural property in occupied territory can also benefit from communication and cooperation between occupying forces and the local populace’ (O’Keefe et al 2016 p. 54). In the UK, Stone’s ‘Four Tier Approach’, which calls in part for cooperation with the local population, was incorporated into British Army training in 2014 (Purbrick 2016).

Outreach and support for the local community can produce positive cross-cultural contacts. As Porter stated ‘Falling prey to flawed ideas of culture may have strategic costs, while a rethinking of culture can have concrete benefits for
militaries’ (Porter 2009 p. 197). Additionally, reports from the DC based Strategic Studies Institute highlighted that ‘Basic knowledge of local norms and customs can prevent a lot of ill will in an occupied country’ (Mockaitis 2007 p. 54).

Said’s last dogma, that the Orient is something to be feared and controlled by the West, was demonstrated during WWI when Babylon was occupied by British troops. Army personnel were in control of how the site was managed and altered. As Hall explained ‘General Costello, who had taken great interest in the place, had tried to make it attractive to visitors by grading roads up to it and beyond it, and marking out paths’ (Hall 1930b, p. vii). For the soldiers, the Arabs were ‘antagonists to the British protagonists’ (Hammond 2009, p. 97). Viewed through this lens, archaeologist R. Campbell Thompson was assigned a British guard for the duration of his 1917 excavations at Ur (Thompson 1920, p. 102).

The 2003 invasion of Iraq also meets the criteria of Said’s last dogma. Iraqi Government buildings in central Baghdad were seized and controlled by coalition forces, and established as military headquarters (Chandrasekaran 2010; Isakhan 2011, 2013). As discussed by Isakhan, former palaces of Saddam Hussein were spared destruction during the Shock and Awe campaign as a sign that the US planned to use them as bases of power and control (Isakhan 2013, p. 232). Similar attitudes were demonstrated by the occupation of the archaeological sites of Ur, Babylon and Kish. As Interviewee 23 explained ‘it’s the situation, it was a result of the war’ (Interview 23). Control of the sites provided the troops a secure environment from which to operate, which was once again more indicative of the combat situation than conscious Orientalism.

Despite concepts based on fear and distrust, attempts at relationship building were found in both the archival research and during the interviews. In the nineteenth century Layard acknowledged the necessity of positively engaging with the locals. At Babylon, he learned about the Islamic traditions associated with the site and was able to associate local affinity to the sites historical attributes, not just the Western narrative (Layard 1882). Similarly, professional relationships between American and Iraqi soldiers during the Iraq war were discussed as successful by Interviewees 22, 12, 10, and 7. Interviewee 10 recalled ‘It was like working with any other ally’ (Interview 10). In addition, according to Interviewee 32 ‘the army is not intent on destroying things that are important to other people’ (Interview 32). The examples cited above demonstrate that a gap existed in cross-cultural understanding as a result of unfamiliarity with Eastern customs, concepts and ideologies, in both the early twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

**Answering the Research Question**

This information was vital in answering the research question: ‘Was the construction of coalition military bases on Iraqi archaeological sites driven by Orientalist biases during the Iraq War?’ Ur, Babylon and Kish were occupied because they were each strategically, tactically and conveniently located. In addition, existing Iraqi infrastructures, such as modern buildings located on both Ur and Babylon, were easily incorporated into base operations. This had potential to be viewed as a purposeful demonstration of power and control, which reverted
back to the nineteenth and early twentieth century Western monopoly over Mesopotamia. While a majority of the interviewees recognised that living on or near an ancient site damaged its historical and scientific integrity, none of them were in an authoritative position to stop construction. Individuals who identified the occupation as a mistake were ordered by their command staff to serve in their capacities as soldiers, and not as archaeologists.

While many sympathised with the Iraqis being unable to visit the sites, they viewed the problem through a Western interpretation. For example, several interview participants suggested that the Iraqis were concerned with everyday survival, rather than ancient ruins. Troops were often faced with an unwinnable decision. If they were to guard the sites, their presence caused damage, but if they did not, the ruins were vulnerable to looters. This led to opinions of seeing themselves as the protectors who prevented the looting activity. However, this attitude was construed by some as displaying Orientalist motivations in regards to controlling the sites and who was allowed entry.

In addition, it was difficult to form relations with the local community because the coalition isolated themselves by building walls that did not allow them to leave the base, while Iraqi entry was restricted. This resulted in nominal cross-cultural interactions. Attitudes about the occupation and the locals varied, but malicious intentions were not voiced by any of the interviewees. However, cultural misunderstandings and unfamiliarity were common, which resulted in frustrations and suspicions. Overall, the manner in which a site was treated and how contact with the locals was approached, was dependent on how the unit commander viewed any given situation. While soldiers were independent thinkers, stringent military structure prohibited comprehensive engagement in cultural heritage matters if the highest-ranking officers did not recognise a need to do so.

However, a few of the soldiers acknowledged that promoting cultural heritage awareness and cross-cultural cooperation were beneficial to the troops and the community. This was evident when the interviewees discussed the various projects they worked on during their deployments. The majority were devised, implemented and completed by the Westerners. On one hand this accentuated the perception of the troops holding an Orientalist attitude, but on the other, there were also several positive results. The entry arch at Ur was erected per Muhsen’s request, and the site assessment at Ur was conducted by a joint American-Iraqi team. The base removal project at Kish was approved by the General Director of the SBAH, which encouraged positive relations between the Western subject matter experts and members of the armed forces, on behalf of the Iraqis. The war environment unfortunately dictated Western involvement, as none of the projects would have been implemented without their involvement. Yet, projects were devised because of the invasion. This ambiguity could result in countless reiterations of the same arguments for and against the war, but the focus of this
study has been on the advances and achievements made thus far, and providing recommendations to avoid negative actions in the future.

The occupation of sites and misunderstandings of the people were attributed to a lack of cultural heritage awareness training, which did not begin until 2006, a full three years after the war began and after thousands of troops had already transitioned in and out of the country. Yet, even once training was provided, it was not afforded to all deploying personnel. It was only available for a few units at selective training camps. The troops who benefited from the instruction were schooled in how to recognise and avoid damaging sites, and warned against stealing artefacts. These were important messages, and the instructors should be credited for their diligence in pressing the DoD to allow them classroom time. In spite of those advances, the topic of Orientalism was not covered, and has yet to be fully indoctrinated into current curriculum.

It must also be noted that the Iraqis discussed in the case studies were willing to cooperate with the coalition, and must be commended for their part in ensuring contacts were beneficial. Feelings of resentfulness and anger would have been understandable, and while some may have felt that way, their conduct was welcoming, with a desire for successful cross-cultural relations. This facilitated reciprocal dialogue when all parties agreed to suspend reservations and embrace the challenges of forming positive relations that benefited the ruins and the people. However, soldiers who were restricted from leaving the secure bases were unable to form opinions about the Iraqis due to the lack of first-hand contact.

None of the participants in this study were part of the collective who made decisions about base placement, as those procedures were under the purview of high-level personnel. This indicates that there is a need for unit commanders and ranking officers to receive in-depth training in order to gain an understanding of Orientalism and its connection to the occupation of a foreign country’s cultural property. However, as was discussed in the literature review, training courses tended to focus on the protection of the artefacts and standing ruins, rather than on relationship building strategies.

Therefore, the answer to the research question is that the occupation of sites unintentionally revisited Orientalist biases, mainly due to the failure to understand the past Western control over Mesopotamia. In the 2003 preface of *Orientalism*, Said discussed the Iraq war and stated that there is ‘a profound difference between the will to understand for purposes of coexistence and humanistic enlargement of horizons, and the will to dominate for the purposes of control and external domination’ (Said 2003 [1978], p. xix). While the soldiers did not intend to control the sites, the occupation dictated their actions, and the colonial past was revisited.
Recommendations

In the following section, there are several suggestions posed that military leadership could embrace in order to alleviate the issues associated with troop activity at and around archaeological sites in foreign counties. The cultural heritage awareness training programs discussed in this thesis set a fundamental context that this research was able to expand on. The implementation of the archaeology checklist, the environmental contingency plan, the US and UK training directives, the websites that offer guidance on protecting cultural property, and the inclusion of coursework in officer candidate schools, were met with appreciation from all levels of the military.

Yet, training organizations could expand these programs and curriculum to demonstrate the importance of cross-cultural cooperation in relation to protecting cultural property, and how it can serve as a method for enhancing relations with local populations. Because military culture is grounded in following the orders of superiors, it is essential to ensure that troops on all levels receive proper training, with a special emphasis on coaching for command staff. The recommendations listed below are not specifically modelled for Iraq, rather, they could be implemented in any country where armed forces units are engaged in conflict or post-conflict operations.

The information provided in this thesis demonstrated that cultural heritage awareness training was generally embraced by members of the coalition who served in Iraq, but they recognised that it requires a more robust approach. One of the prevalent resolutions to this problem was the suggestion to reinstate civil affairs teams, and employ experts as part of the US Army Reserve Units. However this program, while well intended, continues the Orientalist biases which this thesis argues against. It puts Westerners in charge of foreign sites, and mimics the actions promoted by the poorly received Human Terrain System. Therefore, a more valuable tool would be for on-the-ground troops to have a basic understanding of how to recognise and avoid Orientalism biases in times of conflict and at heritage sites, while also promoting positive engagement with local experts.

Although military doctrine may be seen as rigid and set, this is not necessarily true. As was demonstrated in the case studies, many soldiers were willing to diverge from their comfort zones and explore new ways of performing their duties. Therefore, innovative approaches such as including new training methods are anticipated to be well received. Proper instruction that demonstrates how connections to the colonial past pose a hindrance to relationship building would be well placed in practical coursework. Ideally, this could be incorporated into curriculum for officers, non-commissioned officers and the lower enlisted ranks in order to ensure that all members within the military hierarchy were reached.

While training should continue to emphasise the importance of how to recognise and protect ancient ruins and artefacts, the archaeology checklist and lecture
series discussed in this thesis effectively cover those topics. However, in order to strengthen the training, it would be advisable for military planners and engineers to add awareness about avoiding the Orientalist component and provide instructions on how to coordinate with local specialists before choosing a location to build a base. First and foremost would be a warning to not use cultural property for military purposes. The mistakes made at Ur, Babylon, and Kish provided empirical examples of bad practice, and could be incorporated in ‘lessons learned’ training guidelines.

If a base must be constructed near a historical site, full engagement with the local heritage specialists is vital, and they must not be barred from entering the site. In addition, the aforementioned reserve program could ensure that all of their experts were individuals who have and maintain close professional connections with local communities, and are positioned to provide in-field support. They would ensure that communication with the local experts was strictly followed, especially if discussion turned towards using cultural property for military purposes. Overall, recognizing local autonomy would need to remain a prime directive. The Combatant Command Cultural Heritage Action Group and Cultural Heritage by Archaeology and Military Panel websites could also add information about avoiding the colonial past on their electronic tutorials and links.

The looting of sites was of significant concern to several of the scholars who were discussed within the literature review. Suggestions to have troops render protection to vulnerable ruins was posed as one possible solution to curtail looting. Many of the interviewees stated that their presence at Ur and Babylon deterred illegal activity. Yet the initial base placement on those sites should have been in close consultation with the Iraqis. If similar circumstances present themselves in the future, any placement of a foreign military near cultural property, every measure would need to be taken to ensure that international and domestic cultural laws are followed, and that the local heritage experts lead decisions related to the use of the site. The benefits of such close cooperation was outlined by the interviewees who had productive interactions with Muhsen, the site curator at Ur, as opposed to Babylon and the lack of contact with the archaeologists there.

The past focus on ‘save the sites’ and ‘don’t damage the sites’ can often be seen as only protecting a ‘bunch of old rocks’ which not everyone necessarily embraces as a valid cause, and in which military operations take precedence. However, the military supports different concepts related to building relations, and are amicable to new ways of approaching this. Therefore, cultural heritage protection efforts could add an additional component, and that is to emphasize how the occupation of sites causes animosity and resentment, and revisits a colonial past. Such actions do not win the hearts and minds of the community. Protecting sites is not only enacted to save ancient ruins, but to positively engage with the local population.
Several of the soldiers communicated that they were most comfortable engaging with the Iraqi soldiers, mainly due to having similar backgrounds, and possessing an understanding of each other. By this logic, including training about Orientalism and cultural heritage would help the troops become more knowledgeable about the local ancient past, which could result in similar levels of familiarity. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, Orientalism should be the training focus for personnel slated for deployment to Eastern countries, and the broader concept of ethnocentrism should be addressed for others. It would not be expected nor feasible for every soldier to become a subject matter expert. Rather, he or she could possess enough comprehension to effectively relate with a local archaeologist, just as he or she would a member of the local armed forces.

As was demonstrated in the case studies, cooperative projects proved to be useful mechanisms for forming positive relations. Coalition personnel who devised and contributed to the success of them did so mainly on their own accord. Many had a personal interest in history and were self-taught, which sometimes resulted in unknowingly attributing hero status to some of the early twentieth century archaeologists who acted in an Orientalist manner. While such programming should be continued, emphasis should be on military personnel serving in support roles, rather than in a leadership capacity. The same advice applies to civilian organizations who have a vested interest in cultural heritage protection. Cooperative endeavours should function for the primary purpose of aiding the local community, rather than advancing personal agendas.

Further, training institutions that establish stronger ties with international heritage communities, rather than solely relying on Westerners and expatriates to provide instruction during pre-deployment training courses, could benefit from more accurate first-person accounts. The information many of the interview participants had received proved useful for understanding what constituted a cultural faux pas. These included refraining from showing the soles of shoes to the local population, and ensuring that women were not touched during any type of contact or interaction. However, the importance of a site such as Ur or Babylon to the people of Iraq was not discussed. While such interactions would prove challenging, the overreaching advantages gained from the knowledge and expertise from local experts would compensate any anticipated difficulties.

In order to maintain consistency throughout the ranks, all commanders need to be in agreement on how contact with a local population is approached and established. While individual thoughts and perceptions will exist, the military’s structure ensures that rules are followed. While there are bound to be distracters and dissidents who may be against it, according to the research presented in the case studies, the majority of personnel would accept and practice such changes. Therefore, one of the most likely approaches for adding material to the training doctrine would be though the practitioners who work for organizations that instruct deploying personnel. These include: the United States Committee of the
Blue Shield; the US Training and Doctrine Command; the Overseas Regional Cultural Heritage Integrated Data program; the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat course; and the Reserve Officers Training Corps. Additional educational programs that are offered at military posts could also incorporate similar instruction.

Why it Matters
Understanding why it is necessary to raise awareness about Orientalism as it relates to cultural heritage sites is important on several levels. While conflict situations are dictated by military operations, non-combatants also factor heavily into the equation. This was the case during WWI, as it was during the Iraq war. A comparison of the ideologies held by British troops and civilian Westerners in the early 1900s were echoed by some of the 2003 coalition personnel. Similar viewpoints and the mistakes that resulted from them demonstrated that over a span of more than a century, full understanding of the East was still absent. Twenty-first century attitudes should have evolved beyond the Orientalist biases, yet without proper guidance, remained stagnant.

Occupying another country’s cultural property causes anger and suspicion, while also sending a message of callous disregard. In addition, it can give an appearance of ignorance about the local culture and what they deem important. While the majority of the interviewees acknowledged an understanding of this, they did not have the deeper context to connect it to the historically patronizing view of the East by the West. Therefore, possessing a more robust knowledge of past cultural misappropriations would give troops an advantage of how to positively interact with communities. This further manifests into the potential for non-combatants to regard troops more favourably, and conversely, for the non-combatants to be viewed as valuable assets by military troops.

Some of the interviewees explained how their relations with the local population assisted them to track insurgent activity. Because military command seeks alternate ways in which to perform their duties more effectively, being viewed more favourably can result in amicable local input that helps their community as much as it assists the soldiers. In addition, this alleviates the controversy of Western archaeologists aiding armed forces personnel, rather, it stays within a military context. Overall, refraining from treating any given non-combatant population in the aggressive and controlling manners displayed in the past, is one of the most constructive uses of the lessons learned philosophy embraced by the military.

The Present Situation
Since the withdrawal of all coalition forces at the end of 2011, Iraq has suffered another wave of devastating violence. In mid-2014, the Sunni-jihadist group known in English as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) seized large swathes of territory and imposed their nightmarishly cruel state. A key cause of
the emergence of ISIS were the sequence of dramatic mistakes made by the coalition forces and the Iraqi political elite after the 2003 war and the poorly planned and executed withdrawal that failed to achieve its intended goals of bringing democracy and security to Iraq. The ramifications to the general population were catastrophic. They have been subjected to continued sectarian warfare and a repressive regime. The fear of slaughter for non-Muslims, as well as Shia residents, has resulted in a refugee crisis as people flee from both Iraq and Syria (Adelman 2015; Al Tamimi 2014; Isakhan 2015c, 2015d).

A 2014 Brookings Institute report delivered a set of strategies intended to provide guidance in stopping the continued advancement of ISIS. These included the need to stabilise the region, limit their social media outreach, neutralise their mobility, and counter their financial strength (Lister 2014, p. 3). At the time of writing this conclusion (December 2016), the fight against ISIS has had modest successes, including re-taking significant cities such as Ramadi and Tikrit. Nonetheless, they remain a credible threat and are likely to continue to play a destabilising role in Iraq and Syria into the foreseeable future.

From the time they captured significant territory in both Syria and Iraq, ISIS have also undertaken an aggressive campaign against the rich historical and archaeological sites that litter the two countries. In February 2015, they destroyed artefacts on exhibit in the Mosul Museum (Danti 2015; Danti et al. 2015). Wholescale destruction of religious and archaeological sites soon followed, including severe damages at Nineveh, Nimrud and Hatra, which are all located in the north of Iraq (Al Quntar et al. 2015; Bauer 2015; Harmanşah 2015).

Recent events attest to the fact that issues related to Orientalism and the occupation of archaeological ruins are still being committed. An example stems from reports in May 2016 that a Russian army unit was constructing a military base on the ruins of ancient Palmyra in Syria (Danti et al. 2016; Mroue 2016). Syria, just like Iraq, was subjugated to colonial rule in the early twentieth century (Kamrava 2013). However, while many journalists and scholars have lamented the Russian presence at Palmyra, the extent to which it invokes a legacy of colonial control of archaeological sites in the region has not been expressed. Scholars have discussed how the army’s presence is in violation of antiquities laws, and that ‘the site’s militarization exposes the fragile and poorly preserved archaeological remains in the Northern Necropolis to other threats’ (Danti et al. 2016, p. 1).

Yet dialogue has not yet been directed at the issues related to a Western military presence on the ruins and how it has revisited the Orientalism of the past. This demonstrates there is a vital need to raise awareness for military personnel, as well as cultural heritage specialists and academics across the globe. Focus needs to be on the importance of incorporating Orientalist dogma into discussions about heritage protection. As the conflict remains fluid and dangerous, uncertainty surrounds the fate of the people, the region, and the antiquities in Iraq and Syria.
Understanding as many aspects of the conflict as possible, including Orientalist biases and cultural property, could assist with future positive communication and partnerships.

Future Research
The data presented in this study could be utilised for future research. An interesting direction would be to use the data from the case studies to compare with the destruction caused by ISIS, specifically at the ruins of Nineveh, Nimrud, and Hatra. While the circumstances are not parallel, understanding different degrees of occupation would assist the overall scholarly record, which requires further researched accounts. The information learned from this thesis, including the successes and mistakes, would greatly contribute to any body of work that seeks to explore the narrative of foreign militaries and local archaeological sites. For example, it could serve as a catalyst for similar studies in other regions of the world, specifically, post-colonial countries in Africa and Asia that are experiencing current conflict, or where war has recently ended.

Conclusion
This thesis has provided innovative information from individuals who recounted front-line experiences that have not been previously recorded. Their voices have contributed to the existing and growing body of knowledge related to strategies to help protect cultural heritage venues in conflict and post-conflict situations. The literature review established that issues related to looting, site damages, international and domestic cultural heritage laws, cross-cultural relations, and pre-deployment training schemes, were all well reported. Therefore the topic of Orientalism that has been discussed and analysed in this thesis, is a much needed layer that furthers efforts to assist military personnel with productive interactions while deployed overseas. The candid opinions conveyed by the interview participants revealed that while some soldiers were wary of Iraqis, as a whole, they did not feel it was acceptable to damage a site or a relationship. They too wanted positive contact with the local population.

The case studies demonstrated that the sites were primarily coveted for their theological representations by Westerners when archaeology was in its infancy, and by the modern military because they offered a convenient spot to construct a base camp. The analysed data revealed that the relations with Muhsen, the curator at Ur, helped the soldiers to understand how an Iraqi might value the site. This was enlightening for many of the troops who did not initially consider how the local population related to the ancient ruins. Yet it was only by chance that he was allowed to live within the military fence-line, which proved beneficial for both the coalition and the site. It was interesting to note that the unintentional act of leaving Muhsen on the site resulted in some of the most productive and memorable interactions for the soldiers. Contrasting those interfaces with the lack of contact with archaeologists at Babylon and Kish illustrated that the personal contact was one of the most effective tools at bridging the cultural gap.
These real-life scenarios have therefore demonstrated their usefulness for the purposes of serving as valuable examples of best and worst practices. The US Army has recognized past mistakes, and have added new guidance to correct them. However, it must be complemented with an understanding of Orientalism and its effects on a local population. Command staff are the best and most useful instruments in military strategy planning, and if they display positive and friendly overtones to the locals, then troops will match their demeanour.

A globalized world does not mean that the West should take the lead on decisions in other countries, rather shared responsibilities should be the focus. Conducting research about a country where soldiers are set to deploy, examining the history, and refraining from exhibiting notions of power and control over ancient sites, especially those with a colonial past, are a vital step in avoiding the mistakes that were made during previous conflicts. This alters the legacy that was established by early travellers with their disparaging descriptions about Mesopotamia and the local community, which was executed well into the mid-1900s. The years of wars and sanctions resulted in minimal contact between Iraqis and Westerners, especially Americans, and accurate knowledge about local customs were lacking.

Armed with proper awareness will have considerable influence with helping the legacy of Orientalism to become a relic of the past, and something that can be avoided in current and future conflicts. The case studies demonstrated that the troops were not dismissive of the bases on the sites, rather it was not something they deliberated over. This was because they were never schooled in how the occupation would be viewed by the locals, or the international cultural heritage community. Living on the sites did impact their ability to interact with the locals, yet it was also an issue that was overcome by several individuals who reached out and created positive relations, mainly on their own accord.

This thesis has therefore assisted the reader to understand the past history of Orientalism associated with the archaeological sites in Iraq, and how some of the heroes of the past were, in retrospect, acting with self-interest. It also gave voice to members of the coalition who served during the war, and the few Iraqis who were able to contribute their opinions. An emphasis was placed on the importance of cooperative relations, and why it is vital to include training that addresses learning from the past colonial mistakes. The research has made an original contribution to the existing pool of knowledge, and it is hoped that the findings will be included in future training courses and classroom studies.

Reflecting on the events that started the idea to embark on this journey seems like a lifetime ago. When first setting foot in Iraq, and all of the personal experiences and observations throughout the years that eventually led to this thesis, I am reminded of one of my fondest memories. In 2009, I was working in tandem with archaeologists from the SBAH, as we conducted surveys on several southern sites, documenting evidence of looting. My military transport included Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, which stand over 3 meters tall and
weigh more than 13 tonnes, while the Iraqis were in small white pickup trucks. A few of the sites we planned to visit were not accessible by roads, but one of the Iraqis had a map that showed nearby landmarks and potential routes.

The summer temperature was over 40 degrees Celsius and everyone was outside looking at the map, trying to seek shade in the shadow of the colossal US military vehicle. Per military protocol when on the road, the soldiers were dressed in their full battle gear, while the archaeologists were in their jeans and t-shirts. Everyone was bent over the map, consulting each other on how to manoeuvre the convoy through the area, taking into account intelligence information on insurgent activity and the safest possible course to avoid damaging existing ruins. The remembered image of all the soldiers surrounding the archaeologists, giving them their full attention and listening to their advice, heartens me. It highlights that such cooperative and mutually respectful relationships are possible, and more importantly, can and will be encouraged in the future.
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PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR US AND COALITION PARTICIPANTS

TO: Participant

Date: 07-04-14

Full Project Title: Assessing Cross-Cultural Relationships between US and Coalition Military Forces and Iraqi Cultural Heritage Professionals at Archaeological Sites during the Iraq War

Principal Researcher: Benjamin Isakhan

Student Researcher: Diane Siebrandt

Associate Researcher(s):

1. Consent

You are invited to take part in this research project.

This Plain Language Statement contains detailed information about the research project. Its purpose is to explain to you as openly and clearly as possible all the procedures involved in this project so that you can make a fully informed decision whether you are going to participate or not.

Please read this Plain Language Statement carefully. Feel free to ask questions about any information in the document. Once you understand what the project is about and if you agree to take part in it, you will be asked to sign the Consent Form. By signing the Consent Form, you indicate that you understand the information and that you give your consent to participate in the research project.

You will be given a copy of the Plain Language Statement and Consent Form to keep as a record.
2. Purpose

The purpose of this project is to investigate the relationships that did or did not exist between members of the US and coalition military forces, and Iraqi cultural heritage professionals during the Iraq War. Particular focus is on military bases and outposts that were constructed on and near archaeological sites, and what effect that had on establishing cross-cultural relationships. This project is conducted as part of a PhD degree being undertaken at Deakin University in Australia.

3. Methods

Information will be collected from active and retired US and coalition Iraq War Veterans. This will be done by interviewing male and female individuals for no more than one hour either in-person, or over a Skype phone conversation. Each interview will consist of a serious of open-ended questions, which will allow the participant to provide as long or as brief an answer as they wish to give. The questions will focus on discussing how cross-cultural relationships positively and negatively impacted cultural heritage protection efforts in different conflict and post-conflict zones of Iraq. You will be asked to reflect on your interactions with Iraqi cultural heritage specialists, and explain what you believed worked and did not work for forming ties and protecting archaeological sites. If projects were implemented, questions will focus on how responsibilities where divided when devising, implementing and managing projects. The interview will be audio recorded for data analysis purposes. A total of about 40 individuals will be interviewed for this project.

4. Risks and Potential Benefits to Participants

There are no anticipated risks. However participants are encouraged to convey any and all concerns of risk involved to the student researcher either verbally or in writing.

The individuals participating in this research are contributing to enriching a field of study not widely published. Their contributions will provide the information necessary to form guidelines that are hoped to shape future policy towards establishing positive cross-cultural relationships at cultural heritage sites in conflict prone countries.

Local participants will benefit from contributing to and enriching knowledge about Iraqi cultural heritage practices and ideological norms to non-Iraqis. This study also provides participants with the opportunity to reflect and discuss past events and how lessons can be learned from those events, both positive and negative.

5. Expected Benefits to the Wider Community

Forming cross-cultural relationships between foreign military powers and local heritage experts in order to protect heritage sites is rarely discussed in literature.
Therefore, this study fills these gaps in knowledge, resulting in a better understanding of the benefits of cross-cultural cooperation. This study is expected to assist in future academic research projects, in addition to providing guidance to governmental agencies and international public and private organizations with a vested interest in cultural heritage protection.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

The data collected during this study will not be traceable to any individual. The data will be stored in a password protected laptop and desktop computer, and only accessible by the principle researcher and student researcher. All information will be stored for a minimum of 6 years after final publication, after which it will be destroyed.

Information collected in relation to this study that could potentially identify you will remain strictly confidential. Information will only be disclosed with your permission, subject to legal requirements. By giving your permission by signing the Consent Form, we anticipate publishing the results in peer reviewed journals. You will not be identified in any published information.

7. Dissemination of Research Results

The results and information collected and analyzed from this study will be used as a PhD thesis and for publication in journal articles and conference papers. A report about the findings in this study will be provided to any participant upon request.

8. Monitoring of the Research

The student researcher will maintain regular contact with the principle researcher via emails and Skype telephone conversations while collecting data. While in Iraq, contact will be established and maintained with the Australian and American Embassies in Baghdad and the American Consulate in Erbil.

9. Payments to Participants

You will not be paid for your participation in this project.

10. Sources of Funding for Project

Funding for this research project has generously been provided by Deakin University.

11. Conducting Research in Iraq

The student researcher lived and worked in Iraq from January 2005 until January 2013 and is fully familiar with Iraqi customs and traditions, as well as US and coalition military customs and traditions. Risks to participants will be minimized by allowing any participant to opt out of the interview at any time. In addition, confidentiality and anonymity of all collected data will be ensured to each participant.
12. Participation is Voluntary

Participation in this research project is purely voluntary. You are not obliged to participate if you do not wish to do so. If you decide to participate in this project and decide at a later date to withdraw your consent, you are free to do so and any information obtained from you will not be used in the project and will be destroyed. Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with Deakin University. Before you make your decision, a member of the research team will be available to answer any questions you have about the research project.

Sign the Consent Form only after you have had a chance to ask your questions and have received satisfactory answers. If you decide to withdraw from this project, please notify the student researcher or complete and return the Revocation of Consent Form attached to this form.

13. Ethical Guidelines

This project will be carried out according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) produced by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

The ethics aspects of this research project have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Deakin University.

Approval from the Deakin University Faculty of Arts and Education has been obtained.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Manager
Research Integrity
Deakin University
221 Burwood Highway
Burwood Victoria 3125
Australia
Telephone: +61 9251 7129
Email: research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number 2014 – 011.
14. Further Information, Queries or Any Problems

If you require further information, wish to withdraw your participation or if you have any concerns about this project you can contact the student researcher:

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PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR IRAQI HERITAGE PARTICIPANTS

TO: Participant

Date: 07-04-14
Full Project Title: Assessing Cross-Cultural Relationships between US and Coalition Military Forces and Iraqi Cultural Heritage Professionals at Archaeological Sites during the Iraq War
Principal Researcher: Benjamin Isakhan
Student Researcher: Diane Siebrandt
Associate Researcher(s):

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3. Methods

Information will be collected from active and retired Iraqi cultural heritage specialists. This will be done by interviewing male and female individuals either in-person, or over a Skype phone conversation. Interviews conducted in English will last no more than one hour. Interviews requiring the use of a translator will last no more than two hours. Each interview will consist of a series of open-ended questions, which will allow you to provide as long or as brief an answer as you wish to provide. The questions will focus on discussing how cross-cultural relationships positively and negatively impacted cultural heritage protection efforts in different conflict and post-conflict zones of Iraq. You will be asked to reflect on your interactions with members of the US and coalition military forces, and explain what you believe worked and did not work for forming ties with them, and protecting archaeological sites. If there were any projects implemented, questions will focus on how responsibilities where divided when devising, implementing and managing projects. The interview will be audio recorded for data analysis purposes. A total of about 40 individuals will be interviewed for this project.

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Australia  
Mobile: + 61 414 719 269  
Email: dsiebran@deakin.edu.au
بيان واضح للغة الأتم ونموذج الموافقة:

إلى المشارك:

بيان اللغة عادي

التاريخ: 1 يوليو / تموز 2014

كامل عنوان المشروع: تقييم العلاقات عبر تبادل الثقافات والحضارات بين القوات العسكرية الأمريكية وقوات التحالف ومهنئين التراث الثقافي العراقي في المواقع الأثرية خلال حرب العراق.

الباحث الرئيسي: بنجامين أسخان

الطالبية الباحثة: ديان سيرنيدت

مشارك الباحث:

1. الموافقة

أنت مدعو للمشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي.

هذا بيان عادي اللغة يحتوي على معلومات مفصلة عن المشروع البحثي. الغرض منه هو أن أشرح لكم وبصرامة ووضوح يمكن كل الإجراءات اللازمة في هذا المشروع بحيث يمكنكم اتخاذ قرار حول ما إذا كان على علم تام كنت تسير على المشاركة أم لا.

يرجى قراءة هذا البيان عادي اللغة بناءً على لا تتردد في طرح الأسئلة حول أي من المعلومات الواردة في الوثيقة. بمجرد ما هو المشروع حول وإذا وافقت على المشاركة في ذلك، سوف يطلب منك التوقيع على نموذج الموافقة. من خلال التوقيع على نموذج الموافقة، أنت تشير إلى أنك تفهم المعلومات والذين تعطي موافقتك على المشاركة في المشروع البحثي.

سوف تحصل على نسخة من بيان عادي في اللغة الأتم ونموذج الموافقة للحفاظ على كسجل.

2. الغرض

الغرض من هذا المشروع هو دراسة العلاقات التي فجلت أو لم تكن موجودة بين أفراد القوات الأمريكية وقوات التحالف، والمهنئين التراث الثقافي العراقي خلال جميع مراحل الحرب العراق. وسوف يكون التركيز بشكل خاص على القواعد العسكرية والدور الاستيطاني الذي شيدت على والقرب من المواقع الأثرية، وما التأثير الذي كان على إقامة علاقات بين الثقافات.

ويجري هذا المشروع كجزء من شهادة الدكتوراه التي يجري الاضطلاع بها في جامعة ديكين في ملبورن، أستراليا. هذا المشروع هو جزء من مشروع بحوث أكبر أستراليا (ARC)، في وقت مبكر الوظيفي جائزة الباحث (DECRA) زمالة منحت لجامعة ديكين، بعنوان: قياس تدمير التراث والمسامير
من أعمال العنف في العراق. يتواجد المشروع العلاقة بين تدمير التراث والعنف في العراق منذ عام 2003. توظف مقترحة متصلة، من المتوقع أن المشروع لتوليد مقاييم جديدة للمجتمع بين العلاقة التي تربط بين تدمير التراث الثقافي والقوانين المحاذية في الإرهاب والعنف.

3. الأساليب

وسيتم جمع المعلومات من المتخصصين في التراث الثقافي العراقي العاملين والمتفقين. وسيتم ذلك من خلال بحث الأفراد من الذين الأعمال سوي في شغف، أو عبر اجتماعات مكثفة. والمقالات التي أجريت باللغة الإنجليزية إلا أن يكون عن ساحة واحدة والمقالات التي تتطلب استخدام مقال آخر لا يوجد عن سائحين. وستكون كل مقالة من سلسلة من الأسئلة المتوفرة، والتي سوف تسهم في توفير تحليلًا لما يمكن إشارةه كدليل كلاً لتوصيف وسوف تتراكم الأسئلة على مباني كيفية الت👩‍💻مة بين الثقافات أثرت سلباً وأيضًا جوهر حماية التراث الثقافي في مناطق النزاع وما بعد النزاع. خاصًا في العراق، سوف يدخل نفسك في تجاهل مع أحدهم القام بدور الأمريكية ويفتح القناة، وشرح ما كنت تعتقد ذلك، ولم يعمل تم شكل العلاقات متعمدة، وحماية العلاقات الأثرية. إذا كان هناك أي المشاريع المفتوحة، وستركز الأسئلة حول كيفية تقسيم المسؤوليات حيث وضع وتقديم المشاريع ودورها، وسوف تكون المقالة الصوتية المسجلة لأغراض تحليل البيانات. سيتم مقابلتهم ما مجموعه حوالي 40 شخصًا لهذا المشروع.

4. المخاطر والفوائد المحتزمة للمشاركين.

لا توجد مخاطر الموقعة. ومع ذلك كانت مدعومة لنقل أي وجع الاهتمام للباحث الطالب إما شفهي أو خطيًا. وتنشر مشاركتك في هذا البحث في إثراء حقل الدراسة لتكون على نطاق واسع. سوف مساهمتك تتوفر المعلومات اللازمة لتشكل المبادئ التوجيهية التي يعمل في تشكيل السياسات المستقبلية نحو إقامة علاقات إيجابية بين الثقافات في مواقع التراث الثقافي في البلدان المعرضة للصراع.

 هذه الدراسة يوفر لك فرصة لتوفير، مناقشة الأحداث الماضية ويفك الدروس التي يمكن استخلاصها من تلك الأحداث.

5. الفوائد المتوقعة في المجتمع الأوسع

نادر ما يمكن أن تنشأ علاقات بين الثقافات بين القوى العسكرية الأجنبية وخبراء التراث المحلي من أجل تحدي المواطنين الرئيسيين في الأدب. وبالتالي، يمكن أن هذه الدراسة هذه الفجوة في المعرفة، مما أدى إلى فهم أفضل للفروق التفاعلي بين الثقافات. ومن المتوقع هذه الدراسة المساعدة في مشروع البحث الأكاديمي في المستقبل، بالإضافة إلى توفير التوجه إلى الوثائق الحكومية والمنظمات العامة والخاصة الدولية مع مصلحة في حماية التراث الثقافي.

6. الخصوصية والسرية

فإن البيانات التي تم جمعها خلال هذه الدراسة لا يمكن عزوها تكون لك. سيتم تخزين البيانات في الكمبيوتر المحمول وكمبيوتر طاح المكتبة ككلة السر المحتملة في جامعة دينك، ويمكن الوصول إليها إلا من قبل الباحث والباحث المبدع الطالب. سيتم تخزين جميع المعلومات مدة لا تقل عن 6 سنوات بعد نشر النهاي، وبعد ذلك سوف يتم تدميره والمعلومات التي تم جمعها في إطار هذه الدراسة التي يمكن أن تحترق للك بقي في سرية تامة. من خلال إعطاء الإذن الخاص من خلال التوقع على النموذج الموقف، ونحن نتوقع نشر النتائج في المجلات نظير مراجعتها. لن يتم التعرف عليك في أي المعلومات المنشورة.

7. نشر نتائج البحوث

سيتم استخدام النتائج والمعلومات التي تم جمعها وتحليلها من هذه الدراسة بمثابة أطروحة دكتوراه للنشر في المجلة مقابلة أو أوراق المؤتمر. وسيتم تقديم تقرير عن النتائج في هذه الدراسة بناء على طلبك.

8. رصد البحوث

وتطلب البحث على اتصال منتظم مع الباحث المبدع عبر رسائل البريد الإلكتروني والملفات المفتوحة. سبايك في حين جمع البيانات أثناء وجودة في العراق، وسياق إشارة اتصال الملاحظة التي مع السفارات الإسترالية والإيرانية في بغداد والفصيلة الأمريكية في أربيل.

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9. المفتوحات للمشاركين

لن يتم الدفع لك على مشاركتك في هذا المشروع.

10. مصادر التمويل للمشروع

وقد تم توفير التمويل بسخاء لهذا المشروع البحثي من جامعة ديكن.

11. إجراء البحث في العراق

عاش الباحثة بالطلب وعملت في العراق خلال الفترة من كانون الثاني/ يناير 2005 وحتى كانون الثاني/ يناير 2013 ودرّبت تامة العادات والتقاليد العراقية. وسوف يكون الحد الأدنى من المخاطر لك من قبل مما يتيح لك أن تختار من المقابلة في أي وقت. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، جميع المعلومات التي تم جمعها من المقابلة سري، وسوف تظل مجهولة.

12. المشاركة طوعية

المشتركة في هذا المشروع البحثي هو طوعي بحث. أنت غير ملزم للمشاركة إذا كنت لا ترغب في القيام بذلك. إذا قررت المشاركة في هذا المشروع وقرر في وقت لاحق لسحب موافقتك، وأنت حرة في أن تفعل ذلك. سيكون قادرًا سواء المشاركة أو عدم المشاركة، أو للمشتركة، ثم الإنسحاب، لن يؤثر على علاقتك مع جامعة ديكن. قبل اتخاذ القرار الخاص بك، وأحد أعضاء فريق البحث أن تكون متاحة للرد على أي استفسار تود أن تكون متمة.

التوقيع على نموذج الموافقة فقط بعد أن كنت قد كنت لديه فرصة لطرح الأسئلة الخاصة بك وتقية لجودة مرضية. إذا قررت الانسحاب من هذا المشروع، الرجاء إبلاغ الباحثة بالطلب أو كاملاً والعودة إبطال من نموذج الموافقة تعلق على هذا النموذج.

13. المبادئ التوجيهية الأخلاقية


وقد تم الموافقة على الجوانب الأخلاقية هذا المشروع البحثي من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحوث البشرية من جامعة ديكن.

لقد تم الحصول على موافقة من كلية جامعة ديكن في الإذاعات والتربية والتعليم.

الشكوى

إذا كان لديك أي شكاوى حول أي جانب من جوانب المشروع، والطريقة التي أجريت بها أو أي أسئلة حول حقوقك كمشارك في المشروع، ثم يمكنك الاتصال:

مدير
النظام البحوث
جامعة ديكن
221 بيرورود الطريق السريع
يرورود فيكتوريا 3125
استراليا
الهاتف: +61 7 9251 7129
البريد الإلكتروني: research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

يرجى إعداد المشروع رقم 2014 011.

14. معلومات إضافية، إعلامات أو أي مشاكل
إذا كنت تحتاج إلى مزيد من المعلومات، ترغب في حساب مشاركتكم أو إذا كان لديك أي مخاوف حول هذا المشروع يمكنك الاتصال بالباحث الطلاب:

ديان سيريندت
طالبة دكتوراه
جامعة ديكن
مركز المواطنة والعولمة
كلية الآداب والتربية
221 بيروود الطريق السريع
بيروود، فيكتوريا 3125
استراليا
الجوال: + 61 414 419 769
البريد الإلكتروني: dsiebran@deakin.edu.au
Appendix IV

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

TO: Participant

Date: 07-04-14

Full Project Title: Assessing Cross-Cultural Relationships between US and Coalition Military Forces and Iraqi Cultural Heritage Professionals at Archaeological Sites during the Iraq War

Reference Number: 2014 - 011

I have read, or have had read to me in my first language, and I understand the attached Plain Language Statement.

I freely agree to participate in this project according to the conditions in the Plain Language Statement.

I have been given a copy of the Plain Language Statement and Consent Form to keep.

The researcher has agreed not to reveal my identity and personal details, including where information about this project is published, or presented in any public form.

Participant’s Name (printed)

.......................................................... Date ..............................

Signature......................................................Date ..............................

Please mail or email to:

Diane Siebrandt
PhD Student
Deakin University
Centre for Citizenship and Globalization
Faculty of Arts and Education
221 Burwood Highway
Burwood, Victoria 3125
Australia
Email: dsiebran@deakin.edu.au
WITHDRAWAL OF CONSENT FORM FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

TO: Participant

Withdrawal of Consent Form

(To be used for participants who wish to withdraw from the project)

Date: 07-04-14

Full Project Title: Assessing Cross-Cultural Relationships between US and Coalition Military Forces and Iraqi Cultural Heritage Professionals at Archaeological Sites during the Iraq War

Reference Number: 2014-011

I hereby wish to WITHDRAW my consent to participate in the above research project and understand that such withdrawal WILL NOT jeopardize my relationship with Deakin University.

Participant’s Name (printed) ………………………………………………………

Signature…………………………………………………………Date ……………

Please mail or email this form to:
Diane Siebrandt
PhD Student
Deakin University
Centre for Citizenship and Globalization
Faculty of Arts and Education
221 Burwood Highway
Burwood, Victoria 3125
Australia
Email: dsiebran@deakin.edu.au
بيان واضح للغة الأم ونموذج الموافقة:

إلى المشارك:

نموذج الموافقة

(تستخدم للمشاركين الذين يرغبون في الانسحاب من المشروع)

التاريخ: 1 يوليو / تموز 2014

كامل عنوان المشروع: تقييم العلاقات عبر تبادل الثقافات والحضارات بين القوات العسكرية الأمريكية وقوات التحالف ومهنيين التراث الثقافي العراقي في المواقع الأثرية خلال حرب العراق.

واحد هذا لسحب موافقته على المشاركة في المشروع البحثي أعلاه وفهم أن هذا الانسحاب لن يهدد علاقتي مع جامعة ديكن.

اسم المشارك (المطبوع)........................................

توقيع.................................................................

التاريخ.........................................................

البوم:.........................................................

يرجى ارسال البريد الى البريد الإلكتروني من هذا النموذج إلى:

ديان سوبرنت=
طلبة دكتوراه
جامعة ديكن
مركز المواطنة والعلوم
كلية الاداب والتربية
221 بيروند الطرق السريع
بيروند، فيكتوريا 3125
استراليا

البريد الإلكتروني: dsliebran@deakin.edu.au
Appendix VI

Socioeconomic-demographic breakdown of participants

<table>
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<th>Interview Number</th>
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## Appendix VII

### Interview Questions for Western Participants

- In what capacity did you serve in Iraq?
- In what years did you serve?
- What was your knowledge about Iraq and Iraqis before you deployed?
- Were you based on or near an archaeological site? If so which site(s)?
- Did you visit an archaeological site? If so which site(s) and for what purpose? Describe your encounter at the site(s).
- Did you meet with Iraqis while in Iraq? If so in what capacity? Describe the interactions.
- Did you work with Iraqis on any programs related to an archaeological site? Describe the interaction(s).
- Describe the achievements you were involved in or witnessed during your time in Iraq.
- Describe the disappointments you were involved in or witnessed during your time in Iraq.
- Did you receive pre-deployment training about cultural heritage issues? If so describe the training.
- Is there anything you would like to add?

### Interview Questions for Iraqi Participants

- Did you live on or near an archaeological site? If so which site(s)?
- What was your knowledge about the West and Westerners before the 2003 Iraq War?
- Did you meet any members of the coalition? If so in what capacity? Describe the interactions.
- Did you work with any members of the coalition? If so in what capacity? Describe the interactions.
- Did you work with any members of the coalition on any programs related to an archaeological site? Describe the interaction(s).
- Describe the achievements you were involved in or witnessed during your time working with members of the coalition.
- Describe the disappointments you were involved in or witnessed during your time working with members of the coalition.
- Is there anything you would like to add?