THE RENAISSANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN IRAQ
Harvard Professor to be Keynote Speaker at Near Eastern Archaeology Conference

San Diego, CA: On Wednesday, November 19, at 7:00pm, Harvard professor Jason Ur will give the plenary address at the 2014 ASOR Annual Meeting at the Westin San Diego. After an absence of over two decades, foreign archaeology has returned in earnest to one of the “cradles of civilization.”

Two wars, international sanctions, and internal unrest had brought archaeological research nearly to a standstill; only a few under-funded Iraqi teams and a handful of intrepid Europeans attempted fieldwork after the first Gulf War of 1991. Archaeologists have returned to the Republic of Iraq. The resumption of fieldwork in the southern “heartland of cities” has been significant but slow and hampered by internal politics. In the autonomous Kurdistan Region, however, foreign research has expanded rapidly and continuously, in partnership with local archaeologists and institutes. This presentation will review these developments and discuss how the new discoveries are challenging long-held ideas and filling blank spaces on the archaeological map.

The plenary address is timely not only because of recent events in the Middle East, but also because ASOR recently entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of State to protect and document cultural heritage in Syrian and Iraq (see www.asor-syrianheritage.org). Prof. Ur’s lecture will take place on Wednesday evening, November 19, and there is a symposium on cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq schedule for Sunday, November 23 (also at the Westin San Diego).

Prof. Jason Ur specializes in early urbanism, landscape archaeology, and remote sensing, particularly the use of declassified US intelligence imagery. He has directed field surveys in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran.

About ASOR: Founded in 1900 and currently located at Boston University, ASOR (www.asor.org) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the archaeology of the Near East. ASOR’s mission is to initiate, encourage and support research into, and public understanding of, the culture and history of the Near East from the earliest times.

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