



PETER ROGER STUART MOOREY

Peter Roger Stuart Moorey

1937–2004

ROGER MOOREY WAS ONE OF THOSE RARE SCHOLARS who was equally at home in the archaeology of Mesopotamia, Iran or the Levant, and he had more than a passing interest in Egypt. He was truly a scholar of the whole of the Ancient Near East, and attempts to circumscribe him more narrowly, and suggest that he was more interested in one region than in another, are misguided. For the whole of his professional life he worked in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and it was as a museum curator that he really made his mark and established a new benchmark for the profession.

Early life

(Peter) Roger (Stuart) Moorey was born on 30 May 1937 at 64 Hazelwood Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex. His father, Stuart Moorey (known as Sam), was born in Ripon, Yorkshire, in 1906. He was educated at Ripon Grammar School and Selwyn College, Cambridge, where he was captain of the college rugby XV. He became Senior Master of Tottenham Grammar School, where he taught history and rugby. Roger's mother, Freda Delanoy Harris, was born in Newark, Nottinghamshire, in 1909. Roger had one younger sister, Janet, who was born in 1939. Sadly, Roger's mother passed away in 1947, when he was just nine years old. His father married again, and had a daughter with his second wife, but tragically he died shortly thereafter, in 1951, aged forty-four, whilst refereeing a Tottenham Grammar School rugby match. At this time the family was living at 46 Grovelands Road, Palmers Green, London. Roger was there-

fore orphaned at the age of thirteen, and he and his sister were subsequently looked after by their stepmother, by their maternal grandparents at a farm in Lincolnshire and by an aunt in Northampton.

After his father's death Moorey was sent as a boarder to Mill Hill School in the autumn term of 1951, and he remained there until April 1956. He was in School House. Even as a schoolboy, he became interested in the archaeology of the Ancient Near East. One memorable event was a visit to Mill Hill by Sir Leonard Woolley who lectured on his discoveries at Ur of the Chaldees. Also, he remembered in later life the excitement he felt while learning Greek and reading Xenophon's *Anabasis* when the 10,000 Greek mercenaries finally caught sight of the Black Sea. He also used to recall how in those days it had been possible for a young boy to visit on Saturday mornings the second-hand bookshops in Charing Cross Road, London, alone and unmolested, and find for a very cheap price gems such as Layard's account of his excavations at Nineveh. After leaving Mill Hill School, Moorey did his National Service in Cyprus, in the Army intelligence corps (1956–8). He used to joke that 'intelligence is what we did, not what we necessarily had'.¹ During this time he was taught Russian.

After National Service, he went up to Oxford in autumn 1958 with a Charles Plummer Open Exhibition in History. He read modern history at Corpus Christi College, and graduated with First Class Honours in 1961. In view of his interest in the Ancient Near East it is perhaps surprising that Roger chose to read modern history, even though 'modern' history at Oxford was defined as beginning in AD 285, but at that time there was no degree course in archaeology and the alternatives would have been classics or theology. It is also possible that he felt the study of history would be a safe guarantee for future employment. In any case, Moorey took a keen interest in the activities of the university archaeological society while he was an undergraduate. In the summer vacation of 1960 he joined a group of eight enthusiasts from the archaeological society, including Michael S. Tite, who later became Director of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art at Oxford University and the editor of the journal *Archaeometry*, Andrew Selkirk who founded *Current Archaeology*, and Richard Linington, who became a pioneer in the application of geophysical survey techniques; together they purchased a

¹Pers. comm. Timothy Potts.

dormobile type van and for five weeks drove it through Yugoslavia and Greece, visiting archaeological sites.²

Ashmolean Museum

Moorey was appointed an Assistant Keeper of Antiquities at the Ashmolean Museum in summer 1961 in succession to Jeffery Orchard, who had been appointed as Secretary-Librarian of the British School of Archaeology in Baghdad. He was apparently promised this job even before he had taken his finals. When he joined the staff of the Ashmolean, the Keeper of Antiquities (and also the director of the museum) was Robert W. Hamilton, FBA, who had won distinction for his archaeological fieldwork in Palestine in the time of the British mandate.³ A fellow Assistant Keeper of Antiquities was the prehistorian Humphrey Case, who became Keeper of Antiquities in 1973 when Hamilton retired. Other colleagues in the Department of Antiquities over the years were Hector Catling, Joan Crowfoot Payne, Andrew Sherratt, Michael Vickers and Helen Whitehouse. Moorey was promoted to Senior Assistant Keeper in 1973 and to Keeper when Case retired on 31 December 1983. In the meantime, he had been acting Keeper of the department for two spells in 1977–8 and 1981–2. After he himself became Keeper and before he retired in 2002 he did four stints as Acting Director of the museum, most notably for eight months in 1997–98 in the interval between the departure of Sir Christopher White and the arrival of Dr Christopher Brown. However, he never aspired to the Directorship himself. Shortly after he was appointed to the staff of the Ashmolean, Moorey moved into a flat in Rectory Road, Oxford, with Michael Tite and Dennis Britton, curator of the prehistoric European collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum. Then, in 1964, the three of them moved into a university flat in a large Victorian house in Crick Road. From there Tite moved on to a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Leeds in October 1964, and Moorey and Britton stayed in the flat until each purchased a house in Oxford.

²I am grateful to Professor Michael Tite, a former colleague at the British Museum, for information about Moorey's early years in Oxford.

³Moorey wrote a sympathetic memoir about Hamilton: P. R. S. Moorey, 'Robert William Hamilton 1905–1995', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 94 (1997), pp. 491–509

Iran

When he joined the Ashmolean Museum in the summer of 1961, Moorey was detailed to rearrange the display of Near Eastern Antiquities, which he accomplished already in 1962. In the course of researching material for the new display he became intrigued by the large collection of so-called Luristan bronzes. In the preface to the magisterial book that he eventually wrote on this subject, he says that his attention was drawn to a photographic archive put together by Paul Jacobsthal, the author of a celebrated volume on *Greek Pins* (Oxford, 1956), in preparation for a catalogue of Luristan bronzes that Jacobsthal did not live to write. Roger speedily realised that the bronzes would form an excellent subject for a D.Phil. dissertation. In the 1920s and 1930s, in particular, large quantities of these Luristan bronzes had flooded on to the world's art markets, but as they were nearly all from clandestine excavations very little was known about the cultural and historical contexts from which they derived. In Roger's own words 'first by chance, then through systematic search, cemetery after cemetery was ransacked for its bronze furnishings, which were widely distributed without any but the vaguest record of their source and archaeological context'.⁴

Moorey's thesis, presented in 1967, supervised by Sir Max Mallowan,⁵ who was now at All Souls College, Oxford, and examined by Dr Richard Barnett and Mrs Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop, was a monumental work of scholarship, dealing not just with the Luristan bronzes in the Ashmolean Museum but also with bronzes in other collections and with the art and archaeology of the first millennium BC in Western Iran and beyond. However, for his definitive publication of the Luristan bronzes he decided to restrict it to a catalogue of the Ashmolean holdings on the grounds that it was sufficiently representative to be a peg on which to hang a detailed study of the Luristan bronzes. The resultant *Catalogue of the Ancient Persian Bronzes in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1971) is a remarkable study that gives shape and form to a category of material that was previously elusive. By carefully describing and analysing the different types of artefact, and by comparing them whenever possible with excavated material inside and outside Iran, Moorey was able to show that the earlier

⁴P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Bronzes from Luristan* (London, 1974), p. 9.

⁵In view of the brilliance of Moorey's thesis, and his evident potential as one of the most significant Ancient Near Eastern scholars of his generation, it is extraordinary that Max Mallowan does not mention him in his autobiography (*Mallowan's Memoirs*, London, 1977), in which he surveys the field and notes both established and up-and-coming figures.

bronzes belonged to a widespread Near Eastern tradition, but the canonical Luristan bronzes that are so distinctive of the culture were mostly produced in the period c.1000–650 bc. At the time of Moorey's writing, the excavations of the Belgian Archaeological Expedition to Luristan 1965–79 directed by the late Professor Louis Vanden Berghe (1923–93) were still in their infancy, and had by then scarcely been published. Now, thanks to the efforts of two of Vanden Berghe's collaborators, Professor Ernie Haerinck and Dr Bruno Overlaet, eight volumes of final reports have appeared, and it is gratifying that many of Moorey's provisional conclusions about the dating and provenance of the bronzes have been corroborated. The same was true of the Holmes expedition to Luristan that in the 1930s worked at various sites in Luristan, notably the important sanctuary at Surkh Dum-i Luri. These results were not fully published until 1989.⁶

On the strength of his great Ashmolean catalogue, Moorey was subsequently invited to write about the Luristan bronzes in three other collections. First, there was a British Museum booklet about the Luristan bronzes in the British Museum (*Ancient Bronzes from Luristan*, London, 1974). This collection is of particular significance because it contains some of the earliest Luristan bronzes to have entered western collections, in 1854, 1885, 1900, 1914 and 1920 respectively.⁷ Next was the *Ancient Persian Bronzes in the Adam Collection* (London, 1974), but Moorey was deeply disappointed when later this collection was split up and sold; he had agreed to catalogue it on the understanding that the bronzes would go to a public collection, and felt that his catalogue had simply served to increase the value and saleability of the objects. Then he spent part of the summer of 1980 in Los Angeles cataloguing the ancient Iranian objects in the collection of the American art dealer and collector Nasli Heeramanek (1902–71), that were being presented to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The resultant catalogue was published in 1981,⁸ with other contributors being Emma Bunker (on Central Asia, Mongolia and Siberia), Edith Porada (on seals), and Glenn Markoe (on Ancient Europe and the East Mediterranean). Moorey's contribution runs to more than

⁶E. F. Schmidt, M. V. van Loon and H. H. Curvers, *The Holmes Expeditions to Luristan* (Chicago, 1989).

⁷See O. W. Muscarella, 'The background to the Luristan bronzes', in J. E. Curtis (ed.), *Bronzeworking Centres of Western Asia c. 1000–539 B.C.* (London and New York, 1988), pp. 33–44.

⁸P. R. S. Moorey et al., *Ancient Bronzes, Ceramics and Seals: the Nasli Heeramanek Collection of Ancient Near Eastern, Central Asiatic, and European Art* (Los Angeles, 1981).

100 pages and includes nearly 800 items. They date from all periods of Ancient Iran, but the emphasis is on Luristan.

Throughout his adult life Moorey was much interested in Iran. He first visited the country in 1969 to study material in museums in connection with his work on Luristan Bronzes. Soon after the appearance of his Ashmolean catalogue in 1971, he did much of the organisation for the Sixth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology held in Oxford in September 1972. He was also instrumental in putting on at this time in the Ashmolean an exhibition entitled *Excavations in Iran: the British Contribution* with objects from those sites that had been allocated to the Ashmolean and the Manchester Museum. These were supplemented by the loan of a small number of objects from the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran. He then attended the Seventh (and last) International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology in Munich in 1976.⁹

Moorey's early interest in metalwork on one occasion could have led to a potentially embarrassing situation, but he was quick to navigate his way out of trouble. In 1967 in an article in *Iran* on ancient metal belts he included a specimen in the Ashmolean Museum on permanent loan from the Howard de Walden collection.¹⁰ This belt consists of fourteen silver gilt plaques, most showing a pair of bees back to back. The plaques at either end, however, show a winged bull in the Achaemenid fashion. The plaques are inlaid with stones, thought at the time to be garnets but probably in fact almandines. Moorey concluded that the belt had been manufactured shortly after the end of the Achaemenid empire (i.e. post-331 BC), probably in Bactria or Sogdiana. Shortly thereafter, however, he came across an article in Russian demonstrating that that this belt, like similar examples in the Hermitage and the British Museum, had been made in the Black Sea port of Odessa in the early twentieth century. He lost no time in recanting, and it is greatly to his credit that he published 'a retraction and a cautionary note' in the same journal just two years later.¹¹ He wrote here: 'This is but a fraction of the Odessa forgers' output and I trust that in calling attention to these here in an English publication I may at least have prevented others from even stumbling where I so blindly fell.' This was in fact a lesson that stood him in good stead throughout his career, and thereafter he was ever watchful for fakes and copies, the bugbears of

⁹The eighth conference would have been in 1980, by which time the Iranian Revolution had occurred.

¹⁰P. R. S. Moorey, 'Some ancient metal belts: their antecedents and relatives', *Iran*, 5 (1967), 83–98.

¹¹P. R. S. Moorey, 'Some ancient metal belts: a retraction and cautionary note', *Iran*, 7 (1969), 155.

the museum curator. He had a very good eye, and I remember on one occasion many years later when a large cast bronze ibex head turned up for sale in a London department store, and was thought by some experts to be a genuine antiquity from a remote part of the Persian empire, he was able instantly to demonstrate that it was probably a copy of an ibex head in the Metropolitan Museum in New York that in fact had been illustrated on the cover to the *Cambridge Ancient History Plates to Volume IV* (and also illustrated on p. 79).

Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia was always central to Moorey's work and interests. In his early years at the Ashmolean Museum he became interested in the work of the joint Oxford-Chicago expedition at Kish in Southern Iraq, doubtless because Oxford had received a share of the finds. Kish is the name given to a group of mounds about 12km east of Babylon occupied from around 3000 BC to AD 650. Highlights are the Early Dynastic (Sumerian) and Sasanian periods. The project was overseen by Stephen Langdon, Professor of Assyriology at Oxford, and work continued from 1923 until 1933, directed in the field first by E. Mackay and then L. Ch. Watelin. In the words of Seton Lloyd, 'Ingharra (Kish) was badly excavated, the excavations were badly recorded and the records were correspondingly badly published.'¹² In a series of three articles,¹³ by consulting the published reports and the unpublished correspondence in the Ashmolean Museum, and by studying the artefacts from the site, Moorey attempted to make sense of the excavations and offered some thoughts on the stratigraphy, the chronology, and the identification of the buildings.¹⁴ In 1969 he visited Iraq to study objects from Kish in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, and in 1973 he studied material in Chicago. The three articles in *Iraq* were followed up by a definitive publication entitled *Kish Excavations 1923–1933* published by Oxford University Press in 1978. Moorey described this as 'a hybrid volume, a cross between a standard museum *catalogue raisonné*

¹²S. Lloyd, 'Back to Ingharra: some further thoughts on the excavations at East Kish', *Iraq*, 31 (1969), p. 48.

¹³P. R. S. Moorey, 'The "plano-convex building" at East Kish and early Mesopotamian palaces', *Iraq*, 26 (1964), 83–98; P. R. S. Moorey, 'Pictorial evidence for the history of horse-riding in Iraq before the Kassite period', *Iraq*, 32 (1970), 36–50; P. R. S. Moorey, 'Cemetery A at Kish: grave groups and chronology', *Iraq*, 31 (1970), 86–128.

¹⁴For some useful correctives, see Seton Lloyd, 'Back to Ingharra'.

and an orthodox excavation report' (p. vii). In it, Moorey gives an account of excavations at Kish both before and during the time of Langdon, surveys the different areas of the site in turn, and provides an overview of the history and archaeology of the site. This is an extremely valuable exercise, but it is slightly unfortunate that the no less valuable catalogue of objects in Oxford, with drawings and photographs, is presented in a microfiche catalogue arranged on four microfiches that are contained in an envelope at the back of the book. Moorey himself was in favour of this, and wrote: 'I believe that text-fiche publications allow museums, and field archaeologists, a potentially indispensable opportunity for making as widely available as possible basic evidence that might otherwise languish for ever unseen, if not largely unknown, in archives or basements.'¹⁵ These are commendable thoughts, but the scarcity of 'microform' readers nowadays means that this material is virtually inaccessible. Moorey was also interested in the nearby site of Jemdat Nasr, also excavated by Langdon, and wrote about the late prehistoric administrative building at the site¹⁶ that has recently been re-excavated by Roger Matthews.¹⁷

Moorey was always interested in the great Sumerian site of Ur, perhaps originally inspired by the lecture of Sir Leonard Woolley to which we have already referred. In particular, he was greatly intrigued by the identity and social status of the people buried in what Woolley called 'the royal tombs', characterised by vast amounts of jewellery and human sacrifices. Woolley was sure that these were the tombs of kings and queens of Ur who had divine or semi-divine status, but Moorey was rightly sceptical about this.¹⁸ He also questioned the purpose of the 'mausolea' identified by Woolley as the tombs of the kings of the IIIrd Dynasty of Ur.¹⁹ So, when in 1982 the Herbert Press decided to reprint Sir Leonard Woolley's popular account of his excavations at Ur (*Excavations at Ur: a Record of Twelve Years' Work*) that had first appeared in 1954 Moorey was the obvious choice to undertake the necessary revisions. In his preface, Moorey explains the guiding principles behind his revision, namely that he has tried to take account where relevant of the many developments in Mesopotamian

¹⁵ P. R. S. Moorey, *Kish Excavations 1923–1933* (Oxford, 1978), p. 9.

¹⁶ In P. R. S. Moorey, 'The late prehistoric administrative building at Jamdat Nasr', *Iraq*, 38 (1976), 95–106, and also Moorey, *Kish Excavations 1923–1933*, pp. 147–57.

¹⁷ See now R. J. Matthews, *Secrets of the Dark Mound: Jemdat Nasr 1926–1928* (London, 2002).

¹⁸ See, for example, P. R. S. Moorey, 'What do we know about the people buried in the Royal Cemetery?', *Expedition*, 20 (1977), 24–40.

¹⁹ See P. R. S. Moorey, 'Where did they bury the kings of the IIIrd dynasty of Ur?', *Iraq*, 46 (1984), 1–18.

archaeology between 1954 (and even before 1954) and the appearance of the new edition, he has omitted a number of the Biblical references that Woolley always liked to include, and he has exercised some constraint with Woolley's imaginative reconstructions of buildings and daily life. In particular, he has played down the significance of the Biblical narrative associating Ur with Abraham, and he has re-evaluated and put into context Woolley's assertion that he found compelling evidence for the Biblical flood at Ur. It is a credit to Moorey that he managed to make these revisions without interfering with the fluency and readability of Woolley's original narrative. The new edition, grandly described as *Ur 'of the Chaldees': Revised and Updated by P. R. S. Moorey* (London, 1982), contains some sixteen colour plates that were not in the original edition plus a number of extra black-and-white plates.²⁰ Perhaps through his interest in Ur and the exotic stones and minerals that were found in the cemetery, most of which derived from the east, Moorey became much concerned with the eastern trading and cultural connections of Mesopotamia. This interest was encapsulated in the title of one of his articles—'Iran: a Sumerian el-Dorado?'²¹—and he returned to this theme in a number of other works.²² It was therefore a particular pleasure for him to supervise the D.Phil. thesis by Timothy Potts that was published as *Mesopotamia and the East: an Archaeological and Historical Study of Foreign Relations 3400–2000 BC* (Oxford, 1994).

His involvement in Mesopotamian archaeology also extended to participating in fieldwork. Thus, he joined the excavations of Professor Nicholas Postgate at the Sumerian site of Abu Salabikh in Southern Iraq in 1975, contributing a section in the preliminary report on the finds from that season, and then again in 1977 and in 1981. In the acknowledgements to his Schweich Lectures volume published in 2003 he records that his interest in terracotta figurines was renewed at Abu Salabikh in 1981 'when, as registrar, I helped to retrieve by water sieving some of the numerous, often fragmentary, terracottas of the Early Dynastic Period found in the "G6 Ash-Tip"'. Moorey found participation in the Abu Salabikh

²⁰ But for clarity of detail specialists will still want to refer to Woolley's original edition where the quality of the black-and-white plates and the line drawings is much higher.

²¹ In J. E. Curtis (ed.), *Early Mesopotamia and Iran: Contact and Conflict c. 3500–1600 BC* (London, 1993), pp. 31–43.

²² For example, P. R. S. Moorey, 'The eastern land of Tukrish', in U. Finkbeiner, R. Dittmann and H. Hauptmann (eds.), *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte Vorderasiens: Festschrift für Rainer Michael Boehmer* (Mainz, 1995), pp. 439–48, and 'Bluestones in the Ancient Near East: turquoise and lapis lazuli', in A. Caubet (ed.), *La Méditerranée de l'Antiquité à l'Islam* (Paris, 1999), pp. 175–88.

excavations ‘a stimulating and enjoyable experience’,²³ although by his own admission he was not cut out to be a field archaeologist and was happier analysing the results and recording the finds rather than doing the digging.

Levant

In the summer of 1963 Moorey joined the excavations of Dame Kathleen Kenyon at Jerusalem,²⁴ and thereafter maintained a keen interest in the archaeology of the Levant for the rest of his life. In the introduction to the publication of his 2001 Schweich Lectures he tells us: ‘I first encountered battered and broken Judean Pillar Figurines in 1963, as a very junior site-supervisor on the late Dame Kathleen Kenyon’s excavations in Jerusalem. I worked then far down the slopes of Ophel in an area where some years later the assemblage of figurines in Cave 1 ... were found.’ Although during the excavation he was hospitalised in Jerusalem with a bad attack of hepatitis,²⁵ this did not affect his pleasure at being in the region and afterwards he visited archaeological sites and museums in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. In later years he returned to the Holy Land on a number of occasions. For example, he made a study visit to Jerusalem, Israel and Sinai in 1971, he attended the International Congress on Biblical Archaeology in Jerusalem in 1984, and he conducted a seminar at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheva and lectured in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem in 1993. In Oxford, he helped organise the First International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan at Christ Church in 1980, and for many years he edited the journal *Levant*.

In all Moorey wrote three general surveys of archaeology in the Levant. His motivation in part was to examine and set straight the relationship between Near Eastern archaeology and Biblical Studies, and in this he was certainly successful. In his own words: ‘Archaeological evidence, as such, *proves* nothing about the biblical tradition. It only offers a constant stream of fresh information on antiquity from which to reconstruct the societies of the lands of the Bible, before, during and after the times in which the text we have was written down.’²⁶ The first of these

²³Recorded in the Introduction to P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries: the Archaeological Evidence* (Oxford, 1994).

²⁴These excavations were sponsored by the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.

²⁵*Wolfson College Record 2004–2005*, p. 40.

²⁶K. M. Kenyon (revised by P. R. S. Moorey), *The Bible and Recent Archaeology* (London, 1987), p. 11.

general surveys was in a series called 'Cities of the Biblical World' and was entitled *Excavation in Palestine* (Guildford, 1981). Then in 1987 he was asked by British Museum Publications to revise Kathleen Kenyon's book on *The Bible and Recent Archaeology* that had appeared in 1978, the year in which Dame Kathleen died. In fact, Moorey's 'revision' of this book (in contrast to his revision of Woolley's book on Ur) was a complete rewrite, even with mostly new illustrations. Moorey was actually a great admirer of Kenyon, particularly as a field archaeologist. She became Principal of St Hugh's College in Oxford in 1962, a year after he joined the staff of the Ashmolean. He always made a point of crediting her with introducing the principles of stratigraphic excavation (the so-called Wheeler–Kenyon method) to Palestine, making comments such as 'Kathleen Kenyon demonstrated at Jericho the ... methods of stratigraphic excavation pioneered by Mortimer Wheeler.'²⁷ In an obituary of Kenyon in the *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* he wrote: 'She stands in the great tradition side by side with Petrie and Reisner, though in many respects her legacy is more broadly-based and more widely influential than theirs.'²⁸ He also co-edited, with Peter Parr, the Kathleen Kenyon Festschrift.²⁹ His third general book on Levantine archaeology, and certainly the most comprehensive, appeared in 1991, entitled *A Century of Biblical Archaeology* (Cambridge). This is very detailed record of excavations in Palestine, and the changing attitudes of the excavators, over a period of more than 100 years. In the introduction Moorey says that the book belongs to a series addressed in the first instance to students of theology, and one suspects that it is they who were the main target audience, particularly as for many years Moorey taught for the faculty of Theology in Oxford.

Achaemenid Empire

Moorey's deep knowledge of the archaeology of different parts of the Middle East, including Egypt, meant that he was exceptionally well qual-

²⁷ Moorey, 'Robert William Hamilton, 1905–1995', p. 498.

²⁸ P. R. S. Moorey, 'Kathleen Kenyon and Palestine archaeology', *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 111 (1979), 3–4. Moorey also contributed to a Day School at St Hugh's College Oxford on 16 November 1991 on 'Kathleen Kenyon in Retrospect'; his contribution was entitled 'British women in Near Eastern archaeology: Kathleen Kenyon and the pioneers', *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 124 (1992), 91–100.

²⁹ P. R. S. Moorey and P. Parr (eds.), *Archaeology in the Levant: Essays for Kathleen Kenyon* (Warminster, 1978).

ified to study the history and material culture of the Achaemenid Persian Empire (c.550–331 BC) that had embraced the whole region, and this was to become an abiding interest. As a result, one of the best brief surveys of Persepolis and the Persian Empire is to be found in his Elsevier–Phaidon book *Biblical Lands* in ‘The Making of the Past’ series (Oxford, 1975). In addition, he wrote a comprehensive catalogue of the objects from the Achaemenid period cemeteries at Deve Hüyük in Syria (1980),³⁰ now split between five museums (Berlin, Cambridge, Liverpool, London and Oxford), two articles on Achaemenid seals (1978, 1979),³¹ and about fifth century BC coin hoards with C. M. Kraay (1969, 1981),³² and produced in-depth studies on gold figure decoration on Achaemenid silver vessels (1988)³³ and polychrome decoration on Achaemenid jewellery (1998).³⁴ He contributed a chapter on metalwork and glyptic to volume two of *The Cambridge History of Iran* (1985) and put together a lengthy section on ‘The Persian Empire’ for *The Cambridge Ancient History Plates to Volume IV* (1988). A masterly analysis of the native Iranian contribution to the distinctive Achaemenid material culture, that was essentially eclectic drawing inspiration from various traditions, appeared in 1985.³⁵ He was to have contributed a chapter on jewellery and personal ornaments to the catalogue accompanying the 2005 exhibition on Ancient Persia at the British Museum,³⁶ but sadly he was unable to complete this before his death.

³⁰ P. R. S. Moorey, *Cemeteries of the First Millennium B.C. at Deve Hüyük near Carchemish*, BAR International Series 87 (Oxford, 1980).

³¹ P. R. S. Moorey, ‘The iconography of an Achaemenid stamp-seal acquired in the Lebanon’, *Iran*, 16 (1978), 143–54, and P. R. S. Moorey, ‘Aspects of worship and ritual on Achaemenid seals’, *Akten des VII. Internationalen Kongresses für Iranische Kunst und Archäologie* (Berlin, 1979), pp. 218–26.

³² P. R. S. Moorey and C. M. Kraay, ‘Two fifth century hoards from the Near East’, *Revue Numismatique* 6th series, 10 (1969), 181–235, and P. R. S. Moorey and C. M. Kraay, ‘A Black Sea hoard of the fifth century B.C.’, *Numismatic Chronicle*, 141 (1981), 1–19.

³³ P. R. S. Moorey, ‘The technique of gold-figure decoration on Achaemenid silver vessels and its antecedents’, *Iranica Antiqua*, 23 (1988), 231–46.

³⁴ P. R. S. Moorey, ‘Material aspects of Achaemenid polychrome decoration and jewellery’, *Iranica Antiqua*, 33 (1998), pp. 155–71.

³⁵ P. R. S. Moorey, ‘The Iranian contribution to Achaemenid material culture’, *Iran*, 23 (1985), pp. 21–37.

³⁶ J. E. Curtis and N. Tallis (eds.), *Forgotten Empire: the World of Ancient Persia* (London, 2005).

Cataloguing projects

Some Ashmolean cataloguing projects spanned the collections from the whole of the Ancient Near East. Thus, the American scholar Briggs W. Buchanan had originally been invited by Donald Harden, then Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, to prepare a catalogue of all the seals in the collection, but at the time of Buchanan's death in 1976 only a volume on the cylinder seals had come out.³⁷ It fell to Moorey, therefore, to prepare for publication the incomplete manuscript catalogue on the stamp seals left behind by Buchanan. This appeared in two volumes under the names of both Buchanan and Moorey in 1984 and 1988.³⁸ Another of Moorey's longstanding interests was terracottas, small clay models of humans, animals and inanimate objects, largely because they have the possibility of providing information about the religious practices current in everyday life. As he himself put it, 'these terracottas relate primarily to the beliefs and rituals of ordinary people, in many cases particularly to women in domestic rather than non-domestic settings. This is their unique significance. All other comparable surviving material and written evidence relates almost exclusively to the magico-religious ideologies and practices of local, predominantly male, urban élites.'³⁹ He wrote a number of articles on terracottas, on subjects as diverse as terracotta plaques from Kish, Persian rider figurines, and 'Astarte' plaques. He talked about terracottas in a keynote lecture at the British Association for Near Eastern Archaeology (BANEA) conference in Liverpool in January 2001 and chose terracottas for the subject of his British Academy Schweich Lectures at the end of 2001. The three lectures were published under the title *Idols of the People: Miniature Images of Clay in the Ancient Near East* (Oxford, 2003). He records in the preface that 'these Schweich lectures set out to investigate the social contexts, of which any religious aspect is but a part, of the popular terracotta imagery of Canaan, Israel and Judah within its wider Near Eastern context' (p. ix). By this time his last Ashmolean Museum catalogue, on the Ancient Near Eastern terracottas, had effectively been finished, and it was the first scholarly catalogue to be published

³⁷ B. W. Buchanan, *Catalogue of Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum I: Cylinder Seals* (Oxford, 1966).

³⁸ B. W. Buchanan and P. R. S. Moorey, *The Prehistoric Stamp Seals* (Oxford, 1984) and *The Iron Age Stamp Seals (c.1250–350 BC)* (Oxford, 1988).

³⁹ P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas with a Catalogue of the Collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*, (Oxford, 2005), p. ix.

on the museum website,⁴⁰ actually in the year of his death (2004). A limited printed edition was later published by the Ashmolean Museum on the occasion of the first Roger Moorey Memorial Lecture on 30 May 2005. As might be expected, the catalogue is much more than a list of the nearly 400 terracottas in the Ashmolean collection, but a survey of terracottas across the whole of the Ancient Near East from c.8500 BC down to c.330 BC. It is noteworthy that the introduction to the printed catalogue (by an unknown hand) says that Moorey 'was one of the finest scholars of his generation... (who) laid the groundwork for much of our understanding of the bronzes, terracottas and faience of the Ancient Near East'.

Science and archaeology

From an early stage in his career Moorey had been much interested in the application of scientific techniques in the study of artefacts, perhaps because of his early friendship with Michael Tite and colleagues in the Oxford Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, but also because he recognised the value of scientific analysis in the detection of fakes. In a ground-breaking 1971 article he collaborated with Martin Aitken and Peter Ucko to report on a programme in Oxford of thermoluminescence testing of pottery vessels and figurines allegedly from the site of Hacilar in Western Turkey dating from around the sixth millennium BC.⁴¹ The thermoluminescence tests showed that nearly fifty of the seventy-five objects tested were recently fired and almost certainly modern fakes, including an anthropomorphic vessel and three bowls in the Ashmolean Museum and an anthropomorphic vessel and four figurines in the British Museum. In many subsequent articles Moorey included analyses and the results of scientific investigation, and he returned a number of times to the subject of metallurgy and metalworking. By 1985 he was ready to publish a volume in the British Archaeological Reports International Series entitled *Materials and Manufacture in Ancient Mesopotamia: the Evidence of Archaeology and Art (Metals and Metalwork, Glazed Materials and Glass)*. This was followed in 1994 by a vastly expanded work on *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries* published by Oxford University Press which, in addition to metal, glazed materials and glass, deals with

⁴⁰ <<http://www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/amocats/anet>> (accessed 19 May 2016).

⁴¹ P. R. S. Moorey and P. J. Ucko, 'List of objects tested for thermoluminescence', *Archaeometry*, 13 (1971), 110–15.

stone and stoneworking, bone, ivory, shell and building crafts. In the acknowledgements Moorey credits Sir John Boardman for suggesting that studies on all materials should be published together in one volume rather than as separate monographs. The result is a monumental book that makes an unparalleled contribution to Mesopotamian studies and should rightly be regarded as Moorey's magnum opus. It contains a wealth of information and is an indispensable tool for all those interested in the material culture of Mesopotamia and the wider region. In each category Moorey examines raw materials and their origins, analyses, manufacturing techniques and finished products, as well as taking into account ancient textual sources. There is a great deal of scientific and technical information here, but presented in an accessible form for the non-specialist.⁴²

Teaching

Throughout his museum career Moorey was enthusiastic about teaching students, recognising the mutual benefits that this could bring. In this instance he departed from the philosophy of Hamilton who according to Moorey had a 'firm conviction, clearly based on his personal experience, that the roles of a museum curator and a university lecturer were distinct'.⁴³ Moorey taught for the Faculties of Theology and Oriental Studies from 1972 onwards, and when the Archaeology and Anthropology degree was established at Oxford in 1993 he became tutor and lecturer in Near Eastern Archaeology. He also supervised a succession of D.Phil. students, including Michael Roaf (Persepolis, 1979), Kate Fielden (settlement in North-East Syria in the fourth to third millennia BC, 1981), Ellen McAdam (domestic architecture in ancient Mesopotamia, 1981), David Fleming (Achaemenid archaeology, 1982), Jack Hanbury-Tenison (the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age periods in Palestine and Transjordan, 1986), Diana Stein (seal impressions from Nuzi, 1986), Timothy Potts (Mesopotamia and the East, 1987), Tim Clayden (Kassites, 1988), Beatrice Teissier (Syrian glyptic, 1989), St John Simpson (Sasanian period, 1992), Ezra Marcus (maritime civilisations, 1999) and David Wengrow (Neolithic art in Egypt and the Ancient Near East, 2002). Moorey very much enjoyed

⁴²Much of the scientific information in this book was checked by Professor Michael Tite who remained a lifelong source of information about scientific archaeology.

⁴³Moorey, 'Robert William Hamilton, 1905–1995', p. 506.

his sessions with the students, which he found very stimulating, and used to say that he tried to arrange supervisions for Friday afternoons as they put him in a good frame of mind for the weekend. For their part, the postgraduate students derived great benefit from his help and advice. Largely through the efforts of Moorey and the example set by him, teaching is now firmly embedded in the job descriptions of Ashmolean curators and the university benefits accordingly.

Outside Oxford, Moorey was also much in demand as an external examiner for BA and MA courses and for PhD dissertations, and in addition to acting as an examiner for practically every UK university teaching Near Eastern archaeology (including Birmingham, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Liverpool, London and Manchester) he was often called upon to examine PhD dissertations overseas. He was also often invited to sit on appointment boards, and usually obliged with good grace. At the Ashmolean he was unfailingly helpful and courteous to visitors and researchers wishing to access the collections, and he was a ready fount of advice and information.⁴⁴ For this reason scholars from all around the world beat a path to his door, not just to study material, and the Ashmolean became a centre for Near Eastern studies. One such scholar was Mary Aitken Littauer from Syosset, Long Island, who shared with Moorey an interest in horse-riding, transport and warfare, and made annual visits to the Ashmolean. Some scholars stayed for extended periods with fellowships at Oxford colleges, and other scholars, such as Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop,⁴⁵ living within reach of Oxford were welcomed at regular events and seminars in the Ashmolean.

Apart from his formal teaching commitments in Oxford, and in addition to giving talks in the Ashmolean and to various groups in the university, Moorey was always ready to share his knowledge and enthusiasm with interested audiences around the country. He lectured widely at other universities, to extramural classes, to local archaeological societies, and at various schools and colleges. The only stipulation was that the listeners, be they professional or amateur, should be as interested in the subject matter as he was. Apart from these popular lectures he also wrote a number of museum booklets that were designed for the general reader such as *The Ancient Near East* (1987), *Ancient Egypt* (1970),

⁴⁴The present author would like to record his gratitude to Moorey for advice with the layout of his PhD thesis.

⁴⁵For an obituary, see J. Curtis, 'Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop 1914–2011', *Biographical Memoirs of the Fellows of the British Academy*, 14 (2015), pp. 363–80.

Ancient Iran (1975), *Ancient Iraq* (1976) and *Archaeology, Artefacts and the Bible* (1969). As one might expect they are rather more than basic introductions, and in addition to fulfilling their original purpose the booklets also contain a wealth of information that is worthy of attention by specialists.

Administration

In Oxford, he was elected a fellow of Wolfson College in 1976, allegedly because the president of Wolfson, Sir Isaiah Berlin, and also the then President of the British Academy, felt that an Oxford scholar who was about to be elected to the British Academy at such a young age should have a college affiliation.⁴⁶ Thereafter he played an active part in the affairs of Wolfson, becoming in due course the Senior Research Fellow. In 1978 he organised the annual Wolfson College Lectures 'The Origins of Civilization', which were published in 1979, edited by Moorey.⁴⁷ He also kept in close touch with his old college, Corpus Christi. He acted as Secretary of the Griffith Institute for Egyptology and the Ancient Near East from 1983 until his retirement, and for many years (from 1977) sat on the Board of Management of the Gerald Avery Wainwright Fund that disburses grants for work in Near Eastern archaeology. He was Chairman of Oxford University's Committee for Archaeology 1988–90 and Vice-Chairman from 1993, when the new degree in archaeology was introduced. In earlier days he had been the Treasurer of Oxford University Archaeological Society 1971–7 and the Vice-President from 1980. In addition, he had been the Treasurer of the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society 1964–7.

He was a member of the governing councils of a number of British schools and institutes in the Near East: the British Institute of Persian Studies (1972–93), the British School of Archaeology in Iraq (1970–96), the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (1968–98; President, 1991–8), and the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History (1987–96; Vice-Chairman, 1988–92). In addition to this, at the behest of Kathleen Kenyon, he was the founder of the journal *Levant* in 1968 and continued to edit it until 1986. He was also a trustee of the Lukonin

⁴⁶T. Potts, 'Obituary: P. R. S. Moorey, MA, DPhil, FBA, FSA (1937–2004)', *Iraq*, 67 (2005), viii.

⁴⁷There were contributions by Grahame Clark, James Mellaart, Stuart Piggott, William Watson, Warwick Bray, Nancy Sandars and David Hawkins.

Memorial Fund (now the Ancient Persia Fund, administered by the British Academy) from its inception in 1988 until his death, and he was a committee member of BANEA from its foundation in 1982 onwards. In addition to being a regular attendee at BANEA conferences he organised two of the annual conferences in Oxford in 1988 and 1996, and was fond of saying that BANEA, which was originally set up to protect teaching posts at UK universities, had, rather to his surprise, grown from an acorn into an oak tree. He was also elected to the Management Committee of the Institute of Archaeology of London University in 1985, and was a Trustee of the Oriental Museum of the University of Durham 1989–92.

Private life

In *Who's Who* Moorey listed travel and walking as his main interests. He delighted in walking at a brisk pace through Oxford, to and from the Ashmolean every day from his house in Iffley Road, and he enjoyed walking holidays in Scotland. Travel abroad was usually combined with attending conferences, visiting museums, studying collections and giving lectures. Amongst early travels, for example, in 1962 he travelled in Italy with Michael Tite and Richard Linington. In the 1960s and 1970s he visited and studied material in practically all the major museums in Europe, and from the 1970s onwards he spent some extended periods of time (usually during sabbaticals) in the USA, visiting museums and lecturing. In 1986 he was able to visit China where he read a paper at a conference in Zhengzhou on early metallurgy and visited sites and museums. In 1997 he was the McNicoll Visiting Lecturer in Australia,⁴⁸ and in 1992 he lectured in Bahrain. His forays into other parts of the Middle East have been referred to above. Moorey was also a voracious but discerning reader, and was well-informed about a wide range of literary subjects, about which he was delighted to talk on appropriate occasions. When he heard that my wife and I had moved into a house in West Hampstead opposite one where Evelyn Waugh had lived as a young man, he remarked that he had read all of Waugh's books and thought him the best English author of the twentieth century. Amongst nineteenth-century authors, Trollope was a great favourite. He was also very well informed about nursery rhymes and children's literature. This came about through buying books for his

⁴⁸ In 1990–1 he acted as assessor for the appointment of the Chair of Near Eastern Archaeology at Sydney University.

nephews and nieces, and reading them first. Nicholas Postgate recalls that each season when Moorey came to Abu Salabikh he would bring with him a large paperback that he had just bought and which he would leave behind on departure. One year it was a new biography of Disraeli, and another year it was a book about a 1930s scientific hoax by Arthur Koestler (*The Case of the Midwife Toad*). Such books showed the breadth of his reading, but usually had a historical theme, in keeping with Moorey's regular insistence that he was a historian and not an archaeologist.⁴⁹ He was also a devotee of classical music which he played so loudly in his house that he could rarely hear the telephone.⁵⁰

Possibly as a result of his military training, but equally possibly through an inbred sense of order and discipline, Moorey was exceptionally well-organised. One of his neighbours remarked at his funeral that 'you could set your watch by the time he left every morning' and on arrival at the Ashmolean every day his first task was to clear his desk.⁵¹ He was equally punctual at the end of the day, arriving home promptly in time to hear *The Archers* at 6.45 pm.⁵² He had the gift of being able 'to compartmentalise his work so that he could devote his full attention to one task, such as his cataloguing work, and then to drop it and move on to something totally different such as his own reading and writing'.⁵³ Moorey was interested in new technology, witness the microfiche catalogue at the back of his Kish volume and the online terracottas catalogue, but at heart he remained a traditionalist who by his own admission was 'still only really at ease with a pen in his hand'.⁵⁴ He never mastered computers, and was fortunate to have the support of a devoted team of secretaries, illustrators and photographers. Throughout his adult life Moorey lived alone, at 343 Iffley Road, Oxford. Although he valued his privacy highly, and few people were allowed to get very close to him,⁵⁵ he was certainly not reclusive and he enjoyed selective social contact. He kept in close touch with his sister and half-sister and their families, and could be a generous host.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ Pers. comm. J. N. Postgate.

⁵⁰ Pers. comm. M. D. Roaf.

⁵¹ Pers. comm. J. N. Postgate.

⁵² From 1977 to 1998 the programme was broadcast at 7.05 pm and from 1998 at 7.00 pm.

⁵³ Pers. comm. J. N. Postgate, quoted in C. Dauphin, 'Peter Roger Stuart Moorey (1937–2004); in homage', *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 137 (2005), 96.

⁵⁴ See the Acknowledgements to Moorey, *Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas*.

⁵⁵ For example, he abruptly left his fortieth birthday party in Oxford, jointly celebrated with Tom Holland and Michael Roaf who were also enjoying birthdays, when some guests became too familiar.

⁵⁶ Pers. comm. M. S. Tite.

At the same time, he was delightful company and could talk knowledgeably about a wide range of subjects. He took particular pleasure in the company of young people, and enjoyed nothing more than discussing their work over a lunchtime drink in an Oxford pub. For colleagues, he was a great source of information not only about developments in the field but also about the people in it, although such small talk was never malicious and he was universally admired and respected. When I told Nicholas Postgate that I was writing this memoir, he commented that it would be easy to do ‘because nobody ever had a bad word to say about Roger’.

In spite of his academic eminence, and his considerable administrative abilities, Moorey was not by nature a Wheeler, a Mallowan or a Kenyon, all people who by their natural ability and through sheer force of personality were determined to control and advance their respective disciplines, which they were successful in doing. Had he so wished, Moorey could have changed the face of the study of Near Eastern archaeology in Britain, but that was not his way. He was by nature a modest and unassuming man who never sought the limelight and never aspired to high office. Directorships of museums and professorships beckoned, but he was happy to stay as a curator in the Ashmolean. In July 2001, in the acknowledgements to what proved to be his last catalogue on terracottas, he wrote that he had enjoyed ‘over a period of more than forty years ... as near ideal an environment, in the Ashmolean Library, Museum and in the University, as might be hoped for by a student of material culture in antiquity’. By inclination Moorey was conservative, and was pessimistic (perhaps rightly?) about the long-term future of the schools and institutes overseas and indeed about the prospects for Near Eastern archaeology, which he believed should increasingly become a science-based discipline. Colleagues in Oxford record that his natural inclination at meetings ‘particularly when financial pressures on research mounted, was... “to square the circle”, sometimes frustrating to those who felt boundaries were there to be pushed’.⁵⁷ Surprisingly, he often appeared to be slightly nervous when giving lectures, always speaking from a prepared text, but this was perhaps as a result of his natural diffidence.

⁵⁷ *Wolfson College Record 2004–2005*, p. 41.

Retirement and honours

Moorey retired from the Ashmolean in the summer of 2002 and his farewell party was in the garden of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the evening of Friday 21 June. This was followed on the next day by 'an intimate and relaxed dinner party ... at his favourite Randolph Hotel in Oxford' where he 'was presented with a stupendous coffee cake baked at Somerville college in the shape of a Mesopotamian ziggurat with Gilgamesh's virtues detailed in cuneiform script on a marzipan scroll'.⁵⁸ On the occasion of his retirement the Director of the Ashmolean, Dr Christopher Brown, wrote 'He has guided the department with great humanity and skill and is the doyen of Near Eastern studies in this country.'⁵⁹ To mark his retirement, volume 34 of *Levant*, the journal that he had so scrupulously edited in earlier years, was dedicated to him. On 7 July 2003 during the 46th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale he was presented at the British Museum with a Festschrift appropriately entitled *Culture through Objects* (Oxford, 2003). This was edited by three of his former doctoral students—Timothy Potts, Michael Roaf and Diana Stein—and contains nineteen contributions divided into three sections to reflect Moorey's principal interests: 'tracking cultural transfers'; 'understanding images'; and 'materials and manufacture'. This presentation was followed in the evening by a celebration at the house of Diana Stein.

After retirement from the Ashmolean he accepted to become Vicegerent of Wolfson College, a senior administrative post he held until 2004. This and increasing ill-health following a diagnosis of prostate cancer meant that he had little time for academic research during his last two years. He bore his illness with great fortitude, remarking that he was very fortunate to have enjoyed rude good health throughout his life without ever needing to rely on the medical services. Now that he had to do so, it had opened up to him a whole new hitherto unseen world that he found very impressive.

Moorey died in the Churchill Hospital, Oxford, on 23 December 2004. He was just sixty-seven years old. The Oxford crematorium was full to capacity with family, friends and colleagues for his funeral service on 11 January 2005. The opening music was, appropriately, Elgar's Nimrod. After the service, there was a reception at Wolfson College. Moorey had expressed the wish that his papers and any unfinished work should be

⁵⁸ Dauphin, 'Peter Roger Stuart Moorey (1937–2004)', 93.

⁵⁹ *Ashmolean Annual Report* 2001–2, 3.

destroyed after his death, which was duly carried out by his executors. He also indicated there should be no memorial service. In his memory, however, an annual Roger Moorey lecture is organised in Oxford around the time of his birthday on 30 May.

During his career many honours came Moorey's way. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1967. He became a Fellow of the British Academy in 1977 at the age of forty, was Chairman of the Archaeology section (now H7) 1987–91, a member of Council 1991–4 and a member of the Standing Committee on Overseas Schools and Institutes 1985–96. In 1989 he received the Schimmel Prize from the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, for contributions to the archaeology of Eretz Israel and Bible Lands, his *Century of Biblical Archaeology* won the Biblical Archaeology Review 'best popular book' annual prize in 1993, and in 1996 he was awarded the prestigious James R. Wiseman award from the Archaeological Institute of America for his book *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*. On 13 March 2003 he was awarded the Gertrude Bell Medal of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq for 'outstanding services to Mesopotamian archaeology', being the fourth recipient of this award after Sir Max Mallowan (1976), Professor Seton Lloyd (1979) and Professor David Oates (1997). He was elected a Corresponding Member of the German Archaeological Institute in 1985 and the Archaeological Institute of America in 2000.

Moorey left behind him a remarkable literary legacy. He was a prolific author who produced around twenty catalogues or monographs, and more than seventy articles, many of them very substantial pieces of work. Yet he never sacrificed scholarly accuracy for the sake of over-simplification or generalisation, and he produced work that was consistently of the highest standard. His contributions even extended to book reviews, of which he wrote more than seventy, where he always tried—and invariably succeeded—to write something meaningful. For example, in reviewing my volume on the small finds from the seventh century BC Median site of Nush-i Jan in Iran he re-examined the original photographs of some lumps of clay with enigmatic seal impressions,⁶⁰ and concluded that the animal's heads could be compared with sealings from Nimrud or with seals engraved with Urartian hieroglyphs.⁶¹ Altogether, he made a major, one might almost say an unparalleled, contribution to studies of the

⁶⁰ J. E. Curtis, *Nush-i Jan III: The Small Finds* (London, 1984), nos. 238–41.

⁶¹ P. R. S. Moorey, 'Review of J. Curtis, *Nush-i Jan III: the Small Finds*', *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 43 (1986), 802.

Ancient Near East. He belonged to a dying breed of scholar-curator who combined responsibility for the collections under their care with scholarly expertise about them. Sadly, many museums nowadays (but thankfully not the Ashmolean) have given control of the objects to collections managers, believing that scholarly expertise is a dispensable luxury that can be bought in as and when required. As an indication of what can be achieved through combining collection management with academic acumen, Roger Moorey is an outstanding example.

It would be appropriate to leave the last word to Dr Timothy Potts who was to have written this memoir but was constrained from doing so owing to the pressures of administrative work while successively director of the Kimbell Art Museum, the Fitzwilliam Museum and now Getty Villa. In the obituary that he wrote for the journal *Iraq*, Potts summed up Moorey's career and contribution in the following eloquent passage:

Following an era of discovery and research dominated by the excavators of the major sites, he brought an intellectual nimbleness and breadth of scholarship that set new benchmarks of balance, rigour and interpretive sophistication. His range and depth of knowledge were legendary. In a career based entirely in the Ashmolean Museum, he made seminal contributions to the understanding of many aspects of ancient material culture across the Near East: from Egypt and the Levant through Syria and Mesopotamia to Iran, and from the prehistoric to Achaemenid periods. The cogency, integrity and graciousness of his scholarship (one looks in vain for a mean-spirited put-down) were reflections of a mind that compromised none of its incisiveness for being, as he once said, 'appreciative rather than critical'; and his natural collegiality cut across the divides of contemporary Middle Eastern politics. At once a specialist in many things and a generalist of rare breadth and insight, he was for a generation of colleagues and students an inspiring example of the 'complete scholar'.⁶²

JOHN CURTIS

Fellow of the Academy

Note. I was asked to write this memoir at the end of February 2016. As more than eleven years have now elapsed since Moorey's death, I have endeavoured to write it as quickly as possible, and submitted it to the British Academy in April 2016. The benefit from this long delay is that I have been able to consult numerous published obituaries, and I have drawn on them extensively. They include newspaper obituaries in *The Independent* for 18 January 2005 (by Stephanie Dalley and Helen Whitehouse), *The Times* for 22 January 2005, *The Guardian* for 3 February 2005 (by Ashley Jones), learned journal obituaries in *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society*,

⁶²Potts, 'Obituary: P. R. S. Moorey', vii.

22 (2004), 86–96 (by Claudine Dauphin), *Iraq*, 67 (2005), vii–x (by Timothy Potts), *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 137 (2005), 93–7 (by Claudine Dauphin), *Levant*, 37 (2005), v–vi (by Kay Prag), *Iran*, 43 (2005), xv–xvi (by John Curtis), *American Journal of Archaeology*, 109 (2005), 565–6 (by O. W. Muscarella), entries in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (by Stephanie Dalley), *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (by John Curtis) and a memoir in *Wolfson College Record 2004–2005*, pp. 38–41 (by Kay Prag and Andrew Sherratt). The memoir by Claudine Dauphin in the *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* is a personal tribute that is particularly informative. In the preparation of this memoir I have benefited from help and advice from Dr Timothy Potts, Dr Diana Stein, Professor Michael Roaf, Professor Sir John Boardman, Professor Michael Tite, Professor Nicholas Postgate, Kate Thompson of Mill Hill School, Felicity Cobbing of the Palestine Exploration Fund and particularly Dr Paul Collins, Assistant Keeper in the Department of Antiquities at the Ashmolean Museum, who sent me extracts from the *Ashmolean Annual Reports* between 1961 and 2002. In this obituary I have quoted unashamedly from Moorey's own writings as well as those who have written about him.

Bibliography of works by P. R. S. Moorey

For a full list of major publications (books and articles) up to 2002, see T. Potts, M. Roaf and D. Stein (eds.), *Culture through Objects: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of P. R. S. Moorey* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 11–16.

Addenda to bibliography pre-2002

- 'Two Middle Bronze Age brooches from Tell ed-Duweir', *Levant*, 1 (1969), 97–9.
- 'A bronze statuette of a bull', *Levant*, 3 (1971), 90–1.
- 'A small bronze tripod-stand from Western Iran', *Iran*, 10 (1972), 143–6.
- 'The city of Kish in Iraq: archaeology and history, ca 3500 BC to AD 600', in E. Porada (ed.), *Chronologies in Old World archaeology. Archaeological seminar at Columbia University, 1973–1974*, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 80 (1976), 65–6.
- 'Bronze rollers and frames from Babylonia and Western Iran: problems of date and function', *Revue d'Assyriologie*, 71 (1977), 137–50.
- 'Re-appraisal of a Syro-Palestinian bronze female figurine', *MASCA Journal*, 1 (1979), 73ff. (with S. Fleming).
- 'Abu Salabikh, Kish, Mari and Ebla: mid-third millennium archaeological interconnections', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 85 (1981), 447–8.
- 'Lapislazuli. B. Archäologisch', *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*, 6 (1983), 489–92 (with G. Herrmann).
- 'Babylonia', 'Assyria', 'Urartu' and 'Israel and Judah', in J. Boardman (ed.), *The Cambridge Ancient History: Plates to Volume III* (Cambridge 1984), pp. 27–64, 112–24.

- 'Some wood identifications from Mesopotamian sites', in J. N. Postgate and M. A. Powell (eds.), *Trees and Timber in Mesopotamia*, Bulletin on Sumerian Agriculture VI (Cambridge 1992), pp. 197–9 (with J. N. Postgate).
- 'Concluding remarks', in G. Herrmann (ed.), *The Furniture of Western Asia: Ancient and Traditional* (Mainz 1996), pp. 253–8.
- 'Robert William Hamilton 1905–1995', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 94 (1997), pp. 491–509.

Bibliography post-2002

- 'Joan Crowfoot Payne (1912–2002)', *Levant*, 35 (2003), iv–v.
- Idols of the People: Miniature Images of Clay in the Ancient Near East*, The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 2001 (Oxford, 2003).
- Ancient Near Eastern Terracottas with a Catalogue of the Collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford* (Ashmolean Museum 2005; previously published online at <<http://www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/amocats/anet>> (accessed 19 May 2016).