B 836,297

AREA HANDBOOK for IRAQ

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

DEPOSITED BY THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

[Area handbook series]

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

AREA HANDBOOK

for

IRAQ

Co-Authors

1969 First Printing

Harvey H. Smith — **William Giloane**

Nancy W. Al-Any — **Irving Kaplan**

Donald W. Bernier — **Rinn-Sup Shinn**

Frederica M. Bunge — **Suzanne Teleki**

1971 Second Printing

Richard F. Nyrop — **Newton B. Parker**

Beryl L. Benderly — **Suzanne Teleki**

The American University

Washington, D.C.

Published 1971

(This pamphlet supersedes DA Pam 550-31, March 1969)

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DS
70.6
.I65
1971

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 73-610216

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402—Price $3.25

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DEPOSITED BY THE

-14-71

FOREWORD

This volume is one of a series of handbooks prepared by Foreign Area Studies (FAS) of The American University, designed to be useful to military and other personnel who need a convenient compilation of basic facts about the social, economic, political, and military institutions and practices of various countries. The emphasis is on objective description of the nation's present society and the kinds of possible or probable changes that might be expected in the future. The handbook seeks to present as full and as balanced an integrated exposition as limitations on space and research time permit. It was compiled from information available in openly published material. An extensive bibliography is provided to permit recourse to other published sources for more detailed information. There has been no attempt to express any specific point of view or to make policy recommendations. The contents of the handbook represent the work of the authors and FAS and do not represent the official view of the United States government.

An effort has been made to make the handbook as comprehensive as possible. It can be expected, however, that the material, interpretations, and conclusions are subject to modification in the light of new information and developments. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual, interpretive, or other change as readers may have will be welcomed for use in future revisions. Comments may be addressed to—

The Director
Foreign Area Studies
The American University
5010 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

DEPOSITED BY THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

[Area handbook series]

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

AREA HANDBOOK

for

IRAQ

Co-Authors

1969 First Printing

Harvey H. Smith — **William Giloane**

Nancy W. Al-Any — **Irving Kaplan**

Donald W. Bernier — **Rinn-Sup Shinn**

Frederica M. Bunge — **Suzanne Teleki**

1971 Second Printing

Richard F. Nyrop — **Newton B. Parker**

Beryl L. Benderly — **Suzanne Teleki**

The American University

Washington, D.C.

Published 1971

(This pamphlet supersedes DA Pam 550-31, March 1969)

Digitized by Google

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DS
70.6
.I65
1971

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 73-610216

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402—Price $3.25

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DEPOSITED BY THE

-14-71

FOREWORD

This volume is one of a series of handbooks prepared by Foreign Area Studies (FAS) of The American University, designed to be useful to military and other personnel who need a convenient compilation of basic facts about the social, economic, political, and military institutions and practices of various countries. The emphasis is on objective description of the nation's present society and the kinds of possible or probable changes that might be expected in the future. The handbook seeks to present as full and as balanced an integrated exposition as limitations on space and research time permit. It was compiled from information available in openly published material. An extensive bibliography is provided to permit recourse to other published sources for more detailed information. There has been no attempt to express any specific point of view or to make policy recommendations. The contents of the handbook represent the work of the authors and FAS and do not represent the official view of the United States government.

An effort has been made to make the handbook as comprehensive as possible. It can be expected, however, that the material, interpretations, and conclusions are subject to modification in the light of new information and developments. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual, interpretive, or other change as readers may have will be welcomed for use in future revisions. Comments may be addressed to—

The Director
Foreign Area Studies
The American University
5010 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PREFACE TO THE SECOND PRINTING

On May 31, 1968, a team composed of Nancy W. Al-Any, Donald W. Bernier, Frederica M. Bunge, William Giloane, Irving Kaplan, Rinn-Sup Shinn, and Suzanne Teleki, under the chairmanship of Harvey H. Smith, completed the *Area Handbook for Iraq*. Less than two months later, on July 17, 1968, Iraq experienced a coup d'etat, its fourth in ten years. Because of the revolutionary nature of the Baath Party government that was still in power in late 1970 and because of the military and economic importance of Iraq in the Middle East, it was decided to update the handbook completed in 1968 and published in 1969 by the preparation of a separate section entitled "Summary of Events: May 1968—November 1970," which briefly describes the more significant developments during that period. No revisions were made in the 1968 handbook; statistical and other data, for example, were left unchanged. On November 13, 1970, a team composed of Beryl L. Benderly, Newton B. Parker, and Suzanne Teleki, with Richard F. Nyrop as chairman, completed work on the section that immediately follows this preface.

The research team encountered considerable difficulty in securing reliable and current information and statistics. In part because of the anti-Western bias of the Baath government, few Western social scientists have engaged in field work in Iraq in recent years. The more important resource materials used were American and British journals, periodicals, and newspapers as well as translations of articles from several major periodicals and journals of the eastern Arab states. Extensive use was also made of statistical reports of the government of Iraq and of such organizations as the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The transliteration system recommended by the Library of Congress was followed in the spelling of Arabic words and names, except that no diacritical marks or other symbols were used. The place names used are those established for Iraq by the United States Board on Geographic Names, United States Department of the Interior, in June 1957.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SUMMARY OF EVENTS: MAY 1968—NOVEMBER 1970

In late 1970 the Baath Party and its military leaders were seemingly in firm control of political and military affairs. The Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) was the supreme, indeed the only, legislative and decisionmaking body, and the most influential members of the RCC were senior military officers. Field Marshal Ahmad Hassan al Bakr, president, prime minister, and supreme commander of the armed forces, continued in 1970 to serve as chairman of the RCC, a post that he had held since the RCC was formed immediately after the coup d'etat of July 17, 1968.

In October 1970, however, Vice President (and Air Marshal) Hardan al Tikriti was dismissed from the RCC and the vice presidency and sent into exile. The removal of Tikriti presumably increased the power of the two remaining members of the triumvirate that had dominated Iraq since the coup—Bakr and Vice President (and General) Salih Mahdi Ammash. Until December 1969, Tikriti and Ammash had, in addition to their posts as vice presidents, served respectively as ministers of defense and interior. Their ministerial replacements were two more senior military officers. Most observers in 1970 interpreted the demotion of Tikriti and Ammash and the subsequent banishment of Tikriti as an indication of renewed internecine strife within the Baath Party high command that might in time result in yet another coup d'etat.

The period between May 1968 and late 1970 was marked by numerous public executions of "spies and enemies of the state," by serious quarrels with many foreign governments—including all of its neighbors with the exception of Turkey—and by a generally worsening economic situation. The Baath regime did terminate the nearly ten years of intermittent warfare with the Kurds in northern Iraq, but in late 1970 various points of disagreement between the Kurds and the government had not been resolved.

The period was also marked by a significant increase in the size of the armed forces and the modernization of its weaponry. Between 1968 and 1970 the size of the military increased by over 10 percent to about 95,000 officers and men. In 1968 Iraq secured seventy medium-sized tanks from France, but since that time most of its major military acquisitions, particularly jet-fighter aircraft, have come from the Soviet Union.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

In mid-1970 well over 50 percent of the country's estimated 171,600 square miles was considered to be desert or semidesert; 20 to 25 percent was arable; 8 percent or so was irrigated; around 5 percent was under pasture; and around 4 percent was under economically exploitable forest. Agriculture and petroleum were the country's major economic activities, accounting for around 55 percent of the country's output of goods and services. Agriculture served as the basis of subsistence for the bulk of a population estimated at slightly over 9 million. The government's annual oil revenues provided an effective cushion of about 161 million Iraqi dinars (1 dinar equals US$2.80) for economic development and population growth during the economy's transition period from all agriculture to agriculture-with-industry. Iraq is the eighth largest producer of petroleum in the world, and the most important component of the economy is the revenue generated by the oil exports, which account for over 90 percent of the value of all exports.

Despite the investment by successive governments of about 115 million dinars in agricultural development between 1951 and 1967, mainly for flood control, land reclamation, and experimental farming, the continuance of flooding and inadequate drainage were still major problems, with the result that agricultural production from year to year was unpredictable. Moreover, as a consequence of the accumulation of soluble salts in the irrigated areas between the Tigris and the Euphrates, especially below Baghdad, more than one-half of that area was saline and to a varying, but steadily increasing, degree was out of production.

Petroleum output also was unpredictable, in part because it was piped, for the most part, across Syria and was therefore vulnerable to interruption by the Syrian government or by guerrilla action. The result was that the national production was subject to unexpected, uncontrollable, and sometimes sizable fluctuations. The trend of income was upward but at a declining rate.

From the viewpoint of the use of economic resources, the period under consideration was characterized by the Bakr government's determination to establish its effective control over the country, including a satisfactory conclusion to the Kurdish revolt, and by feuds with Israel and its supporters and with Iran. These circumstances contributed to a progressive economic rapprochement between Iraq and the Soviet Union and the East European Communist bloc at the expense of Iraq's traditional ties with Western Europe and the United States. The economic effects of these policies were intensified by a growing government attraction with the possibilities of nationalizing the operating petroleum companies owned by firms in West Europe and the United States and by a strong sense of protectiveness for the country's foreign exchange reserves.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The result of this combination of forces, until the middle of 1970, was a high degree of concentration on the part of the government in military and petroleum matters, attended by an escalating estrangement from the petroleum companies and a growing accumulation of credit lines with the Soviet bloc countries, especially in connection with the exploration and exploitation of the country's petroleum and sulfur deposits. Policies and legislation of preceding governments that were not in harmony with the purposes of the new government were discarded or allowed to fall into disuse. This, in general, was the case with the five-year economic development program inaugurated in fiscal 1965/66 and was especially true of the agricultural portion of that program.

The statistical data for the period under discussion were meager and, much of the time, strictly preliminary, and therefore should be viewed with caution. Although there has been appreciable improvement in recent years in the quality of the series issued by the Central Bank and the Iraqi Central Bureau of Statistics, in general the statistical information should be taken as approximations indicating trend movements rather than as exact presentations of the dimensions the statistics purport to portray.

POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL CHANGE

Seizure and Retention of Power

On July 17, 1968, a group composed of leaders of the Baath Party and elements of the armed forces under the leadership of four young colonels overthrew the regime of President Abdul Rahman Arif. One of the colonels, Abdul Razzak el Nayif, became prime minister and on July 20 formed a government that lasted for ten days. On July 30 the Baathists under the leadership of Major General Ahmad Hassan al Bakr, who on July 19 had assumed the presidency, expelled Nayif from the government and the country. Bakr as president and prime minister formed a new cabinet that was dominated by Baathists.

The government announced on September 28 that eighty people, most of them army officers, had been arrested on charges of attempting a coup d'etat. During the next two months additional arrests were made, and on December 13, 1968, a decree of the RCC created a Revolutionary Court to try those arrested on charges of treason, subversion, and related crimes. A few days later the first trial before this court was shown on television. Two Iraqi citizens "confessed" to membership in a "spy ring" that was purportedly under the direction of two Iraqi Jews and associated with the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Central Treaty Organization.

During late December 1968 there were reports of mass arrests and

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

secret trials, and in early January there were a number of televised confessions. Among those identified in the confessions as having purportedly been agents of the CIA and Israel were a former president, two former prime ministers, a former chief of staff of the army, the military leader of the Kurds, and a son of the spiritual leader of the Iraqi Shiites—the numerically larger group of the Iraqi Muslim community.

On January 27, 1969, eleven Iraqis—nine of them Jews—were hanged in Baghdad; their corpses were subsequently displayed on gibbets in Baghdad's Liberation Square. President Bakr and several of his colleagues visited the scene and made televised speeches that contained promises to "arrest and execute all of the spies for the United States, Israel, imperialism, and Zionism."

Although the executions elicited strong condemnatory statements by such world figures as Secretary General of the United Nations U Thant, Pope Paul VI, and United States Secretary of State William P. Rogers, and less strongly worded but equally critical statements from some Arab heads of state, the trials and executions continued throughout 1969. Those arrested and convicted, many convicted in absentia, included numerous former government officials and military officers and ranged politically from Communists through pro-Nasserists to right-wing military and religious spokesmen.

The government announced on January 21, 1970, that it had suppressed another coup attempt. Within a few days over 40 soldiers and civilians had been tried and executed, bringing to over 100 the number of citizens publicly and officially executed by the Baath regime on charges of espionage, conspiracy, and treason.

Although in middle and late 1970 the government announced far fewer executions than during the same period in 1969, there seemed to be no slackening in the numbers arrested, tried, and convicted. Some were sentenced to death in absentia, many were stripped of their property and sentenced to long prison terms, and still others were convicted but subsequently released on bond. The most significant change during 1970 was that those arrested and convicted were increasingly identified as agents of Iran rather than of Israel and of "American imperialism."

Military Leaders and the Government

The new regime announced on July 30, 1968, that the RCC was "the highest authority in the country." In addition to Bakr as chairman, the RCC was composed of four senior military officers: vice presidents Hardan al Tikriti and Salih Mahdi Ammash, who also held posts as ministers of defense and interior, respectively; Saadoun Ghaidan, commander of the Baghdad Garrison, a key military unit; and Hammad Shihab, chief of staff of the army.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

By late 1970 the RCC had been expanded to fourteen members, but it continued to exercise a monopoly of legislative and decision-making power and to be dominated by the military leaders of the Baath. In October 1970 Tikriti was stripped of his military and civilian posts and titles and sent into exile. Ammash remained as vice president, and Ghaidan and Shihab had relinquished their military positions to become, respectively, ministers of interior and defense. All three remained members of the RCC.

Bakr continued to dominate political, military, and governmental affairs as chairman of the RCC, president, prime minister, supreme commander of the armed forces and, presumably, the leader of the Baath Party. Bakr was an active participant in the 1958 revolution that deposed the monarchy, and he served on a three-man military court that, during late 1958 and early 1959, removed from the armed forces numerous officers believed to be in opposition to the revolution. In 1959 he was the leader of a group of Pan-Arab officers who engaged in a plot to overthrow the regime of President Abdul Karim Qasim. Qasim discovered the plot and forced Bakr to retire from the army.

Bakr was a key figure in the Baath coup in 1963 that resulted in Qasim's assassination. Bakr served for a brief period as prime minister of the Baath regime that was in turn replaced by the military under the leadership of President Abdul Salam Arif, the brother of President Abdul Rahman Arif who was ousted by Bakr and his colleagues in 1968. Bakr served as vice president under Salam Arif until 1965.

Bakr's seeming entrenchment in the key governmental, political, and military positions was interpreted by some observers in late 1970 as the prelude to yet another round of violence. In addition to enemies among the clandestine Communist, pro-Nasserist, and right-wing military and religious groups, Bakr has provoked the enmity of the followers of Tikriti and of other military Baathists.

Although by late 1970 the Baath regime had promulgated two provisional constitutions—one in September 1968 and the other in July 1970—there had been no significant changes in the structure of government. In accordance with a law promulgated by the RCC on October 1, 1969, the internal subdivisions of Iraq were changed from fourteen provinces to sixteen departments. The law provided for an eventual increase in local autonomy through elected councils.

In April 1970 the RCC announced the formation of five new supreme councils to supervise development works and social welfare. In late 1970 there was no information as to what the powers and duties of the councils were or would be.

The presence of a twenty-two member cabinet and the issuance of provisional constitutions notwithstanding, the RCC in late 1970

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

continued to be the focal point of government. What was unclear was the extent to which it controlled, or was controlled by, President Bakr.

The Baath Party

In late 1970 Iraq continued to be a one-party state. The trials and executions between January 1969 and late 1970 eliminated or drove into exile numerous, if not most, of the prominent opponents of the regime. The Communists and the pro-Nasser groups were particular targets for elimination by the Baathists.

The political thought of the Baath Party of the Middle East as a whole has centered on a combination of socialism and Arab nationalism. The slogan of unity, liberty, and socialism focused on Arab unity, liberation from Western imperialism, and Arab or Islamic socialism. The Iraqi Baathists endorsed these notions before attaining power, but in the 1968–70 period, as in their brief rule in 1963, the military leadership of the Baathists pursued an ultranationalist and exclusionist policy. The Shia Muslims and Kurds, who together accounted for perhaps 70 percent of the population, were not represented in the small ruling group of the Baath Party.

The dominance of the military in the Baath Party continues the pattern of Iraqi politics since the establishment of Iraq as a British mandated territory after World War I. According to the fragmentary information available in late 1970, only two civilians occupied positions of power. One was Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Shakhli, a senior member of the Baath and the RCC, and the other was Ali Salih al Saadi, who reportedly was a political adviser to the RCC and the head of the Baath Party's security police, which was reported over 30,000 officers and men.

The Baath political theory involves numerous contradictions. The contradictions are particularly sharp between certain basic tenets of Islam and what some Baathists refer to as "scientific rationalism." Islam, for example, specifically condones private property, but many Baathists advocate the abolition of private property. Islam is an open and individualistic faith, whereas Baathist practice is secretive and collectivist.

The Baath leadership is perhaps most noteworthy for its xenophobia, particularly of Westerners. As one spokesman, Khalaf-Allah, put it, "For the sake of partitioning the Arab Fatherland, the Catholic shook hands with the Protestant, the Liberal with the Conservative, the Aristocrat with the Democrat, the Monarchist with the Republican, the Red with the White, the followers of Jesus with those who killed Him."

The party is based on the Communist cell structure and has remained small. In 1965 it was estimated that there were only about 2,500 party members plus 30,000 "friends." The average age of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

members was twenty-five. There is no indication of any significant increase in party membership until after the 1968 coup. Information on the size of the party was not, however, available in late 1970. Many observers have suggested that the cell structure of the party was well suited to the conspiratorial, clandestine activities that resulted in the 1963 and 1968 coups but does not permit effective governing.

In addition, by early 1969 the Baath regime had introduced into its political pronouncements what has been described as the Communist verbal technique of new meanings to old phrases. "Popular democracy" means adherence to party policy as enunciated by the leadership; "liberated nation" means a nation led by a single party, preferably Baathist; "scientific socialism" is the Baathist improvement on the meaning of "utopian socialism," and the Baathists are members of the "vanguard party" interpreted as acting in harmony with "the fatal course of history."

The Kurdish Problem

On March 11, 1970, the government concluded a peace agreement with representatives of the Kurdish insurgents, thus ending a civil war that had gone on, with occasional cease-fires, since 1961 and that had, at various times, involved perhaps 80 percent of the Iraqi armed forces. The fifteen-point agreement included the provisions of an eleven-point plan worked out in 1966 that had brought about a temporary cease-fire as well as additional concessions to the Kurds.

By late 1970 several provisions of the agreement had been implemented by the government. On March 29 the cabinet was reorganized to include five Kurds, and on May 9 a Kurdish-language newspaper resumed publication. On July 16 President Bakr announced the promulgation of a new provisional constitution—the fourth since 1958—that among other things declared that Iraq is composed of two nationalities, Arab and Kurd. The new constitution recognized Kurdish rights, the chief one making Kurdish an official language and allowing it to be taught in the schools in the Kurdish area.

The March 11 agreement contained a proviso that the Kurds would retain their military equipment until the final stages of implementing the agreement had been reached. In August 1970 the government announced the promulgation of a frontier militia law and, although the details of the law were not available in late 1970, the law apparently makes possible the payment of funds by the central government to the Kurdish army (known as the Pesh or Pej) Mergha for service as a frontier militia force.

In late 1970, however, the Kurds were not yet satisfied. The five

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

cabinet positions were relatively unimportant ones and, in any event, the role of the cabinet itself was subservient to that of the RCC. In addition, the government indefinitely postponed a census that had been scheduled for October 26, 1970, to determine the numbers and location of the Kurds so that a Kurdish area could be designated. Kurdish spokesmen have asserted that the government has aided and encouraged the immigration of non-Kurds into areas in which the Kurds claim a small majority. The Kurds also complained that the government had failed to implement the portion of the agreement that provided for the appointment of Kurdish civil and police officials in those departments that clearly had Kurdish majorities.

The March 11 agreement also provided that a vice president of the republic (appointed by the president) would be a Kurd, but by late 1970 the Kurds had not nominated anyone for appointment. On the one hand, this reflected Kurdish feeling that a Kurdish vice president should not be appointed until the government has effectuated the other points of the agreement, notably the census; on the other hand, however, it indicated some signs of stress and disagreement among the Kurdish leaders.

For over a quarter of a century, the most prominent Kurd was Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who in 1958 returned from several years of exile in the Soviet Union to take control of the military arm of the Kurdish movement. He alternately ignored and dominated the political wing as manifested in the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), but, for the most part, he was concerned and content with his role as general of the Pesh Mergha. During the years of warfare, however, the KDP established a governing apparatus that discharged many of the functions of a state, such as operating schools and a postal system, collecting taxes, and provisioning an army.

The increasing power of the political leaders of the Kurds was indicated by the fact that it was the secretary general of the Executive Bureau of Kurdistan, Mahmud Uzman, rather than Barzani, who was the leader of the Kurdish negotiating team that concluded the March 11 agreement. In addition, Uzman reportedly played the key role in the July 1970 KDP meeting. Many observers interpret Uzman's enhanced power and prestige as an indication of a restructuring of the KDP away from the traditional, feudal, tribal leadership of Barzani. It may, in addition, reflect the fact that by 1970 Barzani was an old man, who previously had for many years been engaged in strenuous guerrilla warfare.

Foreign Relations

It is generally assumed that the Baath regime decided to reach a rapproachement with the Kurds largely as a result of external pres-

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

sures and problems. The Soviet Union, identified by Bakr as an important friend of Iraq, had long been critical of the government's handling of the Kurdish situation. In the fall of 1968, an article in *Pravda* (Moscow) stated that "the Kurds of Iraq are waging a just fight to insure their rights in the framework of one state together with the Arabs." The *Pravda* article included a strong admonition to the new Iraqi government to end the Kurdish civil war in order to be able to pursue the war "against imperialism and against Israel."

The more urgent factor that motivated the government to come to terms with the Kurds, however, was the worsening relationship with Iran. There were many disputed issues between the countries, including: the use of rivers that originate in Iran and flow into the Tigris in Iraq; the alleged support of Iraqi Kurds by Iranian Kurds and the Iranian government; access by Iranian Shiites to Shia shrines at Karbala and Najaf in Iraq; and a claim by Iraq to the Iranian province of Khuzistan, which has large oil reserves. In addition, Iraq allowed General Bakhtiar, a former chief of the Iranian secret police and a bitter enemy of the Shah of Iran, to engage in anti-Iranian activity in Baghdad.

On April 19, 1969, Iran abrogated a 1937 treaty with Iraq on the use of the Shatt al Arab (River of the Arabs), a river that for a distance is the border between the two countries. Among other things, the 1937 treaty provided that, unlike most international rivers, the boundary was not in the channel center, but on the Iranian side at the low-water mark. This gave Iraq control of the navigation of the river, and it was this provision of the treaty that prompted the Iranian abrogation.

The Iraqi government's immediate response was to force several thousand Iranian residents to leave Iraq; by mid-May 1969 an estimated 10,000 Iranians had crossed the border into Iran. During the next several months, the information agencies of the two governments engaged in an unusually virulent propaganda campaign. The Iraqis accused the Shah of Iran of being a puppet of "Western imperialists" and renewed Iraq's 1961 claim to various oil-rich sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf.

In January 1970 the two countries came close to war. On January 22, the day after the announcement of the discovery of a coup plot, the Iraqi government ordered the Iranian ambassador and his staff to leave the country within twenty-four hours. The Iranians subsequently asserted that the Iraqi police had detained an Iranian diplomat and had, through the use of torture, extracted a "confession" of complicity in the Kurdish revolutionary movement.

Apparently as a result of Iran's strong reaction, Vice President Ammash, on February 3, flew to Turkey to ask that government to use its influence to prevent an outbreak of war. The Turkish government agreed to mediate the dispute and, although the propaganda

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

warfare between the two countries continued and, as of late 1970, diplomatic relations had not been resumed, open warfare was avoided.

Iraq's relations with the Arab states of the Middle East continued, in late 1970, to be strained and unfriendly. Iraq and Syria were openly and vociferously critical of each other for deviations from the Baath Party line, and Iraq's radio broadcasts regularly excoriated the monarchist governments of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. For a brief period in 1969, Iraq placed Lebanon off limits to all Iraqi citizens. In August 1970 Iraq closed the Egyptian Trade Center in Baghdad and arrested its director. Iraq supported the denunciations of the Palestinian leaders of the acceptance by Jordan and the United Arab Republic (Egypt) of the peace proposals and cease-fire plan of United States Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

Iraq does maintain various military and political agreements with fellow Arab countries, but the agreements would seem to be of limited value. In late 1968, for example, the governments of Iraq, Jordan and Syria formed the Arab Eastern Command (also known as the Eastern Arab Command) to engage in staff and tactical planning and coordination. At the outset, an Iraqi officer headed the command. In addition, an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 Iraqi troops were stationed in Jordan and 6,000 in Syria, presumably under this command.

The command was of no consequence during the hostilities in Jordan in the early fall of 1970, however, and there were frequent reports that the Iraqi troops in that country had been or would be withdrawn. The Iraqi government was sympathetic to the goals and activities of the Palestinian guerrillas and therefore would not assist the Jordanian forces, but it was not so sympathetic as to commit its forces to aid the Palestinians.

Relations with Egypt were, at least until the death of Gamal Abdel Nasser in September 1970, complicated by domestic political considerations. The Baathists were professedly Pan-Arab but were fearful of the dominance of Nasser in the Pan-Arab movement and of the strong pro-Nasser element among Iraqi politicians. A prime target of the Baathists purge trials, therefore, was the pro-Nasser element.

With the death of Nasser, however, there was a seeming reconsideration of the general anti-Egypt policy. One of the reasons given for the dismissal of Air Marshal Tikriti was that he was rigidly anti-Nasser and therefore had to be removed to make possible a rapprochement with Egypt. In late 1970, therefore, Iraq's relations with Egypt were in a state of flux.

Factors that suggested an easing in the Iraqi-Egyptian hostility were the close and cordial relationship between Iraq and Libya and the participation of Libya in the proposed Libya-Sudan-Egypt

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

federation. On November 8, 1970, a press release from Cairo suggested that a formal federation was a real probability.

Despite its campaign against domestic Communists, the Iraqi government has carefully cultivated good relations with all Communist states except Romania. (Iraq suspended diplomatic relations with Romania in 1968 when Romania established diplomatic relations with Israel.) On May 10, 1969, Iraq established diplomatic relations with East Germany (the German Democratic Republic), the first non-Communist state to do so.

Iraq depends heavily on the Soviet Union for military equipment and economic assistance. In exchange, Iraq has been a staunch supporter of Soviet policy. When the Soviet army invaded Czechoslovakia in August 1968, for example, Iraq supported the action in both its domestic and foreign broadcasts over Radio Baghdad.

During the late 1960s Iraq relied heavily on France as a supplier of military equipment. France was second only to the Soviet Union as a source of sophisticated weaponry and in 1968 concluded agreements to furnish Iraq with fifty-two jet-fighter aircraft and seventy medium tanks.

Iraq strongly supports the North Vietnamese in the struggle in Southeast Asia and was one of the few countries to extend diplomatic recognition to the government-in-exile of the former chief of government of Cambodia, Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The Iraqi representative to the United Nations regularly supports the liberation movements in Portuguese Angola and Mozambique and in South Africa. At the 1969 session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Iraqi representative reiterated his government's opinion that the United States was "the foremost imperialist power in the world . . . from whose machinations no country has been safe." In late 1970 the interests of the United States in Iraq were represented by the Belgian government; the Belgians have performed this function since the cessation of diplomatic relations by the Iraqis in July 1967.

Public Information

In late 1970 the press continued to function under strict government auspices. Dailies circulating in Baghdad included *Al Jumuriyah* (The Republic), *At Thawrah* (The Revolution), the English-language *Baghdad Observer*, and the Arabic-Kurdish *At Taakhi* (Brotherhood). All were published by the official Press and Printing Organization. The official Iraqi News Agency (INA) has assumed the initiative in news gathering and dissemination and was also the primary source for news and commentary that expressed "the views of the ruling regime about national and international problems."

In early 1970 the agency had more than 200 employees and was in the process of further expansion and of technical modernization.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Its daily printed output included news bulletins in English and Arabic and special bulletins on the Palestine issue and the activities of Arab guerrillas. The agency's radio teletype transmissions in Arabic have been expanded, and a new English-language service was initiated in March 1970. In July of the same year, INA announced the opening of branch offices in Mosul and Basrah to serve the northern and southern provinces, respectively. Plans were also announced to open additional branch offices in Arabic countries including Libya, Algeria, Sudan, and Bahrain (the largest island of the archipelago in the west Persian Gulf). The new INA branches will be equipped with radio-telephoto transmitting and receiving equipment to facilitate communication with the Baghdad central office.

In 1970 the government-owned radio and television station was administered by the Directorate General of Broadcasting and Television and was financed by annual government grants. It was headed by a board of directors, which was under the supervision of the minister of culture and information. Members of the board include the director of radio and television, the director of the INA, a representative of the Public Relations Office of the RCC, and representatives of the Ministries of Culture and Information, Defense, Education, Higher Education, and Youth.

In late 1970 Iraqi domestic and international broadcasts used a total of eleven mediumwave and shortwave transmitters ranging in power from 50 to 300 kilowatts. The construction of additional mediumwave transmitters at Basrah, Al Amarah, Kirkuk, and Mosul was scheduled for completion during the course of the 1965—69 Five Year Plan, but by late 1970 they were not yet completed. The Ministry of Culture and Information announced a project for the extensive improvement of radio and television facilities at a cost of 1.3 million Iraqi dinars. The proposed project included an increase in the power of radio and television transmitters in the Baghdad area and the acquisition of a mobile television transmitter and of microwave equipment to relay broadcasts and telecasts. The project was approved by the Economic Planning Council, but information on its implementation was not available in late 1970. According to experts, however, the output powers of some shortwave and mediumwave transmitters were increased between 1968 and 1970, and conditions for radio reception were improved. According to 1970 estimates, the number of radio sets totaled about 185,000.

The domestic service of Radio Baghdad broadcast a daily total of about twenty-three hours in Arabic, eight hours in Kurdish, and two hours in Turkoman. The domestic service formerly broadcast a daily Arabic-language program for the armed forces, but this was replaced in May 1970 by a program entitled "Voice of the Masses," which was broadcast over a powerful mediumwave transmitter.

In the summer and fall of 1970, the facilities of Radio Baghdad

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

were made available for broadcasts of the various groups representing Palestinian guerrillas. In August a program entitled "Armed Struggle," addressed to the guerrillas, was broadcast as part of the "Voice of the Masses" program. The broadcast featured news items from Palestine, gave summaries of guerrilla operations, and encouraged the commandos to thwart attempts at surrender. In September 1970 guerrilla broadcasts regularly took the place of normally scheduled domestic programs. Radio Baghdad allocated three hours of its "Voice of the Masses" program to guerrilla broadcasts and by mid-October devoted the entire time of that program to broadcast messages of the Palestinian Liberation Organization's Central Committee. Commentary on events in Jordan, reports on alleged Zionist plots, and a daily thirty-minute Hebrew-language broadcast were also featured.

The international broadcasts of Radio Baghdad in 1970 used four shortwave transmitters. The transmissions totaled seventy-three hours and thirty minutes a week, including twenty-eight hours in Persian, seven hours each in Urdu, Turkish, Russian, and Hebrew, and five hours each in Germany, French, and English. As a result of the dispute with Iran involving the Persian Gulf area and the use of the Shatt al Arab waterway, the Persian-language broadcasts were increased from three to four hours daily. The broadcasts featured statements against the Shah and against the Iranian government, interspersed with Iranian songs, martial music, and religious talks. Most of the news material, however, dealt with events in the Arab world and was couched in strong terms of Arab nationalism.

Television stations in Baghdad, Basrah, Mosul, and Kirkuk telecast a total of about five hours daily in 1970. Television coverage is scheduled for extension after the completion of new stations in Al Amarah and Al Sanswah. In 1970 the number of television sets was estimated at 176,000.

According to data available in 1970, Arabic-language broadcasts from Communist countries in late 1969 totaled about 235 hours a week. Of this total, the Communist countries of Eastern Europe broadcast 137 hours and 30 minutes; and Communist China and Cuba, 14 hours and 16 hours and 20 minutes, respectively.

Information activities of the Soviet Union benefited by the presence of a Soviet cultural center in Baghdad and by the activities of local branches of international Communist-front organizations, such as the International Union of Students, the World Council for Peace, and the World Federation of Trade Unions. An Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Society was formed in February 1969.

Information activities of the Communist countries of Eastern Europe were reinforced by cultural and economic cooperation agreements and by official visits. Exchanges with East Germany gained impetus when the Iraqi government established diplomatic

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

relations with that country in May 1969. An Iraqi-East German Friendship Society was formed, and cooperative protocols in the economic, technical, and cultural fields were signed during the same year. A vigorous exchange of visits followed—of government officials, municipal authorities, youth groups, and trade-union delegates.

SOCIAL CHANGES AND SOCIAL WELFARE

In late 1970 there was no evidence that significant changes had occurred in the basic social or family structures, but noteworthy developments had taken place in the realm of ethnic and religious relations. The position of the religious minorities, especially the Jewish community, appeared to have deteriorated markedly. In late 1967 special restrictions were imposed on the few thousand Jews remaining in the country. They were required to obtain permission of the Ministry of Interior before selling their property, and their personal income was limited by government order to approximately 95 dinars per year.

In early 1970 a committee of French jurists, chaired by a former president of the French Senate, reported that Iraqi Jews were barred from various professions, were required to carry special identity documents, and were subjected to curfews. In addition, the convictions and public executions of accused traitors, a large number of whom were Jews, gave rise to international concern about possible discrimination, and it was widely reported that numerous Jews were being detained without charges. In January 1969 Pope Paul VI stated that the executions "generated the suspicion that racial prejudice was not absent." The Iraqi government, however, denied the suggestions of discrimination, and asserted that those executed and imprisoned represented all religious communities.

During the spring of 1969 Jews were allowed to leave the country, but without their property; statistics on the number who did so were not available in late 1970. Also, in 1969 foreign-owned businesses were required to inform the government of the names, addresses, and religions of their employees. In June 1969 the government outlawed the observance of the Bahai faith; there were reportedly only a few hundred adherents to the faith in the country, and no reason for the ban was announced. The sect's property was confiscated, and its religious centers were closed.

Education

In 1970 there was little evidence of progress in public education. Political instability had hampered school construction programs, and school attendance had tended to be irregular in the northern areas affected by civil strife. Statements by cabinet ministers and

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

education experts in early 1970 reflected official concern with crowded school facilities and with the problem of coordinating secondary school curricula with the country's economic and manpower needs.

The Council of Educational Planning and Social Development under the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Higher Education (headed by a woman), and the Psychological and Educational Research Center at Baghdad University have been formed since 1967 to develop proposals for educational reforms. University curricula were under review by the Higher University Council, headed by the president of Baghdad University. In late 1970, however, data on the accomplishments of these organizations were unavailable.

Provisions governing the educational rights of Kurds were set forth in several joint agreements following the settlement of the Iraqi-Kurdish conflict in March 1970. The agreements provided for the following: reenrollment in public schools of Kurdish children whose education was interrupted by the disturbances; an urgent school building program in the northern areas; and the allocation to Kurdish students of a proportionate number of places and scholarships in public schools and universities. Moreover, Kurdish was to be taught in secondary schools and universities.

According to official reports available in 1970, approximately 70 percent of the boys and between 30 and 40 percent of the girls, aged seven to twelve, were enrolled in primary schools. More than 60 percent of the students, however, did not finish the primary grades. In early 1970 the minister of planning stated that full implementation of universal, free primary education was expected by 1980 and that by that year attendance of the first three years of secondary schooling will be made compulsory. According to official statements, about half of the 8,000 new primary school classrooms envisaged under the 1965—69 Five Year Plan have been completed. School facilities in late 1970, however, were inadequate, and in most areas, the primary grades were taught in two or three shifts.

The demand for secondary education continued to increase. According to government officials, an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 students will graduate from secondary schools each year during the early 1970s. Despite official encouragement of vocational and technical education, and priorities granted to graduates in these fields in the assignment of university scholarships, most secondary school students majored in liberal arts. In 1968 only 3 percent of secondary school students attended vocational schools. The minister of planning expressed concern about the growing unemployment among secondary school graduates with liberal arts degrees and pointed out that the government and private industry are unable to fill the demand for personnel with vocational and technical qualifications.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The expansion and diversification of the secondary school system, announced during the mid-1960s, were at the beginning stages of implementation in late 1970. Accordingly, some secondary schools during the academic year 1970/71 added grade twelve to the two senior secondary grades ten and eleven and offered a program leading to a major in mathematics, in addition to the two existing programs for majors in science and in the liberal arts.

There were 45,201 primary school teachers and 8,602 secondary school teachers in 1968. Newspaper articles in 1970 suggested that there were sufficient teachers to enable the government to send some of them on a loan basis to other Arab countries. In 1969 some 120 teachers were assigned to teaching posts in Saudi Arabia and another 20 to the People's Republic of Yemen.

University facilities have been expanded since 1968. The construction of a new campus at Baghdad University, begun during the mid-1960s, has been completed. Universities have been opened at Mosul, Basrah, and Sulaymaniyah, and an agricultural college is planned at Irbil. According to official plans, research and instruction in these new institutions will be related to agricultural and oil resources development in the respective areas. Mosul University enrolled about 3,000 students, according to data available in 1970 and received assistance from the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop its chemistry, geology, biology, engineering, and statistical faculties. Basrah University, with faculties of law, engineering, education, arts, and sciences, received a government grant of 9 million dinars to expand its facilities during the 1970s.

Despite the expansion of university facilities, only a small proportion of applicants can be admitted. University enrollment figures for 1970 are lacking, but early in that year the minister of planning stated that the demand by secondary school graduates for university admission was increasing and that the rate of expansion had failed to keep up with the increase of applicants for university admission. According to the minister, unemployment among university graduates was prevalent, and the economy could absorb them "only to a most limited extent."

According to information compiled in 1969, the number of Iraqis attending universities in the Soviet Union and in other Communist countries declined from 1,035 in 1967 to 670 in late 1969. Some 380 Iraqi students were enrolled in universities in Great Britain during the same year. About twelve postgraduate fellowships were extended to Iraqis by the Soviet Union in 1969, and another ten each by Poland and Bulgaria. Lumumba University in Moscow was favored by most Iraqis desiring to enroll in Communist universities, but educational policies in late 1969 reflected an official intent to limit the number of Iraqis at that institution. When in 1969 Iraq

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

recognized the equivalency of Soviet university degrees, those from Lumumba University were specifically excluded.

Living Conditions

In 1970 living conditions reportedly were at a lower level than early in the 1960s. Hardships prevailed in much of the Kurdish-inhabited northern areas that had been the scene of civil strife. In the cities the rapidly rising population outpaced official efforts to develop urban housing and to improve utilities. Many social service projects envisaged under the 1965—69 Five Year Plan were not completed by 1970 because of delays caused by unsettled political and social conditions and because of the diversion of development funds to military budgets. Several of the incomplete projects of the previous plan were carried over to the Five Year Plan of 1970—74, which stressed agricultural development, notably the increase of rural incomes, in an attempt to stem the migration from the countryside to the cities.

In 1970 the main government welfare effort was the Kurdistan Development Project, directed by the Ministry of Affairs of the North and assisted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Designed to reconstruct the strife-torn north, the project called for the building of 780 miles of rural roads, to stimulate local agricultural marketing, and for the irrigation of some 12,300 acres in Sulaymaniyah Province. It also provided for the resettlement of several hundred families displaced by the hostilities and for the distribution of the equivalent of about US$2.8 million worth of food supplies. In October 1970 an electrification plan was announced for northern Iraq at the cost of 2 million dinars, under the terms of the economic and technical cooperation agreement between Iraq and East Germany concluded earlier that year.

Reliable vital statistics, including disease and mortality rates, for 1970 were not available. Partial data compiled by Western observers for the 1965—75 period estimated the crude infant mortality rate at 200 per 1,000 live births and the average life expectancy at forty years.

The main progress in health care was reflected in the increase of health facilities, especially in the rural areas. According to the Iraqi government, in 1970 most villages were served by clinics or mobile health units. The data also indicated that there were 152 hospitals and 741 village clinics in 1967, compared to 131 and 400, respectively, in 1964.

Additional hospitals and other health facilities, including about a dozen village clinics, were in various stages of completion in late 1970, in the northern departments of Mosul, Sulaymaniyah, Irbil,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

and Kirkuk. A new hospital for respiratory diseases at Niniveh, near the city of Mosul, and a maternity ward and outpatient clinic for the Mosul city hospital were nearing completion. The hospital for chest diseases, in the city of Irbil, and the general hospital in Tuz, also in the north, were undergoing expansion. At Dakuk, located about 75 miles north of Mosul, a new 100-bed general hospital was in the planning stage, and the city hospital was being expanded. The construction of a medical building complex at Baghdad University medical school, built at a cost of 5.2 million dinars, was completed in 1969.

The shortage of physicians and of paramedical personnel continued to pose serious problems in public health. An article on health care published in 1970 stated that in Baghdad, in 1967, there was one public health physician for about every 3,000 persons; in some provinces, notably in Sulaymaniyah, Diwaniyah, and Nasariyah, the corresponding ratio exceeded 10,000. The large majority of public health dentists, nurses, midwives, and medical technicians practiced in the capital.

Population

The available statistics, which were basic to all per capita income estimates and other per capita magnitudes used for intertemporal and international comparisons, have to be used with great care. Until July 1, 1970, when the United Nations revised downward its 1965 census enumeration for Iraq because of errors found in the computations, the rate of population growth (compounded) between 1965 and the previous census year, 1957, was taken to be 3.4 percent; this rate had been widely extrapolated from 1965 to subsequent years. After the revision, the 1957—65 growth rate declined to 3.0 percent and, based on regional population estimates made in 1968, the rate from 1965 to 1969 declined even further, to around 2.3 percent. As a consequence, the population estimate for mid-1970 was reduced from 9.7 million to around 9.05 million.

The 1965 census (as revised) gave Iraq a population of 8,047,415 in that year, about 51 percent of which was estimated to be male and around 60 percent to be rurally domiciled. The active population (labor force) was estimated at around 25 percent of the total population. About 70 percent was considered to be rural, and around 65 percent to be male.

In 1967 employees of government and semigovernment departments were estimated at around 300,000. Industrial employment in the same year, according to the government's quarterly industrial survey (which apparently included petroleum and electric power production but not handicrafts), was estimated at more than

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

150,000, of which petroleum extraction and processing probably constituted 10,000 to 11,000. Official estimates of public and private construction indicated employment in that sector in 1967 of 50,000 or more. Employment in agriculture (including rural marketing and handicrafts) was probably somewhere around 1.3 million to 1.4 million (about 60 to 65 percent of the estimated labor force). Employment in private services and urban marketing (taken together as a residual), totaled perhaps some 125,000 or so, of which private services maybe represented 50,000 to 60,000. Unemployment in 1967 (defined by the United Nations as registered applicants for work) was estimated at around 3,700. If defined as applicants unable to secure work, the figure would be vastly increased.

ECONOMIC CHANGES

Output and Income

The distinction between the gross national product (GNP—the total value at recent market prices of all goods and services produced by the economy) and the gross domestic product (GDP—the GNP exclusive of external earnings) is more significant in the case of Iraq than in the case of many other countries. This is because a sizable part of the profits that accrue mainly to foreign-owned petroleum companies from the sale of Iraqi crude oil in foreign markets are retained abroad by the companies and not returned to Iraq. These profits are the spread between what is domestically produced and what is enjoyed by the nation as income; it is the item referred to as investment income, or as net factor income payments abroad, in the goods and services account of the balance of payments. In 1966 the net investment income item amounted to about 138 million dinars, or approximately 16 percent of the GDP. Thus, although the GDP offered the truer measure of the actual output of the economy, the GNP provided the more appropriate picture of nationally available resources.

In 1966—the latest year for which reasonably firm figures for the GDP were available in late 1970—the GDP amounted to around 874 million dinars at current prices (see table A). There was also a GNP of around 736 million dinars at current prices, and a per capita GDP and GNP of 106 and 89 dinars respectively. Preliminary and very tentative figures for 1969 suggested a GDP in that year of around 1,000 million dinars reflecting a growth rate in real income of about 3 percent, and an increase in prices of about 5 percent between 1966 and 1969. Comparison of the growth rates of real income and population over the 1967—69 period would suggest that there was little increase in per capita income in those years.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Table A. Gross Domestic Product of Iraq for Selected Years, 1964–69, at Current Prices
(in millions of Iraqi dinars)[1]

	1964	1965	1966	1969[2]	Percentage contribution 1966
Agriculture, forestry, hunting, and fishing	152.9	163.2	174.2	191.2	19.9
Mining and quarrying	276.0	284.9	303.8	320.7	34.8
Manufacturing	53.0	61.4	62.9	90.1	7.2
Construction	17.1	18.5	19.1	30.9	2.2
Electricity, gas, and water	8.4	9.5	12.0	17.8	1.4
Transportation, storage, and communication	56.4	59.5	58.8	65.4	6.7
Wholesale and retail trade	45.5	53.1	56.8	61.9	6.5
Banking, insurance, and real estate	7.1	7.5	12.0	19.7	1.4
Ownership of buildings	15.3	15.8	15.9	16.3	1.8
Public administration and defense	86.0	89.5	96.6	125.3	11.0
Services	54.4	58.8	62.1	61.3	7.1
Total	772.1	821.7	874.2	1,000.6	100.0
Price indexes (1962=100)[3]	107	104	104	109	

[1] 1 dinar equals US$2.80—see Glossary.

[2] Estimated by compounding the 1966 data at 3 percent per year, multiplying by 1.05 to allow for estimated price changes between 1966 and 1969, and adjusting for estimated changes in percentage contribution by sectors between 1966 and 1969.

[3] Average of wholesale price indexes in Baghdad markets, using weights: foodstuffs, 2; textiles, 1; building materials, 1.

Source: Adapted from *Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, 1968*, United Nations, New York, 1969, I, p. 314 and II, p. 109; and Iraq, Central Bank of Iraq, Statistics and Research Department, *Bulletin No. IV, 1969*, Baghdad, 1969, pp. 38–39.

A percentage breakdown of the 1966 GDP estimate by industries provides a rough idea of the relative contribution made to the national product by the several economic sectors. According to the United Nations, the petroleum industry in 1966 contributed slightly more than one-third of the national output, and agriculture—including animal husbandry, forestry, hunting, and fishing—contributed about one-fifth, or about 55 percent between the two sectors. The next largest contributors were the government—including the police and the military—with around 11 percent and manufacturing with slightly more than 7 percent. These were followed closely by private and social services; transport, storage, and communications; and wholesale and retail trade, in that order, for another 20 percent. Construction (2.2 percent), utilities (1.4 percent), and banking, insurance, and real estate (3.2 percent) provided the remaining 7 percent of the GDP. The use of national resources in

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

expenditure forms was distributed between the private and public sectors, roughly in the proportion of 75 to 25 percent. Gross fixed investment for 1966, including changes in stocks, was estimated at around 17 percent.

Very preliminary estimates of the sectoral breakdown of the estimated 1969 GDP suggested that between 1966 and 1969 there had been no considerable change. Minor percentage reductions in the contributions of both the petroleum and the agricultural sectors were largely offset by increases in the manufacturing, government, and construction sectors. There appeared to have been small increases, also, in the relative importance of utilities, banking, and insurance, with small declines indicated for commerce, social services, and transportation, storage, and communications.

Responsibility for the failure of the economy to grow in real terms between 1967 and 1969, inclusive, is probably to be attributed mainly to the government, both before and after the Baath Party takeover, for since the mid-1960s nearly all sectors of the economy had been subject either to government ownership or to extensive government control. Agriculture continued to be disorganized, as a result of the uncompleted agrarian reform of 1958 and the diversion of development resources from agriculture to defense and security. Large-scale industry, although it had received more development attention than the other sectors, had not recovered from the disorientation and organizational and administrative disturbance resulting from the nationalization laws of 1964; the private sector continued to be loath to invest additional funds in industry. Investment initiative by the foreign oil companies continued in suspense pending clarification of the new government's policy in regard to them. Consequently, new drilling was not being undertaken, and the limit of existing production capacity had effectively been reached.

The proposed economic policy of the Baath government was presented by President Bakr shortly after the government takeover in 1968. Its major tenets called for: development of the agrarian reform of 1958; development of the national oil resources under the aegis of the Iraqi National Oil Company and independently of the world oil monopolies; and development of the public sector establishments, with special attention to the reactivation of the private sector. Most of the agricultural and much of the industrial development implicit in this policy had to be postponed until after the government had firmly established itself, after the Kurdish revolt had been resolved, and after foreign relations issues had been resolved. These problems were only satisfactorily settled in 1970. In the meantime, economic developments were first largely limited to building up the Iraqi National Oil Company and other official agencies for the exploitation of the large and as yet unexploited

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

petroleum, sulfur, and other mineral resources and second, to transportation and construction projects that dovetailed with defense needs or that could be financed and largely staffed from abroad.

Development Planning

By late 1970 the government was embarked upon its second successive five-year development program (fiscal 1970/71 to fiscal 1974/75). The first program (fiscal 1965/66 to fiscal 1969/70), though statistically terminating on March 31, 1970, was foreseen by the Ministry of Planning at the start of fiscal year 1969/70 as not likely to utilize even half of the total funds allocated to it. The funds were programmed at 820 million dinars. This shortfall in the implementation of the program was attributed to poor project design, incompetent contracting, inadequate managerial and administrative supervision, and diversion to current military expenditure of resources allocated to development. It would leave a number of first-program projects to be completed in the second program.

The second program was initially projected at a total cost of 973 million dinars, of which: 490 million dinars represented central government investment; 200 million dinars, investment by state agencies and enterprises; and 283 million dinars, investment by the private sector. The breakdown of total outlays of the central government by sectors showed agriculture allotted 41 percent; industry, 35 percent; transport and communications, 12 percent; and building and housing, 12 percent. The new program appreciably upgraded the priority assigned to agriculture, which, in the earlier program, was assigned 25 percent; it downgraded both transport and communications and building and housing, which previously were allotted 16 and 20 percent of the total, respectively. Industry was allotted 35 percent, compared with 28 percent in the first program. The breakdown of central government outlays in the new program, by years, allocated 16 percent of the total to each of the first two years, 20 percent to the third year (fiscal 1971/72), and about 23.5 percent, each, to the last two years.

The increased proportion accorded to agriculture in the new program was in acknowledgment of the very large proportion of Iraq's population that depended for its livelihood directly on the land. The agricultural allocation would continue to be applied largely to infrastructure—irrigation, drainage, land reclamation, storage, and fertilizers—and would be complemented by current budget outlays for improved seeds and extension services. The outlays for industry would largely be directed, at least in the early years of the plan, to completing projects in process and upgrading the efficiency of industrial management. The private sector was expected to invest 25 million dinars yearly in construction—plus 5 million dinars yearly

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

by the oil companies—and 133 million dinars over the five-year period in agricultural, industrial, commercial, and service projects.

The new program was intended to generate a 7.1 percent increase annually (compounded) in the national income, leading to a doubling of the national income in ten years. Allowing for the Ministry of Planning's projected 3.6 percent annual growth in population, the projected rate of income growth would mean an annual increase in per capita income of 3.5 percent per year. Using a population growth rate of 2.6 percent would mean an annual per capita increase in income of 4.5 percent. This would double per capita income in sixteen years.

In early 1970 the new investment program was expanded from 973 million dinars to about 1,144 million dinars, with the public sector (including state agencies and enterprises) raised to about 860 million dinars. The change apparently was made in order to be able to discount the possibility that the private sector would not fill the role assigned to it and at the same time to be assured that the per capita growth rate would not suffer thereby. It perhaps also reflected the imminent conclusion of the war with the Kurds and the growing body of credits extended to Iraq by the Communist-bloc countries.

Agriculture

Although the agricultural sector contributed only about 20 percent of the GDP in the 1967–69 period, against 30 to 35 percent for the petroleum sector, agriculture was still the sector on which 60 to 70 percent of the population depended for their livelihood and in which any actual, as opposed to statistical, improvement in living standards was first likely to show up. The sector has chronically been subject to short-term fluctuations in production resulting from drought, flooding, and inadequate drainage in the lower Tigris-Euphrates valley.

In the 1967–69 period, the sector suffered from insecurity and lack of new investment as a result of the authorities' failure to move ahead with the implementation of the agrarian reform legislation. According to the statute, as amended, the land held by landowners in excess of the legally specified limits should have been expropriated from the owners and distributed to the landless by the end of 1968. In actual fact, it had not been, and large amounts of land remained in the hands of the authorities awaiting distribution. To this failure was added the failure to implement the agricultural portions of the development program, which mostly were intended to improve the irrigation, drainage, and reclamation infrastructure as a basis for enlarged production and exports.

Until 1969 the success experienced in other parts of the world

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

with the new high-yield varieties of wheat, rice, and corn developed in Mexico and the Philippines had not been achieved in Iraq. Production of the main crops—wheat, barley, rice, cotton, and dates—though demonstrating sizable year-to-year changes in production—had given no indication of a major breakthrough onto a higher plateau of output. Even though 1968 was a peak output year for practically all crops except dates, 1969 saw a backsliding to previous levels for most crops except barley and dates.

With the settlement of the Kurdish problem in early 1970 and the progressive liquidation of political opposition, the government was freer than it had been in 1968 and 1969 to turn its attention to the agricultural requirements of the peasants. In doing so, it was able to enlist the help of the FAO, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and various East European countries. Work was intensified on a number of the irrigation facilities on both the Tigris and the Euphrates and on solving the salinity-drainage problem of the river valley below Baghdad. Further discussions were undertaken with Syria to find a formula for dividing the waters of the Euphrates, upon which depend all the major decisions for further large-scale efforts to impound, divert, and domesticate the waters of that river. The government undertook these expanded activities in the framework of the second economic development program.

By late 1970 there was increased promise of greater application of the high-yield plant varieties, especially wheat, which were foreseen by the FAO as raising dramatically the future output level of wheat, the country's number one food grain. There had been some restructuring of the government's agricultural organization in a search for improved administration, organization, and coordination. In a major gesture the government canceled all further land payments, from peasants to government and from government to landowners, provided for under the 1958 legislation. Also canceled were debts contracted by peasants at the banks in the early years of the land reform. The ownership of machinery pools and artesian wells was transferred from the government to peasants' agricultural and credit cooperatives, of which, at the end of 1968, there were some 450 to 500. A new overall bureau was created to oversee all aspects of agricultural development. In May 1970 the land reform legislation of 1958 was amended, limiting all landholdings to 10 to 500 acres, depending on the location, fertility, and irrigation facilities of the particular parcel of land. Official or semiofficial collective and incorporated farms larger than 500 acres were abolished.

Industry and Communication

Although output in the nationalized large-scale manufacturing sector appears to have declined somewhat in 1967 and early 1968,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

this was apparently offset by increased production in the construction industry and perhaps also in the small-scale manufacturing sector. Of the forces contributing to a decrease in large-scale manufacturing, probably the most important was the abrupt decline of petroleum revenues in 1967 (from 141 million dinars to 125 million dinars) resulting from interruptions in pipeline deliveries at the Syrian and Lebanese littoral. Scarcely less important, however, were the retrenchment in government outlays for development in 1967 and 1968 in reaction to the June 1967 Arab-Israeli armed conflict and the Baath political and military takeover in 1968. The impact of these developments on manufacturing was aggravated by reduced agricultural income and demand in 1967 and by war-induced increases in import duties and excise taxes and restrictions on import permits.

In 1968 oil revenues rose from 125 million dinars to 160 million dinars. This was accompanied by an appreciable increase in income generated in the agricultural sector and by a large increase in government borrowing from the banking system. Development outlays continued low, so that in some areas of large-scale industry there continued to exist a considerable amount of slack; on the other hand, government outlays for defense and security were increased by more than 20 percent. Preliminary estimates suggest that, on balance, manufacturing and construction showed somewhat more than trend growth in the latter part of 1968 and during 1969.

This growth included completion of a number of plants that had been undertaken in previous years and that came into production, or were readied for it, in 1969, and the inauguration of others to start production in the early 1970s. Among the plants already begun were new or expanded production facilities for fertilizers, textiles, refining of sugar and petroleum, and extraction of sulfur. The proposed new manufacturing facilities included: a major sulfur mining and processing complex; assembly plants for cars and trucks; new plants for bicycles, farm machinery, and tractors; and additional capacity for cement, textiles (including carpets), sugar, petroleum, and pharmaceuticals. Because the greater part of the government program of industrial development had emphasized producer or intermediate goods, especially those connected with petroleum, the much-needed increase in employment to match the population growth and the rural-urban migration was left either to the private sector or to the agrarian reform-agricultural development sector programs.

Many of the proposed new industrial investments were to be carried out, including the financing of them, under arrangements with Czechoslovakian, East German, French, Hungarian, Japanese, Polish, and, especially, Soviet interests. Featured in a number of the agreements arranged in 1969 and 1970 were provisions for the re-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

payment of the loan in the form of crude petroleum to be forthcoming from the government's own wells in the north Rumaila field.

Communications

In the matter of communications, there were two outstanding developments during the 1967—70 period. The first was the completion of the Soviet-built standard-gauge Baghdad-Basrah extension of the line connecting Baghdad with Turkey and Europe. This replaced the existing narrow-gauge line between Basrah and Baghdad and completed transshipment-free rail movement between eastern Turkey, northern Iraq, and the Persian Gulf. The other development was the establishment in 1970 of the Iraqi Maritime Transportation Company and its acquisition of two tankers to serve as the nucleus of a tanker fleet based in the Persian Gulf, to be developed by the Iraqi National Oil Company (INOC); this was intended to free Iraq from dependence on foreign-owned marketing facilities.

Arrangements were negotiated with French suppliers in 1969 to provide automatic telephone exchange systems connecting Baghdad and seven other large cities. In 1970 a public transportation corporation, similar to the national oil and national maritime companies, was established to oversee ambitious highway links envisaged to connect Baghdad with Damascus and Beirut.

Petroleum

In 1969 Iraq was the fifth largest petroleum producer in the Middle East and the eighth largest in the world. Of the country's over 100 producing wells in that year, all but 2 were foreign owned, belonging to the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) group. Petroleum was the financial mainstay of the economy, accounting for 30 to 35 percent of the GDP, more than 60 percent of total public sector revenues, 93 percent of exports (1968), and 84 percent of total foreign exchange earnings on current account (1968). As such, the petroleum sector had for some time been a major preoccupation of the Iraqi government. After the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict and especially after the accession of the Baath government, the government grafted onto its economic preoccupation with the petroleum companies a strongly emotional anti-West bias because the countries in which the companies were mostly owned were not prepared to break relations with Israel. Largely under this stimulus and because of the monopoly position held by the companies in Iraq, the new government was increasingly alienated from the IPC group.

In conjunction with this policy, the government built up INOC to develop the national oil resources. Increasingly, the government

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

expanded its participation in the local marketing of the oil it was receiving as part of its share of the profits of the IPC group. It closed out the portion of the concession originally awarded to the IPC companies that had not already been reappropriated and extended a limited concession to French oil interests for exploration and exploitation of part of the concession area. In 1969 the government arranged for Soviet credits (equivalent to US$72 million) for development of crude oil resources in north Rumaila and elsewhere, as well as for other industrial and infrastructure development projects, to be repaid in large part in crude petroleum. In 1970 the government was actively exploring the technical and financial possibilities of a new pipeline, at a cost of 143 million dinars, to connect north Rumaila with either Syrian or Turkish Mediterranean seaports.

Simultaneously, the government was increasing the pressure on the IPC companies for increased production and for a greater participation in their profits, their corporate decisions, and the use of their pipeline facilities. In the absence of a mutually satisfactory resolution of their differences with the government, the companies did not extend their exploration (during the period under discussion), with the result that the annual rate of increase in sales of Iraqi oil observable in the 1950s fell off appreciably during the middle and late 1960s in contrast to the trend in the other Middle East oil-producing countries.

Public Finance

The government's budget revenues and expenditures go through four successive stages to reach their final form: estimate, revised estimate, provisional form, and actual receipts and outlays. The latest year for which, in late 1970, budget data were available in the actual form was fiscal 1966/67, and the latest provisional data were for fiscal 1967/68 (see table B). These data consolidated under revenues and expenditures, respectively, the data for both the government's ordinary, or current, budget and its development, or capital, budget; the data are presented net of internal transfers, which passed generally from the development to the ordinary budget. The government's budgets were devised in the framework of the proposed first development program, as modified by the expanded military outlays induced by the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict, the military and other developments arising from the Baath takeover of the government, and by the reduced capital inflow resulting from the government's alienation from the West—in particular, the United States—and its failure to reach a positive accommodation with the IPC petroleum companies. All these developments probably contributed to the observable expansion of current

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Table B. Consolidated Revenues and Expenditures of the Government of Iraq for Selected Years, 1965/66 to 1969/70
(in millions of Iraqi dinars)[1]

	1965/66 Actual	1966/67 Actual	1967/68 Provisional	1968/69 Revised Estimate[2]	1969/70 Estimate
Revenue:					
Oil revenues	135.4	122.4	151.6	160.7	170.0
Customs duties	28.8	33.1	26.6	34.0	44.3
Excise taxes	14.9	17.1	17.2	18.0	17.7
Income and inheritance taxes	10.5	12.2	13.0	23.3	19.3
Agricultural land tax	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.5	1.5
Revenue from government agencies and enterprises	24.3	22.9	26.1	26.7	44.6
Other revenue	8.6	10.9	24.3[3]	27.0[3]	33.0[3]
Total	223.2	219.3	259.5	291.2	330.4
Expenditure:					
Ordinary budget	187.5	192.4	176.9	247.4	268.1
Defense and security	(84.9)	(83.6)	(75.4)	(110.8)	(126.4)
Education, social welfare, and health	(51.1)	(57.6)	(50.1)	(66.3)	(70.1)
Finance and current economic expenditures	(22.9)	(22.5)	(22.4)	(35.2)	(30.3)
Public administration and justice	(3.7)	(3.8)	(3.9)	(4.5)	(4.5)

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Pensions and gratuities	(11.8)	(12.6)	(12.6)	(15.0)	(15.0)
Other	(13.1)	(12.3)	(12.5)	(15.6)	(21.8)
Development (capital) budget	59.8	82.8	54.8	61.0[4]	95.4[5]
Total	247.3	275.2	231.7	308.4	363.5
Percentage of expenditures	24	30	24	20	26
Budget surplus or deficit (-)	-24.1	-55.9	+27.8	-17.2[4]	-33.1[5]
Financing deficit:					
Increase in bank credit to government sector (net)	+31.1	+30.9	-14.4	+20.1	+33.1[6]
Increase in foreign loans to government sector (net)	-0.7	+4.8	+1.4	-2.9	.....
Grant from Kuwait	.....	.....	+5.0	.....	.....
Other grants or loans (including errors and omissions)	-6.3	+20.2	-19.8	.....	.....

[1] 1 dinar equals US$2.80—see Glossary.
[2] Revised for the ordinary but not for the development budget.
[3] Includes revenues from the national defense tax.
[4] Estimated on the basis of the indicated net increase in claims on the government sector during the fiscal year, assuming there were no other sources of financing the deficit than those indicated—a doubtful assumption though probably not critical in view of the other margins of error involved.
[5] Estimated on the basis of the indicated net increase in claims on the government sector during the fiscal year. The estimate assumes there was no change in the banking sector claims on the government sector between December 31, 1969, and March 31, 1970; also there were no large changes in the government's foreign debt during the fiscal year. These assumptions are doubtful but probably not critical.
[6] April 1 to December 31, 1969.

Source: Adapted from Iraq, Central Bank of Iraq, Statistics and Research Department, *Bulletin No. IV, 1969*, Baghdad, 1969, tables 8, 14, 15, 17, 18.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

expenditures and the curtailment of development outlays as foreseen by the authorities through fiscal year 1968/69. The government's oil revenues were theoretically divided equally between the ordinary and the capital budgets.

On the revenue side of the consolidation budget, the salient features during the period under discussion were the overwhelming importance of the oil revenues in the revenue structure (58 percent in fiscal year 1967/68), the meager contribution of direct taxes (5 percent in fiscal 1967/68) and the insignificant contribution of the agricultural land tax (less than 1 percent in fiscal 1967/68) in a country that still basically lived by agriculture. Despite their absolute importance, the oil revenues during this period appeared to be increasing at a diminishing rate in relation to the changes in the revenue structure as a whole. A national defense tax was imposed in fiscal 1967/68 to help finance the increased military expenditures and to absorb some of the expanded purchasing power created by those expenditures and not offset by increased output of consumer goods and services. In fiscal 1967/68 ordinary revenues, as budgeted, exclusive of those from petroleum, amounted to around 11.5 percent of the GDP.

On the expenditures side, outstanding developments during the 1966/67–1969/70 fiscal period were: the overall decline in outlays in fiscal 1967/68, apparently as a reflex of the decline in revenues in fiscal 1966/67; the sizable increase in outlays allocated to defense and security in fiscal years 1968/69 and 1969/70; and the reduced importance assigned to the development budget. Military and security expenditures during the period ranged between 30 and 35 percent of total budgetary outlays but may have been greater, inasmuch as military imports clearly existed but were not shown in the balance of payments statements. In the early part of the period the military expenditures were partially financed by reductions in the development budget and by the banking system; in the later part, by those plus some increase in taxes.

The development budget declined from 30 percent of total outlays in fiscal 1966/67 to an indicated 24 percent in fiscal 1967/68, around 20 percent in fiscal 1968/69, and an estimated 26 percent in fiscal 1969/70. In fiscal 1969/70 the development budget was broken down under six categories: agriculture, industry, transport and communications, construction and social services, planning and followup agencies, and Ministry of Defense outlays. The development budget was financed by half of the oil revenues, by foreign loans, by meager amounts of profits from government—operated administration, and by other revenues. During most of the period under discussion, however, according to available data, the development budget did not have access to its full share of the oil revenues.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

For fiscal 1968/69 and fiscal 1969/70, except for the banking data and the oil revenues, the figures in late 1970 were still in the estimate stage and subject to sizable margins of error.

Public Debt

The public debt of Iraq is presented by the Central Bank for calendar years. From December 1964 to December 1969, according to the Central Bank, the outstanding public debt increased from a total of 103 million dinars to about 170 million dinars. The debt at the end of 1969 included: 18 million dinars of Iraqi government bonds and 75 million dinars of Iraqi treasury bills; 30 million dinars of indebtedness to Kuwait and 3.4 million dinars to the oil companies; and the equivalent of 32.6 million dinars indebtedness to the Soviet Union, 3.7 million dinars to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), 3.3 million dinars to the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and 3.4 million dinars on account of American agricultural surplus agreements concluded between the governments of Iraq and the United States in 1963 and 1966. In addition to the foreign debt listed by the Central Bank, there appear to have existed supplier's credits totaling the equivalent of some 10 million to 15 million dinars.

Estimated payments on account of interest and amortization on the foreign debt listed by the Central Bank averaged around 6 million dinars in 1967 and 1968; similar payments on account of the supplier's credits averaged around 3.6 million dinars in the same years. The annual service payments on the external public debt in 1968 were estimated to represent somewhere around 1.5 percent of the total exports of goods and services.

Banking System

In 1969 and 1970 changes were made in the banking structure as it evolved from the nationalization legislation of 1964. The Commercial Bank Law was amended to allow the commercial banks to expand their lending activities by permitting them to be less exigent in regard to the collateral required against their loans. The Credit Bank of Iraq, the Baghdad Bank, and the Commercial Bank of Iraq were merged into a new Commercial Bank of Iraq with increased capitalization. The Mortgage Bank was merged with the Al Rafidain Bank, the nation's largest commercial bank. The Cooperative Bank was abolished, its functions being taken over by the Real Estate Bank, which was given increased capitalization. The activities of the Agricultural Bank were expanded, and its branches were increased to twenty-four.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Money Supply and Prices

At the end of 1966 the money supply, as presented by the Central Bank, stood at 156.2 million dinars, consisting of 120.7 million dinars in currency and 35.5 million dinars in demand deposits (defined by the Central Bank as deposits of the public with the commercial banks and deposits of the specialized banks with the Central Bank). At the end of 1969 the money supply had risen to 205.4 million dinars, reflecting an increase during the four years of 49.2 million dinars, or about 31.5 percent, more than half of which took place in 1969. The ratio of currency to deposits in the money supply remained almost unchanged between 1966 and 1969 at a ratio of slightly more than three to one. At the end of June 1970 the money supply series of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which very closely approximates that of the Central Bank, stood at almost 217 million dinars.

The forces contributing to an increase of the money supply during the 1967—69 period were net foreign assets, bank credit to the government sector, and bank credit to the private sector (the specialized banks were included in the private sector for this purpose). Forces tending to diminish the money supply mostly consisted of time and savings deposits, and capital and reserves. Foreign assets contributed 48.7 million dinars; bank credit to the public sector, 41.5 million dinars; and bank credit to the private sector, 0.7 million dinars during the period. The upward pressure on the money supply totaled 10.3 million dinars in 1967, 38.7 million dinars in 1968, and 40.5 million dinars in 1969. The data would suggest that, over the period as a whole, the government placed rigorous restraints upon imports, that the private sector found itself in one fashion or another inhibited from borrowing from the banks, and that the public sector was pursuing an expansionist fiscal and monetary policy.

The effective impact of the rising money supply on prices was not easy to measure because of government controls and the absence of appropriate indexes. In mid-1970 there was no general index of wholesale prices. There were a number of price series covering foodstuffs in Baghdad markets and, based on these, a general wholesale food index in the capital. There were also general index numbers for textiles and for building materials, similarly based on prices in Baghdad. In addition, there was a consumers' index covering prices of purchases of the working class in Baghdad and environs, in which foodstuffs were given a weight of 530 out of a total weight of 1,000.

An approximation of a general index of wholesale prices that would not be overwhelmed by food prices, since these tend to be quite volatile, was attempted by averaging the general wholesale indexes for foodstuffs, textiles, and building materials, giving food-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

stuffs a weight of 500 out of a total of 1,000 and the other two indexes weights of 250 each. This average, using 1962 as the base year, showed prices rising from 100 in 1962 to 107 in 1964; declining to 105 in 1966; and thereafter rising to 110.6 in 1967, 110.9 in 1968, and 114 at the end of 1969. This composite index was appreciably more stable than its components. If it is assumed that this index provided an approximate image of the movement of prices, it suggested an average annual increase in the general level of prices between 1962 and 1969 of less than 2 percent but with the threat of more rapid increases to follow if the money supply continued to rise at the pace maintained in 1969 and the first half of 1970.

Balance of Payments and Foreign Trade

In late 1970 the latest available balance of payments estimate, as presented annually by the IMF, was for calendar year 1968 (see table C). The estimate was noteworthy in several respects. First, it underscored how important the oil-producing companies had been to Iraq. In all the years under observation, the surplus from trade in the goods, services, and transfers account was more than sufficient to offset the total deficit for services, including the petroleum companies' own half share of the oil profits. During the 1964—68 period, the petroleum exports averaged 93 percent of the annual total value of exports, and in no year did the proportion fall below 92 percent, indicating the extent to which Iraq was dependent on petroleum sales abroad for its financial viability.

Second, the current account (goods, services, and transfer payments) showed a surplus in all years from 1964 to 1968, inclusive. This was exceptional by comparison with many, if not most, other underdeveloped countries, and bespoke, at face value, a large measure of constraint exerted by the government on imports. The rising level of the errors and omissions item in the years 1967 and 1968 (and 1969 on a preliminary basis) suggested, however, that imports in those years may have been understated for military reasons.

Also noteworthy in the current account were the travel and official transfers items. Travel, although the item was largely estimated, evinced some tendency to growth and offered another source of exports that could be expected to increase further when conditions in the area became more propitious. The official transfers item was notable for its meagerness, by comparison with other underdeveloped economies, reflecting, in the main, the existence of the development-financing oil revenues that reduced the claims on the United States and other countries for grant-type development assistance.

In the nonmonetary capital account, the significant item was the relatively sizable presence of the oil companies. Data for later years, if available, would probably reflect the growing presence of the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Table C. Balance of Payments in Iraq for Selected Years, 1964, 1966, and 1968
(in millions of Iraqi dinars)[1]

	1964		1966		1968	
	Credit	Debit	Credit	Debit	Credit	Debit
Goods and Services	328.7	315.4	368.6	362.9	409.2	353.3
Merchandise[2]	299.9	145.4	333.6	176.0	372.6	144.3
Oil-producing companies	282.0	0.7	307.1	1.0	345.0	1.1
Nonmonetary gold	—	0.8	—	0.8	—	0.7
Freight and insurance on merchandise	2.5	—	2.6	—	5.7	0.1
Freight	(0.7)	—	(1.1)	—	(3.8)	—
Insurance	(1.8)	—	(1.5)	—	(1.9)	(0.1)
Other transportation	10.9	1.2	8.0	0.9	5.6	1.0
Travel	9.1	20.7	16.5	29.7	16.8	29.2
Investment income	3.8	127.5	4.2	141.9	4.8	161.6
Oil-producing companies	—	126.1	—	139.9	—	159.9
Government (not included elsewhere)	2.2	19.0	2.3	9.1	2.1	12.0
Other services	0.3	0.8	1.4	4.5	1.6	4.4
Net goods and services	13.3	—	5.7	—	55.9	—
Unrequited Transfers	2.3	1.1	1.8	1.7	2.8	1.1
Private	(2.0)	(0.7)	(1.5)	(0.4)	(2.3)	(0.4)
Central government	(0.3)	(0.4)	(0.3)	(1.3)	(0.5)	(0.7)
Unrequited transfers (net)	1.2	—	0.1	—	1.7	—
Net total (goods and services and unrequited transfers)	14.5	—	5.8	—	57.6	—
Capital and Monetary Gold	18.0	—	2.8	—	—	29.7
Nonmonetary sectors	—	2.8	26.7	—	1.4	—

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Direct investment	—	14.0	22.0	—	—	0.1
Oil-producing companies	—	14.9	20.4	—	—	0.1
Other private long term	—	—	3.3	—	2.4	—
Other private short term	—	1.0	—	—	0.2	—
Local government	—	—	—	—	—	—
Central government (not included elsewhere)	12.2	—	1.4	—	—	1.1
Long-term loans received	12.6	0.3	3.6	1.9	1.9	2.5
Subscriptions to IBRD and IDA[3]	—	0.1	—	0.3	—	—
Other	—	—	—	—	—	0.5
Monetary sectors	20.8	—	—	23.9	—	31.1
Commercial banks (liabilities)	—	0.1	0.5	—	0.3	—
Commercial banks (assets)	4.4	—	3.0	—	—	3.2
Central institutions (liabilities)	0.3	—	4.4	—	2.0	—
Use of IMF credit[4]	—	—	—	—	—	7.1
Payments agreements	0.3	—	0.2	—	2.6	—
IBRD and IDA holdings of Iraqui dinars	—	—	0.2	—	—	—
Other liabilities	—	—	4.0	—	6.5	—
Central institutions (assets)	16.2	—	—	31.8	—	30.2
Changes in reserve position in the	—	—	—	1.4	—	7.2
Payments agreements	0.4	—	0.3	—	—	—
Foreign exchange	20.8	—	—	32.1	4.8	—
Monetary gold	—	5.0	1.4	—	—	27.8
Net errors and omissions	—	32.5	—	8.6	—	27.9

[1] 1 dinar equals US$2.80—see Glossary.
[2] Exports free on board; imports cost, insurance, and freight.
[3] IBRD—International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; IDA—International Development Association.
[4] IMF—International Monetary Fund.

Source: Adapted from International Monetary Fund, *Balance of Payments Yearbook (Iraq)*, XXI, Washington, June 1970, p. 1.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Communist countries. In the monetary sectors of the capital account, the notable features were the considerable additions to the gold and exchange assets of 32 million and 30 million dinars in 1966 and 1968, respectively, another reflection of the government's protectiveness for its foreign assets—or, alternatively, faulty statistical foresight on the part of the planning authorities. Also of interest were the large net errors and omissions items in 1967 (23.3 million dinars) and 1968 (27.9 million dinars) and, on the basis of preliminary estimates, the even larger item (35 million to 45 million dinars) in 1969.

Nonpetroleum exports totaled some 27 million and 28 million dinars in 1966 and 1968, respectively—compared with petroleum exports averaging 308 million dinars per year during the same period. The most important of the nonpetroleum exports, taking an average for the three years 1966—68 were dates (6.55 million dinars), cement (4.3 million dinars), hides and animal skins (1.5 million dinars), raw wool (1.4 million dinars), barley (1.3 million dinars), and cotton (0.9 million dinars). Together they totaled 16 million dinars, or some 61 percent of the average annual nonpetroleum exports for the three-year period. Of the nonpetroleum exports in 1968: some 54 percent went to the Arab countries; 17 percent, to the Communist countries; 3.5 percent, to the United States; 3 percent, to the West European countries; and 23 percent, to the rest of the world. The percentage distribution of petroleum exports, by destination in 1969 was: Europe, 85.9 percent; Western Hemisphere, 5.9 percent; Africa, 4.5 percent; and South and Southeast Asia, 1.5 percent.

Imports during the 1964—68 period, taken as an average of the three years 1966—68 totaled 157 million dinars. The most important imports during the period, also taken as an average of the three years, were machinery and transport equipment (50.3 million dinars), foodstuffs (26.2 million dinars), manufactured goods (21.1 million dinars), textiles (12.6 million dinars), chemicals (6.9 million dinars), and timber (3.1 million dinars). Taken together, these import items represented almost 75 percent of the average annual import bill for the three years. In 1968 some 4 percent of total imports came from Western Europe; 21 percent, from the Communist countries (including Communist China); 7 percent, from the Arab countries; 4 percent, from the United States; and 26 percent, from the rest of the world. During the three years previous to the June 1967 Arab-Israeli armed conflict, United States exports averaged about 12 percent of the total value of Iraq's imports.

Terms of Trade

There are no price indexes available for Iraq's exports and imports from which a series on terms of trade could be derived. There is,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

however, an IMF index of Iraq's petroleum prices, and there are United Nations indexes of import prices to underdeveloped countries. These indexes indicate that from 1967 to March 1970 the price of Iraq's petroleum increased some 2 to 3 percent. They also indicate that the import prices faced by underdeveloped countries such as Iraq increased probably some two to three times as much as the value of Iraq's petroleum. Taken together, therefore, the indexes suggest that Iraq's terms of trade suffered comparably in the change over the period and that they were appreciably less volatile than internal prices over the same period.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Al-Marayati, A. *Contemporary Middle East Governments and Politics*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing House, 1970.

_____. "Modern Iraq," *Middle East Forum*, XXXXIV, No. 4, 1968, 21—44.

Arnsten, Andrea, and Ansel, Gladyce W. *Inter-Arab Cooperation and United States Policy*. McLean, Virginia: Research Analysis Corporation, 1970.

Beasley, Robert D. "The Arab and Israeli Air Forces," *New Middle East*, No. 12, September 1969, 44—46.

Be'eri, Eliezer. *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society*. New York: Praeger, 1969.

Bill, James A. "The Military and Modernization in the Middle East," *Comparative Politics*, II, No. 1, October 1969, 41—62.

Brown, Neville. "The Real Capabilities of Soviet and U.S. Weapons in the Middle East," *New Middle East*, No. 20, May 1970, 11—14.

Cook, M. A. (ed.) *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Cottrel, Alvin J. "The United States and the Future of the Gulf after the Bahrain Agreement," *New Middle East*, No. 22, July 1970, 18—21.

Demographic Yearbook, 1967. New York: United Nations Statistical Office, 1968.

Edmonds, C. J. "Kurdish War in Iraq: The Constitutional Background," *World Today*, XXIV, December 1968, 512—520.

Europa Publications. *The Europa Yearbook, The Middle East and North Africa, 1970—71*. London: Europa Publications, 1970.

Gaspard, J. "The Eastern Arab Front: The Dispute Between Iraq and Iran and Its Impact on Kurdistan," *New Middle East*, No. 10, July 1969, 22—26.

_____. "Penetrating the Baath—An Ideology in Search of Leadership," *New Middle East*, No. 8, May 1969, 30—34.

Hottinger, Arnold. "Iraqi Puzzle," *New Middle East*, No. 3, December 1968, 33—36.

Hurewitz, J. C. "The Beginnings of Military Modernization in the Middle East: A Comparative Analysis," *Middle East Journal*, XXII, No. 2, Spring 1968, 144—158.

Hurewitz, J. C. (ed.) *Soviet-American Rivalry in the Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1969.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

COUNTRY SUMMARY

1. COUNTRY: Republic of Iraq, historically known as Mesopotamia. Overrun by numerous invaders, was a part of the Ottoman Empire at the outbreak of World War I. Became a British Mandate territory after the war and achieved independence in 1932. Ruled by Hashimite kings until the Revolution of 1958 established the Republic.
2. GOVERNMENT: The Provisional Constitution of 1968, promulgated after the coup d'etat in July of that year, retained the Revolutionary Command Council as the supreme legislative and decision-making body. The council's president is chief of state, and supreme commander of the armed forces. A new provisional Constitution announced in July 1970 provided that the president is elected by a two-third's majority of the fourteen-member council. The new Constitution also incorporated the agreement of March 1970, which ended the Kurdish civil war and guaranteed the national rights of Kurds.
3. POPULATION: About 9.05 million in mid 1970. Annual growth rate approximately 2.3 percent; density averaged about 52 persons per square mile in 1968. About 60 to 70 percent live under essentially rural conditions. Roughly three-fourths of the people think of themselves as Arabs, and many more speak Arabic. Between 15 and 20 percent are Kurds, the largest minority group. Smaller minorities include Turkomans, Persians, and Lurs. Emigration is relatively low and principally to neighboring Kuwait because of available work in the oil industry.
4. SIZE AND TOPOGRAPHY: About 171,600 square miles; only access to sea is through the thirty-mile coastline on the Persian Gulf. Somewhat over 50 percent of the total area is desert or semi-desert; 20 to 25 percent is considered arable; about 8 percent is irrigated; and the rest is under pasture or represents economically exploitable forest. There are four main topographical areas: the mountainous regions in the north and northeast, with peaks rising to 12,229 feet; the dry, rolling uplands between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, northwest of Baghdad; the fertile flood plains of the Tigris and Euphrates, extending from just north of Baghdad southeastward to the Persian Gulf; and the vast desert south and west of the Euphrates.
5. LANGUAGES: Official state language is Arabic. Kurdish and Turkoman are the most widely spoken minority languages. Under

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. *Annual Report, 1970*. Washington: 1970.
International Monetary Fund. *Balance of Payments Yearbook (Iraq)*, XXI, Washington: 1970.
Iraq. Central Bank of Iraq. Statistics and Research Department. *Bulletin No. IV, 1969*. Baghdad: Government Press, 1969.
Iraq. Ministry of Planning. Central Bureau of Statistics. Section of Research and Publicity. *Statistical Abstract, 1968*. Baghdad: Government Press, 1969.
Iraq. Ministry of Planning. Economic Planning Board. *The General Outline of the Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan of Iraq for the Years 1970—74*. (Translated from the Arabic text) Baghdad: Government Press, 1969.
Ireland, P. U. *Iraq: A Study in Political Development*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1970.
Kemal H. Karpat, (ed.). *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East*. New York: Praeger, 1968.
Khadduri, Majid. *Republican Iraq: A Study of Iraqi Politics Since the Revolution of 1958*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.
Kinsman, James. "The Changing Face of Kurdish Nationalism," *New Middle East*, No. 20, May 1970, 19—22.
_____. "Kurds and Iran: Iraq's Changing Balance of Power," *New Middle East*, No. 22, July 1970, 25—27.
Laqueur, Walter. "An Independent Radical Movement for the Middle East?" *New Middle East*, No. 11, August 1969, 14—22.
_____. *The Struggle for the Middle East: The Soviet Union in the Mediterranean, 1958—1968*. New York: Macmillan, 1969.
Naamavi, I. "The Kurdish Drive for Self-Determination," *Middle East Journal*, XX, No. 3, 1966, 279—295.
Plaff, Richard H. "The Function of Arab Nationalism," *Comparative Politics*, II, No. 2, January 1970, 147—167.
Production Yearbook, 1968. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, 1969.
Salomon, Gershon. "The Kurds are Fighting Again," *New Outlook*, XII, No. 4, May 1969, 35—37.
_____. "Peace with the Kurds," *New Outlook*, XIV, Nos. 4 and 5, May—June 1970, 32—40.
Statistical Yearbook, 1969. New York: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1970.
Torrey, Gordon H. "The Ba'ath—Ideology and Practice," *Middle East Journal*, XXIII, No. 4, Autumn 1969, 445—470.
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Population and Vital Statistics Report, July 1970*. (Statistical Papers, Series A, XXII, Nos. 1, 2, and 3.) New York: 1970.
United States. Agency for International Development. Office of Statistics and Reports, Bureau of Program and Policy Coordina-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tion. *Operations Report: Data as of December 31, 1969*. Washington: 1970.

Van Doorn, Jacques. *Military Profession and Military Regimes: Commitments and Conflicts*. The Hague: Mauton, 1969.

Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, 1968. New York: United Nations Statistical Office, 1969.

(Various issues of the following were also used in the preparation of this summary: *Middle East Economic Digest* [London], Volume XII, No. 1, 1968, through Volume XIV, No. 44, 1970; Quarterly Economic Review [London], from July 1968 through September 1970, and Annual Supplements, 1968, 1969, and 1970; *Etudes Mensuelles Sur L'Economie et les Finances des Pays Arabes* [Beirut], July 1968 through November 1970; *New Middle East* [London], October 1968 through October 1970; *New York Times*, July 1968 through October 1970.)

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

COUNTRY SUMMARY

1. COUNTRY: Republic of Iraq, historically known as Mesopotamia. Overrun by numerous invaders, was a part of the Ottoman Empire at the outbreak of World War I. Became a British Mandate territory after the war and achieved independence in 1932. Ruled by Hashimite kings until the Revolution of 1958 established the Republic.

2. GOVERNMENT: The Provisional Constitution of 1968, promulgated after the coup d'etat in July of that year, retained the Revolutionary Command Council as the supreme legislative and decision-making body. The council's president is chief of state, and supreme commander of the armed forces. A new provisional Constitution announced in July 1970 provided that the president is elected by a two-third's majority of the fourteen-member council. The new Constitution also incorporated the agreement of March 1970, which ended the Kurdish civil war and guaranteed the national rights of Kurds.

3. POPULATION: About 9.05 million in mid 1970. Annual growth rate approximately 2.3 percent; density averaged about 52 persons per square mile in 1968. About 60 to 70 percent live under essentially rural conditions. Roughly three-fourths of the people think of themselves as Arabs, and many more speak Arabic. Between 15 and 20 percent are Kurds, the largest minority group. Smaller minorities include Turkomans, Persians, and Lurs. Emigration is relatively low and principally to neighboring Kuwait because of available work in the oil industry.

4. SIZE AND TOPOGRAPHY: About 171,600 square miles; only access to sea is through the thirty-mile coastline on the Persian Gulf. Somewhat over 50 percent of the total area is desert or semi-desert; 20 to 25 percent is considered arable; about 8 percent is irrigated; and the rest is under pasture or represents economically exploitable forest. There are four main topographical areas: the mountainous regions in the north and northeast, with peaks rising to 12,229 feet; the dry, rolling uplands between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, northwest of Baghdad; the fertile flood plains of the Tigris and Euphrates, extending from just north of Baghdad southeastward to the Persian Gulf; and the vast desert south and west of the Euphrates.

5. LANGUAGES: Official state language is Arabic. Kurdish and Turkoman are the most widely spoken minority languages. Under

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the terms of the agreement signed on March 11, 1970, to end the civil strife with the Kurds, the Kurdish language was given official status in regions of Kurdish settlement. English is the most commonly used Western language.

6. RELIGION: Islam is the official religion; its two dominant sects, Sunni and Shia, are almost equally represented and make up over 95 percent of the population. Other religions in the country include Christianity, Judaism, Mandeanism, Yezidism, and various small Islamic sects. Position of non-Muslim religious minorities has deteriorated since 1967. Special restrictions were imposed on the country's several thousand Jewish citizens after the June 1967 armed conflict with Israel, and a large number emigrated to Israel. The Bahai faith was outlawed in 1970.

7. EDUCATION: Literacy is variously estimated at from 20 to 40 percent. Education statistics for 1970 lacking. In 1968 more than 1.2 million students were enrolled in educational institutions at all levels. About 70 percent of school-age boys and 30 to 40 percent of school-age girls attended primary school. Full implementation of compulsory primary education expected by 1980. Number of Iraqi students attending universities in Communist countries declining.

8. HEALTH: Accurate statistics unavailable. Parasitic diseases, dysentery, malaria, tuberculosis, eye infections, typhus, and venereal diseases were chief causes of debility and death. Shortage of physicians and paramedical personnel poses severe problems. The new medical building complex at Baghdad University completed in 1969. Hospital and other health facilities reportedly under construction in the provinces of Irbil, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Sulaymaniyah in 1970.

9. JUSTICE: Ultimate supervisory power rests with the Ministry of Justice. Three-level court system: Courts of first instance; courts of appeal, one in each district of appeal (Baghdad, Mosul, Basrah, Hillah, and Kirkuk); and court of cassation. Jury system not used; Revolutionary Court deals with cases affecting state security; death penalty for espionage introduced in December 1968.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS: Changed from fourteen provinces to sixteen departments in October 1969. Each department is headed by a governor with extensive powers.

11. ECONOMY: Agriculture and petroleum account for about 55 percent of the country's output of goods and services. Heavily dependent on royalties and taxes from production and sale of petroleum by foreign concessionary companies.

12. INDUSTRY: Mining, exploitation, and processing of petroleum are the principal activities, accounting for 30 to 35 percent of the gross domestic product. Manufacturing and construction are growing. Programs of industrial development stress producer and intermediate goods.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

13. LABOR: About 25 percent of the population economically active. About 60 to 65 percent of the active population is in agriculture, including rural marketing and handicrafts. Industry, including petroleum and electric power production, and the services, including marketing, are the next largest occupational categories.
14. EXPORTS: Petroleum, the principal export item, accounts for over 90 percent of exports, nearly 85 percent for foreign exchange earnings, and more than 60 percent of government revenue. Main nonoil export item is dates, followed by cement, hides, skins, raw wool, barlev, and cotton.
15. IMPORTS: Official efforts to restrict imports. Machinery, transport equipment, food, manufactured goods, textiles, chemicals, and timber accounted for 75 percent of the import bill between 1966 and 1968. Western Europe and Communist countries were the principal suppliers.
16. FINANCE: Currency strong enough to withstand devaluation of pound sterling in 1967. Backed by gold, foreign exchange, and government securities. Foreign exchange reserves fairly steady. Unit is dinar (ID), divided into 1,000 fils; one dinar equals US$2.80. Banks nationalized since 1964, controlled by Central Bank of Iraq. Persistent deficit financing since 1958. Government pursues an expansionist fiscal and monetary policy at the expense of the private sector.
17. COMMUNICATIONS: All information media government controlled. Radio is the principal communications medium. In 1970 eleven mediumwave and shortwave transmitters, ranging in power from 30 to 300 kilowatts; additional ones under construction. Approximately 1 million sets, many in public places with loudspeakers. Telecasts receivable in some parts of the country from stations in Baghdad, Basrah, Mosul, and Kirkuk. Plans announced in 1970 to improve and expand radio and television facilities at a cost of 1.3 million dinars. Automatic telephone exchange system planned to connect Baghdad to other large cities.
18. RAILROADS: Government owned. Standard-gauge Baghdad-Basrah extension of the line connecting Baghdad with Turkey and Europe completed. Line from Kirkuk to Sulaymaniyah planned, also a line from Kut to Nasiriyah, and from Karbala to Sanawa (about 150 miles southeast of Baghdad). Rail lines also planned to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.
19. ROADS: A road building and maintenance program at cost of over 19 million dinars under progress. Construction of a paved road across the desert, west of the Euphrates River, has been started to provide a direct route to Damascus.
20. PORTS: The only port accommodating oceangoing vessels is Basrah on the Shatt al Arab, eighty miles from the Persian Gulf. In 1970 another port with three berths under construction at Umm

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Qasr on the Persian Gulf. Small tanker fleet being organized by the Iraqi Maritime Transportation Company and the Iraqi National Oil Company to be based on the Persian Gulf. River navigation reportedly in the process of improvement with aid from the Soviet Union.

21. AIRPORTS: Two international airports, Baghdad and Basrah. Construction of a new major airport at Baghdad completed in January 1970. Two main domestic airports are at Mosul and Kirkuk; a new airfield is planned for Mosul. The government-owned Iraqi Airways conducts international and domestic flights.

22. AID PROGRAMS: Economic development is aided by various United Nations agencies under the auspices of the United Nations Development Program. The Food and Agriculture Organization sponsors projects for improvement of animal husbandry and seed production. World Health Organization aids malaria and bilharziasis control. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development assisted roadbuilding programs. The Soviet Union has provided loans and technical assistance for industrial development, as well as aid for the modernization of the armed forces.

23. INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS: In principle, supports political unity among Arab nations, although efforts at unification have been limited to cultural and commercial spheres. Has mutual defense pact with the United Arab Republic (Egypt) and Jordan. Relations with both countries deteriorated in 1970 after disagreement among the treaty partners over the United States-sponsored Middle East peace proposal and Iraq's support of Arab guerrilla commandos, disregarding Egyptian and Jordanian efforts to control them. Iraq is a member of the United Nations and participates in at least thirteen specialized agencies; it also holds membership in the Arab League and in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

24. THE ARMED FORCES: Total strength about 95,000, an increase of over 10 percent since 1968. Army, 85,000; navy, 2,000; air force, 7,500. A full-time paramilitary force estimated to be in excess of 20,000 supports armed forces in emergencies. Conscription: two-year period.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

IRAQ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

			Page
FOREWORD			iii
PREFACE TO THE SECOND PRINTING			v
SUMMARY OF EVENTS: MAY 1968–NOVEMBER 1970			vii
		Political and Governmental Change—Social Changes and Social Welfare—Economic Changes—Bibliography	
COUNTRY SUMMARY			xlix
Section	I.	SOCIAL	
Chapter	1.	General Character of the Society	1
	2.	Physical Environment	13
		Major Geographical Divisions—Climate—The River System—Resources—Transportation—Settlement Patterns	
	3.	Historical Setting	27
		Ancient History—Arab Conquest and the Coming of Islam—The Abbasside Caliphate (750-1258)—The Ottoman Period (1534-1918)—The Twentieth Century—Independence—World War II and the Postwar Iraq—The 1958 Revolution and End of the Monarchy—The Arif Government	
	4.	Population	47
		Composition—Dynamics	
	5.	Ethnic Groups and Languages	55
		Arabs—Kurds—Turkomans—Persians and Lurs—Non-Moslems—Language	
	6.	Social Structure	71
		Society in the Mid-Twentieth Century (1918–58)—The Years Since the 1958 Revolution	
	7.	Family	83
		Structure—Family and Society	
	8.	Living Conditions	95
		Standards of Living—Traditional Welfare—Government Welfare Efforts—Private Welfare Organizations—Public Health	
	9.	Education	115
		Background—The School System—Education and Society	
	10.	Artistic and Intellectual Expression	131
		Intellectual Expression—The Oral and Literary Tradition—The Performing Arts—The Visual Arts	
	11.	Religion	145
		Islam—Religious Minorities—Popular Religion—Intercommunal Relations—Religion and Social Change	

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

			Page
Chapter 12.	Social Values ..... Islamic Values—Tribal Arab Values—Urban Values—Shared Concepts—Dynamics		161
Section II.	POLITICAL		
Chapter 13.	The Governmental System ..... Constitutional Development—The Interim Constitution of 1964—The Central Government—Provincial and Local Government—Civil Service—The Electoral System		175
14.	Political Dynamics ..... Political Trends—Political Awareness and Participation—Political Elements—Political Ramifications of Religious and Ethnic Factors—Political Organizations		189
15.	Foreign Relations ..... Determinants—Relations with the Arab League and Arab Nations—Relations with Non-Arab Nations—Relations with Western Nations—Relations with Communist Nations—Relations with International Organizations—Mechanics of Foreign Relations		203
16.	Public Information ..... Government and Freedom of the Press—Information Media During the 1960's—Informal Communications Channels—Government Information Programs—Foreign Government Information Programs		221
17.	Political Values and Attitudes ..... Self-Image of Iraq—Arab Socialism—Attitudes and Expectations—National Symbols		237
Section III.	ECONOMIC		
Chapter 18.	Character and Structure of the Economy ..... Background—The Economy Since 1963—Development Planning		243
19.	Agriculture ..... Control of Land Resources—Land, Crops and Growing Season—Livestock—Fishing—Forests and Forestry		251
20.	Industry ..... Industrial Development Policy—Investment and Construction Program—Current Status of Industry		269
21.	Labor ..... The Labor Force—Employment Patterns—Working Conditions—Labor Relations During the 1960's		279
22.	Domestic Trade ..... Direction and Composition—The Trading Community—Trade Practices—Transportation		301
23.	Foreign Economic Relations ..... Structure of Foreign Trade—Trade Policy—Balance of Payments—Foreign Aid—The Arab Common Market		309
24.	Public Finance ..... The Budgetary Process—The Budget—Taxation		321
25.	Banking and Currency ..... Banking Institutions—Currency		331
Section IV.	NATIONAL SECURITY		
Chapter 26.	The Armed Forces ..... Background—Attitudes Toward Military Service—Mission and Organization—Foreign Influence—Economic Impact—Training—Logistics—Rank and Pay—Uniforms and Rations—Awards and Decorations—Military Justice		339

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Page

Chapter 27. Public Order and Safety 351
Background—The Police System—Legal System—The Penal System—Crimes and Punishment
BIBLIOGRAPHIES 363
GLOSSARY 383
INDEX 387

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure — Page

1 Position of Iraq in Southwest Asia lvi
2 The Terrain and River System of Iraq 14
3 The Transportation System of Iraq 22
4 Geographic Distribution of Ethnic and Religious Communities in Iraq 58
5 The Governmental Structure of Iraq, 1968 178
6 Provinces of Iraq 184

LIST OF TABLES

Table — Page

A Gross Domestic Product of Iraq for Selected Years, 1964–69, at Current Prices xxvi
B Consolidated Revenues and Expenditures of the Government of Iraq for Selected Years, 1965/66 to 1969/70 xxxiv
C Balance of Payments in Iraq for Selected Years, 1964, 1966, and 1968 xl
1 Mean Annual Rainfall for Nine Stations in Iraq 17
2 Mean Maximum and Mean Minimum Temperatures, January and July, for Nine Stations in Iraq 17
3 Population of Iraq by Age Group, 1957 48
4 Population, Growth Rates and Density of Iraq in 1965 50
5 Dialect Distribution in the Mesopotamian Dialect Area of Iraq, 1968 69
6 The Broadcasting Service of the Iraqi Republic in Baghdad (Idha 'At Al-Jumhuriyah Al-Iraqiyah fi Baghdad) 229
7 Production of Selected Commodities by Nationalized Industries in Iraq, 1965–67 274
8 The Consolidated Budget of Iraq for Fiscal Years 1960–61 Through 1964–65 324
9 Iraqi Army Ranks and Insignia, 1967 348

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

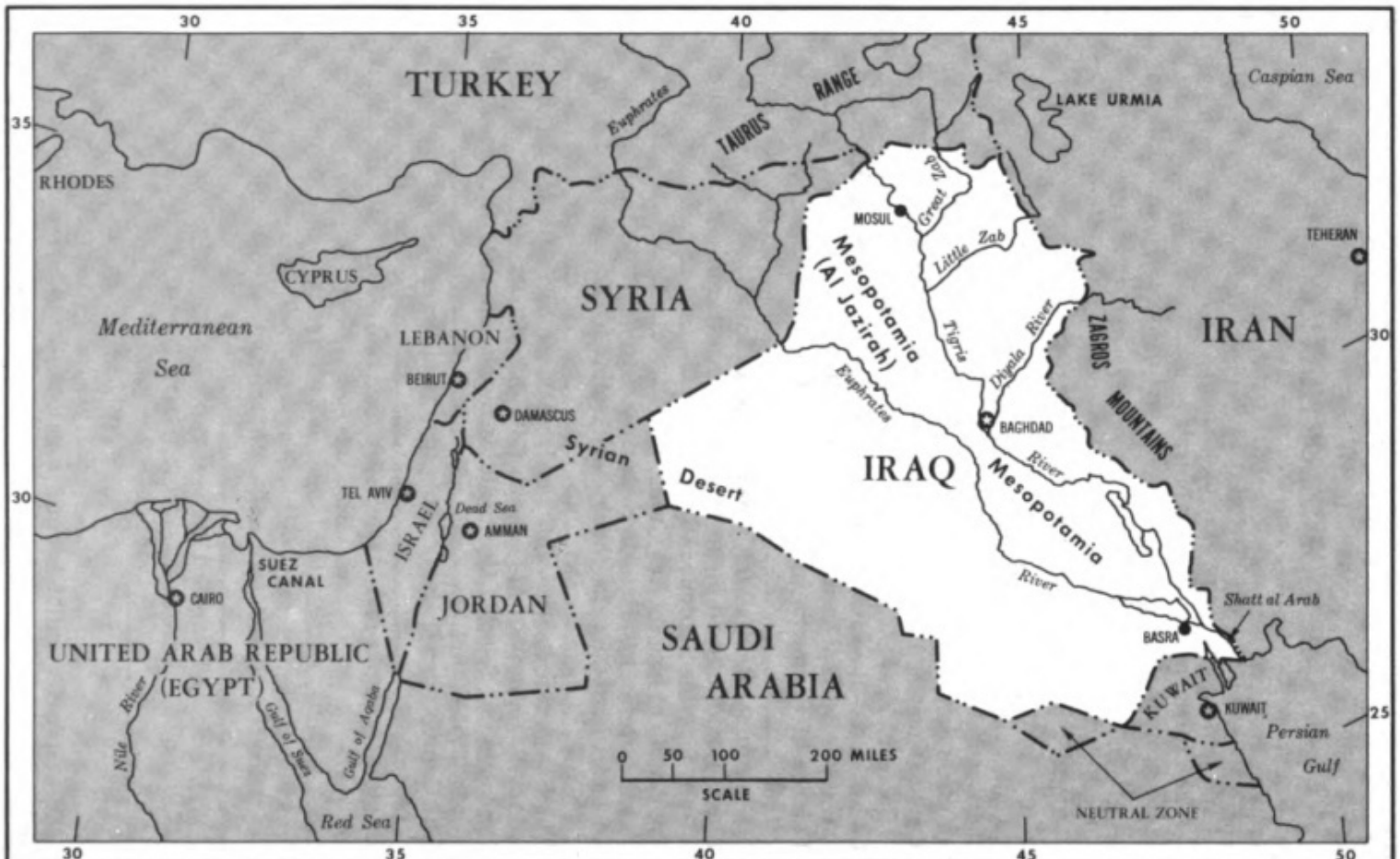


Figure 1. Position of Iraq in Southwest Asia.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SECTION I. SOCIAL

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIETY

The modern state of Iraq developed from three Ottoman Turkish provinces, Basrah, Baghdad and Mosul, which were detached from the defeated Ottoman empire at the end of World War I. After almost 400 years of Turkish rule, the area was awarded to Great Britain in 1920 under a League of Nations mandate. While typical unsettled postwar conditions prevailed, a growing spirit of nationalism matured rapidly and, with British support, members of the prominent Hashimite family from Arabia established a monarchy in 1921 with Faisal I on the throne. Four years later, he signed the country's first constitution. The monarchy assumed increasing administrative responsibilities and took full control of the government after the British Mandate terminated in 1932. At the same time. Iraq was immediately admitted to the League of Nations as an independent and sovereign state. Residual treaty arrangements with Great Britain, however, called for a close relationship between the two countries and for consultations on all foreign policy matters (see ch. 3, Historical Setting).

Hashimite rule ended abruptly on July 14, 1958, when revolutionary forces led by the army seized control of the country after killing King Faisal II, his prime minister, Nuri as Said, and other monarchical leaders. The new government, headed by Brigadier Abdul Karim Qasim, set up the Republic of Iraq, quickly adopted a provisional constitution and announced a policy calling for unity with the Arab world but emphasizing Iraq's separate national interests. Factions soon developed and Pan-Arab sentiments mounted, but Qasim remained in power until he, in turn, was overthrown and assassinated in February 1963, during a coup by the Iraqi wing of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party, commonly known as the Baath Party, which was dedicated to the Pan-Arab movement with emphasis on equality among Arab nations. Political acrimony intensified, and only 9 months later the new

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

government was replaced by another group which established a Pan-Arab nationist policy. This government favored ties with the United Arab Republic but stressed the advancement of internal solidarity and development as a prerequisite for any unity with the United Arab Republic (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

The provisional constitution of 1958 was superseded in May 1964 by the Interim Constitution. Governmental leaders asserted that it would remain in effect during the transition period, which would end with the promulgation of a permanent constitution. By mid-1968, after repeated extensions of this temporary period, a permanent constitution had not been promulgated, but major preparatory measures for parliamentary elections had been announced (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

The country's geography and ecology give form and substance to the most permanently distinguishing features of the society. Situated at the head of the Persian Gulf, this region for centuries has served as an area of contention between peoples living in Turkish territory to the north and those living in Persian-speaking lands to the east.

Three geographic characteristics stand out distinctively. In the north and northeast the Zagros Mountains, rather sparsely covered with deciduous trees and scattered shrubs, are extensions of eastern Turkey's Taurus Range, and their summits rise to approximately 6,500 feet above sea level. To the east, they join western Iran's Zagros Mountains with barren peaks rising from 7,000 to 12,229 feet above sea level (see ch. 2, Physical Environment).

In the center and southeast are the fertile, densely populated alluvial plains adjoining the sluggish lower courses of the southeastward-flowing Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. In the area between the rivers northwest of Baghdad these plains merge with the drier, higher and more undulating terrain. Southeast of Baghdad, the rivers meander through a broad flat delta characterized by a network of ditches, irrigation canals, distributaries, extensive marsh lands and numerous shallow lakes. In many places, their stream beds, being higher than the surrounding flood plains, must be contained by levees. High-water periods extend from March through June and low-water periods from July through October. The rivers finally merge to form the Shatt al Arab which continues southeastward about 100 miles to the Persian Gulf.

In the south and west are expansive, barren and almost uninhabited sandy and rocky deserts which blend indistinctly with similar wastes in neighboring Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria. This region is almost featureless except for scattered sand dunes and boulder areas. During the infrequent rains, intermittent

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

streams in channels called wadis, flow eastward toward the Euphrates, but most of them eventually disappear into the ground.

The flood plains of the two major rivers comprise about 25 percent of the country's total area of approximately 170,000 square miles. The plains contain roughly 75 percent of Iraq's population, in mid-1968 estimated at approximately 9 million. This region is often referred to as the site of the Garden of Eden. More than two-thirds of the people living there work on the land which, with irrigation and drainage systems, constitutes the country's prime agricultural area. These two important rivers provide great benefits but cause serious problems. Spring floods, if unchecked, destroy productive acreage, bring starvation and spread diseases. Flood control measures necessitate effective central planning, financing and administration.

Baghdad, the nation's capital and largest city as well as its cultural, educational, commercial and political center, is on the Tigris in the heart of this region. Basra, on the Shatt al Arab below the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates and about 60 miles upstream from the Persian Gulf (called Arab Gulf by Iraqis) is the second largest city and the country's main seaport. Mosul, also on the Tigris but in the north some 70 miles before it crosses the Turkish border, is the third largest city and an important industrial and agricultural center.

Although the country has been a sovereign state for less than four decades, the land within its present boundaries has witnessed a succession of civilizations and empires over five millennia. This factor has contributed to the varied linguistic and religious characteristics of the Iraqis. Archaeological evidence such as paintings, sculpture and skeletal remains indicates, however, that the physical appearance of the population seems to have remained essentially unchanged over the past centuries.

The Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians in ancient times were followed by the Islamic and Arab civilizations centered around Baghdad. By the end of the Middle Ages, when the Ottoman Turks arrived, the people had been successively under Persian, Greek, Roman and Mongol rule (see ch. 3, Historical Setting).

During this early period, the area, named Mesopotamia by the Greeks, was particularly important because it is the eastern portion of the Fertile Crescent, which extends in a semicircle from the shores of the Mediterranean around the northern and eastern sides of the Syrian Desert to the Persian Gulf. It includes the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in southeastern Turkey. Within this region occurred many of the struggles and migrations involving some of the earliest known peoples. It provided favorable routes for trade caravans and nomads, as well as for con-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

quering and defeated armies. As they passed through, these groups left indelible marks on the indigenous people.

Iraqi society gradually developed into a wide variety of separate communities, based mainly on ethnic or religious distinctions. Language is not a major barrier to interregional communications. Most adults in virtually all groups either speak or understand Arabic, the official state language. Each group, nevertheless, regards itself as distinctly different from the others in one or more significant respects (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

The common tendencies among groups to emphasize their own peculiar characteristics hamper governmental efforts to develop a spirit of national unity. The policy of not focusing attention on statistics regarding ethnic origin or religious faiths, assists the authorities in their efforts to play down intergroup rivalries and differences.

Prominent among the unifying influences is the Islamic religion, professed by at least 90 percent of the population, including a great majority of the Arabs and sizable segments of other ethnic groups. The effects of the Moslem-Arab conquest, which brought Islam to the country in the seventh century, were permanent and profound. The Syriac (also called Aramaic) dialect, spoken by the pre-Islamic inhabitants of the area, was gradually replaced by the related Arabic language of religion and government. Islam still prevails and continues to influence strongly the minds and actions of the people. Small groups of Christians and Jews survived the conquest, and traces remain of still older religions associated with the civilizations of earlier inhabitants of the region (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages; ch. 11, Religion).

After the Prophet Mohammed died in 632, factional conflicts arising from bitter disputes over his rightful successor and the correct policy to be adopted in choosing a successor, led to a deep-seated schism of Islam, not only in Iraq but throughout the Moslem world.

Some of the disputes involved bloody clashes between opposing groups in the Euphrates valley. One faction favored Ali, Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law, as successor. Those holding to this viewpoint became known as Shiites. Another faction developed around Mu'awiyah and the forces of his son, Yazid, who were descendants of the Prophet's clan in Mecca; they were called Umayyads and eventually were known as Sunnites. Conflict between the two factions resulted in the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty of Islam in Damascus and later, the Abbasside caliphate in Baghdad. It also led to a permanent division of the Islamic community between the Sunnites and the followers of Ali, the Shiites (see ch. 11, Religion).

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The effects of this ancient struggle still strongly influence the attitudes of modern Iraqis. The population is divided almost equally between these two main branches of Islam, with the Shiites holding a slight numerical advantage. The schism continues to be reflected in political and economic rivalries. The Shiites remain generally concentrated in the marshy delta area south of Baghdad. The Sunnites, favored by the Ottoman rulers, originally included most of the wealthier and more influential elements of the population; these heritages, in general, have been transmitted to their descendants.

Islam, through its Sharia (law—see Glossary), regulates many affairs of its adherents in a detailed manner, embodying much that is left to custom and individual conscience in Christian countries. The status of this code is recognized by the Iraqi Government. People, therefore, are very much aware of their religious affiliation. This is particularly true of the Shiites, who are advised and guided by an expansive system of religious teachers known as *mujtahids* (specialist in Islamic law). Religious teachers and descendants of the Prophet are held in great respect and, as a result, frequently acquire considerable political and economic power.

The non-Moslem population comprises a very small minority. In the absence of official statistics regarding the relative strengths of various groups, any figures offered are merely estimates by qualified observers. Christians, constituting by far the largest non-Moslem group, include various branches of faith, such as Orthodox or Eastern church, Catholic church, Uniate churches and sundry representations from Protestant churches. Altogether, the Christians make up no more than 6 or 7 percent of the population.

The adherents of several other non-Moslem religions live in widely scattered localities. Their lack of strength and leadership precludes significant influence on national society. This category includes a few thousand Iraqi Jews, most of whom live in the Baghdad area; the Mandeans, pre-Christian gnostics, who dwell along the rivers and among the marshes of the southeastern delta region; and the Yezidis, regarded by some Iraqis as devil worshipers, who live mainly west of Mosul in the northern highlands.

Ethnically, more than three-fourths of the people are Arabs. The largest national minority, the Kurds, comprising at least 15 percent of the population, live in the northern mountains contiguous to other Kurds in Syria, Turkey and Iran. Considered by some historians to be descendants of the ancient Medes, they speak various dialects of Kurdish, their native language. Most of them, however, can speak Arabic, but efforts to elevate Kurdish to the status of a national language has been a subject of dispute

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

with the central authorities (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics). They are commonly regarded as hardy mountaineers, many of whom are still tribally organized. The majority are settled grain farmers or seminomadic crop raisers and stockbreeders. Individualistic in dress and independent in spirit, they are traditionally resistant to national government regulations. Occasional forceful efforts against them to reestablish control have resulted in disquieting truces (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages; ch. 27, Public Order and Safety.)

All together, the smaller ethnic minorities total less than 10 percent of the people of Iraq. Noteworthy among these are the Turkomans. Descendants of the pre-Ottoman Turkish infiltration into the country beginning in the tenth century, they are clustered in small farming villages among the Kurds and along the old trade route south from eastern Turkey, through Mosul, Irbil and Kirkuk to Baghdad. Most of them speak Arabic. Some became Ottoman officials and were regarded by the Kurds as intruders. Tensions between the Turkomans and the Kurds have resulted in clashes creating problems for public order and safety forces. On occasions of disputes between Iraqi Arabs and Kurds, the Turkomans generally have stood aside, seeking to avoid involvement and favoring a peaceful solution to the issue.

The Lurs are Persian-speaking tribal people living mostly in villages and towns along the Iranian border, where they work more often as laborers than as farmers. Many are porters of heavy loads in Baghdad and Basra. They are racially akin to the Kurds and have not been a politically active group.

Within the national society, but not yet fully assimilated by it, are two ethnically Arab groups, the Bedouins and the marsh dwellers, each group having its own peculiar social distinctiveness based primarily on its mode of subsistence originating in the ecology of its living area. The Bedouins, related to nomads in the great Arabian desert, live and move in the wide wastes of the south and west. Organized in large tribes and confederations, their social structure differs markedly from that of other groups. Increasing efforts have been made, with some success, to settle them in cultivable areas under government control. In contrast, the marsh dwellers, also tribally organized, live sedentarily among the swamps in the delta area between the lower Tigris and Euphrates. The region's general inaccessibility hampers the functioning of government supervisory and control agencies.

Literate Iraqis, both rural and urban, regardless of their ethnic, religious or regional differences, have, on the whole, a strong sense of Iraqi nationality. Despite this consciousness of nationality, certain factors tend to retard the development of a spirit of common-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ality among the various groups. The government's chief concern in this respect is the threat posed by the bare subsistence level of living in many areas and by the prevalence of illiteracy, particularly throughout the countryside. Lack of land communications, except in the few main arteries, is a significant factor in the slow progress of improvement efforts made by governments under the monarchy as well as the Republic (see ch. 8, Living Conditions; ch. 9, Education).

Under the monarchy, changes favoring the landlords were accelerated in the nineteenth century land-tenure system. The gap between the rich and the poor widened. The Development Board, an autonomous body established in 1950, proved to be the main catalyst in the monarchy's planned exploitation of the country's immense potential wealth. The Board devoted increased government revenues, especially from expanding oil resources, to major construction projects, principally irrigation works and communications. The beneficial effects of these undertakings, however, were not immediate, nor did they reach the majority of the people. Despite a shift in emphasis to small-scale projects, discontent arose in some areas where it was observed that the growth in material prosperity was shared mainly by government supporters, landlords and entrepreneurs (see ch. 19, Agriculture).

By 1955 more attention had begun to be paid to local development measures and less to industrialization. The Agrarian Reform Law, promulgated by the newly established Republic in 1958, was an important initial step forward in distribution of land to the landless tenants as well as to small holders. It also provided for the formation of rural cooperatives to facilitate the purchase of seeds and equipment, the marketing of crops and the securing of financial assistance. Progress had been slow, mainly because of administrative problems arising in the process of setting up appropriate organizations and the assignment of responsibilities to persons untrained to cope with them.

In industry, the dominant factor is the production and refining of crude oil by foreign companies operating under long-term concessions. Royalties and taxes from these companies in 1966 provided the government with about 80 percent of its foreign exchange earnings and roughly 65 percent of its total revenues. After the Revolution of 1958, successive governments acted to reduce the extent of foreign control over the production and refining processes as well as over the exploration and exploitation of new fields. Since most of the oil fields are located considerable distances inland, an extensive system of pipelines has been developed for transportation to port facilities on the Persian Gulf and across to Syria to outlets on the Mediterranean. Most knowl-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

edgeable Iraqis assert that the oil resources belong to Iraq and that the people should benefit from their own control and utilization (see ch. 20, Industry).

Consistent with the policy of government control over industry, the Detailed Economic Plan 1961–62 to 1965–66 and the Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69 cover industry, agriculture, transport, communications and social services. After the Qasim government was overthrown in 1963, greater emphasis on socialism was accompanied by nationalization of the largest private industrial firms and the reorganization of many others into joint stock companies.

Control of most nationalized activities was placed in the High Council for Public Organization and its four subsidiary groups, responsible for industry, banks, commerce and insurance. By 1968 the number of private industries had increased somewhat, but progress in overall production was slow, mainly because of shortages of skilled labor, capital and imported raw materials after the Middle East conflict in 1967 (see ch. 18, Character and Structure of the Economy).

Most political power since the Revolution of 1958 has been placed primarily in the chief executive of the Republic. Prime Minister Qasim exercised this power through the National Council of Revolutionary Command until February 1963, when his government was overthrown by the Baath Party coup led by Brigadier Ahmad Hassan Bakr. During the next 9 months political power was in the hands of the Baath Party, which drew its support mainly from a group of military officers. After the Party organization became weakened by factional disputes over the method of achieving Arab unity, President Arif, who sympathized with the Party's pro-Nasser elements, brought about a coup in November 1963. He established a non-Baathist government and banned all political parties. Since that time, the President of the Republic has wielded political powers through the Council of Ministers serving as the Cabinet (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

The military officers' corps, together with a number of civil servants with military support, has continued to wield strong political influence. This group, aside from being the most cohesive in the country, is the most adept and experienced in carrying on government organizational functions.

Since dissolution of the party system in 1963, all political activity has been channeled through the Arab Socialist Union, a government-controlled organization established in 1964 as an outlet for political expression between the people and the central authorities. The Union also serves as an instrument for conveying

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the government's viewpoints on political policies and developments to the people.

The government's principal political goals, as indicated by various statements of its leaders in 1968, were to achieve a spirit of national unity, to promote Arab socialism as sanctioned by the precepts of Islam, to attain the political and economic union of all Arab states and to maintain a policy of nonalignment in the East-West controversy. The Kurdish problem presents the gravest threat to national stability and to attainment of the national unity goal. Armed clashes, beginning in mid–1961, formally ended in June 1966 with the government's announcement of a cease-fire accompanied by a 12-point conciliation program. Principal features of this program included decentralization of the Kurdish provinces, recognition of the Kurdish language, surrender of arms by the Kurds and reconstruction of the devastated places. Occasional reports of incidents, however, indicate that tensions still exist in the area. The Kurds, in general, desire autonomy within the Iraqi state. Some desire this autonomy at once, while others, more moderate, appear hopeful that it will be granted eventually.

Foreign policy efforts, under the monarchy as well as under the Republic, have been directed mainly toward advancing the country's role in world affairs, as a member of the Arab bloc of nations. Interest in international problems expanded notably after Iraq became a founding member of the United Nations in 1945. Active participation in at least 13 of its 16 Specialized Agencies has provided Iraq an acquaintanceship with the viewpoints of other nations on affairs influencing Iraq's international position. Under the Republic, various governments have consistently followed a foreign policy of nonalignment, particularly with non-Arab countries (see ch. 15, Foreign Relations).

The Western orientation prevailing under the monarchy was illustrated, for example, by the Baghdad Pact signed in 1955 with Great Britain, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan to control the spread of communism in the Middle East. After the Republic was established in 1958, this orientation shifted to one favoring cooperation with Communist nations but rejecting foreign domination of any kind. Within a year, Iraq withdrew from the Pact which had been under repeated attacks by some domestic politicians, the Soviet Union and by Gamal Abdel Nasser of the United Arab Republic.

Arab nationalism and nonalignment have become major features in foreign policy. Arab nationalism, in general, does not imply a governmental superstructure or the supremacy of any particular country. It appears to be regarded as the natural expression of a common bond emphasizing the unity of interests, including origin, culture, language and history of all Arab peoples.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Christians and other minorities in these predominantly Moslem countries are not excluded from the bond. Reference to religious brotherhood in this form of nationalism tend to be accepted by most Iraqi Moslems who seem confident of the unity and ultimate superiority of Islam.

Discussions on the subject of Arab unity evoke varied interpretations regarding methods of attainment and Iraq's position in relation to other Arab countries within the proposed concept.

The government also pursues the unity policy through the Arab League, established in 1945, and in which Iraq plays a leading role among the seven founding members. By 1968 the League included 13 Arab states extending from Iraq and Saudi Arabia on the east to Morocco on the west. Decisions of the League's Council are seldom unanimous except on resolutions against Israel and on denunciations of "Western imperialism."

The strong influence of the Arab-Israeli controversy on foreign policy has been evidenced since the creation of Israel in 1948. After the armed conflict of June 1967, Iraq broke relations with the United States and the United Kingdom, asserting that these two countries had assisted Israel in its military effort. Likewise, an oil embargo was placed against these two countries and West Germany. Foreign firms said to have provided Israel with armament or related material were subject to economic boycott.

Foreign aid has been received in the form of loans and technical assistance needed for capital and for carrying out the projects outlined in the economic development and modernization programs. Most of this assistance, since the Revolution of 1958, has come from the Soviet Union and several East European countries. Trade agreements have been concluded with some 30 nations. Along with Kuwait, Jordan, Syria and the United Arab Republic, Iraq is a member of an Arab Common Market established in 1965, but by mid-1968 its operation was not yet in evidence (see ch. 23, Foreign Economic Relations).

In 1968 government leaders, pressing forward with the modernization programs, particularly the Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69, were encountering problems arising from lack of skilled manpower as well as a widespread resistance to changes from traditions and age-old customs. Special efforts were being made to build up a desire for cooperation among all segments of society, irrespective of ethnic, religious, regional or other influences. The younger generation appeared to be the most dynamic in accepting and adapting to changing conditions.

The forces of sectarianism seemed to be weakening, except in the more remote areas and inaccessible areas. Government leaders recognized that a major basic requirement is education, essential

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

for developing technical skills and managerial competence. Emphasis is being placed on inculcating all people with the idea that internal unity builds national prestige which in turn promotes progress and enhances individual dignity and prestige.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 2

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Most of the country is hot, dry and level. Only in the foothills of the mountains on the northern and northeastern borders can crops be cultivated without extensive irrigation. In the central and southern regions (the Mesopotamia of the early Greeks and later Europeans), cultivation and the development of relatively dense populations, including cities, are made possible by the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers and the tributaries of the latter. In the desert areas of the west and southwest, only pastoral nomads can subsist.

Except for the mountains in the north (extensions of Turkey's Taurus mountain chain) and in the northeast (extensions of the Zagros mountain system of western Iran), the country's borders with its neighbors are not marked by significant physical features (see figs. 1 and 2). In the west and south Iraq's desert areas merge almost imperceptibly with those of Syria, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Pastoral nomads cross these borders regularly, and the jointly administered Neutral Zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia is meant to facilitate the movement of these people and to provide them with water as they cross the borders. There are no permanent residents in the Zone.

Despite the large tracts of desert on either side of Iraq's borders with its western neighbors, the generally stony surface permits vehicular traffic even on the unpaved sections of the route between Baghdad and Damascus. Movement to the northwest is possible on the railroad that runs from Baghdad through northeastern Syria and Turkey. Until early 1968 most paved highways to the west and northwest tended to stop at, or short of, the border, but proposals to extend them were under consideration.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

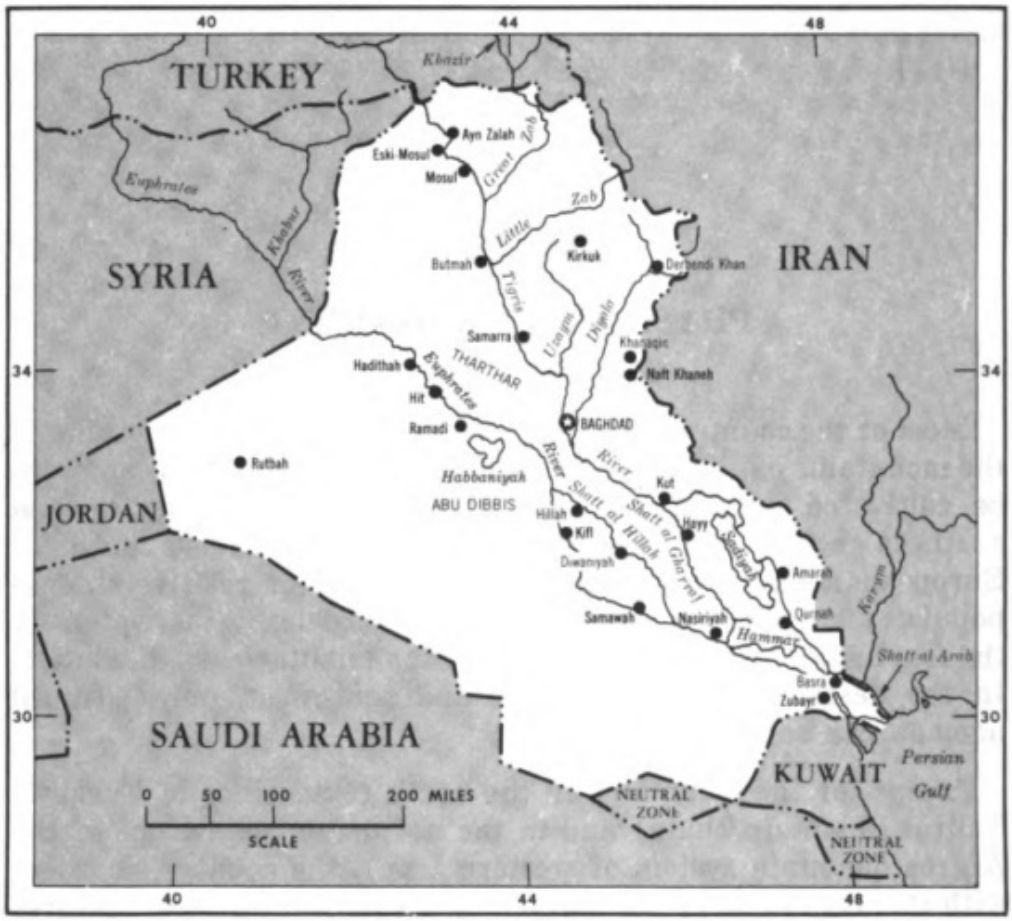


Figure 2. The Terrain and River System of Iraq.

The country's only access to the sea is through the Persian Gulf, on which is its 30-mile coastline. The Shatt al Arab (River of the Arabs), formed by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, about 40 miles above Basra, flows to the Gulf and permits access to the port of that city. The location of the country's single outlet to the sea and the difficulties of access over land across deserts from the west tended, before the development of the Suez Canal in the mid-nineteenth century, to orient Iraq to the east, especially to India and to what was then Persia. Because of the construction of the Suez Canal, the development of port facilities at Basra and, later, the rise of air travel, Iraq's direct economic and political relations with the West grew in importance. Baghdad has become one of the major links in air routes from Europe and North Africa to the Middle East and to southern and eastern Asia.

The lower Shatt al Arab flows along the border between Iran and southeasternmost Iraq, but the river is entirely within Iraq. Unlike most international river boundaries, this one is not drawn to follow the lowest points in the river channel (thalweg line) but

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

along the low water line on the Iranian side, and Iraq controls all navigation on the river. Iran's objection to this has led to disputes from time to time, the latest in the mid-1960's (see ch. 15, Foreign Relations).

MAJOR GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS

Topographically, the country may be divided into four main zones: the desert in the west and southwest; the rolling upland, much of it very dry, between the upper Tigris and Euphrates Rivers; the highlands in the north and northeast; and the alluvial plain through which the lower Tigris and Euphrates flow (see fig. 2). The greater part of the population lives on or near the plain (see ch. 4, Population).

The desert zone, including most of the area lying west and south west of the Euphrates River, is a part of the Syrian Desert, which covers sections of Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The region, sparsely inhabited by pastoral nomads, consists of a wide, stony plain interspersed with rare sandy stretches. A widely ramified pattern of wadis—watercourses which are dry most of the year—run from the borders to the Euphrates. Some are over 200 miles long and carry brief but torrential floods during the winter rains. Wells provide some water for the nomads who cross the desert and for workers who maintain the oil pipeline paralleling the Wadi Hawran, which runs from near the Jordanian border to the Euphrates.

The upland between the Tigris north of Samarra and the Euphrates north of Hit is known as Al Jazirah (the island). It forms a part of a larger area that extends westward into Syria between the two rivers and into Turkey. Water in the area flows in deeply cut valleys, and irrigation is much more difficult than it is in the lower plain. Much of this zone may be classified as desert.

The northeastern highlands begin just southwest of a line drawn from Mosul to Kirkuk and extend to the borders with Syria and Iran. High ground, separated by broad, undulating steppes, gives way to mountains ranging from 3,000 to more than 12,000 feet near Iranian and Turkish borders. Except for a few valleys, the mountain area proper is suitable only for grazing. In the foothills and steppes, however, adequate soil and rainfall make cultivation possible (see ch. 19, Agriculture). Here, too, are the great oilfields near Mosul and Kirkuk (see ch. 20, Industry). The northeast is the homeland of most Iraqi Kurds (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

The alluvial plain begins north of Baghdad and extends to the Persian Gulf. Here the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers lie above the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

level of the plain in many places, and the whole area (roughly 45,000 square miles) is a delta interlaced by the channels of the two rivers and by irrigation canals. Intermittent lakes, fed by the rivers in flood, also characterize southeastern Iraq. A fairly large area (roughly 6,000 square miles) just above the confluence of the two rivers at Qurnah and extending east of the Tigris beyond the Iranian border is marshland, the result of centuries of flooding and inadequate drainage. Much of it is a permanent marsh, but some parts dry out in the early winter, and other parts become marshland only in years of great flood (see fig. 2).

Because the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates above their confluence are heavily silt laden, irrigation and fairly frequent flooding deposit large quantities of silty loam in much of the delta area. Windborne silt contributes to the total deposit of sediments. It has been estimated that the delta plains are built up at the rate of nearly 8 inches a century. In some areas major floods lead to the deposit, in temporary lakes, of as much as 12 inches of mud.

The Tigris and Euphrates also carry large quantities of salts. These, too, are spread on the land by sometimes excessive irrigation and flooding. A high water table and poor surface and subsurface drainage tend to concentrate the salts near the surface of the soil. In general, the salinity of the soil increases from Baghdad south to the Gulf and severely limits productivity in the region south of Amarah.

CLIMATE

Roughly 90 percent of the annual rainfall occurs in the 6 months beginning in November and lasting through April, most of it in the winter months from December through March. The remaining 6 months, particularly the hottest ones of June, July and August, are dry.

Except in the north and northeast, mean annual rainfall ranges between 4 and 7 inches. Data available from stations in the foothills and steppes south and southwest of the mountains suggest mean annual rainfall between 13 and 15 inches for that area (see table 1). Rainfall in the mountains is more abundant and may reach 40 inches a year in some places, but the terrain precludes extensive cultivation. Cultivation on nonirrigated land is limited essentially to the mountain valleys, foothills and steppes, which have 12 or more inches of rainfall annually. Even in this zone, however, only one crop a year can be grown, and a shortage of rain has led to crop failure (see ch. 19, Agriculture).

Mean minimum temperatures in the winter range from near freezing (just before dawn), in the northern and northeastern

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

foothills and the western desert, to the upper 30°s F. and lower 40°s F. in the alluvial plains of southern Iraq. They rise to a mean maximum in the middle 50°s F. (western desert and northeast) and lower 60°s F. (in the south). In the summer, mean minimum temperatures range from the lower 70°s F. to the lower 80°s F. and rise to a mean maximum roughly between 100° and 110° F. (see table 2).

Temperatures sometimes fall below freezing and have fallen as low as 6° F. at Rutbah in the western desert. They are more likely, however, to go over 115° F. in the summer months (particularly July and August), and several stations have records of 120° F. or more.

*Table 1. Mean Annual Rainfall for Nine Stations in Iraq**

Station	Rainfall (in inches)
Baghdad	6.1
Basra	6.4
Diwaniyah	5.0
Nasiriyah	4.8
Hayy	5.3
Rutbah	4.7
Khanaqin	13.8
Kirkuk	15.0
Mosul	14.7

* Mean annual rainfall is based on data collected over a period of 25 to 42 years, and figures are rounded to the nearest tenth.

Source: Adapted from Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Abstract, 1965*, p. 23.

*Table 2. Mean Maximum and Mean Minimum Temperatures, January and July, for Nine Stations in Iraq**

Station	January		July	
	Mean Minimum	Mean Maximum	Mean Minimum	Mean Maximum
Baghdad	40	61	77	110
Basra	45	65	82	105
Diwaniyah	38	62	75	109
Nasiriyah	42	64	78	109
Hayy	42	63	80	110
Rutbah	34	56	71	102
Khanaqin	40	60	78	111
Kirkuk	39	56	80	109
Mosul	35	55	72	110

* Mean temperature data are based on material collected over periods of 17 to 38 years.

Source: Adapted from Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Abstract, 1965*, pp. 18–22.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The summer months are marked by two types of wind phenomena. The southern and southeasterly sirocco (in Iraq, *sharqi*), a dry, dusty wind with occasional gusts to 50 miles an hour, occurs from April to early June and again from late September through November. It may last for a day at the beginning and end of the season but for several days at other times. These winds are often accompanied by violent duststorms which may rise to heights of several thousand feet and close airports for brief periods. From mid-June to mid-September, the prevailing wind, called the *shamal*, is from the north and northwest. It is a steady wind, absent only occasionally during this period. The very dry air brought by this wind permits intensive sun heating of the land surface, but the breeze has some cooling effect.

The combination of rain shortage and extreme heat makes much of Iraq a desert. Because of very high rates of evaporation, soil and plants rapidly lose the little moisture obtained from rain, and vegetation could not survive without extensive irrigation.

THE RIVER SYSTEM

The Euphrates originates in Turkey, is augmented by the Khabur River in Syria and enters Iraq in the northwest. Here it is fed only by the wadis of the western desert during the winter rains. It then winds through a gorge varying from 1 to 10 miles in width until it flows out on the plain at Ramadi and continues to the Hindiyah Barrage, constructed in 1914. There the river was diverted into the Hindiyah Channel. What is now the Shatt al Hillah had served as the main channel of the Euphrates before that time. Below Kifl, the river follows two channels to Samawah where it reappears as a single channel to join the Tigris at Qurnah.

The Tigris also rises in Turkey but is significantly augmented by several rivers in Iraq, the most important of which are the Khabur, the Great Zab, the Little Zab and the Uzaym, all of which join the Tigris above Baghdad, and the Diyala, which joins it about 20 miles below the city. At the Kut Barrage much of the water is diverted into the Shatt al Gharraf which had once been the main channel of the Tigris. Water from the Tigris thus enters the Euphrates through the Shatt al Gharraf well above the confluence of the two main channels at Qurnah (see fig. 2).

Both the Tigris and the Euphrates break into a number of channels in the marshland area, and the flow of the rivers is substantially reduced by the time they come together at Qurnah. Moreover, the swamps act as silt traps, and the Shatt al Arab is relatively silt-free as it flows south. Below Basra, however, the Karun River enters the Shatt al Arab from Iran, carrying large

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

quantities of silt which presents a continuous dredging problem in maintaining a channel for oceangoing vessels to reach the port at Basra.

The waters of the Tigris and Euphrates are essential to the life of the country, but they may also threaten it. The rivers are at their lowest level in September and October and at flood in March, April and May when they may carry 40 times as much water as at low mark. Moreover, one season's flood may be 10 or more times as great as that in another year. In 1954, for example, Baghdad was seriously threatened, and dikes protecting it were nearly topped by the flooding Tigris.

Until the mid-twentieth century, most efforts to control waters were concerned primarily with irrigation. Some attention was given to problems of flood control and drainage before the 1958 Revolution, but development plans in the middle and late 1960's were increasingly devoted to these matters, as well as to irrigation projects on the upper reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates and on the tributaries of the Tigris in the northeast.

Extensive water storage projects, associated with flood control undertakings, are expected to make possible more effective irrigation, since water for irrigation has not always been available at the appropriate time in the agricultural cycle (see ch. 19, Agriculture). Water stored in flood season can be released later (in the dry summer) when it is needed.

In the mid-1960's, for the first time, extensive water control projects, including dams and canals, were proposed and, to a limited extent, executed in the upper Tigris and Euphrates and on the Diyala, Uzaym and Little Zab Rivers. These are meant to provide opportunities for cultivation in the arid zones (Jazirah) and to permit the cultivation of more than one crop a year in areas such as the northeast, which had relied entirely on rainfall.

In the desert zone (west and southwest) where irrigation is not possible, an extensive well-digging program was completed in the early 1960's. In the late 1960's, deep wells were being dug in Mawsil, Irbil and Kirkuk Provinces.

The river system has not been a significant source of power. Although a few of the dams already completed and a few in prospect in 1968 were considered as actual or potential sources of power, oil and natural gas provide the fuels for most of the electricity-producing installations in the country (see ch. 20, Industry).

Two major flood control and water shortage facilities were essentially completed before 1958 but were undergoing modification in the mid-1960's; at Ramadi a dam permits the diversion of water

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

from the Euphrates to Lake Habbaniyah, and a regulator governs flow from the lake to the river downstream. At Samarra on the Tigris, a dam and regulator permit the diversion of water to the great Tharthar depression. Other depressions, quite dry except during the rainy season, provide for water storage in the future.

On the Euphrates, a major water control and irrigation project (probably to be located near Hadithah where the oil pipeline from Kirkuk crosses the river on its way west) has been delayed. Iraq and Syria have contemplated major dams on the Euphrates since the early 1960's, but negotiations between the two countries have been inconclusive, and no significant steps had been taken on the Iraqi dam by the end of 1967.

The 1968 spring floods on the Euphrates—the worst in years—apparently led the government to consider moving ahead rapidly on a dam. The project had been broached in the early 1960's, but technical difficulties had blocked early implementation. The dam will be part of a system meant to provide irrigation for a large arid zone in the Jazirah, to balance the flow of the Tigris to the dam at Samarra and to furnish hydroelectric power.

Elsewhere, progress has been faster. A major dam at Derbendi Khan on the upper Diyala was completed in 1959, and the Dokan Dam on the Little Zab was also completed. These and other projects on the northeastern tributaries of the Tigris are expected to contribute substantially to increased agricultural productivity in this part of the country (see ch. 19, Agriculture).

In the delta area (the alluvial plain) of southern Iraq, proposed projects and some already underway in the middle and late 1960's were directed to water control and drainage. New dams were being planned or built; an older one, such as the Hindiyah Barrage, was being reconstructed.

RESOURCES

The country's only significant and exploited resource is oil. In the 1960's the most productive field was at Kirkuk. Smaller fields near Kirkuk are those at Bay Hasan and Jambur. Substantial amounts of crude oil were being produced at Rumaila and Zubayr in the southeast, and lesser quantities in fields at Ayn Zalah and Butmah, northwest of Mosul. A still smaller producer is at Naft Khaneh, south of Khanaqin on the Iranian border. Most of the production is exported as crude oil, but refineries process some of it for domestic use, and in the mid-1960's the government was planning the development of a petrochemical industry (see ch. 20, Industry; ch. 23, Foreign Economic Relations).

Natural gas is also produced at the Kirkuk field. Some is used

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

domestically for thermal power stations, and gas oil is exported to Syria. In 1967 arrangements were being made for the export of natural gas to Turkey (see ch. 20, Industry; ch. 23, Foreign Economic Relations).

Except for salt, exploited for domestic use, there was no important production of other minerals in early 1968. Gypsum and low-grade coal have been known to exist for some time, and a geological survey underway in the mid-1960's had located ceramic clay, phosphates, sulfur, iron and copper and glass sands. Further exploration and exploitation were expected in the late 1960's but had not yet begun in early 1968 (see ch. 20, Industry).

TRANSPORTATION

With the exception of the road leading west from Baghdad across the Syrian Desert to Jordan and Syria, most roads and railroads follow the large rivers from southeast to northwest or lead from Baghdad to the oilfields of Kirkuk and to other northeastern centers. For all routes Baghdad is the center because of its location and its political, cultural and commercial importance (see fig. 3).

Despite their importance in other respects, Iraq's rivers are not significant traffic arteries. Small craft move in the Tigris and Euphrates between Baghdad and Basra, carrying local trade goods, and the Madans, people of marshes of the southwest, rely heavily on reed canoes, but roads and railroads are much more significant for the movement of people and goods (see ch. 22, Domestic Trade).

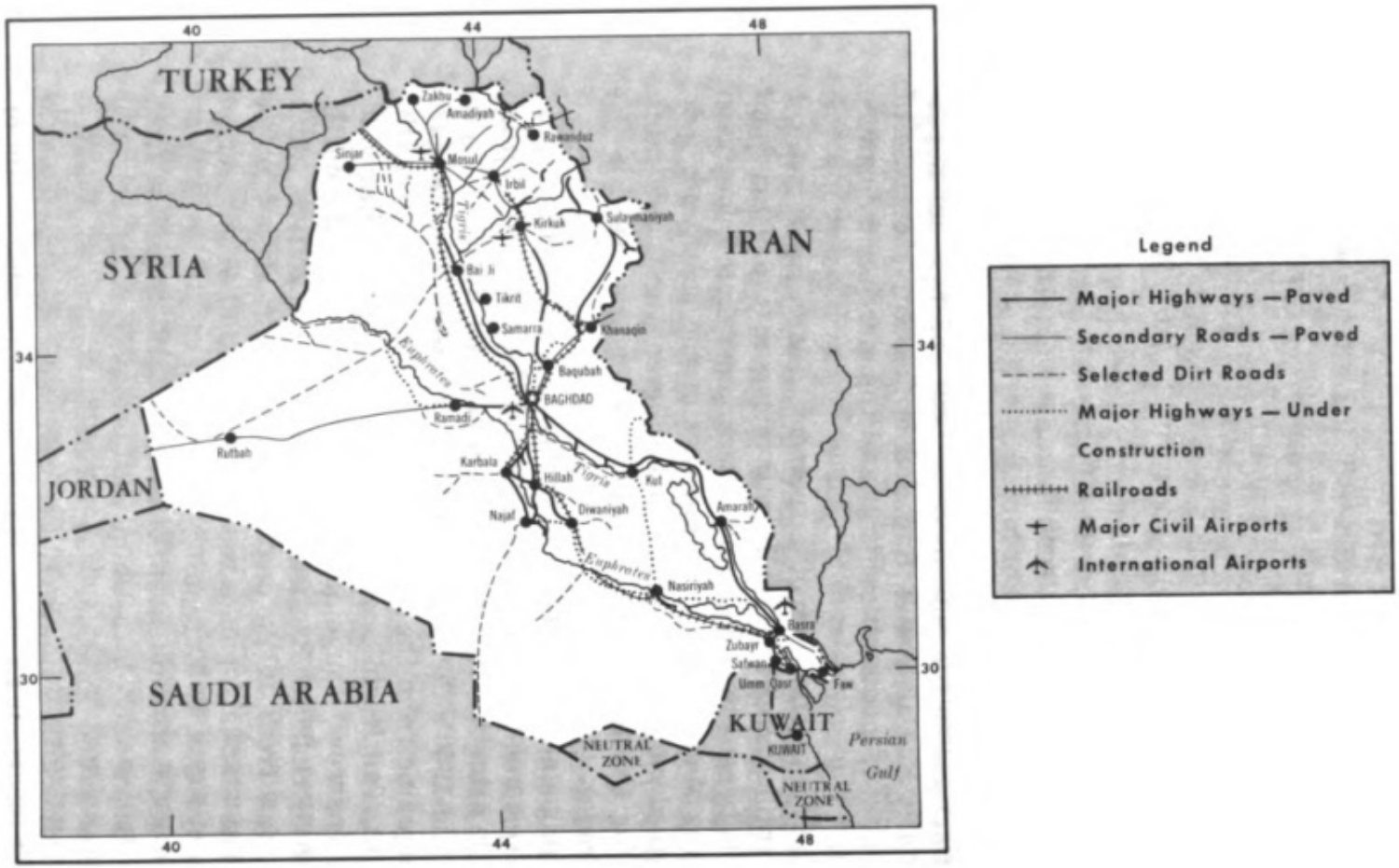
In the middle and late 1960's government plans heavily emphasized the development of ports, airports and the road and railroad system. Little attention was paid to river transportation.

Until the mid-1960's the railroad system consisted of a standard (broad) gauge line from the northwestern border with Syria (the transfer point, Tall Kushik, was in Syrian territory) to Baghdad, and a meter (narrow) gauge line running from Irbil in the northeast through Kirkuk to Baghdad and south to Basra. A short branch line ran from Jalula on the Baghdad-Kirkuk section to Khanaqin. The standard gauge road is directly linked via Syrian and Turkish systems, to Europe.

In the mid-1960's the extension of the standard-gauge line from Baghdad to Basra and on to Umm Qasr, roughly paralleling the existing meter-gauge railroad, was formally completed. Because of technical difficulties, however, the extension was not able to carry heavily loaded, high-speed traffic which continued to run on the meter-gauge line. New stations and other buildings have been constructed and new rolling-stock acquired. Technical and financial aid were supplied by the Soviet Union and most of the new equip-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google



Legend

- Major Highways — Paved
- Secondary Roads — Paved
- Selected Dirt Roads
- Major Highways — Under Construction
- Railroads
- Major Civil Airports
- International Airports

Figure 3. The Transportation System of Iraq.

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ment by other East European countries (see ch. 23, Foreign Economic Relations).

In the late 1960's there were plans for small but important extensions of the railroad system and for the reconstruction of existing sections. By the end of 1967 a spur had been built from the new standard-gauge main line just above Basra to Umm Qasr, where new port facilities were being constructed. Also proposed was a link between Karbala, served by a spur on the Baghdad-Basra line, and Samawah, on the main line to the southeast. Such a link would provide rail service to a densely settled area on the west bank of the Euphrates (the main line runs east of the river) and would also furnish rail access to Najaf, holy city of the Shiites (see ch. 11, Religion). In 1968, work was underway on the existing standard-gauge line from Baghdad to the Syrian border.

The reconstruction and extension of the road system have been underway since the early 1960's, and much had been accomplished by early 1968. Nevertheless, unpaved roads still link some administrative centers, and much of the desert is served only by caravan tracks (see fig. 3).

New or reconstructed roads generally follow older unpaved or otherwise inadequate roads linking towns in the alluvial plain or running from Baghdad to the north and northeast. A new road has been proposed, however, to replace the present inadequate one from Ramadi through Hadithah to the Syrian border following the southeast bank of the Euphrates. The main east-west artery from Baghdad through Rutbah to the Jordanian border is regarded as an inadequate route to Damascus, and it has been suggested that a branch be built, departing from a point west of Rutbah and moving northwest to the Syrian border.

Most communities in the Tigris-Euphrates plain are located at or near rivers or major canals, and the rivers themselves sometimes flow in several channels. Road construction, therefore, often requires extensive bridge building, sometimes several bridges for short stretches of road.

The major international airport is at Baghdad; another is at Basra. A new airport of major dimensions was under construction at Baghdad in early 1968. There are civil airports at Mosul and Kirkuk. In 1966 a new airport at Mosul, primarily for military purposes, but accessible also to civil aircraft, was proposed. In early 1968 there was no information on the status of that project. At one time the Iraq Petroleum Company maintained a number of landing fields, but in early 1968 the only important one still functioning was located at Kirkuk.

In 1968 the major seaport was at Basra, on the Shatt al Arab, roughly 80 miles from the Persian Gulf. The port was already

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

capable of handling oceangoing vessels, but important facilities were being added in the late 1960's. Umm Qasr, near the western end of the short coastline, was also being developed in 1968 and was expected to be able to handle oceangoing traffic when completed. Faw, about 6 miles from the Persian Gulf on the Shatt al Arab, is at the end of a pipeline from Zubayr, the center of the southeastern oilfields. From Faw an underwater pipeline extends to Khoral Amaya, a platform offshore which serves as a loading point for large tankers.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

Although roughly 44 percent of the people live in urban areas as officially defined (all administrative centers, regardless of size and available facilities are urban), it is probable that as much as 70 percent of the population live under essentially rural conditions (see ch. 4, Population).

In the rural areas of the alluvial plain and in the lower Diyala region, settlement almost invariably clusters near the rivers, streams and irrigation canals. The bases of the relationship between watercourse and settlement have been summarized by Robert McCormick Adams, Director of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. He notes that the levees laid down by streams and canals provide advantages for both settlement and agriculture. Surface water drains more easily on the levee backslope, and the coarse soils of the levees are easier to cultivate and permit better subsurface drainage. The height of the levees gives some protection against floods and the frosts that often affect low-lying areas and may kill winter crops. Above all, those living or cultivating on the crest of a levee have easy access to water for irrigation and household use in a dry, hot country.

Although isolated homesteads occur occasionally, most rural communities are nucleated settlements rather than dispersed farmsteads: the farmer leaves his village to cultivate the fields outside it. This pattern holds for farming communities in the Kurdish highlands of the northeast as well as for those in the alluvial plain. The size of the settlement varies, generally with the volume of water available for household use and with the amount of land accessible to village dwellers. Sometimes, particularly in the lower Tigris and Euphrates Valleys, soil salinity is responsible for a rather restricted area of arable land and limits the size of the community dependent on it, but salinity usually results in large unsettled and uncultivated stretches between towns or villages.

Fragmentary information suggests that most farmers in the alluvial plain tend to live in villages of over 100 persons even in

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

larger towns, and substantial numbers of urban dwellers, except, perhaps, those within the municipal limits, actually are farmers. In the lower Diyala, on the other hand, villages are often smaller, but even here, a substantial proportion of the persons residing in the provincial center, Baqubah, are employed in agriculture.

The marsh dwellers (Madans) of the south usually live in small clusters of two or three houses kept above water by rushes which are constantly being replenished. Such clusters are often close together, but access from one to another is possible only by canoe. Here and there, a few natural islands permit a slightly larger cluster. Some of these people are primarily buffalo herders and lead a seminomadic life. In the winter, when the waters are at low point, they build fairly large, temporary villages. In the summer they move with their herds out of the marshes to the riverbanks.

Cities and large towns in this arid country are almost invariably situated on watercourses, usually on the major rivers or their larger tributaries. In the south this dependence has had its disadvantages. Until the recent development of flood control, Baghdad and other cities were subject to the threat of inundation. Moreover, the dikes needed to protect them effectively prevented the expansion of the urban areas in some directions. The growth of Baghdad, for example, was restricted by dikes on its eastern edge. The diversion of water to the Tharthar depression and the construction of a canal transferring water from the Tigris north of Baghdad to the Diyala River have permitted the irrigation of land outside the limits of the dikes and the expansion of settlement.

The way of life of the Bedouin herders of the south and west does not permit permanent settlements. Generally the focal point of their annual movement is a city, usually Baghdad. Some groups move up from the south in small units to gather in Baghdad in the dry season. Others move to Baghdad from the west. In the rainy season (winter and early spring) they disperse to the desert, again in small units. Before and since the 1958 Revolution, there have been efforts to settle the nomads and to convert them, at least in part, into cultivators. There is little reliable information on the success of these efforts (see ch. 6, Social Structure; ch. 19, Agriculture).

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL SETTING

Iraq, a republic since the coup d'etat of 1958 which ended the reign of King Faisal II, became a sovereign, independent state in 1932. The history of the land and its people, however, dates back almost 5,000 years to the time when the fertile area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers was known as Mesopotamia (meaning between rivers) and its inhabitants then called Sumerians, probably because the delta region of the two rivers was then called Sumer. Until World War I, the country was generally known in the West as Mesopotamia.

Geographically, the Mesopotamian region has been open to incursions from all sides. The deserts to the south and west harbored mounted nomads, and the passes to the north and east provided entry corridors from those directions. Numerous foreign conquerors came and went, each contributing to the physical mixture and cultural diversity of the area.

The most significant historical and cultural change occurred in the seventh century, when the Arab conquest brought Islam to the land, overlaying and reworking all that had gone before. It almost completely obliterated any conscious memory among the people of their ancient ways. The Arabs brought not only a new set of rulers but also their language, religion and certain patterns of living which have characterized the country ever since. The conquerors also gave the country its modern name, "Iraq," meaning basically "to sweat" or "to take root."

Despite the destruction wrought by the Mongols in the thirteenth century and the stultifying centuries of Turkish rule that followed, the past has continued to express itself in subtle details of social life and outlook which still distinguish the Arabized Iraqi majority on the Mesopotamian plain from Arab populations elsewhere in the Middle East. There are aspects of community life in Iraq and a characteristic approach to the problems of government, technology and economic organization which in degree or kind set off the country from its neighbors, with whom the majority of its people share common Moslem traditions and faith as well as Arabic speech.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Iraq identifies itself as a bearer of the Arab tradition because of its 13 centuries of participation in the Moslem Arab world. For most Iraqis not the grandeur of ancient Sumer or Babylon, but the magnificence of the medieval Abbasside dynasty (750–1258) represents the zenith of the country's past achievement and nurtures an historical awareness that greatness is possible again in a revived and united Arab world. This outlook, more Pan-Arab than nationalist in its implications, is being modified toward a more specific sense of Iraqi identity in the course of the country's experience as an independent nation while under the influence of the government's efforts to stress Iraq's inheritance of ancient civilization.

For the great majority of the people, Iraq's recent past is seen as a struggle for national freedom—first against the Ottomans (Turks), later against the British, and finally against "Western imperialism" and what is regarded as its creature, Israel (see ch. 15, Foreign Relations). The native heroes vary with the ethnic and religious affiliation of the viewer, but for the most part the people share the common dislike of all non-Arabs. History thus becomes an active factor in the contemporary Iraqi scene and an instrument available to political contenders. The anti-Western sentiments aroused during and since the British Mandate worked to the disadvantage of the Hashemite monarchy (1921—58) and its supporters seeking to maintain an alignment with the West. Since the overthrow of the kingdom in the coup of 1958, nonalignment in world affairs, though erratic, has become an important concern of successive governments.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Sumer, Akkad, Babylon and Assyria

Almost 3,000 years before Christ, Sumerian kings, who were contemporary with the Pharaohs of the earliest Egyptian dynasties (3100–2270 B.C.), developed what is often called "the first civilization." It is not certain where they came from nor when they entered the area. It is clear, however, that they were preceded by numerous other peoples who had contributed to the social and political complexity of the region.

The Sumerians lived under a federation of city-states, devised the oldest form of writing based on pictorial as well as phonetic signs, used copper for tools and weapons, made highly polished painted pottery and developed elaborate irrigation and water-control systems. So important were these irrigation works to survival and prosperity that even in wartime contestants took pains to avoid their destruction.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Sumerian dynasties ended probably about 2800 B.C. when they were conquered by the Akkadians under Sargon, the founder of the Akkadian kingdom. A Semitic people from the west and northwest, the Akkadians had entered in numbers sufficient to give their name to the territory surrounding what is now Baghdad. Despite their worship of the sun, they treated the agrarian religions of the conquered places with respect, and placing their earth-gods into a kind of pantheon protected by a new and larger political order. The Akkadians and the Sumerians, in effect, combined their forces, and Sargon's military movements and exploits were extended to the Mediterranean and into Asia Minor.

After Sargon's death the empire slowly fell before the onslaughts of tribesmen from the north. Power was revived briefly with its center in the city of Erech (modern Warka) and later in that of Ur (now Makayyar), but it was, in turn, gradually weakened by the attack of Elamites, Semitic-speaking people from Elam in what is now the southwestern part of Iran.

The Sumerian-Akkadians were finally subjugated by the Semitic-speaking Amorites, probably from Syria. By 2000 B.C. the Amorites established a new state with its capital at Babylon on the southern Euphrates. Babylonian authority was extended over southern Mesopotamia by Hammurabi (c.1955–13 B.C.), the sixth of his line of Amoritic rulers. One of the great kings of antiquity, Hammurabi is remembered not only as a conqueror but also as a lawgiver. The code of laws he collected dealt with land tenure, rent, the position of women, marriage, divorce, inheritance, functions of money, contracts, control of public order, administration of justice, wages and labor conditions.

Around 1600 B.C. the Kassites, a people speaking Elamitic (one of a group of languages related to modern Georgian) overthrew the Babylonian dynasty and ruled the region until about 1150 B.C. The Kassite domination was supplanted by the Assyrians, a race of warriors from the north containing a mixture of Semites with non-Semitic tribes. The Assyrians were renowned not only for their military innovations and ruthless proficiency in war but also for their contributions in the spheres of administration, architecture, sculpture and literature.

One of the Assyrian rulers of note was Tiglath-Pileser III (745–27 B.C.), who developed an important political idea—the maintenance of a permanent military force or standing army under the control of a permanent bureaucracy. He raised the Assyrian empire, with its capital at Nineveh on the Tigris opposite present-day Mosul, to its pinnacle of power (even Egypt was required to recognize Assyrian supremacy), but the system he inaugurated eventually alienated subject peoples, who were driven to

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

hatred and desperation by the severity of Assyrian methods. Revolt followed revolt; Egypt and Syria were lost; eventually, in 612 B.C. Scythians from the north destroyed Nineveh, and Assyrian power became a historic memory. Iraq's present-day Nestorian Christian minority calls itself Assyrian and claims ethnic descent from the peoples of this ancient empire (see ch. 11, Religion).

Babylon rose again as the center of a Neo-Babylonian empire, also called the Chaldean empire (605–539 B.C.). Favored by its geographical position, Babylon, after being rebuilt as one of the greatest cities of its day, became a center of trade and arts, but this glory also passed when it fell to the Persians under Cyrus the Great (c.550–30 B.C.), the founder of the Archaemenian empire (c.550–331 B.C.).

Persian and Greek Intrusions

Mesopotamia, so long a seat of Semitic power, then came under an Indo-European-speaking people. It remained a province of the Archaemenain empire for nearly 150 years until subjugated by Alexander the Great around 331 B.C. Upon his death at Babylon in 323 B.C., the Greek power began to decline in the hands of his successors. Seleucus, one of Alexander's generals, became ruler of Mesopotamia and Persia, then known as the kingdom of the Seleucide, which had its power center at Seleucia on the Tigris south of modern Baghdad. Although his successors continued to spread Hellenistic civilization, by 200 B.C. the Seleucid power had shrunk to the confines of Mesopotamia and Syria.

The Seleucids were challenged by new powers to the north, the Parthian Persians who were by then in control of all Persia, and increasingly by the rapidly rising new power in the west, the Romans. Subduing Mesopotamia in 138 B.C., the Parthians thereafter had to contest with the Romans for supremacy over the region for nearly 800 years, until the coming of the Arabs. The Parthians were pushed aside in A.D. 224 by a new Persian power, the Sassanian empire (about A.D. 224–641), which in its hostility to the Romans and to Christianity, their favorite religion, gradually revived Zoroastrianism, the dominant religion in Persia since the sixth century B.C. As a result, the Sassanian efforts to consolidate power were aided by the powerful Zoroastrian priests, but by the mid-seventh century inconclusive struggles between Sassanids and the Romans left both of them exhausted and vulnerable (see ch. 11, Religion).

ARAB CONQUEST AND THE COMING OF ISLAM

The process of detaching Iraq from the declining Sassanian

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

power began during the brief reign of Abu Bakr (632–34), first caliph (spiritual and temporal ruler) and successor to Mohammed (570–632), founder of Islam (see ch. 11, Religion). The many Arabs, mostly Christian, who were living under the Persian rule in lower Mesopotamia, at first supported their Persian masters against the Moslem invaders but slowly transferred their allegiance. By 637 Mesopotamia was completely subjugated by the second caliph, Omar (634–44), in a decisive battle at Al Qadisiyah (sometimes called Kadisiya), a locality on the Euphrates south of Baghdad. The religion and, only somewhat more slowly, the language of the victors were accepted by the majority of the population, which since has been Moslem and counted itself Arab.

The Iraqis, whose culture was more advanced than that of the victors themselves, however, did not passively accept the culture brought by the newcomers. Rather, Iraqi culture predominated so thoroughly that the Moslem Arab golden age that followed was centered in Iraq, not in the Arabian Peninsula, and it was the Moslem Arabs rather than the old population of Mesopotamia that may be said to have been culturally absorbed.

As the Islamic empire grew, the center of power shifted from Arabia northward to Syria and Iraq. In this process new divisions and conflicts were added to traditional Arab intertribal and interfactional strife; longstanding regional conflicts reasserted themselves in the new empire. From the beginning, Moslem Arab egalitarianism before Allah or God was perpetuated, but neither then nor since has the Arab ideal of political union among all Arabic-speaking peoples become a lasting reality. Down to the present time the world has witnessed a continual alternation in the Arab world between movements toward unity and countermovements toward schism (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics; ch. 15, Foreign Relations).

After the stabilization of Moslem power in the territories which included present-day Iraq, Iran, Syria and Egypt, the problem of the succession to the caliphate became pressing. In 657 Ali, the fourth caliph (656–61), with his center of power in Iraq, was murdered by his adversaries. Ali's son, Ḥasan, though proclaimed caliph, had to abdicate in the face of superior forces advancing under Mu'awiyah, who became the first of the Umayyad caliphs (661–750) ruling from Damascus in Syria. The last trace of armed resistance to the new Umayyad dynasty was eliminated in 680 when Ali's second son, Husain, was killed in a battle.

Meanwhile, in opposition to the Umayyad dynasty, supporters of Ali and his descendants founded a political organization called the Shi'at Ali, or "the party (partisans) of Ali." Centered in Iraq, this movement drew its initial members almost exclusively from

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

among the Arabs involved in the succession struggles but gradually gained support from large numbers of disaffected Moslem converts in Iraq and Persia who had been treated as second-class Moslems by the Arab aristocracy in Damascus. The early political conflicts soon hardened into the first major religious schism in the Moslem world—the rival Shia and Sunni branches. Both Ali and Husain became Syria martyrs; Najaf, Ali's burial place some 90 miles south of Baghdad, and Karbala, 55 miles southwest of Baghdad, where Husain died, became holy places of pilgrimage as important to the Shiites as Mecca is to the Sunnites (see ch. 11, Religion).

The Moslem empire achieved its greatest political expansion under the Umayyads. From southern France, where it existed only fleetingly, its domains included the Iberian Peninsula, the whole of North Africa, including Egypt, the Mediterranean islands, the Arabian Peninsula, Asia Minor, the Fertile Crescent, Persia with its boundaries pushed eastward to the Amu Darya, Afghanistan, temporary possessions in India and the westernmost portion of China.

Umayyad power waned in the early eighth century because of the age-old Arab difficulties of feud and schism within the ruling aristocracy. The dynasty was also being challenged by the dissident Shiites and other sectarian forces which questioned the legitimacy of the Umayyad caliphate. In 750 it was supplanted by the Abbasside rebels, Arab Sunnites who were most active in Persia but also had the support of Iraqi Shiites.

THE ABBASSIDE CALIPHATE (750–1258)

The Abbassides claimed their descent from al-Abbas (566–652), an uncle of Mohammed and, despite Shiite opposition. they asserted themselves as legitimate heirs of the Prophet. Under the Abbasides, Baghdad became the center of power where Arab and Persian cultures mingled to produce a blaze of philosophical, scientific and literary glory remembered throughout the Arab world and by Iraqis in particular as the pinnacle of the Islamic past.

A cosmopolitan center of the medieval world, Baghdad had the advantages of an adequate water supply, river communications and freedom from malaria. Although it was built entirely with the needs of political administration in mind, its population grew rapidly as it gained importance as a social, political and trade center, and by 800 it had become the second largest city in the Mediterranean world, next only to Constantinople (now Istanbul).

The greatest caliphs of the period combined outstanding administrative and intellectual capacities with unrelenting cruelty. Their

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ruthlessness is less significant as a personal trait than as evidence of the substitution, perhaps under Persian influence, of the caliph as absolute autocrat for the traditional Arab notion by the leader chosen by a council of his peers and answerable solely to the council. The Abbasside cultural renaissance roughly spanned the reigns of the first seven rulers of the dynasty (750–842). Of the seven, three achieved lasting fame: Mansur (754–75), Harun al Rashid (786–806) and Mamun (813–33). These sovereigns had in common great administrative and political ability, both of which were vital in keeping under control the factional strife. The situation in Iraq with its Sunni dynasty and large Shia population was especially volatile, and it required all the guile and sternness of the Abbassides to stay in power. The Abbasside caliphs had to contend with continual Shia revolts in Iraq, Persia and Arabia.

The Abbasside caliphate did not end abruptly but fell into a long decline under the stresses of regional, ethnic and religious differences. In areas under a relatively weak control, local forces revolted and gained autonomy as early as 756 when Spain broke away. Morocco followed in 788, Tunisia in 800 and Egypt in 868. The Abbasside decay was prompted by the Sunni-Shia split which had weakened the effectiveness of Islam as a single unifying force and as a sanction for a single political authority.

Although the intermingling of various linguistic and cultural groups contributed greatly to the enrichment of Islamic civilization, it was also a source of tensions. Not only was there the cleavage between the Arabs and Persians, but the growing prominence of the Turks in military and political affairs gave cause for discontent and rivalry in court. The Turks came as a stream of slaves brought in year by year to man the caliphs' imperial guard and fill the ranks of the regular military forces as mercenaries.

Excelling in combat, Turkish officers rose rapidly to high positions and began to replace the Arabs around the seat of power. This trend was quickened after the rule of Caliph Mutasim (833–42) whose mother was a Turkish slave. By the tenth century the Turkish commanders—no longer checked by their Persian rivals in court—were able to bring the caliphs under their effective control. Consequently, the political power of the caliphate was separated from its religious functions—functions which had heretofore been combined in the person of the caliph.

There was no disposition, however, to dispense with the office of the caliphate, since the sanction of the incumbent continued to be important as a symbol for legitimizing claims to authority. Thus, even the stronghanded Persian Buwayhid family of the Shia branch which ruled Iraq for a century (945–1055), retained the caliph as a shadowy symbol of spiritual authority. Until termi-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

nated in Iraq by the Mongols in 1258, the Abbasside caliphs continued to be treated with deference but only as nominal sovereigns. After 1258 the Abbassides fled to Cairo, where they continued to exercise, under Egyptian protection, the spiritual authority of the caliphate.

The highpoints of the Moslem renaissance in Iraq occurred during the reign of Harun al Rashid, marked by its material splendor, that of his son Mamun, which saw the greatest intellectual advances. In Mamun's time some of the greatest Islamic poetry was written. Under his successors, impressive advances were also made in mathematics, physics, astronomy and geography. Historical and religious scholarship also prospered, and the compilation and further creation of Arabian tales began. In addition, the Abbasside caliphs sought to preserve the unity of Islamic thought by encouraging the use of Arabic as the common medium of expression for all peoples in the empire (see ch. 10, Artistic and Intellectual Expression).

At the top of the Abbasside society was the caliph, the head of a theocratic state. He was assisted by the vizier, often the power behind the throne. Under them were a number of ministers and senior military officers presiding over a salaried bureaucracy and standing army. Learned men were highly honored in and outside the court for their literary pursuits. Artists, merchants, farmers, herdsmen and slaves comprised the remainder of social groups, but there were relatively few rigid social barriers among them. Slavery existed, but little stigma was attached to it.

In the first half of the thirteenth century the Mongols had reached the lower edges of what is now Soviet Russia in Europe. In 1256 under Hulagu, a grandson of Genghis Khan (1162—1227), the Mongols sacked Baghdad. The material and artistic production of centuries was swept away. Iraq itself was laid waste, a tragedy from which the country recovered only in the twentieth century; the canal system, upon which the prosperity of the land depended, fell into ruin.

The Mongol overlords yielded to the Islamic culture of their subject peoples, but their rule remained alien to the end. Another wave of Mongols under Tamerlane (1369–1405) further ravaged Baghdad in 1393, but he was no more successful than his predecessors in stabilizing the vast Mongol empire. New local dynasties and additional Mongol groups rose to power in quick succession.

In Iraq, political chaos, economic depression and social disintegration immediately followed the Mongolian invasions. Baghdad, so long a center of trade, rapidly lost its commercial importance. A major preoccupation of the governmental authorities had been to keep the peace in order to maintain the agricultural production

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

essential to the whole economy. As central controls weakened, nomadic tribes encroached on the settled areas.

The first outside force to take advantage of these conditions was Ismail Shah (1502–24), the founder of the Persian Safawid dynasty (1502–1794) and self-proclaimed leader of all Shiites. In 1509 he conquered Iraq and in doing so came into conflict with the Ottomans (Turks) of the Sunni order, who had their capital at Istanbul. Persian rule ended in 1534 when Baghdad was captured by Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–66). Earlier in 1517 the Ottomans had taken Cairo, ending the last of the Abbasside caliphs, and thereafter Ottoman sultans claimed the title of caliph. Istanbul became the center of Islam, and Iraq was left to decay. Except for an interlude of Persian Safawid control in the seventeenth century (1623–38), Iraq remained under Ottoman rule until 1918.

THE OTTOMAN PERIOD (1534–1918)

Divided into the three provinces (vilayet) of Baghdad, Mosul and Basrah, Iraq was administered by appointed governors (pasha) answerable directly to the sultan-caliph in Istanbul. As the eastern frontier outpost of the empire, it was subjected to recurrent forays by Shiite Persian powers and by tribes in Kurdistan (see Glossary) as well as by the rebellious local chieftains of the predominantly Shia southern Iraq. A tenuous peace was maintained with the intractable tribes largely by leaving them alone. For more than a century, beginning in the early eighteenth century, the waning Ottoman sultan-caliphate could exercise its authority minimally by confirming as governors the strongest among the local chieftains in Iraq. Not until around 1830 did the Ottomans reassert absolute power under the strong leadership of Sultan Mahmud II (1808–39).

From 1831 until World War I the Ottoman rulers sought sporadically to modernize their administration, frequently with the help of European advisers, largely to revive national powers in face of various expansionist threats from Russia and Europe. The Ottoman sultans, gradually enforcing their right to appoint administrators and station troops, turned their attention to many semi-independent pashas. Finally they tried to extend government to the heretofore autonomous tribes, including those in Kurdistan. By selling land to the local rulers and encouraging them to accept government positions, it was hoped that the nomadic tribes could be forced to settle and to accept the government's right to tax and to conscript. Considerable unrest followed these efforts.

The greatest and the most progressive of the governors of Baghdad, Midhat Pasha (1869–72), introduced a series of partially successful reform measures to set Iraq on a course of mod-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ernization. Within 3 years he initiated a system of land-registration, improved communications and reformed the legal and administrative systems. In addition, he started a newspaper, built a hospital and a technical school and opened a savings bank. For a time it seemed that the country might acquire importance in terms of its own internal developments rather than merely as an important link on the East-West line of communication and as a focal point of foreign competition.

Externally, the decline of Ottoman rule after the eighteenth century coincided with the rise of European seapower and the worldwide competition among European powers for commercial benefits and for spheres of influence. The impact of this rivalry was not fully felt in Iraq, however, until after 1899 when Germany obtained from Turkey a concession to build a railway from Konya (a province in southwest Turkey) to Baghdad; in 1902 Germany was granted another right to build a line from Baghdad to Basra, an outlet to the Persian Gulf.

The British feared that this scheme of the rising and potentially hostile German power would interfere with their vital lines of communication to India via Persia and Afghanistan, menacing British oil interests in Persia and ultimately India itself. Russia reacted also with hostility because of its southward expanionist urge for warm water ports and related strategic gains. Although it was in rivalry with Great Britain over Persia, Russia was disinclined to be bellicose toward either the British or the Germans as a consequence of its humiliating defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05; the result was a compromise settlement known as the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, directed in part against Germany. Also under the pact, Persia—the root of the Anglo-Russian conflict—was divided into northern and southern spheres of influence separated by a buffer belt. In addition, Russia yielded to Great Britain's special position in Afghanistan and in the Persian Gulf.

After the 1907 entente the Germans and the British became the primary contenders for influence in Iraq. Because of the British obstruction, for example, German plans to make Kuwait the terminus of the Berlin-Baghdad-Basra railway were abandoned in June 1914. On another occasion the British combined with the Sheik of Kuwait, King Ibn Saud, of Arabia, and a semi-independent local Iraqi ruling group to prevent a reassertion of the pro-German Ottoman power in the lower delta area around Basra.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

World War I

In November 1914 the Ottoman empire, allied with Germany,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

was at war with Great Britain, Russia and France. The British dispatched an expeditionary force from India to Basra to protect their oil interests in adjacent Iran. The first major British advance under General Charles Townshend was stopped in 1915 below Baghdad at Kut on the Tigris by Turkish troops under the command of a German general, and the Anglo-Indian forces were captured. Aroused, the British decided upon a major engagement in Iraq; by March 1917 new forces led by General Stanley Maude seized Baghdad. In November 1918 the British ended the Ottoman rule in Iraq by occupying the remainder of the country to the Anatolian highlands north of Mosul, where Arabic speech is replaced by Turkish speech (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

Upon capturing Baghdad, Maude proclaimed that Great Britain intended to return to Iraq some control of its own affairs, stressing that this step would pave the way for ending the subjection to alien rulers which the country had known since the Mongol conquest. The proclamation was in keeping with the encouragement the British had given to Arab nationalists, such as Jafar al Askari, Nuri as Said and Jamil al Midfai, who sought emancipation from Ottoman rule. Although these nationalists had supported the Allied powers in expectation of the defeat of the Ottoman regime, the local population for the most part had shown only minimal interest in the struggle against the Turks.

During the war the course of events in Iraq was influenced greatly by the Hashimite family (descendants of the Prophet Mohammed) of Husein ibn Ali, Sharif of Mecca. Aspiring to the establishment of an independent Arab kingdom, Husein in October 1915 had secured Great Britain's conditional assurances of support for his cause in return for Arab support against Turkey. Refusing to rally to the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph's call for a holy war against the Allies, Husein in June 1916 led the revolt of the Arabs, marching northward in conjunction with the British into Transjordan (Jordan), Palestine and Syria.

Anticipating the fulfillment of Allied pledges, Husein's son, Prince Faisal, then head of a new Arab regime set up in Damascus with British support, and later to become modern Iraq's first king, arrived in Paris in 1919 as chief spokesman of the Arab cause. Much to his disappointment, Faisal found Allied powers less than enthusiastic about Arab independence and contemplating the notion of a mandate for the ex-Ottoman territories.

The British Mandate

The fate of Iraq and other Arab territories was formally decided in April 1920 at San Remo, Italy, where a conference of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Allied Powers placed Iraq and Palestine under the British Mandate and Syria under French Mandate. Faisal, who had been proclaimed King of Syria by a Syrian national congress in Damascus in March 1920, was ejected from Syria by the French in July 1920; the British then invited him to London as a token of their regard.

In Iraq the British occupation authorities found themselves confronted with a myriad of conflicting local demands and divisive forces. Townsmen and villagers desired restraints against tribal incursions. The tribal sheiks, on the other hand, wanted the government to confirm their titles to tribal territories and to give them new land as well. Merchants demanded more effective legal procedures, courts and laws protecting their activities and interests. Municipal authorities appealed for defined powers and grants-in-aid from an effective central government, in addition to the establishment of public welfare and educational facilities. Landlords pressed for grants of land, for the building of canals, railways and roads, and for the provision of tested seeds and livestock. In religious circles Shiites and Sunnites continued to distrust each other.

The most troublesome issue confronting the British was the growing evidence of Iraqi nationalist discontent. Arab and Iraqi nationalism, directed initially against the Turks in the beginning of the twentieth century, became increasingly anti-European after World War I. In July 1920 an anti-British revolt broke out in southern Iraq among many tribes which had for centuries jealously guarded their political autonomy. The insurrection spread over one-third of the countryside which had been already aroused by the efficient British tax collection methods. For 3 months the country was in a state of anarchy; order was restored only with difficulty by British forces which had to call upon reinforcements from India.

This episode, known to Iraqis as the national war of liberation, gave dramatic evidence of Arab dissatisfaction with foreign rule. Nevertheless, at no time did the revolt show coordination or general direction; throughout, many outstanding local sheiks and urban figures remained aloof from the insurrection; the Iraqi police and security forces were notably loyal to the British authorities.

The British military authorities accepted the revolt as an object lesson. Civil disturbances had cost much loss of life and inordinately large sums of money, prompting the British people to demand the reduction of commitments in Iraq. In October 1920 the military regime was replaced by a provisional Arab government to be assisted by British advisers and answerable to the supreme

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

authority of the High Commissioner for Iraq, Sir Percy Cox. The new administration was to serve as a channel of communication between the British and the restive population, to give opportunity for Iraqi leaders to come forward and to prepare the way for eventual self-government. After a canvass of various influential personalities for the official chief of state, the British persuaded Prince Faisal, the deposed king of Syria, to ascend the throne.

Prince Faisal of the Hashimite family traced his descent from Mohammed, and his ancestors had held political authority around the holy cities of Arabia. Hence he was endowed with traditional Arab standards of political legitimacy which he could invoke to install himself as the monarch of Iraq. Moreover, his achievements as a leader in the Arab emancipation movement made him an acceptable candidate to many Iraqis who were deeply concerned with the development of a national government, especially to the former Iraqi officers in the Ottoman army who had supported the 1916 revolt against the Turks. His candidacy, however, was sponsored by the British to repay Hashimite assistance in World War I and to assure future cooperation between Iraq and Great Britain. A referendum of Iraqi notables, tribal chiefs and townsmen produced an almost unanimous return favoring the selection of Faisal. On August 23, 1921, he was proclaimed king of Iraq.

The British sought to cope with the growing nationalist demands for immediate and outright independence by concluding a compromise treaty with Iraq in October 1922. Intended to soften the Mandate relationship, the treaty gave Iraq limited control in the spheres of both foreign and domestic affairs but retained Britain's ultimate mandatory power. Attempts to modify the 1922 treaty followed in 1923, 1926 and 1927; as a result, the British in December 1927 pledged to conditionally support Iraq's admission to the League of Nations in 1932.

A notable step toward independence was the British decision in September 1929 to terminate the Mandate, support unconditionally the admission of Iraq into the League and to open negotiations with the Iraqi Government toward a treaty of alliance defining future relations between the two countries. This move was precipitated by the coming to power of the Labor Party in London. This change of regime was paralleled by the emergence of a liberal nationalist government in Baghdad under Nuri as Said, who the British authorities believed was capable of leading the country to self-rule.

A new pact called the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was signed in June 1930, providing for the establishment of a "close alliance" and for "full and frank consultation between them in all matters of foreign policy" and mutual assistance in case of war. Iraq granted

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

to the British use of air bases at Basra and at Habbaniyah and the right to move troops across the country. To be of 25 years duration, the treaty was to come into force upon Iraq's admission to the League of Nations.

INDEPENDENCE

Iraq became a sovereign, independent state on October 3, 1932, when it was admitted to the League. The British Mandate was automatically terminated. The independent government possessed adequate financial means to cope with many of its internal problems because of its growing oil revenues; oil had been discovered at Naft Khaneh (about 90 miles northeast of Baghdad) in 1923 and at Kirkuk in 1927. By 1930 oil products were being exported.

Among the problems confronting the government were the deep-seated Shia-Sunni conflicts. The Sunnites, favored by the Turks during Ottoman rule, had had more administrative experience than their adversaries. The Shiites, at the time constituting 50 percent or more of the population and being very conscious of the presence in Iraq of so many Shia holy places, began to fear the possibility of complete Sunni domination in the government. On the other hand, some of the old-fashioned Sunnites felt that Faisal's 1916 revolt against the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph had been an impious act and were indisposed to give full support to the new monarch. In addition, many non-Arab groups, such as the Jews and Kurds, resented the accession of an Arab dynasty.

Another source of concern to the new kingdom related to people living in the Mosul region in the north, the restless Kurds who were noted for their fierce spirit of independence and separatism. An ancient mountain tribe of obscure origin, they were converted to Islam after the Arab conquest of the seventh century. Most of them subsequently became Sunnites, supported the Sunni Ottoman rulers in return for a measure of local autonomy and remained loyal to Turkey during World War I. In recognition of their strong longing for independence, the Allies and Turkey in August 1920 conditionally agreed to the establishment of "an independent Kurdish State," known as Kurdistan, to be carved out of the predominantly Kurdish areas bordering on Iraq, Turkey and Iran. Because of altered political conditions in Turkey under Mustafa Kemal Pasha, however, this scheme failed to materialize, and the Kurds resorted to a series of anti-Kemal revolts in Turkey.

In Iraq the Kurdish opposition to British encroachments upon their traditional autonomy erupted into anti-British and anti-Iraqi revolts in 1922–24. Their hostility increased after 1925 when the League of Nations awarded Mosul, to which Turkey laid claim, to Iraq; despite their traditional suspicion of all outsiders, many of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the Kurds in the Mosul region appeared to have favored Turkish rather than Iraqi rule.

These problems were compounded by the death of King Faisal I in September 1933. His departure meant the loss of the main stabilizing personality in politics and the one figure with sufficient prestige to draw the politicians together around a concept of national interest and to balance nationalist and British pressures within the framework of the Anglo-Iraqi alliance. His son and successor, Ghazi, was a strong Arab nationalist, but he was inexperienced and unable to control the increasing factionalism stemming from tribal and communal tensions and the clamor of voices against Great Britain's dominant influence in Iraqi affairs.

The years during which no stability was provided by royal authority were also years of increased desire for an effective role of government in promoting national welfare. Very important was the growing demand during the 1930's for general reform, including measures in the spheres of land improvement and distribution, roadbuilding, irrigation, commerce, industry, public health and communications. Some politicians, seeking to capitalize on these demands and to lead the growing intelligentsia, responded with liberal and social democratic slogans and programs, while others looked to the emerging authoritarian governments in Europe as models for Iraqi development along vaguely fascist or Communist lines. In this situation the military began to inject itself into the political scene.

The first military involvement occurred in October 1936 when a coup d'etat was executed by an alliance of the army, representing idealistic nationalism, and by a reformist political group, known as the Ahali (People) which advocated socialism and democracy. The incumbent government of Prime Minister General Yasin al-Hashimi was forced from office, and King Ghazi, a helpless bystander, was put in a position of having to sanction a regime coming to power by unconstitutional means. In the course of the coup, Minister of Defense General Jafar al Askari, a highly regarded older statesman, a leading pro-British figure and founder of the Iraqi army, was assassinated.

Through the technique of the coup, various arm leaders deposed and installed a series of regimes in the course of the next 5 years, and a new process for making and unmaking governments became institutionalized. Another consequence of the coup was to split various politicians and generals eventually into two rival blocs, headed respectively by the pro-British Nuri as Said and the pro-German Rashid Ali al Gailani. After King Ghazi's death in 1939, the crown passed to his 4-year-old son, Faisal II, and the royal authority devolved upon the Regent, Abdul Illah, who was the young King's uncle and crown prince.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

WORLD WAR II AND THE POSTWAR IRAQ

When World War II broke out in September 1939, Prime Minister Nuri as Said severed diplomatic relations with Germany under the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930. Rashid Ali al Gailani was ostensibly neutral, but his sympathies lay with the Germans. By March 1940, when he replaced Nuri as Said as prime minister (March 1940–January 1941), he had gradually gathered the support of Anglophobes in general as well as ultranationalists impressed by fascist ideology. Despite the opposition of the British and of Nuri as Said and the regent, he sought to maintain friendly contacts with the Axis powers. He further antagonized the British by returning to power in April 1941 through a coup and by attempting to modify the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty terms of 1930 governing wartime conditions.

The British retaliated by landing forces at Basra in late April 1941, and they justified their action under the 1930 pact. Many Iraqis, still in the flush of their recently won independence, regarded the move as an attempt to restore British rule. They rallied to the support of the Iraqi army, which received a token amount of aid from the Axis. By late May, however, the uprising had been suppressed, and Rashid Ali and his associates had fled the country. Succeeding governments cooperated with the Allies. In January 1943, Iraq declared war on the Axis under the 1930 pact.

In March 1945 Iraq became a founding member of the Arab League (Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen) which was designed to promote "cooperation in economic, cultural, social, and other matters" in a loose framework of Arab unity. It also joined the United Nations in December 1945.

Although the country opposed the creation of Israel in 1948, its external orientation was strongly pro-Western in postwar years. In April 1954 the nation accepted United States military assistance, and in January 1955 the government of Prime Minister Nuri as Said suspended diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. In addition, in February 1955 Iraq signed a mutual defense treaty with Turkey (better known as the Baghdad Pact) to which Great Britain, Pakistan and Iran acceded during the year. Iraq's pro-Western policy culminated in the formation of the Arab Federation (Iraq and Jordan) on February 14, 1958, as a counterweight to the avowed neutralist but anti-Western United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria) that had been formed earlier on February 1, 1958.

Internally, a prominent feature of postwar politics was the continued dominance of men whose names had appeared regularly on Cabinet lists after the 1930's. Chief among them was Nuri as Said

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

who had sought to maintain stable government often through firm measures. He favored alignment with Great Britain and the West and attempted to modernize the country gradually by the judicious investment of rapidly increasing oil revenues. Though not always prime minister, he was consistently recognized as the ultimate arbiter in the affairs of state and, together with Crown Prince Abdul Illah, personified the government. Men who entered political life after 1946, however, found Nuri as Said and the crown prince out of sympathy with their liberal, reformist sentiments. Prince Abdul Illah's regency was terminated on May 2, 1953, when King Faisal II mounted the throne at the age of 18.

In the postwar years the governing elite sought to accommodate growing liberal ferment for social and economic progress in part by permitting the revival of party activities that had been suspended during the war years, but the elder statesmen were not prepared to make any substantive concessions. Believing that parties were dominated largely by irresponsible opportunists, Prime Minister Nuri as Said banned all parties in September 1954.

Antigovernment sentiments continued to grow as Iraq aligned itself with the West through the Baghdad Pact and as Pan-Arab nationalism became a stronger rallying ground for many in Iraq who were aspiring to their country's closer ties with Arab neighbors and to Iraq's greater role in world affairs through nonalignment. This trend was accelerated after the British and French armed intervention against Egypt in October–November 1956. At home the oil revenues, widely publicized by the government as the means by which the country would become prosperous, appeared to many to enrich only the already affluent officials and landlords. To these criticisms were added the new resentments caused by the firm tactics employed by the government against many opposition politicians who were denied access to power by controlled elections or in many cases branded as subversives and deported.

THE 1958 REVOLUTION AND END OF THE MONARCHY

The kingdom of the Hashimite family was overthrown on July 14, 1958, in a swift coup executed by a group of army officers under Brigadier Abdul Karim Qasim and Colonel Abdul Salam Arif. According to later statements by Qasim, he had planned such a move for many years. The coup, or "revolution" as the Iraqis have called it since, met virtually no armed opposition. King Faisal II and Crown Prince Abdul Illah as well as other members of the royal family were executed. The following day Nuri as Said was also killed after attempting to escape disguised as a veiled woman.

The proclamation of the revolution brought crowds of people into the Baghdad streets cheering the deaths of two "strong men,"

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Nuri as Said and Abdul Illah. The young King's death appears to have been regretted for he was regarded as a helpless bystander in the intrigues of Iraqi politics, but he was not mourned. In the ensuing mob demonstrations against the old order, the British Embassy was severely damaged by hysterical crowds.

The leaders of the new regime, who declared their nation a republic, envisioned an Iraq reformed, egalitarian, democratic, united in spirit with the Arab world and committed to a foreign policy of nonalignment. Qasim declared his determination to resist all foreign ideologies—"Communist, American, British, or Fascist." Amnesty was declared for political prisoners, and exiled opponents of the old regime were invited to return home, but the government dealt severely with more than 100 leading supporters of the ousted regime. In September 1958 an agrarian reform law was proclaimed, and in March 1959 Iraq announced its withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact.

The Qasim government was troubled, however, by divisive rivalry within its ranks and by serious internal threats to its own survival. Many people inside and outside the government became disillusioned with Qasim's inability to consolidate authority and bring about any improvement in either political life or material prosperity. The first open split came 2 months after the Revolution when Deputy Prime Minister Arif's policies favoring closer ties with the United Arab Republic prompted Prime Minister Qasim first to dismiss and then to arrest him, setting off a propaganda war between the two nations. In December 1958, an unsuccessful anti-Qasim plot, rumored to have been organized with foreign assistance, caused further political tension. Colonel Arif himself was brought to trial on charges of endangering national security. Although condemned to death in January 1959, he was pardoned in December 1962.

Stability was affected also by frictions between the nationalists, and the surging Communists. Tolerated by the regime apparently as a counterweight against the powerful Pan-Arab and pro-Nasser groups, the Communist Party of Iraq rapidly gained influence after 1958 by infiltrating nearly all social and political organizations, including government agencies. Aroused, a military contingent in Mosul revolted in March 1959 against the allegedly pro-Communist Qasim government but was quickly suppressed. Thereafter, the Communists who had a hand in subduing the military uprising became increasingly assertive and violent, causing Prime Minister Qasim eventually to restrict their activities. Meanwhile opposition from the pro-Nasser group continued unabated as indicated by an assassination attempt in October 1959 on Qasim's life during which he was shot and wounded.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The regime sought to accelerate economic development and to push agrarian reform, but it was frustrated by chaos resulting from the Kurdish rebellion which broke out in September 1961 and by bureaucratic delays and mismanagement. Growing disenchantment with Qasim's "personal dictatorship" and mounting Pan-Arab sentiments culminated in the overthrow of the regime on February 8, 1963. Qasim was executed on the following day.

The coup was carried out by members of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party (Hizb al Baath al Arabi al Ishtiraki), better known as Baathists, who were aided by their supporters and sympathizers within the armed forces (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics). A National Council of Revolutionary Command (also known as the National Revolutionary Command) was established as the highest policymaking body. Brigadier Ahmad Hassan Bakr, a Baathist leader, became Prime Minister, and Colonel Arif was elevated to the nominal position of President. Within the Party, however, internal dissension quickly arose between those favoring the pro-Nasser line and those opting for a pro-Syrian policy.

THE ARIF GOVERNMENT

The Baathist regime was ousted on November 18, 1963, in a military coup directed by Arif, who was known to have sympathized with the pro-Nasser group. A new National Council of Revolutionary Command was established, a nonparty regime which placed its important powers in the hands of Arif, who became president. Externally, the new government sought friendly relations with all nations, notably with Nasser's Egypt. During 1964 steps were taken to hasten integration of military, economic, social, cultural and information policies of Iraq and Egypt by forming in May a Joint Presidency Council and by establishing in December a Unified Political Command; the latter organization was designed to expedite ultimate constitutional union between the two states.

Internally, an uncertain cease-fire was arranged in February 1964 with the Kurds. The Interim Constitution was proclaimed in May 1964, declaring the Republic to be a "democratic, socialist state, deriving the principles of its democracy and socialism from the Arab heritage and the spirit of Islam." The fundamental law, still in force in 1968, stressed Arab unity and declared Islam as "the religion of the state" (see ch. 13, The Governmental System). On the economic front the government announced in January 1965 the Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69 with a goal of doubling national income in 9 years. In April 1966 Major General Abdul Rahman Mohammad Arif succeeded his brother, the late president who had been killed in an air crash earlier in the month.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 4

POPULATION

According to the census of 1965, the total population of the country was 8,261,527. This figure included some 40,000 Iraqis living abroad as well as an unspecified number of nomads who, in the earlier censuses of 1947 and 1957, had been reported separately from the rest of the population. Despite many difficulties encountered by the census takers, especially the presence of a nomad population and the mistrust of some respondents, the results of the 1965 census, on the whole, appeared to be fairly accurate. Figures relating specifically to the northern provinces, however, were unreliable because of unsettled political conditions in that area when the information was being collected (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

Population estimates for the years following the census were not wholly dependable. The reported annual growth rate of 3.3 percent in 1963 was high by Asian standards, and the latest official estimate of total population—8.3 million for July 1966—indicated a rate of only about 1.5 percent annually. Nevertheless, it could be assumed that by mid-1968 the Iraqi population numbered at least 8.6 million and probably more nearly approached 9 million.

The population has fluctuated considerably over the country's long history. Between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries, Iraq was a flourishing center of Arab civilization, and at the height of its prosperity it may have supported a larger population than it has today. Some estimates were as high as 15 million. Decline came swiftly, however, after 1285 when Mongol conquerors ravaged the country and left its elaborate irrigation system in ruins. The pattern continued under the Turkish rule which began in the sixteenth century, and for hundreds of years Iraq remained an underpopulated backwater outpost of the Ottoman Empire. In the mid-nineteenth century it had fewer than 1.5 million inhabitants.

At the end of World War I, however, a new era began in which economic development and the greater availability of modern medical care contributed to a spurt of population growth. By 1947,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

when the first general census was taken, the reported population was 4,816,185, and by 1957 it had climbed to 6,339,960.

COMPOSITION

The 1965 census reported a total of 4,205,201 males and 4,056,326 females or almost 149,000 more males than females. Some females may not have been reported, since Iraq is a male-oriented society and the subject of wives is regarded as a private matter. In urban areas, according to the census, there was an excess of men over women, possibly because there were more men than women among the large numbers or urban migrants.

The age breakdown of the 1965 census figures were not available in early 1968. It could be assumed that much the same ratios prevailed as were reported in the 1957 census (see table 3). There was a good possibility, however, that by 1965 the proportion of the population classified in the lower age categories had increased, since a trend in this direction had been indicated in the previous decade. According to the 1957 figures, 44.8 percent of the population was under 15 years of age; 49.9 percent was between 15 and 65 years of age; and only 5.3 percent was over 65.

Table 3. Population of Iraq by Age Group, 1957

Age Group	Total	Percent of Total
Less than 1 year	208,475	3.3
1–4	1,015,332	16.0
5–9	963,782	15.2
10–14	654,334	10.3
15–19	499,924	7.9
20–24	395,678	6.2
25–29	448,469	7.1
30–34	401,404	6.3
35–39	299,762	4.7
40–44	316,191	5.0
45–49	223,691	3.6
50–54	236,553	3.7
55–59	201,998	3.2
60–64	139,073	2.2
Over 65	335,294	5.3
Total	6,339,960	100.0

Source: Adapted from *Demographic Yearbook, 1966*, pp. 156, 157.

Two major language groups can be distinguished within the population: an Arabic-speaking majority found mainly in central and southern Iraq; and a Kurdish-speaking minority concentrated in the northern highlands. The two have no feeling of affinity for

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

one another. The 1957 census figures classified 79 percent of the population as native speakers of Arabic and 16 percent as native Kurdish-speakers; various smaller groups made up the remaining 5 percent. The population as a whole is predominantly Moslem, and Shia Arabs outnumber Sunni Arabs. Sunni Arabs, however, have tended to be better educated and more influential in national affairs. Moreover, because the Kurds are Sunni, the two main branches of Islam are about equally represented within the country. A few small religious minorities, including a Christian community, total less than 3 percent of the population (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

Official figures show that in 1965 the rural and urban components of the population comprised, respectively, 56 and 44 percent of the total. The urban population was seemingly defined as those persons living in cities, towns or other communities which served as administrative centers and were inhabited by at least 5,000 persons. In many instances, however, there was no real distinction between the way of life of persons living in the so-called urban centers and that of the rural population. Many of the smaller district and subdistrict administrative centers were no larger than neighboring villages and only differed from them in the possibility of having a school, a post office, better roads and one or two resident officials.

Most of the rural population, as well as a sizable proportion of those persons defined as urbanites, were settled farmers. In the mid-1960's about 75 percent of the population, or about 6.1 million people, were engaged exclusively in agriculture. They lived in places where water was available for cultivation, either by rainfall or by irrigation. Thus, most villages, as well as towns and cities, were found on the alluvial plain formed by the silt of the Tigris and Euphrates, where a complicated network of irrigation canals permitted intensive agricultural development. Communities of settled farmers were also found in the rainfall zone of the northern and northeastern mountains, but there were fewer of them than in the plains regions (see ch. 2, Physical Environment; ch. 19, Agriculture).

The vast deserts south and southwest of the Euphrates were occupied by scattered nomadic tribesmen, whose annual pattern of migration took many of them across the frontiers into Saudi Arabia and Syria. A few nomads were also found in the mountains and on the northern and northeastern borders. The total number of these nomads was undetermined, and estimates of the size of this segment of the population varied widely. According to the 1947 census, there were 250,000 pastoral nomads; according to the 1957 census, there were 68,940; and according to the 1965 census,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

there were none. The 1965 census defined the nomadic population as being made up of those persons who have no specific boundaries of land to live on and who remain outside the scope of the main economic sectors. This may account for their disappearance from the tabulations, since efforts to get the nomads to settle permanently on the land have been a feature of national development throughout the modern period. Little reliable information is available, however, regarding the results achieved.

In mid-1968 the country was divided into 14 provinces, 75 districts and over 250 subdistricts (see ch. 13, The Governmental System). Population density in 1965 averaged 48 persons per square mile for the country as a whole, but the provinces varied substantially in this respect (see table 4). In comparison, Iran, four times larger in size than Iraq, had an average density of 41 per square mile. Saudi Arabia, about five times larger than Iraq, but comprised almost entirely of desert area, averaged only 5 per square mile.

*Table 4. Population, Growth Rates and Density of Iraq in 1965**

Province	Population	Percent Increase of Total Population Over 1957	Density per Square Mile 1965
Mawsil	954,157	33	49
Sulaymaniyah	408,220	36	88
Irbil	360,285	32	61
Kirkuk	462,027	19	113
Diyala	400,049	21	66
Ramadi	319,289	24	6
Baghdad	2,124,323	63	276
Kut	335,495	16	59
Hilla	448,023	27	168
Karbala	339,692	57	123
Diwaniyah	548,830	4	17
Nasiriyah	346,663	5	50
Amarah	500,033	5	90
Basrah	673,623	34	97
IRAQ	8,220,709*	30	48

* Excluding some 40,000 Iraqis living abroad.

Source: Adapted from Iraq, *Statistical Abstract, 1965*, pp. 39–50.

The country's desert areas, like those of Saudi Arabia, were also sparsely inhabited, their populations consisting principally of nomadic herdsmen. Accordingly, of the three Iraqi provinces whose boundaries were extended in the 1960's to include former desert administration areas, two, Ramadi and Diwaniyah, with densities of 6 and 17 persons per square miles respectively, showed lower

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

population concentrations than the other provinces. The third province, Mawsil, included Mosul, the third largest city in the country, which raised the average for the entire province to 49 persons per square mile. At the other end of the scale, Baghdad Province, including Baghdad and its metropolitan area, had the highest population density—276 persons per square mile.

An examination of density figures for districts and subdistricts shows that the population clusters in areas where the water supply and fertility of the soil are adequate for cultivation. It also points out the great variation in density within certain provinces. Diyala Province, for example, has some subdistricts where the density is 2 persons per square mile, others with 250 persons per square mile. There appears, at least in this province, to be a significant correlation between population density and land tenure. Areas where tenant farmers predominate have lower densities than those where independent farmers are a majority, because these can manage to exist on less land than the tenants, as they do not have to turn over a major share of the crop to the owner.

The area of maximum population concentration lies in the center of the country and extends north and south of Baghdad along the Diyala, Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It continues roughly in the northeast from Miqdadiya and Baqubah in Diyala Province southwestward to Baghdad, and to Fallujah on the Euphrates, 40 miles west of Baghdad, in Ramadi Province, then southward about 100 miles to the Diwaniyah area. Outlying pockets of dense settlement are found to the north of Baghdad, including the towns of Mosul, Kirkuk and Khurmal (near the border with Iran, about 35 miles southeast of Sulaymaniyah). Dense settlements southeast of Baghdad include the towns of Nasiriyah, Amarah and Basra and their environs. The distribution of villages within this general area has been influenced over the centuries by changes in the productivity of the land. In central and southern Iraq, entire villages have been relocated when surrounding fields were ruined by salination of the soil, by silting of the canals or by floods.

In 1965 the country had six cities with populations of more than 80,000. The largest of these was Baghdad, the capital, a modern cosmopolitan urban center with 1,745,328 inhabitants. Others were Basra (313,327), about 50 miles from the Persian Gulf in the extreme southeast; Najaf (128,096), and Hillah (84,717), some 75 and 50 miles south of Baghdad, respectively; Kirkuk (167,413), in the north; and Mosul (253,311), in the far north on the Tigris River. The figures did not include those persons living on the peripheries of these cities who earned their livelihood as agrilculturalists and whose environment was essentially rural.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DYNAMICS

Birth and death statistics are commonly based on fragmentary information. According to the best estimates, the birth rate in 1964 was approximately 20.0 per 1,000; the death rate, 4.2 per 1,000; and the infant mortality was placed at 19.3 per 1,000. Whatever the infant mortality actually was, it would be expected to decline in the next decade, along with the overall mortality rate, as health services were steadily expanding.

The urban population, especially that of Baghdad, has soared during the past two decades. This growth has been chiefly a product of unfavorable conditions that foster a low standard of living in rural areas. The land tenure system which was in effect before the 1958 Revolution left much of the cultivable land, especially in the south, in the hands of tribal leaders, who rented small holdings to members of their tribe, often for a large part of the total crop. Tenants working small holdings, moreover, had other problems, including poor methods of cultivation, lack of water for irrigation and an inadequate system of agricultural credit. Other forces giving impetus to urban migration included the greater availability of schools and health services in the cities and the promise, even in an urban slum, of an easier life than in the countryside.

The population of Baghdad and its environs grew from 1,056,604 in 1957 to 1,745,328 in 1965. Baghdad Province showed the highest rate of growth of the country's 14 provinces, a 63 percent increase between 1957 and 1965 (see table 4). Much of this increase was caused by the arrival of migrants from the rural areas, principally from the four southern provinces and Kut in the center. Of these, the vast majority traced their origins to some part of Amarah Province. In Baghdad the migrants usually found employment as unskilled workers, although a few became peddlers, policemen, soldiers, domestics, night watchmen or gardeners. They tended to concentrate in certain parts of the city, many of which consisted predominantly of so-called *sarifah* dwellings, temporary one-room structures constructed of reed matting.

Next to Baghdad Province, Karbala Province has shown the highest rate of growth (57 percent between 1957 and 1965); Sulaymaniyah, Mawsil, Irbil and Basra followed. The apparent growth of the northern provinces may reflect errors in collecting and compiling data because of the unsettled conditions in the area. It also may be caused by the growth of a few large towns; Kirkuk, in whose environs lie several oilfields, one of which is the country's most productive; and Mosul, near which are several smaller fields,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Some oilfields are situated in the area of Basra, which is also the principal port of foreign trade.

Emigration to foreign countries is a relatively unimportant aspect of population dynamics. As reported in the 1965 census, there were 40,818 Iraqis living outside the country. Of these, approximately 30,000 were in neighboring Kuwait, which was drawing many Iraqi young men to work in its oil industry.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 5

ETHNIC GROUPS AND LANGUAGES

Iraq is predominantly an Arab country whose people are more than 90 percent Moslem. The Moslem majority, however, is marked by an ancient split between the Shiites and Sunnites. Shia Moslems outnumber Sunni Moslems, but the Sunnites have, historically, been the most powerful.

Communities in Iraqi society have been defined, by themselves and by others, in terms of ethnicity, with language playing a major part, and in terms of religion. In some cases, religious and ethnic distinctions coincide. For example, the small group called Assyrians who speak a dialect of Aramaic are Nestorian Christians.

In most cases, however, ethnic boundaries divide groups of the same or similar religious affiliation, or religious differences separate one section of an ethnic group from another. For example, Kurds share Sunni Islam with many Arabs and with members of other, smaller ethnic groups. The Arab majority, on the other hand, includes Shia and Sunni Moslems and several small Christian groups. From the point of view of language alone even the Jewish community speaks Arabic as a mother tongue.

In the mid-twentieth century, particularly since the 1958 Revolution, Iraq has formally stressed national citizenship in its Interim Constitution of 1964, but ethnic and religious communities persisted in 1968, and attitudes rooted in old conflicts had not yet disappeared.

Community formation and persistence have been supported by geographic localization of some groups, for example, that of the Kurds in the northeastern highlands or the Yezidi communities in the north and northwest. They have also been reinforced by the clear and continuing separation of different groups in specific quarters of the cities, which was just beginning to break down in the 1960's. Moreover, ethnic and religious differences have often been associated with occupational specialization.

In addition, Islam, under Ottoman Turks and Arabs, stressed the rootedness of law in religion, particularly the law governing family relationships, inheritance and related matters. Hence, most

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

religious communities were given jurisdiction over their own members with respect to significant legal relationships. With some modifications this practice persisted in 1968 (see ch. 13, The Governmental System).

Roughly three-fourths of the people think of themselves as Arabs, despite varied origins and significant differences in religion and other aspects of culture. The deepest division within the Arab majority lies between Sunni and Shia Moslems. The common language and common Islamic faith provide a bond in certain contexts, but not in all. The Kurds constitute the only other large ethnic group; other distinctive ethnic communities include Iranians, Turkomans, Armenians, Assyrians and Lurs. Some groups whose native tongue is either Arabic or Kurdish are, nevertheless, clearly distinguished in many aspects of their culture from Arabs or Kurds; Iraqi Jews, for example, are Arabic-speakers, and Yezidis speak a dialect of Kurdish.

Not only did Islam, Christianity and Judaism emerge in the Middle East, but some of the early controversies in both Islam and Christianity took place in the same area. Many of the sects that arose in those early years have small communities of adherents in Iraq and adjacent countries. Other religions, such as Mandeanism, had their origins in the Middle East before or just after the beginning of the Christian era, and their remnants exist in the mid-twentieth century as tiny islands in a Moslem sea (see ch. 11, Religion).

Accurate statistics on the size of ethnic and religious communities are not available, and estimates vary widely. For example, estimates of the proportion of Kurds in the population range from under 15 percent to more than 25 percent.

ARABS

Iraq is the only Arab country in which Shiites form a substantial majority of the Arabic speakers and, probably, a narrow majority of the total population. They constitute from two-thirds to three-fourths of the Arabs. With the addition of small numbers from non-Arabic speaking groups, such as Iranians, some Turkomans and others, the Shiites comprise from 52 percent to 55 percent of the total population. Iraq, unlike Syria and Lebanon, has relatively few Christian Arabs, although a number of groups are represented in the country.

The division between Sunni and Shia Islam had its origins in the first half of the seventh century in a dispute over succession to the leadership of Islam shortly after the Prophet Mohammed's death. Differences in belief, practice and the organization of the religious community developed, and the relationship between

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the two segments of the greater Islamic community has been marked by varying degrees of hostility (see ch. 11, Religion).

Within the Arab majority the division between Shia and Sunni Moslems is associated with other differences—in culture, in economic pursuits and in political participation and power. Thus, although most Iraqi Arabs are Shiites, Sunnite participation in governments in this area has been more extensive. The Sunni Abbasside caliphate had its seat in Baghdad from the eighth to the middle of the thirteenth centuries. After several centuries of war and Mongol rule, the Sunni Ottoman Turks ruled Mesopotamia until World War I, and they were succeeded by the Hashimite dynasty, also Sunnite. Since the Revolution of 1958 most of the leading figures in the government of the Republic have been Sunnites.

Under the Ottoman Turks the law of family relationships and inheritance was administered by religious courts and councils for each religious group. In principle, however, the Ottomans did not extend this right to the community whose members they considered simply as heterodox Moslems. The Shiites acquired the rights held by other religious communities under the British Mandate (1920), and the Constitution makes it clear that they may have their cases heard in religious (sharia) courts presided over by Shia judges (*qadis*) (see ch. 13, The Governmental System). Underlying the relations between the two communities are the ancient grievances connected with the conflict over succession to the caliphate (see ch. 3, Historical Setting). Memories of the conflict are annually reinforced, in the Shiite community, by reenacting some of the events of 1,300 years ago (see ch. 11, Religion).

The Shiites have been generally more conservative and less open to modern influences and developments than the Sunnites. Arab nationalism, which stresses cultural and linguistic rather than religious elements, has had little effect on Shia Arabs. Most of them, although conscious and proud of their Arab heritage, are also strongly aware of their religious affinity for non-Arab Shiites, many of whom live in adjacent Iran, officially a Shia state (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

Shiites

Most Shia Arabs are farmers who live in the alluvial plain of southern Iraq; some are semisedentary sheepherders and goatherders living in the same area. The marsh dwellers living near the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates are also Shiites (see fig. 4). Some Shia Arabs, particularly in the Diyala River region east of Baghdad, are merchants, and still others work in the lower echelons of government service. Shiites have occasionally achieved

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

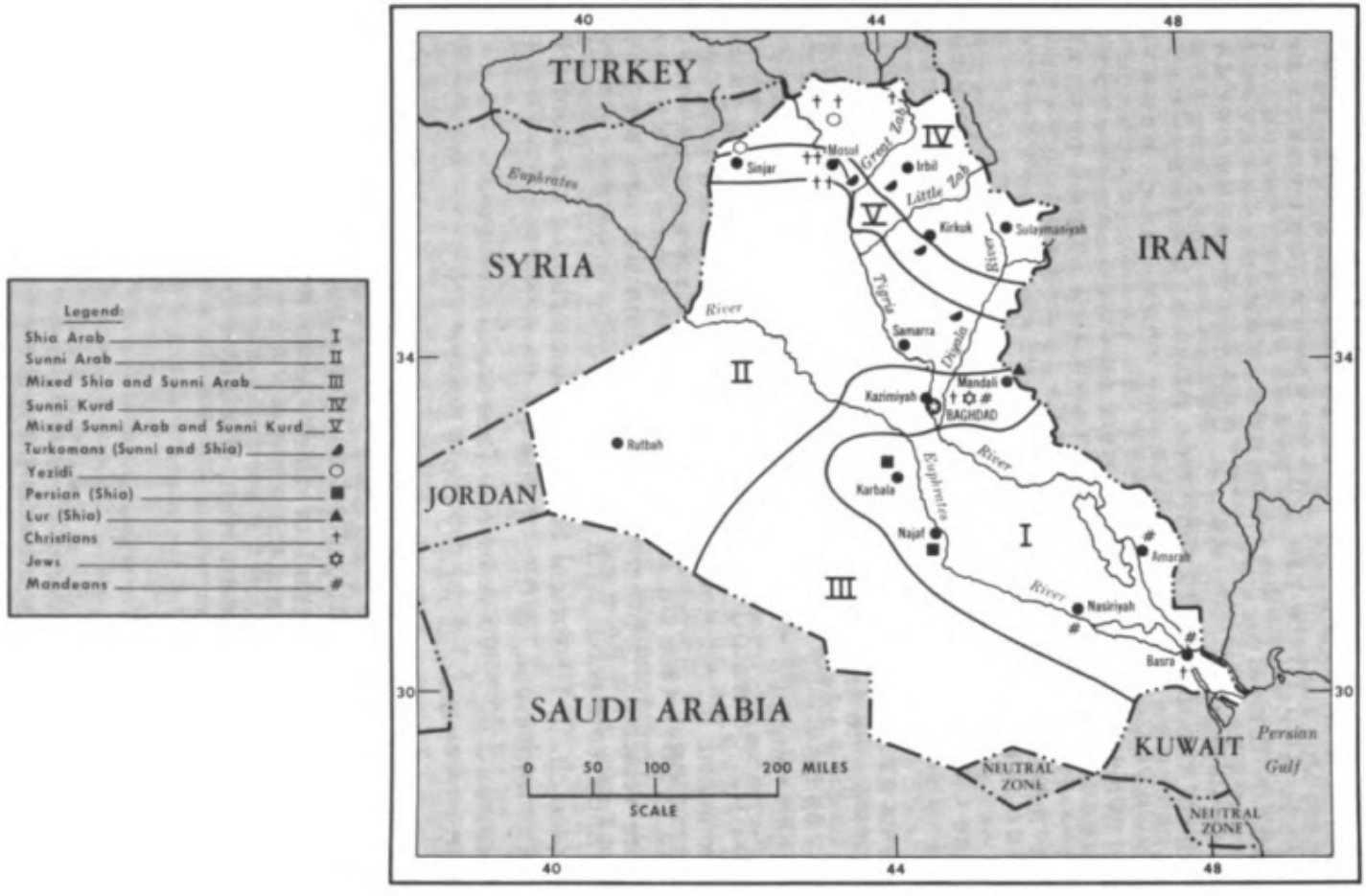


Figure 4. Geographic Distribution of Ethnic and Religious Communities in Iraq.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Cabinet status, and one, Fadil Jamali, was prime minister for a time in 1953 and 1954.

Under the monarchy, Shiites were often tenant farmers, frequently on the land held by Sunnites. As cultivators of the alluvial plain, Shia farmers have often suffered from floods, and many, particularly in Amarah Province, have felt impelled to leave the land because of its salinity and move to Baghdad where, until the construction of low-cost housing was begun in the mid-1960's, they lived in reed huts on the edge of the city (see ch. 4, Population; ch. 8, Living Conditions). These rural migrants to Baghdad come with little or no literacy and few, if any, urban skills, so that they formed, in the middle 1960's, a largely unemployed or intermittently employed group of Shia affiliation in a Sunni-dominated city.

In the rural areas of southern Iraq, the Republic inherited a number of problems affecting the Shia farmer which were gradually being dealt with in the middle and late 1960's. The situation of the Shia agriculturist has been relieved by significant flood-control measures and other continuing agricultural projects on the lower Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Land reforms and reallocation policies, important to the rural Shiite, were also being implemented by the government (see ch. 2, Physical Environment; ch. 19, Agriculture).

Proportionately fewer Shiites than Sunnites are literate, and even fewer have received education at the secondary and higher levels (see ch. 9, Education). Some of the variation may be attributed to differences in value and religious orientation; some to specific historical circumstances. Traditional scholarships, as in law, played a greater role among the Sunni Moslems than among the Shiites who relied more heavily on the religious authority of their leaders than on the results of scholarship as guides to proper practice (see ch. 11, Religion).

The intellectual ferment that began in the eighteenth century under Ottoman rule and took a turn to the secular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries affected Sunni Arabs, in communication with the larger Arab world, more than it did the Shiites. Finally, a far greater proportion of the Shia population than the Sunni has been rural, and Shia Moslems, therefore, have had little access to educational facilities.

Sunnites

The Arabs found along the rivers above Fallujah and Baghdad, on the plain south of Mosul, and the tributaries of the Tigris up to the Kurdish foothills are overwhelmingly Sunni (see fig. 4). Many are farmers and among them are included almost all of the true

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

nomads, Bedouins or camel herders, of the western desert. There are Sunnites in southern Iraq as well, particularly in Basra and some of the other larger towns. Before the implementation of land reform and in 1968 to some extent, many of the big landowners in the south were Sunnites.

The literacy rate has been higher among the Sunnites than among the Shiites, and they have played a greater role in the government, as occupants of high political office and in the bureaucracy. The economic activities of Sunni Arabs, however, range from the bottom to the top of the occupational scale.

Other Arab Groups

Two Arab groups have ways of life substantially different from those of ordinary rural or urban Arabs. The first of these consists of the true nomads (Bedouins), largely Sunni, but independent of the settled Sunni community. In the 1947 census they were estimated at 250,000 and in that of 1957, at roughly 69,000. They were not separately counted in 1965. Over the centuries many groups of Bedouin origin have become sedentary cultivators and contributed to the ordinary rural population of Iraq, but until the early 1960's, at least, large numbers retained a way of life based on camel herding, involving regular movement each year between the desert and the rivers of southern and western Iraq and, for some tribes in the Jazirah, between the upper Tigris and Euphrates.

The Bedouins regard their way of life superior to that of cultivators or urban dwellers, and they have usually managed to maintain a substantial degree of independence under governments in the area. In modern Iraq, however, their nomadism and independence are considered by the government as both disruptive and unproductive, and efforts have been made to have them settle down. No information was available in 1968 about the success of these efforts.

The marsh dwellers (marsh Arabs) are adapted to life in the marshes, permanent and temporary, of the lower Tigris and Euphrates delta above Basra. Other Arabs often apply the term "Madan" (yokel) to them, a name not used by the marsh dwellers themselves except to refer to those devoted exclusively to buffalo herding.

Like most of the other rural people of southern Iraq, the marsh dwellers are Shiites, but other Shiites consider their Shiism to be distorted (see ch. 11, Religion). Some observers believe that the core of the group consists of descendents of ancient, pre-Arab populations. Along the Euphrates, however, their number have been augmented for many hundreds of years by Bedouins

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

who have influenced the social organization of the marsh dwellers but have themselves adapted to their way of life. In the east, among the Tigris marsh dwellers, there is some evidence of Persian influence.

Estimates of the total number of marsh dwellers are unreliable, partly because the vast majority of them, who are primarily agriculturists, with a few cattle, are not usually clearly distinguished from other Shiite farmers in lower Iraq. In the early 1950's an Iraqi who made a close study of them estimated their number between 300,000 and 400,000, including the very distinctive buffalo herders, roughly 25,000, and about an equal number of reed gatherers and matweavers, who also practice a little agriculture.

KURDS

Kurds constitute between 15 and 20 percent of the population. With the exception of a few Shiites and several very small sects, Shabaks and Sarliyahs, most Kurds are Sunni Moslems, but their religious practice and organization differs in some respects from those of Iraq's Sunni Arabs (se ch. 11, Religion). Their homeland is in the mountains, foothills and higher plains of the north and northeast, an area contiguous with the Kurdish zones of Turkey and Iran and very close to the much smaller Kurdish area in northeasternmost Syria (see fig. 4). An increasing number of Kurds have moved to the cities, not only Mosul, Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah and others in their own religion, but also to Baghdad.

The Iraqi Kurds and those of Iran make up the southern sections of a Kurdish population that stretches north into Turkey and the Soviet Caucasus Mountains. Their total number is probably between 5 million and 8 million. The largest single group lives in Turkey, but the approximately equal Iraqi and Iranian Kurdish populations are not far behind at roughly 1.5 million to 2 million each. Much smaller groups live in Syria and in the Soviet Union.

Three groups of Iraqi Kurds are distinguished, and each is composed of a number of different tribes. The Badinan, an extension of the Turkish Kurds, live in villages ranging from the Syrian border to the Great Zab River and speak a northern dialect. The Suran live between the Great and Little Zab Rivers, and the Baban live between the Little Zab and the Diyala Rivers. Both speak a southern dialect.

Each of these groups contains seminomadic herdsmen, freehold and tenant farmers and agricultural laborers. Although the Kurds have a tradition of nomadism, the majority have been settled agriculturalists or semisedentary herdsmen for some time. The

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

latter generally restrict their movements to seasonal migrations between the lower and higher slopes of their mountain homeland.

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, Iraqi Kurds formed a part of a larger Kurdish area—a vassal state of the Ottoman sultan. In the beginning of the twentieth century some of the Kurds educated in Turkey and Europe began to think in terms of Kurdish nationalism, but their interest was not shared by the traditional Kurdish rulers or the ordinary tribesman (see ch. 6, Social Structure). After World War I, and particularly after World War II, Kurdish nationalism became a more significant movement, in part as a reaction to Arab nationalism (and in Turkey, as a reaction to efforts to transform Kurds into Turks) and in part because more and more Kurds, including sons of Kurdish rulers, were educated in and influenced by the West.

In Iraq and elsewhere Kurdish nationalism has led to brief periods of Kurdish unity in opposition to dominate Arab governments, but intertribal rivalries and conflicts between modern and traditional Kurds mark the relations of Kurdish leaders. They tend, however, to agree that Kurds ought not to become Arabs and that some of the wealth of the Kurdish highlands, including especially some of the income from the Kirkuk oilfields, ought to be used for the benefit of the Kurds. Iraqi Kurds make no claims for independence, nor have they shown sustained interest in a Kurdistan (see Glossary) carved out of Iraq, Turkey, Iran and perhaps some other countries. Although the details of the Kurdish position have varied, general emphasis has been placed on substantial Kurdish autonomy within Iraq (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

The Shabaks and Sarliyahs speak Kurdish dialects but are distinguished from the main body of Kurds by their religious beliefs and observances. All of these groups consider themselves Islamic, but there seems to be a good deal of secrecy in their rites and little real information concerning their religion.

TURKOMANS

The Turkomans are village and town dwellers centered largely in the northeast, but there are communities in Tall Afar and Mosul (see fig. 4). They are related to the Turks but came to the area before the establishment of Ottoman rule in the fifteenth century. They have been estimated at between 1.5 and 2.5 percent of the population and are probably closer to the latter. A substantial majority are Sunni Moslems, but nearly a third are Shiites.

Although they have had cultural ties with Turkey and a strong ethnic consciousness, there has been no significant movement for political ties. They participated in Iraqi governments, a few at

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

high levels, but more as members of the bureaucracy. Their relations with Kurds have sometimes been strained, for the Turkomans acted as peacekeepers in the northern highlands on behalf of the Ottoman empire in the nineteenth century, and Kurds have felt them to be intruders in Kurdish territory.

PERSIANS AND LURS

In some population estimates, the Persians and Lurs are lumped together, largely because both are Shiite and most Lurs live in Iran and often speak Persian although they have their own vernacular. The Lurs are a tribal people, and their role in Iraq is substantially different from that of ethnic Persians.

Some estimates of the total number of Iranians place them at 2.5 to 3 percent of the population. Lurs alone may constitute from 0.5 to 1 percent of all Iraqis; Persians may be a somewhat larger group—from 1.5 percent to 2 percent.

Most Lurs are concentrated in east Iraq, south of the Kurdish highlands, chiefly in and around Mandali, but there are others in towns and villages on the Tigris River and the Gharraf Canal, (south from Kut), and a number are to be found in Baghdad and Basra. In Iraq they are often village and town laborers, and many of them act as heavy porters in the larger cities.

Kurdish nationalists have sometimes claimed the Iraqi and Iranian Lurs as "Fayliya" Kurds, but the Lurs do not seem to have accepted this designation and regard themselves as a separate people.

True Persians tend to be merchants and religious figures. Some of the most important Shia holy places, Najaf and Karbala, are located in southern Iraq, west of the Euphrates and at Kazimiyah and Samarra north of Baghdad. Persian Shiites, particularly those engaged in religious occupations, either visit these places for long periods or remain there permanently. Persian merchants have always been active in southern Iraq, and many have been long settled there.

NON-MOSLEMS

Of the 6 to 8 percent of the people who are non-Moslems, most are Christians, divided into a number of groups, all but a few of whom have an ancient lineage in the area. Other than Christians the non-Moslems include the Yezidis, Mandeans and Jews.

Christians

Estimates for the total proportion of Christians range from just under 3 percent to more than 4 percent of the population. The latter may be more accurate.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Political and theological disputes in the first centuries of the Christian era led to the formation of a number of groups which continued to exist in substantial isolation from later developments in Western churches. From the fifteenth century on, however, some of these became affiliated again with the Roman Catholic Church although they retained many of their own liturgical languages (Syriac) (see ch. 11, Religion).

The largest single group of Christians, perhaps 2 percent of the population, consists of members of the Chaldean Catholic Church. Historically, this community is linked to the Nestorian Church (Church of the East) now represented in Iraq only by a small group of people called Assyrians. The Chaldeans broke away from the Nestorians in the sixteenth century to return to the Roman Catholic Church as uniate Catholics (see ch. 11, Religion). Although some Chaldeans may use Syriac as a vernacular, most of them, unlike Assyrians, speak Arabic and seem to accept a status as Christian Arabs. The center of the Chaldean community is in the Mosul area, either in the city itself or in smaller communities north of it. A number of them, however, have settled in Baghdad.

There are now very few Assyrians in Iraq. They have had a long history of conflict with their Moslem neighbors (Kurds, Arabs and Turks), and after the end of the British Mandate in 1932, they sought to obtain autonomy within the Iraqi state. At that time their titular leader, the Mar Shimun, was expelled by the Iraqi Government, and a number of Assyrians went to live in Syria. Some, however, remained in Iraq. There are small villages in the northeastern highlands where they have lived since the time of the Mongol invasions; others live near Baghdad and some near Kirkuk. Assyrians served in the Iraqi Levies, the British-controlled territorial force, during the Mandate period, and some stayed with the Iraqi Army when the Levies were disbanded after World War II. Those who remain villagers retain Syriac as their vernacular and cling to their Nestorian beliefs and rites (see ch. 11, Religion).

The Syrian Church (Jacobites) were also detached from the main body of the Catholic Church by the sixth century. Like the Chaldeans they retain Syriac as a liturgical language but speak Arabic as a vernacular and consider themselves Arabs. Perhaps 10,000 to 15,000 live in and near Mosul, and many are grain merchants.

A branch of the Syrian Church became, like the Chaldeans, uniate affiliates of the Roman Catholic Church in the seventeenth Century. Like the Jacobites, most members of the uniate Syrian Church live in the Mosul area, but there are a fairly large group

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

in Baghdad. They are largely urban and engaged in trade. Some estimates put their numbers at more than 100,000, at least 1 percent of the total population, but there is no accurate information.

The Armenians, whose estimated numbers are as low as 4,000 and as high as 15,000, are relatively recent arrivals in Iraq. Most of the older generation entered the country from the Anatolian uplands following the Turkish violence against them there in 1915. Most Armenians live in the larger cities, particularly Baghdad and Basra, where they are professionals and artisans. In the Kirkuk area they serve as mechanics in the oilfields.

Although many Armenians speak Arabic because their work requires it, they retain Armenian as their home language and as a liturgical language in the two churches to which they belong. Most are members of the Apostolic or Gregorian Church, but a few belong to the Armenian Catholic Church, a small group which became uniate affiliates of the Roman Catholic Church in the eighteenth century.

Yezidis

The term Yezidi is used by other Iraqis for a Kurdish-speaking group which calls itself Dasnayi. Their religion has pre-Islamic roots and has been influenced by several of the religious currents of the pre-Christian and pre-Islamic periods (see ch. 11, Religion). Unlike other religious communities they had no separate legal status under the Ottoman regime, and they have been largely set apart from the mainstream of Iraqi life.

There are roughly 30,000 Yezidis in the country, most of them settled farmers living in the Sinjar district west of Mosul. Others live in the Shaykhan area north of Mosul where their neighbors are Christian and Kurdish farmers. The community has a strictly graded religious-political hierarchy headed by an emir (see Glossary), and they tend to maintain an even more closed community than that of other ethnic or religious groups in Iraq (see ch. 11, Religion).

Mandeans

The Mandeans (Sabeans or, to Arabs, Subba) are largely urban dwellers scattered among the towns along the rivers south of Baghdad. Their largest communities are in Baghdad and the towns bordering the marshes of southern Iraq. Altogether there are perhaps 4,000 to 5,000 of them.

The Mandeans have a reputation as silversmiths, and many are boat builders, performing this service for the marsh dwellers. Their religion stresses the importance of immersion and regular ablutions, and they make a point of living near running water.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mandeans have claimed to be Christian, "Christians of St. John," but this claim seems to have been made largely in order to gain status in Arab eyes as "people of the book," who retained certain legal and religious rights (see ch. 11, Religion). Their scriptures and other documents suggest that they are pre-Christian and that they were regularly in doctrinal and sometimes in political conflict with early Christians.

Jews

Estimates of the number of Jews still in Iraq in 1968 range from 2,000 to 7,000. The 1947 census figure for Jews was 118,000, but they were unofficially estimated at 150,000, more than 2 percent of the population at the time. Most lived in the Baghdad area, but there were many in Mosul and Basra. The bulk of them left in the early 1950's, others after 1956. Earlier they were engaged in commerce, banking, moneylending, medicine and law, but the occupational, economic and social situation of the remaining Jews is not clear.

LANGUAGE

Arabic is the official language of the state and the mother tongue of more than three-fourths of the people. Many members of minority groups, especially the younger males, also use Arabic, often among themselves as well as in their relations with Arabic-speakers. Kurdish, the native tongue of 15 to 20 percent of the population, is the most widely-spoken minority language. According to an agreement signed in 1966, it has an official status equal to that of Arabic.

Smaller groups of people, in no case more than 2 percent and usually less than 1 percent of the population, speak other languages. The European language most commonly used by the educated segments of the population is English which, with Arabic, is employed in the universities and in scientific and technical publications.

Aramaic dialects were, until the coming of Arabic, the most widely spoken tongues in the area stretching from the Mediterranean coast to Iran and the Persian Gulf. Arabic became the principal language of Iraq only after Arabs from the south invaded the country in the seventh century A.D. as the bearers of the then new religion of Islam. As the indigenous population was converted, Arabic supplanted Aramaic.

Kurdish, an Indo-European language, related to but in many ways different from Persian, is spoken by the main body of Kurds and by the Shabaks and Sarliyahs. The Yezidis use Kurdish as

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

their vernacular, but Arabic is their religious language. Of the three Kurdish dialects, Kurdi is spoken by the Suran and Baban Kurds living between the Great Zab and Diyala Rivers. These, together, comprise the bulk of the Kurdish population. The Bandinan Kurds who live west of the Great Zab River speak the Kermanji dialect as do the Yezidis. Members of the small Kakai sect speak a dialect called *macho-macho* (or Gorani).

Aramaic, in the form of a dialect called Syriac, is regularly spoken only by the inhabitants of a few isolated Assyrian villages, but is the liturgical language of Chaldean Catholics, Syrian Catholics and Jacobites and may sometimes be used in ordinary speech by the more isolated of these groups or by their older members. An Aramaic dialect is the sacred language of the Mandeans. Until the tenth century, when it gave way to Arabic, Aramaic was the vernacular of the large Jewish community.

Each of the smaller ethnic groups speaks its own vernacular; Turkmanic, Lur, Persian and Armenian are the most important. All but Turkmanic are Indo-European languages. Turkmanic is related to Turkish and, like it, is one of the Turkic group of the Altaic language family. Many of these people are urban dwellers or are actively engaged in trade and other activities where they regularly have business with Arabs and have, therefore, learned to speak and often to read some Arabic.

Throughout the Arabic-speaking world the language exists in three forms. The first form is the classical Arabic of the Koran; the second is a literary language developed from the classical and referred to as Modern Standard Arabic; and the third consists of local spoken dialects. Classical Arabic was a synthesis of some of the spoken dialects of seventh century Hejaz (the northwestern region of the Arabian Peninsula in which Islam emerged) and of the language of the pre-Islamic poets. It became standardized as the language of the Koran, believed to be the exact language of God's revelations to Mohammed, but as Arabic spread from the Atlantic to the Arabian Sea among largely illiterate populations, local variants developed. These are largely defined in regional terms, but there are sometimes dialect differences between nomadic or seminomadic and sedentary peoples in the same region and between different sections of the population in the same city or town.

Modern Standard Arabic, the present form of the written language, developed gradually from classical Arabic. With the introduction of printing techniques into areas of the Ottoman empire during the last years of the eighteenth century, newspapers and books began to spread the written language beyond the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

narrow range of the academic and religious community, until it has become standardized throughout the Arabic-speaking world as the language of literature, scholarly discourse, official pronouncement and intellectual discussion.

Modern Standard Arabic differs from the classical in the omission of certain syntactical features and in the inclusion of a range of new terms which permits scholars, scientists and technicians to deal with phenomena not within the experience of the people among whom classical Arabic was developed. Generally, new scientific terms are introduced into Arabic by individuals who wish to refer to something for which there is no unambiguous Arabic translation. Sometimes an English (or other European) word, printed in Latin characters, is used, followed by an Arabic transliteration. Sometimes a writer may suggest that an Arabic word or phrase be considered as a translation of a technical term. In either case, if the term meets with general approval it gradually works its way into the written language as a standard word.

Modern Standard Arabic is commonly spoken in political debates, public speeches and university lectures. Classical Arabic is used for effect in speeches in which quotations from the Koran or classical poetry and allusions to early Arab heroes and the glories of Arabic civilization are the basic devices of rhetoric. As a spoken language, Modern Standard Arabic is effected to some extent by the sound and sometimes the usage of local dialects. Most educated Arabs speak Arabic at several levels: the local dialect and a relatively dialect-free Standard Arabic are the two extremes. Varying mixtures of the two will be used depending upon the situation and audience.

Since Modern Standard Arabic is not the language of everyday speech, most people first encountered it on the radio and in the schools. Similarly the older literary form, classical Arabic, is studied in classes on the Koran, in Moslem schools and in classes on Arabic literature and grammar in higher schools. Real proficiency in classical Arabic, however, is reserved to some scholars and students of religion.

Most Arabic-speaking Iraqis speak one of the dialects of the Mesopotamian dialect area, a region stretching along and between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers from the Persian Gulf to the Anatolian uplands in Turkey. According to the linguistic scholar, Haim Blanc, two large groups of dialects (designated as the *gelet* group and the *qeltu* group) are spoken in this area by different groups of people (see table 5).

That the *gelet* group of dialects is spoken by nonsedentary Arabs throughout the Mesopotamian dialect area, but by sedentary Mos-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

lems in southern Iraq only, suggests that these dialects are used primarily by the Bedouins of this area and that the sedentary Moslems of southern Iraq, but not other sedentary people, have been heavily influenced by the former. The dialect distinction be-

Table 5. Dialect Distribution in the Mesopotamiam Dialect Area of Iraq, 1968

Area	Dialect Groups: Gelet	Dialect Groups: Qeltu
Southern Iraq	Moslem: sedentary and nonsedentary	Non-Moslem (Christians and Jews): sedentary
Northern Iraq	Moslem: nonsedentary	Moslem: sedentary Non-Moslem: sedentary

Source: Adapted from Haim Blanc, *Communal Dialects in Baghdad*, p. 6.

tween sedentary Moslems and non-Moslems in southern Iraq apparently did not exist during the Abbasside caliphate (750–1258). The recurrent conquests of the area by Mongols and related peoples led to a shattering of older urban populations, and many sedentary Arabs returned to a nomadic, tribal way of life. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the towns of southern Iraq began to grow again, many of the new settlers were Bedouins of northern Arabic origin. Their dialect, therefore, had a substantial impact on the speech of sedentary Moslems of that region, but little or none on the language of the non-Moslems or of the sedentary Arabic-speakers of northern Iraq.

In southern Iraq there are also clear differences between the dialects (although both are of the *qeltu* group) spoken by the Christians and the now remnant Jews. There seems to be no such systematic difference in Mosul or elsewhere in Iraq. The Christian dialect of southern Iraq closely resembles the Arabic spoken by all sedentary communities in Mosul, which may be a function of the migration of substantial numbers of Christians from Mosul to Baghdad.

Generally, the members of non-Arabic-speaking communities who learn and use Arabic adopt the Arabic dialect of the majority group among whom they live. Armenians in Baghdad and the Mandeans of Nasiriyah Province, for example, speak the *gelet* dialect of the Moslem Arabs.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 6

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In 1968 most Iraqis shared a sense of common identity as Moslems and Arabs, but structurally the society was remarkably segmented. It included numerous ethnic, religious and tribal communities, whose existence as separate entities long predated the beginning of the Republic in 1958; community members in many cases participated only marginally in national life. Still other social cleavages developed from the manner in which people grouped themselves in terms of kinship, occupation, neighborhood and way of life.

Despite this heterogeneity, society in its broadest outlines conformed to the generalized social pattern found throughout the Middle East. Major adaptations to the environment over a long period of time have produced three types of social organization. These are the nomadic communities of the pastoral peoples, the village societies of cultivators settled in the more fertile and well-watered areas and the urban centers of commerce and government. Each type has its own system of social stratification.

Pride in one's own group and a feeling of moral superiority over those who pursued a different way of life colored the relations between these three fundamental divisions. There were, of course, wide areas of interdependence, especially in relation to production and distribution of consumer goods.

In each of these three types of community—nomadic, village and urban—are units of social organization identifiable as lineages. The lineage, the continuation of social organization above the extended family, consists of a group of people who trace their actual line of descent from a common ancestor through a determinate number of generations.

Beyond the lineages are clans, whose members claim descent from a common ancestor but make no attempt to establish the links through an actual line of descent. A system of clans and lineages of varying sizes and depths together forms the basis for the tribe. In the Iraqi context, a tribe may be formally defined as an aggregate of persons claiming descent from a common ancestor,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

who have some degree of residential unity, and who recognize the political leadership of one of their members. The authority of this tribal leader supplements, and in some cases supersedes, that of appointed government officials.

Tribal organization is of greater significance among the nomads than among the settled population, but in Iraq it has persisted to an unusual degree among the sedentary population as well. According to the estimate of an official of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, more than 45 percent of settled village farmers were still tribally organized in the late 1950's. More recent information indicates, however, that among a large number of settled tribal groups, the tribe no longer has any functional importance—economic, jural or political.

Leaders of the 1958 Revolution had envisioned a change in the basic structure of Iraqi society, but in mid-1968 much of the traditional social system that had existed at mid-century remained intact. The society was still basically divided into urban, village and nomad communities, although there were proportionately fewer villagers because of urban migration, and fewer nomads because of settlement programs. The traditional ruling elite had lost its political power, and members of the old urban class were no longer the pace setters for the entire society. Nonetheless, despite the implementation of a land reform program, many of them appeared to have retained at least part of their wealth. Meanwhile, living standards of the rural villagers, whose material position was to have been improved by this program, seemed much the same as before 1958. The major social change of the decade was felt within the urban middle class, with its military core, whose political power and status were rising.

SOCIETY IN THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY (1918–58)

Between 1918 and 1958, a period during which Iraq achieved independence and a greater role in world affairs, some important changes took place in the social order. In particular, access to power and prestige became freer than it was in the traditionally authoritarian and highly stratified system. In general, however, the major outlines of society remained more or less as they had been for centuries, with nomad camps, villages and towns continuing to define vastly different ways of life.

Rural Patterns

The rural population in 1957 numbered approximately 3.8 million persons, or 60 percent of the population. Typically, these rural inhabitants, whether Arab or members of the large Kurdish minority, lived in villages, earned their living from agriculture and

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

regarded themselves as members of some tribe. The nomadic minority was small, and its size was further diminishing because of official efforts to establish its members permanently on the land. The 1957 census gave the nomadic population as 68,000.

Nomads

Nomadic societies included several pastoral peoples differing in their ethnic and cultural traditions and to some extent in their type of nomadism. In the rugged mountains of the northeast, for example, true nomads of Kurdish origin belonging to one of the tribes of the Jaf federation lived in tent camps throughout the year. In the vast swamps along the lower Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, some tribes, such as the Suaid, were seminomads but migrated annually in search of grazing land for their water buffaloes. Bedouin tribesmen of Arab descent, comprising the great majority of nomads, moved with their camels and cattle across the country's desert areas, especially those of the southern provinces.

True nomads, such as the Bedouin tribes, were habitually on the move for about 9 months of the year, traveling by day or night. With their large herds of camels and a few other animals, they followed a fairly fixed annual cycle, eventually returning to their starting point where they lingered briefly to dispose of surplus animals or to collect provisions. Their migratory routes were determined by the need of access to water and pasture for the herds. Each group had lands and water sources which it claimed as its own and stood ready to defend by force of arms. They usually traveled in rather small bands, of 20 or 30 tents.

In contrast to true nomads, seminomads typically remained in permanent settlements at least part of the year, many of them doing some farming or maintaining some date-palm groves as well. Their paths of migration were usually vertical rather than horizontal, taking them from the plain in winter to mountain areas in summer.

All Bedouins and many Kurdish nomads were tribally organized. In the communities characterized by tribal organization, every individual belonged to a particular tribe, and his identity derived from membership in that tribe rather than from an association with a specific place, village or town. This distinguishing criterion was retained even when, as happened with increasing frequency in the first half of the twentieth century, the nomads settled down and became sedentary villagers.

The purely nomadic Bedouin tribes were divided into roughly five tribal groups, most of which had branches in neighboring Syria and Saudi Arabia. The largest of these by far was the Shammar confederation. Others, concentrated for the most part

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

west of the Euphrates, were the Sinjara, the Zawba, the Abda and the Anza.

Tribal organization was based on the kinship system, with the extended family as its nucleus. Patterns of tribal organization and terminology used in connection with it varied not only between Kurds and Arabs, but among Arab groups as well.

The Bedouins followed a complex system involving six levels of organization. In this case the tribe (*qabilah*) was divided into two or more subtribes (*'ashirah*). The subtribes, in turn, were divided into smaller subsegments (*firqah*); these, in turn, into still smaller units (*fakhdh*); and these, in turn, into lineages (*hamulah*). Lineages were made up of two or more related extended families. All members of the same tribe claimed descent from a single male ancestor. In some instances this forebear was a mythical figure. Family groups living together in the same household were commonly called *beyt*.

Among Bedouins in Iraq, even the largest and most complex groups usually had only four levels—extended family, lineage, subtribe and tribe. Next to the extended family, the lineage was the group with which the individual identified himself most closely and which functioned as a unit in grazing its flocks and in camping and protecting its members. Attached to certain influential lineages might be found clients who served, for example, as armed retainers in turn for claiming the protection of that lineage.

Within the lineage every individual had a core group (*khamsah*—literally, five). A man's core group ideally embraced all his patrilineal relatives within five steps of kinship relationship to him. They comprised his vengeance group—the persons on whom he could depend or who could depend on him when vengeance was demanded. Governmental pressures were breaking down the vengeance concept, but traditionally, if a tribesman was murdered, his relatives within his core group were required to avenge his death, and all members of the murderer's core group were regarded as legitimate targets for reprisal.

Leadership among nomadic and seminomadic Arab tribes was vested in the heads of successively larger kinship aggregates. Every competent male could count on eventually becoming head of his own extended family. As a rule, among the extended families, comprising a lineage, one family had the hereditary right to leadership of the lineage. One of that family's senior males—not necessarily the most senior—was the head of the lineage. The headship of the next higher group in the tribe was similarly sanctioned and so on up to the leadership of the tribe or a confederation of tribes. In this hierarchy each leader exercised authority on the level to

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

which family and personal ability brought him. The traditional title of all these chieftains was sheik; the head of a tribal confederation was the permanent sheik.

Within the tribe individual status depended on several circumstances; among them was nearness of relationship to the common ancestor of the group. Those persons considered to be of highest descent; that is, those with the closest degree of relationship by direct patrilineal descent to the common ancestor, comprised an elite group. Standing within the group was also based on personal wealth and on approximation of traditional standards of conduct. In general, age was respected, and a man was subordinate to his elders and equal to persons of his own generation.

The Kurds followed their own system of tribal organization. Among the Jaf, for example, with a powerful federeration of tribes and being wholly nomadic until well into the twentieth century, the largest unit of political organization was the confederacy (*'ashirah*). The tribal confederacy was made up of numerous tribes (*tira*), the primary political and landowning groups. Tribes were, in turn, divided into tent camps (*khel*), roughly equivalent to lineage segments but held together by economic as well as lineage ties. Each tent camp was made up of a number of households. The tribal confederacy was ruled by a Beg, or Pasha; every tribe by a *raiz*, whose position was hereditary. The *raiz* was also the head of his own tent camp. Other tent camps were informally led by a headman subject to the *raiz*.

Villagers

With most of its people living in rural areas, Iraq, like other countries of the Middle East, was a land of villages, almost entirely agricultural. Crops and methods of cultivation differed from region to region, however, as did patterns of social organization.

Many of the villages were inhabited by descendants of formerly nomadic tribesmen, separated from their forebears by only a few generations. In some villages, both Arab and Kurdish, the inhabitants were still tribally organized, and the tribe retained most or all of its traditional functions. Among much of the sedentary rural population, however, probably a majority, tribal relationships no longer retained any political or economic significance. The distribution of power and prestige in these villages was rooted instead in patronage and landlord-tenant relationships.

Regional variations in village social organization were attributable to a number of circumstances, among which the pattern of land tenure was especially important. Most of the cultivated land belonged to large estates, owned by Arab tribal sheiks, *aghas* (Kurdish chieftains) or city landlords. Only about 15 percent of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the land was worked by small independent farmers, found mainly in the central and northern provinces (see ch. 19, Agriculture). Rents paid by tenants to the landlords were high, sometimes 50 percent of the crop, but in return for this advantage the tribal sheiks and the *aghas* were expected to provide agricultural credit and advice and to assist in arranging marriages, judging disputes and protecting the interests of their people with the government. They were also expected to maintain a guest house wherein they dispensed lavish hospitality.

In one Shiite, Moslem village in southern Iraq, said to be representative of many rural communities in that region, five social classes were recognized. In ascending order of prestige these were the Subba (Mandeans), a religious minority; families of slave origin; commoner clans and lineages and their heads; members of the clan which had formerly ruled the villages; and the so-called holy men. All inhabitants of the village regarded themselves as members of a single tribe. The village had been subject to the authoritarian rule of the noble clan of that tribe for four centuries, until 1924, when the central government had intervened and abolished the sheikdom. The former sheik had taken up residence in Baghdad, but a few members of his clan remained in the village.

The holy men claimed descent from the Prophet Mohammed and, when pious and devout, were highly respected by other villagers. They and their families were attached to one of the clans of the tribe, but they were actually unrelated to other villagers and tended to marry within their own group. The few remaining representatives of the former ruling clan were accorded a certain superficial respect by their fellows, but they were losing standing rapidly, and some had become absorbed in occupations which even ordinary villagers disdained. Ranking below the level of the more common clans and lineages and their heads, the descendants of slaves were more or less accepted as ordinary tribesmen, but there was no intermarriage with other villagers. The Subba, however, being non-Moslems, were regarded as religiously impure.

Status within this system was ascribed at birth, and there was no mobility between its different levels. Mobility concerned only between the upper and lower segments of the commoner clan and lineage group, that is, between those who comprised its leadership and the ordinary people. The leaders were appointed clan and lineage heads and other men noted in the community for their good conduct and knowledge of tribal customs and law. They were usually economically better off than the ordinary members of this group. Economic resources in themselves, however, were no criteria of social standing nor was there any special correlation between occupation and social class.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Living in the villages but only participating in a minimal way in village life were the representatives of the government in Baghdad. The large villages usually had a *mudir*, the subdistrict administrative officer who served as the government's administrative liaison with the village authority and who usually supervised one or more teachers, policeman and health workers and a registrar of deeds. These outsiders were dressed in uniforms of Western clothing and were often regarded with suspicion by the villagers and rarely entered fully into the life of the village or intermarried with the local population. Such social contacts as these outsiders maintained were usually with landlords with whom, educationally and economically, they were likely to have something in common. At times they also would be of a different religious or ethnic group from the villagers.

Urban Patterns

Urban society has played a leading role in the cultural achievements of Moslem Arab civilization from the beginning. Islam itself emerged in an urban setting: the Prophet Mohammed was born in Mecca, one of the major cities of his time, and his early followers were drawn from its population. The great heights subsequently attained by Islamic culture rested mainly on the collective accomplishments of theologians, scholars, poets and architects who lived and worked in the towns. The city of Baghdad, under the Abbasside Caliph Harun al Rashid (A.D. 786–809), represented the pinnacle of Islamic cultural achievement.

In the mid-twentieth century the urban segment of Iraqi society was once again a dominant force in national life. According to the 1957 census, nearly 40 percent (2.5 million) of the total population of 6.3 million was urban. Three-fourths of a million (nearly one-third) of these urban inhabitants, moreover, were clustered in Baghdad. The next largest city, Mosul, in the Kurdish region, had fewer than 179,000 people. Baghdad was a rapidly growing and changing metropolis, the seat of government and the center of trade and communications. It drew its wealth and population from, and made decisions for, the entire nation.

Concentrated principally in Baghdad, the urban upper class was distinguished from the rest of the population mainly by its political power and its considerable wealth based largely on land. In terms of the economic resources of its members, the range of their activities, the character of their private lives and their position on the national scene, the upper class formed a clearly recognizable and internally cohesive group. It was comprised of the royal family, ministers and former ministers, urbanized tribal sheiks,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the wealthiest landlords and senior civil servants and military officers. Nearly all were Sunni Moslems. Aristocratic families prided themselves on the nobility and purity of their bloodlines and the degree to which the behavior of their members upheld the ideals derived from their tribal heritage—honor, courage, generosity and hospitality. British, Germans, Americans and other Westerners were freely admitted to upper class society but in practice tended to keep mainly to themselves.

Most of the upper class lived in Ottoman-style villas with extensive gardens, situated in exclusive residential areas of Baghdad. This conformed to traditional settlement patterns reflecting segregation of religious and occupational groups and a tendency for members of one lineage to congregate in certain quarters of the city. The usual domestic living arrangement was a three-generation extended family household. Emphasis was on privacy, and upper class women confined themselves mainly to their homes where they received their peers in regularly scheduled receptions. Beginning in the late nineteenth century upper class young men were given university educations at home or abroad. Modern education for carefully chaperoned upper class young women was a post-World War I development.

At mid-century the urban middle class was far less cohesive than the upper class and was experiencing rapid internal change. Broadly speaking it could be divided into two sectors—traditional and emergent. The core of the traditional sector was comprised of propertied persons whose economic interests lay chiefly in commerce and real estate, mainly successful merchants and small businessmen. Impinging on this group were various religious and educational specialists as well as artisans and tradesmen who shared their ideals and interests but were less prosperous.

The emergent sector, by contrast, was chiefly made up of salaried military officers and civilian administrators, politicians and technical experts, all of whom were nontraditional in outlook. Included with this sector, but comprising its lower strata, were those persons who resembled the salaried group in every respect except that, with too few white-collar jobs to go around, they were unemployed. The chief resource of the traditional sector of the middle class was its productive private property, whereas that of the emergent sector was its influence on, or ability to manipulate, the machinery of state in its own behalf.

Most Iraqis linked middle class status with a white-collar occupation, which required at least a secondary school certificate. Manual labor was generally regarded as degrading and was commonly associated with lower class status. A serious unemployment problem existed in the late 1950's at the executive, managerial and

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

administrative levels and among sales and clerical personnel. Of some 10,000 Iraqis who earned university degrees between 1950 and 1955, for example, fewer than 15 percent found positions in government or business. Many persons who could qualify for white-collar positions but could find no openings remained unemployed rather than accept work which would lower them in the esteem of their peers.

There was a high degree of correspondence between religious and occupation groups. Sunni Arabs, for example, predominated among salaried civil servants. Religious minorities tended to fill socially assigned roles in the economy. The great proportion of Christians and Jews, for example, were merchants and artisans, and they were among the oldest inhabitants of Baghdad. The bazaars (*suqs*), where they engaged in their trade, formed a core area in the inner city. Later arrivals had to establish themselves on the periphery of the already-settled area.

Like the middle class, the lower class grew rapidly in the late Hashimite period, its numbers augmented by an influx of rural peasants. Because of few economic resources and little or no education, these persons were drawn to the cities by the hope of employment in industry and by the lure of modern medical and social services. Beginning in the late 1940's increased oil income produced new employment opportunities for some unskilled workers. These openings were rapidly filled, however, and later arrivals, finding no jobs, were compelled to subsist on occasional employment and begging. For shelter they erected temporary structures on vacant lots, usually adjacent to permanent dwellings from which they drew their electricity and water. Established residents referred to them as the *sarifah* dwellers, after the reed matting which they combined with mud to build their temporary homes.

Not all members of the urban lower class were living under such difficult conditions as the *sarifah* people. Many were gainfully employed as semiskilled or unskilled workers in oilfields, in auto repair and small machine shops or as porters, deliverymen and domestic servants. A substantial proportion of lower class dwellings had electricity and water, and some had inside plumbing. Some public housing for workers had been constructed in various sections of Baghdad.

THE YEARS SINCE THE 1958 REVOLUTION

The government headed by Brigadier, later Major, General Abdul Karim Qasim, which rose to power after a military coup on July 14, 1958, put into force a number of programs intended to

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

reorganize the basic structure of Iraqi society. One of the primary tools of change in the economic sphere was the Agrarian Reform Law of September 30, 1958. Its principal goal was the redistribution of cultivable land held in large tracts.

This program was continued, with only minor modifications, after the overthrow of the Qasim government. Another instrument of social change was the nationalization of all private and foreign banks and insurance companies as well as of 30 industrial and business firms announced by the government of President Abdul Salam Arif in mid-1964. Workers in the nationalized companies were, henceforth, to receive a share of their profits.

Confiscation of large landholdings in excess of maximum limits set by the Agrarian Reform Law had been largely accomplished by September 1963, at which time 85 percent of holdings subject to expropriation had been taken over by the government. Nevertheless, the former large landlords have retained much of their economic strength. At least some have received partial or full compensation for their confiscated holdings. They have kept their most productive fields, and many have sought to offset their land loss by increasing their capital investment so as to produce higher yields per acre. Funds have been made available to them by the Agricultural Bank for the purchase of agricultural machinery. Finally, agricultural income is exempt from taxation under the prevailing income tax system.

In mid-1968 salaried civilian and technical persons and military officers, most of whom were from middle class backgrounds, occupied a prominent position on the national scene. Along with a more direct influence on the conduct of national political affairs than they had exercised before 1958, members of this group had also gained certain material benefits. For example, about 120 housing projects had been built in Baghdad since 1958, of which the majority were for middle-class government employees. By mid-1965, 90 of these projects had had allocated to them government-owned (or confiscated) land on which they planned to build. Of the funds allocated for expenditure under the Detailed Economic Plan 1961–62 to 1965–66, 25 percent was budgeted for building and housing.

By mid-1968 the government had provided public housing for many of the *sarifah* dwellers in Baghdad. Several large projects have been opened or expanded for this sizable segment of the lower class population, said to number some 250,000 persons. Other members of the urban lower class, many of them also recent immigrants and still fully identified with their larger kinship group and points of origin, are concentrated, still by family, elsewhere in the city. As in the past, the inhabitants of any given

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

quarter tend to concentrate on a number of particular occupations. Given common occupations, religious adherence and kinship ties, these neighborhoods are generally set off from each other; jealousies, hatreds and blood feuds between different lineages and neighborhoods continue to be a prominent feature of urban life.

In the rural areas, meanwhile, the social and economic goals of agrarian reform are experiencing slow fulfillment. Confiscation of large landholdings is farther along than either redistribution or assistance programs for newly independent farmers. Nonetheless, tens of thousands of formerly landless families have been settled on small holdings that they work independently, either with permanent tenure or on a leaseholding arrangement with the government.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 7

FAMILY

Family ties are far reaching and pervasive. In Iraq, as in other parts of the Middle East, the characteristic form of family organization involves a large group of kinsmen related to one another through descent or marriage. The prevailing type of domestic unit is an extended family consisting of three generations—grandparents, their sons, sons' wives and children—all living in one household or adjacent households. Sometimes a nuclear family—a husband, his wife and their unmarried children—may break away and form an independent domestic unit. Because of economic pressures and the influence of Western individualistic values, the nuclear household has become fairly prevalent in Baghdad and other urban centers. Polygyny, though declining, is still practiced by a small minority of the people so that in either type of household an adult male may have more than one wife, each with children of her own.

The status of an individual is generally determined by the position of his family in society and his own position within that group, rather than by his personal achievements. The family transmits values and standards of behavior of the society to its members and holds them responsible for each other's conduct and to varying degrees for the punishment of those who do wrong. It determines the occupations and selects the marriage partners of its young people. Often, too, it comprises an economic unit, with kinsmen cooperating in farming or other pursuits, and with ownership of land and other assets vested in the group as a whole.

Because nearly all Iraqis are Moslem and bound by Islamic religious law, different segments of the society show a great deal of uniformity in customs governing family affairs. Slight variations occur in such matters as segregation of the sexes and the negotiation of the marriage contract, but the same basic elements appear among Arabs and Kurds, urban dwellers, villagers and nomadic herdsmen, tribal and nontribal people. Although non-Moslems reject certain features of Moslem family life, such as polygyny, not sanctioned by their own faiths, they too share the same broad

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

patterns. The sharpest degree of divergence occurs among the educated urban Iraqis, many of whom are moving away from certain traditional family customs.

Family life until recently was subject to regulation only according to religious law and tradition. The regulations differed not only between Moslems and non-Moslems but also within the Islamic community itself. Shia Moslems, for example, upheld the principle of *mut'a* (literally, enjoyment), a contractual marriage of limited duration, whereas this practice was strictly forbidden under Sunni law. Minor variations differentiated family life among the followers of the two schools of law to which Iraqi Sunnites adhered.

All Moslems were brought under a single body of family law for the first time in 1959 with the enactment of a secular law on personal status. First drawn up in 1947, this law was strongly opposed by the Shiites who managed to prevent it from being passed until after the 1958 Revolution. Known as the Law for Personal Status of 1959, it was based on the Shariat (Moslem religious law), statutes from other Islamic countries and legal precedents established in Iraqi courts. A brief amendment to the Law was enacted in 1963.

The law and its amendment spell out provisions governing the rights of particular persons to contract marriage, the nature of the contract itself, economic rights of the partners, divorce and child custody, bequests and inheritance. Plural marriage is permitted to males, for example, only provided that the husband is able to obtain the permission of the court, that he has the financial means to treat all wives equally and that there is some lawful benefit involved. The Law for Personal Status is not applicable to non-Moslems, whose affairs are regulated by secular courts (see ch. 13, The Governmental System).

The promulgation of this law in 1959 and its amendment in 1963 occurred at a time when the Islamic countries of the Middle East were confronted with modernization. Ideas, industrial production and power generated outside the Islamic world were having a strong impact on all aspects of the society, including family relationships and the position of women. Some observers saw indications of the growing disintegration of the extended family, as its members dispersed in search of industrial employment or participated in government resettlement schemes which took them far from their place of birth. To what degree bonds between extended family members were weakening in Iraq in 1968 could not be reliably ascertained. It was likely, however, that physical proximity has considerable bearing on the strength of the ties between

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

kinsmen, since the ties of a family to its relatives in a distant part of the country tended to become weak in comparison with those to relatives close at hand.

STRUCTURE

The composition of family units is determined according to the principle of patrilineal descent. Both men and women trace their ancestry through a single line of male forebears. In a patrilineal society a man's connection with his father's family is more important than his connection with his mother's family, but in the Iraqi pattern not to the exclusion of significant ties with the maternal line. In any case, because of cousin marriage, the two lines of descent may be interwoven. Genealogical relationships can be extremely complex.

Kin Group Organization

The basic structural unit of the family system is a three-generation extended family consisting of a senior couple, their sons, married and unmarried, the sons' wives and their children. Other dependent relatives, such as an unmarried sister of the eldest male, may also be attached to the group. The senior male is the head of the family, manages its properties and has the final voice in all decisions. The extended family is traditional in the country and has been widely accepted as the ideal.

Beyond the extended family, kinsmen are organized into still larger groups. Among most segments of the population the next level of organization is the lineage, which is composed of all persons, male and female, who trace their descent from a common male ancestor. The number of generations by which this ancestor is removed from the oldest living one varies; a depth of four to six generations is usual.

Individuals or whole families of other descent sometimes attach themselves to a particular lineage in an arrangement of mutual advantage, becoming recognized after several generations as full members of the lineage on equal terms with those born into it. In small villages everyone is likely to belong to the same lineage, but in larger villages there may be two or more lineages. In such places rivalry between lineages is common but it is tempered by economic cooperation, intermarriage and the political authority of the village headman and elders.

Among nontribal Iraqis, kinship organization and traditions of common descent do not go beyond the lineage. In tribal society, however, organization is carried beyond the lineage to the level of the clan, which is the political and territorial subdivision of the tribe. All the members of a clan are ideologically united by their

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

assumed descent from a common ancestor, but, as is true with lineages, with individuals or even with entire families, assimilation of outsiders can occur.

Whereas awareness of distant kin ties has weakened among long-settled groups in the larger urban centers, it is still keen among recent immigrants to the cities and among the rural population. Many villagers and Bedouins can recite the names of every relative in both the paternal and maternal lines for six generations beyond the oldest living family members. Among the tribes, noble clans maintain elaborate genealogies, through which they claim descent from early rulers.

Residence Patterns

Among the rural population new households are not usually set up until many years after the initial recognition of a marriage. In general, the wife moves in with the parents of her new husband, where the young couple remains for a long period of time. Often this arrangement is maintained until the children of the third generation reach marriageable age, or until the death of the father. Even when the father dies, the brothers sometimes stay together, forming joint family households, comprised of themselves, their wives and their children.

The typical household is thus one made up of three generations of kinsmen all sheltered under one roof or in adjacent quarters. Among the marsh Arabs this may mean living as an extended family group on the same island. The physical crowding and forced coexistence tend to foster tensions, sometimes leading to the breakup of the extended family and permanent separation. When a serious dispute arises between father and son, the young couple may separate itself from the family group.

The actual number of persons who comprise the household is determined by the family's economic circumstances, pattern of living and mode of habitation. In an agricultural society, as long as ownership of land and other possessions is vested in the family as a whole, the possibilities for a young man to set up an independent household are limited. In urban centers, on the other hand, young men can avail themselves of opportunities for wage-earning employment. Middle Eastern observers commonly allege that in the cities there is a trend away from the extended family and toward a greater emphasis on the nuclear household as the principal operative unit. In the case of Iraq, however, there are no reliable statistics to substantiate this assertion.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

FAMILY AND SOCIETY

Kinship groups are the fundamental social units, regulating many activities that in other societies are the functions of political, economic, religious or neighborhood groups. Rights and obligations center on the extended family and the lineage. The Interim Constitution of 1964 declares that the family shall be the basic unit of society, whose principles are religion, morals and patriotism.

The family is the primary focus of loyalty, and it is in this context rather than the broader one of corporate loyalties defined by sectarian, ethnic or economic considerations that the majority of Iraqis find the common denominators of their everyday lives. A mutually protective attitude among relatives is taken as a matter of course; kinsmen are expected to render one another special favors. Relatives tend to be preferred as business partners since they are likely to be more reliable than persons over whom one does not have the hold of kinship ties. On higher levels, deeply ingrained family loyalty manifests itself in business and public life.

Authority

Authority within the family is determined by seniority and sex. Among Moslems and Christians alike, the father, in theory, has absolute authority over the activities of the members of the household, both within the confines of the house and outside. He decides what education his children will receive, what occupations his sons will enter and, usually in consultation with his wife, whom his children will marry.

In practice, a wife may exert a considerable influence in the family depending upon the personalities involved, and in the case of the wife of the village headman, this influence may affect the entire community. Moreover, the wife in her later role of mother-in-law exerts significant authority and influence over her sons' wives and children.

Respect for masculine authority and seniority is carefully ingrained in children. Much attention is paid to the formal deference owed to the father and elder brothers, and in rural families, sons —even after marriage—are expected to obey their fathers. A son may accompany his father to work in the field or to deliberations of the village council, but he should remain in the background and listen quietly to his elders.

Within this general pattern a fairly wide range of variation can be observed. Among the marsh Arabs, a wife, both in theory and in fact, has little influence in family matters. She has scant authority over her children and is allowed no opinions regarding

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the management of family finances. By contrast, in towns and cities the opinions of wives and grown children of Westernized middle class families tend to carry increased weight in family affairs.

Status of Men and Women

In Iraqi society, as in other Moslem societies of the Middle East, the position of men in society is superior to that of women. Inequality of the sexes is fixed in customs and traditions to which the majority of the population remains attached. Great respect is given to men, especially to older men. Correspondingly, although all children are valued, male children are especially valued as the embodiment of the ideals of the culture. This does not necessarily mean that women are downtrodden, only that the pattern of the relationship between the sexes is mutual respect for a strict division between the worlds of men and women.

The status of women is more nearly equal that of men in some segments of the population than in others. In general, the possibilities for movement and the degree of freedom are greatest for the women of educated and middle income groups in an urban environment. Daughters of Westernized families in Baghdad, for instance, are given university educations, and a few can avail themselves of relatively rare job opportunities. Since World War II women who hold professional jobs in the large cities have gone without both the *abaya* (a voluminous and concealing black outergarment) and the veil.

Nonetheless, sexual segregation still persists even among this sector of the population to a degree said by a number of observers of Arab society to be greater than that in Beirut or Cairo. Among the crowds in restaurants, cafes and bazaars, women comprise a minority; some restaurants have special sections where women, escorted by men, can seek relative privacy. Women's social life apparently still continues to revolve around activities in the home. Their participation in national affairs is minimal, but the Election Law of 1967 gave them the right to vote.

A study of Kurdish women's life in Sulaymaniyah Province indicated that urban women of the lower income groups lived a highly secluded life and considered it obligatory, when in public, to wear both a veil and an *abaya*. In the confines of their own villages, rural women of all types went without these garments. The wife of the sheik, however, always wore them on trips to town; moreover, routinely she was more careful about maintaining seclusion than were the ordinary women of the village, who found it impractical. Their daily activities took them to the village well, its

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

workshops and the neighboring fields and orchards. Seclusion for the wife of the sheik, by contrast, became a status symbol.

The Moslem majority regards marriage primarily as a civil contract between two families. The contract is arranged after negotiation, which may be prolonged and which may be conducted by an intermediary. It specifies the amount of money to be paid by the family of the bridegroom to that of the bride, the so-called bride-price. In rare instances, part of the payment may be made in cattle or furniture, the value of which is deducted from the cash total. Some of the bride-price is generally withheld in the event of a death or divorce.

The actual bride-price varies in accordance with a number of circumstances, among which are the family connections of the bride and her desirability as a wife. Theoretically, the bride-price goes to the bride; in fact, however, it is usually handled by her father, who spends at least part of it for clothes, jewelry or household items for his daughter. Islamic law entitles a woman to have property of her own, and part of the sum stipulated in the contract may be paid to the bride personally, either at once or during the course of her married life.

Marriage and Divorce

In Iraq, as elsewhere in the Moslem world, young men and women do not ordinarily mix freely with one another and do not make the choice of whom they will marry. The arrangement of a marriage is a family matter in which the needs and position of the corporate kin group are the primary considerations. The negotiations are carried on by the parents of the prospective bride and bridegroom. The role of the mother in the negotiations varies from group to group, but almost everywhere it is the father who has the final voice in the decision. Among the Kurds the women conduct the preliminary consultations, which are concluded by a meeting between the men of the two families involved. Among the marsh dwellers of the lower Euphrates, the men make all the arrangements; women may be consulted but are without any rights in the ultimate determination.

Often the prospective partners are known to each other, or at least acquainted by sight. Frequently they come from the same village. Their wishes in respect to the choice of a partner may be heard, but except in unusual circumstances, they have little effect on the final decision. Among the marsh Arabs young men wanting to marry a girl other than the one chosen for them may elope with the bride of their choice. This, however, is regarded as shameful; members of the girl's family, moreover, may see it as a collective

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

duty to take revenge against both her and her husband. A Kurdish girl may refuse to marry her parents' choice of a partner for her but not without greatly insulting them, so that this seldom happens. Among educated urbanites the traditional method of contracting marriages apparently is giving way toward a pattern in which the young persons make their own choices. Parents, however, still must approve.

Marriages contracted within the extended family are preferred, and those between the children of brothers are still regarded as ideal. Such marriages are favored for a number of reasons. A girl married to the son of her father's brother remains in the same extended family as her parents. Thus, conflicts of loyalty are less likely to arise, and both sets of parents are more likely to be satisfied that the match is socially suitable since the young couple are of the same descent. Moreover, the bride's father acquires the support of a son-in-law who already has a close relationship with him as his nephew; and finally, if a girl gets an inheritance, it remains in the family.

In return for these advantages and in the interests of family solidarity there is a reduced bride-price for intralineage marriage. The bride-price for extra-lineage marriages is high; the father who seeks financial advantage by marrying his daughter outside the lineage must face severe criticism or outright opposition from his brothers. Among the educated urbanites much less emphasis is placed on the desirability of finding a partner within the lineage.

The rights of Moslems to marry non-Moslems are governed by provisions of the Koran, which are upheld in Iraqi secular law. Thus, Article 17 of the Law for Personal Status of 1959 gives a Moslem man the right to marry a non-Moslem woman provided that she is a believer in a revealed religion—that is, Judaism or Christianity. The Moslem woman is less free, however, as she may not marry a non-Moslem. Marriage between members of the Sunnite and Shiite branches of Islam, although not forbidden either by law or by tradition, is generally disapproved and avoided.

Polygyny in Islam is regulated by tradition and Koranic prescription. A Sunnite is allowed a maximum of four wives, and he is enjoined to treat them equally and to provide each with a separate domicile. He must also pay the bride-price for each and support the children. In the modern period several Moslem countries have enacted legislation prohibiting plural marriage; in Iraq marriage with more than one wife is permitted. In accordance with the Law for Personal Status a man may not take another wife without the express permission of a judge of the religious court. In any case, economic circumstances rule out the possibility of plural marriage for most men.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Only the relatively well-to-do are able to support a second family, and it has been estimated by some students of Iraqi society that fewer than 10 percent of the Iraqis have more than one wife. Polygyny is most prevalent among small landowners, to whom plural marriage is a symbol of wealth and status. It is becoming increasingly unusual in cities and towns and tends to be deprecated by educated groups.

Marriage formalities, which provide an occasion for reaffirmation of kinship ties, vary somewhat from region to region. In the villages and in conservative urban circles two ceremonies precede a Moslem marriage; the engagement (*khutbah*) and the signing of the contract (*katb al kitab*). For the engagement a few relatives and friends are invited to the bride's house, where the parents of the couple announce the forthcoming marriage. Held sometime later, the ceremony of signing the contract is attended by a judge of a religious court and a large gathering of friends; neither bride nor bridegroom need be present. The marriage is not a religious event, but a contract freely reached by the parties involved and this agreement, whether documented or not, must be made public.

Among the Kurds a village wedding involves a festive breakfast followed by dancing, lasting the better part of a day. Men and women congregate separately at the bridegroom's house for the festivities; the men fetch the bride from her home while the women wait to greet her as she arrives in the bridal conveyance. Certain differences mark the ceremonies in an urban setting. For example, the bride does not arrive for the festivities until late afternoon and is escorted by women rather than by the men, who have been spending the day in the company of the bridegroom. A week later a festive meal is shared by the men of the two families.

Divorce is usually effected through repudiation of the wife by the husband. Repudiation has many forms, and depending on the manner in which it is done, it is considered either revocable or definite. In the first case, the marriage is not automatically dissolved, and the repudiation can be withdrawn; in the second, the conjugal community is dissolved. Among the most common forms of repudiation is the so-called triple repudiation, whereby a husband pronounces the traditional formula, "I divorce you," three times. The formula is supposed to be repeated during three successive states of purity from menstruation of his wife, but it has become customary to do it in one declaration. Another common form of repudiation is by the oath of the husband to abstain from marital intercourse for 4 months; if the oath is upheld, the repudiation becomes definite. Under certain circumstances, a wife may obtain a divorce by repudiating her husband, but this rarely hap-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

pens. Marriages can also be ended by a decision of a judge of the religious court, acting either on his own initiative or at the request of one of the spouses.

Dissatisfaction with traditional forms of divorce has been increasing in recent years, and among Westernized townspeople unilateral divorces are becoming less common. In any case, divorce is not as common as might be expected. A man divorcing his wife without good cause incurs censure and loss of honor, and he must pay her the amount of the pride-price reserved in the marriage contract for this contingency; the problems of contracting another marriage are themselves a deterrent. Under Moslem law the children of divorced parents belong to the father, but they generally remain with the mother until the age of 7, in the case of boys, and 9, in the case of girls.

Child Rearing

Economic motivation and considerations of prestige and family strength all contribute to the traditional high value placed on large families. The greater the number of children, especially sons, the greater the prestige of the father and, through him, that of the family as a whole. Among the lower income group, children are regarded as economic assets; the cost of their maintenance is small; and they begin to contribute to the family income at an early age. The subordinate position of the daughter-in-law in the household of her husband's family provides an additional motive for having many offspring, since the young wife, unless she is from a more important family than her husband, gains prestige and position only with the birth of children. A childless woman, often said to be cursed by God, is regarded with commiseration mixed with contempt. Failure to bear children may result in divorce or in the husband's taking a second wife.

The birth of a child is a matter for celebration, especially if the baby is a boy. Boys are especially welcome since they are the carriers of the family tradition, and their economic contribution in an agricultural society is greater than that of girls. Babies are breast fed, and weaning generally takes place at about 2 years of age.

Between the ages of 3 and 6, children are allowed considerable freedom and learn by imitating older brothers and sisters, but in later childhood they begin to be trained for their adult roles. Strong emphasis is placed on teaching the child to conform to the patterns laid down by his elders and to be a loyal and obedient member of the family group. The paramount importance of family solidarity is stressed, and the child learns that his wants are to be

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

subordinated to the interests of the family, through which his own interests will best be served. The concept of honor and personal dignity is stressed in the disciplining of children; the disgrace attaching to improper behavior, to interrupting one's elders, for example, is made plain to the child, who from an early age learns to associate propriety with conformity.

In early life children have more and closer contacts with their mothers than with their fathers, who tend in public, at least, to avoid expressions of affection toward their offspring. Later the responsibility for the upbringing of a boy passes into the hands of his spiritual guardian—his father or a close relative on his father's side, who prepares him for adulthood. During the same years a girl is trained by her mother for her eventual role in her husband's household.

The child passes quickly from adolescence into maturity. Upon reaching puberty there is a separation of the sexes; girls are excluded from male society except that of their own close kin. Daughters maintain only a distant and respectful relationship with their fathers. Great emphasis is put on premarital chasity in women, and a young girl is watched carefully so that she may not be the cause of damage to family honor. This is one reason for their early marriage, which usually is arranged at about 15 or 16 years of age for girls in villages and in nomadic groups. Boys have greater freedom than girls during adolescence and, at that time, begin to be drawn into the company of their fathers and the world of men.

Young married couples leave the bridegroom's parental household only in unusual circunstances, such as the result of a serious quarrel between father and son. The young wife is supposed to relinquish her loyalty to her own father and brothers and identify herself completely with the family of her husband. In practice, however, the wife retains ties and contacts with her own lineage, and in the event of a marital dispute can return to her father's house.

Property and Inheritance

For Moslems, property holding and inheritance are governed by detailed regulations set forth in the Koran, the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed and other rulings based on these sources. In general, important property holdings are passed down within the lineage from father to son, from one male paternal kinsman to another. Women have certain property rights and own such things as jewelry and other movable wealth, but land and livestock are usually owned by men and administered for the collective welfare of the kin group. Ordinarily a married man owns no land while his

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

father lives; on the father's death assets may be divided or held as common property by the surviving sons.

An amendment in 1963 to the Law for Personal Status of 1959 establishes the principle that shares of an estate are to be distributed to surviving family members in accordance with a fixed table. For example, sons inherit equally, and each son receives twice as much as a daughter. Wives usually inherit one-eighth of the husband's property, but are entitled to one-fourth if there are no children to share the legacy. It is likely, however, that in practice the formula is not followed; in many cases wives and daughters probably get less than the amount to which they are entitled or nothing at all.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 8

LIVING CONDITIONS

The general standard of living in 1968 was modest, and in some rural areas just on the level of subsistence. Most Iraqis regard privation and hardship as divinely willed and, therefore, to be accepted with equanimity. Such beliefs, rooted in Islamic tradition, also account for the indifference of many villages toward initiating or accepting changes designed to improve their material surroundings. Modern social and political ideologies that gained prominence after the Revolution of 1958 have begun to change traditional attitudes, especially among urban groups which have begun to look to the government as a source of public welfare. In the rural areas, where for many centuries contact with government officials was synonymous with tax collection and military conscription, government welfare activities are still viewed with some reserve.

The effects of poor sanitation and of limited water and electrical supplies are felt both in the countryside and in the cities. In rural areas flood control and irrigation projects initiated since the 1920's have helped increase crop yields, but inadequate roads and the lack of transportation and communication isolate some communities from the services that would otherwise be available from provincial authorities. Major cities and the provincial towns have a number of characteristics in common. City life has greater complexity, however, and tends to magnify the difference between the prosperous and those living on a subsistence level even though all benefit from the easier access to schools and medical facilities.

Traditionally, the family or larger kinship group was the primary welfare agent. The burden of public welfare was supported by a system of recognized rights and obligations not only between kinsmen but also between landlord and tenant farmer, and employer and worker as well. Differences in wealth and privilege in the community at large were mutually understood and accepted as part of the natural order of things, but the wealthy were expected to assist the poor. Absentee landlordism, urbanization and population growth, in addition to the beginnings of industrialization and the increase of wage labor, have all tended to break down the small-group pattern and the highly personalized system of rela-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tionships through which the society formerly secured the welfare of its members.

The family, in particular, has become less able to function as the self-sufficient economic unit it was in the past. The combined earnings of the members of a peasant family that has moved to the city usually exceed its previous income, but as wageworkers the individual members no longer constitute a single, close-knit economic unit and thus lack the relative security they had known on the land. The single individual who leaves for the city can no longer rely on his family for security in times of economic difficulty unless a relative has moved there before him. Nor can the rural family depend on contributions from one of its members who has succeeded in the city, because his earnings are generally too unreliable and too small for him to be able to bear his share of family responsibility for those remaining on the land.

Governmental initiative in welfare, mostly in the form of public works projects, began in the 1920's. During the 1950's labor and social security legislation was enacted, and projects to expand the school system were started, in addition to small-scale rural improvement and public health schemes. Since 1960, housing and the improvement of municipal services have been the favored areas of government welfare spending. Special efforts also have been directed at improving the housing and living conditions of the *sarifah* (reed hut) dwellers and the rural migrants who have settled in increasing numbers on the outskirts of Baghdad and other major cities in search of urban employment. The continued concern of the government with public welfare is reflected in the budget of the Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69, which allocated the second largest item of its total expenditures to housing, public health and educational projects. In 1967 almost 36 percent of the state budget was allocated for social and educational services.

Debilitating diseases, notably parasitic infections, are widespread and are a major cause of low productivity in agriculture and industry. Most of these are traceable to polluted drinking water and to the lack of sanitation and personal hygiene. Smallpox and cholera have been brought under control by vaccinations, and the incidence of malaria has been reduced by spraying. Major improvements in the general level of health, however, remain dependent on the large-scale introduction of clean water sources and sewage systems.

Medical facilities and the number of trained personnel are inadequate. Physicians, numbering somewhat more than 1,400, practice mainly in Baghdad and its vicinity. Curative and preventive services are free, but the majority of hospitals are located in Baghdad and in the provincial capitals, and people in

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the countryside often have no access to rural clinics because of the lack of transportation.

STANDARDS OF LIVING

With rare exceptions rural Iraqis subsist only on the barest necessities. Famines are infrequent, but when crop failures occur many rural families suffer from hunger. Since agricultural techniques are largely inefficient, villagers must work hard to maintain even minimal standards of living. Tenant farmers consume a large portion of their share of the crop as food. A small cash income, obtained from the sale of dates or sesame crops or from wage-earning expeditions to the nearest town, is used to purchase sugar, tea, tobacco and clothing. Additional material aspirations rarely extend beyond the possession of footwear and perhaps a watch. A transistor radio confers special prestige upon its owner, but only the more affluent villagers are able to afford one. In general, however, cash incomes are insufficient to cover the basic needs of the rural family, and many villagers are deeply in debt. Medical and recreational facilities and schools are scarce. Public life is centered around the mosque, in the guesthouses of wealthier inhabitants and, in the larger villages, in the coffeehouse.

The marsh dwellers, living in the south between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, derive cash incomes by weaving reed mats supplemented by the cultivation of summer crops, cattle breeding, temporary urban jobs, fishing and occasional hunting of wild fowl. Although the economic activities of the marsh dwellers are more varied than those of most villagers, indebtedness among them is frequent.

Tribal nomads live as frugally as village cultivators. Living conditions in this sector of the population vary, ranging from the minimal standards of groups who eke out an existence with a few sheep and seasonal wage labor to the relative comfort and sufficiency of certain camel-raising tribes whose members in some cases also derive income from agricultural holdings.

Urban dwellers may not have to work so hard for food, shelter and clothing, but only a few of them are able to buy luxuries or to save money. To those who can afford more than the basic necessities, however, cities offer a certain variety in consumer goods. Whenever possible, urban Iraqis prefer to spend surplus cash on imported items used to decorate the home, personal ornaments (especially jewelry), cosmetics, food supplements and transistor radios. Urbanities also benefit by the proximity of schools and medical clinics. Recreational facilities are more varied than in the countryside, although in the cities, as in the villages, visiting the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

coffeehouse remains a favorite diversion, especially among the older residents.

Mud bricks, fired bricks, and mud and reed are used most commonly for house construction in the countryside as well as in the towns and cities. Although these materials are readily available, the dwellings made of them deteriorate quickly and provide little protection against dampness, floods and cold. Wooden beams for roofs and supporting frames are expensive, and poor families find it difficult to obtain them. In the northern part of the country, however, wood as well as natural stone are extensively used in construction. The common fuels are dung cake and twigs, adequate for cooking but not for heating. In the towns and cities small kerosene stoves are used; gas heat is available in some of the modern buildings in Baghdad and Basra.

Because locally produced textiles cover only about 40 percent of domestic needs, cotton and wool supplies must be imported and are consequently expensive. Second-hand Western style garments are also available in the bazaars of small towns and in the cities. The acquisition of adequate clothing places a strain on many low and middle income budgets; in the rural areas dairy products and woven reed mats are often bartered for clothing.

The estimated annual average per capita income rose from 66.9 dinars in 1963 to 69.1 dinars in 1965 (1 dinar equals US$2.80—see Glossary). The data upon which these estimates are based include a few personal incomes of considerable size, but the great majority of earnings are barely above subsistence level. Since the late 1950's a potential bridge between income levels has begun to appear with the emergence of white-collar workers and professional people who constitute a developing middle income group. The consumption patterns of this group and of clerks, artisans and small shopkeepers are threatened by the rising cost of living. Despite official attempts to curb the increase in prices, the cost of food and of essential consumer goods in Baghdad rose from 104 points in 1961 to about 118 points in 1966. During the first quarter of 1967, however, the prices of consumer goods remained relatively steady, although that year's harvest was poor. Statistics are lacking regarding the allocation of expenditures in the average urban dweller's budget. Data published during the late 1950's indicate that nearly two-thirds of urban incomes was spent on food, rent and essential clothing. Because luxury items are imported and therefore expensive, middle-income groups feel price rises more than do the urban poor whose small incomes are spent on local items and therefore have a broader purchasing power.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Housing

Rural

The majority of Iraqis live in villages, most of which are located along rivers or canals. The dwellings are built in clusters forming irregular patterns and connected to each other by narrow passageways. Sometimes there is a rudimentary network of narrow, tortuous streets which may end in blind alleys. The larger villages have a plaza in the center where the mosque, the coffeehouse and the shops are located.

The common type of rural house is a rectangular hut, built of mud brick, roofed with reeds or twigs or covered with a mud dome. Most of these dwellings are low, and except for a narrow entrance have no apertures. A single room accommodates the family. Animals are kept in a small, rectangular walled courtyard in rear of the hut, although they sometimes share the living quarters with the family. Some villagers build their houses of a cement made of straw and mud and, when wooden beams are available, use them to support the roof. The dirt floors are covered with pressed wool or with mats. Furniture is lacking except for one or more wooden chests used for storage. Household possessions may include a few wool comforters, aluminum cooking pans and crockery teapots. Working tools, notably pitchforks and scythes, are mostly handmade. Bedouins live in square-topped black tents, made of goat's or camel's hair.

In the marshes between the lower Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, villages are built in the center of a shallow lagoon, surrounded by reed beds. Consisting of a few hundred dwellings, each village appears to be a small island. The individual dwellings are built on a sodden platform made of bundles of rushes and surrounded by a low reed fence. New layers of rushes are added as the platform level subsides. Five or more parallel ribs, made of bundles of reeds, constitute the framework of the dwelling. The ribs are made of tightly bound bundles of reeds which are set into the ground opposite each other. Their tips are then pulled together to form arches which are covered with a treble or quadruple thickness of overlapping reed mats. The interiors of the marsh dwellers' houses are divided by a platform made of bundles of reeds, which separate the family quarter from the reception area where the head of the household entertains his male companions. During floods, when water seeps into the dwelling, the platform is used by the family as a temporary refuge. The family quarters are used for cooking and for storing household possessions, such as cooking pots, earthenware pitchers, mortars and pestles, fishing equipment and grain reserves. Wealthy villagers maintain guesthouses, in ad-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

dition to family dwellings. A spacious, barrel-vaulted structure about 20 feet wide and 18 feet high, the guesthouse is built with an odd number of vaulted arches made of reed bundles. Heavy, tapered columns support the facade, which is ornamented with lattice work.

In the northern mountain regions inhabited by the Kurds, the rectangular houses are built of burnt brick or of stone, with flat clay roofs supported by poplar trunks. In the villages near the Iranian border the walls of houses are made of stone, with short, wooden beams placed horizontally between the stones. The windows, rectangular or arched, may have wooden shutters or they may be covered by a lattice of flat wooden shavings. At least one of the walls is thick enough to allow for the construction of a recess where household goods are stored. Houses on hillsides are sometimes built entirely of natural stone. They have two stories to the front and one to the back. A central living room located on the upper floor leads onto the terrace which forms the roof of the stable located on the lower level. During the summer months the terrace is the main living area and is also used for sleeping. Furniture is scarce, even in the homes of relatively prosperous villagers. Most households, however, have a number of rugs, mattresses and pillows and some chests for storage.

Urban

In the provincial towns living conditions differ little from those of the villages. Narrow, winding unpaved streets are lined with fired brick or mud brick buildings, although in the northern areas these buildings may be made of wood and stone. Schools, hospitals, or government buildings are located in the newer sections, which have been built around the old towns.

In the newer, more spacious quarters of the major cities, the homes of prosperous families are flat-roofed, rectangular, villa-like buildings, surrounded by gardens and hidden behind high brick walls. A hall and rooms reserved for male guests of the host are in the front part of the house; the family quarters are in the back. The floors of the rooms and of the courtyard are of tile. Most of these homes have piped water and electricity, and they include small kitchens with oil stoves and cooking pits, a bathroom which doubles as a laundry room, and sanitary facilities. A smaller, one- or two-storied building is located in a corner of the garden. This building is generally rented out to persons unrelated to the family, although traditionally it was used to accommodate overnight visitors or guests.

In the older sections of town, typical dwellings along the narrow, twisting muddy alleys are one- or two-storied rectangular, flat-roofed mud-brick or burnt-brick structures. They are built in

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

one corner or along one or more sides of a mud-walled rectangular courtyard. The upper story of the house usually has a wooden gallery, with latticed screens projecting onto the streets. The size of the house and of the courtyard, the amount of decorative detail and the number of rooms depend on the wealth of the owner. All dwellings, however, represent a separate unit, with blank walls facing the street although they may be adjacent to one or more similar units. The rooms on the upper story are usually used as sleeping quarters although, during summer months, the family sleeps on the flat roof which is surrounded by a low wall to ensure privacy.

Modern adaptations of these traditional dwellings, found in the new suburbs of the cities, are inhabited mostly by government workers, middle income white-collar groups and army officers. In this type, the house faces the street although its windows open onto the courtyard behind it.

Few Iraqis, even prosperous ones, possess much furniture. Home furnishings may include simple sofas, smoking tables, cupboards, chests and rugs. Clothes are kept in bundles and stored in cupboards. Western furniture, notably bedroom suites, has become popular with middle income families in the towns and cities.

Since the 1940's, Baghdad and the major cities have experienced housing problems and the proliferation of substandard accommodations. A growing number of rural migrants in search of employment have flocked to the cities, especially to Baghdad, establishing themselves in *sarifah* huts, which they set up on vacant lots, tapping the regular water and electricity supplies of the permanent residents. In response to public protest against their presence in the residential sections, *sarifah* dwellers were moved in 1963 by government authorities to the eastern outskirts of the capital. Their influx, however, has continued, and in the mid-1960's their numbers were estimated at about 500,000. The *sarifah* huts have a single room of about 27 square meters where an average of six persons live, cook and sleep.

The muddy roads along which the huts are built often turn into quagmires. Lacking sufficient water, sewage disposal and sanitary facilities, the *sarifah* settlement represents a major health hazard to its inhabitants and to those of the adjacent urban community. Dependent for their livelihood on earnings from casual jobs, the *sarifah* dwellers' living standard barely differs from that in the rural areas. Their occasional earnings, however, provide them with more cash than they were able to earn as village cultivators. Since 1963, the *sarifah* dwellers' difficulties have been compounded by the lack of transportation into the center of Baghdad where the casual jobs are found.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Clothing

Traditionally, the style of garments and the fabrics of which they were made were important indicators of a person's social status, tribal and ethnic affiliations, and wealth. With the growing influence of Western clothing, however, the importance of traditional garments has diminished. Since the 1950's, many people in the countryside as well as in the cities have adopted Western clothing, which they often wear in combination with traditional garments.

The basic garment of rural men is a long *dishdasha* (loose shirt) with long sleeves. It is made of plain or striped cotton and may be worn loose or belted. A long, sleeveless wool cloak is worn over the *dishdasha* in cool weather. Western-type suit jackets often replace the cloak.

The style of headgear varies, but the one most commonly worn is the *kaffiyah*, a large, rectangular kerchief held in place by a piece of cloth which is wrapped around the head or secured by a rope-like band (*agal*). In the countryside the tarbush, a pillbox-like hat made of red or maroon felt, is worn mostly by religious dignitaries, but in the cities it is rarely part of the regular male attire.

Women also wear the *dishdasha*, with either long or short sleeves, sometimes made of patterned fabric. Young women generally wear a short version of the garment, sometimes belted to resemble Western clothing. Older women in the cities wear a floor-length, loosely cut black dress. A distinctive female outer garment is the *abaya*, a long black shroud which conceals the entire figure but not the face. It is worn by nearly all women, rural and urban alike, except for business and professional women.

Most women wear some headgear, but face veils have become rare except in small provincial towns. A black, shoulder-length silk scarf wrapped around the head and draped under the chin is worn by middle-aged and older women. A white rectangular scarf made of thin cotton or silk, loosely draped over the head, is preferred by girls and young women. During the 1960's, however, many women of all ages have replaced traditional headgear with triangular colored silk scarves tied under the chin.

Kurdish men wear a suit costume of bag-shaped, loose trousers with a shirt or jacket open in the front and fitted with a low collar. The shirt is tucked into a long, broad sash, wound several times around the waist. In cool weather a waistcoat is worn under the jacket and above the shirt, or the jacket is replaced by a lined vest which is closed in front with buttons. Western jackets also are

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

often worn over the shirt. The headgear consists of a cap crocheted of cotton yarn, with a turban wound around it.

The main outer garment of Kurdish women is a floor-length, long-sleeved gown usually made of flower-patterned cotton in bright colors, preferably crimson, green and red. Long trousers gathered with a drawstring around the ankles, and a knee-length chemise are worn underneath. A quilted, ankle-length coatlike garment made of brocade is worn over the gown in cold weather. As headgear, married women in the countryside wear a small, black skullcap with slightly sloping sides and a turban wrapped around it. The top and sides of the skullcap may be decorated with coins, jewelry or amulets. Unmarried women wear a thin, white or colored veil which hangs loosely over the head. In the cities and small towns Kurdish women also wear the *abaya* over their long, colorful gowns. Many younger women have adapted Western-style skirts and blouses.

Both men and women in the countryside wear slippers or clogs, but many of them go barefoot. Kurds wear cloth shoes with thick soles made of folded strips of cloth. Western-type leather shoes, imported from Czechoslovakia, have become popular especially in the cities. In many households one or two pairs of slippers are shared by the entire family. Footwear is always removed when entering a mosque or when walking on carpets.

TRADITIONAL WELFARE

Traditionally, the family extended economic assistance and protection to kinsmen in need who, in turn, were bound to them in a network of mutual obligations. This system of welfare, common in the Middle East, has continued to operate, although less and less adequately since the 1950's. The Islamic commandment to give alms conveyed a concept of the broad responsibility of the good Moslem within the community of the faithful. In accepting inequalities of talent and wealth as manifestations of divine will, Moslems also insisted on the obligation of the wealthy to assist the poor. Almsgiving, which represents the direct application of the religious ideal, was originally viewed not as a gratuitous generosity but as the duty of the donor and the right of the recipient. It has also furnished some precedent for modern tax systems and public welfare schemes. During the 1960's almsgiving has become purely voluntary, but for devout Moslems it has remained a moral obligation.

Waqfs (religious, charitable or family foundations) represent another form of traditional welfare. They were established for a variety of secular and religious purposes but have typically taken

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the form of endowments of land left by the donor in perpetuity to his descendants or to a religious beneficiary. During the 1960's they have continued to exercise their welfare functions, and the proceeds accrued from the lease of their properties are used for charitable purposes (see ch. 11, Religion; ch. 19, Agriculture).

The concept of mutual obligations within the family is a duty legally recognized and enforced according to property relationships and mutual financial obligations defined by religious law. A wealthy or income-earning relative must support another relative who is poor or unable to earn a living. A large family becomes "social security" for the aged. The eldest male within the family group, both in the village and in conservative urban households, receives the family income, including that earned by married sons, and disburses it for the benefit of the group. These long-established forms of assistance have not been eclipsed by government welfare programs, but they have not sufficed to meet the problems of poverty under the changing conditions of the 1960's.

GOVERNMENT WELFARE EFFORTS

The authorities have tended to concentrate their welfare efforts in the urban areas, population growth has been rapid, and rising prices have often threatened urban living standards.

The Development Board, an autonomous government agency established in 1950 to promote a more efficient use of the country's economic and human resources, undertook a number of welfare projects or assisted the ministries and municipalities in initiating them. Since 1958, the Board's functions have been taken over by the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Educational and Social Development Planning Board. Housing and municipal development have been given high priority. In the suburbs of Baghdad low-cost dwellings equipped with kitchens and running water have been built to accommodate government employees and army personnel. During the 1960's such housing projects have been expanded to include a growing number of skilled laborers and clerks. Tenants pay a small monthly sum for rent and eventually acquire title to the house. Low-cost home-ownership is also available to workers and employees of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) (see ch. 21, Labor).

To improve the housing of *sarifah* dwellers, the government has allocated plots equipped with drinking water and sanitary facilities in the outskirts of Baghdad. It has also supplied construction materials and encouraged the settlers to build their own simple housing. In some *sarifah* settlements the government erected brick cubicles with small back yards and opened a few schools and medical clinics.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

In response to the growth of the industrial and the governmental labor force, Labor Law No. 1 was enacted in 1958 and has remained in force during the late 1960's. The new, more comprehensive Social Security Law No. 140 was promulgated in October 1965, replacing similar legislation adopted in 1956. The new law provides for sickness, disability and maternity benefits, and for pension payments to retired workers (see ch. 21, Labor).

Other government welfare projects in the cities included street construction, installation of sewage disposal facilities and the provision of pure drinking water. Several modern office buildings and monuments also have been erected in the central section of the capital.

The rural population has received far fewer benefits than urban dwellers from such projects, and the absence of amenities in the countryside has tended to encourage the continued migration to the cities. One major rural improvement project was begun in Diyala Province during the 1950's. Needy villagers were allotted small farms of which they acquired ownership within 10 years. Small-scale cottage industries were organized to provide sources of cash income for the settlers. Educational, health and vocational training facilities were established in conjunction with the project, which was designed to serve as a model for similar rural welfare efforts in other areas.

To integrate primary schools into the rural improvement effort, a special center was opened in Abu Ghuraib, about 20 miles west of Baghdad, where rural primary school teachers were offered courses in modern agricultural techniques, hygiene, sanitation and community welfare. Other rural development projects have been planned by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, but information regarding the progress of these projects in 1968 was lacking (see ch. 9, Education).

On obstacle to rural improvements has been the reluctance of the country's few trained welfare officials to move into the countryside. Although the government has made efforts to enlist active village participation in community development and to coordinate welfare activities, rural communities have remained dependent on the initiative of the government. At the same time the lack of transportation and communication has made contact with central authorities difficult.

PRIVATE WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS

A number of philanthropic and charitable organizations dedicated to social welfare operated during the 1960's. Notable among these are the Red Crescent Society (the Moslem equivalent of the Red Cross), the Child Welfare Society and the Women's Temper-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ance and Social Welfare Society. These organizations have distinguished themselves in lending assistance to the needy in times of natural disasters or public emergencies. They have also helped to operate literacy centers and have supported public health programs. In addition to private welfare organizations of this type, several professional societies have been organized by middle income groups to render assistance to their own members and to promote general social reform.

Governmental efforts to improve public housing have been supplemented by similar efforts on the part of private organizations. Cooperative associations have been formed by professional societies and trade unions to help their members build houses on lots which have been purchased from the government at low cost.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Nutrition

Nutritional deficiency diseases caused by inadequate intake of vitamins, proteins and minerals are prevalent, and because of poor nutrition many villagers have low resistance to disease. The long nursing of babies by undernourished mothers and the practice of withholding solid foods until the child is 2 years old is a major cause of debility among mothers and children.

The staple food of most villagers is wheat, eaten in the form of leavened breads and baked in flat, round or oval loaves. Rice is an important element in the diet. For variety, onions and dates are eaten with the bread. Meat, fish, milk and eggs are almost entirely missing from the diet. Such foods are served only on special feast days, and poor villagers are unable to obtain them without going into debt.

People living in the marshes between the lower Tigris and Euphrates Rivers eat three meals daily consisting of millet, bread and tea, with occasional additions of fish, rice and dairy products, mainly yogurt. The wealthier among them regularly eat rice, fish, yogurt, game and occasionally beef or lamb.

In comparison, the diet of the Kurds is more varied. Their bread is a paper-thin, circular pancake prepared from wheat flour. It is crisp when fresh baked, but later changes to a leathery consistency. Yogurt made of ewe's, goat's or cow's milk is eaten with bread as a morning meal, sometimes with sliced cucumbers. Butter is eaten as a food supplement, used for cooking or sold on the market in a clarified state. Buttermilk mixed with water is consumed as a refreshment between meals. Tea, sweetened with large amounts of sugar, is the main beverage.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The morning meal of prosperous Kurds consists of tea, curd and, occasionally, eggs fried in large amounts of butter. Rice, steamed and served with a thick tomato sauce, vegetables and a few pieces of meat (mutton or fowl) are eaten at noon or at the evening meal, which is usually served at 6 o'clock. Boiled crushed wheat grains are sometimes substituted for rice. Thinly sliced cucumbers and a variety of vegetables, including eggplants, lentils and beans, are served with the main course. Fresh fruits, including plums, apricots, figs and grapes, are served after the meal.

The main staple of prosperous city dwellers is rice, boiled or fried. It is served with vegetables, mainly eggplant, which is stuffed with the rice, ground meats and spices. Grape leaves are sometimes wrapped around a mixture of boiled rice and onions, or ground meat. The preferred meat is lamb, cooked as a stew with various vegetables and seasoned with garlic or curry. The main course is accompanied by a green salad and is followed by fruit, or dessert made of thin layers of pastry, filled with ground nuts, honey and stewed fruit. Yogurt with water is taken as a refreshment between meals. Tea with large amounts of sugar is consumed after each meal.

Bread is the basis of all meals among the urban poor. It is eaten with vegetables, mostly lentils and beans, and is varied with occasional servings of meat and poultry. Dates, eaten with meals or as a snack, are important staples of the diet.

Sanitation

Poor sanitation and polluted water sources are principal factors in the spread of disease. A large percentage of the population lives in villages and towns which have been built along irrigation canals and rivers polluted with human and animal wastes. These waterways, along with the stagnant pools of water which constitute the village reservoir, are the major sources of drinking water and of water for bathing, laundering and washing of food. Some of the major rivers, notably the broad, shallow Shatt al Arab, create favorable breeding conditions for malaria-carrying mosquitoes and parasites spreading waterborne diseases. The periodic flooding of rivers contaminates water supplies and spreads waterborne diseases, including typhoid fever.

The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and their tributaries serve as water sources for Baghdad and some of the major provincial towns. Irbil and Sulaymaniyah, located in the northern mountains, have adequate supplies of spring water. In Basra, Mosul and Kirkuk the water is stored in elevated tanks and chemically

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

treated before distribution. In Baghdad the water is filtered, chlorinated and piped into homes or to communal fountains located throughout the city. In the smaller towns, however, the water supply is unprotected and rarely tested for potability. In 1967 water supply projects were underway in several provincial towns, and a water treatment plant in Samarra, on the Tigris about 70 miles northwest of Baghdad, was nearing completion.

Except in Baghdad and in some sections of the larger cities, sewage and sanitary facilities in urban settlements are nonexistent or inadequate. The major portion of a project to improve the sewer system of the capital, including the construction of a main sewer, pumping station and treatment plant, was nearing completion in 1967. In the smaller towns the narrow streets are strewn with dirt, rubbish and garbage. Dust clouds the air in the summer. In villages facilities for the disposal of garbage normally consist of ditches running along rows of houses. Septic tanks and latrines are used in Baghdad and the major cities. Pits dug near the houses or on the banks of irrigation canals serve as latrines in the villages.

Many diseases are spread through the unsanitary handling of food. Legal provisions exist regarding the sanitary standards of various foods sold, including meat and milk. The enforcement of these provisions, as well as of others relating to supervision by health inspectors of markets, foodshops and restaurants, is hindered because of the shortage of trained officials.

Rules of personal hygiene are unknown to the great majority of the population. Although Islamic teachings prescribe daily ritual ablutions, most people comply with the rule only in the form of token gestures, often using polluted water. Soap is available only to city dwellers; villagers use a cake of slippery, soap-like mud (*geel*) for the same purpose.

Disease

Accurate vital and health statistics are lacking. Available data reflecting birth and death rates are based on incomplete registers and cover only the population of urban centers. In rural areas births and deaths are rarely reported. Admission records of hospitals provide a random sampling of hospitalized cases of diseases and causes of death. The infant death rate was estimated at 23.7 per 1,000 live births in 1965, a figure probably representing a fraction of the actual rate because of the lack of medical care in rural areas. During the same year a Soviet source estimated the average life expectancy of Iraqis to be 30 years.

During the mid-1960's the chief causes of debility and death

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

were parasitic diseases involving the intestinal tract and the skin, malaria, tuberculosis, eye infections, dysentery, typhus and venereal diseases. The effects of many of these afflictions, if not fatal, are to sap the strength and alertness of the population and tot lower its labor productivity. Lack of sanitation, poor personal and food hygiene and polluted drinking water are chiefly responsible for the spread of parasitic diseases. The yearly movement of thousands of pilgrims to shrines increases the danger of epidemics of infectious diseases. Intestinal ailments are a chief cause of mortality among infants. Nutritional deficiency diseases and anemia are frequent underlying causes of debility. Vaccination campaigns begun during the 1950's have reduced the incidence of formerly dreaded epidemics of smallpox, plague and cholera, but government vaccination teams still have difficulty in reaching the Bedouin population.

Ancylostomiasis, an infestation of the intestinal tract by the hookworm, is widespread. The parasite thrives mainly in open drains and in untreated sewers. According to estimates by health experts, 20 percent of the population in the northern provinces and 40 percent in the south were afflicted by the disease during the early 1960's.

Schistosomiasis or bilharziasis, a parasitic ailment affecting the liver and causing extensive debility, is highly endemic. Spread by a snail which breeds in marshes and in polluted stagnant waters, the disease is most prevalent in the irrigated areas of the south, notably in the provinces of Baghdad, Kut, Basra, Diwaniyah, Karbala, Amarah and Hillah. Persons wading in stagnant pools are most susceptible to the disease since the disease-carrying organism is picked up through the skin of the foot.

Although clinical treatment of schistosomiasis is difficult, it can be prevented by wearing shoes and by the chemical spraying of canals and pools of water. Moreover, the host snail fails to thrive in water flowing at a rate of as much as 3 miles an hour or in ditches and canals which are periodically drained. During the early 1960's health authorities launched a schistosomiasis control program which included the building of specially designed irrigation canals and ditches and of drainage works to prevent waterlogging. In general, however, the extension of irrigation systems, during the same period, has tended to promote the spread of the disease (see ch. 19, Agriculture).

Malaria is most prevalent in the north but has been spreading in the south with the expansion of irrigation facilities. Highly malarial areas include the banks of the Shatt al Arab River and the lower Euphrates, the valleys of the Kurdish mountains, the northeastern provinces and the lower Diyala basin. Spread by the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

malaria-carrying *Plasmodium vivax* mosquito, malaria killed more than 50,000 persons each year during the 1950's. The incidence of the disease has since decreased as a result of chemical sprayings of malarious areas, carried out with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Nevertheless, malaria has remained one of the major endemic diseases and a chief cause of death, especially among infants.

Tuberculosis, mainly the pulmonary type, is a major public health problem. Nutritional deficiencies, crowded living quarters and dust help to spread tuberculosis, but because the disease is considered shameful, it is often concealed, making its detection and prevention difficult. A national campaign to control tuberculosis through vaccinations and chest X-rays was begun in 1952 with assistance of the World Health Organization (WHO). These preventive services, however, were available only to a limited segment of the urban population.

According to reports by health experts in 1962, the incidence of pulmonary hydatid disease, a cystic ailment affecting the tissues of the lung, ranked next to that of tuberculosis. Endemic in the region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, the disease is spread by parasites infesting sheep.

Trachoma, a fly-borne eye infection, is highly endemic and represents a major cause of blindness. Eye clinics operate in government hospitals, and the government has also provided fixed and mobile eye clinics. These facilities, however, are not accessible to all afflicted persons, and the disease has continued to spread.

Venereal diseases are widespread, and persons known to transmit them are not subject to legal action. Because the diseases are considered shameful, only a fraction of persons afflicted report for treatment. No stigma is attached, on the other hand, to bejel, a nonvenereal form of syphilis (similar to yaws) which is widespread among infants especially in the Bedouin tribes. Control measures have been carried out by health authorities, and the disease has declined in the northern provinces.

The population suffers from numerous other diseases. Typhoid and dysentery are widespread and occur in epidemic proportions mainly during the summer months, from July to October. Diphtheria, measles, whooping cough, rheumatic fever and pneumonia take a heavy toll among children. Tetanus often results from the common practice of packing an infant's umbilical cord with manure as a healing measure. Complications in childbirth are a common cause of death, particularly among Bedouin women. Circulatory disorders and degenerative diseases of old age are not widespread although ailments of this type occur among the wealthy and longer lived.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Medical Facilities and Personnel

Almost all medical facilities are controlled by the government, and most physicians are Ministry of Health officials. Curative and preventive services in the government-controlled hospitals and dispensaries and the services of government physicians are free of charge. In 1964, the Ministry included Directorates of Health, Preventive Medicine, Medical Supplies, Rural Health Services and Medical Services. The inspector general of health, under the ministry, is in charge of the enforcement of health laws and regulations. The military, the police, the port authorities and the oil companies have independent medical services, but they cooperate closely with the Ministry of Health. Private medical practice and private hospitals and clinics are subject to government supervision.

In each province the Ministry of Health functions are carried out by a chief medical officer who also has his own private practice to supplement his government salary. Provincial medical officers are preoccupied mainly with the administrative duties in hospitals, clinics and dispensaries, which have been increasing even in the smaller towns. Their work in the rural areas is seriously curtailed by lack of transportation.

One of the most serious problems facing the Ministry of Health is its shortage of trained personnel. According to the latest data, the number of physicians in 1964 totaled 1,436, or 1 physician per approximately 5,500 persons. During the same year there were 1,041 fully trained nurses, 1,442 health aides, 650 midwives, 229 laboratory assistants and 528 pharmacists. The shortage is accentuated by the fact that most medical personnel are concentrated in the major cities, such as Baghdad and Basra. Physicians trained at government expense must spend 4 years in the public health service, but they strongly resist appointments to posts outside the cities, and make every effort to remain in Baghdad. Recognizing that the lack of amenities in the countryside is a main reason for the preference for an urban medical practice, the government during the 1960's started to furnish homes to physicians who practiced in rural area.

Training in medicine and in the paramedical professions is given at Baghdad University and its branches at Basra and Mosul. The University also has a College of Pharmacology. In 1965 the total number of medical graduates was 177. A medical degree requires the completion of a 6-year course. Pharmacists, health officials and medical assistants are trained in 5 years, nurses and midwives in 3 years.

Medical courses during the mid-1950's were oriented mainly

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

toward the training of specialists and toward medical practices requiring modern equipment. Since then, more emphasis has been placed on the theory and practice of preventive and simple curative medicine, urgently needed in the rural areas.

In 1964 the country had 131 hospitals with some 14,000 beds. About one-third of the hospitals were located in Baghdad and its vicinity; the rest operated in the provincial towns and were in general inaccessible to villagers and to the nomadic population. Of the hospitals, 87 offered general care; the rest were specialized institutions for the treatment of tuberculosis, children's diseases, trachoma and mental illness. One institution in Amarah cared for lepers and five were maternity hospitals.

Modern facilities are available at Republic Hospital in Baghdad, the teaching institution of Baghdad University Medical College. Another 1,000-bed hospital and medical center to be operated by the Medical College were under construction in 1966. Provincial hospitals, however, often lack equipment, and their services are seriously handicapped by the lack of trained staff (see ch. 9, Education).

More than 400 dispensaries operate in the rural areas. They are staffed by medical assistants and offer simple curative care and administer vaccinations. Some of these are mobile facilities, located on river barges; muleback teams visit some of the remote villages. The dispensaries include special units to treat trachoma, tuberculosis and bejel. Although their services are sought by an increasing number of villagers, they are rarely visited by provincial medical officers.

Modern and relatively high-standard medical services are available to the country's approximately 11,000 oil workers. The IPC and its affiliates maintain six hospitals located in Kirkuk, Basra and Faw. Some 35 dispensaries are scattered throughout the IPC's area of operation; drilling sites are visited by mobile dispensaries. The services are extended to the workers' families and, in remote areas where government health facilities are not available, also to the neighboring villages (see ch. 21, Labor).

Governmental efforts to expand health facilities within the Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69 include plans for the construction of 5 major hospitals with 200 beds each, 8 smaller hospitals, 4 chest disease hospitals and some 800 rural health centers. The 5 major hospitals are to be built in Karkh and Kadhimain (both in the suburbs of Baghdad) and in Amarah, Basra and Sulaymaniyah. The chest disease hospitals are to be located in Mosul, Nasiriyah, Kirkuk and Amarah. The government also plans to open an institution for the training of paramedical personnel and a public health laboratory in Baghdad.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Popular Beliefs and Practices

Like other Middle Eastern peoples, Iraqis have traditionally regarded illness as a manifestation of divine will or as the work of evil spirits. Suffering from illness and injury is endured as an inevitable and normal condition of life rather than as a temporary suspension of good health. In the towns traditional views are yielding to the spread of modern medical practices, but they still persist among the poor in general and are strongest in the relative isolation of the villages and tribes.

Villagers rarely seek medical treatment while they are still able to follow a regular daily work routine. Because hospitals are regarded as places of suffering and death, they are entered only as a last resort, and many rural patients are beyond help when admitted; when incapacitated by illness, villagers usually go to a local "holy man" known for his wisdom and piety, or they turn to bonesetters. Many of the treatments and potions dispensed by traditional practitioners are harmful and sometimes cause death; others are only palliatives. Manipulative techniques of bonesetters and of the village midwives, however, have often been found to be efficacious.

Belief in the curative and prophylactic qualities of charms and amulets is nearly universal. They are supposed to ward off malevolent spirits and offer protection against the "evil eye," believed to be the principal causes of disease. Their most frequent form is a portion of the Koran written on a long strip of paper by a holy man and worn in a small leather case around the neck. Many of the amulets and charms are blue, a color believed to be dreaded by the devil. Special curative powers are ascribed to mud and dust gathered from holy places. Mud is caked and applied over wounds; the dust scraped from the mud cakes is mixed with water and taken for internal ailments.

Cauterization is widely used by traditional practitioners to heal aching spots, tumors and sprains, and to stop hemorrhages. A burning rag is used for the process to make small circular or cross-shaped scars on the site of the affliction.

The meat of roast hedgehogs is eaten to cure children's diseases and ailments accompanying pregnancy. Typhoid and malaria are treated with various herb teas. Water pipes, sometimes containing medicinal herbs, are smoked by those afflicted by syphilis. To cure measles the patient is wrapped in a loose red gown. Persons bitten by snakes are treated with human or snake saliva mixed with sugar.

One of the areas in which traditional ways have remained particularly strong is that of childbirth. The midwife is regarded as

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the only proper and expert attendant in this crisis. Unseen dangers are believed to threaten both mother and child at this time and to surround the infant during its first years of life. The mother is pampered and protected by all sorts of charms to ward off spirits. The young baby is thought to be vulnerable to the influence of both good and evil spirits, and so is protected by bright blue amulets to repel the "evil eye." As a measure of concealment, the child may be kept dirty and disheveled, its face covered with flies; sometimes, a boy is dressed as a girl to trick the "evil eye."

Despite some progress in bringing modern health services to rural areas, villagers tend to regard Western medicine with reserve and suspicion. The results of antibiotic injections in curing bejel and other dreaded diseases have impressed many, and the demand for such curative services has become notable. Nevertheless, the principles of preventive medicine, including the need for vaccinations, have remained alien to most of the rural population. Persons living in the cities, especially those with education beyond the primary grades, usually go to a medical doctor in the case of a serious illness and also recognize the importance of vaccinations. When modern medical practices are accepted they are often used in conjunction with traditional practices by city dwellers and villagers alike.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 9

EDUCATION

The government was making persistent efforts in 1968 to extend educational services throughout the country. Progress was retarded, however, by financial limitations, a rudimentary transportation network and the shortage of trained personnel. Despite these handicaps, the authorities by 1967 had succeeded in establishing a limited network of schools offering primary, secondary, vocational and higher education to more than 1.2 million students in that year.

Between 1958 and 1967 educational services were provided for a growing proportion of the population. Enrollment in primary schools increased from 430,308 to 957,800 and the number of secondary students more than tripled. Literacy centers were important adjuncts to the overall educational efforts, but in 1967 less than one-fifth of the population could read and write.

Primary education is compulsory and free, according to the law, for children between 7 and 12 years of age. In 1967 Ministry of Education estimates indicated, however, that only about half of the children in that age group attended primary schools. Enrollment of all school-age children in primary schools has been assigned a high priority in educational planning, and the government envisages full implementation of compulsory education for boys by 1970 and for girls by 1975.

The growth of educational facilities benefited urban rather than rural areas. In the provinces school construction has proceeded at a much slower pace because materials, labor and local funds were scarce. Statistics published in 1953–54 showed that 60 percent of the primary schools were located in towns, although more than 70 percent of the people lived in rural areas. Official statements in 1965 indicated that the same maldistribution persists (see ch. 4, Population).

Despite the shortage of educational facilities in some areas, the rate of school construction exceeded the rate of economic development. During the 1960's many graduates of secondary schools and of Baghdad University were unable to find jobs. Some filled posi-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tions where their qualifications could not be utilized (see ch. 21, Labor; ch. 6, Social Structure).

Official efforts to promote education have led to a general emphasis on its value for both men and women. Religious and social attitudes disapproving of education for women are beginning to change, notably in the urban centers. In villages, however, such attitudes still tend to lower the proportion of girls enrolled in coeducational primary schools. Secondary education became available to women only during the 1930's, and in 1967 women's secondary schools accounted for only a small percentage of school facilities on that level. During the mid-1960's the number of girls in secondary schools was considerably smaller than that of boys although, in general, female enrollment in proportion to that of boys increased more rapidly on all school levels (see ch. 6, Social Structure).

Education is provided by the government through a centrally organized three-level school system—primary, intermediate-secondary and preparatory-secondary. Baghdad University is autonomous, but its president closely cooperates with a representative of the Ministry of Education. Private schools, operating mainly on the secondary level, are also under close government supervision.

Western influence is notable in both the structural organization of the system and in the curricula. Subjects taught in the primary and secondary schools are mostly academic. Many of the students, especially in rural areas, find it difficult to grasp these subjects which are not related to practical tasks. Islamic religious influences, formerly dominant in the school system, have decreased. Traditional religious instruction, however, survives in the rural mosque schools, which provide the only formal education in areas where public schools are lacking.

The Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69 reflects the government's continued efforts to expand educational facilities. Of the Plan's total expenditure of 830 million dinars (1 dinar equals US$2.80—see Glossary), more than 110 million are allocated to educational projects. Priorities in dispensing the funds are assigned to the construction of 7,900 primary-school classrooms and to teacher training. In addition, 435 secondary-school classrooms and 14 vocational training schools are to be built by 1969. Education officials are also planning an extensive revision of the primary and secondary curricula with a view to introducing vocational subjects.

Official statements during the 1960's repeatedly stressed the importance of education in providing the country with personnel trained in skills and possessing administrative qualifications to implement economic development plans. In his Ministerial Program of July 1967, Prime Minister Taher Yahya called for the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

expansion of scientific and vocational education to meet the needs of industry and agriculture. Progress in this direction, however, tends to be slow because of the highly academic curricula, the insistence of most persons on being prepared for work in white-collar positions and the widespread negative attitudes toward occupations involving manual labor and outdoor work, including some fields of engineering.

Government initiative in the field of education has been affirmed by the Interim Constitution of 1964. Article 33 calls on the government to "pay special attention to the physical, mental and moral growth of youth." Accordingly, education has been officially made an important instrument in developing feelings of national identity and awareness of the Arab cultural heritage. Prime Minister Yahya's Ministerial Program of July 1967 called for educational efforts to help raise "a generation believing in God and country," and urged teachers to foster consciousness of Arab cultural and religious values.

BACKGROUND

Mosque schools (*kuttabs*) provided the only education available in most parts of the country until about the mid-nineteenth century, when the first secular public schools were established under Turkish rule. Extremely limited in scope, this public school system did not displace the *kuttabs* operating in nearly every village.

The language of instruction was Turkish, and both the school system and its teachers were unpopular. Manual instruction, mainly in carpentry, was given to orphan boys in government workshops that combined the functions of orphanages and training institutions. Higher education, available only to a small minority, dealt largely with Islamic theology and with the mastery of classical Arabic. After 1941 the language of instruction in public schools was changed to Arabic, and Arabic-speaking secular teachers were recruited and trained for the first time.

As a result of the establishment of the British Mandate in 1920, the public primary school system gradually expanded under British supervision. The first secondary schools (for boys) were opened during the 1920's in the major cities. The curricula of the primary and secondary schools were similar to those in Great Britain. When Iraq attained independence in 1932, there were about 300 primary schools and 15 secondary schools, located mostly in the towns. The government financed the higher education of a few outstanding students at universities in Egypt, Syria, Europe and the United States.

In 1950 school construction and various other aspects of educa-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tional planning were placed under the jurisdiction of the Development Board, an autonomous government agency established to promote more efficient use of the country's economic and human resources. Sums allocated to education in the state budget were substantially increased. Within a major school-construction program under the auspices of the Board, more than 700 schools were built between 1950 and 1958. As new facilities became available, enrollment levels rose, and by 1958 nearly 43 percent of the school-age children were enrolled in the primary grades, as compared with 20 percent in 1947.

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The majority of schools are owned and operated by the government. In government schools, tuition is free on all academic levels. The government also pays the full or partial cost of board, lodging and medical care in teacher-training institutions, secondary schools, vocational schools and at Baghdad University.

Private schools, functioning mainly on the secondary level, enrolled about 24 percent of the secondary-school students in 1965. Many of these schools operated under the auspices of foreign groups or were maintained by Christian religious denominations. Only some 2.7 percent of primary-school children attended private schools during the same year.

Most of the private primary schools are operated by Moslem religious and fraternal organizations. According to the Public Education Law of 1940, private primary schools for Iraqi children may be operated only by Iraqi citizens. An exception has been made in the case of Iranian schools maintained by Iranians in Baghdad, Basra, Karbala and Najaf for the benefit of children of Iranian merchants who have long resided in these cities.

The curricula of private schools must conform with that of government schools, and the textbooks must meet government specifications. The terminal certificates of private schools are officially acceptable only if students pass an examination administered by a government school official.

In both government and private schools, each year of the primary and secondary level ends in an examination entitling the student to admission to the next grade. These examinations are of overriding importance in assessing the student's academic standing and in determining his admissibility to higher academic levels. The difficulty of the examination contributes substantially to the rate of attrition in the primary and secondary grades.

The language of instruction in the primary and secondary schools is Arabic. Although the Local Language Law promulgated

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

in 1931 specifies that primary instruction in areas where the majority of the population speak Kurdish or Turkish is to be offered in the local language, this provision is not always enforced. In the private secondary schools, literature, history, geography and civics must be taught in Arabic, by teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education. Other subjects may be taught in a foreign language during the last two academic years (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

The government school system is handicapped by a chronic shortage of physical facilities. Despite the allocation in 1966 of 800,000 dinars for the construction of school buildings, the number of classrooms was still inadequate, and many school buildings were in need of repair. In about 20 percent of the school buildings, classes had to be taught in several shifts. The use of rented facilities is widespread, although such facilities are not equipped for classroom use.

In government schools the academic year, beginning in early September and lasting until the middle of June, is divided into two semesters. Classes are held 6 days a week, for an average of 5 hours daily. A 10-day vacation is given between semesters. Private schools follow a similar schedule.

Administration and Finance

According to Article 33 of the Interim Constitution of 1964, education is the right "of all Iraqis, guaranteed by the State through the construction and expansion of different types of schools, universities and cultural and educational institutes." Article 34 provides for state supervision of education and directs that "education affairs shall be organized by law."

Governmental leadership and supervision are exercised through the Ministry of Education, headed in 1968 by Taha al Hajj Ilyas. The Ministry, in addition to coordinating the school system, drafts and implements policies relating to curricula, teacher training and long-term planning. It also recruits and promotes teachers and administers examinations. Some functions pertaining to the physical expansion of educational facilities are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works. The Council on Social and Educational Development is a consultative body for the Ministry of Education and the Council of Ministers.

Within the Ministry of Education, each major department is headed by a director general. There are eight major departments: General Education, Research, Inspection, Vocational Education, Administration, Cultural Relations, Kurdish Studies and Physical

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Education. The Department of General Education, one of the Ministry's largest, supervises primary and secondary schools (both public and private), training institutions for primary school teachers and literacy schools.

The Research Department is in charge of curricula planning, textbook publication and educational statistics; it also controls public libraries throughout the country. Inspection Department officials inspect public and private schools for compliance with regulations governing curricula and administrative procedures; they also report to the Ministry on standards of instruction, financial needs and general progress.

Although the Ministry of Education organization provides for a highly centralized administration of the educational system, some operational and supervisory functions have been delegated to local authorities. The country is divided into 15 educational districts, each headed by a provincial director of education who supervises all public and private schools in his area and is directly responsible to the Ministry of Education. Provincial governors have been responsible, since 1951, for local school-building projects. Construction costs as well as costs for equipment and supplies are financed by provincial authorities, although supplemental grants are made by the central government.

During the 1960's budget allocations for educational development rose consistently. In 1966 the education budget totaled some 44 million dinars, over 24 percent of the total state budget for that year. Of the total sum allocated for education 10.2 million dinars were granted to the Ministry of Education and 28 million dinars to provincial authorities to supplement local school construction. Baghdad University received 5.8 million dinars for expansion of its facilities. In 1967 almost 36 percent of the annual state budget was allocated in educational nad social services, compared to about 18 percent in 1958.

Primary Education

Primary education was available in 1966 to 957,211 students enrolled in more than 4,000 schools offering 6-year courses. Girls accounted for about 29 percent of the primary school students.

The government officially favors coeducation on the primary level. The number of coeducational schools increased from 425 in 1956 to more than 1,700 in 1965, but in most towns there were some primary schools for girls only. Virtually all rural primary schools, however, are coeducational. In at least some of these schools, traditional attitudes toward female education have tended to keep the number of girl students low.

Because of a general shortage of classrooms and the lack of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

schools and of transportation facilities in the countryside, compulsory education is fully enforced only in certain areas designated by the Ministry of Education on the basis of available facilities. Where primary schools are lacking, the only education available to school-age children is offered by the traditional mosque schools. These teach recitation and memorization of the Koran and, occasionally, the fundamentals of reading and writing. Children who have attended these schools may enter the lower grades of the government primary schools after passing an examination.

Attrition rates in the primary grades are high, especially in the rural areas. Figures for 1968 are lacking, but a primary school survey conducted in the four southern provinces of Nasiriyah, Amarah, Basra and Diwaniyah in 1962–63 indicated that of 40,314 students enrolled in the primary grades, more than 30 percent dropped out before the end of the academic year.

Although the government pays for tuition and school supplies, the minimum needs of the primary school student constitute an excessive financial burden for most rural families. Moreover, children become economically useful at an early age, and parents cannot afford to forgo their help at home. Many rural children leave school after completing only two or three grades and soon thereafter lose the basic literacy skills they have acquired. Among students reaching grade 6, the attrition rate is further increased by the terminal examination which many are unable to pass (see ch. 19, Agriculture).

In 1966 the curricula of primary schools included religion, Arabic language and penmanship (with special emphasis on classical, written Arabic), arithmetic, hygiene, geography, history, morals and civics, drawing and manual arts, singing and physical education. English-language instruction is added in grades 5 and 6.

Rural children find many of the subjects difficult to grasp and to relate to their lives because of the primarily academic orientation of the curriculum. Moreover, the emphasis in primary instruction on rote learning, group recitation and rigid classroom discipline has tended to discourage students with the material at hand. In some of the urban schools teaching methods are more flexible.

Plans have been under way since 1960 to introduce agricultural and other vocational subjects into rural curricula and more practical subjects into the curricula of primary schools in general. The lack of appropriately trained teachers, however, has made the implementation of these plans difficult.

The schooling of Bedouin children represents a serious problem to education officials. According to the latest estimates, the Bedouin population numbered about 70,000 in 1957, but the propor-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tion of school-age children in this group was not known. During the late 1960's, a few mobile schools were organized, but in 1968, data about their operations were lacking (see ch. 4, Population).

Secondary Education

Academic

Enrollment in government and private secondary schools in 1966 totaled 214,378. Secondary education, unlike that on the primary level, is not coeducational. Of the 424 schools operating in 1965, about 35 percent were for girls, who accounted for a little more than one-fourth of the total enrollment.

Secondary schooling is divided into grades similar to those in the United States. The intermediate grades are 7 through 9, and the preparatory grades are 10 and 11. In compliance with the decision made in a conference of Arab Ministers of Education, held in Baghdad in February 1964, the Ministry of Education plans to expand the secondary level to 6 years, adding a third year (grade 12) to the preparatory-secondary phase. According to official plans the change was to be effective by September 1968, at which time secondary students entering grade 10 were to enroll for a 3-year rather than a 2-year program. Information about the implementation of the change, however, is lacking.

The curriculum in 1967 for the secondary-intermediate level included religion, Arabic, English, history, geography, civics and ethics, geometry, drawing, physical education and home arts (for girls). General science is offered in grade 7, arithmetic in grades 7 and 8 and algebra in grades 8 and 9. Chemistry and biology are added in grade 8, hygiene and physics in grade 9.

Students in the secondary-preparatory grades (10 and 11) may choose between enrollment in a science or in a literary section of the curriculum. Completion of the science section qualifies a student for admission into the science, engineering and medical colleges, and the literary section qualifies one for admission into the liberal arts colleges of Baghdad University. The curricula in both sections include religion, Arabic, English, history, drawing and physical education; child care and home arts are added for girls.

In the science section, biology, chemistry and physics are offered in both years; trigonometry is added in grade 10 and geometry in grade 11. In the literary section, general mathematics and geography are offered throughout the 2 years in addition to the subjects of the general curriculum. General science is added in grade 10, and economics in grade 11. The Ministry of Education plans some changes in the curriculum after extending the secondary-preparatory level to 3 years. The general curriculum is to be

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

given during the first year (grade 10), after which the students may elect to follow the academic program of the science or literary section during the last 2 years (grades 11 and 12).

Examinations are given at the end of both the intermediate-secondary and the preparatory-secondary grades. These examinations are difficult and contribute substantially to the high attrition rates prevailing at the secondary level. The terminal examination for the preparatory-secondary grades, called the baccalaureate, is administered in June. This examination qualifies students for admission to Baghdad University and is regarded as the decisive point in a student's academic career.

Usually only about 30 percent of the students pass when they first take the baccalaureate. Those who fail in one or more subjects may repeat the examination in September, at which time about another 20 percent pass. As a rule, therefore, only about half of the students who have completed the full secondary school level succeed in passing the baccalaureate. Attrition rates caused by failure to pass the examination terminating the intermediate-secondary level are nearly as drastic.

The government plans to expand the scope of secondary education, but officials have stated that such expansion must be preceded by an adaptation of the predominantly humanistic and academic curricula to the country's need for people trained in technical and intermediate-level managerial skills. They have also expressed concern over attrition rates because of examinations which diminish the upper-grade pool of available, trainable manpower.

In addition to the government-operated institutions, there are 111 private secondary schools. The oldest one among these is the American School for Boys in Basra, founded by the Dutch Reformed Mission during the early 1900's. The same Mission later founded the American School for Boys in Baghdad. The Baghdad College for Boys was founded by American Jesuit priests in 1932. It has modern classroom and laboratory facilities and offers special programs in science and commerce. Noted for its high academic standards, the College graduates approximately 90 students a year.

The Baghdad High School for Girls was organized by the United Mission, a group comprising several Protestant denominations from the United States. Its graduating class numbers about 30 each year. The Mission also operated the intermediate-secondary school for boys in Basra. Among Iraqi private schools on the secondary level, the Shamash Secondary School in Baghdad is noted for high scholastic and disciplinary standards.

Vocational

In 1966 vocational education was offered to about 7,000 students

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

in 45 institutions. Some of the institutions offer 6-year vocational training courses; others give 3-year courses for nurses and health workers; still others specialize in 2-year commercial courses; and one provides a 3-year course to train police officers.

The institutions giving 6-year vocational training courses include schools specializing in industrial and technical skills, agriculture and home economics. Students wishing to enroll must have completed 6 years of primary education. During the first 3 years, the curriculum in all of these schools generally follows that of intermediate-secondary schools.

Subjects related to vocational specialization are taught during the last 3 years. In the industrial schools these subjects include welding, foundry work and mechanical, electrical and radio engineering. In the agricultural schools the specialized subjects are farm management, soil chemistry, animal husbandry and irrigation methods. In home economics schools the last 3 years are devoted mainly to child education, hygiene, nutrition, sewing, crafts, music and secretarial subjects.

Commercial schools operate on the secondary-preparatory level and offer courses in bookkeeping, accountancy, business administration, law and commercial mathematics. Graduates may enter commercial employment, or they may be admitted to the third year of the College of Commerce at Baghdad University.

The schools for nurses and health workers require graduation from the intermediate level (grade 9) of secondary school. The school for police officers, administered by the Ministry of the Interior, has the same entrance requirement.

Enrollment in vocational schools is relatively low because of the generally low regard for manual labor. Commercial schools are more popular since their graduates qualify for the much-coveted white-collar office positions. During the early 1960's, however, the number of such positions was limited, and many graduates could not be placed in jobs for which they were trained (see ch. 21, Labor).

Adult Education

Adult education is offered in literacy schools and fundamental education centers. Night schools offering instruction in primary subjects operate in the major cities. The majority of persons attending these schools are men who plan to enter employment. In 1965 there were 145 literacy centers with an enrollment of 8,421. Of this total only 1,294 (roughly 15 percent) were women. Evening schools in 1965 numbered 163, providing instruction for 36,338 persons, about 10 percent of whom were women.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Fundamental education centers—a total of 27 with more than 3,000 persons enrolled in 1962—are generally located near the provincial capitals; their jurisdiction extends over several of the surrounding villages. The centers offer instruction in reading, writing and basic arithmetic as well as in agricultural and other vocational subjects such as health care and sanitation techniques. The principal center, also a training school for fundamental education teachers, is at Abu Ghuraib, about 20 miles west of Baghdad. The center in Diyala Province operates a small model farm.

Teacher Training

Teacher training is provided in the secondary schools and on the university level. Institutions for training primary school teachers offer 3-year courses to graduates of the intermediate-secondary schools (grade 9). Graduates of the preparatory-secondary level (grade 11) complete the course in 2 years. The curriculum includes methodology, child psychology, social science subjects and languages.

Teachers for the intermediate and the preparatory levels of secondary schools are trained at Baghdad University's two colleges of education, in Baghdad and Basra. The Women's College of Baghdad University also trains secondary school teachers. In addition, persons holding bachelors' degrees from any of the other colleges of Baghdad University are qualified to teach in secondary schools.

The Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad trains teachers of art, music and drama for primary, intermediate-secondary and preparatory-secondary schools. Staffed by the country's leading artists, the Institute is noted for its training program in painting and sculpture. Those applying for admission to the 3-year program offered by the Institute must be graduates of the intermediate-secondary school level (grade 9).

Schools for training primary teachers had an enrollment in 1966 of 5,563 persons, a 17-percent decline from the previous year. The Ministry of Education reported in 1966, however, that though there was no overall shortage of primary school teachers, the pupil-teacher ratio varied widely from one area to another. In some rural areas the teacher shortage was acute since many persons refuse to accept teaching positions in places far removed from the cities. During the same year the Ministry of Education noted a severe shortage of teachers on the secondary level, especially in vocational schools. Official measures to remedy the shortage included appointing primary school teachers to secondary schools, increasing the teaching load of some secondary school teachers and employing foreign teachers—mostly from Europe—on contract.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The Five-Year Economic Plan 1965–69 envisages the training of some 10,000 primary and secondary teachers during the Plan period.

School teachers are subject to civil service regulations in matters of appointment, dismissal, discipline and retirement; their salaries are regulated by separate law, with a supplement paid to those employed in remote provinces.

Higher Education

Higher Education is offered at Baghdad University and its branches at Mosul and Basra, at the University College, at the Higher Technical Institute and at Al Hikma University, all located in Baghdad. Other institutions of higher learning are the College of Religion and Philosophy in Najaf and the College of Commerce in Basra. The Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad also has an advanced studies program.

Unlike other schools and educational institutions directly subordinated to the Ministry of Education, Baghdad University is autonomous and is responsible only to the Council of Ministers. The University is governed by the University Council and by the Academic Council. The former is headed by the president of the university and includes the dean of colleges, four faculty representatives and a representative of the Ministry of Education. In practice, major decisions affecting university affairs are reached on the basis of agreement between the university president and the representative of the Ministry of Education. The Academic Council, composed of heads of the various academic departments, deals with curricula, faculty appointments, admission standards and examination procedures.

Founded in 1956, by 1966 Baghdad University had a main campus in Baghdad and branches in Mosul and Basra. The Baghdad campus included 15 colleges, 5 higher institutes and 4 vocational institutes. They occupied separate facilities in some 48 buildings scattered throughout the northern section of the capital. Both the College of Agriculture and the College of Veterinary Medicine are located 10 miles west of Baghdad. Five colleges and one vocational institute operate in Mosul, and another five colleges are in Basra. According to plans in 1966, the Basra and Mosul branches were to become independent universities when their academic programs were fully developed.

A new campus for Baghdad University designed by Walter Gropius, an architect from the United States, was in the early stages of construction in 1966. Located in the southern sector of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Baghdad, the new campus will provide space for about half of the colleges and will accommodate some 30,000 students. Another major project envisages the construction of a Medical City to house the College of Medicine, the College of Nursing and the College of Dentistry. A 1,000-bed hospital will be the largest building in Medical City (see ch. 8, Living Conditions).

The courses offered by the various colleges and institutes of Baghdad University and by its branches at Mosul and Basra include agronomy and forestry, arts, commerce, dentistry, economics, political science, education, engineering, Islamic law and culture, secular law, medicine, nursing, pharmacology, natural sciences, industrial engineering, languages, physical education, public administration, technology, medical technology and secretarial studies. Largely because of their scattered locations, the colleges and institutes operate independently and often duplicate academic departments and services.

Since 1963, measures have been under way to unify and centralize the academic program through the creation of major departments or faculties which are to consolidate the academic programs in the fields represented by the various colleges. By 1965 the departments of science and of humanities had been established and offered coordinated programs of study on the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Enrollment at Baghdad University in 1966 totaled approximately 21,500, including about 2,300 women. The colleges are coeducational except for the College of Women and the College of Nursing. The College of Physical Education is reserved for men.

By 1965 the largest enrollments were in the colleges of education, law and art. Of a total of 1,923 students who graduated in 1964, 1,075 received degrees in education, languages, commerce and art. An academic 4-year program leads to the bachelor of arts or the bachelor of science degree. In the college of medicine the course of studies is 6 years, and in the colleges of pharmacology, dentistry and veterinary medicine, 5 years. To earn a degree in specialized fields, students must follow a prescribed course with no elective subjects.

The faculty in 1966 totaled 1,128, including 178 foreign professors and lecturers. Most of the foreign faculty members taught science, agriculture, languages and medical subjects. These courses are frequently taught in a foreign language, mostly English. The majority of other courses are taught bilingually, in Arabic and English. English is introduced early in the secondary school curriculum, but many students find it difficult to follow university-level instruction in that language.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Al Hikma University was founded in 1956 under the auspices of the Jesuit religious order of the United States. In 1966 the university offered academic programs leading to degrees in business administration, civil engineering and the liberal arts. It is coeducational, and the language of instruction is English. The Ford Foundation, the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association helped to build and equip five classroom buildings as well as to provide modern laboratory facilities and a 35,000 volume library. Enrollment in 1965 totaled 483, and the faculty numbered 33 full-time and 28 part-time priests, mostly Jesuit.

The University College is affiliated with Baghdad University. Organized in 1964, it offers university-level evening courses to accommodate the growing number of employed persons in Baghdad who wish to acquire a college degree. More than 2,000 students were enrolled in 1965. The cirriculum included courses in mathematics, physics, education, Arabic, law, political science, accounting, business management, economics and languages.

The College of Commerce in Basra is privately sponsored by the Basra branch of the Iraqi Economists Society. Like the University College, it is affiliated with Baghdad University and offers a 4-year course leading to degrees in commerce, accounting and business administration.

The Higher Technical Institute in Baghdad was organized in 1960 by the government, with assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It has a 5-year program leading to bachelor of science degrees in electrical, mechanical, structural and automotive engineering. The first graduating class in 1965 numbered 28; total enrollment in 1966 was 319.

Students attending foreign universities in 1965 totaled 5,457. Of this total, the government provided full financial support to 1,324 and partial support to 870. Others received help from private foundations and international organizations. The largest number of students attended universities in Great Britain, the Soviet Union, Lebanon, the United States, West Germany and the United Arab Republic. The majority of the government-aided students were preparing for degrees in engineering, science and medicine; upon returning to Iraq, they must work in positions assigned to them by the government for a period of time equaling that devoted to their study abroad.

EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

Respect for learning and knowledge among Iraqis is rooted in the Islamic religious heritage. The Koran is regarded as a source

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

of knowledge and inspiration, and its teachings exert a powerful influence. The prestige attached to religious learning is reflected in the strong pressure put upon even the poorest villager or urban dweller to see to it that his son acquires at least some formal knowledge of the Koran. Great value is also placed on facility in verbal expression. Eloquence and the ability to quote from the Koran or to marshal proverbs in arguments are still the marks of an educated man. In learned circles, the correct usage of the many shades of meaning in the Arabic language and the use of allegoric forms of speech bring great intellectual prestige (see ch. 10, Artistic and Intellectual Expression).

Because of these traditions, some Iraqis, notably those in the rural areas, remain unconvinced of the value of modern education, with its stress on factual and quantitative knowledge. Education is equated with knowledge in matters of religion, wisdom and righteousness which presuppose conformity with traditional ways and values believed to be pleasing to God. Innovations, which are invariably introduced by education, are therefore regarded as a threat to God-ordained ways. In those instances when villagers accept education, it must be linked to immediate, tangible benefits, such as laborsaving devices and health care. During the 1960's such benefits usually accrued from community improvement projects rather than from school curricula.

Religious and ethnic factors affect the value placed on education. The Shiites tend to be less literate than the Sunnites; many Shiites are apprehensive about the influence of the more educated Sunni group. The Kurds have been consistent in demanding education for their children. A growing number of Kurds, mostly sons of tribal leaders, have been trained in science, law and government (some of them in schools abroad) to occupy positions of leadership upon their return.

Secular schools are regarded unfavorably by members of the Yezidi religious minority. Some of their religious beliefs prohibit the education of children, and their taboos against the pronunciation of certain sounds and words render virtually all forms of instruction difficult (see ch. 11, Religion).

To urban groups, education is of considerable importance as a path to economic gains and social mobility. Some have accepted the application of learning to practical life although they continue to look with disfavor upon manual work. Those who have received technical training tend to regard themselves as supervisors, no longer obliged to work with their hands. Science is equated with knowledge, and such tangible objects as airplanes, modern weapons and irrigation works are respected as evidence of intellec-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tual and moral achievement rather than as the result of technical labor.

White-collar jobs carry much prestige, and keen competition for them has resulted in a scarcity of office positions. Still more prestige is attached to the position of a government official. Even a low-ranking position in this category represents the ultimate career achievement for many members of the middle class.

University degrees, especially from foreign universities, carry great prestige; serving as passports to the professions and government positions, degrees often compensate for humble origins in an individual's efforts to gain social recognition. The study of law is favored since knowledge of legal matters is regarded as useful in business affairs and in politics.

Students are conscious of themselves as a distinct and important group. They are fully aware that in a largely illiterate population the educated persons wield influence disproportionate to their numbers. At both the secondary and the university levels they tend to engage in political activities and to make their influence felt through strikes and demonstrations that disrupt discipline and often cause suspension of classes (see ch. 14, Political Dynamics).

Besides bringing improved living standards and greater social mobility to many, education has also served as a channel for new ideas and scientific information leading to a reexamination of traditional values and social practices. Those who have completed primary and secondary schooling and have subsequently obtained urban employment often find themselves questioning the values and practices which governed their families and to which they were expected to conform.

Study abroad has helped to fill the need for professional personnel, but young men returning from foreign countries experience difficulty in adjusting to living conditions in their country. Many are discouraged from entering professional positions at home as they see little chance of achieving the material gains they have witnessed abroad.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 10

ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL EXPRESSION

The country's contributions to the artistic and intellectual achievements of the Middle East represent one of the most significant elements in its long history. Throughout its pre-Islamic era, the Tigris-Euphrates region witnessed the rise and decline of great civilizations. Their accomplishments included magnificent architecture, irrigation systems, sculpture and metalwork. Excavations at ancient Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian sites have uncovered vast collections of clay tablets and books containing writings on history, philosophy, religion, law, mathematics and chemistry.

The advent of Islam in the seventh century stimulated a new outpouring of cultural activity which flourished under the Abbasside caliphate (750–1258). Baghdad came to rival Constantinople as a seat of learning and art. Scholars from other flourishing centers of civilization gathered there, intermingling Greek, Indian, Persian and Judaic thought and talent. In time, these diverse elements were submerged and transformed into an all-embracing Islamic synthesis in which a monotheistic religion defined man's place and duties in a supernatural order and constituted the inspiration and guide in art, scholarship and the ordinary affairs of daily life. This golden age represents to Iraqis the climax of their country's past achievements, and it serves them as an inspiration and a goal for efforts to revive past greatness within a unified and prosperous nation. Iraqis are less conscious of the contributions of the pre-Islamic past although government statements and publications emphasize the country's heritage of ancient civilizations (see ch. 3, Historical Setting).

Turkish rule from the sixteenth century to 1918 and subsequent British domination inhibited creative activity and precipitated an era of political and social stagnation from which the country emerged only during the 1930's. Since that time, increasing contact with the West has modified the traditionally religious orientation of scholarship and the arts and introduced modern styles in literature and in the visual arts. Natural science and technological

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

subjects have been incorporated into school curricula, but in the 1960's the country's few experts in these fields were foreign trained (see ch. 9, Education).

During the 1960's the reinterpretation of modern social and political theories in the light of Islamic religious and Arab cultural values dominated intellectual discussion. Within this framework, scholars and writers sought to define Iraq's role in the process of Arab unification and political rejuvenation. Young intellectuals were involved in the search for a national identity, specifically Iraqi, within the Islamic-Arabic context. An awareness of domestic social issues, sharpened by the Revolution of 1958, was reflected in the modern works of sculptors and painters.

Because of the modest scope of publishing activities and the close government surveillance of the press during the 1960's, issues reflecting current intellectual trends rarely appear in printed form. Such issues are generally aired in spirited discussions among a relatively small urban group of scholars and professionals, including journalists, whose views, although not expressed through formal channels, determine the tenor of educated public opinion (see ch. 16, Public Information).

Poetry is regarded as the highest form of art and is loved by all Iraqis. Poetry recitals are a favorite form of diversion in the cities as well as in the countryside. Interest in the modern changes in arts, literature and scholarship is limited to educated urban groups. This trend tends to reinforce the cultural dominance of cities, among which Baghdad is foremost. The flow of new cultural influences from the cities to the villages tends to be slow and, when changes reach the countryside, they are little understood and are frequently regarded with apathy.

Ethnic and religious differences account for diversity in cultural expression within the country. The Kurds, some of whom have shown promise in literary and scholarly work, have a distinct language and ethnic lore to which they have clung tenaciously for many generations. Demands voiced by Kurdish leaders for the recognition of Kurdish intellectual traditions were part of the Kurdish autonomy efforts during the 1950's and 1960's. Authorization was requested for extensive publishing activities in Kurdish and for the establishment of a separate Kurdish college in Baghdad, but by mid-1968 no information had been announced regarding the granting of these demands. The schism between Shia and Sunni Moslems is another reflection of indigenous cultural differences (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages; ch. 11, Religion)

The government's cultural policies during the 1960's focused on the extension of the educational system. Official speeches stressed

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the role of schools in fostering the Arabic-Islamic heritage, and government officials called for the intensification of cultural and educational exchange programs with the countries of the Arab League (see ch. 15, Foreign Relations). Government initiative in cultural activities is exercised through the Ministry of Culture and Guidance and through the Ministry of Education. The latter is responsible for the administration of research facilities, libraries and cultural relations with other countries. A Supreme Council on Research is subordinated directly to the Council of Ministers.

INTELLECTUAL EXPRESSION

The importance assigned to intellectual activity was long ago reflected in the saying attributed to the Prophet Mohammed: "Seek knowledge though it be in China." Under the Abbasside caliphs scholars engaged in the translation of Greek and other foreign works and also wrote original treatises on philosophy and science. The foundations for algebra, astronomy and alchemy were laid, and the system of Arabic numerals became a tool for mathematicians the world over.

During the early years of the Abbasside dynasty, the country came under strong Persian influences which contributed new concepts useful to the exposition of religious and philosophical ideas. Persian questioning of the values and forms brought to them by the Arabs supported indirectly the existing atmosphere of intellectual freedom and inquiry in Baghdad. The tenth century Iraqi theologian Ash'ari, who died in 935, encouraged the use of the dialectic in religious argument. Syrian and Coptic Christian scholars helped to introduce Greek logic and metaphysics into Iraqi philosophy, although the Greek concept of man's ability to participate in a perfect, universal knowledge through the systematic use of mind was never fully assimilated. Although the central motif of Islamic intellectual life in Iraq was always Arabic, the Semitic-Persian-Greek combination contributed greatly to the elaboration of the theories upon which Islam as a religion and as a body politic came to be based.

Greek concepts and terminology also contributed to the clarification of Sufism, or Moslem mysticism, which until that time had been confined to an orthodox vocabulary in its attempts to describe essentially intuitive religious experience. The practice of Sufism in its various forms gradually became embellished with and systematized under external influence—Indian, Christian, Greek and Persian. It spread to Basra and Baghdad and, in time, came to connote the entire body of Moslem mysticism (see ch. 11, Religion).

Generally, the ultimate goal of the Sufi is to draw near to God

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

in a mystical union through prayer or through a defined series of steps. Such ecstasy is considered possible because of the definition, "the existence of created things is nothing but the very essence of the existence of the Creator," and since man preexists as an idea in the mind of God, it is inversely possible that the soul can again unite with God.

This doctrine had important effects on the Moslem community in which it merged and on the intellectual life of that community. Aside from the positive influence of such great thinkers as al Ghazali (1059–1111) and Ibn Sina (980–1037), who were adherents of mysticism, these Sufi convictions presented a real challenge to the dogma of orthodox Islam. Sufism constituted a rebellion of the individual conscience against the rigidly defined collective practices and preoccupation with public behavior that characterized the orthodox. Furthermore, Sufis had a generally uninterested view of politics, and the spread of Sufism coincided with the weakening of Islam as a political force. In spite of the adverse response of orthodox theologians, the Sunnites never wholly rejected Sufism and even incorporated some of its more moderate beliefs.

After the thirteenth century the speculative trend in theology and philosophy gradually gave way to a hardening dogmatism in religion; the Greek influence in science and philosophy disappeared. Bound within the limits of a rigid and pervasive religious code, intellectual expression was thereafter characterized by emotion rather than reason; its language became connotative rather than denotative, and the intellect served to embroider rather than test the verities laid down by religion.

Overshadowed by the preoccupation with law and theology, the earlier interest in natural sciences diminished; mathematics, physics and biology came to be considered foreign fields. Medicine reverted to folk remedies until its revival in 1872 with the construction of a hospital in Baghdad. The intellectual climate of Islam languished for nearly 600 years until its exposure to the modern West. The process of change set in motion by Western contact in the nineteenth century was met by the unwillingness of the traditionalists to compete with or to adapt the new trends in scholarship and art.

As late as the turn of the twentieth century, formal intellectual activity was confined to a small number of scholars who owned their libraries and concerned themselves with the writing of their family chronicles. Sunni Moslems regarded religious law and theology as the most legitimate field of study. Among the Shiites, whose intellectual life was confined to the traditional schools of the holy cities, religious scholarship was considered almost equivalent to virtue. Even among literate groups there was

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

little comprehension of Western thought, which was greatly influencing thinking in some other parts of the Middle East, notably in Egypt and Turkey.

Intellectual ferment leading to attempts at reconciling Western scientific and social thought with Islamic traditions began in conjunction with the gradual political and economic changes set in motion after the attainment of independence in 1932. The publication of books and other printed matter increased, and new fields of study were introduced at Baghdad University. Poetry, a traditionally favorite form of art, became a vehicle for the expression of new currents of thought. The Institute of Fine Arts, established by the government in 1941, offered instruction in modern styles of sculpture and painting and in Western music. The curriculum of Baghdad University Medical College was revised to meet standards of modern medical practices. Foundations for cultural and social studies were created in conjunction with the University to help secure recognition in the Arab world for distinctively Iraqi values and intellectual contributions.

THE ORAL AND LITERARY TRADITION

Poetry, formal prose and speech have long been esteemed as the highest of the arts in Iraq as well as elsewhere in the Arab Middle East. In this tradition, language was more than a means of communication; its skillful use was an end in itself. Where logic failed, the apt employment of a quotation from the Koran, a proverb or a fragment of verse might succeed. Each element of a literary product was regarded as an individual experience. A line in a poem need have no evident relation with the whole, and sometimes even the words themselves seemed to lose all but aesthetic significance. Within the limits of conventionally approved subject matter, the appreciation of sheer rhetoric transcended any concern for internal coherence and logic as these canons have come to be applied in Western literature. The old poetry, recited or sung, is still popular in Iraq, and the storyteller still draws an audience on feast days and festive occasions.

Set content and formal style in the tradition models of poetry had long resisted change. Nevertheless, it was in literature that the beginnings of a new creative effort were first manifested during the early twentieth century. The new directions which were still being pursued during the 1960's have involved changes in both style and content. Whereas philosophy and rhetoric, religion and history, biography and geography dominated the literary scene a century ago, politics and foreign affairs, social and economic subjects have become the prominent interests since the 1930's.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The press, a medium borrowed from the West, has become a major vehicle of literary expression and linguistic reform. Together with textbooks published since the 1930's for the teaching of social and natural sciences in secondary schools and at Baghdad University, the press has played a prominent role in the modification of classical Arabic to meet modern needs (see ch. 16, Public Information).

Poetry

Early Iraqi poetry shows strong pre-Islamic influences in its use of old Bedouin themes. With the advent of Islam, and the town-centered culture under the Abbasside caliphs, a poetry developed which reflected the urban preoccupations of the court. Persia contributed the romantic and heroic epic and a poetry which permitted full elaboration of mystical themes. Later, with the decline of Abbasside power, poets again began to glorify the Bedouin ideals of simplicity, courage and independence. The peasant cultivator, looked down upon by townsmen and nomad alike, was never regarded as a suitable subject for poetic treatment.

Sufism also had a profound influence on Iraqi poetic achievement, stimulating poetry written for the express purpose of inciting a state of ecstasy in the listener; though monotonous in its use of repetitive allegories and expressions, its essential elements were soon absorbed into the body of Islamic poetry as a whole. In the twentieth century, however, this kind of poetry has been increasingly rejected by modern Moslems, and the number of professed Sufi poets in Iraq in the 1960's is small.

Poetry produced around the turn of the twentieth century was still traditional in form and spirit. The typical *diwan*, or collection of odes, of that time was devoted to involved puzzles in verse, commemorative poems for wedding ceremonies and poems in praise of the Prophet Mohammed and religious leaders, the governors and their associates. The works of such famous nineteenth century poets as Abd al Baqi al Umari and Abd al Ghaffar al Akhras and of their younger contemporaries, Haidar al Hilli and Mohammed Said al Habbubi, all fall within this tradition.

The intellectual and political crisis of the first quarter of the twentieth century was reflected in the emergence of a new approach, associated with two of Iraq's greatest modern poets, ar Rasafi (1875–1945) and az Zahawi (1863–1936). The movement they initiated is characterized by the shift from an almost exclusive preoccupation with style to the use of language to inform. Social and political topics replaced the idealized Bedouin themes; modern Arabic was employed, and new poetic forms made their appearance. This trend has been continued by a number of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

younger poets. The attention of these contemporary poets has shifted from the doings of a small group of literati to those of the ordinary people to whom they dedicate their work.

Ar Rasafi, of Kurdish descent, is still read with great admiration in Iraq, and his poems have been included in school texts. His language, although far removed from the colloquial, is clear of the ornate style which prevailed in the classical period. Knowledge of Turkish enabled him to read the works of European thinkers, and he was the first poet in Iraq to come to grips with the social problems of his age.

Az Zahawi has been called the "philosopher of the poets." Viewing scientific progress as the outstanding phenomenon of modern times and employing it as a major theme in his poetry, he appears to be more of an intellectual philosopher than a poet. Like ar Rasafi, he was sensitive to the social and political evils of his day, but he went beyond ar Rasafi in the quest for simplicity of style and language. Az Zahawi was especially noted for his poems in support of the emancipation of women and for his efforts to popularize science. His poetry, however, gained general appreciation only after the country attained independence in 1932.

During and immediately after World War I, the idea of Iraqi nationalism and the revival of the Arab cultural heritage inspired a new group of poets. Many poems featured highlights of Iraqi history and praised national independence, although the public understanding of these themes was limited. Al Shabibi, Al Hindawi and Al Radi were the representative poets of this group.

During World War II and thereafter, poetry in Iraq entered another phase. Traditional literary styles had only limited appeal for the younger writers and poets. Much of the poetry of this period reflected the influence of the content and style of Western literature which reached educated groups mainly through Egypt and Lebanon. Objection and dissent became major keynotes. The traditionally approved *Qasidah* (which was written according to rigid rules, including the use throughout a poem of a single rhyme sound and one of several approved meters) was critically rejected, although no new forms were accepted to take its place. Al Jawarihi is the outstanding representative of modern poetry in Iraq, and he is also regarded as one of the most prominent contemporary poets in the Arab world. Other well-known members of the new group of poets were Nazik al Malaikah, a woman; Buland al Haidari, a Kurd; and Abd al Wahab al Bayati.

During the 1960's poetry continued to be held in the highest esteem by all levels of society in Iraq. It is a popular art, and its enjoyment is limited neither by education nor by sex. Compara-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tively little of it is written, and there is no sharp distinction between "folk" and "classical"poetry. All Iraqis may feel moved, on occasion, to compose poems or a verse on current topics. Village poets recite both traditional and modern poetry. The ideals of the Revolution of 1958, Iraqi national identity and Arab solidarity, are favored themes of poets of national stature as well as those for whom poetry is only an avocation.

Prose

Before the twentieth century nearly every author of Arabic prose employed the traditional pattern of rhymed prose, or *saj*. History, biography, theology, philosophy and other branches of knowledge were written in this manner, as were stories and tales called *maqamaat*. Prose literature in the form of novels, short stories and essays has been borrowed relatively recently from the West and reached the country mainly through Egypt, which had come into contact with these forms during earlier centuries.

The lack of publishers, the size of the literate public and the tendency of intellectuals to be drawn into politics rather than literature have tended to delay the development of creative prose writing. Since the 1950's, however, creative prose has assumed a more prominent place, although poetry has remained the favored literary form. Newspapers played an important role in the development of modern Arabic prose. Many newspaper editors, including Rafail Butti and Fahmi Al Muddaris, are prominent writers (see ch. 16, Public Information).

The works of Mahmud Ahmad as Sayyid and of his greater successor, Dhu Nun Ayyub, show the influence of Western novels and short stories. Anwar Shaul specializes in the colloquial short story. Abdul Majid Lutfi is noted for his simple but forceful style exhibited in several collections of short stories dealing with the life of the poor and with human nature. Dhu Nun Ayyub is generally regarded as the country's most outstanding writer; next in importance is Abd al Malik Nuri.

THE PERFORMING ARTS

Theater

Despite the Greek influence early in Iraqi history (from about 323–200 B.C.), the theater has been unknown in Iraq, except for the Shia passion plays commemorating the death of Husain, son of Ali and grandson of the Prophet Mohammed. This religious performance, reminiscent of the morality plays of Europe's Middle Ages, has set a pattern which varies slightly in dialogue and cos-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tume depending upon the region and the wealth of the particular Shia community (see ch. 3, Historical Setting; ch. 11, Religion).

Dramatic forms are generally alien to traditional Arabic literature. This is indicated not only by the virtual absence of theatrical development but also by the concentration, in verse and prose works, on memorable lines and decorative details rather than on a structure of ideas. This characteristic is closely related to the rhetorical tradition, which is essential to the classical form of the Arabic language itself and which does not lend itself to stage productions. Storytellers, however, unknowingly make use of drama as they portray the characters and events of their stories with great realism. The shadow play, which makes use of themes of well-known folk tales, also contains expressive forms. In the plays the shadows of puppets are projected on a white screen while they act out well-known stories. The plots generally involve heroic characters engaged in contest and aided or hindered by spirits.

Arabic plays written in Egypt are known in Iraq, but the country has no prominent playwrights. There are few professional actors, and no regularly established legitimate theater. Plays written locally show structural characteristics which make staging difficult. Unlike the novel and other prose forms, their content has not been deeply influenced by foreign material; most draw their subject matter from Arab history and literature, although some have been concerned with social and political problems. In these beginning stages Iraqi drama has tended to be serious in tone, and only recently have comedies, such as those of Yusif al Ani, been accepted on the stage. Some of the modern writers have also found Radio Baghdad a medium for expression. There is a Cinema and Stage Administration in Baghdad which produces plays.

Dramatic training is offered at the Institute of Fine Arts at Baghdad. Some theater criticisim appears in the newspapers. Because of the few performances presented in the country, however, such criticism is devoted mainly to encouraging public interest in the theater.

Music

A tradition of folk music enters intimately into the life of the people. Despite the ban on music in Moslem religious services, song has penetrated in the chanted recitations from the Koran in the mosque and in the call to prayer. Music is also inextricably meshed with poetry in Iraq; it provides a vehicle for a style of verse which closely resembles Western lyrical poetry centering mainly of the theme of unrequited love.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Unlike Western music, most of which is composed according to fairly explicit formal rules, Arabic music is based on a modal framework within which the performer is free to improvise. In the absence of a system of musical notation, the musician or singer learns his art by ear and transmits it through his performances. The performance represents a canonical interplay between the singer and the instruments in which the instruments render an embellished version of the basic melody. A good singer is judged by the ability to express by vocal variations the emotions conveyed by the text. The most commonly used instruments in classical Arabic music included the *'ud*, a plucked string instrument with 9 to 11 strings; the *kemanja*, a bowed instrument comparable to the violin; the *qanuun*, another plucked string instrument resembling a three-octave dulcimer played with wooden mallets; and the *nay*, a flutelike instrument.

Like other aspects of Iraqi art, music has come to include Western forms. In urban circles appreciation of Western music is growing, encouraged by radio and television. Since the 1940's, students have been sent abroad to study music, and performers have been trained in traditional and Western instruments at the Institute of Fine Arts. The Iraqi Symphony Orchestra was established in 1941.

Dance

Iraq shares with other Middle Eastern countries a number of traditional folk dances, which are performed during holidays and feast days. Various ethnic groups have traditional dances which are performed for the entertainment of guests. The belly dance, some versions of which are familiar to Westerners from performances in urban nightclubs, is frequently performed at weddings by professional entertainers. On these occasions guests often bring their own dancers. Western social dancing is offensive to the Arab concept of feminine honor and is generally confined to clubs and cabarets.

THE VISUAL ARTS

Architecture

The country has numerous archaeological monuments and relics dating back to the Sumerian and Babylonian empires (3100–1600 B.C.). The government has preserved and restored many of these for the benefit of scholars and visitors. Iraqis, however, have little sense of affinity with these monuments of the past, which they regard as remnants of the Jahiliyah period (pre-Islamic age of ignorance). The ruins of the Persian city of Ctesiphon are located

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

20 miles south of Baghdad. One wing of the royal palace has been preserved, including a large vaulted arch believed to be one of the world's largest spans of unreinforced brickwork. Ruins of the terraced or "hanging" gardens, a noted architectural accomplishment of the Babylonian period, are about 60 miles southwest of Baghdad. On the same site is a massive animal statue, known as the Lion of Babylon.

The traditional architecture, which has flourished in Iraq since the seventh century, comprised elements of Roman, Greek and Byzantine styles. Building proportions were monumental; windows were small; and extensive use was made of pillars, domes and colonnades with pointed arches. This style reached its climax during the Abbasside caliphate, but its techniques and decorative methods have been preserved and adapted to modern needs.

A noted characteristic of Islamic architecture is the use of polychrome faience mosaic to face the exterior walls of mosques, palaces and tombs. The principal elements in the patterns are curving stems, leaves and blossoms in countless pieces of small, carefully cut and fitted segments of glazed tile. Deep blue, turquoise and purple predominate, accented by deep green and bright yellow or black and white. Each cut piece is rubbed down with a rasp until the edges and sides are smooth and even and taper from the glazed surface to a ridge or point in the back. These fragments are placed face down in the outlines drawn on a plaster bed. When a section is complete, it is covered with a thick coat of plaster, which settles into the gaps left by the taper of the units. The units are so close that the plaster barely shows on the surface. The size of each section is determined by convenience in handling, and care has to be taken in assembling and joining these sections when they are raised to a vertical position on the wall.

Workmanship is so skilled, however, that it is impossible to tell from the finished work where the division occurs, and the panel appears to be painted on the wall. Slight irregularities in the bed on which the pattern is assembled result in slight modulations in the surface of the finished work and, as the tiles used are brilliantly glazed, these differences in angle make spots that gleam and sparkle in the bright sunlight.

The Mongol raids of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and devastation during the Turkish occupation beginning in the sixteenth century swept away most of the architectural monuments of the Abbasside period. Of the few surviving representative buildings in Baghdad, the most notable are the minaret of the Suq el Ghazel mosque, a brick structure decorated with geometric designs; the Khan Marjan caravansary, which has accommodated the Islamic Museum in recent years; and the Mustanzariyah,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

another caravansary built during the thirteenth century. Mustanzariyah, a rectangular hall with small cupolas resting on parallel arches, was converted into a customs building in 1823. The Abbasside Palace, noted for its vaulted colonnades and tile decor, is surrounded by a large garden decorated with fountains.

Tile mosaic decoration has been lavishly used on the Qadhimain mosque, located about 4 miles north of Baghdad. The mosque has four minarets, two covered with gilded copper plaques, and a spacious interior which has been richly furnished with carpets, carvings and mirrors. Other outstanding examples of traditional Islamic architecture are the mosques of Najaf and Karbala, the latter a well-known shrine. The Friday Mosque at Samarra, built during Abbasside rule, has a spiral-shaped tower (*ziggurat*), a structure widely used in ancient Mesopotamia.

Mosques built in modern times are in the traditional style. Public buildings erected since the 1950's, however, represent a fusion of traditional Islamic and modern architecture. For example, gracefully proportioned colonnades and marble tile floors were utilized in Baghdad's new Parliament Building. Completed just after the Revolution of 1958, it is used to accommodate meetings of Cabinet ministers.

Painting and Sculpture

Scholars disagree on the extent to which the development of certain forms of the visual arts were inhibited by the proscriptions in Islamic law against the portrayal of human and animal figures. Certainly the Islamic prohibition was preceded by earlier notions of magical attributes attracting to living forms. In any event, with the coming of Islam in the seventh century, certain media of artistic expression hitherto used were disqualified; others were emphasized. Nonrepresentational ornamental motifs gained prominence within the framework of a distinctive decorative style known as arabesque. Characterized by floral and geometric design, this abstract and elaborate style was especially highly developed in the southern portions of Iraq and in Baghdad. The ornamental use of calligraphy was also widespread.

Relics of the pre-Islamic past and of the Abbasside period are preserved in several museums located in Baghdad. The Islamic Museum and the Iraqi Museum are noted for archaeological relics and decorative objects from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The New Museum, located on the east bank of the Tigris River, is surrounded by a garden where some of the archaeological relics are exhibited. Ancient Arab weapons are shown in the War

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Museum; samples of the country's fauna, flora and mineral resources may be seen in the Natural History Museum. The Archaeological Museum in Mosul has an extensive collection of objects dating back to the Assyrian period.

In modern times visual arts in Iraq have been strongly affected by Western influences. Whereas the traditional art forms found their highest expression in tile mosaics, calligraphy and mosque architecture, modern forms of painting and sculpture have made their appearance, notably since 1958. Favored themes of many painters and sculptors are based on political and sociological ideals of the Revolution, although works portraying family groups and rural scenes have also gained prominence.

One of the country's most renowned modern artists was Jawad Salim (1920–61), a painter and sculptor. After studying in Europe he taught at the Institute of Fine Arts and helped found the Friends of Art, the country's first modern art group. Salim's works reflect Babylonian and Sumerian themes as well as Islamic and Western traditions. Among his best-known works is a frieze of bronze figures portraying the Revolution of 1958. Khalid al Rhehal is noted for his sculpture of a mother and child in one of Baghdad's public gardens. Another frieze by Abdul Rahman al Gahailani decorates the modernistic building of the Central Bank of Iraq. The monument to the Unknown Soldier, a simple, sweeping arch located in a major public square in Baghdad, is the work of Ra'uf Chadirchi.

Among the painters, Abd al Kadir ar Rassah (1872–1951) is remembered as the "father of modern art in Iraq." His romantic landscapes enlivened with small figures reflected Turkish influence. The paintings of Faiq Hassan, head of the Department of Painting of the Institute of Fine Arts, depict rural scenes and customs, although many of his works feature abstract themes. Sayid Mahmud Sabri is another noted modern painter whose works have been exhibited in Baghdad.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 11

RELIGION

Most Iraqis are Moslems, and Islam is the state religion. Islamic theology, philosophy, law and administrative practices have played a great part in shaping the character of modern Iraqi society. Communal schisms and loyalties, together with ethnicity and occupational specialization, create a social mosaic (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages). Of these schisms, the most serious is that between the Shia and Sunni Moslems. Religion has traditionally been one of the primary bases for social identity.

Islam is built upon the foundations of Judaism and Christianity and bears much resemblance to both. Most Iraqi Moslems, however, as well as Christians, Jews and members of other religions, subscribe to a number of ancient elements of popular religion without making a clear separation between these elements and those of their formal religion. Educated Iraqis separate popular religion from formal religion and look with disdain on popular religion as superstitious.

In modern Iraq religion tends to be identified with nationalism. Moreover, communal loyalties are felt to be incompatible with loyalty to the Iraqi state. Secular concepts are gradually developing. All of these factors contribute to the complex relationship between religion and the process of social change.

ISLAM

Islam first came to Iraq when Caliph 'Umar led the Moslem armies from Syria against the Sassanians who ruled Iraq and defeated them in 637 at the Battle of Al Qadisiyah on the Euphrates, south of Baghdad. In a short time, the majority of the natives willingly became Moslems. The area was the scene of many episodes in the history of Islam, including some of the events involved in the schism that grew out of disputes between two major factions over the rightful successor to the Prophet Mohammed. These groups developed into the two main branches of Islam—the Shia and the Sunni (see ch. 3, Historical Setting). In

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Arabic, Islam means "submission to the Will of God," and believers call themselves Moslems.

Origins

Islam was founded by the Prophet Mohammed at Mecca in Arabia. He was born there about 570 of a poor family belonging to one of the most powerful tribes of the city. Mecca, at that time, was an important religious and commercial center ruled by an oligarchy of tribes interested in maintaining its power and the income it derived from commerce and from the pilgrims who visited its shrine. Except for other trading cities in western Arabia, the Arabian Peninsula was inhabited by nomadic warring tribes. There were small groups of Christians and Jews in Arabia, but most Arabians were polytheists.

Mohammed was orphaned while still a small child and was brought up by his grandfather and later by his father's brother, Abu Talib. As a young man he differed from other citizens of Mecca only in his refusal to accept the gods of the local religion. At age 25 he married his employer, a wealthy middle-aged widow named Khadija. One daughter of this marriage, Fatimah, survived to leave descendants. As he approached middle age, Mohammed became a respected member of his community, with a reputation for justice and honesty.

Mohammed used to go to a cave in the mountains near Mecca to meditate. When he was 40 years old, he had there the first of a series of visions of the archangel Gabriel, which were the source of the Koran (Qur'an), the Islamic scripture. Among the first believers in his message were his wife and Abu Talib's son, Ali.

In the manner of the old Hebrew prophets, Mohammed began preaching the unity of God and the necessity for a return to upright living. As the number of converts increased, the Meccan oligarchy became concerned about the threat to the structure of society and to the revenues received from the pilgrimage. Persecution of the Moslems became severe, and in 622 they fled some 250 miles northward to Medina, a rival city of Mecca. This exodus, called the Hegira, marks a turning point in Islamic history and is the base date for the Islamic calendar.

After the Hegira Mohammed became the head of state as well as Prophet. The small community of Moslems in Medina continued to gain converts and, by means of treaties and military conquests, gained control of the Arabian Peninsula.

When Mohammed died in 632, the problem of choosing his successor as head of state arose, because he left no sons or any indication as to his choice of successor. Factions developed; some fa-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

vored Ali, Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law, the husband of Fatimah, and others supported various close friends of Mohammed. Abu Bakr, an older man than Ali and a member of the old Meccan aristocracy, eventually was chosen. The Party of Ali (*shi'at 'Ali*) was discontented. After Abu Bakr's death, two other older men served as caliphs (from *khalifah*, literally successor) in succession. Eventually Ali had his turn, but he was assassinated within 5 years.

The civil war intensified. Both Mu'awiyah (a distant kinsman of the Prophet) and Hasan, and later Husain, both sons of Ali, claimed to be caliph. Hasan abdicated; Husain and his followers tried to gain assistance in Iraq but were surrounded and massacred at Karbala in 680. The forces of Mu'awiyah's son Yazid prevailed, and the rule of the Umayyads (descendants of Mohammed's clan in Mecca) was established.

The Party of Ali had reason for being discontented also over the failure of Ali and his sons to gain power. The Umayyads tended to treat Moslems of Persian, and other non-Arab, descent as second-class citizens. Discontent of these non-Arabs was an important factor in the 750 overthrow of the Umayyads by the Abbassides who claimed descent from al-Abbas, a brother of Mohammed's father.

After the final defeat of the forces of Husain at Karbala, the Party of Ali remained a dissident group within Islam. Although the original cause for the split between them and the majority of Moslems was poltical, involving disagreements over who was to succeed Mohammed and what was to be the principle of succession, it was not long before theological, legal and ritual differences intensified the political division.

Members of the Party of Ali became known as Shiites. Followers of the Umayyads, and later the Abbassides, became known as Sunnites, because they claimed to follow the tradition (*sunnah*) of the Prophet Mohammed. Although the Shiites also have a tradition, they accept only those parts of it transmitted through Ali and his descendents.

Divisions

Of the perhaps 400 million Moslems in the world, 30 million are Shiites. The Shiites are divided into three major groups and also a number of sects. In Iraq all of the Shiites belong to the Ithna 'Ashari group and form about half of the Moslem population (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages). Certain of the Shiite sectarian offshoots also find adherents in Iraq, but they are only a small and isolated minority.

The Shiites believe that Ali should have been the head of state

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

after the death of Mohammed because of his close relationship to the Prophet and because of his possession of religious knowledge which they believe had been entrusted to him by Mohammed. Because of their nobility of descent and their possession of this esoteric religious knowledge, Ali's descendants are believed to have exclusive right to leadership.

The Shiites call these leaders Imams and regard them as spiritual as well as temporal rulers. Beginning with Ali, the Iraqi Shiites recognize 12 Imams, the last of whom disappeared as a small child in the ninth century; they believe that he is divine and immortal and will reappear on the Day of Judgment.

Because of their belief in the special qualities of the Imams, the Shiites have tended to hold themselves above the Sunnites. Because of their dependence upon the authority of the Imams and their agents on earth, the *mujtahids* (specialists in Islamic law), the Shiites in Iraq have tended to place less emphasis upon education and, hence, are disporportionately represented in the country's educated classes.

Every year on 10 Muharram (first month of the Islamic year) the Shia community reenacts the massacre of Husain at Karbala and mourns for the family of Ali. This annual commemoration, together with the less-advantaged position of the Shia community in Iraq, has served to reinforce a Shia sense of separation and exclusiveness.

Iraqi Sunnites have always regarded the Shiites as an integral part of the Moslem community; under Ottoman rule, they had no separate legal status. The Iraqi Government is aware of Shia feelings of exclusivness and is giving them a greater share in national life.

Beliefs and Characteristics

Moslems view Islam as a conclusive manifestation of Judaism and Christianity. Mohammed is regarded as the last in a series of prophets which includes Moses and Jesus. Moslem beliefs and practices have much in common with those of Christianity and Judaism, and the Koran contains a good deal of Biblical material.

The Moslem creed (*shahadah*) states: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the messenger of God." As Mohammed was the messenger of God, his message is accepted, but he is not regarded as divine. Moslems make no prayers to Mohammed. The creed is recited in the call to prayer and in the daily prayers; this recital is one of the requirements for Moslems.

Five duties, known as the Five Pillars, are required by Moslems: the recital of the creed, the performance of the five daily prayers, the giving of alms, the fast of the month of Ramadan and the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

pilgrimage to Mecca (Al Hajj). Since Islam does not require an individual to do more than he can accomplish, persons in certain circumstances are exempt from fasting and prayer, and the pilgrimage is required only if one is able to make the journey.

All one needs to do to become a Moslem is to recite and believe the creed; this belief and recital require concomitant action, but the statement is the essence. Ritual practices and duties are equally simple to comprehend. The basic simplicity of Islam has not precluded the development of an elaborate structure of religious law and theology, but this development has been remote from the average Moslem.

Islamic theory views the nature of man as neither perfect nor depraved. Human beings are expected only to do the best they can. Each person is responsible for the sins of no other person other than himself. Thus, no one can inherit sin from his ancestors, nor can one person atone for another.

Moslems characterize Islam as a practical religion for its view of the nature of man, for its stress on the avoidance of extremes and for its stress on duties as opposed to rights. This pragmatic character finds place in the law where, for example, a person is permitted to carry out business transactions while on the pilgrimage to Mecca, so that the required journey is not too great a financial hardship. Neither asceticism nor sensuality is condoned. The life of Mohammed, which was simple but ordinary, is held up as a model, and the *hadiths* (savings and deeds of the Prophet) contain a wealth of material on this subject.

Law and Society

The social life of Moslems is based on local customs and on the Islamic canon law, called the Sharia, which in turn is based on the Koran, and the *sunnah,* including the *hadiths* and other Islamic traditions. Pre-Islamic Arabian custom, and Byzantine, Persian and, to a certain extent, other local customs have also contributed to the Sharia. From these various sources, Islamic legal scholars of the Middle Ages developed the Sharia.

Sunni legal thought evolved into four legal schools, of which the Hanafi and Shafe'i have been predominant in Iraq; the Ithna 'Ashari Shiites also developed their own legal school. These schools differ in the emphasis placed on the various sources of the Sharia and the rational processes applied to the sources, and not in theology. The resultant legal differences concern what are now minor differences in matters of ritual, personal status, inheritance and certain other matters of more theoretical than practical significance.

Since the Middle Ages, Sunni scholars have agreed on a modus

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

vivendi between their four schools, considering all equally valid. Although the country's Shiites (Ithna 'Asharis) belong to a separate sect, their legal thought has developed in a very similar fashion to that of the Sunnites.

Until the Law for Personal Status of 1959, and its amendment in 1963, Iraq had no statute on personal status and inheritance. Instead, as had been the practice since the Middle Ages, religious judges (*qadis*) decided upon cases, and certain experts on religious law (*muftis*) rendered legal opinions. Although the government appointed these officials, their activities were not regulated by status (see ch. 13, The Governmental System).

The chief significance of the 1959 statute is that it unites all Moslems under a single law, without regard to sect or legal school; various provisions of the law were drawn from Shia or from Sunni law, depending on which was thought to be more progressive. The government sought to bring the Shiites into the fold with the Sunnites.

The Law for Personal Status is very general and, in some points, unclear; judges must still rely upon the accumulated jurisprudence and legal decisions. As of 1968 the law had not yet unified the country's Moslems, but the trend was established. As a further attempt at unity, the government now runs the Sharia schools and expects that the new generation of Islamic legal specialists will be more unified than its predecessor.

Criminal law, civil law and regulations concerning economic affairs and administrative practices have been part of the Sharia in theory, but in practice Islamic rulers and their officials have always tended to administer these matters as they saw fit. Consequently, religious conservatism has never been a barrier to the modernization of law in these fields.

Islamic law, as it exists in modern Iraq, covers personal relations, including ethics and ritual matters. As a part of the Judeo-Christian tradition, Islam recognizes more or less the same sins and virtues as Christianity and Judaism. Ritual matters, including dietary restrictions, are closer to Jewish than to Christian practice. Islamic law classifies human actions into five categories: forbidden, reprehensible, neutral, recommended and required. For example, pork and alcohol are forbidden; certain forms of divorce are reprehensible; traveling by air is neutral; extra prayers are recommended; and the Five Pillars are required.

In the history of Islam there has never been a separation of church and state. The community of believers was coextensive with the state in theory; in practice, this was not always true, especially after the decline of the Abbasside empire and the spread of Islam into east Asia and Africa. In Islamic theory, the laws of

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the state are supposed to be the laws as developed by religious specialists, and it has been the duty of the government to follow those laws; the government, however, has been in charge of appointing religious specialists. Although theory and practice have not always coincided, the modern Iraqi accepts the role of the government in appointing religious specialists, regulating religious foundations, training religious specialists and giving religious instruction in public schools. The government exempts non-Moslems from specifically Moslem affairs.

One feature of life in Iraq, as in other Moslem countries, is the separation of the lives of males and females. This separation not only has Islamic origins, but also historical origins. Women have had a restricted life outside the home and fewer opportunities for education. Public life has been considered more appropriate for men. As a result, formal religion has tended to become a more or less masculine province, and popular religion, including magic, a feminine sphere. Women, however, have always performed their religious duties privately, and the men often believe in the magic they claim to scorn (see ch. 12, Social Values).

Holidays and Rituals

Moslems observe two major holidays and four lesser ones, as well as a month of fasting. The Islamic religious calendar is based on a year of 12 lunar months, but an intercalary month is not added to make up a solar year, so that each year all of the holidays come 2 weeks earlier than in the preceding year. The old Arabian calendar had used an intercalary month, but in Islam the month was removed so that Moslem holidays could not become associated with pagan holidays as happened in Christianity.

The major holidays are Fast-Breaking Feast ('Id al Fitr) and Feast of Sacrifice ('Id al Adha). Fast-Breaking Feast falls on 1 Shawwal, at the end of the month of fasting, Ramadan. Feast of Sacrifice comes 70 days later, on 10 Dhu al Hijjah. During this feast Moslems sacrifice a sheep in commemoration of the ram which Abraham sacrificed in place of his son Isaac, and also in commemoration of the sheep being sacrificed by the pilgrims at Mecca on this day (see ch. 21, Labor).

Both of these holidays last for 4 days and are celebrated by feasting, the wearing of new clothes and by giving to charity. Special sweets are appropriate to these holidays, and children ride ferris wheels erected in the streets. These feasts are also marked by special services in the mosques.

The four lesser holidays fall on 1 Muharram, 10 Muharram, 12 Rabi' al Awwal and 27 Rajab. Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar, and its first day is the Moslem New Year (Yawm

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Ra's as Sanah al Hajriyah). Shiites on this day begin the mourning for the martyr, Husain, and his family who were killed at Karbala. The mourning for Husain culminates on 10 Muharram ('Ashurah) and is marked by processions of mourners, the recital of poems and performance of pageants telling the story of the martyrdom. The Sunnites, on 10 Muharram, observe a fast which is said to commemorate the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden; it is the same day as the Jewish Yom Kippur.

On 12 Rabi' la Awwal, the holiday called Birthday of the Prophet (Mawlid an Nabi) commemorates Mohammed's birthday. Poems are recited in his honor on this occasion. The evening of 27 Rajab, known as the Night of the Ascension (Lailat al Mi'raj), commemorates a vision which Mohammed had of Heaven and Hell. Poems telling the story of the vision are recited.

The fast during the month of Ramadan is one of the requirements of Islam. The fast is held in thankfulness for the revelation of the Koran, which was first given during this month; while fasting, adults who are able must abstain from food, drink and sexual relations during the hours of daylight. Ramadan is considered a joyous occasion, and at night, people feast and celebrate. Daily routine is upset; those who can sleep during the day to minimize the rigors of the fast and spend most of the night in celebration and visiting with friends. The mosques are open at night for special prayer services and the recital of the Koran.

The Pilgrimage to Mecca, al Hajj, is one of the requirements for Moslems who are able to go. Although the journey by motor vehicle or airplane is not as rigorous as in the past, its expense is still beyond the means of most Iraqis. Persons who have made the pilgrimage are highly respected, not only because of their piety, but also because only those of means can afford to go. The pilgrimage must be made during the first 10 days of Dhu al Hijjah (literally, month of the Pilgrimage). The ceremonies at Mecca center around a small stone building believed to have been built by Abraham and Ishmael, and other sites connected with Abraham, Ishmael or Hagar. Beside fulfilling a religious duty, the pilgrim to Mecca has a chance to meet pilgrims from many countries and to renew his connection with the entire Islamic community.

Because of the expense of the journey to Mecca and because of their belief in the special qualities of the family of Ali, Iraqi Shiites often prefer to make a pilgrimage to Karbaba and Najaf (Ali's capital city and site of his tomb). Although this pilgrimage, which does not have to be made in any particular season, is not a religious requirement, Shiites believe it greatly increases a person's religious merit. They also believe that to be buried in or near these places improves one's status in the life to come.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Friday noon is the time for congregational prayers at the mosque. These are generally attended only by men; women sometimes form their own congregations or pray in a separate section of the mosque. As the muezzin announces the prayer, people come to the mosque and make their usual noon prayer. Then the *imam* gives two short sermons and offers a prayer for the entire Moslem community. Finally, men and women separately form into lines and pray while the cantor chants the words of the prayer.

Rites of passage (from one stage of life to the next) have only quasi-religious status, and the rites observing them belong more to the realm of popular religion than to Islam proper. These rites include those for birth, marriage, circumcision and funerals.

Officials and Institutions

Islam has no organized clergy. Religious functionaries can be divided into two categories: official and unofficial. Of the former, the following are most important in Iraq: *mulla, imam, khatib, qadi, mujtahid, mufti, faqih, 'alim* and *mu 'adhdhan.* A *mulla* can be a religious scholar of some importance; the title also refers to a teacher in a small primary school attached to a mosque or to the all-purpose religious functionary found in a small town or village.

The *imam* leads the prayers in the Sunni mosque; for Shiites, however, an *Imam* is one of 12 divinely appointed religious leaders of the family of Ali. The *khatib* gives the sermon (*khutba*) at the mosque during Friday prayers.

The *qadi* administers law and makes decisions on cases brought to him. The *mujtahid* is a scholar in religious law who has the knowledge to make certain types of decisions regarding religious law; for Shiites these experts may have considerable temporal power.

The *mufti* is an expert in religious law, competent to render a legal opinion (*fatwa*) on matters not covered in the law books. The *faqih* is a legal expert, competent only in settled jurisprudence. The *'alim* is any kind of expert religious scholar. The *mu'adhdhan* delivers the call to prayer from the minaret of the mosque.

The government is in charge of appointing *qadis* and *khatibs.* In a small community a religiously inclined individual with some religious training may become the religious leader by an informal process, without appointment from the central government, and he may perform several religious functions by himself, such as being a *khatib, mulla, imam* or even *qadi.*

Sufism developed in the second century of Islam as a mystical reaction to the intellectualism prevailing in law and theology. Sufis may belong to orders which follow prescribed rites, or may simply seek union with God as individuals. Although the Sufi movement

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

has never received official sanction from either Sunnite or Shiite leaders and has often been suppressed, it has appealed to people because of its more emotional and personal approach to religion. In Iraq the appeal of Sufism is no longer great, and Sufis are to be found only among the poor and politically disadvantaged.

Informal religious functionaries include such members of Sufi orders as *darwishes* (dervishes), *shaikhs* and *sayyids*. *Darwishes* are generally members of Sufi orders who try to earn a living in rural districts by begging, performing magical feats and dispensing magical charms. *Shaikh* is a term for any leader, but in the religious context it refers to the leader of a Sufi group.

A *sayyid*, also called *sharif*, is anyone descended from the Prophet Mohammed. Their nobility of descent is supposed to give them special sanctity, but *sayyids* are to be found in all social levels and in all occupations, and they are not revered, unless they live a pious and religious life. Many of them become formal religious specialists, where their noble descent is of benefit, or else *shaikhs* of Sufi orders. Among the tribes, they may be called upon to settle feuds. Often, like *darwishes*, they try to capitalize on their descent by going about the countryside selling charms and telling fortunes.

The institution of *waqf* (plural, *awqaf*) is unique to Moslem countries. A *waqf* is a charitable foundation usually consisting of real property; proceeds from the property are used for purposes of charity and to build and maintain mosques. At one time, a considerable amount of land in Iraq was held under *waqf* tenure and, since it could not be alienated, development and land distribution were delayed. In 1924, under the British Mandate, a Ministry of Awqaf was created to administer *awqaf* and to regulate their tenure. In 1964 the Ministry was changed to a Bureau under the prime minister. As modern social welfare institutions and the governmental control of land tenure increased, the institution of *waqf* declined. In 1968 the Bureau administered the *awqaf* remaining in Iraq; it is mainly concerned with building and maintaining mosques and religious schools and with appointing religious functionaries.

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

Approximately 6 to 8 percent of the population is non-Islamic. In this minority are included the many Christian churches, the Jews, Mandeans, Yezidis and a few members of small and obscure sects. These minorities all antedate the coming of Islam to Iraq, and some are of considerable antiquity. Since the advent of Islam, they have survived as small, cohesive and exclusive groups amidst the Moslem majority. These groups are losing some of their isolation and are taking a more active part in Iraqi society.

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Christianity

Christians in Iraq are divided into three general groups—the Orthodox or Eastern churches, the Roman Catholic and Uniate churches and the Protestant churches. The Eastern churches include the Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox (sometimes called Jacobites), Armenian Orthodox (also known as the Apostolic or Gregorian Church) and the Nestorian Assyrian Church. The Catholic churches include the Roman Catholic Church and four Uniate churches comprised of the Chaldean, Syrian, Armenian and Greek Catholic churches. The Protestant churches have several small representations, such as the Anglican Church, Seventh-day Adventists, Lutheran Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Despite their position as a religious minority, the Christians have traditionally attached greater importance to their differences than to their common Christianity (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

In 330, when the seat of the Roman Empire was transferred from Rome to Constantinople, the Bishop of Rome, who had been equal with the other bishops of the church, claimed supremacy over all Christians in matters of faith and morals. The Orthodox churches never accepted the supremacy of Rome.

In general, the Eastern churches observe the same sacraments as the Catholic Church and follow the Apostolic Succession. Their rituals are somewhat different from those in the West, and clergy are permitted to marry. Many fasts are observed, and Lent is followed more rigorously than it has been in the West since the Middle Ages. They have numerous monasteries and shrines, especially in northern Iraq.

There are not many native Protestants in Iraq. An Anglican mission in the north has had some success in converting Armenian Gregorians to Anglicanism, and many Nestorians have been converted to Protestantism by missionaries from the United States. In general, missionaries have had their greatest success in converting Iraqis who were already Christians.

Christmas and Easter are the major Christian holidays. Christmas is celebrated for 3 days. People wear new clothes, give their children money and spend their time visiting and feasting. Mass is celebrated just before dawn on Christmas and is followed by a feast. Easter, celebrated later than in the West, also lasts for 3 days and is marked by feasting, visiting and attending Mass.

Judaism

The Jewish community in Iraq goes back to the Babylonian captivity of the sixth century B.C. When Cyrus allowed the Jews

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

to return to Palestine, many chose to remain in Babylon, which had become their home. Some of their descendants live in Iraq, but most chose to migrate to Israel or to the United States in the 1950's. Most Iraqi Jews were Orthodox (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

Mandeans

The Mandeans, a sect of considerable antiquity, are also called Sabeans or "Christians of St. John." Although they are not Christians, they maintain a special relationship with St. John the Baptist. Mandean beliefs are drawn from Jewish, ancient Persian, Babylonian, Christian and Gnostic sources. They possess a scripture written in ancient Syriac and, therefore, are often classified by Moslems as People of the Book.

Yezidis

The Yezidis are believed by their neighbors to be devil worshipers; they believe him to be a source of good as well as evil. The origins of the Yezidi sect are obscure, but their beliefs contain elements from ancient Persian, Christian and Islamic beliefs. The Yezidis have been regarded as polytheists by the Moslems and, hence, beyond the protection of the law. Beliefs and practices resemble elements of popular religion adhered to by other Iraqis. Despite their reputation as devil worshipers, their lives are sober and quiet. The name Yezidi may be derived from Yazid, the son of Umayyad caliph, Mu'awiyah; they call themselves Dasnayi.

The Yezidis maintain a shrine at the tomb of their chief saint, Shaikh 'Adi, on Jabal Sinjar, a mountain about 70 miles west of Mosul, to which they make a yearly pilgrimage. The shrine is named for their chief saint. The chief object of Yezidi adoration is Malik Tawwus (the Peacock Angel), who represents the devil and is symbolized by a bronze peacock. Images of the peacock are carried to Yezidi communities by the clergy.

Yezidis observe certain food taboos and avoid speaking any words reminiscent of satan (shaitan) which creates a problem in trying to educate them.

Other Sects

There is a small number of adherents to a variety of sects derived from Shia Islam or from Sufi orders; most of these people live in remote parts of the northern mountains. The sects, called Shabaks, Sarliyahs, Kakais, *'Ali ilahis* (Ali is God) and *Ahl al Haqq* (People of the Truth) are, for the most part, secret. Some of their beliefs and practices resemble those of the nearby Yezidis. Their adoration for the family of Ali, derived from Shiite sources,

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

may be carried to the point of deification of Ali, as in the case of the *'Ali ilahis*. Sufi practices are evident in their rites.

There are a few Baha'is, mostly of Persian origin, living in Baghdad. This syncretistic religion originated in Persia and is based in part on Shia sources.

POPULAR RELIGION

In addition to the beliefs and practices of the religion they profess, most Iraqis adhere to religious elements which can be derived only marginally from their formal religion. These elements are of considerable antiquity and are similar to beliefs and practices found elsewhere in the Middle East, as well as in Europe and North Africa, and are shared by Iraqis of all religions.

Much of the practice of these elements is left to women, but men may also believe in them. Some of the rituals are viewed with skepticism but may be tried in the hope of gaining some desired result.

A number of various supernatural spirits are believed to exist. For example, there are the *jinn*, who inhabit the dark wells, public baths and trees, the *qarinah* (an individual's double), familiar spirits, and other creatures living in water and strange places. For the most part, these spirits are considered to be evil, although some of them may perform good deeds. To protect against spirits a number of charms and amulets are worn; the additional precaution of not mentioning them when they might be listening is also taken.

The Evil Eye is also feared. It is not a spirit, but a projection, often unconscious, of evil and envious forces; a person may not be aware of having it. Blue-eyed persons are especially feared. To protect against the Evil Eye, charms and amulets are worn. Small boys may be dressed as girls, and the appearance and cleanliness of children may be neglected, so as not to attract the attention of the Evil Eye. If one desires to praise an infant, one should say "Ma sha'Allah" (whatever God wills) to avert the danger of the Evil Eye.

The charms used to avert evil include certain precious stones, iron, anything blue in color, ancient gold coins, and certain designs, such as the triangle, pentangle, and the figure of a hand. The number seven is also potent. Certain verses from the Koran are believed to afford protection from evil; these may be inscribed on paper and wrapped in silk, or engraved on small images of the Koran. Wandering *sayyids* are the chief source of these charms.

Magic is sometimes used, either to promote fertility in women, to retain the affections of husbands, or to work evil on cowives or other disliked persons.

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Brides, newborn infants and new mothers are believed to be both dangerous and vulnerable to harm. Contact with death is defiling. Sudden fright and strong smells are dangerous and some persons consider members of other sects unclean. Various rites may be performed to avert these kinds of harm. Occasionally aid may be sought from members of other sects for magical purposes; Moslems may visit Christian shrines and vice versa.

One aspect of popular religion which receives very little support from Islamic religious officials is the adoration of saints and the visiting of their tombs for the purposes of magical cures. A saint is a person, often a *sayyid* or Sufi, who was renowned for his piety. The saint is not prayed to, but his tomb and relics, such as clothing, are believed to possess a kind of sanctity and power called *barakah*. Often the sites of saints' tombs are in reality very ancient holy places having nothing to do with Islam. Persons seeking cures at these places go to touch or kiss the tomb and carry away some earth from the grounds. When the cure is effected, they hang small flags on the trees growing near the tomb.

Both cures and attempts to prevent disease may be more magical than rational. Varieties of imitative and sympathetic magic may be performed; for example, a yellow medicine may be given for jaundice, or the touch of a mother of sons may be used for infertility. Certain designs may be tatooed or cauterized on the skin (see ch. 8, Living Conditions).

INTERCOMMUNAL RELATIONS

On the whole, relations among the various religious groups in Iraq have been marked by tolerance. In Islamic theory Jews, Christians, Sabeans (Mandeans) and sometimes Zoroastrians were considered People of the Book (Ahl al Kitab), because they possessed a revealed scripture. People of the Book were to be protected (Ahl adh Dhimma) and were permitted considerable communal autonomy as long as they remained loyal citizens of the state. Feelings of toleration have been increased by the tendency for each group to have an economic specialty and to live in a separate quarter of a city or in a particular part of the country.

Members of various religious groups have tended to cooperate in certain matters of religion, particularly popular religion. They all acknowledge certain holy places, such as the shrine of Jonah (Nabi Yunis) near Mosul, and may carry out rites in common at such places.

RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The relationship between traditional religious beliefs, practices and loyalties and the process of social change is complex. On the

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

one hand, certain beliefs are disappearing with the advent of modern medicine and education but, on the other hand, religion (in particular, Islam), is strengthened by the rise of modern Arab nationalism and its recognition of Islam as part of the national cultural heritage. Conservative religious functionaries oppose change, but as the structure of society changes they have less voice in regulating change.

As modern medicine and education spread into rural areas and the lot of the peasants improves, popular religion and magic are regarded with increasing skepticism. The government is sponsoring a program of religious education in the public schools, which places more stress on moral behavior and understanding of religion and less on the memorization of religious texts.

Since the Revolution of 1958, outward observance of religion has acquired a connection with patriotism. Modern Arab nationalism is secular, in that it rests not on common religion but on common culture, history, traditions and language. Christian Arabs living in Greater Palestine were among the early proponents of Arab nationalism (see ch. 12, Social Values).

Many Iraqis believe that religion must become merely a personal matter in order for rapid social change to take place; most, however, do not go so far. Despite announced adherence to the Sharia, modern legislation, except in the realm of personal status, is based on nonreligious considerations and Western models.

Although the Interim Constitution of 1964 states that Islam is the fundamental basis for the constitution and is the state religion, the Constitution itself has no obvious connection with Islam, and it guarantees freedom of belief and practice of religion and equality of opportunity to all Iraqis (see ch. 13, The Governmental System).

The Islamic tradition is strongest in the laws concerning personal status, which apply only to Moslems, in other fields of law, Islamic tradition was only one of several sources. The application of laws from entirely non-Islamic sources is still colored by the traditions of the Iraqi people.

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CHAPTER 12

SOCIAL VALUES

Underlying most social practices is a fairly well-integrated system of social values originating mainly in the tribal Arab and Islamic traditions. To a lesser extent, some values find their source in the minority ethnic traditions and in the mainly urban traditions, both of which can be traced back to the earliest days of civilization in Mesopotamia. For the most part, these different traditions, after centuries of mutual associations, form a cohesive whole, but there are some conflicts between the values of nomadic Arabs and those of sedentary people. Likewise, there are differences between these same trial Arab values and those of Islam. The Islamic and pre-Islamic traditions are similar in many respects. The knowledge of Western values has increased, but they have not had much impact on the Iraqi system.

Islamic ideals differ from tribal Arab customs. In Islam, distinctions on the basis of descent group membership are to be replaced by Islamic distinctions based on piety, and tribal loyalties by the larger Islamic community of believers. Although it shares a core of values with the Islamic tradition, the tribal Arab tradition places emphasis on lineage principles and loyalties, as well as on concepts of honor, and in its customary law the tradition violates many principles of Islamic law. The urban Arab tradition does not follow some of the Islamic and tribal values concerning commerce and use of wealth.

Mainly, the Kurdish traditions of both nomadic and sedentary ways of life are similar to those of the Arabs. Despite the differences in beliefs, rituals and law, the minorities have traditions similar to the Arab and Islamic traditions; since these minorities are sedentary urban or rural people, the traditions are closer to the Islamic and sedentary Arab than to the tribal Arab or Kurdish value systems (see ch. 5, Ethnic Groups and Languages; ch. 11, Religion).

Western values have become known through the European penetration during the British Mandate (1930–32), through students who have studied abroad and, particularly, through those persons

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

exposed to new knowledge acquired in connection with modernization processes. In general, the values foreign to traditional Iraqis are those which replace loyalty to ethnic-religious community or lineage group with loyalty to the state and which stress an increased civic feeling. Western values also place more emphasis on achieved as opposed to ascribed status and on the office as opposed to the man holding it, although these concepts do have a certain place in the traditional Iraqi value system.

ISLAMIC VALUES

Islam, as one of the major world religions, has no connection with any particular racial, ethnic or descent group. Although Islam is historically connected with Arabs, most Moslems are not Arabs. People of all origins are equal before God in Islam. The Koran says that, "The best of you is he who excels in piety." The Islamic egalitarian ethnic sets a value upon treating all alike without regard to distinctions of wealth, lineage or occupation; the criterion of distinction among persons should be their adherence to Islamic belief and practice.

For the most part, this standard is followed. Men and women of piety and religious learning are revered. Men pray together in the mosque without regard to rank. But most important is the impact of Islamic egalitarianism in a stratified society. Whereas an acceptance of the social order does not stem from Islamic teaching, most Iraqis tend to accept the social order, with its ranks and distinctions, as given. Although there are differences among men, the difference between man and God is such that the difference among men become insignificant. Consequently, in daily social intercourse the elaborate and formal system of manners bridges the gap between Islamic egalitarianism and the stratification of society (see ch. 6, Social Structure).

Islamic standards of behavior uphold fairness and decency in conduct and reject dishonesty, cheating, stealing and sexual laxity. The intent of any action is considered as important as the action itself; one can deceive other people, but not God or oneself. Ideally, one is supposed to follow the same standards in dealing with non-Moslems as with Moslems, although many do not adhere to this ideal. Supernatural sanctions stand behind the Islamic standards but, in addition, the Sharia (the body of Islamic law) invokes secular penalties; in many instances these no longer stand, either because of modern legislation or because of tribal custom, which in many cases is contrary to Islamic law.

The ideal relationship between the sexes is of paramount importance in the Islamic tradition. Chastity outside of marriage is the rule, and modesty is enjoined. Social interaction between

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

the sexes is supposed to be marked by decorum and modesty and kept to a minimum. Stress is placed on kindness and love in the relationship between husband and wife. The extent to which ideals are practiced varies.

Kindness and charity are commanded as the outstanding features in Islamic life. Charity, institutionalized as one of the Five Pillars of Islam, is taken to heart as a means for helping those less fortunate.

TRIBAL ARAB VALUES

Values among tribal Arabs, whether sedentary or nomadic, center around the social structure. Group membership is based on patrilineal descent and the predominant idiom of social interaction is kinship. Residence is usually in terms of patrilineal groupings. Economic cooperation and political leadership occur in the context of patrilineal kinsmen. Individuals or social groups wishing to become part of a preexisting kinship group, usually on the *'ashirah* (subtribe or confederacy) or *fakhdh* (smaller unit of the subtribe) level, do so on the basis of fictitious kinship or adoption (see ch. 6, Social Structure). In the course of time, the fictitious kinship becomes reality. In addition, the kinship idiom often tends to reflect existing territorial and social realities rather than actual genealogical structure.

Tribal Arabs judge descent groups by their adherence to certain traditional values. The reputation of a descent group is believed to be handed down through genealogical lines; nevertheless, a group can lose its reputation. A good reputation is usually associated with wealth and political power, although a respectable family may be poor and a wealthy family may be of low repute if it does not adhere to traditional values. This same wealthy family, however, by its adherence to traditional standards, may over a period of generations acquire a good reputation, and the poor family, as long as it adheres to the social values, will not lose its good name.

The key concept in the tribal value system is honor (*sharaf*). Honor resides in the group and in individuals as members of the group; individuals maintain group honor by their adherence to traditional values—doing good and avoiding the shameful. The honorable man is pious, following the dictates of his religion insofar as he is familiar with them, respects women and protects their chastity, is courageous, strong, virile, generous and disdainful of wealth, proud, wise and clever. He must be dignified in behavior and respectful and polite to others. He must be loyal to his descent group and be ready to defend it.

Women are expected to adhere to the same values as men, except for the masculine virtues of strength, virility and courage. They

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

are expected to serve and obey men. Even after marriage a woman remains a member of her father's descent group and should remain loyal to it. This may create a conflict in loyalty for a woman married out of her descent group, for in time she becomes attached to her husband's group with which she is living, and the two groups may come into conflict.

Many of the virtues of the ideal man center around the idea of a warrior—a man who is brave and skillful in war, but doesn't soil his hands with mundane business. Thus, most domestic and some outdoor work—such as herding, preparing food, or bringing goods to the market—falls upon women and children. Even when tribesmen farm, as they often must, they dislike farming; grain raising is disliked the least, but vegetable raising, fishing, selling of milk products and dealing in commerce or handicrafts are generally viewed with disdain.

Even nontribal peasants and townsmen of the professional classes share this ideal. The peasants tend to dislike farming, and do not feel at all attached to the land they farm; if they could, they too would prefer to be regarded as noble warriors and generous hosts. Among the urban professionals the attitude is manifested in a preference for clerical jobs and a dislike of manual work of any kind.

The tribesman, as well as being a noble warrior, should be a generous host. Tribal leaders, and other tribesmen who can afford it, keep regular guesthouses where they entertain fellow tribesmen and strangers; even less formal entertaining is expected to be generous. The honor of the descent group lies in its generosity, and one of the worst things that can be said about a man is that he is stingy.

Although generosity and the warrior virtues are highly valued, the most important reservoir of the descent group's honor is its women. The honor of women, or more particularly their sexual purity, is called *'irdh*; they must be most careful to maintain it, but the burden of protecting feminine honor lies on the men of the descent group, and upon them the shame of dishonor if their kinswomen transgress the rules. For the tribesmen, honor is held dearer than life itself.

Lesser kinds of shame, called *'aib*, reflect only upon the individual and not upon his descent group. Deviations of this sort, such as evincing too great a concern with money or engaging in a despised occupation, are generally punished by social ostracism and loss of any hope for social recognition.

Nontribal Iraqis, whether rural or urban, also share in these concepts of honor and shame and are most careful to protect their womenfolk and maintain their honor. The word *'aib* is used to

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

admonish children, although it tends to become nothing more than a linguistic habit of speech.

URBAN VALUES

Urban Iraqis in some respects have a set of values different from that of rural Iraqis. Chief among these is a greater interest in commerce and a consequent higher value placed on wealth; for this, the rural Iraqi scorns the urban Iraqi as he would the townsman's weaker concern with family matters. Because the urban environment, with its orderly social life, orderly government and availability of public utilities and a larger food supply, is more congenial to the practice of religion, the townsman places a higher value on adherence to the values and practices of religion.

Although the rural Iraqi believes that the urban Iraqi has no honor and neglects his family, the townsman still has a greater respect for family connections, whereas the rural elaboration of family structure is reduced to the household and bilateral kindred. City dwellers maintain ties with relatives in other cities, prefer to enter into business arrangements with relatives and prefer them for mates; family honor is equally dear to them.

As the urban Iraqi has traditionally made his living by trade, he is interested in maintaining fair practices and standards of commerce, although he is not above making a "sharp" deal. Islamic legal scholars have devoted much attention to standards of commerce, especially to the law of contracts; like the tribal Iraqi, the townsman places great importance on keeping his word.

SHARED CONCEPTS

Respect

Respect is an important concept in the understanding of Iraqi behavior. When a woman covers her head in the presence of her father, when a child kisses his grandfather's hand, when a man pays no attention to his wife in public, the reason is always respect. Deference is paid to persons who are older, of a senior generation or male. Somewhat less deference is paid to strangers. Women, because of the tradition of chivalry, are respected. The man ignores his wife in public so as not to draw attention to her; if he noticed her, the others, not knowing her relationship to him, since the relationship between man and wife is considered private, might think her a women of low repute.

Out of respect, wives and children defer to the authority of men, at least ideally. As children, especially boys, grow older, they become less subject to paternal authority, although ties of

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

affection still lead them to accede to much of it. Married couples maintain a public facade of patriarchal authority, but the extent to which this is privately realized varies; often the woman is of considerable power in the home, less often overtly, but more often as a "power behind the throne." More often patriarchal authority is the reality.

Individual and Society

Precisely because of their concern with honor, the Iraqis are at the same time both conformists and individualists. A man's honor is his own and his descent group's, but he maintains his honor by conformity to tradition. Men belong to various social groups but they remain individuals and find it hard to cooperate in many endeavors. As long as self-expression is possible, conformity and submission to authority are tolerated. The ideal warrior-host of tribal tradition has great scope for self-expression, within the framework of the social structure and the norms of social life.

The Position of Women

A concept similar to the European notion of chivalry after the Middle Ages illuminates the seeming paradox of the position of women in the Arab world. On the one hand, the confinement of women to the home, the wearing of loose, concealing clothing and face veils, and their jural disabilities have made their position seem very low, but on the other hand, Arab men claim they honor, cherish and protect women.

The Arab concept of chivalry places women in high esteem; they are often idealized. Along with the tendency to idealize women goes a tendency to set them on pedestals, to remove them, at least conceptually, from the world of practical affairs. Because of the increase of wealth in Arab society during the early Islamic period, women in wealthy households tended to become luxury items, and to separate them from servants and working-class women, they were increasingly secluded and veiled. The upper-class pattern became a model for other classes to follow as much as they could, although nomadic, village and working-class women, out of economic necessity, have generally had more exposure to public life.

Secluded women, until the penetration of Western ideas during the latter part of the nineteenth century, valued the restrictions put upon them because they indicated that the women were honored, cherished and protected.

Islamic standards of behavior enjoin modesty upon both sexes. Modesty is usually taken to include the wearing of unrevealing clothing and a separation in social life of persons of the opposite

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

sex, except close relatives or spouses; this separation is reinforced by the sexual division of labor.

Iraqis have a strong desire for privacy; family matters are not for the public eye or ear. Given the additional desire to keep women out of the public eye and given the function of gossip as a mechanism of social control, privacy is strongly desirable; in a small-scale society, such as a village, tribal camp or city neighborhood, where everyone knows everyone else, privacy becomes an essential.

The conduct of life became separated into two spheres, the public and the private, the male and the female. Other oppositions were attached to this fundamental duality, such as active versus passive, honor versus taboo, and religion versus magic, although these were not explicitly verbalized.

Fatalism

Iraqis tend to accept events with an attitude of detachment and acceptance, generally called fatalism. This attitude has its roots in the environment and economic conditions, and to a certain extent in religion. A person who has suffered some misfortune will often say, "It is from God," or "It is my portion (fate)."

Iraqi peasants and nomads have lived a life of adversity for many centuries, beset by scarcity of food and water, plagues of disease and insects and by governments seeking only taxes and army conscripts. Try as he might there was often not very much a man could do to control what happened to him in a seemingly capricious world. Even city dwellers were often unable to exert control over many things that happened to them. The level of technology was such that man's best efforts were often to no avail.

Under such conditions, a certain amount of fatalism is to be expected. A farmer, for example, could farm his land using the best techniques he knew, perform magic over it and pray for a successful crop, but if a drought or a plague of locusts came, there seemed nothing to do but adopt the cherished posture of dignity and ascribe his misfortune to fate. Characteristically, Iraqis did not passively accept anything that happened to them; the fatalism was merely a psychological last resort, a reassurance that people had done their best, that the disaster was not their fault.

Fatalism in Islam is an abstract philosophical concept. In the Koran things and events are attributed to God, the First Mover, but on the other hand, man creates his own fate by his own choice and his own actions. They way was thus opened in Islam, as it was in Christianity, for the long debate over free will versus predestination, and it was solved in much the same way. Man remains

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

responsible for his own actions, but God is recognized as the ultimate source of all.

In modern Iraq improvements in technology have increased man's ability to control his environment and the government has become more responsive to law and to public opinion and more interested in public welfare. Modern education has been instrumental in spreading the idea of man's ability to at least partly control his environment. All of these factors are contributing to the decrease in the fatalism of the average Iraqi; the philosophical concept remains for intellectuals.

Thrift

Tribal Iraqis place a high value on generosity and hospitality; feasts and entertainment are expected to be lavish; and a good man is not supposed to appear concerned with money. Nontribal Iraqis also adhere to these standards. Nevertheless, although it is not explicitly verbalized, a high value is placed on thriftiness, especially in women, who are in charge of managing the household. In housekeeping every economy possible is made, and furnishings are apt to be sparse. This economy may be necessary, for when a guest appears, no expense is spared, no matter how marginal the income of the household or the number of members it supports.

DYNAMICS

Manners and Qualities of Social Interaction

In many social situations, one must be dignified, formal and kind. Considerable attention is paid to comfort of others; requests may be assented to, even if there is no intention of fulfilling them unpleasant things are not mentioned; and nothing is said to disparage the reputation of the listener. Events often take a leisurely pace; men will sit in the guesthouse or guestroom for long periods of time, saying little except polite phrases. People, especially older ones, who are in a position of respect, move slowly and in a dignified manner. Most consider it unseemly to be concerned about time and to hurry.

In social interaction it is important to consider the feelings of others and maintain an atmosphere of pleasantness; it is considered important to be charming and adaptable to any social situation. Sincerity is a highly valued quality; Iraqis appreciate one who is sincere, genuine and simple in his reactions with other people.

Iraqis prefer personal to impersonal relations. They prefer to do business with people they know; therefore, they frequently do business with relatives. Upon first meeting a stranger, they are

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

likely to ask many personal, but not private, questions so that they might get to know that person. Commercial transactions are conducted in a personal manner; Iraqis enjoy bargaining over prices, just for the fun of the interaction and the chance to display their wit. Despite the bureaucratic structure of government, Iraqis prefer to rely on personal contacts in an informal way. Both tribal leaders and landlords maintain personal relations with their followers; tribal leaders cannot maintain their leadership if they do not follow this norm. In any situation of office holding, the quality of the person holding the office is considered more important than the mere status of office holding. Thus, the concept of hereditary kingship or any kind of hereditary leadership was never strong in Iraq. Weak leaders were never respected, no matter what office they held, and political leaders are still respected more for their personal qualities and accomplishments than for the offices they hold.

Reciprocity in social relations is usually not verbalized, but nonetheless expected. Hosts keep mental notes on hospitality and expect the returned hospitality to be more or less equivalent; if they feel their hospitality was not reciprocated, they feel somewhat slighted. Sometimes favors are made with an expection of return.

Enculturation and Social Control

A great deal of misbehavior is tolerated from small children, but when they reach the age of reason they are expected to act with propriety. A child will be taught to sit still and be quiet in the presence of his elders; he will be told to kiss his grandfather's hand; he learns to bring things and serve people. He hears the doings of other people discussed and commented on, favorably or otherwise.

If he receives schooling, either modern or traditional, he receives additional explicit instruction in social values. As the child approaches adolescence, his presence in adult circles is more tolerated, and when he becomes an adult, he begins to participate in the discussions of behavior and values.

Social values are reinforced and maintained by social interaction; gossip, praise, manifestations of respect, and occasionally severe negative sanctions maintain the continuity of belief and behavior. In a small-scale, closely knit society, such as that in which most Iraqis find themselves, the chief object of interest and conversation is other people. In such a society, an individual's self-image is that image which is presented to him by others. He cannot afford to neglect public opinion for fear of losing the respect of others and, thus, his own self-respect. Under such condi-

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

tions, gossip cannot fail to exert a powerful influence in social control.

A man or woman who conforms to what is expected of him gains the respect of others and becomes known as *rajul khair* (good man) or *mart khrairah* (good woman). For the most part, desire for the good will of others is sufficient to ensure adherence to the values of the social group, and the possibility of more violent sanctions ensures that practically all conform. The violent sanctions are rarely resorted to, for it is often possible for a deviant individual to seek an alternative social role or to leave the society; a family may also wish to avoid a public scandal.

Supernatural sanctions also serve to maintain adherence to the social values promulgated by religion. All of Iraq's religions have value systems attached; there is little variation among them. The prospect of eternal damnation or eternal bliss, at least for those who believe, is effective in maintaining Iraqi value systems.

Communication of Values

In addition to ordinary talk and the instruction of children, values are communicated and maintained by folktales, proverbs, poetry and other oral teaching. The tribal warrior virtues are glorified in the tribal *hawzas* (rallies in which poems in praise of the descent group are composed and recited in chorus), and the traditional poetry which goes back to the Jahiliyah period (pre-Islamic age of ignorance). In the folktales the hero is frequently a brave warrior, but the villain is never brave or honorable.

In folktales, and to a certain extent, proverbs, cleverness and especially verbal cleverness, is rewarded and praised; frequently, the hero or heroine wins by some trick over his adversary. Cleverness is not one of the more explicit values, but its appreciation is visible in Arab society.

The proverbs offer pithy comments on behavior and morals. The ill fate of deviants is upheld, and the good is praised. Often the proverb is connected with a folktale, to which it is added as a moral.

Grammatical and semantic usage and common phrases as well as value connotations also function in the communication and maintenance of social values. For example, the same word *husn* means both beauty and good, and *qubh* means both evil and ugly; in Islamic law the words *husn* and *qubh* are used to judge the morality of actions. Grammatical categories also tend to stress the masculine; the hero, representing good, is always good looking, and the villian is ugly. Iraqis use the expression, "he has a good face" to mean that a person has a good character; they also say that shame "blackens a man's face." Since they use the symbol

Digitized by Google
Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN