

Iraq is not Artificial: Iraqi Trends and the Refutation of the Artificial State Hypothesis⁽¹⁾

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The main premise of this paper emerges from a treatment of the identities dominant throughout the nineteenth century and at the turn of the twentieth. Specifically, and significantly, this paper asserts that the three formerly Ottoman provinces or vilayet which would compose present-day Iraq — Mosul, Basra and Baghdad — were in fact led and centrally administered from Baghdad. This reality emerges through records of local correspondence and private reports, with official bodies that contained the concept of “Iraq”; in place of a common tribal or clan structure, there were Iraqis who shared a “homeland” analogous to the previous tribal concept of a dirah. Alternative narratives—particularly those adopted by British commentators—emphasize the “artificial” nature of Iraq, but these are overly reliant on a Eurocentric model for the formation of the nation-state. Such Eurocentric approaches are overly restrictive and fail to take into account diverging and alternative patterns for the emergence of modern states. Additionally, the inability of the Iraqi and other models to meet European standards of national homogeneity and territorial contiguity have been used to explain and justify political violence within the boundaries of Iraq, precisely that which British and other narratives have sought to promote.

Artificial State Iraqi State Identities Nation State Ottoman

This study traces Iraq-ist tendencies and trends across the three Iraqi *vilayets* - Baghdad, Basra and Mosul - during the late Ottoman era and at the turn of the twentieth century. The thesis of this study emerges from consideration of the prevailing identities during this period, whether imposed from above by the Ottoman political system or derived from Iraqi socio-cultural reality. Tracing these identities and their specific manifestations, interwoven as they were with a lengthy sequence of structural transformations across Iraqi society, thus represents one of the greatest problematics of the period. The most important of these considerations in the identity structure is the fact that the official mood, whether by chance or in acknowledgement of the existing situation, converged with the local social structure in the Iraqi *vilayets* in a manner that cemented the common vision of a unified Iraq.

Many a study has dwelt on the issue of Iraqi identity in all its ideological manifestations. It is my view, however, that further work needs to be done to trace

the extensive history of previous manifestations of such an inclusive identity. This study thus attempts to shed light on a new corpus of Iraq-ist tendencies. It relies on an examination of the embryonic concept of Iraqi identity that historically coincided with the era of Ottoman administration in the Iraqi *vilayets*. Previous studies have presented the idea that this administration divided Iraq into three heterogeneous administrative *vilayets*. In keeping with the above, I attempt to corroborate a view concerning the multiple ways Iraqi identity was manifested and employed. It is my view that there was a strong Iraq-ist tendency whose foundations were laid by the Ottoman administration over several stages of rule in the Iraqi *vilayets*. One of its principal features is a reliance on, or acknowledgement of, the fact that these three Iraqi *vilayets* formed a centrally administered unit. This was subsequently followed by serious attempts to promote the name of Iraq on public maps of these *vilayets*, particularly at the end of the nineteenth century and at the turn of the twentieth century.

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This coincided with terms that had already been circulating as geographical markers on old maps. The term *al-‘Irāq al-‘Arabī* (Arab Iraq) was similarly extended and integrated with the region of Jazīra to the north or *‘Irāq al-‘Ajam* (Persianate-speaking Iraq) in the mountainous regions.³

Furthermore, it is my opinion that the historical formation of this Iraqi identity took place in several stages before the formation of the modern Iraqi state in 1921. Notwithstanding the broad debate over the premise of the ‘artificial state’, a concept that I will attempt to refute, we find that there are in fact Iraqi identities recorded in the writings of the public and the cultural elite (the intelligentsia). Chief among these is the use of the term *al-‘Irāq* and its circulation among intellectuals, reflecting the cultural legacy of the Iraqi region as a single geographical entity that united the three *vilayets* and gave them an explicit Iraqi nomenclature.

The key research questions to be answered by the author thus revolve around three themes:

- Was there an Iraq-ist tendency transcending the specifically regional nature of Baghdad, Basra and Mosul *vilayets* during the Ottoman period? What was its signification? Did administrators contribute to defining the limits of this Iraq-ist tendency? When?
- Did public and elite local groups utilize their own visions and advance the term “Iraq” as an umbrella identity category before, during, and after the 1914 British occupation?
- Did local debate contribute to the strengthening of Iraqi identity during the first years of the British occupation of Iraq after 1914?

The answers to these questions and their methodological application are of the utmost importance. One way or another, their answers will also help us to understand another aspect of Iraqi identity, the separatist tendency, and its ebb and its flow in the face of an umbrella Iraqi identity.

During the Ottoman era, political and administrative ideas of Iraq were intermeshed. Ottoman *vilayet* officials viewed Iraq as a unified Iraqi entity and region

over successive stages of Ottoman rule. I contend that this influenced the British occupying powers when it came to advancing their own ideas, claiming to have “created” the unified state of Iraq following their occupation of Mosul *vilayet* in 1918. Moreover, I confirm that there is no practical basis to the claim, made by British writers and those who emulated them, that Iraq was formed from various *vilayets* shortly after the end of the San Remo Conference in 1920 and the formation of the Iraqi state in 1921. Rather, it was the primacy of the Iraqi proposal and the discussion of the term “Iraq” in much Ottoman and local/regional literature that caused the British to acknowledge a pre-existing state of affairs. The British claim was thus no more than a technicality.

Various Iraqi figures helped to formalize the Iraqi identity at a historical turning point in the life of the modern Iraqi state (as with the 1908 Revolution; the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and the accompanying response to the policy of Turkification; and the shock and aftereffects of the British occupation). Insufficient attention has been paid to these figures and the role they played in serving the Iraqi identity project. Instead, these figures have been framed in a historical-regional context or stripped of their significance in favor of other historical hypotheses. An understanding of these figures will therefore expose the empty claim that the Iraqi cultural consciousness lacked a specifically Iraqi identity before the formation of the modern Iraqi state in 1921. The pre-existing use of the term “Iraq”; the unification of administrative units; and the presence of this term from the eighteenth century onwards in the conceptualization of various historians and cultural elites of the Iraqi *vilayets* – among other elements – provided the foundations for the administrative and geographical entity of Iraq in the new era, whose features swiftly solidified and emerged at the end of the nineteenth century and the turn of the twentieth.

The extent of the administrative conceptualization of Iraq broadened and came to be combined with the older senses of *al-‘Irāq al-‘arabī* and a major part of the Jazīra region in the broad geographical sense.

3 For geographical and historical context of the terms Iraq, *iqīm al-jazīrah* and *‘irāq al-‘ajam*, see Guy Le Strange, *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate: Mesopotamia, Persia, and Central Asia from the Moslem Conquest to the Time of Timur*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905) pp. 24, 86, 101, 185. See also B. Lewis et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. II, 4th ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991), p. 534; J. W. Redhouse, *Redhouse’s Turkish Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1880), Part II: *Turkish and English*, p. 654.

Historical precedents include the appointment of governors whose jurisdiction extended from Basra in the south to Shahrizor in the north. This gave traction

to the belief, considered mistaken at the time, that they were separate *vilayets* in a unified geographical Iraqi identity.

Chapter One: Ottoman precedent: the historical continuity of the Iraq region

Iraq was under Ottoman administration from the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Ottomans created administrative sub-divisions that lasted for some time, manifested in the tripartite division of Iraq into *eyalets* (which became *vilayets* in 1864). These were Baghdad, Mosul and Basra.⁽⁴⁾ These divisions have been exploited by proponents of the “fabricated Iraq” narrative. Many studies – particularly those in the West – which center on this narrative claim that the centralized nature of the modern state, relied on the idea of a “coincidental combination” of three different and ethnically dissimilar Ottoman *vilayets*.⁽⁵⁾ *Any dismantling of such a narrative and its counterparts will require a sustained historical appraisal of Iraq's heritage and its specificities, aiming to uncover the circumstances surrounding this narrative and the numerous claims that have emerged over more than half a century.*

Modern Iraq was built on the foundation of a series of Ottoman-era derived models that had accumulated over four centuries. It must be emphasized that these models did not emerge in their entirety from a locally-situated framework. Significantly, the administrative divisions of the three vilayets of Iraq were not subject to the influence of Iraqi sectarian identities. It is therefore accurate to state that the Ottomans did not have in mind any ethnic or sectarian considerations when they created the administrative divisions of the Iraqi region and divided it into three vilayets: Baghdad, Mosul and Basra.

Those unfamiliar with these gradual historical transformations might reasonably suggest that this tripartite division was a fundamentally divisive, rather than unifying, element at the core of modern state formation in Iraq. Despite the ostensible soundness

of this claim, it does not address three important elements in the process of the creation of modern Iraq and the construction of the foundations of the state in the general sense. These are:

- The administrative centralization that encompassed the three Ottoman vilayets of Iraq, particularly in the nineteenth century, under the leadership of Baghdad vilayet, and the intersection of this centralization with the socio-economic integration imposed on the three vilayets by local geography.
- The significance of the term “Iraq” as a near-substitute geographical indicator for the three divisionary labels, particularly from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, and how this significance was reflected in administrative and diplomatic correspondence and reports.
- Examples of how the term “Iraq” was used by public and elite groups in Iraqi society, and its active presence as a recognized and self-evident geographical and identity marker.

It would be a futile exercise, and one disconnected from the concrete historical formation of modern Iraq as a nation and identity, to hastily evaluate these three components; attempt to disregard any of them; or lend one greater weight than another. I say this because the artificial state theory, particularly the British narrative, is Eurocentric in its conceptualization of the formation of the modern state. Such Eurocentric approaches are overly restrictive and fail to take into account diverging and alternative patterns for the emergence of modern states and the integration and homogenization of their populations within administrative borders. By this logic, non-alignment

4 For exhaustive details on administration, see Bayāt, Fāḍil, *ad-Dawla al-'Uthmāniyya fī'l-Majāl al-'Arabī: Dirāsa Tārīkhīyya fī'l-Aḥwāl al-Idāriyya fī Daw' al-Wathā'iq wa'l-Maṣādir al-'Uthmāniyya Ḥaṣran* [The Ottoman State in the Arab Sphere: A Historical Study of the Administrative Situation in View of Ottoman Records and Sources Alone]. Beirut: The Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 2007. pp. 243, 392.

5 This will be dealt with in detail in the study. See for example Henry Foster, *The Making of Modern Iraq: A Product of World Forces*, (Russell and Russell: New York, 1935), p. 12; Ghassan Atiyya: *al-'Irāq: Nash'at ad-Dawla 1908 - 1921* [Iraq: Emergence of the State 1908-1921]. Translated by 'Ata 'Abd-al-Wahhab. Introduction by Hussain Jamil. London: Dar al-Lam, 1988, p. 36.

with “nation-state” models results in a failure to homogenize groups within the population, as well as leads to a form of integration that was forced and artificial, in the formation of the state and its structures politically and administratively - precisely that which British and other narratives have sought to promote.

Regionalized vilayets and processes of socio-economic integration: Baghdad as the nucleus of administrative centralization

Two significant questions present themselves: how did the centrality of Baghdad *vilayet* emerge, enabling it to direct the remainder of the administrative units? And did Baghdad *vilayet* wield administrative authority beyond its administrative borders, thus creating a prototype for “super-administrative unity”?

Answering these two questions will require us to draw on examples, witness accounts, and the administrative precedents in light of which Baghdad *vilayet* exercised such duties, and which it used as the initial building blocks of the modern Iraqi state. Observers of the initial units of integration between Baghdad and the two other *vilayets* constitutive of the Iraq region saw these transformations in the administrative system during the Ottoman era. Many historians, particularly Western historians, have observed these initial signs of “administrative unification” with Baghdad, predominantly from the end of the seventeenth century, and consider them “undisputed”.⁽⁶⁾ In their works, Longrigg, Bergen, and Adamov point to the fact that Baghdad had undergone experiments in governance and prolonged integration with Basra and Shahrizor. It was Longrigg’s view that “Ḥasan [Paşa, governor of Baghdad 1704-1723]’s operations in the Shahrizor ayalat are significant of the same process of absorption as was visible in the case of Başra.”⁽⁷⁾ Moreover, we see that Mosul and

Shahrizor *vilayets* were effectively subordinated to Baghdad in 1780, although Mosul enjoyed a kind of autonomy. American-Lebanese historian Dina Khoury brilliantly deduces this from the Ottoman archive in her important documentary work on the history of Mosul. She writes that “within the Iraqi context, the exceptionalism of the Mosul situation should be balanced by a clear understanding of the regional transformations of the period. The nineteenth century witnessed the culmination of a regional realignment in the hierarchy of trade and administrative centers in Iraq which had begun in the second half of the eighteenth century... The expansion of trade with Britain allowed the Mamluk governors of Baghdad to build their military households on the monopolization of receipts from this trade. The Mosuli mercantile community became increasingly involved in trade with the south, and set up agents in Basra and Baghdad. The economic links with Baghdad were reinforced by the involvement of the Baghdad governors in Mosuli politics in the second half of the century... [T]he administrative divisions of Iraq favored Baghdad, which was given control of areas as far north as Mardin. Thus, the dominance of Baghdad did not come with the Tanzimat reforms in the second half of the nineteenth century. Rather the administrative measure of these reforms built on a regional realignment that had begun in the eighteenth century.”⁽⁸⁾ The centralization of Baghdad *vilayet* was a major indicator of the emergence of the “gradual administrative geographical unification” of the emerging state. The administrative units continued to be subordinated to Baghdad. Even in temporary moments of separation they were soon enough returned to Baghdad’s jurisdiction.

While we find these gradual transformations in administrative subordination to the Baghdad *vilayet*, we see by contrast that they have other dimensions on the level of social integration. Administrative re-deployments and the fluid

6 Reidar Visser, “Proto-Political Conceptions of ‘Iraq’ in Late Ottoman Times,” *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2009), p. 144.

7 Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 126. See also Andreas Birken, *Die Provinzen des Osmanischen Reiches* (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1976), p. 226. The Iraqi historian ‘Ala’ Musa Kazim Nuras points to the completion of the Iraqi polity with Basra *vilayet*: “[Hasan Paşa] was able to regain Basra from the Muntafiq [confederation] in 1708 [...] The Baghdad government only established full control over Basra in 1719, when it was assigned to his son, Ahmet Paşa. This marked the beginning of the unification of Iraq, under the rule of the Paşa of Baghdad [...] The latter had previously assumed control of Shahrizor *vilayet* in 1715”. See ‘Ala’ Musa Kazim Nuras, *Ḥukm al-Mamālik fi’l-‘Irāq 1750 - 1831* [Mamluk Rule in Iraq, 1750-1831], New Book Series 84 (Baghdad: Dar al-Hurriyah Press, 1975), p. 18-22; Alexander Adamov, *Wilāyat al-Bašra fī Mādīhā wa-Ḥādirihā* [Basra Vilayet Past and Present], trans. Hashim Salih Al-Tikriti, 2nd ed. (Beirut/London: Al-Warrak Publishing Co. Ltd., 2011), pp. 390, 398.

8 Dina Rizk Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 215.

movement of people in the late Ottoman era reflected the existence of a "large, homogenous local society" that went beyond the framework of individual sub-divisions constituting the *vilayet* units that emerged and disappeared in line with super-political variables. For example, reports from the Ottoman naval base in Basra *vilayet* at the end of the nineteenth century indicated that specifically Baghdadis, as well as people from Mosul to a certain extent, occupied leadership positions alongside an elite section of professionals from various areas of Istanbul.⁽⁹⁾ In addition, the fluid movement experienced by the social components of the Iraqi region transcended the supposed barriers promoted by proponents of the theory that Iraqi social groups did not integrate. For example, the Turkmen of Kirkuk formed an important part of the government's administrative (bureaucratic) apparatus, and skilled craftsmen in areas from the north to the south; some integrated in areas of central Iraq, with certain well-known Baghdadi families claiming Turkmen ancestry.⁽¹⁰⁾

Tracing "economic integration" and the demands of the local market established in the three Iraqi *vilayets* is an important part of identifying the factors shaping the entity and general meaning of the "Iraqi state". The demands of the market between these *vilayets* and the scale and flow of commercial exchange exceeded the demands of the surrounding regional and geographical locality. This prompts us to consider the possibility that claims that these *vilayets* were not closely integrated may be refutable. The fact is that the narrative of the British and its counterparts neglected or more accurately passed over or ignored economic and geographical points of reference. In any event, it is important to note that two major examples of the historical

literature present a universal conceptualization of the integrated economies of the Iraqi *vilayets* at the turn of the nineteenth century and at the turn of the twentieth century. The first example comprises the writings of Claudius James Rich, the British explorer, resident of Iraq as well as an East India Company agent in the first third of the nineteenth century. The second model comprises the writings of Alexander Adamov, the Russian consul in Basra *vilayet* during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth.

Rich explains how the demands of the Baghdad market made timber collection in the Kurdistan Mountains a significant priority in the *vilayet*.⁽¹¹⁾ *The commercial relationship between Eastern Iraqi Kurdistan and the regions of the other Iraqi vilayets* functioned smoothly. Indeed, the population of Kirkuk played a pivotal role, given the city's position as a focal point and supply route: "Kerkook is the mart to which all the productions of this part of Koordistan are carried, not by the Koords themselves, but by the natives of Kerkook, who come here for the purpose, and make advances of money to the cultivators for their rice, honey, &c.[Gall-nuts] are exported to Kerkook, and thence to Mousul."⁽¹²⁾ Baghdad *vilayet's* trade with the northern regions, meanwhile, reached remarkable levels. Rich also gives an account of Sulaymaniyah's trade; of the six regions that Sulaymaniyah traded with, Kirkuk, Mosul and Baghdad formed the largest proportion,⁽¹³⁾ demonstrating the commercial process of integration imposed by the natural geographical proximity of these regions to one another.

Adamov, for his part, describes the close integration of the exports of Baghdad and Mosul *vilayets* during the period 1891-1910: "Goat hair, resin, tannin and a proportion of the wheat exported from Baghdad came from Mosul". Moreover, Mosul *vilayet's* reliance on

9 *Basra Vilayeti Salnamesi Sene-i 1308* [1890], Basra Matbaası, Birinci Defaa., pp. 65-69, *Basra'nın Vilayeti Salnamesi Sene-i 1317* [1899], Vilayet Matbaası, Üçüncü Defaa., pp. 118-122; Adamov, p. 398 - 399. Re-deployment continued without concern for administrative limitations until the turn of the twentieth century. The periodical *Lughat al-'Arab* points to the emergence of the term "Inspector of Iraq" (*Müfettiş-i Irak*): "Celal Bey had previously been appointed provincial governor of Karbala and ruled Basra *vilayet* as a general inspector to reform Iraqi affairs" in 1912. See *Lughat al-'Arab: Majalla Shahriyya Adabiyya 'Ilmiyya Tārīkhīyya* [The Arab Tongue: A Monthly Literary, Scientific and Historical Journal], year 1, no. 12. (May 1912), p. 493.

10 Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, *Iraq: 1900-1950: A Political, Social, and Economic History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 9. p. 30.

11 Claudius James Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh. With journal of a voyage down the Tigris to Bagdad and an account of a visit to Shirauz and Persepolis*, (London: James Duncan, 1836), p. 105.

12 *Ibid.*, pp. 142.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 305.

wool exports rendered it fully reliant on Baghdad during the first decade of the twentieth century: "Most wool goes to that city [Baghdad] to be processed in hydraulic and manual presses. Thus Baghdad, through which passed three-quarters of exported wool, surpassed Basra in importance", and as a few Christian companies in Baghdad monopolized the trade in goat hair obtained from Kurdistan, Basra *vilayet* was forced to rely on Baghdad for exports of raw leather. Certain goods continued to be important in the balance of exports between these regions, revealing an intense regional flow of commerce. Tannin was still exported to Baghdad *vilayet* from Ottoman and Persian Kurdistan before being sent via Basra to Britain and America, while Baghdad *vilayet* met its burgeoning need for wooden beams and panels from Mosul *vilayet*.⁽¹⁴⁾

At any rate, a "united Iraq" from Basra to the north of Baghdad existed for most of the eighteenth century and for a significant part of the nineteenth. A further equally crucial and previously cited point relates to the fact that the northern regions regarded Baghdad vilayet as their regional capital, particularly during the period 1780 - 1880. According to the historian Reidar Visser, this left behind a legacy of centralization, since Baghdad had already been the capital for people from Basra in the south to Sulaymaniyah in the north for centuries.⁽¹⁵⁾

Institutionalization of Ottoman use of the term "Iraq": geographical, administrative and cartographical significations

Specific references indicating the common use of the term "Iraq" occur repeatedly during the first period of history-writing concerned with Iraq's geography. These appear in two important kinds of source: official Ottoman literature and reports, and Ottoman maps. During this period, the term "Iraq" gradually

began to be used in institutional, official, and public contexts to refer to the geographical region, becoming more clearly prominent in cartography in later stages. Contrary to the assertions of many Western scholars, the Ottomans repeatedly used the term "Iraq" to describe this territory, as well as using it in a political-administrative sense. "Iraq" frequently recurs in Ottoman reports and literature⁽¹⁶⁾ from the sixteenth century onwards, i.e. shortly after the Ottoman state absorbed the territory of Iraq, being established in general usage during the first two centuries of Ottoman rule, when the term "Iraq" frequently appeared in general geographical contexts in expressions signifying the boundary of Iraq and its surroundings, such as 'in the vicinity of Iraq' (*Irak taraflarında* or *Irak cihatlarında*). Basra and Baghdad were clearly included in this conceptual description⁽¹⁷⁾ - that is, Ottoman reports imposed a unifying umbrella term on a broad geographical area encompassing two large and prominent *vilayets*, Baghdad and Basra.

These expressions were not limited to common geographical markers. They also included various aspects of the nascent administrative-political entity, such as references found in Ottoman archival reports using the Ottoman expression "the situation in Iraq" (*Irak Ehvali*), or referring to the political system with the expression *Irak nizâmının istihsâli*. A number of Ottoman reports specifically refer, unofficially, to the use of the term 'land of Iraq' (*Irak memleketi*) to characterize the autonomy enjoyed by these territories during Mamluk rule (1747-1831).⁽¹⁸⁾ An important example of this is found in an Arabic-language letter sent by Sultan Mahmut II (1808-1839) to a number of tribal shaykhs in 1830, urging them to support the newly appointed *vali* Ali Rıza Paşa al-Laz (1831-1842) after the deposition of his predecessor, Davut Paşa of Baghdad (1817-

14 Adamov, pp. 527, 543, 545, 550, 580.

15 Visser, p. 145.

16 The most prominent instance of this may be the appearance of "Iraq" in the name of the military campaign conducted by Süleyman the Magnificent (1495-1566, ruled 1520-1566) in Iraq and his conquest of Baghdad in 1534. It is known in Ottoman histories as the *Irâkeyn Seferi* (Two Iraqs Campaign), since it resulted in the annexation of both *Irâk-ı Acem* (the north-western part of Iran and the north-eastern part of Iraq) and *Irâk-ı Arap* (the south-central part of Iraq) to the Ottoman state. This is explicitly referenced by Matrakçı Nasuh es-Silâhî, who accompanied Sultan Süleyman's campaign, in the title of his book *Beyan-i Menazil-i Sefer-i Irâkeyn* (Chronicle of the Two Iraqs Campaign). See Bayat, pp. 255-256, 268; Matrakçı Zadeh, *Rihlat Matraqizâda li-Naşüh as-Silâhî ash-Shahîr bi-Matraqizâda* [Nasuh as-Silahi Matraqizadeh's *The Travels of Matraqizadeh*], trans. Subhi Nazem Tawfiq, review by 'Ammad Abd-al-Salam Ra'uf (Abu Dhabi: Cultural Encyclopædia, 2003), p. 9.

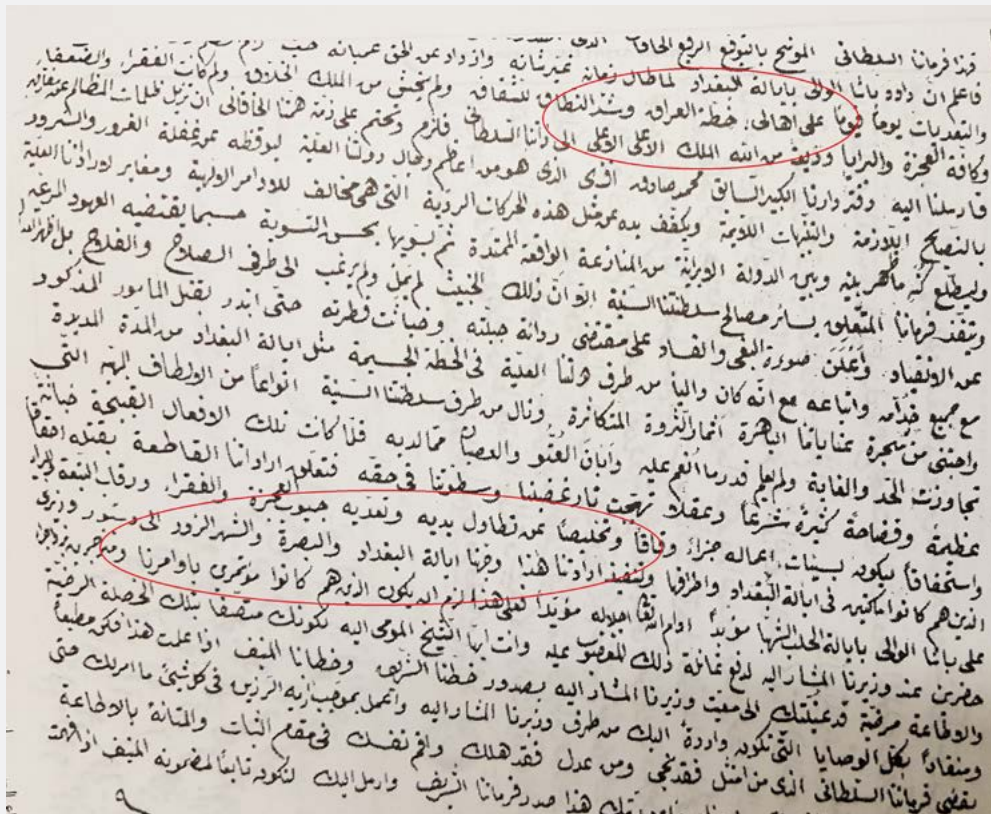
17 Visser, pp. 145 - 146.

18 See Nuras for a survey of the Mamluk era in Iraq.

1831).⁽¹⁹⁾ The contents of the letter show both Mahmut II's general understanding of the term "Iraq" and his association of the word with the term *khiṭṭa*, previously used by Islamic Arab historical sources to describe city areas and their boundaries. He writes: "I know that Davut Paşa is the *vali* of Baghdad *vilayet*, but over time he has changed his position and his blindness has surpassed his righteousness [...] the forms of injustice and hostility imposed on the people of the *khiṭṭa* of Iraq increase day by day".⁽²⁰⁾

What makes the Sultan's letter important is that it shows how he saw the Iraq *vilayets* and his explicit reference to the concept of "Iraq" as a practical equivalent to Iraq's three constitutive *vilayets*, in addition to a further reference that reveals the expansion of the geographic area and the integration of the administrative unit from Basra *vilayet* to the northernmost point of Iraq (Shahrizor) under the control of the new Ottoman-appointed *vali*: "In order to achieve our will, we have added the Baghdad and Basra *eyalets* to 'Ali Paşa's ministerial portfolio."⁽²¹⁾

Document 1
1830 letter from Sultan Mahmud II and its reference to "the khiṭṭa of Iraq" and the centralisation of administration from the south to the very north



Ibid, p. 280.

19 'Abd-al-'Aziz Sulayman Nawar, *Dāwūd Bāshā Wālī Baghdād* [Davut Paşa, Vali of Baghdad] (Cairo: Arab Writer Printing and Publishing House, 1968). There was an abundance of expressions containing the phrase "Iraq" during the Mamluk period. The *vali* was occasionally called "the Minister of Iraq". Davut Paşa himself had been appointed to rule Baghdad, Basra and Shehrizor *vilayets*. A significant development to the term "Iraq" occurs in the Mamluk-era book, *The Genealogy of Ministers*, compiled and printed by the order of *vali* Davut Paşa in 1830. See: Kerküklü Resul/Rasul al-Kirkukli, *Dawḥat al-Wuzarā fī Tārīkh Waqā' i' Baghdād az-Zawrā* [The Genealogy of Ministers in the History of Baghdad], trans. Musa Kazem Nuras (Qom: Al-Sharif Al-Ridhi Publications, 1413 H [c. 1992 / 1993 AD]), p. 275.

20 Sinan Marufoğlu, *al- Irāq fī 'l-Wathā'iq al- 'Uthmāniyya: al-Awqā' as-Siyāsiyya wa'l-Ijtimā'iyya fī 'l- 'Irāq khilāl al- 'Ahd al- 'Uthmānī* [Iraq in Ottoman Records: Iraq's Socio-Political Situation during the Ottoman Era] (Amman: Dar al-Shorok Publishing, 2006), pp. 233-234, also pp. 280 - 281.

21 Ibid.

The frequency of the use of 'Iraq' had increased considerably by the end of the nineteenth century, when the term was employed to refer to an independent administrative division. This coincided with the Ottomans' creation of the "Army of Iraq" (*Irak Ordusu*), referring to a distinct unit in the Sixth Army whose responsibilities included the entirety of Iraq, with Baghdad as its headquarters,⁽²²⁾ thereby transcending the former administrative sub-divisions occasionally proposed in the region and adding further functions to the links between "Iraq" as a geographical region and "Iraq" as a political sphere. The idea of adding the word 'Iraq' as an umbrella term alongside the names of the three Ottoman *vilayets*, but in larger print, became more common in the 19th century and the turn of the 20th century. Despite this common usage (particularly alongside the names of Baghdad and Basra *vilayets*), few scholars have paid attention to this novel technical transformation in the sphere of Ottoman cartography, or to the role that this qualitative addition played and how it served to drive its own adoption as a name for the new state that emerged in the Iraqi territories. The following map illustrates this:

This map was adapted from the Ottoman copy, where it appears directly after page 180.

Safvet Geylangil, an author of Ottoman secondary school geographical books at the turn of the twentieth century, indicates the multiple meanings of the term "Iraq" and its uses in one of the maps included in his *A New Mathematical and Ottoman Geography with Maps and Illustrations*. The expression *Irâk-ı Arap* (an "Arab Iraq" with a demographic majority of Arabs) is visible in the upper section of this map and covers Baghdad *vilayet*, while the lower half of the map is covered by the expression *Irak* in the region representing Basra *vilayet* and matches the map of Baghdad *vilayet*. In addition to the significant expression "the Iraqi desert" (*Bâdiyet-i Irak*), a clear reference to the inclusive geographical expansion to the south of Basra *vilayet*, this suggests that a single common feature defines the two *vilayets*. The process of formalizing the term "Iraq" on maps of the Ottoman-era Iraqi *vilayets* was not restricted to those working in the teaching profession as in the above example. It also included military personnel, who deployed their technical cartographical skills. In 1868, First Lieutenant Hafiz 'Ali Sharif published an atlas, *The New Atlas (Yeni Atlas)*, including a map on

which was written *Irâk-ı Arap* (i.e. what was known as Arab Iraq) covering the south and centre of Iraq. The following map illustrates this:

The appearance of the term "Iraq" on the maps recording the Ottoman Iraqi *vilayets* found its way into the first, rare Ottoman atlases printed at the turn of the nineteenth century. We thus find the expression *Irâk-ı Arap* covering the entirety of Basra and Baghdad *vilayets*, reaching a point above the town of Karatepe (*Qara Tabba*) and south of Taşköprü (*Tāsh Kobrî*) in Kirkuk, and appearing in the New Atlas (*Cedid Atlas*), particularly on maps of the Anatolian Peninsula and the Fertile Crescent. The following map illustrates this:

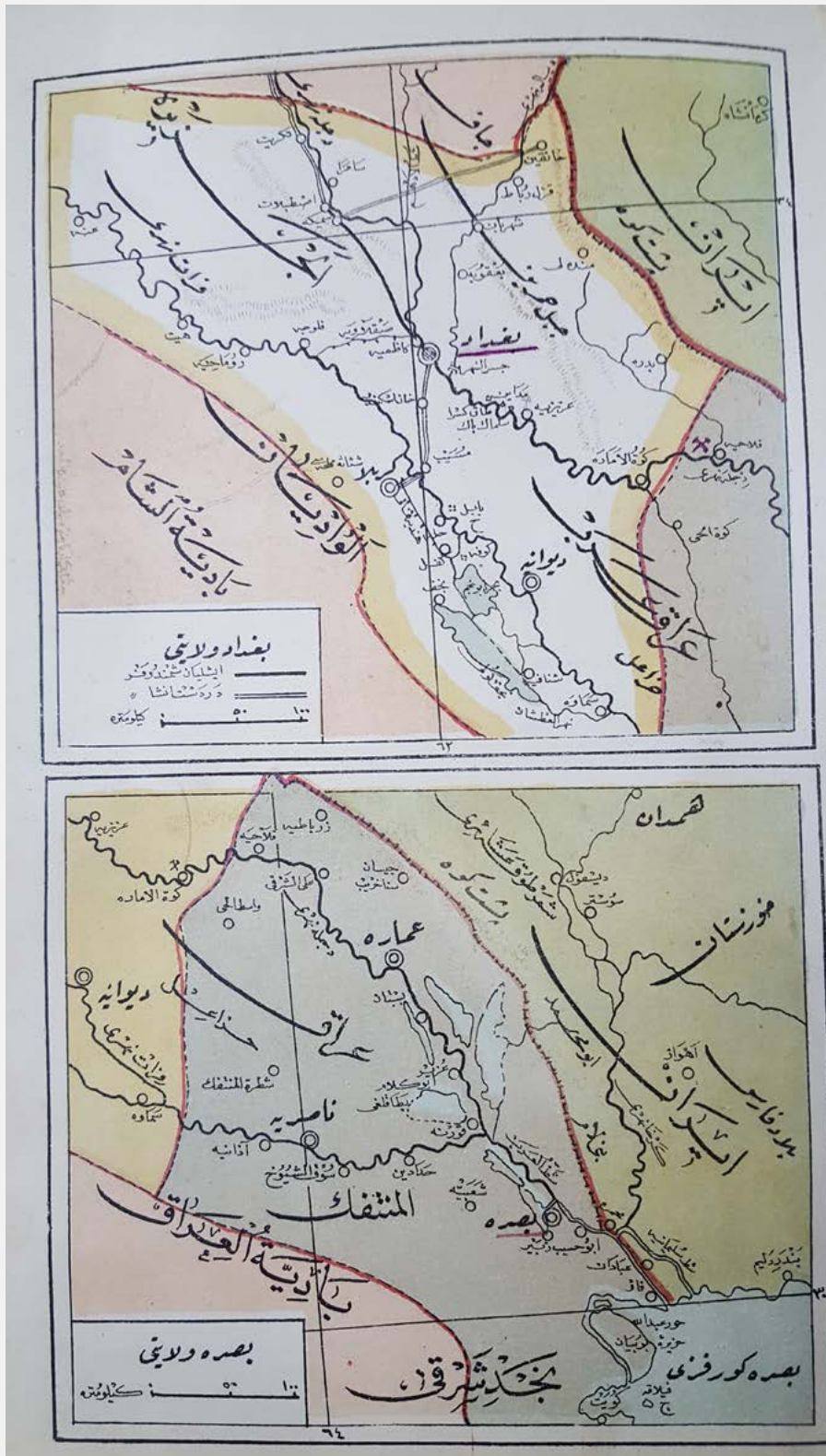
The *Atlas-ı Cedid*, from which I have taken this map, was the first geographical atlas to be printed in the Islamic world; only 50 copies were produced. It is one of the rarest geographical atlases of historical value in the world and in the Middle East.

The term "Iraq" began to appear in Arab publications at the turn of the twentieth century. This manifested in Arab geographical literature, which followed the practice of the Ottoman context in their use of the term on general geographical maps. In Map 4, we see *al-'Irâq* occupying the center of the region extending across Baghdad and Basra *vilayets* and occupying greater space than the two central names of the aforementioned *vilayets*.

Anyone examining these Ottoman records may clearly see how the new contexts and expressions in which the term "Iraq" was employed, and how this term began to overlap with others, indicating its transcendence of the narrow geographical domain to which it had previously been limited (or in other words, where its role had been negated) when the names of the three Iraqi *vilayets* were adopted. This time, we see it overlapping sensitive districts that were a source of consternation for the Ottoman state. For example, Ottoman administrators began to grow concerned about the persistent spread of Shi'ism in the eastern part of the Ottoman Sultanate; soon enough, a report was produced expressing this concern under the title "The daily spread of Shi'ism in Iraq". With this expression, the Ottomans went beyond the domain and familiar administrative designations used to describe the *vilayets*. This is clearly illustrated in Document 2:

22 Bruce Masters, *The Arabs of The Ottoman Empire 1516- 1918: A Social and Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 163.

Map 1
The terms Irâk-ı Arap and Irak as a geographical-cartographical marker for Baghdad and Basra vilayets on an Ottoman map published in 1913*



Safvet Geylangil, *Yeni Resimli ve Haritalı Coğrafya-yı Riyazi ve Osmanî* [A New Mathematical and Ottoman Geography with Maps and Illustrations], (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şirkâsı, 1331 [1913]).

Map 2

The term Irâk-ı Arap covering the south and center of Iraq on an Ottoman map published in 1868*



Servet Özağaç, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Haritacılık Tarihi* [History of Turkish Cartography in the Republican Period] (Ankara: Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2006), pp. 50- 51; Kemal Özdemir, *Ottoman Cartography* (İstanbul: Creative Yayıncılık ve Tanıtım Ltd. Şti., 2008), p. 244; Mustafa Önder, *Geçmişten Günümüze Resimlerle Türk Haritacılık Tarihi* [The History of Turkish Cartography From Past to Present, With Illustrations] (Ankara: Harita Genel Komutanlığı, 2002), p. 130.

Map 3

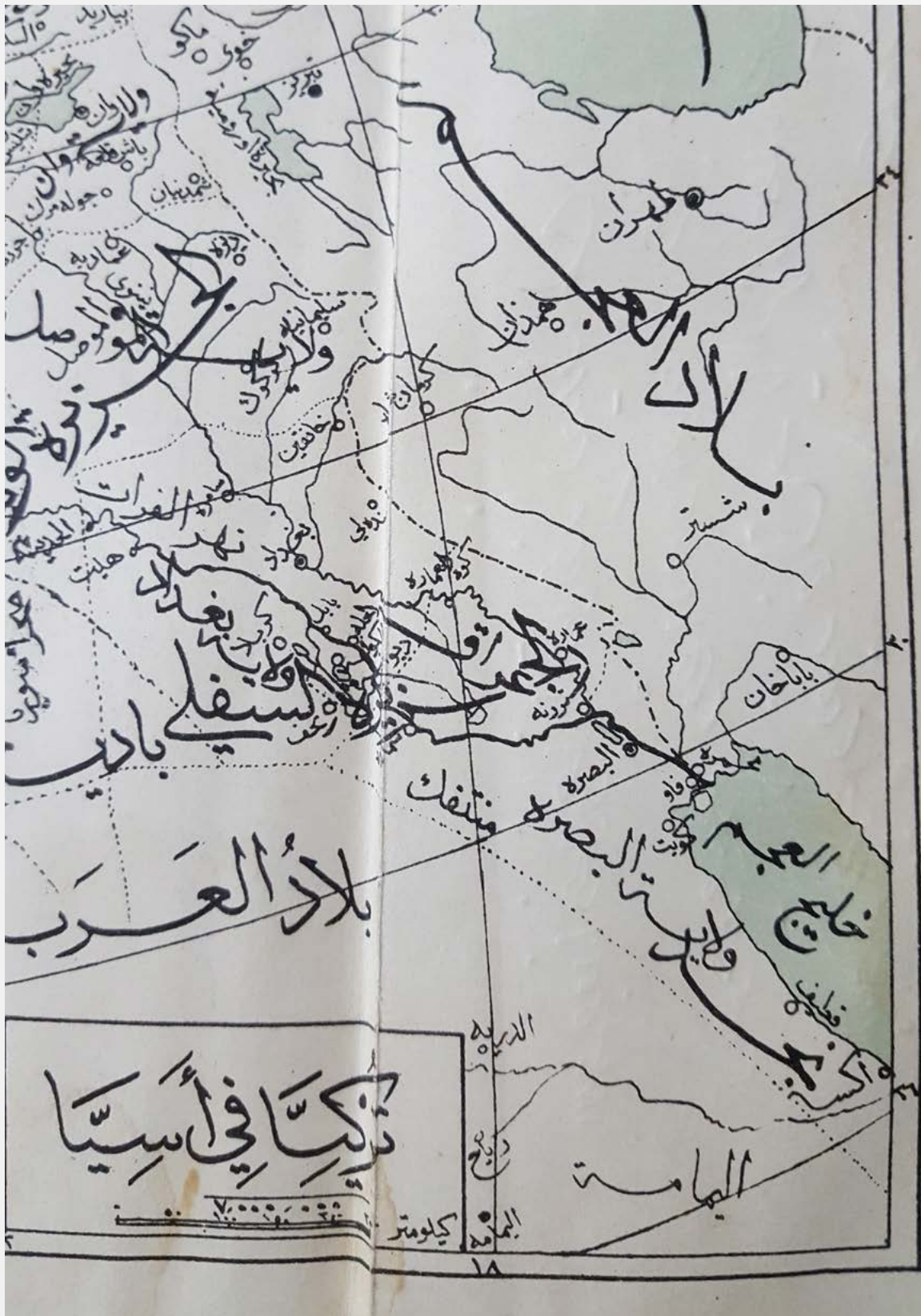
The expression Irâk-ı Arap on a rare Ottoman map at the turn of the nineteenth century (1803)*



Özdemir, 198; "Osmanlı'nın Basılı ilk Atlası, Atlas-ı Cedit," [The First Ottoman-printed Atlas, the *New Atlas*], *Suffagâh*, accessed on 30/2018/4/, at: <https://goo.gl/7BaWc7>

Map 4

The term al-'Irāq in an Arabic-language geography book at the turn of the twentieth century (1912)*



Andrawus Karsheh and Yourghaki Abyad, *ath-Thimār ash-Shahiyya fī Jughrāfiyyat al-Mamlaka al-'Uthmāniyya* [Delicious Fruit in the Geography of the Ottoman Kingdom], (Tripoli, Lebanon: National Press, 1912), p. 92 ff.

Document 2

A citation clarifying the use of the term "Iraq" to express Ottoman sectarian concern in the region of Iraq, 1889*

YEE 9 / 3. Memorandum by Mehmed Ali Bey, 820/1304-1/ January 1889, Quoted in: Reidar Visser, "Proto-Political Conceptions of 'Iraq' in Late Ottoman Times," *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2009), p. 146; Reidar Visser, "Ottoman Provincial Boundaries, Shiite Federalism, and Energy Conflict in Iraq," *historiae.org*, accessed on 30/2018/4/ at: <https://goo.gl/YNW9Q4>

In 1907, a document from the Office of the Ottoman Grand Vizier references measures that would "strengthen faith and Sunnism in Iraq", including a pay raise for Sunni missionaries (*du'āh*) and an improvement to their living conditions in Basra and Baghdad. These expressions continued to be used to describe the situation in Iraq in place of the proper names of the Ottoman *vilayets* even after the 1908 Revolution and the Unionists' rise to power. In February 1910, there was another discussion in the Grand Vizierate concerning the benefits envisioned from sending more missionaries and teachers to "Iraq".⁽²³⁾ The Iraqi *vilayets* witnessed significant transformation at the turn of the second decade of the twentieth century, represented by a kind of centralizing tendency bringing together the consolidation of the three *vilayets'* administrative authorities under the *vali* of Baghdad and the use of the expressions "Iraq", and *al-Khiṭṭa al-ʿIrāqīyya* in local publications under the *vali* Nazım Paşa (1910-1911).⁽²⁴⁾ This latter, despite the brevity of his tenure, was not only *vali* of Baghdad *vilayet* but saw his administrative duties expand to include the two other *vilayets*, and was called the "second reformer" (after the "first reformer", the famous *vali* Midhat Paşa) as a result of his celebrated service. One way or another, the Ottomans thus contributed to the development of a superstructure for the symbolic identity of the embryonic regional Iraqi entity, with Baghdad as its capital, along the lines of what the *vali* Nazım Paşa

envisioned in 1911 when he convened a pan-"Iraq" tribal conference.⁽²⁵⁾ Likewise, local Iraqi publications reflected the reality of the new transformations and names. We thus see the use of descriptors such as "the refuge of Baghdad *vilayet*", and the reformer of the Iraqi *khiṭṭah*" for the *vali*, Nazım Paşa, in a non-official publication, as seen in Document 3:

Mosul vilayet and its affiliation with Iraq in Ottoman conceptions

An important question emerges concerning Mosul *vilayet* (in its broad administrative sense): was this *vilayet* functionally linked to "Iraq"? While "Iraq" was widely used as a practical alternative to "Basra and Baghdad *vilayets*", we find explicit references to Mosul's inclusion in "Iraq" in the archives and Ottoman literature, as with Baghdad and Basra *vilayets*. This is apparent in an Ottoman record discussing issues related to Mosul *vilayet*, which uses expressions framing this *vilayet* as part and parcel of the "Iraq" entity, and "Iraq" as the broad administrative framework containing the three *vilayets*. This record also cites minutes dating back to 1886, produced by a committee consisting of Ottoman officials including the grand vizier and several prominent figures and heads of Ottoman committees and government bodies, and referred to the Secretariat (*Daiyet-i Kitâbet*) at the Yıldız Palace (the seat of the Sultan) which dealt with matters of internal security in Baghdad and Mosul *vilayets*. While

23 Visser, p. 146; B.B.A., Y.E.E., 14/257/126/8, 13 August 1323 / 26 August 1907, Quoted in: Selim Deringil, "The Struggle against Shiism in Hamidian Iraq: A Study in Ottoman Counter-Propaganda," *Die Welt des Islams*, New Ser., Bd. 30, Nr. 1 / 4. (1990), p. 52.

24 For further reading about the tenure of this *vali*, see Nadhr 'Ali Amin Al-Sharif, "Idârat al-Wālī Nāzīm Bāshā li-Wilāyat Baghdād 1910-1911" [The Administration of *Vali* Nazım Pasha in Baghdad *Vilayet*, 1910-1911], *Majallat Kulliyat al-Ādāb*, No. 90 (University of Baghdad, 2009), pp. 124 - 157.

25 Retrospect in IO/LPS/10/732. Fortnightly report no. 20, 11 October 1918, quoted in: Visser, p. 148.

this record deals with security matters and the unrest caused by various Kurdish tribes and their political factions in Kirkuk, the use of the expression "the Iraqi *khiṭṭa*" and the fact that security was entrusted to the *vali* of Baghdad are two important indicators of how the Ottomans typically perceived the Iraqi *vilayets* and saw their administration as complementary and semi-integrated. According to the record, "given that such ordinary incidents may occur anywhere, and that their deterrence is a routine procedure [...] in order to preserve and regulate the Iraqi *khiṭṭa*, and prevent the effects of mischief, it is entrusted to the power of the *vali* present in Baghdad. Since Mosul and Basra *vilayets* serve as natural companions to Baghdad, the authority of the Sixth Imperial Corps encompasses them as well⁽²⁶⁾ [...] I am of the opinion that one of the imperatives of the envisioned reforms is the restoration of Basra and Mosul *vilayets* to the level of sub-provinces (*mutasarrifiye*) and their reattachment to Baghdad *vilayet* as was previously the case [...] and in addition to clarifying the need to conduct such necessary reforms in the Iraq project via local authorities [...] the same local authorities must also be consulted".⁽²⁷⁾

In 1887, another important reference appears in a telegram sent by Kirkuk Reform Commissioner Field Marshal İsmail Hakkı to the Palace Secretariat. The telegram at various points gives the geographical dimensions and signification of the expression "the Iraqi *khiṭṭa*", including the dividing line that would form the borders of the current Iraqi state, stating: "The population of the Iraqi *khiṭṭa* stretching from Baghdad

to Zakho at the furthest point of Mosul *vilayet*".⁽²⁸⁾ The Ottoman idea of "Iraq" increasingly encompassed the region north of Baghdad *vilayet*. In 1892, Ottoman administrative officials refer to Mosul *vilayet* as part of Iraq during a discussion on how to effect the necessary measures to promote education in Mosul, Shahrizor and Sulaymaniyah. The letter, sent by the *vali* of Mosul Aziz Paşa to the Imperial *Mabeyn* Secretariat, states: "The Iraqi *khiṭṭa*, and particularly Mosul *vilayet*, remains at the lowest stage of development [...]". The official Ottoman response to this letter confirms how the aforementioned regions were conceptualized using a single term, Iraq: "The advancement of science and education is an important and necessary matter in Turkey [i.e. the Ottoman Empire] and in Iraq in particular, now and in future".⁽²⁹⁾

By 1906, the concept of Iraq was clearly associated with the three *vilayets*. Thus are cited "Basra, Baghdad and Mosul, which form the area [or region] of Iraq". At the turn of the twentieth century, there was a recurring tendency in Istanbul to see Iraq as a unified political entity (as seen, for example, in separate government maps of "Iraq").⁽³⁰⁾ In this context, an important reference is to be found on a map published at the turn of the twentieth century, which explicitly refers to Mosul as part of Iraq during Atabeg rule in Mosul (521-660 AH / 1127 - 1261 AD) and the foundation of the "Atabegate of Mosul". Thus the mapmaker writes "the Atabegs of Iraq-Mosul 521-631" (*Atabegân-ı Irak-Musul*). The area ruled by the Atabegs covered roughly the majority of northern Iraq, accompanied by *Irâk-ı Arap* that covered the entire south and middle of Iraq. Map 5 demonstrates this:

26 The headquarters of the Sixth Army was in Baghdad *vilayet*, and its purview encompassed Mosul. Significantly, one of the records of the General Chief of Staff of the Fourth War Directorate in 1849 refers to the army of the imperial authorities in the context of the "Iraqi *khiṭṭa*" which encompassed the three *vilayets* of Baghdad, Basra and Mosul. Previous references show how Mosul's local culture intermingled with "Iraq"-related expressions circulating in the Ottoman era. In his book, *History of Mosul*, Mosul historian Sa'id al-Diyuchi mentions a neighborhood called *Bâb al-'Irâq* (Iraq Gate) which in 1729 was the headquarters of the Ottoman 31st military division. He also refers to the largest Ottoman military division in Mosul, the *Orta Irak*, i.e. Middle Iraq. See T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, *Musul-Kerkük ile ilgili Arşiv Belgeleri (1525-1919)* [Archival Documents Related to Mosul/Kirkuk (1525-1919)] Yayın Nu: 11 (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 1993), s. 306-308; Sa'id al-Diyuchi, *Tārīkh al-Mawşil* (Mosul: Dar al-Kutub Press and Publishing Department, Mosul University, 2001), p. 150.

27 T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, s. 178- 182; See also a translation of extracts from this documentary book in: *Mukhtārāt min Kitāb al-Mawşil wa-Kirkük fī'l-Wathā'iq al-Uthmāniyya* [Extracts from Writings on Mosul and Kirkuk in Ottoman Records], trans. with comments by Khalil 'Ali Murad, (Sulaymaniyah: Bank-e Zayn, 2005), pp. 28-33, with Ottoman-language document source on pp. 196 - 199.

28 T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, s. 194; *Mukhtārāt min Kitāb al-Mawşil wa-Kirkük*, p. 40, with Ottoman-language document source on pp. 204 - 204.

29 Y.MTV 72 / 43. "Letter from the governor of Mosul to the Ottoman cabinet dated 22/4-1310/12 November 1892," Quoted in: Visser, p. 146; T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, s. 235- 238; *Mukhtārāt min Kitāb al-Mawşil wa-Kirkük*, p. 64-67, with Ottoman-language document source on pp. 222 - 223. A further Ottoman geographical source refers to the situation in the three *vilayets* (Mosul, Baghdad and Basra) in 1890 with the umbrella expression "the Iraqi *khiṭṭa*". See Ali Tevfik, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Coğrafyası* [Geography of the Ottoman Lands], İstanbul: Kitapç1 Kara Bit, 1308 [1890], p. 319. Ali Tevfik was a primary school teacher, and the book was published with the permission of the Ministry of Education.

30 BOA, İrade Dâhiliye, note by Umûm Erkân-ı Harbiye Dairesi (Üçüncü Şubesi) dated 28 November 1906, quoted in: Visser, p. 146; C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, p. 305.

Document 3

The terms al-*Irāq* and al-Khiṭṭa al-*Irāqiyya* in a dedication to the vali Nazım Paşa in the *Hilal az-Zawra* almanac (1911)*

Leon Lawrence, *Taqwīm Hilāl az-Zawrā' li-'Ām 1911* [Hilal az-Zawra Almanac To 1911], (Baghdad: Al-Ādāb Press, 1911), pp. 2, 29.

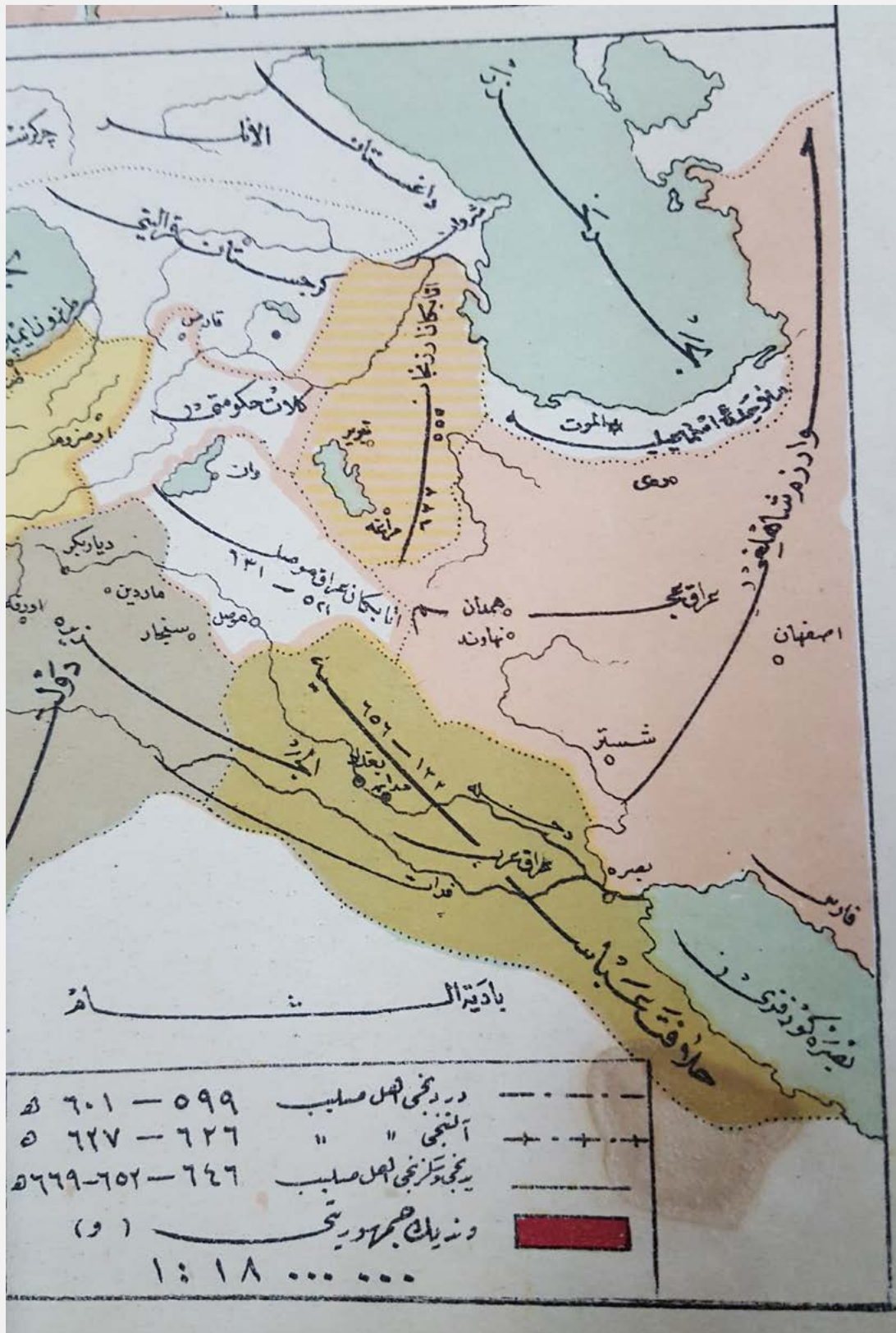
Some of the references in late nineteenth century Ottoman sources, such as the reference work by the Ottoman writer and geographer Ali Cevat,⁽³¹⁾ began to assert an increase in the proportion of Arabs living in Mosul *vilayet* and to treat them as a majority. This rare information concerning Arab identity in Mosul

may have had an additional effect when it coincided with official Ottoman conceptualizations, which saw Mosul as part of the Iraqi identity constituted by the three *vilayets*. The following citation from Record 4, from a geographical-linguistic encyclopedia, illustrates this:

31 Ali Cevat was a military school graduate (*idadiye-i askeriye*) who authored popular historical and geographical works at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. It appears that this rare and detailed statistical work on Mosul *vilayet* and the percentages of its ethnic groups and religious sects may have drawn on an important reference source by Vital Cuinet, a French Orientalist, senior civil servant responsible for overseeing public debt in the Ottoman State and member of the Paris Geographical Society. The source is entitled *Asiatic Turkey* and was published in four parts. In this sense, it would be useful to recall that Cuinet's work subsequently retained its historical value, to the extent that a League of Nations commission, formed to adjudicate in the dispute concerning the ownership of Mosul *vilayet* between Iraq and Turkey in 1925, relied on it, among other sources, to dismiss economic arguments made by Turkey. In its report, the commission concluded that Mosul *vilayet* should be annexed to Iraq. Compare with the following statistical work on Mosul *vilayet*:

Map 5

Ottoman map displaying the Mosul region as part of Iraq during the Atabeg era (published in 1908)*



Source: Mehmet Eşref, *Muhtasar Târih-i Umûmî ve Osmânî Atlası* [Concise Atlas of General and Ottoman History] (İstanbul: Military Office Press, 1326 AH [1908 AD]). Mehmet Eşref, the author of this atlas, was a lieutenant colonel in the Ottoman Army and a trainer at the Military Academy.

Document 4

A page from an Ottoman geographical-linguistic encyclopedia referring to the Arab majority in Mosul vilayet at the end of the nineteenth century (1896)*

۷۸۸

<p>آسیای عثمانی موصل - سمت شرقی سنده ودجله حوضه سنده برولایتدر . مذکور ولایت ۳۹.۳:۴۴ درجه طول شرقی و ۱۵.۱۵:۳۷ عرض شمالی و ۱۵.۱۵:۳۷ دیار بکر و وان ولایتی شرقاً ایران تملکتی جنوباً بغداد ولایتی غرباً زور سنجاقی ایله محدوددر . وسعت و جسامتی تریماً ۷۵۷۰۰ کیلومتره در .</p> <p>ولایت مذکور اهالی اسی اوچیز بیک ایکوز سکان نفوسدن عبارت اولوب قومیت جهتله بوجه آتیدر :</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td rowspan="5" style="vertical-align: middle;">اسلام</td> <td>سوریه لی عرب</td> <td>۸۰۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>عشایر عربان</td> <td>۹۳۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>کرد</td> <td>۴۶۱۸۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ترکان</td> <td>۱۶۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>شایاق</td> <td>۱۲۲۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>هموند</td> <td>۱۰۰۰</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3" style="vertical-align: middle;">خرمیتان</td> <td>کلدانی</td> <td>۱۸۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>سریانی قنولکی</td> <td>۷۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>یعقوبی</td> <td>۵۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3" style="vertical-align: middle;">اسلام</td> <td>اسرائیلی</td> <td>۶۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>یزیدی</td> <td>۱۴۹۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>سازه</td> <td>۱۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>یکون</td> <td>۳۰۰۲۸۰</td> </tr> </table> <p>سریانی عرب: اشبو اهالی اصلیه تک قسم اعظمی سلفکیلرته تحت اطاعتنه ادخال اولنان قدیم سریانیلرله آسی اولوب بونلر عمله وزراع سنفلرینک قسم اعظمی دخی حاوی اولوق اوزره</p>	اسلام	سوریه لی عرب	۸۰۰۰۰	عشایر عربان	۹۳۰۰۰	کرد	۴۶۱۸۰	ترکان	۱۶۰۰۰	شایاق	۱۲۲۰۰	هموند	۱۰۰۰		خرمیتان	کلدانی	۱۸۰۰۰	سریانی قنولکی	۷۰۰۰	یعقوبی	۵۰۰۰	اسلام	اسرائیلی	۶۰۰۰	یزیدی	۱۴۹۰۰	سازه	۱۰۰۰		یکون	۳۰۰۲۸۰	<p>ایدن باغچه لرده هر نوع میوه و سبزه حاصل اولور . تارلار لرده آریه بغدادی نخود وچو . دار کبی حیوانات زرع اولمشدر . اووه بی محدود ایتن اولان تیه لره انکری لوانک بوزخی کولدرن اوزوم باغلی و توتون محصول ایله تری اولمشدر . موش سنجاقی سنوی ۴۰۰۰۰۰ کیلوگرام شراب و ۱۰۰۰۰۰ کیلو خرامدن زیاده توتون پشمکده در . حیوانات اهلیه سی بوجه زیردر :</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>صغیر</td> <td>۲۰۰۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>قون وکی</td> <td>۸۰۰۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>سرب</td> <td>۱۲۰۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>آت</td> <td>۳۰۰۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>قاطر</td> <td>۲۰۰۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>یکون</td> <td>۱۱۵۲۰۰۰</td> </tr> </table> <p>تقسیمات: موش سنجاقی بش قضا ایله ۵۹۰ قریه بی محتوبدر :</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>تضار</td> <td>مرکز ااره لری</td> <td>عدد قرا</td> </tr> <tr> <td>موش</td> <td>موش</td> <td>۱۹۴</td> </tr> <tr> <td>بولاتیق</td> <td>غوب</td> <td>۱۳۵</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ملازکرد</td> <td>ملازکرد قلعه</td> <td>۵۰</td> </tr> <tr> <td>وارطو</td> <td>کوم کوم</td> <td>۹۳</td> </tr> <tr> <td>صاسون</td> <td>حاصکوی</td> <td>۱۱۸</td> </tr> <tr> <td>یکون</td> <td></td> <td>۵۹۰ قریه</td> </tr> </table> <p>آقره موش علی قلعه سی - ولا . یاک به زغاد سنجاقنده برقریه مهمه در .</p>	صغیر	۲۰۰۰۰۰	قون وکی	۸۰۰۰۰۰	سرب	۱۲۰۰۰۰	آت	۳۰۰۰۰۰	قاطر	۲۰۰۰	یکون	۱۱۵۲۰۰۰	تضار	مرکز ااره لری	عدد قرا	موش	موش	۱۹۴	بولاتیق	غوب	۱۳۵	ملازکرد	ملازکرد قلعه	۵۰	وارطو	کوم کوم	۹۳	صاسون	حاصکوی	۱۱۸	یکون		۵۹۰ قریه
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Population. — La population totale du vilayet de Mossoul est de 300,280 habitants répartis dans chaque sandjak comme suit :

Sandjak de Mossoul	159,680 hab.
— de Chehrizor	89,000 —
— de Suléimanièh	51,600 —
TOTAL	300,280 hab.

Cette population se divise, approximativement, par races, religions ou communautés, comme suit :

Musulmans.	}	Syriens arabes	80,000	} 248,380 hab.
		Arabes nomades	93,000	
		Kurdes	46,180	
		Turcomans (Turkvoies)	16,000	
		Chabaks	12,200	
		Hamavands	1,000	

A reporter 248,380 hab.

Ali Cevat, *Memâlik-i Osmaniye'nin Tarih ve Coğrafya Lügati* [Handbook to the History and Geography of the Ottoman Lands], (Istanbul: Kasbar Matbaası, 1314 AH [1896]), section 1, *Coğrafya Lügati*, vol. 3, p. 788.

In any event, the Ottoman reports continued to classify the regions and district capitals under Mosul *vilayet's* administration under the name "Iraq". Despite the changes experienced by some parts of the Iraqi *vilayets* under British occupation, such as Basra *vilayet* post-1914, Ottoman officials continued to adhere to these descriptors in their private reports. A report by an Ottoman administrative official on the district of Koy Sanjaq, which in 1916 was part of Shahrizor, uses the term "Iraq"⁽³²⁾ at five different points when discussing various administrative, economic, civil, military and judicial issues.⁽³³⁾

Significantly, official Ottoman exchanges continued to see the areas that belonged administratively to Mosul as part of the concept of "Iraq", even when the First World War ended and Mosul *vilayet* effectively ceased to be under Ottoman military control. A letter from a senior Ottoman official at the Interior Ministry, dispatched to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry in 1919, refers to tumultuous events in what it referred to as "Iraq", in the context of a discussion about suspected British agitation of the populations of Baghdad,

Mosul, Kirkuk and their tribes against Ottoman state security forces.⁽³⁴⁾ This is ironic, given that while the Ottoman state was protesting the expanding British presence and the occupation of Mosul *vilayet* by British forces in 1918 (an intervention considered a violation as it occurred after the signing of the Moudros Armistice on 30 October 1918 and the cessation of hostilities),⁽³⁵⁾ their officials continued to use terminology indicating that the occupied areas of Mosul came under the designation of "Iraq". This leads us to propose the thesis that the Ottoman usage of the terms "Iraq" and "the Iraqi *khiṭṭa*" as two practical umbrella alternatives to the names of the three *vilayets*, coinciding with the end of the Ottoman era, is what encouraged Britain's speedy adoption of the name "the Kingdom of Iraq" and give preference to this name over other options – including "Mesopotamia", so common in British narratives and histories of Iraq's heritage. It may perhaps even have contributed to Britain's drawing of the boundaries of this new kingdom based on the inspiration of the Ottoman legacy, even if Britain has disregarded and explicitly denied this.

Chapter Two: "Iraq" in the perceptions of social groups: a reading of Ottoman and British records

The term "Iraq" was not the exclusive domain of top-down conceptualizations promulgated by Ottoman sources in their official and public capacities or in works on geographical and administrative subjects. It came to circulate among social groups across the geographical region of Iraq. Through their use of the term these groups gave expression to the emergence of an embryonic identity of a nation-in-the-making.

Social hierarchy and economic environment did not prevent the inward-looking local tribes, which encompassed most demographics in the Iraqi *vilayets*, from expressing their specific local imaginaries or beliefs using the term "Iraq", nor from considering it as one kind of alternative "nation" to the "*dīrah*" or "tribe" in its narrowest sense. In order to adduce this, let us look at a crucial example that took place in the

32 The Ottomans previously used the term "Iraq" to describe the military formations that would fight in Iraq at the start of the First World War in 1914, under the name Iraq Area Command (*Irak ve Havalisi Komutanlığı*). See Edward J. Erickson, *Ottoman Army Effectiveness in World War I: A Comparative Study* (London and New York: Routledge/ Taylor & Francis Group, 2007), pp. 63 - 68.

33 T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, *Musul/Kerkük ile ilgili Arşiv Belgeleri*, s. 364-374; : *Mukhtārāt min Kitāb al-Mawṣil wa-Kirkūk fi'l-Wathā'iq al-Uthmāniyya* [Extracts from Writings on Mosul and Kirkuk in Ottoman Records], pp. 136-146, with Ottoman-language document source on pp. 282 - 292.

34 A contemporary Ottoman telegram sent in 1919 from Van *vilayet* to the Ottoman Interior Ministry uses such expressions: "Reliable information has reached me concerning recent tumultuous events in Iraq... If the conflicting information is correct, the English will no longer hold any influence in this region and in Iraq". A 1919 military memorandum from the Fifteenth Division also discusses events in Erzurum *vilayet* relating to the situation of the British and their military encounters with rebel shaykh Mahmud al-Hafid in Sulaymaniyah. The memorandum refers to the presence of British figures whose new responsibilities were entitled "The Iraq Region": "A while later, the Commissioner for Iraq and the Captain of the Iraq Region flew to Sulaymaniyah". See T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, s. 401-406, 408-410; with original Ottoman-language record on pp. 316 - 319.

35 Hussain, pp. 20 - 22. Ironically, various Ottoman *valis* used the term "Iraq" in their writing to describe the identity of the region they served in. Thus Süleyman Nazif, who became *vali* of Basra in 1909, Mosul in 1913, and finally Baghdad in 1915, published an Ottoman-language in 1918 entitled *Firāk-ı Irak*. See Süleyman Nazif, *Firāk-ı Irak: Mesāib-i Vatana Ağlayan Birkaç Neşidi* [A Farewell to Iraq: A Few *Nashids* Mourning the Misfortunes of the Nation] ([Unknown]: Saadet Mahmut Bey Press, 1918).

middle of the nineteenth century. In 1856, Shaykh Bandar al-Sa'dun wrote a letter to the Defterdar of Baghdad, imploring him not to release various tribal shaykhs, which might aggravate the tribes in the south of Iraq. The letter states: "Unless you keep a grip on them and guard over them [...] it will be difficult for everyone, and if our tribes and the groups in our *dīrah* are stirred up, dissension will be sown across all of your Iraq and something enormous will come to pass."³⁶ Two important things emerge from this appeal: first, Shaykh Bandar al-Sa'dun's mode of expression, and his view of Iraq as an umbrella "nation" linking the population of the south with the center when he writes to the Defterdar of Iraq. Second is the extension of the narrow localism of the Muntafiq tribal confederation, to which Shaykh Bandar belonged, to Basra *vilayet*. This illustrates the mutual understanding shared among the different social groups in Basra and Baghdad *vilayets*, even if it was in a context of mutual self-interest.

The term "Iraq" retained a presence in the popular imagination and the collective tribal mentality. Important Ottoman records at the turn of the twentieth century thus reflect its continued use among various southern tribes, particularly when addressing official Ottoman institutions. Thus in 1911, i.e. three years after the Committee of Union and Progress had taken control of the state, a telegram (from the city of Nasiriyah) sent to the Ottoman Grand Vizier stressed the need to preserve the nation and to take all means necessary to avert danger and external attacks. The letter implies that the region ruled by the Muntafiq was considered a part of Iraq, with Iraq itself occupying the position of the greater homeland, a broader practical alternative to the southern region. It thus states: "We find ourselves unable to decide between two things: whether you have handed Iraq over to foreigners and have rejected the pleas of those who live there, or whether you have been misled by officials' reports". The signatures of many well-

known southern tribal chiefs are appended to this telegram.³⁷

The way that tribal leaders phrased their addresses and petitions (despite the awkward phrasing used by some of them) reflected the local contemporary view of Iraq's position and titular status. The metaphors, explicit indications, and repeated use of the term in a single letter are compelling evidence for the strong presence of the term "Iraq" as an umbrella national and identity descriptor. The following documentary evidence confirms this. We find the term "Iraq" repeated three times in a telegram sent to the Ottoman Ministry of War in 1913 from Suq al-Shuyukh, the center of the Muntafiq Emirate, by the Muntafiq chief 'Ajmi al-Mansur, warning the Ministry of War of what he considered to be treasonous activity on the part of Talib an-Naqib. The letter states: "We have repeatedly indicated to your Excellencies the solicitations and corrupt intentions of Talib an-Naqib, Abu'l-Huda's student in Basra,³⁸ as he is employed by foreigners [...] and follows their thought in stirring up dissent [*ifsād*] in Iraq [...] we are detained with all our men [...] is there anyone who will protect Iraq from Talib Beg, the most dangerous and harmful person in Basra [...] I have finished, and will not repeat myself, since I have come to be of the conviction that Iraq and the surrounding area have no protector who has the justice befitting a *vali*".³⁹

"Iraq" was not restricted to use as a geographical alternative for tribal affiliation. It began to occupy greater space at the turn of the twentieth century when it was combined with another term, "nation" (*waṭan*), by the first generation of journalists in Baghdad *vilayet*. A telegram sent by Müftüzade Kamil (Muhammad Kamil Muftizada, former head of the Arabic section at the newspaper *Bayn an-Nahrāyn*, run by Jewish Baghdad inhabitants Ishaq Hizqil and Menahim 'Ani since 1909⁴⁰) to the Ottoman Internal Ministry, rejoicing at the death of

36 Marufoğlu, p. 83, original document: p. 97. The shaykhs who asked Shaykh Bandar al-Sa'dun for their release were Mansur Beg and Mashari and Faris al-Majid.

37 Ibid, pp. 222 - 223. Original document pp. 286 - 287. The signatories of this document were shaykhs from the Hatit, Albu Shama, Albu Hamdan and Bani Musharraf tribes.

38 I.e. Abu'l-Huda as-Sayyadī, advisor and Chief Sheikh (*ṣeyh-i maṣayih*) during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II. For further exhaustive reading on Abu'l-Huda, see: Butrus Abu-Manneh, "Sultan Abdulhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda Al-Sayyadī". Middle Eastern Studies, 15:2, pp. 131 - 153.

39 Marufoğlu, pp. 212-213, original document: p. 302.

40 'Isam Jum'ah Ahmad Al-Mu'adhidi, *aṣ-Ṣiḥāfa al-Yahūdīyya fī'l-'Irāq* [Jewish Reportage in Iraq] (Cairo: International House For Cultural Investments, 2001), p. 43.

the Grand Vizier Mahmut Şevket Paşa in 1913, ends with the crucial phrase: "in the name of the Iraqi Arab nation".⁽⁴¹⁾ The tendency of social groups to use the term "Iraq" solidified as organizations and societies became more prominent in the second decade of the twentieth century. We thus see frequent usage of "Iraq" in the writings of the Basra Reform Society (established on 28 February 1913 in Basra, with Talib al-Naqib among its founding members⁽⁴²⁾, combined with a political national tendency that went beyond the limits of southern regionalism alongside speeches opposing CUP policy. One of its speeches, entitled "The First Iraqi Cry", directed at what was known as the nation and the Ottoman army in 1913, declared: "A band of hooligans numbering no more than the fingers on one's hand have overrun the country [...] All this and they have not yet filled their stomachs, and little by little they have now begun to sell off Iraq [...] And so to combat this scourge and lessen the disaster [...] a great force, formed from the ranks of the Ottomans, has been founded in Basra, which will play an important role across the regions of Iraq, the land of the Kurds, the country of Syria and Anatolia."⁽⁴³⁾

This Society was one of the first local organizations to advocate administrative decentralization and the need for *valis* to be Iraqis. It also announced its explicit desire to establish the Arabic language as the language of communication in official circles.⁽⁴⁴⁾ In its second speech (the Second Cry), issued in 1913 and directed at what it called the "valiant army" and the "noble Arab nation", the society affirmed its rebellion against the CUP government and that it had joined the Arab political movement demanding decentralized administration. Its petition did not neglect to mention Iraq: "Do you know who this rogue group is [...] they are the ones led by Haqqi Beg al-Baban, the former Deputy for Baghdad, who, when he came to

Iraq [...] sent reports to the Sublime Porte, hoping thereby to secure the implementation of martial law in Iraq and the killing of Arab chiefs [...] as well as actions that might have caused a civil war between religious community (*millet*) and state, since Iraq is Ja'fari Shi'a".⁽⁴⁵⁾

Efforts increased to combine organized political attempts to set up societies and organizations with the use of the term "Iraq" as a meaningful geographical identity. A good example of such combinations was the Iraqi Covenant Association (*al-'Ahd al-'Irāqī*), founded in Damascus in 1919, with branches set up in Aleppo, Mosul and Baghdad in the same year. The most important part of its program appears in the third section, on the members' oath, which contains the nascent concept of the idea of the independent state of Iraq: "In the name of God, righteousness and honor, I pledge to devote myself to the service of the Iraqi Covenant Association, whose aim is the independence of Iraq and the happiness of the Arab nation (*umma*) within its broader unity". Article 1 Paragraph 1 further outlines the main ideas of an independent Iraq's natural borders, and the integration of the three former *vilayets*: "The complete independence of Iraq within an Arab unity and within its natural borders: Iraq is divided into three regions, lower, middle and upper, and extends from the borders of the Euphrates north of Deir ez-Zor, the banks of the Tigris from the north of Diyarbakir to the Gulf of Basra and encompasses the left and right banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates defined by their natural borders".⁽⁴⁶⁾

As with Ottoman records, British records incorporate different social groups' conceptions of "Iraq", showing these groups' ideas and views regarding the creation of a state that would include the three *vilayets* in a single geographical and administrative

41 Marufoğlu, p. 215, original document: p. 300.

42 Sulayman Faidi, *Mudhakkirāt Sulaymān Fayḍī: Min Ruwwād an-Nahḍa al-Arabiyya f'l-'Irāq* [Memoirs of Sulayman Faidi: A Pioneer of the Arab Renaissance in Iraq], review and introduction by Basil Sulayman Faydi. 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 1998), p. 104.

43 Marufoğlu, pp. 238-241, original document: pp. 307 - 308.

44 Faydi, p. 104. For further reading on the work of the Basra Reform Society, see Hussain Hadi al-Shalah, *Ṭālib Bāshā an-Naqīb al-Baṣrī wa-Dawruhu fī Tārīkh al-'Irāqī as-Siyāsī al-Ḥadīth* [Talib an-Naqib and His Role in the History of Modern Iraq] (Beirut: Arab Encyclopædia House, 2002), pp. 277 - 287.

45 Marufoğlu, pp. 242-246, original document: pp. 309 - 310.

46 The Covenant Association was founded in secret by 'Aziz 'Ali al-Masri, an Arab officer, on 28 October 1913. The majority of its members were Arab officers, predominantly Iraqi. The Association aimed to unite Arab soldiers. The organisation quickly formed branches in Damascus, Beirut, Iraq, Mosul and Basra in order to fight the policy of Turkification. Its activities ceased following the breakout of the First World War. At the end of the war, the Association split into an Iraqi and a Syrian branch. See Fuad Qazan (ed./trans.), *al-'Irāq f'l-'Wathā'iq al-Biriṭāniyya 1905 - 1930* [Iraq in British Records 1905-1930], introduction and review by 'Abd-al-Rizāq al-Husni (Dar al-Ma'mun Translation and Publishing, 1989), pp.115-127; Wamidh Jamal 'Umar Nizmi, *Thawrat 1920: al-Judhūr as-Siyāsīyya wa'l-Fikriyya wa'l-Ijtimā'iyya li'l-Ḥaraka al-Qawmiyya al-'Arabiyya al-'Istiqlālīyya* f'l-'Irāq [The 1920 Revolution: The Political and Intellectual Roots of the Arab Nationalist "Istiqlalīst" Movement in Iraq], 2nd edition, (Baghdad: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1985), pp.142-148.

unit. There is a common theme in historical literature that these records represent the British view of Iraq's communities, or else the conceptions (true or false) that the British administration hoped to promote in its records and narratives to encourage their adoption by Iraqi forces in later stages of state formation. However, it must not be forgotten that the overwhelming majority of these records were confidential and only became accessible no less than thirty years later. The collections of British documentation thus derive their importance from the subjects they deal with. The most important of these records are those that reveal the inclinations and circumstances of the Iraqis after the First World War, after Britain had fully occupied Iraq with the addition of Mosul *vilayet* and shortly before the 1920 Iraqi Revolt that was to produce the first Iraqi government of the British occupation. These records reveal the inclination of various demographics' towards a vision of a unified Iraq.

A British record written in January 1919 refers to a study conducted by British officials into Iraqis' inclinations and statements regarding the possibility of founding an emirate.⁽⁴⁷⁾ British exaggerations of local support for their presence aside, the overall impression that we get from these records is that most regions and towns wanted to see a union between the three *vilayets*. The records state that "[t]he general view in Mosul [...] favors a union with Baghdad under British, rather than Arab rule, and many signed letters from all the different communities approve of this". Nasiriyah was no different to Mosul, as the following shows: "Opinion is united in favor of joining Mosul with Baghdad and Basra".⁽⁴⁸⁾ Though certain regions had "Turkish" majorities (as British records refer to

the Turkmen), it is notable that they were in favor of Mosul *vilayet* being integrated into the new Iraq, rather than being restored to Ottoman sovereignty. The following text refers: "Mandali, generally composed of Sunni Turks, requested that Mosul be joined to Iraq without an emir but with a British High Commissioner". In the region of Baquba, the movements seeking the integration of the three Iraqi *vilayets* said: "The population of the city of Baquba, many of whom have come from Baghdad humbly requesting a supreme Arab leader to rule from Mosul to Basra". Kirkuk supported the establishment of an Iraqi state incorporating Mosul *vilayet*, despite British records noting its Turkish character. The record states: "The majority are asking for an Iraqi state that includes Mosul, remaining under a British Protectorate without an emir. A small minority is in favor of an emir, but is unable to nominate a suitable candidate. Kirkuk is Turkish overall, with a mixture of Kurds and Arabs (a tangled group that cannot be resolved), Christians and Jews". Kifri's position was roughly equivalent to that of Kirkuk: "A common request for an Iraqi state that includes Mosul and remains under a British Protectorate".⁽⁴⁹⁾

A telegram received by the British administration in India on 28 January 1919 reiterated the content of the record above. The telegram contained a response to a question previously put to the notables of Baghdad on 9 January to discuss how the anticipated government would be composed. However, the response was not in favor of continued British administration, despite a demand for the three Iraqi *vilayets* to be integrated: "The Muslim envoys put forward a document in which they demanded a single Arab state from Mosul to

47 It is important to bear in mind in this context that Muhammad Reza al-Shabibi (1889-1965), a national figure who heralded from Najaf and who was one of the protagonists of the 1920 Revolution, made a statement concerning the integration of Mosul vilayet into the concept of "Iraq" without foreign oversight at a preparatory meeting convened in Najaf on 11 January 1918 for the general plebiscite. In his statement, al-Shabibi said: "The Iraqi people believe that Mosul is an inseparable part of Iraq. Iraqis see a fully independent national government as their right. None of us would contemplate choosing a foreign ruler". See: Ja'far al-Shaykh Al Mahbuba, *Mādī'n-Najaf wa-Hādiruhā* [Najaf Past and Present], 2nd ed., (Beirut: Dar al-Adwā', 1986), p. 356.

48 While investigating Iraqi views concerning the nature of government and the state, the British conducted a plebiscite in the winter of 1918 - 1919 across several regions of the Iraqi *vilayets*. Various historical and economic dimensions emerge in the minutes of Al-Nasiriya: "Since childhood, we have been told that Iraq is comprised of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul *vilayets*. They were all called Iraq. Baghdad was always the capital of these *vilayets*. It was evident that Mosul was connected to Baghdad, because Baghdad drank from Mosul's waters and Mosul obtained its food from Baghdad by maritime trade. We can never accept the idea of Mosul *vilayet* being separated from Iraq. When war broke out between 'Ali and Muawiyah in the early years of Islam, Syria and its subjects were ruled by Muawiyah; on the other hand, Iraq, including Mosul, was ruled by 'Ali. This is reason enough". See Philip Willard Ireland, *Iraq: A Study in Political Development* (London: Cape, 1937), p. 166ff.; Hussain, p. 24. The original Iraqi-dialect text was published in the minutes of "The Iraq Progress Report", or what was known as "Self-Determination in Iraq", written in Arabic and English: *Self-Determination in 'Iraq': Reproductions of original declarations by the people of 'Iraq' regarding the future of their country*, 1919, p. 8.

49 Alan D. L. Rush, (consultant ed.), *al-'Irāq fī Sijillāt al-Wathā'iq al-Biriṭāniyya 1914 - 1966 [Iraq in British Documents and Records]*, translated by Kazim Sa'd al-Din, (Baghdad: Bayt al-Hikma, 2013), pp. 188 - 189.

the Gulf under the rule of the line of Sharif with no trace of a foreign protectorate".⁽⁵⁰⁾ In 1919, a similar document sent by the India Ministry to the General Representative of the British Monarch in Iraq, Sir Arnold Wilson (1884-1940), discussed these revelations, but in a form that sought to clarify the view of the Iraqi notables through specific questions: were they in favor of a single Arab state under British protection from the northern limits of Mosul *vilayet* to the Persian Gulf? If this were so,

would they in future propose an emir for the Iraqi state? The response, which the document explicitly states, resonates with the integration of the three *vilayets* as proposed above: "Unanimous opinion supports the establishment a single government extending from Mosul to the Persian Gulf".⁽⁵¹⁾ In another version of a British document, the response is as follows: "[...] Unanimously, all consider that Mosul *vilayet* should be unified with Baghdad and Basra *vilayets*".⁽⁵²⁾

Chapter 3. Iraqi Christians and the establishment of the term "Iraq" in the collective memory

The adoption of the term "Iraq" by Iraqi Christians and its deliberate use in journalistic and educational publications during the first two decades of the twentieth century resulted in its transformation into an identity, taking the place of the three Ottoman *vilayets* in the Iraqi collective memory. This conceptual transformation was the first step paving the way for the exchange of views between Baghdad's elites, and coincided with what the British administrators had envisaged in their push to adopt the name "Kingdom of Iraq". The lawyer and notable 'Abd-al-Jibar Paşa al-Khayyat (1856-1924)⁽⁵³⁾ was one of the first Christians to use the term "Iraq" in the local press, and included it in the title of a political newspaper founded in Baghdad on 1 January 1909 – considered the first of its kind to use the word "Iraq" as its title (according to the eminent Iraqi scholar 'Abd-al-Rizaq al-Husni).⁽⁵⁴⁾ Previous attempts to publish this newspaper had only resulted in the publication of newspapers focusing on local issues, such as Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, etc.

Elsewhere, Father Anastas Mari al-Karmali (1866-1947)⁽⁵⁵⁾, eminent scholar, linguist and editor, emerged at the forefront of the Iraqi intellectuals promoting "Iraq" as an identity marker when he published his famous journal, *Lughat al-'Arab*, in 1911. This journal had a regular column entitled "The Month in Iraq and Its Environs".⁽⁵⁶⁾ Not only did al-Karmali use this as a section heading in his journal, he also began to infuse his reading of history with aspects of the identity of Iraq and its intellectual-geographical projections. Thus a 1911 article of his on the Chaldeans reads: "The Chaldeans were a great nation from a bygone era [...] they inhabited Iraq from north to south [...] we have disregarded the traces and antiques discovered in our country [...] we therefore consider it our duty to conduct this valuable research so that the people of this nation may stop and learn the ways of the people of old".⁽⁵⁷⁾ His support for literary efforts during this difficult juncture in the initial formation of the Iraqi state created a space for the limited freedom enjoyed by the Iraqi *vilayets* when the Unionists

50 Ibid., p. 190.

51 A slight technical difference exists in some of the sources that have translated this document. This difference can easily be seen on inspection of these three, originally sixteen, questions. See: Rush (ed.), vol. 2, pp. 247, 274, 275; compare Hussain, p. 23.

52 Rush (ed.), vol. 2, p. 274.

53 For a faithful rendering of the biography of 'Abdul Jabbar Pasha al-Khayyat, see Mir Basri, *A'lam as-Siyāsa fi'l-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth* [Great Figures of Politics in Modern Iraq] (London: Dār al-Ḥikma, 2004), p. 33.

54 'Abdul Rizaq Al-Husni, *Tārīkh aṣ-Ṣihāfa al-'Irāqīyya* [History of the Iraqi Press], 3rd ed. (Sidon: Al-'Arfan Press, 1971), pp. 90 - 99.

55 For a faithful rendering of Father al-Karmali's life, see Basri, Mir, *A'lam al-Yaqāza al-Fikriyya fi'l-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth* [Great Men of the Intellectual Awakening in Modern Iraq], Silsila al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha 38 [Modern Books Series 38] (Baghdad: Dar al-Ḥurriya Press, 1971), pp. 90 - 99.

56 "Tārīkh Waqā'i' ash-Shahr Fī'l-'Irāq wa-mā Jāwarah" [The Month in Iraq and Its Environs], in *Majallat Lughat al-Arab al-Baghdādiyya, Yūliyō 1911 — Oktōbir 1931 M* [The Baghdad Journal *The Arab Tongue*, July 1911-October 1931 AD], Ed. Ibrahim Hamid al-Khalidi (Beirut: Jadawel Publishing, Translation and Distribution, 2014).

57 *Lughat al-'Arab*: year 1, no. 12. (August 1911), p. 52 - 53.

came to power following the 1908 Revolution. A decade that warrants close inspection is that which lies between the moment in 1909 that 'Abd-al-Jabbar Paşa al-Khayyat founded his newspaper, *al-'Irāq* – where the same Father al-Karmali who in 1911 would later use the name “Iraq” in a subtitle in his own newspaper was a columnist – and the publication of a schoolbook entitled *An Overview of the History of Iraq* in Basra in 1919.

Looking into Father al-Karmali's reasons for writing a book about Iraq in 1919, we find that he had a strong relationship with some of the British administrators. John Joseph Duskin states that Father al-Karmali wrote this book at the request of the British.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Thus al-Karmali writes at the beginning of the introduction to the book: "This book was suggested to me by the Baghdad Minister of Education more than a year after the start of the British occupation. It was he that proposed I write it [...] I finished it in three months, because it he had suggested it to me in June 1918, I didn't start it until September [...] and only finished it in November [...] It is a school textbook".⁽⁵⁹⁾ During this phase, the British were hastening to establish dealings with any Iraqis who might be useful points of contact during the transformations expected after the foundation of the Iraqi state. This was the background to the positive relationship that characterized Father al-Karmali's interaction with various British administrators, who were doggedly putting the finishing touches to the plebiscite to be held in 1918 - 1919. Al-Karmali did not himself exist in isolation from the changes in values that accompanied the presence of the British and their

attempts to earn the goodwill of the Baghdad elite after entering Baghdad in 1917. We thus find the British seeking his advice on what to call the Baghdadi newspaper that they wished to publish as their mouthpiece. They were unable to find a member of the elite who could be trusted to give them an appropriate response apart from Father al-Karmali, who in turn sought the advice of Mahmud Shukri al-Alusi, who advised him to call the newspaper *al-'Arab*.⁽⁶⁰⁾

Notwithstanding murmurs that al-Karmali praised the British presence because of his friendships with administrators – especially given his comments in his *Overview*, which reflect his high hopes for the British presence⁽⁶¹⁾ – we must bear in mind the important point that such familiar interactions between al-Karmali and the British⁽⁶²⁾ may have contributed in one way or another to the swift abandonment by the British of terms such as "Mesopotamia" and their replacement with "Iraq", particularly given that al-Karmali's *Lughat al-'Arab* had dwelt on it in detail. Salim al-Alusi comments that "this journal was a space in which differing views, judgements, and explanations regarding the name of Iraq and its significance vied for prominence."⁽⁶³⁾ This argument aside, another aspect is reflected in the predominance of “Iraq” and related terms in the local journalism and publishing, such as the advent of the newspaper *al-'Irāq* in 1909, as well as the role played by the journal *Lughat al-'Arab* following its publication in 1911 – before the arrival of the British and distinct from it.

58 John Joseph Diskin, "The Genesis of the Government Educational System in 'Iraq'," Ph.D thesis, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh - Pennsylvania, 1971, p. 297 no. 1.

59 Anaştas Mari Al-Karmali, *Khulāṣat Tārīkh al-'Irāq min Nushū'ihī ilā Bidāyat al-Qarn al-'Ishrīn* [An Overview of the History of Iraq From Its Advent to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century] (Beirut/London: Al-Warrak Publishing Co. Ltd., 2012), p. 9.

60 'Ali Al-Wardi, *Lamḥāt Ijtimā'iyya Min Tārīkh al-'Irāq al-Hadīth* [Glimpses of Society in the History of Modern Iraq], Book 4, (Baghdad: [name unknown], 1974), p. 370. Al-Husni's aforementioned book on the Iraqi press does not mention that the suggestion to call the newspaper *al-'Arab* came from al-Alusi, attributing it instead to al-Karmali.

61 For example, "[t]he British government wishes to advance the social situation in this region by securing its roads, spreading agriculture and moving its people beyond all the ruin they have faced," al-Karmali, p. 218., and "the British state constantly desires to develop and advance Iraq, and unite the voice of its people and its diaspora between Iraq and the British state in harmony, familiarity and collaboration", pp. 266 - 267.

62 Some of these interactions were connected to al-Karmali's completion of his *Overview of the History of Iraq* in November 1918, as indicated in the book's introduction; with his involvement in the management of a British periodical, *Dār as-Salām (House of Peace)*, published in Baghdad on 6 October 1918; and with his later replacement of this with another British journal called *Mir'āt al-'Irāq (Mirror of Iraq)*, published on 8 February 1919, printed in Basra and distributed in Iraq. See al-Husni, pp. 36 - 37.

63 Salim Al-Alusi, *Ismā'l-'Irāq wa-Baghdād: al-Aṣl wa'l-Ma'nā fi'l-'Uṣūr at-Tārīkhīyya* [The names 'Iraq' and 'Baghdad': Origins and Meanings Throughout the Ages], (Beirut/London: Al-Warrak Publishing Co. Ltd., 2013), p. 21.

An Anatomy of the British Narrative: Shortcomings and Imperfections

The British narrative concerning the emergence of "Iraq" has focused on a concept of an "artificial" state in literature and records referring to the regional space of the three Iraqi *vilayets*, either during the Ottoman era or after the British had fully occupied these three territories. There may be no state that has been called artificial more often than Iraq has, to quote American scholar Sara Pursley.⁽⁶⁴⁾ This narrative has consistently drawn its evidence from the perceptions and writings of an important group of British administrative officials and military officers, who abound with comments and references to those behind the "creation", "invention" or "discovery" of the "State of Iraq". Not only does this narrative draw on these highly loaded terms, it goes so far as to remind its readers that this newly created territory had formerly been merely "unconnected, arbitrary and unplanned Ottoman *vilayets*". The discourse of this narrative was thus occasionally combined with a negative perspective and patronizing overtones, usually linked to two British figures who were the source of this historical discussion: Arnold Wilson, the General Representative of the British Monarch in Iraq, and Gertrude Bell, the Eastern Secretary of the High Commissioner in Iraq (1868-1926).

As part of his formal position and his preparations for the 1918 - 1919 plebiscite on the shape of the forthcoming government, Arnold Wilson laid out his belief in "an Iraq unified in its three *vilayets*". A document thus refers to his tacit acknowledgement of the important market potential that would be created by unifying Mosul *vilayet* with the rest of the *vilayets*: "Failure to append Mosul *vilayet* to Iraq would lead

to the deprivation of that *vilayet's* commercial link with Iraq and the material benefits that the British alone have the ability to bring to those regions [...] It would be useful to demonstrate Sir Arnold Wilson's plan to encompass Mosul *vilayet* as a integral part of Iraq".⁽⁶⁵⁾ It is no surprise that modern sources celebrate him as the "architect of the present Iraqi state".⁽⁶⁶⁾ Many scholars have been inspired by these accolades and made use of them in their work. Reeva Simon, a scholar of the Middle East at Columbia University, thus writes: "A clear example of an artificially conceived state, Iraq emerged by the will of the British at the end of the Second World War. There was a need to create new borders in the Middle East after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. As the victors, the British planned the partition of land as befitted their strategic concerns, which demanded a change of policy [...] they drew new lines at the 1921 Cairo Conference, which created Iraq the state from the former Ottoman *vilayets*, Baghdad, Basra and Mosul".⁽⁶⁷⁾

Not only do these studies ignore the historical background of the Ottoman legacy, the interconnectedness of the three *vilayets* and their economic interdependency, and the active presence of the term "Iraq" and the "Iraqi *khitta*" in the official and local imaginary prior to the British presence, they also neglect historical inquiry into the details of the British narrative itself. In one of his telegrams, Arnold Wilson refers to the integration of the Iraqi *vilayets* before the British presence as a natural unit: "He called for the unification of the Iraqi territories on the grounds that it would be impossible to divide them into *vilayets*, given that since ancient times they had been and continue to form an integrated unit".⁽⁶⁸⁾

64 Despite Sara Pursley's pioneering work refuting the myth of the artificial state, which she dedicated particularly to the question of the Sykes-Picot map and the nature of the plans to draw up Iraq's borders, she makes a mistaken generalisation when she states that the Ottomans only used the term "Iraq" in a narrow sense when referring to Baghdad and Basra *vilayets*. See Sara Pursley, "Lines Drawn on an Empty Map: Iraq's Borders and the Legend of the Artificial State," Part 1, *Jadaliyya*, 02/06/2015, accessed on 30/04/2018 at: <https://goo.gl/dnERhc>

65 Rush (ed.), vol. 2, p. 375.

66 Karl E. Meyer and Shareen Blair Brysac, *Kingmakers: The Invention of the Modern Middle East* (New York: W.W Norton and Company, 2014), p. 199.

67 Reeva S. Simon, "The Imposition of Nationalism on a Non-Nation State: The Case of Iraq During the Interwar Period, 1921-1941," in: James Jankowski & Israel Gershoni (eds.), *Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p. 87; Issam Al-Khafaji, "Tashakkul al-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth: al-Waqā'i wa'l-Asāfīr" [The Formation of Modern Iraq: Myths and Reality], *Kalamon Review: A Cultural Quarterly*. No. 7 (Summer 2012), p. 2; Issam Al-Khafaji, "Tashkīl al-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth: al-Waqā'i wa'l-Asāfīr" [The Formation of Modern Iraq: Myths and Reality], *at-Tayyār ad-Dimuqrāfī*, 01/06/2014, p. 4.

68 Faruq Salih Al-'Umar, *Ḥawl Siyāsāt Biriṭānyā fī'l-'Irāq, 1913 - 1921* [On British Policy in Iraq, 1913-1921] (Baghdad: Al-Irshad Press, 1977), p. 48; an alternative translation is: "Wilson played a decisive role in achieving a British advance northwards to Mosul. In his view, this brought political unity to a region that was a single organic entity in economic and geographical terms. With this he created the required upper boundary to an inter-connected land mass, in order to achieve an inhabitable state". See Reidar Visser, *Basra, the Failed Gulf State: Separatism and Nationalism in Southern Iraq* (London: Global Book Marketing, 2005), p. 161; Ireland, p. 116.

At the same time, the place of oil and its importance in the minds and statements of British officials are far from absent from these documents – it is one of the motives behind their haste to integrate Mosul *vilayet* with Baghdad and Basra.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Thus Mosul *vilayet* played a vital role in confirming the emergence of the story of "Iraq's" invention. The context for advancing the British narrative lent a significant aura to the struggle undertaken by Britain, which claimed to be behind the affirmation of Mosul's identity with Iraq during negotiations with Turkey to establish the border between the new Iraqi state and Turkey until 1925.

The British narrative has been reproduced by Iraqi expatriate historians and academics in Western universities and research centers, including Adeed Dawisha, who writes: "The story is older than the history of the Iraqi state itself, and was born after the three Ottoman *vilayets* were forced to combine following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire [...] the mechanism for state establishment in the Middle East during the post-World War One period reflected the interests of the British and French colonizers in the region. Thus, the states were not necessarily formed in response to the national demands of local populations, but instead to satisfy the political and economic interests of the colonial powers. Not only did the nascent artificial components face the task of administration, a difficult task in the first place, they faced the task of melding numerous local entities and interests, a task that mostly involves a conflict-related dimension".⁽⁷⁰⁾

Such writing reflects how much is ignored or overlooked in these justifications – the same ones that were advanced by the British when discussing the inheritance of the Iraqi *vilayets* and the integrative transformations these *vilayets* underwent within a single administrative entity. This integration is attested by figures such as Arnold Wilson, who notes that in 1910 Nazım Paşa was placed in supreme charge of the three *vilayets* of Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul.⁽⁷¹⁾ Some piecemeal readings of British records present a one-sided perspective, adopting a British claim to graciousness and precedence in creating all

of Iraq's borders, in isolation from geo-societal and political changes and their dynamics on a local and regional level. These records show, however, that there were local contexts and social modalities that encouraged the decision to integrate Mosul *vilayet* and the two other Iraqi *vilayets*. For example, a record dated 27 October 1918 states: "the population of Mosul been closely linked [...] for a very long time with Baghdad. The entire population of Iraq shares a hatred of the Syrians [...] Mosul *vilayet* is the remotest area of Iraq, not Syria, and its trade is developing with Iraq, not Syria. The northern borders of Mosul *vilayet* run alongside the borders of Turkish Kurdistan, and roughly coincide with the southern borders of Armenia. I would therefore prefer the line to be that which shows the local population that it is the best way of separating the French and British spheres of influence exclusively from al-Qa'im on the Euphrates to Jazirat Ibn 'Umar on the Tigris (i.e. Mosul *vilayet's* borders would be roughly as they were before the war)".⁽⁷²⁾

To say that Britain provided the point of reference for the final borders of Iraq would be misleading. It might be fair to state that Britain occupied the dominant position on the political stage, and that it effectively decided how the existing borders would be drawn based on the accounts of the British officials themselves, who resorted to choosing the northern administrative border of Mosul *vilayet* as the boundary line, as described in the aforementioned document. However, at the same time we must not disregard the status of Iraq's western border as a logical dividing line between Syria and Iraq. Travelers, including the British, used the River Euphrates as a boundary marker. This boundary divides Abu Kamal (on the west bank) from Anah (on the east bank).⁽⁷³⁾ In addition, the boundary marker between Syria and Iraq drawn up in May 1920, the current border between the two countries and the pass between Abu Kamal and Al-Qa'im, may roughly correspond with the pre-World War One eastern border of the *sancak* of Deir ez-Zor.⁽⁷⁴⁾

69 Meyer and Brysac, pp. 196, 210.

70 Adeed Dawisha, *Iraq: A Political History from Independence to Occupation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 14 - 15.

71 Sir Arnold T. Wilson, *Mesopotamia, 1917-1920: A Clash of Loyalties: : a personal and historical record* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 151.

72 Rush (ed.), vol. 2., p. 664.

73 Al-Khafji, "Tashakkul al- Irāq al-Ḥadīth", p. 9. See also Anne Blunt, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1879).

74 Eleizer Tauber, "The Struggle for Dayr al-Zur: The Determination of Borders between Syria and Iraq," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 23, no. 3 (August 1991), p. 378.

On the other hand, another British group have continued to explain the integration of the Iraqi *vilayets* as an imposition justified by the incompatibility of its component social groups or the possibility that the Shi'a – who occupied a majority of the parliamentary seats – would usurp the role of the British. According to this group, this thus necessitated the attachment of Mosul *vilayet* to the other two *vilayets* in order to achieve a numerical balance between Sunnis and Shi'is. Gertrude Bell alludes to this possibility in a private letter sent on 3 October 1920: "if you're going to have anything like really representative institutions.[...] you would have a majority of Shi'ahs. For that reason [...] you can never have 3 completely autonomous provinces. Sunni Mosul must be retained as a part of the Mesopotamian state in order to adjust the balance. But to my mind it's one of the main arguments for giving Mesopotamia responsible govt. We as outsiders can't differentiate between Sunni and Shi'ah, but leave it to them and they'll get over the difficulty by some kind of hanky panky, just as the Turks did, and for the present it's the only way of getting over it. I don't for a moment doubt that the final authority must be in the hands of the Sunnis, in spite of their numerical inferiority; otherwise you will have a mujtahid-run, theocratic state, which is the very devil."⁽⁷⁵⁾

Certain examples of academic writing influenced by the British narrative have cast a long shadow on the historiography of the initial formation of the Iraqi state. They have come to constitute one way of accounting for the foundations of Iraq-ist identity, after subjecting it to a re-reading from a one-sided analytical perspective linking the emergence of "Iraq" to the concept of the nation-state, purporting to show that this concept defined the borders of Iraq during the Ottoman phase. This literature willfully disregards the close similarity between the former approximate borders of Iraq and its supposed borders during the British presence in Iraq, so as to present the Iraqi state as though it were completely new and

distinctive. Iraqi scholar Fanar Haddad contends that there was an Iraqi identity and a sense of Iraq, but that it did not have a political element, an element he assumes to be a key factor in drawing the dimensions of the state. "Clearly, at least some people in the three wilayets keenly felt a sense of belonging to an Iraq of some sort. It is tempting to view the interlude between the jihad and the rebellion of 1920 as the gestation period of Iraqi political consciousness. There is no shortage of references to Iraq in this period – or indeed in the Ottoman era for that matter – but it is questionable how politicized the term 'Iraq' was on the mid-Euphrates before 1920".⁽⁷⁶⁾ Although I concur with him to a certain extent, we must bear in mind that the geographical strength or weakness of any identity is linked to a wide range of factors in the embryonic stage, but that the political factor is not the sole decisive factor in the development of any identity which has come to represent a unifying perspective over successive time periods.

Haddad thus repeats his affirmation that Iraqi identity can be reduced to a nation-state-based perspective in axiomatic fashion: "for the majority of the people of the mid-Euphrates, Iraq was either a welcome goal by 1920 or, perhaps more commonly, an acknowledged and recognized, yet largely irrelevant, concept that built upon long-held preconceptions, often of secondary importance devoid of political connotations. This, along with the events and influences of the early twentieth century, is what accounts for the rapid acceptance of and adherence to the Iraqi nation-state".⁽⁷⁷⁾

It was the intersection of indigenous, locally-developed structures and the interaction of regional and international powers and factors that helped Britain to draw up Iraq's borders, and not the reverse. This is not to claim that the borders had previously been drawn up and agreed upon; rather, it is an observation of the sequence of internal dynamics that compelled international forces to adapt to the economic, social and political realities in Iraqi

75 Elizabeth Burgoyne, *Gertrude Bell: From Her Personal Papers, 1914-1926*, (London: Ernest Benn, 1961). The entire text of Miss Bell's letter to her father on that day is available on Newcastle University's indexed archive of her work: "Gertrude Bell Archive," Newcastle University, accessed on 02/05/2018, at: <https://goo.gl/QUL2Bd>

76 Fanar Haddad, "Political Awakenings in an Artificial State: Iraq, 1914-1920," *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2012), p. 25.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 34. This fact notwithstanding, Haddad identifies the broad scope of identities: "Identity develops a momentum of its own and is only as 'real' as people believe it to be. Through the repetition of verbal or physical acts of allegiance, consciously or unconsciously, in other words through ritual, an idea, such as the nation, gains relevance and becomes a reality." See *ibid.*, p. 36.

society.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Moreover – and significantly – at the critical moments in the timeline of the Iraqi state, Iraqi identity did not witness any challenge that might support the British narrative, a narrative that gambled on the conditionality of forced integration and its correlation with the survival and continuity of this state. Visser conclusively arrives at this point: "[No] serious secessionist threat to the 'new' Iraqi state emerged anywhere south of Kurdistan during the critical years of transition in the 1920s and the 1930s. The only separatist movement of note was an attempt to isolate Basra as a British-protected enclave [a petition by the Basra notables in 1921], but this scheme failed to create popular enthusiasm, and, importantly, found it difficult to come up with alternate frameworks of regional identity that could effectively challenge that of Iraq".⁽⁷⁹⁾ For this reason,

one of the failures of the artificial Iraqi state narrative is its recourse to "the fantasy of ethnosectarian homogeneity as the foundation of stable statehood while refusing to acknowledge the inevitable implications of that fantasy."⁽⁸⁰⁾

As Sara Pursley indicates, the artificial Iraqi state narrative "emerged out of the very historical conflicts and processes it was then retrospectively deployed to explain, as well as to explain away. Rather than historicize the narrative, by exploring its emergence in the years after World War I, scholars and countless other commentators have used and re-used it to empty Iraq of history. Rather than set this narrative in historical context through an analysis of how it emerged in the years following the First World War, scholars and commentators have often used and re-used it to drain Iraq of its history."⁽⁸¹⁾

Conclusion

The nascent growth of identity that historically accompanied the Ottoman administration in the Iraqi *vilayets* emerged and manifested in various different ways within the framework of a deeply-rooted Iraq-ist trend based on usages instituted by the Ottoman administration in various stages in the government of those *vilayets*. One of the most prominent features of this trend was the adoption of a centralized unit of administration for these *vilayets* under the leadership of Baghdad, alongside the process of socioeconomic integration imposed by local geography. All these transformations accompanied serious attempts to promote the name "Iraq" in public maps of these *vilayets*. Many figures supported these transformations, including the Sultan (the highest authority in the Ottoman state) and other Ottoman officials, reflecting a kind of transcendence of the regional framework that encompassed Baghdad, Mosul and Basra *vilayets*. This manifested in the frequent use of the two terms "Iraq" and "the Iraqi *khitta*" in Ottoman correspondence, reports, publications, reference works, records and atlases. The promotion of these two terms as practical

umbrella alternatives to the names of the three *vilayets*, in conjunction with the end of the Ottoman era, accelerated the British adoption of the name "the Kingdom of Iraq" and its valorized use over the other names that were abundant in British narratives and histories of Iraq's legacy, such as "Mesopotamia" (i.e. the land between the two rivers). Indeed, it even contributed to Britain's adoption of the borders of this new kingdom through the inspiration they received from the Ottoman legacy, despite Britain itself ignoring or explicitly denying this fact.

Popular and elite local social groups helped put this vision to work, bringing to the fore the term "Iraq" as an umbrella identity. This emerges in much local correspondence and private reports with official bodies employing the concept of "Iraq" socially in place of a tribal structure, or geographically in place of a *dīrah*. This refutes the previous assertion that there did not exist an environment or local concepts that supported evidence of the concept "Iraq" being deployed during the Ottoman era. Rather, the term "Iraq" is used by common and elite social groups

78 Al-Khafaji, "Tashakkul al-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth": Myths and Reality", pp. 14, 16.

79 For a fuller understanding, see Visser, p. 153.

80 Pursley.

81 Sara Pursley, "'Lines Drawn on an Empty Map': Iraq's Borders and the Legend of the Artificial State," Part 2, *Jadaliyya*, 03/06/2015, accessed on 30/04/2018, at: <https://goo.gl/eNiu43>

and is effectively used as a geographical and identity marker, confirming the view that it was extant *prima facie*. Local Iraqi publications correspond with the reality of the new transformations and titles. Thus in one unofficial publication we see the use of adjectives and descriptors including "the sanctuary of the Baghdadi *vilayet* and the reformer of the Iraqi *khitta*", as with inclusive terms in official circulation such as "minister of Iraq", "*vali* of Iraq" and "inspector of Iraq".

The artificial state theory (particularly the British narrative) has focused on Eurocentric models in the creation of the modern state. Such Eurocentric approaches are overly restrictive and fail to take into account diverging and alternative patterns for the emergence of modern states. Additionally, the inability of the Iraqi and other models to meet European standards of national homogeneity and territorial contiguity have been used to explain and justify political violence within the boundaries of Iraq, precisely that which British and other narratives have sought to promote.

There is no merit in practical terms to the specific claim of the British accounts and those that follow their lead that Iraq was created from disparate *vilayets* shortly after the 1921 San Remo Conference and the formation of the Iraqi state in the same year. Rather, clear evidence of the precedence of the Iraqi appellation, and the usage of the term Iraq in many accounts (Ottoman and local/regional) prior to the British occupation, drove the British to acknowledge the existing reality. The British claim therefore rests on a technicality.

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Britain did not provide the ultimate reference point for the map of Iraq's borders. It might be fair to state that Britain occupied the dominant position on the political stage, and that it was Britain that effectively decided how the existing borders would be drawn, based on the accounts of the British officials themselves who chose the northern administrative border of Mosul *vilayet*. One of the strongest pieces of evidence is represented by the Ottoman parameters of the boundaries of Mosul *vilayet*, considered by the population of the so-called "Iraqi *khitta*" to be within "the area that extended from Baghdad to Zakho at the furthest point of Mosul *vilayet* ", and the northern boundary line, as we know, of the current Iraqi state. At the same time, we must not disregard the Arab border of Iraq as a conscious boundary marker between the Iraqi and Syrian states. British and other explorers recognized this line at the end of the nineteenth century as a dividing line between the two countries, as well as the boundary marker between Syria and Iraq drawn up in May 1920, the current border between the two countries and the pass between Abu Kamal and Al-Qa'im, which may roughly correspond with the pre-World War One eastern border of the *sancak* of Deir ez-Zor. Despite the fact that the artificial state thesis sought and continues to seek to negate local history and drain it of its contents in order to grant the Other primacy in establishing roles, we may say that Britain was able to create a monarchical system in Iraq but was not able either to draw up its borders or transcend the historical-geographical legacy of the context and its Ottoman precedents, particularly from the end of the nineteenth century onwards.

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