A RACE AGAINST TIME: GOVERNING FEMININITY AND REPRODUCING THE FUTURE IN REVOLUTIONARY IRAQ, 1945-63

by

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Abstract

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This dissertation rethinks the Iraqi revolution of 1958 and the post-World War II era leading up to it through the lens of gender and family reform, in particular by examining the relation between such reforms and various conceptions of temporality, both secular and Islamic. Engaging critically with Lee Edelman's notion of "reproductive futurism" as a hegemonic political imaginary of modernity, I argue that projects to cultivate modern feminine domesticities in Iraq during this era were linked to larger depoliticizing and disciplinary mechanisms that sought to stabilize the political present in the name of an ever-receding economic future. Sexual difference and the fantasy of the child as the embodiment of the nation's future development were keys to this process. Gender and family reform efforts in this period were markedly different from earlier nationalist projects to cultivate feminine domesticity in the Middle East, shifts that were related to the expansion of public schooling to the lower classes; new understandings of pedagogy, psychology, and child development and new global knowledge networks through which such understandings traveled; ruptures in conceptions of historical time and generational time; the rise of the United States as a superpower; and the dawn of the Cold War and the "age of development" after 1945. Yet the family-reform efforts I examine were not instances of a universal and linear modernization process; they were shaped by, and often direct responses to, local forces of upheaval, including rural rebellions connected to the agrarian crisis and the widespread political mobilization and radicalization of youth in the postwar era. They

also ran up against local modes of life and networks of solidarity, Islamic and otherwise, that were not organized according to the child-centered, future-directed, and present-freezing logic of family reform in the age of development.

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The process of writing this dissertation, as my advisor Beth Baron gently pointed out once it was over, was anything but a race against time. I am immensely grateful to Beth for her patience and humor, her intellectual and personal generosity, her close and incisive reading of most of the chapters more times than she probably cares to remember, and her knack for pointing me in productive directions whenever I found something in my research that wasn't supposed to be there (according to my original arguments). My dissertation first reader Samira Haj introduced me to exciting new work on secularism, Islam, and modernity, including her own, making me feel that there was a reason I had chosen to go to graduate school in Middle East history after all. Dagmar Herzog helped me rethink the chapter chronology and narrative thread of the dissertation during a moment of crisis after I had read through a complete early draft for the first time. My other committee members—Ervand Abrahamian, Orit Bashkin, and Joan Scott—read the submitted dissertation cold turkey, as it were, making very fresh and useful comments that helped me get out of the trees and see a bit of the forest. After having been warned (or promised) by various students and former students over the years that "your committee members don't actually *read* your dissertation," I was honored and a bit chagrined to discover during my defense that what I wrote had been carefully read by six outstanding historians.

My very non-conjugal family made this journey possible in more ways than one. For the past eight years, the tradition of Friday-night dinner with three of my favorite people has carved something resembling a weekend into graduate-school life and has helped sustain me. Eric Taylor took care of me through much of the journey, cooking incredible meals and making sure there was something besides beer in the fridge. For Rob Miotke and Michele Kelley there literally are no words; I do not know how I roped such brilliant and deeply ethical people into my

life but I do know that they make “just friends” the most ridiculous phrase of the English language. Jennie Portnof turned the most mundane writing breaks into pleasures, whether it was watching an awful TV show or analyzing the latest goings-on at the dog run. I thank her for everything.

For my parents, with great love

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The wind asks who I am
I am its confused spirit, disowned by time
I, like it, am nowhere
We keep traveling without end
We keep passing through without staying
Should we reach a bend
We would think it the end of our suffering
and then—nothingness!

Time asks who I am
I, like it, am a giant, traversing centuries
I go back and grant them resurrection
I create the distant past
Under the spell of easy hope
And I return to bury it
To fashion for myself a new yesterday
whose tomorrow is ice

الريح تسأل من أنا
أنا روحها الحيران أنكرنى الزمان
أنا مثلها فى لا مكان
نبقى نسير ولا انتها
نبقى نمر ولا بقاء
فإذا بلغنا المنحنى
خلناه خاتمة الشقاء
فإذا فضاء!

الدهر يسأل من أنا
أنا مثله جبارة أطوى عصور
وأعود أمنحها النشور
أنا أخلق الماضى البعيد
من فنتة الأمل الرغيد
وأعود أدفنه أنا
لاصوغ لي أمسا جديد
غده جليد

- Nazik al-Mala'ika, Baghdad, 1948[1]

[1] From the poem "Ana" ("I"), reprinted in Nazik al-Mala'ika, *al-A`mal al-Shi`riyya al-Kamila*, part 1 (Baghdad: al-Majlis al-A`la li-l-Thaqafa, 2002), 481-82. Translation adapted from Nadje Sadiq al-Ali, *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* (London: Zed Books, 2007), 71.

Introduction

The Iraqi Revolution and the Time Gone By

At 6:30a.m. on July 14, 1958, Baghdad radio went silent for a few minutes. A new voice then came over the airwaves with the following words:

> *In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate*
> Noble People of Iraq,
> Trusting in God and with the aid of the loyal sons of the people and the national armed forces, we have undertaken to liberate the beloved homeland from the corrupt crew that imperialism installed…
> Brethren,
> The army is of you and for you and has carried out what you desired…
> Citizens,
> While admiring your fervent patriotic spirit…we call upon you to remain calm and maintain order and unity…in the interest of the homeland.[1]

Within two hours of this proclamation of the overthrow of the Iraqi Hashimite monarchy created by the British in 1921, the streets of Baghdad were filled with jubilant supporters. The "Free Officers" of the Iraqi military who carried out the coup and installed themselves at the head of the newly declared Republic of Iraq were not communists, but the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and its thousands of fellow travelers were by far their most visible and organized base of support on the streets of Baghdad. They were joined by members of the three other oppositional political parties that had joined together in 1957 to form the United National Front and whose leaders had been apprised of the impending coup—the liberal National Democratic Party (NDP) and the two Arab nationalist parties, the Ba`th and the Independence Party—as well as by throngs of unaffiliated Baghdadis celebrating the monarchy's collapse. Within three days, U.S. troops had landed in Lebanon and British troops in Jordan in a joint effort to keep the winds of revolution

[1] Quoted in and translated by Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 802. For the Arabic original, see Majid Shubbar, ed., *Khutab al-Za`im `Abd al-Karim Qasim [Speeches of the Leader `Abd al-Karim Qasim] 1958-1959* (London: Alwarrak Publishing Ltd., 2007), 25–26.

from blowing beyond Iraq's borders.[2] But for a number of reasons, not least of which was the immense popularity of the new regime in the days following the coup, neither country deemed it wise to intervene directly or immediately in the state of affairs inside Iraq on behalf of its Cold War Hashimite allies.[3]

There are many factors that enabled a military coup in Baghdad in 1958 to be so widely experienced as a popular revolution and then, in some ways, to become one. Among them was the fact that the July revolution was a formerly imagined future—or a "future past," to borrow Reinhart Koselleck's phrase[4]—that by fulfilling certain expectations (abolition of monarchy, an end to British political control, reform of agriculture) could be experienced as an absolute temporal rupture, the end of one time and the beginning of another. The term *al-`ahd al-ba'id* (or *al-`ahd al-mubad*), often translated into English as "the old regime" but more directly translatable as "the bygone era" or "the time gone by," immediately became—across disparate spheres of Iraqi society—a common appellation for the monarchical period, already felt as belonging to the distant past.[5] Yet the threat of counter-revolution was pervasive and no doubt real. The short-term weapon used against it was repression, but the long-term weapon was understood by the new regime and its supporters to be rapid economic development. The experience of the revolution as both an absolute rupture and the unfolding of historical necessity was thus coterminous with a widespread sense of anxiety, of what many contemporaries described as a race against time.

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[2] For a variety of analyses about the relation of the Iraqi revolution to region-wide events, see Wm. Roger Louis and Roger Owen, eds., *A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002).
[3] On the impression that the massive July 14 demonstrations in Baghdad made on "those within Iraq and beyond who were weighing up the possibilities of intervention to restore the old regime," see Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 149. See also Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 803–805.
[4] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
[5] See Orit Bashkin, "Hybrid Nationalisms: *Waṭanī* and *Qawmī* Visions in Iraq Under ᶜAbd al-Karim Qasim, 1958-1961," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 293–312.

On July 27, introducing the "temporary constitution" of the thirteen-day-old republic, the leading officer of the coup and Iraq's new prime minister, `Abd al-Karim Qasim, proclaimed: "When the revolution came, uprooting tyranny and corruption, a new age began, and it would inevitably cut the ties to that painful past."[6] Since then, numerous historians of Iraq have attempted to convey the feeling of temporal rupture and infinite possibility that suffused political and everyday life after the July revolution. Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett describe a widespread "sense of almost unlimited possibilities for the future of the country."[7] Albert Hourani recalls a world transformed by the "sense, so common at moments of great upheaval, that everything was now possible."[8] Abdul-Salaam Yousif contends that July 14 was "an explosive rupture in the very fabric of Iraqi society."[9] Such readings suggest a collective experience akin to what sociologist Georges Gurvitch calls "explosive time"— and which he names as the dominant temporality of modern revolutions—"where the present as well as the past are dissolved in the creation of the immediately transcended future."[10] The familiar unfolding of the Iraqi revolution as a future past thus coexisted with, and in fact produced, a sense of absolute newness and infinite possibility, unconstrained by anything that had come before.

Each of the four political parties in the United National Front had different visions of the future-past revolution. For the NDP, it inaugurated a truly national-sovereign space within which liberal democracy and capitalist development could unfold. For the ICP and the Arab nationalist

[6] "Nas al-Dustur al-Mu`aqqat li-l-Jumhuriyya al-`Iraqiyya [Text of the Temporary Constitution of the Iraqi Republic]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 18, 1959, 4.
[7] Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001), 51.
[8] Albert Hourani, "Forward," in *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958: The Old Social Classes Revisited*, ed. Robert Fernea and Wm. Roger Louis (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991), viii.
[9] Abdul-Salaam Yousif, "The Struggle for Cultural Hegemony During the Iraqi Revolution," in Fernea and Louis, *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958*, 172.
[10] Georges Gurvitch, *The Spectrum of Social Time* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Pub. Co., 1964), 33.

parties, it was "the first stage" in a longer historical process with a different end: for the former, it was the "bourgeois" phase of the two-stage revolution leading to socialism; for the latter, it was the political prerequisite of Iraq's union with the larger Arab nation. But the four parties also agreed on certain conditions that the new regime would have to fulfill in order to maintain the legitimacy of July 14 as the long-awaited revolution. These included abolishing the monarchy; declaring a democratic republic (though some disagreements would soon emerge over whether the declaration itself, as a future promise, was sufficient to meet this condition in the revolutionary present); establishing genuine political sovereignty by terminating British control over Iraq's affairs; implementing a land reform program to break the political and economic stranglehold of the large landholding class on the country's development; and demonstrating advances toward industrialization. In addition, the government was expected to implement legal and social reforms aimed at constituting the kinds of citizens these advances would require.

On December 30, 1959, Qasim's government promulgated the Iraqi Law of Personal Status. Its structural effect was to centralize and homogenize the one area of law in Iraq that was still under the jurisdiction of Muslim religious authorities, "personal status law" or codes related to marriage, divorce, and inheritance.[11] The law's framers claimed that its actual provisions were derived from or at least compatible with the living schools of shari`a law, but this was a matter of considerable debate. Among its most commonly recited elements were the apparent abolition of both child and forced marriages by establishing the age of consent to marry at eighteen years for both sexes; the restriction (but not abolition) of polygamy and unilateral male divorce; the potential expansion of women's rights to child custody after divorce (according to the judge's discretion); and, most controversially, the equalization of intestate inheritance rights for female

[11] The law, while widely trumpeted as a victory of the sovereign and secular nation-state over religious sectarianism, did not apply to Iraq's Jewish and Christian minorities. See chapter 6 for my interpretation of this apparent anomaly.

and male heirs. Opposition to the inheritance provision would play a role in the unification of Iraq's Sunni and Shi`i religious authorities under the banner of Arab nationalism, the short-lived coalition that helped ensure the success of the first Ba`th coup of 1963, in which Qasim's regime was overthrown and Qasim himself assassinated.[12] One of the first acts of the Ba`thists upon taking power was thus to repeal the inheritance clause of the 1959 personal status law.[13]

This study of the interplay between gender and historical time during the Qasimite or "revolutionary" era in Iraq (1958-63) and the years leading up to it originated in a more circumscribed attempt to understand why the 1959 personal status law became such a nexus of political struggle during this period, and what if any relation the conflict had to the Ba`thist rise to power. In other words, it was—and on some level still is—an intervention into the debate over what many historians of Iraq have understood as the "failure" of the 1958 revolution.[14] In the course of my research, I kept returning to two phenomena that have not always been easy to hold in analytical balance. First, the controversy over the personal status law both reflected and mobilized deep differences in Iraqi society over women's rights, family relations, gendered divisions of labor, and the ideal workings of law and morality. Some of these differences resonated with processes and conflicts playing out on a global level and others were particular to the Third World,[15] Arab countries, Iraq, or even subnational Iraqi communities. Second, there

[12] Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem: A Political History, 1958-1963* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1969), 247, 328; Yitzhak Nakash, *Reaching for Power: The Shi`a in the Modern Arab World* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 96.
[13] On the details of the repeal, see J.N.D. Anderson, "Changes in the Law of Personal Status in Iraq," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (1963): 1026–31.
[14] For a discussion of the "failure" theme in the historiography, see Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 111–12.
[15] I have chosen when possible to use the somewhat old-fashioned term "Third World" instead of the more recent "postcolonial world" for a number of reasons. Besides the fact that Iraq was never a full European colony, these include my concern that the term "postcolonial" often serves to obfuscate the crucial historical transition in this period from European to American global hegemony, a transition that is a major background and sometimes the center of my story. While I realize that the term "Third World" is objectionable in its own

was a hegemonic worldview or ideological consensus that bound together most actors in the dispute over the personal status law, and for that matter in Iraqi public discourse more generally. This was a particular vision of historical time and of a necessary and singular national future based on global postwar conceptions of "development" and "underdevelopment."

It became increasingly clear that one thing the two phenomena had in common was that very little sense could be made of them within an analytical framework of "modern/progressive" and "traditional/conservative" sociopolitical forces. Yet this is how the conflict over the personal status law has usually been explained in the historiography on the Iraqi revolution—or, more accurately, how it has usually been explained away, since it is often assumed that mere invocation of the modern/traditional binary is sufficient for understanding both the promulgation of the law and the ensuing controversy. The problem was that categories such as "modern/progressive" and "traditional/conservative" assume certain relationships to historical time—to past, present, and future—that often seemed irrelevant to the terms of the debate at hand. To put it simply, almost everybody with the capacity to make his or her voice heard in the Iraqi public sphere championed "progress" in the form of a future developed nation, which meant, at the very least, a scientific, educated, and industrialized nation.[16] Furthermore, almost everybody agreed that family life—the social and affective relations between the sexes and the

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ways, it avoids this particular problem. It is also the term that was used during the years that are the main focus of the study, and helps to keep present the important Cold War context of that era.

[16] There was much controversy over whether the future nation was to be an Iraqi nation or an Arab nation. This conflict has been covered extensively by other historians, and will be discussed throughout the dissertation when relevant, but it is not my main focus. Most of the discourses I examine here were common to both forms of nationalism though there were some differences in content and in actual political practice, which I discuss in most detail in chapter 5. By "Iraqi public sphere," however, I refer to the very significant fact that most of the institutions and media from which such discourses emanated—i.e., the public sphere in which they circulated and which they themselves produced—were shaped by the statist logic of Iraq's territorial borders. For sustained discussions of Iraqist and Arabist thought in postwar Iraq, see Bashkin, "Hybrid Nationalisms"; Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Davis, *Memories of State*; Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

generations inside the household—was somehow important to the realization of that future and that it was thus of legitimate public interest. There were, to be sure, contestations over "tradition": its sources, its content, its authenticity, its relationship to Islam, its territorial-spatial extension, its role in the nation-building project, and its implications for women and for the structures and expectations of human relationships. But these differences, themselves quite pluralistic, seemed less and less sufficient for categorizing the various interlocutors on the personal status law into those promoting "progress" and those defending "tradition."

At the same time, neither the notions of historical temporality from which those categories derive nor the categories themselves were foreign to the contemporary debates I was studying. On the contrary, they were ubiquitous. Rather than dispense with the modern/traditional binary altogether, therefore, I began looking at how the text of the personal status law itself, and the discourses of its supporters, constructed "progress" and "tradition," that is, what conceptions of historical temporality were embedded in it and what such notions of time had to do with gender categories and family relations in the first place. And while understandings of the past clearly mattered, it seemed that more important, or at any rate less explored, dimensions of the conflict opened up the more I focused on how visions of the national future shaped the controversy over the law and, more broadly, public contestation over the value of different modes of life and forms of political mobilization in revolutionary Iraq. Equally importantly, examining contemporary imaginings and uses of the future helped to elucidate the wider frameworks of consensus and affective registers within with these struggles played out.

The title of the dissertation—"A Race Against Time"—comes from an interview I conducted with an Iraqi woman who was involved in the communist and women's movements during the heady revolutionary years, when she and her comrades were "racing against time," as

she emphatically described it.[17] I had encountered this expression of a race against time numerous times in the documentary sources from the period, but it was striking to realize that, at least for one woman, its affective force had hardly diminished after fifty years. The sense that time is a substance that can be saved, spent, wasted, lost, or even raced belongs, as is well known, to the entire era of capitalism.[18] But developmentalism, especially when joined with the conceptual pair of revolution/counter-revolution, as it was in Iraq during these years, puts different kinds of pressure on modern anxieties about time. And this has an effect not only on political rationalities and forms of mobilization but also on the kinds of intimate bonds and everyday practices that come to be valued, or not, in a given historical context.

Reproducing the Future

Scholarship on nationalism and nation-building has paid far more attention to representations of the past than to representations of the future within modern national imaginations, probably in part because a central preoccupation of this scholarship has been the deconstruction of essentialist claims of nationhood. This is true even of Benedict Anderson's classic *Imagined Communities*, though he states early in the work, somewhat enigmatically given the immediate disappearance of the theme: "If nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, *still more important*, glide into a limitless future."[19] In the pages that follow, I attempt to unravel some of the implications and effects of this limitless future into which modern nations glide in

[17] Mubejel Baban, Interview, January 12, 2008, London.
[18] The classic historical analysis of the process in early modern England is E.P. Thompson's 1967 "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," reprinted in *Customs in Common* (New York: The New York Press, 1993). For an argument that the modern capitalist experience of time first emerged not in the Western metropolitan center but in the colonized periphery, see Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin, 1985). See also Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," in *Questions of Modernity*, ed. Timothy Mitchell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2000).
[19] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 1983), 11. Emphasis added.

one particular historical context. Throughout the work, I draw on one of Anderson's most important insights: that what makes the imagining of modern nationhood even possible is the learned capacity of its members to imagine homogeneous linear-historical time.[20] Yet the chapters that follow also problematize this homogeneity and linearity, and thus Anderson's theoretical framework, in a number of ways.

What happens, for instance, when girls attend public schools, acquire literacy, read novels and newspapers, and internalize modern understandings of historical time and national belonging? Do they imagine themselves—and are they imagined by others—as marching along the same "empty, homogeneous" path of linear progression that Anderson posits as "a new way of linking fraternity, power and time" enabled by literacy and print culture and constitutive of modern nationhood?[21] Or—as Anderson's masculine but unexamined choice of words already suggests—are there important ways in which they do not fully belong to this new apprehension of time, even if it belongs to them?

To approach this problem from a slightly different angle, 20th-century nationalists in Iraq, much like 20th-century nationalists in other anticolonial and postcolonial contexts, constructed the "backwards" indigenous woman, imagined to be hopelessly "trapped in the past," as a tragic symbol or even primary cause of the nation's present underdevelopment. Increasingly seen as the dominant influence on the physical, psychological, and moral development of

[20] The concept of "homogeneous time" (or "empty time") refers to the modern perceptions, technologies, and experiences of calendar time or clock time—i.e., time that is measured in standardized units of uniform duration, in contrast to time experienced through the duration or repetition of lived events with their heterogeneous rhythms. In Anderson's extension of the concept, it refers to the temporality of a modern nation as a discrete, organic, horizontal entity that moves ever forward in a uniform, linear fashion, as represented for instance in the visual timeline of a history textbook, the serial publication of a national newspaper, or the "meanwhile" of the modern novel, in which far-flung characters who need never meet are imagined to be marching along through a single, equivalent time or contemporaneity within a single horizontal "society." According to Timothy Mitchell, Anderson's basic concept of homogenous empty time can be traced back to Henri Bergson by way of Walter Benjamin. Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," 14.

[21] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 36.

children, women—illiterate, superstitious, tied to biological rhythms of time—became objects of sympathy as well as concern for their role in the cyclical reproduction of the past with each generation, the pattern that seemed to block economic development and a national future. The answer, in Iraq and elsewhere, was to provide women with modern educations in feminine domesticity that would prepare them for a particular kind of conjugal and maternal life, one that would effect a decisive break with the nation's past and its diverse, messy, localized traditions and temporalities by reorienting its citizens toward homogeneous time and the limitless future.

Because nationalists themselves have often aligned patriotic feminine domesticity with the timeless and inviolable core of the nation, such discourses have frequently been seen by historians as primarily essentialist and backward-looking, ossifying patriarchal gender relations through the "invention of tradition."[22] But I propose that new dimensions of nationalism and gender become available if we look at the deployment of such discourses and pedagogical interventions as related instead to nationalism's forward-looking, future-directed sensibilities, its reliance on the modern political imaginary that queer theorist Lee Edelman has, in a different context, called "reproductive futurism," imaginatively reinforced through new concepts of childhood and of generations to come.[23] Biological reproduction is typically associated with notions of cyclical, rather than linear, time, and femininity itself is often imagined as a way of living in cyclical time.[24] But reproductive *futurism* is constituted by an interplay between cyclical-biological time and linear-historical time that is both modern and nationalist. For female

[22] Of course, this is not to say that historians, especially in the fields of Middle East women's and gender history, have taken such discourses at their word; on the contrary, the nationalist construction of educated feminine domesticity has been seen by nearly all recent scholars as a thoroughly modern phenomenon. Still, exploring uses and effects of the future in such discourses has not been a major interest, while deconstructing invented traditions has. The concept of invented traditions comes from Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
[23] Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
[24] See Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time," trans. Alice Jardine and Blake, *Signs* 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1981): 13–35.

citizens, as agents of reproduction, this interplay heralds new opportunities but also the consolidation of more formidable pressures. Having been finally freed from the past, the nation's women were henceforth to be trapped in its future.

Edelman's own analytical bent is psychoanalytic and linguistic, but the modern imaginary of reproductive futurism in his formulation is decisively political, because it is one in which the "figure of the child" comes to shape "the logic within which the political itself must be thought." The fantasy of the child's innocence "imposes an ideological limit on political discourse as such"—who but a monster could stand against this innocence?—while the future the figure of the child embodies, but which no "historical child" is ever allowed to reach, becomes the "perpetual horizon of every acknowledged politics."[25]

> The Child has come to embody for us the telos of the social order and come to be seen as the one for whom that order is held in perpetual trust. In its coercive universalization, however, the image of the Child, not to be confused with the lived experiences of any historical children, serves to regulate political discourse—to prescribe what will *count* as political discourse—by compelling such discourse to accede in advance to the reality of a collective future whose figurative status we are never permitted to acknowledge or address.[26]

The political rationality of reproductive futurism, while seemingly based on the valorization of change in its perpetual yearning toward the future, in effect compels a sort of political freezing of the present in the name of a child who never grows up and a future that never arrives. The figure of the child, writes Edelman, thus enacts "a logic of *repetition* that fixes identity through identification with the future of the social order."[27] This is one sense of the term "reproducing the future" in this dissertation's subtitle, i.e., it refers to the continuous political reproduction of a congenitally receding political future.

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[25] Edelman, *No Future*, 2–3.
[26] Ibid., 11.
[27] Ibid., 25.

A similar imaginary was dominant in Iraqi political discourse by the 1930s, if not earlier. I will argue throughout this work that in many ways its effects were far less stable, homogeneous, and predictable than Edelman seems to suggest in his own use of the concept. But its powers of moral unassailability were strengthened in one particular way, which was through its inevitable imbrication with the emerging concept of the "developing" nation. As Partha Chatterjee has noted, development was the 20th-century idiom through which all postcolonial states secured their legitimacy.[28] Like the child's future, and not unrelated to it, the nation's development was a politically unquestionable good in revolutionary Iraq, the safeguarding of which could be, and often was, used as a trump card against any inconvenient demand for political change then and there. Edelman argues that in the 20th-century United States, the figure of the child helped to create a boundary between acceptable partisan politics and enforced—through that very figure—sociopolitical consensus.[29] It seems to have been considerably easier for rulers of "developing countries" in the 20th century to declare, with straight faces, that "partisan politics" *as such* were a "waste of time," as Qasim and other state officials frequently did in revolutionary-era Iraq.

Despite difference between my and Edelman's use of the term, I have found the framework of "reproductive futurism" to be very productive for my analysis of projects to reform the Iraqi family. It has resonances and overlaps with concepts such as "patriotic motherhood" and "feminine domesticity" that have been used by numerous women's and gender historians analyzing nationalist discourses in the 19th- and 20th-century Middle East, and which will also appear frequently in the chapters that follow. But thinking about "reproductive futurism" as a hegemonic political imaginary of modernity helps to open up several aspects of these discourses

[28] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). See also Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 84–85.
[29] Edelman, *No Future*, 2.

that have not received much attention in the scholarship. One is the kind of disciplinary or depoliticizing work they can do, not only in the sense of "keeping women in the home" and out of politics—though often also that—but in the sense of centering a certain affective register of politics on an imaginary child as the embodiment of the nation's (equally imaginary) future. In deference to the child and its "freedom to develop undisturbed by encounters" with "otherness," Edelman writes that "the lives, the speech, and the freedoms of adults face constant threat of legal curtailment," while political discourse is compelled to "conform to the logic of a narrative wherein history unfolds as the future envisioned for a Child who must never grow up."[30]

The Iraqi personal status law was championed by its framers, as well as by women's rights advocates and other liberals and leftists in Iraq, as a historical leap forward for both "women's rights" and "the rights of the Iraqi individual," and has been narrated in similar ways by historians. But a close reading of its provisions, which I conduct in chapter 6, reveals a more complicated picture. With the notable exceptions of the ill-fated equal-inheritance clause and the clause setting the age of marital consent at eighteen years for both sexes, almost all of its provisions distribute rights to Iraqi citizens entirely on the basis of sex. Moreover, many clauses effect a clear *restriction* of individual rights and liberties, for both women and men, in comparison to Islamic legal traditions. Consider, as just one example, a rarely discussed provision mandating that a mother breastfeed her own infant if she is physically able to do so. As I will show, the restrictiveness of this clause has no basis in any of the five living schools of Islamic law and least of all in the two schools practiced most widely in Iraq. Yet it raised few eyebrows in the public controversies around the personal status law and was not repealed after the 1963 Ba`th coup, as was the equal-inheritance clause on the grounds that the latter violated Islamic law. The reasoning of the breastfeeding provision seems rather close to the one posited

[30] Ibid., 19–21.

by Edelman—restricting adult women's "liberties" in the name of the child's "freedom to develop undisturbed by encounters" with those who are "other" to the conjugal family—in this case, wet nurses.

Beth Baron has shown how Egyptian nationalist discourses increasingly constructed wet nurses as strangers to both the family and the nation and thus as endangering the nationalist dream of sovereignty.[31] I elaborate on this insight to consider how wet nurses, along with servants and even extended-family kin, were often seen by Iraqi reformers as symptoms of an unacceptable permeability of the domestic space to the outside world, on the one hand, and of the embeddedness of the family's individual members in wider, less governable social networks, on the other. Aspects of this process can be highlighted by bringing Edelman's concept of reproductive futurism into conversation with Jacques Donzelot's exploration of the "policing of families" in 19th-century France. Donzelot argues that new philanthropic and state-led campaigns for the protection of children and the reform of family life aimed to exclude the "mobile elements" of the household, so that "the children could be immobilized within it." From then on, "If the husband preferred the outside, the lights of the cabaret, and the children the street, with its spectacles and promiscuity, this would be the fault of the wife and mother."[32] We are clearly now talking, at least in part, about "historical children."

According to Donzelot, this process operated differently for middle-class and working-class families, but not in the sense of beginning with the former and then "trickling down" to the latter. Both involved, simultaneously, a "recentering of the family on itself," but the "process did not have the same meaning" in the two class domains. Since family reform and interventions into women's domestic practices beyond the urban upper- and middle-classes have hardly been

[31] Beth Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt: Culture, Society, and the Press* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 160–61.
[32] Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 44–45.

examined at all in Middle East historiography, and are an important emphasis of this dissertation, Donzelot is worth quoting at length on some of these different meanings in his own analysis of the modernizing policing of families.

> The bourgeois family was constituted by means of a tactical constriction of its members aimed at suppressing or controlling an internal enemy, the domestic servants. This cohesion gave it an added power that enhanced its social position and enabled it to return to the social field with the force it needed in order to exercise certain controls and champion various reforms. The woman's alliance with the doctor reinforced her internal authority and mediated the external power of the family. The working-class family, on the other hand, was forged on the basis of a turning back of each of its members onto the others in a circular relation of vigilance against the temptations from outside, the cabaret and the street. It carried out new educative tasks at the cost of a loss of its coextensiveness with the social field; it was dispossessed of everything that situated it in a field of exterior forces.[33]

Drawing on Donzelot's analysis, in chapter 5 I lay out a context for my subsequent reading of the personal status law in chapter 6, by exploring other Qasimite-era laws that involved significant family-reform provisions but which scholars have never connected to those of the personal status law—including the 1958 Land Reform Law, the 1958 Law for Social Institutions, the 1959 Labor Law, and the 1959 Law for the Protection of Children. Most of these laws were directly linked to the government's extensive housing projects to resettle both the urban and rural poor.

I will suggest that such legal and social reforms cannot be separated from the Qasimite state's efforts to demobilize the popular strata—especially peasants and rural-urban migrant slum-dwellers—and to foster new kinds of social relations as well as new spaces through which techniques of governmentality could operate within those strata. Such efforts were driven in part by reformers' and development planners' concerns over the unacceptable mobilities produced by the already advanced dissolution of various bonds as a result of the agrarian crisis that had been destabilizing Iraq for at least two decades—especially those between tribal shaykhs and their

[33] Ibid., 45.

tribespeople, landlords and peasants, and peasants and the land. At the same time, they aimed to undermine certain very alive-and-well social bonds and habitations, including extended family networks, non-child-centered homosocial leisure practices (sitting in coffee shops for men, home visiting for women), and the unregulated street cultures of children.

These projects were interwoven, but not directly aligned, with the government's campaign to discipline oppositional intellectuals and organized political activists—especially the communists and the Arab nationalists. This campaign drew freely on the political imaginary of reproductive futurism and contemporary discourses of economic development, both of which provided compelling conceptual vocabularies and rationalities for arguing that the nation's future depended on the freezing (*tajmid*) of political activity in its present. Indeed, the communists and Arab nationalists, who both deployed very similar reproductive-futurist and developmentalist discourses, often did not have much to say in response to this line of reasoning, other than to attack the other camp for purportedly violating it. Thus, despite the theoretical commitment of all of Iraq's parties to "democratization," it was left to a small wing of the already small NDP to insist that democracy was a good to actually be implemented in the present—a position that quickly led to the split of the NDP itself into two parties and the effective disappearance of any influential liberal-democratic party in the country.

But this does not mean that the various struggles between Qasim's regime, the communists, and the Arab nationalists were unimportant. Chapter 5 also explores a public controversy that erupted in 1959-60 over a national rural literacy campaign run by the communist women's league, a controversy that the Qasimite government would use to justify shutting down the ICP daily newspaper *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, by far the widest circulating periodical in the country. I argue that the literacy program was seen by both state officials and Ba`thist

commentators as violating the tacit terms of the alliance between the state and urban middle-class feminists to reform rural women and families through social and hygienic interventions (notwithstanding the league's own insistence that it did not violate them). Rather than propagating effective techniques for the "policing of families" in the name of the child's and the nation's future, the communist women's literacy work among peasants was seen as a symptom of "social promiscuity" threatening the political order.[34] It led not only to the government's shutting down of the program itself and the censorship of *Ittihad al-Sha`b* but also to the legal prohibition of *any* teacher from an urban area so much as *entering* any of the rural regions of the volatile southern half of Iraq during the summer school vacation for any non-official reason.

Governing Femininity

The themes of mobility and immobility run throughout this dissertation. The Andersonian conception of progressive and homogeneous linear-historical time is of limited use in accounting for the ways in which modern nation-states tend toward the construction and regulation of certain kinds of immobilities, both temporal and spatial, in the process of generating other kinds of mobilities. Gender and family, on the other hand, are very productive categories for exploring facets of these tendencies.

Different scholars have theorized various ways in which the time of modernity, when conceived in all its fullness, is a paradoxically timeless time. The whole concept of the modern is predicated on a radical rupture with the past and on notions of perpetual newness and the linearity of a historical time stretching into infinity. Yet equally central to the production of modernity is its spatialization as a *place* to which some (nations, races, classes) have *already*

[34] The term "social promiscuity" comes from Donzelot, who uses it to refer to the mobilities among the popular strata and the age generations in 19th-century France that had been created by the expansion of capitalist relations, and which became the target of philanthropic campaigns to protect children and reform families. Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*.

arrived. What Timothy Mitchell has analyzed as the characteristically modern "spatialization of time" enables what is described by Koselleck as the "contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous" and by anthropologist Johannes Fabian as the "denial of coevalness."[35] Numerous scholars, including Fabian, have explored the violence that the denial of coevalness has unleashed on those determined to be non-modern, anti-modern, or not-yet-modern.

Others have looked at various ways in which a fully realized modernity might be understood as a static temporality. Two institutions have been seen as particularly charged domains for the production of modern forms of timelessness: the nation-state and the family. As Anderson, Koselleck, and other scholars have noted, the clock time and calendar time that measure modern homogeneous linear time, and which emerge with the rise of the modern nation-state, are predicated on uniform duration and endless repetition. As these forms of time become the basis for modern experiences of governance, they come to mean "precisely not innovation or anything new but rather stability and routine both in the everyday and in the modes of organization of a political society…through repetition, precisely that which is new in it turns into the everyday and loses its meaning as new time."[36] What James Scott calls the "administrative grid" of the modern state paradoxically produces mobile people and objects by first rendering them stable.[37]

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[35] These concepts of Koselleck and Fabian are actually different in important ways, notably in the way Koselleck posits the "noncontemporaneity of the contemporaneous" to be an actual modern experience of time and not just a logical absurdity or psychological irrationality, as suggested by the term "the denial of coevalness." But the concepts are similar in other ways, and both scholars link their historical emergence directly to the colonial expansion of Europe across the globe. In a certain sense, Koselleck's concept might be closer to Dipesh Chakrabarty's notion of "postcolonial heterotemporalities." See Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity"; Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 246; Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[36] Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 150.

[37] James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). Here I am collapsing (as Scott does) practices of "modern state

A primary aim of the 1959 Iraqi personal status law, according to the committee that drafted it, was to rectify a damaging legal situation that had fostered "instability in the life of the Iraqi family" and thereby to establish a foundation on which "the Iraqi family of the new era could be built." As I will show in chapter 6, "instability" in the drafters' statement referred to a number of things, including the confusing plurality and instability of family laws themselves, as they were applied in shari`a courts according to different Islamic legal traditions, along with what reformers saw as the failure of all Islamic schools of law to foster stable conjugal families, for example by facilitating male unilateral divorce. Shi`i family law was often targeted for special attention due to its authorization of *mut`a* or temporary marriage, which is a marriage contracted for a specified period of time, which might be one hour or ninety-nine years, the purpose of which is sexual pleasure.[38] Because it decouples heterosexual intercourse from permanent companionate marriage, reproduction, and the joint raising of children, one might say that *mut`a* marriage, in revolutionary Iraq, had no future.

The elements of the 1959 personal status law oriented toward making marriage more permanent and child-centered, including its failure to recognize *mut`a* marriage, inspired far fewer outcries in contemporary Iraq than did the inheritance clause. Indeed, these former provisions and effects not only survived the 1963 Ba`th coup but are still intact in Iraqi law today. They raise some questions about the familiar claim that, in the period of modernity,

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governance" and "modern forms of governmentality," without going into the important debate over whether the latter in fact undermine any conception of the "modern state" as a coherent entity. For a more nuanced analysis of how modern forms of governmentality, rather than the modern state per se, render subjects mobile and stable at the same time, see Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008). For a fascinating interpretation of the historical relation between the European wars of religion, the rise of the absolutist state as politically enforced stasis, and the Enlightenment conception of progressive linear-historical time, which argues that it was "[n]ot until the State had suppressed and neutralised religious conflict could progressive reason unfold in the newly vacated space," see Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 34.

[38] See Shahla Haeri, *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage in Shi`i Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989).

relationships, especially sexual ones, become more contractual, more oriented toward individual pleasure and choice, and, for the previous reasons, more temporary.[39] I argue that the explicit attempts of the personal status law to make marriage more stable and permanent, while simultaneously making the conjugal home less permeable to strangers, were driven by a reproductive-futurist impetus to create a properly modern domestic sphere, where the "logic of repetition" that the modern fantasy of the child enacts becomes a logic of timelessness pure and simple. As Chatterjee has suggested, it is ironically the imagined timelessness of this sphere that makes it seem so amenable to techniques of governmentality and development.[40] But the modern domestic sphere is not timeless in the way that the "traditional family" or the "traditional woman" is imagined to be rooted or trapped in the past. It is a qualitatively new kind of timelessness: hygienic, orderly, rational, safe, and reproductive of capitalism's *limitless* (that is to say, timeless) future.[41]

In order to be constituted as timeless, and as a productive space for operations of governmentality, the domestic sphere must first be made "legible." Scott writes that in order to "get a handle on its subjects and their environment," the modern state "took exceptionally complex, illegible, and local social practices, such as land tenure customs or naming customs, and created a standard grid whereby [they] could be centrally recorded and monitored."[42] Scott does not include the nuclear family as one of these standard grids, though he does look at the state-enforced adoption of patrilineal surnames the world over, which is certainly related. He also focuses on large-scale "high modernist" projects, mostly conducted by socialist states and

[39] For example, French philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard writes that "the temporary contract is in practice supplementing permanent institutions in the professional, emotional, sexual, cultural, family and international domains, as well as in political affairs." Quoted in David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990), 113.
[40] Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*.
[41] "It is as though the 'not yet' is what keeps capital going." Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 65.
[42] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 2.

involving blatant coercion and external imposition of discipline, whereas I will focus on more micro-level technologies of governmentality aimed at creating *self*-disciplined subjects within the family. But I find his argument useful for analyzing the conjugal family as a conceptual grid that makes the domestic sphere and its private relationships legible to the state and to social workers.

This framework helps to clarify a difference between my argument and the "rise of the nuclear family" narrative that has been the target of much criticism in recent years. Certainly it has been established that important aspects of this narrative often do not withstand historical and empirical scrutiny, especially outside of the industrialized West. Extended family bonds are still highly valued and very present in the everyday lives of most Iraqis; the bourgeois nuclear family has not triumphed in quite the way that social scientists predicted and many legislators, development planners, and feminists hoped. Yet family structures, along with the most intimate family bonds and experiences, *did* change over the course of the 20th century in ways that are hardly unique to Iraq: the conjugal bond became more valued and important in everyday life for many people; education, especially for girls, aimed at preparing the nation's future citizens for marital life and parenthood; childhood and adolescence were reconstituted and temporally lengthened as normative stages of life; the relationship between parents and children changed in myriad ways and was increasingly envisioned as a "generation gap"; experiences of quotidian time in the household were transformed as middle-class families became consumers of new domestic products and children of every class started attending school and marrying later. I will touch on all of these changes in the chapters that follow. But I also propose that the nuclear-conjugal family need not be understood simply as the telos of a universal historical process, the empirical realization of which historians would then set out to prove or disprove in this or that

location. Viewing it instead as a conceptual grid that makes certain kinds of "family" relationships legible so that they can be worked on by technologies of governmentality and development—while simultaneously making other kinds of relationships *illegible*, even when they continue to exist or emerge for the first time—helps to open up some of the important and productive effects that the conjugal-family model can have apart from any society-wide emergence of nuclear households with bourgeois sensibilities.

While supporters of the July 14 revolution often portrayed the gender and family policies of the Qasimite regime as evidence of the nation's total rupture with its past, in fact there were many continuities. Chapter 2, 3, and 4 trace some of these historical genealogies. The three chapters look at different efforts to reconstitute femininity, childhood, and family life during the independent monarchical era, from the formal end of British Mandate rule in 1932 to the 1958 revolution, focusing especially on the first decade of the "age of development" after World War II.

Chapter 2 examines educational reforms under the monarchy that were driven by reproductive-futurist rationalities. Specifically, it traces the emergence of the field of domestic arts (*al-fanun al-baytiyya*) or home economics in the Iraqi public school system, which was intended to teach future mothers how to create and manage conjugal families and raise agentive, future-directed citizens. I suggest that Iraq is a fruitful, if paradoxical, context for re-examining certain aspects of the emergence of feminine domesticity in the 20th-century Middle East, precisely because a serious commitment to the education of girls in domestic arts happened later in Iraq than in neighboring countries. During Iraq's first post-Ottoman decade (the 1920s), and for reasons I explore in the chapter, the Iraqi public school curriculum was remarkably sex-blind compared to most other countries in the Middle East—and, probably, the world—during this

time. This state of affairs lasted until the late 1920s or early 1930s for girls in primary school; female students in Iraq's secondary schools followed a curriculum identical to that of male students until 1940. The relatively late appearance of home economics in Iraq, and the way in which it was implemented, helps bring several relatively underexamined aspects of modern feminine domesticity in the region to the fore.

First, by the time mandatory female education in home economics began to be instituted in Iraqi schools in the 1930s, the science of child psychology and development was an important aspect of the field's expertise on a global level and thus a central focus of the public debates about its implementation in Iraq. In the literature on modern feminine domesticity in the Middle East, it is often noted that the "new educated woman" was tasked with raising the "citizens of the future" or the "men of the future" and thereby with ensuring the future of the nation. But very little attention has been paid to just what sort of creature this citizen/man of the future was, and thus to what *kinds* of domesticity she had to learn in order to raise him. I show how the construction of modern feminine domesticity in Iraq was tied to certain understandings of child subjectivities—and thus to certain modes of subjectification—as well as to the reconstruction of childhood itself as a series of normative stages of growth. Second, the implementation of home economics in Iraqi schools converged with the rise of the global ideology of the development of nations in the late interwar and especially the postwar years. Increasingly, the economic development of the nation was mapped onto the psychological development of *all* the nation's children, including those in peasant, nomadic, and urban lower-class communities. Discourses on, and interventions in, motherhood, femininity, and family life thus went far beyond the urban upper- and middle-class spheres that have been the focus of almost all historians of modern domesticity in the region.

In late interwar and postwar modernization discourses in Iraq, the male child/citizen who was the product of his mother's labor was not merely patriotic. He was the very subject of national development: agentive, future-directed, mobile, industrious, and confident in his ability to shape his own environment. The schooling of future mothers was based largely on the pedagogical philosophy of pragmatism, which originated in the U.S. and became dominant in the Iraqi Ministry of Education during the 1930s and 1940s. I draw on recent critical works by education theorist Thomas Popkewitz that examine the international movement of pragmatism and its construction of the "cosmopolitan child," as well as this movement's connection to U.S. overseas expansion.[43] Certain qualities of the "cosmopolitan child" theorized by Popkewitz—such as the "homeless mind" that became an object and end of pragmatist pedagogies—have striking resemblances to the "mobile personality" posited by leading U.S. modernization theorist Daniel Lerner in 1958 as the cultural-psychological prerequisite for the "passing of traditional society" in the Middle East and thereby the "modernizing take-off."[44] Both models describe the emergence—and the skilled cultivation by educators and modern mothers—of flexible, future-directed subjectivities unbound by local attachments and temporalities and that would be simultaneously open to temporal change and to technologies of governmentality.

Clearly, the fact that Iraq, along with most other regions and populations of the world, was designated "underdeveloped" in the great postwar division of the globe into developed and underdeveloped nations meant that reproductive futurism would take different trajectories from those examined by Edelman. Chapter 3 thus takes a closer look at the role of postwar

[43] Thomas Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform: Science, Education, and Making Society by Making the Child* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Thomas Popkewitz, ed., *Inventing the Modern Self and John Dewey: Modernities and the Traveling of Pragmatism in Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
[44] Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, 2nd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1964).

development doctrine and practice in shaping the reconstruction and governance of femininity in mid-20th-century Iraq. It does so through a micro-history of the one of the world's first coordinated development projects involving many of the new international and U.S. agencies established after World War II that launched the "age of development," including UNESCO, FAO (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N.), and U.S. agencies created under President Truman's "Point Four" program. The Dujayla Land Settlement Project was founded in 1945 in an attempt to mitigate the agrarian crisis in Iraq that was fueling peasant and tribal rebellion and driving thousands of rural people into urban slums. The idea was to create a class of small "independent" or "family" farmers by settling landless peasants and pastoral nomads on underexploited but fertile state-owned lands, without resorting to land confiscations that would alienate the powerful landholding class. Rather than accept the conceptual interchangeability of the terms "independent farmer," "individual farmer," and "family farmer" in the documentary sources, the chapter looks at the work that was done through their very conflation.

The Dujayla Law distributed plots of lands to eligible homesteaders according to a model of isolated nuclear-family farms, deliberating excluding village life from the settlement, in accordance with U.S. Cold War modernization theories of agricultural development and political stability. Subsequent projects on the settlement aimed to reshape the habits and practices of each member of the family farm, primarily through "home economics" training for its women. Chapter 2 examined some of the implications of the increasingly unquestioned notion that women were the necessarily dominant influence on children; chapter 3 shows that they were also seen by development planners as the most effective means of reforming adult men, especially those in "backwards" and dangerously mobile rural communities. In addition to its significant, if often unintended, effects on the everyday lives of settlers at Dujayla, the nuclear-family model

worked as a sort of standardized grid for development plans and operations, providing an identifiable point of entry—the rural housewife—for projects of reform and improvement. The title of the chapter, "Domesticating Women," thus describes both the project of cultivating domestic female subjectivities and the envisioned role of women in domesticating rural men and children—much as the term "governing femininity" in the dissertation's subtitle refers to the construction of modern femininity as both an object and an agent of governmentality.[45]

Chapter 4 turns to three interrelated crises that Iraqi state officials identified and battled in the years leading up to the 1958 revolution: the "crisis of adolescence," the "crisis of girls' education," and the "crisis of marriage." The idea that political and social unrest during the postwar period was driven largely by a "new generation" of educated urban youth is a recurring theme in the historical literature on Iraq. Yet the concept of "generation" itself has, at least until recently, remained largely unexamined. It has often been collapsed into theories of class, such that historians debate whether the new generation represented the established elite, the petty bourgeoisie, a rising middle class, or some other socioeconomic group. This is an important debate. But I suggest that the concept of generation cannot be completely subsumed under that of class, and that if historians are going to use the former term as an explanatory category at all—and I do think it is useful for this period of time in Iraq—it deserves more serious analytical attention. The widely reported generation gap in Iraq during the postwar era was undoubtedly shaped by class and by urban-rural dynamics—but it was also shaped by age. Shared experiences, especially those related to schooling and to print culture, marked many middle-, lower-middle-, and even lower-class members of the young generation off from their parents

[45] Donzelot's "the policing of families" contains this same dual sense.

while linking them to one another, and the significance of this cannot be grasped through purely class-based analyses.[46]

In addition, gender played an important role. Along with the increased differentiation of the school curriculum by sex discussed in chapter 2, the inter- and postwar periods saw a dramatic increase in the number of Iraqi girls attending school. Like the former phenomenon, it was driven by the reproductive-futurist consensus on educated feminine domesticity and was widely promoted by state officials and oppositional nationalists alike. Drawing on Anderson's argument about the role of print culture in the imagining of homogeneous historical time and national belonging, but incorporating the missing dimension of gender, the chapter examines how shared experiences of schooling and reading helped to form a generation of Iraqi women, and also the ways in which this process was riven with instabilities. As those who promoted it were often painfully aware, the project of reproductive futurism—which in order to school and domesticate the mothers of the future required linking the children of the present to one another in an extrafamilial "imagined generation"—could have unpredictable and uncontrollable effects.

In Iraq, the interplay of cyclical-biological time with linear-historical time that constitutes reproductive futurism was thus a highly unstable one, and reformers' efforts to cultivate reproductive-futurist sensibilities in girls and women were shot through with tension and the fear of releasing uncontrollable forces associated both with undomesticated femininity and with the popular classes. Moreover, the education of Iraqi girls as "mothers of the future" really did have uncontrollable effects, from helping produce a generation of young communist women in the 1940s and 1950s to enabling the emergence of a modern homosocial counterpublic of young Muslim women bound not by "traditional" or "private" family ties but by print culture and intra-

[46] As I will show in chapter 4, recent scholars of Iraq have already begun to interrogate the meaning of the term "generation" more explicitly. I draw on this new scholarship while also arguing that it can be pushed further in several directions.

generational identification in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, the powerful appeal of reproductive futurism—which reached, to a greater or lesser degree, into every nook and cranny of contemporary Iraqi public discourse—could have a disciplinary and depoliticizing effect on these same forces. This would be especially true during the second half of the Qasimite era, when women's rights activists and other leftists labored tirelessly, in the name of a foreordained developed future, on behalf of a government that was aggressively and publicly dismantling their organizations and political movement in the present.

My use of the term "reproductive futurism" thus inevitably diverges from that of Edelman in numerous ways. He employs it in a Lacanian critique of what he calls "our current epistemological regime," which he does not define but I take to be roughly located in modern Euro-American society and often specifically in the late-20th-century United States.[47] I use it as a historian of a Third World country in an exceptional revolutionary-nationalist moment. In my account, as already noted, the discourses, techniques, and practices that the concept gathers together are far less predictable than Edelman sometimes seems to imply in his own analysis. Furthermore, I find his frequent suggestion that there can be no genuine pleasure in a futuristic politics rather questionable. When Mubejel Baban exclaimed, "*We* were racing against *time*," she did so not with a dreamy-eyed gaze toward a fantasy future (past or otherwise), nor in the moralizing tone of a Marxist rebuke, but with the nostalgic relish of a person who has participated in the making of extraordinary historical times. And if, as I will show, Mubejel and other leftist women often authenticated their political interventions in the name of motherhood, childhood, and reproductive futurism, it is only fair to mention that, at the age of seventy-three, in the middle of describing to me a typical day in her life during the revolutionary years—when she worked full-time at a bank during the day and at the communist party's office late into the

[47] Edelman, *No Future*, 18.

night—Mubejel suddenly broke off her account in a fit of laughter. She then explained: "I was thinking just the other day that I don't have *any* idea how my children were raised!"[48]

Iraqi Heterotemporalities

Chapters 1, 4, and 7 in particular all highlight ways in which the emergence of "reproductive futurism" in Iraq was not itself a linear or homogeneous historical process, and was certainly not a stable one. Chapter 1 explores some of the ways that gender, nation, and time were imagined in Iraqi nationalist discourse during the revolutionary moment. Its focal point is a famous public monument in Baghdad built by Iraqi artist Jawad Salim: *Nasb al-Hurriyya* or the Monument to Freedom, which was commissioned by Qasim's regime shortly after the revolution. Questions of time and gender lie at the very heart of Salim's monument and it is thus a useful way to introduce some of the analytical frameworks and temporal conceptions that recur throughout the dissertation.

On one level, the work's construction of a visual narrative of the Iraqi nationalist movement and the revolution it produced is a strikingly literal illustration of the linear-historical time that Anderson tells us is a prerequisite for any national becoming. But on other levels, the monument points toward heterogeneous and non-linear temporal conceptions and experiences that may also be seen as constitutive of Iraqi nationhood. As just one example, sequences of masculine-heterosexual-linear time are interwoven with those of feminine-homosocial-cyclical time to propel the irrepressible forward march of the nation's pre-revolutionary history and, ultimately, the explosive and transcendent time of its revolution, which ruptures linearity and tears the (nationalist) past from the (developed) future. The chapter draws on Dipesh

[48] Interview, January 12, 2008, London. Mubejel did not seem troubled by this realization, nor did she seem to think that her children, whose adult photos adorned her London home, were troubled by it. The most likely solution to the purported mystery is that the children were raised by the women of her extended family household.

Chakrabarty's concept of postcolonial heterotemporalities to explore multiple ways of reading the monument's representations of time, which I argue are more heterogeneous and ambivalent than previous scholars of the work have recognized. The chapter also engages with Partha Chatterjee's framework of "inner" and "outer" domains in anticolonial nationalisms to look at some of the normative as well as creative aspects of Iraqi nationalist imaginings of femininity, masculinity, and childhood.

Chapter 4, as noted above, looks at efforts by Hashimite state officials, especially within the Ministry of Education, to address the interrelated "crises" of adolescence, girls' education, and marriage. These discourses and interventions were often framed in a language of reproductive futurism with resonances to the one analyzed by Edelman. Yet, in contrast to his account, they were also strongly shaped by, and often direct responses to, the historical mobilization of historical children. Moreover, most of the education officials in question were anticolonial nationalists opposed to ongoing British control over Iraq's affairs. These officials viewed Iraqi children as embodying the nationalist dream of sovereignty and considered it their mission to prepare the children to historically enact that dream. In this sense, the political future that the figure of the child embodied was decidedly *not* a repetition of the political present. The chapter also explores the related emergence of the ambivalent figure of adolescent-as-political-rebel in Iraqi interwar and postwar nationalist discourses. It argues that this figure was not and could not have been simply an adoption or re-enactment of similar figures that appeared in 20th-century Euro-American discourses and considers the possibility that it may have even been historically antecedent to them.

Chapter 7 looks at what happened when the child-fixated and future-directed discourses of family reform in revolutionary Iraq were confronted by a different understanding of the

relationship between interpersonal bonds of love and pedagogical disciplines of self-formation. The chapter examines the writings of a Shi`i female intellectual and novelist in Najaf named Bint al-Huda, who entered the Iraqi public sphere in 1960 by authoring a regular column on women's issues for the fledgling Shi`i revivalist periodical *al-Adwa'*, which was launched in part as a response to the 1959 personal status law. I argue that the particular directions taken by Bint al-Huda's critiques of secular family law were connected to her ambivalence about modern companionate marriage, and in particular about the ways in which it can work to close off a woman's existing relationships—especially those with her adult siblings and her female friends. An exploration of the author's fictional work adds affective dimensions to these critiques and ambivalences, by showing how Bint al-Huda—who was herself never married—viewed the cultivation of an ethical Muslim subject to be an ongoing and active (adult) process that is inseparable from that subject's relationships with other people. In her novels and short stories, both marriage and motherhood can endanger a Muslim woman's capacities to practice this necessarily intersubjective work of self-formation. Drawing on recent scholarship on publics and public spheres, the chapter juxtaposes Bint al-Huda's ambivalence about modern heterosexual privacy in marriage with the reflexive homosocial publicity of the texts themselves, in order to raise questions about certain theoretical conceptions of "public" and "private" spheres in scholarship on women and gender in the Middle East.

The dissertation's epilogue challenges the claim in some scholarly critiques of modernization and development discourse that the "will to improve" is a distinctively modern, Western, or secular sensibility. Building on my interpretation of Bint al-Huda's writings, it asks whether recent theoretical approaches to Islamic discursive traditions and ethical disciplines might be brought into conversation with certain scholarly works on the ethical and political work

of friendship outside the context of the Middle East, and what such a conversation might suggest about the relationship between the modern conjugal family, historical temporalities, and political futures.

To close with a brief note on method, this is not a "history of" modern feminine domesticity in Iraq, or of any other coherent historical subject moving through homogeneous national-territorial time. Each chapter engages with different types of sources and deals with what might be classified as different historiographical domains (social, cultural, political, intellectual, legal). The aim is to explore a number of different spatio-temporal or discursive "moments" in mid-20th-century Iraq in which femininity and the family were particularly charged objects of imaginative and practical interventions in the name of a national-developmental future. It is also to examine moments that show how such interventions were not seamless or propelled by an ineluctable logic of power. They were often attempts to discipline or contain oppositional forces of various kinds, they often ran up against modes of life not organized according to the futurist and child-centered logic of family reform in the age of development, and they met with varying degrees of success.

Chapter 1

Nation, Gender, Time in Jawad Salim's *Monument to Freedom*

> Art is a way of living in some place. It is something that happens between a person and the land he lives on…For a new people and a new land to understand each other takes time…It takes time because the mutual understanding between the new people and the new land is an understanding through the very terms of time: understanding through custom, repetition, expectation, practice—above all through practice. When the people leaves its mark on the country, and the country on the people, so that the people comes to resemble the country, and the country to resemble the people, only then does one understand the other. And only then does the new country have an art that is particular to it.
>
> -Jawad Salim[1]

> Decolonization brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity. Decolonization is the veritable creation of new men.
>
> -Frantz Fanon[2]

This chapter explores a famous work of art, a public monument, built by Iraqi artist Jawad Salim in Baghdad at the height of the nation's revolutionary fervor. The work was commissioned in 1959 by the regime of `Abd al-Karim Qasim to commemorate the revolution of July 14, 1958. Salim, a painter and sculptor, was the most famous visual artist of the Baghdad Renaissance of the 1940s and 1950s and probably the most famous 20th-century Iraqi artist working in any medium. *Nasb al-Hurriyya,* or the Monument to Freedom, often considered his magnum opus, is

[1] Quoted in Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya: Dirasa Fi Atharihi wa-Ara'ihi [Jawad Salim and the Monument to Freedom: A Study of Its Influences and Concepts]* (Baghdad: Wizarat al-`Alam, 1974), 169.

[2] From *Les damnes de la terre [The Wretched of the Earth]*, quoted in and translated by Kristen Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 158.

a huge bronze and limestone sculpture that still stands in Baghdad's Liberation Square (Figure 1). The artist spent an intense two years designing the monument and sculpting its giant figures in Italy (since Iraq did not have a studio large enough to accommodate them). The work was completed in 1961, shortly after Salim died of a heart attack at age forty-one while working on the installation in Baghdad—brought on, it is widely believed, by the stress of the project. Kanan Makiya asserts that *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is "probably the most important work of public art ever commissioned from a modern Arab artist."[3] It is known to inspire lofty superlatives and hyperbolic comparisons; Iraqi artist Khalid al-Rahhal has identified "two important epics in Iraq—the first is the epic of Gilgamesh and the second is the epic of freedom by Jawad Salim."[4] Today, the monument is widely recognized throughout the Arab world as a symbol of both Iraq and the revolutionary era of the 1950s—or, in the words of one recent commentator, as "a memory of a time and a memory of a place."[5] In this chapter, I use it as a means of introducing some temporal frameworks through which to think about gender, nationalism, revolution, and the age of development in Iraq, and which I employ in various ways in subsequent chapters.

Figure 1: Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 1961.

[3] Kanan Makiya, *The Monument: Art, Vulgarity and Responsibility in Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 81.
[4] "Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya: Dhakirat Zaman, Dhakirat Makan [Jawad Salim and the Monument to Freedom: Memory of a Time, Memory of a Place], http://www.annabaa.org/nbanews/62/197.htm (accessed July 27, 2010).
[5] Ibid. Images from the work are frequently reproduced on book jacket covers and website banners, and a reduced replica of the entire monument forms the background to a popular al-Jazeera show on Iraq.

A reading of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is a productive way to introduce these frameworks for several reasons. First, the monument depicts human bodies marked by gender, age, and other differences, in multiple and complex relations to various kinds of time and space. As Iraqi art theorist and artist Shakir Hassan Al Sa`id has argued, *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is, among other things, about "the relationship between the body and history" (*al-`alaqa bayn al-jasad wa-l-tarikh*), and thus, I argue, about the relationship between gender and time.[6] Second, the monument provides visual illustrations of temporal concepts, which can be useful since time, even in purely textual or oral discourse, is frequently only grasped through spatial metaphors. For example, notions of "near" and "distant" pasts and futures are based on spatial metaphors, as are conceptions of time as "linear" or "circular."[7] The dynamics between time and space in *Nasb al-Hurriyya* are not limited to the relation of national-historical time to the national-territorial space in which it flows, though they certainly include that relation and also serve as reminders that neither time nor space can really be experienced or analyzed in isolation from the other.[8] Like many artists of his generation, Salim was preoccupied with questions of time and space in relation to modernity, the colonial experience, the struggle for national sovereignty, and the role of modern art in that struggle. Nada Shabout writes that Salim:

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[6] In making this point, Al Sa`id quotes Michel Foucault in Arabic translation: *inna al-jasad huwwa al-sath alladhi tartasim `alayhi al-ahdath* (the body is the surface on which events are inscribed). Shakir Hassan Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun [Jawad Salim: The Artist and the Others]* (Baghdad: Iraqi Ministry of Culture and Media, 1991), 202.

[7] Reinhart Koselleck attributes the use of spatial metaphors in temporal expressions to the "impossibility of intuiting pure time," and explores the "methodological difficulties" this impossibility poses for the writing of history, "a discipline [that] lives by metaphorical expression." More recently, Timothy Mitchell has argued that the "spatialization of time," rather than a natural consequence of human capacities of intuition, is characteristic of modernity, indeed the very process through which "the modern" is constituted. Mitchell writes that modern homogeneous national-historical time, in Benedict Anderson's sense, "rests on giving temporality a spatial expression…the contemporaneity of time is haunted by the ghost of space." Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), esp. 6–7. Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," in *Questions of Modernity*, ed. Timothy Mitchell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2000), 14–15.

[8] For more on this, see Jon May and Nigel Thrift, eds., *Timespace: Geographies of Temporality* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

> inaugurated a movement of '*istilham al-turath*,' seeking inspiration from tradition, and developed an artistic vision that was historiocultural as well as modern. What is meant by the act of *istilham* is a return to the past, to tradition, for the purpose of discovering contemporary aesthetics, based on the conviction that a spiritual relationship exists between the past and the present irrespective of temporal distance.[9]

Salim's concept of *istilham* or inspiration was further developed by Al Sa`id, a younger contemporary of Salim who made important contributions to Arab art and Arabic art criticism throughout the second half of the 20th century, and who argued that *istilham* involved "establishing a new spatial and temporal relationship with our surroundings."[10]

Finally, *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is not just a work of art but a public monument; commissioned by the government in the wake of revolution, it was unveiled in a public ceremony replete with speeches from public officials and was then embraced not only by Qasim's regime but by almost every subsequent regime in Iraq.[11] On the face of it, this is quite remarkable, given the work's affiliation with a particular government and the violence of various "regime changes" in the country since then; certainly, public monuments built in modern Baghdad have not generally been known for their longevity. It speaks either to the work's local popularity or to the capacity of its visual representations to be appropriated by a variety of different hegemonic discourses, or to both at once. In any case, the monument belongs to the urban space of Baghdad and to the historical time of 20th-century Iraq in ways that clearly transcend its ties to its creator.

1. Historical Time

I begin with Makiya's description:

[9] Nada M. Shabout, *Modern Arab Art: Formation of Arab Aesthetics* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 28.
[10] Quoted in ibid., 159, n. 38.
[11] Apparently only one Iraqi government, that of `Arif in the late 1960s, has proclaimed a disliking for the monument, threatening to dismantle it on charges of "paganism." Public outcry quickly squelched the impulse. Makiya, *The Monument*, 82.

> *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is a visual narrative of the 1958 revolution told through symbols which the artist had been developing in the whole body of his work. Strikingly modern, yet clearly paying homage to its sources in Assyrian and Babylonian wall-relief traditions, the monument is organized as fourteen separate bronze castings averaging eight metres [26 feet] in height. These are meant to be "read" like a verse of Arabic poetry, from right to left, from the events leading up to the revolution, to the revolution itself and an ensuing harmony.[12]

I will have occasion in what follows to challenge and extend various aspects of Makiya's interpretation of the monument. But his method of reading its temporality—that is, as a linear-historical narrative of the Iraqi nationalist movement and the 1958 revolution it produced—has been by far the most common method, in both popular and scholarly commentary. While it does not exhaust the methods that can be used to read the monument, and even obscures many important issues, as the most obvious reading it remains valuable in pointing to important aspects of how historical time was conceived in contemporary Iraqi nationalist imaginations.

It should be noted here, however, that English-language discussions of the monument, including that of Makiya, have tended to ascribe a single meaning to each of its scenes, figures, or symbols and to follow a single way of reading its overall temporal movement, namely as a linear historical narrative moving from right to left or past to future. As suggested by Makiya in the quote above, this is also often assumed to be the single way that the artist "meant" for the work to be read. In contrast, Arabic art criticism on *Nasb al-Hurriyya* has long recognized the polyvalent ways of interpreting the monument, not only in terms of the multiple and often antagonistic layers of symbolism and historical references embedded in each of its figures but also regarding the multiple ways of reading its representations of time. Critics writing in Arabic have likewise had few qualms about departing from the question of what the artist might have "meant" in order to explore the potentialities of unconscious layers of meaning in the work, the

[12] Ibid., 83.

multiple and diverse effects any work of art might have on different viewers, and the openness of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* to new interpretations shaped by the concerns of viewers living in historical presents different from the artist's present. Many of these characteristics in the tradition of Arabic art criticism of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* were already discernible in the best known analysis of the work, *Jawad Salim and the Monument to Freedom* (1974) by Baghdad's famous resident Palestinian artist Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, a contemporary and friend of Salim.[13] They were to be developed further in subsequent years, culminating in the 1994 publication of what is probably the most theoretically sophisticated work on *Nasb al-Hurriyya* to date, written by Al Sa`id.[14] This chapter builds especially on the work of Jabra and Al Sa`id while drawing on a number of other Arabic- and English-language analyses of the monument.

To return to the linear-historical method of reading *Nasb al-Hurriyya*, Makiya's account interprets the narrative progression of the work from right to left as designed to be read "like a verse of Arabic poetry." Numerous other observers have commented on the monument's resonance with poetry, though many of these have placed more emphasis on its structural form as a horizontal line divided into two parts, separated by the rupture of the revolutionary event, much like a line of classical Arabic poetry. As for its right-to-left directionality, this is obviously no more characteristic of poetry than of any other Arabic genre. The narrative trajectory from right to left might be seen as deriving more simply from the monument's depiction of (one kind of) time as linear. There are only two, or at most four, possible directions in which the movement of linear-horizontal time can be depicted in two-dimensional space, and there is no reason to expect

[13] Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*. On multiple and antagonistic layers of symbolism and a non-linear way of reading the work's temporal structure, see p. 136; on the effects of the unconscious on artistic production and the multiple conscious and unconscious levels on which art can "work on a viewer's psyche," see p. 131.

[14] For a discussion of Al Sa`id's thought and some of his broader contributions to Arabic art theory, see Shabout, *Modern Arab Art*, esp. 97–121.

that Salim would have chosen the one used to read European-language texts. In this sense, the work adds another dimension to Benedict Anderson's well-known argument about the connection between mass literacy and the capacity to imagine the nation as a "sociological organism" moving through "homogeneous, empty time."[15] Salim believed, as did most nationalist intellectuals of his time, that illiteracy had to be overcome in order for the full nation-building process to historically unfold. But in the meantime, he also believed that visual art had a greater capacity than the written word to reach and mobilize the illiterate masses.[16] The linearity and directionality of *Nasb-Hurriyya* might thus be understood in part as a way to inculcate sensibilities of historical time *and* of literacy among the illiterate viewing public. I will return below to various internal references in the work to both the written word and the Arabic language.

Another initial observation about Makiya's account of the monument's overall narrative movement from right to left, and still viewing the work as a whole, is that this movement of temporal progression is not in fact uniform. Only about half of the figures are depicted in forward (i.e., leftward) motion. Neither the figures on the far right edge of the monument, representing the nation's distant past, nor those to the left of the central revolutionary scene, representing its future, are traveling from right to left. They frame the historical events but are not themselves moving in historical time. The figures of the distant past, however, are struggling precisely to set this time into motion. This scene comprises a rearing horse, its erstwhile rider, and three other men struggling to contain the ensuing chaos: a prehistorical and prepolitical past in which human and animal can hardly be distinguished (right half of Figure 2).

[15] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 1983), 26, 37.
[16] Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 189ff.

Figure 2. The Beginning. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

The struggle between the past and the future here is precisely a struggle between temporal stasis and linear progress. Al Sa`id writes that thematically the scene

> is full of beginnings but also the preservation of what came before…the horse is jumping to the right with its front legs, upward with its neck, and toward the left with its head. The overall movement is a spiral—from right to top to top left. The first figure appears to be moving to the right but is trying to fix his hands on the horse's saddle and turning is head to the left, while [second figure] is gripping the horse's saddle or part of its harness with both hands and pulling it forcefully to the left with the strength and thrust of his body.[17]

This particular type of temporal non-homogeneity does not contradict Anderson's argument. He notes it as a familiar trope of nationalist discourse worldwide, in which the nationalist movement is imagined to awaken the nation from its slumber or to pull it out of some other metaphorical

[17] Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun*, 193.

state of premodern stagnation.[18] Here, the tragedy of the fallen rider and out-of-control horse depicts the nation's loss of sovereignty; at the least, it points to British occupation and Mandate rule in Iraq from 1917-32 and the nominally independent monarchical period from 1932-58. The horse, as Jabra writes, is "one of the most well-known Arab symbols, signifying purity of origin, excellence, and strength."[19] That it has thrown its rider and is no longer under the control of its masters evokes the loss of Arab masculine independence in a world turned upside-down. In the context of contemporary nationalist discourse, which constructed Ottoman rule as a centuries-long period of darkness and "foreign" domination, the origins of the tragedy probably go back much further.

Using the placards hoisted in the air by the nationalist demonstrators in the monument's second scene as a retrospective clue to the scene that precedes it, some have interpreted the male Arab nomadic figure stretching vertically out of the prehistorical chaos as attempting to raise and publicize his own political placard.[20] In this interpretation, the figure is not terribly successful in his effort to reach a public of readers and thereby politicize his predicament: he fumbles with crossed hands in an effort to straighten the placard and perhaps to mark it with words. The poignancy of this struggle as at least in part a struggle for literacy is reinforced by the central fold of the semi-rectangular material, which could register as a book or a newspaper as much a crumpled banner. A the same time, the vertical figure's conspicuously open mouth suggests oral rather than, or along with, written language. In fact, Al Sa`id proposes that the monument's linguistic clues evoke an Arabic public speech (*khutba*) as much as a line of Arabic text.[21] *Khutba* can mean any type of public speech but is most commonly used to designate the Islamic

[18] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 195.
[19] Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 136.
[20] Ibid.; Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun*, 203.
[21] Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun*, 110–38.

sermon. From this perspective, the figure's open mouth might be read as evoking the first word of the Qur'an revealed to the Prophet Muhammad: "*iqra'*" (recite!). These dual interpretations—on the one hand, an illiterate or semi-literate pre-political nomad struggling to write a slogan on a placard or read a book, and, on the other hand, a man reading aloud (reciting) or making a public speech (a speech that, in Al Sa`id's interpretation, *is* the rest of the monument)—are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In a speech at the opening of the first exhibit of the Baghdad Modern Art Group in 1951, Jawad Salim contrasted writing and visual art as part of a discussion of the illiteracy of the Iraqi masses, and defined writing as "putting strange symbols on paper and then commanding: '*iqra'*!'"[22] As the first word of the Prophetic revelation, *iqra'* (from the same root as the word *Qur'an*) is translated as "recite!" But it can also mean, as it apparently does in Salim's speech, "read!" The combination of the figure's open mouth and raised print material might thus be read as registering the dual meaning of one historically momentous Arabic word. It would not be the only Islamic theme in the first scene. In an Iraqi context, as various commentators on the monument have noted, the depiction of a horse and fallen rider is almost guaranteed to evoke the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson Husayn at Karbala, which for Shi`i Muslims is "the axis around which all of history revolves."[23] Already, then, in the monument's first sequence, we have different and more local conceptions of both Arabic discourse and historical temporality than those contained in the familiar narrative of secular-nationalist time and print culture.

Regardless of the particular historical narrative that might be read out of this sequence, the artist has managed to condense, in a single vivid scene, the ambivalent nationalist relation to

[22] Quoted in Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 189.
[23] Kamran Scot Aghaie, "Introduction: Gendered Aspects of the Emergence and Historical Development of Shi`i Symbols and Rituals," in *The Women of Karbala*, ed. Kamran Scot Aghaie (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 9.

the past, or the non-ambivalent relation to two very different national pasts: something that was right (in a valorized distant past) has clearly gone wrong (in a tragic nearer past). Salim's view of this more recent past may not be as dark as Qasim's, who proclaimed in 1959 that it was the responsibility of Iraqi artists to "nourish the noble spirit in the rising generation and to cleanse their souls of the filth of the past, the past of darkness, the past of treachery. I don't mean the glorious past…"[24] But the rupture between two pasts is clear enough in both, as it was in all nationalist discourse of the time. It was a necessary device of the drive to purge the colonial/monarchical past from the nationalist/revolutionary present without compromising the historicity of the nation. And it is this national historicity, or rather historical time itself, that is born from the tragedy of the monument's first scene, the single irrepressible motion "driven leftwards by force of the horse's arching neck."[25]

The next set of figures emerges directly out of this struggle, carrying forward the triumphant leftward motion of the struggling horse (left half of Figure 2). Signifying the nationalist protests and uprisings of the monarchical era, a man and a woman march forward in unison, hoisting rectangular political placards in the air. The female demonstrator, destined to become one of the monument's most iconic figures, was instantly recognized by contemporary observers as a young, modern, and revolutionary Iraqi woman claiming her equality with the man marching at her side. To the left of the couple floats the figure of a child, the only completely three-dimensional figure of the relief. Historical time is thus released in Salim's monument through three very particular bodies, strongly individuated and clearly differentiated by gender and age. In their individuality and their differences, as well as the ways in which the two adult figures are marked as urban and modern—by their placards, which prove literacy; their

[24] "Al-Za`im Yaftitah Mahrajan al-Risafi [The Leader Opens the Commemoration of al-Risafi]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 22, no. 5 (May 1959): 2–3.
[25] Makiya, *The Monument*, 83.

clothes, which are snug-fitting and straight-lined; their disciplined bodies, which attest to both modern schooling and political organization; and, of course, their resolute march forward, abandoning the past for the future even as the man's left fist draws sustenance from the former—they form a stark contrast to the ahistorical and undifferentiated mass of (male) human and animal bodies in the first scene.

The depiction of a male and a female together in the public sphere marks the second set of figures apart from all the other scenes of the monument as the only representation of a heterosocial community, and the child confirms that it is a heterosexual one as well. As a triangular structure of relations, it clearly evokes the bourgeois conjugal or "Oedipal" family frequently associated with Western modernity. Many leftist and other nationalist intellectuals conceived of this family type as the most conducive to fostering both women's equality with men—because it freed the conjugal couple from the bonds of the extended patrilineal clan and the older generations—and the nation's future political sovereignty and development—because it ensured the healthy development of its children. In Salim's monument, the stability and power of the conjugal family structure are precisely what enable the progressive linear motion and futurity of the nation—that is, its history.

The monument's primal nomadic scene, with its figures turned inward, onto their own drama, has no public: at best, it depicts one precociously prepolitical figure attempting to find or create a public with his clumsy gesture at placard-raising. The second scene, by contrast, is unmistakably oriented toward a public, as indicated most of all by the placards but also by the demonstrators' coordinated march and raised fists and by the female figure's direct gaze outward, at the viewers or the monument's own public. In some ways, the triangular configuration resonates with Jurgen Habermas's historical account of the modern European

public sphere as originating in the private sphere of the bourgeois family, not in the sense of differentiating itself from that sphere but in the sense of being actually constituted by private (reading) individuals with "audience-oriented subjectivities."[26] In *Nasb al-Hurriyya*, the audience-oriented subjectivities of the conjugal family are what bring a national public into being and, through it, a nation moving forward in historical time. Yet it is worth noting that the conjugal structure is not depicted here in the gendered *spatial* terms of a masculine public and a feminine private sphere; I will return to this point in the next section.

As many observers have noticed, the child figure in the second scene of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is the monument's only fully three-dimensional figure. The effect of this is intensified by the fact that it is one of the few figures in the narrative's "historical" sequence—i.e., from the male demonstrator to the revolutionary soldier—that exhibits no sign of leftward motion or interest. It faces outward, its arms stretching into the three-dimensional space that it alone occupies; it even hovers slightly away from the wall to which all the other figures are firmly fixed. It is the first real hint we have of a second way of reading the location of past and future in the monument, in which the future is located outward, where the viewer stands. In the nationalist discourse of reproductive futurism, the nation's future is of course embodied in the figure of the child.[27] But, following Lee Edelman, this figure should not be confused with any "historical child."[28] Likewise, the future it embodies should not be confused with any historical future; it is not a future bound to the present. Unlike all of its companion figures, the child figure is barely even attached to the wall behind it, which, as nearly all critics remind us, is a tribute to the wall-

[26] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), esp. 43–56. See also Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005).
[27] See introduction.
[28] Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 11.

relief art of ancient Mesopotamia, the historical origin of the nation. It is as if the child has been released from the burden of time altogether.

2. Generational Time

If the conjugal couple in the second sequence of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* resonates in some ways with a familiar modernization narrative, nothing in its representation suggests a scene of private bourgeois domesticity or even, outside the mere existence of the child, of a gendered division of labor. They are certainly not at home; they are both (all three?) engaged in dangerous political action in the public sphere. Indeed, many contemporary observers saw in them not so much universal qualities of modernity as particular sensibilities of Iraqi urban life in the 1950s: leftist heterosocialized activists as representatives of the so-called "generation of '58," formed in the crucible of the mass urban protests of the postwar era. The role of both women and youth in these movements was already a regular feature of nationalist narrative and mythology in Iraq, in addition to being a well-documented historical phenomenon. Even children of elementary-school age were widely reported to have been involved in street demonstrations of the pre- and post-revolutionary years.[29]

In one nationalist story, said to have occurred during the Wathbah rebellion of 1948, the mother of four railway workers led a workers' demonstration to the house of the prime minister. Addressing herself to the minister while holding a revolver in each hand, she reportedly demanded "bread, employment and freedom."[30] Some of these stories have been confirmed by historians. For example, Hanna Batatu's sources substantiate a well-known incident of the Wathbah; when the Iraqi military opened fire on protestors crossing a bridge "[o]nly a fifteen-year-old girl, 'Adawiyyah al-Falaki, who carried a banner and marched at the head of the

[29] See chapter 4.
[30] "They Blazed the Trail," *The Iraq Times Women's Supplement,* March 10, 1959, 1.

column, crossed unscathed."[31] Numerous sources, including the files of the U.S. embassy in Baghdad, report that on October 1956, at the funeral of Shaykh Mahmud of the Barzanji Kurds, "the mob stormed the gates and wounded a policeman; whereupon the police opened fire. One woman, leading the mob, was killed and a number of others wounded." The Iraqi government announced in its defense that the woman had been a "communist sympathizer" and after the revolution the English-language daily *The Iraq Times* would pay tribute to her as "the martyr Akhtar."[32]

Beyond both reflecting and constituting nationalist historical memory of mobilization against the monarchy, the monument's second scene evokes a certain style of companionate marriage practiced or aspired to by many members of the "new generation" in 1950s Iraq, especially within the influential subculture of middle- and lower-middle-class urban communists. To the extent that the figures signify this subcultural style of heterosocial/sexual political comradery, we might not expect to discover behind them any private space of tranquil domesticity, imagined or otherwise—or even, for that matter, parents who believe their leisure time should be spent raising their children[33]—as we might expect from metahistorical narratives linking modernity, companionate marriage, and feminine domesticity. This is not to trivialize the effects of discourses and technologies aimed at constituting that type of domesticity in Iraq, which will be examined at length in subsequent chapters. But it does point to the need for attention to temporal experiences not contained within such universalizing modernization narratives—or to what Dipesh Chakrabarty calls *postcolonial heterotemporalities*—in terms of

[31] Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 557.
[32] U.S. Consulate Basra to Secretary of State, January 3, 1956, RG84/787, USNA; "Brigadier Describes Omar Ali's Moves," *Iraq Times*, February 11, 1959, 7.
[33] Interviews with Mubejel Baban and Bushra Perto, London, 2008.

difference in the meta-trajectories of particular national-historical times *and* difference in the social, gendered, and spatial experiences of everyday time.[34]

As noted in the introduction, "generation" is a much-invoked but still rather slippery analytical concept in the historiography on mid-20th-century Iraq. It has frequently been used by scholars as an explanatory category in analyses of the 1958 revolution, whether in reference to the emergence of a new social class that scholars have frequently conceptualized as a "new generation," or to the large proportion of literally young people active in the communist and nationalist oppositional parties and to their visibility in various political organizations specifically for students or youth (most of which were affiliated with the ICP) during the postwar and revolutionary eras. I will examine these two uses of the term "new generation" in more detail in chapter 4; here I will just note that they are not identical, though they certainly have overlaps and are frequently conflated. The first describes the historical progress of a class ("the new middle class," "the technocratic elite," "the *effendiyya*," to cite some of its common descriptors) during the 20th century and is not linked to age difference as a constitutive factor, though the notion that it is in continuous emergence for much of the century may contain the assumption that it always has more younger than older members. The second refers to youth as a social and analytical category and thus to age difference, or a "generation gap," as a politically salient feature of a particular historical moment. But the relation between class and age—not only their overlap but also their difference—calls for more attention than it is usually given in these narratives.

The ambiguity around the concept of "generation" in the historiography is itself related to the critical but highly ambivalent role that the category of "youth" played in contemporary Iraqi

[34] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

discourse and experience. As in many other national contexts, from the 1920s and 1930s through the political convulsions of the 1950s and 1960s, "youth" were constructed in Iraq both as bearing "the promise of the future" and as "unbridled political and sexual subjects" threatening various established orders, to quote Omnia El Shakry's recent description of nationalist discourses in interwar and postwar Egypt. Rather than seeing this ambivalence as *originating* in hegemonic political projects or new psychologizing discourses on the stages of human development, El Shakry reverses the logic, arguing that it emerged in Egypt precisely at the moment of Egyptian youth's most active political engagement. The student demonstrations of 1935 and 1936 "ushered in the figure of youth as an insurgent subject of politics. Youth were recast as a problem in need of regulation and control and as a necessary object of study." By the 1940s:

> The construction of the adolescent as a psychological subject was geared toward a particular mode of subjectification, which involved the elaboration of an apolitical psychological interiority and an attempt to domesticate the "boundless energy of youth" through the production of normative gendered, heterosexual, and ethical subjects engaged in the cultivation of self-health.[35]

The two young adult figures in *Nasb al-Hurriyya* who do, in critical ways, act positively as "insurgent subjects of politics," forcing the nation's future and even its very history into being, are simultaneously normalized not only through the marks of their orderly discipline but also through their gender difference, their heterosocial/sexuality, and their child. There is no hint in this heteronormative sequence of the widespread public anxiety around the purported "marriage crisis" (i.e., avoidance) among young Iraqis or the general social-sexual disruption feared to be produced by politically mobilized youth (see chapter 4)–except, perhaps, for that which might be read in the arguably strenuous marks of normalization themselves. As for the hovering child, it

[35] Omnia El Shakry, "Youth as Peril and Promise: The Emergence of Adolescent Psychology in Postwar Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 591–610.

embodies the nation's distant and conflict-free future, no doubt, but at the price of being literally severed from any agential connection to the political present or the immediate, historically bound future.

3. Gendered Time

To the left of the couple and child are three primary female figures depicting somewhat different nationalist visions of femininity. The first, who carries on the vital leftward motion launched by the rearing horse and accelerated by the disciplined urban couple, is dressed in a long *`abaya*, her posture and affect evoking the female homosocial work of wailing in grief and/or urging men into battle (Figure 3).[36] By marking this figure with what in the urban nationalist imagination were unmistakable signs of tradition—dress, posture, and social divisions of labor—the artist did not bind her to a stagnant familial space or to a past time. The tribute to mourning as women's work—and the affirmation of its transferability from local tradition to modern nation and progressive time—is further elaborated in the next scene, a woman curled over the body of her martyred adult son. The faces of two other grieving women can be seen in the background. Both the primary female figure of this scene and that of the one just beyond/below it, a mother cradling her newborn child, modify the monument's linear forward movement with their markedly circular shapes (which are enlarged mirror images of the circles carved out of the folds of the wailing woman's *`abaya*), evoking the cyclical-feminine time of mourning and

[36] On mourning as women's work, see Lila Abu-Lughod, "Islam and the Gendered Discourses of Death," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 25 (1993): 187–205. For other examples of Iraqi nationalist narratives of women urging men into battle, see "Iraqi Women on the March," *Iraqi Review* 1, no. 9 (July 30, 1959): 18.

reproduction without which linear-historical time would come to an end (with the death of the martyr) and the nation would not emerge (Figure 4).[37]

Figure 4: The Mother of the Martyr and the Mother of the Infant. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

Figure 3: The Wailing Woman. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

Muhsin al-Musawi has eloquently analyzed the prevalent use of "regeneration themes" adapted from ancient Sumerian and Babylonian literature in 20th-century Iraqi nationalist discourse, themes that were often joined with Shi`i narratives of redemptive suffering. This "combination of ancient hymns and canticles with Shi`i rituals" could be found "in the most

[37] On the circle as a symbol of femininity, the square or the straight line as a symbol of masculinity, and the spiral as a symbol of androgny in Salim's art, see Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun*. See also Shabout, *Modern Arab Art*, 9.

leftist secular discourse."[38] As one example, al-Musawi notes the frequent reference of Iraqi artists to ancient poems attributed to Enheduanna, the daughter of King Sargon of Akkad around 2350 B.C. One of the more popular poems attributed to her, "Lament for the Fall of Ur," evokes the simultaneously cyclical and time-accelerating conception of mourning that often appeared in Iraqi nationalist art of the mid-20th century. The poem narrates the destruction of the third dynasty of Ur, as the god Enil

> called the storm
> the people mourned
> winds of abundance he took from the land
> the people mourn
> good winds he took away from Sumer
> the people mourn
> deputed evil winds
> the people mourn[39]

Here, the cyclical repetition of the work of mourning can be heard as a kind of ominous drum-beat, not slowing down time but hastening it, much as in Salim's monument the figures of the monument's historical sequence—and the female homosocial scene both lies at the heart of and traverses the largest part of this sequence—drive the ever-accelerating rhythm of linear-cyclical nationalist time, heralding the coming temporal explosion of revolution.

There is clearly a modern/traditional dichotomy established through the contrast between the three primary female figures of this sequence and the female demonstrator in the one preceding it: on the one hand, a modern woman engaged in heterosocial publics, heterosexual companionate marriage, and organized political activism; on the other, traditional women living in homosocial community as they carry out the now politicized feminine work of mourning and mothering. Yet this dichotomy does not extend to any direct correlation with the past and the

[38] Muhsin al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq: Culture and Power in Conflict* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 29.
[39] Ibid., 28.

future: its irrelevance to such temporal division is underscored by the very ordering of the figures in linear time. Both types of femininity play crucial roles in bringing the sovereign nation into being. In this sense, the modern and the traditional are just different ways of being a patriotic Iraqi woman.

The two modes of living patriotic femininity do share a common denominator, however: in both of them, women's reproductive labor is essential to national becoming. Yasin al-Nasir has argued that "there is not a figure in the monument that is devoid of the symbolism of mother and child, whether explicit or implicit."[40] But if the theme of motherhood is implicit in much of the monument, it is clearly quite explicit here. In fact, there is a striking paucity of active male figures in the entire historical (left-moving) sequence of the monument, which represents the entirety of the Iraqi nationalist movement in the monarchical-colonial period. In the whole sequence, there are four primary adult female figures and two secondary ones, compared to only one agential male figure, the urban demonstrator, in addition to one ambiguously gendered child, one adult male corpse, and one undoubtedly male infant to replace him and enact the revolution.

The relative scarcity of active male figures in the historical sequence, however, does not translate into the absence of male agency. Rather, it could be argued that there is only one male represented in the entire sequence, the educated urban male nationalist, who is not only "universal"—through his achievement of unconditional individuality and autonomy—but also eternal. However often the corrupt regime guns him down, the nation will throw him up again. In the second sequence, he emerges directly from the nation's primordial past (keeping one fist in contact with it); in the central revolutionary sequence, which he carries out single-handedly, he emerges from a woman's body. In both cases, he becomes the universal subject of national-

[40] Yasin al-Nasir, "Qira'a fi Nasb al-Hurriyya...Sirr al-Fann fi Nasb al-Hurriyya...al-Ta`ish ma`a Jami`at al-`Ahud al-Siyasiyya [A Reading of the Monument to Freedom: The Secret of Art in the Monument to Freedom--Co-existence with Every Political Era]," *al-Zaman*, January 20, 2003.

historical time by differentiating himself from the authentic and particularist core of the nation: its women, peasants, and tribal nomads. This happens a final time in the last, futuristic sequence, where the male industrial worker stands alone at the monument's edge, set apart from the equally necessary but far less individuated peasants, women, children, and animals of the sovereign nation. Joan Scott writes that "since the Enlightenment, the abstract individual of political theory has been presumed to be masculine, while the feminine has been synonymous with the particular and the concrete." Scott points to Simone de Beauvoir's expression of this contrast in terms of "man's transcendence, his disembodiment, and woman's immanence, her confinement to the body."[41] The eternal repetition of the universal (i.e., male) subject of historical time in Salim's monument might be read as a repetition of this masculine transcendence of the body, which does not contradict the autonomy of the male nationalist but is a condition of its possibility.

If much of patriotic feminine agency in *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is located in the reproductive sphere, the way in which the nation's women reproduce its universal male subject clearly goes beyond banal biological observations. After all, almost the entirety of the monument's historical sequence is devoted to representing it. In a well-known argument by Partha Chatterjee, anticolonial nationalist thought constructs two domains, the outer/material/masculine and the inner/spiritual/feminine, and then "declares the domain of the spiritual its sovereign territory and refuses to allow the colonial power to intervene in that domain."[42] In part, this argument is an explicit response to Benedict Anderson. Chatterjee accepts Anderson's analyses of homogeneous linear time and of "modular" forms of nationalism that are developed in the West and then adopted in the colony and the postcolony—but he accepts them *only* for the outer/masculine domain of anticolonial nationalism, the sphere that fosters the adoption of Western technology

[41] Joan Wallach Scott, *The Fantasy of Feminist History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 18.
[42] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 6.

and science as well as universal conceptions of progress and rationality. In a widely quoted formulation, he proposes that it is within the inner, protected, feminine domain where "nationalism launches its most powerful, creative, and historically significant project: to fashion a 'modern' national culture that is nevertheless not Western."[43] According to Chatterjee's analysis of the Indian nationalist movement, this project was successful "in situating the 'women's question' in an inner domain of sovereignty, far removed from the arena of political contest with the colonial state. This inner domain of national culture was constituted in the light of the discovery of 'tradition.'"[44] Chatterjee's argument is useful for my analysis of gender and Iraqi nationalism in a number of ways. It cautions that "inner/outer" and "feminine/masculine" binaries in anticolonial nationalist discourse cannot simply be aligned with the "private/public" spheres of Western capitalist modernity. It also points to the interrelation of class and gender in such discourses—in particular to how the nationalist elite constructs both women and peasants as representatives of the inner/spiritual core of the nation—and it calls attention to the normalizing and disciplinary work performed by such constructions.[45] Finally, it theorizes a relation between gender, the spatial imaginaries of "inner" and "outer" spheres, and nationalist conceptions of homogeneous linear-historical time.

But there are also limitations of Chatterjee's analysis in the context of mid-20th-century Iraq. First, it seems that "tradition" did not play such a central role in nationalist constructions of Iraqi femininity during this time, or rather that it was capable of playing very different roles

[43] Ibid. While his framework is derived from a particular historical analysis of India, Chatterjee explicitly proposes that these two domains are a "fundamental feature of anticolonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa."
[44] Ibid., 117.
[45] This aspect of Chatterjee's argument has been frequently ignored by critics and supporters alike, and what he calls the "creative" aspects of the inner/feminine sphere accordingly overemphasized. In addition to what he posits as its creativity and historical significance, Chatterjee is quite clear that this sphere is a construction of the middle-class nationalist elite, that one of its main functions is to discipline women and peasants mobilized during the nationalist struggle, and that it "remains trapped within its framework of false essentialisms." Ibid., 134.

depending on the context. Second, the "woman question" was anything but "far removed from the arena of political contest" with the Mandate and monarchical states.[46] This is illustrated by the pivotal role of the heterosocial couple in setting historical time and the nationalist struggle into motion in *Nasb al-Hurriyya*, and will be elaborated in subsequent chapters of this work. Third, the relation between gender and linear-historical time in Iraqi nationalist discourses was more complex and dynamic than can be depicted by simply locating the latter within the outer/masculine sphere. In both the traditional/homosocial sequence of Salim's monument and in the modern/heteronormative scene that precedes it, feminine reproductive time does not exactly unfold within an inner sphere that has been assigned the role of preserving tradition, nor is it simply contrasted with a masculine public time of material progress and development. There do indeed seem to be (at least) two different temporalities at play here, constituted through their contrast with each other: one masculine/linear/heterosexual and the other feminine/cyclical/homosocial. But the interplay between the two temporalities is not adequately captured through the binary *spatial* categories of the public/private spheres of modernity or the outer/inner spheres of anticolonial nationalism. Feminine temporalities in *Nasb al-Hurriyya* do not really compensate for the future-directed modern temporality of the larger narrative, thereby safeguarding the nation's authentic past. Rather, they function as that temporality's deep motive force, literally accelerating historical time and propelling the nation into its future. Or, to be more precise, into its revolution, which explodes directly out of the feminine sequence.

[46] For other engagements with, and critiques of, Chatterjee on this point in the context of the modern Middle East, see Omnia El Shakry, "Schooled Mothers and Structured Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*,, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). See also Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 146.

4. Revolutionary Time

Again we have a configuration of three figures, which according to most readings are all marked male.[47] One of them liberates a second, the political prisoner—an iconic figure in Salim's art by this time—while the central figure of the monument, a muscular soldier, takes an exaggerated step forward in time to smash through the bars of the larger prison, the old regime itself (Figure 5). A disc hangs above his head, presumably representing dawn, the actual time of the revolution and the endlessly recycled metaphor of the new age it inaugurated—perhaps even a reference to a different part of the Sumerian poem on the destruction of Ur cited by al-Musawi above:

> dawn and the rise of the bright sun
> he locked up with good winds
> let not the bright sun rise upon the country
> like a twilight star it dawned[48]

Indeed, in many ways, the scene is a visual composite of some of the most pervasive rhetorical trope—some might say cliches—for temporalizing the July revolution, as expressed, for instance, in this unoriginal example from a speech by the governor of Nasiriyya province: "With the break of dawn on July 14 [the revolution] broke forth, to set right what had been corrupted over centuries of darkness and…to see with open eyes Iraq's giant leap forward in every field."[49] It may be its resonance with now deeply unfashionable language such as this—along with retrospective knowledge of revolutionary Iraq's historical future, and in particular the

[47] In Al Sa`id's analysis, there are two political prisoners, a male and a female, both being released by the soldier. I have not encountered this reading elsewhere; most commentators see one of the two figures struggling with the prison bars as helping to release the other, the male political prisoner. But there is no question that the latter figure has a prominent round bulge on his/her chest.
[48] al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*, 28.
[49] Government of Iraq, *Manhaj Ihtifalat wa-Mahrijanat al-Dhakira al-Rabi`a li-Thawrat 14 Tammuz al-Majayda li-Liwa' al-Nasiriyya [Program for the Celebrations and Parades on the 4th Anniversary of the Glorious July 14 Revolution in al-Nasiriyya Province]* (n.p., 1962).

unwillingness of its military officers to consent to democratic institutions—that has made this scene the least admired of the monument, at least among recent commentators.[50]

Figure 5. The Soldier of July 14. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

The soldier is hailed, on the other side, by the figure of Freedom, who is gendered female and draws on certain conventions of European origin, such as the torch in her right hand, for

[50] See, for example, Makiya, *The Monument*, 120.

representing this particular abstraction. (The torch is also one of many direct references in the work to Picasso's *Guernica*.) In a somewhat peculiar way, Freedom seems to be rushing toward the soldier in the wrong direction, against the vital forward movement established by the rearing horse and accelerated in each subsequent scene. When viewed in conjunction with all of the figures to her left, who are also either facing "backwards," toward the past, or directly outwards, toward the viewer, she seems to signal the stopping of historical time altogether.

Some Arabic art critics have pointed out that the radical dislocation produced by the revolutionary sequence, the abrupt shift in directional flow, opens up another possible way of "reading" *Nasb al-Hurriyya*. As al-Nasir writes, and contrary to all English-language analyses I have encountered, "time does not flow in [only] one direction" (*al-zaman la yasir bi-itijah wahid*) in Salim's monument.[51] Rather than proceeding in linear fashion from right to left, past to future, the second method of reading begins with the revolutionary present and works outward in both directions simultaneously. When this method is used, it quickly becomes apparent that many, if not all, of the figures in the revolution's past "mirror" figures in its future, and vice versa. Revolutionary time in this reading ruptures the linearity of historical time, whether the former is understood as a centrifugal explosion that irreparably tears the past from the future and sends them flying in opposite directions, or as a more centripetal movement, a kind of temporal "setting right" that establishes symmetry and harmony between the nation's past and its future. Either way, one could picture the entire monument in this sense not as a fixed horizontal line but as the spoke of a wheel, perpetually rotating around the axis of the July revolution, itself represented by the figure of the circle fixed above the soldier's head.

The circularity of this conception of revolution does not, of course, suggest that it can be seen as what Reinhart Koselleck and other theorists have described as a pre-Enlightenment

[51] Al-Nasir, "Qira'a fi Nasb al-Hurriyya."

meaning of the term in European languages, which implied a restoration of past stability, "a rotation of movement back to its point of departure."[52] As we will see below, there is too much that is different between the nation's past and its future in *Nasb al-Hurriyya*. Rather, the revolution's non-linearity lies in its quality of temporal rupture or explosion. This quality is captured in the most common word used in Iraq for the events of July 14, *thawra*, which has the sense of volcanic eruption, rather than the other available option, *inqilab*, which is closer to the English "revolution" in the sense of a rotation or turning upside-down.[53]

The modern experience of revolutionary time has a complex relationship to the equally modern apprehension of homogeneous linear-historical time. In European history, the two are not disconnected in spite of their apparent contradiction; Koselleck even argues that, in Europe, "the sphere of a genuine human history was opened up *through* its contamination by 'revolution.'"[54] Still, nationalist revolutionaries in Europe's colonies ultimately directed the urgency of absolute temporal rupture precisely against the European Enlightenment promise of gradual linear progress. As Chakrabarty writes, to the repeated "not yet" of the self-proclaimed modernizing colonizer, the colonized nationalist finally responds: "now."[55] If it is true that the "not yet" has never been slow to make its reappearance (see chapter 5), it is also common for the

[52] In Koselleck's analysis, it was the French Revolution that forever altered the meaning of the word in European languages: after 1789, revolution no longer meant a return "to given conditions or possibilities, but…led forward into an unknown future." Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 45–49. Linear and circular conceptions of historical time in Arabic literature as the modern era approaches are as complex and as interrelated as they are in European languages. The 14th-century historian Ibn Khaldun is often seen as introducing, long before the European Enlightenment, a new conception of linear historical time that is embedded within a cyclical understanding of history over the *longue durée*.

[53] *Inqilab* has come to be used most commonly for "coup," but during the 1930s and 1940s in Iraq it could also mean "revolution." See, for example, the writings of leading Arabist intellectual Sati` al-Husri in this period, reprinted in *Mudhakkirati Fi al-`Iraq [My Memories of Iraq], 1921-1941*, 3 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Tali`a, 1967). That the shift to *thawra* in the Arabic-speaking world was not a foregone conclusion is further suggested by the fact that Persian speakers still use *inqilab* for "revolution," including the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

[54] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 48.

[55] Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 9. See also Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), esp. chapter 1.

"now" of the revolutionary event to never quite lose its force. In *Nasb al-Hurriyya*, it is the center toward which the nation's past and future are both directed; in the steady gaze of several of the figures of the future backward, toward the revolution, its memory and its possibility remain as a permanent presence.

The non-linear "now" of revolutionary time becomes even more dominant in yet a third way of reading the monument's overall temporal structure, one in which time does not "flow" in any direction. Some observers have seen in its rightmost set of figures, the horse and struggling men, a famous scene of July 14 itself: the destruction by the Iraqi "masses" of two statues of men on horseback: the first of General Maude, the British conqueror of Baghdad during World War I, and the second of King Faysal, installed by the British as monarch of Iraq in 1921. Apparently these were two of only three public statues in Baghdad prior to the July revolution (the third being an "innocuous figure of Muhsin Saadoon, a former Iraqi prime minister"), and their spontaneous dismantling on July 14 made a "deep impression" on Jawad Salim, whose own public sculpture would soon replace them.[56] Following this method of reading, the entire monument captures no time but the revolutionary moment, with its angry and jubilant masses, its disciplined demonstrators, its loyal soldiers, its just-released prisoners, its martyrs and mourners, its mothers sheltering their infants from the turmoil, and its dreams of a better tomorrow.

5. Future Time

In the monument's final scenes, according to Makiya, the "restless motion, anger, tension and pain of the revolution ceases. Peace descends. Repose enters the people's hearts. Iron bars turn into branches; and eyes close with serenity because peace is an offering which knows no fear."[57]

[56] Makiya, *The Monument*, 81–82; Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 136.
[57] Makiya, *The Monument*, 84. This description is almost identical to that of Jabra, except that the latter does not include the line about "eyes closing with serenity." See Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 154. I will return to Makiya's interpretation of the closed eyes below.

The female figure to the left of the figure of Freedom, the first in the "future" sequence proper, is at rest, eyes closed, in what seems from the wavy indications of water across her legs to be a bath or a pool (Figure 6). According to Iraqi art critic `Abbas al-Sarraf, the figure depicts a young woman "awaiting the prince of her dreams, a girl at the threshold of marriage, preparing to meet her groom,"[58] implying that now that Iraq has achieved its revolution and become a sovereign nation, Iraqis can settle down to the business of marriage, sex, and procreation. He, along with others, also sees the figure as representing nature, symbolized by the water running over her legs, the tree branches growing behind her head, and the bird perched on her shoulder. Many have read the bird, which looks like a dove or a pigeon, as a symbol of peace, though Al Sa`id proposes that it might also serve as one of a number of links integrating the monument in time and space with its Baghdadi environment: that it is "a secret companion" for every other bird who "comes to perch on the shoulders of the monument's figures from time to time."[59] Making a similar point through different reasoning, Jabra reports Salim as saying that the bird is a visual pun: a pigeon (*al-hamam*) symbolizing the bathhouse (*al-hammam*) in which the woman rests, and thus "symbolizing Baghdad itself" through reference to the city's legendary bathing institutions, understood as a spatial embodiment of temporal continuity from ancient to modern times.[60]

[58] `Abbas al-Sarraf, *Jawad Salim* (Baghdad: Wizarat al-`Alam, 1972), 146.
[59] Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun*, 203.
[60] Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 154.

Figure 6. The Woman in the Bathhouse. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

To the left of the bathing woman are two more female figures, representing the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; the latter is pregnant (Figure 7). Between them is the figure of an adolescent girl carrying a tray on her head. It might be noted that Makiya's account of the futuristic scene no longer really applies, once the reclining woman is left aside; while historical time does seem

to have stopped, "repose" is not exactly what has replaced it. All three female figures in this scene are depicted as hard at work, as are the two male peasants to the left of them and the lone male worker on the far left edge of the monument (Figure 8). A sheet of metal is neatly curled around the right side of the worker's body, signaling the industrial materials of his labor as well as the historical closure effected by this sequence. These figures inhabit not just a posthistorical utopia (or not just *any* posthistorical utopia) but, more specifically, a land made prosperous through their own agricultural and industrial labor, and they are no longer directed toward the future—which would be redundant, since they *are* the future, and there is only one future in the national-developmentalist imagination—but toward the ongoing exploitation of Iraq's natural wealth for the benefit of its people. That is, they inhabit a developed country.

Figure 7: The Tigris and Euphrates, or Peasant Women Harvesting. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

Figure 8: The Men of the Future. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

Qasim often insisted that the army intervened on July 14 only because it had no choice, but that when it did, "our free and eternal [*khalida*] republic burst forth into history." The word *khalida*, when attached to "republic," as it often was in the Qasimite years, can be translated as either "glorious" or "eternal," and in this context Qasim clearly meant the latter. He specifically contrasted the nature of the Iraqi republic as *khalida* with the nature of the individual as fleeting and ephemeral: "Among our goals is the end of individual rule…because the individual is

fleeting, whatever his age, and the nation is eternal."[61] The revolution may have launched Iraq and all of its citizens into the proper time of modernity, but it did so by instituting the eternal, static framework—the sovereign Iraqi state—that would ensure the protection, defense, and stability of the uniform space in which development could unfold. In chapter 3, I will examine postwar development projects in Iraq to fix pastoral nomads and landless peasants in space by settling them on small, family-sized plots of land, themselves brought into existence through the fixing of the course and flow of the two great rivers through new dams and irrigation systems.[62] In other words, the progressive temporal motion of development was seen to demand the production of new kinds of spatial immobilities, especially for peasants, nomads, women, and the rural non-human world. Similarly, in Salim's monument, historical time is set into motion, and the end of development finally achieved, by *eliminating* the ungovernable mobility of the nomads in the first scene. We might thus conceive of the future "sequence" in *Nasb al-Hurriyya* not as the end of historical time in Anderson's sense, but as the end of the eventfulness of nationalist, revolutionary time and the proper beginning of homogeneous national time: the opening up of a fully modern temporality instituting the "fantasy of even, limitless development" within the territory of the sovereign nation-state and through the productive agency of disciplined, self-governing citizens.[63]

6. Bio-Time

Sex and gender have never been tangential to any modern state-building project, whether colonial or nationalist; the centrality of what Michel Foucault calls "bio-power" to modern

[61] "Sada al-Za`im `Abd al-Karim Qasim Yalqi Khataban [Leader 'Abd al-Karim Qasim Gives Speech]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 18, 1959, 14.
[62] As I will show, these efforts to fix people, animals, land, and water in space resulted in ecological and social catastrophe. See also Diana K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).
[63] On the global postwar fantasy of even, limitless development and the end of "eventful" historical time, see Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*.

disciplinary regimes has ensured this. Starting in the 18th century in Europe, according to Foucault, new forms of power were deployed at the intersection between "the disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population."[64] What began as a "political economy of population" became "a grid of observations regarding sex. There emerged the analysis of the modes of sexual conduct, their determinations and their effects, at the boundary line of the biological and economic domains." In this narrative, bio-power is intimately linked to the rise of capitalism and to the modern state's efforts to regulate its population, yet it goes far beyond the "crudely populationist arguments of the mercantilist epoch."[65] In addition to its relatively simple interest in increasing or decreasing the population based on the nation's perceived economic needs, bio-power involves the "investment of the body, its valorization, and the distributive management of its forces," and represents "nothing less than the entry of life into history."

> If one can apply the term *bio-history* to the pressures through which the movements of life and the processes of history interfere with one another, one would have to speak of *bio-power* to designate what brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of transformation of human life.[66]

In many ways, such modern formations of power can be understood as driving the temporal motion of *Nasb al-Hurriyya,* even if actual power relations are somewhat opaque in the work. The monument's visual narrative establishes a rhythm, a tension, and a productive dialectic between some of the central "poles" of the functioning of bio-power described by Foucault: the (human) body and the (national) population, life and history. As noted above, a similar configuration of poles, namely "the relationship between the body and history," is seen by Al Sa`id to constitute the central dynamic of the monument.[67]

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[64] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 139.
[65] Ibid., 26.
[66] Ibid., 141–43.
[67] Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun,* 202.

The second sequence of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* already points toward how modern forms of discipline were fostering new kinds of body- and subject-formation in time, and how nationalists embraced this process as enabling the struggle for sovereignty. The disorderly movements and non-differentiated bodies of the nomads are firmly located in the past, superseded by the geometrical and coordinated movements of the protesters' highly disciplined, and deeply gendered, bodies. Such forms of life, and such bodily postures and capabilities, were produced through urbanization, the expansion of the education system and of literacy, and the spread of various other technologies of governmentality in the monarchical period. Yet in the second sequence they are channeled into the only force capable of overthrowing that monarchy, a register of the unstable nature of the modes of subjectification that such technologies enable.

But it is the sequence of bodies in the far left scene that is ultimately both the proof and the guarantee of the nation's achievement of sovereignty through its progress in historical time and the rupture of its revolution. Using the non-linear method of reading that starts from the revolutionary center and moves outward in both directions simultaneously, the three primary male figures of the far left scene—the two peasants and the worker—mirror the three male figures struggling furiously with the horse in the far right scene, while the placid, domesticated, and wealth-producing ox mirrors the ungovernable horse itself.[68] The male figures in both scenes are strong, muscular, and determined. But the marks of their difference signal the reconstruction of Iraqi masculinity through the nationalist struggle and the July revolution—from the noble but somewhat wild, possibly violent, and unquestionably disorganized nomads of the past to the

[68] There is actually a fourth, visually peripheral, male figure in both scenes, neither of which has received much attention in commentary on the monument: the fallen rider and the strange figure near the ox, which seems to be depicted in a warrior-like pose, though with its back turned toward the viewer. Following the historical interpretation of the leftmost scene as the Battle of Karbala, one might speculate that the fallen rider, i.e., Husayn, the Second Imam in Twelver Shi`ism, is mirrored in the future by the figure near the ox, who would then become the Twelfth or "Hidden" Imam, the *mahdi* or messiah who will return at the end of time to fill the world with justice.

cooperative, disciplined, and productive male workers and farmers of the future. As Jabra writes: "The posture of the worker is a posture of pride. In this active posture, this belief in the future, the epic of freedom reaches its conclusion."[69] It is precisely the worker's *posture*—his modern, masculine bodily comportment—that effects the end of history in the nation's long and difficult march toward freedom, and in this "conclusion," the future he "believes" in can be none other than the future he already inhabits. (If he has any doubts, the thick metal-and-stone slab blocking any further leftward motion or even view should dispel them.) In this posture is the promise, or the dream, that the revolution is, or will become, far more than a political or even economic revolution; its effects will be as deep as those described by Koselleck as the aim of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: "to impel disruption into Chinese sensibility, dictating revolution into the body as it were."[70]

The reconstruction of Iraqi feminine bodies is somewhat less clear. The three adult female figures in the future sequence—the woman in the pool and the two women harvesting—can be seen as mirroring the three rural/traditional adult female figures in the historical sequence: the wailing woman, the mother of the martyr, and the mother of the infant. Unlike the latter group of figures, however, or the male figures in the future sequence, the three females of the future double as symbolic figures standing for Nature and the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. It would seem that rural women, once released from historical time (through its coming to an end), revert to the cyclical-biological time of nature and fertility. What becomes of urban women in this narrative is a question I return to in the conclusion to this chapter; here I will just note that the male worker of the future, unlike the two male peasants of the future and the male urban

[69] Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 158.
[70] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 43.

demonstrator of the past, does not have a female counterpart visible in the public space depicted in the monument.

If the reconstruction of feminine bodies is both more ambiguous (for rural women) and less visible (for urban women) than is the reconstruction of masculine bodies, the latter process is hardly devoid of implications for women and femininity. A main argument of this dissertation is that understandings of properly modern motherhood have a lot to do with the kinds of citizens mothers are expected to raise in a particular historical context. In the postwar period in Iraq, nationalist discourses on feminine domesticity and motherhood were no longer directed only at middle- and upper-class women. Peasant women and women of the urban lower and working classes were increasingly mobilized to raise future-directed citizens with healthy, efficient, disciplined bodies who could provide the agricultural and industrial labor necessary for the nation's development. The powerful physical postures, as well as the geometrical and muscular bodies, of the male peasants and worker in the future sequence of *Nasb al-Hurriyya* attest to a history of learned habits, skills, and sensibilities alien to the twisted forms and inefficient movements of the male figures in the rightmost sequence. These include not only vocational skills and habits of hygiene and nutrition but also bodily comportments and future-directed, audience-oriented subjectivities conscious of inhabiting a clearly delineated national public space within a particular national-historical time. The quotes by Jawad Salim and his contemporary Frantz Fanon in this chapter's epigraph illustrate connections that nationalist intellectuals themselves made between the temporal rhythms of the struggle for sovereignty, the (re)construction of masculinity, and what we might, after Foucault, call bio-history. But they only tell part of the story. In Iraq, none of these changes were assumed by nationalists to just

happen, not even through the time-shattering experience of revolution. They were to be instilled over time in the rising generation, in large part through the work of women.

7. Counter-Memory and Heterotemporalities

Some observers now see the post-revolutionary sequence of Salim's monument, from the figure of Freedom to that of the industrial worker, as "utopian," and have criticized it as such.[71] This is perhaps the most obvious reading, though it might be remembered that at the time the work was created the notion of developing underdeveloped countries was not seen by most people as utopian—after all, developed countries actually existed. Moreover, the sequence primarily depicts hard manual work regulated through rather familiar divisions of labor: urban/rural, male/female, human/animal, and adult/child. As utopias go, this is surely a modest one, and it is arguably only retrospective comparison with revolutionary Iraq's dystopian historical future that makes it appear otherwise. In this sense, Salim's vision is not so much a utopia as it is a future truly past and gone.

But my aim in this section is not really to interrogate the representation of historical reality lying at the end of the linear narrative of time through which *Nasb al-Hurriyya* is most often read. Rather, it is to introduce a few potential complications related to that representation's connection to just this linear narrative, and to ask how strong a hold the monument's historical sequence really has on its future sequence, even within the aesthetic limits of the work itself. As Al Sa`id has argued, such complications—that is, the work's numerous marks and movements of tension, disruption, contradiction, ambiguity, and ambivalence—call for more sustained attention

[71] See, for example, Makiya, *The Monument*, 85–87, 120ff.

to the "counter-memory" (*al-dhakira al-mudadda*) that shadows nationalist memory at every step of the way in Salim's epic of freedom.[72]

One of these complications is the gaping white space between Freedom's backside and the future—by far the largest physical gap in the monument—which decisively breaks what has been called the accelerating "rhythm" of the work's depiction of historical events up to that point. There is only one other noticeable, though shorter, visual pause in the narrative, which marks the unseen irruption of power between the defiant uprisings and the corpse of the martyr. Following the linear-historical method of reading, the void after Freedom aligns precisely with the post-revolutionary present of the monument's construction and thus might be read as a question mark regarding both how the story really ends and how the future-directed and present-transcending time of the revolution is to be experienced or depicted.[73] As Koselleck has noted, and which I will return to in chapter 4, the historical time inaugurated by the Enlightenment ended up leading not simply to a homogeneous and linear temporal experience but to an ever-widening gap in present time between "the space of experience" and "the horizon of expectation." This is never more vivid as during modern revolutionary time, when the revolution "appears to unchain a yearned-for future while the nature of this future robs the present of materiality and actuality."[74] The white space in *Nasb al-Hurriyya* that corresponds to the present inhabited by the artist marks this otherwise unrepresentable gap.

Following the reading of the work as capturing only the revolutionary present, beginning with the destruction of the statues of General Maude and King Faysal, the white space might be

[72] Al Sa`id, *Jawad Salim: al-Fannan wa-l-Akharun*, 191–214.
[73] In Al Sa`id's theoretical work on modern Arab art, "the 'temporal now' is…expressed through spatial means. For example, an opening in the pictorial surface is a temporal void." Quoted in Shabout, *Modern Arab Art*, 112.
[74] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 23. Al-Musawi has identified a "common awareness" among many Iraqi poets and visual artists in the 1950s, including Jawad Salim, "of a modernist, even postmodernist, anxiety to account for the oscillation between certainty and rupture." *Reading Iraq*, 137.

seen as similarly marking the difference between the revolutionaries' actions and their dreams of the future in the present, or even between the revolutionaries and (at least some of) the Iraqi masses. The fact that the two male peasants and one of the female peasants are clearly turned toward the revolutionary events, as if pausing only momentarily in their work to watch them unfold from afar, lends support to this reading. And then there are the closed eyes of that first figure after the void, the blissfully bathing woman, which Makiya interprets as symbolizing "peace as an offering which knows no fear." But there was no shortage of fear in Iraq during the revolutionary years in which Salim designed and sculpted the monument, least of all among the country's peace activists. The main peace movement organization—the icon of which was a dove—was the Partisans of Peace, led by communists, who were involved in a deadly street war with the Ba`thists throughout the Qasimite era. In any event, an offering of peace is probably not the only possible interpretation of closed eyes as a visual clue. They could evince something rather more ominous about the widespread trust of the revolution's leftist supporters in the military officers who carried out the coup (see chapter 5), or about what the historical, undreamed future might hold when the nation finally awakes to its present.

Few commentators, it seems, have attempted to account for the unsettling aspects of the figure of Freedom itself in the monument: her apparent flight toward the past; the posture with which she turns her back on both the future and the viewer; her mangled body and contorted neck; and what could be seen as her desperate gaze backwards and her scream (Figure 9). Indeed, many observers have not only withheld comment on these aspects of Freedom but have cheerfully announced seeing just the opposite. Makiya writes that the figure "surges out into the daylight looking towards its liberator" and that "asked why freedom had no feet, Salim is

reported to have said: 'Feet stick to the ground; I wanted her to soar high.'"[75] But Freedom does not look toward her liberator in the form of the soldier; at best, she looks up, though she could easily be seen as looking backwards and upside-down with rolled eyes, toward the monument's viewer. Salim may or may not have said what he is reported to have said about the symbolism of her missing feet.[76] But a glance at the monument is enough to see that the artist did not let Freedom soar very high after all. Her head is lower than the heads of most other figures, and the bottom of her footless leg is one of the lowest points of the entire monument. Far from soaring, she appears to be sinking, with her front leg even lower than the back.[77] Indeed, Al Sa`id goes against the usual interpretation by arguing that Freedom's invisible feet, combined with the wavy folds of the garment around her legs, suggests that she is wading through a marsh rather than soaring through the air.[78]

[75] Makiya, *The Monument*, 84.

[76] Makiya's source here is Jabra, who does not cite his own source, though his use of passive voice ("When Jawad was asked why he didn't give her feet...") suggests that it was not Jabra himself who asked. Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 152. In any event, Freedom is only one of several prominent figures in the monument who are conspicuously lacking feet, a fact routinely ignored by decades of commentators who have repeated Jabra's uplifting interpretation of Freedom's own missing appendages.

[77] I am not suggesting that Freedom's form need be read as a literal representation of a body laid out within a "realistic" depiction of space within the work of art. Salim was strongly influenced by Cubism, after all, and there are many tributes to Picasso's *Guernica* in the monument, including in the figure of Freedom (though it might be noted that Cubism is not a dominant style in any of the other figures of the monument). But I *am* questioning the dominant tradition of reading Freedom's form as a literal representation of bodily *triumph* and of interpreting its apparent bodily distortions (e.g., its "missing" feet) as simple spatial metaphors (e.g., "soaring high") that would also imply a certain kind of spatial realism.

[78] Al Sa`id suggests that Freedom and the other footless figures in the monument may depict the so-called "marsh Arabs" who raise water buffaloes in the vast marshes of Iraq's southern river valley. As al-Musawi notes, in Iraqi nationalist discourses the marshlands have often stood for "a historical space" that "valorizes a politic of revolt." Jabra similarly argues that the footless figure in front of the ox in the future sequence depicts the marshdwellers , though he does not apply that reading to his interpretation of the figure of Freedom. See al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*, 30; Jabra, *Jawad Salim wa-Nasb al-Hurriyya*, 158.

Figure 9. Freedom. From Jawad Salim, *Nasb al-Hurriyya*.

Al-Sarraf is one of the few critics to offer an interpretation of the marks of dismemberment and pain on Freedom's face and body. He compares the figure favorably to the serene, whole, and unrealistic "goddess of beauty"—one plump and healthy breast revealed—representing Freedom in Eugene Delacroix's famous painting "Freedom Guides the People." Jawad Salim's mangled "girl with severed legs," in stark contrast to Delacroix's Freedom, "speaks clearly and eloquently of her tragedy; she is represented by that wounded girl whose

body is rent by bullets, knives, and whips because she is a perpetual victim of the domain of human institutions: wounded by religion, hindered by morality, imprisoned by politics…" Al-Sarraf's ultimate interpretation of the figure may differ little from other observers, since "in spite of the torture, [Freedom] carries the torch high in order to light existence with it," but his analysis opens up a variety of other possible readings.[79] For example, when his vivid descriptions of the figure's mangled body are joined with the peculiarity of its seemingly desperate and decidedly non-linear movements in/against time (which al-Sarraf does not address), Salim's Freedom begins to develop an uncanny resemblance to the Angel of History famously described by Walter Benjamin:

> His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing in from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.[80]

Conclusion: Gender, Politics, and the Time-Space of Development

There are important ways in which the nation's future is not at all a mirror of its past in *Nasb al-Hurriyya*, and its gender configurations are prominent among them. The historical sequence depicts an urban male and female demonstrating against the monarchy, and the future scene depicts an urban male worker; but the females of the future are all marked rural, or at least as embedded in nature. The metanarratives of modernization and development had difficulty imagining any role for urban women in the process of industrialization beyond the role of housewife, raiser of children, and consumer of the new domestic products of national industry.

[79] al-Sarraf, *Jawad Salim*, 147ff.
[80] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 257–58.

Once the revolution was accomplished, that is, urban women were to return to the private sphere, or rather to enter a properly modern private sphere for the first time. This sphere would have resisted representation in Salim's epic, oriented as every sequence is to and about a national public. The first real differentiation of the Iraqi nation into properly gendered public and private spheres is imagined to occur *after* the revolution that brings the sovereign nation into being.

The heterosocial/sexual demonstrators/family thus constitute the only set of figures in monument's historical sequence that do not seem to be fully mirrored by a set of figures in its future sequence. Their singular failure to find a place in the nation's future points to the imagined and attempted depoliticization of the Iraqi public sphere after the revolution (see chapter 5). And it points to the related fact that the female counterparts of the two most likely heirs to the male demonstrator in the monument—the revolutionary soldier and the industrial worker—are un-representable in the national public space that the revolution has transformed. According to present-day notions of progress, this might signify a strange regression—after all, the female counterparts of the past urban nationalist, the past tribal nomads, and the future laboring peasants are all accounted for: so why not those of the two most indisputably modern male figures in the monument? But in the 1950s, modernization and development were widely understood—on a global level—to be constituted by male industrial productivity and female reproductive domesticity. As *Nasb al-Hurriyya* shows, this was not the only way that women's reproductive and political roles could be envisioned in contemporary Iraqi nationalist imaginations. It was just the most futuristic, the most developed, way.

Chapter 2

An Imperious Demand for Action:
Cultivating the Mobile Personality and the Gendering of School Time in Hashimite Iraq

> The cultural future of any nation, and even its political and social future, stands largely on the type of education with which it cultivates and nourishes its rising generation, especially its girls: the mothers of the future, the producers of history.
>
> -`Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz, Iraqi Ministry of Justice, 1953[1]

> The main elements of planning, as we have seen, are two: forethought and reason. Through the use of both the future is made relevant to the present: it imposes itself upon the present as an imperious demand for action.
>
> -John Friedmann, U.S. Technical Cooperation Administration, 1952[2]

The historical emergence of modern feminine domesticity or "patriotic motherhood"[3] starting in the late 19th century has been studied by many scholars of women and gender in the Middle East over the past two decades and is one of the most dynamic and theoretically productive branches of the literature. One of the first works to trace this process, Beth Baron's 1994 *The Women's Awakening in Egypt*, shows how a "new ideology of domesticity" emerged in late 19th-century Egypt that involved a shift in focus "from the father to the mother in shaping the child…The

[1] `Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz, "Tathqif al-Mar'a [The Education of Women]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, no. 1/2 (September 1953): 40.
[2] John Friedmann, "The Study and Practice of Planning," *UNESCO International Social Science Journal* XI, no. 3 (1959): 332.
[3] The term "patriotic motherhood" comes from Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

mother was no longer just a vessel for bringing an infant into the world but a critical influence on the child's early life." The increased emphasis on motherhood coincided with a "greater interest in child development" in general and was connected to new efforts to reform the Egyptian family.[4] Afsaneh Najmabadi examines the emergence of similar discourses in 19th-century Iran, tracing how "the progress of the nation" came to be seen as "dependent on the progress of women," and in particular how women's education came to be understood as "the most fundamental step in the nation's quest for civilization." This social elevation of the educated mother involved a converse denigration of the "ignorant" mother as "the prime reason for trouble of all kinds."[5] Today, few women's historians of the Middle East would dispute what Omnia El Shakry describes as a "fundamental shift" that occurred around the turn of the 20th century across the region, "in which mothers came to be responsible for the physical, moral, and intellectual development of children within the nexus of a nascent nationalist discourse."[6]

This chapter builds on the current literature by examining a different national context at a later historical moment than most scholars have focused on. There have been no focused historical studies of feminine domesticity in Iraq, and the scholarship on other countries deals almost exclusively with the decades from the late 19th century through the 1930s.[7] The chapter

[4] Beth Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt: Culture, Society, and the Press* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 159–61.
[5] Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Crafting an Educated Housewife in Iran," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East,*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 102–103.
[6] Omnia El Shakry, "Schooled Mothers and Structured Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East,*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 126.
[7] Besides the works cited above, see, on Egypt, Beth Baron, *Egypt as a Woman: Nationalism, Gender, and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Lisa Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation: The Family Politics of Modernizing, Colonizing, and Liberating Egypt, 1805-1923* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Mona L. Russell, *Creating the New Egyptian Woman: Consumerism, Education, and National Identity, 1863-1922* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Margot Badran, *Feminists, Islam, and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). On Iran, see Cyrus Schayegh, *Who Is Knowledgeable Is Strong: Science, Class, and the Formation of Modern Iranian Society, 1900-1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with*

begins from the premise that, if modern reformist interventions into domesticity and motherhood are oriented largely toward "producing children worthy of modernity,"[8] as Najmabadi writes, it is worth asking just what kind of qualities make a child worthy of modernity in the first place, whether and how these qualities might differ across time and space, and what effects such differences might have on constructions of "feminine domesticity" in particular contexts. The chapter thus challenges any assumption that the category is homogeneous, even within the historical time-space of "modernity." It introduces questions of class into the scholarship by looking at how, from the 1930s through the 1950s, discourses, practices, and technologies of domesticity in Iraq spread far beyond the urban middle- and upper-class domains, as reformers sought to reshape the lives and habits of *all* the nation's women, including those in peasant,

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Mustaches and Men Without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Camron Michael Amin, *The Making of the Modern Iranian Woman: Gender, State Policy, and Popular Culture, 1865-1946* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002). On Lebanon, see Akram Fouad Khater, *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). On Palestine, see Ellen Fleischmann, *The Nation and Its"New" Women: The Palestinian Women's Movement 1920-1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). A few of these studies extend into the 1940s but none more than a few years beyond World War II. Schayegh's recent work on Iran is the closest to my time period, focusing primarily on the 1930s and 1940s, and finds some arguably similar shifts to those I trace in Iraq during the same period, though without following them into the postwar age of development. Three essays in Lila Abu Lughod's important edited volume *Remaking Women* deal with the 1970s and later decades, but my point that there is a critical lacuna in the scholarship for the postwar period is only strengthened by the fact that this seminal work jumps from "the turn of the century" as the period of Part 2 to the "late 20th century" as that of Part 3. For recent studies in Iraqi women's history, which do not deal in depth with reconstructions of domesticity, see Noga Efrati, *Women in Iraq: Past Meets Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); idem, "Competing Narratives: Histories of the Women's Movement in Iraq, 1910-1958," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40 (2008): 445–66; idem, "Negotiating Rights in Iraq: Women and the Personal Status Law," *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 4 (August 2005): 577–96; idem, "The Other 'Awakening' in Iraq: The Women's Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 31 (2004): 153–73; Nadje Sadig al-Ali, *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* (London: Zed Books, 2007); Peter Wien, "Mothers of Warriors: Girls in a Youth Debate of Interwar Iraq," in *Girlhood: A Global History*, ed. Jennifer Helgren and Colleen A. Vasconcellos (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010); Orit Bashkin, "Representations of Women in the Writings of the Intelligentsia in Hashemite Iraq, 1921-1958," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4 (Winter 2008): 53–82; Jacqueline Ismael and Shereen Ismael, "Gender and State in Iraq," in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, ed. Suad Joseph (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

[8] Najmabadi, "Crafting an Educated Housewife in Iran," 94.

nomadic, and urban lower-class communities.[9] It problematizes the framing of "patriotic motherhood" within a primarily national/nationalist narrative, by exploring global networks through which new knowledges and technologies on domesticity traveled.

Finally, the chapter views interventions in feminine habits and sensibilities as more than the outcomes of "patriarchal bargains" between progressive and conservative nationalists and as far more than "symbolic" or "metaphoric" "tropes" used by nationalists in their struggle for sovereignty.[10] That is, I take my sources' assertions that the (re-)education of Iraqi women and the reconstitution of the Iraqi family were critical to the future of the nation as more or less genuine statements of contemporary understandings of the relation between gender, nation, and historical time. It is this very relation, rather than something else it might stand for, that I explore in what follows. Of course, I am not arguing that patriarchal bargains and family metaphors are not important in nationalist movements. Moreover, most women's historians would likely agree that even explicitly metaphorical uses of family and gender categories in nationalist discourses (e.g., the nation as a mother) can be productive of changes in personal life modes, habits, and experiences.[11] I am only suggesting that there are other questions that might be asked about affiliations of domestic practices and spaces with national futures, and that trying to work "along

[9] Chapter 3 explores this theme in more depth.

[10] On "patriarchal bargains," see Deniz Kandiyoti, "End of Empire: Islam, Nationalism and Women in Turkey," in *Women, Islam and the State*, ed. Deniz Kandiyoti (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*. Numerous studies have focused on the symbolic or metaphorical aspects of these discourses, sometimes arguing that the rise of "the woman question" was "not really about women at all." Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation*, 13. I do not mean to pick on Pollard, who just presents an unusually thoughtful and explicit example of this argument. The chapter of her work in which the analysis is developed most fully is actually more nuanced than this, and seems to be arguing in part that many discourses ostensibly promoting "women's rights," such as those of Qasim Amin, were not really about women's *rights*, and that one aim of home economics interventions was to "domesticate men." I do not dispute either of these points. Yet I would suggest that viewing home economics as a discourse "in which subjects superficially pertaining to women actually couched greater discussions and debates" (p. 142) limits the analysis unnecessarily and risks marginalizing both women and the domestic sphere in relation to "greater" issues. In the Iraqi context, I have not found evidence to substantiate the notion that nationalists saw the reform of women and the family as superficial projects.

[11] See Baron, *Egypt as a Woman*.

the archival grain" of sources on gender and family, in addition to working against it, can open up affective registers and other dimensions of such discourses that may otherwise remain unavailable.[12]

My research indicates that mandatory female education in home economics emerged relatively late in Iraq compared to many other countries; it became a nominal requirement for girls in primary school only in 1928, and was not effectively instituted in public primary schools on a nation-wide level until the 1930s and in secondary schools until the 1940s.[13] I will posit some possible reasons for this in what follows. But rather than viewing its late emergence as simply a delayed re-enactment of earlier models—which would suggest that there is little to be gained from studying it at all—I argue that this very historical peculiarity makes Iraq a productive location to examine some of the shifts in notions of educated feminine domesticity during the late interwar and early postwar eras. These shifts were related to the varied crises of global capitalism, including the Great Depression, decolonization, and World War II itself; new understandings of child development, pedagogy, and psychology, and new global networks through which such understandings traveled; the transformation of public schooling from a focus on educating political elites and technocrats to an emphasis on mass education aimed at mobilizing all of the nation's resources and instilling habits of self-governance in all of its

[12] See Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[13] In Egypt, government-sponsored female education in modern domesticity may have been initiated as early as the 1860s and was added to the public primary school examinations in 1913. See Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation*, 104; Baron, *The Women's Awakening*, 140–41; Russell, *Creating the New Egyptian Woman*, 138. I am not claiming that organized schooling in domestic skills for girls and women did not exist at all within present-day Iraq's territorial borders prior to the 1930s. It would surely have been taught in Protestant missionary schools, which spread domestic education around the world starting in the mid-19th century. See, e.g., Baron, *The Women's Awakening*, 134–36; Pollard, *Nurturing the Nation*, 106–114. It may also have been taught in Ottoman public schools for girls established between 1899 and 1914 and by local initiative in individual government schools during the 1920s. Research into the curricula used in all of these schools would flesh out the story of modern domestic education in Iraq. But for my purposes here, it remains significant that there was no such centrally mandated education for girls in public schools during Iraq's first post-Ottoman decade, and that its introduction and expansion generated a great deal of public interest and debate in subsequent decades.

citizens; the decline of western Europe and the rise of the U.S. and the Soviet Union as superpowers; and, related to all of the above, the dawning of the global "age of development" after 1945. From the 1930s through the 1950s, debates within Iraqi government circles and in the Iraqi public sphere more broadly about the implementation of home economics and the gendering of the Iraqi school system addressed all of these changes and the need to plan a national education policy that could effectively manage them.

There is another reason that the Iraqi school system is a fruitful context for this exploration. Like everywhere else in the 20th century, public schools in Iraq were to build the nation's future through the modern education of its children. And like everywhere else in what would, after World War II, come to be called the "underdeveloped" regions of the world, education was seen as a critical means, if not *the* critical means, through which the nation might "catch up" to the developed countries. It thus comes as no surprise that schools in Hashimite Iraq "were understood to be scientific institutions rectifying the wrongs of the past and alleviating the nation's social and cultural malaise."[14] But the Iraqi school system under the monarchy was also the workplace of many of the country's most powerful intellects and influential writers. In part, this was due to the effective abandonment of the Ministry of Education by the British Mandate authorities and its near complete takeover, only a few years into the Mandate period, by oppositional nationalists of varied political and intellectual leanings.[15] As Orit Bashkin notes, the ministry was not only a vast "employer of writers, journalists, poets, and novelists" as policymakers, administrators, inspectors, and teachers, but through its various publications, many of which represent a vibrant and diverse range of opinion, it became an "important power

[14] Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 229.
[15] See Reeva S. Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars: The Militarist Origins of Tyranny*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), chap. 4; Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), chap. 8.

in the public sphere" quite apart from its influence on schoolchildren.[16] For the same reason, these publications have been an important source for historians of Hashimite Iraq tracing developments far beyond the sphere of education. In particular, the ministry's official journal *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* provides a wealth of information on policy proposals and debates related to Iraqi education, including the schooling of girls.

* * *

Important shifts occurred in educational practice and theory in Iraq during the years around World War II. In the 1920s, the education system was dominated by ex-Ottoman Sharifian Arab nationalists, especially the well-known Arabist philosopher and educator Sati` al-Husri. But starting in the 1930s, their administrative power and ideological hegemony in the Ministry of Education were increasingly challenged by a new group of U.S.-trained Iraqi educators influenced by the pragmatist school of pedagogy associated with the American philosopher John Dewey. This new generation of educators was perfectly poised to lead the Iraqi school system into a postwar age marked by the expansion of American influence and power and by the global dawning of the "age of development" with the Bretton Woods Conference that founded the World Bank in 1944; the establishment of the United Nations and its development organizations, including UNESCO, in 1945; and President Harry Truman's famous "Point Four" speech promising U.S. "technical assistance" to Western-aligned "developing" countries in 1949.

The new Iraqi educators were supported in many of their criticisms and recommendations by U.S. education commissions and international development teams that came to Iraq starting in the 1930s, and with great regularity by the 1950s, usually on the invitation of the new educators in their capacity as ministry officials. These included the U.S. Monroe Commission in 1932; the

[16] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 240.

American Council on Education in 1949; the World Bank in 1952; the University of Bradley Mission in 1953-56; Arthur D. Little, Inc. in 1956; and the U.S. Technical Cooperation Administration (Truman's Point Four program) and various U.N. missions, such as those of UNESCO and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), from 1951-58.

One of the most recurring and persistent criticisms made by these foreign experts and the new Iraqi educators was that the Iraqi public school curriculum was not sufficiently differentiated by sex. They recommended that female students from the primary through the secondary levels, and in many cases at the college levels, be required to take courses in home economics, a field developed in the United States during the late 19th century that by this time was receiving substantial U.S. government support and was a required field of study for American girls attending public schools.[17] Joining the conceptual language of pragmatist pedagogy with emerging discourses of national development, these educators stressed the importance of a modern female-governed domestic sphere for improving national health and productivity, molding agentive future-directed citizens and workers, managing various kinds of sociopolitical disorder, and fostering the growth of a national consumer market.

From 1932-58, the Iraqi Ministry of Education reshaped the nation's public school experience around gender difference, by revising curricula, textbooks, exams, teacher training programs, and paths of education, as well as by constructing new schools. In what might seem to be a paradox, the differentiation of the public school curriculum by sex was paralleled by the expansion of coeducation in Iraq at the primary and postsecondary levels during this same time period. A girl entering the Iraqi public school system in 1926 was certain to study in a school populated only by other girls, but she was almost equally certain to study the same material and

[17] See Megan J. Elias, *Stir It Up: Home Economics in American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

follow the same course of schooling as a boy at her grade level. A girl entering the system in 1956 might or might not find herself in a coeducational primary school, but either way she would follow a mandatory female-only curriculum for about 20 percent of the time she spent in that school. It was as if the more girls mixed with boys, and women with men, in the public sphere, the greater became the impetus to produce differences in their learned modes of thinking and acting.

Pragmatism and the Mobile Personality

Nationalist discourse in many places had linked the future of the nation to the proper education of its children, by both mothers and teachers, before this time. But it had primarily linked it to the education of upper- and middle-class children who would become the nation's future political leaders, scientific innovators, and technical specialists. The nature of this link changed with the expansion of the concept of universal public education, both because the latter greatly facilitated state interventions into the family lives of the lower classes and because similar factors drove both processes. The pedagogical philosophy of pragmatism, or "education for real life," was closely connected to these changes. In the interwar period, pragmatism spread from the U.S. to be adopted by many governments around the world struggling to align their school systems with national plans to overcome current socioeconomic crises and avoid future ones as well as to prepare for what was increasingly understood as the inevitable future of compulsory education for all of the nation's children.

According to education theorist Thomas Popkewitz, pragmatist educators charged both schools and mothers with the task of interiorizing scientific reasoning—now understood as the capacity to plan for the future—in children. Through this interiorization, the child would become a "learner and problem solver who acts toward future goals." Rather than a set of specialized

knowledges to be learned by the nation's elites and technocrats, as science was understood throughout the 19th century, "science" in relation to pedagogy was now understood as synonymous with reason: "to practice science was to be reasonable and reason was what science provided." Science taught the capacity for "rational planning directed to the future" and thus became a "pedagogy that places individuals in time." From its 19th-century conception as knowledge, science was transformed into "a process of enacting life."[18]

Apprehensions of the future in both early 20th-century U.S. pragmatist philosophy and global postwar development and modernization discourses were somewhat different from those posited in Benedict Anderson's analysis of modern historical time. They were predicated on less homogeneous and less linear conceptions of time, or at any rate of future time; the future was seen as unpredictable. Yet they simultaneously involved more deliberate strategies of *planning* for the future. Instead of seeing these two notions as contradictory, both pragmatist educators and development planners asserted that it was the very unpredictability of modern futures that required they be rationally planned. Central to postwar development thought, at least on the Western side of the Cold War, was the notion that the nation's future could be linked to a staged development plan even though the very essence of that future was its unpredictability.[19] John Friedmann, a development specialist with the U.S. Technical Cooperation Administration, wrote: "Modern society is a dynamic society, oriented to the future, depreciating the past…In its *inevitable march towards an uncertain future* such a society makes use of planning, both in its private and its public sector." Planning was the application of reason "to render the future

[18] Thomas Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform: Science, Education, and Making Society by Making the Child* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 55–68.
[19] Obviously discourses on the "Eastern" side of the Cold War also emphasized the planned stages of development, though they may have envisioned futures as more predictable.

relevant to present decisions. For the planner, the present is already history."[20] Popkewitz describes the relation of the child to time in pragmatist pedagogies in strikingly similar terms: "Design is, ironically, planning for uncertainty. Pedagogy becomes a design project of methods to order thought and actions that bring stability and harmony to the processes of change."[21]

These echoes between the discourses of pragmatist educators and economic planners on the child's development and the nation's development in regards to their respective subjects' insertion in time and rational relation to the future were not coincidental, nor was their alignment merely nationalist metaphor. One illustration of this is the similarity between Popkewitz's description of the "homeless mind" that became the desired end of pragmatist pedagogies and the "mobile personality" posited by leading U.S. modernization theorist Daniel Lerner in 1958 as the psychological prerequisite for the "modernizing take-off" in the Middle East. According to Lerner, the explanation for the development of Western nations and the underdevelopment of other nations could be found in the historical emergence in the West of the idea "that personal mobility is itself a first-order value; the sense grew that social morality is essentially the ethics of social change. A man is what he may become; a society is its potential." Western "laws and mores" would henceforth evolve to reflect the world-transforming discovery that "a mobile society has to encourage rationality, for the calculus of choice shapes individual behavior and conditions its rewards." In the West, it took several centuries for this process to reach all socioeconomic classes, and indeed it was left to the "work of the twentieth century to diffuse widely a *mobile sensibility* so adaptive to change that rearrangement of the self-system is its distinctive mode."[22] What Popkewitz calls the sensibility of "cosmopolitanism" that

[20] Friedmann, "The Study and Practice of Planning." Emphasis added.
[21] Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform*, 29.
[22] Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, 2nd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1964), 48–49. Emphasis in original.

distinguished the "homeless mind" of pragmatist pedagogy, Lerner calls "empathy," defined as "a high capacity for rearranging the self-system on short notice," the core capability of the mobile personality and, for Lerner, the *sine qua non* of economic development and modernization.[23]

In pragmatist theory, according to Popkewitz, the "cosmopolitan individual" was one who had learned how to "actively intervene in his or her own development and thus guarantee the progress of the nation."[24] This reflected a dual conception of reason as "both an object of public scrutiny and a private inner mode of conduct to order everyday life." It was concern over this latter facet of reason—its quotidian interiority in relation to both mental and bodily habits—that drove the pragmatist search for pedagogical techniques to redesign "the interior of the child who would 'reason' and become a reasonable citizen."[25] Popkewitz's analysis of pragmatist pedagogy is useful in part because it emphasizes aspects of the American conception of "reason" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that derived from but were also distinguished from earlier "Enlightenment" forms of rationality. These differences were connected to the increasing social and political disorder caused by the crises of capitalism in this period and the related emergence of the concept of universal compulsory education. Educators began searching for pedagogical techniques that would help "eliminate the dangers of those who challenged the search for order

[23] Ibid. Renaissance literary scholar Stephen Greenblatt has put a clever twist on the various critiques of Lerner's historical interpretation of Western development, by asserting that "what Professor Lerner calls 'empathy,' Shakespeare calls 'Iago.'" Greenblatt writes: "The spur-of-the-moment quality of improvisation is itself often a calculated mask, the product of careful preparation…What is essential is the Europeans' ability again and again to insinuate themselves into the preexisting political, religious, even psychic structures of the natives and to turn those structures to their advantage…Professor Lerner is right to insist that this ability is a characteristically (though not exclusively) Western mode…he misleads only in insisting further that it is an act of imaginative generosity, a sympathetic appreciation of the situation of the other fellow. For when he speaks confidently of 'the spread of empathy around the world,' we must understand that he is speaking of the exercise of Western power, power that is creative as well as destructive, but that is scarcely ever wholly disinterested or benign." Quoted in Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 11–12.
[24] Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform*, 54.
[25] Ibid., 28–29.

and harmony." Inserting the child into temporal stages of development helped to "render the characteristics of the child…amenable to government."[26]

The pragmatist ideal of "cosmopolitanism" was not constructed in opposition to nationalist sensibilities in the U.S. but rather in opposition to local identifications and feelings of belonging. Pragmatism "articulated a particular time/space relation through which the child was to be the agent of his or her own future," not in the sense of being freed from all disciplinary bonds but in the sense that s/he was "no longer related to conceptions of time and space bounded in his or her community but to a universal, regulated time of the clock, year, and ordered career of life."[27] By helping "effect the loss of belonging" the child might feel to non-national temporalities and communities, the new techniques of "development and growth" worked as "effectively distancing processes from local ethnic affiliation."[28] In place of that sense of belonging would emerge a new way "of seeing oneself in the universal time of humanity and in the particular time of daily life," through the interiorization of agency "in the family, domestic life, and childhood."[29] But in order to effectively cultivate the homeless mind, the locality of the home had to be transformed through the universal rationality of ordered domesticity.

Nationalist Time and Girls' Education in Mandate Iraq, 1921-32

Recent critiques of "modernity" or of "modern" discourses and practices in the Middle East have perhaps had the unintended consequence of flattening out or homogenizing what we understand by "the modern." The convergence of pragmatism and developmentalism in the gendering of Iraqi education cannot simply be understood as a teleological process undermining "traditional" conceptions that came before it. This section examines a different form of modernist pedagogy in

[26] Ibid., 57, 60.
[27] Ibid., 93.
[28] Ibid., 75, 83.
[29] Ibid., 28–29.

interwar Iraq, besides that of pragmatism, including its different conceptions of the relation between past, present, and future and the different implications it had for family reform and thus for the schooling of Iraqi girls. The differences between these two competing forms of "modernity" played out as concrete political and intellectual struggles within the Iraqi Ministry of Education and in the Iraqi press. The section focuses specifically on the writings of Sati` al-Husri, who was appointed by King Faysal as assistant to the minister of education in 1921 and promoted to director general of education in 1922. Al-Husri had enormous influence on the formation of the Iraqi public school system as well as on the emerging intellectual tradition of Arab nationalism.[30]

Al-Husri's philosophy of nation-building was based on a conception of linear-historical time similar to the one theorized by Benedict Anderson. It is thus an opportunity to examine some of the potential gender implications of what Anderson describes as "a new way of linking fraternity, power and time" in the imagining of nationhood.[31] I am not arguing that these are necessary correlates of any Andersonian conception of linear-historical time, but merely that they were related to a particular development of it in Iraq during the 1920s.

Al-Husri believed that language and history were the only legitimate foundations of nationhood. Like King Faysal, he was firmly committed to the construction and eventual sovereignty of the Iraqi state, conceptually as a "province" of the Arab nation, historically as the "first stage" of the Arab nationalist struggle, and pragmatically as the domain over which he had bureaucratic mandate. But he always maintained that Iraq had no lasting legitimacy as a nation because it had only, at best, a geographically determined identity. The more authentic Arab

[30] See William L. Cleveland, *The Making of an Arab Nationalist: Ottomanism and Arabism in the Life and Thought of Sati` al-Husri* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*; Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*.
[31] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 1983), 36.

nation had preserved its language and thus its life—since language "is what connects the past to the future"[32]—but was currently lacking the other essential foundation of nationhood: a shared historical consciousness among those who spoke Arabic.

> Every nation has a consciousness [*shu`ur*], just as every individual person does...The consciousness of any nation consists of the historical memories that are particular to it. A nation that preserves its language and forgets its history is like an individual who has lost consciousness or is immersed in sleep, or like a sick person in a catatonic state. He is still alive, but his life has no value unless he awakens from his sleep and regains the consciousness that he had lost for a period of time.[33]

The only way for the Arab nation to recover its lost historical memory, its consciousness as a nation, was through the education of its children. Public schooling would instill in Arab youth the apprehension of Arab historical time that would enable them to someday unite as a sovereign nation-state. Al-Husri was a modernist who believed the Arab past was valuable not for its own sake but because the Arab future depended on it. In a speech at a meeting of the Arab Boy Scouts, held at the Museum of Antiquities, al-Husri noted that it was not strange for such a meeting to be held in such a location, even though the Scouts represented "the revival of youth" (*al-shabab al-mutajaddad*) and "preparation for the future" (*isti`dad li-l-mustaqbal*), since "the past is the continuous wellspring of the future."[34]

> History is beneficial when it takes the form of a propelling force driving us forward...but it becomes harmful when it takes the form of a retarding force calling us backward. We must not view the past as a goal that we are moving toward and that we strive to return to…We must make of it a powerful motive force propelling us toward the new future.[35]

The Husrian conception of nation-building was thus rooted in a progressive and linear understanding of historical time, with the nation's past functioning as a propeller of its future, much as it does in the standard interpretation of Jawad Salim's *Monument to Freedom*.

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[32] Sati` al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati fi al-`Iraq [My Memories of Iraq], 1921-1941* (Beirut: Dar al-Tali`a, 1967), 2:480.
[33] Ibid., 2:480–81.
[34] Ibid., 2:479.
[35] Ibid., 2:483.

Education—above all else, education in the discipline of history—was the means by which this consciousness of time would be instilled in the nation's youth, the embodiments of its future sovereignty.

If the nation's past was indispensable for the construction of its future, because it made possible the internalization of historical time by its youth, the past could also be "harmful." In this sense it would work to reinforce the types of local and particular attachments that al-Husri considered the most formidable barriers to nation-building. He posited the "traditional" Iraqi family—i.e., families that existed in the present—as the core source of the nation's stagnation, even if he sometimes valorized an ideal Arab family located safely in the distant past. Public education within each Arab province (e.g., Iraq) was *the* tool of Arab nationalism not only because it shaped the historical sensibilities of the rising generation, but because it did so by removing youth from the harmful influence of their families, especially their illiterate and superstitious mothers. For the same reason, al-Husri viewed the military as the other crucial institution for the formation of national consciousness. Like schools, military service removed youth from their natal families, particular environments, local identifications, and heterogeneous temporalities and enabled them to identify with a larger entity, the nation, moving in its own homogenous time. The school "takes the child from his family, joins him with his peers, and is charged with his upbringing and education in the interest of the nation," while the barracks "removes the young man from his surroundings, joins him with others who are like him, and is charged with preparing him to defend his nation."[36] In fact, al-Husri saw the military as ultimately exerting an even stronger influence than the school on "the life of the individual," for the simple reason that it removed boys from their families for longer periods of time:

[36] Ibid., 2:308.

> The school takes the individual from his private home and his original family every day for a few hours only, then returns him…allowing him to live and sleep in his home, spending the remainder of his hours with his family. The barracks, on the other hand, monopolizes the life of the individual…it demands his complete separation from his original family and private life, forcing him to live with his peers in a new environment, for a long period of time…[37]

These two institutions were so indispensable to the construction of any "contemporary social order" and to its "social and political development" that, according to al-Husri, the state should make it compulsory for every (male) individual to join both of them, "in a particular stage of his life, passing through the school in his childhood and through the barracks in his young adulthood."[38] The construction of male human life as a linear biography, the stages of which would be regulated by the state, is thus closely linked in al-Husri's thought to the construction of the nation through the education of its future citizens into historical consciousness.

These understandings had several implications for the schooling of Iraqi girls in the 1920s. First, during al-Husri's tenure as director general of education from 1922-27, the official public school curriculum for girls was identical to that for boys.[39] This was consistent not only

[37] Ibid., 2:309.
[38] Ibid., 2:308.
[39] There was some initial disagreement over the 1932 Monroe Report's assertion that home economics subjects "receive little or no attention" in the girls' primary school curriculum. Al-Husri first responded to the report's criticism by claiming that domestic education for girls had been implemented "many years ago" in Iraq; but in a later essay, after the debate had escalated, the only specific example he provided was a directive issued to girls' primary schools in 1928. Matta `Aqrawi conceded that al-Husri had issued this 1928 directive for the addition of a home economics requirement in the 3rd through 6th grades (though he also claimed that it was not actually implemented by girls' schools). Key leaders of the two opposing sides thus seem to have settled on 1928 as the date of the first official home economics requirement for girls in the Iraqi public school system. In his 1942 Columbia dissertation, `Aqrawi provided additional evidence for this by reprinting the ministry's official "Course of Study" for Iraq's primary schools from 1922-28, which, as he noted, "contained no provision for differentiation according to the needs of urban and rural schools, or of boys' and girls' schools." This does not mean that there was no variation on a local school level. It is likely, as a 1958 government publication on "Women's Education in Iraq" suggested, that girls' and boys' schools during the 1920s and early 1930s used different activities for teaching the subjects of manual arts and physical education, even though the ministry's official curriculum guidelines for those subjects were the same for all schools. These two subjects were a small part of the curriculum during this period; indeed, their expansion throughout the 1930s and 1940s precisely paralleled the gendering of Iraqi primary school education. See Paul Monroe, ed., *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1932), 112; Matta Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction in the Public Primary Schools of Iraq in the Light of a Study of the Political, Economic, Social,

with his advocacy for the modern education of women, but also with his view that unity in the curriculum would produce unity in the nation, and that the academic subjects of history and language were the most critical for the formation of national consciousness. Al-Husri would later agree with the pragmatists that greater differentiation of the Iraqi curriculum on the basis of sex was necessary. However, he continued to argue that such differences should apply only to the "details," and only in classes oriented toward teaching girls' home economics; they should not affect the "fundamentals" of academic education, which should remain the same for boys and girls. Al-Husri also insisted that male and female students must progress through the school system according to identical temporal rhythms of intellectual development and bureaucratic order. Thus, he sharply criticized a proposed curriculum reform in 1931 that had girls and boys in intermediate schools studying different subjects at different grade levels; for example, "modern history" in the girls' schools would be studied in the second year and "Arab history" in the third year, while in the boys' schools the two subjects were taught in reverse order. Al-Husri asserted not only that girls and boys must study the same core academic subjects but that it was a national imperative that they study them at the same time.[40] This criticism again reflects al-Husri's association between the state's construction of linearity and homogeneity in "biographical time" through its regulation of the temporal stages of child development, on the one hand, and child's capacity to internalize linear-historical consciousness, the prerequisite for national becoming, on the other.

It would seem that, in some ways, al-Husri's conception of linear time was gender-neutral and thus truly homogeneous within the boundaries of the nation. Yet—and this is the

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Hygienic and Educational Conditions and Problems of the Country, with Some Reference to the Education of Teachers" (PhD diss., Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942), 179–97; al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati*, 2:167, 186; Hind Kadry, *Women's Education in Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Embassy of Iraq, 1958), 6.

[40] al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati*, 2:132–33.

second point about the implications of his philosophy for the schooling of Iraqi girls—his writings on Arab youth and Arab history consistently constructed the universal national citizen, and thus the subject of national pedagogy, as male.[41] It is his emphasis on the military that attests most clear to the masculine nature of his conception of linear-historical time: "Military life is a life of movement and toil. It strengthens the spirit of movement and activity in the young man [*shab*], and accustoms him to the roughness of life and the endurance of hardships, through which he develops habits of masculinity [*al-rujula*] and perseverance."[42]

There are some similarities here to what Popkewitz describes as the pragmatist pedagogical technique of placing the student "in a flow of time," which would help remove "the child's fatigue" by reshaping his or her "will, motives, interests, needs, and desires."[43] But there are differences as well. Al-Husri's vision of cultivating masculinity in the nation's future citizens through military training involved the inculcation of self-discipline along with submission to external discipline. But it did not focus on cultivating the same kind of interior agency that Popkewitz theorizes as the heart of the pragmatist ideal: the "cosmopolitan," future-oriented, problem-solving citizen. The "cosmopolitan child" that pragmatist pedagogies aimed to produce was not devoid of nationalist sentiment. She carried within her a "new patriotism" and a new conception of national citizenship, developed not by instilling "unyielding obedience to authority"—a central aspect of military pedagogies by definition—but rather by inscribing

[41] On masculinity in contemporary Iraqi-Arab nationalist thought, including that of al-Husri, see Peter Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism: Authoritarian, Totalitarian and Pro-Fascist Inclinations, 1932-1941* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006), esp. 90–105; Peter Wien, "'Watan' and 'Rujula': The Emergence of a New Model of Youth in Interwar Iraq," in *Youth and Youth Culture in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. Jørgen Bæk Simonsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2005).
[42] al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati*, 2:309.
[43] Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform*, 58, 66.

certain dispositions of self-reliance and self-motivation in the child, which would "produce the cosmopolitan citizen who acted with liberty and freedom."[44]

In sum, al-Husri's nationalist pedagogy focused on the production of healthy masculinity; on inserting male children into the linear time of the nation, in part by removing them from the cyclical or static time of the family; and on patriotism as submission to nationalist authority more than the cultivation of interior agency. This may all help to explain why, in spite of his theoretical support for women's education, he often seemed pessimistic or apathetic about actually overcoming women's illiteracy and impatient with pragmatist proposals to reform the family through the school. For example, the primary school curriculum for "Moral and Civic Information," which al-Husri wrote and which was supposed to teach students about family relations as well as civic duties, dispensed with the first of these in a summary fashion that hardly concealed the author's disinterest:

> The physical and spiritual ties that bind the members of a family together are obvious and do not need a great deal of explanation but the ties that bind individuals with their nation and government are not by themselves clear. The teacher should therefore take special care to bring them out and show what duties devolve on individuals in view of these ties.[45]

Iraqi pragmatists criticized al-Husri's curriculum for this course on the grounds that it did not take seriously the school's role in reforming family relations: "Aside from certain stereotyped notions about the love of parents, brothers and sisters, and about society, there is little in the course to stir the thinking of the pupil about his family life and about his social environment."[46]

Indeed, al-Husri never seemed able to explain, or was never very interested in explaining, how the stagnant feminine space of the family was to be brought into the progressive masculine time of the nation. For the pragmatists, as we will see, the elimination of this stagnant familial

[44] Ibid., 46.
[45] Quoted in Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 192.
[46] Ibid., 200.

space at the heart of the nation, and its replacement by modern, future-oriented spaces of domesticity and femininity, was absolutely essential to the cultivation of healthy citizens, in part because pragmatists saw the earliest years of childhood as critical for the effective interiorization of agency. Deviations during this stage, usually due to some failing of the mother, were difficult if not impossible to correct later; the reform and expansion of public institutions such as the school and the military would never be enough, because their interventions simply came too late in the child's life. In pragmatist pedagogies, a central aim of school reform itself was thus the reform of the family.

Al-Husri's lack of interest or optimism in the possibility of effective family reform, combined with the essential masculinism of his conception of national citizenship, probably has some relation to the fact that neither the rising enrollment of female students nor the numerical increase in female schoolteachers was matched by an equivalent rise in the number of new schools for girls under his leadership. Some of his pragmatist critics would use this discrepancy to argue that the expansion of Iraqi public education for girls in the 1920s was fueled from below by popular demand rather than from above by genuine government support.[47]

Pragmatism and Development, 1932-58

Global, national, and local factors coalesced to make 1932 a pivotal year in the coming convergence of developmentalism and pragmatism in the Iraqi public school system, and for the influence of this convergence on the classroom experience of Iraqi girls. Globally, the Great Depression was transforming the landscape of public schooling, driving the search for new educational philosophies that emphasized the relationship between national school systems and the health of national economies and polities. The American pragmatist school of pedagogy, and

[47] See ibid., 156–58.

kindred philosophies of education for "real life" emerging in Europe, attracted worldwide interest, influencing educational policy from Turkey to the Philippines to Brazil, in part through the development of education programs such as the International Institute at the Teachers College of Columbia University, where John Dewey taught until his retirement in 1929.[48]

Along with the University of Chicago, Columbia Teachers College was the institutional heart of the global pragmatist movement in education. The Iraqi monarchy, like many other governments around the world, forged agreements with Columbia in the late 1920s and 1930s to co-sponsor some of the country's top college graduates to pursue advanced degrees at the institution. The students, for their part, signed agreements to return to Iraq after receiving their degrees and work for the Ministry of Education for a specified number of years. Among the Iraqi students completing their doctoral work at Columbia Teachers College in 1932 was Muhammad Fadil al-Jamali, who would become director general of education in 1934 and would later serve as Iraqi prime minister. Al-Jamali and his friend Matta `Aqrawi, who also received his PhD from Columbia Teachers College and would serve his own stint as director general of education, led the movement to integrate pragmatism and developmentalism in the Iraqi school system, in direct and often very public conflict with Sati` al-Husri. In 1936, they succeeded in pushing al-Husri out of the Ministry of Education altogether.[49]

On a national level, Iraq gained its formal independence from Britain in 1932 and entered the League of Nations. Britain maintained significant unofficial power in the Iraqi government and official control over its foreign policy. But following the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of "independence," certain elements of the monarchical regime—pushed by the economic crisis,

[48] See Thomas Popkewitz, ed., *Inventing the Modern Self and John Dewey: Modernities and the Traveling of Pragmatism in Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Gita Steiner-Khamsi, ed., *The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004).
[49] Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*, chap. 4.

growing sociopolitical disorder, and personal interest—attempted to lead the country toward full political and economic sovereignty by marshalling the country's natural and human resources in a state-led modernization plan. In the end, these elements were never able to enact a successful project of economic development, a failure that contributed to the monarchy's fall in the revolution of 1958. One reason was that reforms were consistently blocked by the large landowning class that had been deliberately strengthened by British and monarchical policy, in part as a counterweight to political opposition movements in urban areas.[50] Unable to directly confront the economic interests of this class, which remained a primary base of political support for the monarchy, development experts in the government concerned themselves with less controversial programs of development, such as the education of future peasants and workers.

Within the ministry itself, certain tensions that had been simmering for several years, including a conflict over the direction of female education in the country, became a matter of public controversy in 1932. In 1928, a directive to add a home economics requirement for girls to the primary school curriculum had been issued, and in 1932 the first "vocational" home economics secondary school for girls was established in Baghdad.[51] But conflict over the seriousness with which officials were implementing these projects erupted in the Iraqi press after the 1932 publication of the Monroe Commission Report, which "spurred one of the most profound debates concerning the correct modes of educating the Iraqi public."[52] The report criticized the Ministry of Education for a wide range of purported failings, including the sex-blindness of the Iraqi public school curriculum. Commenting that "[n]o more important task

[50] Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), chap. 6; Kamil Mahdi, *State and Agriculture in Iraq: Modern Development, Stagnation and the Impact of Oil* (Reading, U.K.: Ithaca Press, 2000), chap. 4.
[51] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 196; `Abd al-Majid Hassan, "Dawr I`dad al-Mu`allimat fi al-`Iraq [The Women's Teacher Training Institutes in Iraq]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 20, no. 3 (June 1957): 305–10.
[52] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 244.

appears in the new social structure than adequate and proper education of girls and women," the report recommended that the "work of the girls' schools be differentiated from that of the boys' and more provision be made in them for effective instruction and training especially in household arts, dietetics, first aid, home nursing, the proper care of children, preparation for parent-hood, family relations, sanitation and hygiene, and similar subjects."[53] Members of the commission did report one positive sign of change on this front, namely the new home economics secondary school for girls in Baghdad, which they proclaimed was "among the best of all the schools we visited" in Iraq.[54] The Monroe Commission was led by Paul Monroe, director of the International Institute at Columbia Teachers College and al-Jamali's dissertation advisor.

The rest of this section will examine the theoretical underpinnings of the "pragmatist" school of pedagogy in Iraq, which was formed through an evolving network of Iraqi and foreign, primarily American, education specialists. There were some similarities between this school and al-Husri's Arab nationalist pedagogical philosophy. Both were based on faith in progress and modernization; embraced science and technology; affirmed the positive correlation of public education with both economic development and nationalism; assumed that the nation's backwardness could only be overcome by uprooting local customs and superstitions; and believed that these obstacles to progress could usually be traced back to families and especially to women. These shared assumptions formed the framework of consensus within which the debates between the "old" and "new" educators played out during the 1930s.

[53] This particular recommendation was for girls' secondary schools; the report also criticized the primary school curriculum for being "uniform for [all] schools, whether urban or rural, whether boys' schools or girls' schools throughout the kingdom." Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 134, 148, 162.
[54] Ibid., 56.

Below I explore four central aspects of the new educational philosophy that differed from the Husrian approach[55]: 1) the primacy of economic development over nationalism as the central aim of public schooling; 2) a differentiated rather than uniform public school curriculum; 3) a child-centered rather than subject-centered pedagogy; and 4) an emphasis on activity-based learning over both oral- and text-based learning. In each subsection, I will note some of the theoretical implications of these differences for female education. The final section of the chapter will examine the actual effects of the new pedagogical philosophy on the schooling of Iraqi girls.

Education for Development

The first difference was over the primary aim of education versus its subsidiary aims. For al-Husri, the primary aim of the Iraqi school system was identical to that of Arab nationalism: to cultivate a historical consciousness among Arab youth living in the Iraqi province so that they would one day unite with Arabs in other provinces to form a modern nation-state. Nationalism was not by any means unimportant to the pragmatists, and many of them were also Arab nationalists, though some leaned toward a more Iraqist form of nationalism. But for them, the primary end of education was economic development; nation-building was only a means to that end.

Al-Jamali argued for this reconceptualization of public schooling in his Columbia Teachers College dissertation on Bedouin education in Iraq, which was published as a book in 1934. He wrote that of the three main problems facing the school system—economic

[55] I realize that "Husrian" is an awkward and uninformative label for this anti-pragmatist educational philosophy in interwar Iraq, whose defenders included officials and intellectuals besides al-Husri. "Arabist" would be misleading, since many pragmatist educators, including al-Jamali, were also firm supporters of Arab nationalism, as were the members of a different anti-Husrian contingent that emerged in the ministry during the 1940s under the leadership of Sami Shawkat and that advocated a far more militarized—some say fascist—school system. "Sharifian Arabist" is not much better, since al-Husri was hardly a conformist within the wider circle of Sharifian state officials during these years, especially outside of the Ministry of Education. I have not come up with a more appropriate term.

reconstruction, nationalism, and morality—the first "presents the greatest challenge to education."[56] Moreover, it was not something that could be pursued in isolation from other state projects. It had to be part of a comprehensive national plan that aimed at the mobilization of Iraq's human resources in order to develop its natural resources, both of which currently lay idle.

> [E]ducation, if it is to achieve anything, has to be purposeful, and the main purpose in Iraq should be a national plan for the reconstruction of the country which should aim to satisfy progressively the physical, social and spiritual needs of every member…Iraq, as is well known, is rich in natural resources but its population has not adequately developed those resources…The result is that the people are poor and they will remain so until they are educated to the point of knowing how to develop their own resources.[57]

Al-Jamali connected the necessity and the possibility of a national plan for reconstruction to the global depression on the one hand and Iraq's newly realized independence on the other. The latter had created the political opportunity for overcoming the economic catastrophe wrought by the former. "Iraq has recently attained recognition from the world as an independent country," he wrote, and yet: "Its rich natural sources are idle. Its people are mainly poor, sick, ignorant and idle…The reconstruction of the country by the efforts if its own natives is the hope of every intelligent Iraqi [and] calls for the work of brains and hands."[58] Al-Jamali's dissertation was framed as an explicit criticism of dominant understandings within the Iraqi Ministry of

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[56] Muhammad Fadhil al-Jamali, *The New Iraq: Its Problem of Bedouin Education* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia Teachers College, 1934), 7.

[57] Ibid., 104–6. Al-Jamali's use of the word "development" here, as a transitive verb indicating an action performed on a country's "natural resources," is consonant with its evolving interwar usage. H.W. Arndt has traced the postwar concept of "national economic development" to two distinct linguistic traditions. The first goes back to Marx, who was apparently the first to apply the concept in an intransitive sense to refer to discrete nations moving through their own time, or at least the first to do so with any economic connotation. The second is rooted in European colonial policy, which by the late 19th century focused on means by which "the conqueror would be most able to develop the conquered region economically." According to Arndt's genealogy of the term, it is the latter tradition that al-Jamali's use draws on: "All through the interwar years, the term 'economic development,' when it was used at all outside Marxist literature, continued to denote the development or exploitation of natural resources." H.W. Arndt, "Economic Development: A Semantic History," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 29, no. 3 (April 1981): 463. In the 1930s, al-Jamali still used the term "economic reconstruction" to denote what he and others would soon call "economic development," so here I use the two terms interchangeably, if a bit anachronistically.

[58] al-Jamali, *The New Iraq*, 100–101.

Education about the relation of public education to economic goals. By the end of World War II, its central argument was considered axiomatic: officials consistently articulated the primary mission of the school system as national economic development. Thus, in 1948, the editors of *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* stated that the aim of Iraqi education was the nation's "scientific and industrial advancement.[59] And a 1953 article on the "problems" of women's education asserted: "Today education is considered a means of forming the new life…Education itself is a productive economic activity. It is through education that individuals, and likewise the nation, can combat poverty and achieve a high standard of living."[60]

By the late 1930s, the linking of public education to national economic planning was no longer concerned only with training a future generation of leaders and technocrats. It also demanded the education of the majority of the population: the nation's future manual laborers and farmers, as well as mothers and housewives of all social classes. Universal compulsory education was still a distant dream of Iraqi educators throughout the Hashimite era, but it was an increasingly explicit and much-discussed one. By the 1930s it was an integral component of national economic planning, and in 1940 its future implementation became official government policy with the promulgation of the General Education Law, which, as the first step toward universal compulsory schooling, made primary education "available" to all Iraqi children between 6 and 12.[61] In actual practice, public education did begin to expand far beyond the children of the ruling elite during these years.[62]

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[59] "Kalima Tawjiyya [A Guiding Word]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 12, no. 1 (September 1948): 3–4.
[60] Jabar `Amr, "Min Mushkilat Ta`limna al-Niswi [The Problems of Our Female Education]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, no. 1–2 (September 1953): 50.
[61] Victor Clark, *Compulsory Education in Iraq* (Paris: United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, 1951), 16; Mahir al-Kasey, *Youth Education in Iraq and Egypt 1920-1980: A Contribution to Comparative Education Within the Arab Region* (Leuven: Helicon, 1983), 45.
[62] See Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 238–42.

As the notion of universal public education spread throughout the world, the theory and practice of female education in domesticity shifted accordingly. The field of "domestic sciences" first emerged at U.S. land-grant universities after the Civil War and originally targeted the education of farm women in household budgeting and efficient methods of domestic labor. By the last decades of the century it was increasingly applied to the education of middle- and upper-class urban women, especially at the university level, where it was considered an elite scientific branch of knowledge. In fact, it was directly connected to the "hard" sciences: educated women were seen to need training in chemistry in order to understand cooking and nutrition, biology in order to understand the development of children, and medicine in order to treat sickness and injury in the family. The field then shifted again in the early decades of the 20th century, in response to the expansion of compulsory universal education in the U.S., the emergency of psychology as a discipline of knowledge, and Progressive-era theories of pedagogy, including pragmatism.[63] Home economics was still seen as rooted in "science" or at least in "scientific methods," but as Popkewitz explains, science itself, in relation to mass pedagogy, was no longer considered a set of knowledges but rather a kind of future-directed rationality that could and should be inculcated in all of the nation's citizens.

By the 1930s, these two historic shifts in the discipline of home economics were already fully recognized within the field. An article by Ruz Gharib published in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* in 1938 narrated the history of home economics as proceeding through three stages: the field had been understood first as a form of "manual arts," then as a "natural science," and finally, in the most recent stage, as a "social science." Among the subjects emphasized in the third stage were "health education, family and social relations, the raising of children, household management,

[63] Rima Apple, "Liberal Arts or Vocational Training? Home Economics Education for Girls," in *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*, ed. Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 3–13.

methods of budgeting and saving, and family and marital problems."[64] I will return below to some of the larger implications of the reconception of home economics as a "social science" in the 20th century. Here I will just note that household budgeting was actually important through all three stages, though perhaps most of all in the first and third ones, both of which focused on domestic education for non-elite housewives. This, along with the teaching of efficient methods of household labor, was a continuous concern of home economists through the decades, and would form an important part of the linking of home economics education for girls and women to national economic development in the interwar and especially the postwar periods. As Gharib explains:

> Perhaps the most important argument supporting home economics is the demonstration of its importance in the economic sphere…the housewife who is ignorant of the principles of the art wastes a lot of time, energy and money without any gain because she does not know the efficient and streamlined methods of work that have been developed through the experiments of specialists.[65]

The article illustrates the importance of home economics to the "economic sphere" by describing a recent exhibit in Boston of a "model home" for "a worker and his wife," which shows how they can "live a modern, healthy and agreeable life on an income of $500 per year."[66]

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[64] Ruz Gharib, "Harakat Tadbir al-Manzil [The Home Economics Movement]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 3, no. 3 (June 1938): 211.
[65] Ibid., 208.
[66] Ibid. It is an irony of history that the term "economy" in the West originally referred to the economy of the home, or "the government of the family," including the elite art of household budgeting. The meaning of the term began shifting in the 16th century, first to refer to the art of governing the state, then to the management of production and flows of capital, and finally to a discrete entity in itself, "the economy." In a sense, then, it returns full circle with the appearance of the science of home economics in the 19th and 20th centuries, but has undergone crucial transformations. Among these are the shift of the sphere of "home economics" from male to female governance, the expansion of its class domain, and its simultaneous linking and subordination to the needs of the "national economy," which emerged from it in the first place. See Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), chap. 4. On the 20th-century appearance of "the economy" as "a self-contained, internally dynamic, and statistically measurable sphere of social action, scientific analysis, and political regulation," see Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 4. Arabic terms for "home economics" in Iraq were highly variable throughout the years of my study. Occasionally a fairly direct translation of the English term appeared, *al-iqtisad al-manzili* (home economy), but more frequent were terms

If Iraqi officials now accepted that the nation's "scientific and industrial advancement" was the primary mission of the Ministry of Education, its curriculum and teacher training methods had to reflect that mission. The philosophy of pragmatism, as interpreted by educators and international development experts in Iraq, provided the conceptual vocabulary for translating national development plans into pedagogical practice and schoolroom experience. While I use the word "pragmatist" to describe this emerging educational discourse and those who produced it, it should be noted that my arguments are related only to the application of pragmatist concepts in interwar and postwar Iraq. I am not concerned with whether or not such use was based on a rigorous interpretation of the writings of John Dewey and other American pragmatists.[67] The term is appropriate not only because a number of leading Iraqi educators, including al-Jamali and `Aqrawi, asserted the importance of pragmatism to their intellectual development and educational philosophy,[68] but also because its conceptual vocabulary reflects the fundamental shifts they advocated, which were toward a differentiated, child-centered, activity-based pedagogy oriented toward "real life." This vocabulary was shared by self-described "pragmatist" educators the world over.

Education for Real Life: Homogenizing the Future by Differentiating the Curriculum

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such as *al-fanun al-baytiyya* (domestic arts) or *tadbir al-manzil* (household management). In the U.S., the field has also experienced numerous renamings, including "domestic arts" or "domestic sciences." In recent years, "home economics" has been largely replaced by "consumer sciences," partly in an effort to shed its historical association with sex-based education. For simplicity, and because there is a genealogy of a discipline that links all of these linguistic shifts since the mid-19th century, I use the term "home economics" throughout most of this work.

[67] A partial exception is my use of Thomas Popkewitz's recent analyses of American pragmatist philosophy of the time, which I find very relevant for conceptualizing educational shifts in Iraq, though I am not concerned with whether or not they are relevant to the U.S. in the same way. In any case, Popkewitz's analysis itself emerges in no small part from his attention to the "traveling" and adaptation of pragmatism throughout the world, and the various relations of this traveling to the rise of U.S. global dominance in the 20th century. If American education advisors in Iraq did sometimes apply central pragmatist concepts such as the "activity-based curriculum" differently depending on whether they were writing about Iraqi or American schools, which from my research seems quite likely, this might be worth its own study.

[68] Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*, 79; Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 233.

The second difference in the approach of the new educators was their criticism of the uniformity of the Iraqi school curriculum, which al-Husri considered a hard-won nationalist achievement. In a bold and direct swipe at al-Husri himself, `Aqrawi asserted in his Columbia dissertation: "The [Iraqi] primary school regulations, the course of study, the methods of teaching, inspection, examination and textbooks are all directed towards one end: uniformity, or as one of the protagonists of the system prefers to call it: 'the unity of education.'"[69]

Against this nationalist uniformity, the pragmatists argued that education should be differentiated according to the "varieties of life and environment" found in Iraq. But they advocated a particular kind of differentiation: some varieties of life and environment were beneficial to the nation and others were harmful. For example, they shared al-Husri's concern that British policy had fostered sectarianism in Iraq by funding Christian denominational schools in an attempt to produce civil servants loyal to Britain.[70] "Difference" and "variety" of the positive type were not those that drove national fragmentation but those that would further the state's economic plan. Thus, the curriculum for a child living in a reed hut in the southern marshes and engaged in the raising of water buffaloes should differ from the curriculum for a child living in an urban industrial community.[71] The question of uniformity versus difference in the curriculum quickly became one of the main points of contention between al-Husri and the pragmatists. Al-Husri argued that differentiation of the public school curriculum would not only divide the nation and weaken historical consciousness but that it was also regressive, because it limited opportunities for youth, who would be tracked into their future careers from the time they entered primary school. He accused Iraqi pragmatist educators of internalizing colonialist

[69] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 209.
[70] See, for example, ibid., 135.
[71] Ibid., 215.

theories of pedagogy that promoted "learning without education" among the colonized, and he called for "attention to children's minds rather than their bodies" across all social classes.[72]

Some pragmatists protested that the type of curriculum differentiation they advocated was not synonymous with occupational specialization or social stratification. The point, they argued, was not to teach students particular crafts that would bind them to particular future vocations, but rather to create new kinds of citizens, confident in their ability to manage change and shape their immediate environment. Since the environment of rural children was different from that of urban children, it followed that they should use different materials in their educational activities, organized in different curricula.[73] But there were many ambiguities in pragmatist proposals for differentiated education. The reports of international experts, from the Monroe Commission in 1932 to the World Bank and UNESCO reports of the early 1950s, consistently emphasized the critical importance of agricultural education to Iraq's future development. They were often unequivocal that one aim of such education was to keep rural youth in rural areas, both to ensure future agricultural development and to minimize political instability in urban areas. The Monroe Report explained that:

> The materials of instruction [in the rural school curriculum] should be selected carefully with the view of training rural boys into healthy productive and useful citizens to whom rural life is attractive and significant…It will increase among rural youth respect for manual labor and the desire to have a part in the basic economic activities of agriculture which has always been the chief means of support of the people of this ancient land.[74]

The emphasis on agricultural development as the key to national development was joined to the pragmatist philosophy of "learning by doing," or the activity-based curriculum, to argue for near-universal vocational education. "The village or farm boy particularly learns by seeing and doing.

[72] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 250–53.
[73] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 215.
[74] Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 120.

His best education can not come from books…Schoolroom work of an academic character should have a definite place, but a subordinate one."[75]

Indeed, one of the most formidable obstacles to implementing an urban/rural differentiated curriculum oriented around "real life" in the two environments, according to the pragmatists themselves, was that manual laborers in Iraq did not want to send their children to school in order to become manual laborers, and peasants did not want to send their children to school in order to become peasants. This problem was often blamed on "traditional Arab views" of disdain for manual labor and of education as a means to a "white-collar" job. `Aqrawi wrote:

> This traditional view of education has been handed down through the ages to the present generation of Iraqis and Arabs and makes both teachers and parents put undue stress on subject matter in the schools. We can see its effects in the fact that many a parent looks with suspicion at such things as physical education, manual training and the like.[76]

Al-Jamali agreed that educational reform in Iraq would have to find ways of grappling with the fact that "many of these parents have a clear aim in mind in sending their children to school. Their aim is that their children may eventually be engaged in 'white-collar' jobs."[77] But reform must take place, since in its current approach to schooling the government was perhaps "going too far in patronizing the public," with the result of educating future non-producers.[78]

Arguments for differentiating the curriculum by sex emerged out of the same logic, but with a difference. `Aqrawi proposed five public school curricula in Iraq: for urban, rural, tribal,

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[75] Ibid., 29.
[76] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 177. Not all agreed that these were "traditional" attitudes endemic to Arab or Islamic cultures. For example, a 1952 World Bank report similarly complained of "a general lack of enthusiasm, if not actual antipathy, for manual work" among Iraqi students and argued that "[e]radication of this aversion to manual work should form an important objective of educational policy at all stages." But it also assured readers that "there is nothing either in the psychology or the religious and ethical traditions of the Arab race to justify such a mentality"; as evidence of this, the World Bank authors invoked a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad on God's appreciation of hard manual labor. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Iraq* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1952), 418.
[77] Al-Jamali, *The New Iraq*, 9–10.
[78] Ibid., 12.

female, and mountain-dwelling Kurdish students.[79] Among several noteworthy aspects of this proposal is that one kind of difference—that of being female—not only overlaps with but trumps every other kind of difference, so that urban, rural, tribal, and mountain-dwelling Kurdish girls would all follow the same curriculum. It turned out that differentiation itself was sex-specific, applicable only to male students. According to `Aqrawi, this was because female students were likely to be future homemakers and thus their environment and the materials they worked on were the same, regardless of where they lived, an explanation that arguably belies his insistence that curriculum differentiation was not about tying youth to future vocations.[80]

While `Aqrawi's proposal contained a higher degree of differentiation than many pragmatists advocated—notably in its separation of the curricula for Kurdish and Arab male youth—the notion that female education should be uniform while male education was differentiated was a recurring theme in pragmatist and, later, development discourse. Thus, in the early 1940s, pragmatist educators launched a campaign within the ministry to modify the existing academic preparatory school curriculum, which was divided into "literary" and "scientific" tracks in both boys' and girls' schools. For the boys' curriculum, they proposed increasing the levels of academic differentiation from two to four tracks, corresponding to science, mathematics, literature, and social science. At the same time, they proposed eliminating differentiation altogether in the girls' schools, so that female secondary students would all follow the same curriculum, oriented toward domestic and child development skills. Both proposals were temporarily instituted and then revoked, apparently in response to public protest.[81] Nevertheless, they remain a striking example of the gendered nature of pragmatist education for

[79] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 216.
[80] Ibid., 237.
[81] Roderic D. Matthews and Matta Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries of the Near East: Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1949), 166.

"real life." While in al-Husri's worldview, the feminine-governed household represented particularity, fragmentation, individualism, and attachment to local difference, in the pragmatist vision it promised to be a homogenizing force, the one universal environment found in every corner of the nation. But this national uniformity was produced through the difference of gender.

Child-Centered Pedagogies: Psychology and the Stages of Development

The third difference in the new pedagogical philosophy was its emphasis on the temporal stages of child development and on the importance of the emerging discipline of psychology for providing teachers and parents with tools that would help the child successfully traverse each stage. Popkewitz writes that for pragmatists:

> Designing the interior of the child entailed a new materiality of time. The child was located in the history of development, growth and learning…Childhood was given chronological ages and developmental stages. The idea of individual differences and changes in body and mind gave the child a progression that could be mapped and administered through purposeful, orderly and goal-directed actions.[82]

A major theme of pragmatist criticism in Iraq was that the primary school curriculum was organized according to subject matter instead of according to the stages of child development. Each teacher was seen as an expert in a particular subject, and taught that subject to all grade levels, rather than being seen as an expert in a particular age of childhood who would teach all subjects to the same grade. The result was "an over-emphasis on subject-matter. With every teacher considering only the teaching of his own subject little attention is paid naturally to character education. Individual knowledge and care of each child is relegated to the background."[83] In addition, schools taught too much information in each subject, and at too "academic" a level for young children.[84] Each subject in the curriculum was taught according to

[82] Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform*, 68.
[83] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 203.
[84] Clark, *Compulsory Education in Iraq*, 26.

the rational and methodological traditions of the discipline from which it was derived—that is, as it was studied and researched by adult experts in that field—rather than according to the disciplinary knowledges of child psychology and development. Pragmatists often opposed the terms "logical" and "psychological" as synonyms for the old and new approaches to learning. For example, `Aqrawi wrote that teaching in the Iraqi primary school "is logical, following the organization of science, rather than psychological to suit the mentality of children."[85]

The new approach called for the slowing down of time in the primary school classroom, as part of the temporal lengthening of childhood itself. The primary school should "avoid the anarchy of those who rush time by teaching the greatest quantity of material in the shortest possible time."[86] The overly academic nature of the primary school curriculum was connected by many pragmatists to a more general ignorance about children in Iraqi society. Because Iraqi officials, teachers, and mothers did not understand the psychology of children or the characteristics proper to each stage of child development, so the argument went, Iraqi children did not act like children. `Aqrawi complained that they did not even *look* like children. He wrote that they affected an "assumed air of seriousness" and a "grown-up look" on their faces, which were "unlevel, unnatural and stifle their spontaneity." And even their spontaneous behavior was too adult-like, including, for instance, a "very common use of profane language."[87] If Iraqi children did not appear to live their childhoods the way that American psychologists said that childhoods should be lived, the problem was that Iraqi mothers and teachers did not understand what a child was.

[85] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 204.
[86] Badi` Sharif, "Mashakil al-Tawjih al-Thaqafi fi I`dad Jil al-Mustaqbal [Problems of Cultural Guidance in Preparing the Generation of the Future]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 12, no. 5 (July 1949): 400.
[87] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 74.

One implication of this difference in the new pedagogical philosophy was a greatly heightened interest in the earliest stages of human development. Al-Husri, of course, had devoted his life to the education of the nation's children, and had based the Arab nationalist dream on it as well—but he was concerned most of all with adolescents and young adults (*shabab*). The pragmatists were far more interested in pre-school children than he was, and within the school system itself they argued for the strong prioritization of primary over secondary education. In what was probably his most effective and devastating critique of the Monroe Report, al-Husri compared the report's recommendations, rather convincingly, to European colonialist policy in this regard. While it was widely, and correctly, believed that the British had feared secondary education in Iraq because they thought it would produce nationalists,[88] the pragmatists insisted that their argument for privileging primary education was based on the fact that modern psychology had revealed the importance of the child's earliest years for his or her future development. Unfortunately for their argument, the Monroe Report had explicitly warned against the expansion of secondary education in Iraq, since "we have a very definite impression that a surplus of academically prepared youth will become a menace to the political stability of any country. In several countries of the Orient such a situation is now quite obvious."[89]

Al-Husri clearly enjoyed himself in his critique of this ill-fated passage of the Monroe Report, which appeared as one of a series of "Open Letters to Paul Monroe" published in the Iraqi press: "Could you enlighten us on just which 'countries of the Orient' have fallen into political or social troubles due to their surplus of educated citizens?"[90] Al-Husri went on to argue that countries under the control of colonialist or other powers that did not rule in the nation's true interests were best served not by "stability" but by revolution (*inqilab*). Only a government that

[88] Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq*, 193–96. See also chapter 4.
[89] Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 38.
[90] Reprinted in al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati*, 2:237.

ruled "in light of the genuine aspirations of the nation" could genuinely claim that political stability was in that nation's interests, and such a government would have nothing to fear from educating its citizens beyond the age of early childhood.

> I will concede to you that a surplus of educated citizens may lead to instability in the first type of political situation, but I believe you will concede to me that this is not the kind of stability that is in the genuine interests of the nation…You are no doubt aware that most "countries of the Orient" have come under the rule or influence of European states…[91]

Finally, al-Husri chided Monroe that, "as you know," the number of students enrolled in intermediate schools in Iraq in 1932 barely exceeded 2,000, the number at the preparatory level of secondary school was under 300, and the total number of secondary school graduates since the Iraqi state was established had not yet reached 700. By way of comparison, he pointed out to the American educator, "if secondary education had expanded in our country at the rate it has expanded in yours, the number of our secondary school students would now be 125,000."[92]

Notwithstanding its suspect affinity with European colonialist policy, the pragmatist emphasis on early childhood education in Iraq was also really based, at least in part, on the different understandings of child development and psychology outlined above. These understandings, like the other aspects of pragmatist pedagogy examined here, would have special implications for the schooling of Iraqi girls. In a 1938 radio address on "the child and the nation," republished in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid,* al-Jamali asserted that "modern psychology has established definitively the importance of the first years of the child's life and its influence over his spiritual, moral, and mental life in future ages."[93] Thus, mothers need education in how to raise children: "the ignorant mother, no matter how noble her feelings and how well-intentioned she is about raising her child, will not be able to fulfill the responsibilities that healthy

[91] Ibid., 2:238.
[92] Ibid., 2:239.
[93] Muhammad Fadhil al-Jamali, "al-Tifl wa-l-Umma [The Child and the Nation]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 3, no. 3 (June 1938): 166.

childraising demands of her; motherly instincts in humans are not enough to raise a child, as they are in animals." According to al-Jamali, this was especially a problem among the poor.[94]

Learning by Doing, or the Activity-Based Curriculum

The fourth difference in the new philosophy was its promotion of the "activity-based curriculum," or "learning by doing." In the pragmatists' view, education was not about transmitting knowledge from one generation to another, which they were fond of denigrating as "stuffing children's heads with facts."[95] Instead, it was about developing the whole child—mentally, physically, and morally. The aim of schooling was to cultivate the particular sensibilities, capabilities, and habits that the modern world demanded if a nation was to develop rather than disappear: from habits of hygiene that would fuel development by reducing child mortality, to problem-solving abilities that would enable the future citizen to manage the complexity of modern life, to a sense of agency that would empower the future worker, farmer, or housewife to shape his or her environment. `Aqrawi wrote:

> The giving of information can under no circumstances be considered the fundamental aim of primary education. The aim can be nothing less than the reconstruction of the whole life and behavior of the child along lines that will lead to his physical, psychological and social moral growth. Information in order to be functional and useful must be translated into action.[96]

This shift in the conception of education's role involved a shift in perceptions of historical time, and in particular of the future. While al-Husri's nationalism placed far more value on the future than the past, to a large degree it posited the future as already known. The role of the school was to impart consciousness of Arab history so that students would become capable of imagining the

[94] Ibid., 168.
[95] See, for example, Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin, "Hajat Madarisna al-Thanawiyya ila al-Tawjih [The Need of Our Secondary Schools for Guidance]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 12, no. 1 (September 1948): 25; Amit Sa`id, "al-Ta`lim al-Niswi [Women's Education]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 12, no. 5–6 (July 1949): 475; Editors, "al-Ta`lim al-Niswi fi al-`Iraq Bayn al-Ams wa-l-Yawm [Women's Education in Iraq Between Yesterday and Today]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, no. 1–2 (September 1953): 3.
[96] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 198.

Arab future that was joined to the past via the present by the continuous Andersonian line of linear-historical time. The pragmatists based their methods on the premise that the only thing certain about modern futures was their uncertainty. If a nation was to survive in that kind of future, its citizens had to be prepared for change and, even more critically, had to be capable of managing change. As Rose Khaddouri, another Iraqi student who received her doctoral degree at Columbia Teachers' College, wrote in her 1951 dissertation, the "uncertainty of the world creates a problematic situation for the human being." This uncertainty is not endemic to all historical periods, but arises specifically from the "complexity and confusion of the modern civilized society." It demands an education that does not just tell students "about facts in books," which are likely to change anyway, but that enables "the individual to solve his problems," so that when he "faces an unfamiliar or problematic situation, he does not react to it mechanically." Instead, he has the learned capacity to respond to the new situation creatively, knowing that "the purposeful reconstruction of experience" is within his power.[97] It was the very unpredictability of modern futures that demanded they be planned and managed. The child, much like the developing nation in the article by Point Four specialist John Friedmann cited above, had to be carefully prepared for its "inevitable march towards an uncertain future."

Pragmatist criticism of existing pedagogical practices in Iraq included the charges that they were too "academic," "scholarly," or "bookish" and that they were disconnected from "real life." Related complaints were that students were "passive" while the teacher was "active";

[97] Rose Khaddouri, "Suggestions for the Improvement of Instruction in the Urban Primary Schools of Iraq" (PhD diss., Columbia Teachers College, 1951). Later in the 1950s, Khaddouri would become a leader of the communist women's league Rabitat al-Difa` `an Huquq al-Mar'a (see chapters 4 and 5 on this group), another indication of pragmatism's lack of alignment with any particular political or nationalist ideology. The only real requirements were that the ideology be future-directed and that it privilege economic development, which by the 1950s was true of the platforms put forth by all of Iraq's political parties.

teaching was "oral" rather than "activity-based"; and learning was about "memorization" rather than "problem-solving." Al-Jamali wrote:

> The present curriculum lacks direct bearing on the social and economic life of the people to-day. It is mainly literary and non-practical…There is a maximum of inert memory work and a minimum of activity and thinking. There is a maximum of imposing orders on children from without and a minimum of developing individual initiative and group planning. With such an educational machinery at work there should be little wonder if the product were a group of nonproducers dependent on the government for their livelihood.[98]

The pragmatists regularly mixed criticisms of "literary" or "academic" education with criticisms of "inert memory work," as if the two things were self-evidently identical. But there was a coherent reasoning running through such arguments. Pragmatist educators consistently advocated pedagogical techniques that motivated students to "activity," by which they usually meant physical activity with the aim of cultivating a habit or capability, and classroom experiences that related directly to "real life," by which they usually meant either the internalization of modern hygienic principles or training for future manual work (agricultural, industrial, or domestic).

The association of U.S. pragmatist pedagogies with democratizing trends has arguably been the cause of some confusion in the historiography. For example, Reeva Simon claims that the battle between al-Jamali and al-Husri in the Ministry of Education "represented the struggle of youth against the established status quo," even while noting that al-Jamali was supported by Prime Minister Nuri Sa`id and the Iraqi monarch, two rather questionable representatives of the "struggle against the status quo."[99] Charles Tripp's statement that al-Jamali's educational philosophy was less "elitist" than that of al-Husri is more defensible on some levels but can also be challenged. Al-Husri did attempt "to restrict Kurdish education in the north" and his anti-Shi`i

[98] Al-Jamali, *The New Iraq*, 10.
[99] Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*, 87.

sentiments are well known.[100] It is probably also the case that al-Jamali placed a greater emphasis on mass education, but al-Husri was likewise a strong advocate of educating the nation's poor; it might be more accurate to say that al-Husri valued the expansion of public secondary and higher education more than his opponent did. Moreover, al-Jamali consistently promoted vocational education for the masses and the restriction of academic education to the nation's future elites, a position that al-Husri criticized passionately on the basis that it was a "colonial" mentality that promoted "learning without education."[101]

In any case, the oft-repeated disparaging of "memorization" as an educational practice, and the championing of an "activity-based" approach in its stead, did not necessarily signify an attack by the forces of democratization and individualism on authority and despotism. How teaching practices based on an active, "real-life" approach could be employed to foster a different *kind* of discipline among children is illustrated in the following observation of an Iraqi classroom by a mission of the American Council on Education, which toured the country in the late 1940s under the direction of Matta `Aqrawi:

> In one village school first-grade children were being given a practical lesson in the use of soap; those whose use of it was ineffective were sent back to the water tap to clean their hands and faces. The Commission found this a refreshing departure from the predominantly academic and detached-from-life atmosphere of the schools.[102]

The problem with the typical Iraqi classroom was not so much that children were being controlled by their teachers, but that they were being controlled in a non-productive way, one that did not compel them to *action*.

[100] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 231.
[101] See Ibid., 253. Bashkin provides a far more nuanced comparison of the views of the two education opponents, including a discussion of al-Jamali's sometimes less-than-democratic tendencies.
[102] Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries of the Near East*, 155.

As a pedagogical technique, memorization has not fared well with pragmatists in any country, and pragmatist educators in Iraq saw it as the cause of a wide range of harmful effects. First, it was viewed as passive rather than active and therefore as damaging to the child's interiorization of agency. A 1951 UNESCO report explained that since the current "methods of learning" in Iraq's schools were based on memorization, students "do not appear to have opportunities of acquiring a sense of individual responsibility through the exercise of their own initiative."[103] Memorization was regularly linked to "verbalism" or "oralism," which were now denigrated in favor of the printed word and, even more importantly, associated with idleness and lack of productivity. According to al-Husri, the campaign against "verbalism" in Iraq's schools reached the point that some Iraqi enthusiasts of "pragmatist pedagogy" *(al-tarbiya al-fa`ala*) suggested that whenever a student asked a teacher a question, the teacher should tell the student to look it up in a book—to which al-Husri responded in exasperation that asking a teacher a question was not inherently less valid as a means of knowledge-seeking than asking a book the same question.[104] But for many pragmatists, speaking and listening hardly counted as activity. The UNESCO report complained that in Iraqi classrooms "[t]here is little activity on the part of the children apart from incredibly quick oral response."[105] Similarly, the Monroe Report criticized "the existing type of school work [in Iraq] which…results for the most part in verbal knowledge alone [and] contains very little which leads to the formation of moral habits." Current pedagogy in Iraq was concerned solely with students' intellectual development while failing to

[103] Clark, *Compulsory Education in Iraq*, 26.
[104] Al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati*, 2:265. Here al-Husri contrasted "pragmatist pedagogy" with "intellectual pedagogy" (*al-tarbiya al-fikriyya*), clearly preferring the latter.
[105] Clark, *Compulsory Education in Iraq*, 21.

recognize "that, after all, the sole purpose of intellectual development is the more rational direction of conduct."[106]

One explanation for the frequently expressed abhorrence of memorization is that it was associated with aspects of Iraqi culture that were seen as anti-modern. A regularly recycled narrative was that, as the UNESCO report put it, education in Iraq was derived from "the traditional Arabic mullah school," in which students "memorized religious lore in a monotonous and repetitive manner. Traces of this verbal technique are still obvious in many primary schools."[107] In addition to their tainted affiliation with Islamic pedagogies, memorization and its companion vices, verbalism and idleness, were often associated with skills and habits valued in nonliterate cultures, which formed the everyday environment of a large majority of Iraqis and which it was the mission of the school system to eradicate. This discourse was part of a larger modernizing denigration of oral cultures, as the capacity for accurate memory retention, "once a celebrated virtue," became "vilified as superfluous, nonrational, and traditional."[108] In his dissertation, al-Jamali recognized the ways in which this capacity could be considered a virtue: "Some very unusual achievements are reported of [Bedouin] individuals who memorize quickly and also recall what is memorized accurately after a long lapse of time. Memory plays an important role in Bedouin life because of the absence of writing."[109] But it is difficult to separate this apparent praise of Bedouin memorization skills from al-Jamali's repeated attacks on the "dead process of memory work" in Iraq's schools and his argument for a curriculum of

[106] Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 70.
[107] Clark, *Compulsory Education in Iraq*, 15.
[108] Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 12. See also Andrew Shryock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
[109] Al-Jamali, *The New Iraq*, 52.

"demonstration and activity rather than verbalism." Indeed, he argued that schools for Bedouin children must be especially dedicated to combating "the habit of inactivity and laziness which the Bedouin has acquired," and "see to it that the idle hours of tribal members be spent in useful activities."[110]

In some ways, the contrast between verbalism as damaging and reading as healthy may seem contradictory to parallel attacks on the overly "bookish" and "literary" curriculum of Iraq's schools, criticisms that were often made by the same commentators. And indeed, throughout the independent monarchical era development experts would occasionally express ambivalence about the spread of literacy in Iraq, which they considered essential to modernization and effective governmentality but also potentially dangerous, especially in light of the spread of communism in the country. But beyond this political ambivalence, there was arguably a continuum drawn in pragmatist forms of reasoning between passive and active experiences of learning, which placed speaking, listening, and memorization on one end and physical activity and habit formation on the other, with reading somewhere in between. No pragmatist educator would have seriously advocated that the school system tolerate the production of illiterates, and few phrased the new pedagogical philosophy in terms quite as vulgar as those of an infamous 1952 World Bank report, which called for the concerted transformation of Iraq's existing "book schools" into "work schools."[111] But it was a characteristic feature of all the educators I am labeling "pragmatist" to argue that literacy was secondary to the development of personal initiative and the formation of healthy habits, and that the time devoted to language arts should be reduced at every grade level of the public school curriculum to make way for increased time dedicated to manual arts and activity-based training in health and citizenship. As the Monroe

[110] Ibid., 104–112.
[111] International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Iraq*, 402.

Report commented, in less inflammatory terms than those used by the World Bank: "sane, healthy and illiterate children are more fortunate than anemic and unhealthy youth who can read and write."[112]

Another way of thinking about pragmatist abhorrence for memory-related pedagogical techniques is to ask whether and in what ways the capacity to *forget* may have become a virtue to be cultivated in children. Beth Baron writes that "Forgetting is a crucial part of constructing nationalist narratives, as episodes and actualities that might divide the collective or show internal dissent and conflict are suppressed."[113] Beyond directly nationalist concerns, pragmatist discourses in Iraq point suggestively to how certain capacities to forget might be related to the capacity to apprehend homogeneous linear time and universal clock-time among citizens of modern nation-states. Popkewitz argues that "action" in pragmatist thought was understood in a very specific sense as action linked to "temporal sequences geared to the future." The agentive sensibility cultivated by activity-based pedagogies was one that experienced everyday life as "planned events in regulated time, with *the past discarded as a hindrance* to the progress of the future."[114] The interiorization of agency in this conception involved the capacity to distance oneself both from one's past and from local identifications. The need for the agentive, future-directed citizen moving through homogeneous linear time to forget local temporalities, affiliations, histories, and narratives might help to explain how certain techniques of cultivating memory skills were seen by pragmatist educators not simply as useless or a waste of school time but as actively damaging to the child's capacity to interiorize agency. They may have been understood on some level as working against the cultivation of what Popkewitz calls "the

[112] Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 110.
[113] Baron, *Egypt as a Woman*, 3.
[114] Popkewitz, *Cosmopolitanism and the Age of School Reform*, 29–30. Emphasis added.

homeless mind" of pragmatist schooling and Lerner "the mobile sensibility" of the modernizing take-off.

The pragmatist advocacy of an activity-based curriculum had a number of implications for the schooling of Iraqi girls. First, it shaped pedagogical approaches to the actual study of home economics. Those with a more "academic" conception of education might well advocate the orientation of the girls' curriculum around the production of future mothers and housewives, as al-Husri ultimately did, at least to some degree, but they were more likely to view "home economics" as what U.S. historian Rima Apple calls a gendered form of "liberal arts education."[115] This typically implied a broad-based academic education for women in addition to training in specific domestic skills. The idea was partly to produce modern companionate wives for educated, middle-class men. It was also linked to the conception of science as discrete bodies of knowledge—rather than a "process of enacting life" as Popkewitz describes the interwar pragmatist conception—and the related notion that women had to acquire knowledge of the hard sciences, not simply "scientific rationality," in order to effectively manage a household and a family. Thus, al-Husri recalled an Iraqi educator who had quipped that girls only needed to be taught "house-cleaning-ology" and "cooking-ology" (*kansulujiya wa-tabakhulujiya*), and countered this "demagogy" with the argument that

> the usual methods of cleaning and cooking in the country were completely contrary to the principles of health, and in need of development and reform on a scientific basis; the housewives of the future needed to know these principles of health that were not possible to really understand except by learning something of physiology, just as the mothers of the future needed to know many things about the best methods of raising children, and the correct understanding of these methods required knowing not a few things about the facts of psychology...[116]

[115] Apple, "Liberal Arts or Vocational Training?," 80.
[116] Al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati*, 2:114.

Al-Husri's belief in women's need for a broad academic and scientific education was one basis for his contention that pragmatist proposals to make the Iraqi girls' curriculum "fundamentally different" from that of boys "could in no way be justified….The differences between the curriculum of the girls and boys' schools must be limited to matters that are relevant to the special circumstances of girls…It is not reasonable for the studies to differ from one other in substance."[117]

Proponents of an activity-based curriculum for children of all classes felt differently. In certain ways, they advocated a more vocational understanding of home economics as manual labor or a set of technical skills. As the article in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* on the history of home economics explained:

> We live in a scientific age in which experiment and experience prevail, which respects machines and manual labor, and which has made these the pillars of modern science…The practice of material and manual household work and its study in schools is not considered a strange or lowly affair in this age.[118]

Similarly, the dean of Queen `Aliya women's college in Baghdad, Amit Sa`id, criticized the current public school curriculum for girls for being "theoretical" (*nazari*) rather than "vocational" (*mihni*). Trotting out one of the pragmatists' favorite tropes, she asserted that an Iraqi girl's education merely "stuffs her [head] with facts and theories," and by failing to "make her a housewife in the proper sense" was creating a "danger to our family life."[119]

But there was another way that the pragmatist emphasis on activity-based learning and the internalization of agency shaped girls' education in Iraq. It not only increased educators' interest in the earliest years of the child's life—when the capacity for agentive action was seen to be most effectively instilled—but also their interest in what were seen to be feminine-specific

[117] Ibid., 2:132.
[118] Gharib, "Harakat Tadbir al-Manzil," 207.
[119] Sa`id, "al-Ta`lim al-Niswi," 475.

skills and sensibilities. Both of these in turn intensified their concern with motherhood and with the need for women to work in social fields, especially education and health care, outside the home. Of course, educating future mothers and housewives had been a concern of self-described modernizers in Iraq and elsewhere since long before the pragmatists arrived on the scene. But there were differences in the new discourse. One was that the new Iraqi educators were far less focused on molding companionate wives to serve as educated conversationalists and helpmates for middle- and upper-class modern husbands. Their overriding concern was with children—and thus mothers—of all social classes, and the lower classes in particular. Moreover, they perceived women as inherently more attuned than men to the non-intellectual, activity-based process of habit formation, which according to both pragmatists and development experts was the type of education the Iraqi masses most needed. In advocating the expansion of girls' education and the sex-differentiation of the public school curriculum, the Monroe Report explained:

> The fixing of habits by training is always a more fundamental process in education than the imparting of ideals through instruction, more fundamental than training in the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, which is practically all that the conventional [Iraqi] school does. These statements do not ignore the fact that in Moslem lands women and girls receive a very fundamental training in customs, habits and moral conduct. But the fixing of proper habits by training is far more effective in directing the education of boys in the home than is the formal education given through the school. Hence the importance of educated women for the home.[120]

While fathers were necessary for external discipline and for intellectual development, mothers were seen as best able to develop the habits and sensibilities associated with *self*-discipline and with the child's internalization of agency, capabilities that lay at the very heart of pragmatist pedagogy. As one Iraqi educator wrote, a household that joined "the mind of the father" with the "heart of the mother" would be governed well. But it was most of all the mother who would not

[120] Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 133.

only "care for the child" but also "imprint him with *masculinity and independence*."[121] The statement is striking in the way it both echoes and contrasts with al-Husri's earlier claim that the military barracks would imprint the young man with "masculinity and perseverance." The pragmatists' emphasis on *masculine* agency, or "independence," and their belief in women's unique natural ability to teach healthy and rational habit formation—or, as the Monroe Report put it, to "translate scientific knowledge into the habits and customs of a people"—was also the basis of the recommendation in the UNESCO report that more Iraqi women be hired to teach outside the home in primary schools for *boys*.[122] Advocacy of a sex-differentiated curriculum in general and "home economics" in particular should thus not be seen simply as an effort to confine future female citizens to the home. Whether they became "teachers, physicians, social workers, public health nurses, physical education specialists," or housewives, schoolgirls were seen by Iraqi pragmatists, as much as by Western education and development experts, as the primary means through which agentive, future-directed sensibilities would be inscribed in the unconscious pre-intellectual minds and habituated bodily capabilities of all the nation's citizens.[123]

As we will see in the next section, the dual effects of the activity-based curriculum on the education of girls—the partial reconceptualization of home economics as vocational training on the one hand and the revaluing of women for their presumed capacity to shape agentive citizens on the other—had complex implications. Within the Ministry of Education in the 1930s and 1940s, home economics was often explicitly classified as a type of vocational education, parallel to the other three types—agricultural, commercial, and industrial—that were specifically designed for boys. Thus, starting in the 1930s, specialized "vocational" secondary schools were

[121] Sharif, "Mashakil al-Tawjih al-Thaqafi fi I`dad Jil al-Mustaqbal," 397. Emphasis added.
[122] Clark, *Compulsory Education in Iraq*, 38.
[123] Monroe, *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission*, 132.

built for all four types. Yet home economics was unlike the other three in important ways, not least in that, by the mid-1940s, it was taught to all Iraqi girls at every age and level of public schooling, not just to those in the home economics vocational schools. Contrary to the claims of some pragmatist educators, the sex-differentiated activity-based curriculum clearly aimed in part at enabling and disabling particular vocational skills and therefore futures. But that was not all it did. It also aimed at enabling and disabling certain capabilities, motivations, habits, social behaviors, and mental approaches to problems. This process of enabling and disabling was a process of constructing gendered citizens. Clearly, a girl's sex determined her future vocation in a way that a boy's sex did not, at least not by itself. But the vocation in question was also different from other vocations. It was frequently depicted as timeless, a product of nature as much as history, which is why its future relevance could be assumed for all girls in spite of the widely felt acceleration of historical time and unpredictability of modern futures.[124] It was synonymous with modern femininity itself—not just a set of technical skills or disciplinary knowledges but a whole mode of being in the world, prior to and constitutive of the mode of being known as citizenship.

The Gendering of School Time, 1932-58

Not all recommendations of the Iraqi pragmatists were implemented, even when their strongest proponents reached positions of power in the Ministry of Education. In the 1960s and 1970s, educators would still be criticizing Iraqi classrooms for fostering passive learning, with the teacher in front lecturing to students sitting quietly in their chairs. The question of agricultural

[124] There was, however, some interesting debate on just this point. An article printed in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* in 1942 argued that a girl's education, especially in the sciences, should not focus on domestic skills precisely because the acceleration of time in the modern era meant that government officials could not safely predict her future work or the broader socioeconomic needs of the future nation. Ihssan `Abid, "Hal Yakhtalif Manhaj al-`Ulum li-l-Banat `an li-l-Walid? [Should the Science Curriculum for Girls Differ from That of Boys?]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 7, no. 6 (June 1942): 513–20.

and other vocational training for boys remained a topic of much dispute and the cause of many confusing shifts in education policy. But some pragmatist proposals had lasting and dramatic effects on the Iraqi school experience: among these were the differentiation of the curriculum by sex and the particular directions it took.

In the 1957/58 school year, on the eve of the revolution, there was still a significant sex disparity in Iraqi education. Only 23 percent of girls aged six to twelve were attending primary school, compared to 65 percent of boys. Yet the quantitative expansion of female education between 1932 and 1958 was not insignificant. The number of Iraqi girls enrolled in primary school increased from around 7,000 in 1931/32 to 124,704 in 1957/58.[125] The rate of increase slightly outpaced that of boys' enrollment in most years, thus somewhat narrowing the gender gap in education: in 1930/31, female students constituted 20 percent of Iraq's total primary school population; by 1957/58, the percentage had risen to 25 percent. The rise in the number of girls attending secondary school was even more significant in percentile terms, from 176 in 1930/31 to 13,627 in 1957/58.[126] While in 1930/31 female students constituted only 8 percent of the secondary school population, by 1957/58 the percentage had jumped to 22 percent, almost reaching the proportion of girls in primary school. The dramatic percentile increase is mostly attributable to the fact that no public secondary schools for girls existed prior to 1929. But it does also suggest that female students were not significantly disadvantaged in their chances of advancing beyond primary school once public secondary schools for them were opened.

As for the content of public schooling, sex-differentiation of the curriculum increased steadily from 1932-58, with more and more of female school time from the primary through

[125] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 157; Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries of the Near East*, 142; Ismael and Ismael, "Gender and State in Iraq," 187.
[126] Al-Kasey, *Youth Education in Iraq*, 51. The number is slightly lower in Ismael and Ismael, "Gender and State in Iraq," 187.

college levels devoted to home economics. The years 1932 and 1952 marked two specific turning points in which the Ministry of Education committed to redirecting and intensifying its efforts to orient female education around domestic and childrearing skills. In both years, these efforts involved collaboration between Iraqi officials and international experts. But there were differences. The shift in 1932, and the general trajectory of home economics education in the school system until the mid-1940s, focused mainly on girls in primary school. As we will see in chapter 4, the 1952 campaign, which focused on female secondary school students, was in part a response to the growing nationalist and communist movements in postwar Iraq, which were especially popular among youth.

The degree of support for or opposition to home economics education among teachers, students, parents, and the public is difficult to gauge. The proponents of home economics consistently provided very conflicting narratives about popular views on the topic, which usually seem to relate more to their immediate political aims than to any serious attention to the question. However, it is clear that there was more debate about home economics and the ministry's proposed expansion of it in 1952 than there was in 1932, both inside the school system and in the Iraqi press. There are also many more anecdotal references, by teachers and development experts, to various forms of resistance by female students to the study of home economics.

While al-Husri objected to many aspects of curriculum differentiation advocated in the Monroe Report, he accepted, at least in principle, the argument that some differentiation by sex was needed. However, the debate between him and the pragmatists continued over the actual commitment of his ministry to a sex-differentiated curriculum. `Aqrawi asserted that al-Husri's addition of home economics to the 1928 curriculum for girls from third to sixth grades was

superficial, since instructions and syllabi for the new classes were promised but never issued by the ministry.[127] It was also, he claimed, prejudicial to girls; while the circular specified that the number of periods in Arabic, math, and English be reduced in the girls' curriculum to make room for the home economics classes, no reduction was made in the content that was expected to be covered in those three core subjects.[128] Thus, "the pupils of the sixth grade in the girls' school were called upon to stand up for the public primary examinations on the same footing as the boys, in spite of the shorter hours allowed to the academic subjects" in their curriculum. According to `Aqrawi, many principals of girls' schools therefore chose to ignore the 1928 directive.[129] The problem for `Aqrawi and the other pragmatists was obviously not that the periods for academic subjects were being reduced in girls' schools, but that the public school exams were still unified for boys and girls in spite of the differentiated curricula. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, they succeeded in increasing the sex differentiation of the primary school curriculum while extending the concept to the primary school exams and, starting in the early 1940s, to the secondary school curriculum.

In primary school, the sex-differentiated curriculum was built primarily through increasing the time and overhauling the content of "drawing and manual arts." This subject existed in the curriculum prior to the interventions of the pragmatists, but became one of the focal points of their interest as it seemed the most amenable to a sex-differentiated, child-centered, and activity-based pedagogy. In 1928, it was allotted a total of eleven periods in the six years of primary school, and these decreased as the pupil progressed from first to sixth grade.[130]

[127] Akrawi, "Curriculum Construction," 196.
[128] Ibid., 197.
[129] Ibid., 201.
[130] Ibid., 181.

It was seen primarily as a way of developing motor skills in very young children.[131] In total, it constituted less than 7 percent of the time a child spent in primary school, which placed it sixth in scheduled time behind Arabic, math, geography and history, English, and religion.[132] In the 1930s and 1940s, it became increasingly differentiated by sex as its time in the schedule steadily lengthened. For girls, the subject now covered "needlework and embroidery, knitting, and making such things as doilies, aprons, and baby clothes. They also learn how to wash and clean clothes, polish windows and furniture, and prepare the tea table," in addition to "other home economics subjects." Boys worked with "colored paper, cardboard, plasticine, straw and palm leaves, and wood, making toylike things, leading to more useful objects later."[133] By the 1945-46 school year, drawing and manual arts comprised twenty-two periods of primary school, third only behind Arabic and math, and its allotted time increased rather than decreased as the pupil advanced from first to sixth grade. Instead of teaching young children motor skills, it now seemed designed in large part to produce gender difference as the child developed. The additional time in the curriculum was created by reducing the periods of Arabic, English, geography and history, and religion. Besides math, the only subjects whose allotted time was not affected were the other three activity-based, "real-life" subjects privileged by the pragmatists: object lessons and hygiene, civics and morals, and physical education and singing. The last of these was also differentiated by sex, so that an Iraqi girl now followed a female-only curriculum for approximately 20 percent of the time she spent in primary school.[134]

Home economics at the secondary school level developed in two different ways, neither of which had much impact on the lives of most Iraqi schoolgirls until the mid-1940s or even

[131] Iraqi Ministry of Education, "Summary of the Present Primary Course of Study," reprinted in ibid., 193–95.
[132] Ibid., 181.
[133] Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries of the Near East*, 152.
[134] Ibid., 149.

early 1950s. The first was the foundation of home economics secondary schools as "vocational" schools parallel to the academic secondary school system, open to female graduates of primary school. The first of these was established in Baghdad in 1932 with an enrollment of 53 girls. Its main function was to train teachers for the girls' primary schools, a role that became even more important as these schools expanded their home economics curriculum.[135] However, in 1946 its mission was modified to encompass the "dual purpose" of producing teachers and "intelligent homemakers," and in 1952 it was modified again so that its aim was "first and foremost" to prepare future homemakers.[136] The school—at least in official discourse and actual curriculum—thus moved further and further away from the concept of vocational training for feminine occupations outside the home and toward the notion of homemaking as the primary vocation for which the school existed. Yet it is clear that no more than a tiny fraction of future Iraqi homemakers were expected to attend this school, and in that sense officials could not have been very optimistic about its impact on society as a direct form of vocational training. Moreover, whatever the school's mission might claim, its graduates remained in high demand as primary and intermediate school teachers and as recruits for the higher teacher training colleges and Queen `Aliya college for women.[137] The modifications in the school's mission thus represented a discursive/political shift that also had effects on the content of girls' education, rather than any real change in the likely futures of its graduates.

The second way home economics was introduced into the secondary school system, starting in the 1940s, was through the modification of the girls' curriculum in the regular (academic) secondary schools. Curriculum revisions in 1940 and 1943 added two mandatory

[135] Hassan, "Dawr I`dad al-Mu`allimat fi al-`Iraq," 306.
[136] "Manahij al-Fanun al-Baytiyya [The Home Economics Curriculum]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 15, no. 5 (June 1952): 60; Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries of the Near East*, 177; Kadry, *Women's Education in Iraq*, 6.
[137] Hassan, "Dawr I`dad al-Mu`allimat fi al-`Iraq."

periods in home economics per year for the three years of intermediate school and the two years of preparatory school, in both the literary and scientific tracks. They covered "sewing, embroidery, knitting, cooking and home cleaning in a more developed form than previous years."[138] As in primary school, the curriculum became more differentiated as the student advanced through the grade levels. In addition to the two core home economics courses now required for all five years of secondary school, girls at the preparatory school level (the final two years of secondary education) were required to take additional specialized courses. Those in the scientific track took two periods covering medical aspects of child care and hygiene, while those in the literary track took four periods in child psychology and development.[139] The new classes on home economics and child care in the girls' science curriculum were particularly controversial, since most of the female students in the scientific track were preparing for public exams to enter college science programs, in competition with male students who did not have similar requirements.

At the higher education level, the Queen `Aliya College for women in Baghdad, which had been established in 1945, overhauled its curriculum starting in 1952, changing its areas of specialization from literature, chemistry, social work, geography, history, and physics to home arts, education, English, fine arts, and secretarial work.[140] The proponents of the change justified it in part by pointing to the fact that most of Iraq's postsecondary institutions were coeducational, and by this time women were studying alongside men at the colleges of arts and sciences, fine arts, chemistry, law, engineering, and economics.[141] Thus it was argued that women who wished

[138] Matthews and Akrawi, *Education in Arab Countries of the Near East*, 168.
[139] Ibid., 166–7; al-Kasey, *Youth Education in Iraq*, 50.
[140] Kadry, *Women's Education in Iraq*, 12; Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin, "Letter to UNESCO: Report on Iraqi Education," 1953, Correspondence file 37 A 57 (567): Educational Mission - Iraq - General, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[141] Kadry, *Women's Education in Iraq*, 14–16.

to specialize in academic subjects could enroll in one of those colleges. Yet it had long been recognized that many Iraqi parents would not send their daughters to a coeducational college, which was why Queen `Aliya had been established in the first place. Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, the majority of Iraqi women pursuing higher education were enrolled either at Queen `Aliya or the women's higher teacher training college, and slightly more at the former than the latter.[142] These were also the two main sources of teachers for the girls' secondary schools.

When international development organizations began arriving in Iraq in the late 1940s and early 1950s, then, home economics requirements already existed at every level of education for Iraqi girls and women. Nevertheless, these groups consistently repeated the argument made by the U.S. Monroe Commission in 1932 that the Iraqi school system was not sufficiently differentiated by sex, and recommended the qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of home economics in the girls' curriculum. Thus, either ignoring or oblivious to the fact that Iraqi girls were already required to study home economics from the first through twelfth grades, a 1952 report of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations made a recommendation to the Iraqi government almost identical to that of the Monroe Commission twenty years earlier:

> the curriculum for girls' schools should not be patterned on that designed for boys but should be suited to their special needs in life. It should provide them with a broad general education and also fit them for homemaking. Part of their schooling should therefore deal with subjects as food, clothing, shelter, family relationships and child development.[143]

In part, such statements simply reflect a familiar tendency of international experts to discover that their particular area of expertise is completely lacking in the country to which they are sent.

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[142] In 1957-58, there were 391 women enrolled at Queen `Aliya; 352 at the Higher Teachers Training College; 263 at the College of Arts and Sciences; and a total of 171 at the other academic colleges. There were also a few hundred women studying in professional schools, including 99 at the Medical School and 120 at the women's School of Nursing and Midwifery in 1955-56. Ibid., 22–23.

[143] Ava Milam, *Report to the Government of Iraq on Education in Home Economics*, FAO Report No. 48 (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, October 1952), 1.

But the reports of the early 1950s also suggest a shift in the dominant conceptualization and practice of home economics.

For underdeveloped countries like Iraq, the most important topics subsumed under the category of home economics in the postwar period were hygiene, nutrition, household budgeting, child development, and consumer sciences. A more extensive FAO report in 1954 explained:

> The present [home economics] programs in [Iraqi] secondary schools emphasize only needlework and child care and very little attention is given to the broader fields of nutrition and family feeding, household management and family economics, the physical, mental and emotional development of children, household furnishings and equipment and textiles and clothing. Provision needs to be made by the Government of Iraq for the inclusion of this training in the elementary and secondary schools and in selected institutions of higher learning.[144]

One aspect of the shift was a conceptual reorientation of women's household labor from the sphere of production to that of consumption. Thus, while the current secondary school home economics curriculum in Iraq, established in 1943, covered "sewing, embroidery, knitting, cooking and home cleaning" the FAO now recommended that "more attention be given in schools to clothing selection, dress design and textiles, and that less emphasis be placed on embroidery."[145] The education of intelligent female consumers in the selection and purchase of manufactured textiles would be based on the "results of research conducted in universities, government departments and industries [in the United States, Canada and Europe] on fibers and fabrics, textile finishes and textile strength etc along with courses on art principles and design."[146] In fact, Iraqi officials had already been thinking about the role of educated women in the consumption of manufactured products. A 1953 article on women's education in *al-Mu`allim*

[144] Jessie B. Brodie, *Report to the Government of Iraq on Home Economics in Queen Aliya College*, FAO Report No. 320 (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, October 1954), 1.
[145] Milam, *Report to the Government of Iraq on Education in Home Economics*, 3. This could also reflect a shift in the social classes that were now targeted with home economics education, since embroidery was often taught to middle- and upper-class girls. See Russell, *Creating the New Egyptian Woman*, 105.
[146] Brodie, *Report to the Government of Iraq on Home Economics in Queen Aliya College*, 2.

al-Jadid, for example, discussed two spheres of life, both requiring planning, organization, and gendered education: the public sphere of the man, based on production, and the domestic sphere of the woman, based on consumption.[147]

In addition to recommending changes in the content of home economics education, the FAO also proposed a dramatic expansion of the mandatory time devoted to it, especially in secondary schools. Specifically, the 1952 report recommended that girls in Iraq's preparatory schools, in both the literary and scientific tracks, be required to study home economics for 20 percent of the time they spent in school, up from 6-7 percent of the current curriculum and from 0 percent ten years earlier.[148] This is an astonishing proposal, especially given the controversy in the early 1940s over the addition of *any* home economics requirements to the female preparatory school curriculum, especially in the scientific track, where most students were preparing for higher education.[149] It is difficult to imagine how its implementation would not have impacted an Iraqi girl's chances of scoring high enough in the public school examinations to enter one of the country's science colleges, all of which were coeducational.

The author of the FAO report, Ava Milam, was the dean of the School of Domestic Science and Art (i.e., home economics) at Oregon Agricultural College who worked in Iraq for several months in 1951-52, visiting primary and secondary schools and serving as a consultant for Queen `Aliya college, before writing the report. Curiously, she later asserted in her memoirs that the female educators she worked with in Iraq faced opposition from "conservative" male

[147] `Amr, "Min Mushkilat Ta`limna al-Niswi," 55.
[148] Milam, *Report to the Government of Iraq on Education in Home Economics*.
[149] For an argument against such requirements in an article published in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* in 1942, one year before the ministry implemented the first mandatory home economics courses in the girls' academic secondary schools, see `Abid, "Hal Yakhtalif Manhaj al-`Ulum li-l-Banat `an li-l-Walid?".

officials who "violently opposed" teaching subjects such as political science to women.[150] Milam may be referring to an ongoing (non-violent) public debate over the content of a political science textbook, which had started before she arrived in Iraq and had nothing to do with her work there. In any case, writing for an American audience in 1969, the author neglects to mention that her own primary recommendation to the Iraqi government in 1952 was to significantly *reduce* the study of academic subjects, including political science, for all girls in Iraq's secondary schools.[151] In the intervening years, the American second-wave feminist movement had launched its attack on sex-based home economics requirements in public schools, which would be banned by law in 1972 with the passage of Title IX. Between Milam's 1952 report and her 1969 memoirs, then, neither the use of women's status to index a nation's progress and modernity nor the relative location of Iraq and the U.S. on the resulting spatio-temporal map of the world had changed; what *had* changed were the dominant American conceptions of progress and modernity. This is how, looking back in 1969, Milam could simply suggest—without needing to explain a thing—that her work in Iraq in 1952 had the effect of expanding academic educational opportunities for Iraqi women, the exact opposite of its actual intent as well as its actual effect.

In the end, the 1952 FAO proposal was never fully implemented, at least in part because it required a large increase in the number of female secondary school teachers qualified to teach home economics, and this target was not reached prior to the 1958 revolution.[152] But Milam and other FAO experts were involved in the initial stages of the post-1952 project to expand home

[150] Ava Milam Clark, *Adventures of a Home Economist* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1969), 333–34.

[151] She does later summarize the 1952 FAO report by noting that it "suggested that girls' schools not be patterned after the boys' schools." But she does not explain that this involved drastically cutting academic courses in girls' schools, nor does she attempt to reconcile the recommendation with her previous criticism that because of male conservatism Iraqi women were graduating from the school system "with little or no study in political science." Ibid., 334, 338. .

[152] Home economics education for Iraqi girls certainly did not come to end in 1958, but FAO involvement declined.

economics requirements in Iraq's schools. These primarily centered on the preparation of teachers, through the reorientation of the curriculum at Queen `Aliya college around home economics rather than academic education and the construction of new vocational secondary schools for home economics in numerous Iraq provinces, to supplement the existing one in Baghdad. Between 1952 and 1958, the number of students attending these specialized home economics schools increased more than tenfold, from 236 to 2,528.[153] In 1953, their number of yearly graduates began to exceed that of the women's primary teacher training institutes, the other main source of female teachers for Iraq's elementary schools, and by 1955 it exceeded the combined total of the women's primary and secondary teacher training institutes.[154]

Foreign, especially U.S., advisors had enough influence on the gendering of the Iraqi school experience from the 1930s through the 1950s that it became standard in bureaucratic narratives of the "history of Iraqi education" to assert that much of the impetus and expertise behind the shift had come from them.[155] Nevertheless, the primary motivations were local, and they were increasingly political as much as economic. In particular, the ministry's 1952 campaign to expand home economics requirements in the girls' secondary schools was driven above all by the growing sense among Iraqi officials that the girls' education system was not only failing in its primary mission of schooling future mothers capable of raising agentive and governable citizens, but that it was having a rather contrary effect: producing a generation of educated Iraqi women who were *resistant* to marriage, domesticity, and motherhood, and who

[153] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 477.
[154] Hassan, "Dawr I`dad al-Mu`allimat fi al-`Iraq," 307.
[155] For example, a history of public education in the country produced by the Iraqi government noted that the gradual expansion of "vocational education" since the early 1930s, including the expansion of home economics, was "a result of various recommendations" of the Monroe Report, the World Bank, UNESCO, and U.S. missions. It also explained that the acceleration of this drive from 1952-57 was a "result of UNESCO's reports on vocational education in Iraq" during those years. Government of Iraq, *Education in Iraq* (Washington: Office of the Cultural Attaché, Embassy of Iraq, 1957).

evidently believed that they could better serve the nation's interests by overthrowing the existing political order than by learning how to efficiently manage a household. A clear subtext, and often the explicit context, of many of the discussions around the "crisis of girls' education" in these years was the increasing political unrest of Iraqi society, especially the rising popularity of the Iraqi Communist Party among youth. Chapter 4 will return to this crisis of female secondary schooling and the education ministry's campaign to address it in the 1950s. But first, chapter 3 turns to a different crisis, one that impelled the introduction of home economics interventions to domesticate a different strata of Iraqi women: the agrarian crisis.

Chapter 3

Domesticating Women:
Rural Mobility, the Family Farm, and the Peculiar Futurist Perspective of Development

> What was the response of liberal theorists as they cast their gaze on an unfamiliar world? In a word, it was to see those experiences, those life forms, as provisional…But what is the perspective from which experience appears irredeemably provisional and incomplete? It is one in which experience is always viewed and assessed from a future point. It is on account of this futural perspective that one can know, or claim to know, the experience's future history, its process of gestation into another stage of life.
>
> -Uday Singh Mehta[1]

> Development doctrine intends to do the opposite of what the idea of development, conveying a fluidity of movement from the old to the new, implies. Its intention is to confront, compensate, and pre-empt this fluidity of movement in order to renew agrarian conditions of development by locking up population in the countryside. Such is the agrarian doctrine of development.
>
> -M.P. Cowen and R.W. Shenton[2]

This chapter explores an apparent paradox in the orientation of postwar development practices toward the future. It does so by examining both the failures and the productive effects of one of the world's first development projects involving multinational agreements and expertise, the Dujayla Land Settlement Project in Iraq, from 1945 to 1958. The project's primary failure was a form of rapid ecological destruction—salinization of the land—which the settlement's planners

[1] Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 191–92.
[2] Michael P. Cowen and Robert W. Shenton, *Doctrines of Development* (London: Routledge, 1996), xiii.

knew from the beginning threatened the entire project and for which technical solutions were frequently asserted to be available. Among its lasting effects were the reconstitution of several thousand rural lives and an expansion of knowledge and technocratic expertise in both Iraq and the emerging body of international development agencies that identified the family—and women in particular—as a primary locus of rural development programs. The paradox I explore is thus the process by which peasant families and individual lives at Dujayla were transformed by state intervention and international expertise in the name of a distant and universal developed future, while the deterioration of the land continued along its rapid and unsurprising course to block even a modest local future for those same families and individuals.

Like the previous chapter, this one is engaged with a number of scholarly discussions related to histories of domesticity and family reform. First, it challenges the assumption in Middle East women's and gender histories that the modernist project to cultivate feminine domesticity—that is, to reconstruct home management as the domain of the wife, rather than the husband, and to intervene in that domain to teach women new techniques of homemaking and childraising—is essentially an urban, middle-class phenomenon. This familiar claim can probably be explained in part by the fact that most historical studies of domesticity in the region focus on the turn-of-the-century and interwar periods, though that observation might beg the question of why there is such a lacuna for the postwar period in the first place. That is, the assumption may have developed a somewhat circular logic: the "modern domestic woman" is defined as urban and middle-class, and it then turns out that her defining characteristics can only be found among urban, middle-class women and that her essential historical origins are located in the urban middle-class nationalist discourses of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While there is no question that feminine domesticities are often imagined and regulated differently for

urban and rural women and for women of different classes, it is not at all clear in the current scholarship what those differences might be, or what kinds of work they might do in particular historical contexts.

Second, the chapter questions the tendency to situate histories of modern domesticity in the Middle East primarily within a national/nationalist framework, by pointing to the importance of global relays of knowledge on gender and families such as those created through the work of postwar development agencies.[3] In placing much of the emphasis in this chapter on the role of international expertise, I do not mean to suggest that the history of feminine domesticity in Iraq should be understood as an instance of the importation of "Western" ideas and experiences and their historical re-enactment by Iraqis. Discourses on family and femininity, like other discourses, are deployed and reworked in particular contexts to address particular perceived problems; they are both locally performative and locally productive.[4] As Tamara Loos writes: "*All* cultural appropriations of modernity are unique to that culture."[5] Moreover, conceiving of modern domesticity as a set of imported or otherwise disembodied ideas would suggest that its emergence is best grasped through a linear intellectual-history narrative rather than by trying to trace its appearances in particular historical moments as an assemblage of practices and

[3] While dealing with a slightly later period (mainly the 1960s) and not framed in terms of domestic technologies, a notable exception is Beth Baron, "The Origins of Family Planning: Aziza Hussein, American Experts, and the Egyptian State," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4, no. 3 (2008): 31–57.
[4] By "performative," I simply mean that a speech act does certain kinds of work in the context of a certain speaker's relationship to a certain audience—and this is rarely, I would add, a foreign audience. See J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).
[5] Tamara Loos, *Subject Siam: Family, Law, and Colonial Modernity in Thailand* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 21. Orit Bashkin has argued that Homi Bhabha's concept of "colonial hybridity" is more constructive for analyzing Iraqi history in the Hashimite era than the "inseparable monoliths" of East/West and colonized/colonizer: "The constant fusion and mutual synthesis between the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized creates an ambivalent space in which a symmetric differentiation between the colonizer and the colonized and their representation as 'self' and 'other' become impossible to maintain." Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 3.

sensibilities shaped by discourse, laws, desires and aspirations, home interventions, education, training and repetition, material structures, and the production of new forms of time and space.

Third, the chapter engages with the global body of scholarship criticizing what James Ferguson has called the postwar "development apparatus."[6] One of the more fruitful directions in this area has been to examine the ways in which development problems were "rendered technical" by postwar development experts, and to criticize the depoliticizing moves of this strategy.[7] While such work has yielded important insights, my research on Dujayla calls into question certain aspects of the "rendering technical" argument as it is often framed in this literature, and points to the importance of gender as a category of analysis for understanding the postwar development apparatus more broadly.[8] A branch of this scholarship has looked at issues of women and gender in development, but it has focused almost exclusively on the post-1970 period. In fact, a very common refrain in the feminist "post-development" literature is that from 1945-70, Western "gender stereotypes" dominating development discourse provided a "rationale for ignoring women," and thus that the "issue of women and development entered the development discourse in the 1970s."[9] This is therefore the point at which critical feminist scholarship on women, gender, and development begins. But these assertions are simply not true.

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[6] James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[7] See, for example, Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2007); Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*.

[8] On gender as a category of historical analysis, see Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–1075; idem, "Gender: Still a Useful Category of Analysis?," *Diogenes* 57, no. 1 (2010): 7–14.

[9] Jane Parpart, "Lessons from the Field: Rethinking Empowerment, Gender and Development from a Post-(Post-?)Development Perspective," in *Feminist Post-Development Thought: Rethinking Modernity, Post-Colonialism and Representation*, ed. Kriemild Saunders (London: Zed Books, 2003), 43; Jane Parpart and Marchand Marianne, "Exploding the Canon: An Introduction/Conclusion," in *Feminism, Postmodernism, Development* (London: Routledge, 1995), 13. Of course, the "ignoring" of women in a discourse would not

Even in the rare studies that recognize the early development preoccupation with teaching home economics to poor women in "underdeveloped" countries, this itself is somehow read as evidence of a *lack* of interest in women. For example, Arturo Escobar correctly observes that postwar development theory in organizations such as the U.N. and U.S. AID was based on a "division of intellectual labor: agriculture for men, home economics for women." Yet he then concludes, inexplicably, that this division demonstrates "the invisibility of women in rural development schemes."[10] One might wonder in this case why the U.S. and Iraqi governments and U.N. organizations in the early years of development bothered devoting so much time and money to home economics programs for women, *especially* within rural development schemes, as I will show in this chapter. In short, when it comes to women, scholars critical of early development projects have too often been content with prescriptive and dismissive critiques based on what they think those projects *should have done* (gotten women out of the house into paid employment), rather than producing critical historical analyses of what they in fact did. The assumption that there is nothing more to be said about home economics campaigns other than that they aimed at "keeping women in the home" is based on the assumption that both "women" and "the home" are self-explanatory, that they are transhistorical categories.

Finally, the chapter is relevant to the historical literature on agrarian family structures in various parts of the world during the 20th century. Over the past few decades, many scholars in this area have tended to agree that the narrative of the "rise of the nuclear/conjugal family" is of little relevance to their work. In one of the classic critiques along these lines, Joan Smith and Immanuel Wallerstein object to the claim that "the family was previously large and 'extended'

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itself be a reason to avoid gender analyses of it. But in fact women were far from ignored in global postwar development discourse.

[10] Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 172–73. A very similar argument is made in Suzanne Bergeron, *Fragments of Development: Nation, Gender, and the Space of Modernity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 19–22.

but today (or in modern times) it has been getting smaller and more 'nuclear.'…This image of the family, as perpetrated by world social-science, has been an obstacle to our understanding of how households have in fact been constructed in the capitalist world-economy."[11] But this chapter argues that the rise of the nuclear family narrative is much more than an "image…perpetrated by world social-science," in part because world social-science does not stand outside the reality it claims to describe, and thus cannot be simply isolated and pushed aside as an "obstacle to our understanding" of that reality. One area in which the real productive effects of world social-science narratives can be readily traced is in the domain of development. Rather than conceiving of the nuclear-family type as the telos of a universal historical process, this chapter views it as a conceptual and spatial grid that makes certain kinds of "family" relationships legible so that they can be worked on by technologies of governmentality and development, while simultaneously making other kinds of relationships *illegible*, even when they continue to exist.[12]

The grid is conceptual in that it can be traced in discourse and does not necessarily describe a society-wide transformation of empirical households along the lines of the bourgeois conjugal family, or for that matter even a widespread loosening of extended-family bonds. But this hardly means it fails to produce effects. Using records of international agencies involved in the Dujayla settlement, the chapter shows how the nuclear-family grid can play a powerful role

[11] Joan Smith and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Households as an Institution of the World-Economy," in *Creating and Transforming Households: The Constraints of the World-Economy*, ed. Joan Smith and Immanuel Wallerstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.

[12] While not identical to them, my notion of a conceptual grid draws on James Scott's analysis of the "administrative" or "standardizing" grids of the modern state as well as on the notion of "grids of intelligibility" discussed by Michel Foucault and elaborated in various ways by Judith Butler. See, for example, James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1975-76* (Macmillan, 2003), 228; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 151. On technologies of governmentality, my analysis also owes much to Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

in the remaking of both time and space for people whose lives become enmeshed in a development apparatus, while providing state officials and development planners with an identifiable point of entry—the rural housewife—for projects of reform and improvement. When legislators and planners modeled the Dujayla settlement around the production of nuclear-family farms, and then deployed home economics projects targeting the women on those farms, they may not have expected to produce bourgeois familial sensibilities among peasants, and in any event it seems that they did not succeed in doing so. But they did hope to address the troubling signs of rural disorder caused by the country's agrarian crisis and the related dissolution of various bonds, including those between landlords and peasants and between peasants and the land. By fixing landless rural people in nuclear-family units on scattered and isolated "independent" farms, and then intervening in their daily habits through "home economics" education, officials hoped to reduce what to them were unacceptable rural mobilities manifested in widespread peasant and tribal rebellions and the massive flight of peasants to urban areas.

One argument of this chapter, then, is that reproductive-futurist techniques, as implemented in postwar development practices, did not only or necessarily work to "reproduce the past, through displacement, in the form of the future," as Lee Edelman argues was the case with political discourses of reproductive futurism in the 20th-century United States.[13] The nuclear-family settlements at Dujayla involved multiple, irrevocable transformations of the past, including the production of completely new forms of space, the reification of new conceptions of human beings and gendered citizens, and a root-and-branch overhaul of rural modes of life and everyday experiences. Yet the settlements then worked to freeze those new spatial and interpersonal configurations in time, in the name of a future that was indeed a "mere repetition"[14]

[13] Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 31.
[14] Ibid.

of the already transformed present. Sexual difference and family structure were, once again, key to this process. The Dujayla law enshrined the legal criteria for what kind of rural human being could conceivably count as an "individual" in the production of a class of "individual farmers," namely, one who was male, married, and middle-aged. It ensured that an individual farmer was by definition a "family farmer," underwriting his legal authority over a nuclear household that was required—according to the law itself—to include a wife and children. Legislators and planners hoped that this type of household would reproduce the surplus rural labor force in a stable and "independent" (that is, non-dependent) way. At Dujayla, the attempted freezing of the newly fabricated present through the construction of stable nuclear households was far more than a discursive or even pedagogical process; it involved the actual production of space—from the newly cultivable land created through the irrigations systems to the entire Dujayla settlement established by the law to each individual family farm defined by the property contract and built by the homesteaders. But it also involved discursive and pedagogical interventions into the lives of those homesteaders, primarily through the attempted domestication of settler women, who were not by any means excluded from the Dujayla legislation even though their potential to become "individuals" was quite literally outlawed in it. The reform of housewives on the family farms was linked to efforts to insert and fix each member of the family farm in new grids of time and space and to ensure the production of healthy bodies and citizenly sensibilities among rural people who would neither flee to the cities nor be dependent on the government for assistance—much less toward larger political or socioeconomic reform. Interventions in rural feminine domesticities were thus connected to the freezing of the present in the name of a fixed future that had never had any relation to the historical futures of these families—except to the extent that it disabled them, since the stabilization of "families" on small plots of land that had no

infrastructure to support fixed-location agricultural practices resulted in the rapid destruction of the soil's fertility.

The abysmal failure of the Dujayla Land Settlement Project by nearly every conceivable measure—which a mere two decades after its foundation was contested by no one—has relegated this early flagship experiment in development to the dust-bin of world history. But I propose that Dujayla need not be understood merely as an aberration from what were purportedly more successful development projects that followed it, or as a tragic series of beginners' mistakes, as it was ultimately framed in the assessments of the international agencies that played a part in it. It can also be viewed as an amplification of certain trends in early development practice that were to persist in more subtle and "effective" ways in later projects. Andrew Zimmerman has commented that development failures "do not merely give the lie to liberal ideology: they reveal its truth."[15] In many ways, and not least of all in relation to gender and family, Dujayla might be seen as the *reductio ad absurdum* of postwar development thought.

The Agrarian Crisis, the Cold War, and the Age of Development

According to Darwish al-Haydari, director general of agriculture in Iraq, the Dujayla settlement was "the first project of its kind in the Arab Middle East and the forerunner of a large scale social experiment."[16] Established by the Dujayla Law of 1945, it was the first in a series of postwar projects under the monarchy that aimed at creating a class of small "independent" landowners in Iraq, by settling landless peasants on underexploited *miri sirf* or state-owned lands. In 1951, the law was extended to establish a number of other settlements, which would be

[15] Andrew Zimmerman, "A German Alabama in Africa: The Tuskegee Expedition to German Togo and the Transnational Origins of West African Cotton Growers," *American Historical Review* 110, no. 5 (2005): 1368.
[16] Quoted in Norman Burns, "Development Projects in Iraq: I. The Dujaylah Land Settlement," *Middle East Journal* 5 (1951): 362.

grouped under the title Miri Sirf Land Development (MSLD) program.[17] Most of the lands, including Dujayla, were located in Iraq's "irrigation zone"—specifically the potentially fertile but rain-deprived plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers—that had been recently opened to agricultural development by large-scale projects to harness water from the two rivers through the construction of large dams and irrigation systems. After the completion of the Kut Barrage—"the showpiece of the government's agricultural and irrigation effort"[18]—water from the Tigris was diverted into the Dujayla Canal, "to convert the semi-desert into 164,000 acres of flow irrigated fertile farm land." The large landowning shaykhs of the area attempted to "lay hands upon it" by claiming previous occupancy and use, and in the end the government agreed to give them 76,ooo acres, or nearly half of the newly irrigated lands, at the cost of $5.6o per acre. The remaining 88,ooo acres were set aside for the Dujayla Land Settlement Project.[19]

The Dujayla and other MSLD laws reflected a larger interest in developing Iraq's rural areas, and governing its rural population, that had gained force in Iraq after formal independence in 1932. As Charles Tripp writes: "Common interests arose among those who now saw the countryside not as the basis of a distinctive moral order, but rather as an area of human and material resources to be pressed into service for the benefit of those who controlled the state."[20] While British interest in the "development" of Mesopotamia's natural resources predated the Mandate period and continued well beyond it, both the independent monarchical state and oppositional nationalists in Iraq from 1932-58 focused new energies on thoroughgoing rural

[17] Kamil Mahdi, *State and Agriculture in Iraq: Modern Development, Stagnation and the Impact of Oil* (Reading, U.K.: Ithaca Press, 2000), 167.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement," 363. According to Samira Haj, only 232,960 of the two million dunums of land reclaimed between 1952-54 were distributed to small farmers, while the rest went to large landholders. Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 34.
[20] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 78.

reform projects, which aimed not just at the more efficient extraction of resources but also at the reconstruction of rural households, bodies, and habits. One goal of development planning, as Muhammad Fadil al-Jamali explained, was to "cultivate the desire and zeal" among the citizenry "for the development of [Iraq's] resources." Interest in the country's rural majority—peasants and pastoral nomads—thus became a central concern. It was hoped that the expansion of techniques of governmentality into rural areas would "combat the habit of inactivity and laziness which the Bedouin has acquired, partly from his desert life and partly from his lack of nutrition, by providing incentives to effort and better health conditions." It was only by replacing such ingrained habits with "desire and zeal" that the country's "period of drifting" would "come to an end." State officials such as al-Jamali saw themselves as planning nothing less than a "new social order…toward which the country as a whole, including the tribes, is to move."[21]

In the decades following al-Jamali's 1934 work on Bedouin education, this heightened interest in "the rural question" would be reflected in the discourses of all government ministries and political parties, as well as in periodicals, books, memoirs, novels, and poems across the ideological spectrum. One of the more widely read postwar works on the topic, Ja`far Khayyat's 1950 *al-Qarya al-`Iraqiyya: Dirasa fi Ahwaliha wa-Islahiha [The Iraqi Village: A Study of Its Conditions and Reform]*, which won a book of the year prize from the Iraqi Academy, explicated what was already a familiar refrain among Iraqi intellectuals and technocrats: that "the countryside is the main cause of the whole nation's backwardness" and that it was "governed by the three maladies of the Third World: poverty, ignorance, and disease."[22] Only an all-out "war"

[21] Muhammad Fadhil al-Jamali, *The New Iraq: Its Problem of Bedouin Education* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia Teachers College, 1934), 102–106. For a far more extensive discussion of the discourses of Iraqi urban intellectuals on tribal and peasant life during this era, see Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, chap. 6.
[22] Ja`far Khayyat, *al-Qarya al-`Iraqiyya: Dirasa fi Ahwaliha wa-Islahiha [The Iraqi Village: A Study of Its Conditions and Reform]* (Beirut: Dar al-Kashshaf, 1950), 3.

on the "three maladies," under the direction of the state, could hope "to revive the countryside and awaken the village from its deathly slumber."[23] Echoing al-Jamali's earlier emphasis on Bedouin nutrition, Khayyat identified disease as the malady that must be tackled first, since "unhealthy homes, food, and drink in the countryside result in diminished capacity for work [*qilla al-qabiliyya fi al-`amal*]." Improving rural education levels, agricultural productivity, and, finally, standards of living could not be done "in an infected environment."[24] This widely shared concern over the infection of rural bodies would play a major role in the targeting of rural women and family life by development planners.

Iraqi peasants, however, were far from passive and immobile creatures whose development potential urban intellectuals and state officials had suddenly happened to notice. Increasing urban concern over the proper governance of the rural population was fueled by recurrent tribal and peasant revolts and by the growing slums of rural migrants surrounding urban areas, especially Baghdad, both of which were responses to rapidly declining agricultural productivity and increasingly exploitative landlord-peasant relations. Eight-four percent of peasants migrating to the cities in this period came from Iraq's central and southern regions, the focus of the MSLD program.[25] As one land settlement expert explained: "Excessive migration results in disturbing the harmony of the society, reducing [the people's] income, lowering the standard of living, and disturbing the balance of the population…in different parts of the country."[26] In particular, "the threat of communism was becoming more impressive to legislators. The displaced peasants were an object of such fears," and keeping them out of urban

[23] Ibid., 54.
[24] Ibid., 84.
[25] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 11, 38.
[26] Hassan Mohammad Ali, *Land Reclamation and Settlement in Iraq* (Baghdad: Baghdad Printing Press, 1955), l, m.

areas was thus becoming a top priority.[27] It was hoped that their settlement on *miri sirf* land would "in the long-run, provide a slow, but certainly sound solution for the land-tenancy problem. Such schemes will also make it possible for the farmers on the miri sirf lands to avoid the exploitation of the landowners and shaykhs and will give them an excellent opportunity for an independent free life."[28] Not unlike how the Ministry of Education's 1952 expansion of home economics requirements for female secondary school students was in many ways a response to the spread of communism and nationalism in the girls' secondary schools, the MSLD program was in no small part a response to peasants who were, as Iraqi writer Baqir Muhammad Jawad al-Zujaji put it, "voting with their feet" on the state of national agriculture.[29] Both cases show how it is often "opposition or resistance that is originary and power reactive" rather than the other way around.[30]

While the Dujayla settlement was thus launched in 1945 as an Iraqi attempt to cope with very Iraqi problems, by the early 1950s it had attracted the attention of some of the new international and U.S. agencies that were laying the foundation of the global "age of development," including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Ford Foundation, and the U.S. Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA). Much as Iraqi officials conceived of Dujayla as the flagship project of the larger MSLD program, leading planners in these agencies saw the settlement as a historic opportunity, a rural development laboratory, and a "forerunner of a large

[27] Warren Edward Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq with Special Reference to the Dujaila Settlement, 1945 to 1954." (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1955), 198.
[28] Ali, *Land Reclamation and Settlement in Iraq*, 75–76. Misspelled words have been corrected.
[29] Quoted in Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 213.
[30] Charles Piot, *Nostalgia for the Future: West Africa After the Cold War*, Kindle ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), Kindle location 142. Piot here is discussing an argument made by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001). But I would argue that this relationship between resistance and power is not peculiar to the age of "globalization."

scale social experiment," which for them was nothing less than the successful planned development of the world's underdeveloped regions.

There were several reasons Dujayla was regarded by many in the West as an attractive development laboratory. Located 135 miles southeast of Baghdad, the region was a "table-flat, dry, treeless plain"; left to its own devices, its "rich alluvial soil is almost barren because of the scant 6-inch annual rainfall," but when properly watered, it "blooms like a Garden of Eden."[31] For Westerners, and perhaps especially for Americans, the reference was more than a metaphor. It drew on the secular trope of ancient Mesopotamia as the "cradle of civilization," but it was also linked to the increasingly widespread Western Christian belief that hidden somewhere on the currently desertified plains of Mesopotamia was the actual geographical site of the Biblical Eden.[32] Both narratives gave Iraq "special relevance" in the West as a "fallen cradle of civilization where development would hail a new age of miracles."[33] President Truman himself proclaimed: "If the Tigris and Euphrates were developed, there would be a revival of the Garden of Eden that would take care of 30 million people and feed all the Near East."[34]

This discourse also drew on what Diana Davis has recently theorized as the "declensionist" narrative of environmental decline used to justify imperial ventures of all sorts since the middle of the 19th century. French colonial narratives of the purported transformation of the Maghrib from the "granary of Rome" in ancient times to the ruined desert of the 19th century constructed

[31] Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement," 363.
[32] Priya Satia, "Developing Iraq: Britain, India and the Redemption of Empire and Technology in the First World War," *Past & Present*, no. 127 (November 2007): 211–55; Dan Smail, "In the Grip of Sacred History," *American Historical Review* 110, no. 5 (2005): 1337–61.
[33] Satia, "Developing Iraq," 23.
[34] Quoted in Daniel Klingensmith, *"One Valley and a Thousand": Dams, Nationalism, and Development* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 67.

> a tale of environment decline since what was presumed to have been the fertile and forested Roman period. This colonial narrative primarily blamed the pastoralists, especially nomadic pastoralists, and their "ancestors," the "invading Arabs" of the eleventh century, for deforesting and desertifying North Africa…in order to justify and enable the appropriation of land and resources, social control of local populations, and transformation of subsistence production into market-integrated production.[35]

Similarly, European commentators since at least the turn of the 20th century had imagined Mesopotamia as an underpopulated wasteland lying atop a historical and essential paradise of natural fertility, and attributed this sad state of affairs to centuries of Ottoman domination. In 1903, after the Ottoman government awarded the German concession to build the Baghdad Railway, German pamphleteers advertised the lands of Mesopotamia as both fertile and available—in fact, the perfect destination for surplus German farmers, who could prosper there by applying "German expertise." A few years later, the British de Bunsen committee suggested that the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys might serve as an outlet for the surplus population of India.[36]

A 1924 British Colonial Office memorandum on Iraq is suggestive of how the 19th-century European colonial declensionist narrative may have begun shifting in the interwar period to become one node in the postwar global narrative of national development:

> The popular view that Iraq is a mere arid desert is far removed from the truth. In ancient times the country was one of the granaries of the world. The old irrigation system (though traces of it are still to be seen) has long since disappeared. Until it is replaced, the country will not regain its prosperity. Irrigation is its vital need; but irrigation costs money, which in these days is very difficult to find. But that the country will repay development cannot be doubted. Development means foreign enterprise, and it is clearly to the advantage of this country that such enterprise should be retained in British hands.[37]

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[35] Diana K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), xii.
[36] Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 3.
[37] Middle East Department, Colonial Office, "British Policy in Iraq", February 8, 1924, 5, Ref # CAB 24/166, The National Archives, U.K., http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk (accessed April 26, 2011).

The memorandum evidently still employs the term "development" as it was most commonly used in European colonial policy documents from the mid-19th century through the interwar period, that is, as a transitive verb referring to an action performed by a colonizing nation on a colonized region's "natural resources."[38] But the appearance of the word twice in this passage with no grammatical object attached to it, especially in reference to the "prosperity" of "the country" as a whole, seems to already point toward the meaning that would become dominant by the end of World War II—"development" as an intransitive verb describing the self-propelled yet planned movement of a nation through historical time toward a prosperous future—and suggestively links that emerging definition to the earlier narrative of environmental decline justifying European colonialism.

Certainly U.S. and other Western development experts drew prodigiously, if often unknowingly, on the tried-and-true colonial declensionist narrative. Thus, the chief of the Public Health Division of the U.S. Point Four program in Iraq from 1952-55 proclaimed that Mesopotamia had been the "breadbasket of the Babylonian and Moslem Empires," before the Mongolian invasions and 400 years of Ottoman rule "drained the people of their initiative and ambition."[39] But by this time, the declensionist narrative was not limited to foreigners. It was also prevalent in Iraqi nationalist and statist discourses on the need to mobilize rural human and natural resources through a national development plan. Thus, Khayyat explained that Iraq's population in `Abbasid times had been seven to eight times what it was at present and that the current low population was a "situation inherited from foreign domination for the last four

[38] H.W. Arndt, "Economic Development: A Semantic History," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 29, no. 3 (April 1981): 457–66.
[39] Glenn S. Usher, "The United States-Iraq Cooperative Health Program," *Public Health Reports* 71, no. 4 (April 1956): 423.

centuries."[40] The country's once-thriving rural economy, powered by thriving rural bodies, had been gradually sapped of its energy, such that the natural "exuberant vitality" of the Iraqi peasant was now "covered by the dust of time."[41]

More immediately, the image of a vast, underexploited, underpopulated, and fertile land resonated with Americans' view of their own country's history, at a time when anti-collectivist Cold War discourse was breathing new life into the 19th-century American construction of "the self-sufficient farmer as the ideal citizen."[42] The revival of this ideal appeared both in popular American discourse and in the field and institutions of technical expertise that grew up around the Point Four program, which designated agrarian reform as the core principle of U.S.-supported development schemes in the Third World, the main battleground of the Cold War by the early 1950s. On the Western side of the Cold War divide, "land reform" or "agrarian reform" meant the creation of "independent" or "family" farms, preferably while avoiding the confiscation of large landholdings—a sensitive issue given the centrality of private property to Western Cold War discourse.[43] Nathan Citino explains:

> Cold Warriors identified land reform as key to America's economic and political goals. Wider distribution of landownership would result in more egalitarian societies immune to radical subversion. Legal rights would give formerly disenfranchised peasants incentives to improve the land, thereby raising yields and living standards. Land reform served as an altruistic mission that simultaneously promoted American interests and values. It also depended upon a historical perspective that associated a regressive social order with the Ottoman past and its legacy of failed reform.[44]

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[40] Khayyat, *al-Qarya al-`Iraqiyya*, 12, 53.
[41] Ibid., 5.
[42] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 12.
[43] See Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East: A Study of Egypt, Syria and Iraq* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957), 2–5.
[44] Nathan J. Citino, "The Ottoman Legacy in Cold War Modernization," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 4 (2008): 581.

The notion of the U.S. as both a historical model for and a reservoir of technical knowledge on land reform was shared by many in Iraq, the Arab world, and the larger Western-aligned Third World. Khayyat noted that "many countries, especially the U.S., have reformed their rural areas, and we need to benefit from their experience."[45] Afif Tannous, a Lebanese sociologist who was the "leading promoter of land reform in U.S. Middle East policy,"[46] wrote that the Arab countries are "becoming increasingly aware of the reality that, under the impact of international forces and ideologies, the maintenance of the present order of things within their boundaries is no longer possible. They are seeking a way out that would obviate destructive upheavals." The way out, Tannous continued, was "land reform," in particular as it was conceived within the Point Four program, which promised to "develop into a great long-range plan for constructive action on a global scale."[47]

When U.S. officials took notice of Dujayla and the larger MSLD program in Iraq, they hailed it as "one of the most important and largest scale efforts by a Near Eastern Government to encourage and assist peasants to become owner-operators of family-sized farms."[48] The first U.S. official to visit Dujayla, in 1951, was Norman Burns of the State Department's new Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (NEA).[49] Burns effused that the purpose of the Dujayla Law, "like our own Homestead Act of pioneer days," was to provide "for the transfer of state-owned lands to small independent proprietors upon condition of occupancy and use." In this development narrative, Dujayla

[45] Khayyat, *al-Qarya al-`Iraqiyya*, 90.
[46] Citino, "The Ottoman Legacy in Cold War Modernization," 582.
[47] Afif I. Tannous, "Land Reform: Key to the Development and Stability of the Arab World," *Middle East Journal* 5, no. 1 (January 1, 1951): 2.
[48] "US Department of State, Point 4 to Assist Iraq in its Land Development Program," Press Release No. 187, April 10, 1953, Washington DC. Cited in Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 259.
[49] Citino, "The Ottoman Legacy in Cold War Modernization," 583.

> points the way toward a possible solution of the crucial land tenure problem that underlies many of Iraq's political and economic difficulties today…The development of a class of small individual proprietors would fundamentally alter the social-economic structure of the Iraqi population and would, if experience in other countries is a guide, give Iraq the kind of progressive stability that the Middle East needs.[50]

Like many other U.S. and Iraqi officials, Burns framed the value of producing a "class of small individual proprietors" less in terms of increasing agricultural productivity than in terms of fostering "the kind of progressive stability that the Middle East needs."

Finally, the narrative of Mesopotamia as a degraded agricultural paradise—underpopulated, underexploited, and thus extremely amenable to land reform—converged with a growing appreciation of the magnitude of surplus capital that the extraction of oil would make available to the Iraqi government for development projects. This was especially the case after the renegotiated oil treaty of 1952 relieved Iraq "of the major predicament facing many developing nations—lack of capital."[51] The government earmarked 70 percent of this oil revenue to the Development Board—founded in 1950 but reorganized after the new oil treaty and subsumed under the Ministry of Development—"to use in programs that would raise the standard of living of the average Iraqi."[52] Western and multi-national agencies could thus bypass the thorny question of providing direct financial aid for rural development in Iraq and focus exclusively on "technical assistance," the core policy laid out in Truman's Point Four speech.

By the early 1950s, the convergence of all these trends had produced a powerful narrative of Iraqi development exceptionalism. As Doris Adams of the Ford Foundation explained:

> Among the underdeveloped countries of the world Iraq is one of the most fortunate, in her possession of a unique combination of attributes: (1) Significant unused resources, particularly in land and the waters of the two rivers…(2) A population small in

[50] Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement," 362–63.
[51] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 56. Of course, Haj is not arguing here that capital was then sufficient to initiate successful development; on the contrary, "oil capital helped to reinforce the social conditions and class relations which perpetuated 'underdevelopment.'"
[52] Ibid., 73.

> comparison with those resources. As economic development proceeds, thereby lowering death rates and accelerating natural increase, the increased numbers can be put to work both on agricultural land newly brought under cultivation and in newly created industries…Finally, (3) a large source of foreign exchange in the form of oil revenues, with which Iraq may purchase the capital goods and technical assistance necessary for economic development.

Even within the oil-rich Middle East, Adams continued, "Other countries…have one or two of these attributes, but no other has all three."[53] The enthusiasm is understandable: here was a poor, undeveloped, Western-aligned country with vast agricultural potential that could actually afford to pay for its own development projects. There could hardly be a more ideal setting for demonstrating to a world increasingly riven by Cold War divisions the viability of the emerging U.S.-led field of Western development expertise. These specialists imagined Iraq as a vast territorial laboratory of raw materials—undeveloped natural and human resources—made available to their experimental interventions through a felicitous convergence of circumstance. For their part, Iraqi officials were well aware of the emerging narrative of their country's development exceptionalism, and helped cultivate it in their requests for foreign technical assistance. As al-Haydari wrote in a report to the FAO: "Iraq possesses the potentialities and the means to promulgate a program of Development, a fact rarely found in most under-developed countries."[54]

The assessment of Iraq as underpopulated would persist throughout the interwar and postwar periods, and meant that attempted interventions in women's fertility would take different paths from those in Third World countries such as Egypt that were seen as overpopulated.[55] It

[53] Doris Adams, "Current Population Trends in Iraq," *Middle East Journal* 10 (1956): 162–63.
[54] Darwish Al Haidari, "The Development of Iraq" (presented to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Country Project No. 1, Iraq, October 1955), 1.
[55] See Baron, "The Origins of Family Planning"; Omnia El Shakry, "Barren Land and Fecund Bodies: The Emergence of Population Discourse in Interwar Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37 (2005): 351–72; Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University

should be noted that this assessment had no relation to the current capacity of Iraq's economy to absorb the available labor force. Anybody could see from the massive unemployment problem and peasant flight to the cities that there was a "relative" surplus labor population in Iraq—that is, "relative" to the present. Rather, it was based on technical calculations of capacity for future agricultural development, using assessments of the national population in relation to the quantity of cultivable land and to the potential for increasing production using more intensive methods of agriculture. Although experts came to opposite conclusions about Egypt and Iraq, both show how, in Mitchell's words, the problem of development "is almost invariably introduced as a problem of geography versus demography."[56] Iraq's underpopulation "problem" was a technical evaluation of geography/demography and present/future that did not factor in political forces, existing class relations, or the dynamics of the country's integration in the global economy. Even on a purely technical level, moreover, it was based on the assumption that intensive U.S. methods of agriculture were as ecologically sustainable in the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys as they appeared to be in the Mississippi and Tennessee river valleys.[57]

Oil capital, foreign expertise, and rationally managed water would establish the infrastructure for developing the land. But this final step could not be taken without the development of the one material in which the country was seen to be deficient, both quantitatively and qualitatively: its human resources. As al-Haydari wrote, "the population of Iraq is very small, and manpower shortage is felt through the whole of planned development. Lack of widespread systematic preventive and curative medicine is one of the most important causes of the present low standard of health." He went on to warn that Iraq's economic

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of California Press, 2002), chap. 7. Baron's article notes that for a brief period in Egypt in the 1950s, a pronatalist politics prevailed.

[56] Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 209.

[57] See Klingensmith, *One Valley and a Thousand*.

development would be "temporary and ill-founded unless we shape the philosophy of life of the nation and accordingly…our morals, our minds and our bodies to safeguard the ideals of that philosophy."[58]

The Production and Fixing of Space

Afif Tannous asserted that the Arab countries were "groping for a situation of security and stability within which they can carry on progressive development. We are suggesting land reform as the key answer to this vital national question."[59] This statement—like that of Norman Burns on land reform as the way to establish "the kind of progressive stability that the Middle East needs"—captures a central paradox of postwar modernization and development discourses. "Progress" clearly connoted a sense of temporal mobility, presumably of the kind that Daniel Lerner hinged on the historical debut of "the mobile personality" in the region.[60] Yet this mobility could only be initiated *within* "a situation of security and stability."

Agrarian reform connoted a series of interventions that would render the Iraqi landscape and its people more stable, including the settlement of pastoral nomads and the resettlement of peasants on "family farms." The family-farm grid on which the settlement plans were based was part of a larger nationalist-modernizing project that demanded the production and fixing of space—including efforts to stabilize the course and flow of the two great rivers, expand the area of cultivated land, settle nomadic pastoral tribes and their herds of animals in permanent settlements, and introduce intensive methods of agriculture on small, fixed-size plots—which in turn would enable what Reinhart Koselleck has called the "release" of linear-historical time.[61] In

[58] Al Haidari, "The Development of Iraq," 8–9.
[59] Tannous, "Land Reform," 2.
[60] Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, 2nd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1964). See chapter 2.
[61] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 101. See also idem, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the*

other words, setting the nation into dynamic temporal motion toward a developed future depended on the production of certain spatial immobilities, especially for peasants, nomads, "families," and the rural non-human world.

In 1950, the Iraqi government issued a statement that the promotion of "small family farm ownership" would guide all future agricultural expansion undertaken by the state.[62] This followed the recommendations of U.S. and U.N. advisors, who asserted that the size of each plot on the land settlements "should be based on the area which a family can effectively handle under intensive cultivation."[63] It was hoped that this "family"-based model of land distribution would foster the individual settler's initiative and rationality, encouraging him to stop "wasting time" and "to manage his property and market his produce wisely."[64]

One target of agrarian reformers was the mobile and shifting nature of Iraqi agricultural practices themselves. These were often associated with the large landowning system in the irrigation zone, which fostered extensive rather than intensive farming methods, encouraging "landowners and peasants [to] exhaust one piece of land, then move on to another," rather than providing them with incentives to "improve" the land.[65] Such criticisms of the effects of the current land tenure system were often mixed up with those of peasant farming techniques seen as dating back to "time immemorial." The widespread practice of fallowing, for instance, in which a piece of land was left to rest for one year after each year of cultivation, was criticized as wasteful, ignorant, and sometimes plain lazy, as was the resistance to planting summer and

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Pathogenesis of Modern Society (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998). On the production of space through capitalist development, see Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008).

[62] Tannous, "Land Reform," 17.

[63] FAO Mediterranean Development Project, *Iraq: Country Report* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1959), 10.

[64] Tannous, "Land Reform," 7.

[65] Khayyat, *al-Qarya al-`Iraqiyya*, 19–20.

winter crops in the same field. The introduction of winter crops to summer-cropped areas in Iraq, one U.S. expert wrote, would "give the fellah a better understanding of modern, fixed-location agriculture as contrasted with the extensive, shifting irrigation cultivation practiced over most of Iraq."[66] Tannous wove criticism of the backwards farming techniques of Iraqi peasants, tales of historical decline, and the ideal of the family farmer as the model rural citizen into a single narrative, asserting that in ancient Middle Eastern agriculture, "settlement by the family or the tribe on a fixed area of land was an essential condition. A sense of attachment to the soil and a desire for ownership were the natural result."[67] But centuries of exploitation of the peasantry had obliterated this system, and "with the abuse and decline of the peasant went an abuse and decline of the great land resource, and consequently a serious weakening of the total national organization."[68]

But land distribution and settlement could not proceed until the land itself was rendered more stable. There was, first of all, the perpetual "problem of confusion in the title to the land," which mid-20th-century modernizers, like 19th-century Ottoman modernizers before them, attributed to a chaotic and irrational accumulation of civil and Islamic land laws and local traditions over time, which obstructed the process of land privatization required by capitalist development. Land distribution was indeed complicated by the frequent lack of consensus over whether a particular piece of land belonged legally to "the state, to this or that absentee landowner, or to the occupant cultivator," especially since, even when the law itself was clear, "the traditional grazing rights of the tribal groups are often confused with the right of cultivation and ownership." This state of confusion, wrote Tannous, "makes impossible the rational development of the great land resource, especially in countries such as Syria and Iraq." A subset

[66] Brad Fisk, "Dujaylah Land Settlement," *Middle East Journal* 5, no. 4 (1954): 349.
[67] Tannous, "Land Reform," 5.
[68] Ibid.

of this problem was the "problem of communal ownership," by which an individual or "family unit" owned a share in communal territory, cultivating one area for a few years, then moving on to another, "in accordance with a community system of rotation." This system was a "serious handicap to agricultural improvement, which depends on the enterprise and initiative of the individual." Communal farming, and the related problem of the fragmentation of land through marriage and inheritance, led to a "waste of time and effort by the farmer."[69]

Land settlement depended on the production and fixing of space in a larger sense as well. As Tannous wrote, only 6 million acres of Iraq's 25 million acres of "potentially cultivable land" were under cultivation.[70] The remaining 19 million acres, it was hoped, would be made actually cultivable through the construction of large dams and irrigation systems to regulate the flow and the course of the two great rivers. Dams would expand crop irrigation and thus produce new cultivable land. But they would also help stabilize the rivers themselves, both temporally and spatially. Historically, the Tigris and Euphrates, like all large rivers, were prone to periods of flooding interspersed with minimal flow; in their case, these fluctuations also happened to correspond rather poorly with the seasonal weather as far as agriculture was concerned. Moreover, Iraq's rivers tended to wander to and fro across a vast geographical area. A British commander during the 1917 occupation of Mesopotamia had noted that the Tigris in particular was "a very fickle lady who never sleeps two nights running in the same bed."[71] By regulating the flow of water, dams would literally help sedentarize the two rivers, or at any rate the river beds through which they flowed. This in turn would assist with the division of at least parts of the river valley into small, fixed, privately owned plots, by providing some assurance that what was a family farm one year would not be part of a river bed the next.

[69] Ibid., 7.
[70] Ibid., 10.
[71] Quoted in Satia, "Developing Iraq," 12.

Today we know that the grand developmentalist schemes of the mid-20th century to immobilize and regulate nature in order to render its resources more extractable usually did not go according to plan, and often had devastating and literally counterproductive consequences. Certainly it is widely recognized that the postwar global mania over large dams as development panaceas was misplaced in numerous ways. Rather than increasing agricultural productivity, dams often destroyed soil fertility. Among other problems, they trapped fertile river silt in reservoirs, preventing it from being deposited downstream to replace the minerals depleted through agricultural use, and without the simultaneous creation of proper drainage systems they raised the water table (groundwater level) on newly irrigated land, creating waterlogged, oxygen-deprived soil and drawing salt buried in the earth's crust to the topsoil to poison the roots of plants.[72]

But if these problems are impossible to deny today, when vast swaths of the planet's formerly productive agricultural surface have been abandoned due to soil salinization and infertility caused by dams and irrigation systems, most of them were hardly unknown even during the mid-century heyday of large dam construction. In Iraq, it was an endless refrain of irrigation engineers, development experts, and run-of-the-mill intellectuals that if drainage systems were not implemented along with the massive new irrigation systems, salinization would soon make the land unusable. Khayyat wrote in his 1950 work on rural reform that "salinity increases in Iraq's soil day after day, destroying its fertility," which was a simple consequence of the government's "total neglect of drainage."[73] A 1959 FAO report was thus merely rehearsing a well-known truth when it noted that the great dams built on Iraq's rivers in preceding decades signaled "not so much a promise of prosperity" but "an immediate menace to the future well

[72] See, for example, J. R. McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), chap. 6; Klingensmith, *One Valley and a Thousand*.
[73] Khayyat, *al-Qarya al-`Iraqiyya*, 11.

being" of the country, since the failure to build drainage systems made "catastrophe well-nigh inevitable."[74] Yet, as in many parts of the world throughout the 20th century, "irrigation almost always amounted to a short-term maximization strategy: to save money and effort on drainage and conservation measures, farmers and engineers [and state officials!] mortgaged their future."[75] Ironically, it would seem that the future that was most deeply and irrevocably mortgaged by the "rendering technical" move of postwar development planning was precisely the "technical" future of the soil.

Environmental historians of the Middle East are producing new studies that show how "extensive" and shifting agricultural methods, fallowing systems, and heterogeneous and mobile forms of land use, including nomadic pastoralism, far from being wasteful and unproductive, are often the most ecologically sustainable and even immediately productive uses of land across large parts of the region.[76] Small family farms on fixed plots of land are not conducive to such practices. While some factors contributing to the long-term ecological unsustainability of family farms in many environments may not have been available to the planners and advisors of the MSLD program, the fact that the intensive methods of agriculture on which family farming is based were not even sustainable in the short- to medium-term without the construction of a drainage infrastructure was very widely known.

In Iraq, drainage was not implemented primarily because it was consistently blocked by the large landholding class, which "had no reason to support investment in drainage since it had

[74] FAO Mediterranean Development Project, *Iraq*, 3.
[75] McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*, 181.
[76] Anthropologist Robert Fernea actually made the same point in a 1969 article on the failure of land reform programs in Iraq, both before and after the 1958 revolution, to increase agricultural productivity. Robert A. Fernea, "Land Reform and Ecology in Postrevolutionary Iraq," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 17, no. 3 (1969): 356–81. For a discussion of the more recent literature, see Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome*. See also the contributions by Davis and Edmund Burke III in the roundtable on environmental history in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42 (2010): 657-71.

the option of abandoning exhausted saline lands for newer and more productive acreage reclaimed at public expense."[77] Large landholders in the irrigation zone relied on the continual expansion of cultivated land, supported by government-financed water and land reclamation schemes, that allowed them to simply move on to new soil when the existing soil became too saline. The "family"-sized farms established at Dujayla and other irrigation-zone settlements were thus created within a system that existed to benefit large landowners and that was completely incompatible with the intensive methods of agriculture encouraged by development experts and indeed required by the model of small, fixed plots of land.

The following sections explore some of the ways in which fixing Dujayla settlers in the spatial grid of the family farm resonates with what Cowen and Shenton posit as the "agrarian doctrine of development" favored by postcolonial regimes across the globe in this period. The overall orientation of the doctrine, the authors argue, was not to foster the capitalist development of agriculture at all.[78] Rather, it was to contain the sociopolitical disorder effected by already-existing capitalist development. The function of state-promoted land settlements based on the model of small "family" or "independent" farms was to absorb a "relative surplus population" in the countryside, making it responsible for its own subsistence and keeping it away from the cities. Thus, "family farms were 'independent' only in so far as the family farm regulated its own disposition of labour effort."[79]

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[77] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 37.

[78] While the subject of a longstanding and extensive debate among economic historians, many scholars have argued that in most historical contexts, and contrary to popular belief, "family farms" have not been conducive to the development of capitalist agriculture. For an introduction to the discussion, see T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin, eds., *The Brenner Debate: Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). Partha Chatterjee argues that the preferred model for promoting capitalist agriculture—large consolidated landholdings employing wage labor—was not available to 20th-century postcolonial regimes, which could not have maintained their nationalist legitimacy while dispossessing the majority of the national population of land. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 212–13.

[79] Cowen and Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, 341.

This is a useful preliminary framework for making some sense out of what otherwise seems to be a pattern of puzzling decisions made by state officials and development experts involved with the Dujayla project. But in treating "the family farm" as a given and unitary subject (which, for example, regulates "its own" labor effort), rather than as a porous, shifting, and semi-malleable complex of unequal social relationships, Cowen and Shenton too fail to explore the implications of agrarian development doctrine for different members, and non-members, of the family unit on which the small, "independent" landholding was based. Their study also does not address the active process by which, in postwar Iraq at least, government and development agencies *worked* to make members of the family farm "responsible for their own subsistence," through interventions in their everyday habits and relations to time and space.

Producing Family Farms

The whole notion of designing, planning, and ultimately producing a "class of small independent landowners," which was the explicit aim of state-led rural development projects in Iraq from the end of World War II through the 1958 revolution and well beyond, is inconceivable outside of certain assumptions about the relation of gender and family structure to national development. But historians have tended to uncritically accept and reproduce a familiar discursive slide in the textual sources, from the terms "independent farmer" to "individual farmer" to "family farmer," as if those modifiers were self-evidently interchangeable. Thus, the slide is allowed to obscure just what it should reveal: the fact that a "dependent" male sharecropper-peasant or pastoral nomad becomes a modern "independent" farmer not only as a result of his new and truly individual title to land but also—and just as importantly—by virtue of his legally consolidated patriarchal control over a woman and children in a newly defined "family."

The reasoning by which Dujayla homesteaders were selected from among the "fifty thousand land-hungry fellahin" who applied for the initial 1,200 tracts of land already illustrates this process quite clearly.[80] The government established a few basic criteria that helpfully eliminated 47,200 of the applicants from eligibility in a single stroke: the would-be settler must be from the Dujayla province or surrounding areas; he must have previous farming experience; he must be married; he must have at least one child; he must be over eighteen but under fifty years of age; he must never have been convicted of a crime; and he must produce a medical certificate of freedom from incurable infectious diseases.[81] The formulation of these explicit criteria leaves no doubt of the underlying, semi-implicit one, namely that he must be a "he." Together, they establish a legal baseline for what kind of person might count as an "individual" in the production of a class of "individual farmers" in Iraq. Yet in order to be eligible for land ownership, this healthy and civil male candidate for individuality/independence had to promise to settle on that land in the company of at least one woman and one child, and he had to be young to middle-aged himself—that is, an identifiable "head of household" in a nuclear family, regardless of his current status in what may have been an extended family household. Elders and other extended kin on the homestead or non-kin agricultural laborers in the fields were not banned from Dujayla in the law; their presence was simply not legible in it. And if some were to happen along nonetheless—as in fact thousands would—their very illegibility would ensure their legal and economic powerlessness in the new relations of property and family enacted by the legislators.

[80] Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement," 363.
[81] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 302; Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement." According to some sources, the original law did not actually specify the "over 50" requirement but it was used as an unofficial method of elimination;

Settlement of the winning applicants at Dujayla started in 1945, the year the law was passed, with 85 families, and within a decade all 1,200 tracts of land had been settled. Each homesteader was provided with 100 dunums (62.5 acres) of "land free of rent and other charges upon occupancy." If he (along with the other members of his family) successfully cultivated the land for ten years, he would receive full legal title to the land, without cost, "subject to the condition that he cannot sell or otherwise alienate it to any other party for another 10 years after registration" of the title.[82]

In the meantime, the settler's "independence" was seriously circumscribed through the rules of the settlement contract. He was required to build "from his own resources…his farm dwellings for his family and helpers, stables for his corn, etc. according to design by the Committee." The Committee would "locate and determine the number of houses and decide on the period within which construction shall be completed on the units and in public places." The settler was required to build his own irrigation ditches joining his plot of land to the larger canals.[83] The Committee determined what crops the settler would grow, and how many dunums of land he would devote to each crop. As Ali wrote, "the plans are worked in such a way that the farmers time [sic] is distributed evenly throughout the year and the settlers will have no need to use hired labour."[84] Finally, no settler was "allowed to leave his land or absent himself for more than five days without notifying the responsible officer."[85]

On the ground, there were factors not envisioned in the plans and the contract that put limits on their power to fully determine settlement life. One of the most intractable had to do with preexisting class relations. The law required that Dujayla settlers be free of debt to their

[82] Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement," 363.
[83] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 296–306.
[84] Ali, *Land Reclamation and Settlement in Iraq*, 77.
[85] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 311.

previous landlords, which most of them accomplished by obtaining credit at high interest from the merchants of nearby Kut, an exchange that left them deeper in debt than ever by the time they arrived on the settlement. Since a settler's crops were always mortgaged before they were even planted, this problem would continuously undermine the ostensible project of fostering his "initiative," including his capacity to rationally market his produce. Other factors that obstructed the orderly execution of the plan included the experiences and preferences of the settlers, the conflicting and shifting advice of the experts, interference from neighboring landowning shaykhs, irrigation and drainage problems, and, last but not least, the land itself. For instance, the contract specified that each settler was to devote two dunums of land to the cultivation of cotton, a cash crop the production and export of which was encouraged by U.S. policy, and a cotton ginnery was accordingly built on the settlement. But the soil did not cooperate; it was "too heavy for cotton, and no cotton [was] grown."[86]

The construction of settler homes also seems to have frequently deviated from the plan:

> Actually, one sees a wide variety of houses while driving through the project; some have window frames opening to the public view, with bars for protection; other[s] have no opening to the outside and open only onto the enclosed courtyard. Within the courtyard there is a great variation in the number of rooms and the quality of the accommodations. It seems to depend largely on the financial status of the settler.[87]

It also depended on the number of people who actually settled on the plot: "Part of the deviations seen were undoubtedly caused by the presence of several families living on a single plot of land." Most plots had at least one additional "family," usually described in the literature as that of the "hired assistant or sharecropper," who upon closer inspection often turned out to be the

[86] Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East*, 166. Adams, however, suggests that the early abandonment of cotton growing at Dujayla was due to an infestation of cotton crops. Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 111. It may have also had some relation to the fact that cotton growing in Iraq was often resisted by peasant cultivators, especially indebted ones, because it was a high-risk, labor-intensive cash crop that could not feed them. See Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 46.
[87] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 107.

legal proprietor's brother and his household. When the assistant farmer "belongs to the family of the settler, he and his family are likely to live within the compound, which is therefore more crowded…Otherwise, his hut is likely to adjoin the outside wall of the compound or to be located indiscriminately in the areas between the compound and the canal."[88]

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that such "facts on the ground" determined life on the settlement, and that the plan was therefore ineffectual. Most obviously, while there may have been little to prevent a settler-proprietor from bringing along members of his extended family or building several homes on his plot instead of one, there was a real material limit to how many people could subsist on 100 dunums of land. Indeed, the settlers' frequent deviation from the independent nuclear-family model led to debates among the experts about whether 100 dunums was too many. Some argued that the presence on a homestead of "assistants" and their families "contravenes the purpose of settlement and small-landholding," and that "[i]f the size of the plot is too large for one family or rather sufficient for adequate support of two families, it should be recognized in the determination of the size of the plot."[89]

Warren Adams, who conducted field research at Dujayla for his PhD dissertation at Berkeley, was astute enough to realize that the problem was actually more complex than the arguments of the experts over whether a plot of land should support "one family" or "two families" tended to suggest. What was also at stake, and much less easily resolved, was the very definition of "family": "the establishment of the proper size of plot to be given to such settlers will encompass decisions concerning the size and description of family." In a footnote to this statement, Adams notes first that the "close relationship between wider branches of the family [in Iraq] cause a peculiar difficulty in the definition of the family." Then again, it was perhaps

[88] Ibid., 188. See also Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya fi Majali al-Fikr wa-l-Tatbiq [Fundamental Education in Theory and Practice]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 18, no. 3 (May 1955): 5.
[89] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 188.

not that peculiar, since "even in the United States," knowing "where to draw the line" had been no easy task for agrarian reformers in the allocation of social services, determined as they were by formulas that used land acreage/family units as the basic input parameters.[90]

Another stark example of the plan's power to shape life on the settlement was the layout of farms in units of four, each group one kilometer from the next, and the consequent absence of village life. In fact, villages had been deliberately excluded from the Dujayla plan. The "four-corners" settlement pattern, it was hoped, would "save the fellahin much time in going to and from their fields and avoid the unsanitary congestion of villages."[91] By spatially reconstituting peasant life—from the "congested" and "unsanitary" village to the "independent" and at least potentially "hygienic" nuclear household—the Dujayla plan would also reconstitute its temporal dimension, "saving time" previously wasted by peasants in their daily journey from village to field. As we will see, it was not long before the experts turned their attention to time wasted by settler women inside the newly constructed homes.

While it is usually difficult to hear the voices of peasant settlers in the archival documents pertaining to Dujayla, on the question of the four-corners settlement plan they do come through indirectly. Sattareh Farman, a U.N. home economics specialist from Iran working at Dujayla, reported:

> The settlers are deprived from group living and they deeply feel the need for a typical Middle Eastern community life which is centered around a shop, a coffee house and other rural social organizations. Since these settlers have been recently imported from the various communities and villages this absence of group living tends to affect their social pattern of life.[92]

Similarly, a U.S. expert wrote:

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[90] Ibid., 189.
[91] Burns, "The Dujaylah Land Settlement," 364. See also Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 96.
[92] Sattareh Farman, "Letter No. 7 to Dr. Taghi Nasr, Technical Assistance Administration, United Nations", December 15, 1954, 2, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

> Unaccustomedly segregated into "4 corners" settlements, families miss village sociability and recreation facilities. No adequate recreational outlets exist—individual center tea houses, like the schools, are often four or more muleback miles from outlying farms. This distance limits demonstration farm activities as well, and prohibits the cross-fertilizing influences of discussion.[93]

Not only did the settlement pattern thus erect formidable barriers to familiar homosocial leisure activities for both men ("tea houses") and women ("village sociability"), it even hindered the modern schooling of children and the vocational education of adults.

Perhaps most remarkably of all, the Dujayla four-corners settlement plan proved counterproductive to realizing the very aim most often invoked in its defense: improved sanitation and hygiene. The reason was not difficult to foresee. One American critic, Brad Risk, explained: "The settlement pattern also precludes the costly piping of pure water into each dwelling. Farmers rely upon the all-purpose irrigation ditch for water, purifying it for drinking with chemicals."[94] In fact, most settlers could not afford water-purification chemicals and did not use them. Moreover, the plan not only precluded the piping of clean water into the widely scattered houses, but even the digging and use of a shared well for drinking water, such as could be found in any settled peasant village.[95] Thus, as we will see below, while development experts continued to rail against "peasant ignorance," which was purportedly responsible for the stubborn use of irrigation ditches for drinking, bathing, and sewage, the settlement plan itself—which prioritized the creation of isolated nuclear-family farms over all other development considerations—guaranteed that Dujayla homesteaders would have no access to any other water source.[96]

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[93] Fisk, "Dujaylah Land Settlement," 527.
[94] Ibid.
[95] All foreign and Iraqi technical specialists working at Dujayla had piped water in their own residences.
[96] In Iraq, it was reported at least as early in 1945, when Dujayla was still on the drawing board, that malaria was spreading at an alarming rate in newly irrigated regions. Iraqi agricultural historian Kamil Mahdi wryly observes that Ibn Khaldun, writing in the 14th century, had already explained that diseases were known to be

Development workers at Dujayla were painfully aware that the lack of villages was a hindrance to social-reform interventions.[97] The fact that there were no paved roads on the settlement and that the dirt roads were unpassable for months out of the year due to flooding greatly exacerbated the problem. The four-corners plan thus remained a source of controversy throughout the life of the Dujayla project, and some future land settlement projects in Iraq that fell under the MSLD program would be based on "model village" plans rather than isolated homesteads. But the fact that the plan was implemented at all, and that it remained a model for some future settlements in Iraq in spite of all the known problems associated with it, speaks to the importance of the role land settlement was expected to play both in reconstructing rural families and in reducing rural capacity for mobilization. As one observer explained, the plan was designed in part "to reduce public security requirements."[98] Even some development workers on the ground, despite their frustration with certain aspects of the plan, recognized as one of its benefits that "the Government can largely control the settlers' activities."[99] This control was enhanced, and the capacity for mobilization further diminished, by the deliberate tactic of settling families from different tribes in each of the four adjacent plots.[100]

Domesticating Women

Arturo Escobar, in his seminal work of development criticism, argues that early postwar development experts stressed the "transfer of technology" to underdeveloped countries, without realizing "that such a transfer would depend not merely on technical elements but on social and

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more acute in irrigated farming settlements than among nomadic people. At Dujayla, the age-old problem was merely exacerbated, and potential solutions to it minimized if not eliminated, by the four-corners settlement plan. Mahdi, *State and Agriculture in Iraq*, 132, 142 n. 10.

[97] See, for example, A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report for March and April, 1953," May 1, 1953, 5, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

[98] Brad Fisk, "Iraq's Pilot Project for Land Settlement," *Economic Geography* 28, no. 4 (October 1952): 348.

[99] H.J. Rousseau, "Fundamental Education in Primary Teachers Colleges in Iraq: Suggested Programme," 9, File: Rousseau H.J., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/258, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

[100] See, for example, Fisk, "Iraq's Pilot Project," 343.

cultural factors as well."[101] This argument is challenged by the considerable interest of postwar development experts at Dujayla in women's labor, both productive and reproductive. Some of these experts even invoked what they claimed was the underutilized productive labor capacity of women in the fields to explicitly argue *against* the mechanization of agriculture—i.e., the "transfer of technology"—at Dujayla. And all of them saw women as essential for the inculcation of new "social and cultural" values and habits that would ensure the physically healthy and politically stable reproduction of the surplus rural labor force. In short, foreign technical assistance to Dujayla settlers consisted in large part of the transmission of "technical" expertise to women in the areas of health, hygiene, and home economics, in smaller part of the transmission of modern agricultural techniques to male farmers, and in virtually no part of the transfer of agricultural technology.

Since the oft-stated purpose of Dujayla and the larger MSLD program was to create a class of family farmers in Iraq, it should not surprise that considerable attention was devoted to shaping family life on the settlement. The priority of social and cultural reform at Dujayla was clear by 1950, and some officials insisted that it had been integral to the plan from the beginning. Adams explained:

> One of the major distinctions in the setting up of the Dujayla project, as opposed to earlier land programs, was the fact that it aimed at a social change in the landholding pattern. This change must of necessity include attention to the social institutions of the community, if the change is to become permanent.[102]

This attention to the "social institutions of the community" was consistent with the dominant mood in global development theory. Daniel Lerner wrote in 1958 that "the problem of

[101] Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 36.
[102] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 129.

stimulating productivity" was no longer seen by "economists and other professional observers" as a fundamentally technical problem, but rather a "psychological one":

> Here the political and sociological problems of the Middle East become intertwined with its economic problems…What is required there to "motivate" the isolated and illiterate peasants and tribesmen who compose the bulk of the area's population is to provide them with clues as to what the better things of life might be. Needed there is a massive growth of *imaginativeness* about alternatives to their present lifeways…The issue, in fact, was joined several decades ago. There is a large and growing preoccupation with modern lifeways and major efforts to adapt them to the Middle Eastern situation.[103]

Similarly, Tannous stressed the "essential need" in any land reform project in the Arab world "for the social scientist to be actively implicated in the program from the beginning. Otherwise, any project of technical aid will run a grave risk of being disrupted, and possibly wrecked, by the ignored forces of local culture, or of creating in the long run more problems than it will have solved."[104]

The MLSD attracted the interventions of multiple foreign agencies, including the U.S. Technical Cooperation Administration or Point Four program.[105] The remainder of this chapter will focus on UNESCO's work at Dujayla, which was conceived by the organization as a pilot project for its new global "fundamental education" program targeting adults and children in underdeveloped countries who had not received formal education. This focus is partly for practical reasons—I had access to UNESCO's archives, which provide a wealth of information

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[103] Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, 411–12. Emphasis in original.
[104] Quoted in Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 272.
[105] According to Adams, the U.S. gave more total technical assistance to the MSLD project in Iraq than did all U.N. agencies combined, though much of it focused on settlements other than Dujayla. Point Four specialists were especially involved at the Shaqwala settlement, on which they cooperated with the UNESCO team at Dujayla. Warren Edward Adams, "Reflections on Recent Land Reform Experience in Iraq," *Land Economics* 39, no. 2 (1963): 200. A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report, Period of August 15 to October 15, 1954," October 15, 1954, 2, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris. On U.S. involvement with Dujayla, see Fuad Baali, "Agrarian Reform Policies and Development in the Arab World," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 33, no. 2 (April 1974): 172; A.B. Trowbridge, "A Day in Dujaila," 1954, 2, article in AMGRAD, an English/Arabic magazine published by and for Iraqi graduates of U.S. universities, enclosed in File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

on its home economics activities—and partly because the UNESCO project was closely linked to the formation of a parallel "fundamental education" program within the Iraqi Ministry of Education. I did not have equivalent access to Iraqi government records on its own home economics programs for rural women starting in the early 1950s, with the exception of various articles in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid*—most of which refer to and some of which focus on the UNESCO pilot project at Dujayla. Point Four projects on Iraq's MSLD settlements also placed a strong emphasis on teaching home economics, hygiene, and child care to peasant women.[106] But they do not seem to have been as strongly tied to parallel Iraqi programs. All U.N. home economics projects, nevertheless, drew heavily on U.S. knowledge and expertise, especially of the type emerging from the country's agricultural colleges, which had invented home economics in the 19th century and remained important centers for research and development in the field.[107]

In 1950, the Iraqi government invited UNESCO to establish a "fundamental education center" at Dujayla; the agreement was signed in 1951.[108] The mission, in the words of the head of the UNESCO team, A.B. Trowbridge, was to "establish a pilot project which could demonstrate how a rural area might be served by an educational campaign designed to raise the

[106] A U.S. Point Four proposal for Iraq explained: "The initial program of rural improvement should be directed to reducing the present ignorance of most rural people in the fundamental principles and concepts of welfare. The major activities of the program should be concerned with the four major needs of improved farming practices, of home and village sanitation, of house building, of home and child care." Three of the four main TCA activities on Iraqi settlements were thus centered on the reform of peasant homes, and two of those (sanitation and home and child care) focused primarily on women. Gordan Macgregor and Yusuf Khaddury, "Village Development Program for Iraq" (Technical Cooperation Administration, American Embassy, Baghdad, 1952), 6, Enclosed in file: Rousseau H.J./Literacy, box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/258, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

[107] See Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Megan J. Elias, *Stir It Up: Home Economics in American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

[108] Al Yasin, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya fi Majali al-Fikr wa-l-Tatbiq," 5.

economic standards of the people."[109] Fundamental education, Trowbridge explained, "is what the words imply: education of a people to improve by their own efforts their living conditions by getting down to fundamentals…In other words, health, home economics and education must all be the concern of Fundamental Education."[110] The project at Dujayla would demonstrate and disseminate techniques for teaching rural people "the knowledge and skills necessary for good use of their material resources, for home-making, for literacy and for the development of their community life."[111] The UNESCO team was to establish a demonstration project on the settlement that would model fundamental education in action. But its primary task was to teach Iraqi trainees sent by the Ministry of Education to Dujayla in the principles and practices of fundamental education so that they could implement future projects in other parts of the country.

The Iraqi government thus established a Division of Fundamental Education within the Ministry of Education to work with UNESCO on the nationwide program. The new division's director, Fu'ad Jamil, explained that fundamental education went "hand in hand" with the "concept of small landholding."[112] Similarly, Iraqi education professor Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin wrote that the purpose of fundamental education was "to work to solve the agrarian problem on the basis of small landholdings distributed to the masses, in a way that will assure their stability and well-being and arouse their self-confidence, while at the same time helping to foster innovation and increased production."[113] Fundamental education focused in part on teaching peasants—especially peasant women—how to maximize the health of their family

[109] "UNESCO and Iraq: A Picture Story of UN Assistance Work," 1954, 7, article in AMGRAD, an English/Arabic magazine published by and for Iraqi graduates of U.S. universities, enclosed in File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[110] A.B. Trowbridge, "An Outline of the UNESCO Fundamental Education Program for Dujaila, 1952-52" (unpublished paper, Baghdad, 1953), 1. Cited in Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 146.
[111] "Progress Report on UNESCO's Participation in the UN Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance," File 36A 653 (567) 224: GCP Beneficiaries – Iraq – Project 224 – Dujaila FE Centre, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[112] Quoted in Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 147.
[113] Al Yasin, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya fi Majali al-Fikr wa-l-Tatbiq," 164.

members and optimize their household budgets. It would thus contribute to what Cowen and Shenton posit as the aim of "the agrarian doctrine of development," namely to make "a surplus population bear the direct burden of its own subsistence."[114] As the editors of *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* explained, Iraq's fundamental education program would "stimulate desire in the masses to acquire the type of knowledge that will help reform and improve social conditions, and enable citizens to utilize their free time to increase and diversify production."[115]

Fundamental education was thus more than the transmission of technical skills, whether to farmers or housewives. It was a means of reshaping rural minds and bodies from the inside out. The main difference between fundamental education and regular education, *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* noted, was that the former must work to "correct the deficiencies in the individual who has not had the chance to be educated in school."[116] One of the core deficiencies that fundamental education experts had identified in those who lacked formal schooling was their relationship to time. The initial UNESCO report assessing Dujayla as a pilot site explained:

> In formal schooling much emphasis is given to history. It is not often realised that apart from this acquiring of knowledge, there is the question of attitude. Those with…a background of education and historical sense differ profoundly from the peasant in their attitude to past, present and future, towards cause and effect…The educated man is, or should, be more objective; he can see time as a sequence. He can study the past and visualize a different future. But the peasant…seems to carry the past within him. It thus becomes woven with the present. He cannot look ahead, and does not realize the steps which have brought him to his present position…He is so much more the incapable of seeing the path ahead and the sort of effort required.[117]

This explanation foreshadows Lerner's 1958 definition of the "mobile personality" as one that is "so adaptive to change that rearrangement of the self-system is its distinctive mode" and that is

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[114] Cowen and Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, 196.
[115] Editors, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya: Ghayatuha wa-Ahdafuha [Fundamental Education: Its Purposes and Goals]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 18, no. 3 (May 1955): 162.
[116] Ahmad Haqi al-Hilli, "Tajriba fi al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya [An Experiment in Fundamental Education]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 18, no. 3 (May 1955): 169.
[117] A. Fielding-Clarke, "Fundamental Education with Special Reference to Dujaila, Iraq," 1952, 11, File: Dujailah project/Fielding-Clarke, A., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

"endlessly *seeking* the new future here and now."[118] For Lerner and other modernization theorists, the Middle East did not have to wait for the historical conditions that led to the emergence of the mobile personality in the West; it could be pedagogically cultivated.

> With the spread of curiosity and imagination among a previously quietistic population come the human skills needed for social growth and economic development. On this psychological fulcrum—involving nothing less than a characterological transformation throughout the area—hinge the problems of the Middle East. On the institutional capacity to provide this new style of life hinge its prospects.[119]

The UNESCO report did not propose to teach peasants academic subjects such as history, however. Fundamental education drew heavily on pragmatist pedagogical vocabularies of education for "real life" and "learning by doing," which as discussed in the previous chapter were also seen as inculcating in students an openness to change and the capacity to "see time as a sequence," but in a way different from the study of history. The pedagogies of fundamental education "rely on real life, going beyond the walls of the school to the fields and communities, using methods that help [students] accept new ideas, not those based on recitation or rote memorization…and that are compatible with what modern Iraq is striving towards."[120] In theory, literacy was an important aspect of the program, in part because it was seen as crucial for fostering modern relationships between the self and time. Yet, like many other foreign and Iraqi pragmatist educators, those involved in fundamental education at Dujayla remained highly ambivalent about the teaching of literacy. As Trowbridge pointed out: "Reading and writing can be used for evil ends as well as good…I am sure the communist propagandists would rejoice to hear that so many former illiterates are being taught to read."[121] Of the five official "sections" of

[118] Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, 49, 35. Emphasis in original.
[119] Ibid., 412.
[120] Editors, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya," 163.
[121] A.B. Trowbridge, "The Aim of the Unesco Fundamental Education Mission in Iraq," October 20, 1954, 2, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

the UNESCO project at Dujayla –health, literacy, home economics, village craft and industries, and agriculture—it does not seem that literacy was a strong priority.

Health and home economics, on the other hand, were both seen as crucial. The initial report recommended:

> The young girls must have a program of home economics in which their mothers will take pride; this special schooling in home economics should be compatible with a modified but immediate improvement of home conditions so that the new habits learned at school or clinic will not be lost when they leave school and are subjected to whole time family influences [sic].[122]

Iraqi officials agreed with this prioritization. Al-Yasin remarked that of all the projects implemented by the UNESCO team at Dujayla, it was the girls' school teaching home economics that best illustrated how settlers would "become capable of adapting to the work of development and growth and of marching side by side with the people of the cities in the domain of life."[123]

The first phase of the UNESCO project was launched in 1951 and led by three development experts, including a specialist in home economics from Canada, Margaret Hockin; in November 1951 she was the first member of the team to arrive in Iraq.[124] Her report recommended that the UNESCO specialists begin by carrying out a study of home conditions on the settlement, in order to identify existing "patterns of interpersonal relations within the family and the community." Home visits should be conducted and "directed conversations" used to extract "facts related to the daily life and work of the women, including evidence of established ways of performing work and those which appear to be most (least) resistant to change."[125]

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[122] Fielding-Clarke, "Fundamental Education with Special Reference to Dujaila," 10.
[123] Al Yasin, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya fi Majali al-Fikr wa-l-Tatbiq," 165.
[124] A.B. Trowbridge, "Annual Report: Feb. 28, 1952 to Feb. 28, 1953," February 28, 1953, 1, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[125] Margaret Hockin, "Report Covering Period Nov. 9-Dec. 9, 1951, Fundamental Education Demonstration Project Dujaila, Iraq," 4, File: Dujailah project/Hockin M.L./Women's Education, Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris. Parenthetical in original.

In 1952, the "second phase" was launched with the arrival of four new UNESCO experts, including two Mexican women, Noemi and Enriqueta Lopez, who specialized in home economics and health, respectively, and had worked on a similar pilot project in Mexico. Their mission at Dujayla was threefold: 1) to carry out home visits on the settlement in order to educate peasant women in modern practices of family care and home management, especially those related to health and hygiene; 2) to establish a women's health clinic on the settlement; and 3) to establish a school for girls. The Lopez sisters worked with four Iraqi women who served as translators and trainees, and in 1954 they were joined by an Iranian home economics expert, Sattareh Farman.[126] As Trowbridge wrote, the team reflected "an outstanding devotion and dedication to the spirit of 20th century internationalism which is to be noted almost everywhere one finds United Nations specialists at work."[127]

The home visits were launched under the direction of home economics specialist Noemi Lopez assisted by the Iraqi women trainees. The hope was that "[i]f we could educate at least one woman in every home, she would be capable of influencing her family and improving its living conditions."[128] They gave advice on "housework, sanitation, hand work and home industries (knitting of socks, cutting out and sewing of garments, etc.) to women and children."[129] The objective of the home visits seems to have been threefold. First and foremost was to improve the health of settler bodies: those of adult men who labored in the fields, those of children who were the farmers of the future, and those of mothers upon whose health that of infants and children

[126] Enriqueta Lopez, "Ma Ya`mal al-Nisa' Fi al-Dujayla [What the Women at Dujayla Are Doing]," *al-Muʿallim al-Jadid* 18, no. 3 (May 1955): 222; Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report, Period of August 15 to October 15, 1954," 3.
[127] "UNESCO and Iraq: A Picture Story of UN Assistance Work," 1954, p. 8, article in AMGRAD, an English/Arabic magazine published by and for Iraqi graduates of U.S. universities, enclosed in File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[128] Lopez, "Ma Ya`mal al-Nisa' fi al-Dujayla," 223.
[129] A.K. Kinany, "Evaluation of the Annual Report of the Fundamental Education Mission in Dujaila, Iraq," April 30, 1954, 2, File: Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/258, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

depended. The emphasis was on teaching "preventive" medicine to avoid the reliance on more expensive "curative" methods. This involved vaccinations given by the team, but focused primarily on teaching "cleanliness of person, house and farm yard," including modern techniques of "washing clothes and babies."[130]

Second, it was hoped that women on the settlement would be made more productive through training in "home industries," primarily the manufacture of clothes. Thus, sewing classes were organized for groups of women and sewing and knitting were taught to individual women inside the homes. Trowbridge commented that "at first the women are sensitive to what might be construed as criticism, and only too eager to assure the visitors that they know all they need to know about sewing and other household skills."[131] None of the UNESCO records I examined explained what was wrong with the clothes already worn by the settlers. But it was hoped that housewives using the new methods would be able to produce more clothes than those required by the family and could sell the surplus.[132] In an article translated into Arabic and published in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid*, the Lopez sisters even expressed optimism that the effects of the rising soil salinity at Dujayla could be partially offset by the education of settler women in "handicrafts and local manufacture," which would enable them to "improve their standard of living and raise their national [sic] income."[133] Some looked forward to mobilizing more enthusiasm among men on

[130] Trowbridge, "Annual Report: Feb. 28, 1952 to Feb. 28, 1953," 6; Rousseau, "Fundamental Education in Primary Teachers Colleges in Iraq: Suggested Programme," 3.
[131] A.B. Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952," December 1, 1952, 6, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[132] See, for example, Fielding Clarke A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report, Period from April 15 to June 15, 1955," June 15, 1955, 3, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[133] Lopez, "Ma Ya`mal al-Nisa' Fi al-Dujayla," 224.

the settlement for the modernization of families and of feminine skills, once they saw the extra income it was bringing to their households.[134]

A third benefit of the home visits was the increased knowledge of settler homes, which was then made available to Iraqi government and development agencies. Thus, "Miss Noemi Lopez was able to offer considerable help to Mr. Button of the Development Ministry on a survey of the economic conditions among the Dujayla farmers. Her careful records and intimate knowledge of family life were something few officials possess."[135] Knowledge of family life was also seen as crucial if specialists were to avoid disrupting it in a dangerous way:

> We shall need to know a great deal about the family group, before we can make a balanced plan of work. If we make plans for girls and boys, we are relieving the father of responsibility, and may be putting so much emphasis on the development of the individual that we raise new problems which weaken family solidarity.[136]

According to the UNESCO reports, Dujayla women were not that interested in the foreigners' advice on family issues. But they seem to have avidly sought out the medical expertise offered by the specialists. The women's health clinic established by Enriqueta Lopez with the help of Iraqi trainees was reportedly frequented by an average of fifty to sixty people per day, as "farmers and their wives [rode] in from great distances" to "receive treatment as well as the education which always accompanies Miss Lopez' work."[137] The Lopez sisters wrote:

> Our objective was to guide and direct [the inhabitants], with the aim of enabling them to solve their family problems [*mushakiluhum al-`a'iliyya*] by themselves. But it became clear to us that they would not be convinced of the importance of what we were asking them to do in this regard, unless we focused first on providing them with what they most

[134] The director noted that the "home economics work program" (of training in home manufactures) was "severely limited by the almost complete lack in each home of needles, thread, yarn, knitting needles, or even a small piece of cloth…We do not want to give away such materials, for they must not become dependent on our gifts, but without working materials, there will be little work." Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952," 8.
[135] A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report, from Feb. 15, 1954 to April 15, 1954," April 15, 1954, 4, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[136] Fielding-Clarke, "Fundamental Education with Special Reference to Dujaila," 12.
[137] Trowbridge, "Annual Report: Feb. 28, 1952 to Feb. 28, 1953," 5.

> urgently needed. We knew it was in our capacity to respond to these demands of theirs, and in that way to earn their trust and support for our [other] aims…These poor and ignorant people were in dire need of health education above all else.[138]

Similarly, Enriqueta Lopez told the English-language *Iraq Times,* in an article on Dujayla titled "Iraq Builds its Future," that "[t]reating their urgent pains and fears is only the first step to making friends of them; and making friends of them is only the first step to educating them into habits of cleanliness and commonsense."[139] The narrative in which foreign development workers stumbled upon health care as the "first step" toward "earning the trust" of settlers, especially women, was a familiar trope in the literature on Dujayla. For example, Adams wrote that "although medical clinical work was not originally planned, it soon became obvious that one of the primary local concerns was along medical lines. As a way of developing interest and following, the [UNESCO] team found itself engaged in medical work, for which it acquired a wide reputation among the settlers."[140]

There is reason to suspect the sincerity of the narrative, since most of those who "found" themselves providing medical care to Dujayla settlers, such as Enriqueta Lopez, were health specialists who had been sent by UNESCO to Dujayla for that purpose. Margaret Hockin's initial proposal for Dujayla had already recommended, before the author had even visited the settlement, that

> health services (educational and clinical) will be welcomed in the area and represent such an important and natural approach to the education of women that, in the initial stages at least, all other educational programmes should be based on these services. Homemaking education…is obviously dependent upon health services and will be radically handicapped, if not rendered totally ineffective, unless such are provided.[141]

[138] Lopez, "Ma Ya`mal al-Nisa' Fi al-Dujayla," 222.
[139] "Iraq Builds Its Future," *Iraq Times*, July 17, 1953, 8.
[140] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 150.
[141] Hockin, "Report Covering Period Nov. 9-Dec. 9, 1951," appendix p. 2.

In fact, the health-care technique, notwithstanding its perpetual rediscovery by development workers on the ground, was a core principle of postwar development doctrine. A 1958 article in *Middle East Journal* on Iraqi village life, written by an anthropologist working in Iraq on a Ford Foundation grant, provides some insight into its reasoning:

> If a hospital or dispensary were set up with the sole object of curing villagers it would have a minimal effect in bringing about the social change which is the ultimate goal of any rural development program. If, however, the hospital or dispensary were looked upon as an opening wedge in village development and took upon itself some of the functions of an educational institution it might very well have some of the far reaching effects desired… Thus the medical facility must, at first, function as a dispensary to treat disease, a school to modify understanding of the peasants, and a police force to insure that minimal standards are being practiced.[142]

Indeed, the main point of the health-care discovery narrative at Dujayla seems to have been the insistence that the provision of medical assistance was always *only* "the first step," that it was not offered for its own sake but as a deliberate technique in a larger development strategy oriented toward the future. Members of the UNESCO team, as we will see below, worried incessantly that their work might be interpreted by outsiders, or experienced by settlers, as merely charitable. They seem to have much preferred that their provision of health care to peasants be understood as the "opening wedge" of social and cultural development: first a dispensary, then a school, and finally a police force.

Yet health problems at Dujayla remained the source of endless suffering for the settlers and endless frustration for the development workers. It was often observed that the treatments provided by Enriqueta Lopez at the women's clinic were usually ineffectual, since "once cured, the people will certainly be contaminated again within a few days or weeks by drinking the polluted water from the canals."[143] The combination of the widely scattered plots and the lack of

[142] Malcolm N. Quint, "The Idea of Progress in an Iraqi Village," *Middle East Journal* 12, no. 4 (1958): 383.
[143] Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952," 6.

a drainage system on the settlement made sanitation problems practically impossible to solve. The poverty and indebtedness of the settlers meant that most could not purchase chlorine pills, which UNESCO offered for sale rather than giving away (a fact the home economics specialists often failed to mention in their promotional literature that claimed Dujayla women were being taught "how to use" chlorine pills for water purification).[144] The scarcity of wood and other fuel meant that most settlers could not afford to boil their drinking water.[145] The lack of drainage ditches on the settlement meant not only the ongoing salinization of the land but also that the latrines built by the UNESCO team were useless due to the ever-rising water table:

> The campaign to build latrines was a dismal failure, for the water level is so close to the surface that about 1½ meters down water begins to collect in any hole dug. The results are not impressive when a latrine is built, and the farmers say: "I will build a latrine if you tell me to, but I shall [then have to] move my house a kilometer away." We can scarcely blame them for feeling this way, and all we can do is tell them not to use the canals as latrines.[146]

But the other option available to settlers, using the fields as latrines, was not much better. Due to the high water table and the fact that the same canals were used for irrigation and field drainage, both human and animal waste in the fields found its way into the canals soon enough.

Technical awareness of the structural problems posed by the settlement plan was thus ever-present for development workers. Certainly it was common knowledge among both settlers and technocrats at Dujayla that the diseases from which most of the inhabitants and their children suffered—especially bilharzia, trachoma, and malaria—were spread by the irrigation canals. As Trowbridge wrote: "Most of the sicknesses come from drinking impure water, direct from the

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[144] Ibid.; Trowbridge, "Annual Report: Feb. 28, 1952 to Feb. 28, 1953," 4. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report April 15-June 15, 1955," 2–3.
[145] Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952," 6.
[146] A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report for Period April 15 to June 15, 1954," 8, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris. See also Fielding-Clarke, "Fundamental Education with Special Reference to Dujaila," 19.

canals, the only water there is."[147] Adams similarly noted that the settlers "are forced to drink and use the canal water, with all of the incipient infection. The settlers themselves are well aware of the fact that they get Bilharzia from the water of the canals, but they have no other alternative."[148] Yet it is typical in development writings on Dujayla for the explicitly stated knowledge that the settlers are "well aware" of the source of the problem to be soon forgotten, and for the spread of disease to be blamed, once again, on rural ignorance. Thus, Adam writes later in the same work that the diseases found at Dujayla are the "common rural ones of Iraq" such as bilharzia, tuberculosis, malaria, and trachoma, and that "[m]ost of these are diseases are associated with ignorance, poverty, and filth."[149]

The perpetual return to "ignorance" as an explanation for diseased rural bodies was arguably integral to the very temporality of development, in which neither the historicity of rural lives nor that of their environment (houses, canals, water tables, soil, snails, microbes, etc.) was truly legible. When the health and home economics specialists arrived at Dujayla, what they found were the very problems they had been trained and empowered to solve:

> Three out of four suffered from bilharzia, a debilitating water-borne disease characterized by slow bleeding, and other diseases were also rife. *This was where the team had to start*; out of health activities would come not only confidence in the team but an interest in clean water, clean bodies, better homes and food, even reading and writing.[150]

The temporality of development required that the team of experts start at what for them was the beginning: peasant ignorance of modern health and hygiene precepts.[151] This, in turn,

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[147] Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952," 6.
[148] Adams, "The Land Development Program in Iraq," 95.
[149] Ibid., 161.
[150] UNESCO correspondent in Dujailah, "UNESCO Team at Work," *Times Educational Supplement*, May 1, 1953. Emphasis added.
[151] There are numerous examples of this "beginning" theme in the sources on Dujayla, going well beyond health and hygiene. For example, Trowbridge reported to UNESCO headquarters that he had witnessed a boy on the settlement being "aided by several of the neighboring boys" in building a new stove, and asserted that

predisposed them to forget, over and over again, the fact that the settlers' bodies, habits, and lives were powerfully shaped and in important ways determined by the settlement itself.

The point, then, is not to prove the short-sightedness or hypocrisy of foreign development practitioners at Dujayla; their frustration over the structural constraints of their work was often palpable, even in the reports they penned for their superiors back home, and sometimes crossed into despair.[152] Rather, the point is that development problems at Dujayla were not just "rendered technical" instead of political by Iraqi officials and foreign development agencies; they were rendered technical in very particular ways. Thus, the "technical" project of reforming family structure (through the Dujayla law and the settlement plan) and family life (through the home economics campaign) took priority over many other "technical" concerns, such as that of building homesteads with access to clean water. As far as the UNESCO team was concerned, this prioritization cannot be attributed solely to the structural obstacles created by the original settlement design or the Iraqi government's refusal to pay for a drainage system. On the contrary, members of the team—as well as UNESCO officials back at headquarters—frequently asserted that technical solutions that did not involve changes in settler habits and mentalities would be futile in the end, and thus the *preferred* solutions were those that involved expert intervention into the intimate lives of settlers, with women and children as the primary points of entry. The choice of Dujayla for a pilot project in fundamental education did ultimately become a major debate at UNESCO headquarters—probably inevitably, given the project's complete failure—

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this signified "the beginning of community cooperation." Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report for Period April 15 to June 15, 1954," 7.

[152] Several UNESCO specialists at Dujayla were sent home due to what appears to have been a psychological inability to cope with the conditions on the settlement. Even Trowbridge, the chief of the mission, wrote: "We feel helpless when confronted with the endless problems of sickness and disease…There is no answer to this other than to keep on." And two years later: "It takes endless patience, courage, and faith to keep believing that our efforts are worth the struggle." Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952"; Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report for Period April 15 to June 15, 1954," 5; Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report [Feb 15-April 15, 1954]," 1.

with those defending the original decision reasoning that there would be no point in sending technical assistants to a site where development problems solved themselves.[153]

An examination of a list of all "technical assistance [TA] personnel" working in Iraq on behalf of U.S., U.K., and U.N. development agencies in 1952 indicates that this reasoning was not limited to UNESCO. The highest number of foreign TA personnel working in Iraq across all development agencies specialized in education (31), followed closely by health and hygiene (28); agricultural experts came only third (20). Much smaller numbers provided expertise in categories such as water resources (12), public services (7), housing (5), economic development (3), mineral resources (2), and industry (1).[154] It should be remembered that in the discourse of Western government and international development agencies during this period, "technical" interventions were distinguished not from "social" or "cultural" ones but rather from "financial" ones. Technical assistance meant providing knowledge workers of all kinds to assist in overcoming perceived obstacles to development, as opposed to providing direct financial assistance to governments for development projects. This distinction was the heart of Truman's famous "Point Four" speech announcing the coming global expansion of American know-how to developing countries, which, in Iraq at least, was overwhelmingly of the social-scientific rather than hard-scientific variety.

In the early 1950s, UNESCO was a pioneer of this philosophy through its program of fundamental education, and thus the training of women in home economics was frequently

[153] For an early example of this argument by the head of fundamental education at UNESCO's Paris headquarters, which criticizes the "counsel of defeat" increasingly proffered by UNESCO's field workers at Dujayla, see Willard Beatty, "Mr. Fielding-Clarke's Report on Dujailah," March 27, 1952, File: Dujailah project/Fielding-Clarke, A., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

[154] These statistics were compiled by the Iraq Technical Assistance Resource Agencies (ITARA) group, which helped coordinate the work of all U.N., U.S., and U.K. technical assistance agencies in the country through regular meetings of their representatives in Baghdad. See attachment to H.J. Rousseau, "Fundamental Education Mission, Dujaila, Iraq, 4th Two-monthly Report: July-August 1952," August 31, 1952, File: Rousseau H.J., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/258, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

asserted by its representatives to be the organization's most important work at Dujayla. When it seemed at the start of one year that no female Iraqi trainees would be placed at the settlement, Trowbridge lamented: "If we cannot get women [trainees] some serious thinking must be done for the whole future program in Iraq…Why make plans for Fundamental Education centers in all the liwas if we cannot foresee staffing any of them with women workers?"[155] Similarly, he wrote that the UNESCO girls' school, which focused on teaching home economics to young girls, was "our biggest accomplishment" and that if it did not become permanent, "our efforts will have been wasted."[156] He invoked the metaphor used by other development theorists of health care as a "wedge" to describe the work of the school for peasant girls: "If we did nothing else, this little beginning of education for girls was a wedge into the backward school provisions of Dujaila."[157]

Iraqi reformers had a similar understanding of fundamental education, and of pedagogical interventions in lower-class life in general. Matta `Aqrawi—the former director general of education in Iraq who by this time was working as one of the top officials of UNESCO's global fundamental education project in Paris—explained in a lecture at the Muthanna Club in Baghdad:

> The illiterate is not one who is ignorant only of reading and writing. The illiterate is one who is ignorant of his country and his nation, ignorant of his patriotic duties and responsibilities. The illiterate is one who has no moral character [*la akhlaq lahu*], who does not know how to behave in a socially acceptable manner and how to live an orderly family life [*ya`ish `isha `a'iliyya munazzama*]. The illiterate is one who does not know how to protect his health or how to earn his daily bread or how to struggle on his own behalf in the battle of life using the most modern and healthy methods [*ahdath al-asalib wa-anja`uha*].[158]

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[155] A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report for Period of Nov. 1 to Dec. 31 1953," January 8, 1954, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[156] Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952."
[157] A.B. Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report May and June 1953," June 30, 1953, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[158] Matta `Aqrawi, "al-Ta`lim al-`Am wa-Atharuhu fi al-Nahda al-Qawmiyya [Public Education and Its Role in the Nationalist Awakening]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 15, no. 5 (June 1952): 105.

These being the objectives of the reform of peasant life, it is not surprising that Al Yasin would pronounce the UNESCO girls' school for future rural housewives to be the Dujayla project that most "inspires optimism and confidence in the future and the capabilities [*qabiliyyat*] of the people of the countryside"[159]

Cultivating Independence

The techniques and emphases of home economics education at Dujayla cannot be understood outside the larger aims of fundamental education for both UNESCO and the Iraqi government. Above all, these were to produce "independent"—that is, self-sufficient—farmers. Members of the UNESCO team at Dujayla were acutely aware of their mandate to cultivate capacities of "self-help" in settlers, and worried constantly that their services might instead foster a "debilitating" reliance on "charity."[160] The objective of the program was to teach rural people how "meet [their] immediate needs while utilizing materials and facilities available [to them] rather than depending upon expensive and outside imports."[161] Thus, "we…try very hard not to make them dependent on us."[162] The director of the UNESCO literacy project at Dujayla fretted that providing free lunches for children in school without requiring the children themselves to raise the livestock, grow and harvest the vegetables, cook the meals, set the table, and wash the dishes afterward would produce "spineless dependence on Government or other charity," and the children were accordingly required to do all those things.[163] Trowbridge explained:

> Always we try to think how we can help them without giving out as charity the many items they need…The families need practically everything—cloth, shoes for the children, medicines, soap, even food. But we dare not give out gifts of these items for there would

[159] Al Yasin, "al-Tarbiya al-Asasiyya Fi Majali al-Fikr wa-l-Tatbiq," 165.
[160] H.J. Rousseau, "Report on School Feeding in Kilo 29, Dujaila, 1953-54," June 22, 1954, 3, File: Rousseau H.J., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/258, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[161] "UNESCO and Iraq," 8.
[162] A.B. Trowbridge, "Objectives of the UNESCO Fundamental Education Project at Dujaila, Iraq 1953," February 8, 1953, 4, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[163] Rousseau, "Report on School Feeding in Kilo 29, Dujaila," 1.

> be no end to this charity, nor would it solve their problems…All plead for medicine, which we cannot give out except in small quantities.[164]

Conversely, the team rejoiced at any sign that settlers were "realising that self-help is the only solution to pull them out of their low living standards."[165] The initial UNESCO proposal for the Dujayla fundamental education project had helpfully suggested that "in case of a difficulty" getting the concept of "self-help" across to settlers, "the Koran can always be quoted."[166]

In spite of all these efforts, some of the team's reports were criticized back at UNESCO headquarters for concentrating "mainly on what the team has been doing *for* the people" rather than on "changes made *in* the people themselves."[167] Officials in Paris were apparently not very sympathetic to an early warning made by one team member that "any attempt to change basic habits, attitudes and thoughts of human beings is slow and unspectacular."[168] But those on both side of the UNESCO field/office divide agreed that changing the basic habits, attitudes, and thoughts of rural human beings was precisely the aim of fundamental education. Unlike other development programs, Trowbridge wrote, fundamental education attempted to "deal simultaneously with the several causes of social ills, trying to heal them at the sources…Our mission would try to see what caused undernourished bodies and what can be done about it."[169]

Despite all the formidable technical obstacles to health and hygiene that development workers at Dujayla couldn't help but notice, what they found to be the ultimate *source* and root

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[164] Trowbridge, "Report for Sept, Oct, and November, 1952," 5–6.
[165] A. Hurbli, "Comments on Report from Dujaila, April 15th, 1954," May 17, 1954, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[166] Fielding-Clarke, "Fundamental Education with Special Reference to Dujaila," 7. As noted in the previous chapter, this imagined technique had also been discovered by the World Bank, which invoked a Qur'anic verse in support of its recommendation to overhaul Iraq's entire public school system around vocational training.
[167] A. Hurbli, "Comments on Report on Dujaila by A.B. Trowbridge," April 5, 1954, EDSP.54.326, File: Dujailah/Trowbridge A.B., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/259, UNESCO Archives, Paris. Emphasis added.
[168] H.J. Rousseau, "Bi-monthly Report No. 1 on Technical Assistance Mission to Establish a Fundamental Education Project at Dujaila January-February 1952," March 4, 1952, 11, File: Rousseau H.J., Box: Iraq CPx/REP.3/258, UNESCO Archives, Paris.
[169] Trowbridge, "The Aim of the Unesco Fundamental Education Mission in Iraq," 1.

cause of the many diseased bodies on the settlement were not political, economic, environmental, or technological conditions but local human ignorance and underdevelopment, especially of women. The production of independent farmers at Dujayla meant the production of farmers with healthy bodies and citizenly sensibilities who would neither flee to the cities nor be dependent on the government for assistance, much less look toward larger political or socioeconomic reform. And an "independent farmer" was by definition a "family farmer" in part because he had a wife who could be mobilized, via techniques of modern domesticity, to cultivate the family's financial, psychological, and bodily non-dependence. After all, "healthy bodies would not need extra feeding at school nor would they be prone to be tubercular."[170] Development problems at Dujayla were indeed rendered technical, in the sense that they were rendered amenable to the interventions of specialists applying new knowledge techniques. But an examination of the techniques that were most strongly prioritized, in both theory and practice, shows how they were also rendered social, and in particular how they were rendered feminine.

The Dujayla law itself had arguably oriented the development interventions on the settlement toward this kind of work. It did so not by defining all the techniques and then minutely regulating their application, but by producing a particular grid—the nuclear-family type: husband, wife, children—through which they could operate. Miller and Rose write that technologies of governmentality seek to "translate thought into the domain of reality, and to establish 'in the world of persons and things' spaces and devices for acting upon those entities of which they dream and scheme."[171] As the conceptual grid of the "family farm" became the legal property grid of the "individual" landholding and then the spatial grid of the "independent" homestead in the 4-corners isolated settlement plan, into which humans were then inserted in

[170] Ibid.
[171] Miller and Rose, *Governing the Present*, 32.

certain configurations, it was hoped that new kinds of relations within the family, and between the family and the things around it, might be enabled—relations that would be spatially fixed but temporally malleable—and that through these relations, a new national history might be set into motion, or, if not, then at the least stabilized.

But a final observation is in order. For the state officials and development specialists who literally fabricated the Dujayla settlement, one quite explicit objective of all these space-producing and disciplinary mechanisms—from the law, to the plan, to the building of canals linked to the new dams and the construction of family farms along the canals, to the interventions of medical and domestic specialists on the homesteads—was to reduce rural mobility and disorder. Yet they should not therefore be seen as purely repressive or punitive mechanisms. On the contrary, the challenge was not how to get some of the country's rural poor onto the settlement but how to keep those who were not supposed to be there out of it. Small land ownership, education, literacy, health, productivity, the care of children—it would seem that none of these were hard sells in Iraq's rural areas. Modern forms of governmentality, as many scholars since Foucault have shown, derive their formidable powers more from their productive effects than their repressive ones, though the latter hardly disappear in the modern era. These forms are linked both to the management of national populations and to new "modes of subjectification" that act on the actions, desires, and aspirations of individuals and on the relations between them.[172] Yet historical scholarship on modern Iraq, and on the modern Middle East in general, has barely scratched the surface of how such productive modes and effects of

[172] Ibid., 8.

modern governmentality might have worked in rural areas, where the majority of national populations lived during most of the 20th century.[173]

The Collapse of the Dujayla Laboratory, the Propagation of the Dujayla Technique

As it happened at Dujayla, the result of all these plans to immobilize and regulate people, animals, plants, water, and land in certain legal and spatial grids was social and ecological catastrophe. Not only did the model of isolated nuclear-family farms contribute significantly to the spread of human disease on the settlement, but the dependence of family farms on intensive methods of agriculture, and the lack of agricultural infrastructure at Dujayla to sustain such methods, led to the rapid salinization of the soil. As Kamil Mahdi writes, all the "efforts and expenditure [at Dujayla] were dissipated by the failure to tackle the salinisation problem."[174]

Like the larger land salinity crisis throughout the newly irrigated regions of Iraq, the causes and mechanisms of the process occurring in the soils of Dujayla were well known, as was its technical solution. As one observer noted in 1951: "If extant blueprints are not immediately translated into a comprehensive drainage scheme, all cultivated soil within the project will salt up. The lands settled first have less than three years of grace left."[175] But little was done in the way of drainage, and by 1954, just as forecasted, the "minimum subsistence requirements of a family could no longer be met and the settlers started to abandon their farms."[176] Things continued to decline after the 1958 revolution. In 1965—the year that the first settlers, according to the original Dujayla law, would have obtained free and clear title to their farms—an Iraqi

[173] An important recent exception is Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, chapters 6–7. Since the work as a whole is on Iraqi intellectual history, these chapters focus primarily on urban discourses promoting new forms of governance in Iraq's rural areas rather than on how such discourses were translated into the implementation of development and other reform projects in these areas.
[174] Mahdi, *State and Agriculture in Iraq*, 168.
[175] Fisk, "Dujaylah Land Settlement," 527.
[176] Mahdi, *State and Agriculture in Iraq*, 168. See also Trowbridge, "Bi-monthly Report, Period of August 15 to October 15, 1954," 5.

government study of one of the settlement's sections showed that only 12 percent of its original 351 farm units were operated by the original homesteaders; the others either lay idle or were managed by tenants after the settlers had left. Only 25 percent of the plots still had any residences on the unit.[177] Five years later, "the whole settlement had reverted to the original extensive form of sheep husbandry."[178]

The UNESCO team was long gone by then, but its members had witnessed the early effects of the soil disaster. Already in 1953, Trowbridge was reporting that some of UNESCO's own agricultural "demonstration plots" on the settlement had become little more than demonstrations "of the heart break [sic] known to many Dujayla farmers whose land is becoming salted and unproductive." Yet in the very next paragraph he proclaimed: "Our whole farm program now 'speaks with authority' and the younger generation of future farmers are learning much of value, perhaps to pass it on to their parents."[179] Not even the heartbreaking agricultural failure of Dujayla could undermine the head of the UNESCO mission's faith in the potential of its success inculcating new values and habits in the nation's "future farmers." To the extent that this was the aim of fundamental education, it did not seem to matter much whether the farmers in question had any local future on the settlement.

For the Iraqi Hashimite monarchy, needless to say, Dujayla cannot be seen as anything but a colossal failure. Whether its primary objective is understood to be the capitalist development of agriculture or instead what Cowen and Shenton posit as the aim of the "agrarian doctrine of development" to "lock up population in the countryside" and thereby exclude rural social disorder and political mobilization from urban areas, the Dujayla experiment, and the

[177] Henry Stippler and Mohammad Darwish, *Land Tenure and Land Utilization in Shakla 8, Dujaila Project, 1965-66* (Baghdad: Ministry of Agrarian Reform, 1966), 5–6.
[178] Mahdi, *State and Agriculture in Iraq*, 168.
[179] Trowbridge, "Annual Report: Feb. 28, 1952 to Feb. 28, 1953," 4.

larger Miri Sirf Land Development program from 1945-58, clearly did not work. Yet this failure does not exactly signify the ineffectiveness of the development techniques for which the settlement and its inhabitants served as a laboratory. In addition to the project's indelible effects on thousands of rural lives (and unknown numbers of rural deaths), many Iraqi trainees at Dujayla became leading technocrats involved in later development projects, including the ongoing reform of rural and urban family life, while lessons learned on the settlement were taken by the foreign specialists to new locations.

But even more than this, the failure of the Miri-Sirf Land Development project further fueled the discontent and the oppositional movements that the monarchical government had hoped it would help stem, along with the momentum of the political parties and actors that claimed to represent these movements. After settling with the Hashimite regime in July 1958, these parties and actors would embark on a far more thoroughgoing national project of agrarian reform, the need for which was widely seen as central to the need for the revolution itself and struggles over which would drive much of the sociopolitical conflict in the country during its "revolutionary era." As controversial as the project was in many ways, it was based on a familiar model of settling landless peasants on "independent" family farms—in which landownership was conditioned on the family's amenability to technical interventions in its daily life—and featured an equally familiar insistence on the need to politically demobilize the peasantry in order for the reforms to succeed and the nation to develop. Unlike specific historical governments, then, modern technologies of governmentality and development thrive on failure. As Miller and Rose have pointed out, failure is what provides the impetus for the propagation of more technologies and more expert interventions for programming healthier bodies and happier futures: if government is a "congenitally failing operation," governmentality "is characterized by an eternal

optimism that a domain or society could be administered better or more effectively, that reality is, in some way or other, programmable."[180]

[180] Miller and Rose, *Governing the Present*, 17, 29.

Chapter 4

The Stage of Adolescence:
Generational Time, Insurgent Youth, and the Marriage Crisis

> It may well be that this strange people is exceptional in the degree of its preoccupation with politics, mixing it with its food and drink, its joy, seriousness, and fun.
>
> - Dhu al-Nun Ayyub, *al-Duktur Ibrahim,* 1939[1]

> Psychologists are in agreement that the secondary level of education corresponds to the most critical and the most dangerous stage of development…The stage of adolescence is a stage of revolution…
>
> - Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin, 1948[2]

In 1929, Britain's annual report to the League of Nations on the Iraqi Mandate criticized a new regulation of the Iraqi Ministry of Education banning the use of corporal punishment in secondary schools and restricting such punishment to six "blows on the hand" in primary schools. The report's authors seem to have been genuinely alarmed by the measure, which they warned "may well prove to be a national calamity. In the towns, especially, some form of discipline that acts quickly, painfully, and irrevocably is badly needed."[3] Two years later, the last British advisor to the Ministry of Education, Lionel Smith, resigned his position, in part to

[1] Quoted in and translated by Muhsin al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq: Culture and Power in Conflict* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 93.
[2] Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin, "Hajat Madarisna al-Thanawiyya ila al-Tawjih [The Need of Our Secondary Schools for Guidance]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 12, no. 1 (September 1948): 22–27.
[3] Quoted in Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 233.

express his and the British government's protest against the ongoing refusal of Iraqi education officials to permit corporal punishment in Iraq's secondary schools. After tendering his resignation, Smith wrote a final memorandum titled "The Present State of Education in Iraq," in which he explained his position:

> It is most regrettable that in a country where passions are strong and even primeval, no corporal punishment is allowed except in Primary and Elementary Schools and then is limited to 6 blows on the hand. Other forms of punishment cannot be regarded as substitutes, as they are revocable and involve the element of time. Actually their infliction is in many cases merely nominal without even the intention to enforce them.

Yet, Smith lamented, Iraqi education officials continued to insist that "Iraqi schoolboys were of too sensitive a nature to be exposed to anything so brutal as corporal punishment."[4] He then proceeded directly into a discussion of the "prevailing vice" purportedly widespread in both the school system and the country at large:

> It would not be reasonable to expect the schools to be free from what is sometimes called the prevailing vice of the country. It is like an endemic disease, and has its ups and downs. A year ago it was certainly increased by a large importation of bicycles. A free ride at the expense of a senior person furnished the bribe and the opportunity. Again the first visit of an Egyptian dramatic company 16 months ago led to a demand for ready cash on the part of schoolboys, and one way of raising this cash was by hiring out their persons according to a regular tariff. I risk mentioning these things partly because I have reason to know that they are true.[5]

The vice in question was obviously male homosexuality, which British officials believed was an endemic disease of Iraqi society that occasionally, given the right circumstances, could swell to epidemic proportions.

Despite Smith's claim that he was taking a "risk" in raising this issue, he was in fact drawing on established narratives of British officials in Iraq, especially but not exclusively those

[4] Lionel Smith, "Note on the Present State of Education in Iraq," reprinted in E. C. Hodgkin, "Lionel Smith on Education in Iraq," *Middle Eastern Studies* 19, no. 2 (April 1983): 258–59.
[5] Ibid.

concerned with the school system. In 1921, his predecessor as British education advisor, Jerome Farrell, wrote a report that detailed the challenges faced by the Iraqi school system in overcoming the "moral degeneration of the Iraqi people…due to vices of all kinds."[6] Farrell claimed to have never witnessed a situation in which moral education was so "utterly lacking and so urgently needed as in the middle classes of the urban population of Iraq, where after the age of puberty an inveterate dignity allows to few the indulgence of more vigorous hobbies than tea-drinking and gossip, and in private certain unmentionable indoor sports."[7] Farrell, who also resigned his position several times due to ongoing conflicts with Iraqi education officials, proposed moral character-building techniques in boys' schools that included team sports, a Boy Scouts program, and cold showers.[8]

The controversy over corporal punishment between Iraqi and British officials in the Mandate era is a footnote in the historical literature that deserves more thorough research, especially into the Iraqi side of the debate. It might seem to at least raise some questions about certain longstanding assumptions, such as the supposedly endemic violence of Iraqi society[9] and

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[6] Quoted in Reeva S. Simon, "The Teaching of History in Iraq Before the Rashid Ali Coup of 1941," *Middle Eastern Studies* 22, no. 1 (January 1986): 40.

[7] Quoted in Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 201.

[8] Reeva S. Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars: The Militarist Origins of Tyranny*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 76.

[9] See, for example, Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem: A Political History, 1958-1963* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1969), 2–3. Reeva Spector Simon traces the violence of late 20th-century Ba`thist Iraq directly back to the cohort of ex-Sharifian officers who received a "German-based" military education in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and then established and ran the Iraqi Ministry of Education in the 1920s and 1930s—i.e., the very group that banned corporal punishment in Iraq's schools over strenuous British protests. (This causal relation is stated flatly on the front cover of the paperback edition of the book: "How the German-based military education of an Iraqi elite led to the regime of Saddam Hussein.") Needless to say, the ex-Ottoman military officers who controlled the Iraqi school system in the 1920s were not, collectively speaking, a pacifist lot. Yet their struggle with British officials over the corporal punishment of schoolchildren does suggest that the question of "violence" cannot be fit neatly into a modernization or East/West paradigm. In this case, the paradigm often mobilizes an East/West binary even within the geographical space of "the West," whereby interwar Iraqi history is viewed through a prism of competing "Western" influences, with German despotism and brutality on one side and British/American democratization and liberal humanism on the other. Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*. This binary can be traced back to British Mandate

the more specific disciplinary severity, if not brutality, toward children that is imagined to have been unthinkingly practiced in both schools and homes in Iraq and the larger Arab world prior to the dissemination of kinder, gentler, and more individualism-cultivating techniques of child care emanating from the West.[10] These questions go beyond the scope of this chapter and pertain to an earlier time period than the work as a whole focuses on. But remembering British Mandate discourse on the disciplining of Iraqi schoolboys, especially those "beyond the age of puberty," can help bring several dynamics that emerged in the education system in later decades into clearer focus.

First, while Iraqi educators of diverse intellectual and political persuasions drew prodigiously on (often competing) Western theories of pedagogy and psychology throughout the interwar and postwar eras, they did not blindly enact such theories. When a particular idea or practice was not compatible with local sensibilities or objectives, it seems that it was rejected, quite firmly if necessary. None of the major Western states whose educational policies and theories served as sources for Iraqi education officials during these years had a public school system in which corporal punishment was restricted to anywhere near the degree it was in Iraq's schools starting in the 1920s, nor would such measures be widely implemented in those countries for another six or seven decades; in some areas, they have not been implemented nearly a

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discourses, which frequently complained that Iraqi educators were drawing on European pedagogical theories that were not British. See, for example, Sati` al-Husri, *Mudhakkirati Fi al-`Iraq [My Memories of Iraq], 1921-1941* (Beirut: Dar al-Tali`a, 1967), 1:65–71.

[10] There has been very little scholarship on childhood in the Middle East, though it has recently been expanding. Regarding corporal punishment of children in homes, Elizabeth Fernea describes a very broad continuity in Muslim societies from the time of the Prophet to the 20th century as follows: "Punishment included spanking or beating, as well as teasing and shaming before peers and before other members of the family. The type of punishment varied from group to group. Some parents argued that corporal punishment was not condoned by the Quran, but most were in full accord with the 'spare the rod and spoil the child' approach favored in some western times and places." But how such approaches to child punishment may have "varied from group to group" across time and space has not really been explored. Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, *Children in the Muslim Middle East* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 8.

century later.[11] But for whatever reason, Iraqi officials in this period seem to have simply not accepted corporal punishment of schoolchildren as an index or driver of modernization in spite of its widespread advocacy and use in contemporary western European and U.S. school systems.

Second, as noted in chapter 2, nationalists were firmly in control of the Iraqi public school system since well before the Mandate came to end in 1932 with Britain's unilateral declaration of Iraqi independence. In most government ministries during the Mandate era, the British "advisors" had far more power than that word was meant to suggest. But this was not the case in the Ministry of Education, where even the advisory influence of this appointee was questionable. The most he could really do to express opposition to policies enacted by Iraqi officials was tender his resignation, a repeat performance throughout the Mandate years that seemed to bother those officials little if at all. This historical dynamic has been noticed and analyzed by a number of scholars.[12] For the purposes of this chapter, what matters is that nationalists in Iraq from the earliest generation saw the country's youth as embodying the nation's sovereign future, and public schools as the means through which that future would be realized.[13] Moreover, this was one aspect of the education system on which Iraqi and British officials were in complete agreement; they simply had different relations to its desirability. Besides the preoccupation of British Mandate officials with the "unmentionable" vice of Iraqi schoolboys—which they managed to mention with remarkable frequency—these officials associated nationalist mischief with Iraqi adolescence, both metaphorically and literally. In the former sense, nationalism was seen as a symptom of Iraq's own adolescence. The British Acting Commissioner in Iraq, Sir Arnold Wilson, dismissed "political aspirations and the desire for self-

[11] Corporal punishment was not banned in the British public school system until 1987, and in 2012 it remains legal in nineteen U.S. states, where it is regularly practiced in both primary and secondary schools.
[12] See, for example, Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq*, 197; Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*, 76–77.
[13] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 263.

government" in the country as equivalent to the "wayward thoughts in any adolescent youth" and as demanding the same repressive response.[14] In a more literal sense, British officials often opposed the expansion of secondary education in the country because they feared it would produce nationalists.[15] Their advocacy of corporal punishment was related to this association of overeducated youth with nationalist mobilization. While such punishment was an accepted feature of schools in Britain, Mandate officials saw it as even more important in Iraq, where "parental discipline" was "weak" and "passions" were "primeval." Iraqi officials were certainly not unaware of this line of reasoning, and may well have seen the banning of corporal punishment in secondary schools as a technique in their opposition to British rule and their careful cultivation of Iraqi youth for nationalist struggle and sovereignty.

Third, and in partial contradiction to the second point, British discourses on Iraqi youth in the 1920s point to certain continuities in official constructions of moral depravity among Iraqi students, and in the disciplinary techniques aimed at correcting it, that persisted, albeit with many changes, throughout the independent Hashimite era (1932-58). This was rooted in what Omnia El Shakry, writing about the same period in Egypt, calls the "inherently doubled" nationalist discourse on youth as both "peril and promise." While young people were the bearers of the nationalist dream of sovereignty, and adolescence "conceived of as a liminal category that marked the threshold between childhood and adulthood was a perfect metaphor for the political and social transformation from colony to independent nation," youth was simultaneously seen "as precarious and it indexed social and political anxieties."[16] Iraqi education officials seem to have remained opposed to corporal punishment in schools, unlike their earlier British advisors.

[14] Quoted in al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*, 97, 40.
[15] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 231; Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq*, 194.
[16] Omnia El Shakry, "Youth as Peril and Promise: The Emergence of Adolescent Psychology in Postwar Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 593.

But they were just as concerned about deviance in youth and about its implications for national unity and for the role of the older nationalist elites in the struggle. As El Shakry writes of Egyptian nationalist discourse, youth embodied "the political subjectivity of nationalism," but only insofar as they "could enact a non-antagonistic conception of politics grounded in national unity."[17] The rest of this chapter will show how these concerns and the pedagogical strategies deployed to address them were reshaped in response to the spread of communism and other radical political movements among the country's youth in the 1940s and 1950s, as well as to the emergence of new psychological discourses normalizing and regulating the temporal stages of human development. But they were not solely a response to these changes. They were linked to the very concept of public secondary schooling in Iraq, and were there from its inception.

Generational Time

The years 1932-58 were marked by student, nationalist, communist, labor, peasant, and tribal uprisings, a number of coups representing splits in the ruling class, and a few half-hearted attempts by Hashimite officials to re-write the Iraqi-British Treaty of Independence, none of which satisfied the country's increasingly mobilized population. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, "periods of repression were followed by new outbreaks of mass unrest, followed by concessions, followed by more unrest, followed by another governmental crackdown."[18] Urban youth played a prominent role in political protests throughout these years; student demonstrations in Baghdad sparked the two most famous uprisings of the period, the 1948 Wathbah and the 1952 Intifada, and many protesters in both uprisings were teenagers.[19] Young people, especially but not exclusively students, were also the dominant force in the Iraqi

[17] Ibid., 594.
[18] Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 98.
[19] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 114–16, 241.

Communist Party (ICP) during these years. As Batatu writes, "the principal vehicles of hostility to the existing social order were the teachers and students, and the center of gravity of the Communist movement lay not in the factories or other workers' establishments but in the colleges and schools."[20]

For many historians, the generation gap itself was behind the revolutionary movements of the postwar era. Phebe Marr writes:

> Iraqi students who went through school in the 1930s and 1940s emerged in the 1950s with sharply different views and aspirations from their elders. The new ideas contrasted with the traditional values of the old regime and contributed to the sense of malaise that afflicted the establishment in its last years. They were at the root of many of the regime's difficulties.[21]

Majid Khadduri concurs: "The military uprising of 14 July 1958 was the outcome of a social revolution for which the new generation had for long been preparing."[22] These accounts associate the "new generation" with Iraqis who were literally young during the 1940s and 1950s, with no explicit reference to class or other social categories. But the term has also frequently been aligned with particular social classes or with the historical emergence of a new class in Iraq. Thus, Batatu writes that the 1958 revolution was "the climax of a struggle of a whole generation of middle, lower-middle and working classes."[23] There are, to be sure, disagreements over just *which* class the "new generation" stood for. Many have asserted that it represented an emerging middle class of one kind or another, though Khadduri asserts flatly: "Neither in aspiration nor in vested interests can the new generation be identified as a middle class, old or new."[24] While historians of Iraq prior to the last few years thus disagreed over which class the new generation

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[20] Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 645.
[21] Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 147.
[22] Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics Since the Revolution of 1958* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 7.
[23] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 806.
[24] Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, 7.

represented, they did not pay much attention to this very overlap or interchangeability of the terms "generation" and "class," or to just what it might mean for one of those categories to "represent" or be "identified as" the other. Recently, a number of historians of Iraq have shown more interest in exploring the analytical concept of "generation." Much of the debate has revolved around the usefulness of the term *effendiyya* to designate what earlier historians often called the "new generation": the educated stratum of aspiring technocrats and intellectuals that emerged from different "older" class backgrounds and that is seen as propelling political unrest of various kinds in Iraq from the 1920s through the 1958 revolution.

Michael Eppel in particular has argued for the appropriateness of *effendiyya* vis-a-vis more "Western" or "academic" concepts such as "the middle class," on the grounds that the former is "more sensitive" to Iraqi realities than the notion of class and that it was the word "used by participants themselves." While Eppel concedes that the term was actually employed in a wide variety of different ways by Arabic speakers throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, in his use it designates the "Westernized middle stratum," more specifically "the educated or semieducated in general, that is, graduates of secondary or primary schools who adopted *ifranji* (Western) dress, engaged in modern political discourse, read newspapers, and, for the most part, worked or sought to work as teachers or state bureaucrats." For Eppel, the *effendiyya* was a cohort of individuals who shared certain experiences, especially of education, and who became "the creators and disseminators of the modern political ideologies and visions of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s—mainly nationalist but also Communist and Islamist."[25] Since Eppel's argument has sparked a fair amount of debate among historians of Iraq in recent years, it is

[25] Michael Eppel, "The Elite, the *Effendiyya*, and the Growth of Nationalism and Pan-Arabism in Hashemite Iraq, 1921-1958," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (1998): 227–50. See also idem, "Note About the Term *Effendiyya* in the History of the Middle East," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41 (2009): 535–39.

pertinent to any analysis of the term "generation" as an analytical category during the period under study.[26]

One of the shortcomings of the argument, as Peter Sluglett has pointed out, is that it constructs political differences (e.g., nationalist, Communist, and Islamist in the quote above) as relatively unimportant. It is thus ill-suited for understanding the sociopolitical characteristics of the communists and other leftists who came of age in Iraq during the 1940s and 1950s and who were quite opposed to the moderate nationalist bureaucrats and technocrats of the interwar generation.[27] The *effendiyya*, according to Eppel's own definition, was neither a socioeconomic class nor a coherent political force nor even, really, a generation. While he does suggest that the term was related to a "generation gap" in the interwar period, he uses it to demarcate the "disseminators" of "modern political ideologies" in *both* the interwar and postwar periods, and asserts that one of the values of the word is that it reflects "the *inter*generational angle of social developments between the two world wars and up to the 1950s and 1960s."[28]

Eppel sees the non-equivalences between *effendiyya* and other analytical categories as evidence that the former term is more sensitive to local realities than "Western," "academic" categories such as class. Yet his *effendiyya* are specifically defined as the "Westernized middle stratum," distinguished primarily by the fact that they are "educated in the Western fashion" and that they "wore Western clothing."[29] One begins to wonder if the word in this use is just a

[26] For a summary of the debate, see Noga Efrati, "The *Effendiyya*: Where Have All the Women Gone?," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (2011): 375–77.
[27] Peter Sluglett, "The Urban Bourgeoisie and the Colonial State: The Iraqi and Syrian Middle Classes Between the Two World Wars," in *The Role of the State in Western Asia*, ed. Anika Rabo and Bo Utas (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute, 2006), 77–90.
[28] Eppel, "Note About the Term *Effendiyya*," 537.
[29] Eppel's use of the term *effendiyya* is often explicitly in contrast to "traditional" and equivalent to "Westernized," "modernized," or even just "modern." For example, he writes that after the 1950s "it no longer made sense to use the term *effendiyya* ," because "[c]ompulsory education, across-the-board modernization, spreading patterns of modern discourse—all made the characteristics of the *effendiyya* nearly universal. Thus,

purportedly non-Western way of saying "Westernized."[30] The argument that it was the term "used by the participants themselves" as a form of self-identification may be true for certain elements of the educated cohort that came of age in Iraq during the 1920s and 1930s and was politically aligned with Arab nationalism.[31] Members of the educated generation that came of age from the 1940s through the 1958 revolution, however, did use the term *effendiyya* frequently, but not as a means of self-identification. Rather, it was one of their favorite insults, used precisely as a way to distinguish themselves from what they saw as an older generation of more elite, and elitist, government functionaries.[32] If the term does have some value in providing, as Eppel asserts, a "unique shading from the point of view of local history," one way might be in how it was used locally to differentiate, not collapse, these two generations.

Building on and engaging with Eppel's argument, other historians of Iraq have advanced more generationally oriented (age-based) uses of the term *effendiyya* for interwar and postwar Iraqi history. Drawing on scholarly approaches to generation as an analytical category, such as those developed by Karl Mannheim in the 1950s, Peter Wien writes:

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the term lost its utility in characterizing social groups." Eppel, "The Elite, the *Effendiyya*, and the Growth of Nationalism," 227.

[30] It has certainly been used this way by Arabic speakers; the definition of *afandi* in the Hans-Wehr Arabic-English dictionary is "gentleman (when referring to non-Europeans wearing Western clothes and the tarboosh…)." Yet it also seems unlikely that the word has remained unaffected by "Western" uses of it; Sluglett points out that it was widely employed in British colonial discourse. Sluglett, "The Urban Bourgeoisie and the Colonial State," 86. It might be noted that in the writings of British (and, later, U.S.) officials in Iraq, it frequently appears in a derogatory sense, to mean something like superficially Westernized and inauthentically Iraqi, often with an additional connotation of being a dandy.

[31] I have not seen this often, but this period was not the focus of my research. It was used negatively even by Hashimite officials at times, and certainly by the pragmatist educators I examined in chapter 2.

[32] A revolutionary-era editorial in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* describing the legacy of the "time gone by" is typical: "The environment, meaning the society, is weak of character and has remained for long years a scrawny thing with its mouth open to swallow whatever kinds of knowledge the West presented to it, including intellectual toxins…And the Iraqi school remained inert, backwards, and undeveloped, not knowing its true mission or understanding a thing about the concepts of education and schooling. It graduated only a sect of 'effendiyya' as functionaries to fill the needs of the state apparatus and dispatch its administrative, financial, and other routine affairs." It might be noted that the term appears in quotation marks in the original Arabic text, as if it were a foreign word. "Ahdaf Wizarat al-Mu`arif wa-Injazatiha fi Haqul al-Tarbiya wa-l-Ta`lim [Goals and Achievements of the Ministry of Education in the Fields of Education and Knowledge]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* (July 23, 1960): 1.

> In Iraq, education had a lasting impact on the members of the so-called Iraqi Young Effendiyya generation which was essentially a group of young men with a common "social experience," referring to culture, education, dress, and behavior. Different from an economically oriented "New Middle Class" definition, the term Young Effendiyya puts more emphasis on formation through interaction and experience.[33]

Wien's use of the term is more precise than Eppel's in that he applies it to a specific age cohort that passed through the Iraqi school system during the Mandate period, mainly the 1920s, and it works for his analysis of that period. It seems to become less useful toward the end of his study, however, when a more radical generation of young people emerges from the school system in the 1930s, which sometimes seems to be part of the "Young Effendiyya" and sometimes does not. Indeed, this difference-sameness is an important part of Wien's argument, as when he writes that the turmoil of 1941 erupted when the (now not-so-young) "Young Effendiyya" lost control of the "youth" for whom they were the self-appointed leaders: "The confrontation between the youth and its Young Effendiyya leaders on the one side and the old establishment on the other side was at least partly due to an open outburst of a generational conflict when the authorities lost control over the youth." By this point, "the authorities" included members of the "old establishment" *and* those of the "Young Effendiyya," and a third group has emerged, "the youth," over whom the Young Effendiyya have only a tenuous claim to authority. The category is thus used in a refreshingly specific way to describe a particular educated age cohort in Iraq, and Wien's capitalization of the term is no doubt meant to underscore that. Yet, as the original cohort ages over time, its analytical usefulness becomes more questionable.

There is considerable evidence that a sociopolitical and generational rupture of some importance occurred in Iraq during and around World War II, from the Rashid `Ali coup and consequent British invasion in 1941 to the partition of Palestine and the Wathbah rebellion in

[33] Peter Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism: Authoritarian, Totalitarian and Pro-Fascist Inclinations, 1932-1941* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 15.

1948. Historians of Iraq do not generally dispute this. But for the category "generation" to be useful for an understanding of the country's history that does not simply reinscribe that history within a modern/traditional (or, worse, Western/traditional) binary, it needs to take such ruptures as defining. That is, "generation" should describe an age cohort that has some affiliational characteristics and sensibilities beyond those that would seem to apply to any "Westernized" segment of any "non-Western" country at any historical moment. Otherwise, "the new generation" and "the young *effendiyya*" become just more ways of spatializing time, by making those who are "Westernized" by definition "new" and "young."

Insurgent Youth

By 1947, 50 percent of Iraqis were under twenty years of age, a proportion that would continue to climb in the following years. In 1958, six-sevenths of the country's total population of six million was still illiterate, but students were not a minor element, especially in the cities. The number enrolled at the secondary level and higher had risen from 2,000 in 1927 to 28,099 in 1948 to 135,658 the year of the revolution. There were an additional 500,000 students attending Iraq's primary schools in 1958.[34]

The rate of this expansion is a familiar paradox of Iraqi history under the monarchy. Not only the British, but also many Iraqi officials and, by the early 1950s, U.S. advisors, warned over and over again that for the government to continue expanding academic educational opportunities for youth when jobs for them did not exist was political suicide. Batatu writes:

> Ironically, the monarchy continued to add to the ranks of the stratum that had become most hostile to its existence, that is, to the ranks of the educated and semieducated class. It really had little choice. The process of expansion of the school system, begun in the twenties, could not be reversed. No little prestige had come to be attached in the society to earning, particularly, of a university degree. Once some Iraqis had received higher training, others, in ever larger numbers,

[34] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 1185, 34, 481, 1120.

> pressed for similar opportunities. The government could not now plead lack of funds [due to its oil revenues].[35]

Batatu's explanation for the continued expansion of education under the monarchy may sound superficial or naïve, but it should not be too quickly dismissed. Contemporary sources, both foreign and Iraqi, convey an overwhelming sense of pressure "from below"—i.e., from parents belonging to the middle and lower classes—to provide educational opportunities for their children.[36] Moreover, it was difficult, once a "public" school was opened, for it to shut its doors to any child who showed up, since the aim of "universal education" was official policy, and after the Education Law of 1940 the government was legally required to make primary education "available" to any family that wanted it. Most schools were therefore oversubscribed. It was even reported that some "boys' schools" in rural areas were in practice coeducational because parents were simply sending their daughters to class, and thus that the official number of Iraqi girls enrolled in school was an underestimate, since all students attending a "boys' school" were counted as boys.[37] Batatu's explanation acknowledges that even nondemocratic states must be responsive to social pressure to some degree, and does not assume that central officials had absolute control over schools on a local level.

But there were other contributing factors behind the continual expansion of public education under the monarchy. Pressure for it did not come only from below, in spite of the nervousness of many members of the elite around its possible consequences; the value accorded to education seems to have been widely and genuinely shared at almost every level of Iraqi

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[35] Ibid., 34.

[36] As just one example, Iraqi educator and later UNESCO official Matta `Aqrawi wrote: "In all the places which I visited where no school existed the parents pressed first and foremost for the education of their children…Not even medical care was as important in their eyes as schooling for their children." Matta Akrawi, "Mission to Iraq," March 6, 1956, 3, EDSO-56.496, UNESCO Archives, Paris.

[37] Hammoudi Majid, "Guides for the Improvement of Teacher Education in Iraq" (PhD diss., Columbia Teachers College, 1953), 32; Rose Khaddouri, "Suggestions for the Improvement of Instruction in the Urban Primary Schools of Iraq" (PhD diss., Columbia Teachers College, 1951), 16. See also Elizabeth Fernea, *Guests of the Sheik: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1969).

society. An article in the Ministry of Education's journal *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* was probably only slightly exaggerating when it claimed that "everyone accepts that there is no awakening of the nation without the education of its sons…[and that the] expansion of public education is inevitable." As Bashkin points out, "it is doubtful whether Iraq could have functioned as a modern state without the production of educated individuals."[38] Numerous sources suggest that this enthusiasm frequently applied to girls as well as boys.[39] The only significant opposition in Iraq to the principle of universal public education seems to have come from some of the large landowners in the southern regions, who often obstructed, through various devices, the spread of peasant literacy. Even their opposition, however, was rarely asserted publicly, and when it was it was not expressed as an objection to peasant education as such. The widespread valuing of education in Iraqi society, and the corresponding respect accorded to intellectuals, likely had cultural roots that long predated the founding of the Iraqi state in 1921.[40] Indeed, as discussed in chapter 2, "traditional" Iraqi and/or Arab attachments to intellectual education were often blamed by reformers for obstructing the spread of vocational schooling in the country, thus retarding the nation's development, and for fueling the endless demands for the expansion of academic educational opportunities, thus producing a class of over-educated "nonproducers" and disgruntled political troublemakers.[41]

But the trend was also clearly shaped and fueled by the nationalist struggle against official British rule from 1921-32 and semi-official British control from 1932-58. The highly

[38] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 244.
[39] See, for example, Paul Monroe, ed., *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1932).
[40] On the respect for intellectuals in Iraqi society, and an argument about its connection to the willingness of a great many of them throughout the 20th century to pay the price of torture, exile, or death for their ideas, see al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*.
[41] See chapter 2; quote is from Muhammad Fadhil al-Jamali, *The New Iraq: Its Problem of Bedouin Education* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia Teachers College, 1934), 10.

self-conscious objective of the nationalist elites who dominated the Ministry of Education in both periods was to cultivate a generation of youth to historically enact the nationalist dream of sovereignty. Education officials under the monarchy were thus advocates for their ministry in ways that many other state officials were not: they both believed deeply in their governmental mission and understood that that mission would often run counter to those of other governmental agencies and powers in Iraq. This historical dynamic points to the importance of viewing "the state" not as a unitary subject but rather, as Samira Haj writes, an "arena of intense struggle whereby various groups and interests interacted, allied with, and contested each other."[42]

The same could be said of the school system itself. From the perspective of the Arab nationalist policymaking elite within the Ministry of Education, something clearly went wrong with public schooling in Iraq during the postwar era. Rather than molding a broader nationalist elite in their own image, their schools seem to have produced a generation of radical leftist activists who self-identified as their staunchest opponents. But the schools did not do so only by producing a "class" or "generation" of educated graduates who would remain unemployed, which has been a dominant explanatory framework. This framework cannot account for the degree to which Iraqi students themselves, especially at the secondary level, were politically mobilized and radicalized during the late interwar and postwar periods—that is, not unless the entire analysis can be made to rest on the sober and rational long-term financial foresight of teenagers.[43] The somewhat linear and unidirectional narrative of politicization additionally offered by Batatu—in which Iraq's students were politicized by its teachers, in part through the

[42] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 111. Haj is referring specifically to the Iraqi state after the 1958 revolution, but the description would apply to the Hashimite state as well.
[43] And even so, it would then have to explain the apparent willingness of many of those same teenagers to take decidedly non-sober risks once politically mobilized.

ICP's strategic infiltration of the teachers' training colleges—also has limitations.[44] More suggestive is Bashkin's reversal of this causal logic: it was the "radicalization of students" in postwar Iraq that "produced radical teachers."[45]

In this chapter, I examine ways in which secondary schooling itself—and not just the underemployment of graduates or the radicalization of teachers—contributed to the phenomenon of "youth insurgency" in postwar Iraq and also the ways in which secondary schools under the monarchy were a battleground on which the country's broader sociopolitical forces contended. Some of the factors examined here no doubt have resonances across the postwar world—needless to say, Iraq's elite classes were not alone in confronting various "problems" of youth in this period—while others seem to have been more specific to regional and/or Iraqi histories.

Spaces of Experience, Horizons of Expectation

In his old age, Iraqi educator and one-time prime minister Muhammad Fadil al-Jamali asserted: "My life is a typical example of a complete transition from one civilization to another, and from an old culture to a new one." Born in 1902 into a modest Shi`i clerical family in the shrine town of Kazimayn, and having attended Qur'anic schools as a boy, al-Jamali recalls how his mental life and entire outlook on the world were transformed after receiving a scholarship from the monarchical government to attend a teachers' college at the American University of Beirut. He specifically identified his study of biological evolution and of secular history as the main forces effecting this transformation. First, the study of evolution caused him to "look at our life at home in a critical way and to reevaluate our sacred social institutions." And then:

> After the study of the history of modern Europe and after the recent political developments at home, the political bond of Pan-Islamism, which I used to cherish so much, gave way completely to the more modern bond of

[44] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 645–47.
[45] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 242.

> nationalism…Great aspirations for developing Iraq in particular and the Arabic world in general began to dominate my whole life.[46]

The connection made by al-Jamali between his internalization of linear-historical thinking as a young man and the subsequent unfolding of his life in Iraq as "a typical example of a complete transition from one civilization to another" is suggestive of how the post-Enlightenment conception of historical time effects a transformation in experiences of generational time. This latter transformation involves ruptures, discontinuities, and heterogeneous pluralities of time that are not captured in Benedict Anderson's explication of linear-homogeneous historical time, although they do derive from that understanding of time.

More useful in this regard is Reinhart Koselleck's analysis of how the relationship between "the space of experience" and "the horizon of expectation" is ultimately transformed through the Enlightenment conception of linear progress:

> What was new was that the expectations that reached out for the future became detached from all that previous experience had to offer…From that time on, the space of experience was no longer limited by the horizon of expectations; rather, the limits of the space of experience and the horizon of expectation diverged. It became a rule that all previous experience might not count against the possible otherness of the future. The future would be different, and better, to boot.[47]

Rather than the notion of progress leading simply to a universal homogeneous experience of gradual advance, in which the sequential generations remained connected to one another by the unbroken line of historical time, "the previous world of social and political experience, still bound up in the sequence of generations, was blown apart."[48] Different classes, nations, political groupings, and age groups that coexisted in everyday time were now understood to be noncontemporaneous with one another in historical time.

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[46] "Mohammed Fadhel Jamali," in Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, ed., *Remembering Childhood in the Middle East: Memoirs from a Century of Change* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 16.
[47] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 266–67.
[48] Ibid., 269.

> The one process of time became a dynamic of a coexisting plurality of times…What progress had conceptualized—that, in brief, old and new collided…had become the lived experience of the everyday. Generations did live in the same experiential space, but their perspective was interrupted according to political generation and social standpoint.[49]

According to Lisa Rofel, our very understanding of "generation"—i.e., the notion that there are "groups of people related horizontally to one another in terms of demarcated periods of linear history"—is a modern feat of imagination. The idea "that these groups can be attributed shared experiences and characteristics makes sense only when the modernist idea of progress—of always overcoming and surpassing that which came before—appears and takes hold."[50]

While such "horizontal" generational identifications do presuppose the modern apprehension of progressive time, I would add that their historical emergence is not only a discursive and imaginative process but also an institutional one. The expansion of public schooling throughout the world in the 19th and 20th centuries *produced* "shared experiences and characteristics" among many individuals in the same generation in the process of producing those individuals' capacities to imagine that they shared them. Indeed, the spatial extension of a "new generation" is very often imagined as stopping not only at the territorial borders of the nation-state but also at the line between the nation's educated and illiterate young. While these typical dual qualities of a "new generation" might warrant more scholarly recognition and attention, there is arguably good reason for their existence: national public schooling is one of the major means through which "new generations" are historically constructed. This is much less frequently the case, it might be noted, for "the older generations," which typically only exist as the "other" of the new one and thus their membership is often, and often by definition, open to illiterates.

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[49] Ibid.
[50] Lisa Rofel, *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China After Socialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 7.

None of this explains the rapid spread of communism among Iraq's secondary school students in the postwar years. But it may help explain how political mobilizations, identifications, and conflicts can be fueled rather than submerged by the expansion and deepening of apprehensions of "homogeneous" linear-historical time and also how broader sociopolitical and ideological struggles can gradually or abruptly align with particular age groups in the era of public schooling, often with little concern for what is taught in the school curriculum. Given that two different wings of Iraq's governing elite—the officials of the Ministry of Education, on the one hand, and those of most other government ministries within the Western-oriented Cold War Hashimite regime, on the other—held virtual monopolies on two of the major "progressive" political ideologies of the time—Arab nationalism and liberalism, respectively—it may not be all that surprising that the "new generation" of the postwar era, many of whom did not come from elite backgrounds, elected for the third, communism. The imaginative and institutional effects of Iraq's schools on its youth must thus be situated within the broader social networks and contexts that the schools, through the youth, were embedded in.

It is frequently assumed that family structures and kinship networks tend to work against schools and other modern public-sphere institutions that promote "horizontal" identifications, and that families will thus function as brakes on political mobilization. This assumption is based on the conception of the family as a "conservative" or "traditional" institution that binds its members to one another through "vertical" ties. For example, Rofel writes that, in China, the horizontal generational identifications that emerged in the modern era continued to be "accompanied" by "a quite different cultural notion of vertical ties through kinship."[51] Eppel makes a similar argument in relation to the *effendiyya* in interwar and postwar Iraq: "Notwithstanding the *effendiyya*'s deviation from the traditional social frameworks, many of

[51] Ibid.

them also retained their affinity with those frameworks. This affinity to old vertical (tribal, ethnic, familial) frameworks made it difficult for the *effendiyya* to coalesce as a stratum or class with its own identity and specific interests."[52]

Yet familial bonds and networks can work "horizontally" within as well as "vertically" across the category of age, or any other category for that matter. The history of the Iraqi communist movement in the 1940s and 1950s is a case in point. Batatu and al-Musawi both mention, in passing, that communist politicization in Iraq often traveled through extended-family networks.[53] Building on this observation, I argue that intragenerational kinship bonds in particular—i.e., those between siblings and cousins—often worked as relays both for the dissemination of leftist political ideas and sensibilities and for the consolidation of a broader self-identification of the nation's youth, especially literate youth in urban areas, as an age cohort. These relays may have been especially important for the politicization of female youth, who had less access than their male counterparts to public institutions such as Baghdad's famous *salon*-like coffee shops and political clubs, and who frequently report having been initiated into political thought by a sibling, most commonly a brother. Family ties in mid-20th-century Iraq, rather than simply being undermined or replaced by the broader, extrafamilial generational alliances produced through schooling and print culture, were often reworked by and incorporated into those new alliances.

Bushra Perto and Mubejel Baban, two young leaders of the communist women's league at the time of the revolution with whom I conducted interviews in 2007-2008, both denied, independently and adamantly, that the public schools they attended in the 1940s and 1950s had any influence on their early politicization. Their memories were of a generationally defined

[52] Eppel, "The Elite, the *Effendiyya*, and the Growth of Nationalism," 235. Parenthetical in original.
[53] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 403; al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*, 67.

political milieu, in which school administrators and teachers were, almost by definition, the enemy. Only when I mentioned that many Iraqi teachers in this period were known to be communists did Perto remember, with apparent surprise, specific teachers she had known as a young student who were, or were rumored to be, communists.

Perto and Baban also told very similar stories about what *were* the most critical avenues of their politicization: namely, sibling bonds and private reading. Perto responded to my question about whether she first learned about politics at school:

> No. It was not the influence of the schools [that led me to] politics, nothing of that sort. It was my brother's influence on me, to turn [to] politics. I have an older brother, six years older than me, and I was very friendly with him, he looked after me, really…since I was very young. He was inclined to a political atmosphere. And he used to collect, I remember, pictures of personalities—you know, prime ministers, ministers, I don't know. And I was a very small child [laughs], not even in primary school, maybe before, and he was telling me: "This is so-and-so, this is so-and-so." And asking me always: "Who's this?" You know, examining me. And because I liked my brother very much, I was following him a lot…He was telling me all about things, and so I had that in mind, you know, all these politics. And the first time I heard about communism it was from him.[54]

The next step in Perto's self-narrative of politicization was a journey into private reading, via a chance encounter and conspiratorial relation with a leftist bookseller in Kirkuk, where she attended a girls' intermediate school.

> I was passing through the suq and I saw—I [already] had in mind things about communism—and I saw some books…and I began to go there and take books from [the bookseller], borrow them, because I could not buy them. My father would not—[he] would see them, you know. So I took the books. I [would] read them, hide them, read them, and then take them back…So that was in Kirkuk...[55]

Mubejel Baban narrated her own introduction to political thinking, at age eleven or twelve, in strikingly similar terms:

> The thing is, my eldest brother, he had TB, and they had to send him to Lebanon…not a hospital, but a place where patients of TB [went]…Lebanon was

[54] Bushra Perto, Interview, January 14, 2008, London.
[55] Ibid.

> the place where cultured people lived, poets and thinkers and everything. It seems he met very left-wing people there. He stayed a year. When he came back—that was '46, something like that—when he came back, he came back with huge boxes of books. He used to give [them] to us: "Read! Read!" [Smiles and mimics handing books out to a crowd]…This was after the Second World War, all the democratic ideas flourished and people started reading and reading and knowing what was going on in the world.[56]

Al-Musawi has noted that "the history of communism and nationalism in Iraq cannot be seen as isolated from structures of feeling and practices that have informed collective memory in Iraq."[57] Perto's and Baban's narratives of politicization both point toward the early formation of structures of feeling, through sibling bonds of love, that oriented them toward, or at least opened them to, leftist political thought. This was then followed by the development of more refined political sensibilities through reading, which had nothing to do with the official educational curriculum but which obviously presupposed their literacy, a capability that both young girls owed to the Iraqi public school system. The practice of reading was proudly believed by many members of this generation to be a special and revered Iraqi pastime. According to a familiar Arabic saying of the mid-20th century: "Cairo writes, Beirut publishes, Baghdad reads." Uttered in Egypt or Lebanon, the aphorism may have connoted a friendly teasing of Iraqis for the supposed backwardness of their literary production sector; but in Iraq, it was repeated with pride.[58]

The political mobilization of both young women as communist activists, however, did occur through Baghdad's public secondary schools and colleges, which is where they would join underground communist student organizations in the early 1950s. The ICP's cellular

[56] Mubejel Baban, Interview, November 27, 2007, London.
[57] al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*, 47.
[58] Needless to say, I am not making any assertion about the historical truth of the aphorism, which is obviously based on deliberate exaggeration in any event. Still, as al-Musawi writes of modern Iraqi claims to a cultural-historical disposition inclined since ancient times toward the pursuit of knowledge: "reference to a specific character and temper may not be consistently tenable…but narrative as such gains currency through repetition and circulation." Ibid., 26. See also Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 90–91.

infrastructure had a separate "women's section" since the early 1940s. Like other party cells, those for women were composed of five party members or "organized supporters" and led by a *mas'ul* or "comrade-in-charge," who was always a full member.[59] Some cells at the top of the party hierarchy were heterosocial but the lower-ranking ones were sex-segregated. The Iraqi public school system was important to the functioning of the male wing of the party, but even more so to its female wing. As Batatu writes, secondary schools and colleges "were the chief springs that fed the female contingent of the party"; according to his statistics, 80 percent of female party members in the late 1940s were students. Baban was recruited into a party cell at her secondary school in Baghdad. Perto became an official party member as a student at the college of chemistry; at her girls' secondary school, she recalls, she had "only ten or fifteen" friends who were communists.[60]

In 1952, female members of the ICP established a women's "popular front" organization, Rabitat al-Difa` `an Huquq al-Mar'a (The League for the Defense of Women's Rights), known locally as *al-Rabita* or the League, which mobilized the existing women's branch of the ICP to recruit members both inside and outside the party. The driving force behind the group's formation was Naziha al-Dulaimi, a gynecologist in Baghdad. It appears that she also used her medical practice to recruit women into the League, including Mubejel Baban, who first met al-Dulaimi when she went to the communist doctor's office—escorted by her brother—for a medical issue.[61]

[59] The ICP had five levels of affiliation: full members, candidate members, organized supporters, unorganized supporters, and "friends" or "fellow travelers." The first three groups were organized in cells; "unorganized supporters" were connected only to an individual member, rather than a cell; and "friends" were leftist sympathizers who made donations or helped the party with public functions such as putting out newspapers and holding public meetings. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 628–39.
[60] Perto, Interview.
[61] Baban, Interview.

The concerns that would be increasingly expressed by Hashimite officials over the popularity of communism among Iraq's students in general and its female students in particular—which I turn to in the next section—thus do not seem to have been unfounded. The Intifada uprising of 1952 could hardly have assuaged these fears. While large sections of the population ultimately joined the Intifada, students of both sexes played an important role throughout it. They also provided its initial spark, in the form of a small student revolt against an unpopular dean at Baghdad's coeducational college of chemistry.[62] Bushra Perto was a leader of the student demonstration that sparked the Intifada and one of two students expelled from the college as a consequence.[63]

Managing Youth: From Military Discipline to Adolescent Psychology

The politicization of Iraqi students in the interwar and postwar periods was paralleled by the proliferation of disciplinary techniques and psychological discourses targeting adolescence and young adulthood as dangerous stages of life demanding concerted state intervention. El Shakry writes of similar processes unfolding in Egypt at the time:

> A public discourse of "youth crisis" emerged in 1930s Egypt, partly as a response to the widespread student demonstrations of 1935 and 1936 that ushered in the figure of youth as an insurgent subject of politics. The fear of youth as unbridled political and sexual subjects foreshadowed the emergence of a discourse of adolescent psychology. By the mid-1940s, "adolescence" had been transformed into a discrete category of analysis within the newly consolidated disciplinary space of psychology and was reconfigured as a psychological stage of social adjustment, sexual repression, and existential anomie. Adolescence—perceived as both a collective temporality and a depoliticized individual interiority—became a volatile stage linked to a psychoanalytic notion of sexuality as libidinal raw energy, displacing other collective temporalities and geographies. New discursive formations, for example, of a psychology centered on unconscious sexual

[62] See Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 116.
[63] Bushra Perto, Interview, November 23, 2007, London. After her expulsion, Perto's father, a government functionary, packed her off to Geneva, where she continued her chemistry studies and quickly hooked up with the international communist movement.

> impulses and a cavernous interiority, and new social types, such as the "juvenile delinquent," coalesced around the figure of adolescence in postwar Egypt.[64]

During the 1920s and 1930s in Iraq, efforts to guide youth in nationally productive directions were directly largely at male students, partly because there were few girls attending secondary school in this period. These efforts coalesced especially around institutions designed to shape healthy and disciplined masculinities, such as those based on military-training models. In the 1940s, discourses of adolescent psychology became more prominent, deploying new techniques and knowledges for managing the healthy development of those traversing the perilous stage of life between childhood and adulthood that had itself been opened up by the expansion of secondary schooling. While El Shakry writes that in Egypt these discourses were focused primarily on the psychological development of boys, in postwar Iraq they seem to have been directed at least as much toward adolescent girls.

By 1919, the British had introduced the international Boy Scouts movement to the country as a means for the "Iraqi establishment…to overcome the vigor of the [male] youth by pressing it into a disciplining institution with a strict pattern of gender relations and gender ideals."[65] Like the schools, however, the Boy Scouts troops quickly became a battleground between British and nationalist forces, which had competing interests in disciplining and channeling the energy of male youth—and, as in the schools, it was the nationalists who won the battle. As Peter Wien has shown, the Iraqi Boy Scouts may have been introduced "in the framework of a colonial narrative," but they quickly emerged as "a model for an Iraqi disciplining institution that [would] prepare the youth for the struggle against imperialism."[66]

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[64] El Shakry, "Youth as Peril and Promise," 591. See also Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, "The Discovery of Adolescence in the Middle East," in *Youth and Youth Culture in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. Jørgen Bæk Simonsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2005).
[65] Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism*, 93.
[66] Ibid.

After Iraq's nominal independence in 1932, Arab nationalist elites in the Ministry of Education introduced a new institution for shaping young male sensibilities: al-Futuwwa, which provided "military training" for boys in secondary school and became "the crucial vehicle for nationalist indoctrination and disciplining of [male] youth."[67] In 1939, the Hashimite government made it "compulsory for every [male] student of secondary state schooling to take part in al-Futuwwa's paramilitary training."[68] Reeva Simon suggests that al-Futuwwa was a fascist organization modeled on the Hitler Youth and that it contributed to shaping the militarist mentalities that lead to the rise of the Ba`th Party in the 1960s.[69] Wien has recently challenged the first part of this argument, making a convincing case that al-Futuwwa can be traced to the earlier Boy Scouts movement in Iraq and thus should be located within a "wider colonial discourse" on youth and masculinity that was not peculiar to Nazi Germany.[70] This argument is supported by the recent work of Wilson Chacko Jacob on contemporary nationalist projects in Egypt geared toward cultivating modern masculinity through the "institutionalization of youthful energy" in a wide range of organizations for boys, including the Scouts.[71]

Simon and other scholars also seem to suggest that al-Futuwwa, along with similar military-masculinization projects in the interwar period, had a powerful and unidirectional effect in molding the sensibilities of impressionable Iraqi schoolboys, which is in part how it is linked to the later rise of the Ba`th. But it seems more likely that these projects were always-already

[67] Ibid., 90. See also Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 232.
[68] Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism*, 90. It seems there may have been some al-Futuwwa troops for female students too, but it was not compulsory in girls' schools. For connections between conceptions of masculinity embedded in al-Futuwwa and changing conceptions of girls' education, see also Peter Wien, "Mothers of Warriors: Girls in a Youth Debate of Interwar Iraq," in *Girlhood: A Global History*, ed. Jennifer Helgren and Colleen A. Vasconcellos (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010); idem, "'Watan' and 'Rujula': The Emergence of a New Model of Youth in Interwar Iraq," in *Youth and Youth Culture in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. Jørgen Bæk Simonsen (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2005).
[69] Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars*, 81, 102–105.
[70] Wien, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism*, 93.
[71] Wilson Chacko Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870-1940* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 85.

part of ongoing sociopolitical and generational conflicts in Iraq. To my knowledge, Orit Bashkin is the only scholar who has asked the question of how the Iraqi public as well as teachers and students in the school system actually responded to the militarization of boys' education during this period, and her research points to resistance in both spheres.[72]

In 1948, *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* published an article by Muhammad Husayn Al Yasin, a professor at the higher teacher's training college in Baghdad, on "the need for guidance in our secondary schools":

> Psychologists are in agreement that the secondary level of education corresponds to the most critical and the most dangerous stage of development, which these psychologists call the stage of adolescence [*al-murahiqa*] or the stage of youth [*al-shabab*]. This is the stage of transition from the age of childhood to the age of maturity…It is a stage characterized by a multitude of problems and a confusion of ideas…If those passing through this stage do not have people whose mission it is to provide them guidance and direction, and who can help them solve the problems associated with this stage, the consequences will be dire and the future unknown. This is because the stage of adolescence is a stage of revolution, a stage of struggle, a stage of violence, a stage of turmoil…a stage that will put parents and teachers in a bind from which there is no escape if they do not grasp the importance of this stage in the life of the young man or the young woman.

In stressing the full implications of this troubling situation, Al Yasin connected the failure of psychological guidance during adolescence not only to political instability in the present but also to the nation's future prospects for development. "Continuing to neglect the proper direction and guidance of youth will result in the nation's loss of its human resources and power…The nation will grow weak and will lag behind other [nations] in the social, economic, cultural, and political domains."[73]

Al Yasin's article signals several shifts in dominant pedagogical discourses on Iraqi youth during the postwar period. In the interwar years, the category *al-shabab* (youth) had been

[72] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 60, 233–35.
[73] Al Yasin, "Hajat Madarisna al-Thanawiyya ila al-Tawjih."

far more common than that of *al-murahiqa* (adolescence) in the literature on educational policy, but the latter began to assume a more prominent place in the 1940s. The expansion of public secondary schooling had contributed to the creation of a stage of life between puberty and adulthood, which had its own peculiar characteristics and developmental challenges and required its own word. More precise and temporally delimited than *al-shabab*, which could stretch amorphously from late childhood through young adulthood, *al-murahiqa* was also more closely associated with the discipline of psychology. El Shakry notes that in Egypt, *al-murahiqa* helped to demarcate pedagogical literature that was self-consciously engaged with the latest psychological theories and discourses from "the more popular writings of the mainstream press that addressed 'youth.'" This demarcation was more than linguistic, of course. Across the world in the postwar era, "psychologists played an increasingly central role in processes of adolescent normalization."[74] The construction of the adolescent subject in the new science of psychology was "geared toward a particular mode of subjectification, which involved the elaboration of an apolitical psychological interiority and an attempt to domesticate the 'boundless energy of youth.'"[75]

In Iraq, as in other parts of the world, the concern over adolescence as a dangerous and rebellious stage of human development was frequently connected to the appearance of sexual desires after puberty. In a 1954 article in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid*, Mahmud al-Jumard, the director of secondary schools in Mosul, explained that during these years the individual "lives in a world full of dreams, fantasies, and illusions because of the emergence of sexual instincts." There were certainly echoes between the psychological literature of the postwar era and earlier British and Iraqi discourses on youth discipline in this regard—both associated sexual immorality with

[74] El Shakry, "Youth as Peril and Promise," 595.
[75] Ibid., 592.

political rebellion. But in the new discourse, sexual transgressions were seen as symptoms of an underlying deviance that could be traced back to unresolved psychological complexes in adolescence, explaining the proliferation of individuals in Iraqi society who were afflicted with "strange concepts" and "moral and sexual perversity," as al-Jumard wrote. Unlike for the British in the 1920s, al-Jumard's solution was not *less* schooling, in the hope of fixing young people within the "traditional" confines of their families and keeping them away from one another. The answer for nationalist state officials was always *more* schooling, both because the nation's youth embodied its sovereign and developed future and because "great care must be taken in this stage lest the boy or girl go astray, develop psychological complexes, and become a danger to himself and his society."[76]

Al-Jumard repeated the observation made by Al Yasin six years earlier that adolescence had been identified by the modern science of psychology as the "most critical" and the "most dangerous" stage of development. But he placed greater emphasis on the schools' failure to regulate the "free time" (*al-awqat al-faragh*) of secondary school students, i.e., their time outside of school. The lengthening of the period of life between dependent childhood and laboring adulthood/parenthood, the age-horizontal identifications fostered by schooling, and the postwar spread of print culture and other forms of entertainment, especially the cinema, had all combined to facilitate dangerous potentials and unregulated mobilities for adolescents once they exited the schoolyard. The author thus criticized not only the education system's "lack of concern with the stage of adolescence" inside the school but also "the lack of value it accords to free time [outside the school] and the necessity of filling it with [activities] to improve the minds, bodies, and souls

[76] Mahmud al-Jumard, "Tilmidhat wa-Talamidh al-Madaris al-Thanawiyya wa-Awqat al-Faragh [Female and Male Students in the Secondary Schools and Free Time]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 18, no. 1 (December 1954): 69–75.

of girls and boys."[77] The author made a number of proposals to rectify this neglect, which reiterated the familiar pragmatist criticism of the "strictly theoretical education" purportedly provided by Iraq's schools, while also calling for an end to the "social and cultural isolation" of the secondary schools and the cultivation of feelings of patriotic responsibility among youth by involving them in extracurricular social service projects and health campaigns.[78] Al-Jumard covered all his bases to support his argument for the state regulation of young people's "free time." He quoted Aristotle that "the aim of education is to help people utilize their free time in the best manner"; he reminded his readers that in the view of religion "idle hours are Satan's hours"; and he explained that the most "fundamental principle of secondary education" in the economically developed United States of America was to teach students "the best way of using their free time," which was why the "modern" American high school paid so much attention to regulating the "extracurricular" activities of its young. This led to the author's invocation of the familiar scare of the nation's lagging development relative to other nations: "We must acknowledge that we have been careless, that the world is moving forward and it is our duty to move forward with it."[79]

The new psychological discourses and extracurricular social projects did not simply replace the older techniques modeled on military pedagogies, especially for male students. Rather, the two worked in tandem as the latter techniques shifted toward a more openly punitive function. After all, positive efforts to successfully guide adolescents through the psychological complexes peculiar to that stage of life, and to inculcate healthy extracurricular habits among students, could always fail. Compulsory military training was thus increasingly used by the Hashimite state as a way of punishing and attempting to rehabilitate recalcitrant youth, especially

[77] Ibid.
[78] Al Yasin, "Hajat Madarisna al-Thanawiyya ila al-Tawjih."
[79] Al-Jumard, "Tilmidhat wa-Talamidh al-Madaris al-Thanawiyya wa-Awqat al-Faragh."

those suspected of communist leanings. Thus, male secondary school students exhibiting leftist sentiments were incarcerated in military "boot camps" for the summer; repeat offenders were expelled from school and conscripted directly into the army. Once there, they were soon discovered, perhaps not surprisingly, to pose an even more serious threat than they had in school, and military leaders demanded that the government pay for the establishment of special camps to keep them segregated from the other soldiers.[80]

In striking contrast to articles on other educational topics that appeared in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* in the postwar era, those on the perils of adolescence nearly always went to the trouble of spelling out both the female and male Arabic forms of nouns referring to students, usually in that order. For example, al-Jumard's article was titled "Tilmidhat wa-Talamidh al-Madaris al-Thanawiyya wa-Awqat al-Faragh" (Female and Male Secondary School Students and Free Time) and insisted repeatedly on the need to regulate the extracurricular time of "girls and boys" (*fatayat wa-fityan*). Indeed, numerous education theorists and policymakers asserted that managing the psycho-social turbulence of adolescence was even more critical for girls than for boys. `Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz argued in 1953 that the government must take care to monitor "all the social and cultural activities" of youth, not just those that took place in school, including the films they watch and the books, plays, magazines, and "pocket novels" they read, since all of these have "an active influence in shaping the mind of a boy or a girl." But the need for such surveillance was especially acute for girls, "because every girl is a potential mother [*umm muhtamala*] and as such she will become the cornerstone of social life…She will instill morality

[80] U.S. Embassy Baghdad to Department of State, Foreign Despatch no. 980, June 29, 1953, RG84/787, USNA; U.S. Embassy Baghdad to Department of State, Foreign Despatch no. 888, May 26, 1953, RG84/787, USNA.

or depravity in her children…and thus controls the fate of the coming generations."[81] In this context, al-Bazzaz contrasted *al-ta`lim* (education or knowledge) with *al-tathqif*, which connotes education with a more moral or civilizing orientation. It was the latter type of learning that Iraqi women most needed, since if their education were not based on "spiritual guidance and refined morals, it would only "increase the confusion and backwardness of the society."

> I do not know which of the two benefits our society more today, and which is more graced with good values: an illiterate village woman who preserves her natural beauty…and has a sense of duty toward her home and her village; or an educated, made-up woman who is not guided by any moral standards, who thinks it is her right to blindly imitate the Western woman and to achieve complete freedom, who enjoys smoking, drinking, gambling, and staying up late, and who frequents every locality with no decency.[82]

The school system must immediately reorient female education around moral character development, al-Bazzaz warned, since the current "band of educated women" (*al-nafar min al-mut`allimat*) in Iraq was on the verge of becoming a "social calamity" (*baliya ijtima`iyya*).[83]

In the early 1950s, as the compulsory summer boot camps for male leftist students expanded, the ministry instituted summer work programs for female secondary school students. These aimed to channel the free time of adolescent girls into social work rather than politics by involving them in "campaigns for the defense of morals" or sending them into rural areas to teach literacy and provide "social guidance" to peasant women, such as those on the Dujayla Land Settlement Project. It was hoped that such activities would cultivate a number of specific habits and sensibilities, including improving girls' physical health and nurturing their sense of responsibility toward "society and the nation." If the government could thereby "build a social

[81] `Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz, "Tathqif al-Mar'a [The Education of Women]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, no. 1/2 (September 1953): 41.
[82] Ibid., 43.
[83] Ibid.

character in the female student" (*bina' al-shakhsiyya al-ijtima`iyya li-l-taliba*),[84] it would bring the next generation of Iraqi women "closer to their nation and make them aware that the nation was in dire need of them."[85]

Gender Crises and Gendered Yearnings

In September 1953, the Ministry of Education devoted a full issue of *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* to what it called the "crisis of girls' education" in Iraq. In large part, the articles in the issue are an attempt to justify and explain the ministry's 1952 decision to overhaul and expand the girls' home economics curriculum, especially in secondary schools, a process that had in fact already begun. Iraqi professor Safa' Khulusi explained the perceived problem:

> For a quarter of a century we have forgotten, or have pretended to have forgotten, the difference between the woman and the man…and we have given the Iraqi woman a man's education…She has now forgotten that she is a woman…and a class of women has appeared in Iraq who despise cooking, housework, and childraising…We have made women unfit for marriage and motherhood.[86]

Historically speaking, the argument had a few holes. As it happened, it was in September 1928—or exactly one quarter of a century before Khulusi's article appeared—that a sex-differentiated curriculum was *introduced* in Iraq's public school system, with the addition of the first national home economics requirement for girls in primary school. Moreover, as shown in chapter 2, by 1953 no female student in Iraq's primary or secondary public school system was receiving "a man's education." Only when she reached the college level could an Iraqi woman receive the same public education as her male counterpart, and even then only outside of Queen `Aliya college and the women's higher teacher training college, where most women at this level were

[84] Ammana al-Salman, "Ara' fi Islah wa-Tahsin al-Ta`lim al-Niswi [Views on Reforming and Improving Female Education]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, nos. 1–2 (September 1953): 94.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Safa' Khulusi, "Tawhid aw Ikhtilaf Manhaj al-Ta`lim bayn al-Banin wa-l-Banat [Uniformity or Difference in the Educational Curriculum for Boys and Girls]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, nos. 1–2 (September 1953): 61–64.

enrolled. But the issue was obviously not about historical research. It was about the politicization of Iraqi youth in the postwar period, and the sense that this trend was at least as prevalent and potentially even more dangerous among female students.

In *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid*, authors' proposals to address the crisis of girls' education were actually diverse and creative, ranging from new courses in sex education to greater attention to religious study.[87] But in the end, the ministry's primary solutions were oddly familiar: more differentiation on the basis of sex in the public school curriculum, and more attention to "real-life" instead of "academic" learning in girls' schools. Thus, even the course of study in the vocational home economics secondary schools was now discovered to be too academic, and a new curriculum was drafted, "with the aim of reducing the hours of theory and increasing the hours of practice, so that the graduate of this school is first and foremost a housewife."[88] But if the activity-based, "real life" curriculum was henceforth embraced with greater enthusiasm than ever, the oft-repeated pragmatist ideals of fostering curiosity and independent thinking were now seen to have gone too far, at least for female students. This pedagogical approach had produced a generation of young Iraqi women who "love adventure"—much like the United States of America loves adventure, al-Jumard suggested.[89] The challenge was to find a way to teach women stability and sobriety in moral and political life while teaching them flexibility and openness to change in everyday mentality. In response, many educators became more inclined to join the discourse of pragmatism with the discourse of cultural authenticity. Thus, Minister of Education `Abd al-Hamid Kadhim asserted in December 1957 that the point of modern education was "to organize the individual's natural motivations" and "to build a whole,

[87] Mahmud al-Jumard, "al-Ta`lim al-Mukhtalit [Coeducation]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, nos. 1–2 (September 1953): 82–8; al-Salman, "Ara' fi Islah wa-Tahsin al-Ta`lim al-Niswi."
[88] "Manahij al-Fanun al-Baytiyya [The Home Economics Curriculum]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 15, no. 5 (June 1952): 60.
[89] Al-Jumard, "al-Ta`lim al-Mukhtalit," 86.

developed character," but that the character the Iraqi school system must seek to develop was "an Arab-Islamic-Iraqi character." Iraqi educators should therefore look to their own history for tools that might help build that character, rather than relying solely on the advice of "foreign delegations."[90]

One of the ironies is that Western pedagogical approaches were now blamed for the purported focus on academic rather than real-life learning in Iraq's schools, which had filled girls' heads with frivolous and/or rebellious notions. Thus, al-Bazzaz called for an overhaul of the female secondary school curriculum around home economics by arguing that while a detached-from-life type of learning might work for an industrialized nation whose young citizens had the luxury of pursuing knowledge for its own sake, it was inappropriate and dangerous for a developing nation such as Iraq: "The theory of knowledge for knowledge's sake, education for education's sake, art for art's sake…might be appropriate for some of the developed countries…but it is not appropriate for us today."[91] Yet this line of reasoning echoed decades of criticism of the Iraqi school system made by Western experts, and was deployed for the same purpose: to argue that an Iraqi girl's education should be determined by her sex and focus on domestic and child-raising skills.[92]

Iraqi educators increasingly called for the expansion of "Islamic" education in schools as a means of instilling morality, especially in female students.

> We need to give the religious sphere the necessary attention in order to root out those reckless tendencies that have taken hold of the minds of females…[The schools lack] structured programs fostering stability and derived from sound principles resting on a firm foundation. Is there not such a moral and sound

[90] `Abd al-Hamid Kadhim, "Dawr al-Mu`allim fi al-Islah al-Ijtima`i [The Role of the Teacher in Social Reform]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 20, nos. 5–6 (December 1957): 653–57. See also Matta `Aqrawi, "al-Ta`lim al-`Am wa-Atharuhu fi al-Nahda al-Qawmiyya [Public Education and Its Role in the Nationalist Awakening]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 15, no. 5 (June 1952): 97–105.
[91] Al-Bazzaz, "Tathqif al-Mar'a," 41.
[92] See chapter 2.

> foundation in the true religion? Then the religion must be made a basic subject in the schools…It is also necessary to appoint specialized female teachers to teach [Islam] so that it can nourish the students with its principles and the value of its commands.[93]

A number of recent scholars, primarily working on Egypt, have examined ways in which nationalist projects aimed at fashioning modern selves and gendered citizens often reconfigured existing Islamic discourses and technologies of the self, such as the concept of *riyadat al-nafs* or "caring for the soul." Wilson Chacko Jacob writes:

> One might date from as early as the 1870s [in Egypt] the beginning of this process of translating emerging techniques of the self in terms of the classical Islamic tradition of caring for the soul. This discourse, tied as it was to effendi masculinity, proliferated dramatically in the wake of the British occupation…The translation of the ancient formula for salvation by tending to the soul took interesting turns in the context of anticolonial nationalism and within circuits of colonial modernity.[94]

Jacob shows how the Islamic concept of *riyadat al-nafs* was "reworked and redeployed" by Egyptian nationalists to promote "the care of a generic male body that suffered from deficiencies," such as through the institution of regulated sports activities (which came to be translated as *riyada*) to shape a properly national masculinity.[95] By the end of the 19th century, while "*al-riyada* could still be used to refer to a kind of psychic and spiritual disciplining, it was well on its way to being reconfigured to connote exclusively a corporeal location of self-disciplining."[96]

Nationalists in Iraq drew similarly on Islamic discourses of self-fashioning in their arguments for new techniques of governmentality that would help constitute modern gendered citizens. But this "reconfiguration" of Islam often involved a careful and explicit disavowal of

[93] Al-Salman, "Ara' fi Islah wa-Tahsin al-Ta`lim al-Niswi," 94.
[94] Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, 14. See also El Shakry, "Youth as Peril and Promise"; idem, "Schooled Mothers and Structured Play: Child Rearing in Turn-of-the-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*,, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).
[95] Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, 24, 73.
[96] Ibid., 87.

Islamic pedagogies that were seen as insufficiently corporeal, or, to be more precise, that were organized around a corporeality that was insufficiently economic and insufficiently gendered. In fact, Islamic technologies of the self have never lacked corporeal dimensions and have not by any means been purely "psychic and spiritual." As just one example, prayer—the cornerstone of Islamic disciplines—is not even intelligible without its corporeal dimension, in contrast to modern Christian understandings of prayer. Jacob's terminology is thus not quite accurate. Yet the historical "reconfiguration" of Islamic disciplines that he identifies in Egypt, and which is also discernible in Iraq, was indeed oriented around a very different kind of corporeality.[97]

In 1953, the editors of *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* invoked the familiar pragmatist refrains that modern education could not be based on repetition, memorization, or "learning by heart," all well-established codes for criticizing Islamic pedagogical exercises. The editors explained that such pedagogies were not merely useless but actively harmful for a nation seeking to develop in the modern era, because they "killed [students'] capabilities" and worked to create "a dependent, weak generation [*jil ittikali mutakhadhil*] unable to stand on its own feet in the battlefield of life."[98] What a developing nation required were pedagogical approaches "appropriate to the awakening of the nation in the agricultural and industrial domains" and that would foster young people's "physical and psychological development according to the differences between the two

[97] On the bodily orientations of medieval Islamic (and Christian) pedagogical disciplines, which in many ways were *undermined* during the modern era as religion came to be understood on many levels as a set of beliefs rather than a collection of practices, see Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). The relationship of the process analyzed by Jacob to the parallel one described by Asad and other scholars, in which religion on some level becomes increasingly associated with pure "belief," might warrant further examination. There are parallels in the West, notwithstanding the historical decline of corporeality in some Christian practices such as prayer—for example, the prevalence of Christian discourses in bodily centered modern disciplinary programs for youth such as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts.

[98] Editors, "al-Ta`lim al-Niswi fi al-`Iraq bayn al-Ams wa-l-Yawm [Women's Education in Iraq Between Yesterday and Today]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, nos. 1–2 (September 1953): 3.

sexes."[99] Formerly decentralized Islamic ethical disciplines of self-fashioning were not merely reconfigured in these nationalist and statist discourses, as they have been throughout the history of the Islamic discursive tradition in response to changing times and circumstances.[100] They were transformed almost beyond recognition into state-centered pedagogies designed to inculcate a new kind of productive national morality that was also highly gendered.[101]

A primary difference between the interwar efforts to expand domestic education for future mothers and the ministry's home economics campaign of the early 1950s was that the latter almost exclusively targeted adolescent girls and young women at the secondary and college levels, whose school experiences had not been significantly affected by the earlier reforms of the curriculum. This was in part because the number of young women pursuing secondary and higher education in the 1930s was low, and most of these were daughters of the country's highest ruling elites and were unlikely to foster significant social disorder. As the girls' secondary schools expanded their enrollment to the middle and lower-middle classes, especially from the mid-1940s on, they increasingly began raising pedagogical and disciplinary issues similar to those of the boys' schools. The spread of communism in girls' secondary schools was one of the more troubling signs of this. Al-Bazzaz blamed "materialist philosophies" (i.e., Marxism) for propagating the notion among Iraqi schoolgirls that merely "acknowledging a woman's femininity" was a "sign of reactionism and backwardness," an effort to "enslave" women and "destroy her rights."[102]

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[99] Ibid., 4.
[100] See Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).
[101] See also Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), chap. 7; Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
[102] Al-Bazzaz, "Tathqif al-Mar'a," 45–46.

The association of communism with women's rights and sexual freedoms was made in many different kinds of discourse for many different ends. Various commentators, including communists in later decades, have blamed this association on the region's first Marxists, who are said to have imported and propagated European Marxist ideas on women and the family in the early years of the 20th century without regard for the cultural context of Islamic societies.[103] It is likely that this played a role in the association. It is also likely that the evasive and condescending references to "appropriate historical stages" that many mid-century Arab communist parties invoked in an effort to stifle public discussion of these issues failed to have their desired effect. Nevertheless, in Iraq, the association does not actually seem to have been very sensitive to what Iraqi communists did or did not say on the topic at any given moment. Such discourses should be situated within the local-historical context in which they are deployed rather than assumed to reflect the same abiding civilizational divide in every time and place; that is, they should be seen as performative for particular audiences. For example, Joseph Massad has argued that, in Jordan in the 1960s, such attacks reflected a consistent state strategy of "feminizing the enemy" as a way of "mobilizing the army" for the suppression of internal dissent, and that they were part of the state's larger effort to homogenize and instrumentalize Islam. In order to be legible, they were made in the name of cultural authenticity, while in practice they drew heavily on "prevailing Western notions at the time about communists and subversives."[104]

According to Batatu, the question of women's rights was *the* critical issue for the earliest stirrings of the Iraqi communist movement: "It was…unheralded, unnoticed and in feminist

[103] See, e.g., Joel Beinin, *Was the Red Flag Flying There? Marxist Politics and the Arab-Israeli Conflict in Egypt and Israel, 1948-1965* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 104–105.
[104] Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 210.

clothing that 'Marxism' first entered into the mental world of Iraqis." He asserts that the country's first proto-communist study group and its newspaper, *al-Sahifa*—both established by Iraqi Marxist intellectual Husayn al-Rahhal—landed in a major public controversy in 1924 not because of their radical class analysis but because of their critique of women's status in Iraqi society. When counter-attacks were launched in the name of Islam, Batatu asserts: "They were not overawed. They questioned Islam's very foundations by explaining all religions in natural terms. This was more than traditional opinion could take, and As-Sahifah was shut down."[105] Batatu argues that public punishment of the country's first Marxist intellectuals for their positions on these issues resulted in the movement's avoidance of them for the next several decades. "The lesson once absorbed was not easily forgotten. In subsequent decades one would in vain search for a definitive Communist expression on religion…The Communists had apparently come to the conclusion that religion could best be combated by being ignored."[106] The ICP not only attempted to minimize controversial debates on religion within its ranks but also seems to have become increasingly reticent on the question of women's liberation throughout the 1940s and 1950s.[107]

[105] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 395.
[106] Ibid., 410.
[107] While more research into the question is needed, it seems that this may have especially been the case after 1948, when the ICP's renowned leader Yusuf Salman Yusuf ("Fahd") was hanged and its infrastructure decimated by the Hashimite state in response to the Wathbah rebellion of that year. Fahd is remembered for his outspokenness on women as "citizens with political, social, and economic rights equal to those of men." Orit Bashkin, "Representations of Women in the Writings of the Intelligentsia in Hashemite Iraq, 1921-1958," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4 (Winter 2008): 68. In 1941, Fahd also appointed the only woman to serve on the ICP's Central Committee prior to the Ba`thist era, Amina al-Rahhal, the sister of Husayn al-Rahhal. See Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 494. There was not a single female member on the Central Committee during the decade of the party's greatest mobilization after 1948 or the "revolutionary era" of 1958-63. The official ICP platform never wavered on the question of women's political and economic equality, and its discourse often blamed the current system for Iraqi women's degraded status. Moreover, as we have seen, the party's active recruitment of female members and affiliates greatly expanded throughout these years, with considerable success. Nevertheless, by the time of the 1958 revolution the party was also producing a notable and often moralizing family-centered discourse on women and seemed to be downplaying its official position on equal rights in all spheres. Such discourse was consistent with global trends at the time.

Yet it would be a mistake to presume that the leaders of the Iraqi Communist Party had much control over the public or private discourse and affective registers that developed in Iraq around communism, gender roles, and sexual disorder/liberation. Gender, after all, as Lisa Rofel writes, "serves as one of the central modalities through which modernity is imagined and desired."[108] As the country's premier "utopian," future-oriented political ideology, and as a movement with a broad following among the country's youth, communism in Iraq was bound to be associated with gender-related imaginings and desires, both positive and negative, and most of these had little to do with the charters, platforms, and public pronouncements of the ICP's Central Committee. Rather, they reflected the degree to which "the woman question" in Iraq had become "an important mode of political and social identification. It was used to denote whether one belonged to the left or the right, to the religious or the secular camp, and how one conceptualized Iraqi law, independence, and electoral structures."[109] Much as Deniz Kandiyoti writes of male reformers in early republican Turkey, many young male leftists in Iraq found women's liberation to be "a powerful vehicle for the expression of their own restiveness with social conventions they found particularly stultifying and archaic."[110] Iraqi novelist Khalid Kishtainy's recollections of how he and his friends took to haunting Kallachia, the brothel neighborhood of Baghdad, in the early 1950s, give a vivid sense of these "gendered yearnings" of many male members of his generation, and also of their association with communism—an association apparently so casual and obvious as to need no explanation:

> We used to stroll into the nooks and crannies of the old lanes reciting passages from the *Communist Manifesto* and verses from Bahr al-`Ulum's poem on the prostitute's grave. There was the painter who paid a black whore only to sit for him. There was the story writer who invited a blind one to a meal of kebab only to

[108] Rofel, *Other Modernities*, 19.
[109] Bashkin, "Representations of Women," 55.
[110] Deniz Kandiyoti, "End of Empire: Islam, Nationalism and Women in Turkey," in *Women, Islam and the State*, ed. Deniz Kandiyoti (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 26.

> hear her story…There was the real political writer who actually went to bed with Zahra and came out crying.[111]

As Phebe Marr notes, the most popular themes in the protest literature of the 1950s "Baghdad Renaissance," much of which was penned by communists and leftist fellow travelers, involved rebellions against "the tyranny of the family, the customary status of women, and the individual's alienation from government and society."[112] Peter Gran goes further, asserting that throughout the whole course of 20th-century Iraqi history, across the entire political-ideological spectrum: "From works on women in Iraq, from Iraqi works of literary criticism, and from general works on Iraqi culture," one finds politics reflected "in the struggle over the ideology of the family."[113]

The "crisis of girls' education" in postwar Iraq was deeply implicated in another crisis increasingly pervasive in government and public discourse—the "crisis of marriage" (*azmat al-zawaj*), referring to an abhorrence for conjugal life that had purportedly reached epidemic proportions among young Iraqi adults of both sexes and all classes, but most of all among those who were recent graduates of the public school system. In response to the crisis, the Ministry of Education launched a "war on singlehood" (*muharabat al-`uzuba*). The campaign was partly furthered by the expansion of home economics requirements in girls' secondary schools, which would help prepare Iraqi girls for the demands and orient them toward the pleasures of modern conjugality, domesticity, and motherhood. But ministry officials also increasingly called on the central government to implement reforms that went beyond the classroom. One educator wrote that since the nation develops only if the family develops, and deteriorates if the family

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[111] Khalid Kishtainy, *The Prostitute in Progressive Literature* (London: Allison & Busby, 1982), 10.
[112] Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 149. For a more extended analysis of these themes in Iraqi literature during the Hashimite era, see Bashkin, "Representations of Women."
[113] Peter Gran, "Organization of Culture and the Construction of the Family in the Modern Middle East," in *Women, the Family, and Divorce Laws in Islamic History*, ed. Amira El Azhary Sonbol (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 68.

deteriorates, it had become necessary to enact legal reforms that would counter the marriage crisis by inhibiting the "anarchy of divorce" (*fawda al-talaq*), restricting polygamy, criminalizing prostitution, and providing incentives for marriage, such as imposing higher taxes on unmarried adults.[114] He explained that the existing Islamic family laws and courts operative in Iraq were no longer sufficient because the people's conscience had "weakened" as the anarchy of divorce and polygamy spread among them; the state therefore needed to intervene in the law and take active steps to "return the people to the limits established by Islam."[115] During the immediate postwar years, the movement for a unified, state-controlled law of personal status intensified. It culminated in a draft law presented to the Chamber of Deputies in 1946/47; this law was not passed, but it formed the basis for the 1959 personal status law promulgated after the revolution, to be examined in chapters 5 and 6.[116]

The term "marriage crisis" or its equivalent in other languages to describe a perceived society-threatening antipathy to marital life and/or prevalence of divorce/promiscuity/polygamy has appeared as a preoccupation of reformers across a wide range of historical contexts, from 15th-century Saxony to 19th-century Russia to the 21st-century United States.[117] But the heyday of marriage crises was undoubtedly the 20th century, when their number seems to correspond pretty closely to the number of nation-states and nationalist movements on the planet.[118] Despite the

[114] `Abd al-Majid Hasan Wali, "Markaz al-Mara' fi al-Kiyan al-`A'ili [The Place of the Woman in the Family Entity]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 17, nos. 1–2 (September 1953): 78–81.
[115] Ibid.
[116] See Noga Efrati, *Women in Iraq: Past Meets Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), esp. chapter 2.
[117] Joel Francis Harrington, *Reordering Marriage and Society in Reformation Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 25; Barbara Alpern Engel, *Breaking the Ties That Bound: The Politics of Marital Strife in Late Imperial Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Lisa Duggan and Nan D. Hunter, *Sex Wars: Sexual Dissent and Political Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 223.
[118] For the tip of the iceberg on 20th-century national marriage crises, see Ellen Fleischmann, *The Nation and Its"New" Women: The Palestinian Women's Movement 1920-1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 78–85; Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 220; Parvin Paidar, *Women and the*

apparently global reach of the 20th-century "marriage crisis" phenomenon, that is, each particular marriage crisis seems to have strictly unfolded within its own national-territorial borders, as if marriage and the nation-state had become so intertwined that the concept of a "global marriage crisis" would be nonsensical.

Hanan Kholoussy's recent study of the Egyptian marriage crisis of the 1930s interprets increasingly pervasive condemnations of "bachelorhood" as largely symbolic discourses in the Egyptian nationalist struggle against British colonialism.

> When Egyptians were discussing this crisis in the press, they were not simply voicing their concerns about the purported greater prevalence of bachelorhood. They were also using marriage as a metaphor to critique larger socioeconomic and political turmoil and to envision a postcolonial nation free of social ills. Marriage was not just a political act and a patriotic duty for these Egyptians; it was also a microcosm of their nation.[119]

No doubt marriage crises work symbolically in many ways. Yet I would suggest that there is never anything "simple" about nationalist concerns around marriage and singlehood. In postwar Iraq, the war against singlehood was indeed seen by educators and other reformers as part of the struggle for genuine political sovereignty and economic development. And it may well have had little connection to an empirical increase in the number of single people in Iraqi society, as Kholoussy suggests in the case of Egypt.[120] But it does not seem on those grounds to have been very metaphorical, nor does it seem to have had much to do with communicating Iraq's

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Political Process in Twentieth-Century Iran (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 285; Dagmar Herzog, *Sex After Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 86; Malgorzata Fidelis, *Women, Communism, and Industrialization in Postwar Poland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Brett Lindsay Shadle, *"Girl Cases": Marriage and Colonialism in Gusiiland, Kenya, 1890-1970* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2006); Christina Simmons, *Making Marriage Modern: Women's Sexuality from the Progressive Era to World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[119] Hanan Kholoussy, *For Better, For Worse: The Marriage Crisis that Made Modern Egypt* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 1–2. On Egypt's 1930s marriage crisis, see also Margot Badran, *Feminists, Islam, and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 136–39.

[120] I have not researched this question, however, which would not be easy.

modernity or capacity for sovereignty to a general (Western?) audience. Rather, its aim was to *normalize* marriage, to transform singlehood from an exceptional state that some people live in by choice or circumstance into a psychological deviance and a social problem.

This is why the "war against singlehood" was waged most concertedly by the Iraqi Ministry of Education rather than by any other ministry. It was not the aim of these reformers to encourage students to marry; on the contrary, the expansion of public secondary education depended on delaying marriage beyond the age of adolescence. But it *was* their aim to cultivate in youth the capabilities and subjectivities required for the future construction of healthy conjugal families and to normalize the temporal stages of psychological development: to make marriage a stabilizing marker between adolescence and maturity and a demonstration of the future citizen's commitment to the nation's future. In addition to being a requirement of economic development, it was part of the broader effort by education officials to discipline politically deviant youth who had transgressed the role assigned to them as the vanguard of the nation and the embodiments of its unity.

Epilogue: Generational Time and Decolonization

Debates around "the new generation" and "the young *effendiyya*" in interwar and postwar Iraq might be brought into more productive conversation with emerging scholarship on "youth" in other regions of the Middle East. Yet this latter body of scholarship as well can be plagued by the difficulty of breaking from linear modernization narratives. Leyla Neyzi writes of nationalist discourses on youth in republican Turkey: "the notion that educated youth would take the lead in the construction of modern nation-states emerged out of Enlightenment ideas about progress."[121] Earlier in this chapter, I made an arguably similar point that the emergence of horizontal age

[121] Leyla Neyzi, "Object or Subject? The Paradox of Youth in Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 413.

identifications in Iraq can be traced in part to European Enlightenment conceptions of historical time. Yet one risk of this kind of analysis is its potential for constructing "youth" as a temporally and spatially homogeneous attribute of "modernity," which like other attributes of modernity is seen as emerging in late 18th-century Europe before making its plodding, predictable way across time and space until it finally conquers the globe in more or less the same shape it was in when it departed Europe a century or two previously. To the extent it does so, this framework likewise fails to break with the spatialization of time on which Westernization/modernization paradigms are based.

In contrast to a linear-historical understanding of the category of "youth," scholars of the 20th-century United States generally recognize World War II as marking a watershed, a radical temporal rupture, in American conceptions and experiences of youth, during which adolescence and early adulthood were reconstituted simultaneously as a period of rebellion against social and cultural mores and as a period of non-productive consumerism helping to fuel the new postwar Fordist economy.[122] Historical scholarship on youth, as on most other things, has been conducted primarily within a national framework. But a recent work by Leerom Medovoi, while remaining very much within a U.S.-centric framework, makes a suggestive argument that points to the potential value of transnational studies of constructions of youth in the interwar and postwar eras as well as to the necessity of breaking from Westernization/modernization paradigms in historical studies of "youth" in the 20th-century Middle East.

[122] This dual reconstitution is behind a long-running debate in the historiography on youth in the U.S. and western European countries. To greatly oversimplify the discussion, the basic point of dispute is over whether young people in such contexts should be understood as likely agents of political resistance and historical transformation due to their relative freedom from concerns over how to make a living and manage a family, or instead whether their social role in the national economy as consumers and/or more simply as nonproducers necessarily limits their capacity to effect social and political change. For early examples of these two positions see, respectively, Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, eds., *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (Abingdon, U.K.: Routledge, 2003); Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

Medovoi argues that the postwar American construction of "the teenager" as a rebellious figure marked a major shift from interwar American conceptions of "the adolescent," one that was very much connected to the start of the Cold War or what Medovoi calls the "age of the three worlds." The "three worlds imaginary" of the postwar era was necessarily a "key turning point" in conceptions of adolescence, because "it envisioned the colonized as having finally begun the transition out of nonage…Within this network of meanings, the first and second worlds benightedly represented, in turn, rival paths to modernization between which the nations of the third world would have to choose as they passed through national adolescence toward maturity." In its world-historical battle to convince these nations to choose its path, the United States "transfigured itself" into their "historical precursor." Thus emerged the "Cold War fantasy of a postcolonial revolutionary American character."[123]

> The adolescent, as a figure who represented the autonomous character of American identity, on both the national and individual levels, offered an imaginative remedy…For emergent nations seeking to define themselves as independent of their former colonizers, what could be a better antidote to the geopolitically deleterious image of a "hypnotized consumership" or an "other-directed" mass than a young America, endlessly restaging its own revolutionary moment in a struggle to assert its emergent identity?

It was "within this field of ideological forces" that the young American rebel made its historical debut as the "nodal point" around which U.S. Cold War identity was assembled.[124] The "geopolitically vital question" of the age then became: "would the new freeborn children of the world recognize their likeness to America?"[125]

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[123] Leerom Medovoi, *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 11–13.
[124] Ibid., 23–24.
[125] Ibid., 13. Medovoi is actually paraphrasing a question that he says the American psychologist Erik Erikson implicitly asked at the time. Yet Medovoi also seems to accept the wording of the question as the basis of his own argument.

It is here that Medovoi's analysis falters somewhat. His posing of the question in this way arguably highlights what is often more implicit in his account: that the location of original agency in the postwar rupture in U.S. constructions of adolescence seems to remain firmly within the United States, in spite of the central importance his own argument assigns to global decolonization struggles in leading to that rupture. Somehow the Third World remains the place where people can only respond to new ideas developed elsewhere; here, the United States is the original to which the world's newly decolonized nations—by "recognizing their likeness" to that original—can only, at best, become dependent copies. Yet if we were to accept the historical sequence of events, along with the connections between them, that Medovoi himself lays out, we could easily turn his formulation of agency on its head—or rather put it back on its feet—and conclude that decolonization struggles exploded the terms of the old European colonial analogy between the human life-cycle and the maturation of nations, and thereby *forced* the reconfiguration of *both* of those narratives within the self-understanding of "the West" as the time/space of maturity, emancipation, and sovereignty. The "geopolitically vital" question of the Cold War might then become: "Could either of the new superpowers battling for control and influence over the world's newly decolonized nations recognize or produce within themselves a convincing likeness to those nations?" Following Medovoi, one answer might be the transformation of the interwar American adolescent as either a dependent (white and middle-class) or delinquent (black or lower-class) figure into the postwar American teenager as a rebellious race- and class-transgressing figure (the "white nigger" famously identified by Norman Mailer) struggling to realize his identity and sovereignty vis-a-vis a morally and politically bankrupt adult world no longer considered worthy of emulation.[126]

[126] Incidentally, reposing the question in this way might open up other ways around what Medovoi criticizes as the analytical cul-de-sac of scholarly debates centering on whether or not the rebellion of white middle-class

From the perspective of Middle East historiography, reposing Medovoi's question in this way might help to free studies of youth—as a category of discourse as well as experience—from the analytical terms of dependency (first the West, then the rest) that still frame so much of the scholarship. Far from an argument about "alternative modernities," this approach might ask how post-Enlightenment universal categories of human and national maturity began to be reworked on the ground, in local struggles of decolonization, by those who had long been placed on the side of immaturity, nonage, and dependency.

Whether the ambivalent 20th-century figure of adolescent-as-political-rebel originated first among the world's colonizers or its colonized might be a question for future comparative research; it is possible that the standard answer has been more assumed than established. As we have seen, Medovoi locates one form of its emergence in the U.S. squarely in the 1950s, while El Shakry and others have identified Middle Eastern appearances of an arguably similar figure in the 1930s. As El Shakry argues, the Egyptian nationalist construction of youth as an "insurgent subject of politics" drew freely on contemporary Western disciplines of adolescent psychology, and were similarly ambivalent about whether the subject thus constituted might signify "peril or promise." Yet this young nationalist figure, and the ambivalences that already cohered around it in the interwar period, seems different in important ways from what Medovoi describes as the American interwar construction of the innocent white child as the embodiment of the nation's distant future and the inner-city adolescent as a psychosexual delinquent menacing that same

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European and American youth against what they saw as a racist and hypocritical world of postwar domesticity was "genuine" or not. It seems more than plausible that such youth could have been genuinely disillusioned by the increasingly obvious failure of their elders to sustain a global colonial system constructed on racism and on developmental metaphors of maturity at the same time that their youthful rebellion was incorporated into emerging Cold War discourses struggling to salvage aspects of that colonial system on new terms. Here I will just note Medovoi's observation that the "psychopolitical" figure of the young American "bad boy" rebel that emerged in the 1950s, epitomized by James Dean in *Rebel without a Cause*, was driven, more often than not, by hyper-masculine shame and disgust at the impotence of his father. Medovoi himself does not directly connect this insight to his argument about decolonization.

future. It would seem that the "promise" and the "peril" of youth in this latter discourse resided in entirely different young bodies, unlike both the "inherently doubled" interwar figure of Egyptian nationalist youth and the American good-bad teenage rebel of the Cold War era.

In any case, I would suggest that Middle Eastern nationalist discourses and experiences of "youth" in this period *could not* have been merely an adoption or re-enactment of Euro-American discourses and experiences, for the simple reason that the two were differently located within the universal spatio-temporal narratives aligning national, racial, and individual-psychological development. The battle between British and Iraqi education officials over the corporal punishment of schoolboys in the 1920s with which I began this chapter may well have been a harbinger of the coming global explosion of these narratives.

Chapter 5

Revolutionary Time and Wasted Time:
The Policing of Families and the Depoliticization of Society, 1958-63

> Revolution assumes a transcendental significance; it becomes a regulative principle of knowledge, as well as of the actions of all those drawn into revolution…Even the state was swept into the grasp of "Revolution," so that it becomes quite understandable that the neologism *contrerevolutionnaire* was translated into German around 1800 as *Staatsfiend*, enemy of the state. Whoever had respect for the state had to be "revolutionary"…
>
> -Reinhart Koselleck[1]

> Should we reach a bend
> We would think it the end of our suffering
>
> -Nazik al-Mala'ika, 1948[2]

On the morning of July 14, 1958, twenty-four year-old Mubejel Baban woke early to the cries of her baby. Like many Baghdadis during the hot summer months, she had been sleeping on the roof with the rest of her household. She and the wife of her husband's brother descended the stairs of their father-in-law's house together. While nursing their infants in the kitchen, they heard a sudden explosion and what sounded like the clap of gunshots. Mubejel exclaimed: "It's the king's palace!" Her sister-in-law laughed and rolled her eyes: "You dream," she replied.[3]

[1] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 49–51.
[2] Quoted in and translated by Nadje Sadig al-Ali, *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* (London: Zed Books, 2007), 71. For the original poem in Arabic, see Nazik al-Mala'ika, *al-A`mal al-Shi`riyya al-Kamila [Complete Works of Poetry]* (Baghdad: al-Majlis al-A`la li-l-Thaqafa, 2002), 1:481–82.
[3] Mubejel Baban, Interview, November 27, 2007, London.

Indeed, Mubejel Baban had often dreamed of such an event. But on that morning she had other reasons to suspect that the commotion might be coming from the palace. Like many members of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), she and her husband had received a secret notice on July 12 calling for "great vigilance" and laying out the party's directives in the event of "a sudden emergency or in complicated circumstances," given the "critical posture of affairs" and "the possibilities of evolution from one moment to another."[4] They did not know exactly what to expect or when, but they knew to expect something soon. The "Free Officers" of the Iraqi military who were at that moment overthrowing the Hashimite monarchy, established thirty-seven years earlier under British Mandate rule, were not communists. But they had been in contact with the ICP, along with the other political parties that had joined together in 1957 to form the United National Front, a broad nationalist coalition committed to dismantling the monarchical regime and its British life-support system. In addition to the ICP, these included the (liberal-bourgeois) National Democratic Party (NDP), the (conservative-Arabist) Independence Party, and the (socialist-Arabist) Ba`th Party. The leaders of all four parties had prepared for the coup in their various ways. The strategy of the ICP—by far the most popular and well-organized political party in Iraq, albeit entirely underground during the monarchical period—was to bring its thousands of members and fellow travelers into the streets at the first sign of the coup.

Mubejel left her baby with the family and rushed out of the house with her husband. Half a century later, she would still remember it as the "best day of my life."[5] In Hanna Batatu's description:

> Members of the party began issuing from their homes or underground hideaways. The movement increased from minute to minute until, about 8:00 A.M., the whole

[4] Cited in and translated by Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 803–804. For the full text of the original directive, see *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 18, 1959.
[5] Mubejel Baban, Interview, November 27, 2007, London.

> active following of the party was on the streets. Nationalists of all hues had also come out. Before very long the capital overflowed with people—shargawiyyas [hut-dwellers] and others—many of them in a fighting mood and united by a single passion: "Death to the traitors and agents of imperialism!" It was like a tide coming in, and at first engulfed and with a vengeance [Prime Minister] Nuri's house and the royal palace, but soon extended to the British consulate and embassy and other places…When in the end, after nightfall, the crowds ebbed back, the statue of Faisal, the symbol of the monarchy, lay shattered, and the figure of General Maude, the conqueror of Baghdad, rested in the dust outside the burning old British Chancellery.[6]

The country's three most visible political leaders—the young monarch Faysal II, the crown prince `Abdallah, and the widely despised prime minister Nuri al-Sa`id—were killed, as were the other royal family members living in the palace. But resistance to the coup was astonishingly flimsy by all accounts. After years of successfully repressing nationalist and communist opposition in the cities and peasant and tribal uprisings in the countryside—using ever more brutal means that included mass arrests and detentions for political crimes, systematic use of torture, and the killing of political prisoners—in the end the Iraqi Hashimite monarchy simply fell, as historian Uriel Dann put it, "like a house of cards."[7]

Scholars agree that the massive outpouring of people into the streets of Baghdad on July 14 had "a tremendous psychological effect. It planted fear in the heart of the supporters of the monarchy, and helped to paralyze their will and give the coup the irresistible character that was its surest bulwark."[8] It was probably also a significant factor in dissuading the United States and Britain from intervening immediately in the course of events inside Iraq on behalf of their Hashimite Cold War allies.[9] Instead, they set themselves the more limited short-term objective of

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[6] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 804–805.
[7] Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem: A Political History, 1958-1963* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1969), 32. On the detainment, torture, and killing of political prisoners, see, for example, Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 690–93; Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 107–111.
[8] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 805.
[9] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 149.

containing revolutionary expectations within Iraq's borders. Thus, on July 15 U.S. troops landed in Lebanon, already destabilized by a political crisis of its own, and on July 17 British troops arrived in Jordan to bolster the understandably nervous Jordanian royal branch of the Hashimite family.[10] By then, the Iraqi monarchy had been abolished and replaced by the Republic of Iraq, which was being recognized by more of the world's governments every day, starting with the United Arab Republic and the countries of the socialist bloc.

Women, Revolution, and the Social Domain

On January 1, 1959, less than six months after the revolution, several thousand women convened for a march through the streets of Baghdad, ending at the Ministry of Defense. The march was organized by the communist "popular front" women's organization, Rabitat al-Difa` `an Huquq al-Mar'a (The League for the Defense of Women's Rights). The purpose of the march was to protest not the current Iraqi regime, still under the military rule of the Free Officers, but rather the monarchical regime of "the time gone by"—agents of which the women deemed responsible for the recent killing of a member of the Popular Resistance Forces (PRF), a civilian militia established to protect the new government against counter-revolutionary forces and filled with enthusiastic young communists of both sexes. Prominent among the protestors were "the widows of the martyrs, who fell in Baghdad streets during various patriotic uprisings, or those who died in prison." A second notable contingent was that of young female PRF members bearing arms. Some of the demonstrators carried a portrait of leading Free Officer and Iraq's new prime minister, `Abd al-Karim Qasim, while others waved portraits of martyrs or placards calling for

[10] See Wm. Roger Louis and Roger Owen, eds., *A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002).

the "immediate execution of the traitors and plotters."[11] Following the march, its organizers sent an appeal along the same lines to Qasim:

> Do you recall the atrocious crimes against our sons in the prisons of Baghdad and Kut on the people of Haj, Basrah, Kirkuk, Mosul, Najaf and elsewhere. We, the deceaseds' mothers, will never forget any of the black days of those traitors. Nor shall we ever forgive them…We, the women of Baghdad, will keep the fire burning in our hearts until we see the traitors' bodies hanging from the gallows. The blood of our martyrs exhorts you, Karim, to carry out the death sentences passed on the traitors by the People's Court.[12]

The women's vengeful and bloody demands seem to have disconcerted at least one observer of the march, a U.S. diplomat who quipped in his report to Washington that this was "an interesting stage in the emancipation of Iraqi women."[13]

In other reports, both inside and outside Iraq, the women's demands were de-emphasized or simply ignored and focus was placed instead on the purportedly unprecedented nature of an all-female public demonstration in Iraq and/or the Arab world. This framing of the march became more prevalent with the passing of time. At the end of January, the *Illustrated London News* published a letter to the editor from the Iraqi Ministry of Development that boasted of the women's march as a sign of the progress the July revolution had introduced in Iraq: "the women of Baghdad, some 50,000 including students, doctors, teachers, housewives, etc. took part in the first female demonstration in the country in support of the present government."[14] Within six months, the narrative of the march as a momentous "first" marking the dramatic entry of Iraqi females into the public sphere had almost completely eclipsed the memory of its declared political purpose and violent language. As a July 1959 article in the communist *Iraqi Review* breathlessly recalled: "It was the first demonstration of its kind in the history of the whole Arab

[11] "Women's Procession," *Iraq Times*, January 4, 1959, 3.
[12] Ibid.
[13] David Frizlan to Secretary of State, January 5, 1959, RG 84/787, USNA.
[14] Sayid J.S. Hannoush, Iraqi Ministry of Development, Letter to the Editor of *Illustrated London News*, republished in *Iraq Times*, January 25, 1959.

people. It was greater than words can express. The streets were silent…Never before had the Iraqi people witnessed such an event."[15] State officials and their communist supporters thus constructed a memory of the Baghdad march not only as the moment of Iraqi women's entry into historical time but also as a sign of Iraq's own entrance onto the stage of modernity. That the Ministry of Development in particular went out of its way to promote this narrative abroad points to the Qasimite regime's engagement with a global idiom of development/underdevelopment that indexed a nation's modernity by the presence of its females in public, by their education and their work in fields related to medicine, hygiene, and children ("students, doctors, teachers, housewives, etc."), and by their simultaneously apolitical or at least non-oppositional stance ("in support of the present government").

The politics of the communist women and young PRF militants who organized and led the January 1959 Baghdad women's march are effectively forgotten in this reconstruction—a forgetting that the women themselves had arguably encouraged with the temporal-distancing move that located their political opponents in the "time gone by"[16]—yet remain as an uneasy undercurrent threatening the stability of the official narratives. The gradual taming of the march in official memory signaled the Qasimite regime's increasing efforts to domesticate and depoliticize the revolutionary movements that had ensured the success of the 1958 coup but then posed a threat to the new ruling elite. It also points to how these efforts were linked to women's occupation of an expanding space at the intersection of the private and public spheres, which Jacques Donzelot calls the space of "the social." This domain can not be conceptualized through a binary analytical framework of public and private spheres,

[15] "Iraqi Women on the March," *Iraqi Review* 1, no. 9 (July 30, 1959): 19. The *Iraqi Review* was the weekly English-language supplement to the ICP daily *Ittihad al-Sha`b.*
[16] On temporal-distancing, see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

> since on the contrary it leads to a new hybrid form of the public and the private, and itself produces a repartition, a novel interlacing of interventions and withdrawals of the state, of its charges and discharges…Donzelot asks how the social takes form, reacting on other sectors, inducing new relationships between the public and the private; the judicial, the administrative, and the customary; wealth and poverty; the city and the country; medicine, the school, and the family. We are shown how it cuts across and reshapes previously existing or independent divisions, providing a new field for the forces already present.[17]

The social "is located at the intersection of all these little lines," and the "milieu on which these lines act" is the family; "the rise of the social and the crisis of the family are thus the twofold political effect" of the same forces.[18] Critical to the emergence of the social is medicine and hygiene; this was already true in the Hashimite era, as shown in previous chapters, but after the July revolution it took on greatly enhanced force. In a process that has resonances with Donzelot's account of sociopolitical turbulence in 19th-century France, in revolutionary-era Iraq "the points of authoritarianism, the points of reform, the points of resistance and revolution, come face to face around this new stake, 'the social,' where medicine combines with the state to foster 'hygiene,' in several, sometimes opposing, ways that invest and reorganize the family."[19] This analysis of the emergence of the social domain is more nuanced than many narratives of the expansion of state power in the modern era and its gradual penetration into the family, in part because the former both rejects the public/private binary and recognizes that state interventions in the family do not unfold through a universal and unilinear process but are often reactions to sociopolitical forces and movements outside the state and must negotiate with those forces.[20]

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[17] Gilles Deleuze, "Foreword," Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), x.
[18] Ibid., x–xi.
[19] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, xiv.
[20] The historical narrative of the expansion of state power has been important in recent scholarship critical of "the modernization narrative" of women's and gender history in the Middle East. While producing important critiques, in some uses the new narrative risks merely turning the older one on its head, making the modernization process morally negative rather than morally positive.

This process worked differently for the educated middle classes and for the working urban and rural poor in Iraq, but in both class domains it was connected to the state's campaign to depoliticize the Iraqi public after the revolution. This involved efforts to introduce new kinds of spaces and habits that would have a stabilizing effect by defusing threats to the new political order posed by the already advanced dissolution of various social bonds in Iraq, especially those between tribal shaykhs and their tribespeople, landlords and peasants, and peasants and the land. These dissolutions, and more fundamentally the agrarian and other economic crises that caused them, played no small part in the coming of the revolution itself. But in order to implement the development plan that, it was hoped, would in the long term resolve the economic crises, state officials and other political leaders had to address the problem of the sociopolitical mobilities—or what Donzelot calls "the social promiscuities"—that these crises had already generated. Such mobilities were related not only to the dissolution of social bonds in the countryside but also to the health and vitality of certain other social bonds and habitations, including homosocial practices and spaces; political networks with long histories of effective underground mobilization, such as the cellular infrastructure of the ICP; the dense networks of slums surrounding Baghdad; and the unregulated street cultures of children. Efforts to counter the mobilities enabled by these "networks of solidarity" focused in no small part on the reconstitution of family life. Women of all classes were crucial to this process through their domestic work inside the home, while middle-class women were also indispensable for their social work at the intersection of the public and private spheres.

Family reform and the coalescence of a social field around the care of children were more than state rhetoric. They were enshrined, as I will show, in a range of laws passed during the first few years of the revolutionary era and in new social institutions and extensive housing projects

for the urban and rural poor. They were also promoted by all of Iraq's political commentators and public intellectuals, whether communist or Arabist, secular or religious, feminist or antifeminist, state or opposition. In some ways, the family, as Donzelot writes, "became the buttress at the foot of which all criticism stopped, the point of support from which demands were launched for the defense of and improvement of the standard of living."[21] Reproductive futurism—the construction of the child as embodying the "telos of the social order"—was the language in which such demands were made in public discourse across the political and ideological spectrum.[22] And it was not only a matter of similar language echoing across diverse political fields, but also one of active alliances and effective operations"; in particular, it was driven "by a decisive alliance between promotional feminism and moralizing philanthropy."[23] Yet, in revolutionary Iraq, the alliance between the state and feminism was far from a seamless one; it was riven with the same social and political instabilities that it had been formed to address and with new ones that it created.

The chapter will first show that for the first year or two after the July 14 revolution there was a broad consensus among Iraq's political forces not only on "development" as the mission of the revolution but also on the necessity—in the name of development—of "modernizing" the Iraqi family and improving women's status in both the domestic sphere and the social domain. I will connect this consensus to an unofficial pact between the Qasimite regime and the country's political parties—even as they engaged in serious and sometimes violent conflict over various other political questions—on the need to demobilize the popular strata, especially peasants and urban workers, in order to create a stable national space in which development could unfold. Diverse political actors and organizations stressed the need to combat "lethargy" or "stagnation"

[21] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families,* 5.
[22] Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 11.
[23] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families,* 36.

in the bodies and minds of the country's laborers; the recurring word they used for this physical and psychological condition was *jamud,* literally "a frozen state." At the same time, they agreed on the need to "suspend"—*tajmid*, from the same root as *jamud*, literally "to freeze"—various kinds of political mobilization. Thus, key NDP leaders called for the "*tajmid*" of all political party activity in the country, including that of the NDP, while the ICP announced the "*tajmid*" of class struggle in Iraq during the "present historical stage." In other words, the conquering of *jamud* (economic stagnation) was widely seen as depending on the enforcement of *tajmid* (political stagnation). All of Iraq's political forces, without exception, made these arguments in the language and rationalities of reproductive futurism and economic (under)development, that is, in the name of the child's and the nation's future. And almost all of them, with a few important exceptions, agreed that the urgent need to uproot *jamud* from the minds and bodies of the nation's citizens trumped any demands for political reform in the present—free elections, for example—that might undercut the stabilizing work of *tajmid* in its various forms. Sexual difference and family structure were seen as integral to both sides of this process, i.e., to the conquering of *jamud* and to the enforcement of *tajmid.*

Starting in early 1959, and accelerating considerably after January 1960, the consensus on the role of gender difference in the revolutionary project unraveled, revealing deep divisions in Iraqi society over questions of sexual equality, family law, and women's political activism. There were two main precipitating factors for this shift. One was the struggle over the December 1959 promulgation of the personal status law—or, more specifically, over its equal-inheritance clause. This law and the ensuing controversy will be examined in chapter 6. The other was a conflict over a rural literacy program for peasant women launched by the League for the Defense of Women's Rights, a conflict that overlapped with the intensifying struggles between the ICP

and the Ba`th Party and with the Qasimite regime's crackdown on the popular organizations that were controlled or strongly influenced by communists. The struggle over the literacy program has to my knowledge not been examined in the historical literature. But it was a central political battle in Iraq from mid-1959 through the end of 1960, expressed in a fiery war of words in the Ba`thist, liberal, and communist press as well as in several violent confrontations. Ultimately, it was used by the Qasimite regime to justify banning the ICP daily newspaper *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, by far the widest circulating periodical in the country.

I will argue that the literacy program of the communist women's league was seen by both the government and anti-communist political parties, especially the Ba`th, as violating the tacit terms of the alliance between the state and middle-class feminists to "familialize the popular strata," to borrow Donzelot's phrase, notwithstanding the league's own insistence that it did not violate them. Rather than propagating effective techniques for the "policing of families" in rural areas, the project was seen as exacerbating forms of "social promiscuity" and thus further enabling the "mobile networks of solidarity" that threatened Iraq's fragile political and economic order.[24] Exploring this conflict not only helps reveal connections between sexual difference, the regulation of families, and the demobilization of the popular strata in the revolutionary era, but also exposes some of the historical links between that attempted demobilization and the Qasimite regime's efforts to depoliticize oppositional intellectuals organized in political parties, especially the communists and the Ba`thists. These efforts seem to have been particularly difficult for the communists to effectively counter, even on the level of discourse, perhaps in part because they shared with the regime a commitment to the suspension of political conflict in the name of defending an already-known historical future of development.

[24] For these terms, see ibid., 40.

Revolutionary Time and Developmental Time

A British official working in Baghdad on July 14 later wrote, under a pseudonym, that "the Revolution, when it came, corresponded so closely to the opinion that had formed before, that everything that happened seemed, in its turn, to be what one had already been taught to expect."[25] Many other sources, both foreign and Iraqi, attest to the fact that Mubejel Baban's sister-in-law had identified a deeper phenomenon when she teased Mubejel for dreaming the revolution that had in fact already begun. The widely reported experience of the July revolution as *déjà vu* was based on its recognizability as a "future past,"[26] which was paradoxically the grounds on which it could be imagined as the inauguration of an entirely new time. *Al-`ahd al-ba'id* or *al-`ahd al-mubad*—"the time gone by" or "the bygone era"—quickly asserted itself as the familiar designation for the monarchical era, seemingly across all sectors of Iraqi public discourse, indicating the widespread sense of July 14, 1958 as an absolute temporal rupture in the nation's history.[27]

The experience of revolutionary time involved both the euphoria and the anxieties associated with the sense that "everything was now possible," as Albert Hourani described the mood pervading Iraqi society in the aftermath of July 14.[28] Yet in order to be identified as revolutionary time, the events of the coup had to inaugurate a series of other events whose outcome was already known. Specifically, there were two primary expectations that the Free

[25] Caractacus, *Revolution in Iraq: An Essay in Comparative Public Opinion* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1959), 8.
[26] Koselleck, *Futures Past*.
[27] These terms can be found almost anywhere in official discourse and the publications of Iraq's political parties in 1958-63. For one of many examples of their use by Shi`i `ulama', see Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, "al-Thawra=Hadm wa-Bina' [Revolution=Destruction and Rebuilding]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 2 (July 14, 1959): 4. For their use in government publications, see also Orit Bashkin, "Hybrid Nationalisms: *Waṭanī* and *Qawmī* Visions in Iraq Under ᶜAbd al-Karim Qasim, 1958-1961," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 293–312.
[28] Albert Hourani, "Forward," in *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958: The Old Social Classes Revisited*, ed. Robert Fernea and Wm. Roger Louis (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991), viii.

Officers had to fulfill in order to maintain the legitimacy of July 14 as the long-awaited revolution: "to liberate Iraq from the claws of the oligarchic monarchy and its creator, British imperialism; and to rebuild and reconstruct the nation by promoting social and economic development on behalf of its people."[29] The latter objective was in reality the primary one, for which the former was a prerequisite. The eventful and linearity-shattering experience of revolutionary time was clearly not on the same order as the stable, homogeneous forward movement of developmental time, even if the former was what enabled the latter. Reconciling the two times was a genuine challenge facing the Qasimite government and the country's political actors. But it was facilitated by the fact that "development" was an unassailable good in "revolutionary" Iraq, delimiting a strong framework of consensus within which other conflicts were waged or in the name of which they were repressed. For Qasim's regime, development was the trump card that could be endlessly deployed against all other, lesser, goods, such as "democracy." Safeguarding the future of the nation's children underwrote the moral unassailability of development.

Whether the concept of "development" was invoked by liberal entrepreneurs, state officials, secular or religious intellectuals, Arab nationalists, or communists, it was understood in Iraq, as elsewhere in the postwar world, in two different senses that were often conflated. On the one hand, it referred to capitalist development: the expansion of industrial production, the rise of a national consumer middle class. On the other hand, it referred to "the reduction or amelioration of poverty and material want" in the country; this sense implied a social and moral, rather than purely economic, form of development.[30] There were in fact two terms in Iraq for

[29] Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 111.
[30] See James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 15.

"development," and to a certain extent these were used to indicate an emphasis on one or the other of the two meanings. *I`mar* connoted "building" or "construction" and was used in a more strictly economic sense; the Ministry of Development was *Wizarat al-I`mar*, a title inherited from the monarchical era. But in the revolutionary period the word *tanmiyya* was more common and is closer to the English "development" in its sense of continuous, planned growth and progress. *Al-tanmiyya al-iqtisadiyya* was the usual term for "economic development" in the dual sense; a developing country was *dawla namiyya*, from the same root.[31]

The notion that these two senses might not be identical, or might even be directly opposed to each other, rarely entered into public discourse in Qasimite Iraq, in spite of the widespread popularity of Marxist thought and the generally negative view of European capitalism, which was linked to colonialism in all forms of Iraqi nationalist discourse. It is not that the differences between the two went unnoticed. Besides the debates that went on in the inner circles of the ICP over how capitalism could serve the interests of workers, the new regime acquired much of its legitimacy by distinguishing itself from the monarchy on the basis of its own attention to "social development"—education, health, and the provision of other social services—as equally important to the nation's true development, if not more so, than "economic planning." The budget created by Qasim's Ministry of Finance thus altered the ratio of oil proceeds that had been allocated to these two broad spheres from 30/70 in the "time gone by" to 50/50 after the revolution.[32] On a theoretical level, the tension between the two senses of "development" tended to be resolved by differentiating between the historical capitalist

[31] There were other words used in the revolutionary era to refer to the nation's forward movement in time that are sometimes translated into English as "development," including *taqaddum*, *tatawwur*, *tarqiyya*, and *numu*, but these tended to connote more general notions of linear-historical time rather than the specific postwar concept of planned comprehensive development, similar to the English "progress," "evolution," "growth," etc.
[32] Muhammad Hadid, *Mudhakkirati: al-Sira` Min Ajl al-Dimuqratiyya Fi al-`Iraq [My Memories: The Struggle for Democracy in Iraq]* (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 2006), 338–40. Hadid was a leading industrialist in Iraq and Qasim's minister of finance from 1958-60.

development of "the West"—unplanned, immoral, decadent—and the ideal of a more conscious, planned, and moral development now available to "developing" countries. In Islamic and Arab nationalist discourse, this distinction was often made in "civilizational" terms that distinguished between an essential Eastern morality and an equally essential Western immorality while carefully separating both from the technical-scientific requirements of development. Yet this discourse arguably shared some family resemblances with the globally dominant "secular" vision of development and underdevelopment in the postwar era, which posited that any nation's historical process of industrialization could be either unplanned and socially unhealthy or planned and socially healthy. While there were clearly different visions of what constituted socially healthy development on the "Western" and "Eastern" sides of the Cold War divide, and of how it could be achieved, the two were in full agreement on the most basic requirement: in order to be socially positive, to both foster national industry and produce healthy modern citizens, a 20th-century nation's development had to be *planned*.

Politics and the Race Against Time

The two competing forms of nationalism in Iraq in 1958 were Arabism and Iraqism.[33] The Arab nationalists, who were represented politically by the Ba`th and Independence parties, considered Iraq to be a province of the larger Arab nation, emphasized its artificial creation through British colonial imposition, and sought its unification with other Arab regions to the west. In particular, in 1958, they demanded its immediate merger with Jamal `Abd al-Nasir's United Arab Republic (UAR), created earlier that year through a merger of Egypt and Syria. On the Iraqist side were the ICP, the NDP, and the Qasimite regime following the purge of leading Arabist Free Officers

[33] For discussions of the intellectual, cultural, and political dimensions of these two forms of nationalist thought in Iraq, see Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*; idem, "Hybrid Nationalisms."

shortly after the coup. Most Iraqists did not foreclose the possibility of a future Arab nation-state but argued, on various grounds, that immediate merger with the UAR would be detrimental to the Iraqi people and that the first objective should be to build a truly sovereign and developed nation-state within Iraq's current territorial borders. The most vocal advocates of Iraqism in the early revolutionary years were the communists, but it also had strong support from capitalist manufacturers interested in protecting "national" industry, technocrats with an investment in the Iraqi bureaucracy, and Kurds, Christians, and Jews, who were often reluctant to become even smaller minorities and repelled by the exclusivist Sunni-Arab essentialism of many Arab nationalists.[34] Many Shi`i intellectuals did support the Arabist dream in this period, in spite of its implication of turning Iraq's Shi`a from a majority to a minority in a predominantly Sunni Arab nation, but the ICP attracted a larger proportion of Shi`a than did the Arab nationalist parties, at least until the former's decline after 1960.

To a certain extent, the Arabist/Iraqist distinction is a retrospective scholarly one, referring to two different ways of imagining a nation, i.e., an organism moving through a particular historical time within a particular geographical space. Contemporaries did not use any directly equivalent word for either "Arabist" or "Iraqist." However, the political distinction between the same two groups was very frequently made. The most neutral, and also the closest to the scholarly distinction, was probably that between *qawmiyyun* (nationalists, from *qawm*, nation), which referred to Arabists, and *wataniyyun* (nationalists or patriots, from *watan*, nation or country), which usually referred to Iraqists. But it was also common for the *qawmiyyun* to be distinguished more specifically from their primary political foes, the *shuyu`iyyun* (communists). Arab nationalists were known to use more derogatory terms for Iraqists, thus distinguishing, for example, between *qawmiyyun* and *iqlimiyyun* (regionalists or parochialists) or *shu`ubiyyun*, a

[34] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 112–19.

word with negative historical connotations of anti-Arab Shi`a/Persians that in contemporary Arabist discourse had become a convenient signifier for anything "from homoerotic poetry to communism."[35] The communists, not surprisingly, looked for more positive and unifying labels to describe themselves and those they considered their temporary liberal-bourgeois (and "Iraqist") allies, such as *dimuqratiyyun* (democrats).

In their arguments against the Arab nationalist parties, the communists argued that uniting different Arab economies, which were moving in different historical times, would inhibit the economic development of the more "backwards" or slower-moving entities: Iraq, namely, in relation to Egypt and Syria. The result would be an exploitative, semicolonial relationship rather than the emergence of viable, independent bourgeoisies capable of leading their respective nations to the next historical stage. Batatu provides an excellent summary of this argument as it was developed by the ICP's leading theoretician at the time, 'Amir 'Abdallah, using many of the latter's words:

> By virtue of differences in their material and cultural life, the various Arab countries "do not proceed at the same pace, either in the general movement of their evolution or in their march toward unity." They will, therefore, be ripe for union at different points of time. The forms of union will also, in each case, "vary in strength and degree of comprehensiveness," and ought to be "the most natural" in the given circumstances, that is, conducive to "the release of the utmost energy for the forward march of the particular Arab country and, consequently, of the entire Arab procession." These differing forms will not be rigid or immobile, but "will gradually grow into higher forms" and "draw closer to one another" until ultimately, under favorable international conditions, an "all-embracing Arab union" is attained.

`Abullah thus assumed, or at least claimed to assume, "that the Arab countries are all in the long run tending toward one common point—unity—and gave no thought to the likelihood of

[35] Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 171.

alternative or reverse directions."[36] This, asserts Batatu, ignores the most basic analytical precept of Marxism, that the movement of history is dialectical, and he thus concludes that the argument was made purely for "political" purposes, that is, to counter the Arabist demand for immediate union with the UAR. The real reason ICP leaders opposed union, in the view of Batatu and others, was rather simpler than their theoretical explication: they had witnessed the fate of first the Egyptian Communist Party and then the Syrian Communist Party under al-Nasir's rule, and they suspected that the shared interest of the Nasirites and Ba`thists in crushing the communist movement in Arab lands was a major motive behind the merger of Egypt and Syria to begin with.[37]

The ICP was undoubtedly, and for good reason, concerned about the anti-communist motivations of contemporary Arab nationalist parties and Arab governments, including that of al-Nasir. But its promotion of Iraqist nationalism after the July revolution was also in line with the contemporary world-communist doctrine that communist parties in colonized/underdeveloped countries should build an alliance with "their own" national bourgeoisie for the sake of capitalist development. As Samira Haj writes, "the key to [the ICP's] support of the preservation of a postcolonial Iraqi nation-state lay in the party's commitment to the theory of a two-stage revolution, socialist transformation being possible only after the full development of capitalism." The party's role was thus to support the "national" (i.e., Iraqi) bourgeoisie "in its historic mission of developing and modernizing the economy."[38]

Arabist discourse was as progressivist and future-directed as was that of the communists and liberals. Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, the well-known Palestinian artist and poet living in Baghdad,

[36] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 830.
[37] Indeed, there seems to be little else to explain the consent of the Syrian Ba`th Party to al-Nasir's condition for union that all Syrian political parties be dissolved: the forcible dismantling of the Syrian Communist Party was apparently worth the price to the Syrian Ba`thists of their own self-dissolution.
[38] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 116.

proclaimed of Arab nationalist thought in the postwar period: "The Arab imagination at the time was at the beginning of a wonderful awakening, possessing the desire to realize what was new and authentic, and what would give the Arab nation hope for a future that could transcend the decadence it had endured for more than seven hundred years."[39] In revolutionary-era Iraq, the communists and Arabists were equally fond of deploying the temporal-distancing tactic in order to defame their enemies by placing them in a past time. The ICP's *Ittihad al-Sha`b* frequently referred to Ba`thists simply as "the reactionaries" or "the traitors from the time gone by," while the Ba`thists accused the communists of being puppets of the very European colonialism that the revolution had already liberated the nation from.

The form of Arabism dominant in Iraq by 1958 was different from the Sharifian Arab nationalism that had been prevalent in parts of the Iraqi bureaucracy during the monarchical period, represented by intellectuals such as Sati` al-Husri. Orit Bashkin has shown how postwar Iraqi Arabism was transformed in numerous ways, especially in relation to the global contexts of the "Third Worldist" movement and the Cold War.[40] The new Arabists tended to be further to the left than their interwar precursors, as indicated, for example, by the Ba`th Party's platform of "Arab socialism." They also placed a stronger emphasis on development, in line with other political orientations of the era. The dream of a united Arab nation-state was no longer pursued for its own sake, but because it was the political prerequisite for true economic development. As Michel `Aflaq, the Syrian founder of the first Ba`th Party and one of Iraqi Arabism's leading intellectuals in the 1950s, succinctly expressed the new orientation: "Economic development is a

[39] Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, *Princesses' Street: Baghdad Memories*, trans. Issa J. Boullata (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2005), 80.
[40] Bashkin, "Hybrid Nationalisms."

clear and simple thing if we take the Arab nation as its unit."[41] Nevertheless, while believing that an Arab rather than Iraqi nation-state "ought to be the agent of a nationalist modernizing project," the Iraqi Ba`th and Independence parties, like the ICP and NDP, were initial allies of the Free Officers who carried out the anti-Hashimite coup. Even after the purge of Arabists from Qasim's government in the fall of 1958, they continued to support the July revolution in theory, maintaining only that it had deviated from its true mission as "the first stage in the struggle toward the resurrection of the historic Arab nation."[42] Iraq's communists and Arab nationalists were thus in agreement that a) the July 14 revolution had inaugurated the "first stage" of the nation's entry into modern historical time; b) economic development was the proper mission of that nation; and c) the particular national unit that each trend promoted was the one best suited to carry out that mission.

While Islamic political parties did not emerge in Iraq until 1960 and would not become significant, broad-based political forces for at least another decade, the celebration of revolutionary time as rupture and the insistence on the necessity of guiding the nation's progress in developmental time were not by any means limited to secular nationalists in the Qasimite years. Many Islamic scholars and Muslim-identified lay commentators, both Shi`i and Sunni, used similar language. Like the Ba`thists, Muslim supporters of the revolution often found themselves on the defensive against charges of being "reactionaries" (*al-raj`iyyun*) and wrote critiques of the association of Islam with backwardness. They also freely used the term *al-raj`iyyun* themselves to insult the "enemies of the revolution," said to be allies of the rulers of

[41] Quoted in Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 112. According to Batatu, `Aflaq was more important to the intellectual development of Arabism in Iraq than in Syria by the mid-1950s. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 730.
[42] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 116.

"the time gone by," who had "destroyed the spirit of development [*ruh al-tatawwur*] in the people."[43]

An article published in 1961 in the important reformist Shi`i journal *al-`Irfan* directly tackles the significance of national-developmentalist discourse in contemporary Arab-Islamic thought.[44] Titled "A Revolution in the Concept of the Nation," the article begins by belittling those who claim that nations are eternal (such people are "annoyed by facts"), and defines the nation as a thing that, like everything else in life, is constantly developing. The true "contradiction" that intellectuals needed to address, the author asserts, was not between Islamic thought and a nation that develops but rather between an Arab-Islamic heritage that values the life of intellectual and spiritual reflection, seeing work only as a means to that end, and the modern worldview that believes in "work, industry and…toil for the sake of developing our economic life, in progress through planning and the increase of production, and in the race against time [*musabaqat al-zaman*]…in order to raise the standard of living." The real contradiction was thus between "our national-cultural sympathies and our current collective behavior." Nevertheless, the problem was not, the author insists, between an authentic Arab-Islamic tradition and imported foreign ideas. Referring to this industrial-developmentalist revolution in action and thought, he writes: "The reality is that this revolution is *our* revolution. It has extended into our deepest life…We must recognize the significance of its influence and assess the truth of what we are doing and the value of what we are striving for." The

[43] See, for example, letters published in *al-Najaf* in response to questions posed by the journal's editors to the Najafi public regarding the "most significant gains of the revolution" in its first year, including by the qadi of the shari`a court in Najaf, Hadi al-`Azimi. *Al-Najaf* 3, no. 5 (September 1, 1959): 13-15.

[44] *Al-`Irfan* was published in Lebanon but had many Iraqi readers and contributors, especially in Najaf. The journal's founder, Shaykh `Arif al-Zayn, stated that the original purpose of the journal had been to "spread knowledge and to form a link of introduction between the scholar and literati of Iraq and Jabal `Amil [Lebanon]." Quoted in Tamara Chalabi, *The Shi`is of Jabal `Amil and the New Lebanon: Community and Nation-State, 1918-1943* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 169. The article examined here, which is not signed, has similarities to the contemporary writings of the young Najafi *`alim* Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr.

contradiction is intellectually and historically resolved through the author's argument that in earlier Islamic history, "salvation" meant "the salvation of the individual above all else"; life on earth was seen as a "bridge that the individual had to cross" in order to attain victory in the hereafter. Today, however, that conception has been replaced by the belief in the "salvation of all the nation's citizens." It is therefore "wrong to call on the individual to stand alone in the corrupt society and to neglect what we now believe: that the nation is nothing without its citizens, and that cooperation among the individuals of the nation is the path to its salvation, the only path to its well-being." Deploying the ubiquitous reproductive-futurist discourse of the time, the author concludes that this path requires "sacrifice and work" from all the nation's citizens, in order to build "a bright and honorable future for the children of the coming generations."[45]

Aside from the widespread faith in the power of development among secular and Islamic intellectuals alike in this period, which extended far beyond Iraq, the Iraqi communist movement had deep roots in Iraq's urban Shi`i communities and even many direct links to the clerical class. According to Batatu's analysis of ICP leaders and members during the 1940s and 1950s, a striking proportion of them were sons of Shi`i 'ulama'. The shrine city of Najaf, which housed the Shi`i clerical establishment and educational system, had been a major center of communist activity in the years leading up to the revolution. In 1956, it was the site of a major communist-led uprising against the monarchy.[46] While some Najafi `ulama' would quietly oppose Qasim's land reform law of September 1958, and they would loudly and unanimously oppose the personal status law of December 1959, the public response of most Shi`i commentators to the July revolution in its first year and a half was enthusiastic. For example, an article titled

[45] "Thawra fi Mafhum al-Watan [Revolution in the Concept of the Nation]," *al-`Irfan* 49, no. 2 (October 1961): 122–24.
[46] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 752, 1000. See also Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Essays on Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), 92.

"Thawratayn" (Two Revolutions), published in the Shi`i literary journal *al-Najaf* on the first anniversary of the revolution, compares "the glorious revolution of July 14" to the "greatest example of sacrifice and heroism ever recorded by history"—the resistance and martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson Husayn at the Battle of Karbala. The author concludes that the important thing when comparing revolutions is not whether they have a "religious character" (*tabi` dini*), but whether they aim to "reform the society and to improve its conditions of life, education, and health."[47] These pervasive Najafi discourses are lost when scholars frame the conflict over the 1959 personal status law as a battle between "progress" and "reaction" or between "revolutionaries" and "counter-revolutionaries" in the Qasimite era.

Mobility through Immobility, or Conquering *Jamud* through *Tajmid*

In July 1959, Qasim gave a speech on the social-psychological problem of *jamud*: apathy, lethargy, or stagnation, literally "a frozen state."

> Colonialists and reactionaries try to encourage *jamud*, so they can destroy the country using its own people. They want to keep the nation in its place…not to stir it to movement for the sake of development. Productive work, marching in the caravan of freedom, demands the destruction of *jamud*. Thanks to God, we have destroyed *jamud* for good, and we have buried it…we were able to overcome the past and crush it...[48]

The nation's stagnated development, a legacy of the colonial/monarchical era, was connected by Iraqi political commentators of all stripes to a stagnation in the minds and bodies of its inhabitants. This mental and bodily stagnation had been deliberately inculcated by "the colonialists" in order to "destroy the country *using its own people*." The main objects of these recurring concerns were the country's peasants and urban workers, who were pressured to improve their efficiency and increase production to ensure the nation's development in both

[47] "Thawratan [Two Revolutions]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 2 (July 14, 1959): 30.
[48] "Dawr Jumhuriyyitana fi Siyana al-Salam al-`Alami [The Role of Our Republic in Protecting World Peace]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 18, 1959, 2.

senses of the word. Iraq's wealth in natural resources was frequently contrasted to its deficiencies in human resolve and productivity. Thus, Qasim proclaimed that Iraq had the resources to defeat "poverty, ignorance, and disease"—the three ubiquitous targets of development in the social/moral sense—but whether it did so would depend on the dedication of peasants and workers to foster development in the economic/capitalist sense. In another speech the same month, Qasim explained that the government had done its part to protect both groups from naked exploitation—especially by passing the 1958 land reform law and the 1959 labor law limiting the working day to eight hours—and now depended on them to fulfill the revolution's mission of development:

> I ask my brothers to make all necessary efforts to strengthen [the nation's] riches, because the efforts of the worker and the loyalty of the peasants are necessary to create an abundant flow of capital, which will ensure the well-being of the nation…We have restricted the working hours to eight and no more, and if a worker labors one hour more, he will be working for the benefit of the nation, and he will receive overtime pay. The worker does not labor only for overtime, but he is also guided by the incentive of increasing production and by the sincerity of his love of work…as for my brothers the peasants, we ask that after we have distributed land to them and given them ownership of it, I ask from them devotion and sincerity so that production is increased and food distributed to the sons of the nation, who are their brothers. The peasant who neglects his work neglects the production of nourishment for his people.

Thus, Qasim proclaims: "we will not waste our time but will devote it to work."[49]

If these speeches deployed universal narratives of development, they were also pronounced in particular contexts to living audiences. The context of Qasim's increasing preoccupation with the wasted time of the country's laborers in July 1959 was the mobilization of agricultural workers in peasant societies and of urban workers in trade unions during the spring and early summer. State officials as well as leaders of the NDP and the Ba`th Party

[49] "Sada al-Za`im `Abd al-Karim Qasim Yalqi Khataban [The Leader 'Abd al-Karim Qasim Gives Speech]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 18, 1959, 14.

blamed the new labor associations and their activities for a purported decline in national productivity that was undermining the government's development plans and thus endangering the July revolution itself.[50] They accused the ICP of "exploiting" workers and peasants by fostering dissent through those organizations and thereby "retarding" the nation's economy.[51]

The ICP was indeed involved in the wave of peasant and worker mobilization sweeping the country in the first half of 1959, including by campaigning for the establishment of peasant societies and pushing the government for their legal recognition. In part due to communist assistance in thwarting an attempted Arabist coup in Mosul in March, the government acceded to some of the party's demands in April and May, in particular by recognizing the right of peasants to form associations. The first "Peasants' Congress" was held in the capital, and "[p]easants by the thousands came to Baghdad to celebrate the occasion and render their support to the communists." By the end of May, 2,267 out of a total 3,577 peasant societies were under communist control. The peasant-communist alliance then began pushing the government to implement more comprehensive land reform.[52] Meanwhile, all fifty-one trade unions in the General Federation of Trade Unions had landed "firmly in the hands of the communists."[53]

But already by May the Qasimite regime was pushing back. That month, it passed the Criminal Ordinance Law, which repudiated "one of the most fundamental principles of the national revolution," the right to engage in political activity, by criminalizing the propagation of "political and 'demogogic' ideas against the republic." On July 18, the government announced the dissolution of the Federation of Trade Unions, arrested its members, and confiscated its documents. On September 2, the monarchical-era Martial Law Ordinance was re-established,

[50] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 126.
[51] See many articles on this topic in *al-Hurriyya* and *al-Ahali* in 1959-61.
[52] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 124–25.
[53] Ibid., 120.

abolishing freedom of expression. September 9 saw the promulgation of a revised Peasant Societies' Law, which proclaimed all existing peasant societies illegal on the basis that they had not been established with the approval of the provincial governors. Finally, in January 1960, "the final blow" was delivered against the political freedoms that had been introduced by the July revolution: the Association Act, which prohibited all political parties, trade unions, and societies from operating without approval from the Ministry of the Interior.[54] The ICP's application to continue operating was rejected.

These laws have usually been interpreted as a not very subtle assault by Qasim's government on the ICP, which was at the peak of its popularity in the spring of 1959 and had begun making demands for a direct share in governmental power at the highest levels, of which it had none in spite of its crucial role in the national front that underwrote the success of the July revolution. The laws abolishing political freedoms were undoubtedly an assault on the Iraqi communist movement. But they were also an assault on a "well-mobilized peasantry"[55] in the countryside and on increasing labor unrest in the cities. To attribute either of these phenomena solely to the activities of the ICP would be to accept at face value the public statements of government officials and NDP and Ba`th Party leaders that worker and peasant dissent could only signify their "exploitation" by "opportunists" (i.e., communists) and not their own dissatisfaction or capacity for mobilization. At the same time, it is *not* to take seriously the daily and publicly expressed concerns of these same actors over the effects of the new political unrest on labor productivity and the national economy. The ICP's bid for a share in government was not the only motivation for the temporary tactical alliance of the government, the NDP, and the Ba`th against the proliferation of peasant defiance and labor strikes in the first half of 1959.

[54] Ibid., 126–27.
[55] Ibid., 127.

In May, Muhammad Hadid—a leading figure in the NDP, a major Iraqi industrialist, and Qasim's minister of finance—proclaimed the voluntary "freezing" (*tajmid*) of the NDP's political activities and encouraged Iraq's other political parties to follow suit.[56] The call was passionately rejected by the ICP, which was already engaged in a battle, at times bloody, with the NDP over control of the peasant associations.[57] But if the ICP refused to suspend its political activities, it did retreat from its role in fostering peasant and worker mobilization, after a sudden about-face and change of party leadership in the summer of 1959. In fact, the party went considerably further than simply withdrawing from labor unrest, actively working to subdue the discontent and then announcing the "*tajmid*" of class struggle in Iraq during the present "historical stage." In July, the party helped broker an agreement with the labor unions not to go on strike again, in the name of "defending the republic,"[58] and it acquiesced to the government's dissolution of the Federation of Trade Unions, which it had helped to form. A former party member later wrote critically:

> One had to expect the party to take some action, however slight, to defend the federation of trade unions and to express opposition [to its dissolution], especially since the party had taken great pains to build that federation from July 14, 1958 to July 14, 1959…But the party did not want a soul to rise up…So [it] went out to the workers with its well-known excuses for the shameful retreat in the face of the bourgeoisie's attack, sacrificing the federation of trade unions for the sake of "unity in the lines" and "defending the republic"…The most simple person knows that unity in the lines had not existed since the morning of July 14, and that the party's cries to bring the elements of the previous [national] front back to life were just cries in the wind, for the very simple reason that there were no longer any shared interests between these elements and the proletariat that could justify unity

[56] This pronouncement was not supported by the other leading NDP figure, Kamil al-Chadirchi, and led to a split in the party, with Hadid and his faction forming the National Progressive Party. Effectively, it marked the disappearance of any liberal-democratic party as a politically influential force in Qasimite Iraq. The NDP already had a small number of followers compared to the ICP and maybe even the Ba`th, but its influence had far surpassed its numerical strength as the party whose economic and Iraqist orientations were closest to Qasim's. But given the insistence of one wing of the already small party on democracy in the present, both its relationship with the prime minister and its ongoing coherence were probably doomed.
[57] Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, 124.
[58] "Qararat Hama Yatahathaha al-Mu'tamar al-Ta'sisi li-Itihad al-Niqabat al-`Am [Important Decisions Adopted by the Founding Conference of the Federation of Trade Unions]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 18, 1959, 10.

> and collective action. But the party nevertheless preferred to sacrifice the federation [of trade unions]...in the name of this nonexistent unity.[59]

The ICP was soon boasting of its role in helping to resolve workers' "problems and disputes with the businessmen" though "friendly and constructive means," and denouncing "the saboteurs and infiltrators" who had chosen to "drag the workers into strikes." It also announced "comparatively good results" for the "intricate task" of "the settlement of disputes in the countryside," in the interest of "safeguarding the Republic and backing the patriotic authority for the accomplishment of Agrarian reform."[60] In October 1959, leading a demonstration in support of Qasim after he was wounded in a Ba`thist assassination attempt, the ICP's placards proclaimed slogans such as "More Grain For Your People, Brave Peasants!" and "Produce More, O Valiant Workers!"[61] The party apparently had little else to say to Iraqi peasants and workers once it had announced the *tajmid* of class struggle in the present.

Neither the government's crackdown on political freedoms and trade union activities nor the ICP's declaration of the "freezing" of class struggle put an end to worker unrest; there were numerous strikes and other labor protests throughout 1960 and 1961.[62] The ICP did participate in some of these, but it did so "half-heartedly."[63] Most of its labor-movement efforts that year were focused on trying to retain the party's influence in the unions, a losing battle due to rigged trade union elections along with summary dismissals and "large-scale arrests" of communist workers.[64] The Ba`thists responded to a massive strike of cement workers in April 1960 with a

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[59] Yeheskel Kojaman, *Thawrat 14 Tammuz 1958 fi al-`Iraq wa-Siyasat al-Hizb al-Shuyu`i [The Revolution of July 14, 1958 in Iraq and the Policies of the Communist Party]* (London: Biddles Ltd., 1985), 147.
[60] "Editorial," *The Iraqi Review* 1, no. 21 (December 30, 1959): 11.
[61] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 935.
[62] Tareq Ismael, *The Rise and Fall of the Communist Party of Iraq* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 102; "Ila Ikhwanana `Ummal al-Simant, ila Ikhwanana `Ummal fi Kul Makan [To Our Brothers the Cement Workers, To Our Brothers the Workers Everywhere]," *al-Hurriyya*, April 15, 1960, 102.
[63] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 957.
[64] Ibid., 946–48.

statement calling on "heroic workers" to ignore "the opportunistic elements" who want to "exploit your powers," and reminding them that "the republic needs your labor and dedication, your patience and your sacrifice." Rather than form unions, engage in strikes, and demand increased wages, the statement suggested that workers adopt the slogan "Increase Production and God Will Support Us."[65]

After 1959, Iraq's party organizations were still involved in strenuous political conflict, increasingly spilling over into a bloody street war, especially between the communists and the Ba`thists. The struggle over union with the UAR continued to deepen, and a new conflict was flaring between the government and the Kurdish Democratic Party in the north that would devolve into open warfare by the end of Qasim's reign, and had something to do with that approaching end. Nevertheless, the government and the political parties had come to an informal consensus on a key issue: the need to depoliticize the laboring classes in order to enable economic development, which all affirmed as a primary objective of the July revolution. The parties further agreed that establishing this stability required the active collaboration of the country's political and intellectual elites with its government agencies. The ICP explained:

> The raising of the slogan of stability and insisting on it will continue to be of no use unless the patriotic forces take the initiative to struggle, in solidarity with each other and each in its private sphere of influence to accomplish the conditions for stability by creating the basis where the legitimate interests of all national classes meet, and correspond with the line of the revolution. The road towards stability is the road of providing the conditions and circumstances that facilitate the task of the patriotic authority towards the new life. It requires from all the loyal patriotic forces and elements inside the patriotic government and outside it to fight patiently and persistently…in order to establish the favourable ground for ensuring [that] stability.[66]

[65] "Ila Ikhwanana `Ummal al-Simant."
[66] "Editorial."

The Ba`thists likewise held that ensuring social stability in the name of development required the engagement of the country's political, intellectual, and technocratic elites in the work of reshaping the minds and bodies of its rural and urban laborers. Unlike the communists, however, they increasingly emphasized the role of religious elites in fostering this stability. An article in *al-Hurriyya*, published at the height of the cement workers' strike, explained that it was through faith in God, his Prophet, and the Day of Judgment (a day on which, after all, "money is of no use"), that "the sons of the nation" would learn to exert themselves, and to exert "their money, their spirits, and their souls." A shared morality would "dissolve special interests," so that the people might become "a single body and a single spirit." But the power of faith must be backed by the "power of order," which results from the "rule of law," ensuring stability and eliminating "anarchy." The article concluded that Islam is "the eternal philosophy of the life of our nation and will rescue it from all of its spiritual and material problems. We must work to revive the power of faith and the power of order in the souls of our nation's sons."[67]

An editorial in the NDP organ *al-Ahali*, also published during the 1960 cement workers' strike, noted that the NDP, for its part, was "scientifically studying the reality of our society and its capacities for development" in order to "treat its sicknesses and backwardness" and thereby overcome its "stagnation" (*jamud*).[68] Another *al-Ahali* editorial on "national industry" explained that the nation's development was obstructed because it "lacked the necessary capabilities" for industrial production, a legacy of the "backwardness and neglect of the time gone by." Building those capabilities would require "cooperation between industrialists and workers."[69] The editors

[67] Nur al-Din al-Wa`iz, "Ba`th al-Quwwa [The Revival of Power]," *al-Hurriyya*, April 27, 1960, 2, 8.
[68] Husayn Jamil, "The Source of Strength of the NDP," *al-Ahali*, April 29, 1960, 1.
[69] "Sina`tna al-Wataniyya wa-Qudratuha `ala Sadd Hajat al-Bilad al-Istihlakiyya bi-Ta`awun Ashab al-Sina` wa-l-`Ummal [Our National Industry and Its Capacity to Meet the Consumer Needs of the Country Through the Cooperation of Industrialists and Workers]," *al-Ahali*, February 22, 1960, 1.

called on all of Iraq's political parties to "define the nation they want" and delineate how it could be achieved through "reforms in health, education, and family structure."[70]

In the midst of their political-ideological struggles, then, the nation's political elites had converged on an agreement that, as *al-Hurriyya* put it, the primary cause of the nation's "backwardness" (*ta'akhkhur*) was its people's lack of a spirit of "self-improvement" (*al-islah al-dhati*) that would inspire them to "struggle for a better future."[71] The solution, in the words of Muyhi al-Din `Abd al-Hamid, an inner-circle Free Officer and Qasim's first minister of education, was to legislate and manage the social welfare of every individual in Iraqi society through every stage of the human life-cycle, by "encircling this individual in complete care from the moment he opens his eyes."[72] As Koselleck writes of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, it was to inscribe "revolution into the body."[73]

Social Reform, the Conjugal Family, and Mobile Networks of Solidarity

On June 1, 1959, a celebration of "World Children's Day" was sponsored by a joint committee of the League for the Defense of Women's Rights and the Iraqi Ministry of Health. Among other prizes and festivities, a cash award was given to the Iraqi woman with the largest number of living children (seventeen). According to the communist *Iraqi Review*: "[The parents] said that they are happy to have this big family, not only to contribute to the development of society [but] to be able to defend the Democratic Republic, with a bigger number of faithful soldiers." A photo of the family accompanied the article, with the caption "The Happiest Mother in the

[70] "Falsifat al-Ahzab [Party Philosophy]," *al-Ahali*, February 22, 1960, 1.
[71] Nur al-Din al-Wa`iz, "Min Mustalazimat Kifahna al-Ta'kid...Islah al-Dhati [Among the Urgent Needs of Our Struggle: Self-Improvement]," *al-Hurriyya*, April 21, 1960, 2.
[72] Muhyi al-Din `Abd al-Hamid, "Mustaqbal al-Thaqafa fi al-`Iraq [The Future of Education in Iraq]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 23, nos. 1–2 (February 1960): 6.
[73] Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 43.

Republic."[74] A year later, additional organizations were involved in Children's Day, including UNICEF and the Iraqi teachers' union. A prize was again given in honor of reproductive fecundity, but this time it was awarded to the "largest family in Iraq" rather than "the mother with the most children." The prize itself was awarded to the father, rather than to the mother as previously, the winning entity was described as "his family," and he was the only individual named in the newspaper announcements. The second year also gave cash awards for the runners-up in the "competition."[75]

The heightened interest in women and children during the Qasimite era was driven in part by the longstanding assessment of Iraq as underpopulated, which was seen as a problem both for economic development and for military defense. In March 1960, an article in *al-Ahali* argued that the country was "in dire need" of additional legislation on "marriage and motherhood" (besides that encoded in the December 1959 personal status law), in order to "increase the population and human productive power" of the nation, "with the goal of exploiting its riches for the benefit of its people."[76] Similarly, the president of the Qasimite People's Court, Col. Fadil `Abbas Mahdawi, in one of his famous digressions from the trial at hand, campaigned against the problem of "singlehood" in Iraq. He argued that Iraqi women should not remain single beyond the age of 25 and men not beyond 30, since "in our great republican regime, we need to increase the population. As we have said, in a few years' time, the population of Iraq should reach 10,000,000."[77] But such pronatalist sentiments were not the only motivation for the widespread

[74] "Children's Day Celebrated," *Iraqi Review* 1, no. 2 (June 4, 1959). For similar prizes awarded in al-Nasir's Egypt in the 1950s, see Beth Baron, "The Origins of Family Planning: Aziza Hussein, American Experts, and the Egyptian State," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 4, no. 3 (2008): 33.
[75] "Fi Ihtifalat Yawm al-Tifl al-`Alami [At the Celebration of World Children's Day]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, May 31, 1960, 4. See also *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, June 14, 1960, 4.
[76] "Bi-Munasabat Yawm al-Mar'a [On the Occasion of Women's Day]," *al-Ahali*, March 8, 1960, 7.
[77] "Editorial Report of Recorded Broadcast of Proceedings of the 114th Session of the Supreme Military Court in Baghdad on 30 May [1959]," in *Records of Iraq 1914-1966* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 13:86.

interest among political and intellectual elites in reforming the Iraqi family. In fact, pronatalism seems to have coexisted rather comfortably with apparently contrasting contemporary images of smaller, nuclear families as indicators of modernization. This difference often fell along class lines, a reminder that projects of family reform were not socioeconomically homogeneous.

Even Mahdawi's diatribes in the People's Court against the "problem" of singlehood were not limited to the pronatalist argument that the country was underpopulated. He asserted that singlehood as such was "harmful" to Iraqi society, because it led inexorably to "sexual and mental diseases."[78] Political discourse across the ideological spectrum made links between a purported lack of stable family bonds and mental and social "diseases," which in turn were linked to political unrest and class struggle and thus to socioeconomic instabilities and blocks to development. During its campaign against the cement workers' strike of April 1960, *al-Hurriyya* accused the communists of "destroying the bonds of family and neighborhood and kindling the fire of class struggle."[79] Ba`thists marshaled as historical evidence for these connections both the purported sexual promiscuity of European communists and the anti-Arab *shu`ubiyya* movement in Iraq during the `Abbasid period, which like modern-day communism had "promoted equality in wealth and women, anarchism, and the dismantling and destruction of the family structure and the teachings of religion."[80] For its part, the ICP's *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, which often found itself on the defensive on this front, assured its readers that "communism is the enemy of prostitution" and that according to the Marxist dialectical-materialist analysis of history, monogamous marriage (*al-zija al-wahdaniyya*) built on "love, cooperation, and companionship" was the only

[78] "Editorial Report of Recorded Broadcast of Proceedings of the 114th Session of the Supreme Military Court in Baghdad on 30 May [1959]."
[79] "Hafnat al-Turab `ala Ghayr al-Intihaziyya," *al-Hurriyya*, April 14, 1960, 10.
[80] "Mawqifna min al-Nazariyya al-Shuyu`iyya [Our Position in Regards to Communist Theory]," *al-Hurriyya*, April 28, 1960, 3.

form of marriage that could be recognized in "civilized societies," as being the only form conducive to their economic development.[81]

Such sentiments were again not limited to secular intellectuals and party leaders. An article in the Shi`i journal *al-Najaf* noted that "the problem of the Iraqi woman" was one of the main causes of the lack of unity and balance in Iraqi society, and had thus become a central concern of "social reformers in our country today." The article called for studies and reforms to address the "marriage crisis," which it described as a "grave problem that the Iraqi society is suffering from, connected to women," and proposed that Qasim's government enact legislation "to lift the barriers to marriage and to take measures to facilitate an increase in the marriage rate." It hastened to add that "our aim is not to do anything contrary to our religious character or foreign to our nation," but rather "to remove the layers of grime from our customs and traditions, which have fostered our ignorance." The marriage crisis discourse, inherited from the monarchical era, was only fueled by the sense of temporal rupture associated with the revolution. This was the context in which the *al-Najaf* article identified the marriage crisis as "a source of anxiety in the souls of individuals, both men and women, and a cause of instability in the society."[82]

While celebrating the destruction of the "time gone by," writers across the political spectrum insisted that the country's leaders must be careful to build moral values for the new era, whether those values were based on older ones or entirely new ones. An article in *al-Najaf* titled "Revolution = Destruction and Rebuilding" argued that a "true revolution" involves not only "the destruction of prevailing values, standards, and modes of thought" but also "the construction

[81] "Al-Zawaj min Wijhat Nazar al-Shuyu`iyya [Marriage from the Communist Viewpoint]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, August 29, 1959, 2.
[82] Husayn Fahmi al-Khazirji, "Mushkilat al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya [The Problem of the Iraqi Woman]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 6 (September 15, 1959): 13–14.

of new values, standards, and modes of thought on the ruins of the old."[83] As *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* explained, this problem was endemic to revolutionary time:

> Social norms are influenced by the sudden social changes, and there is a period in which all of the individuals in the society are not able to discern the new norms appropriate for the revolutionary phase which they are passing through, or at the least there is a group of individuals who are not able to distinguish between those old norms which are worth preserving in the new age and those which must be discarded because they are not appropriate for the new stage of life.

The journal warned that all of Iraq's "great revolutionary achievements and social and economic development projects" would end in failure if they were not accompanied by the careful "building of strong morals" in the souls of the "rising generation."[84]

The "marriage crisis" and the "problem of singlehood" were directly connected to discourses on the excessive mobility, disorder, and ungovernability of non-marital interpersonal relationships in Iraq. Donzelot argues that the wave of laws, institutions, and philanthropic campaigns in 19th-century France for the protection of children were part of "a struggle against these popular enclaves that allowed for autonomous ties between the generations, and consequently, against what resulted politically: a population broken loose from its territorial moorings…a moving force that was unpredictable and uncontrollable."[85] Women were crucial to this process in the domestic sphere, since they were agents of "familializing the popular strata"; by creating a healthy, appealing, and moralizing domestic space, "woman, the housewife and attentive mother, was man's salvation, the privileged instrument for shaping the working class." In the social domain, middle-class women were essential laborers in the fields of education,

[83] Al-Hakim, "al-Thawra=Hadm wa-Bina."
[84] Najiya Hamdi, "al-Jil al-Sa`id [The Rising Generation]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 26, nos. 1–2 (January 1963): 158–62.
[85] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families,* 81.

health, and hygiene, where they would work alongside new public policing efforts to stamp out immorality and "mobile networks of solidarity."[86]

In Iraq, among the most important networks that seemed resistant to effective governmentality were those formed through homosocial practices and spaces, both female and male. The *al-Najaf* article on "the problem of the Iraqi woman" that called on the government to intervene legislatively in the marriage crisis pointed to the national-social problem of inaccessible female-only spaces. The social segregation of women, especially those of the uneducated classes, had "created a foreign body in the body of the nation, a closed world within the society that does not interact with it and leaves no trace on it except for a negative influence." Women should thus be educated to contribute positively to "social service in addition to the realm of family life."[87] Using very similar language, but addressing a different socioeconomic strata of women, Col. Mahdawi launched a campaign against "the traditions among the womenfolk to hold at-home parties for other women," urging middle-class women instead to devote their free time to social projects that would "help their sisters among the poorer classes."[88]

In 1954, the prominent Iraqi sociologist `Ali al-Wardi had argued in his book *The Sultans' Preachers* that both economic underdevelopment and the prevalence of male and female homosexuality in Iraq could be attributed to the segregation of women, and, conversely, that the development of Western nations and the relative infrequency of homosexuality in those nations could be traced to the public (and state-regulated) mixing of men and women in the West. As Iraqi women were brought into the public sphere during the modernization process, al-Wardi argued, male sexual desire would be redirected toward its proper object, while the time and

[86] Ibid., 40.
[87] Al-Khazirji, "Mushkilat al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya."
[88] "Women Censured," *Iraq Times*, March 13, 1959, 7.

energies of half the nation's population would no longer waste away in backwards and inaccessible women-only spaces.[89] The book had produced something of an explosion in the Iraqi press and at least four full-length books were published in response to it.[90] By the time of the revolution, this was thus a well established, if at times controversial, discourse for the country's political and intellectual elites to draw on.

To this existing discourse, a new narrative emerged after the revolution that associated female homosocial spaces and bonds not only with the decadence of the elite classes on the one hand and the ignorance of the popular classes on the other, but also with capacities for political mobilization. The notion that homosocial networks could facilitate unacceptable mobilities and political unrest was not itself new in Iraq, though prior to the revolution it had been more concerned with male homosociality. From the earliest days of the Mandate era, British officials had been preoccupied with Iraq's coffee houses as spaces where men wasted their time, ignored their work, neglected their families, and propagated politically subversive ideas. In 1921, Gertrude Bell, Oriental secretary to the British high commissioner of Iraq, warned of the dangers posed to Iraqi state formation by "the idiot public of the coffee shops,"[91] and Sir John Troutbeck wrote of the typical Iraqi townsman: "Being one of the laziest of mortals and having no family life, he will sit in his café for hours on end surrounded by his cronies, brooding over his grievances and talking interminable politics."[92] Baghdad's coffee shops were indeed renowned for enabling the political radicalization and mobilization of Iraqi men; they helped fuel the ICP's expansion during its underground years,[93] and during the revolutionary era they ensured that the

[89] `Ali al-Wardi, *Wu`az al-Salatin [The Sultans' Preachers]* (Baghdad: Matba`at al-Ma`arif, 1954).
[90] Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 142–44.
[91] Quoted in Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 39.
[92] Quoted in Muhsin al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq: Culture and Power in Conflict* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 24.
[93] See, for example, Bashkin, *The Other Iraq*, 81–93; Davis, *Memories of State*, 94–96.

number of people who came into contact with the communist press far exceeded its already impressive official circulation. But that did not stop *Ittihad al-Sha`b* from attacking Iraqi male "traditions" of "hanging out in coffee shops playing dominos and acquiring bad habits."[94] For communist leaders, "traditional" male homosocial spaces were not only potential venues of political mobilization but also of social immorality and a lack of political discipline.

In February 1959, Qasim issued a "directive to women teachers" in the country's secondary schools:

> The old regime had left us coquetry and immodesty which were the social aspects of the old regime though they are far from virtue and sound morality and are not conforming to the movement of progress and the spirit of liberated nations…We appeal to this conscious vanguard to be a good example to their students in order that the schools produce men of science and education and good women, and not be beauty parlors where time is wasted.[95]

On the face of it, the directive seems to hint at an expectation of heterosocial encounters for the young women who were purportedly obsessed with beautifying themselves. But it was specifically concerned with what these women were doing *inside* Iraq's secondary schools, all of which were sex-segregated. In suggesting that girls' schools had become beauty parlors where time was wasted, the statement draws on the construction of certain kinds of female activities as decadent and Westernized in the wrong way. It simultaneously plays with the association of such activities with obsolete traditions, by deploying the temporal-distancing tactic that locates them in a past time. But there is much more going on in this directive than meets the eye. Reading it the way its contemporaries would have read it requires placing it in the context of day-to-politics in Iraq at the moment it was issued. In February 1959, the ICP was nearing what would later be recognized as the "high tide" of its popularity. The party's relationship to Qasim's government

[94] "Kalimat al-Yawm," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, December 13, 1959, 4.
[95] "Directive to Women Teachers," *Iraq Times*, February 25, 1959, 1.

would soon get a major boost from its role in suppressing the attempted Ba`thist coup in Mosul on March 8. But the weeks leading up to that event marked the beginning of Qasim's crackdown on the ICP, which would be stalled only temporarily after the Mosul events before being renewed in the late spring of 1959. Since the ICP was particularly popular in Iraq's colleges and secondary schools, both male and female, these spaces were important targets of the crackdown. Qasim's "directive to women" points to a shift in monarchical-era modernization discourses attacking female homosociality, adding the potential threat of women's political disorder to the existing negative associations.

Caring for the Child and Autonomizing the Family

In Lee Edelman's account of the modern political imaginary of reproductive futurism, the historical appearance of the "figure of the child" as the "fetishistic fixation of heteronormativity" is connected both to the delimitations of proper political action and to the very capacities of political imagination in the modern era. Edelman thus writes that "we are no more able to conceive of a politics without a fantasy of the future than we are to conceive of a future without the figure of the Child."[96] Indeed, a common thread running through diverse political discourses in revolutionary Iraq was an emphasis on the proper care and development of children. As an *al-Hurriyya* article asserted: "the child is the seed of life, the spirit of the home, the hope of the family, the purpose of marriage."[97] Yet in revolutionary Iraq, the connection between the figure of the child and the attempted depoliticization (*tajmid*) of the social order was not only about the fantasy of the innocent child as the embodiment of the nation's ever-receding future. It was also related to fears around the political mobilization and general unruliness of historical children.

[96] Edelman, *No Future*, 11.
[97] "Al-Marahil allati Yatajawizha al-Tifl wa-Ahmiyyat al-Bayt fi Tarbiyyatihi [The Stages that the Child Passes Through and the Importance of the Home to His Upbringing]," *al-Hurriyya*, May 25, 1960, 11.

Elite anxieties centering on out-of-control youth inherited from the monarchical era were only fueled by the sociopolitical unrest of the revolution's first two years and by the experience of temporal rupture associated with the revolution itself. These fears extended not just to young adults and late adolescents but all the way down to elementary-school children. An article in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* was not atypical in noting that the country had witnessed a disturbing proliferation of children "using foul language" and otherwise publicly misbehaving since July 14, or in attributing this to the fact that children are especially vulnerable to being "affected by the instability of revolutionary times."[98] In some ways, these discourse were similar to those analyzed by Donzelot, in the sense that they consistently turned the problem of labor unrest and lower-class mobility into a problem of the family: "whatever aspect of the problem of the working class was taken up, and irrespective of the region considered, the key question was always that of the adult-child relationship."[99]

In fact, children were often politically mobilized in Iraq, both before and after the revolution. Starting in the 1940s, according to Batatu, underground communication between the ICP's party center, its provincial organizations, and its nation-wide network of cells was conducted through *murasils* or couriers, "who in many instances were reliable and well-trained children."[100] Children were also reported to have engaged widely in the mass demonstrations leading up to the revolution, especially the Wathbah of 1948 and the Intifada of 1952, as discussed in previous chapters. After July 14, the participation of "patriotic children" in both the revolution and the nationalist movement that produced it was frequently celebrated in public discourse, but these narratives were shot through with an undercurrent of ambivalence about the potential consequences of out-of-control youth. An illustration of this can be found in the first

[98] Hamdi, "al-Jil al-Sa`id."
[99] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 72.
[100] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 637.

issue of *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* produced after the revolution, which featured a long poem titled "The Child Demonstrators." It narrated a familial group of children of both sexes whose father notices have begun "whispering in secret / a look of determination radiating from their eyes." The father asks: "What is on your minds that makes you whisper? / My children, what are you planning? / And they all fell silent / and their eyes asked each other / What should we do?! / Should we explain ourselves??" Finally the oldest among them summons the courage to answer truthfully: "Father, we are revolutionaries / We want to demonstrate / We want to support the leader / Our beloved `Abd al-Karim." The father reacts first with fear for their safety: "But you are so young / I am afraid for you." After hearing their patriotic and courageous responses, tears fall from the father's eyes and he exclaims in wonder: "A nation cannot be defeated whose children do not fear death!"[101] As in this poem, such discourses were often interwoven with a sense of shame that the older generations had learned to live in fear and submission to the monarchical regime, thus leaving it to their own children to shed their blood for the nation's liberation. The tense moment in which the children might choose not tell their father their secret revolutionary plans underscores the potentially disconcerting consequences of the older generation's failure of nerve, a breach that is healed not so much by the oldest boy's brave confession as by the children's declaration of loyalty to their new substitute father, `Abd al-Karim Qasim.

In addition to celebrating the political courage of the young generation, the poem was a signal, in the pages of the official journal of Qasim's Ministry of Education, of the mission of state schooling and social welfare in the new era. This would be similar to what Donzelot describes as "the social mission of the teacher" that emerged with the spread of capitalist relations and sociopolitical disorder in 19th-century France: "to place the child at odds with

[101] "The Child Demonstrators," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 21, no. 6 (November 1958).

patriarchal authority, not in order to wrest him away from his family and disorganize it a bit more, but 'to cause civilization to penetrate into the home through him.'"[102] The 1959 personal status law, as I will show in the next chapter, was one manifestation of the new urgency around child development and the related drive to foster the "autonomization of the family" from the broader and more mobile networks of social relations in which its individual members were embedded.[103] But the law was only the most visible and controversial of a whole series of legal reforms and social projects implemented by Qasim's government in its first two years that were designed either in whole or in part to protect and regulate the child-adult relation across all social classes.

On the occasion of the 1959 World Children's Day celebration, Qasim's government promulgated the Law for the Protection of Children. The need for such a law was explained in its preamble as stemming from "the guarantees made in the temporary [Iraqi] constitution [and] the human rights declarations of the United Nations, and the fact that the child is the nucleus of the coming generation on which stands the future of the country." Since the nation's development rested on the shoulders of the child, it was the government's duty to ensure that "every child has a chance" and to concern itself with the development of all the nation's children, "mentally, spiritually, morally, and socially." The law identified three institutions that were responsible for the management of childhood—the family, the government, and social organizations—and distributed the various obligations of child care among them. It was the duty of parents to "defend the child against oppression and exploitation, protect him from sickness, and create an environment of warmth and material welfare." The government was required to provide compulsory education to all Iraqi children, "at least through the primary level," and to create

[102] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 78.
[103] Ibid., 69.

institutions for child delinquents and orphans, children who were physically or mentally disabled, and those whose families had otherwise failed in their obligations. Communicating between the two was the task of the "social organizations," which would "cooperate with official authorities in the duties of caring for children, and guide the family in its responsibilities toward its children."[104] The 1958 Law for Social Institutions had already laid out the government's duties in establishing public institutions and working with private institutions to incarcerate, care for, and, when possible, rehabilitate the needy and the delinquent. In addition to institutes for the mentally and physically handicapped, and shelters and rehabilitation houses for "repentant prostitutes," these included special "prisons and arresting stations for the juvenile" and reformatories for "for the care, life, subsistence, and education" of orphans and juvenile delinquents.[105] It was at the intersection of these three institutions responsible for the care of children that the domain of the social was constructed.

Links between unmonitored children, unstable family life, non-conjugal relationships, social disorder, and class struggle were also prominent in the Qasimite government's programs to resettle peasants and the urban poor in new housing developments. Philanthropic sympathies for "children in danger" and sociopolitical fears of "dangerous children" were interwoven in these projects. Both the "model villages" established as part of the implementation of the land reform law and the extensive new housing projects built for the *shargawiyyas* or migrant hut-dwellers in Baghdad emphasized the rehabilitation of family life among the nation's poor and especially the proper care of children. In addition to the ubiquitous elementary school and medical clinic for mothers and children, these projects often contained a school to teach poor girls and women "domestic arts," including child-raising techniques, as well as a day-care center

[104] "Mashru` Ri`ayat al-Tafula [Draft Law for the Protection of Children]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, June 5, 1959, 6.
[105] "Law No. 42 of Social Institutions for the Year 1958," *Iraqi Government Gazette*, May 13, 1959. For the original law in Arabic, see *al-Waqa'i` al-`Iraqiyya*, December 7, 1958.

and a modern, fenced-in public playground to get children off the streets and into spaces that would foster their healthy psychological, moral, and physical development.[106] The leftist journal *al-Muthaqqaf* explained that the role of the teacher in the schools of the model villages established as part of the implementation of the land reform law was to reform peasant children, "cleansing their minds of the defects of the time gone by," while the Ministry of Education stressed the need for its teacher training institutes to educate future teachers in the psychological "nature of the child," so that they could effectively "sow in [children] a love for manual labor."[107] It was hoped that the extensive new housing developments for the urban and rural poor would both foster the development of healthy, productive citizens and become the "grave of the riot."[108]

Defending the Republic and Childhood: The League for the Defense of Women's Rights

In the early 1950s, the underground ICP established a number of organizations as part of its strategy of building a "popular front" with the "national bourgeoisie" against the Hashimite monarchy and its British colonial allies. By the time of the 1958 revolution, the three most significant of these were the Partisans of Peace, the Federation of Democratic Youth, and the League for the Defense of Women's Rights (*al-Rabita*, or the League). Each of them was considerably larger than the full membership of the ICP and was officially independent from the party but retained strong ties to it at the upper leadership levels. Reports from the U.S. embassy in Baghdad, while mostly preoccupied with the communist identity of these groups, expressed awe at how rapidly and thoroughly they emerged from underground life to transform the Iraqi public sphere after July 14:

[106] See, for example, *al-`Ahd al-Jadid*, April 3, 1962, 4.
[107] "Al-Islah al-Zira`i [Land Reform]," *al-Muthaqqaf* 2, no. 10 (July 1959): 28.
[108] Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 42.

> In less than a half a year the old picture of Iraq has become unrecognizable. The bookshops, newsstands and even streets of Baghdad are filled with Communist literature…The rapid growth of political groups is evidence of the hardiness of Communists in Iraq to have remained committed to their cause during the years of banishment and underground existence.[109]

As Charles Tripp writes, by 1958 these popular organizations "were not simply fronts for political parties, but represented attempts by a wide variety of Iraqis to establish a voice for hitherto neglected sections of society. Nowhere," he continues, "was this more the case than in al-Rabita."[110]

As discussed in the previous chapter, the League was formed by female members of the ICP in 1952 as the "women's front" of the "broad" nationalist movement. On July 14, 1958, the League publicly declared itself through a cable to Qasim expressing its "solidarity with the revolutionary government" and asserting that "all its members and the rest of the women of Iraq stand united behind the Premier and the Government."[111] At its first conference on March 8, 1959, the organization announced that it had 25,000 members; a year later, it reported a membership roll of 40,000.[112] These numbers are difficult to substantiate with any precision today, since most of the League's archives were lost or destroyed in the aftermath of the 1963 Ba`th coup, when its leaders fled into exile along with many other ICP members and fellow travelers who managed to escape the anti-communist bloodbath.[113] But there is little doubt about the organization's rapid expansion and ubiquitous public presence during the Qasimite years,

[109] Second Secretary of Embassy Lee Dinsmore to Secretary of State, January 6, 1959, RG84/787, USNA.
[110] Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 154.
[111] "Iraqi Women on the March."
[112] "L.D.W.R. Elections Conclude," *Iraq Times*, March 15, 1959; "Iraqi Feminist Leader Acknowledges Gains," *Iraq Times*, March 9, 1960.
[113] On the Ba`thist bloodbath against communists and suspected communists, see Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 974–94.

based on the numerous references to it (often simply as "al-Rabita") in contemporary media sources as well as in Iraqi government records and the archives of the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.

One indication of the League's visible impact in the Iraqi public sphere can be found in a remarkable pair of telegrams sent from the U.S. Secret Services in Baghdad to the State Department in July 1959. The first telegram mentions, quite dismissively, some recent comments by Qasim concerning women's rights: "[The] last third of speech [was a] rambling discourse which touched on the following: Women's rights are under consideration and women [may] share in government responsibility before July 14."[114] But someone in the secret service seems to have then reconsidered this part of Qasim's speech, finding it less "rambling" than described in the first telegram and in fact rather alarming from a U.S. Cold War perspective. The second telegram concludes that if Qasim was really preparing to appoint an Iraqi woman to a senior government position then he was also, in all likelihood, preparing to appoint a communist, since "[a]mong women currently active on local scene it would be difficult [to] find one not far left." Thus, the second telegram predicts: "Qasim may designate woman Communist such as Women's Rights League President Dulaimi."[115] Indeed, four days later, Qasim announced his new Minister of Municipalities, Naziha al-Dulaimi, a practicing gynecologist, a card-carrying member of the ICP for more than a decade, and a founding member as well as the current president of the League for the Defense of Women's Rights. She was the first female government minister in Iraqi history and the only full-fledged ICP member appointed to the cabinet during Qasim's five-year reign.

Prior to July 14, 1958, the League had three primary "slogans" or missions: "Defending Women's Rights," "Defending Motherhood," and "Defending Childhood." After the revolution,

[114] Jernegan to Secretary of State, July 7, 1959, RG84/787, USNA.
[115] U.S. Embassy Baghdad to Secretary of State, July 10, 1959, RG84/787, USNA.

it added a fourth, which was to take precedence over the existing three and was identical to the new primary slogan of the ICP: "Defending the Republic."[116] According to the *Iraqi Review*, "the League devoted most of its first year to the foremost aim, that is the Defence of the Republic." It was a conservative slogan by any measure, yet the activities that the League pursued under its auspices were not straightforwardly pro-Qasimite. In the end, they would land the organization in more trouble with the government than any of the activities it defined as deriving from its other three slogans. As a statement from the League would point out in the midst of one such controversy: "The most important thing is to defend the republic, but there are a number of ways of doing this."[117]

There were two main features of the activities organized by the League under the slogan "defending the republic," and they were mutually synergistic. One was to push Qasim's government to the left on issues the ICP had deemed critical if the regime was to fulfill its mission as the bourgeois-nationalist revolution; the other was to educate and politicize Iraqi women of all classes. Thus, the League launched door-to-door campaigns that sent its members and volunteers into Iraqi households to gather signatures from women on various causes dear to the ICP while simultaneously educating them in the "importance of defending the republic," which involved explaining the tenets of the revolution, and with them, no doubt, the basics of Marxist thought. Some of the petitions were designed to reward the government, and counter its opponents, by expressing public support for actions already taken, such as the passage of the Land Reform Law; others pressured it to take action in areas where it appeared to be wavering, such as on the question of Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact.

[116] "Iraqi Women on the March."
[117] "Nada min Rabitat al-Difa` `an Huquq al-Mar'a fi Irbil [Call from League for the Defense of Women's Rights in Irbil]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, June 10, 1959, 7.

According to the *Iraqi Review*, League members "entered one house after another in order to explain the importance of the revolution and its gains…The cities and the rural areas were divided into so many regions and localities, and there were so many committees for each region and locality…that every one [in Iraq] heard and came in contact with these groups."[118] While this is surely an exaggeration, the women's door-to-door signature campaigns had enough of an impact to be mentioned regularly in reports to the U.S. State Department from the embassy in Baghdad, where the League often sent copies of its petitions. During a large demonstration against the U.S.-sponsored Baghdad Pact, two communist-front delegations stopped by the embassy to deliver copies of their petitions: the first, from the mixed-sex Partisans of Peace, had 655 signatures; the second, from the League, boasted 2,780: "The girls presenting it to the Embassy said signatures were obtained on a house-to-house campaign."[119] The embassy would continue to report regularly on the League's petitions on a variety of issues, not only in Baghdad but in towns and provinces across Iraq; a typical example reads: "Girls from Erbil (100 signatures) express solidarity with the Prime Minister, call for the crushing of plots. The Agrarian Reform Law was supported by the Women of the League for the Defense of Women's Rights in Mosul."[120]

The activities organized under the League's second slogan, "Defending Women's Rights," focused primarily on legislation, an area in which it celebrated two major victories in 1959. The first was the outlawing of honor killings, effected by the abolition of the Mandate-era Tribal, Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation, which had established a separate legal sphere for

[118] "Iraqi Women on the March." See also Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem*, 117.
[119] Second Secretary of Embassy Lee Dinsmore to Secretary of State, December 29, 1958, RG84/787, USNA.
[120] Second Secretary of Embassy Lee Dinsmore to Secretary of State, January 6, 1959, RG84/787, USNA.

"tribal" disputes.[121] The second was the promulgation of the personal status law to remove marriage, divorce, and inheritance laws from the jurisdiction of Islamic authorities and bring them under state control. The League apparently submitted its own proposed draft of the law to the Council of Ministers, and several of its members sat on the official government drafting committee.[122] Among other aspects of the final law promulgated in December 1959 that had been advocated by the League were the setting of the minimum age of marriage at eighteen years for both sexes; the restriction of polygamy; the expansion of "women's protection" against *talaq* or unilateral divorce; the according of female heirs equal rights with males in matters of intestate inheritance.

The last two slogans of the League, defending motherhood and childhood, were not really distinguishable in practice and focused primarily on medical care and hygiene. The organization helped to open maternity clinics that provided free medical services to pregnant women and new mothers as well as hygienic information on "the best ways of promoting their own health and that of their children and families." League members also launched their own vaccination campaign; according to the *Iraqi Review*, "The Rabita alone was responsible for the [smallpox] inoculation of 70,000 persons."[123] Some of the League's social-work projects, especially those connected to children and to maternal health and hygiene, were jointly sponsored by the Qasimite government. Besides the fact that the League provided a great deal of unpaid women's labor to the state's social-development programs, its efforts in these areas conformed, at least in

[121] On the history of the tribal code in relation to Iraqi women, see Noga Efrati, *Women in Iraq: Past Meets Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), chap. 1. See also Su`ad Khayri, *al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya: Kifah wa-`Ata* (Stockholm: A.R.M. All-Tryck, 1998), 17; Jacqueline Ismael and Shereen Ismael, "Gender and State in Iraq," in *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, ed. Suad Joseph (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 193.
[122] "Second Congress of Iraqi Women," *Iraqi Review* 1, no. 27 (March 23, 1960): 6; Noga Efrati, "Negotiating Rights in Iraq: Women and the Personal Status Law," *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 4 (August 2005): 577–96.
[123] "Second Congress of Iraqi Women," 6; Government of Iraq, *The Iraqi Revolution in Its Second Year* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1959), 373–77.

theory, to the public role of women in social development that was promoted by all of the country's political parties. The Ba`thist *al-Hurriyya,* for example, proclaimed:

> We must understand the meaning of "freedom" which we want for the women of our republic. What we have always wanted is opposed to aristocratic trends and fashions; we do not want women to amuse themselves in their free time. We want the Iraqi woman to treat social problems and to raise the level of the republic's women, culturally, socially, and in the domain of health, so that the woman in Iraq will stand with her brothers in the republic and the Arab nation, and with the women of the world to spread honor…[124]

Yet—and this was the subtext of the Ba`thist statement—the highly visible work of the communist women's league sat precariously on the line between social development and political mobilization, or between the "public" domain of the social and the formation of politically effective counterpublics.

Starting in the spring of 1959, the League, like other communist front organizations, faced escalating opposition, including violent attacks, from the Ba`thists and their sympathizers as well as increasing repression from Qasim's government, including the periodic arrest of its leaders and volunteers. In 1959-60, these assaults were more visible and ferocious in relation to its campaign against rural illiteracy than in any other area of its work. Later, after its literacy campaign was effectively shut down, the main public controversy would shift to the personal status law, the focus of the next chapter.

By July 1959, the League had opened more than 200 of its own schools to combat women's illiteracy in rural areas; these were staffed by female volunteers, primarily leftist schoolteachers and secondary school students, and attended by more than 7,000 rural women.[125] The literacy campaign was funded in part by donations from a women's organization in East Germany, which had sponsored an international conference for communist women attended by

[124] "Ilayki Ayatuha al-`Adawiyya al-Karima [For You, Honorable (Female) Member]," *al-Hurriyya*, September 9, 1960, 5.
[125] "Second Congress of Iraqi Women."

two League members. The program placed special emphasis on reducing women's illiteracy in rural areas in southern Iraq, Kurdish areas in the north, and the slums of *shargawiyyas* surrounding Baghdad. At its own program expanded, the League was also working with the Ministry of Education on a proposal to open jointly sponsored literacy schools for girls and women throughout the country.[126]

Due to the predominance of schoolteachers and secondary school students among the League's volunteer literacy teachers, the program was far more active during the summer school vacation than the rest of the year. Its first major implementation was planned for the summer of 1959, when the government and Ba`thist counter-assaults on the ICP were in full swing following the party's demand for a share in governmental power in previous months and the huge demonstration in Baghdad in support of its demand. The League had spent the spring recruiting scores of women volunteers to be sent into rural areas to teach over the summer, often in the unused classrooms of public schools. By mid-summer, however, the campaign found itself in a "fight against social prejudice and official obstruction in some parts of the country."[127] In fact, the commander of the First Division of the Iraqi Army, covering the central and southern provinces of the country, had shut down the League's literacy schools across the entire region. The commander, whose action was not opposed by Qasim's government in spite of an extensive media campaign in the communist press and various petition campaigns, claimed that the League had "deviated" from its stated mission of combating illiteracy by pursuing "partisan" activities in the countryside. Some young members were arrested and delivered to their parents, who were instructed to prevent them from returning to League activities and meetings.[128]

[126] "Iraqi Women on the March"; "World Democratic Feminist Union Delegate Addresses Conference," *Iraq Times*, March 9, 1960, 2; "M.E. Women Expected in G.D.R," *Iraq Times,* March 8, 1960, 3.
[127] "Second Congress of Iraqi Women."
[128] "Khalf al-Suda...Bashar," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid*, August 19, 1960, 2.

> The League publicly denied the charge that it was partisan, insisting that it was
>
> a democratic organization, not a partisan one, and the curricula of the schools did not include anything except what concerns women in household and educational affairs. Furthermore, your action is not consistent with the principles of the revolution in that you include the innocent with the accused...We ask you to undo this unjustice...and return to women the light of knowledge and education which was denied them during the time gone by.[129]

But the communist women's assertions that they were teaching peasant women literacy strictly through educational material on domestic and child-raising skills were not taken seriously by their opponents. And indeed, in other League statements, there was some acknowledgement that the literacy campaign was also a political project. After all, it fell under the slogan of "Defending the Republic" and thus required the education of rural women against counter-revolutionary "lies and deception." As one member explained: "Fighting illiteracy among women and providing correct guidance is the main way to raise the level of women, in order to defeat narrow viewpoints and tendentious rumors, and to encourage correctness toward the defense of the republic."[130] League leader Rose Khadduri likewise insisted that the literacy program was not only about reading and writing but also about teaching women "the meaning of freedom, the meaning of family life, the meaning of peace, and other such concepts."[131]

The shutting down of rural literacy programs in the entire southern half of Iraq, which affected both the League's schools and those of the communist-affiliated Federation of Democratic Youth, became a major public controversy in Iraq. The commander who shut down the programs had justified his decision on the basis that "an honest illiterate is better than an

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[129] "Rabitat al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya Tasahim bi-Sharaf fi Mashru` Mukafahat al-Ummiyya al-Nabil [The Iraqi Women's League Participated Honorably in the Noble Program to Fight Illiteracy]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, June 15, 1960; "Rabitat al-Difa` `an Huquq al-Mar'a Tatalib bi-`Ada Fatah Marakaz Makafahat al-Umiyya [The League for the Defense of Women's Rights Demands Re-opening of Centers to Combat Illiteracy]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, August 30, 1959, 2.

[130] "Nada min Rabitat al-Difa` `an Huquq al-Mar'a fi Irbil."

[131] "Muhadarat al-Duktura Ruz Khadduri hawl Mushakil al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya [Lecture by Dr. Rose Khadduri on the Problems of the Iraqi Woman," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, July 24, 1960.

educated provocateur." He had also ordered that no teachers from urban areas were to enter rural areas in the south during the summer vacation for any non-official reason. *Ittihad al-Sh`ab* ran numerous editorials and articles condemning the statement and the action, the result of which was that the newspaper itself was banned in the entire southern region.[132]

While the League attempted again and again to legitimate its literacy program by invoking widely accepted modernization discourses on the necessity of women's work in social fields and the development benefits of educating peasant women in domestic and child-raising skills, these failed to have the desired effect. Instead, the program was seen by government officials and other anti-communists as violating the fundamental precept that development and social work be conducted through purely technical—that is, apolitical—methods. Instead of functioning as a relay in the "anti-politics machine" of development,[133] the encounter between educated, urban, middle-class leftist women and poor illiterate peasant women was seen as a type of social promiscuity threatening the stability (*tajmid*) that development demanded. The issue was not only that the communist women were suspected of teaching peasant women certain non-domestic concepts. After all, the problem of Marxist schoolteachers was one that Iraq's Ministry of Education had grappled with on a daily basis for several decades. On a more fundamental level, the problem was that there was no telling *what* the women were doing; the literacy program's modes of operation worked against both state and male surveillance. Its lessons were often held in the unused classrooms of state schools during summer vacation or in the evening, but it also relied extensively on existing female homosocial networks and rural modes of hospitality; moreover, it was funded by donations, some of them from communist organizations abroad. The interpenetration of certain spheres in its operations—public and private, state and

[132] See, among many other articles around this time, the editorial "Wad` al-Hawajiz amam Tadawul Ittihad al-Sha`b [The Situation of the Ban on the Circulation of *Ittihad al-Sha`b*]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b* (June 9, 1960): 1.
[133] Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*.

community, urban and rural—was not of the kind envisioned in modernization and development discourse, which depended on the strict separation of two other spheres: the social and the political.

The League's literacy program received the bulk of public attention, but its other social programs did not go unnoticed in the new crackdown. Bolstered by the escalating public controversy over communist activities in general and those of the League in particular, by its drive to subdue the ICP after the latter's demands for a share in government, and by its own growing capacities of surveillance and supervision in the fields of social work, in December 1959 the government announced that all organizations with a "relation to public health," whether public or private, would henceforth report directly to the Ministry of Health and would require its approval for their activities. All such organizations, especially those "working in the rural areas," were directed to attend a conference sponsored by the ministry later that month to "discuss their roles."[134] There is little doubt that the decision was made with the rural health activities of the communist women's league in mind. During the protracted controversy around the literacy campaign, *Ittihad al-Sh`ab* also began posting numerous notices denying the "rumors" that were being spread in the "reactionary" press about the "character" and morals of League members and League activities. These included the false accusation that the League had refused to participate in the government's celebrations of World Children's Day in 1960.[135]

Qasim gave the opening speech at the second annual conference of the League, in March 1960, as he had the previous year, but this time he dropped a bombshell. "Until now the League was known as the League for the Defence of Women's Rights. Today, this name is gone and is

[134] "Mu'tamar Ru'asa' Sihha al-Awliya [Conference of Heads of Provincial Health Organizations]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, December 9, 1959, 4; "Iqtirah Wazirat al-Sihha [Proposal from the Ministry of Health]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, December 10, 1959, 4.
[135] See, e.g., "Min Rabitat al-Mar'a [From the Women's League]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, June 19, 1960, 5.

replaced, in accordance with your wishes, by another name—the League of the Iraqi Woman or the League of Iraqi Women." Qasim's next sentence contained less ambiguous instructions about which part of the name change was to be "in accordance" with the League's wishes: "Sisters, if you wish to use the singular form you will then call it the League of the Iraqi Woman. If you want to use the plural form then you can call it the League of Iraqi Women." The prime minister went on to explain that since women in Iraq had achieved their rights, they no longer needed to defend them. "In the past you were defending the rights of women. Now you are defending the rights of the homeland. Along with your brothers, the men of the Republic, you are now defending the homeland and struggling for the preservation of the gains of the victorious Iraqi Revolution."[136] Qasim thus invoked the primary slogan of both the ICP and the League, "defending the republic," in order to remove any hint of politics from the very name of the organization. On the closing day of the conference, the League voted to enact Qasim's suggestion, permanently changing its name to the League of Iraqi Women.

Epilogue: The 1963 Ba`th Coup and Political History

The analytical framework of most scholarship on the Iraqi revolution, including that of the Marxist Batatu, has been defined by the struggles of the party organizations and the Qasimite regime—that is, the histories are primarily those of political elites, whether the emphasis is placed on those elites' intellectual-ideological trajectories, their social-cultural backgrounds, or their economic interests.[137] Thus, the central conflict of these years has been seen as that between the ICP and the Ba`th, with Qasim guided by the strategy of playing the two parties off one

[136] "Iraqi Women's Pledge," *Iraq Times*, March 11, 1960, 9.

[137] Muhsin al-Musawi has recently criticized this tendency, which according to him extends across all of Iraq's 20th-century history. He calls for historiographical approaches to modern Iraq that do not continue to privilege the political (narrowly defined) above everything else, so that "Narrating Iraq…emerges as a number of itineraries, encounters, efforts, struggles, successes and pain, not only in response to a political scene, an internal crisis, or a massive military occupation, but also to natural disasters, as well as to history itself, and its manner of unfolding to every Iraqi." Al-Musawi, *Reading Iraq*, xiv.

another, more or less successfully for awhile, and then not. Yet even historians who portray Arab nationalism as *the* oppositional movement to Iraqi communism concede that the former movement appealed primarily to certain enclaves of the country's Arab Sunni minority in Baghdad and the northwestern provinces, especially Mosul. In other regions, the most intense struggles against communism were not waged by Arab nationalists at all.

The bloody battle in Kirkuk in July 1959, for example, which is generally considered a milestone in the turning of the national tide against the ICP, was driven by complex local animosities sharpened in recent years by the emergence of "a near parallelism between the racial and economic divisions" of the city; namely, most economic power had accumulated in the hands of Turkmen at the expense of a growing population of Kurds, whose confidence was likewise growing due to their domination of the local communist party infrastructure.[138] In the Kurdish north more broadly, from 1958-63 the ICP gradually lost its early widespread support due to a number of factors, including the party's continuing support for Qasim as the latter launched a repressive campaign, and then an all-out war, against the Kurdish Democratic Party. In Najaf and Karbala, the deepening split was between Shi`i `ulama' and predominantly Shi`i communists, especially after the promulgation of the personal status law. In the southern rural regions, it was between large landowners and peasants over the implementation of the land reform law. The growing anti-communist movement in Qasimite Iraq, which was indeed the basis of the shaky coalition that would bring the Ba`th to power, is thus more accurately understood as comprising an array of diverse groups representing a wide range of interests across the entire country.

By early 1963, the Ba`thists were able to build a very fragile and very temporary alliance of those interests that was nevertheless strong enough to forestall widespread opposition to the

[138] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 912–21.

coup just long enough for it to succeed. Qasim had paved the way for the success of such an unlikely gathering of interests by dismantling all of the provincial and mass political organizations that might have successfully defended him, apparently believing that the important balance of power to maintain in his divide-and-conquer strategy was that between the central party organizations, which he left more or less intact. But the ICP had never had any power in Iraq beyond that which derived from the various popular organizations that supported it; the party could thus do little to protect Qasim—or itself—on February 8, 1963. This has been widely recognized by historians, and indeed the ICP had desperately pointed it out to Qasim on numerous occasions. Yet the emphasis on the political-ideological struggle between the central party organizations has continued to dominate the scholarship, thus analytically repeating Qasim's fatal mistake. As this chapter has attempted to show, other historical narratives of Iraq's revolutionary era are bound to emerge if we suspend the assumption that the many differences and conflicts within Iraqi society during these years were little more than covers for the more important political-elite power struggles between the ICP Central Committee, the Ba`th Party, and the Qasimite regime.

Chapter 6

Building the Iraqi Family of the New Era:
The Personal Status Law of 1959

> A unified law of personal status regulations is the foundation on which the Iraqi family of the new era will be built, guaranteeing the stability of the positions within it and protecting the woman's legal rights and her familial independence.
>
> -Statement of Objectives of the Iraqi Personal Status Law, Baghdad, 1959[1]

> Compelling one sect to follow a legal school different from its own…will obstruct humanity's progress in building a [new] human nature for a better society, shimmering with happiness and freedom in the shadow of Islam.
>
> -Muhammad Bahr al-`Ulum, Najaf, 1963[2]

On December 30, 1959, the Iraqi government gazette published the Law of Personal Status, which had been drafted over the past year by a committee of Qasimite officials, lawyers, feminists, and religious scholars. The new law was hailed in the liberal and communist press as a major step forward for the Iraqi nation and Iraqi women. Among its most widely proclaimed provisions were the equalization of intestate inheritance rights for male and female heirs, the restriction (but not abolition) of men's right to polygamy, mild limits on male unilateral divorce, the possible expansion of women's rights to child custody after divorce (according to the judge's discretion), and the abolition of child and forced marriages by clauses establishing the legal age of consent marry at eighteen years for both sexes. But the law's historical significance derived

[1] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya [Law Number 188 of the Year 1959: The Law of Personal Status]," *al-Waqa'i` al-`Iraqiyya [Iraqi Government Gazette]* 2, no. 280 (December 30, 1959): 8.
[2] Muhammad Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya al-`Iraqi [Insights into the Iraqi Personal Status Law]* (Najaf: Matba`at al-Nu`man, 1963), 247.

from more than the content of its provisions. It was the first time in Iraq that "personal status law"—i.e., legal codes regulating marriage, divorce, and inheritance—had been codified in a single, unified body of law and brought under the complete purview of the state. It was also the last area of law applicable to Iraqi Muslims to undergo this process, since civil, commercial, and criminal branches of law had been codified and unified under Ottoman state control during the 19th century.[3] Its promulgation thus had implications not only for family life and relationships but also for the work and authority of Iraq's `ulama' and its judicial system more broadly.

The personal status law occupies an interesting position in the historical literature on the 1958 revolution, the rise of the Ba`th Party to power after 1963, and the emergence of Islamic political opposition movements in Iraq during the 1960s and 1970s. On the one hand, numerous scholars seem to have accorded no small significance to the law by either stating or suggesting that the controversy it provoked is an explanatory factor behind the coalition that emerged against the Qasimite government and thus in the regime's overthrow, along with the assassination of the prime minister himself, in the first Ba`th coup of 1963.[4] Historiography on the late 20th-century Sunni and, especially, Shi`i political opposition movements in Iraq have likewise identified the 1959 personal status law as a contributing factor in the historical

[3] It was not quite the last area of the law in Iraq to undergo the process, since Jewish and Christian personal status laws remained under the control of those communities. See below.

[4] See, for example, Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 146; Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem: A Political History, 1958-1963* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1969); Yitzhak Nakash, *Reaching for Power: The Shi`a in the Modern Arab World* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 96. Other historians have been more circumspect. For example, Charles Tripp explains the 1960 formation of the Islamic Party by reference to Sunni and Shi`i perceptions of a "need for the reorientation of political life…in terms of Islamic obligations," and notes only that the party was shut down in October after it "criticised aspects of the government's legislative programme for being contrary to the Shari`a." But to my knowledge the Islamic Party only criticized a single provision of Qasimite legislation, the equal inheritance clause of the 1959 personal status law. Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 160–61.

emergence of those movements.[5] Yet few historians have devoted more than a sentence to explicating the law's content and the sociopolitical dynamics of the conflict it produced. Moreover, with the exception of recent work by Noga Efrati, scholars' interest in the law seems to have steadily declined over the past fifty years, notwithstanding the emergence of women's and gender history as disciplinary subfields during that time.[6]

One early work on Iraqi history that devoted more than passing attention to the reforms is Uriel Dann's 1969 *Iraq Under Qassem*. Dann concluded that the law was the personal initiative of the prime minister and that it ultimately reflected Qasim's "Western-style 'progressiveness'" more than his "political acumen," since the communists dismissed it as "bourgeois reform" and the Arab nationalists, while perhaps agreeing with it in theory, were simply uninterested.[7] The argument that the law was an expression of Qasim's well-intentioned liberal ***naiveté***, for which he would be punished, perhaps with his life, rests on two interlinked assumptions: first, that the mass of Iraqi society was so conservative and traditional that it would have formed a natural body of resistance to the personal status law; and, second, that the political parties active in Iraq at the time—most of which were in fact liberal on questions of women's rights and family reform—could not have been interested in such trivial issues as women and family during such a critical historical moment and thus could not have served as a vanguard or counterpoint to the

[5] See Faleh A. Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq* (London: Saqi Books, 2003), 76; Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi`is of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton, 1994), 135; Pierre-Jean Luizard, "The Nature of the Confrontation Between the State and Marja`ism: Grand Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim and the Ba`th," in *Ayatollahs, Sufis and Ideologues: State, Religion and Social Movements in Iraq*, ed. Faleh Abdul-Jabar (London: Saqi Books, 2002), 92.

[6] Noga Efrati, "Negotiating Rights in Iraq: Women and the Personal Status Law," *Middle East Journal* 59, no. 4 (August 2005): 577–96; idem, *Women in Iraq: Past Meets Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012). The only other English-language studies I am aware of that give the law more than a brief mention are more than forty years old. See Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem*; J. N. D. Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (October 1960): 542–63; idem, "Changes in the Law of Personal Status in Iraq," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (1963): 1026–31.

[7] Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem*, 247.

conservative weight of the masses. In contrast, this chapter will show that the law's promulgation was of considerable interest to political commentators and organizations across the ideological spectrum. A common thread running through the discourses of supporters and opponents alike was their agreement on the importance of laws regulating family structures and relations to the construction of a desirable national future.

Most historians since Dann have not gone beyond the now fairly standard inclusion of the 1959 personal status law in the list of factors that led to Qasim's downfall and the triumph of the Ba`th to examine the actual substance of the legal reforms or the conflict that they provoked. One explanation is that the rationalities driving both the law's promulgation and the subsequent opposition to it are imagined to fall along simple modern/traditional and progressive/conservative lines. Thus the basic contours of the controversy are assumed to be always-already known: the law's supporters stood for women's rights and liberal-secular equality, its opponents for male privilege and religious tradition. But a close examination of the law itself and the discourses around it reveals a more complicated picture.

The next section of this chapter briefly surveys several recent works on laws regulating family relations in Ottoman and Hashimite Iraq prior to the July revolution, in order to show that these laws, and the institutions that implemented them, were not homogenous or static prior to 1958, and indeed that "the state" had been intervening in them for centuries. The following section engages in a close reading of the actual text of the 1959 personal status law—a method that has not been employed in any Western-language academic treatment of the law since Anderson's 1960 legal-modernist study[8]—opening up aspects of the reform that are obscured in analyses based on a progress/tradition binary. The last two sections examine responses to the law's promulgation by various secular and Islamic intellectuals in Iraq, establishing that many of

[8] Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq."

these responses have been misunderstood or misrepresented in the scholarship. I first examine the reasoning of the law's primary non-state supporters, the communists, and then show how much of the opposition to the civil code—specifically that of the Ba`thists and many Sunni `ulama'—was directed solely at its inheritance clause and, albeit to a much lesser extent, its provision restricting polygamy. Far from being unconcerned with or disinterested in the law's other provisions, and indeed the concept of the law itself, these actors strenuously defended them.

In the final section, I explore the more comprehensive critiques of the law produced by Shi`i scholars and the debate that emerged between them and Iraqi Sunni scholars over the very legitimacy of a unified personal status code under the control of the secular state. The section raises questions about various ways that temporal change and spatial difference were imagined by the secular and Sunni thinkers who supported most or all of the law's provisions and those Shi`i critics who opposed it on principle. On the one hand, Iraqi Shi`i scholars asserted that the 1959 law was incompatible with the unchanging, eternal nature of the shari`a. On the other hand, they argued that it temporally and spatially immobilized legal *practice* by obliterating differences in the five schools of Islamic law, fixing laws and legal authorities to a particular time and place, and "closing the gates of *ijtihad*" or independent juristic reasoning. The temporality of shari`a law as conceived in these Shi`i discourses was not static, although it derived from unchanging principles. Rather, it was shaped by the dynamic temporality of Islamic legal schools (*madhahib*) as discursive traditions.[9] I argue that these critiques are suggestive of how the revolutionary state sought to enable one form of temporal change (economic development) through the production

[9] On Islamic discursive traditions, see Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

of other forms of temporal and spatial stasis and of the importance of the law, sexual difference, and the "permanent" conjugal family to this process.

The State, the Sects, and Family Laws in Ottoman and Hashimite Iraq

Histories of legal transformations in Islamic lands framed by modernization theory have tended to narrate these changes as a linear process of secularization and rationalization, whereby different legal categories were gradually removed from the domain of religious legal systems and authorities, codified into unified bodies of law, and brought under the control of the modern nation-state. In these narratives, the last legal category to undergo the transformation was that of "personal status law," often glossed as "family law," and the reason commonly given for the delay is that this area of law was regarded by Islamic authorities as the untouchable "heart of the shari`a." Thus, for pragmatic reasons, modernist legal reformers in the 19th-century Ottoman Empire concentrated on the reform of commercial, civil, and criminal branches of the legal system, leaving family law alone. Only in the 20th century, so the story goes, did states in the former Ottoman territories acquire the confidence, or the power, to begin encroaching on the "sacred domain" of Islamic personal status law, with greater or lesser success depending on the respective strength of "secular" and "religious" authorities in each national context.

Various aspects of this narrative have been challenged in recent years. One of the most important critiques, by Talal Asad, contests the notion that Islamic laws and courts in 19th-century Egypt were "restricted" to the sphere of family law due to the fact that this sphere's regulation was the essential and sacred "heart of the *shari`a*." Asad argues that the concept of "family law"—and indeed of "family" itself—was unknown in Islamic legal discourse prior to the 19th century, and that both concepts were constructed through the judicial transformations of that era. The formation of the "dual legal system" in 19th-century Egypt thus did not "leave"

family law to the domain of Islamic authorities but rather constituted both "family" and "religion" as belonging to the "private" sphere, where religion was assigned the role of fostering a healthy national morality through the organization and regulation of family life. "It is in this context that 'the family' emerges as a category in law, in welfare administration, and in public moralizing discourse. The family is the unit of 'society' in which the individual is physically and morally reproduced and has his or her primary formation as a 'private' being." The shari'a thus reconstituted "is precisely a secular formula for privatizing 'religion' and preparing the ground for the self-governing subject."[10]

In constructing "premodern" family law in Islamic lands as the unchanging "heart of the shari`a," the standard secularization narrative of modernist legal reforms also fails to consider various ways in which state authority *has* extended into the regulation of marriage, inheritance, and other "family" affairs throughout Islamic history, in ways that have differed greatly across time and space. In the territory of present-day Iraq, this history was shaped in significant ways by Sunni-Shi`i relations since the establishment of the Shi`i Safavid Empire on the eastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire in 1501. There is a dearth of secondary literature on how legal systems and practices worked at the local level in the Ottoman provinces of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra, and almost none on family laws, on Shi`i courts and practices, or on how official Ottoman civil and religious (Sunni Hanafi) legal systems addressed the ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian diversity of these provinces on the empire's periphery. A work by Karen Kern published in 2012, *Imperial Citizen: Marriage and Citizenship in the Ottoman Frontier Provinces of Iraq*, begins to address this lacuna.

Kern shows that the Ottoman state asserted legal authority over some aspects of marriage and inheritance within the territory of modern-day Iraq from the time it established control—

[10] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 227–28.

through a series of wars with the Safavids—over the provinces of Baghdad and Basra in the 16th century. Already in 1501, shortly after the establishment of the Safavid state, Ottoman imperial orders and religious fatwas evinced "a hardening attitude toward Shi`ism" among both state officials and the empire's leading Sunni `ulama'.[11] There is some scholarly debate over whether the increasing Ottoman persecution of "Safavid sympathizers"—which included local incidents of harassment as well as mass deportations and executions—targeted the empire's Shi`i communities indiscriminately or focused mainly on those demonstrating political sympathies with the enemy state. In any case, Kern argues persuasively that the Ottoman "geopolitical struggle" over its eastern frontier was intimately linked to "the rhetorical creation of a binary opposition between 'true' Islam (Sunni orthodoxy) and Shi`i 'unbelief'" in Ottoman discourse during this period. A letter from Sultan Selim I to the Safavid Shah Isma`il during the Battle of Caldiran in 1514, for example, asserted that "the fatwas of distinguished `ulema who base their opinion on reason and tradition alike and the consensus of the Sunni community agree that the ancient obligation of expiration, extermination, and expulsion of evil innovation must be the aim of our exalted aspiration," and accused the shah of having "incited your abominable Shi`i faction to unsanctified sexual union and to the shedding of innocent blood."[12] As Kern notes, the sultan's charge of Shi`i sexual immorality most likely referred to *mut`a* marriage, which has played a recurring but far from historically uniform role in Sunni-Shi`i theological debates and political conflicts over the centuries.[13]

[11] Karen M. Kern, *Imperial Citizen: Marriage and Citizenship in the Ottoman Frontier Provinces of Iraq* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 37.
[12] Ibid., 39.
[13] On the role of *mut`a* in 20th-century debates between Sunni and Shi`i intellectuals, see Werner Ende, "Ehe auf Zeit (*mut`a*) in der innerislamischen Diskussion der Gegenwart," *Die Welt Des Islams* 20 (1980): 1–42; Rainer Brunner, *Islamic Ecumenism in the 20th Century: The Azhar and Shiism Between Rapprochement and Restraint*, trans. Joseph Greenman (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

In 1511 and 1512, the qadi of Istanbul issued fatwas declaring that *kizilbas* were infidels and invalidating marriages between them and other Muslims. While *kizilbas* technically referred to what Kern calls the "Shi`i-Safavi sect (*tarikat*)," it seems there was often little distinction made by Ottoman civil and religious authorities between *kizilbas* and other Shi`a within the empire, and many of the most common charges made against the former—such that they "cursed" the first three Sunni caliphs and practiced *mut`a* marriage—were true of Twelver Shi`a in general.[14] Fatwas invalidating marriages between *kizilbas* and members of the empire's other sects and religions continued to be issued throughout the 16th century by government-affiliated `ulama' of the Hanafi *madhhab*, the school of Sunni law officially promoted and enforced by the Ottoman state. Several of these were issued by *seyuislam*s, the highest ranking Islamic authority in the empire, responsible for the appointments of all other official `ulama' and for serving as an advisor to the sultan. In the mid-16th century, the very powerful *seyuislam* Ebussuud defined *kizilbas* as heretics on the basis of their adherence to beliefs that would seem to apply to all Twelver Shi`a, declared that a "Muslim" was not permitted to marry a "heretic," and thus "confirmed and strengthened" what Kern asserts was the Ottoman state's increasingly assertive "prohibition of marriages between Sunnis and Shi`ites" within its borders.[15] While Islamic law is clear that prohibitions of marriage between "Muslims" are not permitted, these fatwas drew on a tradition of Ash`ari scholarship holding that "an *unorthodox* Muslim man could not marry an orthodox woman" and may have also utilized 10th and 11th-century Hanafi literature from Iran and Transoxiania, which "denounced the Shi`a and other sects as heretical because of their practice of temporary (*mut`a*) marriages" and thus excluded them from "Muslim" status.[16] Kern did not find similar fatwas or other Ottoman rulings banning marriage between the sects in the

[14] Kern, *Imperial Citizen*, 35–37.
[15] Ibid., 46.
[16] Ibid., 44, 48.

17th century, but they seem to have reemerged in the late 18th century, likely due in part to rising tensions over Persian Shi`i pilgrimage traffic through Ottoman lands and to renewed hostilities between the Ottoman and Persian states on the eastern borders of present-day Iraq.[17] Another issue that drove these efforts was the concern of Ottoman state authorities over the widespread conversions from Sunnism to Shi`ism among the populations of Baghdad and Basra in the late 18th and 19th centuries.[18]

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Ottoman attempts to prevent marriage between Sunnis and Shi`a remained highly sensitive to the shifting political winds of the empire's relations with Iran, especially regarding border, migration, pilgrimage, and conversion disputes, while becoming intertwined with changing conceptions of Ottoman (and Iranian) citizenship and the related state centralization efforts and legal reforms of that era. In 1822, Sultan Mahmud II issued a mandate "Concerning the Prohibition of Marriage with Iranians," which "specifically designated as heretics (*rafiza*) the Shi`a, Iranians, people of ignorance (*cehele-i nasi*), and people of unknown lineage (*mechulunnesep eshas*), all of whom had strayed from the true path of Islam and were prohibited from marrying Ottomans."[19] The mandate charged the empire's official (Hanafi) qadis and imams with the duty of enforcing the ban. Finally, in 1874, the Ottoman government promulgated the "Law Protecting the Prohibition of Marriage Between Iranians and Ottoman Citizens." Unlike the previous fatwas and official directives, this law technically only prohibited marriage between Ottoman citizens and Iranian citizens (which according to Kern was a unique prohibition—i.e., marriages between Ottomans and citizens of any other nationality were not banned). Yet the category "Iranians" continued to be regularly conflated with "Shi`a" and subsequent legal rulings and other civil and religious discourses around the law remained

[17] Ibid., 49–53.
[18] Ibid., chap. 2. On conversion in this period, see also Nakash, *The Shi`is of Iraq*.
[19] Kern, *Imperial Citizen*, 54.

inextricably linked to the "Shi`i-Sunni religious difference."[20] In the following decades there were numerous, often contradictory, attempts to deal with the legal confusion this conflation created for rulings on individual cases, for example regarding whether a Christian or Jewish Ottoman citizen was allowed to marry a Christian or Jewish Iranian citizen or whether a Sunni Ottoman was allowed to marry a Shi`i Ottoman.[21]

The official state recognition of the Ja`fari (Shi`i) legal school in Iraq as having jurisdiction over "personal status law" disputes within Shi`i communities was an innovation of the British Mandate state, since it had never been recognized by the Ottoman state. (This does not mean it was ineffective on a local level, however, given the often tenuous nature of Ottoman authority over the shrine cities and the rural Shi`i-majority areas of the Baghdad and Basra provinces.) In his recent study of sectarianism, law, and state formation in 20th-century Lebanon, Max Weiss argues that the recognition of the Ja`fari *madhhab* and the establishment of a system of Ja`fari shari`a courts to hear personal status cases by the French Mandate state "constituted a watershed" in modern Lebanese history. "When the French colonial state officially sanctioned the practical application of Ja`fari personal status law—an altogether new category of jurisdiction—through the formal recognition of the Ja`fari *madhhab*, Shi`i juridical, religious and cultural identities were reconfigured within the multisectarian environment of Greater Lebanon."[22] Weiss connects this new legal system to the appearance of "a new mode of identifying oneself, one's family, or one's 'community' as Lebanese *and* Shi`i" in the French Mandate state.[23] A comparable study of the relation between personal status laws and

[20] Ibid., 96.
[21] Ibid., 107–112.
[22] Max Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi`ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 124.
[23] Ibid., 19.

jurisdictions and changing sectarian and national identities in the process of Iraqi state formation under the British Mandate and independent Hashimite monarchy would be illuminating.

Another work on Iraq published in 2012, Noga Efrati's *Women in Iraq: Past Meets Present*, examines family-law jurisdictions and attempts to institute a unified national personal status law in Hashimite Iraq from 1921-58. To my knowledge, this is the most sustained attempt to consider the effects of the Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation (TCCDR) on family life and relations in Iraq. The TCCDR was introduced by the British during the occupation of Ottoman Basra and Baghdad in 1916 "for the purpose of ruling over Iraq's vast countryside," and then became state law under the Mandate in 1924; it was not repealed until after the 1958 revolution. The law created a separate legal domain for areas designated as "tribal," which "sanctioned settlement of disputes among the rural population in accordance with 'tribal methods' and 'tribal law.'" The regulation bolstered the power of "tribal" shaykhs hand-selected by British authorities and created two separate legal domains in Iraq, "tribal law" for rural populations and state-controlled civil and criminal law for urban populations. Efrati does not really explore the jurisdiction of shari`a laws and courts under the TCCDR; since personal status laws did not fall under state-controlled civil and criminal law at all, it is not clear whether shari`a law was actually excluded from the regions that fell under tribal jurisdiction, either officially (i.e., according to the tribal regulation) or in local practice in all areas. But it does appear that many of the "tribal customs" enforced under the TCCDR had to do with family relations and were often in direct violation of Islamic law; they included, for example, the prevention of women from inheriting property, the exchange of women for the settlement of "blood feuds," and minimal or no punishment for "honor killings" of women by their relatives.[24]

[24] Efrati, *Women in Iraq*, chap. 1.

Efrati also examines various attempts by Hashimite authorities to implement a unified law of personal status, culminating in a full draft law that was considered by the Chamber of Deputies in 1946/47 but never promulgated, at least in part due to concerted opposition from Shi`i `ulama'. But if personal status laws themselves remained beyond the jurisdiction of state legislators, Efrati describes a gradual "unification" of civil and shari`a courts throughout the Mandate and independent-monarchical eras, which seems more like a gradual expansion of civil courts over the adjudication of personal status laws and a gradual disappearance of shari`a courts and qadis. Already in 1929, "civil judges were authorized to rule in personal status matters, consulting with `ulama' only when necessary," and by the 1950s "only a few specially designated qadis remained."[25] Unfortunately, Efrati does not discuss any differences between Ja`fari and Hanafi shari`a courts/laws in this process of incorporation of personal status law into the civil court system, and there seems to be some confusion in the historical literature on the Mandate era over when, where, and to what extent Ja`fari personal status law was adjudicated in shari`a or civil courts.[26] In any case, the recent works of Kern, Weiss, and Efrati should serve as reminders both that state intervention into "family law" in Iraq, whether in the legislative or judicial domains, was hardly an invention of the Qasimite regime and that it had long been linked to the religious and sectarian diversity of Iraqi communities.

The 1959 Iraqi Personal Status Law

[25] Ibid., 83.

[26] According to Chibli Mallat, Ja`fari shari`a courts in Iraq had jurisdiction over cases between Shi`i claimants and Hanafi courts over cases between Sunni claimants, and for the most part both shari`a court systems operated independently of the state, which "recognized their decisions and implemented them, without interfering with the internal legal process which was specific to each community." Chibli Mallat, "Shi`ism and Sunnism in Iraq: Revisiting the Codes," in *Islamic Family Law*, ed. Chibli Mallat and Jane Frances Connors (London: Graham & Trotman Limited, 1990), 77. Jamal Nasir, however, claims that from the start of British Mandate rule, personal status disputes among Shi`a were placed under the control of civil courts, whose state-trained judges were charged with adjudicating them "according to the Jaafari doctrine" and consulted with Shi`i `ulama' on individual cases when necessary; shari`a courts retained jurisdiction over personal status matters for Sunnis and continued to exclusively apply Hanafi law, as they had during Ottoman times. Jamal J. Nasir, *The Islamic Law of Personal Status* (London: Graham & Trotman, 1990), 33.

It is often asserted that the road to modernity involves the emergence of marriage as a contract between consenting adults and that it is because of this new contractual understanding that marriages become dissolvable in the modern era. Many share the view expressed by French philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard that the "the temporary contract is in practice supplementing permanent institutions in the professional, emotional, sexual, cultural, family and international domains, as well as in political affairs."[27] Thus, modern law will tend toward a greater facilitation of divorce, which combined with other social, cultural, and economic forces will lead to a decrease in the average duration of marriage.

In the Iraqi personal status law of 1959, what we find instead is an unmistakable drive to make marriage less of a temporary contract and more of a permanent institution. On one level, this points to the limitations of turning the European experience into the normative model of modernization. In the history of marriage, that experience was shaped by the status of the institution as a religious sacrament in pre-Reformation and Catholic Europe.[28] In Islamic law, marriage has always been defined as a dissolvable contract, albeit much easier for the man to dissolve than the woman, and this alone meant that conflicts over marriage as a "religious" or "secular" institution in the modern era would follow different trajectories from those in the West. On another level, the narrative of the gradual contractualization and consequent temporal shortening of marriage does not account for the widespread efforts across the globe to stabilize

[27] Cited in David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell, 1990), 113. The view that the average duration of marriage has decreased over the *longue duree* of Western history has been challenged by European family historians. Lawrence Stone argues that a combination of late marriages, short life-spans, and flexible marital practices in medieval and early modern England produced marriages of shorter average duration than later modern ones. He also proposes that increasing demands for laws facilitating divorce in the modern era may be partially attributable to the lengthening of the average human life-span. But this sort of work does not seem to have had much impact, outside the field of family history, on general understandings of the history of marriage in the West. Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*, reprint (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1990).

[28] See John Witte, *From Sacrament to Contract: Marriage, Religion, and Law in the Western Tradition* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1997).

the conjugal bond in the modern period, or for the degree to which, in the 20th century, those efforts were linked to new discourses around the nation's and the child's future.

The fundamental aim of the 1959 personal status law, according to the committee that drafted it, was to repair a damaging legal environment that had generated "instability in the life of the Iraqi family," and thereby to establish "the foundation on which the Iraqi family of the new era will be built."[29] The notion of "instability" in the Iraqi family connoted several things that are conflated in the law's reasoning. First, it pointed to the fact that different families in Iraq were governed by different religious laws, a situation that was often said, perhaps paradoxically, to both fuel religious sectarianism and to tempt Iraqis to change their religion at will (e.g., based on whichever sect's inheritance law most appealed to them). Second, it referred to the indeterminacy, complexity, and opacity (to civil bureaucrats) of Islamic law itself, which was uncodified and thus frequently open to individual juristic interpretation and to change over time and space. Third, it referred to the temporal instability of the family, caused by the ease of unilateral male divorce in all schools of Islamic law and by the Shi`i institution of *mut`a* marriage, both of which were seen by reformers as harmful to the development of children. Fourth, it referred to the family's spatial instability, its porosity to the outside world, demonstrated on the one hand by the household's openness to those who did not belong to the nuclear unit—extended kin, servants, wet nurses—and on the other hand by the embeddedness of its individual members in broader social networks, often to the detriment of the conjugal bond and the care of children. Thus, while the legislators' declared solution was to institute a single, uniform code that would also, in its content, foster family "stability," the law's provisions in fact worked to "stabilize" certain kinds of relationships and to destabilize others.

[29] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 7–8.

While the statement of objectives does not provide an explicit definition of "instability" in the family, it does provide an account of its origins. The problem could be traced to the lack of "a unified law bringing together, from the opinions of Islamic jurists [*fuqaha'*], the relevant shari`a rulings on personal status that are most appropriate to contemporary welfare." To state the causal logic even more baldly, it was the "multiplicity of juridical sources and the diversity of rulings" on matters of personal status in Islam that had "generated instability in the life of the family."[30] Criticism by modernizing reformers of the diversity and open-endedness of Islamic jurisprudence was nothing new. In the 19th century, it had been endlessly deployed by Ottoman reformers and their European advisors to explain the necessity of codifying all other areas of the law (besides personal status law), and indeed is familiar to the process of modernizing and "rationalizing" legal systems across the world in the 19th and 20th centuries.[31] What is interesting about the statement's reasoning is that it makes the multiplicity and lack of fixity in the Islamic legal system the *cause* of instability in the contemporary Iraqi family.

It is not immediately clear how Islamic legal multiplicity across time and space would be imagined to produce instability in a particular time and place (i.e., a family), since most Muslims living in the same locality, and certainly most living in the same family, would follow the same school of law or at least belong to the same sect.[32] Moreover, as we have seen, by 1958 Iraq's shari`a courts had already been incorporated under state control to a considerable degree and personal status cases were often if not usually heard in front of civil judges who did not have Islamic legal training, but who consulted with `ulama' from either the Hanafi or Shi`i legal schools when necessary. But it was precisely the governance of Iraqi family relations by laws

[30] Ibid., 7.
[31] See Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). See also the works of Max Weber, e.g., *Economy and Society* (Totowa: Bedminster, 1968).
[32] There are four living schools of law within the Sunni sect, but all recognize the legitimacy of the others.

that differed *across* space and time, within the territorial borders of the nation-state, that was intolerable to reformers. A major aim of the law was to submerge the diverse religio-legal spaces inhabited by Muslim communities in Iraq into the single, theoretically homogeneous, space of the modern nation-state. Furthermore, in establishing a correlation between a unified national family law and the construction of a homogeneous family type appropriate to the new era, the legislators suggested a converse correlation between the diversity of Islamic laws categorized since the 19th century as "personal status law" and the diversity of interpersonal relationships that might have been governed by these disunited opinions, texts, and rulings relating to childbirth, custody, marriage, divorce, bequests, and so on. In place of a multiplicity of laws governing a multiplicity of relationships subject to spatial difference and temporal change ("instability"), the Iraqi personal status law was to lay the foundation for a unified system governing a timeless institution based on a fixed relationship: the monogamous conjugal couple. It was also to lay the foundation for the everyday life of each member of this institution—man, woman, and child—encouraging, for each of these, certain ways of spending time and discouraging others. This effort to reconstitute everyday time reflected the lawmakers' larger aim of creating, as the statement of objectives explained, not only a nation of stable individual families but also a "society stable in its rights and its duties."[33]

If the law was guided by an effort to eliminate the heterogeneous and unstable practices of existing Islamic systems of jurisprudence, I will argue that it was *not* driven by an impulse to undermine Islam itself as a source of national morality and identity: quite the contrary. The lawmakers' do not conceal their consternation that the multiplicity of religious family laws in Iraq had led "certain interested persons to make a sport of the law and the principles of the

[33] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 8.

shari`a by changing their religion or legal school [*madhhab*]."[34] This concern over insincere religious conversion in the addendum of what is often considered the final step in the "secularization" of Iraqi law is striking. As I will argue below in relation to the responses of Sunni scholars and Ba`thist commentators to the law, its promulgation might be more productively conceptualized as part of a process by which religion was equated with morality as both were increasingly displaced to the "private" sphere of state-regulated familial relations. This was not a process of undermining religion but of remaking it.

That the personal status law was not an effort to minimize the influence of Islam on individual conduct, but rather to rehabilitate it as a homogeneous and state-friendly force fostering national morality, is further suggested in the law's first two articles. Article 1 claims that the law's provisions are drawn from the shari`a, as well as from the personal status laws of "other Islamic countries." It further specifies that in cases where no provision of the law is applicable, judgment shall be made according to "the Islamic shari`a," without naming any particular school of law. Article 2 states that the present code shall apply to all Iraqi citizens with the exception of those covered by a "special law."[35] This clause has generally been interpreted as meaning that Christians and Jews in Iraq would retain their own personal status laws.[36] It presents some difficulty to Anderson's argument that the law represents a step forward in the historical process of secularization/modernization, through which national identity was to submerge over all other forms of identity, especially religious ones. No doubt many non-Muslim Iraqis appreciated the right to maintain their own family laws. Yet their exclusion from the national personal status law seems to fly in the face of the revolutionary project to unify the law

[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid., 1.
[36] Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," 542.

for all Iraqi citizens, and of the ubiquitous nationalist criticism of British and the monarchy for dividing the nation by inserting different Iraqis into different legal spaces.

One possible reading is that post-revolutionary national identity itself was based in part on the construction of Iraqis as Muslim, against the Christian/Jewish Other, who had been increasingly associated throughout the 1940s and 1950s with the European colonial powers in spite of these communities' long Iraqi heritage and, especially in the case of the Jews, deep integration into the fabric of Iraqi urban culture and Arabic language. Such a project would involve, on the one hand, the forging of a more unified identity from among the various Muslim sects and legal schools, and, on the other hand, the exclusion of Christians and Jews from full national citizenship, both of which the personal status law seems to participate in. In addition to their general exclusion from the law itself, a number of provisions seem to restrict the rights of non-Muslims more than could be justified by any claim of remaining true to the shari`a. The most striking of these prohibits the bequeathing of real property to a person of a different religion. Since the personal status law only applies to Muslims, the clause presumably only means that a Muslim cannot bequeath property to a non-Muslim, and in fact the law specifies that this prohibition applies even if the laws of the designated legatee would allow that person to bequeath property in the other direction. By contrast, other provisions in the law permit bequeaths from an Iraqi citizen to a foreign national on the condition that the law of the foreign national would permit reciprocal bequeaths. According to Anderson, the clause banning the bequeathing of property to non-Muslims has no historical basis in any school of Islamic law, which, at the most, makes religion a bar only to intestate inheritance, not to testate inheritance or voluntary bequeaths. He simply notes that the provision is "strange"—as indeed it is if, as

Anderson argues, the personal status law is to be interpreted as a "sacrifice of sectarian principles on the altar of national unity."[37]

The remainder of the personal status law consists of the actual codes related to marriage, divorce, child care, and inheritance. The presentation of the provisions in this order reflects the new type of family envisaged by the legislators. The term "personal status law"—a category that derives not from the shari`a but from the Napoleonic Code—is most commonly defined as "family law," but this is not quite accurate. The category does not cover all legal codes defining and regulating family relations; it excludes laws on incest and adultery, for example (which fall under "criminal law"). More suggestive is a definition proposed by Iraqi Shi`i scholar Muhammad Bahr al-`Ulum in a 1963 critique of the Iraqi code. He writes that "personal status law" can be defined as comprising those codes that regulate the *temporal stages* of an individual's "private" life—from "the appearance of the fetus" in the womb to the infant's birth to the care of the child to marriage (including its potential dissolution) to death and beyond it (the distribution of the deceased's property and debt).[38]

Indeed, the substantive provisions of the 1959 law can almost be read as a temporal narrative of a normative human life—except that they begin not with conception or with birth but with marriage, the act that founds the modern conjugal family. This choice reflects the law's orientation not only toward regulating the life-cycle of the individual—as Bahr al-`Ulum understands the category of "personal status law" in its appropriation within Islamic law—but also toward regulating the life-cycle of a particular kind of family. Unlike the "extended family," this family is easily narratizable for the simple reason that it has a beginning: the individuation of the conjugal couple from the spouses' previous social contexts. The necessity of making such

[37] Ibid., 547.
[38] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 21.

narrative choices already illustrates the relevance of Brinkley Messick's insight that codification of the shari`a is *always* a transformation of the shari`a, regardless of how closely the new codes might be argued to adhere to existing Islamic legal precepts.[39]

Article 3 establishes the definition of marriage as "a legally sanctioned contract between a man and a woman, the aims of which are to establish the bond of a shared life and to beget children."[40] This definition resonates to a degree with Islamic law, which also views marriage as a contract; legal rulings connected to the marital bond have thus often worked by way of analogy with other instances of contract law. The marriage contract in Islam likewise has two legally authorized aims, one of which is procreation. But here the overlap ends, since the second legitimate purpose of marriage in all schools of Islamic law is sexual pleasure. The concept of marriage as the foundation of "a shared life" between a man and a woman is historically unknown in Islamic law, though of course it was a familiar understanding in Iraq by this time of the companionate conjugal couple as the basis of modern family life. The absence of sexual pleasure as a legal aim of the marriage contract is consonant with longstanding Western conceptions of the institution, both Christian and secular. Yet its omission from the 1959 Iraqi law, and the addition of "the bond of a shared life" in its place, are so far from historical Islamic understandings of marriage that their failure to raise opposition from Islamic scholars opposed to other aspects of the law is noteworthy.

In Shi`i law, moreover, sexual pleasure has historically been the *only* authorized purpose of *mut`a* or temporary marriage. The Arabic word *mut`a* actually translates as "pleasure," although the terms *zawaj al-mut`a* or *nikah al-mut`a* have conventionally been translated into English as "temporary marriage" rather than the more direct "pleasure marriage." This form of

[39] Messick, *The Calligraphic State*.
[40] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 1.

marriage, which is not recognized in the four Sunni schools of law, consists of a contract between a man and a woman for a period of time specified in advance, which might be one hour or ninety-nine years.[41] While procreation is not a legitimate intent of the parties to a *mut`a* contract, children conceived during the contracted period are considered legitimate. After the contract expires, the woman must observe an '*idda* or waiting period, spanning two menstrual cycles, in order to verify the paternity of any offspring. Since, at least historically, Shi`i law has explicitly banned procreation as a purpose of *mut`a* marriage,[42] and has implicitly banned the creation of a shared life as such, it would seem that the definition of marriage in Article 3 of the Iraqi personal status law would fail to legitimize *mut`a* marriages. As Iranian Shi`i scholar Muhammad Ja`far Ja`fari Langarudi explains, marriage in Islamic (i.e., Shi`i) law "cannot be defined as an agreement for the establishment of a family or household, because that does not include *mut`a* marriage…[sexual] intercourse is the *raison d'etre* of marriage."[43]

The law contains other clauses that reinforce the abandonment of the Islamic concept of sexual pleasure as a purpose of the marriage contract. Many are phrased to evoke Islamic legal discourses, even when the effect of the provision is quite different. For example, the law permits a woman to divorce her husband if she finds that "he is impotent or afflicted by an ailment that prevents him from consummating the marriage." But such ailments are then defined as those that "make his companionship harmful," specifically leprosy, tuberculosis, syphilis, and insanity. If a medical exam indicates that the condition may be temporary, moreover, the court shall postpone

[41] See Shahla Haeri, *Law of Desire: Temporary Marriage in Shi`i Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989). Unfortunately, no comparable study exists on the institution of *mut`a* marriage in Shi`i areas of Iraq, though Haeri does include some accounts of the practice of *mut`a* in Najaf as described by her Shi`i informants in Iran.

[42] This appears to be changing in the 21st century. Some Shi`i scholars now permit *mut`a* contracts between a man and an egg-donor woman who have never met for the purpose of legitimizing *in vitro* fertilization of the man's "permanent" wife. See Morgan Clarke and Marcia C. Inhorn, "Mutuality and Immediacy Between *Marja`* and *Muqallid*: Evidence from Male in Vitro Fertilization Patients in Shi'i Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 3 (2011): 409–427.

[43] Quoted in and translated by Haeri, *Law of Desire*, 34–35.

the order of separation until the disease has time to resolve, and in the meantime the wife may "refrain from meeting the husband."[44] The relevant concept drawn from Islamic law, subject to some variation among the schools, is that a woman has the right to sexual intercourse with her husband. Thus, if he is "impotent," she has the right to divorce him. Bahr al-`Ulum, in his critique of this provision of the personal status law, notes that the word "impotence" (*`innin*) in Islamic law has a single meaning, namely "an inability to perform the sexual act." Differences of opinion among the legal schools revolve around the definitions of "inability" (e.g., whether the man is unable to have sex with any woman, or just his wife, and whether he was ever able to sex with his wife, i.e., whether the marriage was consummated) and of "the sexual act" (thus, in two Sunni schools, a man must be able to have sex with his wife "from the front," not just "from behind").[45] Iraqi women's rights advocates supported this provision of the personal status law as protecting a woman from a diseased husband. Yet it would appear that the Islamic protection of a married woman's right to sexual intercourse and to divorce in its absence had been quietly abandoned.

In one of the more widely discussed provisions of the law, polygamy is prohibited except with a judge's permission, which may be granted only if two conditions are met: 1) the husband has adequate financial resources to support multiple wives; and 2) there is a "lawful benefit" in his taking more than one wife.[46] All five Islamic legal schools permit a man to contract up to four ("permanent") marriages simultaneously, on the condition, based on a Qur'anic injunction, that he treat his wives equally. (In Shi`i law, there is no limit to the number of simultaneous *mut`a* marriages a man may contract.) The condition of equal treatment has been the subject of extensive discussion within Islamic legal traditions; in the modern period, a minority of jurists

[44] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 5.
[45] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 96–101.
[46] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 2.

have argued that since in reality it is impossible for a man to treat multiple wives equally, the condition can be interpreted as a ban on polygamy.[47] Condition 1 of the polygamy provision in the 1959 law is clearly meant to echo the Qur'anic condition of equal treatment, though its stipulation of adequate financial resources as the sole consideration in the assessment of "equality" is at best a minority opinion among Muslim jurists. Condition 2, that there be a "lawful benefit" to polygamous marriage, is unknown in Islamic law.[48] It is not entirely clear what the expression means, but one plausible reading is that "lawful benefit" would be connected to the "legitimate aims" of marriage itself as defined by the law; since one of these is procreation, a man might be permitted a second wife if his first does not bear children. In any case, the provision as a whole is clearly oriented toward establishing polygamy as undesirable in itself (there must be a good reason for it), without going so far as to legally prohibit it and while leaving judges considerable leeway in interpretation.

The law went further on child marriage, which it did ban altogether. Legal capacity to marry was determined by the individual's "sanity and puberty," and the latter was defined as eighteen years of age for both sexes. A separate clause permits those as young as sixteen to contract marriages under special circumstances, with the permission of a judge and their legal guardians.[49] Another apparent implication of the definition of "capacity to marry" as "sanity and puberty" is that guardian consent would not be required for marriages of women eighteen and over. This latter effect is consistent with most schools of Islamic law, though it is in violation of the Shafi`i school and possibly of the more complicated Hanafi provisions on the question.[50] The prohibition of child marriage, on the other hand, is incompatible with the Shi`i, Hanafi, and

[47] To be more precise, the argument is that it is not possible for any fallible man to treat his wives equally; thus, a polygamy ban may be justified in spite of the fact that the Prophet Muhammad had multiple wives.
[48] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 39–42.
[49] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 2.
[50] Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," 551.

Shafi`i schools of law. Unlike the inheritance clause, however, this explicit deviation from majority Islamic opinion did not provoke much opposition from either the Iraqi public or the 'ulama'. The banning of child marriage might be seen in conjunction with other Qasimite laws enabling the temporal lengthening and regulation of childhood and adolescence discussed in chapter 5. Like the 1959 Labor Law banning child labor, it would help free the time of young Iraqis, which could then be redeployed in conformance with the 1959 Law for the Protection of Children establishing compulsory education through the primary level.[51] Indeed, the personal status law itself mandated that providing for a child's education was the responsibility of his or her legal guardian.

Provisions regulating the terms of the marriage contract reflect the tension in the law between simultaneously encouraging marriage while expanding state control and surveillance over it. The latter aim is reflected in clauses requiring two witnesses to the contract and the registration of all marriages with the state, which the law specifies will require the submission of a medical certificate verifying that both partners are free of sexually transmitted disease and other "health impediments" to marriage.[52] How this last requirement was to be fulfilled in a country where the majority of the population had little or no access to medical professionals is not explained.[53] In any case, the following article states that a marriage may be alternatively verified by a man's affirmation, and a woman's confirmation, that they are husband and wife, given that there is no "legal impediment" to their marriage. As Anderson points out, this clause seems to completely nullify the one preceding it.[54] It might simply be read as an addendum conceding to Iraqi present reality and the fact that the goal of the lawmakers was not, after all, to

[51] "Mashru` Ri`ayat al-Tafula [Draft Law for the Protection of Children]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, June 5, 1959, 6.
[52] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 2.
[53] See Efrati, *Women in Iraq*, 46.
[54] Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," 552.

make legally sanctioned marriage unattainable for the majority of the population. The previous article, on the other hand, is based on the vision of an economically developed future in which modern forms of governmentality have already expanded their reach into the daily lives of the nation's citizens.

Contemporary celebrations of the divorce provisions of the personal status law often portrayed them as moves toward sexual equality, that is, toward limiting the rights of men and/or expanding the rights of women to divorce. In Islamic law, unilateral divorce by the man is a simple matter, legally speaking, while divorce initiated by a woman against the wishes of her husband is much more restricted though not impossible. But the thrust of the various provisions on divorce in the 1959 law is more complex and contradictory than suggested in the usual explications. To the extent that they have much coherence at all, they might be more accurately conceptualized as driven by the law's definition of marriage: "a contract between a man and a woman, the legitimate aims of which are to establish the bond of a shared life and to beget children." The law thus restricts irrational divorces made in the heat of passion or motivated by reconcilable differences, while facilitating those based on the practical impossibility of a "shared life" for the couple, its inability to produce offspring, or the danger it might pose to women or to present or future children. Like most other provisions, those regulating divorce distribute the rights of Iraqi citizens solely on the basis of sex, contrary to the claim in the preamble that the law was designed to ensure the rights of the (only apparently non-gendered) "Iraqi individual."

The chapter on divorce begins with a section on *talaq*, or unilateral divorce initiated by the man. In all five schools of Islamic law, a man may unilaterally divorce his wife, without stating a reason, by proclaiming a formula (e.g., "I divorce thee"). The wife retains her right to maintenance from the husband during the *`idda* or waiting period and also retains her dower, or

her rights to the dower if it had been deferred. The couple may reunite during the *`idda* period, but on the third pronouncement of *talaq* the divorce becomes irrevocable. The legal schools differ over the form of the pronouncement, whether the three statements must be separated by a span of time, whether they can be conditional (i.e., based on the wife's future actions or inactions), and whether the formula is legally effective when uttered under certain physiological or mental conditions, such as intoxication, rage, or jest.[55]

The personal status law retains the man's right to unilateral divorce through the pronouncement of *talaq.* At the same time, it adopts from among the Islamic legal schools those opinions most restrictive of the physiological and mental states under which *talaq* is valid. In brief, it is valid if the man intended for it to be valid and if he was in full control of his mental capacities when making the pronouncement. These restrictions on *talaq* were welcomed by women's rights advocates and Western legal theorists. The latter had long been horrified by what they viewed as the arbitrary and irrational legal validation—and in some cases irrevocability—of divorce statements made by men under the influence of alcohol or in moments of anger or jest. Anderson, for example, departs from his usual neutral tone when noting that the personal status law limited "the appallingly wide scope previously accorded to pronouncements of unilateral repudiation of their wives by Muslim husbands."[56]

Talaq is clearly an instance of male privilege in a patriarchal legal system. Yet comments such as Anderson's do little to enlighten us on the substance of debates among the various *fiqh* traditions around the conditions under which *talaq* is valid. Islamic legal opinions that enforce statements of *talaq* uttered by a drunk, enraged, or mocking husband do not exactly protect men's "rights," since their sole legal effect is to deny the man's right to revoke the statement

[55] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 26–27, 70–76.
[56] Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," 546.

later. Rather, they reflect the broader ethical and pedagogical orientation of Islamic law, the norms of which include refraining from intoxication, losing control of oneself, and saying things one doesn't mean. In the personal status law, this is replaced by a far greater concern for stabilizing the conjugal bond. The law's provisions on *talaq* thus did not limit the "scope" of men's "right" to divorce, since a man who actually wanted to divorce his wife was still entirely free to do so; it might be more accurate to say that they expanded the scope of men's rights to make and then rescind pronouncements of divorce at will.

They also, as the law's advocates often pointed out, protected a woman from suffering the consequences of rash, abusive, or drunken statements uttered by her spouse. The assumption in liberal discourse was always that the wife would not want her husband's statements of *talaq* to be enforced. Given the precarious status of divorced women in Iraqi society, this may have usually been the case. Yet the possibility of other empirical scenarios cannot be foreclosed, especially since women retain more rights under the *talaq* form of divorce, in terms of maintenance and the deferred dower, than they do under any other form in Islamic law. The very nature of *talaq* as finely regulated private communication—e.g., it must be spoken by the husband directly to his wife, who must both "hear" and "understand" it—suggests that some women might sometimes have some agency in producing the conditions that lead to its fulfillment, to say nothing of its appearance as a dispute between two parties in a court of law. In any case, even granting that the new provisions may have offered legal protection for some women, it is difficult to conceive of them on that basis as an expansion of women's "rights," since the woman's will is simply not under consideration in either the relevant provisions of the Islamic legal schools or those of the personal status law.

Women's rights to initiate divorce are covered in several other provisions. The form known in Islamic law as *khul`* divorce is maintained. This is divorce based on mutual consent but is typically initiated by the wife and consented to by the husband, since the woman retains fewer rights than in the *talaq* form and thus has no reason to consent to a *khul`* divorce she doesn't want. She forfeits her right to maintenance and in some cases may have to return part or all of the dower. Typically these questions are negotiated between husband and wife before the former agrees to the divorce; *khul`* is thus sometimes seen as a way for the woman to "buy" a separation from her husband. The only deviation from standard shari`a provisions on *khul`* is that the personal status law mandates that it must be performed in a court of law to be valid, making it somewhat more cumbersome.[57] Other provisions in the law establish a woman's right to divorce her husband without his consent in a few situations, in addition to the health conditions mentioned earlier, such as if he has been sentenced to prison for five years or more or is absent for more than two years "without a lawful cause."[58] These clauses represent a modest expansion of women's right to divorce, at least in comparison to some Islamic legal interpretations, though only if the couple has already ceased to exist in reality; that is, they do not signal an acceptance of female singlehood in the law but rather an effort to minimize it.

In sum, male unilateral divorce has become somewhat less likely, rather than more difficult for the man, since *talaq* is only valid if it is uttered soberly and sincerely. For the woman, initiating divorce has become both easier and more difficult, depending on her circumstance. It seems she is no longer permitted to divorce for lack of sexual intercourse, as long as her husband is healthy, and *khul`* divorces were slightly more difficult as they required court authorization; but her grounds for divorce on the basis of her husband's extended absence,

[57] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 5; Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," 555–56.
[58] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 5.

mental or physical disease, and other kinds of harm had been modestly expanded. As a whole, the provisions on divorce do not further any sexual equalization of rights, which are still distributed on the basis of gender. Rather, they further the primary objective of the law as laid out in the legislators' preamble: to foster and sustain stable "families." Meanwhile, a married woman's right to sex has arguably disappeared from the law, and for Iraq's Shi`i majority marriages based entirely on sexual pleasure (*mut`a*) will not be recognized by the state. This itself was nothing new, but the state had never asserted this degree of authority over marriage before and thus its implications were unknown. The abolition of *mut`a* marriage is just one example, if a particularly literal one, of how marriage in the revolutionary era was increasingly imagined as a permanent state. Rather than fulfilling desires for immediate gratification in the present—which, as seen in the previous chapter, was a "waste of time" given the urgencies of national development—marriage was about building the future. Both Sunni and secular, including feminist, commentators in Iraq often expressed abhorrence over the institution of *mut`a*, frequently asserting that it was simply legalized prostitution. The practice of *mut`a* certainly has resemblances to prostitution. It might be noted, however, that the *mut`a* contract follows the form of the "permanent" marriage contract in every way besides the time limit; it would thus seem that one implication of this argument, followed to its logical conclusion, is that the only feature distinguishing "permanent" marriage from prostitution is its duration.

The section on "Childbirth and Its Consequences," and the other provisions related to children, are the most vivid in their portrayal of life inside the "Iraqi family of the new era." These clauses narrate the life of the Iraqi child from birth to maturity. In a striking provision with no direct parallel in the shari`a, the law requires that a woman breastfeed her own infant unless a

physical illness prevents her from doing so.[59] This clause presumably forbids the use of wet nurses. It is unclear whether courts might also have interpreted it as prohibiting bottle-feeding, which was practiced in the 1950s by middle- and upper-class women in Iraq, though this seems unlikely.[60] The Islamic legal tradition that the clause gestures toward relates to the conditions under which it is permissible for a woman who is not the child's mother—i.e., a wet nurse—to suckle an infant. The majority opinion—that of the Shi`i, Hanbali, Hanafi, and Shafi`i schools—is that a mother is not required to nurse her own infant unless there is no one else available to do it, that is, if the child would otherwise die. The Maliki school does mandate that a mother nurse her infant except under designated circumstances, though these are a bit more lenient than those of the personal status law: they exempt a woman who has been divorced by the baby's father from any requirement to nurse their child as well as any woman for whom breastfeeding would be "dishonorable" or "shameful," a provision that presumably refers to upper-class women in certain cultural-historical milieus, though it would seem to give judges wide latitude in the interpretation of individual cases. Not surprisingly, the Malikis also authorize the sole exemption permitted in the personal status law, that of mothers who are ill or deficient in breast milk.[61]

The breastfeeding provision of the personal status law clearly cannot be interpreted as an expansion of women's rights, nor can it be explained away as a concession to patriarchal Islamic law. Not only does it reject the majority opinion in Islam that nursing is not an obligation of the mother unless the child's life is at stake—which, between the Shi`i and Hanafi schools, in fact represented an overwhelming majority of Islamic scholars in Iraq—but it deviates from all legal schools in order to devise a new, more restrictive law. It is possible that the clause was related in part to Qasim's personal fondness for the symbolism of mother's milk as nourishment for the

[59] Ibid.
[60] Mubejel Baban, Interview, November 27, 2007, London.
[61] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 142–45.

nation's future. For example, at the opening ceremony of the League's second conference in March 1960, the prime minister proclaimed that the Iraqi woman "will always remain a symbol for the protection of this generation and the coming ones. She will suckle these generations with the milk of dignity and pride, and will infuse them with devotion and sincerity to defend the homeland."[62] But the provision also reflected the broader modernizing drive to expel those are strangers to the nuclear-conjugal family from the home, and especially from the care of the children inside it. Beth Baron has shown how wet nurses were increasingly constructed in 19th- and 20th-century Egyptian nationalist discourses as foreign, to both the family and the nation, and thus dangerous.[63] In Jacques Donzelot's analysis of philanthropic campaigns in 19th-century France, wet nurses were among those "mobile elements" of the household who had to be excluded so that "the children might be immobilized within it."[64]

The law's provisions on child custody were similarly oriented toward expanding the role of mothers in the child's development. Article 57 states that "a mother has a better right to keep the custody of the child and to take care of it both during marriage and after its dissolution." It delineates certain requirements for the mother to retain this right: she must be "mature, sane, trustworthy, capable of raising [*tarbiya*] the child and protecting him, and not married to a person who is a stranger to the child." Subsequent clauses specify that in the case of divorce the mother has automatic custody of a child of either sex up to age seven and that a judge may prolong this period if it is in "the interest of the child."[65] Ending the mother's period of custody at seven years for both boys and girls follows mainstream Hanafi law, while Shi`i law would terminate her custody at age two for boys and seven for girls. On the other hand, some Hanafi

[62] "Iraqi Women's Pledge," *Iraq Times*, March 11, 1960, 9.
[63] Beth Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt: Culture, Society, and the Press* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 160–61.
[64] Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 44.
[65] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 5–6.

interpretations extend the custody to age nine, and thus the lawmakers did not choose the longest possible period within Islamic legal opinions.[66] But the new law arguably gives judges wide scope to extend the mother's custody beyond age seven, by introducing the legal notion of the "interest of the child," especially since Article 57 explicitly states that the child's interests are on the side of custody with the mother.

By far the most controversial clause of the 1959 personal status law was Article 74 on intestate inheritance, its innocuous presentation notwithstanding. The text simply states: "The provisions comprised in articles 1187-1199 of the Civil Code shall govern the determination of who are the heirs and what share in the estate they shall take, whether in regard to real or personal property."[67] The articles in question originated in the Ottoman Land Law of 1858 and related solely to the inheritance of leaseholds on state lands. In neither the Ottoman Land Law nor the monarchical-era Iraqi Civil Code that was partially derived from it did the articles apply to the inheritance of private property, whether real or personal. Nevertheless, state officials could and did respond to the opposition they knew would be forthcoming from defenders of the shari`a by pointing out that the articles on inheritance of leaseholds to state land had not, in the century that had passed since their promulgation, produced any memorable dissent from Iraq's `ulama'.[68]

The basic contention over the use of these articles of the civil code is that they gave female and male heirs equal shares of the property governed by intestate inheritance, whereas in all schools of Islamic law a female inherits one half the share of a male in the equivalent position. In the personal status law, as in Islamic law, the rules of intestate inheritance govern a minimum of two-thirds of the deceased's estate. The other one-third may be bequeathed—i.e., through testate inheritance—according to the will of the testator, though there are differences

[66] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 156.
[67] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 6.
[68] For example, see interview with Qasim in *al-Thawra*, March 7, 1960.

among the legal schools over whether this part can be bequeathed to the heirs who automatically receive portions of the estate through the rules of intestate inheritance. Thus, Article 74 of the personal status law would likely apply to at least two-thirds of all inherited property in Iraq, and probably much more than that since many people did not invoke their right to testate inheritance. Public controversy over Article 74 focused almost exclusively on the sexual equalization of inheritance rights. But an examination of the entire set of inheritance rules codified by this article helps to delineate more clearly which kind of family relationships they were oriented toward "stabilizing" and which toward destabilizing.

The rules divide most heirs into three broad classes, which, as Anderson notes, "at first sight suggests the Ja`fari [Shi`i] system." Class I encompasses the children and grandchildren, however low, of the deceased. Class II comprises the parents and their descendants however low, that is, the siblings, nieces, and nephews of the deceased. Class III includes the grandparents followed by their descendants however low (aunts, uncles, and cousins of the deceased). Generally, a single living member of any class will "exclude" (i.e., from the total inheritance) the entirety of any lower class. In other words, if the deceased is survived by a child, grandchild, or great-grand-child, no member of Class II or Class III will inherit property. The two exceptions to the class hierarchy of exclusions are that 1) living parents will receive one-sixth of the estate (either between them or singly if only one is alive) when members of Class I exist; and 2) a spouse relict of either sex, who is not a member of any class, will take either one-quarter, one-half, or the entirety of the estate, depending on whether s/he is in competition with heirs from Class I, II, or III respectively. In addition to the exclusions by class, and with the above exceptions, any heir in any class excludes all of his or her direct descendants. [69]

[69] Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," 559. Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 6–7.

To the extent that these class-based inheritance rules derive from Islamic legal precepts, they are based on Shi`i law in direct contradiction to all four Sunni schools. The main effect of using Shi`i law in this case is to block the inheritance privileges accorded in Sunni law to male agnates (uncles and cousins) when these are in competition with linear female descendants (daughters and granddaughters). In Sunni law, as Noulson and Hinchcliffe explain:

> if the sole heirs are a daughter and a distant male agnatic cousin, the daughter will be restricted to one-half of the estate of her parent and the remaining half will go to the distant cousin as residuary agnatic heir, although he might, at least in the circumstances of present-day society, have had no real contact at all with the deceased.[70]

Yet the three inheritance classes established by the personal status law, while representing Shi`i law in form, actually differ from it somewhat in content. This particular difference relates not to preferences based on sex, linearity, or the likelihood of having had real contact with the deceased. Rather, it relates to the age generation to which the respective heirs belong. In Shi`i law, parents are members of Class I and grandparents of Class II. The personal status law demotes both of these one rung down the hierarchy.[71] Fathers and grandfathers are therefore the heirs with the greatest potential losses in the personal status law, relative to both Sunni and Shi`i law. Mothers and grandmothers also lose if there are survivors in a higher class, but this is mitigated by the fact that their individual portions, if they do receive them, are expanded by the sexual-equality clause.

In its preference for Shi`i over Sunni law, then, the personal status law privileges nuclear and linear family ties over extended ones, as we might expect from analyses such as that of Noulson and Hinchcliffe, whose own modernist preference for the Shi`i precepts in this case is clear. But in its deviation from Shi`i *and* Sunni rules of inheritance, the new law simply

[70] Noel Coulson and Doreen Hinchcliffe, "Women and Law Reform in Contemporary Islam," in *Women in the Muslim World*, ed. Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 46.
[71] For parents, the effect of this is lessened by the device of declaring them "residuary heirs," so that they retain some right to inheritance if there are survivors in Class I, but never exceeding one-sixth.

privileges the younger generations, not only over older generations of equivalent linear distance (children over parents), but also over linearity itself and over closeness to the nuclear unit. Thus, contrary to all five schools of Islamic law, an infant nephew or even grand-nephew could conceivably exclude a surviving grandfather from the inheritance, though surely it is the latter who is more likely to have had "real contact" with the deceased.

On one level, these provisions might seem to be guided by a reasoning similar to that posited by Lynn Hunt as driving family law reform after the French Revolution: "the contractual association of free individuals was now supposed to replace the patriarchal family despotically controlled by the father as the fundamental unit of the new polity."[72] In this interpretation, the personal status law might be read not only as a move toward equalizing rights between men and women but also as a move toward equalizing the brotherhood—and, albeit much more controversially, the sisterhood—of republican citizens against the patriarchal authority of the older generations. But in positing a simple "replacement" of "the patriarchal family" by "the contractual association of free individuals," this narrative would leave out the family that remains and indeed that is actively constructed through these same reforms.

A return to the statement of objectives may provide more productive clues to the reasoning that guides many of these clauses. The statement makes several references to "rights," of both "the Iraqi individual" and "the Iraqi woman," and of course the perception of the law as a historical advance of women's rights was the basis for its positive reception in feminist circles.[73] As we have seen, the law's content is hardly straightforward in its expansion of rights, whether for women or "the individual." But in addition to family stability and individual rights, the statement of objectives promises the Iraqi woman in particular something more: the protection of

[72] Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 42.
[73] Government of Iraq, "Raqam 188 li-Sanat 1959: Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 7–8.

"her familial independence" (*istiqlaluha al-`a'iliyya).*[74] This somewhat curious expression could be read as referring to a woman's independence, as an individual, within her family. But the law institutes a notably conservative reading of shari`a law in relation to a woman's autonomy and independence vis-a-vis her husband; most significantly, it mandates that she is not allowed to leave the home without his permission. It thus seems more likely that the expression refers to the independence of the conjugal family itself, promising to protect it from the intrusions of strangers, whether wet nurses or elder members of the patrilineal extended family. It is not the rights of the individual Iraqi citizen that the personal status law advances so much as the individuation of the conjugal couple from the spouses' other social contexts. Within the domestic space inhabited by that unit—which is now designated as "her" family—the wife is accorded a number of powers, especially in relation to the care of her children. But the law also codifies her husband's absolute power over her interaction with the outside world, while simultaneously working to exclude that world from her home.

Responses to the Personal Status Law: Communists, Ba`thists, and Sunni `Ulama'

Contrary to Uriel Dann's claim, mentioned above, that Iraqi communists dismissed the 1959 personal status law as "bourgeois reform," the primary popular organization that pushed for its promulgation was the communist-led League for the Defense of Women's Rights. At its first public conference in March 1959, the League had made family law reform one of its principle goals. Female lawyers from the organization sat on the government committee to draft the law and the League's president, Naziha al-Dulaimi, who at the time was also serving as Iraq's minister of municipalities, was involved in the drafting process. The connection between women's rights and family reform had been central to the League's program from its inception.

[74] Ibid., 8.

In a paper written in 1952, the year she founded the organization, al-Dulaimi argued that the causes of women's inequality were primarily economic, manifested in their sexual exploitation through the dual institutions of marriage and prostitution. Islamic marriage law—and al-Dulaimi singled out laws on arranged marriages, child marriages, and *talaq* for special attention—underwrote men's rights to "buy and sell" their daughters and wives. If marriage did not work out, the woman would be forced to turn to the other institution available for her economic subsistence, prostitution. The solution for the women's league was "to work for the creation of a broad democratic women's movement capable of liberating women from these two problems."[75]

If the language and priorities of the Iraqi women's movement's were shaped by its close connection to the communist movement, its focus on the reform of family law was not unusual. Since the 1930s, women's organizations throughout the Middle East had taken up the problem of the dual legal system established by the Ottoman and other regional governments in the 19th century, whereby "personal status law" was designated the proper realm of the shari`a while other branches of the law were brought under state control. Women's movements across the region demanded the secularization of personal status laws, i.e., their incorporation under the laws of the modern nation-state. This emphasis was reflected in the resolutions of various Eastern Women's Conferences attended by Iraqi delegates in the interwar period.[76] In the 1950s, optimism about the achievability of the goal was fueled by the promulgation of national personal status laws in Syria in 1953, Tunisia in 1957, and Morocco in 1958.

[75] Naziha al-Dulaimi, "al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya [The Iraqi Woman]" (manuscript, 1952). I thank Mubejel Baban for providing me with a copy of this manuscript.

[76] See Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 142–44. Thompson argues that in Syria and Lebanon this emphasis was a deliberate retreat from the more radical feminist demands of the 1920s for suffrage and unveiling. There is no indication that this was the case in Iraq, at least by the 1940s when Marxist thought had gained a strong foothold and even mainstream women's groups began pushing for suffrage.

Yet Marxism had strongly influenced feminist thought and action in 1950s Iraq, which may help explain why the Iraqi law was more radical in several ways than the laws promulgated by other Arab states during this decade. Foremost among these were the equalization of intestate inheritance rights and the establishment of the age of consent to marry at eighteen years for both sexes. (These were also among very few of the law's clauses that did not distribute citizens' rights on the basis of sex.) Equality of inheritance had not been attempted in any other Arab state, and it was destined to become the Iraqi law's most controversial and most short-lived provision. But it was consistent with the longstanding emphasis of Iraqi feminists on economic exploitation as the foundation of women's oppression.

It was not just communist women in Iraq who had an investment in the personal status law. The Central Committee of the ICP appears to have followed the drafting of the law with interest, probably through consultations with al-Dulaimi and other League members on the drafting committee, and it took pains to prepare Iraqis for its promulgation. On November 6, 1959, less than two months before the law was issued in the government gazette, the ICP daily *Ittihad al-Sha`b* published a long special report on "Marriage and Family Life in the Soviet Union."[77] Its broad title notwithstanding, the essay focuses entirely on Soviet family law (not "life"), or at least on what it claims to be Soviet family law.[78] Most of the provisions of Soviet family law that the article explicates happen to also be provisions of the Iraqi personal status law that was soon to be made public. These include the equalization of inheritance rights between men and women; the abolition of child and arranged marriages via the fixing of the age of

[77] "Al-Zawaj wa-l-Haya al-`A'iliyya fi al-Ittihad al-Sufiyati [Marriage and Family Life in the Soviet Union]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, November 6, 1959, 6–8. The author of the piece is not named; it could have been al-Dulaimi.
[78] Future research into Soviet family law in this period might be illuminating. On the one hand, my argument that the article is really about the Iraqi law under the pretense of being about Soviet law is only strengthened if the article's depiction of the latter is fictitious. On the other hand, if it is not fictitious, this raises the possibility that Soviet family law may have actually been one of the sources of the Iraqi law.

consent to marry at eighteen years for both sexes; the outlawing of polygamy and punishments for infractions (in the Iraqi law, as we have seen, polygamy was restricted but not banned outright); new restrictions on divorce; legal preference for the mother in child custody disputes; a preference for linear relatives in inheritance law; and the requirement of state registration of marriages and of medical certificates verifying that the prospective spouses are free of disease. The article also gives a sense of why the ICP considered family law reform to be a critical issue, even in the midst of Iraq's chaotic and unstable revolutionary situation. It explains that family life is a social matter, not a private one, and that civil registration "bestows on marriage the protection of the state," delineating the rights and duties of each spouse. It also allows the state to "prevent harmful marriages, such as marriage to a person with an infectious or genetic disease that could affect the health of the children."[79]

The article directs its most forceful language against "inherited customs" and "despotic traditions," such as arranged marriages and child marriages, which had been particularly prevalent in the "eastern regions" of the USSR. The Bolshevik revolution, in part through family law reform, succeeded in submerging these differences in historical time that had been manifested spatially (east/west, backwards/modern) in order to build a homogeneous society moving in the same time, one in which a developing "eastern" country like Iraq could see its own future—a not very subtle subtext of the entire article. In much the way that historical time for the communists operated as a series of linear and inevitable "stages," marriage, in the communist view, was the "first phase" of family life, followed by the appearance and then the development of children.[80] The article elaborates especially on this last theme, explaining the purpose of several Soviet family laws related to childhood that were not instituted in the Iraqi personal

[79] "Al-Zawaj wa-l-Haya al-`A'iliyya," 6.
[80] Ibid.

status law but were included in the 1959 Law for the Protection of Children. The only significant difference between the article's depiction of Soviet family law and Qasimite-era family laws related to women's work outside the home. The article emphasizes that Soviet family law protects a woman's right to leave the home without her husband's permission and to work outside the home.[81] It is likely that this was a controversial aspect of the Iraqi law within the drafting committee, given the public writings of Naziha al-Dulaimi on the critical importance of women's rights to work outside the home. In any case, the ICP would continue to misrepresent the relevant provisions of the Iraqi law long *after* it was promulgated.

On August 8, 1960, when the controversy over the personal status law was in full swing, *Ittihad al-Sha`b* published a recent lecture in Baghdad by Ahmad Jamal al-Din, a lawyer and one of the founders of the ICP in 1935, titled "Personal Status and the Rights of Women." Jamal al-Din produced a historical narrative of the Iraqi family, which he introduced as an explanation for why marriages in contemporary Iraq so often ended up in court. First, there were the Islamic jurists in the early days of Islam, who struggled commendably for a "unified [family] law for the entire people." But gradually, the different legal schools appeared, and their opinions on personal status laws became more and more divergent. In the Ottoman era, the judiciary was subordinated to the powers of the state, but Islamic laws on the family continued to weaken and fracture. During both the classical and Ottoman eras of Islam, Jamal al-Din notes, marriages were arranged by parents for their children, who were not allowed to see their future spouses prior to the wedding night. Marriages were contracted solely for pleasure (*mut`a*), wealth, or power. Since the spouses were strangers to one another, the marital household was full of "trouble and misery," which naturally had a "significant influence on the children who would live within it." This situation necessitated the jurists' development of family laws that did not attempt to impose

[81] Ibid.

"marital stability or permanence" upon the people, that is, laws facilitating the separation of the conjugal unit so as not to prolong its members' misery. Finally, the laws regulating Iraqi families deteriorated further after the British occupation of 1917, as "the people were divided into various groups, on the basis of sect and religion, and each sect or group was given special laws….in order to build a solid foundation for colonialism, which could never have survived otherwise."[82]

The construction of the 1959 personal status law as an anticolonial intervention necessary for ensuring national unity and sovereignty was a common one. Jamal al-Din explained that after the July 14 revolution, the Iraqi republic had an urgent need "to abolish the laws of occupation and of the monarchical period." Thus, the revolution's leaders formed a committee to draft a new law of personal status, which would be based on the shari`a "without giving preference to any particular school [of Islam], while also benefiting from the experience of other nations." The promulgation of the final law produced by this committee marked nothing less than "the end of religious and sectarian division in our country."[83] In this narrative, the historical trajectory of marriage from a contract of pleasure and property to one of companionship and the care of children, and from an ephemeral and impermanent institution to a stable and lasting one, precisely parallels the historical trajectory of the nation from internal sectarianism and foreign exploitation to full political sovereignty and economic development.

On the connection between family life and the uses of everyday time, Jamal al-Din proceeded in a more Marxist vein than either the statement of objectives or the text of the personal status law: "The family is a social institution, a means of building cooperation in the society based on an agreement about how energy should be expended to realize shared interests and mutual benefits." On the specifics of how this expenditure of energy, i.e., labor, would be

[82] "Al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya wa-Huquq al-Mar'a [Personal Status and the Rights of Women]," *Ittihad al-Sha`b*, August 8, 1960, 5.
[83] Ibid.

fostered by the family, his explication is somewhat muddled, not surprisingly given the discrepancy between the communist position and that of the personal status law on women's work.

> Each party in the marriage has equal rights as well as corresponding duties…The labor of the woman, like the labor of the man, is respected by the [personal status] law and assigned its place, and it is not permissible for the main to exploit it or to profit from it…They are equals in their freedom to work and to gain earnings from it [*hurriyyat al-`aml wa-l-kasb*]. The law makes them jointly responsible for the care of the family and for adhering to the regulations [*ahkam*] of marriage.

Jamal al-Din seems to suggest that women and men have an equal right to work outside the home (i.e., to gain earnings from their labor) and that they share responsibilities inside the home. The former position, at least, is consistent with the position of the ICP in its National Charter, and also with the earlier article in *Ittihad al-Sha`b* on Soviet family law. But it is a blatant misrepresentation of the Iraqi personal status law. The ambivalence is hinted at by Jamal al-Din's references to the law "assigning a place" for women's work and to the sexes having "corresponding duties," and elaborated later in the speech when he refers to women as primarily mothers and housewives.[84]

Members and supporters of the Ba`th Party were apparently split over the inheritance clause of the personal status law. Batatu reports that the repeal of the clause after the 1963 coup had to be done while one of the party's leading figures, `Ali Salih al-Sadi, was away in Cairo, since he had warned against repeal on the grounds that it would "create a split" in the coalition that had ensured the coup's success and that the world would not be able "look upon us as a progressive regime."[85] Nevertheless, the party's newspaper *al-Hurriyya* was publishing articles as early as 1960 that laid out arguments supporting every provision in the 1959 law *except* the

[84] Ibid.
[85] Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 1018.

inheritance clause. This position seems to have helped consolidate the party's alliance with leading Sunni `ulama', which was much stronger than the tenuous coalition with Shi`i `ulama' it would form just prior to the coup. In May 1960, *al-Hurriyya* published a statement from the qadi of Basra, Shaykh `Ala' al-Din Kharufa, that he had sent to Qasim, the minister of justice, and the interior minister. "Muslims welcomed the personal status law as a leap forward on the path of reform and of the unity of all Muslims," Kharufa asserts. But, he continues, they were "surprised" by Article 74, which equalized inheritance rights between the man and the woman and is a "clear violation of the word of God." Kharufa declares that if Qasim would only repeal the equal-inheritance clause, the Iraqi personal status law would be "the greatest law that has appeared in Iraq or in the rest of the Islamic countries." He states categorically that all of the law's provisions, with the exception of the inheritance clause, were compatible with the shari`a.[86]

The primary grounds for Kharufa's enthusiasm are suggested in his comment that the personal status law was a leap forward for the "unity of all Muslims." The qadi was part of the broad 20th-century movement of Sunni reformers who sought to do away with what was seen as the divisiveness of the various schools of Islamic law in order to forge a unified Muslim identity for the modern era. He writes that the July 14 revolution, which had "liberated Iraqi soil from colonialism and the Iraqi dinar from the [British] sterling," had likewise "liberated the Iraqi judicial system through this [personal status] law, freeing it from the rigid boundaries [*nitaq al-jamud*] of a single school [*madhhab wahid*] into the expansiveness of the wide, developed Islamic *fiqh*."[87] As I will show in the next section, Shi`i critics would argue in response that it was the 1959 personal status law that sought to establish the "rigid boundaries" of a single family

[86] `Ala' al-Din Kharufa, "al-Mirath bi-Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya [Inheritance in the Personal Status Law]," *al-Hurriyya*, May 29, 1960, 3. For a more detailed explication of the 1959 law by Kharufa, see `Ala al-Din Kharufa, *Sharh Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya: Raqam 188, Sanat 1959 [Explanation of the Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959]* (Baghdad: Matba`at al-`Ani, 1962).
[87] Kharufa, "al-Mirath bi-Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya," 3.

law, undermining the "expansiveness" and heterogeneity of existing Islamic legal schools and practices.

Scholarly assumptions that opposition to the personal status law from the Iraqi `ulama' was based on its "secular" nature or on its undermining of Islamic clerical authority cannot account for the enthusiasm with which many Sunni intellectuals greeted almost all provisions of the law and, most of all, for its very concept and promulgation as a unified code under the central control of the "secular" state. These assumptions do not take seriously the efforts by many Sunni thinkers during this time to unify Muslims by unifying Islamic family law or their frequent willingness to align themselves with the independent nation-state to achieve this aim. The assumptions have also led to the occasional repetition in the scholarship of a historical inaccuracy: that the 1959 personal status law itself was repealed by the Ba`thists after the 1963 coup. But the new rulers only modified two provisions of the law, its section on inheritance and its polygamy provision; the rest of it was left intact. Indeed, this would lead to a split between the Ba`th and Shi`i `ulama' who had supported, or at least not opposed, the coup in the hopes that the entire personal status law would then be repealed. But it did not damage the Ba`thists' relationship with many leading Sunni `ulama', who had only asked for the alteration of those two provisions.

Shi`i Responses to the Personal Status Law

In February 1960, Iraq's leading Shi`i authority, Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim, issued a fatwa declaring that communism was incompatible with Islam.[88] Other Najafi `ulama' soon followed suit with similar fatwas, such as those declaring that prayer and fasting by communists were invalid; that Muslims were not permitted to buy meat from a communist butcher; and that

[88] Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq*, 110.

communist youth were not entitled to inherit from their fathers.[89] The last of these was an unsubtle recognition of the generational lines along which the conflict often fell as well as a reminder of the primary dispute over the inheritance provisions of the personal status law, not to mention a legal opinion that was in itself in direct violation of that law. Various historians, while acknowledging that the personal status law was a trigger, have attributed the increasing public antagonism of the Shi`i clerical establishment to Qasim's regime primarily to the former's fears of the rising popularity of Iraqi communism in general, driven by the `ulama's sense of losing authority over their Shi`i followers and by their ideological opposition to communism itself.[90] These motivations were undoubtedly important. Indeed, before the personal status law was even passed, a younger generation of `ulama' was already emerging in Najaf to both challenge the historical political quietism of the older clerics and develop an Islamic political philosophy that might help bring young Shi`i communists and communist sympathizers back to the fold.[91]

Yet the notion of an essential incompatibility between communism and Shi`ism in the shrine cities should not be taken too far, given their relatively easy coexistence in Najaf for a decade before revolution and for the first year and a half after it. As Sami Zubaida points out, the Iraqi Shi`i `ulama' "did not constitute a unitary political group, but different members and factions had associates and patrons in different political corners, ranging from communist sympathisers to those on the payroll of Western embassies."[92] Another factor cautioning against

[89] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 954.
[90] Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq*.
[91] See Ibid.; Chibli Mallat, *The Renewal of Islamic Law: Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, Najaf and the Shi`i International* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[92] Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Essays on Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), 92. Zubaida postulates some reasons for the importance of the Shi`i shrine cities to the vitality of the Iraqi communist movement, as does Batatu, who also notes the extensive familial links between communists and the Shi`i clerical establishment. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 749–57. Both Batatu and Yitzhak Nakash describe efforts during the 1940s and 1950s by the Hashimite regime and some Shi`i `ulama' to work together against communism, precisely because of its popularity in the shrine cities, though

attributing too much analytical power to the incompatibility argument is the timing of the anti-communist fatwas. The ICP was at the height of its popularity in Iraq in the spring of 1959, when it made its bid for political power and when the counter-assaults on it were launched by the government, the Ba`th Party, and the NDP.[93] By early 1960, when the Shi`i clerics initiated their own attack on communism, the ICP was already greatly weakened. Hundreds of its members had been imprisoned and scores killed on the streets; its popular organizations and its influence in the trade unions and peasant associations had been decimated; and the party itself became illegal as of February 1960.[94] The timing of the Shi`i anti-communist upswelling corresponded not with the ICP's closest proximity to political power in Iraq or with Marxism's strongest hold on the hearts and minds of lay Shi`a but with the promulgation of the Iraqi personal status law on December 30, 1959. There may be no reason to suspect the sincerity of Grand Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim in 1961—by which time he was the highest Shi`i authority in the world—when he stated that he "had no word to say on the situation inside Iraq or his attitude towards the new regime, except that the Personal Status Law of 1959 was obnoxious to Muslims and should be repealed."[95]

The origins of the Shi`i Islamist movement that would largely replace communism as the most important political opposition movement in southern and central Iraq by the early 1970s is usually traced to the formation of several small political groups around 1960. Scholars have given different dates for the founding of the Da`wa Party in Najaf by young radical scholars, ranging from 1957 to the late 1960s. Faleh Jabar makes a reasonable case that it most likely

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these efforts were hindered by the antagonism between the two interlocutors. Nakash, *The Shi`is of Iraq*, 134–35.

[93] See, e.g., Samira Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963: Capital, Power, and Ideology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 126–27.

[94] Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 922–23.

[95] Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem*, 328. On al-Hakim's consistent opposition to the entire personal status law from the time it was promulgated, see also Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 9–11.

came together in 1959.[96] But it was not until 1960 that the older, more quietist 'ulama'—"stunned and dismayed" by the promulgation of the personal status law—lent their support to the formation of a broader political organization representing the entire Shi`i clerical establishment, Jama`at al-`Ulama, and to a newspaper that would promulgate its platform, *al-Adwa' al-Islamiyya.*[97] The Islamic Party, which included both Sunnis and Shi`a, was also formed in 1960.[98]

Since these organizations only started issued public statements after the promulgation of the personal status law, it is difficult to trace the direct effects of the law on their mobilization or political positions. But there was another Shi`i reformist journal, *al-Najaf,* published monthly from 1957-62, that provides suggestive evidence of these effects.[99] Prior to January 1960, *al-Najaf* ran numerous articles by `ulama' and lay Shi`i intellectuals positively assessing the July revolution in particular and the concept and meaning of "revolution" in general.[100] Other articles stressed the need to defend and fully implement the land reform law of September 1958 as well as the annulment of the tribal code in 1959. The latter was described by one writer as the nullification of "some of the harmful tribal customs that divide the country into two classes: a tiny class in the city who live under the rule of law and another large class whose despicable crimes of murder, appropriation, and slavery are minimized by tribal law."[101] In the

[96] Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq*, 95–100.
[97] Ibid., 110–13.
[98] Nakash, *The Shi`is of Iraq*, 135.
[99] The journal's editor was the *`alim* Hadi Fayad, later the dean of Kuliyat al-Fiqh (College of Jurisprudence). To my knowledge, it has not been used in the historiography on the Iraqi revolution. According to various Shi`i clerical biography websites, Fayad launched *al-Najaf* in 1957 and its publication continued for five years. See http://alnajaf2012.com/ar/index.php/mobile/permalink/4645.html and http://www.almoajam.org/poet_details.php?id=7750 (both accessed February 20, 2012).
[100] See, for example, "Thawratan [Two Revolutions]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 2 (July 14, 1959); Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, "al-Thawra=Hadm wa-Bina' [Revolution=Destruction and Rebuilding]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 2 (July 14, 1959).
[101] Ahmad Husayn al-Rahim, "`Uruq al-Nar fi Thawrat 14 Tammuz [Veins of Fire in the July 14 Revolution]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 2 (July 14, 1959): 7.

contemporary Iraqi press, accusations of tribal law legitimizing murder were most frequently references to "honor killings" of women. The journal also published articles and poems criticizing the practice of polygamy for being cruel to women, though nothing was said about the law in this regard.[102] Its authors as well as its readers (through letters to the editor) insisted on the importance of expanding "women's rights" and asserted that one of the most important gains of the July revolution was the advances it had made or promised in this area.[103]

After the promulgation of the personal status law, the tone and political positions of *al-Najaf* were transformed in relation to women's rights, the Qasimite regime, and the communist threat. Clear indications of this shift appeared almost instantly, by the February 1960 issue.[104] A number of essays dealt directly with the personal status law. But the broader effect of the shift is vividly illustrated in a pair of articles written by the same author, Husayn Fahmi al-Khazirji, that were published in the journal in 1959 and 1962. The September 1959 essay, titled "The Problem of the Iraqi Woman," asserted that the question of women's work and status was "one of the most important social issues that must be addressed by social reforms in our country today." By "granting the woman her complete rights, we will raise our society from the depths of ignorance, traditions, and...ancient customs to the heights of civilization and progress, and we will then be able to say that Iraq has the right to join the caravan of human civilization."[105] Three years later, the author's tone had changed markedly. In an article titled "A Nation that Entrusts Its Affairs to

[102] See Muhammad al-Hijri, "Fi `Urs [At a Wedding]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 3 (August 1, 1959): 13.
[103] See, for example, `Abd al-Muhsin al-Hakim, "Mushkilat al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 6 (September 9, 1959).
[104] The shift also coincided with some sort of split within the journal's editorial staff. Reporting the resignation of the assistant editor in January, the journal duly noted that he had "asked that the readers be told that he has no relationship to anything printed in the journal in the future." It is unclear whether there was any relationship between this split and the coming storm around the personal status law. The journal's editor remained the same through the dramatic about-face in its assessment of the Qasimite regime and women's rights. See *al-Najaf,* January 15, 1960.
[105] Husayn Fahmi al-Khazirji, "Mushkilat al-Mar'a al-`Iraqiyya [The Problem of the Iraqi Woman]," *al-Najaf* 3, no. 6 (September 15, 1959): 13–14.

Women Will Not Prosper" (a reference to a hadith or saying of the Prophet Muhammad), he writes that any society that tries to erase the "clear differences" between the sexes "will end in turmoil and corruption, because that is a revolution against nature…and nature is not affected by the differences between nations, epochs, or cities, nor by alterations in the environment and whether it is advancing or decaying, nor by changes in the education or culture of the individual."[106] While these positions were not necessarily irreconcilable in themselves, there is little doubt that the sociopolitical context and affective registers in which they were pronounced had shifted considerably.

The most sustained critique of the Iraqi personal status law by a contemporary Shi`i scholar was Muhammad Bahr al-`Ulum's *Adwa' `ala al-Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya* (Insights into the Personal Status Law), published in 1963 shortly after the new Ba`thist rulers had revised the inheritance section of the law in order to remove its sexual equalization effect. Like many of the law's supporters, Bahr al-`Ulum insists on the importance to the country's political and social future of family laws promoting a healthy morality. He asserts that "the greatest popular demand" after the "blessed [Ba`thist] revolution" of 1963 had been for the new government to annul the personal status law in its entirety.[107] But after agreeing to review the law—leaving Iraqis who have "faith in their creed" waiting in anticipation and "great hope"—the government repealed the inheritance clause only, "with no regard for the many critiques that have rejected [the law] as a whole" and that had established clear grounds for total repeal.[108] The effect that this early disappointment of Shi`i scholars with the new government may have had on future Shi`i-Ba`thist relations, and the degree to which it may have violated any agreements or

[106] Husayn Fahmi al-Khazirji, "Lan Yaflah Qawm Asanadu Amrahum ila al-Mar'a [A Nation That Entrusts Its Affairs to Women Will Not Prosper]," *al-Najaf* 4, nos. 19–20 (April 24, 1962): 14–15.
[107] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 7, 9.
[108] Ibid., 8.

understandings between the party and the Najafi `ulama' prior to the coup, cannot be pursued here, though they are not well understood in the current literature.[109]

The rest of Bahr al-`Ulum's book is a detailed critique of the 1959 personal status law. It is directed in part at Sunni `ulama' who legitimize the practice of state rulers picking and choosing from among the five living schools of Islamic law in order to construct a unified, fixed code, a practice not considered valid by Shi`i `ulama'. He begins by noting Muhsin al-Hakim's consistent opposition to the personal status law since the day it was promulgated, which never deviated from the simple demand that state authorities "leave Muslims alone in their religious matters and [let them] draw their interpretations freely from their own doctrinal [*madhhabiyya*] sources, without giving preference to some of them over others."[110]

Bahr al-`Ulum then develops an argument that the personal status law freezes legal practice in time and "closes the gates of *ijtihad*" or independent juristic reasoning. *Ijtihad* is performed by a living religious scholar in a particular time, while "the personal status law requires that every judge in every generation" pass judgment according to its precepts. The author concedes that the Ja`fari school of Shi`i law permits more types of *ijtihad* than some of the Sunni schools, and thus the argument might seem to be less relevant to Sunnis. But he counters this possible objection by asserting that the personal status law violates even the doctrines of "our brothers from *ahl al-sunna*," which all require that the gates of at least one type of *ijtihad*, namely *ijtihad fi al-madhhab*, remain open. Bahr al-`Ulum further points out that many Sunni scholars in modern times have called for opening the gates of absolute ijtihad (*al-*

[109] Several historians have suggested an informal alliance or understanding between the Ba`thists and the Shi`i clerical leadership, whereby the latter's support for or at least non-opposition to the 1963 coup was exchanged for the former's promise to repress the Iraqi communist movement and/or repeal the 1959 personal status law. It is well-known that the coalition was short-lived, and that Shi`i membership in the Ba`th Party plummeted subsequent years.

[110] Bahr al-`Ulum, *Adwa' `ala Qanun al-Ahwal al-Shakhsiyya*, 9.

ijtihad al-mutlaq), "especially in circumstances…that require modern opinions."[111] Through arguments like these, the author counters the notion that Shi`i opposition to the law was less modern or progressive than was Sunni and secular support for it.

Bahr al-`Ulum's analyses of temporal change in relation to law are complex, but can be grouped into two basic positions. On the one hand, he asserts that the 1959 personal status law was based on the notion that legal *principles* change based on changing times and circumstances, which contradicts the eternal nature of the shari`a.[112] On the other hand, he argues that legal *practices* in the Islamic tradition of jurisprudence are more dynamic and sensitive to temporal change and spatial difference than is the personal status law. He explains that Shi`i court users and judges "are not bound to a time and place," in the sense that people may travel to the court and judge of their choice, and jurists are not appointed by anyone for a fixed duration of time but rather chosen anew by their followers at each moment in time. Thus, in addition to closing the gates of *ijtihad*, Bahr al-`Ulum asserts that the personal status law "closes the gates of *taqlid*."[113] *Taqlid* is the practice by which each Shi`i individual chooses one living *mujtahid* or Islamic legal scholar to emulate, and whose interpretation of the law she or he follows. It helps ensure that the interpretation of the unchanging legal principles are relevant to a particular time and place—hence the requirement that the *mujtahid* be still alive—and also gives laypeople control over the ranking and authority of individual *mujtahid*s. In Bahr al-`Ulum's view, the personal status law only appeared to promote progressive change, while actually replacing the temporally and spatially dynamic Shi`i practices of *ijtihad* and *taqlid* with legal stasis.

Conclusion

[111] Ibid., 27.
[112] Ibid., 32.
[113] Ibid., 26–28.

Analytical frameworks of modernity/tradition, progressivism/conservatism, and secularism/religion are inadequate for conceptualizing the content of the 1959 Iraqi personal status law or the struggle that ensued in Iraq over its promulgation. Narratives of the expansion and contraction of women's rights, while relevant to the conflict, are also not sufficient for understanding its complexity. As I argued earlier in this chapter, in the current historiography on the Iraqi revolution these frameworks have not, with few exceptions, been the basis of historical investigations of the law so much as they have precluded such investigations.

An examination of the actual content of the personal status law shows that its provisions did not always follow a clear, single logic, which was most likely a result of the diverse individuals, representing diverse Iraqi constituencies, who sat on the drafting committee. If there is an overall reasoning guiding the provisions of the personal status law, however, it is not coherently framed as an expansion of "rights," nor for the most part do the provisions extend the concept of equality before the law. On the contrary, almost all of its individual clauses distribute the rights of (Muslim) Iraqi citizens exclusively on the basis of sex, while the law as a whole distributes rights on the basis of religion. I have suggested instead that the dominant reasoning of the personal status law was precisely the one announced in the statement of objectives written by those who drafted it: to create a "stable" Iraqi family for "the new era." It was hoped that this would both ensure the healthy development of children and reduce sociopolitical disorder. The latter aim built on associations inherited from the monarchical era of "the marriage crisis" and other purported manifestations of familial instability with the sense of nationwide moral and political instability. This interpretation of the personal status law points not so much to the undermining of religion by the secular state as to what Talal Asad has theorized as the process by which the modern-nation state constructs both "religion" and "family" as belonging to a "private

sphere" that is assigned the task of fostering a healthy national morality: "By being identified with the family the *shari`a* thus becomes functionally central at once to political order and to the total body that will eventually be represented as 'society.'"[114]

In Iraq, the project of homogenizing and fixing the shari`a as national family law/morality was a contested and embattled one, as bureaucrats, feminists, communists, Arab nationalists, and Sunni and Shi`i `ulama' all brought different conceptions of morality, family, women's rights, and the proper boundaries and functions of public and private spheres to the table. At the same time, the spokespeople of all of these groups, without exception, framed their arguments in the language of progressive developmental time and reproductive futurism, demonstrating the powerful appeal of this discourse across the sociopolitical and ideological spectrum and to what may well have been the global 20th-century truth of Lee Edelman's assertion that "we are as unable to conceive of a politics without a fantasy of the future as we are to conceive of a future without the figure of the Child."[115] As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the implications of this consensus for women and for experiences of family life were profound, albeit not always predictable.

My reading of the law and the conflict over it does suggest that a "women's rights" framework is not inappropriate for one critical aspect of the struggle, that over the equal-inheritance clause. Much of the coalition that emerged in opposition to this provision was indeed driven by a unification of interests defending male property rights and opposing women's autonomy vis-à-vis their husbands and fathers. These seem to have been the dominant concerns of the Ba`thists and many Sunni 'ulama', for example, who wholeheartedly supported the law's other provisions in the interests of national and Muslim unity. But even on this issue, the

[114] Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 229.
[115] Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 11.

positions could be more complicated than is usually assumed. The almost unshakeable liberal-leftist conviction that the conjugal-nuclear family is more advantageous for women than the "traditional" extended-patrilineal family made contemporary progressives—and later historians—deaf to critiques of the equal-inheritance clause that were not necessarily about shoring up patriarchal power. Chapter 7 turns to a discussion of one such critique, launched by the female Shi`i intellectual Bint al-Huda.

Chapter 7

Daughters of the Right Path:
Family Law, Homosocial Publics, and the Ethics of Friendship in the Works of Shi`i Revivalist Bint al-Huda

> As in our own time the permafrost of modernity has at last begun to melt—and a more determinedly pluralistic world has bounded back into an often troubling life—the world we are seeing is not a strange new world, revealed as the glaciers draw back, but a strange *old* world: kinship, locality, embodiment, domesticity, affect. All of these things, but I would add that at times we are seeing them in something as actual—and as tangible—as the tomb of two friends buried in an English parish church. We did not see these tombs because they did not signify, but they are beginning to signify again.
>
> -Alan Bray, *The Friend*[1]

> Being close to you is my way of being close to God.
>
> -Warqa' to Ma`ad, *An Encounter at the Hospital*[2]

In 1960, a group of young Shi`i `ulama' in Najaf, including the future ayatollahs Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, launched *al-Adwa' al-Islamiyya* (Islamic Lights) as the journal of the recently founded Jama`at al-`Ulama' (Society of Religious Scholars). Included in the journal was a regular column on women's issues written by al-Sadr's sister, Amina bint Haydar al-Sadr, under the pen name Bint al-Huda ("Daughter of the Right Path"). Over the next two decades, Bint al-Huda would write dozens of essay collections, religious treatises, novellas, and short stories, very few of which have been translated into

[1] Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 306.
[2] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a al-Qasasiyya al-Kamila [Complete Collected Works]* (Beirut: Dar al-Ta`aruf li-l-Matbu`at, 1981), 2:141.

English.[3] Her life and career came to an early and brutal end in 1980, when she and her brother were arrested and murdered, after probable torture, by Ba`thist security forces.[4]

As part of the broader Shi`i campaign against the 1959 Iraqi personal status law, Bint al-Huda wrote a number of articles in *al-Adwa'* defending Islamic family law. In many ways, her arguments echoed those of other, mostly male, Muslim critics of the civil code. But there were differences, including what she perceived as the corruption of Islamic law and the erosion of women's status in Muslim societies over the centuries. She was a passionate advocate of a woman's rights to pursue an education, choose her own husband, and divorce a bad husband, and at times she criticized male clerics for their positions on these issues. Like other Muslim intellectuals in the Qasimite era examined in chapters 5 and 6, Bint al-Huda often framed her arguments in a language of reproductive futurism similar to that used by the secular feminists, communists, and liberal nationalists she opposed on the question of family law. In numerous ways she shared her opponents' commitment to a progressive, linear, and teleological vision of historical time, with the aim of economic development and industrialization, while insisting against them that Islam provided the means to realize that vision. But her thought also diverged from these discourses in important ways.

In this chapter, I argue that Bint al-Huda's writings can often be read as critiques of the contemporary liberal-secular imaginary that valued the child-centered conjugal family over all other types of human relationality and that conditioned the future of the nation on the proper

[3] The only English translation of her work in print that I have found is a collection of stories published in Iran in 1991. This translation is highly problematic and omits much material without notification. See Bint al-Huda, *An Encounter at the Hospital and Other Short Stories*, trans. M.N. Sultan (Tehran: Foundation of Islamic Thought, 1991). There are also a number of amateur translations of her work that have appeared on Islamist websites, which have similar problems.

[4] Faleh A. Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq* (London: Saqi Books, 2003), 234; Chibli Mallat, "Le feminisme islamique de Bint al-Houda," *Maghreb-Machrek* 116 (1987): 45–58; Ja`far Husayn Nizar, *`Adhra' al-`Aqida wa-l-Mabda': al-Shahida Bint al-Huda [Virgin of Faith and Principle: The Martyr Bint al-Huda]* (Beirut: Dar al-Ta`aruf, 1985).

functioning of sexual difference within and outside of the family. Her texts call into question the developmental narratives of time's progression, both historical and biographical, that constructed certain kinds of lives as worth living and other kinds as worthless, wasteful, or unintelligible—among them, female lives organized largely around homosocial attachments. These narratives resonated with Bint al-Huda's own life as a never-married woman who lived throughout her adult years with her brother Baqir and his wife Fatima while working as a principal and teacher in Islamic schools for girls, in addition to her work as a public intellectual.[5]

By comparing some of the recurrent forms of reasoning in her essays on family law to the depictions of intimate relationships in her biography of the Prophet Muhammad and her later fictional works, I argue that Bint al-Huda was preoccupied with the problematic construction of marriage in liberal-secular discourse and law as a temporal event that marks the beginning of a new family and a new life for the woman (one that cannot be easily ended) and often involves the curtailment or erasure of her existing relationships. This preoccupation can be read as an expression of opposition by a 20th-century Muslim woman to what Talal Asad, writing about legal transformations in 19th-century Egypt, describes as "the appearance of the conception that love between a man and a woman is the necessary basis of the only kind of family life that can have any value and the assumption that legal conditions are necessary for ensuring domestic bliss."[6] Yet I will argue that it cannot be read as some sort of anti-modern resistance to the destruction of historically "old" social bonds (patrilineal, extended, tribal, religious) by historically "new" ones (nuclear, conjugal, child-centered, secular), since Bint al-Huda both

[5] Muhammad Rida al-Nu`mani, *al-Shahida Bint al-Huda [The Martyr Bint al-Huda]* (Qum: Mu'assasat Isma`iliyya, 1999); Mallat, "Le Feminisme Islamique De Bint al-Houda"; Joyce Wiley, "`Alima Bint al-Huda, Women's Advocate," in *The Most Learned of the Shi`a: The Institution of the Marja` Taqlid,* ed. Linda Walbridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[6] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 234.

affirmed the modern institution of companionate marriage and criticized tendencies to privilege it over equally modern types of relationships. Foremost among the latter were non-kin friendships among women enabled by the expansion of literacy, print culture, and a bureaucratic/technocratic labor force in 20th-century Iraq. The female homosocial lifeworld depicted in Bint al-Huda's works was neither historically "traditional" nor spatially "private."

Her writings also diverged from contemporary secular reformist discourse in their non-child-centered conceptions of ethical development and self-formation. In these texts, consistent with the Islamic tradition, moral subjects are formed not passively and decisively, as an effect of early childhood influence, but actively and continuously, through the repetition of pedagogical and disciplinary practices that work to internalize virtue and happiness simultaneously. As Samira Haj explains, these practices are associated in Islam with the discourse of *adab* or ethics, which involves

> the cultivation of proper ethical conduct through a slow process of educating and disciplining the self (body and soul) until a set of virtues, or *fada'il*, become interiorized. The process of cultivation of an inner disposition along with the disciplining of the outer self (the body) is identified within the discourse as *malaka* (habitus)—describing a state in which virtues come to inhabit both the soul and the body, enabling the moral subject to reach a state of equilibrium and happiness.[7]

The Islamic technologies of the self that I analyze in Bint al-Huda's writings differ from those emphasized in Saba Mahmood's account of the late-20th-century Sunni women's mosque movement in Egypt.[8] Bint al-Huda focused less on bodily practices such as prayer and the wearing of hijab, at least in their role as active ethical pedagogies, and placed more emphasis on

[7] Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 111.
[8] Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005). For other recent works on Islamic ethical pedagogies, see Charles Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

intersubjective practices of subject formation.[9] Simply put, ethical Muslim selves are formed in Bint al-Huda's works through engaged dialogue and sustained intimacy with beloved companions. In her fictional narratives, marriage and motherhood often not only fail to bring private domestic bliss but can actively endanger a woman's capacities to engage in these ethical practices.

The main Western-language studies of Bint al-Huda and her work are two essays by Chibli Mallat in French and Joyce Wiley in English.[10] There are some additional scattered references in some (but far from all) monographs on her more famous brother Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and/or the Najafi Shi`i revival.[11] Her memory has been more carefully preserved in Arabic-language sources, though mostly outside of academic studies. There are at least three full biographies, all situated within a hagiographical tradition.[12] Her works were collected and published in a three-volume set in Beirut c. 1981 and a second collection appeared in Iran in 2000. Today, her fame seems to be spreading, if the proliferation of internet essays, chat-room discussions, and amateur translations of her work is any indication. One of the more startling references flashed briefly through the world media in 2004, when U.S. occupying forces in Iraq were threatened by a Shi`i women's militia called the "Bint al-Huda Brigade," apparently allied

[9] Whether this reflects primarily a difference of scholarly approach or an actual historical/geographical/theological difference in the pedagogical approaches of our subjects, is not clear. Mahmood does suggestively urge us to explore how politics "issues forth from intersubjective levels of being and acting," and she pays attention to new institutional structures that bring pious women in the Egyptian *da`wa* movement together, as well as to the importance of the Islamic principle of *amr bi-l-ma`ruf* or the requirement to "enjoin others in the doing of good or right." But it seems to me that she does not devote much theoretical attention to the affective qualities of interpersonal relationships in the women's mosque movement and their role in subject formation, preferring instead to focus on "the role bodily behavior plays in the construction of the self." On the other hand, Bint al-Huda may well have placed more emphasis on intimate relationships and their inevitable role (both positive and negative) in ethical discipline than did Mahmood's informants, for example in her radical and unqualified insistence that a woman should divorce a husband who does not share her dedication to the pursuit of piety in everyday life. Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 152, 58, 121.
[10] Mallat, "Le feminisme Islamique de Bint al-Houda"; Wiley, "`Alima Bint al-Huda."
[11] Chibli Mallat, *The Renewal of Islamic Law: Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, Najaf and the Shi`i International* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq*.
[12] Nizar, *`Adhra' al-`Aqida wa-l-Mabda'*; al-Nu`mani, *al-Shahida Bint al-Huda*; Arif Kazim Muhammad, *Al-Shahida Bint al-Huda [The Martyr Bint al-Huda]* (Beirut: Dar al-Murtada li-l-Tiba`a, 2004).

with junior cleric and resistance leader Muqtada al-Sadr, Bint al-Huda's cousin and nephew-in-law.[13] By then, according to Wiley, an entire generation of Shi`i women in Iraq had read her work and many had given their children the distinctive names of her fictional characters.[14]

These fragments point to the possible appearance, in the second half of the 20th century, of a community of educated Shi`i women in Iraq bound together by the experience of reading the same texts, or of what might be called a modern public.[15] Something along these lines was suggested by Bint al-Huda's first biographer, Ja`far Husayn Nizar: "The seventh decade of this century witnessed a social phenomenon encompassing all of Iraq: the emergence of a society of the committed [Muslim] woman [*mujtama` al-mar'a al-multazima*] in a visible and unprecedented manner…The phenomenon has continued since it was started in the 1960s by an obscure woman…"[16] In what follows, I do not attempt to evaluate the historical evidence for the development of such a society of Iraqi Shi`i (or Muslim) women in this period, or for Bint al-Huda's role in it. Instead, I explore the means by which her writings constructed and addressed a homosocial readership of Muslim women. Along the way, I certainly suggest that Bint al-Huda's literary output might have helped constitute a pious female public in Iraq by virtue of addressing it as such. But my primary interest is in exploring how the texts themselves raise important questions about certain underanalyzed aspects of 20th-century Iraqi history, including struggles over Islamic and secular family law and concepts of self-formation, the emergence of modern private and public spheres, and women's experiences of both privacy *and* publicity. The overall aim is to approach, in a mid-20th-century Iraqi context, one last time and from a different angle, Lee Edelman's assertion that "we are no more able to conceive of a politics without a fantasy of

[13] See http://newamerica.net/node/7788 and http://www.williambowles.info/gispecial/gi_2b21.pdf (both accessed November 20, 2010).
[14] Wiley, "`Alima Bint al-Huda," 158.
[15] Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005).
[16] Nizar, *`Adhra' al-`Aqida wa-l-Mabda'*, 9–10.

the future than we are able to conceive of a future without the figure of the Child."[17] I will show that Bint al-Huda's writings often conform to this compulsion of the modern political imaginary of reproductive futurism, demonstrating, as previous chapters have done, that this discourse was not limited to secular thought. But I will also argue that a close reading of her texts, especially her fictional works, reveals conceptions of a modernist and future-directed temporality in which the figure of the child is absent.

Personal Status Law and the Conjugal Family

Bint al-Huda was around twenty-two years old in 1960, when she started her monthly "women's column" in *al-Adwa'*. She continued the column for at least two years, even after Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was pushed out from his position as editor, reportedly due to pressure from more conservative senior `ulama' concerned about his political and theological radicalism.[18] It is in these columns, as well as in her 1960 collection of essays *al-Mara' ma`a al-Nabi* (Women with the Prophet), that the author developed her critique of what she called "Western" or "modern" (*haditha*) family laws, a critique that was clearly engaged with the contemporary debate over the personal status law.[19] In none of these essays did Bint al-Huda ever actually refer to the Iraqi Law of Personal Status by name. The closest she comes is in an essay comparing Islamic and "modern" inheritance law, in which she notes, with some understatement, that "this is an issue which has arisen."[20] But given the controversies in the Iraqi press in 1960-62 over the December

[17] Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 11.
[18] Mallat, "Le feminisme Islamique de Bint al-Houda," 51; Jabar, *The Shi`ite Movement in Iraq*, 119.
[19] Like Mallat and Wiley, I assume that the essays grouped under the title "Kalima wa-Da`wa" in the 1981 Beirut collection are Bint al-Huda's columns published in *al-Adwa'* from 1960-62. Unfortunately, the journal seems to have been lost, so this cannot be verified for all of them, though some mention *al-Adwa'* by name. For convenience, I use the 1981 collection for all citations, but with the exception of the essays in "Kalima wa-Da`wa," the works I cite are also available in numerous libraries as individual volumes published during Bint al-Huda's lifetime, albeit often as reprints. This may be necessary to mention, since I have encountered a rumor that her literary fame and even her literary output were posthumously invented to enhance her status as a martyr.
[20] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:332.

1959 legislation, it is inconceivable that her commentaries on family law would not have been read as interventions in that debate.

In an column titled "Women and Property," Bint al-Huda's basic defense of the unequal provisions of Islamic inheritance law is similar to those of other Muslim writers. She argues that the man's double share of inheritance is justified on the grounds that a husband is required by law in Islam to support his marital household and children, while the wife's property is hers alone and neither her husband nor her children have any rights to it. But there is one noteworthy emphasis of Bint al-Huda's critique. This is her focus on marriage in "Western" family law as a problematic and even threatening stage of a woman's life. She asserts that Western/modern law, under the guise of elevating the rights of the woman, in fact codifies her exploitation by the man (*istighlal al-rajul laha*) by joining the property of husband and wife and then giving the man disproportionate rights over the so-called joint property created by the marriage. In Islamic law, by contrast, a woman's rights—notably her right to own property—are not affected by the temporal events of her life-cycle.

> The Muslim woman has an absolute right to private property…in every stage of her life, whether she is a daughter, a wife, or a mother…The Muslim husband has no right to use what belongs to his Muslim wife or to touch anything she owns without her permission…The marriage contract in Islamic law does not extend beyond the personhood of the spouses to their money or property in any way…She is legally competent to dispose of her money and her property before marriage and after it with no distinction.[21]

The author spends the first four pages of the essay laying out this difference between Islamic and Western law regarding a married woman's property before closing with a one-page explication of the unequal provisions of Islamic inheritance law. The thrust of the reasoning seems to be that "Western" family law grants a woman the right to inherit from her father the exact amount of

[21] Ibid., 3:327–30.

property that her brother inherits—but only on the condition that she sign complete control of it over to her husband the instant she is married.[22] The implication is that the sexual equalization of inheritance in the new Iraqi civil code threatened to undermine the protection of a married woman's property in Islamic law, due to the necessity of supporting the marital household, especially its children. Rights are envisioned here in relational, rather than autonomous, terms, highlighting how laws that construct human beings as equal, independent, rights-bearing agents may require that certain biological and social realities be bracketed—the dependence of children, for instance, or women's extra financial vulnerability in divorce settlements. The bracketed realities then return to exacerbate actually existing inequalities, the opposite of the law's purported intent.

Women's financial and legal capacity for divorce is a recurrent concern in Bint al-Huda's essays on family law. She criticizes the anti-divorce sentiments of the secular-leftist women's movement in Iraq, which tended to address the problem of inequality in Islamic divorce law less by insisting on women's right to *talaq* or unilateral divorce than by attempting to restrict men's right to *talaq*. In one *al-Adwa'* column, she narrates a conversation between herself and a secular feminist who criticizes the legitimacy of *talaq* in Islamic law on the grounds that it destroys "conjugal bliss" (*al-sa`ada al-zawjiyya*) and denies a woman her "natural rights" (*huququha al-tabi`iyya*). Bint al-Huda explains that Islam permits spouses to separate "when life and harmony between them are impossible and there is an absence of spiritual and moral bonds," and asserts that a Muslim woman may also initiate divorce proceedings "under specific circumstances," and may even insert her own right to *talaq* into the marriage contract.[23]

[22] In the mid-1960s and 1970s, of course, feminist movements in many Western countries would take up this problem as a central concern—but that was in the future.
[23] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 192–95.

At the same time, Bint al-Huda shared certain conceptions of conjugality with contemporary liberal and secular-feminist discourse. She consistently valorized marriages founded on choice and companionship and criticized those inspired by sexual passion and pleasure. Unlike male Shi`i `ulama' of her time, she refrained from defending *mut`a* (temporary) marriage or polygamy.[24] There is even evidence that she opposed these practices in spite of their permissibility in the opinion of most Shi`i jurists. In one of several statements in her work that seem to at least flirt with explicit opposition to *mut`a* marriage, she writes that "Islam created marriage as a stable bond, fixed by conditions and regulations, not a fleeting amusement or pleasure [*mut`a*]."[25] Her essays on family law are resoundingly silent on the question of polygamy—in spite of the contemporary controversy around the relevant provision of the 1959 personal status law—as are her fictional works. The one place she does address the issue, at least indirectly, is in the long title essay of her 1960 *al-Mara' ma`a al-Nabi*, a biography of the Prophet Muhammad, when discussing the Prophet's wives. Yet even here, it is only Muhammad's first, long-term, monogamous marriage with Khadija that is depicted in unambiguously positive terms. The polygamous marriages contracted after Khadija's death are represented as deficient in various ways and/or as examples of the Prophet's charity.[26]

But there is something else the author emphasizes about the Prophet's first marriage in this text. While based on love and companionship, it did not cause him to "forget the three women who preceded" Khadija in his affections—his mother, his wet nurse, and his uncle's wife—or to "deny their presence in his past life." This is because "Muhammad was not the type

[24] Chibli Mallat also noticed the author's "striking" and "important" silence on these two topics. But it may not be quite true that, as he states, "in all her published work, Bint al-Huda never dealt with polygamy or temporary marriage." Mallat, "Le feminisme Islamique de Bint al-Houda," 54.
[25] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:342–43.
[26] The valorization of Khadija conforms to historical Shi`i evaluations of the Prophet's wives, though that may simply have made it a more effective vehicle for expressing the author's distaste for polygamy.

to forget those who loved him."[27] Bint al-Huda goes on to criticize other Muslim biographers of the Prophet, particularly the Egyptian female intellectual Bint al-Shati', for claiming that Muhammad daughter Fatima, after avoiding marriage for a long time because she was reluctant to leave her father's house, was finally forced to marry `Ali when Muhammad's new wife `A'isha insisted that Fatima leave the conjugal household to the conjugal couple.[28] Bint al-Huda writes that any man who is "strong of character" would not allow his wife to exclude his daughter from his household. Anyway, the real reason Fatima avoided marriage for so long was that "she saw with her own eyes the misfortunes that marriage brought to her sisters," and because she did not want to diminish her relationship with her father. By finally choosing to marry Muhammad's companion `Ali, she was able to strengthen rather than weaken that existing bond: *this* marriage, "as she knew with certainty, would bring her closer and closer to her father."[29] Bint al-Huda's earliest writings, then, already challenge marriage as a private institution between two people, founded on a rupture with their previous lives and relationships.

Femininity, Childhood, and the Domestic Sphere

It seems at first difficult to reconcile the assertions in Bint al-Huda's essays that a woman's essential role is to be a housewife and mother with her fictional depictions of women, to say nothing of these assertions' apparent incongruity with her own life as an unmarried and childless intellectual. She writes that "the woman is entrusted with serving the society inside the home and the man is entrusted with serving the society outside the home." A woman, she continues,

[27] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:259–60.
[28] For recent scholarship on Bint al-Shati' and her work, see Ellen McLarney, "The Islamic Public Sphere and the Discipline of *Adab*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 429–49; Mervat F. Hatem, "'A'isha Abdel Rahman: An Unlikely Heroine," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 7, no. 2 (2011): 1–26.
[29] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:281–83.

"because of her tender feminine nature, is more suited to managing the household" than a man.[30] And again, a woman, because she is "affectionate by nature and disposition," is "driven to bear children" in spite of all its difficulties.[31] The author often emphasizes the social significance of this natural feminine drive, especially in the modern era, since a mother is "the producer of the rising generations and the creator of the future."[32] This is why "the advanced nations" always attach "special importance" to mothers.[33]

Indeed, as previous chapters of this dissertation have shown, these statements conformed to the political rationalities of reproductive futurism in contemporary liberal-reformist discourse, which viewed the careful cultivation of feminine domesticity and educated motherhood as crucial to national development. This discourse was based in part on the conviction that the earliest years of childhood were critical to a person's future moral-psychological development and that deviations during this period of life, usually due to some failing of the mother, were difficult if not impossible to correct later through schooling or other interventions. But if such statements were in line with contemporary modernization discourse, how are they to be reconciled with Bint al-Huda's own lifeworld, or with her fictional representations of women happily and healthily pursuing careers outside the home and even choosing not to marry or have children? The simplest explanation is that, to some extent, her views changed over time. In an *al-Adwa'* column, answering a letter from a female reader who asks whether it is against the teachings of Islam for a woman to become a doctor or an engineer, Bint al-Huda writes (without stating that it is against Islam) that such careers are not well-suited to a woman's "emotional"

[30] Ibid., 3:319.
[31] Ibid., 3:345.
[32] Ibid., 3:203.
[33] Ibid., 3:345.

nature.[34] Yet in the 1977 novella *Liqa' fi al-Mustashfa*, as if the author wanted to modify the answer to her reader sixteen years previously, the two pious female protagonists are, precisely, a doctor and an aspiring engineer. But the seemingly contradictory positions, at least in their more subtle forms, do not always fit into a neat chronological division.

There is another explanation, rooted in Bint al-Huda's basic conceptions of gender, religion, and selfhood. Her views on women's work can only be understood in the context of her notion that every individual possesses two distinct natures, a human nature and a gendered nature: "A man is a human and a male; a woman is a human and a female."[35] Gender roles are derived, naturally, from gender difference, as well as from the economic principle of the division of labor. But gender difference is only one aspect of an individual's personhood, and it is not the primary aspect. The first duty of every Muslim is not to any child, family, polity, economic law, or biological accident, but to God. And a Muslim's duty to God, which inheres in her non-gendered nature as a human being, requires first and foremost that she develop a virtuous self in accordance with the teachings of Islam: "Humanity in the view of Islam has a single value and a single measure of honor regardless of all the natural characteristics that differentiate individuals. That single measure…is piety and godliness." What Islam most demands, therefore, is "virtuous work" (*al-`amal al-salah*).[36]

In an essay on the role of women in society, Bint al-Huda writes:

> A woman's virtue [*salah*] in relation to herself is to practice the precepts of Islam in her private conduct. A woman's virtue in relation to her home is to radiate a spirit of stability and happiness, and to provide her children, *if she has children*, with security…planting in their souls the seeds of piety, godliness, and morality. And her virtue in relation to humanity is to participate in useful fields that do not contradict her primary duties.[37]

[34] Ibid., 3:201–205.
[35] Ibid., 3:321.
[36] Ibid., 3:311.
[37] Ibid., 3:152; emphasis added.

The first path to virtue, or sphere of obligation, is that of developing a pious self. It is not located in any particular social space or gendered personhood but derives from a woman's human nature and obviously applies equally to men. The third path applies to activities in the public domain, i.e., "to participate in useful fields," and is likewise derivative of a woman's human nature. This is supported by the author's statement elsewhere that both men and women, "in their capacity as human, are permitted to participate in the service of society so long as they appear in [this domain] as a human, nothing more and nothing less."[38] (I will return to this issue of appearance below.) Only the second path of virtue seems to derive from a woman's nature as a female and is located definitively in the domestic sphere, and even here the role of motherhood is optional, or at least not universal. In any case, it is clear that an unmarried, childless woman in this ethical framework will not on those grounds be lacking in virtuous work.

Rather than reading Bint al-Huda's conception of the three types of obligation owed by a Muslim woman in relation to modern understandings of private feminized domesticity or rigidly naturalized genders, we might situate them within an Islamic discursive tradition that delineates the self, the household, and the polity as the necessary ontological and epistemological domains in which virtuous subjects are formed. Compare Bint al-Huda's account of a Muslim woman's three paths of virtue to the following description by Ebrahim Moosa of how the medieval theologian-philosopher-mystic Abu Hamid al-Ghazali conceived of the three "types of knowledge" necessary to advance on the Islamic path of self-realization:

> The first is psychology, knowledge that provides an understanding of the self and the possible ways in which self-discipline can be exercised. The second is skills related to domestic management. Here, knowledge relevant to raising children and taking care of dependents, such as wives, husbands, children, family members and, in [al-Ghazali's] day, slaves, comes into play. The third is knowledge of politics and the skills to manage the polis, where jurisprudence and civil administration are critical requirements.

[38] Ibid., 3:321.

> Harmony in the three spheres—personal, family, and political—he believed, creates the optimum conditions for the realization of true happiness.[39]

The tripartite division can now be envisioned as representing paths of virtue, spheres of obligation, or types of knowledge.[40] We might recognize in some of Bint al-Huda's other statements, such as that a woman "is more suited to managing the household" than a man, that a shift has occurred in the second sphere. It is now imagined as a domain largely under feminine administration, whereas in al-Ghazali's time it was seen to fall under the watchful guidance of men. But we might, in addition to this, leave open the possibility that the three spheres described by Bint al-Huda are less stable in their gender boundaries than the dualistic public/private spheres peculiar to capitalist modernity and feminist scholarship. In this sense, her views on women's social roles are not simply contradictory; they may also refer to different and necessarily fluid spatio-temporal domains of a woman's—or a Muslim's—life.

Like her obligations, a woman's rights in Islam derive, according to Bint al-Huda, either from her nature as a woman or from her nature as a human. When the difference between them is misrecognized, misunderstandings can result. The hijab, for example, is often misrecognized as an unequal obligation derived from a woman's nature as a female (*tabi`atuha ka'untha*), when its real purpose is to protect her equal rights as a human.[41] Contrary to Western propaganda and the misguided behavior of many Muslim men, Bint al-Huda explains, the hijab is incumbent on a Muslim woman not in order to "destroy her personhood" (*tusahhaq shakhsiyyatuha*), but so that

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[39] Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*, 243. Moosa's designation of the first type of knowledge as "psychology" is anachronistic; as discussed in chapter 4, the discipline of psychology introduced new conceptions of self-formation in the 20th century.

[40] A 1938 article in *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* invoked this three-fold Islamic schema, which it attributed to Ibn Sina, in arguing for home economics education for girls in Iraq's schools. See Ruz Gharib, "Harakat Tadbir al-Manzil [The Home Economics Movement]," *al-Mu`allim al-Jadid* 3, no. 3 (June 1938): 206. For an account of a similar tripartite schema of spaces of self-formation in ancient Greek and Roman thought, see Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 75–76.

[41] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:169.

she can enter the public sphere in her capacity as a human (*bi-wasfha insana*), on an equal footing with men, rather than in her capacity as a female (*bi-wasfha untha*) who should be treated differently from men.[42] "The woman who appears in society looking like a human, rather than accentuating all the signs of her femininity, will be equal to the man."[43] A man is also required to cover parts of his body in public and for the same reason. That a woman must cover a somewhat larger area is because women are "more attractive" than men, a fact that derives from her nature as a female but which Islam does not permit to infringe on the rights that accrue to her as a human—in this case, her right to participate in the public sphere on an equal footing with other humans. The Western woman, by contrast,

> who is told by the [Western] man that she is free in her behavior and in everything else, is in reality forced to please the man—any man whatsoever—and to satisfy his desires. She is required to appear in public as a woman, in the name of freedom, submitting to all the exhausting demands [required to appear feminine] that consume a woman's time [in the West].[44]

But Islam "imposes no constraints" on a woman that it does not impose on a man except for the hijab, "which has no effect on her public or private conduct."[45]

Print Culture, Female Homosociality, and the Public Sphere

Michael Warner has conceived of a public as an indefinite group of readers who recognize themselves as members of the public being addressed in the texts they read, though most of them do not know each other personally. This is a "public of strangers," and "comes into being only in relation to texts and their circulation...[It] may be real and efficacious, but its reality lies in just

[42] Ibid., 3:154.
[43] Ibid., 3:322. For similar arguments by Shi`i women in present-day Lebanon, see Lara Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi`i Lebanon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 114.
[44] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:322.
[45] Ibid., 3:331.

this reflexivity by which an addressable object is conjured into being in order to enable the very discourse that gives it existence." A public, in Warner's formulation, requires "mere attention."[46]

This understanding can open new challenges to the ways that public and private spheres have often been conceived in Middle East historiography, and particularly to the ways they have been aligned with the gender binary.[47] One of the noteworthy aspects of a public in Warner's sense is that it makes no spatial demands of its members; strictly speaking, it does not even require leaving the house.[48] What it does require is literacy and access to texts addressed to publics, the not-so-minor prerequisites of "mere attention" by a public of strangers. The presumption of a certain level of literacy among Iraqi women by 1960 is what allowed Bint al-Huda to address the readers of her *al-Adwa'* columns as "My Sisters" and thereby to interpellate them as a community of pious women reading the same text, that is to say, as a public. On the journal's second anniversary, Bint al-Huda writes that "*al-Adwa'* has become an inseparable part of my life…It brings me together with you at the start of each month, and lets me carry out some of my responsibilities, first to my religion and second to the girls of my sex [*banat jinsi*]." The author celebrates her certainty "that you read what I write and listen to my call with your heart, mind, and feelings."[49]

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[46] Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 66–67, 87.

[47] For different recent critiques of this alignment in relation to Muslim women, see Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern*; S.P. Yadav, "Segmented Publics and Islamist Women in Yemen: Rethinking Space and Activism," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 6 (Spring 2010): 1–30. For recent approaches to publics and public spheres, besides that of Warner, see Armando Salvatore, *The Public Sphere: Liberal Modernity, Catholicism, Islam* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape*; Craig Calhoun, *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).

[48] As Warner notes, this conception of a public as comprising private persons engaged in reading is also used by both Kant and Habermas. In the latter's historical account, modern publics emerged precisely in the privacy of the modern bourgeois household: "here, in the bourgeois homes, the public sphere was established." Warner also points out that the English translation of Habermas' *Offentlichkeit* as "public sphere" is misleading in that the German word lacks the spatial connotation. Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 47–48.

[49] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:180–81.

It is not clear precisely when Bint al-Huda's novellas and short stories began appearing, since I have not found most of them in first edition, but existing volumes span from the early 1970s until her death in 1980. Her fictional characters are, as Mallat asserts, "unidimensional,"[50] and on a basic level the plotlines tend to fall somewhere between didactic morality tale and paperback romance. Yet important questions emerge from these works. They open up affective and intersubjective dimensions of the author's conceptions of gender, self-formation, and public/private experiences that are less available in the nonfictional works but that, I argue, do shape their reasoning. This and the following section thus draw on the author's fictional texts in order to elucidate themes already introduced in her 1960-62 essays on law, women, and family, though the former's publication dates fall outside the temporal bounds of this dissertation.

Bint al-Huda's stories address reading, writing, and the circulation of texts in numerous ways. Most involve a central pedagogical relationship between two characters that involves reading the same books and then discussing them together. More private forms of reading and writing can also foster new relationships and modes of living in these texts. Several of the fictional works are in epistolary form; here, the exchange of letters is a means of forging bonds beyond one's kin, who are frequently oppressive and/or irreligious. Other stories are written in the form of the protagonist's private journal entries. In one, a miserable young woman named Baida' ruminates on the importance of the journal to her survival: "It is true that I cannot speak, but I can write." But she also complains that writing and reading are solitary activities, substitutes for true living: "What life is this? It is a…living death." Books used to help her—they were "weapons to battle the fog"—but now she sees "nothing but black lines." Longing for

[50] Mallat, "Le feminisme Islamique de Bint al-Houda," 47.

authentic human contact, she despairs of ever finding it: "Will I find the compassionate hand that will heal my wounds and the kind bosom I can rest my head upon?"[51]

Ironically, Baida' finds that person by losing her existing lifeline, her journal, in the street, where it is picked up by Rabab, a pious young woman who reads it and becomes obsessed with finding its unhappy author. The most private form of writing is thus fortuitously put into circulation, so that that it can join two unrelated young women. When the strangers finally meet, "a moment passed in silence as each gazed at her companion, as if she was trying to determine her position towards her—or trying to recognize what this position demanded of her." Through friendship, conversation, and mutual reading, Rabab gives Baida' strength and hope, putting her back on the path of self-realization. At the end of the story, Rabab asserts that it is the "nature of the believer to support his believing brother, to stand by his side and give him strength…That is the reality that all believers live." Baida' responds: "Then I will live it at your side, Rabab, *insha'allah*."[52]

Attempting to map a male/female public/private dichotomy onto the homosocial world depicted in Bint al-Huda's fiction clearly will not do. Most of her pious female characters do not mix socially with men outside their kin,[53] but their lives hardly unfold in a private sphere of family relations and domestic/reproductive labor. They attend school, socialize outside of kinship circles, and work as teachers, doctors, writers, and engineers. Some even seem to interrogate the meaning of the words "private" and "public" in relation to homo/heterosociality. In the novella *al-Fadila Tantasir* (Virtue Triumphs), the pious Naqa' defends her future life with her fiance Ibrahim, while Su`ad, her impious cousin, criticizes that life for its "isolation" from "society." Naqa' responds that she will not be isolated, because she has her female society. She

[51] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 2:58–62.
[52] Ibid., 2:67–84.
[53] Two exceptions can be found in the novellas *al-Fadila Tantasir* and *al-Bahitha `an al-Haqiqa.*

goes on to criticize marriages that undermine female friendships by insisting that the spouses accompany each other everywhere: "the ideal man is one who shares his opinions, thoughts, goals, and feelings with his wife, not all of his movements and actions; the woman has a private domain [*ufq khass*] that it is not right for a man to keep her from." But while both characters apply the word "private" (*khass*) to female homosocial settings, there is a degree to which the meaning of that word begins to come unhinged in the conversation, especially regarding whether it also applies to male homosocial contexts:

> Su`ad: "But a man has public [*`amma*] gatherings and a broad domain, while a woman of your kind has only private [*khassa*] gatherings and her movements are restricted."
> Naqa': "Ibrahim does not attend mixed [*mukhtalita*] gatherings."[54]

Su`ad and Naqa' do not resolve the problem they have stumbled upon, namely how to apply the terms "public" and "private" to male and female homosocial gatherings, but their conversation does suggest that one can't have it both ways: either extra-familial male and female forms of homosociality are both "public," or publics are heterosocial ("mixed") by definition.

Naqa' passionately defends her female community against Su`ad's attacks. When the latter points out that the former's way of life goes against the ideas of "our society," Naqa' responds: "By 'society' you mean your own society, Su`ad. The society I live in shares my ideas." And when Su`ad asks sarcastically, "Why have I seen no trace and heard not a word from these millions?," Naqa' responds: "You see and hear them, Su`ad. But you refuse to believe your own eyes and deny what your own ears hear." The language of this accusation draws on well-known verses and reports in Islamic texts that judge a person's willful refusal to "see" or "hear" a reality/truth that is all around her as a serious moral failure. On a more subjective level, it affirms that a community of modern pious women not only exists but is ample compensation for

[54] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 1:43–44.

a woman's refusal to participate in heterosocial lifeworlds. Such affirmations are often accompanied by assertions of the value and fullness of a life that is lived largely among other women, and an implied criticism of the devaluing of such lives in secular worldviews. Naqa' declares: "I am not isolated like you think I am. And my life is not worthless. It is filled with everything a heart could desire." And later: "I am full of life…and life in its entirety belongs to me, too."[55]

The characters go on to explore the aggressively patriarchal logic governing the association of publicness with both maleness and heterosocial/sexuality and the related implication that a male gaze is required for something to be made important or even real. Su`ad proclaims to Naqa', because the latter wears the hijab, reads books alone in the park, and socializes only with women:

> I am sure you are still unaware of the truth of your beauty and magnificence, for a young woman does not feel the reality of her beauty unless she hears it from the mouths of men...A woman's life begins when she realizes that a thousand hearts have started circling around her.

Naqa' responds angrily to this assertion that a female life without male affirmation and desire is a life that has not even begun : "What kind of life are you talking about, Su`ad? When did the desires of men become weapons to menace the personhood of girls?"[56]

Naqa''s rhetorical question takes on an arguably more historical dimension (When, indeed?) in the context of contemporary modernization discourses attacking homosociality, especially among women, as a backwards tradition leading to wasted lives and obstructing sexual heteronormativity. In 1954, as noted in chapter 5, Iraqi sociologist `Ali al-Wardi had launched a passionate debate with his book *Wu`az al-Salatin* (The Sultans' Preachers), which argued that the

[55] Ibid., 1:45–53.
[56] Ibid., 1:125–26.

prevalence of both male and female homosexuality in the Arab world was an inevitable consequence of the seclusion of women and that the relative infrequency of homosexuality in the West could be attributed to the mixing of women with men in the public sphere. In a 1957 book answering some of his critics, al-Wardi completed the modernization narrative through which deviant homosexual desires are historically repressed through regulated public heterosociality, envisioning a 21st-century Iraq in which men who are surrounded by "slender women with deep-set black eyes" will have abandoned "antiquated traditions" such as poetry directed to a male beloved.[57] According to this narrative, the heterosocialization of the public sphere is designed to redirect men's sexual desire toward women, a process that is seen as integral if not central to modernization itself.[58] I will argue in the epilogue of this dissertation that such discourse was linked not only to the undermining of homosociality/sexuality but also to the undermining of friendship as such.[59]

The Ethical Work of Friendship

Piety in Bint al-Huda's world is not a wholly interior disposition that can be cultivated outside of one's relationships with other people. Her insistence on a woman's right to choose her own husband, and to divorce a bad husband, is rooted in this understanding of the necessary link between human intimacy and ethical life, and all of her fictional work can be read as an exploration of that link. Moreover, this cultivation of a moral self was conceived as primarily an adult, or at least a postpubescent, project. While her 1960-62 essays on family law and women's social roles sometimes deployed familiar arguments about the importance of motherly guidance

[57] `Ali al-Wardi, *Usturat al-Adab al-Rafi` [The Legend of Refined Literature]*, rev. ed. (London: Dar Kufan, 1994), 72.
[58] See also Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men Without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
[59] See also Bray, *The Friend*.

in early childhood for planting "the seeds of piety, godliness, and morality" in a person's soul,[60] her large body of fictional work is silent on that part of the subject-formation process. Parents are conspicuously absent or marginalized in many of these stories, and children below the age of adolescence are almost nonexistent. In a rare story that does include a young child, the moral of the tale is that a woman should not hesitate to divorce a bad husband just because they have offspring.[61] Nor are the years of childhood remembered by her characters as particularly important to their self-development. One protagonist comments that she does not understand "the meaning of childhood as others picture it," namely as a period of "joy" and "hope." She recalls that her own childhood "was nothing but a period of life that I submitted to without the weapons of thought." Adolescence, on the other hand, was a "very happy time" of discovering friendship and the pursuit of knowledge, when "nothing concerned me except developing my self [*bina' shakhsi*] on the basis of my religion."[62]

Much of Bint al-Huda's fiction affirms the potential of companionate marriage for fostering ethical self-growth, provided both partners are pious. But marriage does not subsume two other important bonds that recur throughout her work: those between female friends and those between adult siblings. Many narratives close with a happily-ever-after based on one or more of these three relationships, and they need not involve a marriage at all. In the story discussed above, Baida' asserts that she will live the rest of her life "by the side" of her friend Rabab. In the story "Determination," it is a sister-brother bond that guarantees the protagonists' future happiness. At the start of the narrative, the orphaned Wifaq lives alone with her uncle while her brother is studying in Europe. When she refuses to marry the man her uncle has chosen, he gives her an ultimatum: she must either submit to his choice or leave his house. She

[60] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:311.
[61] Ibid., 2:209ff.
[62] Ibid., 1:262–71.

chooses the latter, although she purportedly has no one else to support her. This fictional moment, in which a young woman of marriageable age leaves her only home and kin and goes out into the world alone, is a stark expression of the harm that Bint al-Huda believed a bad marriage could cause, and also of the degree of agency she demanded of Muslim women in their struggle for personhood. It is not revealed to the reader until Wifaq has actually left the house that she has a friend to whom she can go, a fact she suddenly "remembers" as she wanders alone through the streets. Once there, she learns that her brother has already written to her friend's brother that he is on his way home to be with her, and the story closes with his line: "I want to return and take her hand, so we can walk together on the right path, in search of true happiness in the teachings of Islam."[63]

Yet most of the narratives involve a more complex configuration of intimacy, often involving all three of these bonds. One frequently employed device in the stories that do end in a happy marriage is the conspicuous presence of a third person, typically a friend or brother of the female protagonist who is, conversely, the sister or friend of her fiance. This triangular relation of friendship/sibling bond/heterosexual romance disrupts the private exclusivity of marital bliss, sometimes to the extent of actually constituting the "conjugal" household.

According to a famous argument by Eve Sedgwick, male homosocial bonds in English literature are often constructed through a triangular relation in which two male characters traffic in, or exchange, a female figure. In Bint al-Huda's fiction, it is far more common for two female characters to relate to one another by exchanging a male figure. The application of Sedgwick's schema here is not a neat one, since the gender reversal is anything but trivial: patriarchal power is a critical aspect of the "routing of homosocial desire through heterosexual love" in her

[63] Ibid., 2:25–26.

analysis.[64] Yet the structural parallel is striking. As in Sedgwick's framework, the triangular relation takes many forms in Bint al-Huda's fiction, even while the basic gender structure (in her case, woman-man-woman) and movement of desire (woman-to-woman-through-exchange-of-man) remain fairly constant. The homosocial couple, for instance, might be composed of kin or non-kin, and bound together by love or hate—which is one reason Sedgwick uses the term "desire" rather than "love" to describe the homosocial bond.[65] In *al-Fadila Tantasir,* the bad Su`ad tries to separate the good Naqa' from her equally good fiance Ibrahim, but ends up losing her own husband when Naqa' persuades *him* to return to Islam. Different homosocial desires inhabit a similar structure in the aptly titled novella *Imra'atan wa-Rajul* (Two Women and a Man), in which a pious woman unknowingly loans her fiance to her beloved but scheming and atheistic sister, who exchanges love letters with the virtuous and rather gullible man until he inadvertently persuades her to return to Islam, and her loving sister. Meanwhile, two other women, the mothers, arrange a second marriage, between the formerly impious sister and the fiance's brother, so that the reconciled sisters can stay together, and the novel ends with a joint wedding.[66]

But nowhere in Bint al-Huda's works is the cultivation of female homosocial intimacy through the exchange of a man more fully developed than in the remarkable novella *Liqa' fi al-Mustashfa* (An Encounter at the Hospital). The protagonist, Warqa', is a student at the college of engineering who lives alone with her paternal grandmother. Her mother died giving birth to her and her father died in mysterious circumstances when she was young. When her grandmother gets sick and Warqa' takes her to the hospital, she meets Ma`ad, a doctor who, like Warqa',

[64] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 160.
[65] Ibid., 2.
[66] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 1:337–424.

wears the hijab. They form an immediate bond, such that Warqa' becomes anxious when Ma`ad fails to return to the hospital room at the time she said she would, and feels "as though she had lost something." After several meetings over the course of a few days, moreover, "she began to feel that she was bound to Ma`ad intellectually and spiritually and that it would be difficult to separate from her."[67]

Ma`ad is somewhat older than Warqa', and much more learned, in Islam as well as in philosophy and the modern sciences. She begins teaching Warqa', primarily about how to defend Islam against the "materialists" and the "skeptics" by linking religious truth to philosophical concepts and scientific proofs. Ma`ad had her own teacher in these matters, her twin brother Snad, with whom she has lived throughout her life; like Warqa', Ma`ad and Snad are orphans. While there is an unapologetic asymmetry in the pedagogical relation of authority between Warqa' and Ma`ad, there is no question that the affection runs both ways. During one meeting, Ma`ad asks Warqa' to promise that they will be sisters forever; in the next meeting, the full implications of this become clear when she asks Warqa' to marry her twin brother. Warqa' wants to say yes, but hesitates when she thinks of her grandmother and says she will have to consult her before answering. Ma`ad chides her gently for this, telling Warqa' that the decision is hers alone. Warqa' explains: "I am not used to deciding my private affairs, because my grandmother has gotten me used to her deciding everything," to which Ma`ad responds: "Then make an effort to think independently this time." Ma`ad goes on contest the common assumption that "experience is the way to knowledge," suggesting that Warqa' try using reason instead.[68] The philosophical rejection of "experience" as the grounds for knowledge was a recurring theme in Bint al-Huda's work, and was nearly always invoked in order to contest the truth-claims of older generations. It

[67] Ibid., 2:94, 118.
[68] Ibid., 2:128.

is one of many illustrations of her full engagement in modernist and futurist conceptions of historical and generational time, in which the "space of experience" and "the horizon of expectation" had been blown apart.[69]

The novel's crisis is produced when Warqa' presents the proposal to her grandmother, who responds by revealing that the father of Ma`ad and Snad was the murderer of Warqa''s own father. She demands that Warqa' not only refuse the marriage but also end her friendship with Ma`ad. When Warqa' hears this, "tears ran down her cheeks, and she was thinking of Ma`ad more than Snad." She agrees not to marry Snad, but refuses to stop seeing Ma`ad, crying out: "How can I, when she has become a necessity of my life?"[70] The grandmother forces Warqa' to leave the hospital immediately, leaving only a note for Ma`ad that rejects the marriage but does not explain why. A week later, Warqa' receives a letter from Ma`ad:

> I found you, Warqa', like a fragrant flower bud that was created to blossom and spread its fragrance, to herald the spring. But it had lost the hand that watered it and the shadow that protected it from the sun…I felt your spirit calling me, asking for generosity and protection, and I responded to the call…I opened my heart to you…Then I chose you to be the wife of my brother, who is the most important thing to me…But [though you have rejected him], I am still your sister, for better and for worse.[71]

Warqa' responds in her own letter:

> Let me kiss you from afar, for God alone knows how much I miss you and how ashamed I am, my sister. You are the one I found in my thirst…but I was able to drink only a few sips before the cruel hand of time took the cup from my lips, returning me to my burning thirst and to my submission to a life of bitter loneliness…I learned that life is cruel even to the noblest of feelings and affections…and fate gives no value to relationships and bonds.[72]

[69] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 266–69. See also chapter 4 of this dissertation.
[70] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 2:132–35.
[71] Ibid., 2:138–39.
[72] Ibid., 2:140.

When they finally meet again, Ma`ad tells Warqa': "I missed you as if I had lived with you my whole life rather than knowing you only a few weeks."[73] The friendship is resumed, with Warqa' visiting Ma`ad nearly every day, first without her grandmother's knowledge and then against her express objection.

But the grandmother cannot tolerate the women's relationship. She decides to arrange a marriage between Warqa' and the cousin of Warqa''s father. Predictably, the man is educated, wealthy, and good-looking, but does not observe his religious duties. The grandmother justifies the decision to herself by reasoning that "the marriage to her [father's] cousin will end her relationship with Ma`ad for good."[74] While in this case, the grandmother has external reasons for wanting to end the friendship (Ma`ad's father is the murderer of Warqa''s father, the grandmother's own son), the notion that marriage, especially to an irreligious man, is likely to end a woman's female friendships was a recurring theme in Bint al-Huda's fiction. In one story, a young woman rejects the advice of her friend not to marry an impious man, and when they part the woman who gave the advice "felt as though she has lost her friend forever."[75]

In these narratives, the harm that is caused by a bad marriage derives directly from its expectation as a close companionship. Ma`ad cautions Warqa' that marriage to an impious man "will spread its roots throughout your life…and will shape your near and distant future." She tells Warqa' to remain strong, to which the latter responds that just "sitting with you makes me stronger." And when her grandmother, in exasperation, asks Warqa' what she will do "if you do not find a man who shares your ideas?," she responds immediately: "Then I will not marry." After all, that would make her no different from her role model Ma`ad. The latter's single status

[73] Ibid., 2:143.
[74] Ibid., 2:156.
[75] Ibid., 1:297.

is not explained in the text, or for that matter even wondered about by any character; it simply affirms that an unmarried woman can live a desirable life.[76]

The novel ends in a triple happily-ever-after, simultaneously conventional (heterosexual companionate marriage), less conventional (a family constituted by a triangular bond of love and commitment with a female homosocial friendship at its base), and literal (the promise of eternal life).[77] After various twists and turns through which Warqa' manages to escape the fate of two bad marriage arrangements, we learn that it was only the twins' hated stepfather who murdered Warqa''s father, not their biological father, and this satisfies the grandmother. Warqa' is free to marry Snad and to live with him and Ma`ad.

> Then [Warqa'] rested her head on Ma`ad's shoulder and said: "And now I have returned to you, my sister." Ma`ad embraced her, and her eyes filled with tears as she recited [the Qur'anic verse]: "*Most surely He Who has made the Qur'an binding upon you will bring you back to the destination*."[78]

The novel ends with this verse. Its final word, which is usually rendered in English translations of the Qur'an as "the destination" but which can also mean the life to come, the hereafter, or the place to which one returns, is in Arabic *ma`ad.*[79] The narrative thus closes by asserting the primacy of another triangular relation, one that Warqa' had mapped out earlier in an ultimate declaration of love to Ma`ad: "Being close to you is my way of being close to God."[80]

* * *

[76] Ibid., 2:168–75.
[77] In Bint al-Huda's society, an unmarried woman living with her married brother would not be unconventional. Here I am referring primarily to narrative conventions of the novel, the historical development of which is of course not unrelated to the emergence of the bourgeois conjugal family.
[78] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 2:208.
[79] In spite of its translation as "the destination," the word in the Qur'an does not include the definite article, which is why it is translated more indefinitely as "the destination" instead of directly as "the hereafter." This, combined with the lack of capitalizations on Arabic proper nouns, means that one way to read the verse in the novella is "*Most surely He Who has made the Qur'an binding upon you will bring you back to Ma`ad*."
[80] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 2:141.

Literary scholar miriam cooke has dismissed Bint al-Huda's fiction with the assertion: "didacticism crushes these stories."[81] In aesthetic terms, I do not dispute this evaluation, and it may help explain why the texts have not received more scholarly attention. But if the value I have found in them is not necessarily an artistic one, neither is it any presumed capacity of the stories to transparently reflect contemporary social reality in Najaf. To begin with, it would probably not be too difficult to argue that the remarkable degree of familial independence attained by many of Bint al-Huda's young female protagonists was mostly fantasy—one frequently facilitated by the author's habit of killing off her heroine's parents before the narrative commences. Rather, what I have been interested in is the appearance of such fantasies in particular textual forms and of the assumption that they could find, or create, a particular reading public. I have also sought to explore how certain theoretical understandings of the public/private divide, and its relation to the gender binary, might be complicated by these texts.

One way I have attempted to do this is by juxtaposing Bint al-Huda's ambivalence about modern heterosexual privacy in marriage with the reflexive homosocial publicity of the texts themselves. But it should also be noted that the pious female readership to which the author addressed her work both was and was not a "public of strangers." In accordance with Warner's definition, it was an indefinite group of readers, most of whom did not know each other personally, who were implicitly and explicitly encouraged to recognize themselves as members of the public being addressed. Yet this public was not envisioned as a group of private, atomized individuals responding to texts in a cultivated mode of autonomous liberal rationality.[82] Without a doubt, Bint al-Huda's writings were designed to persuade through reason—and a self-

[81] miriam cooke, "Prisons: Egyptian Women Writers on Islam," *Religion & Literature* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 145.
[82] Warner does not claim that all modern publics are so envisioned. On the contrary, he defines a modern "counterpublic" in part by its rejection of these norms. Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 56–58.

consciously modern and scientific form of reason at that—but they were also designed to be read and discussed in the company of friends, and to foster embodied, affective, and intersubjective practices of public and ethical life.

Epilogue: Women, Islam, and Autonomy

Both Chibli Mallat and Joyce Wiley—the only Western scholars to focus sustained attention on Bint al-Huda—evaluate her work and thought through the prism of women's rights, while also portraying her as having a somewhat functionalist "role" in the emerging revival movement. For example, Mallat writes that she was "in charge of the 'feminist rubric'" of the movement,[83] while Wiley tells us that she was "charged with clarifying women's rights" and, again, that her "role in the movement was to educate women about their rights in Islam."[84] These quite similar formulations arguably minimize Bint al-Huda's own agency in engaging with the Shi`i revival movement, by suggesting that she was somehow assigned or "charged" with an instrumentalist "role" in that movement, by whom we are not told. But at the same time, they seem to take for granted the relevance of concepts such as "feminism" and "women's rights"—and thus of a feminist, rights-based conception of agency and autonomy—against which Bint al-Huda's writings can be productively measured.

Wiley is clearly drawn to a number of Bint al-Huda's positions on women, such as the author's insistence on a Muslim woman's rights to pursue an education, choose her own husband, and demand a divorce. But she is just as clearly uncomfortable with other positions, especially Bint al-Huda's stance that a Muslim woman is required to wear the hijab or headscarf (though not the full face veil) in the presence of men to whom she is not related. Wiley's resolution of the problem is connected to her assertion that Bint al-Huda was playing a "role" in

[83] Mallat, *The Renewal of Islamic Law*, 16.
[84] Wiley, "`Alima Bint al-Huda," 153, 149.

the revival movement. She argues that this role gave her space to push the boundaries of Islamic conceptions of Muslim women's rights in a number of ways, but that it also required her, for purely strategic reasons, to refrain from pushing them in other ways: "In the matter of *hijab*, Bint al-Huda was pragmatic" and "it appears that she accepted veiling for strategic reasons but did not believe that it was required by the Qu'ran."[85] Wiley concludes that Bint al-Huda's positions on women "form a coherent whole, with the possible acceptance of her acquiescence to *hijab*."[86]

I have found nothing in Bint al-Huda's writings to support the claim that she did not believe the hijab was required by the Qur'an. In any case, the notion that unveiling was an inseparable part of a "coherent whole" of women's rights was one the author explicitly rejected. For example, she writes: "Foreign culture has spread hostile colonial concepts into our territory, targeting us, the daughters of Islam, specifically! They distort our quest for knowledge, through which we are fulfilling the call of the Prophet, equating [women's] education with unveiling as if there were no difference!"[87] While agreeing with Wiley and Mallat that Bint al-Huda was often concerned with women's rights, this chapter has suggested that different aspects of both the Najafi Shi`i revival movement and Bint al-Huda's understandings of women's social roles and public and private lives can be opened up by situating them within the Islamic discursive tradition to which they, at least in part, belonged, rather than simply measuring them against liberal values and political concepts.

Saba Mahmood has argued that Western feminist scholarship has difficulty analyzing important aspects of women's involvements in religious movements due to feminism's conceptual understandings of agency and the female subject. She questions

[85] Ibid., 155.
[86] Ibid., 157.
[87] Bint al-Huda, *al-Majmu`a*, 3:173.

> how the notion of human agency most often invoked by feminist scholars—one that locates agency in the political and moral autonomy of the subject—has been brought to bear upon the study of women involved in patriarchal religious traditions such as Islam….[and suggests] alternative ways of thinking about agency, especially as it relates to embodied capacities and means of subject formation.[88]

According to Mahmood, the failure of Western academic feminists to differentiate between the analytic and prescriptive ends of feminism, especially when writing about non-Western women, has led to a preoccupation with discovering moments of female resistance to male domination, at the expense of exploring—or even recognizing—other female experiences, actions, lifeworlds, and even, paradoxically, relations to authority and power. Mahmood asks whether this preoccupation with resistance might "impose a teleology of progressive politics on the analytics of power—a teleology that makes it hard for us to see and understand forms of being and action that are not necessarily encapsulated by the narrative of subversion and reinscription of norms?"[89]

My reading of Bint al-Huda's work is indebted to Mahmood's scholarship in a number of ways. Yet there are two aspects of her analysis that I would like to push in a somewhat different direction. These differences probably derive in part from differing historical, cultural, theological, and even psychological circumstances, insofar as Bint al-Huda was an arguably exceptional activist and intellectual who lived in a different time and place from Mahmood's informants and was situated within a different Islamic discursive tradition (Shi`ism). But these very differences may help to open up some questions raised by Mahmood's study. First, as I have already shown, Bint al-Huda's conceptions of how ethical Muslim female subjects are cultivated does not fit with Mahmood's emphasis on the priority, in the Egyptian Sunni women's mosque movement, of bodily disciplines over intersubjective disciplines of Islamic self-

[88] Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 7.
[89] Ibid., 9.

formation. Second, Bint al-Huda's uncompromising opposition to many forms of patriarchal domination and kinship authority in her society invites us to explore the historical particularity of "norms" and to pay attention to different *kinds* of norms, patriarchal and otherwise—distinctions that may sometimes get collapsed in Mahmood's argument that "norms" in general are not only "consolidated and/or subverted" but also "performed, inhabited and experienced."[90]

This point might be elucidated by looking at Mahmood's formulation of a binary set of oppositions within a critique she makes of Western feminist analysis. She writes that such analysis is often based on a preoccupation with "the capacity to realize an autonomous will, one generally fashioned in accord with the dictates of 'universal reason' or 'self-interest,' and hence unencumbered by the weight of custom, transcendental will, and tradition."[91] Mahmood's main point here is that a Muslim woman's work of self-formation is not derived from and cannot be measured by the liberal notion of an autonomous will, and this point certainly stands. As Moosa has eloquently argued, disciplines of subject formation are Islam is based on a heteronomous rather than autonomous understanding of selfhood; ethical subjects can only be formed in relation to the Other, which in his analysis refers both to the divine and to other human beings.[92] (Moosa, however, also argues that various conceptions of autonomy exist in the Islamic tradition, and are important.) But going beyond this main point, Bint al-Huda's work invites us to examine the binary categories Mahmood constructs for conceptualizing the various kinds of forces that might play a role in ethical self-formation: "universal reason" and "self-interest" on the one side and "custom, transcendental will, and tradition" on the other.

In fact, Bint al-Huda constructed a similar binary opposition in her writings, but with a difference: she did not place "transcendental will" on the side of "custom" and "tradition." On

[90] Ibid., 22.
[91] Ibid., 11.
[92] Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*.

the contrary, the submission of a heteronomous Muslim subject to God's will—which for Bint al-Huda is not only compatible with but logically inseparable from both universal reason and individual self-interest—must itself be "unencumbered" by the historically accreted "weight" of customs and local traditions. As Samira Haj explains, the work of un-encumbering Islamic law and practice from such accretions is precisely the historical conception of revival in the Islamic discursive tradition.[93] Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr invoked this conception when he wrote that it was the responsibility of Muslim scholars in his time to "separate religion from the customs and apprise people of the true nature of religion and its role in life."[94] Among the existing practices and interpretations he categorized as customs rather than true religious obligations were "the un-Islamic habits and social usages responsible for the backwardness of women."[95] Mahmood's analysis does not seem to leave much room for potential distinctions between existing cultural/social norms and the revealed norms of religion, a distinction that was of paramount importance to Bint al-Huda (and, at least in theory, to all monotheists by definition).[96]

Mahmood writes that "the desire for freedom from, or subversion of, norms is not an innate desire that motivates all beings at all times."[97] Indeed, for Bint al-Huda, women's freedom from certain existing norms of male and kinship authority was not an end in itself. It just

[93] Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition*.
[94] Cited in Wiley, "`Alima Bint al-Huda," 149.
[95] Ibid., 150.
[96] While Mahmood's presentation of the dual categories in the quote above was made in terms of a critique of feminist scholarship, I would suggest that the same division shapes her own analysis. For example, she writes that the Islamic discursive tradition "regards subordination to a transcendent will (and thus, in many instances, to male authority) as its coveted goal." But the parenthetical comment in this statement is Mahmood's; the Islamic discursive tradition itself does not equate "transcendent will" with any historical embodiment of "male authority," much less with particular embodiments of it in late-20th-century Egypt. For example, Bint al-Huda often pointed out to her female readers that "obedience need not be given to any creature if it means disobeying the Creator," which of course is simply a restatement of the fundamental Islamic creed "There is no god but God." The fact that many Muslim male authorities might object to Bint al-Huda's applications of the creed only serves to highlight that the problem of the relationship between transcendent and human authority in Islam is far more complex and contested than the parenthetical suggests. Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 3.
[97] Ibid., 14.

happened to be a necessary means to a different end: the capacity of Muslim women to inhabit Islamic norms, form ethical selves, and "realize their personal happiness in this world and the next," as she often put it. Performing or inhabiting one norm may—and in the modern era is probably even likely to—require resisting or subverting another. It might be objected that a norm is not really "subverted" if resistance to it is incidental rather than purposeful, or a means rather than an end, or inspired by a heteronomous rather than an autonomous understanding of selfhood, but my reading of Bint al-Huda's work suggests that such distinctions are not always meaningful or even possible. One of Mahmood's most important criticisms is that Western feminist analysis is often unable "to envision valuable forms of human flourishing outside the bounds of a liberal progressive imaginary."[98] I submit that Bint al-Huda's opposition to some patriarchal norms might be interpreted as resistance to/subversion of those norms, even (or especially!) if this resistance was not an end in itself but a necessary means to a different end, guided not by a liberal progressive imaginary but by an Islamic conception of human flourishing. As Mahmood suggests, the subversion of patriarchal norms in this case cannot be recuperated for a secular project of feminist liberation that Bint al-Huda did not claim as her own and indeed explicitly rejected. But it does point to the importance of paying attention to how *particular* norms in particular historical circumstances are subverted, consolidated, performed, or inhabited, and to what such acts might tell us about particular conceptions of human flourishing and experiences of gender, power, and other forms of relationality.

[98] Ibid., 155.

Epilogue

Improvement, Tradition, History

> We may even say that history comes alive in and through friendships.
>
> - David Burrell[1]

Recent critiques of liberal, modernization, and development discourses have frequently involved criticisms of the "will to improve," whether the object of that will is a society or an individual.[2] The notion of improvement indeed carries within it both a conception of change over time and prescriptive assessment of that change, and in those two senses it sounds a lot like the Enlightenment notion of "progress" as the latter is often understood. Yet, as suggested in the previous chapter and established by various other scholars, techniques of self-improvement are not peculiar to the West, the modern, or the secular, no matter how those terms are defined.

Tania Murray Li provides an illustration of the frequent connection in such critiques between a general human striving for "improvement" and modern technologies of governmentality and development.

> The will to improve is situated in the field of power Michel Foucault termed "government." Defined succinctly as the "conduct of conduct," government is the attempt to shape human conduct by calculated means…Government operates by educating desires and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs…Persuasion might be applied, as authorities attempt to gain consent. But this is not the only course. When power operates at a distance, people are not necessarily aware of

[1] David B. Burrell, *Friendship and Ways to Truth* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 2.
[2] The examples are many, but I am taking the term from Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2007).

> how their conduct is being conducted or why, so the question of consent does not arise.[3]

I do not contest the substance of Li's cogent criticism of development operations in Indonesia. But I do wonder if this kind of critique of governmentality in the Foucauldian sense sometimes works to reproduce, in different terms, the "repressive hypothesis" that Foucault's work sought to challenge.[4] It seems to do so by retaining an unacknowledged attachment to the notion of an authentic self that exists prior to the "conduct of conduct," that is, prior to operations that effect changes in that self by "educating [its] desires and configuring [its] habits, aspirations and beliefs." The problem is not solved by asserting that the difference is that the techniques of improvement targeted by the critique are those that operate through "calculated means," or "from a distance." This distinction would seem to implicitly assign authentic or ethically positive forms of "the conduct of conduct" to the private sphere, the same private sphere to which religion, morality, the conjugal family, love, and intimacy are assigned as these are separated from the public domain of politics in the modern era—a drive whose logic was reflected in the 1959 Iraqi Law of Personal Status as well as other reforms examined in this work. The implied, but rarely acknowledged, *positive* techniques of improving the self—i.e., techniques that operate on without repressing the underlying authentic self, whether they are initiated by that self or by others—become those that are shorn of political relevance and efficacy in the same way that those other categories inhabiting and delineating the modern private sphere are shorn of it. What began as a critique of the "Enlightenment" conception of historical "progress" seems to end in an implicit reassertion of the public/private, reason/morality divide and thus in an impoverished conception of the political.

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[3] Ibid., 5.
[4] See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).

Recent scholarly works on Islamic discursive traditions and ethical pedagogies offer some productive ways to begin thinking through critical impasses around techniques of self-formation or self-improvement, impasses that are related (through critiques of "progress," among other ways) to critical impasses around historical time. From different angles, and often in dialogue with each other, these scholars have engaged with the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre's concept of "discursive tradition" in order to develop an analytical framework that seems better equipped than many existing frameworks to resist the drive to reinscribe modern/traditional, progressive/backwards, and rational/religious dichotomies into any historical narrative of change in Islamic societies.[5] A central analytical problem that this dissertation has attempted to address is that the impressive resilience of such dichotomies within the Western historiographical tradition—even after decades of broad, and apparently broadly compelling, theoretical assault—is related in no small part to the fact that they share with this tradition a constitutive bond to the liberal-secular conception of historical time. As Samira Haj writes, the very idea of history, as it has developed since the Enlightenment, is "inseparable from the notion that tradition and modernity, religion and reason, are irreconcilable."[6]

The model developed by these scholars conceives of Islam as a discursive tradition that links together past, present, and future in a logic of historical temporality that has linear and even "developmental" characteristics but which is neither unidirectional nor rooted in the

[5] See especially Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Charles Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). See also Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

[6] Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition*, 74. See also Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

homogeneous and territorial historical time of secular nationalism. Haj explains that the model "conceptualizes Islam not as a commitment to a fixed and essentialized set of tenets, but rather as historically evolving discourses with long-term temporal structures built around certain authorized arguments and counterarguments regarding the 'goods' that are constitutive of a Muslim community."[7] In Ebrahim Moosa's words, "tradition" in this understanding is not "a static and homogenized past laced with a romantic nostalgia" but "an ontological sensibility in which the temporal and timeless are often seen to coexist in a complex, often mysterious, contemporaneity."[8] Thus, when a Muslim intellectual invokes an authoritative Islamic text in the course of making an argument about this or that aspect of the present in which she lives, it is not because she is irrationally fixated on a past tradition that may or may not have ever really existed. Rather, such invocations are a necessary function of how all discursive traditions work, including the tradition of liberalism as much as that of Islam.[9]

Nor does it mean that the intellectual in question is resisting historical change. On the contrary, the ability of any discursive tradition to survive across time is conditioned both on its capacity to maintain its intelligibility as a tradition *and* on its capacity to change and develop, to be made a relevant framework of inquiry into new questions and problems. As Christian scholar David Burrell puts it, "those traditions which keep managing to accommodate our wandering

[7] Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition*, 34.
[8] Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*, 60. Moosa, who was trained first in the tradition of Islamic scholasticism and then in that of Western academia (as a scholar of religion), takes pains to note that this expansive, temporally heterogeneous, and "often mysterious" understanding of tradition does not necessarily describe the way that many of those he calls Islamic maximalists (and others call fundamentalists) in the contemporary era formulate their own relationship to the Islamic tradition.
[9] As MacIntyre has pointed out, a liberal intellectual—assuming she wants to make any sense to her liberal audience—has no choice but to engage either explicitly or implicitly with the body of past works that constitute the discursive tradition she shares with that audience, which may include both relatively "fixed" and temporally remote texts such as the legal constitution of the nation-state to which she belongs and relatively "open" and temporally near texts authored by other liberal intellectuals. See MacIntyre, "Liberalism Transformed Into a Tradition," in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, 326-48.

spirit then become viable traditions, or 'major religions.'"[10] The notion of "discursive traditions" is thus far from a scholarly call for cultural relativism; unlike culturalist and civilizationalist discourses, it assumes neither that a tradition has an unchanging historical essence nor that it is a discrete organism incapable of interacting with other living traditions in order to solve present problems and to improve on present modes of life and thought.[11] Rather than viewing any divergence within the tradition as somehow inauthentic, as a "departure from its founding doctrines," this analytical framework begins from the premise that change is "a necessary condition" for the perpetuation of any tradition "constituted of historically extended discourses."[12]

This scholarship has focused primarily on three, often overlapping, aspects or domains of the Islamic discursive tradition: textual discourse, especially that produced by Muslim reformers or revivalists[13]; modern media and the ways they have both affected and been affected by changes in Islamic discourse, norms, and sensibilities in the 20th and 21st centuries[14]; and Islamic pedagogical disciplines of self-formation, especially those centering on the internalization of virtue through the repetition of bodily practices.[15] As noted in the previous chapter, one aspect of the functioning of the tradition that has not received much emphasis in the current scholarship is that of the ethical and pedagogical work of friendship. What I have described as the third area of this scholarship, the one focused on bodily disciplines, has most closely addressed the subjective

[10] Burrell, *Friendship and Ways to Truth*, 5.
[11] Burrell comments that modern notions of "relativism" are just the other side of the coin of the Enlightenment conception of "universal" reason and truth, which is forced to respond to the first "unsettling" demonstration that there are other sets of rational criteria in the world with the conclusion that "there are no longer any operative norms across human discourse, so power or even violence will have to arbitrate." Ibid., 41.
[12] Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition*, 197.
[13] Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition*; Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*.
[14] Charles Hirschkind, "Experiments in Devotion Online: The YouTube Khuṭba," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (2012): 5–21; idem, *The Ethical Soundscape*.
[15] Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*; Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape*; Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*.

and affective dimensions of Islamic ethical pedagogies. Yet despite their various compelling critiques of "secular" conceptions of "autonomous" selfhood, it seems to me that the dominant trend in these works has retained a strange focus precisely on "the self" to the exclusion of that self's others.[16] There have been academic explorations of Islamic conceptions of friendship outside of this recent scholarship on discursive traditions. But the former studies have focused primarily, maybe even exclusively, on the classical age of Islam, either in relation to Sufi notions of "friendship with God" and its connection to friendships on earth or in examinations of the writings of the 10th-century philosopher Ibn Miskawayh and, though less frequently, those of his famous 11th/12th-century interlocutor Abu Hamid al-Ghazali.[17] In what follows, I suggest that bringing the recent scholarship on Islamic discursive traditions into conversation with several studies of friendship outside the context of the Middle East may help open up ways of thinking through connections between political action, temporal change, and the conjugal family in the modern era, a problematic that has run throughout this dissertation.

In chapter 5, on revolutionary time and politics in Iraq from 1958-63, I explored how attempts to reform Iraqi families were built in part on discursive constructions of male and female homosociality not only as anti-modern (a phenomenon that has been examined by other

[16] This focus may be connected to what French philosopher Pierre Hadot has criticized as Foucault's use of his (Hadot's) analysis of ancient Greek "spiritual exercises," which Foucault renames "techniques of the self." Hadot writes that these exercises "cannot be defined simply as culture of the self, a relationship of the self to the self, or pleasure that can be found in one's own self. The Epicurean was not afraid to admit that he needed other things besides himself in order to satisfy his desires and to experience pleasure. He needed bodily nourishment and the pleasures of love, but he also required a physical theory of the universe, in order to eliminate the fear of the gods and of death. He needed the company of other members of the Epicurean school, so that he could find happiness in mutual affection." Pierre Hadot, "Reflections on the Idea of the 'Cultivation of the Self'," in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, trans. Michael Chase (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995), 208.

[17] Ibn Miskawayh is often seen as authoring the first major work on the philosophy of Islamic ethics, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq [The Cultivation of Morals]*, which placed a strong emphasis on the role of friendship in the ethical cultivation of virtue. While there has been a fair amount of recent scholarly interest in al-Ghazali, it has not focused much on his conceptions of friendship. An exception is Lenn E. Goodman, "Friendship in Aristotle, Miskawayh and al-Ghazali," in *Friendship East and West: Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Oliver Leaman (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1996), 164–91.

historians) but also as facilitating dangerous political mobilizations that threatened the work of stabilizing the present via the continuous reproduction of an ever-receding future. It might be objected that the examples I provided were not attacks on homosociality per se but would have been directed equally at heterosocial networks, spaces, and friendships if those had had the same capacity for political mobilization as homosocial ones did in Iraq. And this is precisely the point I want to make. Rather than viewing what scholars have come to call "homosociality" and "heterosociality" as essentially symmetrical spheres, practices, or encounters, I propose that in such modernization discourses there was a more fundamental and politically salient difference between them than the question of which configuration of genders might count as a legitimate friendship in the public sphere. The difference is that one of these relational models was based on the valorization of friendship as such, and the other was not.

The term "friendship" is used here as it is conceptualized by European historian Alan Bray—not as a wholly private relationship that has no bearing on public life, not as something necessarily exclusive of either kinship ties or sexual relations, and certainly not in the post-Enlightenment sense of an abstract universal friendship of equivalent citizens.[18] This is an elective, embodied, and affective kind of friendship between individuals that is embedded in and connects other networks of human relations, including kinship. In mid-20th-century Iraq, these friendships and the political networks they sustained were fostered in a variety of spaces, including homes, coffee shops, mosques, schools, workplaces, and political organizations.[19] Not

[18] Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[19] One very important space for the formation of political friendships and networks in 20th-century Iraq, which I have not examined in this work, is that of the prison. A historical study of prison life in Iraq during the 20th century is sorely needed. Batatu pointed out long ago that some prisons under the monarchy, especially the one at Kut, functioned almost as Marxist universities. There was a separate women's prison, which seems to have mostly housed communist women and prostitutes. Memoirs and prison literature would provide one source for such a study. For a model, see Ervand Abrahamian, *Tortured Confessions: Prisons and Public Recantations in Modern Iran* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). For snippets on Iraqi prison life, see Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University

all of those spaces were homosocial but most of them were, at least most of the time. Under the monarchy, when oppositional parties could only operate underground, these were the kind of friendships that made political organization possible—most graphically in the ICP's vast and famously responsive cellular infrastructure but in many other ways as well. On July 14, 1958, it was the kind of friendship that enabled the success of the revolution and that ensured the early success of the new regime, but was also increasingly perceived by that regime as a threat to its stability. To conceive of the heterosocial public sphere championed by reformers as somehow structurally parallel to these networks of predominantly homosocial friendships would be getting it wrong.

If the dual (i.e., male and female) homosocial spheres were based on—indeed, were unthinkable without—the valorization of friendship as such, and the modern public heterosocial sphere was not, then what *was* the latter based on? Afsaneh Najmabadi has argued that there were strong connections between the emergence of this sphere and the "heteronormalization of eros and sex" in 19th- and 20th-century Iran.[20] In chapter 2, I similarly showed how the heterosocialization of the Iraqi public sphere during the 20th century paralleled the increasing differentiation of the Iraqi public school curriculum by sex; that is, the state's construction and regulation of public heterosociality as an integral component of "modernization" was not necessarily based on the rejection of gender difference but, on the contrary, enabled its more deliberate and thorough production. Another way of putting this is that was being constructed in this process was precisely not friendship but rather sexual difference and heteronormativity. The stabilization of the male/female binary sought to keep heterosociality from proliferating into

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Press, 1978), 541–42; Orit Bashkin, *The Other Iraq: Pluralism and Culture in Hashemite Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 97–98, 113–14.

[20] Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men Without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 146.

unstable and pluralistic networks of solidarity through friendship. The key to this stabilization was that, unlike the dual homosocial spheres (which are sustained by networks that may proliferate in all kinds of ways), the modern heterosocial/heteronormative sphere involves and even centers on a third figure, the figure of the child, and this triangular structure was reinforced through discourses, institutions, and legal reforms, such as the 1959 Iraqi personal status law, that fostered the impermeability of the conjugal household to the outside world.

Several chapters of this work have also shown how these reforms did not always succeed in stabilizing and regulating actual interpersonal bonds and experiences. Iraqi communists may not have had a language for conceptualizing the role played by networks of friendship, both inside and outside the ties of kinship, in facilitating communist mobilization in Iraq, but in chapters 4 and 5 I explored the existence and importance of those links. Chapter 7, in contrast, examined a reformist Shi`i female discourse that did not construct its interventions as political in the same way as the communists thought of their own activities and writings, but which *did* have a language for thinking about the public work of friendship outside the framework of modern conjugal and heteronormative imaginaries.

Christian scholar David Burrell, in his work *Friendship and Ways to Truth*, links the ethical work of friendship to the temporal-historical operations of a "discursive tradition" in Alasdair MacIntyre's sense:

> We might say, mimicking Wittgenstein, if truth is to be had, it will only be had in a tradition, within a community, in the company of friends. For each of these terms implies the other: tradition without a sustaining and connecting community is nothing but past history; and we are formed into communities by the cross-hatching of friendships, and especially of friends bound together by their shared faith in a communal goal.[21]

[21] Burrell, *Friendship and Ways to Truth*, 2.

Burrell insists that "it is inevitably friends who make it possible for us to bond with a community or a tradition," but it is a particular kind of friendship that does so, one organized around a common conception of "the good."[22] In this framework, Warqa''s passionate statement to Ma`ad in Bint al-Huda's *Liqa' fi al-Mustashfa*—"being close to you is my way of being close to God"—should be read neither as a metaphorical depiction of a human relationship standing in for the believer's "real" friendship with God (as male homosocial and homoerotic elements of Sufi poetry have long been read by Western scholars) nor an invocation of faith in God as an alibi for a "real" human relationship that might otherwise be seen as transgressive (as a Western feminist or homosexual-identitarian reading might have it). Rather, it should be read as an affective declaration of human love that also describes the way in which traditions are formed and sustained through friendships oriented around a third pole: a shared conception of the good, or, in the monotheistic traditions, of God. Burrell notes that this "triadic" conception of friendship is also an Aristotelian one.[23] It is neither the binary (or "romantic," in Burrell's terms) modern conception of private friendship nor the abstract friendship of a universal imagined community; based on shared commitments and practices of ethics, it is also deeply personal and usually embodied.[24] Friendship "takes time" and "histories at once bind and empower; friendships both require and acquire a history, if they are live up to their promise." The histories that such friendships make are not only those of the two friends. Their practices of friendship introduce them "into a community of interaction. And communities have histories, so what

[22] Ibid., 5.
[23] Ibid., 69.
[24] "Embodied" friendships are not the only kind discussed by Burrell, though they are the ones emphasized in his discussion of the Aristotelian triadic conception of friendship. Besides considering various Christian and Islamic conceptions of "friendship with God," he explores how textual traditions also operate through the cross-hatchings of "friendships" across time and space—that is, between readers and writers, including dead ones. I am not addressing this latter operation since it has been a more significant focus of the existing scholarship on Islamic "discursive traditions," though perhaps more could be done in relation to Burrell's point that "texts require communities, as a community requires a texture of friendships." Ibid., 50.

results is tradition."[25] Because it exists through the continuous and living "cross-hatching" of friends on a journey, this type of tradition cannot, by definition, be unchanging.

The relationship between friendship and the workings of a tradition over time is not limited to religious traditions, though in many cases these may have developed more explicit philosophical formulations of the ethical and public work of friendship than have secular traditions. With the emergence of the Enlightenment conception of an abstract universal friendship of equivalent citizens, the subjective and embodied kind of friendship—which had for centuries, as Alan Bray has shown, been central to European Christian ethics—was increasingly imagined as "an essentially private tie that does not (or rather perhaps *should* not) obtrude on a world of affairs and politics."[26] The understanding of friendship as "something *done*, active and immediate," was gradually undermined by the dual conceptions of marriage as private and self-enclosed and of civil society as "something that subsists as an objective entity—a Great Something," which the individual just finds himself *in.*[27] Read in relation to Burrell's argument linking the ethical work of friendship to the historical temporality of traditions, Bray's analysis points suggestively to the ways in which the modern public/private divide—with the universal friendship of equivalent citizens on one side and the universal privacy of conjugal domesticity on the other—helped to introduce, though the back door of "progress" as it were, the timeless time of modernity.

This timelessness is only imagined, of course, and very paradoxically and ambivalently imagined at that, as discussed in previous chapters. But the categories most commonly employed in our main historiographical domains—whether social, political, cultural, or intellectual—do not provide very powerful tools for conceptualizing or even narrating the histories that friendships

[25] Ibid., 22.
[26] Bray, *The Friend,* 76. Parentheses and emphasis in original.
[27] Ibid., 213.

make. Much of the scholarship on historical friendships that has been produced (which has focused mostly on regions outside the Middle East) has centered on questions of sexuality, which may not be surprising given the modern understanding of friendship as essentially private. Bray writes:

> What I have sought to convey is the conviction at the heart of these cultural practices [in medieval and early modern Europe] that the ethics of friendship operated persuasively only in a larger frame of reference that lay *outside* the good of the individuals for whom the friendship was made. To pose the historical question in terms of the good or ill of sexuality therefore, the question that has come to dominate the corresponding modern debates, operates necessarily by contrast *within* the friendship. The inability to conceive of relationships in other than sexual terms says something of contemporary poverty; or, to put the point more precisely, the effect of a shaping concern with sexuality is precisely to obscure that wider frame.

This is not, Bray continues, "to say that such an ethical praxis must exclude the erotic." On the contrary, "the ethics of friendship in the world I describe began with the concrete and the actual, and the only way to exclude anything would be by abandoning that starting point." The ethical work of friendship carried the potential for the erotic along with the potential for many other things, good and ill alike.[28]

To close with a brief illustration of my point that this is partly a historiographical problem, and not just a historical one, it is worth recalling that 20th-century communists in Iraq, like 20th-century communists across the world, in fact had rich vocabularies for ties and networks that resonate with some of those described by Burrell and Bray: comrades, friends, fellow travelers.[29] In a very tangible way, the bonds that these terms named were how communists made their histories—until they became Communists at the helms of states, anyway. The vocabularies emerged from living communist practices and traditions, not from Marxist-Leninist ideology, and they never did leave much of a trace on the ideology of living 20th-century

[28] Ibid., 6–7.
[29] I thank Afsaneh Najmabadi for making this point in comments on a version of chapter 5.

communists. That ideology apparently only had room for universal binary or linear categories (which together could make "dialectics")—the proletariat and the capitalist, the man and the woman, this historical stage and that historical stage, the state and the family, theory and practice—and no amount of communist experience could change that. Twentieth-century Marxist discourse, shaped in important ways by the political imaginary of reproductive futurism, did not have ways of recognizing that communist movements themselves have had and made histories beyond those recorded in the party archives, and that they have had them and made them in no small part through the lived traditions, affective desires, and embodied friendships of comrades and fellow travelers.

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