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Adnan Koucher

**State
and Society:**

**The Question of Agrarian
Change in Iraq 1921-1991**

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State and Society:

The Question of Agrarian Change in Iraq 1921-1991

Een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de
Sociale Wetenschappen

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan
de Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, volgens
besluit van het College van Decanen in het
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Preface

Carrying out this research was, for a long time, "mission impossible", as I was working and living within the domain of the Iraqi state. However, my forcible departure from Iraq, although it sometimes brings me distress, has placed me in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, where I became able to rethink the subject of state intervention in Iraq.

In Iraq, I realized that development and the people's free will should go hand in hand, so that "talking development" was "talking politics" and the latter was a risk. People's lives and assets are controlled and owned by the state. The Iraqis are continually reminded by the state-controlled media that what they earn is due to the fruits of the 1968 revolution and the generosity of the legendary leader. State intervention in people's lives is evident, whether in the home or outside, day or night. In such a climate the state penetrates society and guides the changes in the social, economic and political spheres.

Since the Gulf War of 1991, many reports, articles and books have been written about Iraq. The theme in most of them was either the impact of the war and the sanctions on Iraqi people or Saddam Hussain and his regime. In this work, besides the interaction between the state and society, the issue of agrarian change has been studied in the wide context of social, economic and political structures.

It would be more difficult for this study to have been written without the opportunity to obtain source materials from inside Iraq. Working in the Third World Centre at the University of Nijmegen, has enabled me to enrich the arguments of this thesis and helped in providing the technical facilities. I wish to acknowledge the critical readings of drafts of this study by the persons named below, although I alone remain responsible for its final shape.

I wish to thank my supervisor, Professor Gerrit Huizer, for his critical comments and constant help. His faith that "the good" will win, based on his long experience in Latin American peasant movements, nourished my wider hopes for a better Iraq. I am thankful to my co-supervisor Dr. Paul Hoebink for his constructive suggestions and support. I extend special thanks to Hilary Dent, who commented in depth upon various chapters of this study and provided valuable suggestions. My special gratitude to Dr.

Penny Perkin of The University of Reading, UK, for her careful reading of the entire study. I am greatly in debt to Isam al-Khafaji of Amsterdam University, with whom I had many discussions on Iraq's economy and politics. I am thankful to Dr. Ton van Naerssen of Nijmegen University for his helpful advice. I am grateful to Cecile Thijssen and Haranath Tadepally for helping me in drawing the figures and editing the work. Randa Heggstand corrected the English of several parts of the thesis, so I am thankful to her and also to Mark de Bresser for translating the summary into Dutch.

My appreciation goes to innumerable men and women of various interests and occupations, both inside and outside Iraq, who have indirectly contributed to the argument of this study.

Back home in Iraq, my parents, my sisters and their children deserve a special kind of acknowledgment. They forgave my inadequate financial support to them at a crucial time, due to the UN sanctions on Iraq, for the sake of finishing this work.

Finally, to refer to the support of my wife, Marjon, in the last lines of the preface, does not mean it was less than of others. Her patience, tolerance and freeing of me from household responsibilities before and after the birth of our daughter, Jamila, sets a fine example of family love and support.

Adnan

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Measures, abbreviations and Glossary

Measures

bcm	billon cubic meters
b/d	barrel per day
<i>donum</i>	one <i>donum</i> = 2500 square meter = 0 618 acres
ha	hectare = 2 469 acres = 4 <i>donums</i>
ID	Iraqi Dinar, the official exchange until 1990, ID 1 = \$ 3 3
mm	millimetre
mt	metric tons
sq km	square kilometer

Abbreviations

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
EIU	The Economist Intelligence Unit
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
ICP	Iraqi Communist Party
IPC	Iraqi Petroleum Company
ISNAR	International Service for National Agricultural Research, based in the Hague, The Netherlands
INOC	Iraqi National Oil Company
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
LEB	Life Expectancy at Birth
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture, Iraq
MOE	Ministry of Education, Iraq
MOP	Ministry of Planning, Iraq
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (a Kurdish political party)
RCC	Revolution Command Council
SCWWD	State Company for Water Wells Drilling

Glossary

<i>agha</i>	Kurdish tribal chief
<i>alim</i>	religious dignitary (pl <i>ulama</i>)
<i>amen</i>	internal security secret police
<i>ashira</i>	tribe (pl <i>ashayer</i>)
<i>ayatollah</i>	Islamic title for a high rank religious clergy (higher than all other clergies such as <i>mulla</i> or <i>sayyid</i> only lower than <i>Imam</i>)
<i>dewan</i>	<i>agha</i> 's guesthouse
<i>estikhbarat</i>	military intelligence
<i>fakheth</i>	section of a tribe
<i>fellah</i>	peasant (pl <i>fellaheen</i>)
<i>infitah</i>	policy of open economy/ privatization
<i>jihad</i>	holy war
<i>mawm</i> at land	wasted land (not suitable for cultivation)
<i>mallak</i>	urban based agricultural landlord (pl <i>mallakeen</i>)
<i>matruka</i> land	land without cultivation
<i>miri</i> land	state-owned land
<i>mohandis Zerat</i>	extension engineer
<i>morshed Zerat</i>	extension worker
<i>mudhif</i>	<i>shiekh</i> 's guesthouse
<i>mukhabarat</i>	Saddam's security secret police
<i>mulk</i> land	land privately-owned
<i>mulla</i>	religious dignitary
<i>pasha</i>	a Turkish title equivalent to lord in English. It follows person's name, e.g. Churchill <i>pasha</i>

<i>qabila</i>	clan
<i>sayyid</i>	religious dignitary (pl <i>sadah</i>)
<i>sergal</i>	tribal chief's assistant
<i>sharia</i>	laws of Islam
<i>sheikh</i>	tribal chief (pl <i>sheikhs</i>)
<i>sultan</i>	Ottoman's head of state
<i>tapu</i>	government's estate department
<i>tapu sanad</i>	certificate of land ownership
<i>tanzimat</i>	reforms
<i>waqf</i>	endowment land for religious purposes
<i>wali</i>	Ottoman's governor
<i>wilaya</i>	province

Introduction

This thesis is an investigation of the state role in the vast social, economic and political changes which rural Iraq and Iraqi society, in general, have been witnessing since the turn of this century. It concentrates on the period from independence in 1921 until the onset of the Gulf war of 1991, with special emphasis on the last three decades. Reference will be made, however, to the period when Iraq was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire and, later, the British occupation and mandate. I shall attempt to identify the extent of state intervention in agrarian change and to explore the impact of the state in shaping the network of social and economic relations in rural areas. The analysis of rural change is cast within the specific context of the larger political-economic system and focuses on how the state's objectives influence rural livelihoods. By establishing these linkages, it will be shown how the pattern of agrarian change is a part of a larger process of structural change involving major shifts in the state's interests in relations with economic development and the rural sector. After these extended explorations, the following central questions of the research will be addressed:

- 1- What is the nature of the Iraqi state and has it changed over time ?
- 2- What are the patterns of state-society interactions ?
- 3- Which path or paths has agrarian change followed ?
- 4- How and to what extent has the state intervened in agrarian change ?

The study of the state's role in agrarian change is an extremely demanding and rewarding intellectual task. Besides having to make thorough use of material from several disciplines, such as sociology, political science, history and economics, it was also necessary to draw on a wide range of fields in development studies, as well as works in English and Arabic that dealt directly with political and economic development in Iraq and areas in the Middle East.

This study made extensive use of reports, statistical data and publications

of the relevant Iraqi government departments. For political reasons and because of the abnormal situation during and after the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88), the government released little information about key sectors of the economy, labour force and foreign trade. This is the reason why the thesis refers to some data which are relatively dated.

Between 1993 and 1997 I stayed in Iraq, in the provinces of Arbil and Duhok, for a period of six months. During this period of participant observation, I met and had discussions with many high ranking leaders, politicians, bureaucrats and men of various interests. These meetings were of great importance, as they provided feedback to certain themes of this study. For the same purpose, discussions were conducted with various Iraqi academics, including economists, as well as politicians and technocrats living outside Iraq, particularly in the United Kingdom.

The thesis is structured as follows: Iraq's geographical location, physical features and natural resources are described in the appendices. This is done in order to show that Iraq is a country with ample natural resources for agriculture. There is water from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers which, for thousands of years, has been used for irrigation. There is no shortage of arable land, which is rain-fed in the north and irrigated land in the centre and southern parts. The deterioration of soil fertility has, however, accelerated in recent years through improper agricultural practices and poor drainage systems. The changes in production in Iraqi agriculture for the most important crops, cereals, dates and livestock are outlined.

Chapter one reviews the main theories of the state and the discourse of state-society dichotomy. The chapter aims to construct a theoretical framework which will serve to explain the nature and behaviour of the Iraqi state. State intervention in agrarian change is analyzed within the wider structures and interactions between the state, society and economy. Through knowledge of the crucial role of the political factor, the behaviour of the state will be better understood.

Chapter two describes the social structure of Iraqi society from the second half of the nineteenth century, when Iraq was part of the Ottoman Empire, until the present day. It also explains the role of the Ottoman *wali* (governor) in his attempts to control the rural society. When the British occupied Iraq in 1917, they tried to enforce their control over the whole Iraq. They implemented various measures in defining power relations with rural people. In 1932 Iraq became independent under a monarchy. The chapter will highlight the positions of the bourgeoisie and the elites in the state power structure. Special attention will be paid to the role of the rural elite in the new state and its hegemony over rural life. The chapter will

further explain the emergence of a developmental state with the arrival of the 1958 government, when Iraq became a republic. The government introduced a comprehensive package of reforms affecting education and health care as well as agricultural land tenure. The chapter will examine the impact of such policies on agrarian changes and Iraqi society in general. Since that time, however, there have been several military coups, ending with the last one which brought the current Ba'ath Party to power was in 1968. Since then, the state has dominated the scene. The Ba'ath Party's monopoly of power turned the state into one which is widely known as one of the world's most authoritarian state. The chapter will examine the nature and the extent of intervention by such a state in the social, economic and political structures of the society.

Chapter three addresses the issue of Iraq as a rentier state with oil revenues compromising the main source of the state income. The chapter will trace the development of this industry since commercial production of oil began a few decades ago. The role and power of the foreign oil companies, as well as their relations with Iraqi state, will be discussed. The chapter will examine the effects and results of the nationalization of oil on the behaviour of the state and how the financial capability of the state influenced state interaction with society and the economy as a whole. This chapter will further discuss the link between oil revenues and agriculture, as well as oil and militarization. The impact of Iraq-Iran war 1980-88 and the 1991 Gulf war, with UN embargo on oil revenues, will be explained. This cannot be done without looking at the present state of the economy as a whole, so that the economic consequences of the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf war will be discussed, together with the United Nations' sanctions.

Chapter four addresses the issue of state intervention in agrarian relations. Exclusive attention is paid to the role of the state in structuring the land tenure system. The chapter illustrates agricultural land ownership from the second half of the nineteenth century, examining the application of the Ottoman Land Code in Iraq and its consequences for the small farmers, landless and rural people, and the increase of power of landowners. The British occupation and mandate (1917-1932) resulted in the retention of the land tenure system introduced by the Ottoman rulers, but favouring tribal chiefs and big landlords who supported the occupation. The monarchy in the 1930s legitimized claims of land ownership by traditional chiefs and urban-based landowners. Under the monarchy, many measures were taken, but they all reinforced the power of the above groups. Two agrarian reform laws were passed after Iraq became a Republic: one in 1958 and the other in 1970. Both laws focused on

expropriation of land and aimed to redistribute it among the *fellaheen* (peasants). In the early 1980's, these laws were revised and the upper ceiling on the ownership of land was removed, resulting in the emergence, once again, of big landowners.

Chapter five traces the development of the agricultural cooperatives which grew in number under the agrarian reform laws of 1958 and 1970. Beneficiaries of the reforms had to form cooperatives. The expansion of cooperatives was particularly great under the 1970 Law and, state and collective farms were introduced for the first time. The chapter will further explain the state's motives behind the expansion of these organizations during the 1970s. In the 1980s, with the new changes in rural policy, state support was reduced from the public sector and, for this reason, the impact of such policy changes on the agricultural organizations and other public services will be described.

Chapter six addresses important elements in the state's agricultural development policies and food security. It looks at the nature of the agricultural labour force and illustrates the decline in numbers of the agricultural labour force in relation to rural urban migration. This situation was worsened by the state policy of militarization and the 1980 war with Iran. The labour force was drained from the rural areas and the country as a whole. All agricultural development plans in Iraq were drawn up in the hope that agricultural production would achieve considerable annual growth. Contrary to the aim of those plans, there was constant decline during the 1970s and 1980s in both production and the contribution of agriculture to GDP as well as employment. Agricultural imports increased, particularly of food-stuffs.

Chapter seven focuses on the recent development policy of an open economy (*infitah*). A change in agrarian policy took place as the state initiated the privatization of the economy. There was large-scale closing down and selling of assets of the collective and state farms, as well as other agricultural services departments. A large landowning group and agribusiness emerged. These new landlords are comprised of people close to the state's rulers, such as army officers, relatives of the President and top Ba'th party members. This chapter will analyze the nature of Iraq's privatization and the state's motives behind its implementation. It will further discuss the result and outlook of privatization.

Chapter eight presents a summary and draws conclusions. It attempts to shed light on the results of discussions in the previous chapters. This chapter, therefore, commentates on the scale of the Iraqi state's intervention in the economy and the lives of rural population.

The theoretical framework

Expanding both the scale and range of state intervention in Third World economies has become one of the dominating phenomena since the end of World War II. This was implicit in the centralization of finance, expansion of social services, and nationalization of industry.¹ By the 1960s, states had become involved in virtually every aspect of the economy including administering prices, and increasingly regulating labour, foreign exchange, and financial markets.² The role of the state became 'pervasive in every sphere of life as it permeates in society'.³

1.1 Definitions of the state

It is difficult to avoid engaging in the debate about the nature of state intervention without attempting to set up definitions, but the conceptual problem cannot be resolved at this stage unless reference to the vast literature on the state is kept to a minimum. To develop the main theoretical ideas relevant to this study, I will discuss the concepts of state, state power, and agrarian change.

It is important to acknowledge here that modern states differ from each other, and so the abstract term "state" can only refer to an ideal type. There is a broad range of definitions of the state, some of which contain an institutional element, others a functional element, and a predominant definition is a combination of the two. Miliband illustrates that the state stands for 'a number of particular institutions which, together, constitute its reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system' (1969:49). The term state is usually associated with the term government, and both are often used interchangeably. The term government refers to three distinct sets of powers: legislature, executive

and judiciary, whereas state, in its wider sense, refers to a set of institutions that possess the means of legitimate coercion exercised over a society.⁴ In other words, state means the wider structure of governmental institutions.⁵ State apparatus refers to the real, existing institutional forms of state power: coercive, judicial and bureaucratic arms of the state.⁶

Miliband stresses the distinction between government and state and indicates that treating the government as the state itself will introduce a major element of confusion in the discussion of the nature and incidence of state power (1969:49). The organization of the state apparatus, which may take a variety of forms such as liberal democracy, authoritarian or dictatorship is referred to as a regime.⁷

A formal separation between the branches of legislature, executive and judiciary is found in the liberal constitutional state.⁸ Whereas in authoritarian statism, according to Poulantzas, an accelerated fusion between those branches occurs, accompanied by a decline in the rule of law. The power to fix norms and enact rules shifts from the legislative body toward the executive and the state administration (1978:218). Eventually, effective power becomes concentrated and focused in the office of president at the apex of the administrative structures, with the resultant appearance of a personalized presidential system.⁹

Since the state is concerned with the making of public policy, Nordlinger stresses that the definition of the state must refer to individuals. 'The state is made up of and limited to those individuals who are endowed with society-wide decision making authority' (1981:11). This statement goes beyond defining the state as mere institutions viewed as stable and valued patterns of interaction. Mann (1988:4) acknowledges the magnitude of the personnel element, he defines the state as:

A differentiated set of institutions and personnel embodying centrality in the sense that political relations radiate outward from a centre to cover a territorial demarcated area, over which it exercises a monopoly of authoritative binding rule-making, backed up by a monopoly of the means of physical violence.

A distinction should also be made between state and regime. A regime reflects the characteristic of the groups of people who run the state and a regime ends while the state continues.¹⁰ In characterizing state power, therefore, it is essential to examine both state continuities and changes at the level of the regime. Petras (1989:27) argues that:

the state is prior and more basic than the regime in the functioning of the social system, it is the nature of the state which is the "noun" and the regime which is the adjective in characterizing the political configuration.

From the viewpoint of the present study, the nature of power possessed by the state, its relative autonomy and the state elite are the crux of any concept of the state. This will enable the role of the state in development to be explained in relation to the political and class structure in society.

1.2 State - market dichotomy

The common perception of the state's role has changed considerably over time. During the 1950s and early 1960s development studies were dominated by Structuralist theory, which implicitly assumed that the state had an unlimited capacity for economic management.¹¹ Low private saving, dependence on export of primary product, and pervasive unemployment necessitated a greater role for the state.¹² The range of tasks included wider provision of infrastructure and utilities, as well as extensive support for education and health care. Hence the state should not only supply public goods and services, but should also, as Wade (1990) argues, accept direct responsibility both for augmenting the economy's investable resources and for establishing a mechanism to transfer those resources into productive investment. In this view, capital formation was the engine of development.¹³ The interventionist role of the state was praised in the light of the prevalence of market failures and the state was accorded a central role in correcting them, as well as in resource allocation.

Modern political economics points out this central role of the state in countries with a planned economy. This by no means to deny the obvious role of the state in capitalist economies. This is not new, as Miliband argues that 'state intervention presided at its [capitalism] birth or at least guided and helped its early steps'. Miliband goes on to say that state intervention 'has never ceased to be of crucial importance in the workings of capitalism, even in the country most dedicated to *laissez faire* and rugged individualism'(1969:9). In capitalist societies, as Giddens explains, from the beginnings of capitalism, the state played a major part in economic activities. State activities, both within and outside the economy, have continued to expand (1981:214).

In a planned economy, the state takes over total control of all factors

of production and distribution. In this sense, the planned economy is supply-oriented, which means that the state makes production decisions on the basis of supplying citizens with goods and services. In contrast to the planned economy, in the market economy, total private control by individuals over the means of production allows the market to determine production and distribution through principle of competition, supply and demand. In the market economy, however, the role of the state is explicit in providing protection for the private ownership, and guaranteeing the inviolability of contracts in order to create and maintain the free market system.¹⁴

The behaviour of the market is often associated with great inequalities among people in their access to and control over resources. This motivated structuralist or Marxist theorists not only to consider markets as inefficient, segmented and monopolistic, but also to be exploitative.¹⁵ This argument is, in fact, in direct opposition to Neoclassical theory, which sees markets as efficient, integrated and competitive instruments for the allocation of resources.¹⁶ The Neoclassical school of thought views governmental intervention as the primary source of economic inefficiency and market distortions.¹⁷ Neoclassical analysts have emphasized that state intervention has led to widespread misallocation of resources and had a chilling effect on investment and growth.¹⁸

A *laissez-faire* economy (with minimal government involvement) would operate with full employment of labour and capital equipment.¹⁹ The market is seen to promote both individual freedom and economic efficiency, while state intervention is viewed as restricting liberty and undermining economic efficiency.²⁰ The result of state intervention, according to the Neoclassical political economy and public choice schools, is 'an inefficient and inequitable allocation of resources, general impoverishment, and reduced freedom'.²¹

The notions of Neoclassical theory gained ground during the 1970s and 1980s, as governments in many developing countries were 'mired down in economic policies that were manifestly unworkable'. Even in the instances of obvious market failure, 'there could be little question but that government failure significantly outweighed market failure'.²² The World Bank 1997 World Development Report mentioned three areas of state-inflicted damage to the economy; wrong policies which discouraged the creation of wealth, right policies, but wrongly applied, and dubious policies.²³

The debt crisis which hit the developing countries during the 1980s

and, later, the collapse of the Soviet Union seemed to sound, as the World Bank describes, the "death knell" for state-dominated economic development. Market-friendly strategies emerged as the alternative to the state's role in economic activities, for example, in production, prices and foreign trade.

Privatization and structural adjustment became the passwords to development in the former socialist countries and most developing countries, including those of the Middle East, for example, Egypt, Tunisia and Iraq. It was not only the policy makers in those countries who were chanting this tune, but also mainstream academic economists, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.²⁴

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the mixed outcome of privatization and structural adjustment policies 'have led to considerable doubt about the effectiveness of a blueprint state withdrawal from the market'.²⁵ The pendulum seems to be slowly swinging back from the *laissez-faire* ideology.²⁶ Evans (1992:141) convincingly points out that 'dismantling the state is not the answer. It must be reconstructed'.²⁷

From the dilemma of both market failure and state failure, a fundamental proposition arises that the dichotomy of state versus market is unjustified. A marriage between market and the state should be possible and the virtues of this need to be appropriately utilized. Weiss and Hobson note that 'the history of developmental success shows that "market and state" are not opposed forms of social organization, but symbolically linked'(1995:8). The division between the roles of the market and state, therefore, is not as precise as the Neoclassical approach seems to imply. Dutt *et al* emphasize that the 'state must do a variety of things not explicitly mentioned, but implicitly assumed, in this approach [Neoclassical]' (1994:5).

In fact, the economic functions of any country are unlikely to be operated only by the market mechanisms. In this sense, Sawyer (1989) argues that a great deal of economic activity takes place within various institutions, whether they be firms, households or government.²⁸ Obviously, this is evident in what is known as a mixed economy, in which there is a significant sector of state planning to serve the public good, while retaining a privately-owned market free from state control.²⁹

The economic success of some newly industrialized countries in East Asia, such as Taiwan and South Korea provides evidence in support of such a hypothesis. The governments of those two countries intervened extensively in an attempt to guide the pattern of development. The

combination of market-orientation and active state involvement was central to their success.³⁰ White and Wade explain that, in order to pursue a policy of industrialization *per se*, the states of Taiwan and South Korea have intervened 'aggressively in (parts of) the market so as to bring about specific allocational effects, as well as taking measures designed to institute and safeguard the self-regulating parts of the market (1985:4). The state which acts in this way has largely been viewed as a developmental state, i.e a state that is progressive and benign. The significant consensus in the developmental state theory is that development could not be left to markets and that state intervention is a *sine qua non* for development.³¹ Obviously, state intervention here extends beyond macro-economic policies to the level of a sector and firm. Thus a developmental state attempts to combine the strength of the market model and centrally planned economies and, at the same time, to avoid the weaknesses of the two systems. White and Wade argue that the developmental state differs from both socialist and western countries. Unlike socialist countries, the means of production and profits in Taiwan and South Korea are mostly privately owned and appropriated. The developmental state has a role different from that of the Keynesian welfare state in western countries. White and Wade explain that the Keynesian welfare state serves to restrain market rationality by measures to protect groups vulnerable to the consequences of market rationality, whereas the developmental state restrains market rationality by the priority of industrialization (1985:4). This expansion of functions performed by the state is a visible indication that the state's role goes beyond being merely coercive to being a developmental one.

As far as the development success of East Asian economies is concerned, a clearer distinction needs to be drawn between them and most of the developing countries. The newly industrialized countries of East Asia started from higher economic bases than those found in many developing countries. They have relatively small populations and were able to focus on particular sectors of economic development.³² It is dubious, therefore, whether their model of the developmental state is a realistic option for other developing countries.

The World Bank's Report of 1997 (1997:30), emphasizes the significance of the state's role in economic activities and stresses the importance of appropriate ways, but provides no mechanisms for them:

The state is often a dominant player, in the economic game. Every day, state agencies invest resources, direct credit, procure goods and services, and negotiate contracts; these actions have profound effects

on transactions costs and on economic activity and economic outcomes, especially in developing economies. Played well, the state's activities can accelerate development. Played badly, they will produce stagnation or, in the extreme, economic and social disintegration.

The magnitude of the state's role admitted by the World Bank drives us to the post-Keynesians school of political economy. Keynes himself repudiated the idea of non-intervention by government, advocating the need for public policy measures in certain periods to raise the levels of output and employment.³³ It is not surprising, therefore, that adherents of post-Keynesian economics suggest a strong role for the state in a mixed economy. They tend to be reformist in the sense that they seek to make a capitalist economy more just and equitable.³⁴ They consider capitalist economies to be inherently unstable, tending to operate at less than full capacity, and having built-in inflationary tendencies.³⁵ The private sector, according to post-Keynesian theory, does not always generate the institutions necessary to promote cooperation, whereas the government can use legislation and set up institutions to promote cooperation.³⁶

1.3 Theories of the state

The issue of the importance of the state role in furthering development coincides with the question of who is benefiting from such state activities. Some attention should be paid to the question of whether the state operates in the interests of a certain social group(s) or is managed by politicians and bureaucrats who use the state for their own interests.

In the Third World, as Seidman (1989) observed, most governments used state power to aid, not the masses, but the rich and powerful.³⁷ The mechanisms of the state are therefore likely to be used by politicians to 'promote the welfare of special groups; those on whom the politicians rely'.³⁸ There is little readiness, as Killick (1989) states 'to assume that the state is benign, acting on behalf of the public interest to maximize social welfare'.³⁹ The experiences of many developing countries indicate that the state's malign impact was shown through the privileging of groups of individuals who diverted public resources to their own interests.⁴⁰

The fact that much controversy still surrounds the state's power is a strong testimony of its importance. This controversy is due to the polemic perception of the concept of power *per se*. Max Weber

considered power 'as the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability exists'.⁴¹ Poulantzas sees the Weberian definition of power narrowed to the normative behaviour of subjects/agents and its reduction to that of legitimacy (1975:105). As an alternative, Poulantzas defines power as 'the capacity of a social class to realize its specific objective interests' (1975:104). Poulantzas admits that his concept is related precisely to the field of class struggle. As he explains (1975:105):

the capacity of one class to realize its own interests through its practice is in opposition to the capacity and interests of other classes. This determines a specific relation of domination and subordination of class practices, which is exactly characterized as a relation of power.

The implicit notion in Poulantzas' view is that class relations are power relations and state power means the power of the determinate class to whose interests the state corresponds (1975:100).

Various schools of political theory have tried to provide answers to the questions of who possesses state power, the determinants of its distribution and whether a distinction can be drawn between political power and economic power in relation to the dichotomy state-society. For the purpose of this study, it will be appropriate to frame this discourse within the context of the elite, pluralism, Marxism and state-centred theories.

1.3.1 The elite theory

The elite theorists presumed that a socially identifiable, cohesive group within a given society wields power based on conscious self-interest.⁴² The classical elite theorists, Mosca, Pareto and Michels, were strongly convinced that governance by a small elite over the rest of society is inevitable. Mosca asserted that, in all societies 'two classes of people appear, a class that rules and a class that is ruled'.⁴³

Wright Mills (1956:4) clearly stated the basic premise of the elite theory by saying that the power elite is composed of men who are:

in positions to make decisions having major consequences Whether they do or do not make such decisions is less important than the fact that they do occupy such pivotal positions their failure to act, their failure to make decisions, is itself an act that is often of greater consequences than the decisions they do make

Mills' study of the elite in the United States illustrates that the elite occupy the strategic command posts of the social structure, in which the effective means of power and wealth are centred. Mills pointed out three main circles: political, economic, and military as a complex set of "overlapping cliques" which share decisions having at least national consequences (p.18). In other words, a power elite - as Eugene Schneider explains - controls great organizations, corporations, the armed forces and the mass media (1968:16). The elites are embedded in the structures of the society and their power, therefore, is institutionalized. Mills carefully noted that though men and institutions are always related, the unity of the elite is not a simple reflection of the unity of institutions (1956:19). This is not surprising, as members of the elite come from different categories, ranging from the capitalist class to the military. Yet to some degree, the power elite, according to Schneider, does form a unified group, as they have similar interests and a great deal of experience in common. The political elite, for example, is composed of a mixture of top-level politicians and members of the military and economic elites.⁴⁴ Yet in Mills' vision, this does not mean that the state is merely the tool of the economic-military elite, much less of the capitalist class.⁴⁵ For Mills, the political elites are able to initiate and pursue a policy of their own. Mills (1956:277) states:

We do not accept as adequate the simple view that high economic men unilaterally make all decisions of national consequence. We hold that such a simple view of 'economic determinism' must be elaborated by 'political determinism' and 'military determinism'; that the higher agents of each of these three domains now have a noticeable degree of autonomy; and that only in the often intricate ways of coalition do they make up and carry through the most important decisions.

Thus Mills disapproves of Marx's theory of economic determinism and the class struggle. He criticizes the Marxist concept of the ruling class, as he states, 'ruling class is a badly loaded phrase. Class is an economic term; rule a political one. The phrase 'ruling class' thus contains the theory that an economic class rules politically'. Mills, therefore, prefers to use the term power elite instead of ruling class (p.277).

Like Mills, though from a different angle, Pareto rejected the Marxian notion that the dominant group is the product of economic forces; he assumed that psychological characteristics of human beings produce elite groups.⁴⁶ Burnham acknowledged that power lies with

those who control the means of production. He argued that (through the separation of ownership from control) it is the technical and managerial class which comprises the new elite.⁴⁷

The elite theory and, in particular, Mills' work (*The Power Elite*) has left many problematical issues unanswered, such as the degree of concentration of social power, the dynamics of the class system; how people lose high class status, how new members of the ruling class are co-opted.⁴⁸ A strong challenge to the elite theories comes from Poulantzas (1975:330):

The major defect of these theories consists in the fact that they do not provide any explanation of the foundation of political power. In addition, they acknowledge a plurality of sources for political power but can offer no explanation of their relations.

Furthermore, despite the elite theory's criticism of Marxism, it continues to adopt a Marxist notion in the sense that elite theorists perceive that state policy is controlled by the owners of capital and thus deprives ordinary people of any genuine control over economic decisions.⁴⁹

1.3.2 The pluralist theory

The pluralist theorists argue that there are many determinants for the distribution of power besides a particular elite or class. This view, in fact, is based on the Weberian conviction which rejects the analysis of power in accordance with the analysis of classes. Classes are only one aspect of the distribution of, and struggle for, power.⁵⁰ Power is a complicated part of an endless process of bargaining between numerous groups (ranging from business organizations, trade unions to women's institutions and ethnic and religious groups) representing different interests.⁵¹ Dahl, a classical pluralist, sees power as 'unevenly distributed; neither individuals nor groups are politically equal'(1983: 125). For the pluralist, therefore, the state does not mirror civil society. They argue that, in a proper polyarchy, the state can be neutral both in theory and practice.⁵² The state, therefore, 'balances, re-weights and referees pressure group contests to protect unorganized or weakly organized groups in the public interest'.⁵³

In Dahl's view, competition among organized interests structures the policy outcomes of the government. The interest groups, however, are not necessarily equal in either political or economic strength.⁵⁴ These two strengths are closely linked. Dahl argues that ownership and control

of economic enterprises contribute to the creation of great differences among people in wealth, status, and control over information and propaganda. These differences, as Dahl asserts, generate significant inequalities among people in their capacities and opportunities to participate as political equals in governing the state (1985:54-55). Eventually, public policy will tend to be inclined towards the more organized interest groups with most resources.

In order to enhance business interests, the state will ignore or play down claims from weaker, rival interest groups. In doing so, the state is no longer neutral, but becomes the captive to the powerful social forces which would never agree to the state changing social, political or economic institutions in ways that weakened themselves. Thus pluralism ran aground in response to the question of state neutrality. Seidman asked how a state could refrain from intervening in political bargaining while, at the same time, intervening to structure that very process? By enforcing existing laws, the state inevitably favours those advantaged by the existing system (1994:99).

This leads to the proposition that the nature and relations of the groups who hold power in society map the way in which the state operates and initiates its policies. Reuschmeyer and Evans (1985:47) argue that:

The state cannot escape being an instrument of domination. The interrelations between the various parts of the state apparatus, on one hand, and the most powerful classes or class fractions, on the other, will determine the character of the overall pact of domination.

1.3.3 The Marxist theory

In the Marxist tradition, as Sawyer (1989) explains, 'the nature of those power relations depends on the forces of production, so that it arises from economic power'. In feudal times, the power resides with landowners and the state is operated in the general interests of the landowners'.⁵⁵ In developed capitalist economies, the actions of the state are used to serve the interests of capitalists. The state becomes no more than the expression of the capitalist class dominance over the working class in modern capitalist society.⁵⁶ This assumption can be assimilated to the view that the state is an instrument of class rule. In this instrumentalist approach, the state is seen as the instrument of capitalists.⁵⁷

Marxism, as Miliband explains, considers the ruling class of a capitalist

society to be the class that owns and controls the means of production and is able, by virtue of its economic power, to use the state as its instrument for domination (1969:23). Thus it is capital which employs the state to promote its interests at the expense of other classes and social forces.⁵⁸ This means that the state is used as 'an instrument for the exploitation of wage-labour by capital and/or the maintenance of class domination in the political sphere'.⁵⁹ In a broader context, as summarized by Streeten, in Marxist theory the state is conceived as the 'executive committee of the ruling class' and whether it acts in the interest of an indigenous capitalist or the 'international, metropolitan capital, [by] extracting surplus from the periphery for the benefit of the centre', the state always serves the economic interests of the ruling class (1992:25).

The state, as Sawyer (1989) explains, not only carries out functions on behalf of the capitalist class, but also those functions which individual capitalists cannot carry out themselves. A nationalized health service could be seen as providing a healthy work force for business and neutralizing working class agitation (p.321-322).

The opposition of the dominant class to certain state policies depends significantly on the nature of the policy objective. For example, the opposition of the dominant class to obviously redistributive policies will be much more consistent and intense than its resistance to the expansion of the state's role in the process of accumulation.⁶⁰ Whereas certain acts of the state seem not to be in the interests of the capitalist class, this is only in the short run. For the Marxist tradition, these acts were a necessary concession made by the capitalists in order to ensure the continuation of the capitalist system.⁶¹ As Long and van der Ploeg (1989:239) explain:

The state may also institute policies that have negative consequences for certain segments of the dominant class or class alliance, and that offer concessions to subordinate groups such as peasant producers or workers.

Long and van der Ploeg go on to say 'in the end the objective power of capital and the shoring up of the system work to the benefit of capitalist interests, national and foreign' (p.239-240). Paul Streeten shares a similar view (1992:25):

It is the function of the state to reconcile differences of interest within the ruling class to maintain its power and the capitalist mode of

production,... it is possible for the government to impose measures in the interest of the exploited workers and small peasants in spite of the loss of profit that this involves if these measures save the system from revolt or revolution.

Long and van der Ploeg indicate that it is at such historical junctures that the state is said to acquire some measure of independent action or relative autonomy vis-a-vis the dominant class' (1989:239). The existence of various socio-economic interests suggests that they directly or indirectly shape the actions of the state. Long and van der Ploeg, therefore, stress that 'one cannot argue that state policies are simply derivative of either class relationships and struggles or the logic of capitalist development (1989:241). This view, in fact, also reflects the position of many contemporary Marxist writers who seek to avoid any simple instrumentalist or reductionist explanation of state activity. Jessop stresses that there is little agreement between contemporary Marxist writers that instrumentalism is the most adequate approach to a Marxist analysis of the state (1982:15). In fact, it was during the early decades of this century that Antonio Gramsci considered the Marxist conception of the state as a coercive instrument of the bourgeoisie to be too narrow and rejected this simple instrumental or epiphenomenal views of the state. He sought the "enlarging of the state" by saying:

the general notion of the state includes elements which need to be referred back to the notion of civil society (in the sense that one might say that state = political society + civil society, in other words, of hegemony protected by the armour of coercion).⁶²

Though Gramsci maintained the view of the state as an organisation of class domination, he emphasised the organic relationship between the governmental apparatus and civil society. This is apparent, as Jessop explains, when Gramsci relates the institutions and apparatuses to their social bases rather than treating them as technical instruments of government. He stresses the ways in which their functions and effects are influenced by their links to the economic system and civil society (1982:146). Gramsci perceives the state as 'the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justify and maintains its dominance but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules'.⁶³ He formulated his concept of the 'integral state' or the state in its totality, which is based on hegemony (consent) and coercion (Mouffe, 1979 and Jessop, 1982). In

Gramsci's view, the dominant class can rule in the long run, not only through domination (direct physical coercion), but also through its hegemony (consent, ideological control).⁶⁴ By hegemony, Gramsci meant, as Boggs (1976:39) explains:

the permeation throughout civil society - including a whole range of structures and activities like trade unions, schools, the churches, and the family - of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs, morality, etc., that is in one way or another supportive of the established order and the class interests that dominate it.

A successful hegemony consists of 'the creation of an active, direct consensus resulting from the genuine adoption of the interests of the popular classes by the hegemonic class, which would give rise to the creation of a genuine national popular will'.⁶⁵ Hegemony is achieved when the prevailing consciousness is internalized by the broad masses to become part of their sense of commonality.⁶⁶ When this happens, the state becomes the means of social reproduction in all its aspects and political leadership becomes merely an aspect of the function of domination and the masses are ultimately treated as a mass of manoeuvre.⁶⁷

The significance of Gramsci's view lies in his focus on the relational nature of state power and on his modalities of class domination, coercion and hegemony.⁶⁸ Gramsci, however, was aware of the fact that the bourgeoisie and its dominant groups constantly disintegrate any initiatives of the subordinate groups which might cause sociopolitical instability. The dominant groups are even able to generate new parties intended to conserve the assent of the subordinate groups and maintain control over them.⁶⁹

For contemporary Marxist theorists, this does not mean that the state becomes a mere instrument of the dominant class. The state in this sense, as Poulantzas points out, performs its general functions aimed at the maintenance of the unity of a social formation which is based on political class domination and thereby secures cohesion (1973:54). In promoting his theory of the state, Althusser outlined differences between repressive and ideological state apparatuses. Repressive state apparatus functions through violence and coercive control. It operates through the army, police, courts and prisons, whereas the ideological state apparatus functions by ideology. It operates through churches, the educational system, the family, unions and various forms of communication systems.⁷⁰ For Althusser, the role of the ideological state apparatus

(ISA) is of great importance.⁷¹

The ideology of the ruling class does not become the ruling ideology by the grace of God, nor even by virtue of the seizure of state power alone. It is by the installation of the ISAs in which this ideology is realized, and realizes itself that it becomes the ruling ideology.

Althusser's contribution to Marxism is, of course, much richer than simply narrowing it to the above mentioned notion. It produced a more tangible concept of politics to assist the development of a discourse on politics as an autonomous practice. The modalities of this practice are 'not reducible to the reproductive logic of the economy or, therefore, to the singular logic of class transformation'.⁷²

Giddens in his "Critique of Historical Materialism" looks at power in relation to the resources which human beings (agents) employ in the course of their activities. Giddens distinguishes two types of resources: the allocational and the authoritative. By the allocational he means dominion over material facilities, including material goods and the natural forces that may be involved in their production. Authoritative resources are the means of domination over the activities of human beings themselves (1981 and 1985). According to Giddens, Marxism gives primacy to allocational resources in the constitution of society and in the dynamics of social change. Giddens rejects this view and affirms that 'no account of history that gives to allocational resources some sort of determining role in either social organization or social change can be defended' (1985:8). For Giddens, the problem for social analysis becomes that of examining a variety of relationships between allocative and authoritative resources which can make up the social system, and are also present as an explanation of social change (1985).

1.3.4 The state-centred theory

Since the objectives and the effectiveness of the state depend on the relationship between the state and the dominant and dominated classes of society, the issue of the degree of state autonomy from class domination and societal pressures opened another, problematical, arena of the state discourse.

In this context, although this study acknowledges the idea which views the state as a set of administrative and coercive institutions, this does not mean that the state should be seen as a simple bureaucracy, because the state simultaneously expresses several contradictory tendencies. In this

sense, the analytical line of this study concurs with the arguments which acknowledge state autonomy.

There are various conditions and resources, such as patterns of leadership and ideology, the organization of state power, as well as control over productive property, which affect the state's capacity to act autonomously vis-a-vis society. According to Kohli, these variables 'are continuous and varying in degree, so does state autonomy' (1987:27).

There have been various important attempts by contemporary Marxist writers to come to grips with the issue of state autonomy. Giddens reveals that their aim is to 'derive the state from the form of the capitalist mode of production', but their writings, as Giddens confirms, still contain 'a thinly veiled functionalism' (1981:215). Giddens provides an example of this when reviewing the work of Poulantzas. As he says (1981:215):

In Poulantzas's conception the state's 'relative autonomy' from the interests of particular 'fractions of capital' is functionally necessary to protect the general interests of capital, which thus ensures the long-term perpetuation (reproduction) of capitalist society as a whole.

For Giddens the term 'relative' is redundant, as he considers 'all autonomy [to be] relative' and says 'autonomy and dependence are the reciprocal defining criteria of power relations reproduced within social system' (1981:217).

The state performs various managerial tasks which, according to Giddens, include a spectrum of surveillance activities. For example, Giddens asserts that the modes of the surveillance of the civil society, though highly relevant to the relative autonomy, are not purely economic, as the Marxist theory emphasizes (1981:214).

Unlike Marxist theory, the implicit view of the state-centred economic analysis is that there is a separation between economic power and political power. Here the focus is on the state itself as a form of political domination and it has powers of autonomous action. The state is seen as 'an institutional ensemble and/or from the managers of the state system (politicians, bureaucrats and the military)'.⁷³ According to Jessop (1990:92), state-centred theorists:

Focus on the institutional forms of the state without relating them to capitalism as a mode of production or to the nature of class relations. In this sense they take for granted the separation between state and society (or state and capital) and tend to treat them as distinct and only contingently related.

State power autonomy is delineated into two dimensions. Michael Mann defines them as 'despotic power' and 'infrastructural power'. The former refers to a 'range of actions which the [state's] elite is empowered to undertake without routine, institutionalized negotiation with civil society groups'. Infrastructural power refers to 'the capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm' (1988:5). Mann argues that whereas 'states in the capitalist democracies are despotically weak, but infrastructurally strong', authoritarian states are 'high on both dimensions' (1988:7-8). Mann's view of state autonomy presents a focal point in the approach of state-centred theorists.

Skocpol (1985), a distinguished writer in the notion of "bringing the state back in" viewed state autonomy by conceiving states as 'organizations claiming control over territories and people'. She argues that the states 'may formulate and pursue goals that are not simply reflective of the demands or interests of domestic social groups, classes, or society'.⁷⁴ Skocpol pursues a twofold vision of the state as an actor through which 'an official collectivity may pursue distinctive goals' and as an institution, 'a configuration of organization and action that influences the meaning and methods of politics', i.e influences group formation, interest articulation, and political capacities.⁷⁵ This new movement brings political factors back in, by stressing the autonomy of the state and recognizing the autonomy of political forces. Such autonomy exists, as Dutt *et al* (1994) argue, because those who hold political power are able to make choices which reflect their own ideologies and interests, and because political traditions have a continuity of their own and are not transformed readily by socio-economic changes'.⁷⁶

The assertion of state-centred theorists that state activities are controlled by state managers who employ their own policy preferences and interests provoked serious criticism. From the Marxist viewpoint, Paul Cammack argues that Skocpol and other state-centred advocates tend to draw a division between state and society by presenting them as separate, distinct polar opposites. Likewise, though from different perspective, Jessop says that the State-centred theorists' mistake lies 'in positing a relatively unambiguous boundary between the state and society'(1990:303).

Cammack's theoretical critique of Skocpol is focused on her denial that 'the state is shaped by classes' and the state's character' can be derived from the dominant mode of production'.⁷⁷ Cammack (1989:289)

explains:

A two-stage process takes place in which first social classes are dissolved into 'society', then this undifferentiated 'society' is counter-posed to 'the state'. As a consequence, the idea that the state is differentially penetrated by conflicting classes, and incorporates, reflects and affects the struggle between them, becomes literally unthinkable.

This divergence between state-centred and neo-Marxist writings starts to converge on the idea of the state as an autonomous actor. There are, however, many Marxist writers who claim that careful readings of Marxism will show that there is no disapproval of the notion of state autonomy in Marxist tradition. Cammack emphasizes, that from the structural Marxist perspective, the state is seen as an autonomous actor, because 'the state acts, at times against the short-run interests of even dominant capitalists'.⁷⁸ In fact, many Marxist authors stress the relative autonomy of the state and even consider it a necessity.⁷⁹

In the wake of these comments, a second significant feature of the polemic on state autonomy is in the arena of the state and development. In this sense, Rueschemeyer and Putterman (1992:256) emphasize that a high degree of state autonomy is an indispensable condition:

Autonomy contributes first of all to the state's capacity for corporate action, without it, coherent state policies are rendered difficult or impossible because different parts of the state apparatus can easily become captive of divergent vested interests.

As much as state autonomy is important, Rueschemeyer and Putterman argue that the state 'must also have the capacity to pursue them [policies] even against resistance from powerful partial interests' (1992:256). The latitude of the state's actors to take political initiatives unconstrained by the claims of other social forces can only be translated into practice by state capacity. Skocpol defines state capacity as 'the means to implement official goals, especially over the actual or potential opposition of powerful social groups or in the face of recalcitrant socioeconomic circumstances (1985:9). This is to emphasise the importance of the state's ability to implement political decisions not at odds with democracy and free from authoritarianism.⁸⁰

For the purposes of development, therefore, it is essential that 'the state apparatus devote its resources to social and economic development rather than to war and expansionism, the greater glory of the state's

elites, or their sheer material self-interest'.⁸¹

This thesis, in dealing with the state as an autonomous actor in society which allows an analysis to assess the degree to which the state is autonomous and reflects on the fact that the state is all-pervasive and has a major effect on economic activity. This is certainly not to deny the crucial role of class relations and the class struggle within society, capitalist or non capitalist, and their impact on the state power structure and therefore on state policies.

1.4 State and politics in the Third World

The history and politics of states in the Third World vary from one region to another, therefore, the thesis is concerned that any thematic generalisations should provide insights to regional specificity and historical setting. In Third World countries, in addition to the remarkable expansion of the state's role, what in fact distinguishes the state is its power in relation to the nature of the techniques used to extend and consolidate this power.⁸²

A study by Cammack, *et al* indicates that, in East and Southeast Asia, 'state-society relations reflect the outcome of attempted state-building emerging out of a context of class conflict, social revolution, and foreign intervention' (1993:66). The state has been a key actor in struggles for domination. For political leaders the quest for the state is to exercise their control over society, which often occurs with the privileging of powerful social groups with which state leaders are allied.

1.4.1 Clientelism

Clientelism has been identified as one of the common phenomena among Third World states in various parts of the world,⁸³ although it can be found in societies at various levels of social differentiation and technological development, and in different types of political regimes.⁸⁴ The essence of clientelism is based on the notion of patron-client relationship or clientele. In the literature, this relationship is defined as a vertical alliance between two parties of unequal status, power or resources, the superior is called patron and the inferior is called client. The purpose of this relationship is exchanging non-comparable goods, services and providing mutual assurances of aid.⁸⁵ Powell summarizes

three main characteristics of the patron-client pattern: unequal status, reciprocity and proximity. This is the case whether the parties are individuals, kinship groups or even institutions (1977:148). For the purpose of this study, what matters is the fact that the utility of the clientele notion is no longer limited to the personal level, i.e a dyadic phenomenon, but it is rather institutionalized in a wider setting of the relationship between state and society. Using Jessop's definition, clientelism means 'a mode of representation in which political support is exchanged for particular benefits' (1990:163). In other words, this means a patronage kind of politics in which, as Cammack *et al* explain, 'those in control of the state reward their supporters, and these supporters (the clients) themselves act as patrons to dependants at lower state levels' (1993:59). The form of this exchange relationship varies widely, as Clapham explains, from 'on the one hand physical or legal protection, land or a job, some kind of economic development assistance, even religious intercession; on the other, military service, voting, economic labour power, information' (1985:55).

In Third World countries, at the state level, clientelism serves as a means by which a political project favouring one set of class interests over another eventually serves the domination of the ruling class.⁸⁶ In modern Africa, as Boone noted, clientelism has helped to extend state power and consolidate regimes (1994:131).

Clientele hierarchy within the state apparatus indicates that, within the categories of rulers and the ruled, there are division, competition and a power struggle, as well as patterns of alliance and conflict. Clapham argues that the neo-patrimonial state embodies inherent inequalities, between those who control the state and those who do not, and also between those at higher and lower levels within the state hierarchy (1985:55).

The socio-economic and political gap between a minority who run the state and the majority who are ruled by it, raises an acute problem in the relationship between political power and popular support. The relationship between the state and social actors is ambivalent and contradictory. State rulers tend to transform society by imposing their planned policy, but they cannot be effective at this task for long without seeking legitimacy from among society's members. Clientelism, as Hall explains, has been used politically to mobilise mass support on the basis of promised favours, such as land reform, in exchange for votes (1977:512). Rulers of the state generally need political support, unless they can rely on a repressive apparatus which is both loyal and efficient

enough to deal with any opposition'.⁸⁷ In many Third World countries, as there is no genuine electoral process, the type of clientelism which has developed focused primarily on armies and bureaucracies. Thus, if an anarchic reward system fails, other means are used, such as regular purges of the army and civil service and political assassination.⁸⁸

Coercion, authority and manipulation may exist as elements of clientelism, but if they come to be dominant, the tie is no longer a patron-client relationship.⁸⁹ This discussion brings us quite close to the subject of the authoritarian state.

1.4.2 Authoritarian state

In authoritarian regimes those who hold power can be 'civilians or military officers, capitalists or champions of the working class'.⁹⁰ It is common, however, in state-dominated societies, as Hewison *et al* argue, for significant segments of capitalists to support authoritarian regimes, because their social position, their access to resources and their protection from other social forces require the coercive power of the state (1993:6).

In Third World countries, colonial rule had done very little to prepare the way for a liberal democratic system to succeed it. Not surprisingly, after independence, the new political elites felt little commitment to democracy; instead, they gave greater importance to the use of state power to further personal and group interests. Democracy, therefore, proved fragile, even in the states which advocated it, let alone under those regimes which are based on the one-party system and dictatorship. Whether radicals or conservatives, leaders of Third World regimes feared that democracy would eventually destabilize their governance. Democracy in the Third World therefore gave way, as Cammack *et al* argue, 'to military regimes, or systems in which elections continued to determine the choice of government, but the holders of the state power made sure that there could be only one winner' (1993:9). Despite the appearance of modern institutions of democratic government, the reality is that those institutions are the facade behind which the few control the majority, the latter lack the means to hold the rulers responsible. The absence of real competition for political power is the key feature of authoritarianism. As dominance underpins any social formation, therefore, it can be said that a degree of authoritarianism is embedded in the institutional structure of any state. The degree of overt authoritarianism is, of course, restricted by the existence of democracy

in liberal democratic systems.

In authoritarian systems, a privileged group by the state exercises its domination over other social groups. Simone and Feraru argue that 'those who are in power use the "stick" of repressive measures or the "carrot" of positive inducements to keep themselves in power and keep the "outs" out of power'. Simone and Feraru accordingly distinguish between soft and hard authoritarianism. The former uses the carrot, although the ultimate power of the state is always there to break up unruly demonstrations, whereas in hard authoritarianism the stick is more often the weapon to be used, although the carrot may be held out to favoured individuals or groups (1995:136).

By the 1980s, much of the Third World was ruled by military regimes, dictatorships or by politicians helped into power by force of arms or force of personality. Like traditional dictators, who ruled through direct personal control of the national economy and military forces, modern Third World dictators have as Rubin (1987:12-13) describes:

melded the inventions of Marxism and fascism with his own national history and conditions to gain a new kind of legitimacy as a populist (the people's tribune), nationalist (the country's defender against imperialism), revolutionary (destroyer of the old order), and socialist (mobilizer and manager of the nation's economy).

It is well known that most of Third World countries face a tremendous challenge from poverty, poor infrastructure and enormous economic difficulties, as well as from foreign powers. Dictators who take power in the aftermath of a coup or independence do not hesitate in taking advantage of the situation, therefore, their call to change these conditions aims to rally the people behind them.⁹¹

1.4.3 Arab state / rentier state

Like most Third World countries, in many Arab countries, the highly centralised colonial administration established the socio-economic and political basis for the post-colonial regimes. In most instances, it laid the foundation for the emergence of the future authoritarian state. The growth of the Arab modern state, therefore, was not a natural development of its own socio-economic history or its own cultural and intellectual tradition. In other words, the formation of the modern state in the Arab region was due neither to the rise of an independent

bourgeois class nor to the rise of secular nationalism.⁹² The monarchies of Jordan and Iraq, for example, were created by the British. Urban notables, former Ottoman officers and the leading families of the tribes, already converted into large landowners, were recruited into the 'faáade' of political institutions.⁹³

After independence, however, considerable social and political changes took place in the region, including the beginning of industrialisation, urbanisation, and the overthrow of the monarchies. In some countries, such as Egypt and Iraq, the monarchies were overthrown by the upper levels of the middle strata, who also seized political power from the landowners.⁹⁴ The regimes of Arab countries, such as Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, attempted to establish strong centralised governments. It is important to note here, in the case of Iraq, that although Cammack *et al* emphasise this trend, they overlook the fact by describing the post-1991 Gulf War uprising of the *shi'a* and the Kurds against the B'ath regime as signs of a fragile authoritarian centralism. The uprising was, in fact, a consequence of the weakening of the strong and highly centralized Iraqi state apparatus by the foreign powers. This issue will be discussed in the next chapter.

During the past three decades, the Arab state has achieved a remarkable expansion both in the size of the state apparatus and in its influence on the economy and society. In many Arab countries, the state, according to Ayubi, is a fierce state that has frequently to resort to raw coercion in order to preserve itself (1995a:3). It exercises its power mainly in order to accomplish political goals. The political character of the Arab state is the predominant one.⁹⁵ The Arab state is an authoritarian state, it is 'obsessed with power and strength'.⁹⁶ The most important characteristic of the current stable Arab state is the position of a central strong man. Zartman (1988:9) explains:

The Great Patron or Manipulator may adopt many different styles of leadership and may have a position that runs through many shades of centralisation and control but in all cases of state stability, that stability is associated with one or successive single leaders.

In order to establish control, the state single leader, just as he seeks popularity, he also represses his opponents after branding them as counter-revolutionaries, feudalists, anti-patriotic elements and servants of foreign powers.⁹⁷ The establishment of a strong authoritarian state mainly requires the formation of a ruling political party. This is another feature of the modern Arab state. A major goal of a ruling party in the

Arab state is to mobilize support for the regime and to protect it. For example, in Syria and Iraq, the members of the ruling Ba'th party 'act as eyes and ears of the regime'.⁹⁸

Another characteristic of the Arab state is bureaucratization, which has swept the Arab world since the 1950s. According to Ayubi, this is a tendency that goes very much in the direction of centralisation, hierarchy and control (1988:14 and 1995a:296). The expansion of administrative organisation gives the state a *modus operandi* and also benefits a section of the population whose interests are associated with the state itself.⁹⁹ Bureaucratization is, in fact, associated in some Arab countries with the growing rentier nature of the state.¹⁰⁰

A rentier economy is in fact a key feature which distinguishes many Arab states from the rest of the Third World. The rentier characteristic of the state has been often linked with resource-rich countries. Rentier states are defined, according to Mahdavy (1970:428), as:

those countries that receive on a regular basis substantial amounts of external rent. External rents are in turn defined as rentals paid by foreign individuals, concerns or governments to individuals, concerns or governments of a given country.

In other words, a rentier state is any state that receives a substantial portion of its national income in the form of external rents. This income is derived from rents rather than from returns of the productive sectors of the economy, and these rent revenues are received by the government, which takes charge of their allocation and distribution.¹⁰¹

The oil-exporting Arab states represent the example *par excellence* of rentier states. Beblawi explains that 'with oil exports' revenues, the Arab oil states depend on external rent. Oil revenues represent more than 90 per cent of budget revenues' (1987:53). Rentier states, however, are not necessarily oil exporting states, as there are other rent-like sources of revenue which accrue directly to the state besides oil.¹⁰² For example, payments for passage of ships through the Suez Canal, payments to the transit countries in the Middle East that allow oil pipelines be passed through their territories.¹⁰³

It may be concluded that a rentier state has the following main characteristics: the state's main revenues are from rent, these revenues are of external (foreign) origin and, finally, they accrue directly to the state.¹⁰⁴ Thanks to these characteristics, the rentier state becomes more allocational than productive in nature. It allocates the income that it receives from abroad for various purposes, such as (though not

necessarily) the strengthening of the domestic economic base. It can be said, as Luciani argues, that a rentier state 'does not need to formulate anything deserving the appellation of economic policy: all it needs is an expenditure policy' (1987:74). Luciani, however, is careful to maintain that some allocation states are confronted with greater demands than they can accommodate, so they pursue a process of diversification of their domestic economic base and gradually turn themselves into production states (1987:81).

The significance of external rent for a rentier state is manifested in two ways. First, it helps to free the state from its domestic economic base, so that the state possesses a high degree of relative autonomy from the specific interests of various classes in society. Secondly, it makes the state an intermediary between the world capitalist order and the domestic economy and society.¹⁰⁵

States of resource-rich economies used the revenue bonanzas from the oil price rises of the 1970s and other commodity booms to expand their public sectors, sometimes with reckless affluence. Infrastructure projects tended to absorb the largest share of the total public expenditure. According to Abdel-Fadil, the reason for this is that such infrastructure fulfils immediate needs related to consumption activities in the oil-rentier states and the results are visible to all to see (1987:84).

In oil-rentier economies, as Abdel-Fadil concludes, the state becomes the main intermediary between the oil sector and the rest of the economy. As a result, the direct linkages between the oil sector and the rest of the economy are very limited (1987:84). The state, therefore, remains the main source for channelling oil revenues to the economy's sectors, such as industry, services and agriculture.

In rentier states, as in other developing economies, economic activities follow the line of state national development policies and come under state control often through the medium of bureaucratic and public enterprises.

1.5 Agrarian change

In most developing countries, the agricultural economy and rural people are essential elements in the overall national economic activities. State intervention in the economy, therefore, includes intervening in the processes of rural development and agrarian change. A whole range of measures and institutions are used by the state to implement its rural

policies. These policies affect land tenure, technology, employment, price, rural institutions and linkages with the rest of the economy.¹⁰⁶ It should be noted that, although state policies often tend to be national policies, they decisively shape rural social structure and livelihoods in rural areas.¹⁰⁷ Tinteraction of the state with rural people and the rural economy, therefore, is an important element in the process of agrarian change.

Agrarian change is generally regarded in the literature as change in the whole system of relationships of the agrarian economy and society. This system, according to Harriss (1982), includes not only modes of agricultural production, but also the sets of social and cultural, as well as environmental, technological, and demographic factors (1982:16-17).

To talk about agrarian change, therefore, simply means talking about changes in the agrarian structure as a whole. This structure according to Long and van der Ploeg, can be operationalized as composed of a set of interlinked human agencies involved in the everyday negotiation of the role-definition and role-enactment of farmers and forming part of a wider regionalized system of production. This regional system of production is a complex system of capital, labour and socio-political linkages. Long and van der Ploeg maintain that the system of linkages is 'continually being remoulded by the struggles that go on between different individuals and social groups, and of course affected by the ways in which outside forces impinge upon it' (1989:238).

It is difficult to assume that agrarian change occurs in similar patterns in different societies. Long, therefore, argues that variation within agricultural systems leads to different patterns of response and changes. Thus in analysing agrarian change, 'it is necessary to look more closely at the sets of relationships that evolve between intervening agencies and local groups'.¹⁰⁸

Because of the growth of market systems and communications, agrarian change does not occur in a vacuum or in an isolation from the influence of national and international systems. From the perspective of the institutional incorporation model, Pearse argues that 'parallel with penetration of the market there is an institutional penetration seeking to incorporate the peasantry in a variety of local segments of national organisations'(1975:252). This means that the rural population and farm enterprises become integrated into the wider technological and administrative framework. Long (1988:115) explains that

Although the degree to which the farmer or farms is incorporated will vary, the central tendency, then, is towards externalisation of farm

practice: an increasing number of farm tasks are separated from the farm labour process and reallocated to external agencies.

Pearse, however, affirms that 'the majority of the peasantry has neither the resources nor the social advantages necessary to make the full re-orientation necessary to benefit from incorporation, and they are forced into a bad bargain with the society'.¹⁰⁹ Long expresses his dissatisfaction with the institutional incorporation model in analysing agrarian change. In Long's (1988:117) view this analysis provides:

no appreciation of the importance of inter-agency conflict or of the struggles that take place between farmers' organisations and government or private institutions. A related problem is the failure to locate the discussion within an analysis of existing power structures at either regional or national level.

The issue of agrarian change has been looked upon in a wider context which goes beyond the boundaries of a single state. Long cites the example of de Janvry and the logic of capital approach. From this perspective, agrarian problems and processes are part of a world-wide structure composed of centre and peripheral economies that have unequal relations of dominance. The problems of poverty and agricultural production, therefore, should be related to the nature of the class structure of peripheral economies and the process of capital accumulation which guides the historical development of capitalism.¹¹⁰ This interpretation obviously focuses on capital accumulation as a major drive for agrarian change. For Long (1988:110) this view faces a major difficulty as:

it interprets the pattern of agrarian development in peripheral economies as resulting from the logic of capital accumulation, thus according little attention to other factors such as the styles of political intervention and ideologies of development represented by State programmes, or the influence of forms of peasant organisation or resistance.

1.5.1 Modernization and commoditization

Various views have advanced to analyze the forces and paths of agrarian change. The commercialization school which was built around modernization theory found the key to the breaking down and modernizing of traditional peasant culture in the introduction of modern

technology and the commercialisation of agriculture.¹¹¹ This process was thought to have been achieved through a series of interventions from external forces such as the state or international interests and to involve the transfer of technology, knowledge, resources and organisational forms.¹¹² It was assumed that modernizing peasant agriculture would increase farmer's incomes and the wellbeing of the society as a whole. It has been argued that this can be achieved gradually and through the trickle-down mechanism.

In contrast to the prophecy of the modernization theory, the experiences of developing countries had come to show evidence of growing inequality among their population by the 1970s and economic growth did not benefit the majority of poor people. In Chenery's words, it was of little or no benefit to perhaps a third of the population of underdeveloped countries. Chenery argues that 'while growth policies have succeeded beyond the expectations of the first development decades, the very idea of aggregate growth as a social objective has increasingly been called into question' (1974:xiii).

That economic growth does not result in benefiting all segments of the population is much emphasized in the development literature. The tendency to define economic development as synonymous with economic growth measured almost exclusively in terms of GNP growth came to be viewed as a misleading criterion. GNP growth alone does not guarantee a more equal and equitable distribution of income, an increase in the level of effective employment and the achievement of minimum or desirable nutritional standards. The impoverishment of rural people, as Griffin asserts, is hardly surprising in countries where agricultural output per head has declined, even though GDP per capita has continued to increase (1989:136).

In fact, in many countries, whether developed or developing, polarization between rich and poor people has become a striking process, often associated with the growth of national income. Hall shows that 'many developing countries which have had reasonable success during the last two decades maintaining a relatively high growth rate of national income while simultaneously unemployment and underemployment was worsening and absolute poverty increasing' (1982:4). Kohli also concluded that the new wealth had not trickled down (1987:1). The failure of the modernization theory to explain the prevalence of poverty and inequality in developing countries despite the achievement of marked economic growth has led to a wide range of critiques.

Marxist scholars point out that the mechanization and commercialization

of agriculture, i.e the expansion of capitalism in agriculture, generates increased economic differentiation within the rural population, creating a relatively small, landowning capitalist class and a large agricultural proletarian class.¹¹³ In between there is a middle peasantry or a class of more or less self-sufficient household producers, who use mainly their own family labour. This class tends to be squeezed out progressively as the process of differentiation continues.¹¹⁴ The result is a high rate of displacement of the rural population, as many individuals and families are forced to seek work outside agriculture.¹¹⁵ Through the expanded development of capitalism in the agrarian sector, the differentiation perspective assumes a complete dissolution of the peasantry as a social category. This conclusion is drawn in Lenin's writings. According to Lenin (1982:134):

the peasant bourgeoisie oust not only the bottom group, but also the middle group of peasantry. Thus a process specifically characteristic of capitalist economy takes place, the middle members are swept away and the extremes are reinforced - the process of 'depeasantising'

In Lenin's view, commodity production differentiates peasant agriculture into two classes; a class of capitalist farmers (owners of the means of production) and a rural proletariat (sellers of labour power).¹¹⁶ Accordingly, for Lenin and many contemporary Marxist writers, the existence of other modes of production such as the household type of production are considered to be aspects of the transition to capitalism.

1.5.2 Critique of modernization and commoditization

The persistence of the household/peasant mode of production has brought serious criticism of the differentiation perspectives, some of which are as early as the time of Lenin himself. Kautsky acknowledged that the peasantry, far from disappearing, were persisting as a relatively permanent feature of rural society.¹¹⁷

Chayanov recognized the importance of household production and emphasised that family property is both natural and efficient in the rural economy. For Chayanov, household production was the basic characteristic of the peasant economy and is unique to agriculture.¹¹⁸ In Chayanov's view, as Harrison explains (1982:246):

modernization of traditional small farming [is] lying along neither a capitalist nor a socialist road, but as a peasant path of raising the

technical level of agricultural production through agricultural extension work and co-operative organization, at the same time conserving the peasant institutional framework of the family smallholding.

The polemic of the persistence of peasant household production, i.e. simple commodity production, continued to arouse controversial views among contemporary scholars of development and peasant studies. For example, Bernstein emphasises that simple commodity production is 'a form of production that can exist in different historical periods and in variant relations with other forms of production' (1982:163).

Commoditization, therefore, as Bernstein emphasises, is not a uniform process that unfolds through a sequence of a necessary stage, nor is it complete (1982:163). For Bernstein, a major impetus to the further development of commodity relations comes from the operation of state-managed forms of capital (1982:175). Differentiation may be encouraged when the state provides incentives to progressive farmers who eventually consolidate and develop further private property in land and other means of production. In this way, according to Bernstein (1982:174), the state acts to promote the extension and intensification of commodity relations.

For some empirical scholars, the survival of the peasant mode of production in the face of the development of capitalism and the expansion of commodity relations is because peasants are able to supply goods at lower prices than capitalist producers.¹¹⁹ Others see peasants as being efficient in utilising their assets.¹²⁰ Friedmann argues that peasant household production involves important communal and/or class relations which limit the penetration of commodity relations into the productive process (1980:162).

External factors, such as capital flow from merchants and moneylenders, also intervene in maintaining family farming production.¹²¹ It would be difficult, therefore, not to agree with Long and van der Ploeg that 'any serious analysis of commoditization processes must include a consideration of the role of farmer/household strategies in the production and reproduction of agrarian structure'.¹²²

Critiques of the role of both commercialization and commoditization in rural transformation have initiated a wide debate, not only in the domain of rural sociology, but also in the field of agrarian development. Long and van der Ploeg, for example, point out that both approaches operate 'with a historical and unilinear model of agrarian change'. This means, in the words of Long and van der Ploeg, that 'development

signifies the movement from some kind of traditional social order or natural economy towards a fully market-integrated modern type of agriculture where farmers behave according to a supposed logic of market'. Long and van der Ploeg continue that this can 'in no way explain the great variety of forms, directions and rhythms of agrarian change' (1988:31).

Long and van der Ploeg conclude that both approaches are tainted by determinist, linear and externalist views of social change (1994:63). Although they acknowledge the crucial impact of external forces (market and state) on structural changes, they emphasise that these changes are not the outcomes of external actors only. They argue that it is 'theoretically unsatisfactory to base one's analysis on the concept of external determination' (1994:64). Instead Long sought for a more dynamic approach to the understanding of social change, one which 'stresses the interplay and mutual determination of "internal" and "external" factors and relationships, and which recognizes the central role played by human action and consciousness' (1992:20).

As an alternative to both the modernization and neo-Marxist approaches, Long proposes his actor-oriented approach. This approach focuses on how externalities are mediated by the strategies, understandings and commitments of different actors and actor-networks (1997:229). For Long and his colleagues of the "Wageningen Sociology school", the actor-oriented paradigm puts back the interests and strategies of key actors into the equation. The range of actors involved might include government functionaries, export company entrepreneurs, irrigation officials, village-level leaders, political bosses, private landowners, smallholder peasants, groups of village women, agricultural workers, development experts and media creators and communicators.¹²³

The question remains, however, of how does the actor-oriented paradigm systematically conceptualize the role of the state in bringing about changes? Its framework does draw attention to the state as an actor situated within social context, but where to locate the power of the state? It is important to define whether or not the state is an autonomous actor and, if not, to identify the social actors who undermine state autonomy.

Long, however, leaves no doubt about his strong disagreement with the assumption that the outcomes of struggles between agrarian actors are primarily determined by those who possess power (1997:230). Thus he insists (1997:230) that any effective imposition of:

state laws or programmes of development, or measures aimed at promoting the 'logic of the market', must necessarily depend upon whether or not, and to what degree, the various actors involved in these processes come to accept these interventions as legitimate or at least not worth contesting.

According to Long, the actor-oriented perspective 'views state intervention and the modernization of agriculture as a set of ongoing socially constructed and negotiated processes involving specific actors'. Long goes on to say that these processes consist of 'a complex series of social encounters and interfaces involving persons belonging to contrasting, and sometimes even seemingly incompatible, life worlds'.¹²⁴ Long refers to the ability of the weak actors to use 'complex and subtle manipulative ways' by which to influence the negotiations or even to 'hoodwink the more powerful actors' in order to extract significant benefits for themselves (p.230). As it is difficult to assume that the state normally acts as a collectivity, it should be borne in mind that the state's interests and objectives may not coincide with those of certain social actors. Thus the question arises of how far the weaker parties can go in manipulating and shaping the negotiations with powerful actors such as the state or the urban and rural elites.

1.6 Final commentary

It is widely accepted that the state, in all societies, has control over the means of administration and coercion. We may conclude, therefore, that the state has considerable power to shape agrarian socio-economic change.¹²⁵ The outcome of this change is presumably to serve the interests and goals of the state. The latter, of course, will vary according to how we view the state, whether as a tool of the ruling class or as an autonomous institution. Any theory that is capable of explaining development policies, therefore, must be grounded in a broader view of the general determinants of state action. From the analytical standpoint of this study, the state autonomy perspective, therefore, provides an important interpretation of agrarian change and the patterns of development.

By examining the nature of the state in Iraq, it became clear that, as a rentier state, Iraq exercised complete monopoly over the allocation and distribution of the huge oil revenues. The outcome of such a phenomenon was the enhancement of the autonomous character of the

state. During the 1970s state support of the public sector ironically led to the further prosperity of the wealthy segment of the population servicing and supplying the public sector. This was, and has remained, the segment of the private sector most closely tied to direct political clientelism.¹²⁶ Since the 1980s, through the concentration of the apex of power in the office of the presidency and on personal and kinship relations, patron-client ties have become more focused and operational in line with the patronage system. This, however, does not mean that clientelism is disappearing. The solid centralization of the decision-making process, together with the regular use of coercion, has intensified the authoritative nature of the Iraqi state under the current Ba'th Party government.

It is common in almost all the states in the world for development policies to be a translation of the various objectives of the state. Consequently, state intervention in development aims to achieve certain goals, which are not necessarily to serve the interests of development itself. By extending this particular line of argument, one can discern why the actor-oriented approach is asking for the deconstruction of the whole notion of planned intervention in development. Long and van der Ploug regard the claim that intervention is the key to agrarian development as false; they consider intervention to be part of the problem of development itself (1989:235).

Rural policy is a politicized process, thoroughly infused by the forces of power relations. The announced objectives of a state's development policy often differ from those which are really intended. Hopkins (1984: 7-8), in looking at the relationship between development and government in the Middle East, explains:

while the manifest function of "development" carried out under government auspices might be to raise the income of the poor, or improve agricultural productivity or raise health standards, the latent function might rather be to reinforce the weight of the central government, the political centre and its associated class within the total social formation.

In this respect, Kohli affirms that fundamental socio-economic changes are set into motion within the Third World primarily as a consequence of politically defined goals and decisions (1987:28). This assumption, in fact, is evidently applicable to Iraq. The following chapters will attempt to show that, in Iraq, the arm of the political is still able to twist that of capitalist logic.

38 State and society

Notes:

- 1 M Cooper, 1982, P 16-17
- 2 World Bank 1997, p 23
- 3 A Farazmand, 1989, p 2
- 4 World Bank. 1997, p 20
- 5 Wade, R . 1990, p 8
- 6 Hewison, K , ct al, 1993, p 5
- 7 Petras, J , 1989, p 26 and Hewison, K , et al, 1993, p 5
- 8 Jessop, B , 1990, p 66-67
- 9 Ibid, 1990, p 67-68
- 10 Zartman, 1988, Petras, 1989, and Hewison et al, 1993
- 11 Weiss, L and Hobson, J , 1995, p 137
- 12 Wade, R , 1990
- 13 Ibid, p 8-9
- 14 Simone and Feraru, 1995, p 161
- 15 Spoor, M , 1994, p 519
- 16 Ibid
- 17 Seidman, 1994, p 96 and Lewis, 1994, p 439
- 18 Lewis, 1994, p 439
- 19 Sawyer, M , 1989, p 312
- 20 Ibid
- 21 P Streeten, 1992, p 24
- 22 Krueger, 1990 cited in A Islam, 1994, pp 94-95
- 23 World Bank, 1997, p 31-32
- 24 Dutt, A . and et al, 1994, p 3
- 25 Spoor, M , 1994, p 517
- 26 ul Haque, I , 1994, p 22
- 27 Evans, P , 1992, p 141

- 28 Sawyer, M , 1989, p 6-7
- 29 Simone and Feraru, 1995, p 162
- 30 Evans, 1992, p 151, Weiss & Hobson, 1995, p 12, and MacIntyre, 1994, p 5
- 31 Dutt,A , and et al, 1994, p 3
32. Rush, 1992, p 235
- 33 Love, J ,1991,p 161
- 34 Miller and Mair, 1991, p 16
- 35 Dow, S , 1991, p 199-200 in Mair and Miller, A modern guide to economic thought
- 36 Dow, S , 1991, p 200
- 37 Seidman, A ,& R , 1994, p 98
- 38 P Streeken, 1992, p 24
- 39 Killick, T , 1989, p 14
- 40 Wade, R , 1990, p 27
- 41 cited in Rush, 1992, p 45
- 42 Rush, M , 1992, p 45
- 43 Ibid, p 60
- 44 Schneider, E., 1968, p 17-18
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State and society: The social and political structures

This chapter aims to establish the elements which make up rural society in Iraq.¹ It will analyze the ways in which rural society changed as new political structures were imposed. This will provide a clear basis for understanding the interaction between the state and society, the evolution and changes in the nature of the state, as well as looking at agrarian change and the role of the state in this process.

2.1 The society: A historical setting (mid-19th century to 1917)

From the early decades of the sixteenth century until the First World War, Iraq² was a part of the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish ruler (known as *Sultan*) was running "Iraq" through his governors (known as *Wali*) from his capital of Constantinople (Istanbul).

At the end of the nineteenth century, "Iraq" consisted of three provinces (*wilaya*), Mosul in the north, Baghdad in the centre and Basra in the south. The three *wilaya* were administered by a large number of Turkish bureaucrats appointed from the imperial capital, Longrigg states:

In the original form of Ottoman rule, which was pure oriental despotism, all power was the Sultan's. He stood at the head of an elaborate hierarchy of stratified functionaries, and was represented by governors locally as autocratic as himself. Rule was for his sole benefit and grandeur.³

During the last century the people in Iraq's three *wilayas* were mainly Bedouin (nomads) and rural dwellers. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, the total population was estimated to be a little less than two million. Data from that time are scarce and those which are available lack accuracy as they were, firstly, based on mere estimation and,

secondly, produced to serve the purposes of the estimators. For example, the Ottomans collected data for the sake of tax collection, while the British did so later on for political reasons. In 1867, the population of the three regions was estimated to be 1.28 million, this figure had increased to 2.25 million by 1905. See Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Population in 1867-1905 ('000)

Population	1867		1890		1905	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nomads	450	35	433	25	393	17
Rural	525	41	963	50	1,342	59
Urban	310	24	430	25	533	24
Total	1,280	100	1,826	100	2,250	100

Source : Hasan, M., 1966, p. 157

However, Iraq's three regions differed in the density of population and its composition. For instance, in 1867, the North had 265,000 inhabitants, while 491,000 and 524,000 lived in the central and the southern regions, respectively. In 1935 the regional distribution was as follows: 1.04 million inhabitants in the north, 1.3 million in the central and 1.2 million in the southern region.⁴

Thus society in Iraq was made up of three main groups: the urban dwellers, Bedouin and village tribes. The two latter groups covered to a considerable extent urban centres, as many urban dwellers considered themselves as coming from one of the rural tribes.

In the literature, the term tribe has been used to describe many different kinds of groups or social formations. Tappers' definition is a helpful one for understanding the nature of tribes in Iraq. According to Tapper, the term 'tribe may be used loosely of a localized group in which kinship is the dominant idiom of organization, and whose members consider themselves culturally distinct (in terms of customs, dialect or language, and origin)' (1990:9).

2.1.1 *The structure of Bedouin society*

The Bedouins are composed of several tribes in a constant movement from one place to another from north (Mosul regions/ west to the Tigris River) to south (*Shatt al-Arab* River/ south of Basra) searching all the year round for better pasture and weather.

The livelihood of the Bedouin was totally dependent on selling cattle, camels and horses to visiting traders in order to obtain their basic foodstuffs and other essential commodities. Camels and horses were their sole method of transportation and food consumption as well as being used for social events such as dowry or the payment of ransom. Barakat (1990) describes the main features of Bedouin society in the Arab countries:

Bedouin way of life has traditionally asserted (1) solidarity (*'asabiyya*) and its derivatives (such as respect for parents and ancestors, pride in origin, ascription, loyalty to blood relations, honour, the taking of revenge, etc), (2) chivalry (*furussyya*) and its derivatives (courage, gallantry, power, independence, pride, dignity, manhood, defiance, austerity, adherence to a knightly code, etc), (3) hospitality and generosity (giving freely, helping others, giving protection, etc.); (4) freedom (individuality, etc); and (5) simplicity of life ⁵

Cultivation or any other craft work was considered as inferior, shameful and not belonging to the culture of the warriors. Warriner (1962) states:

Tribal tradition prevents the people from taking up occupations which would greatly improve their standard of living, such as vegetable growing, dairy production, and fishing These are by tradition the occupations of the weaker clans and therefore despised ⁶

Retaliation was also a dominating feature among the customary law of the Bedouin. Fighting and often raiding other tribes were matters of pride, even when it was in many instances simply robbery. The tribe's power was based on the strong solidarity among the tribesmen and was embodied in the personality of the tribal chief (called *sheikh* in the middle and south regions and *agha* in the north), his word and authority were unquestionable.

It was the responsibility of the tribe collectively to defend its members and to take revenge when they were abused by members of other

tribes or by government officials. However, the violent aspect should not be overemphasized, because there was also some degree of alliance between tribes over certain time periods.

In order to control the Bedouin and keep them within the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman governors did not hesitate to use force, where necessary. They were particularly aware of the danger of Bedouin tribes forming alliances. The Ottoman governors made use of the existing power structure as a mechanism for ruling the Bedouin. The *wali* approached the tribal chiefs with bribes and a 'stick and carrot' policy. They offered financial help and official decorations to tribal chiefs in return for the compliance of the tribe with the laws of the Ottoman Empire.

It was also easier to control Bedouin who became settled. Between 1867 and 1905, there was a substantial decrease in the nomadic population from 35 per cent to only 17 per cent⁷ (see Table 2.1). This was due to a relative improvement in living standards in villages and towns compared to the hardships of desert life. An increase in the government's power to 'check the Bedouin and reclaim pastures agricultural lands previously used as pastures' reinforced pressure on nomads to abandon their traditional way of life and settle in villages.⁸

Unfortunately, there is a lack of data on the population in general and, particularly, the Bedouin and the rural society in respect of the population growth rate, cultivation, and other socio-economic activities. Moreover, what is available should be treated with much caution, because of the unreliable methods used in gathering information and carrying out the censuses during that time.

2.1.2. *The social structure of villages*

Up to World War 1, the social structure of the village was quite similar to that of the Bedouin, despite the fact that the people were settled and depended on agriculture for their livelihood.

The village was a tribal society. Almost all the inhabitants of any village were related to each other by blood and kinship. They belonged to one clan⁹ called *qabila*, which occupied several villages, depending on the number of its people. The head of the *qabila* was the most powerful person in the region, his decisions were obeyed by all his tribesmen, he had the final say on important events such as raids, revenge against other tribes and settling conflicts. Each *qabila* was composed of several tribes called *ashayer* (single *ashira*)' the people of

one *ashira* lived in one or more villages. The *ashira* was headed by the tribal chief, the *sheikh*.

There was a strong solidarity among the *ashiras* of the same *qabila*, which was exercised in the event of conflicts with other *qabila*. But the clannishness was stronger among the tribesmen of the same *ashira* as was shown when there was a dispute between members of different *ashayer*, even though they belonged to the same *qabila*.

The *ashira* was often formed from a group of a few families, each group was called *fakheth*. See Figure (2.1).¹⁰

Figure 2.1. Tribal organizational structure

<i>QABILA</i>	(regional level)
<i>ASHIRA</i>	(several villages)
<i>FAKHETH</i>	(village level)
TRIBSMEN	

The power structure of the *ashira* was based on the solidarity among the tribe's members and the strong personality of the tribal chief, who was guarded by several armed men. The chief had the command and interdiction solely in his hand, he and his family sat at the top of the hierarchy of power which was of a paternal character. They exercised almost absolute power over the tribesmen regarding all aspects of their lives. This phenomenon was, in fact, reinforced by the Ottoman administration in Iraq through the implementation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858, which legalized the tribal chiefs' control over almost all agricultural land.¹¹

Religious clergy¹² (known as *sayyid* or *a'lim* in the middle and the south regions and as *mullah* in the north) and elderly people also enjoyed a remarkable respect from the chief and the tribesmen. This was due to the influential role of religion. Farsoun and Hajjar show that Islam was deemed to shape the structure and history of the societies of the people who profess it (1990:164).

The *sheikh* used the local religious leaders to increase his power over the rest of the community. It was a mutually beneficial arrangement. The *sheikh* provided money for the religious leaders and showed them respect. This encouraged others to respect their religious leaders, too. In

return, the religious clergy used the "Friday preaching" to manipulate the people. They quoted the Koran and the Prophet's teaching to encourage the rural community to show respect and obedience to their leaders (the tribal chief and the *wali*) as if it was demanded by the *Sharia* (the revealed law of Islam) and was, therefore, a religious obligation. Such propaganda was received by the rural people with a great deal of conformity because of their strong religious faith.

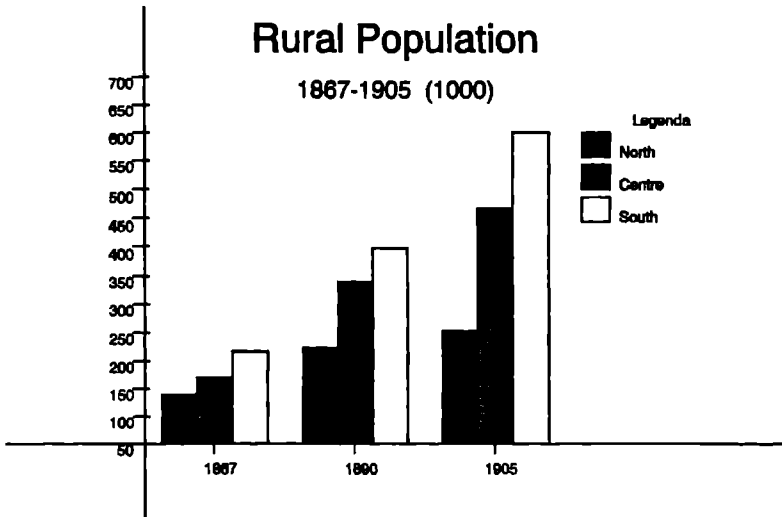
There is a great deal of evidence from a variety of rural societies which indicates that villagers look more kindly on a man of religious eminence than upon a chief. But like the chief, the *sayyid/Mullah* too is looking after himself and his own soul. His life is not spent in the service of others; the religious person is respected, not for what he does for the community, but simply for what he is - a holy man.¹³

The chief's house had an extension called *al-mudhif*.¹⁴ In *al-mudhif* the traditional leaders headed, by the chief, met with tribesmen to discuss and take many decisions on the daily matters of the tribe. Meetings were also held on some occasions in the mosque. The *al-mudhif* was also a place to seek the protection of the chief and it was open to everybody who feared a revenge attack until the chief reached a compromise between the disputing parties according to the tribal customs.

The settlement of many tribes in the rural areas increased the numbers of the rural population. Figure 2.2 shows the geographical concentration of the rural population at the beginning of this century.

Land ownership was also used as a means of maintaining the power structure within village society. Although all land was considered to be state property, in practice, the tribal chiefs acted as if they owned it. Each tribe had an area of land assigned to it. No other tribes were allowed to use it and each tribe defended its land, using force where necessary.

Figure 2.2. Geographical distribution of the rural population 1867-1905 ('000).



(Source: Based on data in Hasan, M., 1966, p. 157)

The chief and his family farmed large areas of the most fertile land, leaving the rest to other tribesmen. The result was that many of the tribes had small, unfertile plots, or no land at all. Though the majority of the *fellaheen* (= peasants in Arabic; singular: *fellah*) of any village were related in kinship, there were other *fellaheen* of different tribes who took refuge in the village with the permission of the *sheikh*. Eventually the *fellaheen* were unable to maintain themselves financially by working on their own land, so they turned to the *sheikh* for help on the basis of share-cropping arrangements by which the lion's share of the production went to the *sheikh*. Alternatively, the cultivation of the tribal chief's land was carried out by the *fellaheen* as agricultural labourers, but the wages were hardly enough for the basic necessities of daily life. According to Gabbay (1978), in the purely tribal areas, the *fellah*:

could not be called an agricultural labourer or a tenant at will. His economic position was inescapably governed by his social position. His duties and rights arose more out of his tribal affiliation than out of his economic function as a tiller of the soil.¹⁵

Village power structure

The Ottoman administration established taxes in order to benefit from the agricultural land and production. All tribal chiefs were supposed to enter into a contract with the government in order to lease land which they could then cultivate. They then had to pay taxes either in cash or as a percentage of the production to the government. It became increasingly important to expand control over the rural areas and secure the flow of taxes.

The *Wali* acted as a bridge between the *Sultan* and the tribal chiefs. When the government was in a strong position, the *Wali* would frequently resort to the use of force to collect taxes. The *Gendarme*, the *Wali's* police force, was used for this purpose. However, the Turkish administration, particularly by the end of the last century, was weak and ineffective. It was also corrupt. This fact was exploited by the traditional local leadership (the *sheikh/gha* and *sayyid/Mullah*). Often they continued to cultivate what they considered as their tribal lands without entering into any contract with the government. The *Wali* would offer the tribal chiefs bribes, positions in government, financial aid and so on, in exchange for the collection of taxes. The *Wali* was careful not to allow alliances to form between tribal chiefs and practised a policy of 'divide and rule'. When taxes were paid, these were therefore often used to maintain the existing power structure.

The Turkish government had little influence on the rural population. Very little was done to change patterns of land ownership, as this would have disturbed the reluctant alliance between the *Wali* and the tribal chiefs. Nothing was done to improve the living standards of the majority of the rural people. In fact, even when the Ottoman Land Code of 1885 was implemented in Iraq, it tended to strengthen the existing landlord-peasant production relationship.¹⁶ There were, however, some changes in Iraq's rural areas during the period of Ottoman rule. The agricultural production relationship changed from *sheikh/tribesman* mode to a *sheikh/fellaheen* production relationship, i.e. the position of the *fellaheen* tended to change from a social to an economic relationship, and the land tended to be held by the 'landlord' more as a private holding than as a

communal property, with the holder as the trustee of the tribe.¹⁷

The *sheikhs* started to distance themselves gradually from direct involvement in tribal life and preferred to live in urban areas, leaving the responsibility of farming their land to managers, who supervised agricultural work and collected revenue. The development of steam navigation on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers from the second half of the last century up to the World War 1 by a British company (East-India Company) and the Ottoman Administration led to the foundation of new villages and towns on the banks of rivers, particularly in the southern region. The result was more tribal settlement and an expansion of agricultural production. Grain production rose by about one per cent per annum and production of dates by slightly more. The area under cultivation increased fairly rapidly, from probably less than 100,000 *donum*¹⁸ (61,700 acres) in the 1860's to about 1,613,000 *donum* (997,321 acres) in 1913.¹⁹

Steam navigation, which was the sole modern means of commercial transportation, had activated foreign trade and linked Iraq's three *Wilaya* with international markets. Another major stimulus for increasing foreign trade came from 'the opening in 1869 of the Suez Canal, which greatly reduced sailing time between the Persian Gulf and Europe'.²⁰

Dates, wool and grain were the main Iraqi export commodities, most of which went to the Indian and European markets, particularly Britain with its colonies, while the Middle Eastern markets became less attractive. Trade flourished in Iraq's three *Wilaya* until the onset of First World War, (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Trade development 1880-1913 (annual averages, 1000 British Pounds)

Years	Imports			Exports				total
	sugar	textile	total	dates	wool	wheat	barley	
1880-84		n.a	788	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	940
1885-90		n.a	988	292	268	72	22	1208
1890-94	60	n.a	1523	336	240	165	89	1453
1895-99	86	451	1222	257	321	64	77	1259
1900-04	91	512	1373	317	188	30	216	1536
1905-09	87	839	2019	402	222	129	260	1959
1910-13	256	1002	3170	487	273	151	619	2700

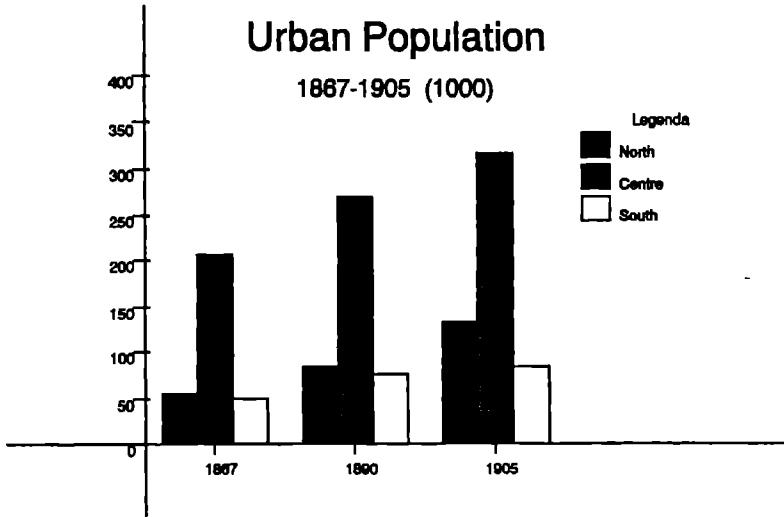
Source: Owen, R., 1981, p. 275

2.1.3 *Social diversification*

Iraq's society as a whole has always been heterogeneous in terms of both religion and ethnicity. There are significant differences of ethnic origin, language, religion and culture among Iraqis. The majority of the inhabitants are Arabs, who live in the middle and south regions. But Iraq is no different from many other Middle Eastern countries in regard to the overriding gap between rural and urban communities, which is probably no less significant than any other cultural differences within Iraqi society.

Up to the first decade of the twentieth century, the urban population was estimated to be around 24 per cent of the total population of the three *wilaya* of Iraq, (see Table 2.1 and Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Urban population in the three *wilaya* of Iraq, 1867-1905 ('000s)



(Based on data in Hasan, M., 1966, p. 157)

The density of population was concentrated in a few big urban centres, i.e. Baghdad, Basra and Mosul, in addition to other small towns such as Sulaimaniyah and Kirkuk in the north, Karbala and Najaf in the middle and Nasiriah in the south.

The Turkish *Wali*, who was based in the main city, was at the top of the power hierarchy, aided by senior administrative officials. Urban aristocrats and religious clergy played an essential role in the power structure. Without their support, the Turkish administration would have had serious problems in establishing its authority among the people.

The urban population regarded the *fellaheen* as ignorant and primitive, but brave and generous. This sort of attitude was maintained even when the rural emigrants had settled in the towns for many years. The social values and cultural customs of the urban-based Arabs and Kurds became less rigid and, to some extent, different from those of their ethnic

tribesmen in the rural areas. The life of urban people, however, was on the whole governed by Islamic laws and had come under the influence of Turkish and Persian cultures, whereas the life of the tribes escaped those influences and continued to follow Islamic-tinged ancient tribal customs.²¹

The Kurds:

The Kurds' ethnic roots reach back thousands of years to the dawn of Mesopotamia. They were not actually called Kurds until the seventh century, when most of them converted from Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity to Islam.²² Almost all the Kurds adhere to the *Sunni* branch of Islam.

Though the origin of the Kurds is uncertain, they have retained their distinct identity for at least two thousand years, whilst their neighbours have suffered successive invasions and absorbed both foreign peoples and cultures. However, according to McDowall (1985):

It is unlikely that they are purely aboriginal, or derive from one single source. Most of them are probably the descendants of Indo-European tribes setting amongst aboriginal inhabitants in the mountains as much as 4000 years ago. The Kurds themselves believe they are descended from the Medes.²³

The Kurds live today where they have always lived, in the area of northern Iraq, south-east Turkey, north-east Iran and north-west Syria. Since the early thirteenth century much of this area has been called Kurdistan, although it was not until the sixteenth century that the term Kurdistan came into common usage.²⁴ In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Kurdistan was often the battlefield between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. The first partition of Kurdistan between the two empires took place following their treaty of 1639, the boundary of which is identical to the present border between Turkey and Iran.²⁵

Attempts by the Ottomans to assert their authority over that region met with major uprisings in 1837-52 and 1880-81.²⁶ The defeat of the Ottomans in the First World War and the British occupation of the Mosul *wilaya* in 1918 were seen by Kurds as a golden opportunity for pressing their claims for self-determination²⁷, further encouraged by the acceptance of the Istanbul government (as a result of its defeat in the war) the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920²⁸, which acknowledged the formation of independent states in Armenia and Kurdistan.

The Treaty of Sèvres [articles 62 and 64 of the fourth part] recognized the Kurdish right to nationhood and said the right should be transformed, in the course of a year, into complete independence for a Kurdish nation-state, consisting of all parts of Kurdistan.²⁹

General Ataturk's (Mustafa Kamal) seizure of power in Turkey led to the blocking of the implementation of the Treaty.³⁰ Kurdistan was again divided, the British were allotted the southeastern region (Iraq), the French were allotted the southern area (Syria), and Turkey was allotted the northern area, the largest, geographically and in population.³¹ By the early 1920s, the political geography of the Kurdish areas had begun to assume the general shape that it has today, with the Kurds divided between the states of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey.³² Despite the fact that the Treaty of Sèvres was never ratified, it marked, according to Sluglett (1987), an important turning point in the evolution of the Kurdish political movement, since it was the first formal declaration of intent to set up a separate Kurdish political entity. Since then and until now the Kurdish demand for self-determination has been denied by the four states. They often use military force in controlling Kurdistan.

Precise figures for the Kurdish population are impossible to ascertain. According to Sim (1980), this is because of infrequent and inadequate censuses and deliberate understatements by central governments. Approximate figures are shown in Table 2.3.

According to Sim (1980), the cultivation of cereals was important in all parts of Kurdistan, accounting for roughly 15 per cent of the total in Turkey, 35 per cent in Iran and 30 per cent in Iraq. The major mineral is oil, found in commercial quantities in Kirkuk (Iraq), Batman in Turkey and at Rumeylan in Syria.³³ Iron and natural gas are developed in Kurdish areas of Iraq, but most of Kurdistan's mineral wealth of coal, copper, gold and silver lies largely untapped.³⁴ The exploitation of these minerals, especially oil, heightens both the Kurdish sense of injustice and the governments' determination to allow no separatism to threaten these important resources.³⁵

Table 2.3. Kurds Population in 1979

Country	Kurds	Total Population
Iran	4,500,000	38,146,000
Iraq	3,000,000	13,134,000
Turkey	8,700,000	45,182,000
Syria	600,000	8,534,000
Lebanon	100,000	2,981,000
USSR (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan)	200,000	14,031,000
Total	17,200,000	

Source: Sim, R., 1980, p. 3

The Kurds in Iraq are the second biggest ethnic group after the Arabs. There are other ethnic groups, but on a smaller scale, such as Turkmans (who mostly live in the Kirkuk area); Persians and Assyrians are scattered all over the three regions.

Religious groups:

Islam is the religion of the vast majority of the population, with the dwellers of the south (the Arabs) belonging to the *Shi'a* branch of Islam. The people in the middle are mixed *Shi'a* and *Sunni* branch, while the people of the northern region (including most of the Kurds) belong to the *Sunni* branch of Islam. There are other smaller religious communities such as Christians, Jews, *Yazidi* and *Sabeans*. Table (2.4) shows that, in 1919, the population was composed of 17.5 per cent Kurds and 77.5 per cent Arabs and other small minorities.³⁶ Even then, Islam (*Shi'a* and *Sunni*) was the religion of the majority of the population, followed by the Jewish faith, then Christianity and a small number of *Yazidi* and *Sabeans*.³⁷ Most of the Christians lived in the main towns, particularly in Mosul area and the northern region. The Jews, like the Christians, were living in most of the big cities.

Table 2.4: Iraq's Ethnic and Religious composition in 1919

Ethnics	Number	Religion	Number
Arabs	2,206,192	<i>Shi'a</i>	1,494,015
Kurds	499,336	<i>Sunni</i>	1,146,685
Persians	79,908	Jews	87,488
Turks	60,493	Christians	78,792
Indian	3,061	Others	43,302
Europeans	292		
Total	2,849,282	Total	2,849,282

Source: Hershlag, Z., 1980, p. 239

The power hierarchy of the government in the urban areas was the monopoly of the Muslims and they looked upon the Christians and the Jews as inferior to them to such an extent that they considered them as second class citizens. That attitude was encouraged and backed by the Turkish administration resulting, in some instances, in bloodshed.

Commerce and handicrafts were the main occupation of the Christians, but (unlike the Jews) some Christians were also engaged in agriculture on the outskirts of towns in northern Iraq. The Jewish community was wealthier than the Christian, and was chiefly engaged in trade and, to a lesser extent, in handicrafts³⁸

Sabeans were and are still concentrated in Amara and Basra, working mainly as goldsmiths and jewelers. The *Yazidi* were and are still living in the Mosul area and working mostly in agriculture. According to Penrose, the *Yazidi* were originally Muslims but have:

followed an heretical deviation from Islam which probably embodied elements derived from pagan cults and, more doubtfully from Zoroastrianism. By the orthodox they have sometimes been assailed as devil-worshippers but this seems an absurd travesty of their view that Allah in his infinite mercy will pardon even the angel who was cast out, and will let him return³⁹

2.2. The Colonial administration (1917-1932)

The next significant change in the power structure took place in the First World War. The Ottoman Empire officially allied itself with Germany. Consequently, Iraq was invaded by the British and, on March 11th 1917, Baghdad fell to the British.

The British consolidated their occupation by applying a strategy of political rather than military control. Their aim was to convince the people that they had succeeded in removing the foreign Turkish rulers of Iraq and therefore in liberating the indigenous population. The public address given by General Maude, the leader of the British troops on March 17, 1917, one week after the invasion, highlights that policy:

To the people of Baghdad *Wilaya* our armies have not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies but as liberators Since the days of Hulaku your citizens have been subject to the tyranny of strangers, your palaces have fallen into ruins, your gardens have sunken in desolation and yourselves have groaned in bondage . it is the wish not only of my king and his people, but it is also the wish of the great nations with whom he is in alliance that you should prosper But you, the people of Baghdad, are not to understand that it is the wish of the British Government to impose upon you alien institutions It is the hope of the British Government that the aspirations of your philosophers and writers shall be realized again ⁴⁰

Once the initial military invasion had succeeded in ousting the Turks, the British rapidly established new administrative structures to run the three *Wilaya* of Iraq. These were regarded as highly important in tightening the British hold over the population. Vast amounts of money were pumped into developing the administrative structure. For example, administrative expenditure rose by 600 per cent between 1916 and 1918. In fact, it rose 70 times more than expenditure on education and medical services for the same period.⁴¹ Improving the people's standard of living was not seen as a high priority.

According to Atuyah (1973), the money for this administration came primarily from land revenue and general taxes on customs and agricultural produce. Taxes were increased to cover costs. For example, in 1918, the tax on gross winter crop production was ten per cent in the southern region. By 1919, this tax level had been raised to 20 per cent for *miri* land (state-owned land) and 15 per cent for *tapu* (privately-owned) land.⁴² The British, like the Ottomans, realized the importance and power of the *sheikhs* in the rural power structure, and so the exist-

ing arrangements between the landlords and *fellaheen* were maintained. In fact, the British tribal policy was one of consolidating the political and economic position of such *sheikhs* and the recognition of tribal customs (Batatu, 1978, 24, Pool, 1979:75). The British also recruited some big landlords (urban aristocrats) as important allies. They often favoured these less traditional landlords at the expense of the tribal chiefs.

In order to gain the support of both tribal chiefs and big landlords, they officially recognized their position. Some were offered senior posts in the civil service, while others were appointed as mayors within their areas. They received financial aid and a monthly allowance to enable them to suppress opponents to the regime, both within and outside their tribes. The *sheikhs* were also given responsibility for collecting taxes from their tribesmen. This was controversial, as they had been opposing tax collection for years. However, a *sheikh's* failure to collect taxes would lead to his removal in favour of a more reliable *sheikh*. Other responsibilities included the maintenance of law and order within their tribal district and failure in this respect could also lead to fines being imposed on the *sheikh*.⁴³

In 1918 the British issued the Tribal Disputes Law. This enabled the *sheikhs* to continue to settle their disputes by tribal methods under the jurisdiction of the *sheikh*. It gave him absolute authority to act as judge and jury over his tribes in both civil and criminal matters. This regulation was, according to Sluglett, included in the ordinary Laws of Iraq in 1924 after suitable changes in wording were made from British to Iraqi officials (1976:241).

The mandate system:

In April 1920 the League of Nations approved the British demand to take Iraq under its mandate. The dispute over the Mosul area between the British and the defeated Ottomans was left unresolved, although the area was, in practice, controlled by the British. 'On 3 May 1920, the British mandate for Iraq was announced in Baghdad. It meant that Iraq became a British responsibility before the League of Nations'.⁴⁴ Penrose explains that:

The mandate system was based on the view that the peoples in a large proportion of Africa and a smaller proportion of Asia who had been in a dependent or

colonial status were entitled to self-determination, but as yet were insufficiently developed in a material and educational sense to stand wholly by themselves in the modern world. A great power would therefore be given a Mandate by the League of Nations over each of the territories brought within the system.⁴⁵

The British started to introduce a version of a democratic constitution. The First High Commissioner, Sir Percy Cox, formed an Iraqi Council of Ministers by late 1920. This was not because local tradition demanded it, but because the British sought a façade behind which to run the new system. In August 1921 Iraq became a monarchy, but still under the British mandate, in which Faisal ibn Hussein (an Arab ruler but not Iraqi) was enthroned by the British to be the King of "The Hashemite Kingdom of Iraq".⁴⁶ For appearances' sake, it was decided that the relationship between Britain and Iraq should be regulated by treaties. An electoral law published in May 1922 prepared the way for the choice of a constituent assembly which, in March 1924, ratified an Anglo-Iraqi treaty guaranteeing the special interests of Britain in Iraq.

During the mandate, there were six principal elements in the government and politics of Iraq: the British, the king, the tribes, cabinets, parliament and administration. Of these, the British were the most independent and powerful. The high commissioner, who advised the king and Iraqi cabinets, retained ultimate authority over a large number of British advisers who were employed in the central and local bureaucracies. Those at the central administration might advise ministers, formulate or block the successful implementation of parliamentary legislation. The local British advisers and officials kept in touch with tribes and events in the rural areas and again were able to implement or impede the instructions of the Iraqi government. In other words, Iraqi cabinets were powerless to enforce legislation without the blessing of the British.⁴⁷

The government wanted to disarm the tribes by asking the *sheikhs* to surrender the tribe's rifles and sign a pledge to maintain order and follow the given instructions. The implementation of such a policy required transport and other communications to be improved to make the dispatch of troops easier. Nevertheless, the tribes were well armed and therefore difficult to control, despite the occasional use of British force to keep them under control.

However, the British occupation and, later, its mandate over Iraq were never accepted by the Iraqi people as a whole or the rural population, in particular, despite the feeling of relief at the removal of their

former Turkish rulers.

2.2.1 *The peasant movement*

Local leaders and their tribes found the position of the British and their attempts to control rural areas, unacceptable. Their opposition gradually developed into a serious challenge to the British. Anti-British feeling grew in rural and in urban areas. In rural areas, particularly in the south, the religious *Shi'a* officials (*ulama*-single *a'lim*) played an important part in mobilizing the people against the British. In Karbala, the *ulama* proclaimed a *jihad* (holy war) against the British.⁴⁸ In the urban areas it was the intellectuals who developed feelings of national independence and anti-colonialism. Some cities saw incidents of violence and the unrest spread through the tribes of the southern part of Iraq as far as Kurdistan.

2.2.2 *The pattern of the 1920 uprising*

Conflicts usually arose over the failure of the tribal chiefs to pay taxes or to carry out orders given by the British. In early 1919 when the *sheikh* of *Albu Salih* (a large southern tribe) refused to pay their taxes, the British launched an air and ground attack. This ended in victory for the British.⁴⁹ The British were, of course, militarily superior to the tribesmen. They did not hesitate to use this military power to accomplish their objectives.

A report sent by a British Official to his Headquarters in Baghdad highlights the British attitude and policy towards the tribes.

There seems to be a general feeling of unrest amongst the tribes, and also a tendency not to obey orders issued by the Political Officers... I hope as soon as the scheme for a military detachment has been developed and a straight road has been made from the detachment to Rumaytha, that permission will be given to teach three or at least one of these tribes a lesson that the remainder will bear in mind for a few months to come.⁵⁰

This report refers to an incident in Rumitha, where a tribe called Dulaim regularly refused to pay taxes and continually flaunted British instructions. On 30th June 1920, the local British official in the area detained

the tribe's *sheikh*. This sparked off the 1920 revolution. Tribesmen on hearing of the *sheikh's* arrest, immediately stormed the building and released him. The tribes having been encouraged by the initial success of the Dulaim in releasing their *sheikh*, began a wider rebellion against the British. The rebellion spread from one region to another. Soon the entire area of the lower Euphrates was in revolt, with a fresh uprising breaking out around Baghdad. By mid-August the whole country, with the exception of the Tigris Valley in the south and the heavily controlled urban centres, was in revolt.⁵¹

The urban protests were mostly spontaneous acts. There was no effective organized alliance between rural and urban Iraqi rebels, although this alliance was significant. Urban-rural alliances had played an important role in the success of peasant uprisings throughout the world.⁵²

However, the military power of the British far outweighed that of the tribesmen. The British army had fighter planes, heavy artillery and tanks, whereas the rebel tribesmen had hatchets, sticks and a few rifles. Nevertheless, uprisings continued to occur until early 1921. By February 1921 the revolt had been crushed, between 8,000 and 9,000 rebels had been killed or wounded and the British suffered 2,000 casualties.⁵³

2.2.3 *The effect of the uprising*

Although the revolution ended in defeat for the rural population, it did have a significant effect in two ways. Firstly, it served to make the British aware of the dangers of hostility between themselves and the traditional leaders. It reinforced in their minds the importance of establishing cooperation between local leaders and the British, if a policy of indirect rule was to succeed. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the attempted revolution increased political awareness amongst the Iraqi population. The political consciousness of the rural population became more established. They became aware that something should be done against oppression, whether it was by a foreign or domestic force. That awareness was manifested in 1958, when a group of military officers overthrew the monarchy, farmers immediately showed their support for the revolution and succeeded in chasing chiefs and big landowners out of the rural areas.

2.3 The monarchy (1932-1958)

In December 1925, the League of Nations recommended that the Mosul area should be integrated with other parts of Iraq.⁵⁴ In 1926 a treaty was signed between Britain and Turkey, with the approval of the League of Nations, concerning the Mosul area. The two parties agreed that the Mosul area was a part of Iraq's territory.

In the early 1930s, Iraq's population was around 3 million. There were 2,246,000 rural, 808,000 urban people and 234,000 nomads and semi-nomads.⁵⁵

In October 1932 the Kingdom of Iraq came out of the British mandate and was granted formal independence from Britain (Faisal I maintained his role as the king of Iraq) and became a member of the League of Nations, putting an end to a period of twelve years of mandate, but not to the real influence of Britain upon Iraq's internal and external affairs.

Following the pattern of other recently independent ex-British colonies, the new Iraqi state was left to face tremendous institutional, social, economic and political difficulties. This was a well known British policy. It was aimed at forcing any newly independent government to maintain bonds with Britain. Therefore, Iraq's first king 'Faisal strongly believed that effective Anglo-Iraqi friendship and cooperation established on a mutual basis would eventually serve the interests of both parties'.⁵⁶

After Iraq became a monarchy, the power structure and socio-economic situation of the rural society witnessed no improvement of any kind. In fact, the impoverishment and the oppression of the *fellaheen* was given further legal authority when the government issued "The Law of Rights and Duties of Cultivators" in 1933. The politicians claimed this was to serve as a measure to stop the massive rural-urban migration.

According to one of its provisions, no farmer was allowed to be employed unless he was free from debt to the landlord. Police were used to force the emigrant farmer to return to his landlord and be in servitude to him until he paid off his debts. If he escaped, the landlord could destroy his hut and throw his family out.⁵⁷ Thus the dominance of the tribal chiefs was further enhanced and given legal backing, such enforcement turned the tribal chiefs into the sole authority in their regions.

In practice, there was very little government authority in rural areas.

This was for two main reasons: firstly, presuming that the government wanted to enforce its will on rural areas, the British (who held key positions as advisors in the King's government) and, of course, the chiefs were opposed to such measures. Secondly, the government had no military or police power capable of establishing control over the armed tribes. In fact, the government was forced, due to its lack of military power, to form alliances with the traditional rural upper class who controlled most of the arms. In 1933, there were 100,000 rifles in the country as a whole, with the government possessing only 15,000 of them.⁵⁸ It is not surprising, therefore, that the traditional leaders had an almost free hand in controlling the tribes' economic resources.

The government of King Faisal (1921-33) was eager to establish control over the rural areas, but it intended to do this with the support of tribal chiefs and did not wish to be seen as threatening. In 1933 King Faisal declared that:

They should not be given cause to feel that it is the intention of the government to wipe them out, on the contrary we should, as far as circumstances permit, assure them of their livelihood and well-being.⁵⁹

King Faisal aimed to bring together in one state the tribal chiefs, the *Shi'a* Moslems, who dominate middle and southern Iraq, and the Kurds in the north. He wanted to be seen as the overall ruling and administrative power. He was regularly occupied and concerned in trying to unite the heterogeneous people of Iraq and cool down revolts based on tribal, ethnic, religious or other differences.

Later, under the rule of King Ghazi (1933-39), these local internal conflicts continued. The King's policy did not really deviate from that of his predecessor King Faisal. There were several tribal rebellions and military coups, depending on the relative power of the government throughout the period. In 1939, King Ghazi died in a mysterious car accident in Baghdad and was succeeded by his son Faisal II. Faisal II was a child when he was crowned in 1939, so his uncle Abdul-Ilah ruled as the regent until 1953. Then Faisal II took over the administration until he was overthrown by the 14 July 1958 Revolution.

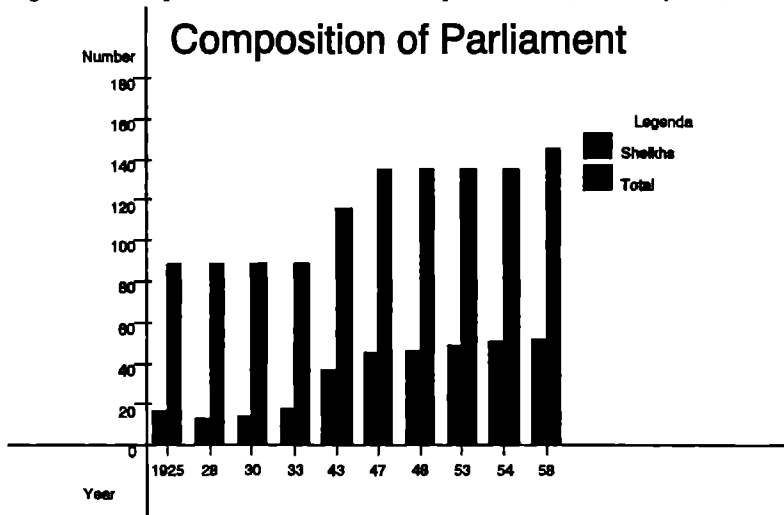
2.3.1 The rule of the elite

During the period of the monarchy, the state legislative power was vested in a parliament composed of two houses, the Senate and the

Chamber of Deputies, and the King. Members of the Senate were appointed by the King, while the deputies were elected by a secret ballot on the basis of one deputy for every 20,000 male inhabitants. Until 1935, the number of deputies was 88, but was increased to 108 in 1935, to 118 in 1943 and stood at 135 deputies before the monarchy was overthrown in July 1958.⁶⁰

Iraq's political life was largely in the hands of landed upper class and tribal chiefs, who secured positions in the parliament through their traditional power over the *fellaheen*. The *sheikhs* formed more than one-third of the members of parliament (see Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4. Representation of *sheikhs* in parliament (selected years)



(Source: based on data in Batatu, H., 1978, p.103)

Most of these *sheikhs* were illiterate and had very little understanding or knowledge of Iraqi politics. They continue, even today, to be the butt of many jokes about their behaviour during parliamentary sessions.

Theoretically, the parliament was meant to represent the whole Iraqi nation, i.e. rural and urban, Arabs, Kurds and other minorities, but it was

the rural landlords and aristocrats, regardless of their ethnic origin, who became members of the parliament, as long as they maintained strong ties with the authorities. The *Dizeyi* Kurdish family is a case in point. Under the monarchy the *Dizeyi aghas* secured their overlordship by developing close connections with the Baghdad authorities. Some of them became members of parliament and even cabinet ministers.⁶¹

The monarchy legalised several political parties, all of which were controlled and led by the elite. These parties were mainly groups of individuals who had come together because of their position in society and did not represent any particular political ideology. They had no continuity or any real organisation.⁶² The parties did not therefore attempt to involve the *fellaheen* in their political organisations or to mobilise them. Farouk-Sluglett (1993) explains:

One feature peculiar to Iraqi politics between the end of the Second World War and the Revolution of 1958 was that there was little room for the development and expression of a 'conventional' democratic political tradition. As a result no liberal democratic party was able to muster anything like mass support or to build up a well functioning organization.⁶³

The first party to work among the farmers in Iraq was the Communist party (ICP) which was formed in March 1934 and operated as an underground organisation. It became active in the rural areas of Nasiriya in the southern region of the country from the early 1940s and managed to involve the *fellaheen* in a critical understanding of their situation and then involved many of them in its political activities. In fact, the Communist Party was willing to take measures to organize a rural guerrilla base, but it was too hazardous to resort to a rural guerrilla struggle. The party's reason for dismissing such action or pushing for a continuous political agitation of farmers against their landlords was that the farmers were not ready for violent actions.⁶⁴

This idea of the ICP is similar to what Eric Wolf (1988) has noticed with other peasants elsewhere:

The poor peasants or landless who are dependent on a landlord for most or all of their livelihood, have no tactical power. They are completely within the power of their employers, without sufficient resources to use for their own power struggle, poor peasants and the landless are unlikely to pursue the course of rebellion unless they are able to rely on some external power to challenge the power which constrains them.⁶⁵

In 1949 the monarchy succeeded in putting a drastic check on the

political activity of the ICP. Yousif Selman (known as Fahad), the General-Secretary of the ICP, together with two other key party members were hanged.⁶⁶ The monarchy's policy of repression was directed not only against the ICP, but also against the Kurdish national movement.

The Kurdish Issue:

Since the early years of this century, the Kurdish question has been a major issue in Iraq's internal and external politics. Under the British occupation of Iraq and, later, during the mandate, the British indicated to the Kurds that they could expect no support from Britain in their attempts to assert their national independence.⁶⁷ In fact, the British frequently used military force to put down the Kurdish revolts. In 1922, the Kurdish rebellion in the areas of Rowanduz and Suliamaniya (north-eastern Iraq), led by *sheikh* Mahmud, was countered by a British military offensive. It was not until July 1924 that Suliamaniya itself was occupied by the British troops.⁶⁸

A similar policy towards the Kurds was followed even after Iraq became a monarchy. The Kurdish revolts of 1930 and 1931, led by *sheikh* Mahmud of the Suliamaniya area, were crushed and Mahmud was exiled from Iraq.⁶⁹ However, a new and generally more effective nucleus of Kurdish opposition was developing in the Barazani tribal lands. *Mullah* Mustafa Barazani emerged in the early 1930s as the principal figure in Iraqi Kurdish politics.⁷⁰

The period between 1930 and 1945 witnessed several Kurdish revolts organised by Mustafa Barazani against the monarchy's authority in the Barazan area. All of them were put down by the Iraqi army. In 1945 the Iraqi government sent 14,000 troops against Barzani's ill-equipped forces, forcing him and many of his followers to flee to Iranian Kurdistan in October of that year.⁷¹

2.3.2 Rural life and agriculture

Under the monarchy the development of human resources was totally neglected. Rural people throughout Iraq lived in complete poverty. The majority of the people lived in clay huts roofed with straw thatch in the north, and reeds or palm leaves in the south. They had very little

furniture, commonly only a few mats and cooking utensils. They often shared their shelter with their livestock.

A typical *fellah* would earn an annual net income of only ID. 20 (\$ 58), according to estimates made by the World Bank mission to Iraq in 1951. Iraq's per capita income was estimated as \$ 85 by the UN in 1949.⁷² This income was mainly spent on basic food. Fruit and vegetables would have been too expensive, and meat was eaten only occasionally. Some of the income was used for cheap clothing. A man may also have bought a second-hand jacket, but shoes were a rarity among the *fellaheen*.⁷³

Living in these poor conditions with inadequate nutrition, health standards were very low. Malaria, hookworm and bilharzia were rife. For example, during the 1940's, there were, on average, 600,000 cases of malaria per annum, but there was only one doctor for every 6,400 people and 1.25 hospital beds for every 1,000 people.⁷⁴ Warriner (196-2) states 'it is not exaggerating to state that the *fellah* is a living pathological specimen, as he is probably a victim of ankylostomiasis, ascariasis, malaria, bilharzia, trachoma, bejel, and possibly of tuberculosis also.'⁷⁵

Agricultural productivity remained low. Traditional systems of production were unchanged. The *fellaheen* followed a fallow system, using wooden, animal-drawn ploughs, and digging sticks. Other farming practices, including harvesting, were carried out by hand. There was therefore little ability to increase productivity. The average productivity of wheat, for example, was 0.5 tonnes/hectare between 1948-1950, whereas in other Middle Eastern countries it was higher, 0.9 tonnes/hectare in Syria and as much as 1.8 tonnes/hectare in Egypt over the same period. The Iraqi average was 50 times less than that in the United Kingdom.⁷⁶

Here it might be useful to mention that cultivated land was mainly used for grain production. Dry farming predominated in the north and north east region, as agriculture relied totally on rain, while rivers and canals were the sole source of irrigation in the middle and southern regions. The productive area of 13.5 million acres is divided roughly equally between the irrigation zone of the south, the alluvial plain between the two rivers, and the rainfed zone of the north. In all three areas, the only pattern of cropping was the fallow system (half the land was cultivated each year, the other half remained uncultivated). Wheat, barley and rice were the dominant crops. See Table 2.5.

Table 2.5. Area of land and production of main crops 1934-1954
(area: '000 hectares, production: '000 tons)

Crop	Area of cultivation (average)		Production (average)	
	1934-8	1950-4	1934-8	Average 1950-4
Wheat	661	1,086	478	691
Barley	734	992	575	948
Rice	152	137	205	180
Cotton	16	40	2	5
Dates	n.a	n.a	260	285

Source: Warriner, D., 1962, pp. 117-118

Little was done to modernize agriculture. There was virtually no increase in government investment in programmes of this kind, even though Iraq's revenue increased thanks to crude oil exports. For example, during the 1940s, state receipts from oil export rose from 2.8 million ID. to 73.7 million ID.⁷⁷ Over the next few years the government used its increased income to improve its military position and strengthen internal security. See Table 2.6.

Table 2.6. Budget expenditures of few ministries 1949-55 (ID. million)

Ministry	1949-50	50-51	51-52	52-53	53-54	54-55
Defence	6.6	7.2	7.9	13.8	15.9	15.6
Interior	4.2	5.7	5.4	8.8	10.4	12.8
Education	2.6	3.6	4.0	2.2	2.5	3.3
Health	1.3	1.8	2.3	2.8	3.0	3.8
Agriculture	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.5	2.1
Social Affairs	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.8

Source: Cited in Harris, G., 1958, p. 321

According to official figures, agriculture's share of the national budget was three per cent, rising to only 3.3 per cent in 1955.⁷⁸ Despite the government's lack of investment in agriculture, Iraq was self-sufficient in cereals in the 1950s. In fact, cereal crops made up 55.9 per cent of Iraq's total agricultural export in 1950-1953. Dates were also important exports at 22.2 per cent.⁷⁹

Some investment was however made in river control over this period. It is significant that this concentrated on flood control projects within several big cities, including the capital.

2.3.3 Rural - urban migration

Before the 1958 revolution, migration from rural areas to the cities was mainly due to 'push' factors and less to 'pull' factors; i.e migration was not a result of the willingness of villagers to seek employment or to earn better income in urban centres, but it was the sole means of escape from oppression by tribal chiefs and landlords. For example, the implementation of the 1952 Law for Granting *Lazma* Rights in *Miri-Surf* land in Amara allowed *sheikhs* and their families to secure most of the land and so gave impetus to the rural exodus.⁸⁰

The consciousness of injustice and frustration due to his inability to eliminate oppression, left the peasant feeling that there was no real meaning to his life in rural areas. An interesting example of such awareness is a well-known song among the tribesmen in the southern part of the country:

O lord, my condition is without meaning,
I toil and others gather the fruits.
I wish to escape to Baghdad from this tribe,
which succours not its afflicted nor has pride.
I wish to escape to Baghdad from this cultivation,
which appeases no hunger nor gives repose.
clap palm and palm time passes..passes
and I run and I am tired but what I earned is gone.⁸¹

An extensive wave of migration from rural areas descended upon the big cities. According to some studies, the average annual rural-urban migration was estimated to be 11,700 persons between 1948 and 1952, then it rose to almost 20,000 between 1953 and 1957. For example, from Amara rural area (a southern region) alone, 96,000 people left for Basra and Baghdad between 1947-57. According to another estimate, Baghdad alone received 200,000 rural migrants between 1947 and 1957.⁸² The

1957 population census revealed that 29 per cent of Baghdad's inhabitant came from rural areas. Thus Baghdad's outskirts were overwhelmed with about 47,000 mud or reed huts known as *al-Sarifa*. These inadequate shelters lacked services like electricity and clean water, and no provision was made for schooling and transportation.

The new urban dwellers suffered not only from a lack of facilities in their new settlement but also faced tremendous hardship in finding employment and integrating into urban society.

The differences between rural and urban people in social values, attitudes and religious inclinations was enormous, not to speak of the level of education and financial welfare.

2.4 The developmental state (1958-1963)

In 14 July 1958 a group of military officers calling themselves "The Free Officers"⁸³ led by Colonel Abdil Karim Qasim, overthrew the monarchy and announced the establishment of a republican government in Iraq.⁸⁴

The revolution was engineered and led by army officers, who were not members of any political party and were helped by a group of liberal and left wing civilians. Immediately after the announcement of the revolution, members of different political parties, particularly the Communist Party, rushed onto the streets of Baghdad and organized a spontaneous public open air celebration. For two days a joyous crowd gathered in the streets of Baghdad to show their absolute support to the new leaders. They gave out inflammatory anti-Western and anti-Imperialist signals.

The Communist Party soon revealed publicly its support for the new government,

We confirm that the revolution of July 14 is a national bourgeoisie one. It is a -phase of national liberation- along the long path towards the full communist revolution... it is our duty to join ranks with these national forces and together to defend the achievement of the republic... only through going into alliance with other groups can our party have a real influence on the course of events.⁸⁵

This alerted the United Kingdom and the United States and aroused their fears that a communist government had been installed in Iraq. This explains their reaction in attempting to create disorder and suspicion among Iraqis, by asking western nationals to leave the country in a hurry. Thus many western embassies organised the evacuation despite the revolutionary leaders' assurances of the safety of all, regardless of their nationality. The US ambassador at that time, W. Gallman, stated:

Qasim honoured his assurances. He had only one reservation to make. In order to avoid giving the impression that ours [the Americans] was a panic exodus, he would like us to allow some days between flights, moving our people out in gradual, orderly fashion.⁸⁶

Gallman continues to say 'planes were chartered from a private company in such numbers and on such closely following days that any staggered, gradual evacuation, as requested by Qasim was ruled out.'⁸⁷

Despite the controversy about the nature of the revolution, there could be no doubt that the leaders, particularly Qasim, were determined to bring about genuine reforms in the social, economic and political structures of Iraq. Two years after the end of the monarchy, the Communist Party split with those in power. Looking back on the revolution, they analyzed it:

The July revolution is the revolution of all the anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist classes. Though the takeover had been triggered by a group of officers representing the national bourgeoisie the latter group had since been reluctant, at least, to share its power with working classes and the peasants led by the Communist Party.⁸⁸

This clarifies to some extent the nature of the revolution. The revolution was in the interest of the vast majority of the people. Its leaders were also concerned and aware of the national rights of different ethnic groups within Iraq, in particular, the Kurds.

Qasim released imprisoned Kurds and allowed the return of the exiled Barazani tribesmen, headed by Mullah Mustafa Barazani. Moreover, the first republican provisional constitution had accorded the Kurds an unprecedented position 'the Kurds and Arabs are partners within the nation.'⁸⁹ The position of the Kurds was further strengthened, as Qasim legalised the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) under the leadership of Barazani.⁹⁰

Qasim came from a rural background and was the son of a poor

family, so he was well aware of the misery and oppression of the rural population. In his speech in March 1959 to a newly recruited group of military officers Qasim said:

If you go and tour any part of the country you will see how widespread are misery, poverty and want in the life of the people. You will see in the shacks or near the marshes moving skeletons.⁹¹

The new leaders of the revolution knew that in order to tackle the chronic problems faced by rural society, radical measures would be necessary. It would not be possible to make improvements in the social and economic conditions of the mass of rural people without changing the traditional pattern of land ownership. Qasim's first and most important step was, therefore, to break down the power structure of feudalism and replace it with a more equitable system, ensuring dignity and a better life for all rural people.

2.4.1 *The reforms*

Only two weeks after seizing power, the newly-established Iraqi government, officially abolished the tribal jurisdictions. This was immediately followed by a vigorous agrarian reform law. On September 30, in his radio address to the nation, Qasim announced the Agrarian Reform Law of 1958.

This was considered by the Iraq's new leaders as the right diagnosis of the problem. This policy was decisive and signalled the beginning of a new era of agrarian change. Iraq's agrarian reform was in line with reform policies in other countries in the Middle East. The Egyptian Agrarian Reform Law of 1952 introduced by Colonel Nasir (Egypt's president, 1952-1970) is a case in point. According to Radwan and Lee (1986), the major objective of Egyptian land reform was to:

Break the power of large landowners and raise the standard of living of the peasantry through the enforcement of complementary measures such as tenancy reforms and minimum wage legislation within the framework of private land ownership.⁹²

The studies of Warriner (1962) and El-Ghonemy (1990) show that the implementation of land reform in rural Egypt led to greater equality in

the distribution of rural income and consumption.⁹³ Warriner stresses that the Egyptian Agrarian Reform of 1952 had introduced immense change, as it assured the cultivator's legal status which meant a real gain for the majority of the *fellahs*, either by giving them protection as tenants, or by giving them secure status as co-operative farmers (1962:4-8). El-Ghomy suggests that inequality of income and landlessness in rural Egypt were sharply reduced during 1952-1965 and there was also a substantial reduction in the incidence of rural poverty due to the implementation of 1952 land reform law (1993:97).

Qasim realized how the tribal chiefs and landlords exploited the feudal structure to maintain power. He chose a policy of reconciliation as a way of dealing with these influential power groups and enabling agrarian reform to take place. Qasim offered compensation to landlords in return for expropriated land. He also appealed unsuccessfully to the rural population to exercise restraint and avoid revenge and violence.

Dann (1969) describes the rural people's reaction as follows:

In a spontaneous movement, which appears to have sprung up without organisation or known leaders, the peasants stormed, looted and burned down the residences of the big landlords. Accounts and rent-rolls were destroyed, the agents and overseer chased away. The erstwhile share-croppers took over the machinery and settled down as owners. The acres hitherto tilled on behalf of the landlords were divided up by the share-croppers and landless labourers in rough and ready fashion. There seems to have been little bloodshed, though much destruction of property. The majority of the landlords were absentees, others fled. The peasants were abetted by the local communists, but these did not initiate the movement.⁹⁴

Dann's description dramatizes the scene and exaggerate the events. There were incidents of blood-letting and looting but on a limited scale. However, what is accurate is that most of the big landlords and many tribal chiefs either fled from the rural areas to urban centres or they were already residing outside the rural areas. Their local aides (*Sergal* in the southern parts of Iraq) were taken by surprise by the land reform law and were by no means able, even if they were willing, to stand against the revolution.

Qasim's government did not tackle the agrarian question in isolation. Immediately after the revolution, plans were put forward to improve public health standards and secure free health care for all. Provision was made for improving education for all people. There was also a housing initiative, which aimed to replace slums and shanty towns with decent

housing. These plans were backed by the investment of public funds. In 1960 government expenditure as a percentage of GNP was one per cent on health, 5.8 per cent on education and 8.7 per cent for defence purposes. Unfortunately these priorities did not persist after the end of Qasim's rule (1958-63). Twenty five years later, in 1988, expenditure on health and education had dropped to 0.8 and 3.7 per cent respectively, while expenditure on defence rose to 37 per cent of GNP.⁹⁵ Measures were introduced to improve the living standards of the urban poor. The price of bread was reduced to two thirds, as the bakeries received flour with a high government subsidy. The rents of houses were reduced and landlords had to have solid reasons in order to evict the tenants. Workers unions were permitted and the daily working hours were reduced from nine to eight. Large firms were obliged to build houses for their workers. Within two years of seizing power, Qasim's government had completed the building of thousands of houses for the urban poor. For example, the shanty town on the outskirts of Baghdad was replaced by 10,000 houses with roads, markets, and other facilities.

In education, the state made a huge investment in school building and developing educational facilities. Education was free for all, so that the number of students at all levels nearly tripled between 1957-58 and 1962-63. All primary school students were provided with a daily free meal in school.⁹⁶

With regard to women's emancipation and family relations, the government took the step of bringing some justice and equality between men and women. In 1959 the government radically revised the 'Personal Civil Status Code'. The right of polygamy was severely restricted, child marriage was forbidden and women were given equal inheritance rights with men.⁹⁷ These measures were the main source of Ba'th Party agitation on the pretext that Qasim was anti-Islam. In December 1958, a women's union was formed, its members were working women, farmers, civil servants and housewives. In 1959 a woman became a government minister for the first time, not only in Iraq, but in all the Arab countries.⁹⁸

In manufacturing, capital investment in the public sector nearly doubled and there was a remarked increase in the value of gross industrial output. The annual growth rate averaged 17 per cent between 1958 and 1961. Revenue from crude oil production was of great concern to

the people, as they felt that the monarchy had given foreign oil companies (known as the Iraq Petroleum Company/IPC) a free hand in deciding the volume of production and share of revenue. The new government became involved in long negotiations with the IPC in attempting to secure a just share for Iraq from the oil revenues. The next chapter of this study will deal with this issue in detail.

2.4.2 The political atmosphere

It is not the purpose of this study to investigate and analyze the power struggle and conflicts among the various Iraqi groups and political parties acting in the national political field. However, in order to obtain a full picture of the whole development process, it is necessary to understand some key threads of Iraqi political life.

During Qasim's early years in power, the influential parties such as the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), the Ba'th party and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) found a real opportunity to strengthen their positions and gain more ground in political life. The government's tolerance for those parties' activity was evident in the first years, although Qasim stressed that he himself was above political inclinations and trends. However, by the end of 1961, the increased influence of the KDP and its leader Barazani in Kurdistan, was seen by Iraqi leaders as a threat to their authority, and this led them to take restrictive measures against Barazani and the KDP. The KDP programme was amended and some of its leaders were put in prison.⁹⁹ This eventually led to the renewal of the Kurdish revolts against the Iraqi government. In fact, the split between Qasim and Mullah Mustafa Barazani was a product of the government's fear that concessions to Kurdish nationalism would ultimately result in the partition of Iraqi sovereignty.¹⁰⁰

The agrarian reform and the radical oil policy of Qasim's administration found a positive echo in the political position of the ICP towards the regime. Members of the party held influential posts in the government structure, including the cabinet, creating a situation which caused great concern among Western countries, including the USA. Allen Dulles, Director of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), said in April 1959 that the situation in Iraq is 'the most dangerous in the world today ... the Communists were close to a complete takeover'.¹⁰¹ It became common knowledge to most of the Iraqi people that a conspiracy was being formulated behind the scenes against the government. On several occasions, Qasim revealed that the US and some Western

governments were planning to topple him. On 4 February 1963, in an interview with *Le Monde*, Qasim declared that the US State Department had sent him a threatening note.¹⁰² The ICP warned Qasim that the Ba'th Party was planning to overthrow him and a military coup was imminent.

On 8 February 1963, a group of military officers seized the national radio station in Baghdad, announced the overthrow of Qasim's regime and the formation of a new government headed by Abd al-Salam Arif as a president and Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr (a key leader of the Ba'th Party) as prime minister.¹⁰³ 'There were immediate demonstrations in support of Qasim in Baghdad, and people poured into the streets in a desperate effort to defend his regime'.¹⁰⁴ A huge number of ordinary people gathered in front of the Ministry of Defence, where Qasim was heading a meeting with his aides. The people demanded arms so they could defend their leader, but Qasim refused this demand in order to prevent a civil war. On 9 February Qasim agreed to surrender to the leaders of the new coup. After a short interrogation, Qasim was shot.¹⁰⁵ The coup d'état was orchestrated by the Ba'th Party with the assistance of the CIA, who had allegedly provided the Ba'th party leadership with the names and addresses of Communist leaders. As a result five thousand Communists (including the party's General-Secretary¹⁰⁶ Salam Adil) and pro-Qasim sympathizers were killed in the first three days of the coup.¹⁰⁷ The CIA link has been pointed out by some knowledgeable sources, including King Hussein of Jordan, who stated:

I know for a certainty that what happened in Iraq on 8 February had the support of American Intelligence Numerous meetings were held between the Ba'th party and American Intelligence, the more important in Kuwait¹⁰⁸

The French weekly *L'Express* revealed that the coup was inspired by the CIA, and the British government was aware of the putsch preparations. *Le Monde* reported 'the present coup is not regarded as a menace to US interests; on the contrary, it is regarded as a pro-Western re-orientation in the Middle East'.¹⁰⁹ However, if the degree of CIA involvement is questionable, one thing is not, the coup d'état had succeeded in putting a drastic end to the ICP role in the state power structure.

Nevertheless, the situation continued to be critical for the coup organizers. A power struggle among them immediately came to the surface. On

November 18 of the same year, Abd al-Salam Arif pulled the rug from underneath the Ba'th Party and succeeded in pushing his Ba'thist partners out of the coalition. Abd al-Salam Arif had emerged as unchallenged leader.¹¹⁰ After establishing his control over the power structure in Baghdad, Arif turned to Kurdistan in order to reassert the authority of the government in that area. In April 1965, most of the Iraqi army's units were despatched to the north and began a large-scale offensive against the KDP forces. By May 1966, Barazani and his followers inflicted a crushing defeat on the Iraqi army.¹¹¹ In April 1966, Abd al-Salam Arif was killed accidentally in a helicopter crash in the southern part of the country. His brother Abd al-Rehman Arif, a military officer, who had neither the charisma nor the strength of his brother, became the new president of Iraq.¹¹² The armed clashes between the Kurds and the government continued until the Ba'th coup of 1968.¹¹³

2.5 The authoritarian state (1968 to the present)

On 17 July 1968 a military *coup d'état* led by Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, backed by his party, the Ba'th Party, took over power. Al-Bakr became the new president and a "Revolution Command Council" (RCC) was formed to become the supreme executive and legislative authority. Saddam Hussein, a cousin of al-Bakr and head of the party's underground militant apparatus, started to emerge as a powerful figure behind the scenes. The RCC was chaired by al-Bakr and Saddam Hussein became his deputy. Saddam states:

Constitutionally, the RCC is the state's highest body. It is the supreme executive and legislative authority. The RCC chooses from its members, a chairman and his deputy. Eventually the chairman becomes president of the state, thus the legislative and executive authority is embodied into the state's highest body i.e. the RCC.¹¹⁴

The new Ba'th government wanted to erase any bad memories from the minds of the people of its earlier time in power. It needed to establish itself among all levels of the social structure. In order to do this, the Ba'th government introduced social, economic and political reforms. Interestingly, these built on reform policies already initiated by Qasim. This was especially true in the areas of land reform, the nationalization of oil and negotiations for a peaceful settlement with the Kurds.

The new Ba'th government started its armed combat against the Kurds in April 1969. Being unable to crush the resistance of the Kurdish partisans, the Ba'th leaders began to look seriously at the prospects for a negotiated settlement.¹¹⁵ The dialogue which commenced with Barazani from late 1969 brought a cease-fire and the declaration of a peace agreement on 11 March 1970. The Ba'th leaders were anxious that the fighting should not be allowed to debilitate their regime and open the way to another army coup.¹¹⁶ Kurdish national aims had been moderate from the outset; they had involved, not separation, but the autonomy of Iraqi Kurdistan within the framework of the republic. The manifesto of 11 March recognized the legitimacy of the Kurdish nationality and promised Kurdish linguistic rights, Kurdish participation in government and Kurdish administrators for the Kurdish area.¹¹⁷

2.5.1 *The era of socialism*

Ever since its formation in 1947, the Ba'th party had called itself a socialist party. It saw socialism as the way forward to national development. It promoted a public image of the party being engaged in a struggle to achieve socialism and claimed that every available resource should be devoted to that goal.¹¹⁸ In fact, socialism was seen as the answer in many Arab countries in the 1960s and 1970s. In Syria, Egypt (early years of Sadat), Libya, Algeria and Iraq, the regimes in power claimed to be rebuilding their economies according to socialist ideology, but used the term "Arab socialism".¹¹⁹ These Arab regimes embraced the ideas of equality, social justice, and independence from western imperialism.

The Arab-Israel conflict provided a focus for uniting the Arab nations. They could gain support from other Arab allies by condemning the role of the west in supporting Israel. Anti-western and anti-Israeli slogans carried great power. The USSR and Eastern European block supported the Arab cause. For example, during the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973 the USSR supported the Arabs and, though the Arab governments were often rivals, they were united in their desire for Soviet backing.

The new Arab regimes had all come to power following military *coups d'état*: the Ba'th in Iraq in 1968, Qadafi in Libya in 1969 and

President Assad in Syria in 1970. They all lacked the genuine support of the masses. They therefore had to gain the blessing of other parties; in the case of Iraq and Syria, this meant the Communist Party. Successful alliances of this nature would be seen as favourable by the USSR. Iraq's Ba'th Party was not going to find this easy. The ICP could not easily blot out the memory of the atrocities carried out on its members by the B'ath party in 1963. It had always considered the Ba'th as a party of the petite bourgeoisie, regardless of its socialist slogans.¹²⁰ In fact, the principal inspiration behind the Ba'th philosophy was that of pan-Arabism: the individual Arab states were regarded as regions of the Arab nation.¹²¹ The party ideology is based first, on Arab unity, secondly, on freedom and thirdly, on socialism. On examining the principle of the Ba'th Party in more detail, it can be seen that, though socialism is consistently proclaimed as the path for development, in practice, articles on economic policy raise many questions about its socialist intent.¹²² In the writings of Aflaq, the founder of the Ba'th Party, private ownership is praised for its "initiation of individuals' aspiration and creation".¹²³ However, there are no clear or precise definitions clarifying the Ba'th Party's understanding of socialism. There are also no details of how this socialism would work in practice; there is no link between policy and performance. As Ayubi (1992) states:

It is not sound to call a system socialist simply because its leaders happen, at a particular political juncture, to raise socialist banner and to use socialist terminology. We do not accept so readily the appellation 'democratic' that many of the command regimes attribute to themselves, so why are we so easily prepared to accept a 'socialist' designation of a regime simply because it is called so by its leaders?¹²⁴

Nevertheless, the Ba'th party was determined to legitimize its claims as a socialist party. In 1972, a treaty of "friendship and cooperation" was signed with the USSR, and the Iraqis regularly referred to this as the symbol of socialist countries. It was hailed in Baghdad as a strategic and ideological alliance between two regimes, bound together by a shared revolutionary project, against Zionism and western imperialism.¹²⁵ The USSR's support of the Iraqi ruling Ba'th party was expressed, for example, by its encouragement of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) to agree to the Ba'th party call in July 1973 to form the Patriotic Front and to accept a few ministerial posts.

The alliance between ICP and the Ba'th Party came as shock to most of the ICP members, who saw huge differences between the ideologies

of the two parties. They were even more annoyed at the acceptance by the ICP of the condition imposed by the Ba'th party that they should be the "leading" party. For the Ba'th party leadership this act (as the events of later years proved) was simply a tactical move, whereas the Communist party leadership took it seriously and regarded it as strategic collaboration. The ICP held the conviction that, by working together with the Ba'th party, the Ba'th's petit bourgeois ideology would eventually be dissolved within the process of building socialism.¹²⁶ Unfortunately, only a few years were needed to prove that particular idea of the ICP wrong. It is hard to say whether this was a miscalculation by the ICP leaders or their compliance with the centre-periphery relationship between the USSR and the ICP, which aimed to serve the interests of the USSR (centre) at the expense of the ICP (periphery).

2.5.2 *The dictatorship*

Iraq has been led since 1968 by a few Ba'th party leaders unwilling to share their power in any way.¹²⁷ In fact, it had become apparent by the beginning of the 1970s that most regimes in the Middle East 'appeared to be moving toward conventional authoritarianism, as the single-party vehicles for popular participation withered into unresponsive mechanisms for enforcing government policy.'¹²⁸ Having established their power and taken hold of all key military and civil posts, the Ba'th party began a ruthless campaign to eliminate its opponents and marginalize the role of other political parties. In March 1974, in order to put an end to the KDP's control of Kurdistan, Saddam Hussein insisted that the government's autonomy plans be accepted. The KDP rejected the demand, whereupon the Iraqi government unilaterally implemented its own version of the autonomy programme. The 1970 agreement had contained a phrase on the Kurds' participation in legislative authority. The Ba'th had never tolerated either a parliament or free elections. Decision-making was reserved to the Ba'thist RCC.¹²⁹

Fighting erupted throughout Kurdistan and soon the Iraqi army was experiencing serious problems.¹³⁰ The *Shah* of Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, was a key ally of the KDP, supporting them with arms and finance. Saddam Hussein approached the *Shah*. On 6 March 1975, they both (the *Shah* and Saddam) signed a treaty of cooperation and friend-

ship in Algeria. Under the treaty, Iran was given the right of free navigation in the *Shatt al-Arab* canal and over the disputed border. In return, Iran agreed to cut the support it was giving to the Kurds.¹³¹ It was a reluctant tactical manoeuvre by the Iraqi leaders to concede to Iranian demands on the common waterway. The Ba'th leadership regarded the treaty as a temporary measure.¹³² After signing the treaty with Iran, Iraq immediately began a massive military campaign against the KDP fighters in Kurdistan. Within days of the Iraqi-Iranian understanding, the Kurdish revolt collapsed. The government managed to gain absolute control over almost all Kurdistan (except for a few high mountain peaks and the small triangular border area between Iraq, Turkey, and Iran), forcing Mullah Mustafa Barazani and the KDP leaders, with tens of thousands of Kurds, to flee to Iran.¹³³ The victory of the Iraqi military was a signal of defeat to the Kurdish forces and the end of attempts to win a genuine autonomy. It was too late when Barazani realized the fact that 'the Americans have not proved of any help or protection'.¹³⁴ According to G. Simons (1994):

Barazani, believing in the moral obligation and political responsibility of the United States towards the Kurdish people, had no doubt that he had been betrayed by Washington. His sons, Idris and Massoud, took control of the remnants of the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP], and before long other Kurdish leaders were coming to the fore.¹³⁵

Jalal Talabani, ousted from the KDP leadership by Barazani in 1964, returned to Kurdistan after the collapse of the guerrilla movement. By November 1975, he announced the formation of a new resistance movement, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Meanwhile the remainder of Barazani's KDP was reformed under the control of his two sons, Idris and Massoud. The KDP revived guerrilla warfare in 1976.¹³⁶ From Iran, Mustafa Barazani went to the United States for cancer treatment. He died there in 1979. According to R. Sim (1980):

The eclipse of General Barzani's leadership During a guerrilla career spanning some 40 years he had fought the British, the Persians and Iraqis and had been bombed by both the [British] RAF and the Iraqi Air Force. A religious leader, dubbed the 'Red Mullah' after his exile in the USSR, he had long been the recognised leader of Kurdish resistance in Iraq. Indeed he was one of the last tribal chiefs of the traditional type, whose mere name inspired loyalty.¹³⁷

After removing the KDP armed forces from Kurdistan and forcing them

to abandon their political activities, the Ba'th government turned its aggression against the *Shi'a* movement and the ICP. The Ba'th party demanded from the ICP that it stop any political activity inside the armed forces;

Communists and their supporters inside the army were threatened with the death penalty. The ICP gave directives to thousands of its members and supporters inside the army to dissolve their organisations and to sever their relations with the party during their military service. The Communist press was banned from the barracks, and the military were barred from reading Marxist literature, under threat of execution.¹³⁸

Members or sympathizers of the ICP became victims of arrest and execution. In 1978, more than 30 members of the ICP were executed and all centres belonging to the party were closed.¹³⁹ In April 1979 the ICP suspended its membership of the Progressive National Front.¹⁴⁰ All the ICP leaders fled either abroad or to Kurdistan's mountains and ICP political activity was banned by the government. This aggression, however, could not put an end to the ICP as the Ba'th aimed. The ICP's organizational structure proved to be strong enough to survive this crisis. Kelidar (1979) states:

It is recognised that the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) has been one of the best-organised and widely supported political movements in the Arab world. It has survived many crises and overcome several attempts to destroy it by the authorities.¹⁴¹

Thus, after a short time, the ICP resumed its political and armed activities against the Ba'th government using Kurdistan as a base.¹⁴²

Since the B'ath government seized power, the country has been engaged internally in continuous armed conflicts and internationally in two major catastrophic wars. The economic impact of these wars will be discussed in the following chapter. This unrest, however, helped the Ba'th leadership and Saddam Hussein, in particular, to grasp absolute power over the Iraqi people and to turn the state's institutions into an executive tool to serve the interests of their party's organization. Membership of the Ba'th party became obligatory for all government employees in the sectors of defence, education, key posts in all ministries, and military officers.

Despite the loyalty (whether because of fear or enticement) of the Ba'th party members to Saddam Hussein, Saddam 'placed no reliance whatsoever on either institutions or ideologies as sufficient guarantors of men's loyalties and political behaviour'.¹⁴³ Saddam's mistrust of people has led him to set up clandestine apparatuses in the form of three agencies, first the *Amen* (state internal security), secondly, *Estikhbarat* (military intelligence) and, thirdly, *al-Mukhabarat*, composed of men tied to him by blood and kinship bonds. The *al-Mukhabarat* is directly linked to Saddam's younger son Qusayy. It is the most powerful and feared agency among the three, is a meta-intelligence organization designed to watch over the other policing network and to control the activities of government departments and public organizations (youth, women, and labour).¹⁴⁴ It has the power to arrest and eliminate anybody, including ministers, high ranking army officers, and top Ba'th party leaders. In practice, therefore, the Ba'th party itself came under the surveillance of the *al-Mukhabarat*. During the past two decades, the Ba'th regime has constructed a network of multiple intelligence apparatuses that pervades all aspects of Iraqi society.

While unleashing indiscriminate violence against society, these institutions [intelligence apparatuses] retain their immunity from justice by making a virtue of their constant and unquestioning allegiance to the person of the dictator [Saddam Hussein].¹⁴⁵

Al-Khafaji (1994) states that 'corruption, competition for influence and authority, and a rigid hierarchy have rendered this system highly effective in achieving one of its major objectives; promoting a sense of helplessness among the population' (1994:29). This method, which Saddam used to keep control in Iraq, became more established in the aftermath of the Gulf War of 1991.

2.5.3 *The Iran-Iraq war*

In 1979 *Ayatollah* Khomeini (a distinguished *Shi'a* religious cleric) seized power in Iran and established his Islamic state. The *Shi'a* community of Iraq was inspired by Khomeini's success. The Iranian revolution was considered as a triumph of the *Shi'a* branch of Islam.¹⁴⁶ Long before Khomeini's revolution, the Iraqi *Shi'a* leader *Ayatollah Sayyid* Baqir al-Sadr was keen to establish an Islamic government in Iraq.¹⁴⁷ The Ba'th Party, therefore, shortly after seizing power in 1968, 'underto-

ok preliminary steps to gain control over the *Shi'a* community'.¹⁴⁸ When Saddam took over the presidency in July 1979, he immediately began to suppress the *Shi'a* movement. Sluglett (1993) stated:

He [Saddam Hussein] did this with the same kind of thoroughness and vindictiveness which he applied to the extirpation of any other potential or real opposition forces, throwing the full weight of the state and its coercive apparatus against the [*Shi'a*] movement and the dissident clergy.¹⁴⁹

In April 1980, Saddam sentenced *Sayyid* Baqir al-Sadr to death. Between 15,000 and 20,000 *Shi'a* people were expelled from Iraq to Iran and hundreds more were arrested, tortured and executed.¹⁵⁰

Khomeini's intention of introducing the Islamic revolution to all Islamic countries alerted the regimes of Iraq and other Gulf countries and, in fact, also alerted the US and many Western governments. Saddam's ambition to become a sole Arab leader was echoed in the tendency of the US and the Gulf states to weaken Khomeini and break down his power. According to Clark, US policy turned to 'adopting a supportive stance towards Iraq. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski publicly encouraged Iraq to attack Iran' (1992:5).

In early September 1980, Saddam publicly announced that the Algiers Treaty of 1975 was null and void. In 22 September 1980, Iraqi armed forces advanced into Iran's territories, occupying border towns and moving towards such main cities as Khoremshahir and the oil-rich port of Abadan. Thus the eight years of war with Iran began.

In the first week of the war, four American AWACS planes were deployed from Saudi territory for air surveillance.¹⁵¹ Throughout the war, the Pentagon and CIA provided Iraq with satellite and AWACS intelligence on the Iranian forces'.¹⁵² In fact, the help from US and other western countries to Iraq consisted of more than just passing on military information. The build-up of the Iraqi arms industry, including super guns and weapons of mass destruction, would not had been possible without the technology and materials provided by the US and western countries. The US government 'allowed US companies to sell directly to Baghdad such "dual-use" equipment as jeeps, helicopters, and Lockheed L-100 transports' (Clark, 1992:7). In order to give Iraq a military superiority over Iran, the US government pressed its allies, including Israel, South Korea, and Britain, to halt military sales to Iran

and to build ties with Iraq.¹⁵³

The financial aid given to Iraq during the war years by the Gulf oil exporters was substantial and a decisive factor in enabling Iraq to continue the war. In fact, this financial support for Saddam Hussein was not the result of sympathy, but of fear of the much more dangerous ideology of Khomeini.¹⁵⁴ Khomeini critically questioned the legitimacy of the Gulf regimes. In his turn, Saddam himself regarded the credit and aid which he had received from these states, not as normal debts but, according to Rieck, 'as an obligatory contribution to the Iraqi war chest, since the Gulf monarchies had been saved from the Persian danger by the blood of the Iraqi people' (1993:329).

The war with Iran created ideal conditions for the Iraqi leaders to apply political, social and development policies in line with their own objectives. Elimination of their political opponents, creation of a vast group of loyalists and, not least, the endorsement of the state's new ideology of "turning west" were major objectives. Their new development policy involved the substitution of the public sector of the economy by the private sector. This issue will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

2.5.4 The 1991 Gulf War

Soon after Iraq had invaded Kuwait on 2nd August 1990, a coalition of western countries, led by the USA and UK, persuaded the United Nations Security Council to impose a comprehensive embargo on all trade with Iraq, including the freezing of its foreign assets and a ban on the international sale of its oil.

Yet for the USA, that measure was not sufficient and, on 16 January 1991, the USA and its allies began a 42-day air assault on Iraq, averaging 2,000 sorties a day throughout Iraq and Kuwait.¹⁵⁵ The air attack was followed by a massive ground assault on 23 February and continued until Iraq and the United States agreed to a cease-fire on 28 February. Kuwait was liberated and Iraq compelled to accept the 12 resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.¹⁵⁶ All the resolutions have to be implemented by Iraq for the economic sanctions to be lifted.

The bombing caused severe damage to Iraq's physical and service infrastructure, including oil refineries, power plants, bridges, factories and telecommunications. Unlike the bombing, the economic sanctions imposed are still in place, causing a virtual collapse, not only of general economic activities, but also of basic human needs, such as health care and adequate nutrition.¹⁵⁷ The dramatic destruction of human life is so

immense that reference must be made to its scale. Estimates of losses of Iraqi lives range from 50,000 to 300,000 dead, with countless more wounded and traumatised.¹⁵⁸ In addition to the loss of human lives, the continuation of sanctions has inflicted and still inflicts other forms of human misery on the Iraqi people. Hospitals and public health centres are severely affected by a lack of medicines and medical equipment, as Iraq used to import annually approximately \$ 360 million worth of drugs and medical appliances.¹⁵⁹

Not since the Second World War, had there been such disruption and carnage, inflicted by almost 30 countries attacking one army and raining down death and destruction on inhabited towns and villages. In Noam Chomsky's words, 'the term "war" hardly applies to a confrontation in which one side massacres the other from a safe distance, meanwhile wrecking the civilian society' (1994:8).

The coalition was able to launch a "Hot War" in consequence of unanimity achieved by the melting away of the Cold War.¹⁶⁰ George Bush portrayed the war as the prototype of the post-Cold War conflict. Bush predicted that future adversaries who studied it would think twice before challenging the United States.¹⁶¹ Thus, as Noam Chomsky says, if the meaning of George Bush's "new world order" 'was not clear at once, it certainly left no mysteries in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf war or more accurately, the Gulf slaughter' (1994:8). Andre Gunder Frank (1992) regards the Gulf War as a Third World War, as it aligned the rich North against a poor Third World country, i.e it was a Third World War by the North against the South (1992:267). Frank reveals three elements in the international political economic relations which escalated the Gulf crisis;

- 1) The energetic American response in the Gulf was visible over a political economic issue. The issue is oil without any Cold War ideological overtones.
- 2) This mobilisation was entirely against (a part of) the South without any pretence of an East-West ideological cover.
- 3) The near unanimity and alliance in the North against the South.¹⁶²

The need to secure Gulf oil has been and remains the *raison d'être* of the numerous US efforts to foster Gulf security'.¹⁶³ Ayubi (1995) states:

Whereas Iraq's conquest of Kuwait was basically motivated by economic considerations of oil and finance, the 'Western' reaction was in turn mainly guided by concerns over access to and control of the oil resources (and their distribution, pricing)¹⁶⁴

The prosecution of the Gulf war by the Americans was intended to serve their other purposes as well. According to G. Simons, that 'a post-Cold War United States could operate without the bothersome constraints of another global super power. It was essential in these circumstances that Iraq be mercilessly crushed' (1994:3). The war also enabled the United States to experiment with a new generation of high-technology weapons. In fact, what was practised in the Gulf was pure savagery. Bush was as responsible as Saddam. Both, with their inflexibility, considered only the cold logic of geopolitical interests.¹⁶⁵

The turmoil in Iraq continued, as the war was immediately followed by a widespread uprising throughout the country against Saddam's regime.

In March 1991, following Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War, the Kurds of northern Iraq and Arabs of the south rose up against the Ba'th regime. For two brief weeks, the uprisings were phenomenally successful. Government administration in the towns was overthrown and local army garrisons were left in disarray¹⁶⁶

The allied coalition urged the rebels to overthrow the regime. By early March, the Iraqi opposition achieved a significant success. The Kurds had taken control of almost all Kurdistan and the *Shi'a* were controlling the south, including the main cities of Karbala, Najaf and Basra.¹⁶⁷

Despite suffering from a fresh defeat in the Gulf war, the Iraqi army was able to crush the rebels and to wreak havoc in Kurdistan and the southern parts of Iraq. It was estimated that between 20,000 and 100,000 civilians lost their lives during the uprising, while 15,000 to 30,000 Kurds died on the road while fleeing to Iran and Turkey and later in refugee camps.¹⁶⁸ This created further major destruction and the displacement of millions of people to the neighbouring countries of Turkey and Iran.¹⁶⁹ Refugee camps were established in these areas. It was estimated that 400-1000 Kurds, primarily children, were dying each day along the Iraqi-Turkish border.¹⁷⁰ The world had witnessed the plight of the Kurds during that winter of 1991. On 5 April 1991, the United Nations Security Council had condemned the repression of the Iraqi Kurds and demanded that the Iraqi government end this repression immediately.¹⁷¹ The coalition responded by establishing a Kurdish safe

heaven in the northern part of Iraq. Starting in mid-April, refugees began returning to their homes after promises of coalition protection above the 36th parallel, which continues to this day.¹⁷²

Despite the United Nations sanctions and the enforcement of the non-fly zones in the northern and southern parts of Iraq, Saddam's regime is regaining strength. Saddam had survived despite everything, and it looks as if he will remain in power for the foreseeable future.

Notes:

- 1 Annex 1 illustrates Iraq's natural elements such as climate, soil and water resources
- 2 Modern Iraq (current sovereignty) came to existence after the treaty of Lausanne in 1923
- 3 Longgg, 1956, p 35
- 4 M Hasan, 1966, p 155
- 5 H Barakat, 1990, p 145
- 6 D Warnner, 1962, p 180
- 7 The data is stated by M Hasan, cited in C Issawi, 1966 is based as Hasan says on population figures in the British Consular Reports particularly around 1866-67, some estimations derived from a partial census of population of the Ottoman Empire in 1890, other British population estimations for 1900-1908 and 1909
- 8 C Issawi, 1966, p 154
- 9 According to Tapper a clan is a group of people, part of a larger nation or ethnic group, who claim common ancestry Tapper (1983, p 10)
- 10 Until nowadays this structure of grouping is common in the rural community and to some extent in urban centres as a considerable number of urban inhabitants originally came from rural areas and therefore have brought with them this tradition For example I am from a Fakheth called Hasanî which is a group from Bedran Ashura and the later from Qabila called Koucher
- 11 See chapter four
- 12 The Sadah (plural of Sayyid) are those who descent from the prophet Mohammed dynasty They have the monopoly of supervision on the holy shrines in Najaf, Karbala, and elsewhere They wear black turban as head-dress which differentiates them from other religious dignitaries (A'lim and Mulla) who are not from Mohammed's dynasty and wear green or white turban (green for shi'a and white for sunnis)
- 13 F G Bailey, 1988, p 288
- 14 al_mudhif in Kurdistan is called Dewan
- 15 R Gabbay, 1978, p 26
- 16 The code and its effects will be discussed in chapter three
- 17 Gabbay, R, 1978, p 27

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- 18 The Iraqi unit of area is donum or meshara which is equal to 0.618 acres or 0.251 hectares or 2500 sq m
- 19 M Cook, 1970, p 350
- 20 C Issawi, 1966, p 132
- 21 H Batai, 1978, p 13
- 22 The History of Kurds and Kurdistan by M Zeki, 1961 is a profound and pioneering study of the Kurds (written in Kurdish language and translated to Arabic)
- 23 D McDowall, 1985, p 5-7
- 24 Ibid, p 5
- 25 The Socialist Party of Turkish Kurdistan, 1989, p 6
- 26 M , and P , Sluglett, 1987, p 23
- 27 J Talabani, 1969 (Talabani is the founder and the present leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Party)
- 28 A Bncfkani, 1996, p 56
- 29 F Kakai, 1994, p 129
- 30 General Ataturk openly declared that any sort of self-determination for Kurdistan will be a serious threat to the Turkish nation (al-Itihad No 74 April 1994, p 8)
- 31 The Socialist Party of Turkish Kurdistan, 1989, p 6
- 32 M & P Sluglett, 1987, p 24
- 33 D McDowall, 1985, p 5
- 34 R Sim, 1980, p 1
- 35 D McDowall, 1985, p 5
- 36 Annex 2 provides more details about the present size, regional and ethnic composition of the population
- 37 This composition had been changed after a few decades due to the migration of most of the jews to Israel late of the 1940s and 1950s, the few who remained also left gradually in the 1960s and finally in the 1970s
- 38 Atyyah G 1973, p 33
- 39 E & E Penrose, 1978, p 86
- 40 Cited in Atyyah, 1973, p 151
- 41 Ibid
- 42 Ibid
- 43 Ibid, p 243
- 44 M al Adhami, 1979, p 13

- 45 E.& E. Penrose, 1978, p 44
- 46 D Hopwood, 1993, P 9
- 47 M Elliot, 1996, p 8
- 48 G Simons, 1994, p 178
- 49 G Atyyah, 1973
- 50 A report by a British official known a Political Officer worked in Rumaitha District (southern part of Iraq) sent in July 1918 to Baghdad, cited in G Atyyah, 1973, p 252
- 51 G Simons, 1994, p 178
- 52 In addition to the important role of urban allies, Huizer (1973) explains some other factors which altogether feature the effective peasants movement in Latin America.
- 53 G Simons, 1994, p 178
- 54 M Abdi al-Redha, 1970, p 56-57 For more details about the question of Mosul see E Picard, 1993, p 342-347
- 55 M Hasan, 1966, p 157
- 56 A Shikara, 1979, p 36
- 57 R Gabbay, 1981, p 353
- 58 A Hourani, 1993, p 513
- 59 Cited in Batawi, 1978, p 101
- 60 R Gabbay, 1978, p 46
- 61 M Bruinessen, 1978, p 100
- 62 R Gabbay, 1978, p 47
- 63 M Farouk-Sluglett, 1993, p 52
- 64 R Gabbay, 1981, p 330
- 65 Eric Wolf, 1988, p 370
- 66 The Journal of Gadhaia al Selm wal Ishterakia, No 4, 1984, p 119
- 67 G Simons, 1994, p 264
- 68 P Sluglett, 1986, p 180
- 69 Ibid
- 70 P Sluglett, 1986, p 181

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71 G Simons, 1994, p 265

In August 1946 Mustafa Barazani founded the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in Mahabad. Details about Barazani and the KDP are well documented in M al-Barazani, 1987

72 R Gabbay, 1978, p 28

73 Ibid

74 G Baer, 1964, p 24

75 cited in D Warriner, 1962, p 119 quoting M Critchley, 1955

76 D Warriner, 1962

77 S Haider in C Issawi, 1966

78 G Harris, 1958, and also Penrose, 1978

79 G Harris, 1958, p 328

80 D Warriner, 1962, p 153

81 Cited in Batatu, 1978, p 142

82 Marr 1985, p 142, and also Penrose, 1978, p 165

83 The word Free in Arabic language is Ahrar, and here it refers to "being free from oppression and domination of all kinds". In fact the same phrase 'Free Officers' was used also by General Nasir of Egypt and his army's colleagues when they overthrew the monarchy in 1952

84 S Jawad, 1979, p 173

85 Quoted from an editorial article in 28 July 1958 of the *Itihad al-Sha'b*, the mouthpiece of the Communist Party. Cited in R Gabbay, 1981

86 Gallman, 1963, p 209

87 Ibid

88 Cited In Dann, 1969, p 94

89 D McDowall, 1985, p 19

90 S Jawad, 1982, p 48

91 Cited in Dann, 1969, p 63

92 S Radwan and E Lee, 1986, p 8

93 R El-Ghonomy, 1990, p 236, and D Warriner, 1962

94 U Dann, 1969, p 60

95 H Deegan, 1994, p 123

96 Annex 3 provides more details about the educational system and the state policy in regard to illiteracy and schooling

- 97 Marr, 1985 and also Penrose 1978
- 98 D Cobbett, 1986
- 99 S Jawad, 1982, p 48
- 100 P Sluglett, 1986, p 192
- 101 Cited in F Hazelton, p 26, 1986
- 102 G Simons, 1994, p 225
- 103 A Fouzi, 1990
- 104 M Sluglett, 1987, p 87
- 105 A Fouzi, 1990, p 173
- 106 The Journal of Qadhaia al Selm wal Ishterakia, No 4, 1984, p 119
- 107 H Deegan, 1994, p 71
- 108 H Batau, 1978, p 985
- 109 cited in G Simons, 1994, p 225
- 110 P Sluglett, 1986, p 194
- 111 Ibid
- 112 M Chartouni-Dubarry, 1993, p 28
- 113 D McDowall, 1985, p 20
- 114 Saddam Husain, The Battle of Independence and Foreign Polhtics, 1978, p 4
- 115 R Sim, 1980, p 11
- 116 Ibid
- 117 P Sluglett, 1986, p 195, and S Jawad, 1982, p 50
- 118 Saddam Husain, 1978
- 119 D Seddon, 1993, p 91
- 120 al Thakafa al Jadida, NO 7, May 1987
- 121 G Simons, 1994, p 200
- 122 F Gottheil, 1981, p 827
- 123 al Khafaji, 1983, p 176
- 124 See N Ayubi, 1992, p 92
- 125 E Picard, 1988, p 45

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- 126 The Journal of Qadhara al-Selm wal Ishterakia, No 4, 1984, p 120
- 127 R Sim, 1980, p 11
- 128 L Anderson, 1990, p 61
- 129 R Sim, 1980, p 11
- 130 G Simons, 1994, p 269
- 131 E Kienle, p 71
- 132 G Simons, 1994, p 273
- 133 A al-Briefkani, 1996, p 206
- 134 The Times, 24 March, 1975 cited in R Sim, 1980, p 15
- 135 G Simons, 1994, p 270
- 136 R Sim, 1980, p 15
- 137 Ibid
- 138 Z al-Jaza'iri, 1994, p 40
- 139 The Journal of Qadhara al-Selm wal Ishterakia, No 4, 1984, p 121
- 140 P Heine, 1993, p 44
- 141 A Keldar, 1979, p 183
- 142 Aziz Mohamad cited in Al-Nahaj, No.5, 1985 (Aziz Mohamad is a former secretary-general of the ICP.
- 143 C Tripp, 1993, p 93
- 144 S al-Khalil, 1989, p 14-15
- 145 K Abdullah, 1994, p 57
- 146 R King, 1987, p 8
- 147 G Simons, 1994, p 274
- 148 R Soetenk, 1980, p 16
- 149 P Sluglett and M Farouk-Sluglett, 1993, p 89
- 150 G Simons, 1994, p 275
- 151 A Rieck 1993, p 327
- 152 R Clark, 1992, p 6
- 153 R Johansen and M Renner, 1985, p 811-812
- 154 T Koszinowski, 1993, p 291

- 155 R Clark, 1992, p xxvi
- 156 H Ishow, 1993, p 316
- 157 The impact of the sanctions on Iraq's economy to be discussed in chapter six
- 158 G Simons, 1994, p 346
- 159 see p 12 of the report of the United Nation mission to Iraq headed by Sadruddin Aga Khan visited Iraq from 29/6-13/7/1991 submitted to the UN Secretary-General
- 160 D Whittaker, 1995, p 88
- 161 M Gordon and B Trainor, 1995, p 467
- 162 Andre Frank, 1992, pp 270-271
- 163 J Anthony, 1985, p 131
- 164 N Ayubi, 1995, p 6
- 165 cited in N Chomaky, 1994, p 9
- 166 F Abd al-Jabbar, 1994, p 97
- 167 G Simons, 1994, pp 25-27
- 168 Free Kurdistan No 11, June 1993, p 7
- 169 Some 1.4 million Kurds fled to Iran, 450,000 to Turkey and 35,000 to Saudi Arabia (al-Iraq al Hur No 41 July 1993, p 10)
- 170 cited in L Cankar, 1993, p 24
- 171 M Gunter, 1993, p 295
- 172 L Cankar, 1993, p 24

The rentier state: Oil revenues and their impact

Oil revenues have played and still are playing a vital role in the Iraqi economy. Oil revenues did not assist GNP formation alone, but were the major means in the hands of the state for penetrating not only all sectors of the economy, but also the lives of the Iraqi people. The wealth from oil has freed the state from being dependent on domestic economic activities for generating state income and also helped in increasing state bureaucratization, thus strengthening the authority of the political rulers and allowing them to act in a way that mainly reflected the interests of those who held state power. It was the oil revenues which the current rulers used to build a modern military weaponry. Oil revenues eventually led to the engagement of the country in the two most bloody and expensive wars in the world since the Second World War.

A few decades ago, the rigorous conflict between oil-exporting countries and oil concession companies resulted in the oil-exporting countries securing their basic rights in terms of sharing profits and fixing the prices of oil. The oil boom in the early 1970s generated further growth in oil revenues, which helped many oil-exporting countries, including Iraq, to invest in development. The wealth of some oil-exporting countries has led to the creation of another category between developed and developing countries as the per capita income of many oil-producing countries exceeded that in some of the most developed countries. Usually in oil-exporting countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, oil revenues are poured directly into the state treasury and then the state uses the revenue for development and various other purposes according to its goals. As we described in the introductory chapter of this thesis, this inspired many authors to characterize the oil-exporting countries in the Middle East as rentier states. From the 1960s, oil revenue began to be the fundamental

component of the Iraqi economy as the position of agriculture gradually lagged behind. The role of oil revenues in the national income grew remarkably after the nationalization of oil in 1972. As the bulk of state income came to be generated from oil revenues, we are inclined to classify Iraq as a rentier state. It is useful, therefore, to highlight the development of this sector from its beginning, as it will help in drawing a picture of Iraq's economy after the halting of oil exports with the imposition of United Nations sanctions in August 1990.

3.1. Early oil concessions

The formation of the Turkish Petroleum Company in 1912 was the first effective step in the exploitation of oil in Iraq.¹ The defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I and the occupation of Iraq by Britain paved the way for the monopolization of the development of oil resources by European and American multinational oil companies.

The first concession for the exploration and production of oil to the so-called - Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) was granted in 1925 for a period of 75 years. The average duration of concessions at that time was 20 years in America. In 1932 Mosul Petroleum Company (MPC) was established and was granted a concession covering the northern part of Iraq. In 1938 the Basra Petroleum Company (BPC) came into existence, and was granted a concession in the southern part of the country. Both companies (MPC and BPC) were affiliates of the IPC. Thus the three concessions covered the total area of Iraq.

The three companies were owned by the following shareholders:²

23.75 per cent British Petroleum Company (BP)

23.75 per cent Royal Dutch Shell

23.75 per cent *Compagnie Francaise des Petroles* (CFP)

23.75 per cent Near Eastern Development Corporation -USA- (NEDC)

5.00 per cent Participation and Exploration Company. (Gulbenkian)³

After the completion of the pipelines connecting the Kirkuk oil fields (northern part of Iraq) to the Mediterranean ports in Lebanon and Palestine, the IPC began its first full year of Iraqi oil exports by the end of 1935. By the early fifties the IPC had completed a pipeline network linking oil fields in the Mosul area (northern part of Iraq) to the Mediterranean ports and the southern oil fields in the Basra area to the

Iraqi harbour of Fao at the mouth of the Persian gulf.

Financially, the IPC was to pay the Iraqi government a sum of £400,000 in gold per year up to the first full oil-exporting year. Half of this was to be deductible from future royalties. Payments to the government during the first 20 years of export were not to be less than £400,000 per annum.⁴

The monarchy in Iraq was keen to maintain a smooth and friendly relationship with the IPC, despite continuous demand by the public and opposition parties for a more hard-line policy against the IPC's exploitation of Iraq's national resources. Before the completion of the first pipeline from the Kirkuk oilfield to the Mediterranean in 1934, the oil revenues paid to the Iraqi government had mounted very slowly to ID 0.7 million (US \$ 2.8 million). In 1935 with the terminals at Tripoli (Lebanon) and Haifa (Palestine) in operation, oil revenue reached ID 1.5 million (\$ 6 million).⁵ No further substantial increase took place until the 1950s. Table 3.1 illustrates the growth in oil production and the Iraqi government's revenues from 1946-1959.

Table 3.1. Oil production and the Iraqi government's receipts, 1946-59

Year	Production (million tons)	Revenue (ID millions)
1946	5	2.3
1950	7	5.3
1951	8	13.3
1952	18	32.4
1957	22	48.6
1958	35	79.9
1959	41	86.7

Source: Alnasrawi, A., 1967, p. 23

During the early 1950s, however, dramatic events affecting oil concessions and revenue sharing between oil companies and national governments also took place in the neighbouring oil-producing countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iran.

The Saudi government reached a fifty-fifty profit sharing agreement with Aramco,⁶ followed by Kuwait and Iran. In Iran, events were even more dramatic, as Muhammad Mossadeq, the prime minister of that country, announced the nationalization in April 1951 of foreign-controlled oil production in his country, 35 per cent of which was in American hands.⁷ It is noteworthy here, that in Washington, according to Limbert, 'the new Eisenhower administration had decided to support Britain and the Iranian officers' efforts to remove Mossadeq' (1987:95-96). Two years later, a coup d'état overthrew Mossadeq's government and re-established the personal control of *Shah* Mohammad Reza Pahlavi over Iran's political power.

In Iraq, negotiations between the Iraqi government and the oil company were stimulated by new elements in the case: the announcement of the new Aramco-Saudi basis of payment and oil nationalization in Iran. These events created the climate for a considerable alteration in the IPC's policy affecting Iraq's share of the oil revenues, and the IPC and the Iraqi government signed a new agreement in February 1952, effective from 1 January 1951, according to which Iraq became entitled to receive annually 50 per cent of the profit from oil exports.⁸ This agreement fell short of meeting the public and the opposition parties' demand that the government should follow the example of Iran and put an end to the exploitation by the oil companies. Longrigg (1968) wrote that:

Young Iraqis who tomorrow, if not today, would claim political leadership, were already heard to express fervid admiration of Dr. Mossadeq and to clamour for immediate nationalization of the oil industry.⁹

Nevertheless, both the newly introduced profit-sharing agreement and the rise in the international demand for oil provided opportunity for Iraq to expand output and obtain a higher revenue. The average revenue per ton received by Iraq during 1951-59 was \$ 5.5, as compared with an average of \$ 1.75 per ton during 1934-50.¹⁰

Government oil revenues had reached ID 3.1 million in 1949 and rose to ID 5.3 million in 1950. After the new agreement, it climbed to ID 40.7 million in 1953.¹¹ Between 1952 and 1958 Iraqi oil production nearly doubled and revenues were more than doubled. Despite these increases, the IPC had generated hostile opinion among the Iraqi people for a long time, because they regarded IPC as a British company.

According to Penrose:¹²

It was widely identified with British "imperialism" which in turn was held responsible by large groups of the politically conscious public especially among the young, for the maintenance in power of a regime which resisted reforms in agriculture in the interest of landowning sheikhs and which pursued "reactionary" foreign policies.

3.2 Law 80 of 1961

When Qasim overthrew the monarchy on 14th July 1958, it was not simply an internal change of power positions. The revolution had the far-reaching objective of freeing the country from subordination to western countries (particularly Britain), which sustained control over Iraq's affairs during the monarchy. On the domestic front Qasim put forward plans for radical social and economic reforms. On July 18, after only four days of being in power, Qasim issued his first statement on his government's policy. The republican government would honour its obligations, but it would work for the preservation of national interests. The revolutionary Iraqi leader's statement was careful not to arouse the fears of the companies of the oil cartel, but to show Iraq's readiness for cooperation, hoping that those concerned would respond to its desire for the continued utilization of this vital resource for the good of the national, as well as the international, economy.¹³ Evidence from a few decades later has revealed that Qasim's fears were genuine. Ramsey Clark (1992), a key American politician states:

Shortly after the 1958 revolution, the CIA formed a 'health alteration committee' to plot Qasim's assassination. At the same time U.S. generals in Turkey devised a military plan, code-named Cannonbone, for invading northern Iraq and seizing the oil fields there¹⁴

There was a strong feeling among the people that something should be done to preserve the national source of wealth. Thus, soon after he overthrew the monarchy, Qasim invited the IPC for talks. Negotiation started between IPC and the government early in 1959, when the government affirmed its demand an increased share in the oil revenue, while the oil company insisted that the fifty-fifty profit sharing formula could not possibly be altered. Negotiations continued after the interruption in October 1959 caused by an assassination attempt on

Qasim's life, Qasim and most Iraqis felt that the IPC had a hand in the plot. Although Qasim had secured the backing of Iraqis and the major political parties - the Iraqi Communist party and the Kurdish party - Qasim could not take the risk of nationalizing the oil production industry for two main reasons: firstly he feared revenge from the mother countries of the IPC (USA, Britain, and France) with their capability of undermining his rule, as they did with Mossadeq in Iran. Secondly, he was anxious not to disturb the flow of oil output, as he was aware of what the financial results would be to the country's economy.

Negotiations between Iraq and IPC were thorny and complicated. Qasim found that he himself had to head the Iraqi delegation. Nevertheless, it became clear to the Iraqis after three years of negotiations that they were leading them nowhere. It was widely believed in Iraq and outside that Qasim was moving towards nationalization of oil and a draft law for that purpose had been prepared. In his speech of May 1961 Qasim said: 'We are not combating the oil companies for another 7 million dinars a year. We are fighting for the industrialization of our republic and an end to our dependence on the sale of crude oil'.¹⁵

On 12 December 1961, the government issued Law 80, which withdrew 99.5 per cent of the IPC's concessionary areas, allowing the IPC to retain 748 sq. miles (288 sq. miles in the north-east of the country, 24 sq. miles for the MBC in the Mosul area, and 436 sq. miles for the BPC in the Basra area). The former rights over practically the whole of Iraq's territory were abolished.¹⁶ However, the law left the door open for the future restoration of some territories to the companies if the government wished.¹⁷ The expropriation was without compensation. In passing the law, the government 'went as far as it dared, it could not risk the complete nationalization of the operating companies since it relied on them for markets'.¹⁸ The companies protested and began retaliation. During 1961 and 1962, the IPC allowed oil to continue to flow, but kept the output unchanged (see Table 2.2). Stagnation of output also meant stagnation of revenues.¹⁹ Halting or reducing production was a well-known retaliation policy of the oil companies. Exxon's negotiator stated:

Any country which makes things too difficult for the companies provides the ideal pretext for reduction. Sometimes they have aided our reductions by breaking a contractual accord, as was the case in Iraq, then we can "pack the whole thing in".²⁰

Despite the irreversible achievement of the Law No. 80, its popularity with the Iraqi people was never in doubt and no subsequent government would dare to attempt to rescind it.²¹ In issuing that law, Qasim had paved the way for a further break in the domination of foreign power in the Middle East and in Iraq, in particular, which eventually resulted in the nationalization of oil in 1972.

3.3 The formation of OPEC

The revenues received by oil-producing countries from the sale of their oil were assessed on the basis of the posted prices. These prices were fixed according to a certain formula. Alnasrawi explains that the buyer of oil was billed at the ruling prices at the Gulf of Mexico in the United States, plus the freight charges from the Gulf to the point of destination, irrespective of the actual source of supply. This meant that the oil companies of the Middle East were collecting "phantom freight" when they sold oil to locations closer to the Middle East than to the Gulf of Mexico (1967:12). Thus posted prices, as E. & E. Penrose (1978) explain:

were not necessarily the price at which crude oil was actually sold in international markets, nor did they necessarily reflect the imputed value of crude to the integrated companies which produced refined products from their own crude oil.²²

During the 1950s, it was common among oil-producing countries, as an incentive for increasing production, to credit the oil companies with a deduction from the posted prices as marketing allowances.²³ A 12-15 per cent discount on the posted prices was applied in Iraq.²⁴

By the end of the 1950s, the rapidly increasing output of crude oil in the Middle East and competition among international sellers began to depress the price of crude oil in international markets.²⁵ The oil companies chose to reduce the posted prices, as the best solution for maintaining their receipts at high levels. Thus, in August 1960, the oil companies announced a reduction in Middle East posted prices. This act came at a time when the negotiations between Qasim and IPC were at critical stage. E. & E. Penrose (1978) stress that:

Although this action was not related to the Iraqi negotiations, it reinforced the Iraqi government's determination to increase its share of the oil revenues, and also led Iraq to take the initiative in calling the conference of oil-producers.²⁶

Venezuela had long been pushing other oil-producing countries to take joint measures to protect their rights against the oil companies. In September 1960 Iraq took the initiative in inviting a number of oil exporting countries to hold a conference in Baghdad. Venezuela, Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia attended the meeting. Thus the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was set up in Baghdad.²⁷

The first resolution of OPEC was that the oil companies should cancel the price cut of August 1960. Although it looks a modest start for OPEC, it marks the beginning of the struggle of the oil-producing countries through OPEC against the domination of the oil companies.

3.4 The formation of INOC

Soon after the assassination of Qasim in 8 February 1963, the new leaders revised Qasim's oil policy. Although still within the mandate of Law 80, they were keen to reach a settlement with IPC. Negotiations were immediately resumed between the new government and IPC. As Longrigg (1968) observed, 'the disappearance of Qasim raised hopes of a less unfavourable atmosphere, and these were in part fulfilled, ... a new oil law was said to be under drafting' (1968:357). Whether the new government wanted, because of a power struggle and its political aims, to soften the lines with IPC or not, the famous law 80 with its tremendous popularity among Iraqis made it almost impossible to revise the codes and articles of the law in favour of the oil companies.

Unpublicized negotiations began between IPC and the new Iraqi oil minister. By June 1963 an interim compromise agreement had been reached. The company agreed to raise output and the government agreed to suspend the increased charges on shipments over 8 million tons.²⁸ Attempts were made by Iraq to determine the oil potential of the areas expropriated under Law 80 and to elaborate a programme for their development. Qasim had previously decided that this development had to be carried out by a national oil company and had prepared a draft law to this effect in 1962.²⁹

In February 1964, a law was issued announcing the formation of the

Iraq National Oil Company (INOC). Under to the law, the INOC took charge of Iraq's oil industry, including the exploration, production, transport, refining, storage and distribution of crude oil.³⁰

Iraq stressed that it had no intention of replacing IPC by its INOC and hoped that the IPC would co-operate with it.³¹ It took several years before the INOC was granted a real company structure. This was because successive governments failed to establish a clear and consistent development policy for the oil industry and to define the IPC's role in it.³² However, the eruption of the Six Day War between Israel and neighbouring Arab countries on 5 June 1967 had 'crystallized opinion against any stronger links with foreign oil companies'.³³ In July and August of that year two laws were therefore passed which enlarged the role of the INOC and prohibited any further concessions to foreign companies.³⁴ Thus, under the new measures all vestiges of the earlier hints of collaboration with IPC were removed. However, up to the early 1970s, the internal political conflicts and changing governments in Iraq had overshadowed the unsettled dispute between Iraq and the IPC. Meanwhile, the major proportion of Iraq's oil continued to be produced from the fields belonged to the IPC, i.e almost all the country's foreign-exchange earnings came from the revenues paid by the IPC.

Table 3.2 Iraq's oil production and revenue 1960-1971

Year	production (million tonnes)	revenue (ID million)
1960	47.5	95.1
1962	49.2	95.1
1963	56.7	110.1
1964	61.6	126.1
1965	64.4	131.4
1967	60.1	140.8
1968	74.0	174.0
1970	76.9	186.1
1971	83.5	276.3

Source: Sayigh, Y., 1978, p. 37

In 1972 INOC was producing only 2.3 million tons out of a total production of 72.1 million tonnes (1 tonne= 7.3 barrel).³⁵

3.5 Oil nationalization

A new government was formed by the Ba'th party in 1968. Unlike Qasim, it did not involve itself immediately after taking power in a fierce conflict with the oil companies. The government's first priority was to establish its authority firmly.

The new government of 1968 was keen to allow revenue to flow in uninterrupted from the IPC. As it was unable to confront the oil companies, the government realized that the way forward lay through an accommodation with them until it could develop the oil industry and gain access to crude oil markets and accumulate capital reserves. Then it would be able to take on the IPC. Independent development of the oil industry was the key goal. The whole programme of constructing crude oil pipelines in the 1970s was geared to this aim. Both the Haditha-Rumaila strategic pipeline and the Kirkuk-Dortyol line were designed to break out of the dependence of Iraqi crude oil exports on relations with egregious alien interests.³⁶ In fact, in 1969 the government signed an agreement for crude oil sales to the USSR. In return, the latter provided the INOC with petroleum machinery and geological equipment. The agreement included were the necessary cadre for installation, operation and maintenance, as well as a loan of \$ 60 million to be used to develop the disputed north Rumaila oilfield. The latter contains estimated reserves of one billion tons and is close to the Iraqi port of Fao at the mouth of the Gulf.³⁷ In 1972 INOC was still producing only 3.2 per cent of Iraq's total oil production of 71.2 million tons. However, thanks to Iraq's agreements with the USSR, Eastern European countries and Brazil, the Iraqi government was confident that it was capable of marketing all of its oil if pushed to do so by the IPC. When a new round of negotiations began between the government and the oil companies in early 1972, the Iraqi government's position was bolstered by two internal elements and two external ones.

- 1- A strong grasp over the internal political structure.
- 2- The existence of INOC with its capability to take over oil operations in the event of a disruption in oil output.
- 3- Support by the USSR and other Eastern Europe countries.

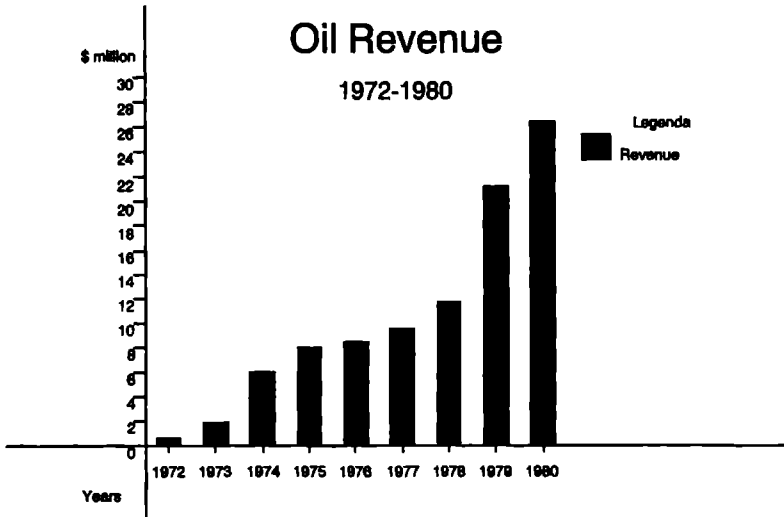
4- The existence of OPEC as a strong bargaining body in the international oil market which defended the rights of the oil producing countries.

During the negotiations, the IPC, realizing the strong position of the Iraqi government, showed its readiness to increase production, to pay its dues and to accept a 20 per cent participation by Iraq in the IPC capital. Not surprisingly, Iraq rejected such a token offer and asked the IPC to come up with a reasonable one.³⁸ Iraq demanded agreement on five points: (1) an effective participation in ownership, (2) a continuous audit of accounts, (3) agreement on a cost procedure manual, (4) payments of suspended royalties since 1964 and (5) the removal of the IPC headquarters from London to Baghdad.³⁹ The IPC did not respond to the Iraqi proposal and so the Iraqi government publicly announced the full nationalization of IPC on 1 June 1972. The IPC's two affiliates Mosul Petroleum Company (MPC) and Basra Petroleum Company (BPC) were not immediately affected.⁴⁰ In its attempt to save what it could, the IPC gave up the MPC and paid Iraq \$ 141 million of outstanding royalty back-payments in return for retaining BPC.⁴¹ Disputes between Iraq and IPC were settled by a treaty in February 1973. The BPC remained the property of the IPC and was committed to raise production from 35 million tons in 1973 to 80 million tons in 1976.⁴²

When the war broke out between Israel and the Arab countries on 6 October 1973, the governments of the US and the Netherlands supported Israel. On 7 October, in retaliation, Iraq nationalized American interests (Near East Corporation) and the 60 per cent Dutch interest in the Shell Petroleum share holding of BPC.⁴³ Other shares (British and French) in BPC were also taken over by Iraq in December of that year.⁴⁴ With this act as E. & E. Penrose (1978) say half century 1925-75 relationship between the IPC group and the Iraqi government drew to a close.

Less than a year after the nationalization, the price of oil in the international markets soared beyond any expectation (the oil boom of 1973). As a result, Iraq's oil revenue increased sharply from \$ 575 million (ID 189.9 million) in 1972 to \$ 26,500 million in 1980.

Figure 3.1. Revenue from oil exports, 1972-1980 (\$ million).



Based on data for the Middle East and North Africa, 1982-83)

In fact, Iraq's oil production and revenue continued to increase (see Table 3.3) until September 1980, when the war with Iran broke out.

The war disrupted both production and exports (especially during the initial years) due both to the closing of the oil terminals in the Gulf and the destruction of oil installations. From April 1982, the only usable export route was the Turkish one. In 1985 a pipeline (500,000 b/d) was connected to a petrol line in Saudi Arabia and, in 1987, the Turkish line was doubled, carrying the entire export capacity of approximately 2,200,000 b/d.⁴⁵

However, by the end of 1990, not only did oil exports drop once again, but they were completely halted because of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August of that year. This event immediately resulted in a complete embargo on Iraq's foreign trade, enforced by several UN resolutions. This situation still prevails at the present time [winter 1999].

Table 3.3. Oil production and exports, 1979-1990

Years	Production (000 b/d)	Volume of export (000 b/d)	Value of Export (\$ million)
1979	3,477	3,275	21,382
1980	2,646	2,459	26,296
1981	897	746	10,422
1982	1,012	811	10,104
1983	1,099	725	9,900
1984	1,221	856	11,992
1985	1,404	1,085	11,380
1986	1,877	1,372	7,238
1987	2,234	1,704	11,300
1988	2,600	2,200	13,000
1989	2,786	2,260*	n.a
1990	2,125	1,596*	n.a

* July - December

Source: The Economist (EIU), 1990 and 1992-93

3.6 Oil reserves

There are no signs at present that the world will shift to non-oil energy sources in the next few decades. Even if it does happen, that does not mean that the demand for oil will diminish. Oil products will still supply essential materials produced from petrochemicals, so oil-exporting countries will continue to earn revenues from oil sales. Table 3.4 shows the estimated life of reserves if Iraq and the other Gulf countries continue to produce at the same average rate as from 1972 to 1987.

Table 3.4 Estimated number of remaining years of oil production

Country	No. of Years
Iraq	143.0
Iran	69.5
Kuwait	154.0
Saudi Arabia	65.0

Source: Richards, A., and Waterbury, J., 1990, p.61

According to some extreme estimates, Iraq's reserves go as high as 280 billion barrels. Moreover, according to reliable and firmly based estimates, Iraq possesses ten per cent of the world's oil reserves. It has been estimated that, altogether, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iran possess about 50 per cent of the total world oil reserves. No less important is the fact that Gulf oil is also the cheapest oil in the world to produce. In 1985, the estimated cost of production of Gulf oil was less than \$ 1.00 per barrel, the cost of producing Alaskan oil is about \$ 7.00 per barrel, and that of North Sea oil is about \$ 8.00 per barrel.⁴⁶

Since commercial oil production began in the 1930s and continued until recently, oil exports have brought Iraq large revenues. Table 3.5 summarizes total oil revenues and shows that Iraq has earned over \$ 200 billion during the last five decades.

Table 3.5. Oil revenues, 1931-1990 (\$ billion)

Years	Revenue
1931-1949	0.1
1950-1959	1.5
1960-1969	3.7
1970-1979	70.3
1980-1989	118.5
1990	9.5

Source: Alnasrawi, A., 1995, p. 3

The sharp increase in revenue cemented the centrality of the role of the state in the economy by making it the primary link between the oil sector and the rest of the economy. This situation gave the state unprecedented power to allocate economic resources between various sectors of the economy and between different social classes and groups. Thus the state became the primary determinant of employment, income distribution and sectoral and regional development.

The huge oil revenues received during the 1970s and 1980s inspired the government to implement development programmes and, at the same time, to proceed with its other prime goal, that of expanding and modernizing the military.

3.7. The impact of oil revenues

Iraq's rulers perceived that, in order to achieve their political aim of becoming the leading power in the Arab world and of Iraq becoming a regional superpower, oil revenue was essential. Oil revenues were required for two purposes: a modern and strong army and self-sufficiency in agricultural products.

3.7.1 *Oil and agriculture*

During the 1970s it was circulated (publicly and officially nationwide) that oil and agriculture were to become the backbone of the Iraqi economy. Moreover, in the long run, agriculture could take the lead when the oil sector was no longer able to provide foreign exchange. Publicly, the government spared no pains in drawing people's attention to the importance of a restored agriculture and self-sufficiency in food production. Slogans and mottoes such as "Agriculture is an eternal oil" and "Who does not till shall not eat" were widely publicized.

Although agricultural products were imported without financial difficulties until the late 1970s, it became evident to the government that oil markets could easily change and that the country's revenues from oil exports could decline. An agricultural country such as Iraq should be able not only to feed its people, but also to export to other countries. Agriculture should become a revenue generator.⁴⁷

During the 1970s, despite oil revenues being largely spent on militarization, the availability of funds was sufficient for investment in development as well. This explains the state's motivation in taking measures to improve agricultural production. Many agricultural schemes were initiated and irrigation, storage and marketing facilities were made widely available to most farmers. Intervention in land tenancy was another measure used by the state. Radical policies such as agrarian reform and the formation of collective and state farms were also implemented, signalling the promotion of the public sector and the socialization of agriculture.

The impact of oil was reversed during the 1980s, however, as it contributed to the revision of government policy in favour of the private sector. Springborg stresses that 'the sudden and dramatic rise in oil prices and oil related revenues [during the 1970s] made it possible to consider and to effect far more than minor rearrangements' (1986:33). The impact of oil revenues on agriculture and on the economy as a whole will be dealt with in

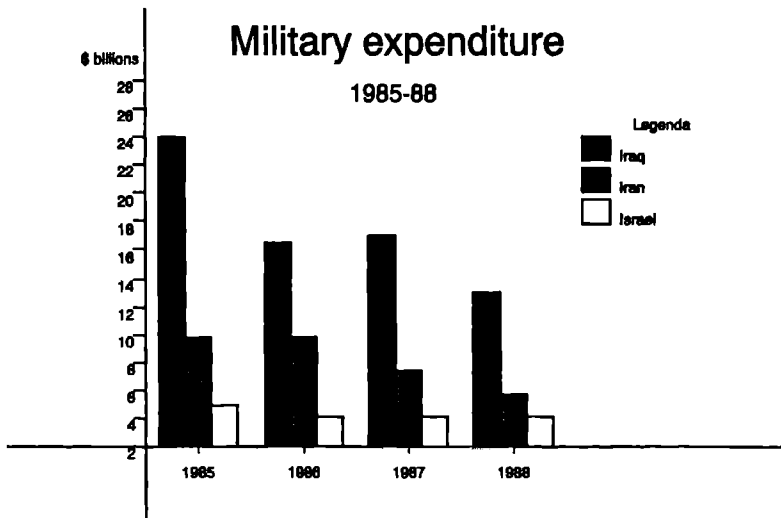
the following chapters.

3.7.2 Military expenditure

The bulk of government spending went to strengthening military power and to pursuing a long-standing programme to develop nuclear weapons. This attempt by Iraq to become the first Arab country to possess nuclear weapons was motivated by the belief that Israel already had a nuclear arsenal of at least 200 weapons.⁴⁸

It is difficult to estimate the total cost of Iraq's nuclear programme. The country certainly spent at least \$ 10 billion and probably as much as \$ 20 billion in pursuit of a bomb during the 1980s.⁴⁹ Between 1985 and 1988 Iraq's military expenditure exceeded \$ 70 billion, more than double that spent by Iran had and triple that of Israel during the same period (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2. Military expenditure of Iraq, Iran and Israel 1985-88 (\$ billions)



(Source: Middle East Report, July-August 1992, p. 8)

Iraq's huge military expenditure continued even after the war with Iran

ended. For example, in 1989 military expenditure as a proportion of GNP increased to 23 per cent. In other words, it was five times as high as the combined expenditure on education and health. In that same year, Iraq's weapon imports exceeded \$ 10 billion, equivalent to 10.1 per cent of the Third World countries' total weapons imports.⁵⁰

Oil revenues, as described in the previous chapter, were used not only to buy weapons and modernize the military, but also used to fund the two most expensive wars in the Middle East, the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88 and the Gulf War of 1991.

The role of the oil revenues in the economy would not be complete without shedding light on the present state of the economy. This can be done by examining the impact of these wars and the sanctions on the country's economy.

3.8 Oil and the War economy

When Iraq fired the first bullet against Iran on 22nd of September 1980, signalling the eruption of eight years of war, the country was on the threshold of embarking on an intensive development plan. This is evident in the Five-Year Plan of 1981-85. The importance of the plan is shown by the size of its total allocated expenditure of \$ 135 billion.⁵¹

On the eve of the war, Iraq had \$ 32-35 billion in foreign reserves.⁵² This availability of funds explains the continuation of government policy "Business as usual" despite the costly war, in other words, maintaining prewar levels of public expenditure as well as increasing imports of consumer goods. Thus the value of imports, excluding military imports, between 1978 and 1981 increased from \$ 2.6 billion to \$ 16.8 billion.⁵³ By pursuing such a policy the government intended to convince the Iraqi people and the world that the war could be handled in parallel with continuing economic progress. Within a week of the outbreak of fighting, Iraq was forced to suspend virtually all oil exports, Iraq's production in October 1980 was 500,000 barrels per day (b/d), down from an average of 3.4 million b/d. However, after an initial period in which production was almost halted, it was resumed, but this time under much constraint because of the loss of two major off-loading terminals in the Gulf, Khor al-Amaya with a prewar capacity of 1.8 million b/d, and Mina al-Bakr, with a capacity of 2.5 million b/d.⁵⁴ The sharp decline in Iraq's oil exports eventually led to a tremendous drop in oil

revenue. According to K. Mofid (1990), Iraq's total potential losses in oil revenue during the 1980-88 was \$ 197.7 billion.⁵⁵

The tremendous loss in oil revenues, combined with continuously soaring military imports, therefore, made the prewar level of investment in development very hard to maintain. Almost half of Iraq's foreign exchange holdings had been spent during the war's first year. The Bank for International Settlements suggested that Iraq's foreign exchange holdings at the end of 1981 were \$ 15.9 billion.⁵⁶

The government realized the disastrous consequences of pursuing such a policy. Thus from early 1982 it revised its development policy and began to devote its diminishing financial resources to maintaining war operations. Only on a few industrial projects, predominantly in petrochemicals and communications, did the government manage to maintain some government spending.

In 1983 the government asked for credit terms from most of its major trading partners. All the contractors working on civil projects had been asked to refinance the foreign currency portion of their contracts and most had complied, France, for example, refinanced its projects to the amount of \$ 350 million, but some were unable to do so and were forced to withdraw.⁵⁷ The difficulties which faced these foreign companies were not only financial; they were also unable to find local labour for their projects. This situation was even harder in certain sectors of industry, agriculture, services and many government departments, which became severely understaffed as a result of the recruitment of men into the military.⁵⁸

When the war with Iran began, it was widely circulated among Iraqis that the war would last only a few weeks. After many months had passed and the war continued to drag on, Iraq's Vice President, Taha Ramadan, declared in a televised speech that the strong Iraqi economy and its healthy foreign exchange reserves could shoulder the cost of the war, even if it lasted for two years. The war lasted for eight years, however, and this turned Iraq from a creditor country into a debtor country in order to finance its military imports. Iraq's debt in 1989 was estimated at \$ 82 billion, including \$ 25 billion owed mainly to the West and \$ 10 billion owed to the former Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries.⁵⁹ The financial support by the Gulf Arab oil exporters ranged from \$ 47 billion to \$ 54 billion during 1980-88. Very little of this was a loan in the strict commercial sense, but was mostly a gift as a gesture of appreciation of Iraq's effort to defend the "Eastern Gate of the Arab World".⁶⁰ Kuwait and Saudi Arabia supplemented financial help with

the opening up of their ports for the shipment of goods bound for Iraq, as well as with the sale of oil on Iraq's behalf. In addition, Iraq constructed a major oil pipeline through Saudi Arabia which, together with a pipeline through Turkey, enabled it to export an estimated 2.7 million barrels of oil per day by late 1987.⁶¹ The destruction of eight years of war, though much felt, through the sharp decline in oil sales, has had a far-reaching impact on other sectors of the economy, as oil revenue symbolizes the backbone of the Iraqi economy.

During 1976-80 oil revenue had accounted for an average of 50 percent of the GNP each year. With the eruption of the war, the contribution of oil revenue to GNP was greatly reduced. Table 3.6 shows that the total actual GNP for the period 1980-86 was \$ 306.7 billion while, in the absence of war, it could possibly have reached \$ 518.5 billion. The difference between actual and potential, therefore (\$ 210.9 billion), is that part of the national output which could have been produced if Iraq was not at war.

Table 3.6. Estimation of Iraq's potential GNP, 1980-86 (\$ billion)

Years	Actual GNP	Potential GNP
1980	45.8	59.7
1981	32.2	75.1
1982	39.1	82.5
1983	40.6	80.0
1984	43.1	75.3
1985	52.1	75.3
1986	54.7	69.8
Total	306.7	518.5

Source: Mofid, K., 1990, p. 51

During the last 17 months of the war, the actual GNP was \$ 79.7 billion, while the potential figure could have been \$ 90.0. For this reason, the total estimated loss in GNP during the war period was \$ 222.1 billion (including \$ 198 billion in lost oil revenue).⁶² If all the components of Iraq's economic losses are added together (i.e damage to infrastructure and commodity-producing sectors of \$ 67 billion), the loss of Iraq's pre war \$ 35 billion

foreign exchange reserves, plus lost earnings on the original \$ 35 billion; \$ 80 billion in war-related military expenditures above and beyond defence spending under non-war conditions, and \$ 4.7 billion for the cost of rerouting imports, the total cost of eight years of war from 1980-88 works out at \$ 452.6 billion. This loss represents only the monetary costs. It does not include non-monetary cost elements such as inflationary costs, the loss of services and earnings by the many hundreds of thousands of people killed or disabled by the war, the depletion of national resources, the postponement of development projects, the cost of delayed education and training of young people, and the burden on society of those who became disabled.⁶³

The war ended on the 18th July 1988 (after Iran announced the acceptance of United Nations' resolution No. 598),⁶⁴ leaving Iraq and Iran to rebuild their shattered economies. The cost of the war exceeded the total oil revenue which both countries had received throughout this century.⁶⁵ Iraq's oil-exporting capacity from the southern fields was destroyed. Its roads, railways and other utilities were for the most part new at the beginning of the war. They became run down as care and maintenance had been kept to a minimum.

To date, Iraq has not made public any estimate of the war damages it suffered. It has been estimated that it would take Iraq about ten years to reconstruct its economy after the end of the war.⁶⁶ During the postwar period, in addition to the destruction caused directly by the war, Iraq found itself in financial turmoil. The huge foreign debt had increased and a constant decline in oil revenue was suffered due to low international oil prices, spurred by a continuous increase of oil production by some members of OPEC. Following the 1986 price collapse, OPEC decided to re-establish a reference price of \$ 18 per barrel, and the system of quotas was reintroduced. As certain member countries chose to produce above their assigned quotas, prices failed to reach the agreed reference level and averaging \$ 16.9 per barrel in 1987, \$ 13.2 in 1988, and \$ 15.6 in 1989. Given Iraq's need for a steady and rising level of oil income, it had no choice but to focus its attention on prices as the only means of increasing or at least stabilizing oil revenue. In its request for higher prices Iraq had the support of many oil producers such as Iran, Venezuela, Algeria, Libya and Nigeria.⁶⁷ The Gulf oil-exporting countries such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates chose increasing production to increasing revenue and this eventually led to lower prices. This policy of the Gulf oil producers alerted the Iraqi government and a feeling of bitterness grew among the Iraqi people,

which arose from their feeling of being betrayed by those Arab countries, as it is widely known that Iraq had saved the Gulf regimes from a rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism by initiating the war with Iran.

Saddam's resentment towards Kuwait was particularly strong, since the emirate would neither reschedule its wartime loans to Iraq (put at \$ 17 billion) nor cooperate in raising oil prices to enable Iraq to increase its revenue.⁶⁸ On the 30th May, 1990, at the Arab Emergency Summit Conference in Baghdad, Saddam Hussein spoke of the damage inflicted upon the Iraqi economy as a result of lower oil prices. Lowering prices meant an economic war of aggression against Iraq similar to conventional wars:⁶⁹

I wish to tell those of our brothers who do not seek war, and those who do not intend to wage war on Iraq, that we cannot tolerate this type of economic warfare which is being waged against Iraq. But I say that we have reached a state of affairs where we cannot take the pressure.

On 17th July Saddam accused unnamed Gulf states of stabbing Iraq 'with a poison dagger' by helping the United States to secure the flow of oil at low prices so that it could cheaply build up its oil reserves. He said the sharp drop in oil prices in the first half of 1990 (down from \$ 21 to \$ 14 a barrel) had been caused by overproduction, and would cost Iraq \$ 14 billion a year in revenues.⁷⁰

Between 1987 and August 1990 Iraqi losses amounted to \$ 25 billion. With every dollar by which the price was lowered, Iraq lost one billion dollars a year. The economic war strangled Iraq at a time when it was desperate to reconstruct its infrastructure, enforce the privatization programme, and service its foreign debts. For the period 1989-93, Iraq needed at least \$ 58 billion, of which \$ 7 billion was for infrastructure and petrochemicals, \$ 30 billion for the reconstruction of industry and ports, \$ 20 billion for the repayment of foreign debt and \$ 1.0 billion for implementing a wider scale of privatization.⁷¹

The Iraqi government was determined to maintain heavy state expenditure on both economic and defence projects. According to Niblock (1993), the lack of sufficient funds to meet this expenditure provided Iraq with the incentive to attack Kuwait.⁷² Iraq's claim about the oil being used as an economic weapon might, therefore, have been a factor leading to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, but it was surely not the only one in the eruption of the Gulf War of 1991.

The impact of the Gulf War and the sanctions imposed on Iraq's economy

began with UN resolution 661 on August 6th, which urged all member states to enforce a strict embargo on all imports to, and exports from, Iraq and also demanded a freeze on Iraq's foreign assets. The impact of the sanctions was evident in the immediate drop in Iraq's oil production, from over 3 million barrels per day in July 1990 to less than 14 percent of that level after the imposition of the sanctions. Only four months after the sanctions came into effect, the embargo shut off 90 percent of Iraq's imports and 97 percent of its exports. The Iraqi government's own estimate of the cost of the embargo for the period August 1990-January 17th, 1991 was set at \$ 18-25 billion, including \$ 10-17 billion lost in oil exports.⁷³

The US bombing targets during the war were not only military installations, but also economic sites in order to create postwar leverage over Iraq. This was not to influence the course of conflict itself, as Pentagon officials later acknowledged. The planners now say that their intention was to destroy or damage valuable facilities that Baghdad could not repair without foreign assistance.⁷⁴

The Iraqi government estimated its foreign exchange requirements at \$ 214.4 billion to cover the expenditure for the five-year period 1993-97, estimated at \$ 75 billion for the payment of foreign debt, \$ 48.5 billion for imports, \$ 55.4 billion for development plan projects, \$ 20.6 billion for the repair of war-damaged infrastructure, \$ 12.6 billion for services, and \$ 2.4 billion for reconstitution of stocks.⁷⁵ In the aftermath of the 1991 war, the Iraqi economy was reduced to two sectors. The public sector was concerned with the production of limited quantities of oil, its refining and distribution. The rest of the economy comprised subsistence activity, which involved scavenging and selling scrap and used equipment across borders.⁷⁶

According to a UN report compiled in mid-March 1991, the war "wrought" near-apocalyptic destruction on the economic infrastructure, relegating Iraq to a preindustrial age, but with all the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on an intensive use of energy and technology. The damage to the infrastructure is reflected in every sector. The failure of irrigation and drainage systems owing to lack of fuel and spare parts caused the 1991 grain harvest to decline to an estimated 1.25 million metric tons, about one-third of the amount harvested in 1990. By late 1991 a drastic decline in industrial output had been observed, with hundreds of industrial projects having ceased owing to the continued trade embargo and a consequent steep rise in unemployment.⁷⁷

On August 15th, 1991 the Security Council issued a resolution allowing

Iraq to sell \$ 1.6 billion worth of oil over a six-month period in order to finance the purchase of food and medicine and to be distributed among Iraqis under UN observation. The Iraqi government refused to adopt that resolution on grounds that it was a direct intervention in Iraq's independence. In mid-1996, however, Iraq agreed to accept the implementation of the resolution, but it took the UN Security Council over six months to respond to Iraq's request.

Given the current hazardous situation, it can be concluded that lifting the sanctions may be one way of putting an end to the current daily humanitarian tragedy of Iraqis. The sooner oil exports return to the prewar level, enabling oil revenues to be used for the productive reconstruction of the economy, the better the chance that Iraq's devastated economy will receive the kiss of life.

Notes

1 C Issawi and M Yeganeh, 1962, p 29

2 A Alnasrawi, 1967, p 5

3 A Alnasrawi, 1967, p 4-5 and for more details see chapter five of S Longrigg, 1968

4 E and E Penrose, 1978, p 71 and also see S Longrigg, 1968, p 75 for further concession given at that time by the Iraqi government to the British Oil Development Company (B O D)

5 A Badre, 1972, p 285 cited in C Cooper and S Alexander (ed)

6 J Blair, 1976, stated that Aramco was obliged to share profits with Saudi Arabia due to,

- The constant demand and pressure from the Saudi side on Aramco
- The success of Venezuelans to obtain 50 % income tax on oil companies
- The extraordinary potential of Saudi oil inspired Aramco for long terms interests

7 For details see S Longrigg, 1968

8 E Penrose, 1978, p 158

9 S Longrigg, 1968 (A), p 197

10 A Alnasrawi, 1967, p 7

11 A Badre, 1972, p 285

12 Penrose, 1978, p 539

13 Dann, 1969, p 53

14 R Clark, 1992, p 4

15 cited in R Clark, 1992, p 4

16 C Whittleton, 1986, p 63

17 Longrigg, 1968, p 355

18 E and E Penrose, 1978, p 262

19 Ibid, p 269

20 cited in M Chatelus, 1993, pp 147-148

21 Ibid, p 269

22 E and E Penrose, 1978, p 259

23 N Kanafani, 1982, p 29

24 N Kanafani, 1982, p 29

25 Penrose 1978, p 259 For more details about the origin and development of the posted prices, see A Alnasrawi 1967, p 11-16

26 E & E Penrose, 1978, p 259

27 According to E Penrose, 1978, p 259, Venezuela had long pressed for holding a conference of such a kind

28 E & E Penrose, 1978, p 382

29 C Whittleton, 1986, p 63 and Penrose 1978, p 423

30 C Whittleton, 1986, p 63

31 E & E Penrose, 1978, p 386

32 Ibid, p 423

33 C Whittleton, 1968, p 63

34 E & E Penrose, 1978, p 394

35 E, E, Penrose, 1978, p 399

36 P Stevens, 1982, p 170

37 A Badre, 1972, p 298

38 Kanafani, 1982, p 37

39 E Penrose, 1978, p 406

120 State and society

- 40 E & E Penrose, 1978, p 409 and M Chatelus, 1993, p 149
- 41 C Whittleton, 1986, p 64
- 42 C Chatelus 1993, p 149
- 43 E & E Penrose, 1973, pp 414-415, and C Whittleton, 1986, p 64
- 44 The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), 1990, p 23
- 45 M Chatelus, 1993, p 152
- 46 Drysdale and Blake, 1985, quoted in A Richards and J Waterbury, 1990, p 61
- 47 Ministry of Agriculture, 1976
- 48 Middle East Report, July-August 1992, p 8
- 49 Ibid
- 50 al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi, 1992, No 163, p 181
- 51 B al Bustany, 1984, p 73
- 52 K Mofid, 1990, p 52
- 53 A Alnasrawi, 1986, p 879
- 54 D Long, 1984, p 48
- 55 In K Mofid's essay, 1990, p 48-61 a detailed estimation of war damages to the economies of Iraq and Iran
- 56 J Townsend, 1984, p 55
- 57 The Middle East and North Africa, 1986, p 428
- 58 For example in 1987 the ratio of school teachers to soldiers was 1 625 (al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi, 1992, No 163, p 181)
- 59 Middle East report, May-June 1991, p 9
- 60 al Mustaqbal al-Arabi, 1992, NO 163
- 61 S Chubin and C Trupp, 1989, p 154
- 62 K Mofid, 1990, p 51
- 63 K Mofid, 1990 and also A Alnasrawi, 1992, and 1994
- 64 al-Uom assabeh No 223, August 1988

65 K. Mofid, 1990, p 53

66 R. Johansen and M Renner, 1985, p 803

67 A. Alnasrawi, 1992, p 340

68 D. Neff, 1991, p 34

69 Cited in A. Alnasrawi, 1992, p 342

70 D. Neff, 1991, p 38

71 A. Alkazaz, 1993, p 238

72 T. Niblock, 1993, p 77

73 A. Alnasrawi, 1994, p 79

74 Middle East Report, July-August 1992, p 5

75 Ibid

76 The Economist (EIU), 1992-93, p 10

77 The Middle East and North Africa, 1992, p 1440

State intervention in land tenancy

4.1. Land tenancy during the Ottoman Empire

Throughout the period of Ottoman rule, the most significant change in the organisation of land ownership came after the introduction of a wide range of reforms (*Tanzimat*) in 1839.¹

In 1858 the 'Ottoman Land Code' was issued. It was implemented throughout the Turkish Empire over the following decades. The *Wali* of Baghdad *Midhat Pasha*,² was responsible for its introduction in the three Iraqi *wilaya*, during his administration from 1869-71.

The law redefined the existing land ownership into the following five categories:³

1. *Mulk*, privately-owned land;
2. *Miri*, state-owned land;
3. *Waqf*, endowment land, either owned by the state or privately, however all the revenue was devoted to religious or charitable causes like mosques and shrines;
4. *Matruke*, land without cultivation or ostensible owner; and
5. *Mawwat*, wasted land (not suitable for cultivation).

Anyone was allowed to use land in categories four and five for cultivation with the possibility of tax exemptions.

According to this new classification, most of the agricultural land in Iraq was state-owned or *miri* land. Even though it had been used by the same group of people for many years, they were not entitled to sell the land or give it as part of an inheritance, without permission from the state. To gain possession the farmers would have to obtain a certificate of ownership or *tapu sanad* from the government's estate office or *tapu* office. For a fee the land could then be transferred from state to individ-

ual ownership. Once the *tapu sanad* was granted, the land became *mulk* to the named person, whose rights of possession was then guaranteed.

Although most of Iraq's territory was classified as *miri*, the tribal chiefs acted as if they owned the land and therefore, could also hand it down as inheritance. The Ottoman Land Code, therefore, had the potential of significantly altering the structure of rural society, and the domination of the tribal chiefs. However, there was a way out for the tribal chiefs. According to article 78 of the Code:

. If a person has possessed *Arazi Miri* (*Miri* land) and *Mevkufe* (*Waqf*) for ten years without disturbances his prescriptive right becomes proved and whether he has a title-deed or not such land cannot be looked upon as *Muhlul* (belonging to no body), but a new *Tapu sanad*(title-deed) should be given to him gratis. But if he admits that such land was *Mahlul* and he took it without right, no consideration will be paid to the passage of time, but the land will be offered to him for its *Tapu* value, and if he refuses it will be sold by auction to the candidate.⁴

The tribal chief could make use of the system for obtaining *tapu sanad*. However, for many cultivators who rented land from tribal chiefs, the proof of ten consecutive years of cultivation was virtually impossible due to prevailing tribal loyalties and obligations, which allowed the tribal chiefs to frequently reallocate land among cultivators.

Midhat *Pasha* claimed that implementation of the land code would:⁵

- initiate the process of transformation from a tribal society to a farming population;
- weaken the power of the tribal chiefs among their tribes, as this was mainly associated with land ownership;
- restore order and minimise tribal conflicts, as the majority of these were land ownership disputes;
- aid tax collection; and
- improve agricultural production.

In practice, the code did not really fulfil any of the goals, except in a very limited way. This puts a shadow over Midhat *Pasha's* policy and his underline reasons for implementing this code. According to Tucker (1990) the Ottomans regime's intervention in land tenancy was 'due to the state's desire to abort any embryonic competition for power, in the form of a landed upper class'.⁶ Whether it aimed to benefit the peasants or to breakdown the power of the big landowners, the code had little to offer.

There are many reasons why the Ottoman Land Code failed in its objectives. The most obvious is perhaps the lack of government officials employed for this purpose. The government officials who were in charge of land registration and other provisions related to the code, were often unskilled. But more importantly, they were frequently subjected to bribes and fear of revenge from tribal chiefs. There was not enough government backup to enable them to perform their duties correctly.

A second important reason touched on earlier was that it was the impossible, for many cultivators to prove that they had farmed the land for ten consecutive years. This was also due to fear and power of the tribal chief. An attempt to put land in the name of a *fellaheen* was a direct challenge to the tribal chief. When a small number of *fellaheen* were able to afford the *tapu sanad* and actually managed to obtain one, they were usually unable to maintain possession. These poor peasants were subjected to threats by powerful elements in society, tribal chiefs, urban merchants or government officials. Atiyah (1973) states:

a peasant would be offered for his land 25 per cent of its value, and on his refusal to sell, he would be cast into prison on a trumped up charge of murder, to remain there for years unless he changed his mind.⁷

Other reasons why the *fellaheen* were unwilling to take up their right of possession were for fear of military conscription should the land ownership register be used as a census, and fear the of higher taxes. The tribal chiefs and other wealthy people from urban society successfully manipulated this climate of fear and used it for their own gain ending up with most of the land in their own names!

According to Sluglett (1987):

The immediate result of the introduction of the Code was that title deeds (*tapu sanads*) confirming what were in practice inalienable possessory and usufructuary rights were issued on the most perfunctory evidence to city merchants, former tax farmers and tribal chiefs and others astute enough to 'understand the advantages conferred by the possession of slips of paper', who were thereby transformed overnight into large landowners.⁸

Thus the law produced an effect contrary to that which it in theory set out to achieve. It paved the way for, and gave official credence to, a parasitic social class. This class was made up of tribal chiefs and merchants (known as *mallak*)⁹ most of whom lived in towns. However, when traditional tribal chiefs failed to pay taxes, the government would

allow the land to be taken over by a new more compliant owner. Owen (1981) cites a typical example of this process in action:

Land about 1,500 acres, nearly thirty years ago belonged to a great tribe called the *Khazal*, who took no notice of the Turkish Government and did not pay any tax. In 1889 the Turkish Government decided to do something so they sold the land, with an enormous amount besides- probably 30,000 acres in all- for a nominal sum to a rich man called *Sayyid* Hasan who stood well with them, on his promising to pay the necessary taxes. The whole business was accompanied by amazing bribery and fraud and the deeds of sale are so fatuous as to be entirely invalid. But the Turks provided troops to push out the tribes, and *Sayyid* Hasan managed to get possession and to cultivate the greater part of the land.¹⁰

In practical terms the implementation of the land code brought almost nothing to ease the exploitation and oppression which heavily burdened the *fellaheen*. It was significant that the *fellaheen* used to say 'It is the same donkey but another bridle' to describe their situation before and following implementation of the code.

The only large areas of agricultural land which came under a different category were the large estates known as *saniya* land and registered in the *Sultan's* name. As much as 30 per cent of cultivated land in Baghdad *wilaya* and vast estates in Mosul and Basra *wilaya* was in this category¹¹. According to Owen (1981):

These estates were administered on the *Sultan's* behalf by the local officials of the *Daira al-Saniya* (Department of *Saniya*) responsible directly to Istanbul. Such a close link with the ruler gave the estate managers numerous advantages.¹²

Saniya land was cultivated by the *fellaheen* but its revenue went entirely to the *Sultan* in Constantinople (Istanbul). Haider states that 'the greatest single landowner who had benefited from the application of the *tapu* system in Iraq was *Sultan* Abdul Hamid himself' (1966:168).¹³ In 1880 and 1892 the *Sultan* issued two decrees which suspended any further *tapu sanad* registration in Iraq's *wilaya* except for the Mosul *wilaya*.¹⁴

4.2. British colonial land tenure policy

Before the British invasion the Turks removed or destroyed all the records of land ownership. (In any case, the records were inaccurate,

being based on surveys carried out by junior officials using lengths of rope to measure the land).

During the British occupation and later under the mandate there were only minor changes in land ownership. It was the policy of the British to maintain the status quo. In 1919 the British Revenue Commissioner noted: 'We must recognise that it is primarily our business not to give rights to those who have them not, but to secure their rights to those who have them'.¹⁵

To gain control of the rural areas, the British invested in a large number of British officers who worked with their assistants in rural areas. Their strategy was to win over the tribal chiefs and make them more responsible for keeping peace and ensuring the payment of taxes. They did this by giving the tribal chiefs leaseholds on land virtually tax free. This was supposed to provide a loyal base in rural areas and it did indeed reduce the cost of keeping peace.

The *sheikhs* who sought alliance with the British were given protection from other tribes, through the British Political Officers. However, when the matter concerned *mallakeen* this was one area of conflict. The *sheikhs* wanted the British to support them against the *mallak* who held *tapu sanads*. The British were not particularly interested in who owned the land but simply wanted to ensure that taxes were paid. Their land tenure policy was based on tactical measures rather than any long-term problem-solving. It was left to the judgement of the Political Officers to decide on the merits of each *tapu sanad* and to make arrangement for payment of revenue.

The British followed one of the following three options depending on individual situation in question. The first alternative was to support the sheikhs regardless of the legal rights of the *mallakeen*, a policy which was bound to win over all the tribes. The second alternative was to support the *mallakeen* by enforcing their legal rights, thus allying the landed class with the civil administration appointed by the British officials. The third alternative was a sort of a temporary compromise by which the landlord would be acknowledged as the legal owner, but forbidden from interfering in day- to- day matters, the administrator would assume responsibility and collect the landlord's share on his behalf.

The *fellaheen*, the real producers, were not involved in these disputes between landlords, and merely got caught up in the crossfire between the *sheikh* and the *mallak*. The British, ever mindful of the need to maintain their support in rural areas, made several tax reductions. A

1919 settlement that had been made for the payment of 40 per cent of gross production of *tapu* land was soon reduced by ten per cent.¹⁶ Although the British continued to try to please both *sheikhs* and *mallak-eeen*, the tax burden affected the *fellaheen*. In 1920 this was a cause of widescale unrest.

Revenue from agriculture was one of the most important sources of revenue in Iraq. Its collection was therefore a major British concern. This also gave the *sheikh* and *mallak* a certain amount of power in government policymaking. During the period 1921-30 land revenue comprised of 11.7 to 27.6 percent of total state revenue, however after Iraq began exporting oil there was a marked decline in the share of land revenue. In the period 1931-1940 the figure was 7 to 10.5 percent, and during 1952-58 it dropped as low as 1.7 per cent.¹⁷

4.3. Land titles settlement measures

During the period of the monarchy, the government initiated several measures (under the supervision of British officials) concerning land tenure and tax on agricultural produce. Several enactments were issued, the *Lazma* Law No. 51 of 1932, and the Settlement of Land Rights laws No. 50 of 1932 and No. 29 of 1938. These measures, though they defined a new type of land tenure, mainly regulated the already existing types.

The Land Title Settlement Law of 1932 kept almost the same old definition of land ownership: *mulk*, *matruka*, *waqf*, *mawwat*, and *miri*. However, according to this law, there were three types of *miri* land:¹⁸

- *miri-tapu*, where land titles were in the names of individual owners while the state's rights were minima;
- *miri-lama*, where land titles held by the crown but the right to cultivate them was given to individuals; and
- *miri-surf*; land ownership and the right of usage were in the hands of the state.

The categories *mulk*, *matruka*, and *waqf*, as well as *miri-tapu* and *miri-surf* corresponded to the old Ottoman tenure system, while *miri-lazma* which was also one of the main forms of customary tenure recognised at that time, was given legal status by the new law. There was no practical distinction between *tapu* and *lazma* land. It was enough for the *sheikh* or other landlord to install irrigation pumps in a *miri*-land to be entitled to *lazma* rights. The significance of such measures is reflected in the fact

that though the *miri*-land remained in the hands of the state, the reality was different as Batatu (1978) says:

A large part of this category of land was rented to individuals usually *sheikhs*, by auction or direct lease contract for a period which theoretically did not exceed three years. In fact, lands rented to *sheikhs* tended to be re-rented to them and after their death to their descendants.¹⁹

Later on, after 1939, holders of *tapu* and *lazma* land were released from paying tax on their land. Any remaining land to which title had not been fixed i.e. it was not *mulk*, or *waqf* remained in the formal ownership of the state as *miri-surf*. This category included land actually in the possession of *sheikhs* or other landowners who in fact enjoyed undisturbed rights of possession. These occupiers paid a light tax on their holdings. Up to 1953, there were over 25 million *donums* (*one donum*=0.25 *hectare*) held in the above categories of tenure. Table 4.1 below illustrates areas of land under each category.

Table 4.1. Area of agricultural land according to its title, 1953, ('000 *donum*)

Type	Size
<i>Tapu</i>	10,109
<i>Lazma</i>	6,713
Other tenure	1,012
Rented land	7,702
Total	25,536

Source: D. Warriner, 1962, p. 149

The table above reveals that the title of a great part of land had been fixed, more than 16 million *donum* became *tapu* and *lazma*. Rented land (*miri surf*) and *waqf* (other tenure) composed almost 8 million *donum*. In theory the definition of land titles was to help in fixing land ownership for the benefit of the majority of farmers. In practice the pattern of land ownership was dependent on the power and sincerity of the government. Eventually most of the agricultural land was registered in the name of the tribal chiefs and urban-based aristocrats. The law had yet again

provided legal backing to the *sheikhs* and landlords for their claim over large estates of land including *miri* land.

4.4. Land development law of 1951

In 1951 the *miri-surf* Land Development Law aimed to distribute state land, which would be developed or reclaimed, to private tenure. Under this law 2,126,580 *donums* were distributed between 1952 and 1954.²⁰ This could have marked a genuine change in agricultural land ownership. However, it seems that the main outcome of this law was to continue the practice of assigning land to tribal chiefs. Land was not redistributed to the *fellaheen*. Warriner states that of the 1,800,000 *donums* were distributed in Mosul province, large areas of the best state land were registered in the names of the *sheikh* of the *Shammar* tribe and his sub-*sheikhs* (1962;160). So despite much legislation on land ownership the feudal system still prevailed in Iraq. As *sheikhs* and other landlords continued to hold influential positions in government, there was no likelihood of legislation which did not favour big landowners. The landlords revelled in their position of social prestige. Warriner (1962) describes the big landlords in Amara region as follows:

The social structure is still tribal. One of the three big landholders, for example, the Senator Mohammed el-Araiby, has 6,000 people (i.e. *fellaheen*-tribesmen), a family of 200, and 4 wives. Smaller landholders have between 1,500 and 2,000 people.....The crops are grown by the cultivators, who must deliver two-thirds or even three-quarters of the produce to the *sheikh*.²¹

In fact in other parts of Iraq the case was similar to the above, for example in the northern Kurdish city Suliamaniya one family (*Jaf Bagzadah*) owned 539,333 *donum*, much of it in a rain-fed area. Another family (*al-Yawer*) in Mosul owned 346,747 *donum*, most of it arable land.²²

According to the Iraqi Communist Party, on the eve of the 1958 Revolution about 4 million *fellaheen* were landless, while 272 landlords controlled 4.5 million *donums* and some families even accumulated over 500,000 *donums* each²³ (see Table 4.2).

4.5. Absentee landlordism

On examining absentee landlords in more detail, it can be seen that there were different groups of people involved, all residing in urban areas. The main groups were:

- the *mallak*, urban-based merchants;
- tribal chiefs who had been attracted to a lifestyle in urban areas; and
- religious leaders (*Sayyid/Mulla*) who often possessed large estates under the *waqf* category of land tenure.

During the Ottoman era the land owned by the religious leaders was extended. The Turks increased the number of *sadah* (plural of *sayyid*) during the nineteenth century, and granted them large areas. Their role was to appease those in rural areas, and check the power of the tribal chiefs.²⁴ Later, under the monarchy, the landholding of *sheikhs* and *mallakeen* also grew. These were the recipients of a free *lazma* title to state land, in return for their loyalty or the installation of water pumps.²⁵ The *mallak* and religious leaders knew very little about agriculture, and therefore did not get involved in the day-to-day running of their land. They usually employed middlemen for that purpose. However, the relatively large group of urban-based tribal chiefs had much greater control and influence over their land. They frequently supervised their property and land cultivation using family members. They maintained close links with the tribesmen and the traditional power structure within the tribe was left intact. Those "urban" *sheikhs* continued to wield great power and influence in the state power structure as well. They did not completely forget that their influential positions were due to the backing of their tribesmen in rural areas.

Absentee landlordism did not as might be expected provide the *fellaheen* with an opportunity to mobilise and demand their right to a more just system of land tenure. On the contrary, it tended to reinforce the existing system of patronage as *sheikhs* in government consolidated and legalised their positions. This might explain what kept Iraq's rural land tenancy unchanged, until the legal position of the landlords was severely undermined by the implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1958.

4.6. Sharecroppers

Prior to the Agrarian Reform Law of 1958 the concentration of agricultural land in the hands of a small group of landowners reached very high levels and the percentage of small household farms owned by the *fellaheen* was very low indeed.²⁶ In fact the big landlords possessed most of the country's fertile land, 62 per cent of the cultivable land (total 32 million *donum*) belonged to 1.7 per cent of the total number of landowners. See Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Land ownership prior to 1958

Numbers of holders	% of holders	Size of area (<i>donum</i>)	% of total area
23,089	9.12	8,599	0.03
50,021	19.75	93,722	0.29
40,475	15.98	243,004	0.76
71,049	28.05	1,671,484	5.20
29,884	11.80	2,055,856	6.40
31,508	12.44	5,799,012	18.03
2,916	1.15	1,992,431	6.20
1,832	.72	2,560,190	7.96
2,128	.84	8,550,322	26.59
224	.09	3,030,773	9.42
95	.04	2,998,607	9.32
25	.01	1,725,988	5.37
8	.003	1,424,825	4.43
253,254	100.00	32,154,813	100.00

Source: Batatu, H. 1978, p.54

Therefore, virtually all land was cultivated by sharecroppers. These could be categorised as follows:

- sharecropper tribal tenants, the most common group;
- freeholder tribal cultivators, a rarity;

- small independent farm owners, unusual for the reasons given above; and
- hired agricultural labourers.

There was no one formula for sharecrop arrangements. It varied from one region to another, and from one landowner to another. It also varied depending on the state system of the time.

However, the share-cropping system generally consisted of two types. The first type was where the land was owned by the *fellah* and he gave 50 per cent of the production to the creditor, and the second type was where the peasants worked on their landlords land. In the latter, much more than 50 per cent of the production went to the landlord.²⁷

On examining the second case in more detail it can be seen that the landlord had tremendous power over the peasant. He or his local assistant (*Sergal*) controlled the assignment of land distribution among the *fellaheen* (plural of *fellah*). The procedure was conducted as follows: the landlord or his *sergal* assigned the piece of land and the crop to be cultivated for the next season, then he divided the *fellaheen* into groups giving each group a plot of land. The group was divided into subdivisions each comprising of 2-5 *fellaheen*, and the land divided among the sub-divisions by means of a local lottery. Each *fellah* was assigned a piece of land varying in size according to the will of the landlord and his contentment with the *fellah*. Any increase in plot size would be at the expense of another *fellah* with whom the landlord or the *sergal* was not fully satisfied.²⁸

Once the harvesting had been done the *fellah* had to make his payments. As previously mentioned these varied greatly. For example, during the period of the monarchy it was usual for the landlord to get three-fifths of the crop of flow-irrigated land (rising to two-thirds if the landowner provided the seed). On pump-irrigated land the share was five-sevenths. The most serious aspect was that the farmer did not receive his portion from the total farm produce but from what was left of the crops after a series of dues. The principal dues were as follows:²⁹

- four per cent of the product to the men who guarded the crop from the moment it came to ripeness till its actual division;
- nine per cent for the support of the *sheikh's* guest-house and to the servant (coffee-man);
- three per cent (in some regions) to the *sayyid/ mulla*;
- five per cent to the measurers of the crop; and

• five per cent (in irrigated areas) to the man who supervised the distribution of water and the repair of pumps.

The *fellah* had to satisfy so many claims from various bodies, a situation embodied in a verse the rural people used to recite 'And at the door of the fellah's hut...the dog of the *sheikh* is barking 'Where is my right?'

It was not only through the system of agricultural production that the landlords exploited the peasants. They also used to rely on them to carry out other tasks when required, and were literally in servitude to the landlord. In some areas the landlord also expected a fee to be paid whenever a birth or marriage occurred among 'his' peasants. The landlord seized every opportunity he could to exploit the workers. So, although the peasants were the food producers, they often remained hungry. The labourers were the worst off, sleeping in overcrowded mud or mat huts with their cows or buffaloes. Their staple diet consisted of dates and lentils supplemented with barely and rice.³⁰

Peasants were reminded constantly that they should indeed be grateful to their landlord, after all he had given them the use of a plot of land and this protected them from complete destitution. In return, they were required to do all they can to serve the landlord, and provide rent and labour when requested.

There was, as mentioned earlier, a small percentage of small household farms (owned by the *fellaheen*) whose very existence was threatened by the fact that the majority of the owners were poor. They had to rely on loans for the daily expenses of their families and for the acquisition of farming inputs. The source of credit was usually the big landlords or merchants in nearby urban centres. Therefore, most of the *fellaheen* had no choice but to mortgage their land gradually losing it to the big landlords, and rapidly becoming subject to share-cropping systems. The Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) analysed the problem by stating:

So long as the Iraqi *fellah* remained burdened with debt, trodden with misery, ignorance and exploitation- simply as a slave...,he had no chance to retain any land in his possession for long, and at the end all the land would become the property of the feudalists.³¹

By the time of the monarchy the *fellah's* share of crop production had dwindled. Laws passed by the rulers had little or no effect in the field. In 1952 a law stated that the landlords share should not exceed 50 per cent. Neither *fellaheen* nor landlords took any notice of this.³² The politicians in Baghdad could and did not control the landlords, in fact,

they had no real desire to do so. They made no attempt to ensure that the law was implemented. As has already been discussed in Chapter 2, the landlords and the politicians were actually the same group of people. They would gain nothing by altering the status quo.

The long-term effect of this situation was the obstruction of any real opportunity for improvement in the quality of life within the rural areas. Those in power firmly resisted any attempt to introduce schools in the villages and used all possible means to persuade fathers not to send their sons to the schools nearby towns. Warriner gives an example of Amara town: 'new schools are being started, but many children cannot attend because they must work. Some *sheikhs* oppose education' (1962:152).

Standing observed that landowners have often impeded modernisation, seeing it as a threat to their affluence, power, and capacity for exploitation. In some Latin American countries (e.g. Chile and Ecuador) hacienda owners opposed railway construction in the regions they dominated precisely because they feared it would allow outsiders into the provinces and provide peasants with means of emigration (1980:1-82). For these and other reasons Iraq's rural landlords wanted to keep rural people illiterate, ignorant and poor. Consequently, the cumulative effect has produced social and cultural isolation of rural and urban societies. Physical and mental isolation of these rural people has resulted in a suspicion and mistrust of outsiders, and in particular a mistrust of officials. In some cases this mistrust was so great that it was considered dangerous for an outsider to visit rural areas without an armed escort.³³ This suspicion and mistrust greatly hindered the work of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform and its officials, in implementing the measures of the land reform issued by the new republic government of 1958.

4.7. Agrarian reform: Conceptual and local practice issues

The concepts of agrarian reform are extensively discussed in development studies, with reference to various experiences of many developing countries around the world.³⁴ It is not my intention to become involved in this discourse in this chapter, but in order to highlight Iraq's initiation of agrarian reform legislation and implementation, it is necessary to state worldwide common definitions of this issue, so that any difference in the Iraqi approach can be observed.

Conceptual differences between the various definitions of agrarian reforms are illustrated in the literature, mainly attributed to differences

in socio-economic and political criteria. Bark and O'Hare (1984) define agrarian reform as 'intervention in the prevailing pattern of land ownership, control and usage in order to change the structure of holdings, improve productivity and broaden the distribution of social and economic benefit'.³⁵ Michael Lipton considers agrarian reform to be an equalising policy, its primary motivation being to reduce poverty by reducing inequality. Therefore, Lipton says that changes in landholding structures that do not reduce inequality cannot be defined as agrarian reform (1974:271)

Reforms take place because agricultural land is a crucial asset, and because either the majority of the rural population are dependent on agricultural production for their livelihood, and/or the country's economy offers little opportunity for absorption of the rural labour into other economic sectors.

The variation between countries with regard to agrarian reform reflects to some extent the historical, cultural and economic contexts of the different rural societies and more importantly the country's policymakers' political agenda for development. Lehmann (1974) states:

Agrarian reforms vary in content and meaning. They operate to the benefit of different groups in different situations at the national level and within agrarian society. They have varying effects on the political system, sometimes contributing to its continued or restored stability, sometimes upsetting that stability.³⁶

Sobhan (1993) provides a useful distinction between various agrarian reforms according to their social origins and outcome. Radical agrarian reforms and non-egalitarian reforms with social transition and without social transition. According to Sobhan the outcome of radical reforms:

Usually contributes to the virtual elimination of landlessness and ensures a highly egalitarian access to land. Such a social transformation frequently, though not invariably, leads to a transformation in the relations of production due to the complete eradication of the original dominant class.³⁷

Sobhan argues that eradication of a landlord class and a transformation of production could also be achieved without realising egalitarian access to land. He goes on to say:

Non-egalitarian reforms leave a class of middle peasant/capitalists intact under the provision of the reforms, with sizeable retained holdings. This class retains the capacity to hire labour, generate surpluses and reinvest it in capitalising its

land, it remains equipped to absorb modern technology and within its resources base retains the capacity to benefit from technological advances and state investments in the agricultural sector³⁸

Interestingly, Sobhan places Iraq's agrarian reform within the category of non-egalitarian with social transition. His argument of this classification is based on the assumption that though the overthrowing of the monarchist regime in 1958 targeted the class of landlords, it left sizeable lands (despite the large area of land covered by the reform) in the hands of the former landowners due to inordinately high retention limits set by the 1958 and 1970 reforms. 'These ceilings not only left intact a class of potentially big farmers but also permitted many former landowners to retain their land through various clandestine forms of sub-division'.³⁹

The introduction of agrarian reform in Iraq marked a new phase of state intervention in rural economy and the development process. Iraq's first Agrarian Reform Law aimed for more than expropriation and redistribution of land among disadvantaged farmers. It hoped to introduce genuine changes in the socio-economic and political structures in favour of the poor and the oppressed. But to what extent was Qasim's government prepared to challenge the tribal chiefs and the influential urban-based big landowners?

4.8. The first agrarian reform law

Before the 1958 revolution, the process of rural change was significantly led and controlled by the rural upper class as they were the key land owner and *de facto* allies of the monarchy. Soon after the 1958 revolution, the new government began to show its concern for the well-being of the rural population and for which land ownership was a pre-requisite.

On 27 July the government took its first step to eradicate feudalism by putting an end to the implementation of the tribal jurisdictions law (Tribal Dispute Code). This step was closely followed by the issuing of the First Agrarian Reform Law. Perceiving the importance of land ownership, the emphasis was on land reform which was considered a vital issue in agrarian reform.

On 30 September 1958, the Agrarian Reform Law was issued and broadcast to the nation. Qasim, the leader of the 1958 revolution stated:

'We have found that agrarian reform is the foundation of social reform which our great nation is historically entitled to. The law will do away with feudalism forever and liberate the fellaheen.'⁴⁰

The new leaders were conscious of the thorny nature of land ownership and the kind of economic and social ties and bonds which had been established over many decades in the rural areas and used by the landlords in dealing with the *fellaheen*. They were also aware of the danger of unleashing feelings of revenge against the landlords. The release of the peasants from oppression and exploitation could provoke all sorts of bloodshed. Colonel Qasim emphasized the principle of loyalty to the republic by all Iraqis in his speech of September 1958 which said:

We will not persecute landlords or treat them unjustly. We will only awaken their conscience towards the sons of this people, and they will march alongside the caravan of liberation and equality. Our aim is to eradicate greed, exercise tolerance even with the people who have done you harm. We do not hold the son responsible for the crime of his father because the children of the present will form the good generation of the near future.⁴¹

4.8.1 Measures and objectives

The Agrarian Reform Law was based largely on the Egyptian agrarian reform law issued by President Nasir in 1952. Focusing on three major issues: limiting upper ceiling of land ownership; redistribution of land among *fellaheen*; and setting up cooperative societies. The law was based on the following principles:⁴²

- defining the ceiling of landownership and expropriation of all privately-owned holdings in excess of 1000 *donum* of irrigated land and 2000 *donum* of rainfed land;
- distribution of sequestered land and state-owned land among the *fellaheen*, (30-60 *donums* of irrigated land and 60-120 *donums* of rainfed land);
- compensation of former landowners on the basis of land values by three percent interest-bearing bonds of 20 years maturity; and
- setting up agricultural co-operatives composed of the beneficiaries of the land reform in order to provide their members with credit and other inputs as well as agricultural services.

The law was to be implemented within five years, and would have an effect on 1,043 big landowners and their properties amounting to 7.6 million *donum*.⁴³

The Ministry of Agrarian Reform started land expropriation, and it became the sole administrator of the expropriated land until land was distributed among the *fellaheen*.

During the transition period between expropriation and distribution the continuation of agricultural activities was entrusted to the former landlords. They were to manage the land and supply agricultural requisites to the cultivators as they always had done and in return the ministry would pay them a reasonable fee.

The agrarian reform law aimed to achieve the following objectives:•

- the abolition of feudal system of land tenure and the transformation of the rural society into a cooperative system;
- the increase of agricultural production and productivity by improving the labour /land/capital ratio which would lead to an improvement in the standard of living in rural areas; and
- enhancing of the social status of farmers which heavily depended on the redistribution of land to 'give the land to those who till it' implying giving the farmer a higher degree of independence and security.

The cooperatives were one of the main instruments used to translate the objectives of the agrarian reform law into reality and set the policy in motion. Therefore, a hierarchy of administrative bodies to supervise and articulate the work of the local cooperatives was necessary. On May 1959, the General Federation of Peasants Societies (GFPS) law was issued. The law outlined the structure of the GFPS with the local cooperatives located in the villages at the bottom of the pyramid and the National Federation (NF) bureau in Baghdad as the top. The administrative structure was as follows:

National Federation	(national level)
Regional Federation	(based in the capital)
District Federation	(based in the province's main city)
Sub-district Federation	(based in the towns)
local Cooperatives	(based in the villages)

Once the cooperatives became capable of providing the farmers with the services they required, they would become entirely independent of wealthy farmers and their exploitation.

4.8.2 The impediments of agrarian reform

The ultimate aims of the Agrarian Reform law were very far reaching. They presented a formidable task, especially in a society governed by

such a complex set of social, economic and political constraints. To begin with, the law of 1958 was not prepared and drawn in accordance to Iraq's local needs and conditions, but was based on the Egyptian law which was designed according to Egyptian rural needs. Though this was a helpful guide to draw on the principles of the law, there were significant differences between the two rural societies.

The Egyptian Reform Law of 1952 introduced integrated and controlled measures. This was comparatively easy because in comparison with Iraq, Egypt was as Alwan and Warriner (1969) pointed out:

Agriculturally an advanced country, and, long before the reform, had a system of perennial irrigation, controlled by a government service, some system of agricultural credit, some experience in co-operative organisation, and an ample, even excessive, supply of officials trained in agriculture. Iraq had none of these things.⁴⁴

Implementation of the law in Iraq, therefore, suffered from many difficulties. Two categories of factors can be identified which contributed to the shortcomings of the law: legislative and socio-political.

1) Legislative factors

- except for differences in the ceiling of irrigated and non-irrigated land, the law took no account whatsoever of the great regional differences in the country, the wide variety of land, degree of fertility, location from the rain-line, type of irrigation, and type of produce;
- much leeway was given to the goodwill of the landlords in that they were allowed to continue to manage their former lands and to provide the necessary agricultural inputs during the transition period, as if nothing had happened;
- the law permitted a high ceiling of land to remain in the hands of the big landlords, which they had acquired through illegitimate means or according to laws issued by previous biased governments. Many landlords had subdivide their properties, registering the fragmented properties under the names of their sons and wives. The ceiling of 1000 *donums* in irrigated areas, and 2000 *donums* in rainfed areas had, in many instances allowed the concentration of land to remain in the hands of big landlords;
- paying compensation to the landlords for the expropriated land contributed to the social injustice and inequality already in existence in rural areas;
- permitting the landlords to choose the plots of land they wished to retain (within the ceiling) led to a situation where the most fertile

land close to main roads and source of water remained in the hands of the landlords; and

- demanding that beneficiaries paid 20 per cent of the price of land and an additional three per cent in administrative fees, and also the remaining amount in annual instalments over a period of 20 years, meant that many eligible beneficiaries who were very poor just who couldn't afford to pay what was asked of them.

2) Socio-political factors

From its early stages of implementation and for many years to come, agrarian reform encountered many hindrances as a result of political instability, insufficient capacity of the state institutions and the tribal affiliation of the *fellaheen*⁴⁵; in addition to various socio-economic constraints

Politically, the Qasim's government had enthusiastic backing of the Communist Party (many of its members held influential posts within the government, and the Minister of Agrarian Reform was himself a strong sympathizer of the Party) to dismantle the power of big landlords and expropriate large estates. But when it came to land redistribution the Communist Party took a totally different stand from Qasim's government. The agricultural policy of the Communist Party (based on its ideology) was to press for the acceleration of the process of land expropriation. However, when it came to redistribution of land in small holdings among the farmers, the party was not so keen. They preferred to initiate a communist programme of collectivisation of agriculture. From September 1958 until the end of 1960, the *fellaheen* got only about three per cent (some 224,000 *donums*) of the land that was to be expropriated.⁴⁶

After the assassination of Qasim and the massacre of the communists by the new government of the Ba'ath Party of February 1963, political instability began to be a major feature of Iraqi political life. This is evident in several coups d'état during the 1960s as noted in Chapter 2. Each abolished the policy of the former, replacing the key civil servants in the agricultural sector.

The institutional and social framework in the initial phase did not provide the required levels of administration which the agrarian reform process demanded. There was no efficient administrative apparatus. Instead, there was too much bureaucracy, and a lack of personnel able to carry out surveys, check disputed land titles, and above all to distribute land.

The newly formed cooperatives were inefficient and unable to serve large numbers of beneficiaries, and provide their members with credit and other inputs which they used to get from their landowners. The functions of the cooperatives was greatly hampered by the high rate of illiteracy of their members who also lacked knowledge about the merits of cooperatives.⁴⁷

The legal abolition of the feudal system did not put an end to the big landowners power. The tribal structure of the rural society provided enough room for the tribal chiefs to retain considerable control over the tribesmen.⁴⁸ Tribesmen's loyalty to their *sheikhs* was evident even when they became members of cooperatives. Eventually many cooperatives fell under indirect control of the tribal chiefs who tried every means to either commandeer them for their personal gain or to undermine their work.⁴⁹

Economically, the reform objectives were not adequately achieved in this initial phase. Average agricultural production level fell in 1958-60 in comparison to their levels prior to the reform, for example grain production fell by 17 per cent, rice by 20 per cent and cotton by more than 16 per cent.⁵⁰ However, Iraq was not the only country to experience the phenomenon of production decline immediately after the implementation of an agrarian reform law. Many other countries who adopted a land reform policy such as Bolivia, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Mexico had similar experiences.⁵¹ Unfortunately nature was not merciful to agricultural production during the three years following the legislation. Iraq suffered a continuous drought. Therefore, it would not be accurate to blame the agrarian reform for the entire decline in the production.⁵²

To evaluate the impact of a serious change such as land reform on the farming patterns by comparing the production levels of the 4-5 years before and after that event would be inadequate and misleading. To make a valid judgement would take more than a few years. Difficulties in implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law were mainly associated with one key issue: the redistribution of land. Land could be rapidly expropriated, but re-distributing it and providing enough support for the new land owners proved a mammoth task. Of the 4.5 million *donums* that were expropriated up to the end of 1963, only 1.2 million *donums* were redistributed and 0.56 million *donums* of *miri* land (state-owned land) was also distributed to raise the total area of redistributed land until the end of 1963 to 1.7 million *donums*, see Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Land expropriation, distribution and number of beneficiaries, 1959-67

Years	Total distributed land (donums)			No. of beneficiaries
	Miri land	Expropriated land	Total	
1959	36,900	nil	36,900	615
1960	59,504	223,925	283,429	7,393
1961	198,305	293,726	492,031	9,460
1962	67,876	569,647	637,523	11,170
1963	203,618	177,161	380,779	6,779
1964	149,532	267,452	416,984	9,599
1965	27,830	52,852	80,682	1,984
1966	26,771	55,422	82,193	2,340
1967	60,156	81,281	141,437	3,290

Source: Gabbay, R., 1978, p. 117

The table above shows that by the end of 1967 the total area of redistributed land (from *miri* and expropriated land) reached 2.5 million *donums*, while the expropriated land alone reached only 7.1 million *donums*. Up to 1970, an area of 3.6 million *donums* of land had been redistributed to 66,092 families. This constituted about 30 per cent of the 12 million *donums* of the expropriated and state-owned land available for distribution.⁵³

4.8.3 *The impact of reform on rural development*

An overemphasis of the shortcomings and impotence of the agrarian law should not let us turn a blind eye to the remarkable changes which occurred as a result of the implementation of reforms. Though the distribution of land lagged behind expropriation, the essence of reform is to introduce equity and justice among rural society. Therefore, expropriation of big estates from landlords and redistributing land among landless and small farmers is a notable hallmark. The positive impact of the agrarian reform law could be listed as follows:

- political, where breaking down the political power of big landlords resulted in the freeing of the *fellaheen* from subordination and

enhanced their power over their own existence. In fact this impact was acknowledged by some leading scholars like Sobhan (1993), El-Ghonemy (1990) and Warriner (1969). In this regard Warriner says 'the tribesmen have been freed from a state of subjection akin to serfdom';⁵⁴

- social, where land possession for the Iraqi farmer meant not only ownership of a key factor of production, but also was considered as a precious gift from *Allah*. Accordingly, land ownership was an indication of blessing improving the status of the farmer. The agrarian reform law had brought more than 'another land tenure system' it eventually reshuffled the societal structure in favour of the oppressed and poor; and
- economic, where the implementation of the reforms produced a marked increase in yields of the main crops and in food production in general, landlessness and share-cropping systems and the exploitative relationships of the pre-reform era engendered little or no production incentives or motivation, and resulted in very low yields of main crops. See Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Productivity of main crops 1948-71 (selected years), (ton/hectare).

Crop	1948-52	1958	1961-65	1969-71
Wheat	0.48	0.40	0.53	0.88
Barley	0.77	0.50	0.75	1.19
Rice	1.16	1.12	1.42	1.95
Cotton	0.27	0.46	0.74	1.30

Source: El-Ghonemy, R., 1990, pp. 218-19

This was due to more investment in irrigation schemes, and land reclamation in addition to the provision of inputs and other farming services through the cooperatives. Before 1958 there were 22 agricultural cooperatives many of which were inactive, but by 1968 the number reached 443, embracing about 60,000 members.⁵⁵

4.9. The second agrarian reform law

Following the seizure of power in Iraq by the Ba'th party in 1968, the new government issued the second Agrarian Reform Law. This was issued in May 1970. The new law incorporated many provisions of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1958. It aimed to overcome deficiencies and shortcomings associated with the previous law. The significance of this new law was that it did not use single criteria of irrigated/ rainfed as a way of calculating land to be expropriated and redistributed. It introduced several new criteria which took into consideration the fertility of the land, availability of water and methods of irrigation, level of rainfall in the rainfed areas, cropping patterns and marketing facilities,⁵⁶ and used these to put a ceiling on levels of land ownership.

In the rainfed zone, the law adhered to the rainfall line which separates the lands receiving an average of 400 mm of rain or more from those of lower average. The ceiling ranged from 1000 *donums* of land situated north of the line to 2000 *donums* of land situated south of the line. In the irrigated zone, the scale ranged from 600 *donums* of unfertile, flow-irrigated land to 40 *donums* of flow-irrigated land cultivated with tobacco and 100 *donums* of flow-irrigated land cultivated with rice. An administrative body was formed named the Supreme Agricultural Council (SAC), headed by the vice-president, in order to supervise the implementation of the law. The SAC was authorized in the case of lands which were close to marketing centres to lower the ceiling by as much as half of what was defined by the new law.

According to the Agrarian Reform Law of 1970, lands exceeding the above-mentioned ceilings were to be expropriated. All the expropriated lands were to be registered as *miri* (state) lands instead of the many other former forms of registration. As far as redistribution was concerned, the allotments to the *fellaheen* varied from 100 *donums* in areas north of the rain line to 200 *donums* in areas south of the line. In the irrigated land, the allotments ranged between 30 and 40 *donums* (flow irrigated), 40 and 60 *donums* (lift irrigated), and in the areas which cultivated rice it was 10 *donums*. In the northern region the irrigated areas ranged between 4 and 16 *donums* depending on the type of crop such as cotton, rice, tobacco and vegetables.⁵⁷ However, in addition to defining a new ceiling, the agrarian law provided for the following principles:

- annulment of the landlords' right to compensation and free land redistribution to the farmers;

- no right for the landlords to choose which land they wished to retain within the ceiling of ownership; and
- establishment of collective farms, state farms, and an increase in the number of cooperatives. These agricultural organisations were to provide their members with inputs, marketing facilities, credit, agricultural supplies, joint farming and machinery services. Loans were made available through the Agricultural Bank.⁵⁸

Despite the manifested objectives of tackling the shortcomings of the First Agrarian Law, there were other objectives. The Ba'ath party government wanted to organise the farmers professionally and politically according to the ideology of the party.⁵⁹ The government aimed at having more political control in rural areas and at strengthening central planning for the agricultural sector. The government supervised cooperatives, collectives and state farms and brought them under its direct and indirect control. They made up the agricultural public sector (later called socialist sector) while the private farms outside the agrarian reform areas represented the agricultural private sector. During the 1970s the public sector covered about 85 per cent of the cultivated land while the private sector covered about 4 million *donums* of the cultivated land which was 15 per cent of the total land under cultivation.⁶⁰

4.9.1 *The supplementary law*

In May 1975 the government issued the Agricultural Ownership Organisation Law No. 90⁶¹ which was a supplementary measure to the agrarian reform law of 1970 exclusively for Kurdistan (named by the state as the autonomous region comprised of the provinces of Sulaimaniya, Arbil and Dohuk). According to this measure, the ceiling for orchards and irrigated land ranged from 40 to 120 *donums*. In rainfed areas it ranged from 300 to 500 *donums* according to rainfall, methods of irrigation and type of produce. Lands which exceeded those ceilings were to be expropriated and became state property. Thus an area of 633,645 *donums* was expropriated most of which was suitable for cultivation, and an area of 1.2 million *donums* was distributed to farmers. The total number of beneficiaries amounted to 59,145 families.

The region had always been (except in 1970-74) under a state of martial law. Thus military objectives had priority over any projects or development programmes. The state recruited some Kurdish *Aghas*-the heads of their tribes-to serve as militia fighting alongside the Iraqi army against their fellow Kurdish guerrillas. In return the state gave the *Aghas*

a free hand in agricultural land ownership and tribal affairs. Large areas of agricultural land were used for military camps and cultivable land often became the battle fields of the government army and the Kurdish guerrillas. After the major defeat of the Kurds in 1975, the army demolished most of the villages, particularly those near the borders with Iran and Turkey, to prevent the Kurdish guerrillas from receiving shelter and food.⁶² To maintain control over the Kurdish inhabitants, consolidated villages were constructed near main roads which were under total army control. However, villages accessible to the army were left uninhabited until the early 1980s when the state accelerated the destruction of villages. For example between 1987-88 more than 4000 villages were destroyed and by 1988 only a handful of villages were left in the whole of Kurdistan.⁶³

4.9.2 Land distribution

The process of land expropriation and redistribution following the legislation of the First Agrarian Reform Law of 1958 and also after the second law of 1970 was slow, despite it relatively speeding up between 1975 and 1977. About 2.7 million *donums* was distributed among the farmers up to 1970. However since the 1970 agrarian reform law was issued and up until 1983, less than 6.5 million *donums* was distributed and after 1983, the process significantly slowing down until it stopped completely. The total area of agricultural land which was redistributed in all provinces of Iraq according to both agrarian reform laws and Law No. 90 of 1975 was about 9 million *donums* and the number of beneficiaries totalled 261,900 by the end of 1985.⁶⁴

The distribution of land according to the agrarian reform laws was based on small to medium-sized single holdings for each of the beneficiaries. Table 4.5 shows that about two thirds of the holdings are medium-sized ranging from 10 to 120 *donums* held by almost half a million holders (one holding each holder) representing 72 percent of all landholders.

Table 4.5. Land holdings, 1982

Size of holding	No. of holders	% of holders	Area of holdings (donum)	% of land in holdings
Less than 10	157,050	23.0	692,000	2.8
10 - 120	492,300	72.1	16,400,000	66.7
120 - 300	28,300	4.1	4,100,000	16.7
More than 300	5,214	0.8	3,400,000	13.8
Total	682,864	100.0	24,592,000	100.0

Source: Alwan, A., 1986, p.25

The holdings shown in the table above comprise two types of land holding: the reform land, i.e the land given to/acquired by the beneficiaries in accordance with the agrarian laws; and lands outside reform zones which were held by non-beneficiaries. According to a survey carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1979, land outside the region of reform land in the various parts of the country amounted to 13.6 million *donums*.⁶⁵

5.10. Recent agrarian policy

In 1983 the government issued Law no. 35 in line with its new policy of privatisation. This law defined no upper limit on land tenure for any individual or private company wanting to rent land from the state. This is completely contrary to the spirit of the two agrarian reform laws of 1958, and 1970.

First, the new law lifted the limits on upper ceilings of land tenure, and second, it put a lower ceiling on areas of land to be leased at 250 *donums*, which put an end to land distribution among small farmers. The new law allowed individuals to rent state owned land (confiscated according to agrarian law of 1970) at very favourable rates and also included substantial credit.⁶⁶ Private companies and individuals could therefore enjoy the above privileges and also buy farming equipment such as harvesters, tractors and so on from the government importation agency at subsidised prices. This enabled them to gain extra profits by subcontracting the machinery for use on other farms. The government closed down several public sector administrative and operational depart-

ments, for example, the Directorate of Farm Supplies and Machinery with all its branches in the provinces was closed and assets were sold to individuals. Although Law 117 of 1970 has not been repealed or amended, its provisions are no longer strictly enforced. The government, in implementing Law no. 35, is itself violating land ceilings specified in Law 117, while allowing land consolidation in the private sector to occur. Families who had distributed land among their members to avoid confiscation were able to have reintegrated their holdings, while they and others have acquired even more land through purchase or rental.⁶⁷

As a result of the new agrarian policy almost all agricultural land which was in the possession of the state or which was used as collective and state farms, was either sold or rented to private agricultural firms and individuals. By the end of 1988 the size of agricultural land under private cultivation was 99 per cent (53 per cent was privately owned and 46 per cent was rented from the state by private investors) and the remaining one per cent was state-held.⁶⁸ Although this chapter concludes with a glance at the new policy of privatisation, a full discussion of this issue is in Chapter 7. In the next chapter the mechanisms of state intervention is dealt with, consisting of the introduction of cooperatives to provide farmers with inputs and agricultural services as a substitute for the rural landlords and urban merchants.

Notes:

1 Z Hershlag, 1964, pp 30-32

2 Midhat was the governor's name and pasha (equivalent to lord in English) was his title

3 G Atyyah, 1973, p 28 Excerpts of the Ottoman Land Code cited in Z Hershlag, 1980, pp 312-14

4 Cited in Hershlag, 1980, p 314

5 G Atyyah, 1973, p 28

6 J Tucker, 1990, p 213

7 Cited in Atyyah, 1973, p 30

8 M P Sluglett, 1987, p 4

9 In fact those urban based landlords, Mallakeen, (single mallak) sometimes encountered conflicts with the tribal sheikhs over their rights of land ownership in the tribe's area. However, the Mallakeen were often backed by the government until 1958 as most of them were members in the parliament or held powerful posts in the administration

- 10 Extract from a letter written by a British administrator posted in the Middle Euphrates after World War I, quoted in R Owen 1981, p 282
- 11 S Haider, 1966, p 168
- 12 R Owen, 1981, p 280
- 13 S Haider, 1966, p 168
- 14 Attyyah, 1973, p 30
- 15 Cited in P Sluglett, 1976, p 239
- 16 Reports of the Political Officers documented several settlement of these sort in various parts of the country For more details see G Attyyah, 1973, pp 240-250
- 17 H Batatu, 1978, p 105
- 18 This law was based upon the recommendations of Ernest Dawson, a British adviser to the Iraqi monarchy government at a time R Gabbay, 1981, p 349
- 19 H Batatu, 1978, p 109
- 20 D Warnner, 1962, p 159
- 21 *Ibid* p 151
- 22 For more details about the principle landed families who owned more than 30,000 donum see table 5-3 in H Batatu, 1978, p 58-61
- 23 R Gabbay, 1980, p 329
- 24 H Batatu, 1978, pp 162 165
- 25 D Warnner (1962, p 148) states that The 1932 Law of Granting Land on Lazma Tenure was used chiefly by the pump owners to acquire ownership of land on which they had installed pumps
- 26 P Springborg, 1993, p 45
- 27 Pourous, 1979
- 28 Ministry of Information, 1973
- 29 H Batatu, 1978, p 143
- 30 *Ibid* p 140
- 31 Cited in R Gabbay, 1980, p 329
- 32 R Gabbay, 1981, p 333
- 33 D Warnner, 1969
- 34 World Bank (1975), Janvry (1981) R Herrng (1983), R El Ghonemy (1984) and (1990) and R Sobhan (1993)
- 35 Bark, and O'Hare, 1984

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- 36 D Lehmann, 1974, p 16
- 37 R Sobhan, 1993, p 16
- 38 Ibid p 18
- 39 Ibid pp 44-45
- 40 Cited in R El-Ghonemy, 1990, p 244

- 41 Cited in U Dann, 1969, p 63
- 42 A Alwan, 1986, R Gabbay, 1981, D Warnner, 1962, and 1969, E Penrose, 1978, El-Ghonemy, 1990
- 43 R Gabbay, 1981, p 340
- 44 D Warnner, 1969, p 83
- 45 El-Ghonemy, 1990, p 212
- 46 R Gabbay, 1981, pp 343-4 Gabbay in his study provides more details about the Iraqi Communist Party's agrarian programme
- 47 A Alwan, 1986
- 48 R Fernea in R Anton and I Hank, 1972, p 84
- 49 Ministry of Agriculture, 1976
- 50 A Alwan, 1986
- 51 Alwan, 1986, and Sobhan, 1993 Noteworthy is that Sobhan (1993, p 96) stresses that in many cases it would be inadequate to equate the reform with the decline in production.
- 52 A Alwan, 1986 p 23
- 53 A Alwan, 1986, p 22
- 54 D Warnner, 1969, p 8

- 55 A Alwan 1986, p 26, and Ministry of Information, 1973, p 22
- 56 R Gabbay, 1978, p 119, and A Alwan, 1986, pp 23-24
- 57 A Alwan, 1986, p 24 and Ministry of Information, 1973, pp 29-38
- 58 In the next chapter these forms of agricultural production will be discussed in more detail
- 59 al Thoura al Arabia, No 2, March 1975, p 55
- 60 A, Alwan, 1986, p 24
- 61 Ministry of Agriculture, 1975
- 62 K Khalid 1990, pp 69 70

63 *Ibid* pp 84-85

64 Ministry of Planning, 1986

65 Ministry of Agriculture, 1980, p 15

66 Ministry of Agriculture, 1991

67 R Springborg, 1986, p 37

For example the branch of the Ugali tribe which resides north of Mosul and which was forced to camouflage its wealth and landownership in the 1970s is again openly farming huge areas in the region

68 K. Chaudhry, 1991, p 15

Agricultural organisations and services

The agrarian reform attempt to change the structure of the agrarian systems through land distribution and the setting up agricultural organisations mainly cooperatives. In principal, the agricultural organisations focused on accelerating the pace of agricultural development and achieving an equitable distribution of income by helping the low income groups of farmers to gain access to farming requisites and services. A historical review of the evolution and development of the cooperatives will help in gaining an understanding of their importance in agrarian change and of the state's attempt to further them in order to serve its objectives.

5.1. Agricultural cooperatives

The emergence and development of the agricultural cooperative movement can be looked at in tandem with the enactment of the Agrarian Reform Laws were the fundamental measures for the creation of the agricultural cooperative societies.

5.1.1 The initial phase (1944-1958)

In 1944 the government issued the first Cooperative Law, No. 27, which attempted to organize various types of cooperative societies. These were mostly urban-based societies concerned with housing, credit and consumption. The first agricultural cooperative society established under the law was formed among settlers in the Dujaila Settlement Project in 1944. It was a multi-purpose cooperative to help the members to obtain seeds and fertilizers. The law introduced tax rebates and subsidies for the

cooperative societies. The following are examples of such measures:-

- 1 - Deduction of 25 per cent from the transport charges on tools and equipment.
- 2 - Reduction of 25 per cent on the cost of seeds and fertilizers.

158 societies with a total membership of 24,677 persons were registered during the period 1944-1958, 22 of which were agricultural cooperatives.¹ The agricultural cooperatives in fact offered a very limited benefits to poor farmers for many reasons. First of all, their number was very small and, secondly, even if their number was increased they were controlled and run by landlords and wealthy farmers, so that poor farmers, who formed the vast majority, were denied any access to the cooperative services, even if they had ever heard of their existence. Thirdly, the government itself was not very enthusiastic about promoting a movement which might (if the cooperatives become a source of services to the poor farmers) reduce the big landlords' role and so change the power structure in the rural areas. According to the Iraqi Communist Party:²

by enacting the Cooperative Societies Law No.27 and permitting the establishment of a few societies the government under the monarchy's aim was to demonstrate that ultimately they would fail, so that it could propagate the failure of the cooperative idea and its unsuitability to the Iraqi *fellah*.

Not surprisingly, all but four of the agricultural cooperatives became inactive, two of the four were marketing societies handling dates in the central and southern provinces under government aegis and two were of milk producers societies established near Baghdad for buying foodstuffs.³

5.1.2 The second phase (1958-1970)

One of the major objectives of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1958 was the organisation of agricultural cooperatives. The aim was to diminish the role of the landlords and to eliminate their monopoly of agricultural production and to fill the vacuum created by the abolition of the big landlords in providing agricultural services to the farmers in a just, effective and sufficient manner.

The beneficiaries of land reform were obliged to set up agricultural cooperatives. Membership was also open to non-beneficiary farmers in the agrarian reform areas if the area of land owned by them did not exceed the ceiling specified by the law. In accordance with the Agrarian Reform Law

and the new Cooperative Societies Law of 1959, a Department of Agricultural Cooperation was established within the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform and was made responsible for the organisation of agricultural cooperatives with the tasks of :-

- 1 - Carrying out preliminary enquiries prior to the formation of the cooperatives.
- 2 - Preparing their bye-laws.
- 3 - Advising and guiding the cooperatives in implementing the agricultural programmes planned by the specialist department.
- 4 - Helping the cooperatives to obtain loans for their members, to market their products and to carry out any other functions beneficial to members.
- 5 - Supervising the cooperatives' activities and auditing their accounts.
- 6 - Ensuring that the functions of the cooperatives were carried out in conformity the Cooperatives and Agrarian Reform Law.⁴

The Agricultural Bank was established in order to provide financial help and loans through the cooperative societies to their members to be used exclusively for farming purposes.

The first agricultural cooperative to be established under the Agrarian Reform Law of 1958 was formed in 1960 and, by the end of 1961, 17 societies had been registered, although only one was actually functioning.⁵

It was mentioned above that, prior to the Agrarian Reform Law, most of the farmers were tenants and landless labourers who farmed under the instructions and supervision of the landlords. They were not acquainted with cooperatives and so, after they became beneficiaries of land distribution, the Ministry of Agrarian Reform had the task of informing them about the benefits of cooperatives and of training the members to operate the cooperatives. The task was extremely difficult because of the lack of skilled personnel to carry on the education programme among the cooperatives' members. However, as more local cooperative advisors and supervisors were employed and trained by the Department of Agricultural Cooperation, the number of cooperatives increased rapidly.

The average membership per cooperative varied from year to year; for example, it was 172 in 1962, but declined to 123 members in 1966.⁶ It is important to note that not every member of a cooperative was a farmer, but he was a representative of his household.

The organization of cooperatives

The farmers formed a cooperative with the help of a cooperative supervisor. A common procedure for setting up a cooperative was as follows:

Not less than 150 farmers had to agree on forming an agricultural cooperative in their area subject to the condition that there was no cooperative in their village or a nearby village. They had to choose a committee of three persons from among themselves to act as the chairman, secretary and treasurer. There had to be at least two annual meetings attended by all the cooperative's members⁷ and any decision had to be approved by a minimum of two-thirds of those attending, with each member having one vote. The cooperative supervisor was allowed to attend the meetings, but had no right to vote. Each member had to contribute to the formation of the cooperative's capital by paying a membership fee once and had to own at least one share. The members held joint liability for the debts and enjoyed the profit of the cooperative in proportion to their shares.

In order to help the cooperative to carry out its tasks, a civil servant with the title of Cooperative Advisor was appointed and paid by the Ministry of Agriculture to guide the cooperative. These Advisors were usually graduates of agricultural schools who had received in-service training for a period of 6-8 months.

An administrative body attached to the Ministry of Agrarian Reform was made responsible for the formation and development of the cooperative societies. A cooperative advisor worked directly with the cooperative at village level and was supervised by the Cooperative Supervisor based at the Department of Cooperation in the nearby town or city. The Department of Cooperation in any city was linked with the Directorate General in Baghdad.⁸

The initial duty of the cooperative Advisor was to explain to the rural community the merits of the cooperative system and the benefits which a cooperative society can bring to its members. His task was to raise farmers' awareness of cooperative work, so that membership could be voluntary rather than obligatory under the law.

Once the cooperative had been formed, the Advisor's duties included preparing budgets, providing the farmer with a recommendation to the cooperative bank to get a loan, keeping accounts, preparing an annual plan of work and calling committee meetings. Each Cooperative Advisor was in charge of one or two cooperatives and was responsible for reporting his work to a Cooperative Supervisor. The Cooperative Supervisor was in charge of ten cooperatives and had to ensure that the Advisors and the cooperatives were working according to the instructions and regulations laid down by the Ministry. As more cooperative advisors and supervisors were employed and trained by the department of Agricultural Cooperation, the number of cooperatives grew gradually; by 1967 there were 408 cooperatives, serving 55,492 members. See Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Agricultural cooperatives in agrarian reform areas, 1961-67

Years	no. of coops	no. of members	Capital (ID)	Reserve fund (ID)	Working capital (ID)
1961	17	2,385	n.a	n.a	n.a
1962	50	8,795	3,117	2,034	10,551
1963	65	11,833	7,312	3,102	28,765
1964	222	33,176	27,427	7,633	75,761
1965	297	38,743	56,239	16,601	83,820
1966	353	43,158	57,427	n.a	84,240
1967	408	55,432	71,157	23,072	n.a

Source: cited in G. Ward, 1967, p. 5

By 1969 the number of agricultural cooperatives had increased to 519, with a membership of 80,149.⁹

The functions of cooperatives

The agricultural cooperatives were multi-purpose, i.e. their functions were to provide the members with agricultural inputs, farm machinery services, irrigation equipment, marketing services and helping them to obtain loans from the agricultural bank. Many cooperatives expanded their activities beyond farming services to include the provision of consumer goods such as tea, sugar and soap to their members.

Since credit is one of the major needs of the farmers, the cooperatives undertook at an early stage to extend loans to members. For example, in 1963 loans borrowed from the Agricultural Cooperative Bank amounted to ID 3,278, which figure had increased to ID 96,888 in 1966.¹⁰ During 1968/69 the total credit drawn by the cooperatives from the Agricultural Bank was ID 302,336 of which 57 per cent was used for agricultural supplies, 19.6 per cent for farm administrative costs and 23 per cent for marketing.¹¹

In addition to the Agricultural Bank, there were two other sources of credit for cooperatives: the Government Machinery Department and the

Agricultural Department. ID 26,791 worth of farm inputs were obtained on credit from the Agricultural Department, and services valued at ID. 118,449 were obtained on credit from the Government Machinery Department by the cooperatives in 1968/69. With regard to seasonal loans made by the cooperatives to their members, during that same year ID 463,062 was advanced to 23,498 applicants in the form of loans averaging ID 20 per borrower.¹²

The number of cooperatives owning tractors rose from five in 1964 to 73 in 1966, when they owned a total of 75 tractors plus other farm machinery. Another example of services provided by the cooperatives to their members was the marketing of produce. In 1965-66, 40 cooperatives in five provinces marketed the following for their members:

<u>Product</u>	<u>Tons</u>
Wheat	480
Barley	40
Rice	19
Cotton	70
Dates	100

Source: G. Ward, 1967, p. 9.

During 1968/69 the cooperatives marketed 13,961 tons of produce valued at ID 322,603, by far the highest proportion of this consisted of 10,490 tons of barley, mostly from Mosul province.¹³ In fact, the cooperatives, by taking on the three basic functions of credit, marketing, and supplies, worked as an instrument of agricultural development designed to increase production and thereby the farmers' real income.

The performance of cooperatives

Despite various sorts of support given by the government to the cooperatives, the latter faced tremendous difficulties and were unable fulfil their objectives efficiently for many. Iraq had little experience in forming cooperatives, the farmers did not understand the meaning and functions of cooperatives, as they had lived for centuries under feudalism and had never been exposed to the idea of cooperatives. On the other hand, the farmers feared collectivization and wanted independent holdings of their own and not land controlled by a collective.

A high proportion of illiteracy among the members led to total

dependency on the Cooperative Advisor to keep records and on the management of the cooperative. The cooperative lacked genuine participation by its members in most aspects of its activities. The tribal structure of the society meant that the members of the cooperative showed less solidarity to the cooperative in comparison to the tribe and were suspicious of members who came from another tribe. Most members had a low income and so were unable to contribute sufficiently to the formation of the cooperative's capital needed to purchase seeds, fertilizers and farm machinery.

The lack of trained agricultural staff working at the village level led to the diversification of the work responsibilities of each Cooperative Advisor. It was common for the Cooperative Advisor to be responsible, in addition to his original work, for extension work, land surveys, and marketing.¹⁴ On other occasions, there were no Cooperative Advisors available and so the extension agents were instructed to work as Cooperative Advisors, a function for which many of them either had insufficient experience or lacked the motivation to fulfil the extra duties required by the job.

The failure of the Cooperative Bank to meet the increased financial demands from the members of cooperatives led many farmers to secure funds from the traditional sources, such as money lenders, big farmers or the chiefs. This eventually placed the farmers at the mercy of the wealthy farmers and the chiefs, who were seeking every means to undermine the success of the cooperatives.

There was some belief among the farmers that information about their possessions and production might be used by the officials for other purposes, such as taxes or military conscription. This resulted in a lack of accurate data about members possessions, needed for an annual assessment of the cooperatives' work. However, those problems and shortcomings should not be allowed to overshadow the achievement of the cooperatives. An increasing proportion of cooperatives were showing their members tangible benefits. Returns to members for their products ranged from 5-10 per cent above local prices and the cooperatives also provided improved seeds and fertilizers to their members at subsidised prices.

The cooperative policy of giving loans primarily in the form of production requisites or equipment and machinery minimized the diversion of loans by the recipients to non-productive purposes and greatly improved the level of repayment. Particular efforts were made by cooperative advisors to induce members to repay loans when they sold their harvests. Only 25 out of 12,000 members who borrowed from cooperatives for financing 1965-66 crops failed to repay by 31 December 1966, i.e. less than one per cent of the sum advanced was in arrears.¹⁵

5.1.3 The third phase (1970-1979)

After the enactment of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1970, the number of cooperatives increased rapidly. Like the First Agrarian Reform Law, the Agrarian Law of 1970 also made it conditional for the beneficiary to become a member of a cooperative society. Table 5.2 shows that, between 1971 and 1977, more than 1,000 new societies were established, with over 300,000 members.

Table 5.2 Growth in the number of cooperatives 1970-1978.

Years	Number of cooperatives	Number of members	Area ('000) donum
1970	786	107,797	5,181
1971	831	129,588	6,766
1972	986	160,148	9,924
1973	1271	201,490	13,463
1974	1386	217,723	13,641
1975	1652	239,644	18,043
1976	1852	296,507	21,939
1977	1860	319,117	22,786
1978	1935	331,973	37,618

Source: MOP (1979:97)

Half of the new agricultural cooperatives were established in Kurdistan under the supplementary Agrarian Reform Law of 1975. The progress in the establishment of cooperatives continued to mount until there were 1923 in 1979 in the whole of Iraq. The cooperatives had a total membership over 345,000 farmers.¹⁶ At the same time, the official emphasis was also on the formation of other types of agricultural organisations, namely, collective and state farms, and it was intended that, in the course of time, cooperative societies would be transformed into the latter types.

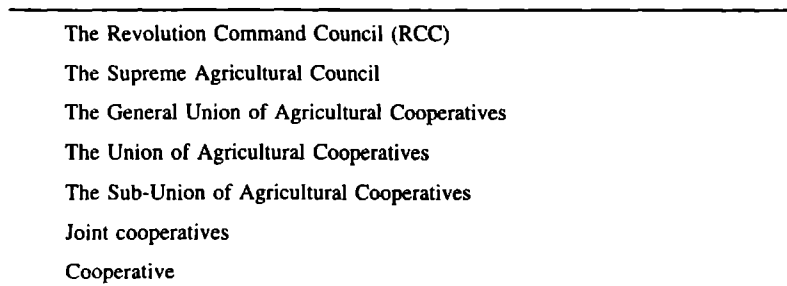
5.2. State agricultural organizations

Although a cooperative is composed of individual privately-owned farms, because of the collective services which the cooperatives provided for their members, they together with the collective and state farms were classified as a socialist (public) sector. Farms which did not belong to these agricultural production organizations were classified as private sector.

The various kinds of large-scale organization of agriculture: state farms, collective farms or some reasonably centralized form of cooperative, all tended to reflect the desire of the government to establish a state-run socialist agriculture. The cooperatives were instructed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform to conform to the centrally-planned annual agricultural production programme drawn up by the Ministries of Agriculture and Planning. These instructions were conveyed by the Cooperative Supervisors and Advisors.

Government intervention in farming was aimed at directing and increasing production in order to achieve self-sufficiency in wheat, rice and cotton, which were called strategic crops. In order to fulfil that goal, the state established a strong hierarchical administrative apparatus linking the cooperative societies at the village level to the centre. Figure 5.1 illustrates the organizational structure of the cooperatives, starting from the society at village level and proceeding upwards to the Supreme Agricultural Council in Baghdad.

Figure 5.1. The administrative structure of agricultural cooperation.



(Source: MOA (1976:17))

In addition to this official bureaucratic structure, the local organizational cell of the Ba'ath party in the village was made responsible for reporting to the political bureau the farmers' attitudes and behaviour in relation to the cooperative and, of course, to the Ba'ath party policy. This institutional supervision enabled the state to control agricultural production and, more importantly, other aspects of rural life, particularly the political ones. A certain degree of flexibility in the cooperative's activities was tolerated at the local, village level, as this was essential in order to meet diverse local conditions.

Since the Ba'ath Party seized power in 1968, the top posts in the government departments and organisations have become the monopoly of the party's members. As Chaudhry noted, key positions have increasingly become 'the preserve of individuals from Tikrit (Saddam's home town) and its environs, many of whom were related to Saddam Hussein' (1991:21). It is noteworthy that, since the establishment of the administrative bodies of the agricultural cooperatives, all the posts have been in the hands of Ba'ath Party members only. This includes the chairman of the cooperative, members of the unions and the Supreme Agricultural Council. This combination and political interference (the Ba'ath party) in the administration of the agricultural organisations is a remarkable feature of Iraq's agricultural cooperatives. It has been clearly stated by the government's leaders that the cooperatives, the collectives and the state farms are the long hand of the Ba'ath Party in implementing its agrarian policy as well as its political objectives.

According to the supplementary code of the 1970 Agrarian Reform Law Section 2, 'one of the main objectives of the Cooperatives is to implant among the rural society the Party's ideology and to reinforce the revolutionary dimension of the July 1968 Revolution'.¹⁷ This interpretation of the cooperative's role explains the government's enthusiasm in supporting cooperatives financially and technically.

5.2.1 Collective farms

The establishment of the collective farms was a further step at the cooperative level towards the socialization of agriculture. In this mode of agricultural production, each member officially retains his land in his possession, but the work is done collectively in all the land of the collective farm. The Iraqi collective farms were, in fact, designed according to models introduced in the former USSR and other Eastern European

countries. Similar arrangements were made for the division of labour and distribution of profits.

The first collective farm, comprising 35 farmers, was established in the province of Hilla in 1969, a year before the enactment of the second Agrarian Reform Law. During the same year a second farm was established in the same province.¹⁸ Despite the establishment of these two collective farms before the Agrarian Reform Law of 1970, this new type of land utilization has in practice been introduced under the provisions of the latter law. Table 5.3 shows that the number of collective farms in Iraq was doubled between 1973 and 1979.

Table 5.3. Changes in collective farms, 1973-1979

Years	Farms	No. of members	Total area (‘000 donum)
1973	35	3601	234,4
1974	72	11253	534,9
1975	78	10543	576,4
1976	79	9857	640,1
1977	79	8540	723,4
1978	79	7569	717,8

Source: MOP (1986:79)

Trained civil servants were designated by the Ministry of Agriculture to manage the farms and supervise the work of the farm's members by keeping records of working hours as well as production. Farm machinery and other services were made available in order to increase production and help the farms to operate successfully. However, most of the farmers were not convinced of the ultimate objectives of the farms and, above all, they felt that the development of this system of farming would undermine their entitlement to their own land. Other obstacles and shortcomings had limited the scope of the operation and, consequently, the development and existence of the farms.

5.2.2 State farms

This mode of production reflected the government's determination during

the 1970s to gain control of agricultural production. In this system of farming the state owned the land and appointed civil servants e.g. cooperative advisor, clerk, and manger to supervise the work. The farming work was done by agricultural labourers, who were paid fixed salaries, regardless of the revenue and the economic efficiency of the farm.

The state's objective was to use these farms to expand the production of industrial crops such as cotton and sugar beet. Most Iraqi farmers were unwilling to grow these crops, because of their low revenue in comparison to vegetables or wheat.

Table 5.4. Growth of state farms 1973-1977.

Years	No. of Farms	No. of Workers
1973	19	3,216
1974	23	3,519
1975	25	4,339
1976	30	5,011
1977	40	5,319

Source: MOP (1986:80)

The tremendous emphasis during 1970s on expanding the network of cooperatives and the formation and growth of collective and state farms reflects the fact that the state policy was tending towards the introduction of collectivization in agriculture. In fact, the government focus was on two key aspects:

1. To introduce fundamental changes into the social structure of rural society in an attempt to mobilize rural people in accordance with the Ba'ath party policies.
2. To improve agricultural production by solving problems caused by the fragmentation of landholdings into small holdings distributed among the beneficiaries of the agrarian reform laws. Thus, both the introduction of collective and state farms and the expansion of the network of cooperatives may be considered to be steps in that direction.

Politicians and development policy makers gave a remarkable thrust to these agricultural production organizations to ensure their success. In socialist agriculture, state farm production functions were linked with wider objectives of social transformation of the rural system ambiguously known

in the literature as 'integrated rural development'. According to El-Ghonemy, 'state farms are assigned the role of spearheading social objectives, of alleviating illiteracy and gender inequality, and providing health and recreational services' (1993:134).

Publicity campaigns using all means of mass communication advocated the importance of the cooperative movement in transforming the rural economy into a socialist one in order to achieve the Ba'ath party political objectives of "Arab unity, liberty and socialism". Government policy greatly favoured the public sector, using the motto "Socializing agriculture is a sacred national duty" in order to mobilize the whole nation to take part in the process of building socialism.

Whatever the motives behind the state's policy of socializing agriculture, one thing became apparent: it was an opportunity for the economy to move from being an economy dependent on a single resource (oil) for foreign exchange to a more diversified one.

5.2.3 Revision of the policy

The adoption of the socialist path in agriculture did not last for long; by the late 1970s and early 1980s the Ba'ath government had revised its policy in all sectors of the economy, including agriculture. The state was no longer in favour of the public sector and, more importantly, it initiated a policy of privatization. At the July 1982 conference of the ruling Ba'ath Party a political decision was made to promote the private sector. According to Alnasrawi (1992):

This decision was endorsed publicly in 1985 by the president when he said that "our brand of socialism cannot live without the private sector whether now, or after the war [Iran-Iraq war].¹⁹

Socialization of agriculture became a burden on the state's commitment to encouraging the private sector and therefore, in 1983, a decision was taken by the government to reduce the number of local cooperatives through the amalgamation of some societies and the abolition of some others. The number of collective farms also declined remarkably.

The same fate awaited the state farms as well. In 1983 it was decided that state farms should concentrate mainly on the production of industrial crops, it was also decided to liquidate the small farms and retain the large ones. A few years later all were closed down and their assets sold. It became apparent that the government's policy towards this type of farming had become less favourable and so they were left to die out gradually.²⁰

Table 5.5 The Decline in Cooperatives and Collective farms, 1979-1988

Years	Cooperatives		Collective farms	
	Number	No. of members	Number	No. of members
1979	1923	345029	77	7493
1980	1893	358790	33	1597
1981	1885	370817	28	1346
1982	1877	375418	17	749
1983	824	374896	10	448
1984	784	377353	9	540
1985	786	377868	7	288
1988	713	336831	7	138

Source: MOP (1986:80 and 1989:28)

5.3. State agricultural services

It was mentioned above that agricultural cooperatives were multi-purpose societies which helped small farmers to obtain various farming services such as farm machinery, loans and extension services. In performing their operations the cooperatives rely on other agricultural organizations to facilitate the achievement of these objectives.

5.3.1 Agricultural machinery

Traditional methods of agricultural production still prevail throughout the remote parts of the country, although mechanization has been proceeding steadily in areas close to big towns. Early attempts to introduce farm machinery in Iraq took place in about 1945, when the first cargo of farm machinery arrived in the country, but it stayed in its boxes for many years to follow. The delay in introducing farm machinery to Iraqi agriculture was due to many reasons, mainly the domination of feudalism in rural areas. The landlord-peasant system provided cheap labour, which meant that the

use of farm machinery was less economically attractive, especially since the landlords themselves might have had insufficient knowledge of the operation and benefits of mechanization.

The implementation of the 1958 Agrarian Reform Law encouraged the introduction of machinery to make good the shortfall in agricultural labour caused by rural-urban migration.²¹ Agricultural mechanization has also helped to reduce the areas of land under the fallow system.

The Five Year Development Plan of 1965-69 had allocated ID 8 million for the import of farm machinery.²² During the 1970s, the state policies of land reclamation, the expansion of cooperatives and the formation of the large-scale units of agricultural production organizations (collective and state farms) all led to the introduction of farm mechanization. The 1958 act had necessitated the introduction of mechanization on a relatively large scale. In 1971, a government Department of Agricultural Machinery was formed and linked to the Ministry of Agriculture. The new department was responsible for providing the cooperatives with farm machinery.

The successive five-year development plans had allocated funds for investment in machinery. For example, the plan of 1970-74 allocated ID 17 million for this purpose and, during 1976, '77 and '78, more than ID 8 million was invested in farm machinery under the plan for 1976-80. The Cooperative Bank had provided the sum of ID 134.8 million in loans to the cooperatives during 1969-1981 for the purchase of farm machinery.²³

Most of the mechanization in Iraq consisted of the use of tractors for primary tillage and the transport of produce. In the second place came the harvesters, then other machinery like seed drills and fertilizer applicators which were used on a smaller scale. Table 5.6 shows the growth in the number of tractors and harvesters during the 1970s.

Table 5.6 Number of tractors and harvesters 1970-1982 (selected years)

Years	Tractors	Harvesters
1970	10400	2280
1973	12143	2656
1976	20711	3637
1978	22100	3529
1979	20058	3443
1980	27069	4372
1981	29793	2399
1982	29956	2773

(Source: MOA (1984:273))

The use of tractors on a wider scale than other machinery suggests that tractors were substituting as much for animal power as for human labour. A major reason for this was the rapid rate of growth of demand for livestock products. It is noteworthy that the drop in the number of machines in some years was due to the lack of maintenance which resulted in many of machines going out of use. Table 5.7 shows the scale of use of tractors and harvesters.

Table 5.7 Ratio of arable land to tractors and harvesters 1960-1985 (selected years) (ha/one machine).

Machine	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985
Tractor	1208	537	366	268	245	179
Harvester	3757	1908	1287	1088	1434	1981

Source: Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p. 173

The table above shows the ratio of one machine to the area of arable land, which in 1960 was one tractor per 1208 ha and one harvester per 3757 ha. However, the use of machinery is still of a limited nature when it is compared with the vast area of arable land. For example, the ratio

ha/tractor in Germany is 5.6 and in Belgium 8.5, and the ratio of ha/harvester is 47.1 and 86 for these two countries, respectively.²⁴ This comparison between the amount of machinery used in Iraq and of some developed countries demonstrates, not only the huge gap between them but, more importantly, the limited extent of mechanization in Iraq.

The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides is still low in Iraq, although chemical fertilizers are now being used in vegetable production, but very little have been used for the cultivation of wheat and barley. The total consumption of all types of fertilizers grew from 17,000 tons in 1969/71 to 77,000 tons in 1981/82. Iraq is considered to be one of the Middle Eastern countries with the lowest fertilizer use rates. With the continued depletion of nutrients from the soil, it is not really surprising that crop yields are low.²⁵

5.3.2 Agricultural credit

One of the main problems which burdened and continues to burden the farmer is the lack of funds for investment in farming, so that the Iraqi farmer was often obliged, up to the 1960s, to go to the big landlords or merchants to secure the necessary credit in return for crop sharing or some other payment arrangement. The agrarian reform laws aimed to tackle this serious problem and put an end to the exploitative nature of this sort of financial arrangement. The Agricultural Cooperative Bank was established to provide farmers, particularly those who were members of a cooperative society, with low interest-bearing credit (three per cent).

The loans were given to farmers after they had obtained a recommendation from the cooperative, and it was the cooperative supervisor's duty to make sure that the loan was used by the farmer for agricultural purposes only. However, in many instances, the inability of the cooperative supervisors to make an accurate assessment of members' needs resulted in the halting of loans, although they had been approved by the bank for payment to the cooperative. Farmers pledged to repay the amount to the bank in due time. In the event of any failure to do so, the cooperative society was authorized to take suitable measures against the borrower in order to secure the due amount. It is interesting to note that, on many occasions, the government decided to pardon farmers from the repayment of the loans to the bank. Such actions encouraged borrowers to delay the payments in the hope that the government would pardon them in the end. In fact, the bank also provided loans to farmers who were not members of cooperatives. Table 5.8 shows the amount of loans paid by the cooperative

bank to farmers of both categories.

Table 5.8 Credit provided by the Agricultural Cooperative Bank, 1969-79

Years	Members of coops		Non members	
	No. of farmers	loans (ID)	No. of farmers	loans (ID)
1969	646	737,852	3664	1,157,050
1970	1528	1,736,337	3987	840,073
1971	439	1,127,158	4531	891,897
1972	1698	2,622,240	3979	935,590
1973	2283	4,722,717	4224	1,349,974
1974	1405	3,708,006	3017	1,323,656
1975	1290	6,486,043	703	1,003,088
1976	2334	10,185,521	2124	1,358,991
1977	1842	10,677,342	1343	1,175,732
1978	2256	16,211,225	1438	1,480,041
1979	2701	21,214,382	1688	2,217,034

Source: MOA (1982:117)

The direct link between cooperatives and the Agricultural Bank had a double or mutual impact, i.e. the success of the bank helped more cooperatives to perform better and *vice versa*. However, the decline in the number of cooperatives since the late 1970s was reflected in the decline in the total amounts of loans drawn from the Agricultural Bank. Table 5.9 shows that, between 1981 and 1988, the amount of loans paid by the Bank to support various agricultural activities dropped sharply. The role of the Agricultural Bank declined considerably after the government initiated its policy of privatization in the early 1980s, which resulted, as we stated above, in the closing down of state and collective farms and limited cooperative activities. In accordance with new policy, the Agricultural Bank no longer gives priority to members of cooperatives. All farmers, even the wealthy ones, can apply for loans from the Agricultural Cooperative Bank.

Table 5.9. Total loans provided by the Agricultural Bank (ID '000), 1981-1988

Years	agr. supplies	marketing	machinery services	poultry	animals	orchards
1981	13204	6442	75752	66720	4213	17685
1983	5909	941	4372	5877	2411	3013
1985	13936	1784	11735	15011	604	6159
1987	12777	1	5341	3554	781	2362
1988	5288	6	4146	2204	524	1678

Source: MOP (1986:81 and 1989:26)

5.3.3 Agricultural extension

Traditionally, it is the agricultural extension service's task to encourage farmers to adopt new farming methods and to diffuse new knowledge and techniques among rural people. It was the classical diffusion of innovation theory which dominated in the 1960s and influenced the practice of the extension service in many developing countries (including Iraq, though that was many years later). Zijp (1992) states that:

The main focus was on interpersonal communication, with attempts to categorize farmers on the basis of the speed with which they adopted new technology. A lot of work was also done on differences in communication patterns between groups of two, three, and four individuals.²⁶

Farming systems research (FSR) emerged during the 1970s, because traditional research did not produce results which farmers in developing countries could use. Discussions concentrated on the differences between real, felt and expressed needs. Linkages were identified as weak points in the channels for technology transfer in most developing countries.²⁷

In Iraq the FSR attracted some attention, but it was mainly in academic and research institution circles and was hardly felt within the extension service.²⁸ It is noteworthy here that several agricultural research centres were established in the early 1970s. In 1979, the Board for Applied Agricultural Research was established to liaise with most fields of agricultural research.²⁹

In the 1980s the focus in many developing countries was shifted to the management side of extension services and, by the end of the decade, to a more systematic approach to agricultural information, concentrating on information supply and demand.³⁰ In Iraq, the extension service has not yet been acquainted with this change in outlook.

Since it started in the 1930s, the agricultural extension service in Iraq, which is a governmental organisation, has not achieved much apparent success. Its organisational structure has changed several times during the past two decades. In 1982, the Ministry of Agriculture was restructured and a department called Organisation of Training and Agricultural Extension was set up and attached to the ministry. This organisation was made responsible for extension work, it has a hierarchical structure with a network of village extension workers, supervised by extension officers and administrators at the provincial and national level. Figure 5.2 shows the current organizational structure of the extension service.

Figure 5.2 The Organizational structure of the agricultural extension service

Ministry of Agriculture

General Organization of Agricultural----- (National level)
Training and Extension

Department of Agricultural Training ----- (Provincial level)
and Extension

Agricultural Extension Centre ----- (Town level)

Extension worker ----- (Village level)

(Source: MOA (1982:77))

Iraq's agricultural labour force has a small number of specialists and technicians who are engaged in various agricultural activities, they made up 0.5 per cent of the total agricultural labour force of 943,890 persons in 1977.³¹ It is apparent that there is an imbalance between the huge number of farmers and the technical personnel needed to help in tackling the various problems facing agricultural work and in transferring new information.

There are 142 extension centres in the whole country, providing extension services to the farming population. The task of the service is to advise and train the farmers in improved agricultural production techniques

in order to increase the productivity of the available resources. To reach the farming population, the extension service depends on the extension workers, as they have direct contact with the farmers.

The extension workers generally have a basic degree in agriculture. Most of the village extension workers have finished agricultural school (secondary school). They are called 'agricultural extension officers' (*morshed zerai*). Graduates of agricultural colleges, known as agricultural engineers (*mohandis zerai*), do not work at the village level, but are based in the towns and cities. Their task is to supervise the extension workers by paying regular visits to them in the field.³² The vital element in the organisation's hierarchy are the extension workers, as they form the link between the farmers and the ministry, which means that the efficiency of their performance is the key element in the failure or success of the service.

The main tasks of the extension service in Iraq is the same as that in most of other developing countries, i.e. to help farmers to adopt and utilize innovations. To achieve this objective, there should be constant contact between the farmers and the extension workers. This raises a major problem for the Iraqi extension service and an old dilemma. There is a serious lack of extension workers to deal with a very large number of clients. According to the FAO (1970), the number of extension workers has been too few to reach the farmers and to be of any effective service to them. In the 14 provinces of Iraq, only 235 officers were engaged in extension work, plant protection and other regulatory work.³³

To compound the problem, the job of the extension worker has often been diverted from its real function to other duties, such as cooperative supervisor or agricultural supplies mediator. The FAO (1970) stated:

Officers in charge of the extension work were also responsible for regulatory work, and the term *morshed zerai* has been used to indicate a grade, instead of the nature of work, and applies equally to administrators, store-keepers, and technicians.³⁴

In order to do his "job", the extension worker established a direct contact with a few "contact farmers" who were quick to adopt the new techniques and more receptive to changes in farming. He concentrated his work on these "progressive farmers" and helped them to get credit and other facilities.

In the literature of agricultural extension, farmers are classified into several categories according to their speed in adopting innovations. Rogers and Shoemakers (1971) named five categories: innovators (farmers who

themselves create new techniques, skills or knowledge), early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.³⁵ As a result of following this classification, the extension service was greatly skewed in favour of the innovators and the early adopters, who often happened to be the more progressive and wealthier farmers.

The works of many authors, such as Leonard (1977), Mikilop (1981) and Chambers (1983), show that, even when the extension worker does contact the small and poor farmers, not much can be expected. When the extension worker goes to see the farmers, the duration of the visit is too brief to allow for meaningful communication, and the visits themselves are irregular. Most of the extension workers do not live in the village and many of them do not have strong commitments to their work. For many urban-based professionals, rural development work is tourism, as Chambers (1983) describes. Chambers lists six biases which impede the rural work of urban-based professionals in developing countries. These biases are: spatial, project, personal, dry season, diplomatic and professional.³⁶

In rural Iraq, most extension workers are affected by one or more of these biases and have also been pulled into a situation where they largely serve wealthy or politically influential farmers (who are usually wealthy as well), visiting them often, while other farmers see them only occasionally. Even other extension communication techniques, such as demonstrations, are often carried out in the fields of the better-off farmers. For example, in 1982, the extension service carried out 2331 demonstrations showing the advantages of using innovations.³⁷

Mass media communication methods have largely failed to reach the Iraqi farmers, even when the extension service was energetically engaged in such activities. The high percentage of illiteracy in rural areas has prevented the vast majority of farmers from gaining any advantage from the various publications, such as bulletins, leaflets and magazines produced by the extension service. The same conclusion applies to radio and television programmes, although for different reasons.

In addition to the above, the following are some of the characteristics of the extension service in Iraq:

1. Extension workers are inadequately trained and hardly know more than the farmers.
2. Lack of commitment to their work, because of low salaries and lack of interest.
3. Scarcity of transport to carry out farm visits.
4. Irregular and inadequate evaluation of extension workers' job performance by their superiors.
5. Extension workers are not accountable to farmers.

6. Farmers are regarded as ignorant recipients of new information and are traditionally unwilling to change.³⁸

As the extension service in Iraq is carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture, it receives its requirements from the Ministry and consequently operates within the framework of a national agricultural policy. Iraq is no different from many other Middle Eastern and developing countries as far as the ultimate objectives of the extension services are concerned, which are to increase production. Roling (1982) observed that, in many developing countries, the most common reason for a government to employ an extension service is to increase and safeguard the nation's food and export crop production.

In Iraq, the Ministry of Agriculture provides the extension service with its annual work plan and other necessary information on new agricultural techniques and knowledge.³⁹ In so doing, the extension service is exercising one-way communication, which flows from the Ministry to the farmers. However, because of the various obstacles and shortcomings which the extension service has suffered, the efficiency and scope of its work is of a limited nature. An FAO study explains that 'the present status of the agricultural extension service is not inspiring, and can be considered hardly more than nominal. It is unable to percolate to farm level' (1970:11). In order to find a way out of this dilemma, the Ministry of Agriculture in 1982 re-defined the function of the extension work to allow it to "concentrate in limited regions in the country which have a high potential for increasing the production of strategic crops as they will have the most impact on the country's food and industry".⁴⁰ To achieve these objectives, the extension service made contact with the better-off farmers, who are quick to follow new knowledge and to adopt new techniques, on the assumption that the message would trickle down to other farmers.

In practice, this top-down approach, as in most other developing countries, has hardly occurred. During the past few decades, it has become increasingly evident worldwide that the realities of development practice in many developing countries are not in agreement with the theoretical assumption models such as the trickle-down approach. G. Huizer (1989) states that:

A disadvantage of this approach which has been recognised and carefully evaluated by UNRISD, was that an important minority sector of the peasantry could gain benefits but that large and often majority sectors were not enabled to share in this process and remained behind.⁴¹

The Iraqi extension service nevertheless persisted in its policy. In the few

instances where there was a tangible improvement in productivity, the extension service had approached the progressive farmers with more support in terms of providing agricultural advice, farming supplies and facilities, at the expense of the majority of the farmers. The economic arguments for the progressive farmer strategy do not depend upon its achieving a wide distribution of benefit. Extension here, as Leonard (1977) says, is conceived of as a tool of economic growth, not of social welfare.

Obviously, this paradox of the policy of the extension service has not only deprived the majority of farmers from obtaining the benefits of the extension service, but also unfortunately has brought further inequalities among farmers and promoted the gap between the rich and poor in rural areas, so that the extension service in rural Iraq, instead of helping to solve problems, has become part of the problem.

Notes:

1 A Alwan, 1986, p 26

2. Cited in R Gabbay, 1978, p 92

3 G Ward, 1967, p 4

4 Ibid, p 12

5 Ibid, p 5

6 Ibid, p 6

7 According to R Russel (1971) an Extraordinary General Meeting could be summoned at any time for the purpose of liquidation, amalgamation, affiliation and amendments to the bye-laws

8 Ministry of Agriculture, 1963, p 31

9 R Russel, 1971, p xx1

10 Ibid, p 7

11 R Russel, 1971, p xv

12 Ibid

13 R. Russel, 1971, p xvii

14 G Ward, 1967, p 12-13

15 Ibid, p 8

16 There was also 64 specialized cooperatives with a membership of 9,515 farmer See A Alwan, 1986, p 26

176 State and society

17. Ministry of Information, 1973
18. A Alwan, 1978, p.28
19. Cited in A Alnasrawi, 1992, p 337.
20. A Alwan, 1986, p.27, and R. Springborg, 1986, p.36
21. Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p.172
22. Ministry of Agriculture, 1976, p 241
23. Ministry of Agriculture, 1984, P.272
24. Ministry of Planning, 1978, P.276
25. P Beaumont et al mentioned that fertilizer usage has risen from 0.5 kg/ha for all cultivated land in 1961-65 to 14 kg/ha in 1981. (P Beaumont, G Blake, J.Wagstaff, 1988. p 354).
26. Zijp, W., 1992, p.67
27. Ibid
28. Ministry of Agriculture, 1982
29. ISNAR (International Service for National Agricultural Research), 1992, pp.51-57
30. See W Zijp, 1992, p.67-8.
31. Ministry of Agriculture, 1984
32. Ministry of Agriculture, 1982
33. FAO, 1970, p 11
34. Ibid, p 11
35. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971, pp 182-85) put the percentage of the five categories as follows, the first one (innovators) 2.5 %, 13.5 %, 34 %, 34 %, and the last (laggards) 16 %.
36. R Chambers, 1983 and 1993
37. Ministry of Agriculture, 1982
38. Ibid
39. H al-Samarra'i, 1984
40. Ministry of Agriculture, 1982, p 37
41. In fact Huizer was referring to trickle-down approach in the context of rural development strategy as a whole. See G Huizer, 1989, p 10, also N. Rohing, 1982, and D Pitt, 1976.

Food and agricultural policies

Iraq's agricultural experiences illustrate that even in the presence of abundance of water, arable land, and capital investment, which are key requisites for agricultural development, it is essential for a suitable state agricultural development policy to spearhead the introduction of the desired changes in agriculture. During the 1970s the state's support of the agricultural sector was remarkable in terms of capital injection in pioneer farming projects and supporting the farmers with access to inputs and other farming services. The aim was food security by increasing the production of the staple crops, wheat and rice in a very short span of time.

6.1 Food security

Iraq's concept of food security is centred on achieving self-sufficiency in the staple crops (wheat, barely, rice, and cotton), which are referred to by Iraq's policymakers as strategic crops. Self-sufficiency in food production, however, does not necessarily mean that the country is food secured. Some self-sufficient countries, like Brazil, export so much of their food that many of their own people go hungry.¹ Contrastingly, countries that are not self-sufficient in food production, such as Japan, Hongkong, and Saudi Arabia are considered food secured because they can afford to import the necessary volume of food from international markets.

Until the 1980s, to most decision makers and intellectuals around the world, food security meant the sufficiency of a domestic supply of food to meet the domestic requirements. Currently, the most common understanding of food security is the concept initiated by Sen (1981), which focuses on the entitlement to acquire food instead of the supply

of food.² Like Sen, Reutlinger sees food security as the access of all people at all times to enough food for an active and a healthy life. The essential elements are the availability of food and the ability to acquire it (1987:203). A country is considered to be food secured when its agricultural production, marketing, and trade systems are capable of providing adequate food to all its people at all times.³

The importance of self-sufficiency in food to the policy makers in Iraq was not merely an economic necessity, it had a political dimension. Food export countries, USA in particular, has increasingly linked its food export with the tendency of the importer developing country to become politically friendly. Food has thus become an important factor in determining foreign relations and a degree of political independence. Iraqi ruling Ba'ath government realised that in order to achieve their political objective of being the leading power in the Middle East, building a modern and strong army was not enough: Iraq should not be dependent on foreign countries for its food.

All Agricultural development plans in Iraq were drawn up in the hope that agricultural production would achieve a considerable annual growth to eventually meet the domestic demand for food. Appendix 4 outlines the changes in production of the main crops. However, these optimistic goals hardly saw any light. Main crop production during the 1970s and 1980s was unable to meet the continuous increase in demand. Table 6.1 shows that in 1980 wheat and barley production met less than 50 percent of domestic consumption, and rice production provided even less than one-third of the consumption.

Table 6.1. Self-sufficiency of main crop 1980 (%)

crop	production (['] 000 tons)	consumption (['] 000 tons)	self-sufficiency %
wheat	976	2030	48.0
barley	682	1375	49.6
rice	165	610	27.0

Based on data of MOA, 1989, pp. 24 and 212)

According to a survey carried out by the Ministry of Industry in 1979, in order to meet the domestic demand for sugar, 0.3 million tons of sugar cane were needed, but the country's production was a little over

345,000 tons which is only 12.8 percent of domestic consumption. Tobacco on the other hand, secured 55 per cent of the domestic demand.⁴ Instead of increasing or at least maintaining the same levels of production as the 1970s, the self-sufficiency ratio of many food commodities fell sharply during the 1980s. Table 6.2 illustrates the serious decline in the ratio of self-sufficiency in cereals, legumes, red meat and milk by the end of the 1980s.

Table 6.2 Self-sufficiency ratios in food commodities 1970-88 (%)

Commodity	1970	1980	1988
Cereals	97	38	37
Legumes	88	61	18
Vegetable Oil	12	9	3
Vegetables	93	93	92
Fruits	139	92	102
Red Meat	99	80	62
Poultry	100	38	97
Milk	90	53	43
Eggs	60	73	70

Based on data of ISNAR, 1992, p. 43

The annual growth rate of the population was 3.4 per cent during 1965-1980, rising to 3.6 per cent during 1980-89, and is estimated to be 3.4 per cent for the years 1989-2000. The population, which was 18 million in 1989, is expected to grow to 26 and 48 million in 2000 and 2025 respectively placing more pressure on the agricultural sector to secure the food supply. If this fails the dependence on the international markets will continue at a higher rate and a larger scale.

6.2 Agricultural policies

There are two variables which feature the state agricultural policies in Iraq. First, is the nature of state investment in agriculture. The state investment in agriculture is primarily aimed at helping overcome the

difficulties of production. Funds have not been used for capital investment programmes but mainly to subsidise crops and animal production throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

The national development plan of 1961-65 allocated a considerable budget for investment in agriculture. ID 113.0 million which was 20 per cent of the total sectoral allocation of funds went to agriculture. The share of agriculture rose in the Five Year Plan of 1965 to ID 173.6 million which was 25 per cent of the total allocation.⁵ The plans showed the interest in developing various agricultural projects aimed at improving institutional organisations, marketing, storage, irrigation schemes, productivity, and agricultural cooperatives.

Soon after the oil boom of 1973, when oil international prices soared and oil export countries began to obtain a tremendous revenue, Iraq's oil revenue jumped from US \$ 1 billion in 1972 to \$ 8.2 billion in 1975.⁶ The availability of funds had encouraged the government during the 1970s to allocate considerable sums to the agricultural sector. In this regard several observations can be noted. Firstly, when government investment in agriculture appeared to increase, it was low in comparison to other expenditures, particularly military (as described in Chapter 3). Secondly, not all the fund were actually invested. Table 6.3 demonstrates that ID 366 million was allocated to agriculture, comprising 19 per cent of the total sectoral allocation of funds according to the Five Year Development Plan of 1970-74, but the actual governmental expenditure in agriculture did not exceed 72 per cent of what had been allocated to the sector.

Despite the increase in the sum allocated to agriculture according to the Five Year Development Plan of 1976-80, in real terms it comprised 14.2 per cent of the total sectoral allocated fund, and above that only 68 per cent of what was allocated to agriculture was actually invested in the sector. Thirdly, government's mismanagement of fund expenditure in agriculture was evident. For example, providing every farmer with a pick-up truck was a simple illustration of such conduct. Many farmers left farming and became drivers in nearby towns.

The growth of oil revenue made it easy to rely on food and raw material imports, eventually making agriculture economically dispensable, also depriving it from incentives which may have resulted from changes in the domestic terms of trade. The harmful impact of a decline in the agricultural role on the employment side became evident. Many rural people have been forced to seek employment in other sectors of the economy, particularly in service.

Table 6.3. Fund and agricultural share of the actual expenditure 1968-80

Years	Fund allocated to agriculture	% to total sectoral allocation	Actual expenditure in agriculture
1968	40,00	29.0	13,20
1969	22,00	19.7	17,00
1970	28,00	24.0	14,00
1971	60,00	29.7	49,30
1972	23,21	17.3	29,20
1973	65,00	21.0	37,70
1974	190,00	16.3	78,00
1975	207,50	19.3	99,90
1976	268,00	17.9	174,40
1977	389,90	16.4	243,80
1978	500,00	17.8	388,60
1979	500,00	15.2	298,00
1980	505,0	9.6	386,00

Source: MOP, 1977 and 1985

The second feature is the state agricultural policies is the imposition of agricultural regulations and measures. The application of the agrarian reform laws was one of the most important measures of state intervention in agricultural production. The redistribution of land and the formation of an agricultural service apparatus (cooperatives, agricultural bank, and farm machinery departments), as described in Chapters 4 and 5, were major measures aimed at giving a big impulse to agricultural growth.

The rapid expansion in the number of agricultural cooperatives in addition to the imposition of a new sort of agricultural production organisation in the form of collective and state farms in a typical top-down style has been speedily injected into the body of the rural society. In fact this top-down approach was comprehensive. It included obligatory membership in cooperatives and the compliance of members with the instructions on farming activities given by the Ministry of

Agriculture (MOA) .

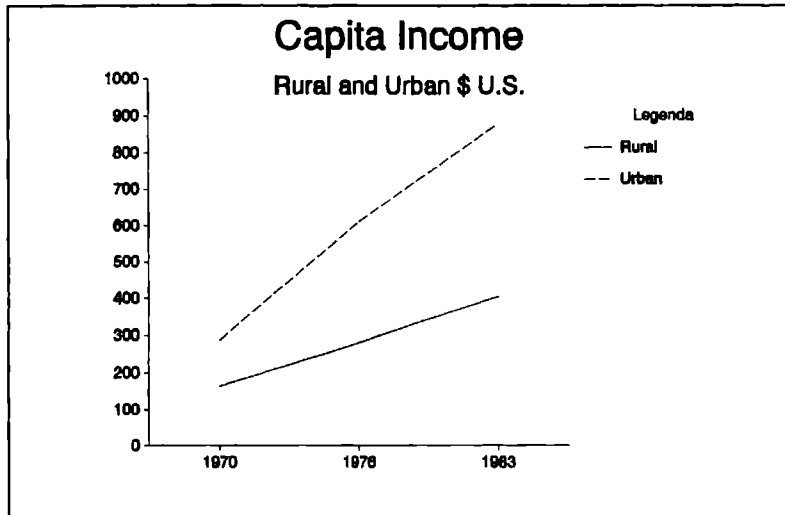
The new experience of collective and state farms needed more empirical study and preparation before setting them up in a traditional society, which had hardly any experience in collectivisation in farming work and communal benefits of the output. Most of the collective and state farms lacked the basic requirements for efficient management, operation and maintenance of the farm's machinery.⁷

During the 1970s the state's criticism of the agricultural sector was focussed on the farming organisations, eventually leading to the conclusion that the farmers were unwilling to participate in the work of those organisations. There was some truth about the weak response of the farmers particularly to the collective and state farms. However, it was no surprise, that within the given socio-political framework, frustration and passivity emerged among many farmers towards the farming organisations imposed upon them. Like any event of this kind it requires various preliminary clarifications in order to make a valid judgment of such a response. The innumerable obstacles that hindered the process of agrarian reform and consequently the socialisation of agriculture were ignored by the decision-makers. The deterioration in agricultural production was blamed on the efficiency of the public sector rather than on the obstacles which the agricultural sector and rural development encountered.

Since the 1980s the state started revising its agricultural policy. State-owned farms and agricultural projects were sold to the private sector. Widespread privatisation measures were implemented in agriculture in the hope they would cure the problems and decline of agricultural production. Discussion concerning privatisation policy will be left until the next chapter.

The changing priorities of the state pertaining to land ownership and agricultural organisations were found to create feelings of insecurity in the farmers and bring about changes in the agriculture sector's importance to the country's economy and well-being of the rural population. Consequently, the deterioration of comparative income of farmers against other urban wages aggravated the disadvantages of the rural community, see Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Regional per capita income 1970-1983, US. \$



Based on data of EIU, 1988-89, p. 21

The disparities in urban-rural income has accelerated the drift from villages to the towns. Naturally the migrated agricultural labour force sought work outside agriculture.

6.3. Agricultural labour force

Iraq's agricultural labour force has been subjected to the influence of various demographic, social, economic and political variables which eventually shaped the characteristics of the agricultural labour force. To obtain the full picture of the agricultural labour force in Iraq it is useful to place it within the context of the country's total labour force movement.

One of the main obstacles confronting a study of Iraq's labour force is the lack of accurate data from both domestic, or external sources, which permits rigour in research. In most cases it is the state's will to conceal from the public - for political reasons - information about the

labour force, armed forces, government expenditure and revenues from oil export. Any available information about Iraqi labour force is mainly based on official censuses and surveys. These usually lack accuracy as until now there has been some confusion in the definition of the legal age of labour, whether it should be from 10 to 60 years or 15 to 59 years. In agriculture the problem is even more serious as until recently the official data had considered most rural women as housewives and ignored their essential contribution to the workforce in the agricultural fields. The most reliable sources are the population censuses of 1977 and 1987, as well as the few recent annual statistical reports of the Ministry of Planning (MOP).

In 1957 Iraq's population was 6.299 million and the labour force accounted for 1.795 million, these figures increased in 1980 to 13.238 and 3.445 respectively. According to FAO (1991) in 1990 the labour force reached 5.1 million workers out of total a population of 18.92 million. The labour force has increased with an average of 2.9 per cent annually while the population's increase was 3.3 per cent see Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. Population and labour force index numbers 1957-1990

Years	Population	Labour force
1957	100	100
1960	106	108
1965	128	125
1970	150	144
1975	177	165
1977	191	175
1980	210	192
1985	205	203
1990	300	285

Source: Annual Abstracts of Statistics of various years

The difference in ratio of growth between population and labour force can be attributed to various reasons, among them the limitation of involvement of women in work due to some socio-cultural restrictions. Increase in the opportunity for schooling has resulted in extending the

time length of education. Migration from rural to urban areas led to a situation where family members of the immigrant farmer (wife and children) who were agricultural workers turned to being non-workers in the new urban societies.

Finally and more importantly, the increased military power has resulted in draining males away from labour force, those who were previously working or searching for work in various sectors of the economy, thereby affecting agriculture the most. Table 6.5 shows that between 1970 and 1988 there was a considerable growth in both the labour force and the armed forces and also reveals a dramatic rise in the armed force at the expense of the labour force. In 1970 the labour force was 2.4 million persons, which almost doubled in 1988 while the armed forces of 62,000 strong jumped to 1 million by 1988.

Table 6.5. Ratio of armed forces to labour force

Year	Labour force (in millions)	Armed forces (in thousands)	Percent ratio AF/LF
1970	2.4	62	3
1975	2.8	82	3
1980	3.2	430	13
1982	3.8	404	11
1984	4.1	788	19
1986	4.4	800	18
1988	4.7	1000	21

Source: A. Alnsrawi, 1995, p. 4

In addition to the regular army, the Ba'th government after seizing power in 1968 formed a paramilitary force called the People's Army. The outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) drew off almost all adult males to the armed forces or to the paramilitary. Before the war 'the People's Army' was 35,000 strong, its number reaching 400,000 in 1982.⁸ By the end of the war, every Iraqi man from the age of 18 to 40 years⁹ (with few exceptions) had to join the army and those in from the age 40-60 group had to join the 'Popular Army'. The impact of enlarging the military and paramilitary forces is evident by recognising the fact that all men called for such service were from the economically

active population. Considering the number of persons aged 15-59 years as a criteria to determine the size of the labour force, therefore, would be a misleading measure. The actual labour force constituted people who were not only within the working age category and able to work, but also those who were actually available for work. For example, in 1977 the group of people aged 15-59 was 5.276 million of which 3.1 million (59.4 per cent) was considered as the actual labour force.

A few decades ago the agricultural labour force was the largest of the labour in the economy's sectors. By the end of the 1950s it composed almost half of the total labour in the country, however a decade later agriculture began to be no longer the major source of employment.

From the early 1970s the agricultural labour force began to decline, losing 10 per cent of its manpower between 1970 and 1975 as it decreased from 47 per cent to 37 per cent of total labour. Table 6.6 shows that during the 1980s the decline in agricultural labour continued to grow even more rapidly.

Table 6.6. Labour force and agricultural labour. 1947-90 ('000)

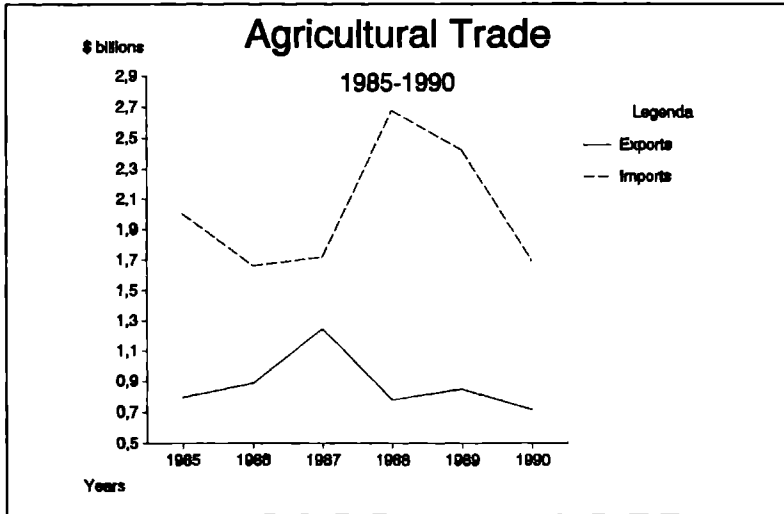
Years	Total labour	Agric. labour
1947	1315	748
1957	1795	859
1965	2243	892
1970	2389	1125
1975	2890	1073
1980	3251	1081
1985	4259	1043
1990	5119	1049

Source: MOP (1986), ILO (1989) and ISNAR (1992).

During the 1970s the focus of development activities was on industrialisation and infrastructure of which the latter received the lion's share of investment during the 1980s. The growth of those economic activities was accompanied by an enormous expansion of the service sector. The flourish in these sectors attracted and absorbed most of the labour provided by the new rural-urban migrants. By the end of the 1980s

employment in Agriculture had dropped to one-fourth of its size in 1970. Figure 6.2 shows that in 1987 agricultural labour consisted of only 12.4 per cent of total labour while the service sector employed almost 50 per cent of the labour force. Here it is important to mention that quite a large number of the service sector employees were, in fact army conscripts.¹⁰

Figure 6.2. Sectoral labour force, 1987



(Source: J. Dreze and H. Gazdar, 1991, p. 5a)

During the 1980s, in order to fill the vacuum created by calling most of the agricultural manpower to the military, Iraq's government encouraged workers from Arab countries to come to Iraq and work in the various sectors of the economy including agriculture. According to the German paper *Die Zeitung* (1983):

The decline in the number of Iraqi workers is evident in all the sectors. They were replaced by 1.5 million Egyptian workers in addition to tens of thousands of Asians, Polish and Yugoslavians. Also there are 6,000 French, 4,000 German, and 5,000 Chinese. Even hotels and restaurants are run by foreigners, mostly from India, the

Philippines and Thailand.¹¹

Various agricultural projects were created solely for these immigrants in projects ranging from animal husbandry to orchards, most of them in ideal locations, like for example, the al-Rashdia project on the bank of the Tigris close to Baghdad. Most of the immigrant agricultural workers came from Egypt and Morocco, their number estimated at 440,000 during the 1980s.¹² The number of non-Iraqis working in agriculture, however dropped noticeably after the Iran-Iraq war ended in 1988. The Gulf war of 1991 and its disastrous consequences on the economy and standard of living in Iraq had resulted in the departure of most of the foreign labour.

The Iraqi government policy of not revealing the numbers of Arab workers in addition to the virtual lack of reliable data from other sources, makes it difficult to analyse changes in the role of foreign agricultural labour within Iraq's total agricultural labour.

6.4. Agriculture's economic performance

The value of agricultural production (crops, products, and livestock production) has fluctuated throughout the 1970s and 1980s, but in general its contribution to the country's GDP had been decreasing even without the revenue from oil. Table 6.7 illustrates that in terms of the value given in constant price, the agricultural GDP increased by an annual growth rate of 1.5 per cent during 1970-1980, whereas the country's GDP increased by 10.4 per cent during the same period which was much faster.

The rate of agricultural GDP does not reveal the fluctuation in production, but from the table above it is apparent that agricultural production decreased during 1973-80 in comparison to what it was in 1972. This decrease came in contrast to a growth of seven per cent envisaged by the national Five Year Development Plan of 1976-80.¹³ This low growth rate agricultural GDP is reflected in the decline of its share in the total GDP from 12 per cent in 1970 to 5.2 per cent in 1980. At current prices, the difference in growth rate between total GDP and the agricultural GDP appear to be not as sharp as in the case of constant prices. Table 6.8 indicates that the growth in agricultural GDP grew by an annual rate of 14.3 per cent against a total GDP of 29.4 per cent.

Table 6.7. Value and growth rates of GDP and agri. GDP
1970-80 (constant price 1975, ID million)

Year	Total GDP		Agr. GDP	% of agric. GDP	
	inc. oil	exc. oil		inc. oil	exc. oil
1970	2656,5	1175,5	319,1	12,0	27,1
1971	2841,6	1236,0	331,5	11,7	26,8
1972	2735,6	1352,6	401,4	14,7	29,7
1973	3261,2	1345,1	306,1	9,4	22,8
1974	3599,0	1758,4	362,5	10,1	20,6
1975	4105,1	2062,3	311,6	7,6	15,1
1976	4931,8	2311,6	384,2	7,8	16,6
1977	5092,5	2451,8	373,9	7,3	15,3
1978	5976,6	2812,7	378,4	6,3	13,5
1979	7520,4	3640,0	372,7	5,0	10,2
1980	7170,3	4180,5	370,8	5,2	8,9

Source: MOA (1984: 155)

It could have been that the increase in the prices of agricultural products was relatively higher than that of products of other sectors of the economy. The value of agricultural GDP at constant prices fluctuated according to size of production, while the value at current prices appeared to be continuously increasing (except in 1973 due to the marked increase in production in 1972)) in such a manner that it compensated the decline in the size of production over some years.

However, the higher rate of increase in GDP compared with that of agricultural GDP led to the decline in the sector's share in the GDP despite the absolute increase in agricultural GDP during the period of 1970-80. In 1980 the agricultural GDP's share in GDP dropped from 16.2 per cent in 1970 to 4.7 per cent.

*Table 6.8. Value and growth rates of GDP and agri. GDP
1970-80 (current prices, ID million)*

Year	Total GDP		Agric. GDP	% of Agric.GDP	
	inc. oil	exc. oil		inc.oil	exc.oil
1970	1199,1	836,5	194,6	16,2	23,3
1971	1396,6	888,8	215,8	15,5	24,3
1972	1398,9	998,9	260,1	18,6	26,0
1973	1598,6	1035,2	210,6	13,3	20,3
1974	3522,6	1499,9	278,4	7,9	18,6
1975	4105,1	2062,3	311,6	7,6	15,1
1976	5381,7	2578,0	429,0	8,0	16,6
1977	6008,5	2918,9	498,4	8,3	17,1
1978	7225,4	3523,6	550,0	7,6	15,6
1979	11652,8	4939,8	611,8	5,3	12,4
1980	15794,6	6200,2	741,9	4,7	12,0

Source: MOA (1984: 159)

The conclusion is that the performance of agriculture in the country's economy characterised by a low rate of growth in its share of the country's GDP. This tendency is reflected in the decline of the sector's growth rate itself over the period 1960-79, the growth rate appears to have been 5.7 per cent during 1960, which fell to 1.8 per cent during 1970-79.¹⁴

Lack of reliable data on national output and income or the controversial data published by foreign sources such as FAO¹⁵ and the Economist makes drawing an accurate conclusion rather difficult. For example the figures in the Economist's bulletins 'Iraq: Country Profile' about Iraq's agricultural growth rate for the same years are different.

Issue	Growth rate (%)		
	1986	1987	1988
1988-89	4.5	2.0	-
1989-90	4.5	-0.4	2.6
1992-93	-6.5	-8.1	2.8

However, an examination of the available data on the economy as a whole and agricultural growth in particular helps to clarify the picture. During the 1980s, the growth rate in agricultural GDP fluctuated from one per cent in 1984 to -0.4 per cent in 1987 and then to 2.6 per cent in 1988. Table 6.9 reveals that the share of agriculture in the composition of the country's GDP ranged between 11.0 per cent and 15.4 per cent, over the period 1983-87.

Table 6.9. Value of agriculture's GDP and its contribution to the total GDP during 1983-87 (current prices, ID million)

Year	Value of Agr. GDP	% of Agr. GDP of total GDP
1983	1,413.8	11.0
1984	1,941.9	12.8
1985	2,160.3	14.0
1986	2,173.7	14.3
1987	2,517.9	15.4

Source: ISNAR, 1992, p. 40

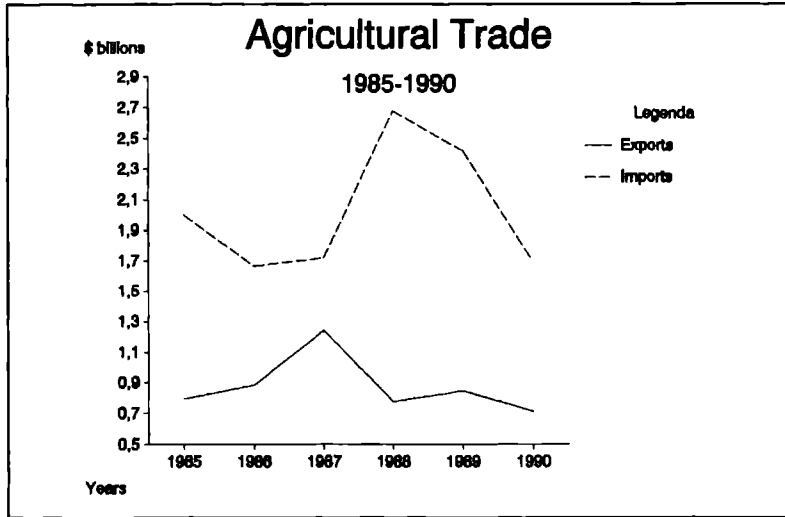
The relative increase in agricultural contribution to the GDP during the 1980s was largely the result of a rapid decline in oil production and export, depriving the GDP of its main source of revenue, and the growth rate of the total agricultural output in terms of value rather than in quantity. In this regard, there are three noteworthy observations. First, there was a decline in the production of cereals which are the main agricultural products, and second, the domestic prices of agricultural products rose faster in the 1980s than in 1970s. Third, there was a sharp rise in agricultural product imports during the 1980s.

6.5. Agricultural foreign trade

Decline in agricultural production, population growth and rural-urban migration, on one hand, and the insufficiency of domestic supply on the other, have accelerated Iraq's agricultural trade with foreign countries. During the 1970s the balance of trade was more in favour of imports than exports, which was maintained by the availability of funds from oil exports. The availability of funds made it easy to cover the shortages of agricultural production and of other sectors, meeting domestic demand by importing from foreign markets. Noteworthy is that the import of agricultural products was carried out by government departments, the size of imports mainly determined by political decisions rather than market mechanisms.

During the 1970s there were many circumstances which encouraged Iraq to maintain its food import policy: First, was the ample amount of foreign exchange due to the nationalisation of oil production and the increase in oil prices in the international markets. Second, was the political will of the state to have an accumulation of cereals in stock as a matter of precaution in the face of crisis, and also to control the flow of food to domestic markets in accordance with its political aims. This was demonstrated by the fact that agricultural cooperatives were marketing their products to government silos. Third, was the relatively cheap price of agricultural products in the international markets in comparison to the prices of oil. In 1970, for example, a barrel of oil would buy roughly a bushel of wheat, but by 1980 the same barrel would purchase six bushels.¹⁶ In 1970 the value of agricultural exports composed 32.3 per cent of the value of agricultural imports of ID 51.2 million. In 1973 it was dropped to 21.7 per cent and in 1980 to only 6.6 per cent.¹⁷ Imports continued throughout the 1980s despite the financial difficulties which the Iraqi economy began to encounter. Figure 6.3 illustrates the gap between agricultural exports and imports. The figure shows that in 1985 Iraq's imports of agricultural products reached US\$ two billion while it exported less than US\$ 80 million. The imbalance of trade continued throughout the 1980s.¹⁸ Wheat flour, rice, sugar, and red meat were the major foodstuffs which Iraq continuously imported from foreign markets. See Table 6.10

Figure 6.3. Agricultural trade 1985-90 (\$ billions)



Based on FAO data, Trade Year book, 1990, Vol. 44)

Table 6.10. Values and volumes of food imports, 1987-89
(value US\$ 1 million, volume '000 tons)

	1987		1988		1989	
	value	volume	value	volume	value	volume
Foodstuff						
Wheat + flour	360.0	3,190.0	495.0	2,939.0	652.0	3,439.0
Rice	147.0	524.0	253.0	603.0	196.0	542.0
Red meat	96.8	41.5	302.0	113.0	240.0	110.0
Canned meat	17.4	5.9	24.5	0.9	12.5	5.4
Fresh poultry meat	76.1	69.8	7.0	5.0	7.0	5.0
Eggs	51.0	30.0	67.5	27.0	43.5	14.0
Sugar	169.7	169.7	203.0	203.0	235.0	235.0

Source: FAO Year book of trade of 1989, vol. 43, No. 96, 1990

Paying such huge bills came at a time while Iraq's economy started to encounter serious problems due to the tremendous costs of the war with Iran and the severe drop in oil exports. Seeking solution for this dilemma the state turned to the private sector. The policymakers perceived that the key to solving agricultural inefficiency was the introduction of privatisation.

Notes:

- 1 W Hollist, et al 1987
- 2 A Sen, 1981, 1990, and Dreze and Sen, 1989, p 9
- 3 A Sarns, 1985, and for more details about the concept of food security, Bigman, 1985 and M Alamgir and P Arora, 1991
- 4 Ministry of Industry, 1980, p 12
- 5 F Jalal, 1972, p 106 and also N Kanafani, 1982, p 82
- 6 A Alnasrawi, 1994, p 74
- 7 A Alwan ,1986
- 8 A Abbas, 1986, p 218
- 9 It was common among Iraqi families for sons to serve in the army and the father in the Popular army. In my case my two brothers and I were soldiers while my father escaped joining the popular army due to his health problems
- 10 J Dreze and H Gazdar, 1991, p 6
- 11 Die Zeitung, 29 July 1983, cited in Sada al-Harb, 1984
- 12 According to the estimates of the Egyptian Centre for Statistics Cited in H Ishow, 1993, p 188
- 13 Ministry of Planning, 1977, p 23
- 14 The Economist (EIU), 1987-88, p 15
- 15 FAO, Trade Year Books of 1989, and 1990 state different data for the same years during the 1980s for the value of Iraq's agricultural imports
- 16 Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p 143
- 17 Ministry of Agriculture, 1984, p 203
- 18 FAO Trade Year Book 1989, Vol 43, No 96, 1990

State privatisation policy

7.1 Privatisation: conceptual and practical issues

Worldwide, the growing movement to privatise industries, services, and state owned agricultural enterprises has been a phenomenon since the 1980s. In developing countries there were increasing calls for economic policy reform to expand the role of market forces and the private sector.¹ State intervention in the economy was seen as the problem in economic development; not the solution.² Increased state activities and state-owned enterprises (SOE) have largely contributed to becoming 'debt burgeoned, where budgets and current accounts ran deep into the red, and inflation soared',³ therefore, as Waterbury argues it was the fiscal crisis that necessitated economic reform (1992: 183). Privatisation has been embraced as the central plank of policy reform. For policy makers in these countries privatisation offers the prospect of greater efficiency at the enterprise, as well as the economy-wide, level.⁴ Privatisation carries many a different meaning, and it is therefore useful to define its main components so that its magnitude can be identified as in the case of Iraq. Adam *et al.*(1992: 6) define privatisation as a process which:

covers the transfer from the public to private sector of the ownership and/or control of productive assets, their allocation and pricing, and the entitlement to the residual profit flows generated by them.

Adam states that the transfer of assets to the private sector can be either by sale of assets (outright or partial) by the state or by leasing arrangement (p. 6). The extent to which privatisation has occurred in the developing countries varies from one country to another. There are many reasons that motivated governments to implement privatisation. Stevens

(1993: 115) categorises these reasons under three headings:

First are selfish political motives. For example, the programme may be aimed at rewarding family, political friends and allies. Alternatively, the programme might be a part of a 'democratisation' process aimed at reinforcing the political positions of a flagging regime. Second, the programme might be simple window dressing to secure the approval of the IMF and World Bank as part of debt-rescheduling negotiations. Third, the government may be seeking to optimise the country's social welfare. Selling off state-owned enterprises is seen, in this perspective, to improve the economic performance of the enterprise.

Steven's emphasis on domestic reasons alone are insufficient to explain the shift in development strategy and implementation of structural reform. The impact of external factors are substantial.⁵ Haggard and Kaufman assert that 'international pressures in the 1980s pushed toward a scaling back of the state's developmental and redistributive commitments' (1992: 3). Stallings, however, stresses the crucial role of domestic, political, and economic variables in initiating and implementing such changes. She sees the rush toward privatisation in the 1980s as *prima facie* evidence that there were external forces operating. It is unlikely that domestic forces just happened to coincide with so many dissimilar countries to bring about such similar policy decisions.⁶ Stallings (1992: 48-49) identifies three types of relationships between external and internal structures and actors:

One concerns the operation and impact of international markets that constitute the constraints and opportunities within which Third World actors must operate. A second stresses the economic, political, and ideological 'linkage' between domestic groups and international actors. The third concentrates on the power relations between international actors and Third World governments, the question of 'leverage'.

The critical feature of the relations between a Third World country and external actors is manifested in what is labelled as 'conditionality'. In other words, the external financial assistance is provided conditional to the economic policy change in the receptor country.⁷ Helleiner reveals that the excessive influence of the external donor, especially that of the IMF and World Bank, is evident in African development policies (1994: 10).

The extent to which privatization is a product of internal and /or external variables reflects its complexity and the fact that it takes place within the context of social, economic and political power structures in the country. Like most Third World countries, many Arab countries introduced privatisation measures into their economies. The timing and degree differ, but strengthening the private sector and shifting the performance criteria for public sector enterprises are found not only in pro-Western Egypt but also in 'socialist' countries like Algeria and Iraq.⁸

Egypt was a leading country among the Arab countries to pursue a policy of inviting domestic and foreign capital to invest in its economy, i.e. Egypt opened its economy for capital investment more than tending to privatise the public sector.⁹ This came to be known especially after 1974, as the policy of the 'opening of the economy' (*infitah*) or the 'open door economy'.¹⁰ It was initiated in late 1973 by President Sadat of Egypt.¹¹ Due to the great cultural and geo-political importance of Egypt in the region, its *infitah*, therefore, became a 'developmental model' for many Arab countries. As Egypt 'opts for *infitah*, similar orientations seem to be developing in Syria, Iraq, Algeria, the Sudan, and other Arab countries'.¹² In Tunisia, since 1986, the range of economic liberalisation policies has been extensive.¹³ Syria's privatisation policy began, according to Hinnebusch, two decades ago and today it appears to be accelerating (1993: 177).¹⁴

The Egyptian *infitah* came as a response both to internal and external elements.¹⁵ It was the outcome, as Ayubi explains, of developments on three distinct levels: the domestic, the regional, and the international. President Nasir's (who ruled from 1952 to 1970) socialist approach could not continue according to Ayubi, because it was 'socialism without socialists'. Nasir's development experiment relied heavily on the managers and technocrats in a mixed economy that boasted a private as well as a public sector (1982: 349). Cooper points out that lifting restrictions on the flow of commodities and foreign exchange from the hands of individuals and expanding areas of economic activity of the private sector freed the private sector (1982: 44). According to Ayubi this eventually led to the '*embourgeoisement* of the system' (1982: 350). The creation of such socio-economic forces resulted in a situation where these forces found the existing framework of the economy inadequate for furthering their interests, and it was their pressure coupled with external pressure that led to the subsequent drive for *infitah*.¹⁶ At regional element level, the financial aid from oil exporting Arab

countries (after the 1973 oil boom) and remittance from Egyptians working in these countries were too great a temptation for capital-hungry Egypt to brush aside.¹⁷ Among the international factors conducive to *infitah* was the increasing political influence of the United States in the region which resulted in a growing belief among Egyptian leadership that the United States held the solution to the Middle East problem. Therefore as Ayubi (1982:350) stated that Egyptian decision makers believed it was:

necessary to achieve some sort of rapprochement and coordination with the United States and with international organisations that reflected American ideas and concepts - particularly in economic matters - such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

The pressure of Western governments and that of the US on Egypt to liberalise its economy became apparent as these governments linked their economic assistance programmes to Egyptian willingness to undertake specific reforms.¹⁸ Support for the private sector was, and still is, as Al Sayyid says, 'a constant element in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) annual aid package to Egypt' (1990: 14). The World Bank and the IMF were active in pushing Egypt for economic liberalisation and increased reliance on market forces and the private sector.¹⁹

The Egyptian *infitah* policy made by Sadat in 1974 and pursued by his successor, Mubarak, enabled the private sector in Egypt to significantly penetrate several areas that were previously inaccessible such as banking, finance and insurance. The share of private enterprise in trade and manufacturing increased and the sectors of agriculture and construction became dominant.²⁰ Increasing private sector activities did not intend to diminish the public sector, instead, the Egyptian government wanted the private entrepreneurs to complement and not to compete with public sector activity.²¹

7.2 The emergence of privatisation in Iraq

Iraq during the 1970s provided little opportunity for changing the shares of public and private sectors in the economy. This stability of shares suggests, as Richards & Waterbury explain, that '*infitah* was limited (1990: 255). The superiority of the public sector, however, was not

based on minimising the role of the private sector; Iraq's economy remained a mixed one. During that decade-- especially after the oil boom-- the remarkable increase of the state public expenditure helped in boosting the private sector as well. For example, in 1978 the private industrial sector employed 39 per cent of total labour force in industry and contributed 31.3 per cent of the value added in that sector.²² This sort of economic activity presents the problematic nature of defining the categories of public and private arises. Richards and Waterbury (1990:256) explain:

Iraqi construction firms are privately owned; that is, their profits occur to certain specific individuals. But they get their money by working for the government; they are hardly 'in opposition' to the state in any way.

The state generated and became the pole around which various fragments of a new bourgeoisie began to take shape. The contracting sector, for example, grew steadily and the number of contractors increased substantially from 828 in 1970 to 2788 in 1975.²³ The political elite used office to acquire wealth and went into business on the side.

Unlike Sadat of Egypt, the Iraqi political leaders during the 1970s were careful enough not to praise the importance of the private sector in public. The domestic and regional political environment during the 1970s, as described in Chapter 2, was highly in favour of socialism and Arab countries were therefore advocating socialist ideology. The abandon of such rhetoric by any regional government was seen as 'national betrayal'.²⁴

The extent of *infatih* difference between Iraq and Egypt's during the 1970s can be attributed to Iraq's political and economic conditions during that decade. The determination of the Ba'th government during the early 1970s to establish its firm rule over political, economic and social life in Iraq was manifested in two methods: (1) promoting the public sector, which served as a capable means in the hand of the state to implement its central planning and price policies, and (2) eliminating its political opponents and creating a life of uncertainty and fear among non-Ba'thists. It is not surprising, as Richards & Waterbury argue, that in such a political atmosphere a very weak economic 'opening up' can occur (1990: 256). The tremendous oil revenue due to the oil boom (described in Chapter 3) strengthened the state's financial capabilities

and eventually facilitated building infrastructure, it 'increased greatly investment in all fields of the economy'.²⁵ For instance, the annual average of investment of ID 71.7 million in 1968-69 million rose to ID 1214 during 1975-77.²⁶ Revenues from oil exports absorbed the pressure of the balance of payment and eventually defused changes within the framework of the economy. The balance of payment pressure which forced changes in many countries in the region had also, according to Richards & Waterbury, prompted changes in Iraq after 1980 (1990:256). In fact, changes towards privatisation in Iraq were under way before 1980.²⁷ This was a result of interaction of several political and socio-economic changes which had been taking place since the Ba'th government rose to power in 1968. In fact several factors can be identified which paved the way for the emergence of privatisation in Iraq.

The first factor which contributed to Iraq's privatisation was inefficiency of production; during the late 1970s the stagnation of public sector production came under serious criticism from powerful political figures. The state leaders adopted a rigorous method; in a televised series Saddam Hussein held several meetings with ministers, general managers of state owned enterprises and heads of production service directories of both industrial and agricultural sectors. Those meetings which became known as 'Low Productivity Meetings' were run like court trials rather than discussions and sharing ideas. The key concern was why the public sector suffered from low productivity. The public sector was accused of being economically inefficient, a locality of disguised unemployment and financial dependency on other sectors of the economy.

The public sector in agriculture, as mentioned in Chapter 5, consisted of three types of production organizations: cooperatives, collective farms, and state farms. Empirical data show that there was an alarming decline in productivity of main crops in both public and private sectors. However, productivity of the public sector was relatively higher than that of the private sector. Table 7.1 reveals that in 1978 the private sector's productivity of wheat, barley, rice, and cotton had dropped by 32.4, 20.4, 11.6, and 11.4 per cent respectively compared to its level in 1976. In the public sector in 1978, however, productivity of wheat decreased by 30.8 per cent, barley by 10.4, and cotton by 43.6, but rice made a recovery as its productivity increased by 9.5 percent of its level of 1976.

Table 7.1. Productivity of main crops according to sectors 1976-78 (Kg/donum)

products	1976		1977		1978	
	public	private	public	private	public	private
Wheat	227	207	216	180	158	140
Barley	248	256	218	202	222	204
Rice	715	895	702	882	783	792
Cotton	316	413	201	202	178	366

Source: MOP (1984: 68)

Low productivity in agriculture was obviously not an exclusive characteristic of the public sector. Criticising the public sector alone and seeking a way out of inefficiency through the promotion of the private sector is, therefore, a debatable matter.

The second factor which elicited the formal adoption of privatisation in Iraq in the 1980s was political structure. Though it was a turning point in the state development policy, it was by no means a turning point in the politics of the ruling Ba'th party. The Ba'th leaders' advocacy of socialism during the 1970s, as described in Chapter 2, was more tactical than strategic perception. Like Egypt during Nasir's era, Iraq's economy remained a mixture of private and public activities and Iraqi decision-makers never intended to or did dismantle the private sector. In actuality they began-- though slowly-- from their first day in power, to implement their political agenda of promoting capitalist development which was carried out, as al-Khafaji explains, under the umbrella of building socialism (1983:18). The ideology of the Ba'th party and its literature implicitly refer to the encouragement of the private sector.²⁸

After 1980 the Ba'th government began to officially renounce its socialism rhetoric and revealed its policy of privatisation. In 1985 Saddam Hussein announced 'our brand of socialism cannot live without the private sector whether now, or after the war [with Iran]'.²⁹ Saddam's statement clearly expressed the view of the Ba'th party; he was and still is the head of the ruling party. Encouraging the private sector, in fact, took another impulse as Saddam's aspirations grew to obtain undisputed authority. Saddam's ambition brought him, as Springborg explains, to confrontation with his own party, 'the Ba'th

party, which derived its strength from domination of the state apparatus and public sector of the economy, constrained his autonomous exercise of power' (1986: 34). Springborg (p. 34) continues to say:

His [Saddam's] encouragement of the private sector has 'weakened the hold of the Ba'th party over the economy and paved the way for the emergence of a new, as yet amorphous group, rather than a class, upon which an increasing amount of the President's political base and legitimacy rest.

Changes in domestic political structure came to move alongside serious changes in the state's foreign political and economic policies which have also been taking shape since the mid-1970's.

The traditional alliance of Iraq with the USSR and the other Eastern Europe bloc during the early 1970s began to lose the support of the Iraqi policy makers. This became evident in economic and political terms. Imports from the Eastern Bloc, which were only 11 per cent in the mid 1970s, had dropped to six per cent by 1979.³⁰

During the first phase of the oil boom Iraq had, as Richards and Waterbury noted, 'turned West'. Iraq 'gave out huge, lucrative contracts to firms from all over the world, especially Western ones' (1990: 256). Since the early 1980s Iraq started sending increasingly more messages to the USA in order to restore diplomatic relations which had been severed after the June 1967 Arab-Israel war. In fact it was not only Iraq which sought relationships with the US and the West, the latter were even more willing. The emergence of Khomeini and his Islamic revolution in Iran, as described in Chapter 2, had alerted the USA, the West, and their allies in the Gulf. They perceived that supporting Saddam's regime during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) was the best way to minimise and stop the 'spread of Islamic revolution'. In 1984 full diplomatic relations with the USA was resumed. Noteworthy is that the trade between the two countries and other West European countries had been growing significantly since the late 1970s despite the broken diplomatic relations. France, the UK, and West Germany became the major trading partners of Iraq at the expense of trade with the USSR. Table 7.2 shows that Iraq's imports from West Germany jumped from 14.3 per cent in 1974 to 51.6 percent in 1981 while imports from the USSR dropped from ten per cent in 1974 to only 1.2 per cent in 1981.

Table 7.2 Iraq's imports 1974-81 (ID millions)

Country	1974	1977	1979	1980	1981
USSR	32.1	42.3	35.0	13.6	9.0
USA	55.6	55.8	81.5	94.1	81.2
France	51.7	62.8	119.4	127.5	127.1
UK	37.3	82.8	84.0	122.2	131.5
W. Germany	56.4	189.8	176.4	359.2	371.9

Source: The Middle East and North Africa (various years).

This strengthening of economic bonds with capitalist countries eventually led the Iraqi economy to be more open to the mechanisms of the world market. Many scholars such as Alnasrawi (1994:75) Springborg, (1986:33) and Richards & Waterbury (1990:256) argue that Iraq's close economic relationship with West European countries coupled with the increase of USA's presence in the region were among the factors that contributed to the emergence of privatisation in Iraq.

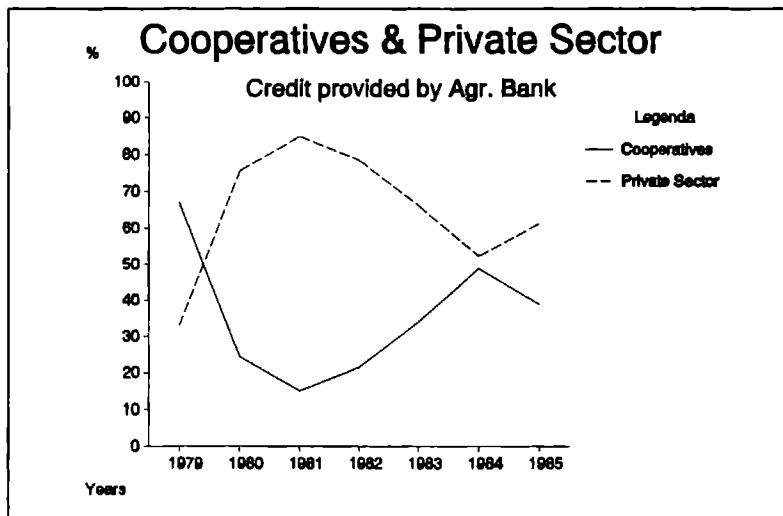
The third factor in leading up to privatisation in Iraq was its financial incapacity. During the beginning of the 1980s, Iraq began to experience the erosion of its financial assets and to face serious financial difficulties. This was due to two major reasons: (1) the cost of the war with Iran, and (2) the decline in Iraq's oil revenues due to the impact of the war and the decline in international oil prices. The financial incapacity forced the state to cut non-military expenditures and withdraw from various economic activities. As a means of increasing agricultural and industrial output as well as consumer goods during the war, the government relaxed its control over the private sector and provided measures of freedom to individuals for imports, production and marketing.³¹ Changing the economic policy, therefore, was the most significant response to the state's financial incapability due to the war conditions.³²

7.2.1 Privatisation of Agriculture

Relaxation of state control of the economy began by the end of 1970s, particularly in the agricultural sector. This came to be evident when the

government enforced the creation of new economic space for the private sector by reallocating resources formerly used by the public sector. For example, during early 1970s the agricultural cooperative bank was providing loans to the public farming organisations (cooperatives, collective and state farms) without many restrictions, but with rigid conditions to the private sector. By the late 1970s this policy was revised. Figure 7.1 shows a clear drop in the size of loans provided by the Agricultural Bank to the cooperatives in favour of the private sector.

Figure 7.1 Loans provided to cooperatives and private sector 1979-85



(based on data of MOP: 1985)

Actually an increasingly serious cut in providing loans by the Cooperative bank to the cooperatives had already taken place; loans dropped from ID 215 million in 1985 to only ID 91,000 in 1988.³³ This decline in credit resulted in cutting capital investment by the public sector in production operations. It became impossible to maintain the appropriate level of investment in machinery, while credit made available to the private sector had increased its ownership of farm equipment. For example, in 1982 the private sector owned 92.4 per cent of all the

pumps, combines and tractors. The remaining 7.6 per cent was owned by the public sector.³⁴ The focus of state interest moved more toward increasing agricultural production than toward enhancing the process of social economic structural changes in rural areas. This focus is reflected in Saddam Hussein's emphasis on 'all activities of the private sector form part of the national wealth, and are as important as the activities of the socialist sector'.³⁵ This was a turning point in the state's policy, as Chaudhry describes, that 'the new policies reflected a serious shift in emphasis from equity to efficiency'(1991: 15).

The decision by the government to rely more heavily on the private sector was enforced not only by providing the sector with incentives and credit³⁶ but also by various measures concerning agricultural policy. A legal framework has been provided in line with the new policy. Law No. 35 of 1983 (as discussed in Chapter 4) gave the private sector remarkable freedom to possess land and obtain various subsidies. For example, private companies were guaranteed subsidised raw materials and duty-free imports of machinery, enabled them to obtain further benefit as buyers of agricultural machinery from the government importation agency at subsidised prices, which they could sell at higher prices on the black market.³⁷ Measures to encourage private activities in services and manufacturing sectors were also implemented. Law 115 of 1982 and Company law of 1983 increased the ceiling on private sector investment by over 1,000 % and offered various tax benefits to private firms.³⁸

The government was very firm in taking further measures in order to encourage the private sector activities, meanwhile pulling its support from the public sector. In 1987 the government issued a decree legalising the sale of all state farms, including six dairy farms; the same happened to the assets of the collective farms as well as to a large number of cooperatives.

7.2.2 Private agri-businesses

The agricultural privatisation policy opened the doors enabling some wealthy individuals to establish private agricultural firms³⁹ through which either imported farming commodities needed for agricultural production such as farm machinery, seeds and pesticides, or obtained them from the state's import department. Moreover, they owned large numbers of trucks, tractors, and other machinery. Those agri-business firms provided their services to small farmers who formerly relied on

the cooperatives for such services. The state encouraged the private agri-businesses through various channels to diversify their agricultural performances. It began by allowing them to rent the state grain production farms and introduced a variety of subsidies to encourage vegetable and fruit production on privately-owned farms.

By late 1989, the agricultural land rented by large grain farmers exceeded 14 million *donums*, or about 60 per cent of the total farming area.⁴⁰ A variety of large poultry, dairy and fishing state-owned projects were sold to private enterprises. By late 1980s, 19 of the state's 29 poultry farms, six of the large poultry feed projects, six of the 10 large dairy farms, three of the four large government fisheries, and subsidiary services such as mills and bakeries, had been sold to private investors.⁴¹ Many of new investors were not traditionally agricultural elites but had made their wealth in the construction sectors.⁴² The new agricultural entrepreneurs are mostly wealthy politicians, relatives of influential leaders, and high ranking military officers. According to al-Khafaji (1986):

Among 31 top contractors seven came from the family clan of the ruling elite, six others had joint business ventures with such persons, two were former leading figures of the ruling party, and four belonged to families traditionally sympathetic towards the party and had relatives in it.

For such entrepreneurs who are politically influential or linked to powerful leaders it was easy to utilise resources to secure land, credit, and equipment directly from the government.⁴³

The example of the *Maktib Khalid* company is an interesting case; one of the two principle partners of this company is a close relative of Saddam's wife. He had a large farm in a favourable location on the Tigris nearby Baghdad, where he produced a wide variety of horticultural products using the most advanced trickle irrigation techniques. He is a millionaire and owns a Boeing 707.⁴⁴

Though the private agri-businesses are concentrated in irrigated farming areas, many of them are in the rainfed areas as well. According to Springborg (1986:45):

Possibly the most successful entrepreneurs in the rainfed areas are those who provide contract seeding, tillage, and harvesting services for small landowners..for planting and harvesting the contractor typically receives 40-50 per cent of the crop, with arrangements varying according to rainfall and soil conditions and the relative

influence and bargaining skills of the concerned parties.

The agri-businesses are composed of a wide range of activities: farming, land reclamation, drainage, fishery bonds and animal feed. For example, one company, benefit from Law 35 of 1983 and established in 1984, owns 2850 *donum*, 20 fishing bonds which cover an area of 1000 *donum*, a factory of animal feed production and provides services to land reclamation, drainage and digging canals.⁴⁵

7.3 The nature of Iraq's privatisation

Iraq's economy is centrally planned; all sectors of the economy are run by the state. In Iraq privatisation began as a non-spontaneous process, and is continuing without major adjustments in the sense that the state remains the key actor in the privatisation process. Undoubtedly, the economic importance of the private sector in Iraq is growing, but at the same time the state, while opting for full liberalisation in certain spheres, plays an intensive interventionist role in several areas of the economy. This is despite the fact that a large number of state-owned enterprises and projects were sold to the private sector. The state maintained its control over oil, mining, and certain industries such as, the petrochemical industry, banking, and public utilities.⁴⁶ Thus Iraq, according to Richards and Waterbury, 'presents an example of a very limited, highly tentative, easily revokable *infitah*' (1990:255). This view though perceptive, in assuming Iraq's privatisation to be easily revokable, is rather sceptical. The introduction of privatisation, as discussed earlier, is a response to various internal and external elements, therefore, to reverse such processes of change, is unlikely to be simple, not denying the state's strong hold on key sector(s) of the economy. In fact, through its interventionist policy, the state has largely influenced the conditions under which other-even genuinely private-enterprises function. In this respect Iraq's privatisation is similar to the Egyptian *infitah*, in its aims for the private sector 'participate actively in achieving the government's goals. For example, if the state believes that urban markets lack eggs, it simply 'instructs' private poultry farmers to switch to egg production'.⁴⁷

In the privatisation experiences of Eastern European countries the state's role has been remarkably modified. Stanojevic explains that 'the state is regarded as an important but not central actor in relation to privatisation. Its essential role is seen to be that of external general

regulator (and corrector) of the process' (1994: 170). This also means that the enterprise employees will be able to determine the degree of state involvement (p 170)

The Iraqi government tried to encourage the growth of the private sector without ceding real economic control to the private sector. According to Niblock (1993:81-83), there are central considerations which feature the limits of Iraqi privatisation. Firstly, most of the businesses sold to the private sector were loss-making while the economically-profitable enterprises remained under state control. Secondly, privatization measures did not stem from any desire on the part of the government to limit state involvement in the economy. On the contrary, the state continued to embark on a wide array of new military, industrial and mining projects. Niblock (p. 82) stresses that:

While divesting itself of some small-scale undertakings, therefore, the Iraqi government was investing (or preparing to invest) huge sums in heavy and military industry. Overall, the government was involving itself more deeply in the economy than ever before.

Thirdly, some of the privatisation measures were reversed such as the re-imposition of price controls (p 82).

By the introduction of privatisation, the Iraqi leaders aimed at solving problems of financing the public sector, i.e. to cut government investment in agricultural, industry and service sectors. For this reason privatisation was a path the government followed to achieve savings in foreign exchange by turning over consumer imports and non-strategic facets of the economy to the private sector. Observers such as Niblock (1993), Springborg (1986), and Richards and Waterbury (1990) emphasize that the Iraqi privatisation has not been designed to 'transform the economic system from a state capitalist into a free enterprise one, nor politics from authoritarian to liberal democratic'.⁴⁸ Unlike other countries where economic liberalisation is to some extent accompanied with political reforms,⁴⁹ the Iraqi government has no intention of relinquishing political or economic control to anyone.⁵⁰

7.4 The impact and outlook of privatisation

The 1980s were marked by a multitude of countries going through the processes of 'structural adjustment'. Waller notes that this adjustment process involved 'important policy changes and economic restructuring

in order to compete the world market and enter a path of economic growth'(1994: 63-64). It was the changes in Eastern Europe, according to Mkandawire, which made these strategies 'appear as the *only* alternative' path of development available to developing countries (1994: 81). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to examine the success or failure of these new experiences worldwide. However, it is worth mentioning that there is increasing evidence that indicate that policies of 'structural adjustment' were not the panacea to solve problems of the world economies. Privatisation in Eastern Europe itself, has provoked serious criticism as their economies began to witness rising inflation rates and fall of real income and output levels.⁵¹

Kiss (1994) explains that privatisation:

has come to mean the dismantling of the production system, the break-up of its former networks, ways of functioning and division of labour. This also contributes to the deepening of the economic crisis, for which privatisation was supposed to be the solution⁵²

Amsden, *et al.* confirm that the disorders of the economies of East European countries during the centrally planned system became worse as 'they embarked upon their transition to the market' (1994: 17). The deterioration of economic performance of Eastern European economies is 'causing major economic and social imbalances'.⁵³ In developing countries a similar scenario can be seen, according to Murphy and Niblock (1993) where, 'economic liberalisation generally widens the gap between rich and poor, at least in the short term, increases regional disparities, and deepens dependence on external powers and institutions'.⁵⁴ In fact, polarisation and disadvantage of most segments of the society due to implementation of privatisation are also characteristics of privatisation in Arab countries.

In Egypt *infatih* has led to a similar result. Abdel-Khalek argues that in Egypt 'a new pattern of income distribution is thus revealing itself with the share of the poor falling and that of the rich rising' (1982: 275). *Infatih* affects income distribution, as Abdel-Khalek summarised, in many ways. Firstly, it results in public expenditure growing faster than public revenues. Secondly, it results in a decline in the share of wages in national income. Thirdly, it results in devaluation and raising of the interest rate, and reducing subsidies (1982: 273-274). On the economy level, as Lofgren explains, Egypt's chronic deficit in goods trade remains large (1993: 28). The main field of *infatih* banks' business is in 'financing foreign trade and deposits abroad, which does not really

serve the cause of developing the Egyptian economy'.⁵⁵

In Iraq the privatisation policy has aggravated the economic crisis and lowered the living standards of the majority of the Iraqi people.⁵⁶ Inflation, shortages and the mushrooming black market in goods and services had, as Chaudhry explains, shocked a population long accustomed to stability in consumer goods (1991: 17). The state's removal of price controls over consumer goods produced by the private sector resulted in an immediate rise in the prices.⁵⁷ The rise in prices has naturally affected the poor people the most.

In contrast to the disadvantages to the majority of the people, privatisation helped in allowing certain businesses to prosper, where only a small group of people made their fortune. The number of large private contracting firms, for example, has increased from 1,875 in 1985 to 3,329 in 1989.⁵⁸ This is an indicator of the remarkable increase in the number of the richest Iraqi bourgeois families. Obviously privatisation has resulted in skewing the distribution of national income between the poor and rich segments of Iraqi society in favour of the rich. The contracting business continued to flourish during the 1980s despite the incompetent climate of the Iran-Iraq 1980-88 war. The onset of the 1991 Gulf war and the imposition of international embargo on Iraq's economy, as described in Chapter 3, have devastated Iraq's economy. It is therefore difficult to assess the precise impact of the privatisation policy on the productive sectors under these circumstances. However, the cases of social injustice and inequality remain numerous.

The international sanctions have opened up new horizons for the private sector to expand certain economic activities that are of an exploitative nature. The Economist has observed that, 'except for the distribution of rationed foodstuffs, which is under government control, the bulk of the distributive mechanisms are essentially of a black market nature'.⁵⁹ For the foreseen future, certain factors such as the increasing of Iraq's external indebtedness and the required foreign technology for the reconstruction of Iraq's infrastructure, as well as the oil international market mechanisms are further impulses of broadening of the privatisation.

Notes:

1 Haggard and Kaufman, 1992, p 3

2 Dutt et al, 1994, p 3

3 Stallings, 1992, p 41

- 4 Persaud, 1992, p ix
- 5 Stallings, 1992, Haggard & Kaufman, 1992, and Helleiner, 1994
- 6 Stallings, 1992, p 82
- 7 Kahler, 1992
- 8 Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p 238
- 9 El-Naggar, 1989, p 7 and Abdel-Khalek, 1982, p 260
- 10 G Abdel-Khalek, 1982, p 259
- 11 R Springborg, 1993, p 145
- 12 N Ayubi, 1982, p 349
- 13 J Marks, 1993, p 166
- 14 R Hinnebusch, 1993, p 177
- 15 Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p 240
- 16 Abdel-Khalek, 1982, p 261
- 17 Ayubi, 1982, p 350 and Al Sayyid, 1990, p 5
- 18 Springborg, 1993, p 153
- 19 Lofgren, 1993, p 22 and Wahba, 1993
- 20 AL Sayyid, 1990, p 6
- 21 Abdel-Rahman & Abu Ali, 1989, Richards & Waterbury, 1990, and al-Khafaji, 1991
22. al-Khafaji, 1991, p 182
- 23 al-Khafaji, 1986, p 4
- 24 al-Khafaji, 1991, p 175
- 25 Niblock, 1993, p 77
- 26 al-Khafaji, 1983, p 65
- 27 al-Khafaji, 1986, Springborg, 1986, and Niblock, 1993
- 28 al-Khafaji's (1983) study of State and capitalist development in Iraq 1968-1978, provides comprehensive insights about the flourishing of capitalism under the Ba'th government in Iraq
- 29 A Alnasrawi, 1992, p 337
- 30 M Sluglett and P Sluglett, 1987, p 240
- 31 EIU, 1989, p 14 and Richards & Waterbury, 1990, p 257

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32. Alnasrawi, 1992, p 337
- 33 K Chaudhry, 1991, p 18
- 34 R Springborg, 1986, p 39
- 35 A Alnasrawi, 1992, p 337
- 36 A Alnasrawi, 1986, p 877
- 37 R Springborg, 1986, p 40
- 38 Richards & Waterbury, 1990, p 257
- 39 I al-Khafaji, 1986, R Springborg, 1986, and K Chaudhry, 1991
- 40 K Chaudhry, 1991, p 15
- 41 Ibid
- 42 Ibid, p 18
- 43 al-Mu'tamar No 41, February 1994
- 44 R Springborg, 1986, p 44
- 45 al-Khafaji, 1991, p 199
- 46 Alnarawi, 1992 and Niblock, 1993
- 47 Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p 257
- 48 R Springborg, 1986, p 51
- 49 Pool, D, 1993, p 41
- 50 Richards and Waterbury, 1990, p 257
- 51 Amsden, A, et al, 1994, p 17
- 52 Y Kiss, 1994, p 139
- 53 Y Kiss, 1994, p 139
- 54 E Murphy and T Niblock, 1993, p xiii-xiv
- 55 Abdel-Khalek, 1982, p 272
- 56 Alnasrawi, 1994, p 75
- 57 Niblock, T, 1993, p 80
- 58 Chaudhry, K, 1991, p 16
- 59 The Economist, 1992-93, p 11

Concluding remarks

This study attempts to define the interaction between the state and rural society through the examination of the effects of three main factors: the extent of the state's role in directly influencing agrarian changes, the power structure of the state ;and the role of political objectives in state policies.

In Iraq, like most modern Arab states, the emergence of the state was not the outcome of a natural evolution from its own socio-economic context or its own cultural and intellectual tradition. Neither was due to the rise of an independent bourgeoisie class nor to the rise of secular nationalism. It was the outcome of conflicts over the territory between colonial powers. The British, in particular ,made state boundaries the central feature of their policy of divide and rule. The modern Iraqi state dates from the separation of the three Iraqi *wilaya* (counties), Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul of the Ottoman Empire when it collapsed during the First World War. The British formed Iraq by unifying the three *wilaya*. Although the boundaries of Iraq and other Arab states were formalised by ruling colonial powers, they were also deeply rooted in the patrimonial culture of the region.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, Iraq has undergone vast social, economic and political changes. Interaction between the state and society has been wide-ranging and intense. It has turned the state into a major social formation whose structure and function influence greatly society and its organizational structures.

During the Ottoman rule until 1917, the *Sultan* (the Turkish ruler in Istanbul) was governing the three *wilaya* of Iraq through an administrative hierarchy structure. The authoritarian nature of the Ottoman rule manifested itself through the use of coercion and oppression in order to keep their territories, including Iraq under their control. The *Sultanate's* policies were largely unpopular, and its bureaucracy was corrupt and venal.¹ In 1905 the total population of Iraq was 2.25 million of which 76 percent was living

in the rural areas.² The relationship between the rulers and the rural society varied according to the strength or weakness of the tribe. Consequently a policy of clientelism or coercion was used. If means of coercion were not needed to bring the tribes under state control, the Turkish *wali* (governor) of each *wilaya* relied on the tribal chiefs to maintain state control over the region and to raise taxes to be sent to the Capital. In return the *wali* ensured the domination of the tribal chiefs over their areas, the state intervened very little in the internal governance of the ruled communities. Those who held power in rural areas became the sole power and their authority could not be challenged by the local people, thus the rural elite intervened in all aspects of rural life, from marriages to land access. The Ottomans, however, were aware of the risks of allowing any competition to their power from the rural elite. The rulers realised the importance of land ownership as a source of power and wealth in rural society. Changes in the prevailing land tenure system meant, therefore, restructuring power relations in the rural community. Theoretically, although this was an option in real terms changing power structure was a complex act. Rural society was dominated by a patronage system in which kinship and tribal loyalty provided the source from which the *sheikhs* (tribal chiefs) derived their indisputable authority over their tribesmen. The Ottoman Land Code of 1885 laid down a basis for classifying agricultural land tenure into state-owned, privately owned, endowment, and waste land. However, if the Ottoman intended to improve the lot of the peasants through this code or to break down the power of the rural elite, they singularly failed on both counts. In fact the implementation of the code exacerbated the problem and resulted in an even greater concentration of land and power in the hands of the tribal chiefs and big landlords who became urban based aristocrats.

During the British occupation and its mandate over Iraq (1917-1932), the Iraqi state was based on the existing Ottoman apparatus and personnel.³ Thus the state's administrative structure was composed mainly of Arabs who had been officers in the Ottoman armies and a few who had been members of anti-Ottoman organisations.⁴ The Iraqi administration was merely a tool in the hands of the Colonial power which continued to possess ultimate authority. This was true even after Iraq became a monarchy in 1921 it remained under the mandate. British policies were based on tactical measures rather than on any long-term problem solving. In rural areas there were no major changes in land ownership simply because the issue of who owned the land was less important than maintaining control over the region. It was only after several rural riots and

the 1920 uprising in particular, that the British came to realize the importance of gaining rural political support. Their interest, therefore, lay in finding a local social pillar upon which their rule might rest as cheaply and effectively as possible. This they found in the *sheikhs*.⁵ The patron-client relationship was enhanced by the British policy of consolidating the political and economic positions of the tribal chiefs. In exchange these chiefs supported British rule. The British provided the chiefs with direct payment, subsidies and economic privileges. For example in 1920 the *sheikhs* of the Dulaym tribe (based in southwest of Iraq) were offered 13,000 pounds sterling and one *sheikh* was put in charge of distributing 10,000 donum of land among his tribe.⁶ In addition, the tribal chief was authorised to decide upon all legal matters in his area. This was done by the issuance of the Tribal Disputes Regulation of 1924. The effect of this law was the recognition and confirmation of the jural role of the *sheikh* and the tribal customary measures.⁷

During the British occupation, Iraq's society was still predominantly rural, with only 22 per cent living in urban areas.⁸ Revenue from agricultural land represented the second major source of state revenue, the first being taxation (in 1921 it was 27.6 per cent and for the taxes 43.7 per cent).⁹ This might explain why the British treated the landlords so well. They also gave their support to the chiefs when it came to the election for the Iraqi Parliament. Thus in the 1924 Parliament 34 tribal chiefs were elected out of a total of 99 delegates.¹⁰ The existence of this Parliament should not, however, be taken as an indicator of the democratic nature of the state. It was set up mainly as a means by which the British could achieve their objectives of creating a ruling elite through whom they could control the country.¹¹ The elites were composed of several groups: landlords (*sheikhs*, urban based landowners), urban aristocrat (mainly merchants), ex-officers of the Ottoman army, religious clergy, and the educated individual.¹² The end of the mandate and the emergence of the independent monarchy in 1932 did not change the power structure of the state - the British retained supreme power and control of the country.

In Chapter 1 of this study various theories of the state were put forward: elite, pluralism, Marxist and state-centred. The elite theory maintains that within a society a small group of economic, military and political elite occupy strategic posts in the state where by effective means of power and wealth are safeguarded. This view explains to a large extent the power structure in Iraq during the monarchy. State power was kept in the hands of a small group of people composed of wealthy urban notables, landlords and tribal chiefs.¹³ Their priorities were to ensure that political

power and wealth remained in their own hands. This elite segment of Iraq's society dominated state apparatuses and used them to expand its hegemony over the rest of the society's social groups. Ministerial posts were mainly allocated to individuals from the elite. For example 73.4 per cent of the 575 ministers appointed in the period of 1921-1958 were aristocrats, wealthy religious clergy, *sheikhs*, and army officers. The remaining percentage came from the middle class.¹⁴

An analysis of the distribution and use of power within society, shows that these privileged groups repeatedly used power to maintain their own interests. In rural society state intervention led to the legalisation of the exploitation of the *fellaheen* (peasants) by the rural elite, tribal chiefs and landlords. The introduction of measures such as the laws of 1932 Land Settlement Title and the 1933 Rights and Duties of Cultivators gave the landlords legal right to use means of coercion to keep the peasants in their service. More importantly, these laws also resulted in further concentration of land in the hands of a small group of big landowners. By 1958 four million *fellaheen* were landless, while 272 landowners possessed 4.5 million *donums*.¹⁵ As land was the major source of power and wealth for the tribal chiefs, they wanted to maintain their relationship with the *fellaheen* and strengthen this by adding a legal framework which would serve their best interests. The tribesmen's role as cultivators grew and landlord-cultivator relationship gradually began to substitute the *sheikh*-tribesmen relationship. Thus many *sheikhs* who had already settled in urban centres were transformed into agricultural capitalists.¹⁶

The vast majority of the rural population lived in utter destitution. The *fellaheen* were like servants to the landlords, who controlled the utilisation of rural infrastructure and also owned the means of production. Rural changes were guided largely determined by the rural elite. By strengthening the patronage relations and the use of coercion, the agrarian relationships came to be extremely repressive. The system could be defined as almost feudal.¹⁷ The *fellaah* received a small portion of his produce (a quarter of the total) which was further reduced by a series of dues. He also had to put up with other *sheikh*'s impositions, for if he owned livestock he had to pay a grazing charge. If there was a marriage or birth in his family, he incurred an arbitrarily fixed fee. All this was as a result of the state policy which was implemented from Mandate to Independence. It fostered and consolidated the power of an aristocracy of landholding *sheikhs* which led to the inevitable downgrading of the *fellaheen*. The domination of the landlords over the peasantry was not challenged by any internal political force.¹⁸ The strong position of the rural elite in Iraq's politics was evident

as they were natural allies of the monarchy: In 1958 they comprised 35 percent of the total number of the members of the parliament.¹⁹ The tribal chiefs had their personal militia composed of their own tribesmen to enforce the chiefs' orders and develop their interests. In many cases the weapon power of the chiefs exceeded even that of the government. For example, in the mid- 1930s, the government possessed only 15 percent of the total 100,000 rifles in the country.²⁰ In such a repressive climate migration, regarded by the *fellaheen* as the only way out of misery and exploitation, accelerated and the six southern provinces lost a total of nearly 169,000 people. This was in spite of laws imposing severe penalties on peasants who tried to leave their landlord, and the use of force to send them back.²¹

In addition to the massive migration, salinity damage caused to the land by inappropriate drainage systems resulted in once highly productive and fertile agricultural areas, falling into disuse. Wretched slum areas sprouted on the outskirts of Baghdad.²² Although the power of the landowners within the state political structure safeguarded oppression and exploitation in rural areas, it also created conditions for social forces which contributed in bringing the whole political system down in 1958.

The overthrowing of the monarchy in 1958 paved the way for the advent of a developmental state during the rule of Qasim, the first leader of the new republic. A wide range of social, economic and political reforms was introduced. Education and health care were made available and free to all. Women's emancipation made genuine steps forward as the rights of women to work and to education were secured and enforced by law. Political parties, including the Communist and the Ba'th were no longer banned and the Kurds were invited to share power and enjoy their ethnic rights. A nationalist trend in state policy became apparent. The policymakers, however, sought their own interpretation of Arab nationalism and stayed away from the ideological umbrella of Nasir of Egypt. The Communists and other radical groups in Iraq who held influential positions in the state realised that the subservience of Iraq to Nasir would result in their persecution. These political groups had supported Qasim and were not eager to welcome what they saw in Nasir as a new form of tyranny.²³

The developmental nature of the state is manifested in the intensity of social and economic reforms and in the capacity of the government to introduce and sustain them. The first Provisional Economic Plan (1959-1963) reveals a detailed system of planning and implementing development policies - a total of 248 projects, including housing, infrastructure, irrigation, flood control, and a wide range of state-owned industrial

enterprises, with a total expenditure of ID 392.2 million.²⁴

State development policies did not exclusively target urban areas; priority was given to the rural people. Rural areas were largely neglected during the monarchy and needed a quick and a radical solution. The new regime wanted to effect agrarian structures through major institutional change. The most important instrument of this change was the reform of the old land tenure system. Qasim's government wanted to learn from the experience of other Arab countries, Egypt in particular, about land reform. Thus Iraq's agrarian reform law of 1958 was heavily drawn from the Egyptian agrarian reform law issued by President Nasir.

The reform laws of both Egypt and Iraq were intended to put an end to the feudal system in rural areas, and to break down the power of tribal chiefs and big landlords. In Iraq, agrarian reform undermined the economic basis of this class as more than 4.5 million *donums* of its land were expropriated by 1963.²⁵ The redistribution of land among small farmers and the landless empowered these groups and enhanced the existing household mode of production in rural Iraq. Cooperatives were formed in accordance with the 1958 law to substitute the landlords' control of the mechanisms of production. The reforms tended to create a new set of agrarian relationships more conducive to agricultural development, equity and welfare in rural society. The number of cooperatives reached 222 in 1964 serving more than 33,000 farming households.²⁶ This precipitated land reforms, and new rural organisations provided a great impetus for the process of agrarian change and the demise of the hegemony of the old class of rural bourgeoisie. The outcomes of the agrarian reforms should, however, not be overstated as there were various obstacles to overcome and shortcomings in the process of its implementation, which subsequently affected the actual achievements. Bureaucratic incompetence greatly hindered the process of agrarian reform. It failed to provide the skilled personnel required to survey, expropriate and redistribute the land or to supply the myriad of services needed by the *fellaheen*. The *fellaheen* themselves were not wholly antagonistic to change, however, to work with them and enable them to benefit from the changes required a knowledge of their social and cultural forces that most officials simply did not possess.

With respect to international relations, Qasim's government was keen to minimise Iraq's traditional ties with Great Britain and other western countries. Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact and the Sterling Area and ended the presence of the British military bases on its territories. Iraq sought economic and political collaboration with the socialist bloc.²⁷

The Iraqi government took moves to ensure better control over the

country's economy and the backbone of its economy, oil. As it prepared to undertake the development of the country's own oil industry the Iraqi government realised that it was necessary to challenge the powerful oil companies which would put the fate of the government in danger. A few years after issuing law number 80 of 1961 which minimised the rights of oil companies, Qasim was assassinated.

Between 1963 and 1968 there was a period of political instability which resulted in several military coups, and turbulence became commonplace in the political world in Iraq.

The current Ba'th regime came to power in 1968. Since then the nature of the state as well as the pattern and extent of its intervention have changed considerably. From the very early years of seizing state power, the political elite of the Ba'th party began to penetrate the state institutions and apparatus. They were from different social groups, though mainly from the lower socio-economic strata.²⁸ For them the state became a source of benefit in itself and a means of coercion and resources through which they could bind the society to their own political goals. Key positions in the government, bureaucracy, military and social organisation are held only by members of the Ba'th party. Consequently decision making is in the hands of a few influential politicians who despite their strident rhetoric of nationalism, began to restructure the ruling institutions according to personal linkages and inter-group cohesion. Affiliation by kinship and loyalty, especially to the President and a few influential leaders of the Ba'th party came to be the key to power and influential posts in the government. In such an atmosphere, nepotism and favouritism were rampant, and the creation of clientelistic groups through reward and punishment were the basis for mass mobilisation and consolidation of the regime.²⁹ Although personal and kinship ties, and patronage network provided the regime with a central line of authority and cohesion, the organisation of the Ba'th party which allows it to reach down to local levels has enhanced the regime's control over the country. The interaction between the state and the Ba'th Party became stronger and deeper so that the state power came to express the interests of both the government bureaucracy and the Ba'th party. The bureaucracy and the party have powers, legitimacy and authority. The two were totally united with the same aim which was ultimately to serve the Ba'th Party's objectives. This unity between the party and bureaucracy gave an extra ability to the political elite, to enforce state control over the society and the economy.

Since the 1970s the staying power of authoritarian regimes has become a phenomenon in the Middle East. Many of these states are authoritarian in the pejorative sense, being despotic, illegitimate and politically bankrupt.

Their authoritative nature is so intense that the state can be seen as a "fierce state" as it repeatedly exercises coercion in order to preserve itself.³⁰ The oppression and elimination of opponents is justified by accusing them of being the spies of foreign powers or of being counter-revolutionaries. Authoritarianism is magnified when power becomes concentrated in the hands of exclusive ideological parties such as the Ba'th in Iraq and Syria or in the hands of military oligarchies. No regime in power believes that there could be any alternative government. It holds power until it is overthrown.³¹ The leaders of most Arab states are obsessed by power and could in some cases be described as megalomaniacs, therefore, the term "presidential monarchy" could well be used to describe these republics. Saddam Hussain has been the head of state in Iraq since 1979 (he has practically been in power since the early 1970s) and Gaddafi has governed Libya since 1969. Syria has been ruled by the same party (the Ba'th) since the early 1960s and by the same leader, Hafiz al-Asad since 1970.³²

The Ba'th government was undoubtedly aware of the importance of oil revenue, thus controlling the oil industry meant gaining the upper hand in the economy. In the early 1970s there were two important events: nationalisation of oil in 1972 and the oil boom in 1973, which resulted in a rapid increase in oil revenues. State revenue from oil rose from \$ 575 million in 1972 to \$ 26.1 billion in 1980.³³ This meant a sharp increase in the importance of oil in the make up of the GDP. During the early 1960s 50 per cent of GDP came from oil, whereas by the end of the 1970s its contribution had increased to 73 per cent.³⁴ Oil revenues were significant not only because of their contribution to the national income but also because they were pouring directly into the state treasury and could then be allocated according to the state policy. This situation puts Iraq in the category of a rentier state. The magnitude of these revenues shaped the relationship between the state and the economy. This relationship came to be centred around the allocation of oil revenue rather than the generation of other sources of income domestically. The few attempts of the state to diversify its economic base (expansion in agriculture and manufacturing) were ineffective. Like many other rentier states in the Middle East, such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Iraq remained in a transition stage between the allocative and productive state. The rentier nature of the Iraqi state remained in the domain of allocation of the revenue and has not been diversified and developed in order to generate revenues from domestic productive sources.

Since the Iraqi economy is centrally planned and the major part of state revenues stem from the oil industry, which is a state monopoly, the

economy responds to state intervention in exceedingly direct ways. Militarisation has become the highest item on the political agenda. By the end of the 1970s, the state had formed a modernised and strong military force governed solely by the Ba'th leadership. Expenditure for building a modern army and obtaining weaponry accelerated during the years of the war with Iran. Although it is difficult to estimate the total cost of Iraq's programmes in developing super guns and nuclear weapons, Iraq's military expenditure had exceeded \$ 70 billion in only four years between 1985-88.

³⁵

Availability of funds allowed the state a freer hand in commanding the economy and distancing itself from the pressures of social forces, namely the bourgeois class. This point is of substantive interest because it concerns a conceptual issue raised in the Introduction Chapter. It is of major importance to the entire question of the nature of the state since the approach of this study is to treat the state as an independent element which is not subject to collective action among members of civil society for class dominance. The impact of oil revenue in enhancing state autonomy is not exclusive to Iraq. In other oil-producing states such as Iran, Libya, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia, oil revenues lend the state additional resources with which to assert its autonomy.³⁶ In Iraq various elements provided grounds for state autonomy: the unification of the state bureaucracy, the Ba'th party apparatus and the military. Another important element was the influx of oil revenues, and finally the immaturity of the power of the bourgeoisie class itself as it 'has not yet developed the common tradition of enabling members of the class to cooperate and to trust each other'.³⁷ Signs of state autonomy, although they should be looked upon with great caution, could be seen in certain aspects of the behaviour and objectives of the state. During the 1970s there was a strong state movement towards land reform, promotion of the public sector, and affiliation with anti-bourgeoisie ideology. Domestically, there was an alliance with the Iraqi Communist Party and internationally with the Communist countries.

The affluence of the state had also encouraged extensive intervention in rural areas. This became evident through the introduction of a wide range of public policies affecting agricultural land ownership, marketing, pricing and investment. Intervention in agriculture was done through implementing the agrarian reform law of 1970 and introducing agricultural organisations such as cooperatives, collective and state farms. Land reform had various objectives, the most frequently declared was that of social justice. One major objective was a political one, that of elimination of the power base of the big landlords (who were mostly loyal to the old monarchy and apparently unsupportive to the new rule) as a politically

influential force. The big landlords who were mostly tribal chiefs were still enjoying the loyalty and support of their communities, which to a large extent was due to the persistence of patronage relationships. Thus by expropriating their land and enforcing cooperatives, the state attempted to break down the power of these groups, consequently destroying any potential challenge to its power. Various mechanisms were used to institutionalise the systematic control of the state over rural society. The supreme Agricultural Council which controlled and guided farmers' cooperatives was linked directly to the Revolution Command Council which is, of course, the highest governing political body. Ba'th rural youth and women's organisations were formed with an abundance of assets to attract the target groups. The authority of the local Ba'th Party organisations was increasingly derestricted and they became more able to manipulate the laws. Mayors of villages were appointed by the government, with hardly any regard for their social or tribal status, only the rank in the party organisation hierarchy was of any significance. In these ways the state penetrated rural areas and tightened its grip on society and on agriculture.

Within this context, land reform was formulated and implemented from above. Obviously the *fellaheen* had neither participated in the initiation of the land reform programme nor in its implementation. The massive increase in the number of agricultural cooperatives, collective and state farms in Iraq was conceived as a way of putting the state in control of agricultural resources. The number of cooperatives increased from 786 in 1970 to 1935 in 1978; the number of collective farms reached 79 in 1978; and state farms increased from 19 in 1973 to 40 in 1977.³⁸ Cooperatives, collective and state farms carried out the recommendations of the state's agricultural policy. These agricultural organisations, however, are complex due to their patterns of farming and income distribution. Iraq lacked the managerial and organisational capacity required to run them efficiently. They were, therefore, not very successful in promoting agricultural development. Land reform expected to boost agricultural production, but this did not happen and agriculture became crippled, indicated by the sharp drop in the self-sufficiency ratio especially of the main products, cereals, meat, and milk.³⁹

Some other countries in the region which had also began land reform with the attendant state control had experienced similar results. In Syria, for example, the area of cultivated land declined and likewise the yield of the principle crops, cotton and cereals.⁴⁰ The deficit in agricultural production in Iraq, however, aroused few concerns for the country's rulers

during the 1970s. Iraq's financial capability during the 1970s made an increase in reliance on international markets for agricultural products and food security possible. At this time agricultural development was not considered to be as important as industrial development, or in particular, as development of the oil sector. Available data show that state investment in agriculture was decreasing. For example the share of agriculture in development plans declined from 24 per cent in 1970 to nine per cent in 1983.⁴¹ Eventually agriculture's share in the formation of the GDP fell steadily so that it stood at eight per cent in 1980.⁴² The deterioration of agriculture was coupled with an escalation of rural-urban migration which resulted in a constant draining of the agricultural labour force. In only five years (between 1970 and 1975) the agricultural labour force was reduced by ten per cent.

The readily available funds had encouraged the state to expand the public sector (known in Iraq as the socialist sector). By the early 1980s the state had managed to dominate the national economy where state owned enterprises were responsible for producing 90.3 per cent of capital from all external trade and commercial activities. The state's tendency to promote the public sector, however, should not be attributed solely to the availability of funds. It was the outcome of a wider domestic, regional, and international setting during the 1970s. Domestically, the Iraqi Communist party (ICP) was allied with the ruling Ba'th party. The promotion of the socialist sector was at the top of the political agenda of the ICP. Regionally, socialism was very appealing to many Arab countries such as Syria, Egypt, Libya and Algeria who claimed socialism as a path toward national development. Iraq did not want, therefore, to be seen as anti-socialist. Internationally, the support offered by the USSR and Eastern European socialist countries to Arab countries in their conflict with Israel encouraged Arab states to turn to them for cooperation and friendship.

Despite its expansion in the public sector and its sensitivity to the popularity of socialism, the Ba'th government in Iraq continued to favour the nourishing of capitalists. In the mid-1970s the private sector trebled in size, and there was rapid growth in the number of private middlemen and senior bureaucrats in the public sector. By the end of the decade there were some 700 multimillionaires.⁴³ Supporting the public sector meant initially a transformation of the structure of the economy to allow for more state supervision and control. This sort of centralised control of the government turned the advantages of having a public sector into a burden.

Immense resources were channelled into large-scale projects so that few resources were left for small-scale investment which is much more vital to growth.⁴⁴ To start with, grandiose projects, which were of very doubtful

economic value, resulted in the wasting of essential resources. Consequently many projects were left unfinished. In this way the policy had weakened the efficiency of production and distorted the utilisation of financial, human and natural resources.

By controlling enormous financial resources the Ba'th government was able to form powerful clandestine state security organisations. Through means of terror and oppression they enforced the authoritarian nature of the state and enabled the Ba'th party to establish absolute control over the country's political life. The Communist party was officially banned in 1979 and its leadership was forced to flee.⁴⁵ Severe pressure was placed on the *shi'a* community and its influential religious leaders were imprisoned or killed. The Ba'th government managed to extend its control over almost all Iraqi Kurdistan after defeating the Kurdish rebellion in 1975.

In 1979 *ayatollah* Khomeini with his Islamic revolution came to power in Iran. Despite the gradual development of secularism in Iraq, for most of the population religion remained a primary basis for social and political identity. Thus not surprisingly, Khomeini's call for an Islamic state won listening ears among the *shi'a* community in Iraq. The political and ideological disparities between Khomeini and the Ba'th party in addition to Saddam Hussain's personal ambition suited the super powers in their desire to weaken Khomeini's influence in the region. Thus the eight years of war between Iran-Iraq erupted in 1980. The war did not only intervene in development activities but also severely affected the country's infrastructure. Iraq was cut-off from large oil revenues and this placed a major strain on its economy. Before the onset of the war, Iraq had accumulated \$ 35 billion in foreign exchange reserves.⁴⁶ Together with the financial support from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait it enabled Iraq to pursue the policy of 'guns and butter'.⁴⁷ The economy had to shoulder the costs of the war both in financial terms and through the discharge of labour force from its sectors to the military. As the war dragged on, the Iraqi economy was brought to its knees. By the third year of the war Iraq's \$ 35 billion of reserves had been totally depleted.⁴⁸ The total cost of eight years of war is estimated at \$ 452.6 billion and this turned Iraq into a debtor country with a debt estimated at \$ 82 billion.

During the 1980s, seeking a way out of financial turmoil, the Ba'th government halted all development programmes and was further encouraged to revise its development policies. In the 1980s privatisation of the economy as a whole and of agriculture in particular, was introduced. The government abandoned land reform measures and lifted the upper ceiling of land ownership, it also sold most state owned land and

enterprises. On the eve of privatisation, 50 per cent of agricultural land was owned by the state, by 1989, 88 per cent of land was privately owned, 11 per cent was rented from the state by private companies, and only one per cent was state managed.⁴⁹ This signalled the start of a new phase of agrarian transformation in rural Iraq.

The state encouraged the penetration of private capital in agriculture by providing a variety of incentives and removing constraints on private assets and capital accumulation. This did not take place without damaging the social and economic achievements of the agrarian reforms. A new group of Iraqi elite were able to consolidate economic and political power. Wealthy individuals and agri-businesses mushroomed at the expense of small farmers. Once again after 25 years of land reform the *fellaheen* found themselves without state support, having to rely on merchants or wealthy farmers in order to sustain their own farming. The privatisation policy reflects a shift in emphasis by the state from promoting agrarian reform to improving growth in production, regardless of the effect this would have on increasing the inequality among people. The impact of privatisation on widening the gap in incomes has been noted in other countries as well. For example Egypt which was a pioneer of *infītah* (open market) and had more experience than Iraq of the implementation of this policy, is witnessing a rapid polarisation within its rural society.⁵⁰

The privatisation policy in Iraq has not, however, led to any significant improvement in production. Between 1988 and 1990 (the period between the two Gulf wars) agricultural production was unable to meet the increasing domestic demand. Available data show that the country continued to import two-thirds of its food. This makes the policymakers' argument that privatisation improves agricultural growth more than a public sector approach, untenable. In stating this, it should not, however, be presumed that this thesis concludes that privatisation is necessarily conducive to inefficiency, but it does emphasise the view that the patterns of privatisation which developed in Iraq were inappropriate. The new framework provided to the private sector should have been created and developed over a sufficient span of time to allow for successful implementation of the legal, economic and financial components.⁵¹ Moreover, there was an absence of trust and confidence in the state's intentions. The entrepreneurs were uncertain about future measures and political decrees which the state might impose.

This study supports the view that there should be constructive interaction between state and private enterprise. The state actions should be directed towards improvement of the market mechanisms, on the grounds

that a properly functioning market mechanism stimulates economic growth more efficiently than most centralised state bureaucracies do. The present economic activities of the private sector, however, should not be overstated. Up to this point, the Iraqi state still has a keen grip on key elements of the economy such as the oil and foreign trade. This is to be expected, and simply reflects the authoritarian nature of the state. The creation of a marginal space for the market under the umbrella of the state brought no political reforms but it did reflect the ways in which state policy is determined. The adoption of state autonomy theory in this study albeit leads to the emphasis on the state being autonomous, it does not imply that this thesis assumes that state policies are the product of the political variable only. This would rule out, a priori, the possibility of other factors having influence as well. By stating this, the thesis agrees with the actor-oriented approach which argues that in addition to the social interests and ideologies of the state's political and bureaucratic elite, there are other major structural factors which determine state policy, for example international markets, the state of capital accumulation on a global and national scale and the influence of the class struggle.⁵² Although state policies are based on a range of factors, this does not necessarily mean that the state cannot be independent of the influence of social groups which possess capital. This argument is in line with the notion that hard authoritarian systems with a high degree of state autonomy will retain a major role in controlling the economy.

Under pressure of economic chaos, the state's leaders in Iraq decided on another political adventure: that of invading Kuwait in 1990 and causing the eruption of the second Gulf war in 1991. This led to the imposition of international sanctions on Iraq's foreign trade which continue to be implemented. This outcome is a calamity for the vast majority of the people in Iraq as the economy reaches the edge of an abyss. This new climate has, however, opened a wider economic horizon for clientelistic groups. The groups function as the executive arm of the state and a pillar of support for its policies. In return they are prospering as they monopolise internal trade in food and medicine. Since the Gulf war, the Iraqi military power has been largely weakened, but the regime's grip on power has not. The state still regularly resorts to coercion to control the country and up to now Iraq shows no signs of becoming a fragile authoritarian state.

It is difficult to know whether a stable system will eventually emerge in Iraq. There does not seem to be much prospect for the recovery of the economy either. Events since the creation of the Iraqi state in 1921 indicate that, if the society can somehow overcome the imposition of a rigid authoritarian system, it could develop a political system with a low

authoritative structure, not greatly dissimilar from that of Qasim era. Further hypotheses of future scenarios for Iraq would be pure speculation, with no concrete evidence to support them.

Notes:

- 1 Bill, J, and Leiden, C, 1979, p 184
- 2 Hasan, M, 1966, p 157
- 3 Stork, J, 1982, p 28
- 4 Pool, D, 1979, p 65
- 5 Gerber, H, 1987, p 91-92
- 6 Pool, D, 1979, p 77
- 7 Batafu, H, 1978, and Pool, D, 1979
- 8 Tarbush, M, 1982, p 16
- 9 Batafu, H, 1978, p 106-107
- 10 Gerber, H, 1987, p 92
- 11 Tarbush, M, 1982, p 40
- 12 Batafu, H, 1978, Pool, D, 1979, and Tarbush, M, 1982
- 13 Vankotss, P, 1984, p 143
- 14 Batafu, H, 1978, p 178-9
- 15 Gabbay, R, 1980, p 329
- 16 Pool, D, 1979, p 81
- 17 Gerber, H, 1987, p 94
- 18 Warnner, D, 1962, p 157
- 19 Batafu, H, 1978, p 103
- 20 Hourani, A, 1993, p 513
- 21 Penrose, E, and E, 1978, p 165
- 22 Elliot, M, 1996, p 17
- 23 Simons, G, 1994, p 220-221
- 24 Alnasrawi, A, 1967, p 41-60

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- 25 Gabbay, R , 1978, p 117
- 26 Ward, G , 1967, p 5
- 27 Simons, G ,1994, p 220
- 28 Marr, P , 1975 and 1988
- 29 Dorraj, M , 1995, p 122
- 30 Ayubi, N , 1995a, p 3
- 31 Vatikious, P , 1984, p 141
- 32 Hinnebusch, R , 1990, p 1
- 33 Alnasrawi, A , 1986, p 874
- 34 The Economist (EIU Country Profile 1988-89), p 16
- 35 The Middle East Report, 1992, p 8
- 36 Dorraj, M , 1995, p 124
- 37 Springborg, R , 1993, p 29 quoting al-Khafaji
- 38 Ministry of Planning, 1979 and 1986
- 39 For example self-sufficiency in wheat declined from 93 % in 1970 to 31 % in 1980 and of meat from 99 % to 57 % (ISNAR, 1992, p 43)
- 40 Kedourie, E , 1992, p 303
- 41 ISNAR, 1992, p 41
- 42 The Economist (EIU Country profile 1988-89), p 16
- 43 Simons, G , 1994, p 252
- 44 cited in Kedourie, E , 1992, p 305
- 45 Simons, G ,1994, p 251-252
- 46 Mofid, K 1990, p 52
- 47 Alnasrawi, A , 1986, p 875
- 48 Mofid, K , 1990, p 52
- 49 Chaudhry, K , 1994, p 8
- 50 Abdel-Khalek, 1982, p 275
- 51 Alnasrawi, A , 1994, p 75
- 52 Long, N , 1988, p 133

Appendices

Appendix 1: Geographical features

Iraq is situated in the south-west of Asia, bounded on the north by Turkey, on the east by Iran, and on the west by Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Iraq lies between latitudes 29° 5' and 37° 22' north and between longitudes 38° 45' and 48° 45' east (map A 1 1) Covering an area of 438,317 sq km, the topography of Iraq ranges from mountains to a desert (map A 1 2) It consists of the following regions (MOE 199-0 203-204 and MOP 1988)

1 The mountainous region is situated in the north and northeast of the country and extends to the boundaries of Iran in the east, Turkey in the north and Syria in the west The mountains occupy 90,370 sq km which forms 20 per cent of the area of Iraq, where rainfall exceeds 600 mm per annum

2 The semi-mountainous terrain is a transitional region between the high mountainous region and the lowlands in the central and southern part of the country It forms 75 per cent of the mountainous region (67,000 sq km) The rainfall here ranges between 250-600 mm per annum

3 The alluvial plain formed as a result of river sedimentation covers one-fifth of Iraq's surface area, i.e. 93,000 sq km extending from the rectangle (650 km long and 250 km wide) between Balad on the Tigris river and Ramadi (al-Anbar) on the Euphrates river in the north, Iranian frontiers in the east and the desert plateau on the west, and the marshland in the south It covers the vast plains between the two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, from Baghdad to Basra and the Gulf

4 The marshland region is situated to the south of the alluvial plain and forms a triangle between the towns of Amara (Maysan), Nasiriya (Thiqar), and Qurna The marshes at al- Huwaiza, located to the east of the Tigris, between Maysan and Basra, and al-Hammar is on banks of the Euphrates between Nasiriya and Qurna in the north of Basra

5 The desert plateau is situated in the west of the country along the Euphrates river to the right and comprises about 60 per cent (270,000 sq km) of the country's total surface area Annual rainfall is less than 200 mm

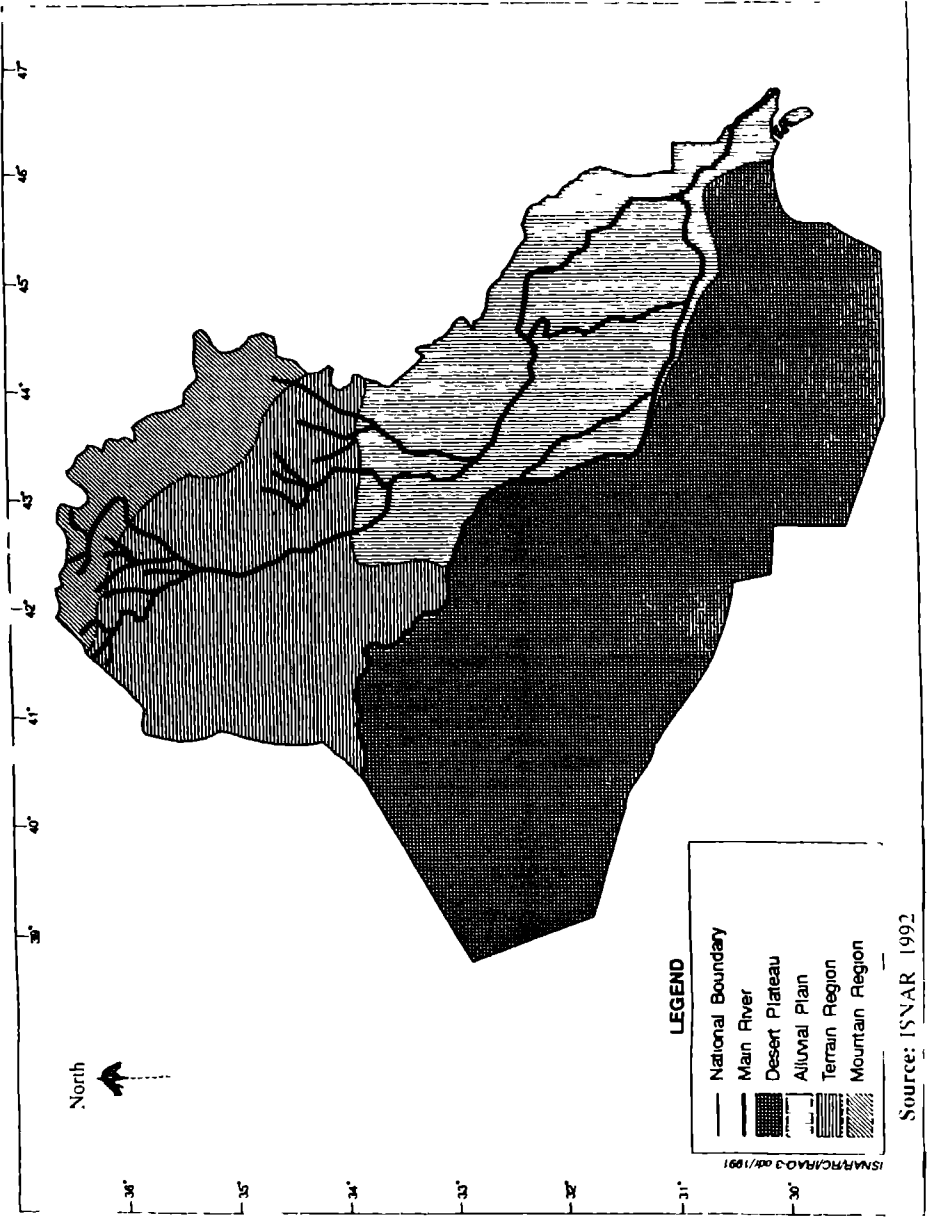
The climate

Iraq lies in the northern hemisphere, its climate ranges from continental and sub-tropical with a rainfall system similar to that of the Mediterranean which is characterised by cool to cold winters and hot to extremely hot, dry summers The rainfall occurs almost exclusively in winter, autumn and spring, ranging from less than 100 mm to about 1000 mm annually (map A 1 3) Iraq's climate can be divided into three kinds (MOP 1988)

1 The mediterranean climate

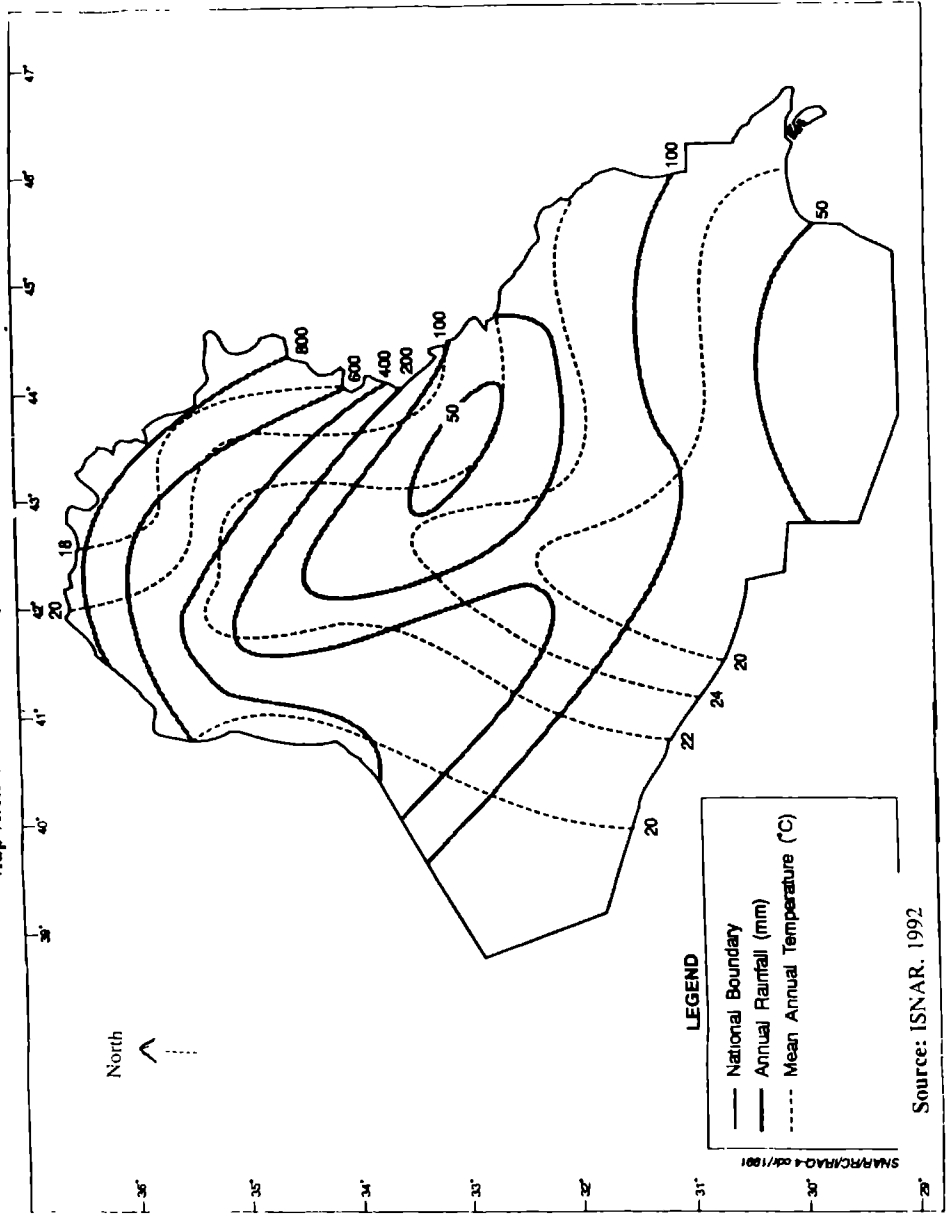
This occurs in the mountainous area in the northeast, characterised by cool winters with snowfalls at the top of the mountains and a rainy season extending from

Map A.1.2 The topography of Iraq



Source: ISNAR, 1992

Map A.1.3 Mean annual temperature and rainfall 1988



September to May, the rainfall ranging from 400 to 1000 mm annually Its summer is dry with temperatures not exceeding 35 C

2 The steppe climate

This is a transitional climate between the mediterranean climate in the north and northeast, and the desert climate in the south and southwest covering an area that is about one-sixth of the country's total surface area The rainfall ranges between 200 and 400 mm annually The farmland in this region is irrigated as well as rainfed when rainfall is high which in general is sufficient to allow natural pasture to grow, therefore the area is said to be a grazing area

3 The desert climate

This prevails in the sedimentary plain and western plateau which covers about 60 per cent of the country with an annual rainfall of 50 to 200 mm It is characterised by extreme temperature fluctuations between day and night and between summer and winter In summer maximum temperature in summer could reach up to 50 C while in winter the temperature is moderate and remains above the freezing point with exception of a few nights per year North-western winds prevailing in the country during all seasons of the year are cool and dry in winter, whereas in summer the wind moderates the weather and decreases high temperatures Eastern or northeastern winds blow in winter, accompanied by severe cold As to the south-eastern wind it is relatively warm and humid sometimes causing clouds and rain

The soil

Today, Iraq's soil fertility is quite different to what it once was Nowadays, the plain has lost most of its fertility because of salinity Soils in about 80 per cent of the region are affected by salinity

For example arable land in 1958 was 31 million *donum*, because of salinity was reduced to 23 million *donum* in 1970 There is about 12 million *donum* of cultivable land in the central and southern parts of the country which needs reclamation

Soil salinity in Iraq has two origins natural and human High temperature and drought evaporate the surface water leaving salt to be accumulated which then covers the soil surface Floods which covered a large area of the land left a thick layer of salt over the soil in its aftermath Although the water of Tigris and Euphrates rivers is considered to be reasonable, the traditional ways of irrigation and the lack of proper drainage have worsened the problem

Soil salinity has affected Iraqi agriculture in many ways It has first of all reduced the area of land under cultivation, about 30 per cent of the agricultural land has been deserted It has a limiting affect on the expansion of land for cultivation, makes the usage of fertilisers ineffective, and finally it has contributed to the reduction in the productivity of the main crops by almost 50 per cent The poor farmers have been forced to follow the "fallow system" i.e to cultivate half of the land in the first season and leave the second half for the following season and so on Large numbers of poor farmers shifted to nonagricultural work because they were unable to have their land reclaimed

After Iraq became a state, almost all the national development plans have stressed the necessity of land reclamation and flood control Since the 1950s serious attempts have been initiated to solve the problem of salinity by improving the drainage

system In 1952 an American company constructed a network of drainage canals in the central part of Iraq, and in 1959 a Dutch company built a 60 km canal in the southern part (MOE,1990,266)

The land

Iraq has a total surface area of 43.5 million ha but its arable land does not exceed 12 per cent of the country, permanent pastures come to less than ten per cent and forests total about three per cent

Table A 1.1 Land usage in 1989 ('000 hectare)

Land usage	Size of land	%
Arable land	5,450	12.5
Permanent Pastures	4,000	9.1
Natural Forests	1,890	4.3
Other land	32,397	73.9

Source: FAO, Yearbook production, 1990

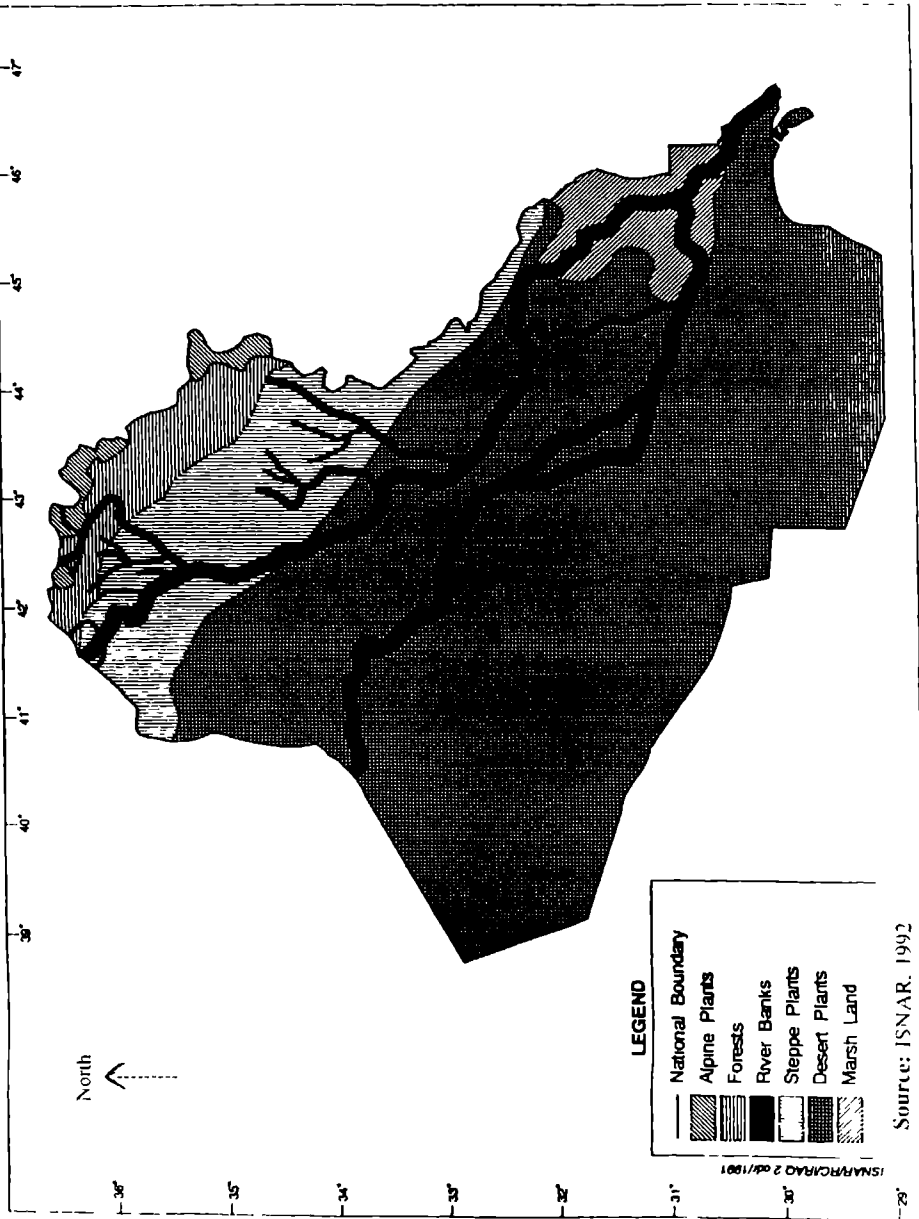
In addition to the low percentage of arable land, the imposition of the traditional farming method - the fallow system - further reduces the area of land under cultivation annually. In 1980 2.8 million hectare was under cultivation in the whole of the country, of which 69 per cent was in the north, 24 per cent in the middle and the rest was in the south (MOP 1986)

Vegetation zones

Climate diversity, availability of water, soil fertility, and topographical diversification from a high mountain to a desert lying at its edge, have all shaped the country's vegetation (map A 1.4). Iraq can be divided into four vegetation regions (MOE,1990:233-236 and ISNAR, 1992:13)

1 Forests. These are situated in the high mountainous region and around the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. This is the thickest vegetation zone, with dense forests covering 645,000 ha, open forests covering about 588,000 ha, and trees around the rivers bank covering about 11,000 ha. The different species of trees growing in this zone include oak, walnuts, pinenuts, and terebinth.

Map A.1.4 Vegetation zones



Source: ISNAR, 1992

The armed conflict between the government and the Kurds has resulted in the burning and cutting of trees and plants in a large area in this zone. In addition, the continuous cutting of wood (for heating and construction purposes) and heavy grazing causes a continual deterioration of the plant coverage.

2 Pastures, These cover the semi-mountainous regions and part of the eastern sides of the alluvial plain. Most of the plants are herbs, some bulbs and thorny plants, covering about 4 million ha and the country's natural pasture. However, expanding agricultural land and overgrazing have seriously affected the zone.

3 Desert, This region covers the desert plateau and most of the western and southern sides of the alluvial plain. Low rainfall and high temperatures cause a shortage of plants, except those specially adapted to these harsh conditions, like tamarisk, milfoil, zizyphus, and other desert plants.

4 Marshlands, These are situated south of the alluvial plain dominated by reeds and cane.

Water resources

Iraq's other name is Mesopotamia which means the land between the two rivers (Tigris and Euphrates), indicating its unique position in regards to water availability. However, the growth of the population, the expansion of agriculture and industry, and to some extent the fluctuation of rainfall, has increased the demand for water. In Iraq there are three main sources of water supply:

1 Underground water

There is a marked lack of geological surveys to determine the availability of underground water and to assess its potential of supplying water on a larger scale. Underground water is a vital to irrigation and to a less extent for domestic consumption in areas where there is a serious shortage of river water, such as the semi-desert. Availability of water from this source and also its usage differ according to the geographical regions, for instance the mountainous area is the richest due to snowfall and heavy rain, in the terrain region (al-Jazira) underground water is available in a large area and is used for agriculture, but rarely for drinking because of a high percentage of chloride and sulphate in the layers of the soil which gives the water an unpleasant taste. In the alluvial plain, soil salinity has greatly restricted the usage of underground water, and in the desert plateau water is scarce and is deep down below the surface of the soil, needing to be pumped to the surface. An estimation has shown that 1.5 per cent (0.125 million ha) of total arable land could be irrigated from underground water. More than 6000 wells were in use in 1982 in the whole country, but after the establishment of the State Company for Water Wells Drilling (SCWWD) in 1987, there was acceleration in the digging of wells, so by the end of 1990 the number of wells drilled by SCWWD was 1615 wells (Fisher, 1992: 500).

2 Rain water

The rainy period in Iraq is in autumn, spring, and winter, i.e. it starts from September until mid April. It differs from one region to another with regards to its annual intensity. In some regions it is quite low, less than 100 mm, while other regions can be over ten times higher. The duration of the rainy season differs greatly between the various regions of the country. In the southern part of the country, the rainy

season is only a few weeks during winter, with an annual average of 75 mm while in some areas in the northern part, the rainy season lasts for more than 8 months with an annual average exceeding 1000 mm.

Almost two-thirds of the country's total area receives rainfall of less than 300 mm per year and only about 5 per cent receives more than 600 mm. Table A.1.3 shows the monthly average rainfall for thirty years from 1955-85 and for the single year of 1985 in four selected places: Mosul in the north, Baghdad in the centre, Rutba in the west, and Basra in the south. Rainfall above 400 mm. annually is considered sufficient for rainfed agriculture, therefore, in the northern region winter crops especially wheat and barley, are cultivated in the guaranteed rainfall area of 500-800 mm. per year. But the expansion in grain cultivation has led to cultivation in areas where average rainfall ranges from 400 to 600 mm per annum.

Table A.1.2 Monthly rainfall, 1985 and 1955-85 (mm)

Month	Mosul		Baghdad		Rutba		Basra	
	1985	55-85	1985	55-85	1985	55-85	1985	55-85
Jan.	52.5	62.0	33.3	29.6	16.9	16.1	35.2	28.0
Feb.	50.9	65.7	7.1	26.7	0.8	14.6	< 0.1	17.8
March	78.2	68.3	13.2	24.4	18.3	17.9	0.8	13.4
April	52.8	55.7	0.4	25.2	20.8	18.8	2.4	15.8
May	1.5	21.6	3.5	7.9	4.9	12.7	0.0	5.7
June	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2
July	0.0	0.02	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aug.	0.0	0.03	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sept.	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.1
Oct.	3.0	10.1	0.0	3.6	0.0	5.1	0.0	2.4
Nov.	23.9	34.2	5.6	14.7	31.5	13.3	75.9	17.4
Dec.	38.1	62.0	27.7	24.3	28.9	16.6	27.8	32.5
Total	300.9	380.8	90.0	156.8	122.1	115.9	140.1	133.3

Source: MOP (1986:37)

Rivers and water reservoirs:

Irrigation of almost all the agricultural land in the central and southern parts of Iraq is dependent on surface water (rivers and reservoirs), in addition to a large area in the northern part, estimated at 375,000 ha which also depends on rivers. Iraq has abundant water resources, about 0.8 per cent of the country's surface area is taken

up by rivers, lakes, reservoirs and marshlands. The ample water provides a great potential for expansion of irrigated agriculture, but at the same time necessitates water control and a proper drainage system. Despite the abundance of water resources, there is still a noticeable shortage of irrigation water at particular times of the year because of the lack of sufficient water storage during the flood seasons. The shortage of water in summer is one of the critical problems facing agriculture particularly in central and southern parts of the country.

The Tigris and Euphrates rivers and the tributaries of the Tigris, are the major water resource for Iraq's domestic consumption and agriculture. The source of both rivers lie in the mountainous area of southern Turkey. The Euphrates flows through Syria before it makes its course through Iraq, while the Tigris flows into Iraq directly, altogether only 40 percent of its total water supply comes from Turkey (Clawson, 1971, 203). Within Iraq, the Euphrates has no tributaries, whereas the Tigris has four (map A 1.5).

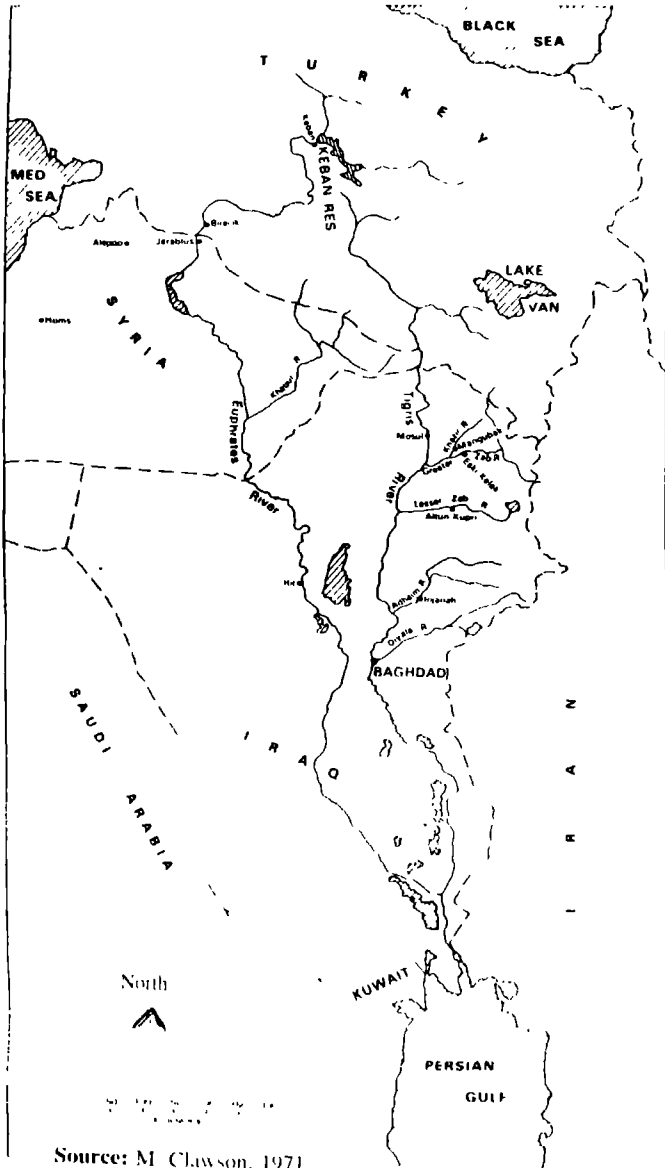
Table A 1.3 Length of rivers within Iraq (km)

Rivers	Length
Tigris	1290
Greater Zab	230
Lesser Zab	250
al-Adhim	150
Diala	300
Euphrates	1015
Shatt al-Arab	190

Source. MOP (1986:12)

The two rivers unite in the southern part of Iraq forming the Shatt al-Arab, which flows for 190 km before it pours into the Gulf. The flow of the main stem and the tributaries varies greatly from one year to the next and also from one stream to the other, due to fluctuations in precipitation. In spring, following the melt of snow, the two rivers begin to rise reaching a maximum level normally in April in the case of the Tigris and in May for the Euphrates. In summer the flow of the two rivers drops to less than 20 percent of their capacity which results in a drastic shortage of water for irrigation especially in the middle and southern parts of the country. The average annual flow of the Tigris river and its tributaries in Iraq is about 45.28 bcm (billion cubic met) and the flow of the Euphrates is about 33.69 bcm (Clawson, 1971: 204-205). In 1984, the total surface water actually used was little more than 48 bcm of which 88 per cent was used for irrigation, 2.7 per cent for domestic purposes, 1.9 per cent for industry, 6.6 per cent for power generation and 0.4 per cent for fisheries (EIU, 1987: 24).

Map A.1.5 River basins of the Tigris & Euphrates



Irrigation water for some 2.2 million ha is supplied by the Tigris, the Euphrates serves about 1.0 million ha and Shatt al-Arab provides a further 105,000 ha (EIU, 1992: 19). According to some studies each hectare used for cultivation requires about 7500 cubic metres of water per year. This means that the actual water resources available are only enough to meet the needs of 4.625 million ha with 100 per cent utilization of land (ISNAR, 1992: 11). Water availability has become a major issue over recent years among the three countries Iraq, Turkey and Syria using water from the Tigris and Euphrates.

The construction of barrages and dams in Syria and particularly in Turkey on the upstream of the Tigris and Euphrates has affected Iraq. In particular the construction of the Kiban dam and other agricultural projects in the upstream of the Euphrates in Turkey will allow Turkey to use 14 bcm of the river water annually, so that the flow into Syria will only be 13 bcm annually. Syria in its turn has constructed the Tabaqa dam to irrigate the arable land on the banks of the river using 75 per cent of the Euphrates water (al-Rubayi, 1994: 10). The construction of the Tabaqa dam in Syria and the Kiban dam in Turkey has seriously reduced Iraq's availability of water from the Euphrates and has resulted in a drastic shortage of irrigation water for the farmers in the middle and south of Iraq.

Controversy about the use of the water from the Euphrates has been going on for a number of years and as yet no agreement has been reached between the riparian countries (Beaumont, 1993: 130). Delegations from the three countries concerned constantly meet in order to settle the issue of water sharing. Many observers think that without a just settlement of the rights of this vital resource, the next war in the Middle East will be the "Water War".

River control

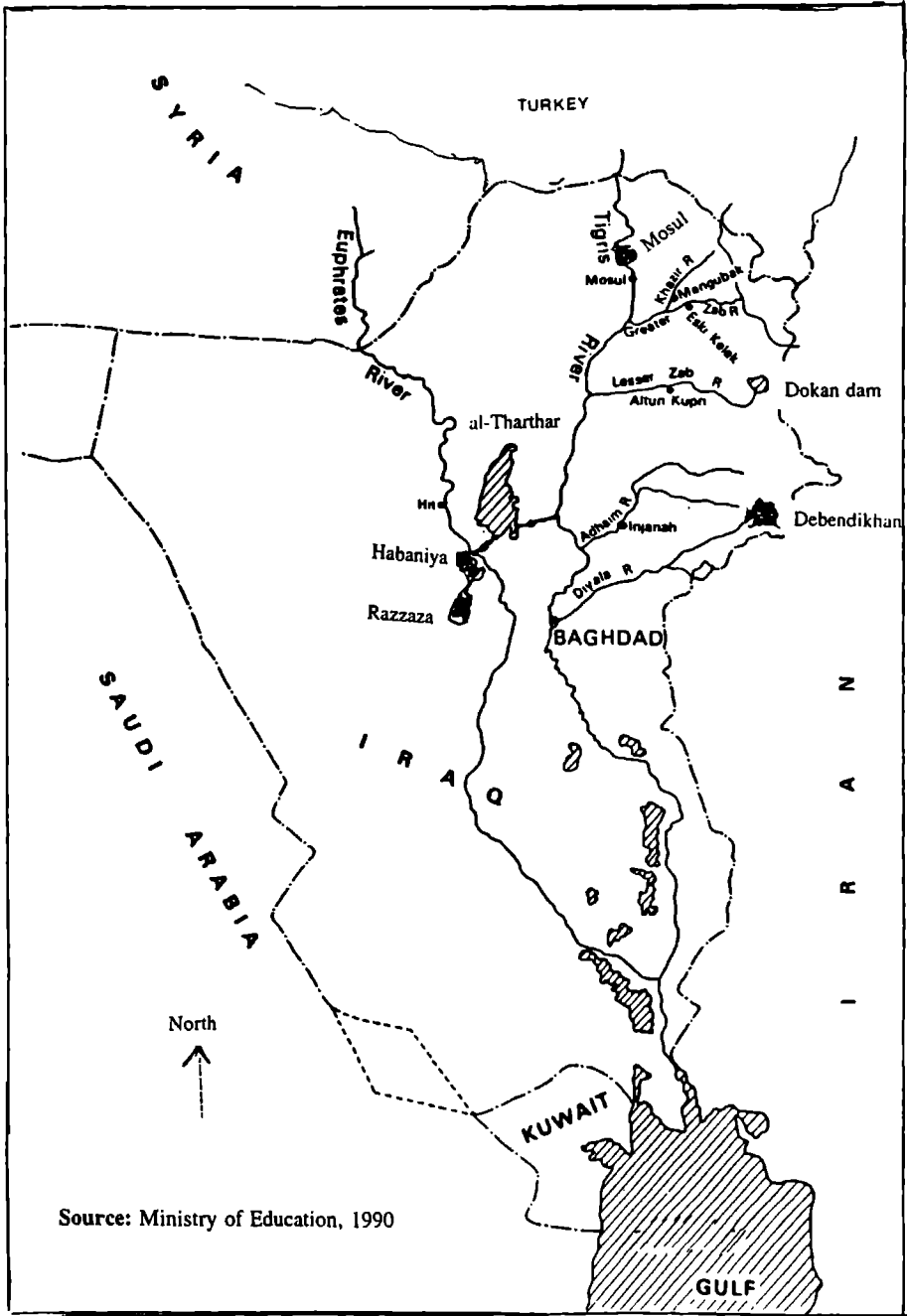
For several decades river control policies have been the focus of successive Iraqi governments the main reasons being flood control, provision of water for irrigation and power generation. A serious dam-building programme was implemented in the early 1950s. Barrages and dams have been constructed on the Euphrates, Tigris and its tributaries. Dams help in blocking the excessive water during the flood season and they either keep it in the river's basin itself e.g. the Dokan dam on the Lesser Zab and Derbendikhan on the Diala river, or divert the excessive water through canals to lower lands e.g. Tharthar on Tigris near Samarra (map A 1.6).

The major dams and reservoirs are

1 Dokan dam was built between 1954-58 on the upper reaches of the Lesser Zab in the mountainous area between Arbil and Sulimaniya. The capacity of this reservoir is about 6.8 bcm and covers an area of 270 sq km surrounded by mountains from all sides. The reservoir supplies irrigation water to 350,000 ha of the terrain region and feeds the Adhaim river during summer time. In order to expand the use of the dam's water, the massive Kirkuk irrigation project (re-named Saddam's project) was opened in December 1983 with a potential to irrigate more than 300,000 ha (MOE, 1990: 253).

2 Derbendikhan dam was built in 1961 on the upstream of Diala river in a deep valley, with a potential storage of 3.2 bcm covering an area of 121 sq km. The reservoir supplies irrigation water to about 250,000 ha.

Map A.1.6 Dams and reservoirs



Source: Ministry of Education, 1990

3 Habbaniya reservoir is situated on the right side of the Euphrates, southeast of Ramadi city which is a natural lowland. The reservoir contains about 3.3 bcm of water of which 2.7 bcm is used annually for irrigation. Habbaniya reservoir is connected at its southern end with the Razaza reservoir for the discharge of excessive water. The Razaza has the capacity to store about 2.1 bcm.

4 al-Tharthar reservoir is the biggest reservoir in Iraq with a capacity of 8.5 bcm. The dam was built in 1956 on the Tigris river, near Samarra, 65 km to the northwest of Baghdad, initially to save Baghdad from the flood by diverting the excessive water during the flood season via a canal to the natural reservoir in the right side of the river. In 1976 the reservoir was linked with the Euphrates by a canal 38 km long to feed the river with water during summer, at a time when the river's water decreases and demand for water to be used for irrigation is high. Indeed the significant function of the reservoir became obvious following Turkey's diversion of the Euphrates to fill the reservoir of its new Ataturk dam.

There are some other old dams e.g. Himrin, Hindiya, Falloja, Haditha, and many new dams e.g. Mosul dam which was opened in 1986, with a storage capacity of more than 11 bcm and which irrigates about 250,000 ha in the al-jazira plain.

5 Saddam's canal is the most recent "drainage scheme", composed of a canal 565 km long. It begins north of Baghdad and ends by joining the Shatt al-Basra stream near Basra and then continues to the gulf. The canal was opened in December 1992, and named "Saddam's River" (Alef-Ba, 1992). There was a great deal of controversy both nationally and internationally about the purpose of this project. The Iraqi government claims that the project is merely an agricultural one, the canal will help to collect excess water from more than 1.5 million ha of the irrigated land and then drain it into the Gulf. The political opposition insists that the state's objective is to drain and to gradually diminish the marshland in the south because it became a refuge for armed opposition guerrillas (Al-Wefaq, 1994 and al-Bayati, 1994). On the other hand many world environmental groups think it will have a disastrous effect on the region because draining of the marshlands will kill scarce species of birds and other water-living plants and animals.

Fisheries

The two sources for fisheries in Iraq are inland waters and the Gulf. The rivers, reservoirs and the marshes are the main source for fish catches. However, there is a marked lack of data about the catches and those available are based on estimates more than on adequate surveys. According to some studies catches from inland waters ranged from 17,500 mt (metric tons) in 1980 to 15,500 mt in 1987 (ISNAR, 1992: 15). During the 1970s Iraq tried to extend its catches from the Gulf by introducing a new trawler fleet, which worked. In 1979 catches were about 37,000 mt but the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980 ended the fleet operation, and reduced the catches from the Gulf to 15,000 mt in 1987 (ISNAR, 1992). Since the government's policy to increase fisheries in the early 1990s, a considerable subsidy was made available to the private sector to modernise methods of catching and to construct fish ponds.

Appendix 2: Population

Regular population censuses have been carried out by the governmental departments at least once every ten years since Iraq's independence. The results of the early censuses are not reliable, however, because they were largely based on estimates and very unsatisfactory methods. However, the censuses of 1957, 1965, 1977, and 1987 can be considered to be fairly reliable. Recently a few annual population surveys and estimates were carried out by either Iraq or by international bodies such as FAO, and the World Bank.

The first population census in 1927 put Iraq's population at 2,968,054 and in 1947 it had grown to 4,816,185. According to the population census of 1987 the population rose from 6.3 million in 1957 to 16.3 million in 1987 increasing to 18.9 million in 1990. An average of 3.4 per cent annual growth in the population was estimated during 1965-80, 3.6 per cent during 1980-89 and it is projected that the population will be about 26 million in the year 2000 (World Bank, 1991). The crude death rate (CDR) has decreased markedly since the 1970s. The decrease in CDR is much higher than the decrease in crude birth rate (CBR) in the same period. For example the CBR and CDR (per 1000 person) decreased from 49 and 18 in 1965 to 42 and eight in 1989, respectively (World Bank, 1991).

Three major features of population's distribution in Iraq can be observed. First most of Iraq's population is concentrated in urban centres. Statistics show that 70 per cent of the total population were living in towns and cities in 1988. Baghdad, Mosul and Basra have the highest population density, reflecting a high level of urbanisation. During the 1970s various factors contributed to urbanisation. The growing industrial and service sectors attracted people to the cities, just as the poor quality of housing, water supply, health, education, and other facilities drove them away from the villages. Migration from rural areas to urban centres continued during the 1980s. The recent picture of regional population shows that the rural population in 1990 comprised less than 30 per cent of the country's total population. Obviously this degree of urbanization shapes the rate of population growth so that it is quite high in urban centres in comparison to both rural areas and to the country as a whole. Between 1960 and 1990 the urban population increased by 5.2 per cent annually compared to the increase of only 0.9 per cent the rural population (Al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi;1992:183-185). This in fact is a consequence of widescale migration from rural to urban centres.

Second, the number of males is increasing in a higher rate than the females. Table (A.2.2) shows that of the 16.3 million in 1987, 48.6 per cent were females and 51.4 per cent males while in 1947 females constituted 53.1 per cent of the population.

Table A 2 1 Total and regional population 1957-1990 ('000)

Year	Population	Urban	%	Rural	%
1957	6,299	2,445	38 81	3,854	61 18
1965	8,047	4,112	51 09	3,935	48 90
1970	9,356	5,254	56 00	4,102	44 00
1980	13,291	8,799	66 00	4,492	34 00
1990	18,920	13,488	71 00	5,432	29 00

Source ISNAR (1992) and also MOP (1977)

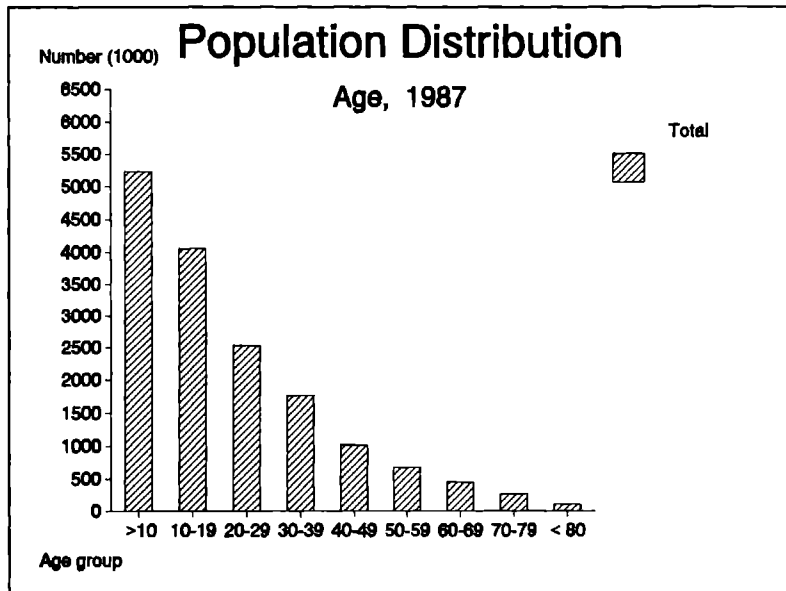
Table A 2 2 Population of Iraq according to sex 1947-1987 (millions)

Year	Males	Females	Total
1947	2 257	2 559	4 816
1957	3 155	3 144	6 299
1965	4 102	3 945	8 47
1970	4 754	4 686	9 440
1975	5 603	5 521	11 124
1980	6 815	6 423	13 238
1987	8 396	7 939	16 335

Source MOP(1988 11)

A third distinctive feature of the demography of Iraq is the high number of young people in proportion to the total population. Figure A 2 1 indicates that in 1987, 57 6 per cent of the population under 20, and only 5 09 per cent above 60 years old

Figure A 2 1 Distribution of population by age, 1987, (1000)



(Source based on data of MOP (1988))

Like many other countries in the region the population of Iraq is composed of different ethnic and religious groups. Almost two-thirds of Iraqis are Arabs (living in the middle and south of the country), they number over 12 million, the Kurds (living in Kurdistan / northern part of Iraq) number more than three million, and the rest of the population consists of Turkomans, Armenians, and Assyrians. The majority of the population are Muslims. There is a minority of Christians, in addition to a small groups of Yazidis and Sabia.

Governmental statistics concerning the numbers of ethnic groups should be treated with great caution, particularly the population censuses of 1977 and 1987. Solely for political objectives the Ba'th government tried to minimize the number of the Kurds and the Turkomans by encouraging families from these ethnic groups to register themselves in the census as Arabs. Noteworthy is that Iraq's ethnic and religious structures have undergone much change during the last few decades, the reasons being mainly the political instability and the armed conflict between the government and ethnic minorities.

Table A 2 3 Ethnic and religious groups in Iraq, 1989

Ethnic groups	%	Religious groups	%
Arabs	73.5	Muslims - Shia	53.5
Kurds	21.6	Muslims - Sunni	41.5
Turkomans	2.4	Christians	3.6
Armenians & Assyrians	2.5	Yazidis & Sabia	1.4
Total	100.0	Total	100.0

Source: The Economist (EIU) 1989-90, p 8

The first wave of change started in the late 1940s until the late 1960s and resulted in the exodus of almost all the Jewish population from Iraq to Israel. A second wave occurred during the 1970s and continued into the 1980s when the Ba'ath government forcefully deported tens of thousands of Kurds from the *faily* group who are also Shia Muslims to Iran claiming that they are of Iranian origin.

A third wave started soon after 1975 as a result of the defeat of the Kurdish rebellion by the Iraqi army, forcing hundreds of thousands of Kurds to flee to Iran and settle there. A fourth wave began when Saddam's forces crushed the uprising (the Kurds in the northern and Shi'a in the southern parts of Iraq) which followed the end of the Gulf war of 1991. The mass killing and torture of the political opponents by Iraqi secret police horrified the population, and as a result more than 1.5 million Kurds fled to neighbouring countries (Turkey and Iran). However, that exodus eventually ended by the intervention of the Western powers and the establishment of a Kurdish safe haven zone above the 36 latitude). According to unofficial sources about one million Iraqis are still living in Iran or in various other countries in the northern hemisphere.

Appendix 3: Education

Like most Middle Eastern countries, until recently Iraq had a high level of illiteracy. According to the 1957 population census, 82.1 per cent were illiterate, ranging from 63.3 per cent in urban areas to 92.7 per cent in rural areas, and from 72.4 per cent among males to 91.6 per cent among females. Up to 1970, 66 per cent of Iraqi people were illiterate, the percentage in rural areas was quite high at a figure of more than 85 per cent, of which some 96 per cent were women and almost 80 per cent were men (MOE, 1990, 179). However, during the last two decades, the number of illiterate adults has been reduced from 53 per cent of the total population in 1977 to 40 per cent in 1990 (Al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi, 1992, 151).

After Qasim took power in 1958, a serious attempt was made to expand educational opportunities for all strata of society. In the past, education was exclusively for wealthy families. Educational system reforms made all levels of education free

for all people, enrolment in primary school was made compulsory and free meals were provided for all pupils in all the country's primary schools. The number of schools, teachers, and students were increased. The number of pupils enrolled in primary school soared. For example in 1960, the school enrolment ratio was 94 per cent (of age group) for boys and 36 per cent for girls (Richards & Waterbury, 19-90,112). The number of pupils admitted to primary school before 1958 was 430,000 in 1957/8 and by 1963 it had increased to 849,000. The education sector during the 1960s enjoyed a substantial share of investment from the national budget. But since the 1970s, investment in education has declined considerably. Table A 3 1 indicates the share of education in the national budget. Despite the legislation for compulsory education, it was not until the 1970s that the measure was fully implemented. Since the early 1970s the primary schools stopped providing the students with a free meal. The increase in the number of pupils due to the rapid increase in population resulted in several groups of pupils using the same premises, in sequence throughout the day.

Table A 3 1 Education's share (%) in the national budget, 1960-80

Year	Education's share	Year	Education's share
1960-61	21.5	1971-72	19.9
61-62	24.4	72-73	20.7
62-63	25.3	73-74	17.7
63-64	22.4	74-75	13.6
64-65	21.1	75-76	11.5
65-66	22.9	1978	7.7
66-67	24.6	1979	6.1
67-68	24.0	1980	5.8

Source: MOP (1975 and 1980)

In 1979 the number of the primary schools totalled 11316, decreasing to 7930 in 1988/89 due to consolidation (MOP, 1988, 60). Worth mentioning that education among females has increased particularly at the primary level, although it varies not only among females but also among males but between rural and urban areas on one hand, and between low-income and high-income families as well. As enrolment in school decreases, the education level increases, i.e. there are less pupils in secondary schools than in primary schools. Many girls from low-income families stop going to school after they turn 14 years old, and many boys leave school and start working to support their families. It is common among poor families for the oldest son to stop his education for financial reasons, so that his brothers can continue their education. This is more common in rural areas because secondary schools are not available in the villages and pupils have to travel to the nearby town.

Since 1976 the number of children in primary schools has increased substantially due to legislation which made enrolment in primary school obligatory for all children between 6 and 15, and parent failing to send children to school an offence for prosecution. In 1979/81, primary school enrolment was 100 per cent of the age group, while it was 67 per cent in the secondary schools (Richards & Waterbury, 1990,122-125). Table A 3.2 shows the development in the number of these schools and their students during the last two decades. Between 1979/80 and 1987/88 the number of the primary school teachers rose from 92,644 to 119,280, and secondary school teachers from 28,002 to 40,438 for the same period.

Table A 3.2 Numbers of students, schools and the percentage of female students, 1979- 1988

Year	Primary schools			Secondary schools		
	No of schools	No of students	% of females	No Of schools	No of students	% of females
1979/80	11316	2608933	45.0	1774	897700	30.2
1980/81	11280	2612332	46.0	1891	950142	32.0
1981/82	10816	2637023	47.0	2042	1018609	29.2
1982/83	10223	2614927	46.4	1977	971827	34.5
1983/84	10138	2698542	45.7	2027	962003	34.5
1984/85	9914	2746297	44.9	2109	996622	35.1
1985/86	8127	2812516	44.7	2238	1031560	36.0
1986/87	8210	2917474	44.6	2315	1012426	37.1
1987/88	7954	2996953	45.1	2306	985123	38.2

Source MOP (1988 60-61)

One of the features of Iraq's education system is the lack of sufficient vocational education, which the country desperately needs especially in the field of agriculture. In 1980/81 the number of these schools was 143 (equivalent to 7.5 per cent of the number of normal secondary school) of which 30 were agricultural school, enrolling 9,010 students. In 1987/88, the ratio of vocational school to secondary schools rose a little higher to ten per cent (MOP,1988,62). Graduates of these schools hardly have any opportunity to go to universities to pursue further studies. Graduates of secondary schools can go to colleges and universities depending on the marks they obtain in the national exams at the end of their final year of the secondary school. The Faculty of Medicine and Engineering require the highest marks and are the most sought after faculties, while the Faculty of Agriculture and Arts accept lower marks.

This attitude is reflected in the high income jobs available to students who have graduated in medicine or engineering, as well as the high social prestige

University graduates were entitled to a governmental job, and indeed during the 1970s and the 1980s they were obliged to take the posts allocated to them centrally. This policy increased disguised employment and maldistribution of the labour force. However, since 1990, this policy has changed and graduates are no longer guaranteed a government job, they have to apply for the available vacancies. There are ten universities, sponsored by the government, the students pay no fees and students studying away from their home towns are eligible for a study loan. The number of university students increased from 48,073 in 1971/72 to 137,912 in 1985/86 of which 31.8 per cent were females. By 1988/89 the number of students reached 179,458 (MOP, 1989: 64). However, since the late 1980s many private universities have been established, which demand tuition fees from students, the number of private colleges continues to increase as privatisation of the economy advances. Low investment in education has led to an inadequate budget allocation to the Ministry of Education and its departments in the provinces. Lack of funds has brought school maintenance to a halt. They have no heating, most windows are broken, and the classrooms are overcrowded, most of whom are ill-clothed and fed. Still, the schools in urban areas are better equipped and staffed than in the rural areas. Up to now there are no private schools in Iraq, and education is still free, the schools are responsible for providing pupils with books but no stationery. However, recently the situation has deteriorated. Once every pupil used to get new text books each year, but nowadays, due to severe shortages of books, the package of next books has to be shared by more than one student.

These books have already been used by students for one or two years. Universities, are in a relatively better situation compared to schools. Other deficits are more serious. Most of the students cannot afford to pay for books, transport, and daily expenses. Students studying outside their own home towns no longer get loans, therefore, many leave university before being able to finish their studies. As universities provide more graduates for the job market each year, degrees have become debased, and they no longer represent known skill or educational level. Employment in the public sector until the 1970s meant good and secure income. Now, public sector earning has become extremely low paid due to inflation, so the majority of government employees (especially school teachers) have to seek second jobs in the private sector. It is common nowadays to find a school teacher selling vegetables or second hand clothes in the town's market when not teaching.

Eradication of adult illiteracy

Despite the educational reforms introduced two decades earlier, the rate of illiteracy was still high in 1978. Table A 3.3 reveals that in 1978 about 60 per cent of Iraqis above the age of ten were illiterate. There is quite a sharp difference in the level of educational attainment between rural and urban areas.

Table A.3.3 Educational attainment, 1978

Literacy level	Urban	Rural	All country
Illiterate	44.5	77.0	55.9
Able to read and write	25.8	13.9	21.7
Primary school certificate	16.4	6.5	12.9
Intermediate school certificate	5.5	1.3	4.0
Secondary school certificate	4.6	0.7	3.2
Higher	3.2	0.6	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: J. Birks and C. Sinclair, 1982

Eradication of illiteracy

During the 1970s Iraq implemented a distinctive experiment in adult literacy. Iraq's illiteracy campaign is unique among most developing countries and particularly among Middle Eastern ones. The enormous financial and technical support made available by the state and the comprehensive scale of the campaign are unrivalled. In 1976 a Supreme Council for Eradication of Illiteracy (SCEI) was formed from various members representing the Ministries of Education, Planning, Social Welfare, Health, and Defence, in addition to trade unions and agricultural cooperatives.

The task of SCEI was to mobilize human and material resources of those institutional bodies for the sake of the campaign. The SCEI relied on data made available by the 1977 population census, with regard to the number of illiterates, their age, sex, income, and ethnic and geographical distribution. The census revealed that there were 2,212,630 people between the age of 15 and 45 who were illiterate of which 1,535,937 were women (Sousa;1982:103). In order to launch the campaign the government issued in 1978 a decree No. 91 of the "Law of Compulsory Eradication of Illiteracy", making the eradication of illiteracy a national objective towards which all the country's facilities on both governmental and non-governmental levels were to be oriented. According to the law every illiterate person aged between 15-45 had to attend a seven-month foundation course to be followed by a seven-month supplementary course. Regular attendance at classes was obligatory and punitive measures were laid down to deal with those who failed to comply (Sousa;1982:104).

An extensive campaign proceeded in December 1976, the teachers were assigned to this task were composed of primary school teachers, government employees and university students after having finished a training course in adult education. Schools and public buildings were used as classrooms, and the required technical materials such as books, notebooks, and stationery were provided free of charge. A sum of ID 236 million was allocated.

The campaign was carried out in urban centres, villages, nomadic areas, marshlands, military bases, and even prisons. The campaign was accompanied by extensive media publicity special programmes were broadcast on radio and televi-

sion, and daily evening literacy lessons were televised on the national network. The media emphasised that the failure of a person to be enrolled in the course, meant betrayal of the nation and disobedience of God, quoting the Koran's verses or prophet Mohammed's teaching, such as "Learn from your birth until your death". In fact this motto helped to convince the traditional older persons, particularly in rural areas, to attend. The campaign covered the whole country and aimed to teach 676,693 men and 1,535,957 women. In 1979 the number of participants was 647,209 men and 1,430,893 women (Sousa, 1982: 105).

However, the objective was far beyond that which was achieved in reality. The campaign faced serious obstacles for many reasons, for example the compulsory nature of attendance regardless of the particular situations of some individuals, some really couldn't combine involvement in the campaign and other daily responsibilities such as their work. There were also some social barriers which crippled the campaign, for example the participation of women was hindered by many conservative families. It is noteworthy that 16 per cent of these who were supposed to attend did not comply, also the onset of the war with Iran in September 1980 impeded the effectiveness of the campaign.

The campaign did not achieve its goal of eradicating illiteracy effectively and in many instances failed to achieve any marked success, nevertheless, it had a considerable positive side effect with regards to the emancipation of women. A large number of women who rarely left their homes in the past, got the opportunity to accustom themselves to the world outside their homes. Worth mentioning is that the campaign was the only serious institutional attempt in Iraq to improve literacy levels.

Appendix 4: Crops and livestock production

Agricultural land in Iraq accounts for 12 million ha but less than 6 million ha is used for cultivation, and due to the implications of the traditional land utilisation system - fallow method - the size of the annually cultivated land is reduced by half. In 1980 2.8 million hectares was under cultivation in the whole of the country, of which 69 per cent was in the north, 24 per cent in the middle and the rest was in the south (MOP 1985).

Despite the serious difficulties which face agriculture, it is reassuring to know that some of them are solvable, at least at a technical level. For example, soil salinity can be alleviated by surface leaching and an efficient drainage system. Once this is achieved, and provided that adequate water for continued leaching of the soil is available, then crop yields are likely to increase (Beaumont et al., 1988: 364). Arable land is dominated by the production of cereals, followed by vegetables in second place, then other various crops.

Cereals production

All agricultural development plans emphasised the necessity of expanding cereal (wheat, barley, and rice) production through implementation of a dualistic approach of improving productivity and expanding the area of production. Between 1970 and 1988, the size of the land used for cereals production was 85 per cent of total cultivated land. Table A 4 1 reveals that there is a fluctuation in both the size of land cultivated by cereals, and in the production, with a very modest growth.

Table A 4 1 Area of land and production of crops and cereals 1968-1988 Selected years

Year	Land ('000 donum)		Production ('000 tons)	
	Total crops	Cereals	Total crops	Cereals
1970	11465	10071	4632	2112
1972	12420	11038	6563	3901
1974	10089	8793	7062	1961
1980	10181	8823	8527	1888
1984	13069	11361	6547	1108
1988	12349	10794	6888	2586

Source MOA (1989 8)

The major cereals are wheat and rice, their importance is reflected in their being the main staple food for the vast majority of the population. Barley is also widely used for animal feed and some consumption by humans. Production of cereals is concentrated in the northern, wetter parts of the country and in the Tigris-Euphrates lowlands. In the northern part wheat and barley are grown by dry farming methods, while in the middle and southern parts irrigation has to be used. Table (A 4 2) shows changes in size of land and production of wheat, barley and rice during 1970-88.

Table A 4 2 Wheat, barley and rice production and area of cultivation
1970-1988 production (1000 tons), Area (1000 *donums*)

Year	Wheat		Barley		Rice	
	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production
1970	7034	1236	2690	682	298	180
1971	3792	822	1584	432	436	307
1972	7658	2625	2902	980	376	268
1973	4624	957	1856	462	256	157
1974	6533	1339	2076	533	126	169
1975	5631	1406	2393	437	126	149
1976	5997	1312	2399	579	213	163
1977	5375	696	3020	458	260	193
1978	6361	910	3102	617	235	172
1979	4929	685	3490	571	253	185
1980	5655	976	3659	682	239	165
1981	4847	902	4195	923	229	162
1982	4728	965	4665	902	245	163
1983	5126	841	5523	836	227	111
1984	5771	471	5744	482	181	109
1985	6266	1406	5795	1331	245	149
1986	5041	1036	6108	1046	211	141
1987	4881	722	5823	743	294	150
1988	4381	929	5916	1437	223	141

Source MOA (1989 24)

The table above reveals that during 1970-88 there was a negative growth rate of -3 per cent in wheat production and of -1 percent in the area of land cultivating this crop Likewise, the production and area under cultivation of rice had negative growth rates of -3 and -2 per cent respectively

Vegetable production

Unlike the main crops, vegetable production increased throughout the 1970s and 1980s comprising of 36 per cent of total crop production and 8 2 per cent of total

cultivated land Vegetables production grew with average annual output growth rates of 4.1 per cent, and 2.4 per cent in the size of the cultivated area In 1970, the amount of land which cultivated vegetables was 804,000 *donum* producing 1,986,000 tons, and in 1987, an area of 1,208,000 *donum* was cultivated which produced 3,192,000 tons of vegetables During the 1970s and 1980s Iraq's self-sufficiency in vegetables ranged between 97.4 per cent and 100 per cent (MOA,1989 155)

The development of vegetable production reflects the growth in domestic demand on the one hand and the relative increase in their prices, although lower than some other crops on the other But the improvement in the productivity has resulted in higher revenue per *donum*, which is reflected in the remarkable increase in both their price index itself and in comparison with other agricultural products The price index of vegetable rose from 51.6 to 690.7 between 1970 and 1988, while of the cereals rose from 76.9 to 441.6 for the same period (Ibid 25)

Dates production

Iraq is one of the world's major producers of dates, two decades ago it had more than 21 million date palm trees and even when millions of the trees were cut and burnt during the war with Iran, they are still plentiful In 1985 there were 17,822,000 date palm trees in the central and southern regions of the country In Basra alone there were more than five million trees

Iraq produced 390,230 tons of dates in 1985 which accounted for more than one-third of the world production However, the continuing shift of farmers to non-agricultural work and also lack of pesticides and fertilizers, have markedly affected the production, which fell from 434,200 to 356,300 tons between 1986 and 1988 (MOP,1988 20) Despite a decline in production in 1987, Iraq exported 157,000 tons of dates valued at \$ 5.2 million, declining in 1989 to 110,000 tons with a value of \$ 3.9 million (FAO 1990) A government company has been established and made responsible for the processing and marketing of the product In order to maximise and expand the usage of dates produced beyond export and domestic consumption, a major programme was initiated in the late 1970s to produce sugar from dates, for such purpose many factories came into existence

Cotton production

Many attempts have been made to commercialise of Iraqi agriculture, much attention being focused on improving the production of cotton as it is the second important commercial crop after dates Kirkuk, DIALA, and Tikrit are the country's main regions for cotton production (MOE,1990 274) A few decades ago Iraq enjoyed a relatively large scale of cotton production for export and also for the domestic textile manufacturing which started to grow and modernise since the 1970s However, during the 1970s and the 1980s, cotton production was unresponsive to export and domestic demand The maximum production during the 1970s, and 1980s was 51,000 mt (metric tons) in 1972, dropping to a mere 7,000 mt in 1984 The average area of land used for cotton production was 113,000 *donum* in the 1970s and 60,000 *donum* in the 1980s The average annual production of cotton was 35,000 mt during 1970s and 13,000 mt in the 1980s (MOA,1989 127) This reveals a negative growth rate of 7.8 per cent in the 1980s With such a performance the gap between demand and

production became dramatically wide, particularly as the annual demand during the last few years has been 360,000 mt (Ibid)

Livestock production

With regard to livestock production, Iraq is an unusual case as it combines two extreme production systems. Sheep, goats, and buffalo production generally follows the traditional semi-nomadic system which is characterised by low inputs / low output and it is based in villages and small towns. Poultry production on the other hand tends to be highly capital intensive and includes modern technology, and the import of raw materials and either hatching eggs or day-old chicks from the most highly productive hybrid lines (ISNAR, 1992: 33). Poultry production, unlike other livestock is mainly based on the outskirts of cities or nearby villages. Cattle production consists of those that are kept mainly for draft and manorial purposes and follow the low input type, naturally being based in rural areas, while cattle used for dairy production come close to poultry in the intensification of capital, production and location.

There is a constant fluctuation in the numbers of the main animals, which is largely a result of being dependent mainly on grazing and by-products of wheat and barley, therefore, low rainfall, and availability of feeding resources have a major impact on the number of animals kept in any given year. Table A 4.3 shows the fluctuation in the numbers of sheep during the 1970s and 1980s, their number dropped from more than 13 million in 1970 to 9.6 million head in 1990. The number of goats decreased from 2.6 million in 1975, to 1.5 million in 1986. The number of cattle in 1973 was over 2.0 million which decreased to 1.6 million in 1990. A serious decline since the mid-1970s occurred in the numbers of buffalo and camels, the buffalo numbered 288,000 in 1970 but after two decades they declined by almost a half. Camels suffered the most decline in their numbers as they dropped from 330,000 in 1978 to only 59,000 in 1990. The settlement of bedouins in villages and towns, migration to urban centres contributed largely to the reduction in the numbers of buffalos and camels.

Table A 4.3 Numbers of the main animals 1968-1990 (selective years) ('000)

Year	Sheep	Goats	Cattle	Buffalo	Camels
1968	11500	1800	1650	250	200
1970	13099	2301	1830	288	266
1973	16218	2561	2030	259	311
1975	8500	2584	2064	180	322
1978	9723	2058	1697	170	330
1986*	8981	1475	1578	141	60
1990*	9600	1650	1675	148	59

Source: MOP (1984: 72) * ISNAR (1992: 34)

Red meat production has continuously fallen during the last two decades. It dropped from 685,000 tons in 1971 to 157,000 tons in 1988, and further declined throughout the 1980s. The white meat production has had a better record keeping almost the same level during the 1970s. However, by the 1980s it had increased rapidly where in 1970 production did not exceed 40,000 tons, it grew to 45,700 tons in 1979, in 1990 the 75 million chickens in the country produced 223,000 tons of meat (ISNAR, 1992:35).

Egg production likewise increased from 5,000 tons in 1970 to 82,000 tons in 1986. Milk production stagnated during the 1970s and 1980s; the minimum production was 264,000 tons in 1974 and the maximum was 299,200 tons in 1986. Table A 4.4 reveals the trend of decrease in red meat and the development in white meat, milk, and eggs production.

Table A 4.4 Livestock production index 1977-88 (1979-81 = 100)

Year	Red meat	White meat	Milk	Eggs
1977	121.6	51.4	101.1	101.8
1978	115.6	68.8	103.3	109.8
1979	116.6	85.1	104.8	103.2
1980	98.0	97.6	95.6	100.0
1981	85.4	117.1	99.6	96.8
1982	85.7	194.8	94.4	98.3
1983	83.3	140.4	94.4	84.7
1984	94.7	201.5	94.4	85.3
1985	79.4	239.8	90.9	126.4
1986	74.3	236.4	88.2	169.3
1987	76.2	216.6	90.1	138.8
1988	58.2	217.6	85.6	126.3

Source: MOP (1986:77) and (1988:24)

The flourishing poultry production industry during the 1980s is no surprise once we know that substantial subsidies and incentives were made available by the state to some groups of private individuals in line of the state policy of privatisation introduced early 1980s. Most poultry is now produced in privately owned batteries (Springborg, 1986:42). Together with the construction sector this forms a key field in which some wealthy people and military officers in addition to political leaders made their fortune in less than a decade (Ibid).

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Curriculum vitae

Adnan Koucher was born in Mosul, Iraq, and studied rural sociology at the University of Mosul. He worked as a tutor in the Department of Rural Sociology, University of Salahaddin, Arbil. He was offered a scholarship from his department to pursue his study for a higher degree abroad. After getting the Master's degree in agricultural extension and rural social development from the University of Reading, England, in 1984, he went back to Iraq. Here, he worked as a lecturer in the Department of Rural Sociology, University of Salahaddin, he was also a part-time consultant to the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Arbil. After his forced departure from Iraq, he came to The Netherlands and in 1997 began to work as a Research Fellow in the Third World Centre at the University of Nijmegen.

Dutch summary

Staat en samenleving: het vraagstuk van verandering op het platteland van Irak 1921-1991

Dit proefschrift is een onderzoek naar de omvangrijke sociale, economische en politieke veranderingen die zich sinds het begin van deze eeuw hebben voltrokken in de Iraakse samenleving in het algemeen en op het platteland in het bijzonder. Doordat de staat de beschikking had over hulpbronnen en instituties, was zij in staat via verschillende vormen van beleid de veranderingsprocessen te beïnvloeden. Als de beleidsvormen strookten met de belangen van de heersende klasse, kon de staat als een instrument worden beschouwd van deze sociale groepen. Als dit niet het geval was, betekende het dat de staat een onafhankelijker en meer autonome positie innam jegens sociale krachten. De doelstellingen van staatsinterventie in plattelandsgebieden verschoven al naar gelang de inrichting van de staat en haar machtsstructuren.

De invloed van de staat op veranderingsprocessen in plattelandsgebieden kwam tot stand in het bredere kader van de interactie tussen staat, samenleving en economie. Veranderingen vonden in eerste instantie plaats door de invloed die de Ottomaanse machthebbers uitoefenden op de maatschappelijke organisatiestructuren. Door de politiek van de Britten kwamen vanaf 1917 gronden en macht in toenemende mate in handen van stamhoofden en grootgrondbezitters.

Ten tijde van de Britse bezetting en de daaropvolgende mandaatperiode (1917-1932) alsook tijdens de monarchie (1932-1958) was de staatsmacht in handen van een elite bestaande uit welgestelde stedelijke groepen en grootgrondbezitters. Zij wendden het staatsapparaat aan om hun hegemonie over sociale groepen in de Iraakse maatschappij uit te breiden. Op het platteland leidde de staatsbemoeyenis tot de legalisering van de uitbuiting van boeren door de plaatselijke elite, stamhoofden en grootgrondbezitters. De overgrote meerderheid van de plattelandsbevolking leefde in bittere armoede en boeren waren feitelijk slaven van de grootgrondbezitters. Deze situatie in ogenschouw nemende werden veranderingen op het platteland geïnitieerd en doorgevoerd door de plaatselijke elite. Alleen zij konden toestemming geven tot het gebruik van de rurale infrastructuur en hadden de voornaamste produktiemiddelen in handen.

De omverwerping van de monarchie in 1958 effende voor Irak de weg om

een staat in ontwikkeling te worden. Onder Qasim, de eerste leider van de nieuwe republiek, werd een breed scala van sociale, economische en politieke hervormingen doorgevoerd in de gehele Iraakse samenleving.

De hervorming van het oude systeem van grondbezit en de invoering van coöperaties vormden een belangrijke aanzet tot veranderingsprocessen in plattelandsgebieden en de afbrokkeling van de hegemonie van de plaatselijke elite.

De Iraakse regering vergrootte haar controle op de economie van het land en de drijvende kracht erachter, de olie-industrie. Enkele jaren nadat in 1960 wet nummer 80, die de rechten van oliemaatschappijen sterk inperkte, was uitgevaardigd, werd Qasim vermoord.

Het huidige Ba'th-regime kwam in 1968 aan de macht. Vanaf dat moment veranderden het karakter van de staat en het patroon en de mate van staatsinterventie aanzienlijk. De staat kreeg een uitgesproken autoritair karakter. Sleutelposities in de regering, de bureaucratie, de militaire en sociale organisatie werden uitsluitend ingenomen door leden van de Ba'th-partij. Ten gevolge hiervan kwam de beslissingsmacht terecht bij een kleine groep invloedrijke politici. Leidende instituties werden ingericht langs lijnen van persoonlijke verbondenheid en groepsloyaliteit. (Bloed)verwantschap (afkomstig zijn uit Tikrit, de stad waar Saddam Hussain vandaan komt) en loyaliteit jegens met name de president en enkele invloedrijke leiders vormden de basis voor autoriteit en samenhang.

Op het platteland werd de staatsinterventie voelbaar door de invoering van een breed scala aan beleidsmaatregelen die gevolgen hadden voor het bezit van landbouwgronden, marketing, prijsmechanismen en investeringen. De landhervormingswet van 1970 diende meerdere doelen behalve het bevorderen van sociale gerechtigheid. Haar voornaamste politieke doel was de uitschakeling van de machtsbasis van de belangrijkste grootgrondbezitters en daarmee van hun politieke invloed. De aanzienlijke stijging van het aantal landbouwcoöperaties en collectieve en staatsboerderijen werd door de staat als een goed middel beschouwd om gebruik te maken van agrarische hulpbronnen en aan staatsdoelen tegemoet te komen. Ondanks het feit dat de oprichting van landbouworganisaties in relatie tot het beoogde doel -namelijk de ontwikkeling van de landbouwsector- niet als een onverdeeld succes kan worden beschouwd, werd de hoofddoelstelling van de staat wel bereikt. Deze organisaties werden namelijk instrumenten in de handen van de staat om de keuzes van boeren in hun werk en persoonlijke leven te sturen.

De Ba'th-regering was zich terdege bewust van het belang van controle op de olie-industrie. Deze werd in 1972 dan ook verder genationaliseerd. De olie-opbrengsten verschaften de staat de ruimte om de economie te

manipuleren en onafhankelijker van sociale krachten te opereren. Het belang van de hoge olie-opbrengsten kwam tot uitdrukking in de bestending van de autonome positie die de staat ten opzichte van de maatschappij innam.

De beschikbaarheid van fondsen zette de staat aan tot uitbreiding van de publieke sector. Begin jaren tachtig was de staat de belangrijkste machtsfactor in de nationale economie. Ter illustratie: 90,3 % van de kapitaalschepping in alle handels- en commerciële activiteiten kwam op conto van de staat.

De overmatige staatscontrole had een negatief effect op de efficiëntie in de productie en op het gebruik van financiële, menselijke en natuurlijke hulpbronnen. De riant financiële situatie die de jaren zeventig kenmerkte, maakte dat de leiders zich weinig bekommerden om de tekortschietende landbouwproductie. Irak vertrouwde in toenemende mate op internationale markten en stelde zijn voedselvoorziening veilig door importen.

De Iraakse economie is een centraal geleide economie en wordt daardoor meer dan andere economieën beheerst door de manier waarop hulpbronnen worden geëxploiteerd en de opbrengsten van -in dit geval- de olie-industrie worden aangewend. De opbouw van een militair apparaat vormde inmiddels het belangrijkste thema op de politieke agenda. Eind jaren zeventig had de staat een sterke, gemoderniseerde militaire macht opgebouwd die uitsluitend onder de Ba'th-leiders ressorteerde. Doordat het over enorme financiële middelen beschikte, kon de Ba'th-regering machtige veiligheidsdiensten oprichten die de Ba'th partij in staat stelden absolute controle uit te oefenen over het politieke leven in Irak.

De ideologische verschillen tussen de Ba'th-partij van Irak en de nieuwe regering van ayatollah Khomeini in Iran alsmede de persoonlijke ambities van Saddam Hussain waren de belangrijkste redenen voor het uitbreken van de Iraans-Iraakse oorlog (1980-1988). De oorlog met Iran legde niet alleen een zware hypotheek op de verdere ontwikkeling van Irak, maar betekende ook een aanslag op de infrastructuur van het land. Met het voortduren van de oorlog werd de Iraakse economie langzaam op de knieën gedwongen. Bij het zoeken naar een uitweg uit de financiële chaos werd de Ba'th-regering gedwongen zijn ontwikkelingsbeleid te herzien.

In de jaren tachtig vond de privatisering plaats van de economie in het geheel en de landbouwsector in het bijzonder. De regering stapte af van het landhervormingsbeleid en versoepelde de regels aangaande het maximaal toegestane grondbezit. Voorts werd het grootste deel van de staatsondernemingen verkocht. Deze maatregel luidde het begin in van een nieuwe periode van ingrijpende veranderingen voor het Iraakse platteland. De staat moedigde het gebruik van privékapitaal in de landbouw aan door

de invoering van verscheidene regelingen voor investeringspremies en het opheffen van de belemmeringen op privébezit en kapitaalintensivering. Deze verschuivingen in beleid deden de behaalde successen op sociaal en economisch vlak teniet. Er vormde zich een nieuwe elite die er in slaagde zijn economische en politieke macht te vestigen. Welgestelde individuele investeerders en agri-business floreerden ten koste van de kleine boeren, hetgeen de ongelijkheid onder de plattelandsbevolking deed toenemen. Aangaande het produktieniveau in de landbouw leidde het privatiseringsbeleid niet tot significante verbeteringen. Gegevens tonen aan dat Irak nog steeds gedwongen was tweederde van het benodigde voedsel te importeren. Tussen 1988 en 1990 (de periode tussen de beide Golfoorlogen) kon de landbouwproductie niet voldoen aan de stijgende binnenlandse vraag. Het argument van de beleidsmakers dat hun privatiseringspolitiek de groei van de landbouwproductie meer zou stimuleren dan de publieke aanpak, wordt hierdoor ongeloofwaardig. De controle van de private sector op de Iraakse economie dient echter niet te worden overschat. Tot op heden heeft de staat zijn greep op de voornaamste sectoren binnen de economie, zoals de olie en de buitenlandse handel, niet verminderd.

Het politieke avontuur dat de Iraakse leiders ondernamen toen zij in 1990 Koeweit binnenvielen, hetgeen de Tweede Golfoorlog en het instellen van internationale handelssancties tegen het land tot gevolg had, stortte de economie van het land en het overgrote deel van zijn bevolking in een situatie van ellende en uitzichtloosheid.

De opbouw van het proefschrift is de volgende: een beschrijving van de geografische positie van Irak alsmede van de natuurlijke kenmerken en hulpbronnen van het land is opgenomen in een appendix. Dit is gedaan om de grote omvang van natuurlijke hulpbronnen, waarover Irak beschikt voor het beoefenen van landbouw, aan te geven. Verder zijn de veranderingen geschetst ten aanzien van de produktie van de belangrijkste gewassen, granen, dadels en vee.

In hoofdstuk één worden de voornaamste theorieën over de staat en de relatie staat-samenleving uiteen gezet. Het hoofdstuk beoogt een theoretisch kader te geven dat het karakter en het gedrag van de Iraakse staat verklaart. De invloed van de staat op veranderingsprocessen op het platteland geanalyseerd binnen het bredere kader van interactie tussen staat, samenleving en economie.

Hoofdstuk twee beschrijft de sociale structuur van de Iraakse samenleving vanaf de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw, toen Irak deel uitmaakte van het Ottomaanse Rijk, tot heden.

Hoofdstuk drie behandelt Irak als renteniersstaat waarvan de inkomsten

voornamelijk bestaan uit olie-opbrengsten. De ontwikkeling van de olie-industrie volgt gevolgd vanaf het begin van de commerciële exploitatie van olie enkele decennia geleden. Verder is ingegaan op de verbanden tussen olie-opbrengsten en landbouw alsmede die tussen olie en militarisatie. Ten slotte zijn de gevolgen besproken van de Iraans-Iraakse oorlog (1980-88) en de Golfoorlog van 1991 en het daarop door de Verenigde Naties ingestelde embargo voor de olie-opbrengsten en de economie in zijn geheel.

Hoofdstuk vier gaat in op de rol van de staat inzake de herstructurering van grondeigendomsrechten. Het bestrijkt de periode van de Ottomaanse overheersing tot heden.

Hoofdstuk vijf behandelt de ontwikkeling van de landbouwcoöperaties ten gevolge van de landhervormingswetten van 1958 en 1970. Het verschaft inzicht in de motieven van de staat voor de uitbreiding van het aantal coöperaties en voor de invoering van collectieve en staatsboerderijen in de jaren zeventig.

Hoofdstuk zes bespreekt de hoofdpunten van het staatsbeleid ten aanzien van de landbouwontwikkeling en de voedselvoorziening. Het geeft een analyse van de beroepsbevolking in de landbouw en de invloed die deze heeft ondergaan van de migratie van het platteland naar de steden alsmede van de Iraans-Iraakse oorlog. Voorts geeft het hoofdstuk een verklaring voor de voortdurende daling van de landbouwproductie en van de bijdrage van de sector aan het BNP gedurende jaren zeventig en tachtig.

Hoofdstuk zeven gaat in op de recente veranderingen in beleid die de weg effenen naar een open economie. Het privatiseringsproces bracht grote veranderingen voor het landbouwbeleid met zich mee.

In hoofdstuk acht zijn de conclusies opgenomen die zich hebben gevormd ten aanzien van de in de voorafgaande hoofdstukken gevoerde discussies. Dit hoofdstuk geeft daarom commentaar op de mate van inmenging van de Iraakse staat in de economie en het leven van de plattelandsbevolking.

Why does Iraq, with its once dynamic economy, food security and real potential for genuine agricultural development, fail to feed its population and find itself on the very edge of an abyss? Since the formation of the Iraqi state, interaction between the state and the society has varied according to the nature of the state and also its power structure. With increasing of state revenues from oil, the state arose as a major force in the process of societal change. By looking at the power structure of the state, this thesis illustrates the objectives of the development policies implemented by the state. It examines the crucial role of the political actor in defining the relationship between the state and the economy. It explores the role of the state in agrarian change in a historical perspective of the evolution of agricultural land tenancy, set in the context of changing political, economic and social forces within rural areas and Iraqi society as a whole. Since the Ba'th government came to power there have been major shifts in state development policies: from a socialist approach during the 1970, to ongoing privatisation of agriculture and the economy as a whole. This thesis provides a useful interpretation of the arguments which surround this paradox.

The 'Nijmeegs Instituut voor Comparatieve Cultuur- en Ontwikkelingsstudies' (NICCOS - Nijmegen Institute for Comparative Studies in Development and Cultural Change) of the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands, was established in 1989 in order to co-ordinate and stimulate the research in the Third World and in peripheral regions of the industrialized countries carried out by the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology, the Department of Geography of Developing Areas, the Third World Centre, the Centre for Women's Studies, the Missiology Department and the Department of Middle East Languages and Cultures.